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**Discourse Analysis of Gender-based Violence in Contemporary
Kiswahili Fiction: A Case Study of Selected Novels of the Past
Three Decades (1975 - 2004) and Young Tanzanians’
Interpretations**

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy
at
The University of Waikato
by
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THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

2013

Abstract

This study focused on indirect exposure to violence against women by examining the discursive construction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels. While there have been numerous studies on violence in the mass media and its possible effects on young people, limited research has focused on the role of violence in novels, particularly those written in the African languages. Since novels comprise a significant form of media in Tanzania and are particularly influential in the lives of young people, this study examined how novelists employ dominant discourses of gender-based violence to depict perpetrators and victims of violence against women, and the way young Tanzanians make sense of these textual constructions.

Drawing on feminist poststructuralist and audience reception theories, this study combined textual analysis of Kiswahili novels with empirical research into their reception. A sample of 15 Kiswahili novels, published between 1975 and 2004, was analysed using Foucauldian discourse analysis to uncover the strategies novelists employ as they reflect, reproduce and sometimes challenge dominant discourses of violence against women in their novels. Focus group interviews were then conducted with 72 high school students in order to ascertain how they understood and responded to depictions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels. The composite model of modes of reception was used to analyse their responses as they affirmed, questioned, and critiqued the novels' depictions of gender-based violence. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with six Kiswahili teachers to understand the relationship between the textual construction of gender-based violence and broader social/cultural practices, and to identify potential ways of using novels in school settings as part of wider efforts to end violence against women in Tanzanian society.

Analysis of the textual representation of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels showed that the dominant male power of the perpetrators was the main reason offered for the violence against women depicted in the novels. However, cultural practices, poverty, alcoholism, male sexuality and uncontrollable jealousy were also foregrounded as factors promoting violence against women in Tanzanian society. Furthermore, while some novelists seemingly raised these factors to exonerate perpetrators from responsibility for their abusive actions,

others punished the victims of violence for not complying with accepted social practices. By rearticulating discourses that exonerate abusers while punishing victims, the textual representation of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels generally failed to challenge the dominant discourses that maintain oppressive social relations in Tanzanian society.

The interview findings supported the conclusions drawn from the textual analysis, and showed that the textual depiction of violence against women is influenced by cultural practices. Respondents also argued that problematising discourses that sustain violence against women and emphasising alternative ways of understanding gender-based violence would offer different subject positions to girls and women who experience abuse in Tanzanian society. In summary, this study illustrates the importance of authors drawing on alternative and critical discourses when representing violence against women in novels, and it also supports the contention that using novels as an education tool in school settings to raise awareness about gender-based violence would usefully contribute to wider efforts to end violence against women in Tanzanian society. To that end, a model for curriculum intervention is also presented.

Acknowledgements

Completing my doctoral thesis has been the fulfillment of a dream. Indeed, this dream would not have been accomplished without the guidance, help, and support of many people throughout my doctoral study at the University of Waikato.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my supervisors Dr. Jo Barnes and Dr. Carolyn Michelle, for their outstanding guidance and constant encouragement during the process of writing this thesis. Jo, your calm reassurance and patience have been a source of positive motivation even at the time of difficulties in my study. Carolyn, you have inspired me to learn everything I know about discourse. You both have played a huge part in helping me “grow” intellectually and for this I will be forever grateful.

My gratitude goes to the tutors in Student Learning Support, particularly, Andrea Haines. I would also like to thank Jim for proof-reading the final version of this thesis.

I am indebted to the students and teachers who participated in this study. I am appreciative of their critical reflection on Kiswahili novels and thoughtful suggestions.

In terms of being able to afford the time to undertake my doctoral studies, I am very appreciative of study leave granted by the University of Dar Es Salaam and financial support. I am grateful for your help, without which I would not have been able to finish my studies.

Lastly, and most importantly, thank you to my family. Special thanks to my sister Honoratha and her husband Thadeus for their special support and for looking after my daughter Neema in my final year of study. I also owe so much to Fr. Tom Kessy, Sr. Clare, Sr. Jane Ablett, and Deni Soesmanto and his wife Jessica for their unforgettable support. To all who have assisted me, I offer my deep and lasting appreciation.

This thesis is dedicated to my daughter Neema that she may learn the lived experiences of her grandmother.

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List of Abbreviations

ASRP	Adolescent Sexual Reproductive health Programme
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus infection/ Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
MHIC	Muhimbili Health Information Center
MMC	Muhimbili Medical Center
MYC	Mikumi Youth Care
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
TAMWA	Tanzania Media Women Association
TAWLA	Tanzania Women Lawyer's Association
TEC	Tanzania Episcopal Conference
TGNP	Tanzania Gender Networking Programme
TPFNet	Tanzania Police Female Network
SADC	Southern African Development Community
WHO	World Health Organisation
WLAC	Women's Legal Aid Centre
WOWAP	Women Wake Up
UMCA	Universities Mission to Central Africa
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women

Chapter One

This study developed as a result of my engagement with Kiswahili novels, both as a Kiswahili literature teacher in High School and later as a teacher of Kiswahili novels at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. The opportunity to critically engage with Kiswahili novels inspired me to explore why Kiswahili authors so often depict women characters as passive, while punishing those who rebel against the accepted cultural norms. As I read the novels, I pictured my mother – hard working, independent, and in control of her life. More importantly, she managed to resist oppressive cultural practices. As a widow living in a village where oppressive cultural practices are viewed as “normal,” she stood up for her rights and the rights of her children. Aware of the importance of economic independence, she worked very hard and encouraged us to work hard. She knew the importance of strong social networks; thus, she sought out trustworthy people who would support her when she needed it. My mother always insisted that you should “associate with people who will improve your life and who you can count on.”

These experiences, which shaped my understanding since childhood, were in sharp contrast to the representation of women characters in Kiswahili novels. When I started teaching Kiswahili literature at High School, I observed how the depictions of women’s position in the novels shaped students’ perceptions of reality and prevented them from seeing other views of reality. Hence, my lived experiences, which were in contrast to those depicted in Kiswahili novels, inspired me to consider this topic, which offers a critical reflection on Kiswahili novels, particularly in terms of how they construct the issue of violence against women. Furthermore, I wanted to contribute to social change by offering a classroom intervention programme that would enable students to reflect critically on the problem of violence against women from a wider perspective and develop constructive ideas aimed at raising awareness about this problem.

1.1 Introduction

Gender-based violence has been recognized as a widespread and escalating phenomenon in Africa (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Mama, 2001; Merry, 2006), one that takes various forms – including physical, psychological, sexual and/or economic abuse - and occurs in both domestic environments and public spaces, with known and unknown assailants (Adames & Campbell, 2005; Manderson, 2001; Muganyizi, Kilewo, & Moshiro, 2004). Government and community resources, health services, law enforcement, legal services, women and families are all affected by violence against women. Yet, despite its high social and

personal costs and its pervasiveness, it is only in the last few decades that violence against women in Africa has become a subject for research (Bennett, 1999; Jewkes, 2001, 2002; Manderson, 2001).

A growing awareness of gender-based violence as a significant social problem (Hyden, 1994; Nazroo, 1995; Saunders, 1988) has been attributed to the consciousness raised by the women's movement and subsequent feminist initiatives that have shifted the discussion of violence against women out of the private realm (Mama, 2001; Richie, 2005), such that it is now understood as a social, intellectual and clinical problem and an obstacle to economic and political development (D. Green, 1999; Mooney, 2000). As Blackman (1989, p. 10) suggests, it is feminism that provides, "the impetus and the philosophical base for the naming of these injustices that accrue disproportionately to women and children within sexist societies and moved the problem from being one of 'taboo' to 'talked about' about" openly.

Violence against women violates not only their right to human dignity, but also other rights such as the right to life and the right to health. Violence against women denies women the ability to control their sexual and reproductive choices. It severely affects women's physical, psychological, mental, reproductive and sexual well-being (Jacobs, 2003; Maman, Campbell, Sweat, & Gielen, 2000).

In Tanzania, as in many African countries, it is difficult to obtain accurate data on the prevalence of violence against women and its costs to the economy and society (Brown, Laliberte, & Tubbs, 2003; Muganyizi et al., 2004), but some indication of its prevalence can be gleaned from a 2006 study by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in two regions - Dar es Salaam and Mbeya. This study revealed that 41% of women in Dar es Salaam and 56% of women in Mbeya had experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of their partners (WHO, 2006). Another study by McCloskey, Williams and Larsen (2005) showed that 26% of women in the Moshi region reported having experienced intimate partner violence. A more recent study by Wubs et al. (2009) on dating violence among students in Tanzania and South Africa showed that 51.7% of school girls in Dar es Salaam had experienced violence at the hands of their boyfriends. This apparently pervasive violence is recognised by feminist scholars as a

manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women and thus as socially constructed and culturally justified rather than natural (D. Green, 1999; Manderson, 2001; Mooney, 2000). Manderson writes, “women’s subordinated position with respect to men underpins the prevalence of these practices everywhere” (2001, p.7).

The United Nations (1993), Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women emphasises that governments have to develop plans and programmes aimed at preventing violence against women¹ in their societies. The Declaration defines violence against women as:

Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. (Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Article 1)

Further, the Declaration illustrates that gender-based violence includes:

a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;

b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in education institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;

c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs. (Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Article 2)

Ampofo, Beoku-Betts, Njambi and Osirim (2004) surveyed existing studies of gender-based violence in Africa and noted that the types of gender-based violence discussed are domestic violence (e.g. wife battering, assault of co-wives in polygamous marriages, and assault on maids), sexual violence (e.g. rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment), and traditional practices defined as gender-based violence (e.g. female genital mutilation and accusations of witchcraft). Gender-

¹ In this study violence against women has the same meaning as gender-based violence.

based violence has been examined within a structural context, with emphasis on historical, social, political, and economic conditions that foster violence and empower men to perpetrate abuses against women and encourage women to tolerate it (Galtung, 1990; Mama, 2001).

The present study brings a new lens to this topic by examining how gender-based violence that has a physical and/or sexual manifestation, psychological and emotional abuse (violence which consists of threats and insults), and financial abuse are discursively constructed and represented in selected Kiswahili fiction². This focus on fictional representations may seem surprising; however, research has shown that fictional and non-fictional works about social problems have the same influence on readers' perceptions (Strange & Leung, 1999), as factual and fictional information is not automatically processed in a different mental category (Gerrig, 1993). Thus, works of fiction, particularly novels, are used to understand social issues (Cosbey, 1997) and to ascertain the relationship between the individual and society (Cosbey, 1997; Fitzgerald, 1992; Gold, 1988). According to Cosbey, novels provide the opportunity for readers to understand characters' behaviour and the reasons for their actions in detail, which widens their understanding about people's behaviour. Additionally, the ability of fiction to address both personal and societal problems from different angles enables readers to comprehend societal problems from different perspectives (Cohen, 1998). Cohen describes fiction as "a source of important truth that is generally hidden from ourselves and the society we live in" (Cohen, 1998, p. 172). Park (1982) concurs with this view, yet suggests that fiction reveals truthful realities which cannot be disclosed in scientific or philosophical discourses. According to Gold (1988), the truth coded in experiences found in novels provides awareness to individuals about what is happening in a society. If novels are used effectively, he suggests they can assist us in knowing how to live safely and creatively in our communities. This suggests that through novels, we can learn about the complex nature of gender-based violence as a social problem and ascertain its diverse manifestations and multilayered nature (Franzak & Noll, 2006). Informed by this literature, in this study I argue that by analysing Kiswahili novels, we can identify different levels of gender-based violence, including the individual level, the

² Kiswahili fiction in this study refers to novels written by Tanzanians about Tanzanian society using Kiswahili language.

institutional level where harmful actions are practiced by various institutions, and the cultural level which forms the foundation of values, ways of thinking, and social relations in Tanzanian society (Galtung, 1990; Soest & Bryant, 1995). Indeed, comprehensive understanding of how these levels of gender-based violence are interrelated is important in developing effective intervention programmes to address gender-based violence in Tanzanian society.

According to Sundermann, Jaffe and Hastings (1995), high school students are aware of the problem of gender-based violence in their society and in their own lives. Sundermann et al. (1995) propose that intervention programmes with high school students have considerable potential for behavioural change. Similarly, Kivel and Creighton (1997) assert that young people are the group at the forefront of social change, but they need skills and knowledge to initiate that change. This suggests that intervention programmes with high school students will contribute in addressing the issue of violence against women in Tanzanian society.

Despite this evidence detailing the power of fictional stories to offer an understanding of society (Cosbey, 1997; Fitzgerald, 1992; Gold, 1988), to contribute to solving societal problems (Cohen, 1998; Cosbey, 1997), and to change individuals' beliefs and attitudes (M. C. Green, 2004; M. C. Green & Brock, 2000; M. C. Green, Garst, & Brock, 2004; Marsh, Meade, & Roedigger, 2003; Strange & Leung, 1999; Tsai, Louie, Chen, & Uchida, 2007), little attention has been paid to the role of violence in literary works (Franzak & Noll, 2006; van Peer & Maat, 2001). Franzak and Noll (2006) suggest that by bringing the effects of violence to the foreground in the study of texts, we can enrich and deepen what the stories offer to readers. Consequently, by studying the textual representation of violence in novels we can discuss social and cultural realities that would be difficult to deal with in a real situation (Alsup, 2003).

This research, therefore, aims to make a contribution to the existing scholarship by highlighting the effects of the discursive construction of violence against women in Kiswahili novels on young readers. It analyses the discursive construction of violence in 15 Kiswahili novels, and draws on data from twelve focus group interviews with high school students conducted in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, to illustrate how young people make sense of them. Drawing on data

from six in-depth interviews with Kiswahili teachers, this study offers specific proposals on how Kiswahili novels might be used in high schools in the effort to end violence against women in Tanzanian society.

1.2 Objectives of the study

Bakhtin (2002) maintains that the novel is a collection of societal events and it is an “instrument of social critique” (Cunningham, 2002, p. 106). With this in mind, this study examines the privileged discursive constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels and young Tanzanians’ responses to these constructions. The analysis of 15 Kiswahili novels featuring different forms of gender-based violence, such as domestic violence, sexual violence, and traditional practices defined as gender-based violence, will reveal what are discursively constructed in Kiswahili novels as the causes and consequences of gender-based violence in Tanzanian society.

While educational programmes and services for victims of gender-based violence are vital, it is important to address its root causes, which are found in culture and maintained by societal laws, economic inequalities, and the common experiences of everyday life (D. Green, 1999; Mooney, 2000). With regard to this, it is suggested that one way of successfully intervening to end gender-based violence is to gain an understanding of the cultural beliefs and discourses that sustain it, including how those discourses are made sense of, especially young people. Thus, a second goal of this study is to assess young Tanzanians’ knowledge of and attitudes towards gender-based violence as it is discursively constructed in Kiswahili novels.

Young people, especially those in high school, are ideally positioned to become involved in changing attitudes, values, and learned behaviour patterns that underlie and promote acts of gender-based violence in their society (Hromek & Walsh, 2012; Kivel & Creighton, 1997; Sudermann et al., 1995). The present research reflects the view that working with young people in schools will contribute to ending gender-based violence through challenging cultural beliefs which permit and encourage gender-based violence in Tanzanian society. Hence, a third aim of this research is to explore whether and how Kiswahili novels might

be utilised in classroom and school settings as part of wider attempts to intervene in gender-based violence in Tanzanian society.

1.3 Research questions

The objectives of this study will be achieved by answering the following questions:

- 1) What are the causes and consequences of gender-based violence as constructed in Kiswahili fiction?
- 2) What are the dominant subject positions offered by the various discursive constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili fiction texts?
- 3) How do young people interpret the different forms of gender-based violence as they are discursively constructed in Kiswahili fiction texts?
- 4) How do young people respond to the discursive construction of the causes and consequences of gender-based violence in Kiswahili fiction texts?
- 5) To what extent are the discursive constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili fiction perceived as a reflection of socio-cultural practices?
- 6) How can Kiswahili novels be used in school settings to address violence against women in Tanzanian society?

1.4 Methodology: A brief overview

In order to understand how gender-based violence is discursively constructed in Kiswahili novels, I analysed a representative sample of 15 Kiswahili novels, cutting across the three decades from 1975 to 2005. In my analysis chapter, I include the Kiswahili version and English translation of analysed excerpts to enable readers of the source language (Kiswahili) to experience the same effect intended in the original text. The analysis of the novels was guided by Willig's (2001, 2008) version of Foucauldian discourse analysis. In addition, the NVivo 8 software programme was used to code the discursive patterns in the construction of gender-based violence in the novels.

To understand how young people respond to the discursive constructions of violence against women as represented in the novels, I conducted 12 focus group discussions with high school students in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The focus group discussions were guided by a list of open-ended questions and five extracts

from Kiswahili novels about gender-based violence. In analysing the data from the focus groups, I used the composite model of modes of reception (Michelle, 2007, 2009).

Lastly, I conducted in-depth interviews with six Kiswahili teachers which aimed to solicit their views of the discursive construction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels and possible ways in which novels might be used in school settings to support wider efforts to end gender-based violence. All focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were conducted in Kiswahili. However, in this study only the translated version is presented.

1.5 The significance of the study

The findings from this study will provide a better understanding of how contemporary Kiswahili fiction constructs the causes and consequences of gender-based violence and how young Tanzanians respond to those constructions. Of particular importance to this thesis is understanding different views about violence against women drawn on by young people in responding to these constructions.

Research has shown that school-based programmes have considerable potential for behavioural intervention (Sudermann et al., 1995), and in Tanzania such programmes can reach a large number of young people in secondary schools. With this in mind, the study suggests ways of engaging young people in addressing the question of gender-based violence, using a literature-based approach as an educational tool to create awareness of this issue. It is hoped that through a literature-based approach, it will be possible to identify various cultural values, norms, and discursive practices which emphasise and possibly reinforce gender-based violence in Tanzanian society. By using these literary works, we can develop school-based programmes whereby students and teachers identify and discuss the discursive meanings that circulate around different forms of gender-based violence in both the public and private domains. More importantly, it is hoped that a literature-based approach will help teachers, students and the wider community to challenge dominant attitudes and beliefs which sustain gender-based violence in Tanzanian society.

1.6 Chapter outline

This chapter has provided an overview of the research, Kiswahili fiction, the main objectives, research questions, methods, and the rationale for this study. The next chapter, Chapter 2, provides a review of literature on gender-based violence in Tanzanian society and in Kiswahili novels. The main focus here is to examine the prevalence of violence against women in Tanzanian society as demonstrated in research and as depicted in Kiswahili novels. This chapter also examines how novels can be used as an instrument of behavioural change to establish the grounds for using novels in intervention programmes in an effort to end gender-based violence in Tanzanian society. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework that guides this research. This chapter demonstrates the importance of using feminist poststructuralist theory in attempting to understand the textual constructions of violence against women in Kiswahili novels. Also, it illustrates how dominant discourses in the field of violence against women describe this social problem. Chapter 4, which focuses on the research methodology, describes how Foucauldian discourse analysis has been used to understand the construction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels. Furthermore, this chapter argues that focus groups and in-depth interviews provide meaningful methods for understanding the influence of the constructions of violence against women in Kiswahili novels, as well as how novels can be used in intervention programmes in high schools in the effort to end gender-based violence.

Chapters 5 through 8 focus on data analysis. Chapter 5 analyses the textual constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels. It aims to show the way novelists construct perpetrators and victims in the novels. Specifically, the chapter examines how different discourses in the field of violence against women are employed by authors to construct gender-based violence in their novels. Chapter 6, which examines young Tanzanians' views about textual constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels, seeks to synthesise young readers' understandings of these textual constructions and the discourses they drew on to support their points of view. In order to understand the relationship between gender-based violence as constructed in the novels and social/cultural practices in Tanzanian society, teachers' views were explored and these are the focus of Chapter 7. Teachers' views about the relationship between textual constructions

of gender-based violence in the novels and societal practices highlight the potential role of novels in ending violence against women in Tanzanian society. Their ideas are illustrated in Chapter 8, which proposes ways in which novels can be used in school settings to support the wider effort to end gender-based violence. This chapter also argues that working with high school students would be an opportunity to involve young people in solving societal problems such as violence against women. The final chapter, Chapter 9, summarises and discusses the main findings of this study and offers recommendations for further research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the social and cultural context in which this research was conducted. Given that this study uses novels written in Kiswahili, one of the 155 ethnic languages spoken in Tanzania (Muzale & Rugemalira, 2008), this chapter begins by discussing Kiswahili's origin, spread and current position, particularly in Tanzania. Then, I examine the depiction of violence against women in Kiswahili novels as well as reviewing relevant studies of gender-based violence conducted in Tanzania. As the primary goal of this thesis is to analyse gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels and how young Tanzanians respond to these constructions, demonstrating the link between studying novels and behavioural change is essential. Hence, the last part of this chapter describes how novels can lead to behavioural change. By looking at literature on violence against women both in research and in Kiswahili novels, this chapter provides essential background while also identifying the need for an alternative approach in the effort to end violence against women.

2.2 Origins, spread, and the current position of Kiswahili language

2.2.1 Origins of Kiswahili language

The history of the Kiswahili language has been a subject of debate among many scholars, including historians, linguists and archaeologists. In regards to its origin, three perspectives have dominated: Kiswahili is considered to be an Arabic language, a hybrid language, or a Bantu language (Massamba, 2007). The proponents of the view that Kiswahili is an Arabic language base their argument on two main factors – the dominance of the Islamic religion along the coast and the presence of Arabic loan words in Kiswahili. They argue that the Kiswahili language was brought by Arabs who came to East Africa to preach Islam. Massamba (2007) asserts that advocates of this view see the Kiswahili language and Islam as inseparable. Habwe claims that the Kiswahili language is such an influential factor in East Africa that “there is no way one would be a Muslim without being Kiswahili-speaking” (Habwe, 2009, p. 6).

However, the claim that there are many Arabic words in the Kiswahili language is discarded by various scholars. Research has shown that East African people traded with Arabs, Persians and Indians for many centuries (Rollins, 1983). As languages come into contact they influence each other depending on their status (Zawawi, 1979). Therefore, it is not surprising that the Kiswahili language has borrowed Arabic words, as people along the East African coast used them in different activities. Furthermore, while the Kiswahili language was used in preaching Islam, there were sometimes no equivalent words in Kiswahili to translate the Arabic words in the Koran. In these cases, Arabic words were used. Other Kiswahili scholars have argued that the domination of Arabs in Zanzibar, where Kiswahili was used as an official language, contributed to the influence of Arabic words in the Kiswahili language (A. M. Mazrui & Shariff, 1994). Clearly, the availability of loan words and the presence of Islam alone cannot be taken as a justification for determining Kiswahili to be of Arabic origin.

The advocates of Kiswahili being a hybrid language argue from historical and archaeological premises. They claim that the Kiswahili language came into existence as a result of intermarriage between the coastal people and Arabs. The assumption is that the Kiswahili language was not spoken along the coast before the coming of Arabs (Zawawi, 1979; Massamba, 2007). Rather, it is the language which emerged as East African people were Islamised by Arabs. In supporting this view, A. M. Mazrui and Shariff (1994) employ linguistic criteria by comparing the Kiswahili language with other Bantu languages. They contend that Kiswahili lacks a tonal system that is found in other Bantu languages. There is a vast literature demonstrating that Bantu languages have changed over time, and are categorised into three main groups: purely tonal, tone accent, and simple stress languages. The Kiswahili language is found in the simple stress group with other Bantu languages, like Kikami, Kikutu, Kizaramo and Kidole (Massamba, 2007). According to Massamba (2007), in order for a language to be a pidgin it should have its own grammar. However, the Kiswahili language has a grammar similar to other Bantu languages. Therefore, the claim that the Kiswahili language is a mixture of Arabic and other Bantu languages is not correct.

The view accepted by linguists, Kiswahili scholars, ethnologists, African historians and African archaeologists is that the Kiswahili language is a Bantu

language, which borrowed from other languages such as Arabic, Persian, Indian, German, Portuguese, and English. By using linguistic criteria, such as basic vocabulary³, scholars have proved that Kiswahili is a Bantu language, as its basic vocabulary is similar to other Bantu languages (Amidu, 1995; Massamba, 2007). Further, the Kiswahili language is related to Bantu languages as it has a similar word syllable structure, syntactical construction, and noun class system (Massamba, 2007).

2.2.2 The spread of Kiswahili language

Many factors have contributed to the development of Kiswahili from a language of a minority in the 18th century to a national and international language in the 20th century. These include long distance trade from the coast to the interior, the spread of religion (Islam and Christianity), colonial administration, and post-independence government policies (Kiango, 2005; A. A. Mazrui & Zirimu, 1978; Mukuthuria, 2009; Njubi, 2009; Polomé, 1983).

Long distance trade

The Kiswahili language spread from the coast of East Africa to the interior as a result of expansion in trade. Literature suggests that from the 13th century, Kiswahili was used by the people along the East African coast (A. A. Mazrui & Zirimu, 1978). The introduction of long distance trade at the beginning of the 18th century from the coastal areas, when Swahili people travelled to the interior to trade guns, ceramics and textiles for gold, slaves and ivory, facilitated the spread of the Kiswahili language (A. A. Mazrui & Zirimu, 1978; Njubi, 2009). Swahili people were involved in the long distance trade as porters or caravan leaders, thus spreading Kiswahili from the coast to the interior. A. A. Mazrui and Zirimu (1978) note that as trade expanded, several centres were established where Arabs traded with local people. As more ethnic groups became involved, there was a need for a lingua franca. For example, Arabs who were active in the slave trade used Kiswahili to communicate with their agents in the interior such as in the Kamba, Nyamwezi and Mijikenda (A. A. Mazrui & A. M. Mazrui, 1995).

³ According to Bynon (1977, p. 267), a “basic vocabulary of a language is the sector of its lexicon which deals with those elements of universal human experience which exist irrespective of speakers’ culture and comprises such fundamental biological activities such as eating, sleeping and natural physical phenomena like fire, water, sun....”.

Consequently, by the second half of the 19th century, Kiswahili had spread to different areas in Tanzania (Polomé, 1983).

Religion

Both Islam and Christianity also contributed to the development of the Kiswahili language. For example, when Arabs arrived in East Africa they interacted with the people along the coast. This led to Arabs learning the coastal people's language (Kiswahili) and culture, and then introducing the Swahili people to Islam (Mukuthuria, 2009). Despite the fact that the teaching of Islam was in the Arabic language, all the interpretation was done in Kiswahili. This meant that Kiswahili spread to all areas where Islam was preached in East Africa.

