

## Portrait of Musical Creativity or Indolence: A Critique of Unoka Character in Achebe's Things Fall Apart

**Authors :** Ebim Matthew Abua

**Abstract :** In Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart (henceforth, TFA), the character Unoka is portrayed as a weakling and indolent person even when he was a creative artist, a talented musician, and a mathematician. His lack of achievement becomes the barometer for measuring his success. Right from time, music is considered to be of great significance because of its capacity to recreate and retell social events. To this end, music is both a social act and a creative art. As a social act, music is a discursive medium that exploits the dynamics of art in its evaluation of society. Music is so much a part of human existence that its presence in literature can help readers relate to fictional situations and characters. In this paper, the character Unoka is examined against the backdrop of his musical proclivities and his contributions to the overall development of TFA. Unfortunately, Achebe's Things Fall Apart, a product of artistic creativity, portrays the personality of Unoka as lazy and uninspiring because he (Unoka) is a musician who is busy playing his flute and hardly doing anything productive. This paper is significant because it examines the literary and or linguistic depiction of Unoka and the aftermath of that depiction on the entire novel and, by extension, the larger society. Methodologically, this paper adopted the qualitative approach from the ethnography of communication (EOC), which is the analysis of communication within the wider context of the social and cultural practices and beliefs of the members of a particular culture or speech community. The aim of this qualitative research method includes the ability to discern which communication acts and/or codes are important to different groups, what types of meanings groups apply to different communication events, and how group members learn these codes to provide insight into particular communities. The study reveals that the people of Umuofia were mono-directional in their economy, and there was no room for diversification. One was either a farmer, or such a person was relegated to the background. Unoka, taking up a new challenge of diversifying the economy from the perspective of entertainment, was viewed as a misnomer. This study opens the door to other areas of studying Achebe's epic novel apart from the critical works of literary artists that have been dished out over time.

**Keywords :** literature, popular culture, unoka, things fall apart

**Conference Title :** ICAHP 2024 : International Conference on Arts, Humanities and Postmodernism

**Conference Location :** Istanbul, Türkiye

**Conference Dates :** September 26-27, 2024