The Kiswahili language was used in religious instruction in the mosques together with the Arabic language. Arabs also introduced Islamic schools (Madarasa) where local people were taught Islam and how to read and write, and Kiswahili was used in all Muslim schools. Thus, as Muslim religious activities spread in East Africa, Kiswahili also gained prominence (Mukuthuria, 2009).

Christian missionaries used both Kiswahili and local languages to spread the gospel and in formal education. Although some missionaries, such as the Spiritans, were reluctant to use Kiswahili in their evangelical activities, most of their religious publications were in Kiswahili (Mhina, 1975). The Holy Ghost Fathers' and Universities Mission to Central Africa's (UMCA) missionaries from England used Kiswahili in all of their evangelical activities (Whiteley, 1969). They also built schools where the medium of instruction was Kiswahili (Kiango, 2005).

Another notable contribution from Christian missionaries is the documentation of the Kiswahili language. For example, in 1850, Dr J. C. Krapf published the book *Outline of the Elements of Kiswahili Language with Special Reference to Kinika Dialect*. Also, Bishop Edward Steer wrote *A Handbook of the Swahili Language as Spoken in Zanzibar*, which was published by the London Society in 1894. The missionaries also compiled a Kiswahili English dictionary. This meant that the Kiswahili language could be taught as a second language beyond the East African coast where it was a native language (Kiango, 2005; Mukuthuria, 2009).

Colonial administration

Different colonial regimes also made various contributions to the development of the Kiswahili language. German colonial rule in Tanzania (by then Tanganyika) demonstrates the wider use of Kiswahili as a language of administration and education at the lower levels, aimed at training indigenous administrators (A. A. Mazrui & Zirimu, 1978; Polomé, 1983). When Germany started ruling Tanzania in 1884 they used the German language in their schools. In 1885 they changed to Kiswahili after the policy of using German failed (Kiango, 2005). Kiswahili was thereafter a medium of instruction in primary schools all over the country. To strengthen the use of Kiswahili, German officials and missionaries were required to pass a Kiswahili test (Mhina, 1975) before coming to Tanzania. The German government established schools in Berlin to teach Kiswahili to their officials and missionaries before coming to Tanzania (Rollins, 1984). During the German colonial period, Kiswahili was used from the coast to the interior by traders, craftsmen and low-level officials. This encouraged more people to learn Kiswahili and it spread quickly into the hinterland, especially in education and administration (Rubagumya, 1990).

When the British took over after the First World War, Kiswahili continued to be a medium of instruction in primary schools (years one to four), and a subject in high school. Kiswahili was also used in local administration and local courts (Kiango, 2005). In 1925, the governors of Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda set up the Inter-territorial Swahili Language Committee to select a dialect to be used in education. The committee started its work in January 1930. The main task of the committee was to standardise and develop the Kiswahili language (Whiteley, 1969). These efforts enhanced the status and the position of Kiswahili, particularly in Tanzania, and hence following Independence (1961) it became the national language, with almost all governmental activities conducted in Kiswahili (Kiango, 2005).

Post independence government policies

Kiswahili attained more status after independence, not only as a national language but also as an official language for Parliament in 1962 (Whiteley, 1969). In 1967, it was declared a language of instruction at primary level, years one to eight. This initiative was underpinned by the philosophy whereby using a language that many

people would be able to comprehend would be a weapon in the war against poverty, disease and ignorance (Kiango, 2005). Momanyi (2009) argues that when discussing issues pertaining to people's lives, it is imperative to use language which they can comprehend. Ngũgĩ (1993) argues that it is difficult to think and be creative using a foreign language. It is also interesting to note that even though English is the medium of instruction in secondary schools and at the tertiary level, in Tanzania research demonstrates that although examinations are set in English language, Kiswahili is used in those institutions by teachers to make subjects comprehensible for students (Senkoro, 2005). Students also use Kiswahili in various activities in educational institutions where English is deemed the official language.

Furthermore, Kiswahili serves as a language of communication in trade and organised labour, in that it facilitates communication between workers from different ethnic groups and different geographical locations across the area. Indeed, the language has played an important role in promoting economic and social integration among the people in the East Africa and neighbouring countries (Habwe, 2009). Also, it is the second language used in the East Africa Community after English. It is a working language in the Great Lakes Region and one of the four official languages used in the African Union, the others being English, Arabic and French.

Figure 1: Map of areas where Kiswahili is used in East and Central Africa



Source: <http://swahililanguage.stanford.edu/where%20swahili%20is%20spoken.html>

2.2.3 The status of Kiswahili today

Besides Tanzania, where Kiswahili is recognised and used both in formal and informal contexts and well understood by the vast majority, there is formal recognition of the importance of Kiswahili in other countries, particularly in education. In Kenya for example, following the 1999 Koech Commission, Kiswahili became one of the five compulsory subjects for examination at the end of primary school and one of the three core subjects examined at the end of secondary school. Also, public universities and their respective constituent colleges have established Kiswahili departments (Momanyi, 2009). This acknowledgment reveals the official recognition of the importance of Kiswahili in Kenya. It is also important to note that in Kenya, Kiswahili is spoken by over 80% of the population (Momanyi, 2009). In Uganda, Kiswahili is taught at the university level, particularly at Makerere and Islamic universities.

In the United States, Kiswahili has been taught as a cultural language since 1965 for African Americans (Njubi, 2009). It can be argued that as a “non-ethnic or

tribal”⁴ language, Kiswahili has wide-ranging acceptability and has become a tool of communication for people from different ethnic groups and backgrounds (Moshi, 2006). More specifically, East African people around the world are united by the Kiswahili language. Further, the Kiswahili language has been selected as the language of identity for Africans. Moshi (2006) observes that African refugees in England and America who spent time in East Africa and learnt Kiswahili always select Kiswahili when requesting an interpreter, though they speak other European languages. Similarly, Congolese refugees in New Zealand prefer Kiswahili interpreters over French interpreters, even though some of them are more fluent in French than in Kiswahili⁵.

Kiswahili also flourishes as a popular African language taught in leading academic institutions in Africa, America, Europe and Asia. The main objectives for teaching Kiswahili are linked to development projects supported by Western countries, volunteer services, religious activities, business, and global performance. Moshi (2006) notes that in recent years there has been an increase in university enrolments in Kiswahili, particularly in Europe and Asia. It is thus apparent that Kiswahili is widely used in Tanzania and other countries.

2.3 Kiswahili novels

The status accorded to Kiswahili language by British colonial rulers in the first half of the 19th century, and particularly the standardisation of the language, gave rise to a new genre, Kiswahili fiction. Kiswahili fiction is a relatively new genre in Kiswahili literature compared to Kiswahili poetry, which has been documented from the 17th century (Khamis, 2005). The first novel published in Kiswahili was *Uhuru wa Watumwa (The Freedom of Slaves, 1934)* by James Mbotela. This historical novel, which deals solely with the “theme of slavery and slave trade” (Khamis, 2005, p. 93), is regarded as the forerunner of other Kiswahili novels (A. M. Mazrui, 2007). However, A. M. Mazrui observes that this novel is mainly “colonial in its style, content, and ideology to the extent that it exonerates the West in African enslavement” (A. M. Mazrui, 2007, p. 27).

⁴There is no tribal or ethnic group which can be affiliated to the Kiswahili language (Moshi, 2006; Njubi, 2009; Senkoro, 2005).

⁵Based on my personal observations and inquiries as an interpreter for Congolese refugees in New Zealand.

The development of Kiswahili novels can be seen in the works of the renowned Kiswahili poet and novelist Shaaban Robert. His novels, *Kusadikika (The Believable)*, 1951), *Adili na Nduguze (Adili and his Brother)*, 1952), *Kufikirika (The Imaginable)*, 1967), *Siku ya Watenzi wote (The Day of Judgment to all)*, 1968) and *Utubora mkulima (Utubora a Farmer)*, 1968) mark the progress of the Kiswahili novel both in content and style. These early novels have an educative purpose with the author intentionally employing stereotyped characters to emphasise his message (Mulokozi, 1992; Topan, 2006).

Kiswahili novels in Tanzania in the 1970s to 1980s reflect contemporary issues in society, particularly those related to political matters such as socialism and national unity (Khamisi, 2005; A. M. Mazrui, 2007; Topan, 2006). Novels which propagated socialist ideology and its values, such as Balisidya's *Shida*⁶ (1975); Mhina's *Mtu ni Utu (To be Human is to Act Humanely)*, 1971); and Seme's *Njozi ya Usiku (Night Dream)*, 1973) encouraged people to have hope for the existing system. Others such as Kezilahabi's *Gamba la Nyoka (The Snake's Skin)*, 1979); Liwenga's *Nyota ya Huzuni (The Ominous Star)*, 1981); Mbogo's *Giza Limeingia (Enters Darkness)*, 1980) and Mung'ong'o's *Njozi Iliyopotea (The Lost Hope)*, 1980), re-examined socialist ideology critically and revealed the greedy and corrupt leaders who betrayed Tanzanian society (Khamis, 2005; A. M. Mazrui, 2007; Mulokozi, 1992).

Inspired by the socioeconomic and political changes from the late 1970s to the 1990s, Kiswahili novelists continued to write realistic novels which challenged leaders and individuals who abused the power granted to them by society. This is apparent in novels like Burhani's *Kipimo cha Mizani (Weighing Scales)*, 2004); Chachage's *Makuadi wa Soko Huria (Pimps of the Open Market)*, 2002) and *Almasi za Bandia (Spurious Diamond)*, 1991); M. S. Mohamed's *Nyota ya Rehema (Rehema's Destiny)*, 1976); S. A. Mohamed's *Asali Chungu (Bitter Honey)*, 1980) and *Utengano (Separation)*, 1980) and Ruhumbika's *Miradi Bubu ya Wazalendo (The Dump Projects of Nationalism)*, 1995) and *Janga Sugu la Wazawa (Ongoing Sufferings of the Native)*, 2001).

⁶ Throughout this study Kiswahili titles will be translated, except for titles which indicate a character's name (e.g. Shida).

A new style of writing emerged in the early 1990s, where authors combined elements of realism with “fantastic magical and postmodernist tendencies” (Khamis, 2005, p. 91) to capture societal issues in their totality. Elements of realism are evident in novels which focus on the failure of economic, social and cultural policies (Khamis, 2005) and the social life of Tanzanians (Gromov, 2008). Novels of this era present the society in terms of socioeconomic power relations, leadership integrity, cultural degradation and oppression (Khamis, 2005). However, novelists are more concerned with the “causes and repercussions of the failure” of the economic, social and cultural policies of Tanzanian society (Khamis, 2005, p. 93). The current study aims at expanding Khamis’s view by looking at how Kiswahili novelists construct violence against women.

2.4 Construction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels

Kiswahili language is a compulsory subject in Tanzanian secondary schools⁷ from Form 1 to Form 4 (the first four years in high school), and the Kiswahili novel is taught from year three in high school. In terms of the perspective taken in the current research, understanding the discursive constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels is important as narrative plays an important role in the way society understands and experiences gender-based oppression and discrimination (Diop, 2002; Pratt & Sokoloff, 2005). However, as Andrade (1995) and Priebe (2005) observe, there has been a general silence in approaching gender-based violence as a continental-wide phenomenon in African novels written in African languages such as Kiswahili.

The available research on Kiswahili fiction mainly focuses on the portrayal of women (Mbughuni, 1982; Mlacha, 1993; Ohly, 1990) and seeks to illustrate how different fiction writers negatively portray women. Analysis of the portrayal of women in Kiswahili fiction shows how cultural ideologies shape the status of women in Tanzanian society. Female subordination as a result of cultural values, norms and practices features prominently in Kiswahili fiction (Mbughuni, 1982). Ogundipe-Leslie (1994) identifies cultural values as one of the barriers to the emancipation of African women. Further, Ogundipe-Leslie asserts that

⁷ The system of education in Tanzania involves seven years in primary school, four years in ‘O’ Level secondary school, two years in ‘A’ Level secondary school, then tertiary education.

patriarchal values, norms and practices are fostered through the gender socialisation process, which attributes macho strength and heroism to males, and the traditional roles of wife and mother to females. The patriarchal portrayal of women characters in novels is modelled along cultural ideals which define women as marriage-oriented and searching for men's protection (Selden, 1989; Birkett & Harvey, 1991). The way cultural values oppress women is clearly visible in marital institutions. As Oriaku (1996) notes, married life, both in real life and in fiction, is perhaps the most circumscribing factor in the life of an African woman. I concur with Oriaku, as many women in Africa live in the countryside and are subject to traditional values and customs that emphasise the subordinate position of women within the family. Furthermore, in countries such as Tanzania where a bride-price (a certain number of cows and goats) is paid by the man's family to the woman's family upon her marriage, women are perceived as the property of the husband's family. This practice makes it more complicated for a woman to go back to her original family should her husband become abusive, as her family may be either unable or unwilling to return the bride-price.

Discussing Kiswahili fiction authors, Mbughuni (1982) argues that they have shown only minimal positive characterisations of female characters. She suggests that such a tendency is because many Kiswahili novelists are male. Additionally, Kiswahili novels are influenced by traditional values in their themes (Mbughuni, 1982), within which a woman is expected to be totally subservient and obedient (Chukukere, 1995; Fonchingong, 2006; Ssetuba, 2005) and often acts within the framework of her traditional roles as wife and mother. Similarly, Selden (1989) notes that it is relatively unusual for the central character in a novel written by a man to be a woman. As a consequence of this male-dominated literary tradition (Kumah, 2000), depictions of African women perpetuate androcentric values and practices which emphasise male dominance and female subordination. In Kiswahili novels, female characters are often trivialised to varying degrees, and they are depicted as silent and submissive in nature, remaining absent from the public sphere. Accordingly, Ogundipe-Leslie (1994) emphasises that the status of women and the nature of their depiction within the African literary tradition are certainly issues of great relevance.

Mlacha (1993) is in consensus with Mbughuni (1982). He contends that many Kiswahili literati have not given women characters a positive image. Compared to the mother, the fictional father is there to imbue tension and in some cases torture the children and mother. As a result, women stay in constant fear, suffering and frustration and are tormented in their own homes. The negative portrayal of the female persona in African literature and Kiswahili fiction in particular is rooted in gender inequality, which has reduced women to mere objects of voyeuristic attention, only portrayed through stereotypes (Chukukere, 1995; Swilla, 2000). As Kolawole (1997) notes, by omission or commission, most male writers in the early phase of African literature encouraged the marginalisation of women. In this context, female characters are still marginal to the plot of the fiction.

The depiction of women as sexual objects in Kiswahili fiction was also commented on by Swilla (2000). In her findings she notes that the authors of many Kiswahili fictional stories depict a woman as a person whose success depends on her sexuality, and who continually strives to attract men who can best cater to her needs, whether through marriage or love affairs. Swilla (2000) also comments that the representation of women as economically dependent on men and as sexual objects shows a lack of recognition of women's contribution in Tanzanian society. It trivialises the progress women have made and continue to make in modern Tanzania. As Swilla (2000) notes, women in Tanzania provide household care and most of the labour in agriculture. Although the percentage of women within professional sectors is smaller than that of men, Tanzanian women are chief executive officers within both the public and private sectors, cabinet ministers, doctors, judges, professors and directors, to name only a few. The absence in fictional stories of such heroines or of women holding post-secondary qualifications is therefore a "misrepresentation of reality" (Swilla, 2000, p. 167).

Equally, Selden (1989) suggests that the history of literature has been dominated by patriarchal authority, which has demeaned women in various ways. This underlying theme is also highlighted by Bertoncini (1996), from a different perspective, which focuses on thematic qualities. She notes that women characters have often been raped as young girls, and this traumatic event is depicted as leaving a mark on them for their whole life. That is, when these girls

marry, they experience even more violent actions from their partners and from their society, which does not give them a chance at equality either. Bertoncini also states that the prostitute is a common character in Kiswahili literature. Her study findings concur with Senkoro (1982), who argues that the African literary tradition is characterised by a prostitution trope, one that is certainly exemplary of the debasement African women suffer at the hands of male authors.

These studies collectively reveal that Kiswahili fiction discourses provide subject positions for women which are relatively passive and which prescribe compliance with the dominant patriarchal system within the wider society. Kiswahili fiction is replete with discourses that affirm male dominance and inadequately plead the case of women (Swilla, 2000). Further, Kiswahili fiction studies so far have focused mainly on the portrayal of women (Mbughuni, 1982; Mlacha 1993; Ohly, 1990; Swilla, 2000), showing how women are stereotypically depicted in domestic roles and as dependent on men (Swilla, 2000).

However, none of these studies specifically focus on violence against women. Rather, they have only highlighted that gender-based violence is a predominant theme in Kiswahili novels (Bertoncini, 1996; Mlacha, 1993). Understanding the discursive constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels and how these textual constructions link to social and cultural practices, I believe, may contribute to ongoing efforts to end violence against women in Tanzanian society.

In addition, none of these studies has examined the possible effects of textual constructions of violence against women in Kiswahili novels on young readers, who are often required to read them in the course of their studies. In this study, I argue that understanding young readers' views on the textual representations of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels would contribute to understanding how dominant discourses are maintained in Tanzanian society and the potential effects they may have on young readers. In this respect, I propose that understanding the discursive construction of gender-based violence in the novels and young readers' views would be useful in developing programmes aimed at behavioural and attitudinal change towards violence against women in Tanzanian society.

2.5 Gender-based violence in Tanzania

In Tanzania, gender-based violence was long considered to be a private matter and a taboo subject; the victims typically suffered in silence while the perpetrators went free (Johanessen, 2002; TAMWA, 1993, 1994). However, in the last decade, in response to liberalisation and commercialisation of the media and increasing pressure from feminist groups (D. Green, 1999; TAMWA, 1994), stories about violence against women have become a daily feature in the Tanzanian press (McCloskey et al., 2005) and formal surveys on violence against women have been conducted. The existence of official women's organisations and increasing attention from NGOs have increased public awareness of violence against women as a social and economic problem in Tanzania (D. Green, 1999; Mama, 2001). The Tanzanian Media Women's Association (TAMWA), an NGO formed in 1986, now publishes a magazine called *Sauti ya Siti (Women's Voice)*, which deals with a variety of women's rights issues. In 1990, TAMWA published a pamphlet on *Ukatili dhidi ya Wanawake (Cruelty against Women)*. The pamphlet illustrated the degree to which Tanzanian women perceive men's violence to be normal and women's protests to be shameful or pointless. Further, in 1991, TAMWA opened Tanzania's first crisis centre which deals with rape, sexual harassment and gender-based violence. This event heralded a new era for women in Tanzania, giving them opportunities to discuss issues like rape, domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence. In addition, Tanzanian women now have a place to go to and seek help, as the centre also offers legal and medical advice and counselling services (TAMWA, 1993).

In 1992, *Sauti ya Siti* published another pamphlet on violence against women. Among other matters, the pamphlet revealed how female students at the University of Dar es Salaam's main campus were being sexually harassed by a group of male students known as "Mzee Punch", which led to one female student committing suicide in 1990. This publication revealed to the Tanzanian public that sexual harassment was a serious problem at the university. Mzee Punch was a group that specialised in producing pornographic wall graffiti about selected female university students. The aim was to make female students give in to the sexual demands of Mzee Punch members, or to make successful female students perform badly in their studies (TAMWA, 1994). In terms of its modus operandi,

this group first singled out a female student. Then, they researched her previous life: where she came from, which school she had attended, her family situation and details about her love life. Later, this information, always distorted and some of it totally invented, would be featured on huge placards on a high wall where it could be read but not taken down. Alongside this type of public ridicule, Mzee Punch also threatened any other female student walking with the targeted female student and placed obscene messages and threats on the door of the room of their target. Efforts by women leaders and women's groups to have Mzee Punch banned were unsuccessful until the group targeted government leaders, including the second President of the Republic of Tanzania, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, and other top government leaders including Ministers. Only then was Mzee Punch officially banned (TAMWA, 1994).

To a large extent, TAMWA has been instrumental in bringing the issue of gender-based violence to the public and so far has remained at the forefront of trying to get information to women regarding their rights, through its magazine, radio programmes, brochures and educational materials. However, despite its efforts, gender-based violence remains a major problem in Tanzania. A government-sponsored survey of violence against women conducted by TAMWA in 1992 reported that 90 percent of the 300 women and schoolgirls interviewed had experienced sexual harassment (TAMWA, 1994, p. 79). In this study, TAMWA asserts that sexual harassment is a serious problem for employed women. Ninety percent of the 200 women interviewed who worked outside the home claimed that sexual harassment threatened their jobs and their economic survival. Some of the women interviewed argued that they were bypassed for promotion because they did not respond to sexual propositions from male colleagues and bosses. Further, among the 50 housewives surveyed, all admitted to being sexually harassed in the streets (TAMWA, 1994, p. 80). However, since the method used to obtain the sample for the study is not described, it is difficult to generalise these results to the wider population.

Muganyizi, Kilewo and Moshiro (2004) conducted a cross-sectional household survey in the Dar es Salaam region to establish the magnitude of rape against women, the most common perpetrators, and patterns of disclosure of rape. A total of 1,004 women between 12 and 80 years of age were interviewed. In their study,

the researchers note that 198 of these women had been raped in the past, with 142 reporting that the rape had occurred within the past two years. Also, the study notes that of these 142 recent victims, 129 (90.8%) were young women between 12 and 30 years of age at the time they were interviewed (Muganyizi et al., 2004, p. 140).

With regard to disclosure of rape events, Muganyizi et al. (2004) note that more women disclosed rape events to other people (33.8%) than to police or other legal organisations (10.1%) (p. 140). However, the closer the perpetrator was socially to the victim, the lower the frequency of disclosure to either legal organisations or other people. The majority of victims did not report the rape, to avoid shame and publicity. In this study they also note that 92 percent of the perpetrators were men known to the victims, and over 83 percent of the perpetrators were either closely related to the victim or a family member (Muganyizi et al., 2004, p. 144).

Lary, Maman, Katebalila, McCauley, and Mbwambo (2004) carried out in-depth interviews with 40 men and 20 women between 16 and 24 years old to explore the relationship between infidelity and violence. In this study, Lary et al. (2004) illustrate how young men used violence when they suspected their female partner of infidelity or when their female partners asked them (men) about their own sexual infidelities. All of the male participants in the study who condoned violence or reported violence in their relationships said that infidelity justified the use of violence against women. Furthermore, these young men considered it appropriate to force a partner to have sex. Interestingly, Lary et al. (2004) note that young men who had not yet initiated a sexual relationship felt that the use of violence and forced sex could not be justified by men. This suggests that innovative programmes for young people that challenge norms regarding violence against women may be important and potentially effective in combating gender-based violence in Tanzanian society.

On the issue of domestic violence, McCloskey, Williams and Larsen (2005) conducted a household survey of gender inequality and intimate partner violence in the urban district of Moshi. 1,444 women aged between 20 and 44 years old were interviewed to assess the prevalence of intimate partner violence both during their lifetime and during the past twelve months. McCloskey et al. note that

during the 12 months prior to their survey, 21 percent of the interviewed women had been physically and/or sexually attacked or threatened with violence by their partners. Further, they assert that 26 percent of women interviewed had experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lives (McCloskey et al., 2005, p. 127).

These researchers also demonstrate how the power imbalance in Tanzanian families contributes to gender-based violence. They identify three “domains” that reveal power inequality in the relationship: education, type of marriage, and women’s fertility. McCloskey et al. argue that less educated and unemployed women experience more physical violence than educated and employed women, who are valued by their husbands and extended families and are able to leave a relationship should their husband become abusive. Thus, their study is consistent with Maman et al. (2001) who assert that women with higher education are less likely to be abused by their partners. In terms of the type of marriage, they note that men in relationships of either “explicitly polygamous or implicitly polygamous” are more likely to be violent against their partners than men in monogamous relationships (McCloskey et al., 2005, p. 128). Further, they assert that men whose financial contribution in a family is low are more abusive than men who contribute more to the family. They found that women with no children experienced more partner violence in their marriage than those who have children. In Tanzania, children are seen as the main purpose of marriage and those women who do not have children in their marriages are stigmatised and their value as wives declines (McCloskey et al., 2005). Paradoxically, they note that women who had had more than five children also experienced more partner violence than those who had fewer children. This study suggests that the preference for smaller families is developing in urban areas, including Moshi.

Another study on intimate partner violence was conducted by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2006) in two regions: Dar es Salaam and Mbeya. The study involved individual interviews with 1,820 women in Dar es Salaam and 1,450 women in Mbeya aged between 15 and 49 years old. In this study, 41 percent of women interviewed in Dar es Salaam and 56 percent of women interviewed in Mbeya had experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of their current partners. Further, the study revealed that 33 percent of

women interviewed in Dar es Salaam and 47 percent of women interviewed in Mbeya experienced physical violence, while 23 percent of women interviewed in Dar es Salaam and 31 percent of women interviewed in Mbeya had experienced sexual violence. Additionally, the study asserted that 17 percent of women interviewed in Dar es Salaam and 25 percent of women interviewed in Mbeya had experienced severe physical violence from their partner. Of the women who experienced severe violence, 15 percent of injured women in Dar es Salaam and 23 percent of injured women in Mbeya had lost consciousness at least once as a result of the beating (WHO, 2006).

The WHO (2006) study also reported that 29 percent of women in Dar es Salaam and 30 percent of women in Mbeya who had experienced physical violence had told no one about the violence before the study interview. Also, in both locations about 60 percent of all women who had experienced physical partner violence had never gone for help to any formal services or any person in a position of authority. Further, the study emphasised that 56 percent of women interviewed in Dar es Salaam and 48 percent of women interviewed in Mbeya did not seek help because they thought the violence they experienced was normal.

Research also shows that there is an association between a history of violence and HIV serostatus among women younger than 30 years of age (Maman et al., 2000). Tanzania is one of the Sub-Saharan African countries most affected by HIV. It is estimated that nationally, 17 percent of females and 8 percent of males aged between 15 – 19 years are HIV positive (Rumbold, 2008). Researchers have hypothesised several ways in which the epidemics of HIV and violence overlap in the context of women's lives. First, coercive sexual intercourse may directly increase women's risk of HIV through physiological trauma (Choi, Binson, Andelson, & Catania, 1998). Second, violence and threats of violence may limit women's ability to negotiate safe sexual behaviours (Gupta & Weiss, 1993; Wingood & DiClemente, 1997). Third, women who have been sexually abused in childhood may participate in more sexual risk-taking behaviour as adolescents or adults, thereby increasing their risk of HIV infection (Handwerker, 1993).

A study by Maman, Mbwambo, Hogan, Kilonzo, Sweat, and Weiss (2001) on HIV and partner violence was conducted in Dar es Salaam at the Muhimbili

Health Information Center (MHIC) clinic from January to December 1999. The MHIC is a free-standing voluntary HIV counselling and testing clinic on the grounds of the Muhimbili Medical Center (MMC), the national referral hospital and the largest public hospital in the country. The data collection of this study occurred in two phases. In phase one, in-depth interviews were conducted with 62 participants who were over the age of 18, either as individuals (men and women) or couples. The participants included 15 women (2 HIV-negative, 13 HIV-positive), 17 men (11 HIV-negative, 6 HIV-positive), and 15 couples. Among the couples there were 12 concordant HIV-negative couples, 1 concordant HIV-positive couple, and 2 discordant couples (1 HIV-positive man and HIV-negative woman; 1 HIV-negative man and HIV-positive woman) (Maman et al., 2001, p. 12).

One of the goals of this study was to understand how gender-based violence is defined in the Tanzanian context (Maman et al., 2001). As Maman et al. (2000) have argued, the main limitation of earlier studies on gender-based violence concerns the imprecise and inconsistent measurement of physical, sexual and psychological violence. Thus, Maman et al. (2001) note that variations in “definitions, study methods, time frames of assessment and sampling frames all contribute to the difficulty in understanding the scope and severity of violence against women” (p. 9). Hence, in the first phase of their study participants were asked “to define violence in Kiswahili, to identify situations in which violence may be justified, to describe how violence is used by people in the community, and to relate their personal experiences with violence in intimate partnerships” (Maman et al., 2001, p. 9). In the second phase of data collection only women participated. Two hundred and forty five women were interviewed three months after receiving their HIV test results. The median age of these women was 30 years. While 46.4 percent of interviewed women were married, 36.4 percent were in relationships but were neither married nor living with their partners. In this study 29.8 percent of the 245 women interviewed were HIV-positive. Maman et al. (2001) note that the “number of physically abusive partners for HIV-positive women was higher than that for the HIV-negative women” (Maman et al., 2001, p. 24).

In terms of this study's findings, both male and female informants described violence against women as a way to "correct" or "educate" women. In this study, some male participants thought that violence that will not leave a physical mark on a woman was normal. One participant, for example, remarked: "I punished by beating with a cane and like three or four slaps. What I know is small, small punishments like these are normal. It is a must that I remain firm as father of the family. I am the head of the household" (p. 23). Further, Maman et al. (2001) note that some women agreed that if a woman disobeyed her partner, punishment would be justified (29.4%). A small number of women (21.7) agreed that if a woman were unfaithful to her partner, punishing her would be acceptable (p. 23). This observation concurs with that of Lary et al. (2004), who note that partner infidelity is widely seen as justifying gender-based violence. A similar minority of women interviewed (17.6%) agreed that punishment was justified if a woman refused to have sexual relations with her partner, and 40.4 percent reported that a woman was not justified in refusing her partner sex, even after he had beaten her. Furthermore, 16.8 percent of women believed that a woman's concern about contracting HIV was not a valid justification for refusing sex (p. 23).

In terms of lifetime violence by an intimate partner, the study disclosed that 46.5 percent of the interviewed women had been verbally abused by their partners, 38.5 percent had been physically abused and 16.7 percent had been abused sexually. Maman et al. (2001) noted that women who are physically abused by their partners are more likely to tell other people about the violence (77.7%), compared with 58.5 percent of those experiencing verbal abuse and only 35.7 percent of those experiencing sexual abuse (Maman et al., 2001, p. 24).

When assessing gender-based violence with the current partner, this study noted that the most common forms of physical violence reported by women included slapping (23.3%), twisting an arm (16.7%), grabbing (12.2%), punching (11.4%), kicking (9.8%), slamming against a wall (8.6%), and choking (3.9%). Further, 11.4 percent of women reported at least one physically violent event with a current partner in the last three months since getting tested for HIV. More than a quarter of all women surveyed (27.2%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "Violence is a major problem in my life". Further, the study noted that 10.7 percent of the women reported that they had been injured once as a result of

the violence, and 11.7 percent reported that they had sustained injuries two or more times as a result of the violence. Of the women who sustained an injury, 63.3 percent saw a health care provider as a result of the injury and 23.3 percent said that they thought they should have seen a health care provider because of the injury but did not. The injuries that were sustained included bruises (16%); continuing pain (5.3%); head injuries, internal injuries, or permanent disfigurement (4.9 percent); and severe bruises, broken bones, or broken teeth (2.9%) (Maman et al., 2001, p. 26).

According to this study, women whose partners have had other sexual partners experienced five times more physical violence than women whose partners have not had other sexual partners. This result concurs with McCloskey et al. (2005), who divulged how polygamous marriages are correlated with gender-based violence in marriage. Moreover, they reveal a relationship between age and violence in intimate partnerships. They argue that women whose partners were 6-15 years older experienced more violence than women who were either older than their partners or whose partners were 1-5 years or 16-23 years older than themselves (Maman et al., 2001, p. 27).

Maman et al. (2001) suggest that three main actions are required in order to intervene in gender-based violence and against HIV infection. First, programmes have to be set up which will focus on raising awareness about violence against women, and also ways have to be found to intervene in gender-based violence in both public and private spheres. Second, HIV counsellors should be trained in how to ask clients for information about gender-based violence between intimate partners, since at the time of the study the HIV counsellors were not asking their clients about experiences with partner violence. Third, community-based research should be conducted to obtain population-based estimates of violence against women in Tanzania.

An assessment study by Betron (2008), which focused on policies, services and intervention programmes on gender-based violence, gives a general picture of the situation of violence against women in Tanzanian society. The study was conducted in two cities, Dodoma and Dar es Salaam, and Kibaha town (peri-urban in Pwani region). The study interviewed 37 representatives from government

offices, public services and non-governmental organisations who work with the survivors of violence against women. The study also conducted five focus group discussions with adolescent boys at the Mikumi Youth Care (MYC)⁸ in Dar es Salaam, adolescent girls at the MYC in Dar es Salaam, women who have been supported by the Tanzania Women Lawyer's Association (TAWLA)⁹ in Dar es Salaam, women who have been supported by Women Wake Up (WOWAP)¹⁰ in Dodoma, and male community leaders in Kibaha town.

Data collection in this study occurred in two phases. In 2005, the study conducted 28 interviews and five focus group discussions. In 2008, the study conducted interviews with 18 participants who had been identified in the first phase (2005) as the key players in addressing the issue of gender-based violence in Dar es Salaam. In both phases the interviews aimed at ascertaining attitudes towards violence against women at the institutional level, the resources and support available, and prevention programmes implemented. The focus group discussions aimed at getting views from individuals about the effects of gender-based violence and support available for the survivors (Betron, 2008).

In this study, most participants in the focus group discussions asserted that intimate partner violence is common and accepted by the community as a means of resolving family conflict. Participants also noted that rape is viewed as acceptable behaviour for boys and men. Reasons given by both men and women participants in the focus group discussions to justify rape include men's lack of money to persuade women to have sex, women's acceptance of gifts from men, and alcohol (Betron, 2008).

In terms of "harmful traditional practices", this study noted that most girls are forced to marry at younger ages because their parents are more interested in the money they will get from the bride price than they are in the wellbeing of their daughters. Furthermore, the study notes that women's lack of property and inheritance rights are other practices which put women at risk of gender-based

⁸ MYC is a non-governmental organisation which promotes behavioural change against HIV/AIDS and drug abuse among youth.

⁹ TAWLA is the organisation of Tanzania women lawyers which educates women and children about their rights and assists them with legal problems.

¹⁰ Women Wake Up (WOWAP) is a non-governmental organization which works to promote a positive social attitude towards women and children.

violence in Tanzanian society. When assessing available services for the victims of gender-based violence, the study noted that most of the participants in group discussions were not aware of some of the existing services available, such as legal aid and health care. Additionally, Betron (2008) notes that at the time of this study, there were only two established shelters for the victims of violence against women - the Young Women's Christian Association and the House of Peace - and both were in Dar es Salaam city.

At the institutional level, such as within the health sector, Betron's study notes that there are no clear guidelines for health providers to address the issue of gender-based violence. All doctors interviewed in this study said that when they attend a woman injured by gender-based violence they mostly focus on the physical injuries. In addition, this study notes that survivors suffer ongoing psychological effects because there are no psychological services for survivors due to a shortage of psychologists in the country. At the time of this study, the researcher noted that there was no university training programme for psychologists and psychiatrists in Tanzania.

While there is legal protection against rape and female genital mutilation in Tanzania, this study noted that there is no specific law against domestic violence. Betron (2008) argues that the lack of specific laws and courts such as family court to address domestic violence increases the possibility of the survivor becoming more at risk of further violence. The lack of sufficiently trained police officers and judges familiar with how to address gender-based violence also increases the chances of survivors experiencing more violence.

However, this study notes some progress in the legal system with the establishment of gender units at police stations. A network of female police officers, the Tanzania Police Female Network (TPFNet), has led the effort to establish these gender units, which work with survivors of violence against women. TPFNet, in collaboration with the Women's Legal Aid Center (WLAC) and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), have trained 180 police officers in Dar es Salaam on how to address gender-based violence. The study also identifies on-going training for different providers on how to respond to violence against women. For example, at the time of this study, WLAC was

training community workers on women's rights and developing training materials detailing the roles of health providers, police and local government leaders in the issue of violence against women.

In terms of programmes dealing with gender-based violence, Betron (2008) notes several initiatives aimed at awareness raising and behavioural change in the Tanzanian community. One programme from the Mennonite Church works with the perpetrators of violence against women to help these men change their violent behaviour. Kivulini, an agency in Mwanza region, is involved in awareness raising in the community on the issue of gender-based violence through debates, community dialogues and festivals. Another initiative is led by Women Wake Up (WOWAP). This organisation employs different means, such as poetry, music, dance, debate and discussion, to advocate behavioural change in relation to violence against women in the community. However, Betron's study did not find any intervention programmes which address the issue of gender-based violence occurring within schools in the region where the study was conducted. This lack of intervention programmes is surprising, as gender-based violence has emerged as a widespread and serious phenomenon within schools in "developing" countries, including Tanzania.

Sexual violence and unequal sexual relationships between young school girls and older men, including teachers, are the most obvious manifestations of gender-based violence in schools in Tanzania (Mgalla, Schapink, & Boerma, 1998; Plummer et al., 2007a). For example, a study by Mgalla et al. (1998) on protecting school girls against sexual exploitation (conducted in 62 primary schools in the Mwanza region) showed that gender-based violence is common in primary schools. The study involved 40 schools with guardian teachers¹¹ and 22 schools with no guardian teachers. In this study a random sample of 1,219 school girls in the highest three classes were interviewed; 401 girls were in standard five (fifth year in primary school), 520 girls were in standard six (sixth year in primary school), and 298 girls were in standard seven (seventh year in primary school).

¹¹ A guardian is a female teacher whose role is to help school girls in cases of sexual violence or sexual harassment and act as a counselor on sexual health problems.

The girls' ages ranged between 13 and 19¹², with a mean of 15 years. Forty-three guardians, forty-four female teachers (in schools with no guardians), and sixty-two head teachers were also interviewed in the study to examine sexual behaviour problems and cases of sexual exploitation of girls in schools. In terms of the key findings, 75 percent of the respondents (1,219 girls) reported that they had been harassed by school boys, followed by adult men (50%) and by teachers (9%). Further, Mgalla et al. (1998) note that sexual violence and sexual harassment had been reported as occurring in all 62 of the schools participating in the study. Also, 75 percent of the 43 guardians interviewed reported that they had been contacted by school girls. The main purpose was to report sexual harassment: the most noted instances were by village men (58%), school boys (56%) and by teachers (16%) (pp. 22 – 23).

Rape was another problem reported in this study by school girls, teachers and guardians. Fourteen of the 1219 girls interviewed said they had been raped (2.6%) (Mgalla et al., 1998, p. 23). Cases of rape were brought to the attention of the guardians or teachers, who often took the case to the school board, the courts, or sometimes to the district education authority. However, the punishment was often minor. Mgalla et al. (1998) assert that male teachers used force and/or their position of authority to get girls to have sex. The teacher would offer a girl extra marks as an inducement but if the girl refused to have sex, he would give her poor marks or subject her to corporal punishment.

When assessing the level of disclosure of sexual harassment, girls in schools with no guardian said that they would not consult a female teacher if sexually harassed by the male teachers. This is in line with Muganyizi et al.'s (2004) finding that the closer the perpetrator of sexual violence is to the victim, the lesser the likelihood of disclosure to other people. However, 52 percent of girls in schools with guardians said that they would consult a guardian in the case of sexual harassment by a teacher (Mgalla et al., 1998, p. 26). In addition, Mgalla et al. (1998) stress that the guardian programme in schools created a link between guardian teachers, parents, school committees and the local authorities to combat sexual violence and sexual harassment in schools. They also note that reports of

¹² The official age for starting primary school is seven years of age: however, it is estimated that only 2.7 percent start at seven years old. Most of the pupils start at the age of nine (Ministry of Education and Vocational, 2007).

sexual abuse and harassment of school girls by male teachers have become less hidden in schools with the guardian programme. They recommend that a guardian programme be introduced to other schools, since only a few primary schools in Mwanza region had the programme at the time of their study. Mgalla et al. (1998) propose that peer education programmes on violence against girls and women in schools would be an important intervention in addressing gender-based violence in schools.

A study by Plummer et al. (2007a) on adolescents' sexual health in primary schools in Mwanza region revealed that sexual violence was common in all the schools that participated in the study. The study employed participant observation and informal interviews with pupils, recent school leavers, teachers and parents to gather their views and experiences of sexual health programmes in rural primary schools. The study was carried out over three years, from 1999 to 2002. The observations and informal interviews were conducted in nine villages and in each village one school was selected for the study. The nine villages involved in the study were of two types: those with an adolescent sexual reproductive health (ASRP) programme¹³ (the intervention villages), and those without the ASRP programme for comparison. Four intervention villages and five comparison villages were selected respectively. However, the study focused more on four villages, two intervention villages and two comparison villages. In these villages, observations and informal interviews were conducted over seven weeks per year for the three years. The visits for the other five villages ranged from one visit to seven visits over the entire period of the study.

This study notes that sexual violence was a common problem in the schools, with the main perpetrators being teachers. In eight schools out of nine there were incidents where teachers had a sexual relationship with a pupil. Four schools reported teachers who impregnated school girls, three schools reported male teachers who forced school girls to have sex, and three schools reported teachers who were caught having sex with school girls. The study noted that some of these cases were discussed in the community and teachers were transferred to another school, fined or suspended. This study's findings are thus consistent with those of

¹³ The ASRP programme was implemented in 20 communities (10 interventions and 10 comparisons) in four districts in Mwanza region from 1998-2002 and involved 9,645 primary school pupils who were born in 1984 or earlier.

Mgalla et al. (1998), who revealed that teachers who abuse school girls continue to do so as they are hardly ever punished.

According to this study, the community response to sexual violence against girls in schools is very limited. It was revealed that a number of parents collaborated with school teachers in getting money from the man who impregnated a school girl (if the perpetrator was not a teacher). In all nine villages, there were incidents where a perpetrator paid both the girl's family and the school teachers to prevent his being held accountable for having sex with a school girl. In these cases they removed the girls' names from the school records and did not report the pregnancies to the authorities. The study also reported that if the abuser or his family (in the case of a young man) had a good relationship with the school teachers, the amount of money he paid to the school teachers was low, or sometimes he did not have to pay. Plummer et al. (2007a) note that normally the community does not get involved in preventing such behaviours. Among the reasons cited in this study are lack of trust in the legal system and corruption. The issue of corruption is widespread in the legal system and particularly in relation to violence against women (Betron, 2008), and this contributes to women and girls enduring more violence and not having their rights protected even when their cases are taken to the legal institution. For example, out of all the reported cases of sexual violence against school girls by teachers, only one case was taken to court. This case involved a Standard Five school girl (year five) and the head teacher. However, the girl and her family endured more victimisation, as the researcher reports:

The girl's parents asked the head teacher if he was responsible and what he was ready to offer them. ... He denied responsibility. The parents sold one cow and took the case to court in the village. The head teacher bribed the magistrate, who judged unfairly. ... The parents sold another cow to take the case to a higher court. ... The head teacher was found guilty and moved away from the village. (Plummer et al., 2007a, p. 495)

Other research has highlighted the incidence of violence perpetrated by school boys against school girls. For example, Wubs et al. (2009) conducted a study on dating violence among school students in Tanzania and South Africa. This study demonstrated that violence is common among adolescents. Participants for this study were 3,796 students from Cape Town (South Africa), 2,616 students from

Mankweng (South Africa), and 567 students from Dar es Salaam (Tanzania). The study included only students who were in a relationship or previously involved in a relationship at the time of the research. The students were aged between 10-18 and at each school were at a different level of study. The data in the three sites were analysed separately to minimise the complexity of the interpretation.

In terms of their involvement in perpetrating violence against women, this study reveals that male participants in Dar es Salaam had a higher level of involvement in violence (61.3%) compared with males in Cape Town (41.1%) and Mankweng (36.6%). Involvement in perpetrating violence in this study meant that a participant responded affirmatively to one of the four items, which were: 1) had punched or hit, 2) threatened to use a knife or other weapon, 3) used a knife or other weapon, and 4) forced anyone to have sex when they did not want to. In this study, while 57.1 percent of the male participants in Dar es Salaam responded affirmatively to one item on perpetration, 32.6 percent responded to two or three items and 9.65 percent responded to four items.

The social and economic status of the parents of participants in this study was linked with violence. Higher status of the parents was linked to an increase in the perpetration of violence by boys, while lower status of the parents was linked to an increase in the victimisation in girls. Furthermore, Wubs et al. (2009) note that the level of education of the mother of the participants in Dar es Salaam was associated with violence. In particular, participants in the sample whose mother had a university education were more involved in perpetrating violence. This is consistent with Jewkes et al.'s (2006) study on rape perpetration by young, rural South Africans, which found that the higher the education of the mother, the greater the chances of their sons perpetrating rape. Jewkes et al.'s study suggests that maternal education indicates higher socio-economic status. This is similar to Duvvury, Nayak, and Allendorf's (2002) findings that men with higher socio-economic status in India were more likely to perpetrate sexual violence than those with low socio-economic status.

Mack (2009) extended the research on gender-based violence by conducting a survey in two districts, Temeke and Kinondoni (in the Dar es Salaam region), to establish the challenges secondary school girls face as they use public transport in

getting to and from school. In Dar es Salaam, the demand for local public transport, known as *daladala*, is very high and drivers and conductors are reluctant to let students board because they pay lower bus fares. Drivers' and conductors' pay in *daladala* is not fixed, but depends on how much money they make in fares, therefore, they prefer to have adult passengers (Mack, 2009). The participants in this study were 659 girls from different day schools in Temeke and Kinondoni districts. Among the goals of this study was to find out the types and prevalence of gender-based violence secondary school girls encounter as they get to and from school. In terms of the key findings, the study noted that 66 percent of the participants reported being harassed and mistreated by the *daladala* drivers and/or conductors as they tried to board the buses. In terms of types of violence they experienced, 46 percent of the girls surveyed had experienced physical violence, by being hit and pushed. Fifteen percent had experienced sexual violence, particularly punching and/or grabbing the breast. Verbal abuse was the most common type of violence reported by the girls in this study. It included name-calling, humiliation and sexist rhetoric. The study notes that violence against girls in the transport sector affects girls' self esteem, health, and their motivation to continue with their studies. Mack (2009) asserts that girls are more affected by gender-based violence in *daladala* because they are vulnerable and there is no community support to prevent the violence. She asserts that the community acceptance of violence directed towards girls encourages drivers and conductors to continue abusing girls. Normally, passengers in *daladala* do not get involved when a driver or a conductor abuses a student. This study suggests that community awareness about the effects and consequences of gender-based violence would motivate people to take action rather than remain passive when drivers and conductors abuse girls.

Generally, these studies show that women experience different forms of violence in their homes, work places, in the streets, and in learning institutions. They have been battered, sexually abused and psychologically injured, often by persons whom they know. Yet, this maltreatment has gone largely unpunished, unremarked upon, and sometimes has been tacitly ignored (Garcia-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise, & Watts, 2006; Mama, 2001; United Nation, 1989). Furthermore, many of these studies document the prevalence of violence against women in Tanzanian society (Mack, 2009; Muganyizi et al., 2004; Plummer, et

al., 2007a; TAMWA, 1993, 1994; WHO, 2006; Wubs, et al., 2009) but often not the beliefs and attitudes that sustain violence against women. In relation to the current research, little is known about the ways literary works such as Kiswahili novels shape the way readers understand and respond to violence against women in Tanzanian society. Therefore, this research aims to find out young readers' views on the depiction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels.

A significant number of studies on violence against women in Tanzania suggest that programmes aimed at awareness raising would contribute to the effort to end violence against women (see for example Betron, 2008; Lary, et al., 2004; Maman et al., 2001). According to Hromek and Walsh (2012), the school environment is the ideal context where young people can safely learn about respectful behaviour and it is a site in which prevention education programmes can be introduced and reinforced. Similarly, Fortune (1991) and Sundermann et al. (1995) suggest that educational approaches that aim at changing attitudes and beliefs that maintain violence against women in society will have a more lasting impact. Hence, the current study seeks to identify ways of using Kiswahili novels in intervention programmes for awareness raising in relation to violence against women in Tanzanian society.

2.6 Novels as an instrument of behavioural change

There is a substantial body of research focusing on the effect of indirect exposure to violence against women. Many of those studies draw attention to mass media and its effects on young people (Gentile & Anderson, 2006; Haridakis, 2006; Kunkel & Zwarun, 2006; Signorelli, 2006; Slater, Henry, Swaim, & Anderson, 2003; Wilson & Martins, 2006).

However, research on the effects of media has been criticised for two main reasons (Shrum, 1998, 2009). First, after many years of research there is no evidence of a causal relationship between media consumption and changes in people's behaviour (Freedman, 1984; Gauntlett, 1998). The second criticism centres on explanation mechanisms (Shrum, 2009). It is claimed that researchers of media effects have mainly focused on media information and its outcome with little consideration of how other factors have contributed to violence (Shrum, 2009).

Media effects researchers have responded to this criticism in different ways. According to Ruddock (2011), some researchers have used “cultivation analysis” to explain the influence of mass media effects on an individual’s behaviour. Ruddock describes cultivation analysis as a form of research that “focuses on systematic media power while remaining sensitive to the importance of reviewing why questions about media influence are asked and how we seek answers to them” (Ruddock, 2011, p. 341). Likewise, Gerbner (1998) and Morgan (2009) assert that cultivation analysts focus on the effects of long term exposure to repetitive patterns of stories, images and messages. In this respect, cultivation researchers pay attention to media institutions, the messages they produce, and the assumptions they cultivate (Morgan, 2009).

Elaborating further on media effects, Shrum (2009) contends that the cognitive processes model illustrates the link between the stimulus (mass media consumption) and the response (beliefs). The cognitive processes model builds on social cognition research that relates the types of information people use in the process of constructing their perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs (Shrum, 1998). Shrum (1998) argues that audiences accumulate information from the mass media and use this information to construct judgments about a particular reality in the social world. He suggests that two main principles underlie cognitive processes - sufficiency and accessibility. The sufficiency principle suggests that when people construct judgments they retrieve only a small subset of the information available. The accessibility principle states that the information that is most accessible will be used for the judgment (Shrum, 2009). He also notes that other factors, such as frequency, vividness, and recency of construct activation, may influence the way information is retrieved and used in making judgments in the social world (Shrum, 2009).

From a different angle, B. O’Neill (2011) maintains that effect researchers have provided “critical reflection on the relations of media and power in society and how research interests served to unwittingly support the needs of industry rather than the public interest” (B. O’Neill, 2011, p. 335). He further argues that media effects research findings are important in providing knowledge about mass media and its potential impact on society.

Despite the significance of media effects studies, research focusing on the role of violence in novels aimed at young readers is limited (Franzak & Noll, 2006). According to Isaacs (2003), violence against women is common in young adults' novels. He notes that explicit details of violence against women that have been condemned in films and video games dominate young adult novels through vivid word pictures. He argues that readers construct the "vision of reality from what they have seen, heard or read even more than from personal experience" (Isaacs, 2003, p. 51).

According to M. C. Green and Brock (2000), story readers may become absorbed in a story and disinclined to scrutinise information presented therein, especially if the reader is familiar with the issues narrated in the story. Further, they assert that reading stories leads people to adopt attitudes that are more congruent with those expressed, explicitly or implicitly, within the story (M.C. Green & Brock, 2000; see also Michelle, 2007, for discussion of a parallel mode of reception (transparent) identified in relation to film and television viewing). Likewise, M. C. Green's (2004) study of the effect of prior knowledge and perceived realism on story readers demonstrates that readers' involvement in a story may change their beliefs and attitudes in the real world. She argues that as a reader becomes transported into the story, he/she takes the story facts as a point of reference and suspends his/her real world views. According to Mar, Oatley, Hirsh, dela Paz, and Peterson (2006), the process of transportation can have a permanent influence in the real world. M. C. Green's (2004) study, which involved 152 undergraduate students, shows that readers' prior knowledge and familiarity with the main character increases an individual's degree of transportation. She further illustrates that prior knowledge or experiences enable readers to create mental pictures as they read the story and relate this to their experiences. M. C. Green (2004) also notes that participants who are more transported relate to the story as though it was true and believe that the characters are behaving like real people.

Strange and Leung (1999) illustrate that exposure to stories may influence readers' judgments about the causes of certain behaviour. More importantly, they note that "stories about concrete instances of a problem may be particularly powerful vehicles with which to focus attention on the situational causes of behaviour" (Strange & Leung, 1999, p. 445). In their study on how anecdotal

accounts in news and in fiction can influence judgments of a social problem's urgency, causes and cure¹⁴, they reveal that detailed descriptions offered in fiction stories have the ability to remind fiction readers of people and/or events similar to the story. Furthermore, they argue that stories have the "power" to prompt readers to change their "beliefs" and "attitudes" by adopting the central character's standpoint. By the same token, Marsh et al. (2003) claim that fictional stories not only change attitudes but may also lead to the acquisition of accurate or inaccurate knowledge about the world.

A study by Brozo, Walter and Placker (2002) also demonstrates the power of fictional stories to change people's belief and attitudes. Brozo et al. (2002) undertook an eight-week programme with 16 high school students (14 boys and two girls) in the USA, which examined young people's attitudes to violence and masculinity as constructed in fiction in relation to life experiences. This study demonstrated that reading and discussing novel(s) could change beliefs and attitudes. Although the sample for this study was very small, therefore making it hard to generalise the findings, it is worth discussing as the findings on the use of novels are quite suggestive. Brozo et al. note that participants were reflecting on their own experiences as they discussed the fictional characters. As they discussed characters' behaviours, participants were able to challenge and change perceived social constructions and find non-violent solutions for problems.

In their eight-week programme, they used a novel, *Scorpion* (Myers, 1988), to discuss topics such as police harassment and injustice, male behaviour, and violence among juveniles. For each theme they brainstormed and explored alternative ways of dealing with problems resulting from the respective behaviours. Brozo et al. (2002) administered a survey to participants at the beginning to assess their attitudes towards violent male behaviour, and re-administered the survey at the end to determine whether there had been any changes. They were encouraged by the differences in the responses identified by the students in the post survey. In response to the statement "Men like to fight because that's just who they are", Ricardo, for example, made the following comments in the pre-unit and post-unit surveys respectively:

¹⁴ The study was conducted with 95 participants at Columbia University.

Preunit answer Yes Reason: We're stronger than girls so we have to do the fighting.

Postunit answer: No. Reason: We have control of what we do.

In relation to another statement, "Sometimes being violent is the only way for a man to make others understand he means business," James's responses were:

Preunit answer: Yes. Reason: I've seen it.

Postunit answer: No. Reason: There are other ways, like what you say that lets people know that you ain't messing. (Brozo, et al., 2002, p. 537)

While Brozo et al. (2002) suggest that it is impossible to tell if their participants will practice the changes they reflect in their postunit interviews, it is important to have programmes which aim at changing young men's attitudes towards violent behaviour and help them find alternatives ways of "being a real man".

The changes in attitude among adolescents documented in Brozo et al.'s study are consistent with Farrell and Meyer's (1997) study of the effectiveness of school-based curriculum activities which aimed to reduce violence among sixth grade students in Richmond Public Schools in the USA. In their programme, 978 students in six schools¹⁵ completed a survey at the beginning of the prevention programme indicating the number of violent acts they had instigated. At the end of the prevention programme the survey was re-administered. Boys reported a reduction in frequency of involvement in violent behaviour and the changes were maintained to the end of the school year. Farrell and Meyer's (1997) and Brozo et al.'s (2002) studies suggest that prevention programmes and discussion of violence in schools can reduce violent behaviour and change attitudes about violent behaviour.

Cosbey (1997) asserts that using novels as a teaching tool allows students to relate what they learn in a more vivid way and broadens the scope of the subject matter. She emphasises that reading novels focusing on family issues provides students with experiences which they lack in real life and provides understanding of

¹⁵ This study was conducted in Richmond Public Schools in USA during the 1993/1994 school year.

complexities and challenges people encounter in the real world. These views are supported by Mar et al.'s (2006) study, which reveals that fiction readers have more social life skills and social experiences and they relate well with peers compared with non-fiction readers¹⁶. Similarly, Petit (2003) argues that when students read novels related to their experiences they become more involved as they discover more about their life through the characters and think how they would respond to different situations. Hence, reading fiction guides an individual to extend his/her understanding of other people and to understand their beliefs and emotions (M. C. Green, 2004; Keen, 2006). Cosbey (1997) further argues that as students engage in analysis they think critically to discover solutions for the problems posed by the author. This process of discovery that they go through influences their thinking and they are likely to share their discoveries with their peers.

Cosbey uses novels in two "Family and Society" courses of 30 and 40 students at Eastern Illinois University, USA. Cosbey (1997) uses novels to help students comprehend and think critically about the changes that have occurred in society over more than three decades. Students could complete either a novel analysis or a research paper as part of the assessment requirements for the course. About 75 percent of the students did the novel analysis. In their assignments, students revealed that reading novels made what they had learnt in classes "concrete and vivid" (p. 229). In particular, she notes that in their novel analyses students related the characters' experiences to their own experiences and learned from their own mistakes. As one female student remarked, "I must learn to love and respect myself before I am able to share my life with others" (Cosbey, 1997, p. 230). Furthermore, Cosbey (1997) argues that by reading novels, students develop their own ideas and suggestions that lead to new insights on how to deal with societal problems. Cosbey's findings are similar to Mar et al.'s (2006) findings, which reveal that reading novels allows readers to explore and discover new ways of doing things in the wider society.

Research also shows that fictional stories are important teaching tools not only in the social sciences but also in the natural sciences. Negrete (2003) asserts that it is easier to illustrate abstract concepts and theories in natural science by using

¹⁶ The study was conducted with 94 participants of Toronto University.

fictional stories than facts alone. He argues that the ability of fictional stories to create a “hypothetical world” enables learners to comprehend complex processes and apply that knowledge in a particular situation. Negrete conducted a study using fictional stories and factual statements with 40 undergraduate students to establish how people learn scientific information. The students were divided into two groups: one group read fictional stories with a scientific theme and the other, a list of scientific facts extracted from the stories. Two sets of questionnaires were administered to the groups to test their performance. At the first session the groups were tested on identifying, recalling and applying the scientific information. One week after reading the narrative and the facts, the second set of questionnaires was administered to the groups to determine the level of knowledge retained. Negrete asserts that the factual group performed better in the first set as compared to the narrative group. However, the narrative group performed better in the second set, while in the factual group the average score dropped drastically. He argues that how information is presented contributes to the way knowledge is retained. In particular, he points out that the ability of fictional stories to evoke emotions in readers is linked to the retention process. Cosbey (1997) and Negrete’s (2003) studies are consistent with Mar and Oatley’s (2008) assertion that “narrative fiction provides a better mode of instruction as it represents learning through experience and invokes understanding that is socially based” (p. 184).

Despite this evidence detailing the power of fictional stories to change individuals’ beliefs, attitudes and behaviours (Brozo et al., 2002; M. C. Green & Brock, 2000; M. C. Green, 2004; Strange & Leung, 1999), communicate socially-based knowledge (Cosbey, 1997; Mar et al., 2006; Mar & Oatley, 2008), and help readers retain knowledge acquired (Negrete, 2003), little attention has been paid to the role of violence in literary works (Franzak & Noll, 2006; van Peer & Maat, 2001) nor to the role of novels in changing attitudes and behaviours that sustain violence in the wider society.

The current study builds on existing research by identifying the various discursive interpretations of gender-based violence young Tanzanians draw on when they read Kiswahili novels. As Isaacs (2003) suggests, it is important to find out what influences the violence depicted in novels might have on young adult readers and

what they learn from those stories. He reminds us that a vision of reality is constructed by what we have read, heard, and seen more than by our personal experiences. Likewise, M. C. Green et al. (2004) note that the information presented in novels, if not examined critically, can change individual beliefs and attitudes about the world both positively and negatively.

Of more central importance to this study is the issue of how we can utilise Kiswahili novels to understand the problem of gender-based violence from different viewpoints through characters' experiences, with the aim of initiating intervention programmes in high schools. These programmes, which would focus on awareness raising about the issue of gender-based violence, will offer venues for discussing the problem of gender-based violence in a non-threatening environment (Betron, 2008; Mgalla et al., 1998). In particular, these programmes will aim to encourage young people to become more aware of the issue of gender-based violence in Tanzanian society and to actively engage in prevention efforts by suggesting ways of challenging and changing the attitudes and beliefs which sustain gender-based violence in society.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the widespread nature of gender-based violence in Tanzanian society and the factors contributing to the persistence of violence against women in the society. Efforts by government and non-governmental organisations to end gender-based violence were also described. Given that this study takes a literary approach, the chapter also examined gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels to establish the rationale for using Kiswahili novels in order to understand the problem of violence against women in Tanzania. Understanding the link between novels and behavioural change is essential, as the main purpose of this research, apart from understanding the discursive constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels, is to ascertain how novels can be used in intervention programmes aimed at ending gender-based violence in Tanzanian society. Therefore, the last section of this chapter explained how novels could be used to facilitate the discussion of social issues such as gender-based violence. In the next chapter, I explain the theoretical framework that guides this research. This chapter also describes the dominant discourses circulating within the field of

violence against women. Chapter 3 concludes by illustrating how feminist poststructuralist theory was applied in this study.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the theories employed in this study. While acknowledging that there are various ways of looking at societal problems, the current study is directed by two related theoretical approaches: 1) feminist poststructuralist theory, as applied by Gavey (1989), Hollway (1984), D. O'Neill (1998) and Weedon (1987), which underpins my analysis of the discursive construction of violence against women in Kiswahili novels, and 2) audience reception theory, as expressed in the composite model of modes of audience reception (Michelle, 2007, 2009). This analytical framework is used to uncover the different positions young Tanzanians adopt in the process of determining the meaning of these constructions. Together, these approaches reveal both the way cultural texts operate in terms of reproducing discourses within the social world and the ways in which individual subjects engage with, and in some cases contest, those discourses.

The chapter starts by outlining feminist poststructuralist theory and the way in which language, discourse, and subjectivity are conceptualised within this theoretical framework. Drawing on the works of Hollway (1984) and D. O'Neill (1998) in particular, I then describe the main discourses circulating within the field of violence against women. Then, I outline and illustrate the composite model of modes of audience reception. In this section, four main models of audience engagement are described. The chapter concludes by explaining the application of these theories in the study.

3.2 Feminist poststructuralist theory

This study employs feminist poststructuralist theory, developed by Weedon (1997) as an expansion of Foucault's work (1980, 1989), which considers language as a discursive practice, to facilitate an understanding of discursive constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels. Weedon describes feminist poststructuralism as "a mode of knowledge production which uses poststructuralist theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations and to identify areas and

strategies for change” (Weedon, 1997, p. 40). According to Davies and Gannon (2005), feminist poststructuralist theory facilitates an examination of how power relations are “constructed and maintained by granting normality, rationality and naturalness to the dominant half of any binary, and in contrast, how the subordinate term is marked as other, as lacking, as not rational” (p. 318). They note that by examining how power relations are embedded and work in individuals, it is possible to discover how oppression of the subordinate group has been achieved. Understanding how different institutions work through discourses to maintain power relations in a society (Weedon, 1997) will allow us to anticipate new ways of acting and thinking (Davies, 1993). Weedon (1997) claims that to understand how women’s lives are constructed, it is essential to scrutinise the power relations which govern society. She further maintains that it is important to recognise the various subject positions available for women and the meanings attached to them. This awareness, she suggests, would allow us to identify alternative subject positions which offer choices and possibilities for change. Likewise, Alcoff (1988) proposes that by theorising the construction of subject positions and examining social discourses, we can ascertain the mechanisms employed in the construction of specific gender categories. The process of theorising subject positions and scrutinising discourses will make visible the way masculine and feminine categories are constructed and maintained in order to problematise their inevitability (Alcoff, 1988; Davies & Gannon, 2005).

Foucault alerts us to the fact that most individuals see power in terms of state apparatuses alone, and individuals also believe that they do not exercise power: others do (Mejiuni, 2006). Additionally, Foucault contends that power is “present in the smallest, apparently most inconsequential human interaction” (Brookfield, 2001, p. 7) and exercised through the body, sexuality, family, kinship, knowledge, technology, and so on. However, resistance to power is to be found wherever power relations are exercised (St. Pierre, 2000). Thus, any group in power is likely to use coercion to maintain itself if challenged (Mejiuni, 2006). In this respect it is not surprising that men use violence to maintain their domination and oppressive position. “Violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others as people – not by those who are oppressed, exploited and unrecognized” (Freire, 1972, p. 32). Violence becomes a habit when the

powerless do not resist violence in a productive way (Mejiuni, 2006). In a sense, this explains why women, by virtue of their gender, experience discrimination in terms of denial of equal access to the power structure that controls society and determines development issues and peace initiatives. In view of that, Mejiuni (2006) asserts that “violence against women is the consequence of the unequal relations of power between men and women in many societies” (p. 38). In this regard, the efforts to end the “vicious circle” of violence against women in Tanzanian society need to understand how women are positioned to accept and remain in powerless positions.

From a different angle, St. Pierre (2000) notes that feminist poststructuralist theory shows how language manifests in discourse to construct ideas and things in the world. Further, St. Pierre explains that through discourse, “language does not simply point to pre-existing things and ideas but rather helps to construct them and by extension, the world as we know it” (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 483). Emphasising the importance of this poststructuralist theory of language, Scott (1994) suggests that by analysing the language through which meanings and cultural practices are constructed, we will understand the way social relations are organised, work, and how different institutions sustain and support power relations. He further argues that analysing language will open up new ways of interpreting and understanding how power relations are constructed and function in society. The significance of looking at language is also highlighted by Mouffe (1992), who suggests that there is a deep link between language and the way individuals are constituted and view the world. In this regard, Weedon (1997) states that language constitutes the individual’s subjectivity and provides ways of interpreting the world around her/him – such as knowing what is acceptable and normal.

3.2.1 Language

According to Weedon (1997), meaning is produced in language and thus constitutes social reality for individuals in a society. In her view, language is a social construct and is a site for change. For poststructuralist theorists, language is an important tool for an individual to think, express ideas, and make sense of the world around her/him (Scott, 1994; Weedon, 1997). Weedon goes further by

suggesting that we can transform the way we understand the world around us through language. However, she reminds us that we need to theorise language to open up new possibilities for change and not only to use language as a tool of expression. That means we must deconstruct the way language is used in historical structures by examining what is taken for granted and finding out how we can offer different interpretations which allow for change (Luke & Gore, 1992). By examining language, we can understand social relations and how certain meanings have emerged and become taken as the norm (Jaworski & Coupland, 1999; Scott, 1994).

An individual's subject position is constituted in language and made meaningful in discourses (Harris, Lea, & Foster, 1995). Davies (1994) and Luke and Gore (1992) assert that human subject positioning is organised in the patterns of the discursive system which is governed by dominant discourses, and different types of subject positions circulate in a wider community through those dominant discourses. This suggests that changing the way we understand the world around us is possible by examining and challenging the discourses and subject positions available in society. In this study, the focus is on how dominant discourses in the field of violence against women construct women and girls, particularly in Kiswahili novels.

3.2.2 Discourse

Jaworski and Coupland (1999) describe discourse as “language use relative to social, political and cultural formations – it is language reflecting social order but also language shaping social order, and shaping individuals’ interaction with society” (p. 3). Writing broadly about discourse, Foucault (1984, 1989) explains that discourse is produced according to socially and institutionally constructed rules and regularities that allow certain statements to be made and not others. Clearly, he states:

In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality. (Foucault, 1984, p. 109)

According to Foucault, discourses provide us with ways of representing ourselves, what we think, feel, and desire (Burr, 1995; White & Epston, 1990). Foucault's main premise is that our identities, experiences, thoughts, and feelings are socially constructed and that the primary site of such construction is in the discursive exchanges that occur between people using the discourses that are culturally available (Burr, 1995; McNay, 1992). Thus, discourse provides "subject positions which when taken up, have implications for subjectivity and experience" (Willig, 2001, p. 107).

Discourse is important to feminist poststructuralism as it provides an understanding of the relationship between power, knowledge and institutions (Bove, 1995). Phillips and Jørgensen (2002) and Wolin (1988) note that discourses contribute to the creation and reproduction of unequal power relations among social groups. Foucault maintains that discourses are systematic ways of making sense of the world by inscribing and shaping power relations within a text (Baxter, 2003; Weedon, 1997). Foucault proposed that the degree of power an individual possesses determines his or her ability to contribute to dominant discourses that shape society (Freedman & Combs, 1996; McNay, 1994).

For Weedon (1997), discourse is where social structures and ways of thinking are modelled and patriarchal interests are maintained. She suggests that to find alternatives to the present patriarchal power relations, we need to understand the network of discourses that sustain the values and norms of the hegemonic structures and their power relations. Furthermore, she asserts that social structures which are organised in various institutions, such as the law, family, church and education system, are located in a specific discursive field. She describes discursive fields as "competing ways of giving meaning to the world and of organizing social institutions and processes" (p. 34). Weedon maintains that in different institutions, discourses do not have equal power. In the family institution, for example, dominant discourses which underline patriarchal power are privileged and used to justify the status quo, while discourses which challenge the existing practices are marginalised by the hegemonic system. These dominant discourses, which are learnt early in life through socialisation and mastered through exposure to social practices, are easily accepted as the norm compared

with alternative discourses¹⁷ acquired later in life through overt instruction (Gee, 2007). For example, women are socialised to believe that once they marry it is their responsibility to take care of their family and look after their husband and children. Consequently, if they have problems in their relationship it is often difficult for them to leave the abusive relationship even though they are aware of alternative discourses. Gee (2007) suggests that challenges and conflicts which arise in accepting alternative discourses can give rise to new insight and meta-knowledge to manipulate, analyse and resist previous dominant discourses. Gee describes meta-knowledge as the ability to clarify, explain, analyse and criticise the issue under discussion.

According to Gee (2007), meta-knowledge of discourses can empower and liberate an individual. Gee notes that dominant discourses acquired early in life cannot liberate individuals, as they lack the meta-knowledge with which criticism can be carried out. He proposes that instead of marginalising and/or silencing alternative discourses as deviant, it is important to familiarise individuals with new discourses, and if possible, to show how they can open new ways of understanding the world. Davies and Banks (1995) take this idea further by describing ways of enabling individuals to accommodate new discourses around gender roles. They advise that programmes which rely on role models (for examples role model texts) and non-sexist curricula (men and women are equal) will not be enough to disrupt the dominant discourses around gender roles (primary discourses), because individuals have taken up those discourses as their way of living. Therefore, they suggest that it is important to guide individuals towards understanding the constitutive force of the discourses and how they have taken up those dominant discourses as their own. Only after being fully aware of how they are constituted by dominant discourses will they be in a position to accept new discourses (Davies & Banks, 1995).

In this study, I argue that by broadening the scope of textual analysis it is possible to disclose the power of the literary discursive field in maintaining dominant discourses in the field of violence against women. More important, however, is how these textual representations are interpreted by readers.

¹⁷ Gee describes discourses which people learn early in life through socialization as primary discourses and discourses which are learnt later through institutions such as school as secondary discourses.

3.2.3 Subjectivity

Subjectivity is the product of a discursive network of social relations which organise and systemize cultural practices (Davies & Banks, 1995; Willig, 2001) and works through society, language and discourse through different social agencies in which we participate (Fiske, 1987, 1989). Weedon (1997) describes subjectivity as the “conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world” (p. 32). She notes that subjectivity is not genetically determined; rather, it is socially constructed in various discursive practices located in social institutions which construct and manage human subjects in a specific manner. Davies and Banks (1995) define subjectivity as different ways in which people assign meanings to themselves, others and the world.

Hollway (1989) suggests that in order to understand subjectivity, we must make visible the discourses which individuals have taken up as ways of living for themselves and others. Subjectivity is constructed through discourses (Davies, 1992; Davies et al., 2006; Gavey, 1989) in which individuals have participated and taken up as their own (Davies, 1994; Davies & Banks, 1995). An individual’s subjectivity is thus the effect of discourse (Weedon, 1997). This means that understanding subjectivity entails a process of examining discourses in which the construction of subjects takes place (Davies, 1992). In order to change the existing mode of subjectivity, one needs to recognise how it is organised (Davies & Banks, 1995) and how it is maintained in existing discourses (Weedon, 1997).

According to Fiske, while the “individual” is viewed as being essentially biological, the subject highlights the “constructed sense of the individual in the network of social relations” (Fiske, 1987, p. 48). It is in the social networks that individuals take up different subject positions, in which they can position themselves and others (Willig, 2001). Subject positions do not dictate what is to be done; rather, they provide discursive positions from which individuals can act and speak (Willig, 2001). Discursive subject positions are crucial in an individual’s life, as they are taken as ways of seeing and interpreting the world through different concepts and storylines which are available in a particular discursive practice (Davies & Harre, 1990). Davies (1994) argues that accessibility to different subject positions would allow individuals to discover the

constitutive force of the dominant discourses as well as various options available to improve their current lives if they want to. In her paper on women's subjectivity, Davies clearly states that poststructuralist theory helps women in

recognizing the means by which they have been subjected, made object, deprived agency and inscribed with patterns of desire that hold that oppressive cultural pattern in place ... and searches out ways in which the patterns that hold that subjection in place can be subverted and turned to other ends. (Davies, 1992, pp. 58-59)

A slightly different perspective on understanding positioning is proposed by Hollway (1984). In her view, by revealing how values and power are attached to one's positioning in a chosen discourse, it is possible to initiate change. Hollway describes "values and power" attached to positioning as an investment which is socially constructed in a particular discourse. She cites an example of men's investment in sexist discourse that constructs them as powerful, rational, responsible and self-confident, as opposed to women's positions as weak and needing support. In her opinion, changing "positioning investment" will give rise to alternative discourses, which can be used in the process of redefining women's positioning in sexist discourses. Significantly, Hekman (1991) posits that patriarchal discourses proclaim inferior and passive positions to women, as opposed to liberal discourses which promote equality. She suggests that women have to resist subject positions which oppress them.

The importance of identifying and affirming subject positions which enable women to resist their subordinate positions within patriarchal discourses is further developed by Marcus (1992). Using examples of rape incidents, Marcus explains that while women are positioned as fearful and vulnerable, men are positioned as powerful and entitled to women's sexual services. She further asserts that whereas men's position gives them the ability to accost women verbally and attack them physically, women's position triggers fear, which activates immobility and silence (Marcus, 1992). She suggests that taking an active role, such as verbal or physical self-defense, can disrupt rapists' intentions. These techniques, which position women as subjects who can take an active role in fending off rape incidents, will develop resistance and help to transform women's passive positions. By the same token, Kristeva claims that the subject "possesses revolutionary potential" (Hekman, 1991, p. 54). This means women have the

ability to transform the position which they are assigned in oppressive and sexist discourses. Hollway's and Marcus's views concur with Weedon's (1997) suggestion that the availability of alternative discourses will allow women to take up different subject positions and change the way they identify themselves and their position in the world. Certainly, the concept of subjectivity is useful in exploring how women and girls are constituted through, and in terms of existing discourses, and to ascertain ways in which new subject positions can be generated in response to the dominant discourses in the field of violence against women.

3.2.4 Dominant discourses in the field of violence against women

Given the fact that research examining the discursive field of gender-based violence in developing countries is sparse (Dunne, Humphreys, & Leach, 2006), this study is guided by D. O'Neill's (1998) work in identifying five distinct predominant discourses underlying various theories in the field of domestic violence scholarship within the social sciences. These are the discourses of medical pathology, romantic expressive tension, liberal humanist instrumentalism, tabula rasa learning, and socio-systemic discourse. Also, the study draws on Hollway's (1984) discussion of male sexual drive discourse.

Within the medical pathology discourse, domestic violence is constructed as being an abnormal phenomenon explained through pathological causes of behaviour, of which wife abuse and violence are considered to be symptoms (D. O'Neill, 1998). The perpetrator in this scheme of events is not to be held responsible for the violence, and can only manage his symptoms to the best of his ability (Evans, 2003). Among the reasons for violence cited in the research are mental disturbance and personality disorders, which are thought to generate difficulty in controlling anger (Gelles, 1999; D. O'Neill, 1998; Vaselle-Augenstein & Ehrlich, 1992) and alcoholism and drug abuse (Flanzer, 2005; Gelles & Straus, 1988; United Nations, 1989). Other literature suggests that witnessing violence in childhood results in an abusive adulthood (Vaselle-Augenstein & Ehrlich, 1992). Thus, perpetrators of violence are discursively positioned as sick individuals who need help (Michelle & Weaver, 2003).

The discourse of romantic expressive tension constructs domestic violence as stemming from a loss of control due to a high degree of inner tension or personal

frustration (Evans, 2003; Michelle & Weaver, 2003), thought to be driven by impulse forces – anger or tension from within (Gelles & Straus, 1979; Steinmetz, 1986). Thus, violence is the expressive form of this inner tension. Theories informed by this discourse construct people as being subject to an inner force over which they have little or no control. Reasons offered for such behaviour are unemployment, problems at work, lack of life skills or education, and relationship conflict (Gelles, 1999; Michelle & Weaver, 2003; D. O’Neill, 1998). Furthermore, D. O’Neill (1998) points out that lower socioeconomic groups are structurally predisposed to greater marital conflict as they “have fewer life chances, frustrations are higher, combined with the greater stresses associated with poverty and a lack of skills and resources to deal with them effectively” (p. 462). By employing this discourse, men are enabled to take up the position of the out-of-control agent (D. O’Neill, 1998). This discourse again positions the offender as being subject to powerful forces, over which he has little control.

The discourse of liberal humanist instrumentalism constructs domestic violence as an intentional means to exert authority and control over women and as exercised by conscious rational agents to obtain a particular end (Jewkes, Penn-Kekana, & Rose-Junius, 2005; D. O’Neill, 1998; J. T. Wood, 2004). In contrast to romantic expressive tension discourse, violence against women is seen as a means to achieve certain goals. Feminist researchers contend that violence against women is part of a system of coercive control through which men maintain societal dominance and women remain subordinated in the family and society (Bograd, 1988a; Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Stark & Flitcraft, 1996). In these terms, violence against women is influenced by societal norms maintaining and sustaining male power (Anderson & Umberson, 2001; D. Green, 1999; Frude, 1994). Furthermore, men with limited resources are seen to engage in violence as a means of re-establishing their dominance within their family (Anderson, 1997; Prasad, 1994). According to social exchange theory, violent men are protected by societal tolerance of violence against women and by the rewards they receive from that behaviour (Gelles, 1983). The common perception is that a man will be punished if he abuses a woman, but this is not the case; in fact, he may receive rewards from the behaviour. Accordingly, this discourse suggests men engage in violence as they can attain certain social power or rewards, such as tension release, getting their way or getting recognition, without having to face costs such

as police intervention, physical retribution from wives, or community shame (Ellis, 1989; Gelles, 1983; Gelles & Cornell, 1985; Prasad, 1994). Furthermore, this discourse asserts that when men feel their masculinity is challenged, violence is seen as an appropriate means to exert dominance and control (A. Campbell, 1993). As Ferree (1990) points out, “male dominance within families is part of a wider system of power, is neither natural nor inevitable, and occurs at women’s cost” (p. 866). As noted by feminist analysts, men abuse women because they can (Jones & Schechter, 1992; McCall & Shield, 1986; Yllö, 2005); hence, this discourse suggests men consciously use violence as a powerful technique to enforce male domination and female subordination.

Somewhat differently, socio-systemic discourse draws attention away from individual responsibility by asserting that domestic violence is the product of cultural norms, values and institutional practices in society (Dobash & Dobash, 1998; D. O’Neill, 1998). According to D. Green (1999), in African societies various cultural explanations have been used to explain violence against women as being normal and acceptable. In terms of this discourse, beliefs and values surrounding masculinity and femininity within the culture and learned very early in life shape and constitute the problem of violence against women (D. O’Neill, 1998). Western societal norms, values and practices encourage men to be competitive, tough, aggressive, unemotional, and/or objectifying (O’Neil & Nadeau, 1999). Women’s socialisation also has a prominent meaning in this discourse. Being taught to be obedient and submissive to their husbands, they are often prone to self-blaming and long term suffering within a violent relationship. This is maintained within, and supported by, the misogynist cultural traditions that devalue women and often regard them with overt contempt (Bograd, 1988b; Dobash & Dobash, 1979).

The discourse of tabula rasa learning is mainly based on social-psychological theories of social learning (Bandura, 1977), which describe violent behaviour as learned through observation, experience and conditioning (D. O’Neill, 1998). O’Leary (1988) suggests that violence is learned through socialisation practices in the family, the environment which serves as a training ground for violence and provides examples for imitation and role models. Proponents of social learning theory maintain that men’s socialisation encourages them to use violence as an

acceptable way of solving problems and maintaining their identity and status in society (A. Jenkins, 1990; Jenkins & Davidson, 2001). Furthermore, from the social learning perspective, observation is regarded as the principal learning process (Dutton, 1998). Research suggests that an abusive family serves as a training ground for social relationships (Mialon & Mialon, 2006) by providing examples such as abusive language, aggressive actions and lack of respect shown to the mother by the father, which encourages violent behaviour. The violent behaviour learnt in the family is further reinforced by messages learnt from different sources, which contribute to shaping an individual's actions (Ward, 2000). For instance, boys learn control strategies for achieving their needs (Berman, 1993). From this perspective, the discourse of tabula rasa learning views violent men as relatively passive agents, located within the powerful forces of cultural norms and beliefs, or as products of their learning experience, which again places the violent incidents outside the individual's responsibility (D. O'Neill & Morgan, 2001).

The discourse of male sexual drive draws on biological theories that view male sexuality as natural and compelling. Hollway (1984, 1989) identifies a dominant discourse suggesting that biological necessity renders male sexual urges uncontrollable, with men forced to satisfy them. This discourse holds that a normal healthy man has a strong drive to have sex (Gavey, 2005). The belief is that males have strong physical sexual desires which control and overwhelm rational thinking (Crawford, Kippax, & Walby, 1994; Kitzinger & Powell 1995; Potts, 2001). According to Potts (2001), constructing male sexual desires as a driving force serves to absolve men for taking responsibility from sexual matters. Hollway (1989) points out that male sexual drive discourse views men's sexuality as powerful and natural. By extension, this perspective is drawn on to rationalise men's rape of women (Harris et al., 1995; Kottler & Long, 1997). The male sexual drive is, therefore, used to exonerate men from taking responsibility for their actions, as they have "no other way" of satisfying their strong sexual desires. Within the discourse of male sexual drive, women are positioned as passive and responsible for accommodating men's sexuality (Gavey, 2005, 2009; Reinholtz, Muehlenhard, Phelps, & Satterfield, 1995).

Michelle and Weaver's (2003) study of three New Zealand documentaries on "family violence" demonstrates how the dominant discourses of medical pathology, romantic expressive tension and tabula rasa learning silence the roles of both abusers and society in perpetuating violence against women. Portraying abusive men as non-responsible agents of violence against women, these documentaries silenced the analysis of the connection between domestic violence and male power and marginalised critical accounts offered within liberal humanist instrumentalist and socio-systemic discourses (Michelle & Weaver, 2003). Their work is thus consistent with the views of other feminist poststructuralists, who hold that some discourses may be hegemonic or employed to subjugate women (Gavey, 1996), while others are marginal or actively suppressed. The current study aims to ascertain which discourses of gender-based violence are privileged by Kiswahili authors, and to consider the implications of the privileging of certain discourses over others for young readers.

3.3 The composite model of modes of audience reception

The composite model of audience reception recognises that in the process of constructing the meaning of a text, audience members may adopt different positions (Michelle, 2007, 2009). According to Michelle (2007), the composite model facilitates the process of examining differences and similarities in audience responses to a text by distinguishing between responses which are in line with the dominant ideology of the society, and thus hegemonic, and those which are totally divergent or counter-hegemonic. Michelle's view concurs with audience research, which demonstrates that audience members are creative, active, selective and critical as they engage with messages in the text (Johnson, del Rio, & Kemmitt, 2010; Liebes & Katz, 1989; Morley, 1980). Fiske (1987) makes a similar observation as he argues that readers have ability to control the meaning of the depicted text and the role the text plays in their lives. Fiske maintains that the ability of the readers to negotiate the meaning of the text enables them to resist dominant meanings and be open to new ways of constructing their own subjectivity, which may lead to social change. However, he notes that this process is only possible if readers have access to counter-rhetoric discourses which enable them to resist the dominant meanings conveyed by the text. Likewise, Condit (1989, p. 108) notes that readers have the "ability to create their

own empowering responses” from mediated texts. Like Fiske (1987), she notes that a person’s values and position in society determine the way he/she will construct the meaning of a given text. But she also notes that making oppositional and negotiated readings requires access to particular discursive resources and takes more effort than is needed to make a dominant reading. While Condit (1989) claims that readers with access to networks that offer oppositional discursive resources could challenge the text to fit their own needs, it is also useful to explore how those networks enable them to resist, as this will enable researchers to anticipate ways of facilitating successful oppositional readings.

In this regard, the composite model of audience reception enables researchers to capture the diverse modes of interpreting cultural texts that viewers can adopt, and the specific sets of discursive resources they draw on in the process of constructing meaning (Michelle, 2007). According to Michelle, the model identifies four broad modes of audience engagement and response: transparent, referential, mediated, and discursive.

3.3.1 Transparent mode

Within a transparent mode, readers rely on information supplied within the text to interpret the message (Michelle, 2007). Readers informed by this mode “temporarily suspend disbelief and critical distance to grant fictional worlds the status of “real life,” or a “realistic slice of life,” for the purpose of entering into the story and engaging in it” (Michelle, 2007, p. 196). Michelle further suggests that although readers are aware that they are reading/viewing a fictional work, their engagement with the text is a close, subjective one. Readers’ engagement with characters and the message in fictional work is identified by M. C. Green and Brock (2000) as a reason for readers to become absorbed in a story, as they are “transported” into the fictional world by the narrative. Thus, readers in a transparent mode experience cognitive and emotional engagement and may lose awareness of the real world for some time as they are completely immersed in a fictional world (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2008; M. C. Green, 2004).

Busselle and Bilandzic (2008) suggest that the shift from the real world to a narrative one enables readers to identify with the viewpoint implied by the text as they construct the meaning of the story from the inside. As readers become

immersed in the fictional world they assume the depicted text is a reflection of the real world, and draw on information supplied in the text to make sense of the message represented in the text (M. C. Green & Brock, 2000; Michelle, 2009). Those who adopt this mode draw on information offered within the text to support their interpretation and evaluation. Consequently, they assume the “dominant preferred position” foregrounded in the text as they lack critical engagement with the text (Michelle, 2007, p. 198).

3.3.2 Referential mode

In a referential mode, the textual depiction is interpreted in relation to readers’ experiential knowledge and the extra-textual world (Michelle, 2007, 2009). Readers in this mode see the text as “standing alongside the real world,” and often compare the depicted reality in the text with their experiences in the real world “out there” (Michelle, 2009, p. 154). Subsequently, they draw from different information sources, such as personal experiences, immediate life experiences and their knowledge of the wider society, to affirm, question and evaluate the accuracy of the textual depiction of characters and events in the text (Michelle, 2007, 2009). Likewise, Liebes and Katz (1989, 1990) note that in a referential reading, readers relate to the constructed message as real and draw on their experiences or roles in real life to justify their standpoint.

Offering additional insight, Höijer (1992) suggests that in interpreting fictional narrative texts, readers look for a connection between the text and their own real world. She notes that explicitly or implicitly, readers compare the fictional text with reality as it is known to them. In so doing, they may draw from several sources of experiences, including the private sphere - such as daily routines at home, travelling, and sporting activities - or the public sphere, which includes their engagement in different occupations, observations of other people, and knowledge drawn from the educational sphere.

3.3.3 Mediated mode

While readings in a referential mode are framed by experiential knowledge, readings in a mediated mode are characterised by the ability of the readers to recognise the text as a constructed media product (Michelle, 2007). As readers

recognise the media text as constructed, their relationship is more objective compared with readers who view the text as a representation of social reality (Michelle, 2009). Michelle contends that readers adopting this mode draw on their knowledge of textual production; in particular, various aesthetic features, generic form, and the motivations of the text's producers. Michelle (2007) claims that some readers consider the textual features within the text as intending to achieve a certain message such as to entertain or educate, whereas others consider the text as revealing the motivation of the industry.

Given that readers in this mode pay attention to features of textual production, this may interrupt their involvement with the text's message content (Höijer, 1992; Michelle, 2007). Different from the other modes, Michelle (2007) suggests that readings in a mediated mode require specific knowledge and competencies. This is in line with Höijer's (1992) observation that in her study, one participant (a dancing-teacher and actress), utilised knowledge derived from her occupation and the educational sphere to evaluate the quality of a fictional television programme's production.

3.3.4 Discursive mode

In a discursive mode, readers examine the text's intended message in terms of its ideological connotations (Michelle, 2007, 2009). Whereas all receptions have discursive elements, readers who frame their responses in the discursive mode perceive the text as attempting to communicate a particular message about the wider social world, and present readers' evaluation of and responses to that message (Michelle, Davis, & Vladica, 2012). Critical reading of the text results from awareness of and/or familiarity with the society depicted in the text or access to extra-textual information and alternative discursive frameworks, more importantly (Lewis, 2004; Liebes & Katz, 1989, 1990; Michelle, 2007). Thus, readers in this mode may comment positively or negatively about the message depicted in the text and highlight the possible implications of the message for the wider community (Michelle, 2007). According to Michelle, in a discursive mode readers may also reflect on and highlight the intent of the message promoted in the text through particular characters or events. In addition, readers may identify what was not addressed in the text but should have been said, by drawing on

alternative discourses within the wider macro context and marginalised discourses articulated within the text (Michelle, 2007).

The importance of critical engagement with texts and promoting access to alternative discourses in order to bring about social change has been noted by several scholars. For instance, D. O'Neill's (2000) study exploring violent men's accounts of their violence towards their female partners asserts that critical examination of texts to identify the discourses drawn on to naturalise violence would facilitate the process of challenging the way violence against women is understood in society. More importantly, he proposes that consciousness raising programmes that would prepare individuals to challenge dominant discourses that sustain violence in society and foreground such "alternative realities as "choice," "responsibility" and "assertion"" would be an important step in intervening in the problem of violence against women (D. O'Neill, 2000, p. 17).

Similarly, Davies and Banks' (1995) study on primary school children, which sought to understand the ways in which dominant discourses of gender constrain children, concluded that it is essential to offer children alternative ways of understanding their position in society as boys and girls. Their school based programme, which examined the way children interpret their lived experiences through fiction stories, aimed to challenge dominant discourses about gender and introduce interpretive strategies which opened up the possibilities of choice. They maintain that involving children in understanding how they have adopted the dominant views as their own would enable them to translate alternative ways of being into their own lives. Certainly, critical engagement with the text is important to the present study, as it explores ways to challenge the dominant discourses of violence against women and generate alternative discourses in the effort to intervene in the problem of violence against women using Kiswahili novels.

It is useful to note that the composite model also acknowledges that readers may commute between different modes of reception (Michelle, 2007, 2009). This means that in some cases, those who primarily adopt a referential mode by comparing the textual reality with real life may sometimes have an intense and critical engagement with the text's message, at which point they can be said to

“commute” to a discursive mode. This shows that readers’ experiences are not confined to one particular mode (Michelle, 2007). While commuting offers alternative ways of interpreting a particular text, it is also important to note that the ability of readers to shift between modes depends on “their access to different discursive repertoires” (Michelle, 2007, p. 214). In terms of this study, the ability of readers to commute between modes signals the possibility for change, especially when they are exposed to different ways of making sense of cultural texts and their discursive constructions of gender-based violence.

3.4 Application of the theories to the current thesis

Poststructuralism has played a major role in shaping our understanding of the power of dominant discourses (Sunderland, 2004). According to Foucault, through participation in the social setting in which a person is positioned, he/she comes to internalise dominant discourses as normative standards. These normative standards work powerfully to produce conformity (McNay, 1994; Sawicki, 1991; White & Epston, 1990). It is central to this study that discourses make truth claims via the inclusion and exclusion of knowledge. What has counted as truth about violence against women has been the effect of specific kinds of techniques and discursive practices deployed by society and social groups staking claims on knowledge (Evans, 2003). The discursive practices of gender-based violence are constructed through different techniques of power and knowledge, and once these become normal it is difficult to think and act outside these (St. Pierre, 2000).

I used poststructuralist theory in this study as a means to uncover the discourses employed by Kiswahili authors in constructing violence against women and to find ways of making alternative discourses more widely available. Thus, the theory enabled me to look beyond the linguistic level to examine the constitutive power of language through discourses in order to better understand Tanzanian society, particularly in terms of how discourses have constructed individuals in relation to the issue of gender-based violence and the subject positions available for women and men as constructed in Kiswahili novels. By seeking to understand the constitutive force of discourse in fictional texts and readers’ responses, I concur with Davies et al.’s (2006, p. 89) suggestion that in order to “reconstitute the world in less oppressive ways” we must examine the existing discourses. In

this study, I argue that we may deconstruct the way violence against women is constructed in Kiswahili novels by making visible what is taken for granted as “normal” and by utilising alternative discourses to open up new subject positions which offer possibilities for change, which I hope will lead to new ways of thinking and acting within the wider society.

Different concepts from feminist poststructuralist theory - namely, language, discourse and subjectivity - are employed in this study to comprehend how “discursive practices are structured, what power relations they produce and reproduce” (Weedon, 1987, p. 136), and to make sense of the ways in which these discourses position individuals within the text (Baxter, 2003). It is hoped this process will uncover the dominant discourses of gender-based violence as constructed in Kiswahili novels.

The composite model of modes of audience reception offers a deeper understanding of the diverse ways in which audience members engage with and respond to cultural texts (Michelle, 2007, 2009). In the current study, the composite model was used to facilitate the process of exploring the different positions young Tanzanians adopt as they engage with the textual representations of violence against women in Kiswahili novels. Identifying when participants adopted a referential mode made it possible to examine the sources of knowledge young Tanzanians drew on to affirm, question and evaluate the accuracy of the textual depiction of violence against women in the novels. On the other hand, being able to recognise moments where participants adopted a discursive mode assisted me in exploring the alternative discourses young Tanzanians already have access to when attempting to challenge and resist dominant discourses of violence against women, as foregrounded in Kiswahili novels.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has described the theoretical background of this study, with specific emphasis on the theories guiding this research: feminist poststructuralism and the composite model of modes of audience reception. In this study, poststructuralist theory offers an understanding of the networks of dominant discourses and how they work through different institutions. This understanding of the constitutive power of dominant discourses may suggest ways of introducing alternative

discourses, which may disrupt what is taken for granted as normal and natural in Tanzanian society in relation to gender-based violence. In addition, the theoretical understanding of existing dominant discourses of violence against women will assist the process of analysing various constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels, and how these constructions are interpreted by young Tanzanians.

The composite model of modes of audience reception extends my understanding of these textual constructions and facilitates the process of examining the different positions readers adopt as they engage with cultural texts. This understanding of the diverse ways in which readers engage with cultural texts allows me to explore how young Tanzanians make sense of the textual representation of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels. The composite mode, and particularly its description of the discursive mode, captures the different ways in which readers manage to resist and challenge the dominant meanings foregrounded in a text. This understanding is central to this study, which explores ways to challenge dominant attitudes and beliefs that sustain gender-based violence in Tanzanian society and make alternative ways of being more accessible. Hence, the theory facilitates the process of exploring the knowledges and skills needed for readers to make successful counter-hegemonic readings of the dominant views expressed and reproduced within Kiswahili novels. In the next chapter, Chapter 4, I explain the methodology that guides this study.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology that guided this study. It starts by explaining the procedures used to select the novels, followed by the process of translation of the extracts selected for analysis. Given that this study uses Foucauldian discourse analysis in examining the discursive practices of gender-based violence in selected Kiswahili novels, I outline the specific steps that guided the analysis of the novels. Then, I describe the procedures followed in recruiting participants for the focus group and in-depth interviews. All interviews in this study were conducted in Kiswahili and tape-recorded; hence, I describe the processes of transcription and translation for the interviews. After that, I illustrate the procedures used in their analysis. Finally, I address the ethical issues pertaining to this research and outline how they were resolved.

4.2 The selection of the novels

I selected a representative sample of 15 novels, cutting across the three decades from 1975 to 2004, as this was the period when feminist groups in developing countries began to explore the nature of violence against women to reveal the underlying causes of sexual harassment and domestic violence (Duff, 1995; Kilpatrick, 2004). In this study a total of 45 novels with different themes relating to gender-based violence were included in the population sample. Then, I used a stratified random sampling technique to select 15 of these novels to be analysed. To do this, I first divided the 45 selected novels into three homogeneous subgroups based on publication dates: 1975 - 1984, 1985 - 1994, and 1995 - 2004. Then, four novels from the first cluster, five from the second cluster and six from the third cluster were selected randomly, making a total of 15 novels. In my sample, I selected six novels from the third cluster (1995 - 2004) because there were more novels published in this period.

The Kiswahili novels selected in this study include popular novels as well as “serious” novels. Kiswahili popular novels include thrillers and love stories, while serious novels are those which deal with more complicated social issues in society (Gromov, 2008). In both the popular and serious novels, authors explore what is

happening in the society, aiming at challenging, educating and guiding the community (Gromov, 2008; Topan, 2006). Thus, Kiswahili novels can be seen to contribute to the way people understand social issues, including the problem of gender-based violence.

4.3 Translation

All extracts used in this study were translated from Kiswahili language into English. Translation is the process of changing a written text from a source language (SL) into a written text in a target language (TL) with a communicative purpose (Munday, 2001). Hatim and Mason (1990) add that translation is a “communicative process which takes places within a social context” (p. 3). Consequently, as translators construct a new communication text from the source language, one that has been constructed within a particular social context which is different to the social context of the reader of the translated text, they try to negotiate between the meaning of the producer in the SL text and that likely to be derived by the reader in the TL text (Hatim & Mason, 1990). They further note that authors of SL texts have specific meanings to communicate to readers and so they select particular lexical terms and grammatical arrangements. Focusing on the author’s intention, Fisher (2010) asserts that it is difficult for a translator to scrutinise the purposes of the author unless he/she has the time and ability to interrogate the author. It is not surprising, therefore, for a translator to find it difficult to maintain the same effect intended by the author of the SL text when it is translated into the TL text. This is evident in the Kiswahili novels, where authors select certain vocabularies to communicate their message. As my thesis will be read by Tanzanians, in my analysis chapter - Chapter Five - I include the Kiswahili version of the extracts and the English translation to enable readers of the SL (Kiswahili) to experience the same effect intended in the original text.

4.4 Data analysis: Novels

The analysis of the data was guided by Willig’s (2001, 2008) version of Foucauldian discourse analysis. Foucauldian discourse analysts are concerned with the discursive resources available to people and the ways in which discourse constructs subjectivity, selfhood and power relations (Willig, 2001, 2008). Discursive resources available in a given society provide a way of viewing the

world. Foucauldian discourse analysts look at how discourses function in a “wider social process of legitimation and power” (Willig, 2008, p.172). In this regard, Foucauldian discourse analysis is concerned with how dominant discourses are organised, regulated and administered in social life, particularly in terms of governing what people can do or say (Wiggins & Riley, 2010). According to Arribas–Ayllon and Walkerdine (2008), Foucauldian discourse analysis is a way of “doing social critique” (p. 106). Consequently, discourse analysis looks at the specific details of the discursive practices which constitute dominant discourses in order to uncover the particular regime of power and knowledge at work in the wider society (Weedon, 1997). To that end, Foucauldian discourse analysis is interested in how language constructs subject positions and what materials are available for the construction of subjectivity (Willig, 2008). Unlike discursive psychology, which places emphasis on the qualities of language, that being what people do with language, Foucauldian discourse analysis explores how social and psychological worlds are constructed through discourses and how these constructions are interpreted by individuals. This entails a process of examining the implications of available discursive resources in a society, existing subject positions, and power relations, which are reinforced through dominant discourses and institutional practices (Parker, 1999; Wiggins & Riley, 2010; Willig, 2001, 2008).

The Foucauldian discourse analysis approach was chosen to analyse the novels, as it offers a way to critically reflect on how networks of dominant discourses are sustained and reproduced, and to examine the way in which individual subjects engage with those discourses.

Willig (2001, pp. 109-112) outlined six stages for discourse analysis. The first stage focuses on discursive *constructions*¹⁸. This stage aims at identifying the discursive objects in the text. In this stage both implicit and explicit information is gathered. The second stage focuses on *discourses*. This stage seeks to discover the various constructions identified in stage one, within broader discourses. The third stage, which is referred to as *action orientation*, involves closer examination of the discursive context in which the different objects are organised. This process offers deeper understanding of the use of various constructions of the

¹⁸ Emphasis is in the original.

discursive objects in the text. The fourth stage addresses subject *positionings*. Here, the task is to look closely at the subject positions that the discourses offer. The fifth stage focuses on *practice*. This stage examines the relationship between discourses and practice by considering the effect of various discursive constructions and subject positions available within them. The sixth stage addresses *subjectivity*. The main purpose of this stage is to trace the effects of adopting various subject positions. In the current study the examination of how various subject positions assigned to victims and perpetrators of violence against women open or limit opportunities for action (stage five) and the effect of adopting particular positions (stage six) were examined together. Thus, all these stages were adopted in this study as outlined below.

In this study the first step was a careful reading of the 15 novels to identify different sections in the texts where gender-based violence was discussed. This process was guided by research questions one and two (see section 1.6), as Arribas–Ayllon and Walkerdine (2008) remind us that the selection of texts for analysis should relate to the information we are researching. Willig (2001) argues that our search for constructions of the discursive object is guided by shared meanings rather than keywords. Thus, at this stage both implicit and explicit references to gender-based violence in the novels were identified. The purpose of this stage was to become aware of how the novels constructed different types of violence against women and how these constructions were accomplished through the different subject positions offered to characters.

The second stage was to read and re-read the text to extract the paragraphs which revealed the discursive construction of the causes and consequences of gender-based violence and the different subject positions offered by these constructions. What appears to be one and the same discursive object can be constructed in very different ways (Willig, 2001). Furthermore, reading and re-reading the text develops an awareness of the way in which language is used to construct subjectivity for women and men (Weedon, 1997) and not just to reflect social reality (Coyle, 2000). At this stage, texts were read more closely, looking for recurrent discursive patterns to locate the various discourses of gender-based violence used in the novels.

The selected paragraphs from different novels were typed into a word document. Then, the word format (.doc extension) was converted into rich text format (.rtf extension) in order to process the text as NVivo document files. After the conversion process, all the extracted paragraphs were transferred into an NVivo document browser. Here, the paragraphs from the different novels and the novels' details could be easily accessed.

Discursive patterns in the construction of gender-based violence in the novels were coded into organised nodes using the NVivo 8 software programme, which provides “a set of tools for undertaking an analysis of qualitative data” (Bazeley, 2007, p. 2). Coding in NVivo is the process of bringing together passages or phrases that seem to illustrate a theme represented in a project document as nodes (Bryman, 2008). Nodes are “containers” where ideas extracted from data are stored. In the coding process, I began with free nodes. All key themes relating to gender-based violence were identified and coded. However, after re-reading the data, some patterns emerged and then the free nodes were merged into tree nodes. Tree nodes are “containers” which are “hierarchically structured with categories and subcategories” (Bazeley & Richards, 2000, p.70). Thus, all paragraphs relating to a particular theme were gathered together and accessed by browsing a specific tree node. Four tree nodes were created in relation to gender-based violence as constructed in the novels, namely; causes, consequences, types, and discourses of violence against women.

In this study, while the four tree nodes were permanent, the subcategory nodes changed and others were deleted as the process of re-examining the data and identifying different discursive patterns of gender-based violence in the novels developed. In NVivo, every node is identified by its specific title and family location (Bazeley & Richards, 2000). For example, in this research the coding format was: \causes of violence\men's power, \consequences of violence\unplanned pregnancy, types of violence\rape, discourses\liberal humanism. Details about the novels, such as title, author and year of publication, were also coded in subcategories into a tree node. Hence, it was easy to find different themes and where they occurred in the novels. Also, during the coding process, initial thoughts and reflections about the different themes were written and stored as “memos.” A memo in NVivo is a tool used by the researcher to

store generated insights (Bazeley & Richards, 2000). After completing the coding process, the document was printed to review the patterns that emerged from the data.

After identifying different constructions of gender-based violence using tree nodes, the third stage of analysis – focusing on action orientation - involved examining the discursive contexts within which different types of discourses in the field of gender-based violence were organised. In this step, the objective was to explore and uncover the functions and effects of different discursive structures (Coyle, 2000; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). A particular discursive practice has been designed to fulfil a certain function; therefore, it is a question of identifying what its function is and how it relates to other discursive practices identified in the text. Foucault describes this stage as “to regroup the statements, describe their interconnection and account for unitary forms under which they are presented” (Foucault, 1989, p. 35). In this study, I re-examined the tree nodes, which coded the types and discourses of gender-based violence as constructed in the novels. This process aimed to uncover the authors’ techniques and patterns in constructing different types of gender-based violence in the novels. Strategies used to foreground dominant discourses within the field of gender-based violence were also explored.

The fourth stage of the analysis sought to address subject positioning. Willig (2001) asserts that “discourses construct subjects as well as objects and as a result make available positions within the networks of meaning that speakers can take up” (p. 110). The focus here was to identify the different subject positions offered by the various discursive constructions of gender-based violence within the texts. To this end, material related to causes and consequences of violence against women was examined closely to discover the subject positions offered to women and girls.

The final stage in the analysis was concerned with the systematic exploration of the ways in which discursive constructions, and the subject positions contained within them, hasten or encumber opportunities for action and the consequences of taking up particular subject positions. (Thus, combining Willig’s stages five and six). In this stage, the study mapped the possibilities for action contained within

the discourses used within the texts to construct gender-based violence. The central focus here was on the rules which constitute a particular discourse of gender-based violence in the text. This process sought to find out what actions are made possible by subject positions offered to girls and women and the effects of these subject positions. The use of various discourses within the text was contextualised to find out how different “actors” were constructed as “responsible” for the causes and consequences of gender-based violence. In this study, these identified causes and consequences were scrutinised to determine how and why particular discursive practices were privileged by the authors.

4.5 Interviews

In addition to analysing 15 Kiswahili novels, this study employed focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. The focus group interviews aimed to explore young people’s interpretations of the discursive construction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels. A focus group interview is a method of collecting data which involves a small group of people, usually four to six, discussing a particular topic or issue defined by a researcher (Cameron, 2000; Millward, 1995; Wilkinson, 2004). Discussion-based group interviews were chosen to explore young people’s interpretations due to their ability to encourage interaction among participants and allow respondents to react to and build upon the responses of other group members, and also for the dynamics of the group, which give room for arguing about and debating the topic under discussion (Cameron, 2000; Madriz, 2003; Wilkinson, 2004). The main objective of the focus group interviews was to facilitate discussion among the participants in order to explore their different viewpoints, attitudes and opinions (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999) about gender-based violence and its representation in Kiswahili novels. This mode of interaction provides an opportunity for the researcher to listen to the different voices of participants as “constructors and agents of knowledge” (Fine, 1994, p. 76).

The in-depth interview is a method which aims to “explore the complexity and in-process nature of meanings and interpretation” (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005, p. 56) of a given topic in order to obtain a deeper understanding (Hesse-Biber, 2007). In this study, the in-depth interviews aimed to solicit Kiswahili teachers’ opinions of the discursive construction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels and their

thoughts on possible curriculum interventions in this area. According to Parker (2005), the in-depth interview offers an opportunity to access individuals' experiences about social relations. Thus, participants' knowledge about Kiswahili novels and their experiences of societal practices were thought to offer insight into the underlying factors shaping different constructions of violence against women in Kiswahili novels.

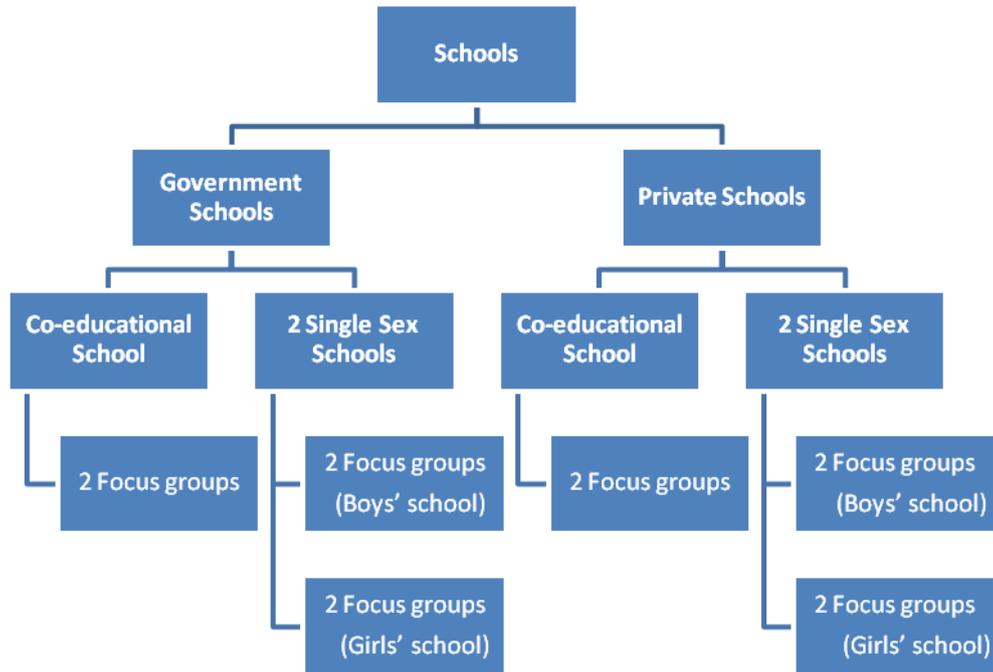
4.5.1 Selection of the participants for focus group discussions

The study employed a purposeful sampling technique to obtain student participants for the focus group discussions. Millward (1995) asserts that in order to obtain meaningful information, it is important to identify people with a broad knowledge of the subject under study. Krueger and Casey (2000, p. 26) describe this group as "information rich." In this regard, only secondary schools which teach Kiswahili at "A" level (year six in high school) were included. Participants' ages ranged from 19 - 20 years of age¹⁹, which is thought to be a meaningful age group to engage in discussion of serious topics such as gender-based violence (Sudermann et al., 1995). Also, they had been studying Kiswahili novels since year three in secondary school and therefore, they would have sufficient knowledge about Kiswahili novels to participate in a meaningful discussion.

The participants were selected from six secondary schools in Dar es Salaam city. Dar es Salaam was chosen because it has many secondary schools, both government and private, which teach Kiswahili at "A" level. All secondary schools which teach Kiswahili at "A" level in Dar es Salaam were clustered into two groups; government or private schools. Co-educational and single-sexed schools were grouped separately. Six sub-groups were formed, as illustrated in the diagram below.

¹⁹ The starting age in primary school is 7 years old. Primary school last for 7 years. 'O' level is for 4 years and 'A' level is for 2 years.

Figure 2: Selection of schools for the study



This method of selecting the schools aimed to achieve standardisation across the participants. Standardisation refers to the type of respondents included in the study, whether they are homogeneous or heterogeneous (Leavy, 2007). Millward (1995) suggests that focus group discussion of sensitive topics such as gender-based violence can be enhanced when a group comprises participants who share a key characteristic. However, this study used focus groups which included participants who shared some characteristics, such as gender, as well as groups which included participants who did not share this key characteristic. My objective in using both homogeneous and heterogeneous focus group discussions was to examine whether there were different viewpoints on how gender-based violence is discursively constructed in Kiswahili novels among the homogeneous and heterogeneous groups.

4.5.2 Recruitment of the participants for focus group discussions

In the selected schools, the Kiswahili teachers introduced me to year six Kiswahili students. I explained to the students the nature of my study. Since it would not be possible to include all year six students who were studying Kiswahili at the selected schools in my study, a random sampling technique was used to obtain a representative sample of students from each school who agreed to participate in my study.

As shown in the diagram, in each school I formed two focus groups of six students. This allowed each participant to contribute to the topic under study (Cameron, 2000; Wilkinson, 2004). The total number of groups was 12, with six students in each group (four focus groups in two co-educational schools, four focus groups in two girls' schools, and four focus groups in two boys' schools). I developed the following procedure to select the 72 representative students to participate in this study:

- There were three types of cards: 6 x **1YES**, 6 x **2YES** and **NO**²⁰.
- Students selected only one of these cards each.
- Those who selected a card with **1YES** formed the first focus group interview.
- Those who selected a card with **2YES** formed the second focus group interview.
- Those who selected a card with **NO** did not participate in the study.
- The number of cards was equal to the number of students who expressed interest in participating in my study.

In the co-educational schools, I divided the students into two groups (boys and girls) before selecting cards in order to have the same number of boys and girls in the groups.

4.5.3 Interview process for the focus groups

All the focus group discussions were conducted in the respective schools. The location varied within each school. In two schools the focus group discussions were conducted in the office of the Kiswahili teacher, of three schools they took place in a classroom, and at one school in the office in the library.

In all the focus group discussions I acted as a facilitator and the discussion lasted between 100 to 120 minutes. All the discussions were audio recorded with permission from the participants. The discussion was guided by a schedule of open-ended questions (see Appendix 1). The first questions in the discussions

²⁰ The number of cards with **NO** varied according to the number of students who expressed interest in participating in my study.

aimed to build confidence and rapport between the participants and me as the facilitator (Madriz, 2003).

Given that my interest was to understand students' interpretations of gender-based violence as constructed in Kiswahili novels in general, I selected five extracts (see Appendix 2) from several Kiswahili novels that students have read in schools, in order to provide a basis for the discussion. The extracts included: accounts of the violation of widows' rights (Burhani, 2004); rape (Chachage, 1991); wife beating (Kezilahabi, 1981); forced prostitution (S. A. Mohamed, 1980); and child marriage (Shafi, 1999). These forms of violence were selected, since they are the main forms of violence against women in Africa and in Tanzania that feature in Kiswahili literature (Ampofo et al., 2004). I selected the particular extracts because the description of the particular form of gender-based violence in each was obvious, and I knew that students would be familiar with the each novel's narrative structure. Over the two-hour period the five extracts were introduced at different stages to stimulate the discussion of the different forms of violence. Thus, the focus of the discussion was not on the individual extracts *per se*; rather, each extract was offered as an example of a particular form of gender-based violence and was chosen to elicit discussion and to assist in shifting the focus of the discussion to another related topic.

These extracts were very useful as they encouraged the participants to express their own viewpoints and opinions about the construction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels. The extracts also created the environment for the participants to focus on a particular form of violence. Using extracts of different types of gender-based violence provided an opportunity for the participants to explore further the reasons for these constructions. Indeed, while this approach allowed different perspectives on the construction of particular form of gender-based violence in the novels to be articulated in a less threatening manner (Barter & Renold, 1999), it also allowed participants to share their experience implicitly. This is similar to Rahman's (1996) argument that the use of hypothetical characters in the form of a vignette or a story enables participants to discuss the topic under study more broadly and articulate more useful information.

4.5.4 In-depth interviews

Kiswahili teachers of “A” level students in the selected schools participated in this study. All six schools had one Kiswahili teacher at “A” level, and all agreed to participate. They included three female and three male Kiswahili teachers, all with different levels of experience in teaching Kiswahili novels in high school, ranging from six to twenty years.

4.5.5 Interview process for the in-depth interviews

In-depth interviews with Kiswahili teachers were conducted in their respective offices. The interviews, which lasted for around 60 minutes, were guided by a list of open-ended questions to facilitate the discussion (see Appendix 3). All the interviews were audio recorded with permission from the participants. I was flexible, and follow-up questions were generated accordingly. This method enabled me to solicit information and participants’ opinions on the relationship between discursive constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels and social-cultural practices in Tanzanian society, and their opinions on possible curriculum interventions in this area using the novels.

4.6 Transcription and translation for the interviews

The first step in the data analysis was to transcribe the tapes. This involved listening to the tape-recorded discussions of the focus groups and in-depth interviews to establish the key components for the discourse analysis. Transcription is the process of transforming spoken text into a written form to make it accessible as a reference during analysis (Du Bois, Schuetze-Coburn, Cumming, & Paolino, 1993; Wood & Kroger, 2000). In discourse analysis, the transcription process has to be complete as it is difficult to know which information will be important during analysis (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Wood & Kroger, 2000). With this in mind, I transcribed all of the interviews verbatim. The transcriptions included information, such as who said what and the division of the speech in turns, as it was not feasible to include all features such as nonverbal interaction, pauses, laughter and vocal noises (Du Bois et al., 1993). Nevertheless, I tried to maintain the integrity of the message articulated, as the process of transcription plays a central role in the analysis stage (Gumperz & Berenz, 1993; Wood & Kroger, 2000).

Puchta and Potter (2004) note that transcribed talk can be hard to follow because of different turns in conversation. Hence, Du Bois et al. (1993) propose the use of letters or pseudonyms to identify the speakers in a given turn. They note that in a situation where the researcher wants to know more about the participants' impressions, pseudonyms are preferred. In this study, I used pseudonyms for the students and teachers. Also, in focus group discussions I adopted a "turn," which is "a string of utterances produced by a single speaker and bounded by other participants' turns" (Gumperz & Berenz, 1993, p. 95), as the unit of analysis. The turn provides a sequential analysis and allows for the examination of how participants construct and interpret different discourses as they converse. This helped to distinguish the different viewpoints in the focus group interviews.

All focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were conducted in Kiswahili. Participants were very confident and comfortable as they were using a language they have mastered very well. This affirms Liamputtong and Ezzy's (2005) suggestion that it is important to conduct interviews using participants' own language. However, in this study only the translated version is presented. Compared with the extracts from the novels, the interaction, clarification, and the social contexts of the discussions and the interviews enabled the researcher to maintain the meaning intended by the interviewees.

4.7 Data analysis: Interviews

The analysis of the data from the focus group discussions aimed to explore the relationship between discourses constructed in Kiswahili novels and the subjectivity of the readers. Since my purpose was to understand the way young people respond to gender-based violence as it is discursively constructed in Kiswahili novels, the analysis focused on identifying the discursive constructions of gender-based violence that participants drew on when they read, interpreted and responded to Kiswahili novels. As Willig (1999) asserts, understanding the way discourses are articulated in the real world facilitates the process of knowing how different subject positions are constructed by these discourses.

The following procedures guided the analysis of the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. First, the interview transcript files were converted from word format (.doc extension) into rich text format (.rtf extension) in order to process

them as NVivo document files. Then, all transcript files were transferred into the NVivo document browser.

Second, the interview transcripts were read closely to identify key themes young people drew on when encountering depictions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels. Research questions three and four, “how do young people interpret the different forms of gender-based violence as they are discursively constructed in Kiswahili fiction texts?” and “how do young people respond to the discursive construction of the causes and consequences of gender-based violence in Kiswahili fiction texts?” served as a guide. Initial themes for coding were noted while transcribing the interviews. However, I continued creating free nodes as the coding process progressed. By using the NVivo program, it was possible to group together participants’ ideas with related themes into nodes. For instance, all responses related to “men’s power and control” were coded in one tree node, “men’s power.”

Third, the coded responses were checked carefully to make sure the main themes related to different ways young people responded to the discursive construction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels and were then coded into respective tree nodes. This was done by re-reading the coded notes. Patterns in the thematic content were evident in the data; therefore, it was possible to connect the themes. Tree nodes with subcategories were created. For example, the theme “liberal instrumentalism discourse” was developed into a tree node with subcategories such as “men’s control” and “men’s physical power.” At this stage, themes within the data clustered into two main groups: themes that reiterated and themes that challenged dominant discursive constructions of violence against women in Kiswahili novels.

For the in-depth interviews, the analysis aimed at exploring the relationship between textual representations of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels and social practices. The point here is that knowing how dominant discourses about violence against women are maintained and reproduced, and what new discourses are potentially available (Kendall & Wickham, 1999), may help in the design and implementation of prevention programmes. To this end, research question five, “to what extent are the discursive constructions of gender-based violence in

Kiswahili fiction perceived as a reflection of socio-cultural practices?” was used to examine the relationship between the textual representation of gender-based violence and what is happening in Tanzanian society. Research question six, “how can Kiswahili novels be used in school settings to address violence against women in Tanzanian society?” was used to establish possible intervention programmes in school settings using Kiswahili novels. The analysis of the in-depth interviews followed the same procedures that guided the focus group interviews.

4.8 Ethical considerations

Gaining permission to conduct research is an important ethical issue (Upvall & Hashwani, 2001), especially when research involves discussing a sensitive topic with high school students. The first step was to obtain approval for the study from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato. Then, I gained permission from the Regional Educational Officer of Dar es Salaam before approaching the selected schools. In each selected school, participants were informed that their responses were entirely for research purposes and their participation was completely voluntary. Also, they were informed that the outcome of this research could be used in developing intervention programmes for ending gender-based violence in Tanzanian society.

During the initial phase of each focus group interview, I explained the nature of my study and key issues pertaining to participants’ rights regarding the entire group interview process, my obligations to the participants, and my aims for the interview. Although the interview was about fictional stories, I conveyed information about possible emotional reactions, and I had ready the contact details of both male and female counsellors based in Dar es Salaam during the interviews in the event that any participants wished to discuss any distress the topic had created for them. The participants read the information sheet and consent form (see Appendix 4 and 5) outlining the purpose of the study. Then, I clarified the participants’ role and answered any questions they had about the study raised by the information sheet and consent form. A written consent form was signed by all the interviewees and myself as the researcher before the interviews.

During the initial phase of the focus group, I also emphasised that the contributions sought from the students related to their understandings of and responses to the novels and their general knowledge about their society, but they were not required to share their personal experiences. Furthermore, I asked the participants to treat the discussion as confidential. During the discussions a number of students did however share their personal experiences of gender-based violence. Clearly, this suggests they felt comfortable to share this information with me and their peers. As a researcher, however, I was sensitive and careful throughout the discussion and always re-directed the discussion back to the topic of Kiswahili novels and their general knowledge about Tanzanian society, rather than concentrating on personal experiences.

A full briefing with the Kiswahili teachers who agreed to participate in in-depth interviews was also given before the participants read the information sheet and consent form (see Appendix 4 and 6). Again, I explained the nature of my study and addressed key issues pertaining to the participant's rights and my obligations to the participant. As mentioned earlier, while the interview was about fictional stories, I talked about possible emotional reactions. After they had read the information sheet and consent form, I answered any questions the interviewee had about the study. A written consent form was signed by all the participants and me before the interviews proceeded.

All participants chose pseudonyms, and with the permission of the participants, all the discussions were tape-recorded. In the actual analysis, anonymity is assured as the names of the schools are not mentioned and all individuals are referred to by pseudonyms.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the research methodology that guided the study. Foucauldian discourse analysis was singled out as the most appropriate method for achieving the objectives of the study, which were to explore the construction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels and young people's responses to these constructions. Thus, the procedures used to carry out the Foucauldian analysis in the novels were described in detail. The purpose of exploring these constructions is to ascertain how novels can be used in intervention programmes

aimed at combating violence against women in Tanzanian society. Therefore, this chapter also explained the purposes of employing focus group discussions and in-depth interviews and the procedures used to recruit the participants in this study. The final section of this chapter explained how any ethical issues were resolved. In the next chapter, I will focus on analysing the different types of gender-based violence as constructed in Kiswahili novels. Primarily, Chapter 5 examines how Kiswahili authors utilise dominant discourses in the field of violence against women to construct perpetrators and victims of gender-based violence.

Chapter Five: Discursive Constructions of Gender-based Violence in Kiswahili Novels

5.1 Introduction

Gender-based violence is a complex social problem which manifests itself in different ways. This violence has major repercussions for women and girls physically, emotionally and psychologically. Understanding discursive constructions of its causes and consequences is essential for planning prevention programmes to address this problem in Tanzanian society and in other societies. Analysing the dominant discourses which sustain gender-based violence is particularly essential, as individuals draw on these discourses when constructing their understandings of, and responses to, gender-based violence in their own lives and in their communities. As previously noted, the novel is one source for understanding the social world (Mar & Oatley, 2008) and people's beliefs and emotions (M. C. Green, 2004; Keen, 2006).

This chapter focuses on identifying the dominant discourses which Kiswahili novelists have drawn on when constructing fictional representations of the causes and consequences of gender-based violence. Drawing on the Foucauldian notion of discourses as “ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledge and the relations between them” (Weedon, 1997, p. 105), I am interested in the ways in which dominant discourses in the field of violence against women shape the subject positions of victims and perpetrators of gender-based violence as depicted in Kiswahili novels. To achieve my objective, I selected 15 Kiswahili novels published between 1975 - 2004 for analysis, namely: Balisidya's *Shida*, (1975); Burhani's *Kipimo cha Mizani* (*Weighing Scales*, 2004); Chachage's *Almasi za Bandia* (*Spurious Diamond*, 1991); Kalindimya's *Wimbi la Huzuni* (*Wave of Sadness*, 1988); Mapalala's *Kwa heri Iselamagazi* (*Goodbye Iselamagazi*, 1992); Mkufya's *Ua la Faraja* (*Consolation Flower*, 2004); M. S. Mohamed's *Nyota ya Rehema* (*Rehema's Destiny*, 1976); S. A. Mohamed's *Asali Chungu* (*Bitter Honey*, 1977) and *Utengano* (*Separation*, 1980); Mtobwa's *Dar es Salaam Usiku* (*Dar es Salaam at Night*, 1990); Mwajjega's *Mama Baba yangu ni yupi?* (*Mother, who is my Father?*, 2002); Mwanga's *Wivu wa Mume* (*Your Husband's Jealousy*, 1988). Ruhumbika's *Janga Sugu la Wazawa* (*Everlasting*

Doom for the Children of the Land, 2001); Shafi's *Vuta n'kuvute (Pulling one Another*, 1999); and Wambura's *Nuru ya Bhoke (Bhoke's Future*, 2004).

As has been indicated in the previous chapter, the analysis of the novels was guided by Willig's (2001, 2008) version of Foucauldian discourse analysis, which looks at the discursive resources available in a given society and the ways in which dominant discourses function in a wider society to construct subjectivity, selfhood and power relations. In addition, O'Neill's (1998, 2000) work, which identifies five dominant discourses in the field of violence against women, and Hollway's (1984, 1989) discussion of male sexual drive discourses, were used to examine the discursive practices of gender-based violence in selected Kiswahili novels.

In the selected novels, Kiswahili authors draw on these dominant discourses as they describe reasons for gender-based violence. In order to understand how the authors depict gender-based violence in the novels, I approached each text as a "whole"; that is, the authors' illustrations of gender-based violence within a text were examined for ambiguities, contradictions, and tensions conveyed explicitly and implicitly. Through this process it became apparent that the novels, to different degrees and at various moments, reflect, reproduce and challenge dominant discourses. While some authors offer "cautionary tales," others provide visions of alternatives; some momentarily challenge only to have this critique silenced as dominant discourses are privileged and reconfirmed by the narrative outcome. The narratives suggest an internal "discursive struggle" in these texts. They are not internally consistent: at times they are contradictory, and this opens up different possible readings. The following discussion focuses on the depiction of various forms of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels, namely domestic violence, sexual violence, economic violence, and child marriage.

5.2 Construction of different types of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels

5.2.1 Construction of domestic violence

Individual and societal factors have been documented in research as the “causes”²¹ of domestic violence. Kiswahili novelists depict domestic violence as emanating from individual factors, such as the use of alcohol, infidelity, and jealousy, and societal factors including poverty, gender socialisation and men’s power. In their constructions, discourses of medical pathology and romantic expressive tension, as well as socio-systemic discourses, dominate the narratives, while liberal humanist discourse features only in a few cases. Drawing on discourses of medical pathology and romantic expressive tension, Balisidya, in *Shida*, for example, constructs wife battering as being “caused” by poverty, which manifests itself in the excessive use of alcohol. Balisidya describes Machupa’s excessive use of alcohol after being unable to take care of his family as the cause of wife battering and taking his wife’s money by force, as the following extract illustrates:

Mke na watoto wakajiunga naye. Sasa maisha ya Machupa yakazidishiwa uzito mara mbili; hakuyamudu. Kwa hiyo Machupa akaingia ulevi; ulevi usio kipimo. ... Badala yake, fedha ya mshahara ilipokwisha, aligombana na mkewe, akampiga na kumnyang’anya chochote alichokuwa nacho. (Balisidya, 1975, p. 61)

His wife and children joined him. Life became tough, as there were twice as many to support. He couldn’t afford it. Consequently, Machupa started drinking excessively. ... When he finished his salary he quarrelled with his wife, beating her and forcefully taking all her money.

Balisidya describes the consequences of abuse in Machupa’s marriage as family breakdown - “divorce.” However, this has more effect on the mother because she has the responsibility for the children. Generally, in Tanzania, family breakdown

²¹ Few studies on violence against women suggest direct “causes,” but more often identify “associations” between variables. Nonetheless, in terms of how that research comes to be understood and rearticulated within the wider public, “causality” is often attributed to factors associated with domestic violence. Discourse analysis in this study thus seeks to identify such causes.

creates more problems for a woman as she may have insufficient resources to take care of the children, as the author further illustrates:

Hatimaye watu hawa walitengana, mke wa Machupa akahamia sehemu nyingine ya mji. Yeye na watoto wake sita wakasaidiana katika biashara yake, ili wapate muradi wao – waishi. (Balisidya, 1975, pp. 61-62)

Finally this couple separated, Machupa's wife moved to another area of the city with her six children and they worked together in a small business so that they could survive.

Later on, the novelist describes how Machupa blames his wife for the separation, as she allowed herself to have many children:

“Tatizo langu,” ... Machupa alieleza “... ni matoto a – a tatizo lilikuwa matoto mengi mno nikamtupilia mbali yule mama na mizigo yake ya kila siku. Angekuwa peke yake, loo! kisura wangu nampenda kweli tungeishi tustarehe. Lakini ah, amekuwa malaya. Acha aende Jehanam nani anajali?” (Balisidya, 1975, p. 62)

“My problem,” ... Machupa said “... is the children. The problem was children, too many children. I decided to divorce her with her daily problems [children]. If she was alone, Oh! My lovely wife, I love her a lot, we would live together and enjoy. But, Oh! She had been a prostitute. Let her go to hell who cares?”

In this extract, Machupa positions his wife as responsible for having too many children. Furthermore, because of his frustration with his life, Machupa calls his wife a “prostitute,” but only because she has numerous children. Having too many children, which contributes to his life's hardship, is implicitly depicted as another cause of wife battering in this novel. This depiction is consistent with McCloskey et al.'s (2005) study of the power imbalance in Tanzanian families, which reported that women who had had five or more children were at a high risk of violence. These authors argue that life adversity, which manifests itself in economic dependency, is the main factor.

Elaborating on economic and social abuse of women, Kalindimya (1988) in *Wimbi la Huzuni* narrates the story of a man, Josephat, who forbids his fiancé, Seya, from continuing to work in a paid job once he starts working, as the following extract illustrates:

Ile siku aliyianza kazi kwa Mr. Patel na kukabidhiwa matangulizo ya mshahara wake. Ilikuwa ni ile siku aliyomsimamisha au kumzuia Seya, asiendeleo kufanya kazi hapo Ushirika Club. (Kalindimya, 1988, p. 35)

The day he [Josephat] started working for Mr. Patel and received his salary advance is the day he forbade Seya from working at Ushirika Club.

As noted by Coleman and Strauss (1986), in heterosexual relationships, traditionally it has been the man who makes decisions about which job should be taken or if a partner should go to work or quit work. Explicitly, the extract reveals a power imbalance within the couple. In addition, Josephat is living according to cultural norms in which the male partner is a breadwinner and the female has to stay home (Lary et al., 2004). The lack of economic power puts women in a vulnerable environment of potential exposure to violence, as they cannot afford to leave the relationship if the need arises (Bassuk, Dawson, & Huntington, 2006; Bograd, 1988b; Jewkes, 2002). Subsequently, men prohibiting women from working in paid jobs, as reflected in Kiswahili novels, aims to put women under men's control and hence renders them more vulnerable to domestic violence.

Research on violence against women demonstrates that males' controlling behaviour has several consequences. One is to exclude women from the public domain and thus limit their opportunities to discuss issues of concern. As a result, they cannot participate fully as citizens in the community. Kelly (2003) argues that women's isolation and economic dependency limit their development as a group and realisation of their capacities as individuals, and thus perpetuates their subordination in society. Dominant discourses about women in the society construct women as subordinate and obliged to obey men's orders (A. Jenkins, 1990; Nichols & Feltey, 2003). Such discourses are clearly evident in the novels. Kalindimya (1988), for instance, illustrates how Seya tries to persuade her fiancé, Josephat, to let her continue working. However, when Josephat refuses, the relationship seems to be more important to her than her job; hence, she opts to keep the relationship with her fiancé rather than her job:

Jitihada zote za kumtafadhalisha Josephat Kilungu aendeleo na kazi yake, zilipingwa mpaka ikafikia hatua ya kutoelewana. ...

Kuendelea kuwa mkorofi, ni kama kuipiga teke bahati yake halafu aanze tena maisha ya kubahatisha, kisa! Potelea mbali haya mambo ya kazi. Akaupitisha uamuzi. (Kalindimya, 1988, pp. 35-36)

Her effort to convince Josephat Kilungu [her fiancé] to let her continue working was unsuccessful. They quarrelled as she (Seya) tried to explain the importance of her working. ...

Persisting in her views is to dismiss her good fortune and start living an uncertain life again. Forget about working. She made her decision.

In these extracts, the novelist emphasises dominant discourses affirming men's superiority and women's subordination in making decisions. The author reveals that women's status and identity are attained through marriage and not through occupational achievement. The narrative positions the relationship as most important for Seya, who believes a married woman is safe and certain in her life. Consequently, for a woman to have a job and be economically independent is not as important as having a husband. In traditional gender socialisation, while men are encouraged to be independent, women are schooled in dependence and submissiveness (Barnett & LaViolette, 2003). Additionally, Barnett and LaViolette (2003) assert that in socialisation, achievement is gendered - men work hard for success and women avoid success. To fit with traditional socialisation, they argue, women keep away from achievement and opt for marriage. Accordingly, these narratives, which uncritically reflect dominant discourses, potentially encourage women to be obedient and submissive for the sake of their relationship and to be fearful of fighting for their rights.

Earlier on, Kalindimya (1988) explains that Josephat promises Seya to live with her forever. However, as the narration continues, Seya leaves Josephat because she was told by Shemsa, Josephat's boss, that Josephat does not love her anymore. Shemsa wants to marry Josephat, and thus had lied to Seya when Josephat was on a working trip. According to the narrative, Josephat does not know Shemsa's plans and he refuses to marry Shemsa. The narrative concludes by revealing Josephat as a successful businessman and Seya living with another man in a hotel. In this novel, Kalindimya appears to suggest that the available subject positions to women have effects on their decision making.

Likewise, Mwanga (1988), in *Wivu wa Mumeo*, describes a man, Ihucha, who forbids his wife from working and monitors her movements as he suspects her of being unfaithful. In the following example, the author depicts Ihucha's fear of his wife having a sexual relationship with another man, Raymond Lyimo, as a source of problems in their marital relationship:

Baada ya kuachishwa kazi ya ofisini na mumewe, Farida aliamua kujishughulisha na biashara. ... Hali hiyo haikumfurahisha Ihucha, bali ilimtia wasiwasi. Lengo lake la kumuachisha kazi mkewe likawa linatiwa dosari. Yeye alimuachisha kazi ofisini ili akae na kutulia nyumbani, na sio kuzunguka madukani! (Mwanga, 1988, p. 1)

Bwana Ihucha alikuwa akifuatilia nyendo za mkewe. Hakupendelea kufanya kitendo hicho lakini ... hakuwa na imani na Raymond juu ya mkewe. Pili, simu alizokuwa akipigiwa Farida (ambazo kwa kweli zilitoka kwa wateja), zilizidi! Tatu, Farida alionekana kutomjali sana Ihucha, hata arudi usiku sana hakusumbuka kuuliza. ... Hayo yote yalimpa wasi wasi Ihucha, akaona kuwa kuna hatari ya kuporwa mkewe, hasa na Ray. Wivu ukapamba moto! (Mwanga, 1988, p. 5)

After her husband forbade her to work in the office, Farida decided to set up business at home ... Ihucha was not happy because he was worried his wife would meet other men. He did not succeed in his aim. His intention of preventing her working in the office was so she would stay at home and not go around the shops.

Mr. Ihucha was monitoring his wife's movements. He was not interested in doing that ... but he suspected that Raymond was having a sexual affair with his wife. Second, Farida received too many phone calls (which were business calls)! Third, Farida was not worried about her husband even when he came home late from work; she didn't care to ask him. ... All these things made Ihucha wonder whether someone was going to take his wife, especially Ray. His jealousy towards his wife grew.

In the first extract, Mwanga elucidates how Ihucha uses his "power" to overcome his fear of infidelity by prohibiting his wife from working in paid jobs. Also, he becomes unhappy when his wife "set up a business at home" because he wants his wife to be totally dependent. When Ihucha realises that it is not possible to stop his wife from starting a business at home, he decides to monitor her movements, especially when she visits her customers, because he becomes worried that his wife has been unfaithful in their marriage. Thus, Ihucha's subsequent violence towards his wife is presented as being the result of an uncontrollable internal force

- jealousy. Jealousy, when provoked, has been identified as one of the “reasons” for violence in marital relationships (Babcock, Costa, Green, & Eckhardt, 2004; Dutton, van Ginkel, & Landolt, 1996; Foran & O’Leary, 2008). Evidently, drawing on this understanding, Ihucha’s jealousy is described as being provoked by his wife’s behaviour. Furthermore, Ihucha’s inability to control his wife’s communication and mobility after prohibiting her from working in a paid job is positioned as a threat in his marriage.

Studies on violence against women have noted that men’s jealousy against women is related to men’s sense of possessiveness and control over women (Foran & O’Leary, 2008; G. Kaufman, 1992; Lary et al., 2004; Wang, Parish, Laumann, & Luo, 2009). In the following conversation between Ihucha and his wife’s friend (Khadija), Ihucha’s jealousy is initially constructed as emanating from his notion of possessiveness over his wife; hence he is compelled to control her. However, the author’s critical identification of Ihucha’s power to possess and control his wife is then undermined; instead, the author foregrounds Ihucha’s personality, over which he has no control:

“Lakini Farida ni mtoto mtaratibu sana. ... Nashangaa kwa nini unamchungu kiasi hicho.”

“Ni wivu Khadija. Nampenda sana, na sitaki kuingiliwa na mtu. Nataka awe wangu peke yangu.” ...

“Nadhani hata kazi ulimuachisha kwa sababu ya wivu. Huoni kama mnabomoa ndoa yenu badala ya kujijenga?”

“Nifundishe basi Khadija, nifanye nini. Niambie dawa ya wivu ni nini, nitashukuru sana.” (Mwanga, 1988, p. 21)

“But Farida is a very trustful wife. ... I wonder why are you controlling your wife to that extent.” [Khadija, Farida’s friend asked Ihucha].

“Khadija, it is jealousy. I love my wife so much and I don’t want anybody to interfere in my marriage. I want her to be for me only?”...

“I think also you prohibit her working in paid jobs because of your jealousy. Can’t you see you are breaking your marriage rather than strengthening it?”

“Teach me Khadija, what I shall do. Tell me what is the solution to jealousy, I will really appreciate it.”

As Ihucha reveals his problematic personality traits and seeks help from his wife’s friend, the author explicitly links Ihucha’s behaviour to his jealous personality. Ihucha is consequently repositioned, not as dominating and controlling his wife, but as suffering from dysfunctional behaviour. This conflation between the discourses of liberal humanist instrumentalism and medical pathology offers a different subject position for Ihucha. He is recast as a sick perpetrator who needs help and is ready to change, as is apparent in his consequent cry for help, “Teach me Khadija, what I shall do? Tell me what is the solution to jealousy, I will really appreciate it.”

While this discursive reframing enables Ihucha to rationalise his abusive actions, it has serious consequences for his wife economically, as he makes her dependent on him and socially isolated from the public sphere. Moreover, Mwanga describes the husband’s lack of trust in the relationship as causing more problems for his wife’s health. Mwanga reveals that Ihucha takes a pistol and attacks a house, which his wife has entered to have her hair plaited, because Ihucha thinks she has gone there to meet her extramarital friend. When entering the house, however, he finds a group of women plaiting hair. In shock, he drops his pistol and runs away, leaving his wife in emotional distress and asking many questions.

Mwanga explains that after the attack Ihucha runs away and hides far from his house, fearing the police will be looking for him. Later he visits his wife’s friend, Khadija, to ask what happened after his surprise attack. While in Khadija’s house, Ihucha consumes alcohol and has sex with Khadija. When Khadija and Ihucha are together, Khadija’s boyfriend, Rugakiza, takes a photograph without their knowledge. Then, he takes the photo to Ihucha’s house. Later, Rugakiza phones Ihucha’s wife and informs her that there is a message from her husband under the main door. Farida is shocked to see a photograph of her husband kissing her friend, Khadija. The following day, Ihucha returns home and lies to his wife, saying that he had been hiding in the hotel. Farida is infuriated with her husband’s unfaithful behaviour and she wants to leave. Ihucha then admonishes his wife for accusing him of being unfaithful. Farida is unable to hold back her anger and pushes her husband and throws objects at him:

Alichukua mto akamtupia, ... na kila alichokiona hapo mezani. ... Kioo kidogo kilivunjika na kumkata kidogo kwenye paji la uso. Hapo alipatwa na hasira, akasimama upesi kabla hajafikiwa na silaha nyingine. ...

“Usinilazimishe kukupiga Farida. Umeshaniumiza. ... Sasa eleza unalotaka kusema lieleweke.” ... Ihucha alitupa jicho ... akaona picha moja ya rangi. ...

Aliduwaa alipowatambua watu waliokuwa katika picha hiyo. ...

Farida alikuwa anamuangalia kwa jicho linaloweza kumfanya mtu azimie! ... Ihucha akaendelea kuikodolea macho ile picha kana kwamba ndio kwanza alikuwa anaitupia jicho. (Mwanga, 1988, pp. 51-52)

She threw a pillow at him ... and whatever she saw on the table. ... The small mirror broke and cut him on his forehead. That time he was angry and he stood up before enduring more injuries. ...

“Farida, don’t force me to beat you. You have injured me. ... Now tell me what do you want.” ... Ihucha looked over ... and saw a colour photo. ...

He was shocked as he recognised the people in the photo. ...

Farida was giving her husband a look which could stop him dead! ... Ihucha continued looking at the photo as if he was seeing it for the first time.

In the discourse of medical pathology, while the actions of violent men have been positioned as an outcome of their personality disorder (Holtzworth-Munroe, Bates, Smutzler, & Sandin, 1997; Star, 1983; Trute, 1998), abused women have at times been discursively positioned as precipitating the abuse (Babcock, Waltz, Jacobson, & Gottman, 1993; G. Kaufman, 1992; O’Leary, 1993). Furthermore, research framed by the discourse of medical pathology has suggested that perpetrators of violence against women have higher levels of personality disorder, which lead them to involve themselves in negative and emotionally unsatisfying relationships (Trute, 1998). Also, they are said to lack communication and problem solving techniques (Babcock et al., 1993; Holtzworth-Munroe, 1992; Star, 1983). Echoing these perspectives, Mwanga positions Farida as culpable for her subsequent victimisation, as she initiates the violence. Farida’s response - throwing objects, the way she looked at her husband, and her intention to attack her husband - provokes the violence that subsequently occurs. On the other hand,

Ihucha's dysfunctional personality is described as a reason for his inability to communicate and explain marital problems appropriately.

The ultimate consequence of this lack of trust in the marital relationship is Farida's miscarriage. Later on in the narrative, Mwanga explains that when Ihucha tries to use his power to keep the photo, his wife becomes unhappy, as the following extracts illustrate:

Wazo la kuiteketeza picha ile likapenya akili yake. ... Farida akalisoma wazo hilo usoni mwa Ihucha. Akamrukia mumewe kumyanganya picha ile muhimu... ikatokea kukuru kakara. ...

Katika purukushani hiyo Ihucha alirusha mkono akampiga Farida tumboni. Ilikuwa bahati mbaya. Lilikuwa pigo la ghafla na la nguvu. (Mwanga, 1988, p. 52)

Ihucha alikwenda hospitali kumuangalia Farida. Habari alizopata huko zilizidi kumvuruga akili na kumuongezea huzuni. Aliambiwa kuwa Farida alizidiwa na maumivu ikabidi afanyiwe operesheni saa tisa. Kiumbe kilichokuwa tumboni kilitolewa, kwani hakikuwa na uhai tena. (Mwanga, 1988, p. 57)

He thought of destroying the photo. ... Farida read that in Ihucha's face. She attacked her husband and grabbed the photo which was important... it was then that the fighting started. ...

While quarrelling, Ihucha hit Farida in her stomach accidentally. It was a sudden and heavy hit.

Ihucha went to the hospital to see Farida. What he heard was very disturbing and sad. He was told that Farida was in great pain and she had surgery at three in the afternoon. The baby in her stomach was dead.

In this novel, Mwanga positions the abuser as a man who suffers from behavioural deficits, causing irrational jealousy. In the examples given above, Ihucha is positioned as a sick individual who needs help, as he is a victim of a behavioural disorder which is beyond his control. Mwanga writes, "Ihucha hits Farida in her stomach *accidentally*" (emphasis added). In this way, the novelist distances the abuser from his violent actions and diverts attention away from him being responsible for the consequences of his behaviour.

Later in her narration, Mwanga reiterates Ihucha's dysfunctional behaviour and attributes Ihucha's unfaithfulness to consumption of alcohol. Mwanga reveals

this as Ihucha writes an apologetic letter to his wife detailing the reasons for the problems in their marital relationship:

Naomba nijieleze makosa yangu ili utambue kuwa naelewa kuwa nimekosa. Farida mimi nina wivu. Nakuonea wivu sana, ndio maana nikakufuata nyuma juzi jioni. ...

Ulevi ni rafiki mkubwa wa shetani; nimegundua. Ulevi uliponitawala ulimkaribisha shetani, nikajikuta nafanya mambo kwa kutumia akili ya shetani na sio akili yangu hasa. (Mwanga, 1988, pp. 67-68)

Let me articulate my faults so that you can be sure I am aware of my liability. Farida, I am jealous. I am so jealous about you, that is why last night I followed you. ...

Drunkenness is a good friend of a devil, I have realised. When I was very drunk, the devil took control, and I was acting through the devil's mind and not mine.

In the letter, Ihucha suggests that his “jealousy” was uncontrollable, and that he had been unable to control his previous actions because he was drunk. Hence, the “devil” managed to take control and he did not know what he was doing when he had sex with Khadija. Studies on violence against women suggest that causal explanations can be used to rationalise abusive behaviour, excuse the perpetrator from responsibility, and seek forgiveness from the victim (A. Jenkins, 1990). According to the narrative, Farida accepts Ihucha's apology and they continue with their matrimonial life. The ending of this novel seems to echo traditional gendered discourses that encourage women to preserve their marriage, even in the face of violence.

Elaborating further on economic and social abuse of women, S. A. Mohamed (1980) in *Utengano* features the story of a man, Makuudi, who abuses his first wife, Mwanasururu, by beating and confining her because he wants to control his wife's wealth. The author explains that Mwanasururu has properties, which she inherited from her father before marrying Makuudi. However, Makuudi becomes unhappy seeing his wife controlling the properties. Consequently, he uses his power to get hold of the properties for himself. Makuudi reveals this as Kabi (Mwanasururu's son) tells his girlfriend (Maimuna) what happened to his mother:

“Basi bwana huyu alikwua maluuni ... akawa anamtesa mama, akawa anampiga viboko, anamtawisha. Na mama yangu niseme alikuwa ana chake. Si kitu kikubwa, bali alirithi ng’ombe ishirini kwa babake. Pia kijishamba kidogo cha mikorosho, pia alikuwa na vyombo vya dhahabu na tena vipesa kiasi che elfu sita benki. Basi bwana huyo aliviwania kwa hadaa na hadaa iliposhindwa alitumia mabavu. Alipokwisha vipata tu, alimwacha mama.” (S. A. Mohamed, 1980, p. 164)

“This man [Maksuudi] was a greedy person ... he [Maksuudi] abused my mother by beating her and confining her to the house. My mother has a little wealth. It was not a lot; she inherited twenty cows from her father and a small cashew farm. Besides that, she had golden ornaments and six thousand Tanzanian shillings in the bank. Then, her husband tried to persuade her to give him her wealth, but when he failed he used brute power. Right after getting her wealth he divorced my mother.”

Feminist researchers have long argued that violence against women is a means of accomplishing a certain goal (Bograd, 1988a; Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Stark & Flitcraft, 1996). This is apparent in the narration, as Maksuudi’s desire to gain his wife’s properties is achieved through violence. He abuses his wife physically by beating her, socially by isolating her from the public sphere, and economically by taking her wealth. After accomplishing his goal, Maksuudi divorces his first wife. Explicitly, the author positions the perpetrator as being fully responsible for his abusive actions. As a consequence of wife-battering and economic abuse, Mwanasururu is shown to endure suffering throughout her life. She becomes an alcoholic and a prostitute. She becomes pregnant and has a son (Kabi). As a result of her excessive drinking, Mwanasururu becomes mentally unstable and one day she tries to rape her son. He runs away and is hit by a car. Badly injured, one of his legs has to be amputated. Finally, Mwanasururu dies because of depression. According to the narration, nothing occurred to Maksuudi after he accomplished his goal. Discussing violence against women in Africa, Kimani (2007) asserts that men’s notion of using violence to get what they want from women is maintained by the culture. She argues that violence against women is rooted in the culture and norms which privilege men and devalue women. Therefore, it is not surprising when the author leaves Maksuudi unpunished, as he lives according to cultural norms.

As noted by various authors (Dauer & Gomez, 2006; Kim & Motsei, 2002; Shackelford, Goetz, Buss, Euler, & Hoier, 2005; Wilson & Daly, 1992) abusive

men control women, particularly wives, by preventing them from participating in economic and social activities and by restricting their ability to fight for change, while themselves enjoying all these with their friends and/or with other women. This is apparent in *Utengano*, as S. A. Mohamed explains how Makuudi controls his second wife, Tamima. He confines his wife and his daughter to the house while having an extramarital affair with another woman, Kazija. The author explains that when Makuudi's daughter becomes tired of living in seclusion she decides to escape a few hours after her mother has had a new baby. Learning that his daughter has run away, Makuudi punishes his wife:

"We, ... paka, we mwanaharamu," ... "Wallahi nitakupiga leo, nikubakishe kope tu." ...

"Utasema husemi?"

"Nitakula nyama mbichi mimimiiii," ...

"Maimuna yu wapi naseeeemaa. Ilikuwaje? ... Unamtorosha mwanangu...? Yuko wapi Maimunaaaa?" Makuudi ilimtoka bakora ambayo ilianguka juu ya kichwa cha Tamima. Tamima alipiga usiyahi mkubwa akaanguka chini. ... Damu ilikuwa ikimchuruzika. (S. A. Mohamed, 1980, p. 47)

"You ... spiteful woman, you deceitful woman" ... "Truly today I will beat you, to death." ...

"Will you explain or not?"

"I will punish you severely," ...

"Where is Maimuna, I'm asking, what happened? ... You had planned for my daughter to leave...? Where is Maimuna?" Using his walking stick, Makuudi beat Tamima on her head. Tamima cried loudly and fell down. ... Blood was flowing where she had been beaten by the walking stick.

In this example, S. A. Mohamed depicts violence against women as an expression of men's power and women's subordinate position in society. Research has shown that violence against women in African societies is viewed as an acceptable way for men to punish women for perceived disobedience (Kim & Motsei, 2002; Rude, 1999; J. T. Wood, 2004). Failure to fulfil the traditional female role of taking care of children is used to rationalise wife battering. J. T. Wood's (2004, p. 563) study reveals that men think "it is a man's right to use violence to discipline and control women." This behaviour of disciplining a woman, is supported and normalised by society, and a man who manages to punish his wife for not meeting the required traditional role is praised as a good

man who is “keeping order in his home” (Kim & Motsei, 2002, p. 1246). According to the narrative, Tamima does not know where her daughter is because she disappeared a few minutes after Tamima has given birth to a new baby. Yet, her husband punishes her for not taking sufficient care of her daughter and accuses her of having aided her escape.

Later in the narration, S. A. Mohamed details how Makuudi is challenged by his former mistress, Kazija, in a community meeting while contesting community leadership. Kazija describes what he did to his wives, as well as his infidelity. She also explains his misconduct when he was a district commissioner and argues that he will not be a good leader. People become very upset and want to beat him. He gets arrested by the police and taken into custody. Subsequently, he is jailed for two years. Although it is not clear if he is jailed because of domestic violence, the author’s depiction of Makuudi’s abusive actions toward his wives seems to challenge the dominant view that violence against women is a private matter.

Also, the author illustrates how Makuudi regrets what he did to his wives. He tries to reunite with his second wife, Tamima, but she refuses. Responding to his letter, Tamima writes:

Pamebakia nini baina yetu? Labda roho yangu ambayo nusura uitowe. Na sasa siko tayari kukupa. Sirudi. (S. A. Mohamed, 1980, p. 108)

Nothing is left between us. You almost killed me. Now I am not ready to give you a second chance. I am not coming back.

S. A. Mohamed explains that Makuudi is very saddened by his ex-wife’s reaction. At the end of the novel, S. A. Mohamed accentuates the importance of equality between women and men and the need to hasten women’s liberation. S. A. Mohamed’s depiction of Tamima’s response possibly challenges other Kiswahili novelists, who portray women characters as inferior to men and unable to make decisions when needed.

Feminist studies demonstrate that inequality between the roles assigned to men and women within the family cause injustice and often violence against women. Women’s subordinate position in the family and the gendered division of labour causes women to be dependent, and this increases their vulnerability to violence

(Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Kisaakye, 2008; Mooney, 2000; Wang et al., 2009). This is apparent in *Ua la Faraja*, as Mkufya (2004) describes how Ngoma uses his power to abuse his wife economically, as he is the only one who earns money and is the decision maker in the family. His wife – Tabu and their children suffer while her husband uses his money for drinking and conducting extramarital affairs. When his wife challenges his behaviour, he abuses her verbally and threatens to divorce her. Here, his son Juma narrates the story to his uncle:

“Baba alikuwa hamjali mama wala kujali kumpa pesa za chakula na mahataji ya nyumbani. ... Yeye baba akipata pesa zake ni kwenye ulevi na wanawake ... Kila siku hawaishi kugombana na mama kuhusu wanawake. Baba anazo daladala nne. Mama akimuuliza pesa zote anazopata anapeleka wapi, kila siku jibu lake ni kwamba anataka kuongeza gari nyingine. ... Mama akiuliza faida ya gari zote hizo ni nini kama watoto hawana nguo, wanatembelea marapurapu, yeye kazi kumsuta mama kwamba hajui maendeleo. Eti alikuwa anamtishia mama kwamba ataoa mwanamke mwingine anayejua kutafuta pesa...” (Mkufya, 2004, p. 140)

“My father did not care for my mother, even to bother to give her money for food or other expenses for the family. ... When he gets money it is for drinking and having sexual affairs with other women ... Every day he quarrels with my mother because of his unfaithful behaviour. My father has four commuter buses. When my mother asks him where all the money goes, my father says he wants to buy another commuter bus. ...When my mother questions the value of all the wealth when the children have no clothes to wear, they are going just with ragged clothing, he chastises my mother that she does not know what development is. He threatens her that he will marry another woman who knows how to find money...”

The author states clearly that Ngoma deliberately abuses his wife, by exercising control over financial decisions, and is therefore culpable for his actions.

As noted by Weedon (1997) and Boonzaier (2006), the available discourses and subject positions offered shape the way women interpret different types of violence in their lives. These discourses open up different subject positions through which women justify staying or leaving the abusive partner. This is apparent in the following extracts, as Tabu, a victim of verbal and economic abuse, has internalised gendered discourses in her justification for continuing to live with her abusive husband. Tabu decides to stay, justifying her decision based on her socialisation, culture and religion:

[Tabu] alitoa kisingizio kwamba baba na mama yake na ndugu zake watamlaumu kwa kuvunja ndoa iwapo ataamua kuachana na Ngoma. Pia, aliogopa kwamba jamii itamcheka kwa kuwaachia malaya wamchukue mume wake na kuacha watoto wapate shida kutokana na wazazi wao kufarakana. Aidha, aliogopa Mungu atamlaani kwa kuvunja kiapo cha ndoa alichopa pale walipofunga ndoa hii. Visingizio hivi ndivyo vilivyomfanya avumilie na kuubeba mzingo mzito wa ndoa ile. (Mkufya, 2004, p. 127)

[Tabu] gave justification for not leaving as her father, mother and relatives blaming her for breaking her marriage with Ngoma. Also she was afraid that society would blame her for leaving her husband to prostitutes and her children to suffer because of their parents' separation. Furthermore, she was afraid that God would condemn her for breaking her marriage oath, which she took the day of their wedding. These excuses encouraged Tabu to stay with her abusive husband.

The meaning of experiences is not automatically reflected in language, but it is through language that we can communicate to others how we feel and think (Parker, 1999; Weedon, 1997). In this extract, the author describes Tabu's life experiences through traditional gendered discourses of culture and religion, which depict a woman as being responsible for the survival of her marriage and the well-being of the children. Failure to achieve this means she brings shame to the community and will not be respected as a complete woman (McCall & Shields, 1986; Ritchie & Ritchie, 1990; J. T. Wood, 2001). Furthermore, the author uses religion to rationalise Tabu staying in an abusive relationship. As Tabu relies on traditional gendered discourses she legitimises and tolerates the abusive marriage. Feminist scholars have argued that discourses have "produced certain knowledge and truth about women that have become 'natural' and self-evident" (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 499). Hence, for Tabu, the traditional discourses that assert women are born to undergo suffering in the service of family and community seem to her to be the "truth." Research on violence against women has noted that women who accept traditional gender discourses that link their worth to having a husband are at risk of believing that they are responsible for sustaining their marriage, even if the husband is violent (Barnett & LaViolette, 2003; Cavanagh, 2003; J. T. Wood, 2001). Indeed, Mkufya's depiction is similar to Kim and Motsei's (2002) study which reveals that parents and relatives insist a woman stay in her marriage and that "she should die at her husband's place" (p. 1247). These discourses allow

women to rationalise what is happening in their marital life and to tolerate the violence.

However, when Tabu realises that she has been infected with HIV/AIDS by her husband, she regrets upholding the traditional gender discourses. She also blames society for encouraging women to tolerate an abusive relationship that has put her in a vulnerable situation, as the following extract illustrates:

Lakini siku alipogundua kwamba kuvumilia kwake kumemletea balaa kubwa zaidi, alilia sana. Alijuta, alishindwa kujisamehe kwa ujinga wake. Alilaani vipingamizi vya kijamii vilivyomfanya asite kumkimbia mwanamume yule. Zaidi ya hapo, alilaani utumwa, uonevu na usaliti uliofichama katika jambo lile la kijamii lililoitwa ndoa. (Mkufya, 2004, pp. 127-128)

When she realised that she had endured more suffering because of her tolerance of the abusive relationship, she cried a lot. She regretted and was unable to forgive herself for her stupidity. She condemned society's justification that encouraged her to stay in the abusive relationship. More importantly, she condemned the slavery, oppression, and unfaithfulness which are hidden in the marriage institution.

Surprisingly, while in the above extract the author appears to implicitly challenge the wider social structure for encouraging women to stay in abusive relationship, in the previous extract and through the same character the author frames the idea of leaving abusive husbands in a way that suggests disapproval. Arguably, this may reflect the contradictory discourses and subject positions that are available for women in Tanzanian society. Indeed, different discursive positions offered to women in relation to the dominant discourse have effects on women's understanding and decision-making (Davies, 1994), as every discourse claims to be the truth (Burr, 2003). For an individual to accept a particular positioning as right or not depends on what is assured in the positioning (St. Pierre, 2000). Tabu, for example, in the earlier extracts, abides by the traditional gender discourses and tolerates violence in her marriage without knowing the consequences.

Societal expectations and attitudes are described by Kiswahili novelists as reasons for men to abuse women. Mapalala (1992), in *Kwaheri Iselamagazi*, for example, relates the story of a woman, Isamba, who endures psychological and physical

violence because her husband, Matumula, is not living according to standard societal norms. In his novel, Mapalala reveals that Matumula loves his wife, Isamba, and their son. However, according to society's expectations, Matumula is expected to have many wives and many children. Having only one wife and one child is perceived by others as an insult to Matumula. In the narrative, although Matumula is happy, the elders and his relatives are not, and force Matumula to have another wife so that he can have many children.

According to the narrative, Matumula does not take the elders' advice as he is happy having one wife and had promised her he would not take another wife, in spite of having only one child. Additionally, the author explains that Matumula was hardworking and an intelligent man. Because of his good qualities, the elders appoint him to be a leader. However, Matumula refuses the position, as he is not interested in leadership. This is understood by the elders and his relatives as the consequence of being bewitched by his wife Isamba, and so they decide to have a meeting to advise him, as the following extract demonstrates:

“Watu wote wanataka kukufanya mtemi, lakini umekataa. Yote haya yanaonesha jinsi ulivyo na akili ndogo. Nayo yanatokea kwa sababu ya huyo mkeo aliyekupumbaza kwa madawa. Huyo ni mwanamke mwasherati na mchawi. ... Huyo mkeo mshenzi ndiyo kamba iliyokufunga. Sisi nduguzo lazima tukueleza.” (Mapalala, 1992, p. 36)

“We have appointed you to be a leader but you have refused. That shows how unwise you are. And this is because of your wife who has bewitched you. Your wife is a witch and a prostitute. ... Your wife is a witch; she is the one who is causing all the problems. We [his relatives] must tell you.”

In this extract, community elders and Matumula's relatives blame Matumula's wife for what is happening to her husband's life, and they try to force Matumula to take action against his wife. After the meeting with the community elders and relatives, the author explains that Matumula consults a witch doctor, because he does not believe what the elders said about his wife. The witch doctor also insists that his wife is the problem and the ancestors want him to marry other wives in order to have many children:

“Tatizo liko kwa mkeo ambaye ni mwerevu na mwenye tamaa. ... Mizimu wanasema uoe wanawake wengine watakaokuzalia watoto

kwa kuwa hivi sasa huna mtoto yeyote. ... Mizimu wanakuambia uchague mwenyewe kama ni kusuka au kunyoa.” (Mapalala, 1992, pp. 41-42)

“The problem is your wife who is cunning and greedy. ... The ancestral spirits say you need to have more wives who will bear you children, as now you have no child²². ... The ancestral spirits say you must decide - to comply or to refuse.”

Graham (1999) notes that in African societies, the ancestral “spirits” are believed to play a vital role in solving problems. Drawing on this knowledge, the author positions Matumula as a victim of the ancestral spirits following his consultation with the witch doctor, after which he changes dramatically and starts behaving differently toward his wife and his son. Changes in Matumula’s behaviour affect his wife emotionally and psychologically. She becomes unhappy and unable to continue doing her daily work. Furthermore, the author narrates that the community elders order his family to be isolated as a punishment for Isamba bewitching her husband and for her husband not respecting the elders’ and relatives’ advice. According to the narration, Isamba is strongly affected by what is going on, and hears people gossiping about her behaviour. His son suggests that she leaves the place, as he sees his mother’s health deteriorating day after day. However, his mother refuses to leave her non-abusive husband for fear of retribution from her family who are already angry at her for leaving and marry a foreigner:

“Tena ujue mwanangu sitakiwi huko kwetu kwa kuwa niliasi urithi wangu na kuolewa na mgeni. Kwa hiyo adhabu iningojayo ni kuuawa mara nitakaporejea.” (Mapalala, 1992, p. 47)

“My son, you have to know that I cannot go back to my parents because I disobeyed my tradition and married a foreigner. Consequently, if I go back I will be killed immediately.”

As the narration continues, the author reveals that Matumula becomes very confused, stressed and full of anger but is unable to tell his wife or his son what has happened. When his wife asks him why he behaves differently, her question exacerbates his anger, as the following extracts demonstrate:

“Matumula mume wangu, siku hizi umeacha hata kunipa salamu.

²² Matumula has one child. However, as an important man in society he is considered by his relatives and the witchdoctor as he has no child.

Je, umepagawa na nini?”
“Unasema nimepagawa?”
“Siyo hivyo mume wangu, desturi uliyoianza si nzuri.”
“Wewe mwanamke, sasa umefikia hatua ya kunitukana sivyo?”
“Mimi sijakutukana.”
“Uliponiambia nimepagawa ulikuwa na maana gani?” ...
“Sikiliza ewe mwanamke” alifoka “unadeka kwa sababu sijawahi kukupiga hata siku moja. Lakini ukitamka neno moja zaidi nakwamba nitakujeruhi.” ...
“Haya Matumula. Nipige! Nakwambia unipe mbele ya mwanao hivi leo. Niguse nijue kwa hakika kuwa kumbe unanitendea hayo ukiwa na akili timamu.”
Matumula hakusubiri kauli nyingine, aliachia kofi lililotua kama umeme juu ya uso wa Isamba, ambaye alitokwa damu mdomoni. ...
“Matumula wangu, kweli umekuwa mnyama!”
Matumula alirusha tena konde zito lililotua usoni mwa Isamba na kumdondosha chini. Isamba aliponyanyuka alikuwa amevimba nundu. (Mapalala, 1992, pp. 47-49)

“Matumula, my husband, nowadays you don’t greet me. Are you possessed with an evil spirit?”
 “I’m possessed with the evil spirit?”
 “It is not that you are possessed by an evil spirit my husband, but the way you are behaving nowadays is not good.”
 “Woman, you have decided to insult me?”
 “I have not insulted you.”
 “When you said, ‘I am possessed with the evil spirit’ what did you mean?”...
 “Woman, listen,” he scolded, “You have been arrogant because I haven’t beaten you. But if you dare to say a word, I tell you I will hurt you.”...
 “Matumula beat me! I tell you beat me today in front of your son. I will know for sure you are doing it purposely.”
 Matumula did not wait, he slapped her face hard and blood flew from her mouth. ...
 “My husband it is true that you have been a beast!”
 Matumula strongly slapped her again in her face and she fell down.
 When Isamba stood up she had swelling.

In these extracts the author depicts Matumula’s abusive actions as the consequence of losing control when his wife provoked him. Furthermore, the reader is already informed that he was angry and under considerable stress because of what he was told by the community elders, his relatives and the ancestral spirits about his wife’s behaviour. Although the author earlier described how societal expectations and attitudes contributed to Matumula’s reactions, here he appears to position Isamba as more immediately responsible for provoking her husband, and hence as potentially blameworthy. Isamba’s blameworthiness for her victimisation is

reinforced when she later regrets not listening to her mother's advice before marrying Matumula, as the following extracts illustrate:

"Mwanangu, usiyaweke reheni maisha yako mikononi mwa mwanamume. Wanaume hawaaminiki mwanangu. Wote ni wajinga na wambea." (Mapalala, 1992, p. 46)

"Mbona ninayaona? Hii ndiyo radhi ya mama yangu. Laiti ningemsikiliza." (Mapalala, 1992, p. 48)

"My daughter don't entrust your life to a man. Men are untrustworthy my daughter. All are fools and gossipers."

"Now I am paying. This is my mother's blessing. I wish I had listened to her."

In these extracts, Isamba describes her suffering as a punishment for not listening to her mother's advice. This is made explicit in the narrative as she states, "I wish I had listened to her."

Matumula's violent action is subsequently praised by his neighbours and relatives as evidence that he has properly disciplined his wife:

"Leo Matumula umefanya la maana. Heshima ya mwanamke lazima apate kipigo," jirani mmoja alidokeza.

Bibi Ndende naye akasema, "Nawe kaka yangu Matumula umezidisha upole. Laiti ungemkanya jinsi hii tangu mwanzo asingefikia ujeuri alionao hivi sasa." (Mapalala, 1992, p. 49)

"Matumula, today you have done a good job. A woman must be disciplined," said one neighbour.

"My brother you are too gentle. If only you had disciplined her like that from the beginning, she would not be arrogant as she is now" said Ms. Ndende [Matumula's sister].

Studies have found that men who abuse their wives identify with the accepted cultural norms which promote men's dominance and control (Bograd, 1988b; Kim & Motsei, 2002; J. T. Wood, 2004). Building on this, Matumula's sister and the neighbour view violence against women as a socially acceptable way of disciplining women.

Among the strategies employed by women for dealing with abuse is suicide (Chang, 1989). In this novel, Mapalala presents the consequences of wife beating

as suicide: Isamba commits suicide the second day after being beaten by her husband and hearing her neighbour's and sister-in-law's responses. Mapalala also details what happened to Matumula after his wife's death. He reveals how different people - elders, relatives and friends had expected Matumula to take another wife. However, Matumula refuses to marry, as he has a deep binding to his first wife's love:

Kusema kweli, kifo cha Isamba kilimfunua macho Matumula; akatambua kwamba hangeweza kumpenda yeyote yule isipokuwa yule aliyeondoka. Hakudiriki kuingia mkataba wa maisha na mtu mwingine kwa kuona kitendo hicho ni usaliti usiosameheka. Daima alisongwa na kauli ile: "Matumula wangu, umekuwa mnyama kweli." (Mapalala, 1992, p. 59)

Isamba's death taught Matumula a lesson. He knew for sure he could not love anyone else other than his late wife. He didn't dare to take another wife, as he thought it would be an unforgivable sin. Always he was occupied with his wife's statement, "My husband it is true that you have been a beast."

Everyone is shocked by his attitude, as they had thought that his wife was the problem. The witch doctor concludes that he is not a normal person as he has refused to obey the ancestral spirits by marrying other wives. Matumula's health deteriorates as he is always thinking about what he had done to his wife; subsequently he dies. I presume this illustration suggests how societal pressure on individuals can become a source of violence against women in a community. Arguably, when addressing domestic violence, we need to know the nuances of cultural and societal expectations in order to take appropriate measures to intervene in domestic violence. It is by changing societal expectations that we can enable people to think differently (Bent-Goodley, 2005a).

5.2.2 Construction of sexual violence: Rape

Rape is recognised as a social problem in developed and developing countries. It is a risk factor for physical, reproductive and psychosocial problems that have both short and long term consequences (Gavey, 2005; Heise, Raikes, Watts, & Zwi, 1994; Muganyizi et al., 2009). A key discourse identified in the selected Kiswahili novels and documented in the literature in relation to rape is male sexual drive discourse (Anderson & Doherty, 2008; Gavey, 1992, 2005; Hollway, 1984, 1989). In this discourse, initially defined by Hollway (1984, 1989) and

developed by other researchers (Crawford et al., 1994; Harris et al., 1995; Kottler & Long, 1997; Potts, 2001; Reinholtz et al., 1995), male sexual desires are positioned as natural and uncontrollable, with women being responsible for managing men's sexuality (Gavey, 1992, 2009; Reinholtz et al., 1995). Drawing on this discourse, Kiswahili novelists depict rape as caused by a strong male sexual drive, which the perpetrator does not have control over. An example is in the following extract from *Nyota ya Rehema*, which describes how Mansuri, a married man with one child, attempts to rape his babysitter, a fourteen-year-old girl, Rehema, while his wife is at work:

*“Njoo huku,” alimsikia akisema.
Rehema alikwenda. Alimwona kamshika mkono na akaingia naye
katika chumba cha kulala. ... Kutahamaki, Rehema alimwona
Mansuri akimpandisha kitandani. ...*

*“Ngojea kwanza bwana Mansuri,” ... “unataka kufanya nini?”
“Usijifanye mtoto, Rehema, unajua kuwa mimi nakupenda,”
alisema Mansuri, sauti yake ilikuwa imebadilika.*

*“Hebu kwanza, bwana Mansuri, mimi si ...sitaki ...” ... Aliyekuwa
akisema naye alikuwa keshaingia katika daraja ya uhayawani. (M.
S. Mohamed, 1976, pp. 64-65)*

“Come this way,” he [Mansuri] said.
Rehema went. He [Mansuri] took her hand and took her to his
bedroom. ... Then, suddenly Mansuri threw Rehema onto the bed.
...

“Wait Mr. Mansuri,” ... “what do you want to do?”
“Rehema, don't pretend that you are a child; you know I love you,”
said Mansuri with a different tone in his voice.

“Wait Mr. Mansuri, I don't ... like ...” The person she was
speaking to was already out of control.

According to the narrative, Mansuri is so sexually aroused that he is unable to tell the babysitter (Rehema) why he has called her; instead, he just grabs her hand and takes her to his bedroom and throws her onto the bed to fulfil his desires. He is seemingly not aware of what he is doing, because of the “uncontrollable” male sexual drive.

Jewkes, Penn-Kekana and Rose-Junius (2005) assert that the notion of men's sexual desire being uncontrollable when they are aroused may be used as an

excuse for rape. This discursive practice, therefore, can be easily used to justify rape and exonerate the perpetrator from his violent actions. Similarly, Hollway (1984) notes that in male sex drive discourse, men are constituted as needing sex and women as having to fulfil men's sexual needs. The acceptance of this notion that the male sex drive is uncontrollable, and the way in which this discourse works to normalise rape, is best expressed by a local Kenyan probation officer when talking about the 1991 mass rape in Kizito School in Kenya. In that incident, seventy-one girls aged between 14 and 18 years old were raped by their classmates. In responding to what happened, the probation officer stated: "If you're a girl, you take it and hope you don't get pregnant" (D. Green, 1999, p. 69). However, in *Nyota ya Rehema*, Rehema is not ready to "take it." Instead, she fights off her abuser:

Rehema alitumia uwezo wake wa mwisho, nao ni kuzamisha meno yake katika bega la Mansuri! Mansuri aligutuka kwa maumivu na kujitupa upande wa pili, Rehema akapata nafasi ya kuponyoka. ... Kisha akageuka na kutoka mbio mpaka chumbani kwa mtoto, akakomea mlango kwa pete, na kujitupa juu ya kiti huku akilia. (M. S. Mohamed, 1976, pp. 64-65)

Rehema used her last weapon. She bit Mansuri on his shoulder hard. Mansuri was frightened with pain and threw himself onto the bed. Rehema was able to escape. ... She ran to the baby's room and closed the door. She sat on the chair weeping.

In this extract, M. S. Mohamed describes Rehema as a brave girl who succeeds in fighting off a rape attempt, despite the uncontrollable sexual desire of her boss, by "biting his shoulder hard."

Later on in the narrative, the novelist discursively reconstructs Rehema's action as blameworthy, as she caused him pain. Implicitly this suggests that she was wrong to resist his advances, and thus by extension that he had a right to impose himself on her. Rehema also expresses feelings of guilt for what she did to her boss. She decides to approach her boss to ask for forgiveness. However, the outcome of this action is that Mansuri is given the opportunity to fulfil his intention to rape her, as the following extract illustrates:

Rozi alipokuwa katoka ... Rehema alielekea upande wa chumba alicholala Mansuri. ... Akaingia ndani na kumkuta Mansuri kaka juu ya kitanda... Mansuri ... alimtazama Rehema pasi na

kumsemesha lolote. ... Rehema, katika hali ya woga na kubanwa na hisia ngeni asiyoijua alisimama mbele yake kama mpumbavu, ... tone za machozi zikichungulia katika pembe za macho yake. Mansuri ... akanyanyuka na kumshika mkono Rehema, kimya kimya, pole pole, na kumpandisha kitandani, kwani alijua Rehema akitaka nini. (M. S. Mohamed, 1976, pp. 73-74)

When Rozi [Mansuri's wife] was away ... Rehema went to Mansuri's bedroom. ... she entered Mansuri's bedroom. Mansuri was sitting on the bed ... Mansuri ... looked at Rehema wordlessly. ... With worries and strange feelings which she couldn't understand, Rehema stood in front of Mansuri like a fool ... her eyes full of tears. Mansuri ... stood up and held Rehema's hand, silently, slowly he put her on the bed as he knew what she wanted.

Unlike the first incident, where Mansuri attempted to rape Rehema, here the novelist positions Rehema as responsible for her successful seduction as she had followed her boss into his bedroom, thereby reframing the events and subsequent act as "just sex." Furthermore, he now describes Rehema's body language in terms reminiscent of engaging in consensual sex, rather than being subjected to an act of rape. This discursive construction potentially serves to suggest that Rehema was foolish to have placed herself in such a vulnerable position, or even deciding to have such contact, given her first experience with her assailant. The author's description, therefore, echoes the rape myth that women say "no" but really want to be seduced. In this way, accountability is transferred from the perpetrator to the victim for having placed herself in a position of vulnerability by enticing her attacker (Doherty & Anderson, 1998; Walby, Hay, & Soothill, 1983).

Knowing the relationship between respect and generational hierarchy in African societies is crucial for understanding a girl's possible reaction to sexual advances from older men (Jewkes et al., 2005; Meursing et al., 1995). Jewkes et al. (2005) argue that men's high status in African countries increases girls' vulnerability to rape, since girls are not expected to refuse sexual advances and men have the right to control girls. Drawing on this understanding, the novelist describes Rehema as a girl who tried to resist the normalised tradition of accepting men's sexual advances. Consequently, the attribution of responsibility to the victim has been achieved through shifting the sexual act from "rape" to just "sex," which constructs a victim as available to a man as she puts herself in a vulnerable position – "he knew what she wanted." Using Gavey's words, "she was asking for it" (2005, p. 23).

The consequence of this discursive construction is that the perpetrator's sexual conduct with the girl is recast as justifiable, as she had followed him into his bedroom and put herself in a vulnerable position. If she had not done this she would not have been raped. Furthermore, the girl is described as wanting sex, "standing in front of him wordlessly." In contrast to the first incident when he attempted to rape her, this time she was silent and this was taken as a sign of consenting to the sex act. Morgan and Coombes (2001) argue that the positioning of an individual may open up possibilities for transforming ways of understanding and doing things. The initial subject position offered to Rehema, as a brave girl who fought off the rape attempt of her boss, opens up a way for girls to rescue themselves from rapists. However, the second discursive position offered to her as capitulator to her boss engenders the notion that rape reflects a "natural" male need for sex, rather than constituting it as an act motivated by power (Anderson & Swainson, 2001). These discursive manoeuvres are used by the author to position the perpetrator of rape as not responsible for his violent actions. Also, they serve to position girls as the passive receivers of men's sexual advances, with no legitimate means of resisting unwanted sexual contact.

Later on in the novel this implicit discursive construction of rape prevails in a way that again positions the abuser as "just having sex." In the following extract, for example, the novelist depicts Mansuri as a good man who encourages Rehema to continue working in his house. However, this is Mansuri's way of retaining Rehema in his house so that he can keep abusing her sexually:

Rehema hakupenda kuacha kazi ... kitu kilichomfunga zaidi katika kazi hii ni wema na ukarimu wa Mansuri. ... Rozi alipokwenda kazini, Rehema alichukua mahali pake pa umama kwa mwanawe, na pa uke kwa mumewe. (M. S. Mohamed, 1976, p. 77)

Rehema didn't want to resign from her job ... as she was motivated by Mansuri's kindness and hospitality. ... When Rozi [Mansuri's wife] was at work, Rehema was a mother to her child and a wife [sexually available] to her [Rozi's] husband.

Having repositioned Rehema as Mansuri's mistress, the novelist normalises Mansuri's abusive actions towards her. In this way, the discursive articulation of a common rape myth provides grounds to trivialise the severity of rape, reconstructing it as a mutual and perhaps enjoyable sexual act, rather than an act of

violence or an abuse of power (Doherty & Anderson, 1998; Gavey, 2005; Parrot & Cummings, 2006). In addition, M. S. Mohamed frames Rehema as responsible for her involvement in her boss's unfaithfulness in his marriage. Thus, Mansuri's wife's expressed intention to kill Rehema, after she finds her sleeping with her husband (Mansuri) in her bedroom, is ultimately described as punishment of Rehema. The consequences of Rehema's double victimisation - her attempted rape and being subsequently identified as the source of unfaithfulness in her boss's marriage - force Rehema to join the prostitution industry.

M. S. Mohamed's (1976) depiction reflects on the dominant discourses which reinforce sexual violence in Tanzanian society. Generally, sexual violence against women, particularly rape, is depicted in Kiswahili novels as the legitimate manifestation of men's power in Tanzanian society to get what they want (Mgalla et al., 1998; Muganyizi, et al. 2004; Muganyizi, et al., 2009) and of a society which condones and sustains violence against women (Ferraro, 1996). Feminists have argued that rape is not a crime of irrational impulsive lust but an intentional hostile violent act used to dominate, control and silence women (Mooney, 2000; Scully & Marolla, 1993; Warr, 1985). Surprisingly, this feminist understanding is apparent in *Wimbi la Huzuni*, where Kalindimya (1988) reveals how abusive men continue with their violent actions because there is no accountability or punishment. As an example, Kalindimya illustrates how an eleven-year-old girl (Seya) who runs away from an orphanage is brutally raped by a group of men:

Kutenda unyama limekuwa tukio la kawaida. Ni matendo ambayo watu wanatenda na kujivunia. Kila wanapofanya majaribio ya uovu na kufanikiwa, walitenda wanatenda tena na tena, na hata imegeuka sehemu ya maisha yao ya kila siku.

Seya wa watu, kinyume na utashi wake wakamtenda kinyama. Si mmoja la hashu, ila msululu wa wanaume, wenye uchu na waliodhamiria. ... Kwa uchungu wa maumivu, Seya akazimia na hata alipozinduka, alijikuta yupo kwenye hospitali ya Mwananyamala. (Kalindimya, 1988, pp. 14-15)

Violence is normal. People are proud of their violent actions. When they succeed and are not punished they do it again and again. It becomes part of their daily life.

They raped Seya brutally. Not one man but several men who intended to fulfil their sexual desires. ... With the pain, Seya fainted

and when she gained consciousness she was at Mwananyamala hospital.

In these extracts, the culture of violence in society is initially presented as the reason why men abuse women. But while the novelist reveals society's responsibility for tolerating violent deeds, he immediately draws attention to men's "intentions to fulfil their sexual desires." Thus, two competing discourses - the culture of violence and male sexual drive discourses - are co-articulated and become mutually reinforcing in a way that serves to normalise rape. Furthermore, the author's style of foregrounding societal beliefs as a source of violence against women is a discursive strategy that has the potential effect of normalising the abusive behaviour of males in Tanzanian culture. These discourses affirm each other - violence is cultural, while rape is about biological sexuality and thus "natural." According to this line of thinking, men are exonerated from their violent actions on both counts.

Equally, Mtobwa (1990), in *Dar es Salaam Usiku*, reveals how an abusive man uses his economic power to deceive a girl child, Rukia, and rapes her. Rukia is the child of a single parent, and her mother, Nunu, abandoned her when she was eleven years old. The day before Nunu left she told her daughter that she is very attractive and can use her body to make her living. Rukia starts going around trying to find food and is sexually abused by a man. According to the narrative, that man has experience with poor children like Rukia, as illustrated by Mtobwa in the following extracts:

Aliyajua macho ya msichana anayetaka mwanamume na alijua anayemlilia. Ya Rukia aliona "yakimlilia" kabisa. ... Aliwapenda hawa kwa sababu za kiuchumi. ...

"Twende zetu Nyamanoro, nina chumba changu."

"Mia mbili hazitoshi."

"Mia tatu?"

"Hazitoshi. Bwana wangu ananipa mia tano kila asubuhi"

Bwana huyu alishangaa. Mtoto huyu ameijulia wapi pesa kiasi hicho? ...

Bia ya pili aliinywa haraka kuliko mwenyeji wake. Mwenyeji wake aliyaona hayo akamshawishi kuendelea kunywa haraka zaidi. ... Ya tano hakumbuki kama aliinywa. ...

Alikuwa taabani. Hakuiona hata shilingi kati ya pesa ambazo alikuwa tayari amepewa na bwana huyo. (Mtobwa, 1990, pp. 56-57)

He knew the eyes of those who wanted a man and those who were crying for a man. Visibly, Rukia's eyes were "crying for him." ... He liked these children for economic reasons. ...

"Let us go to Nyamanoro, I have a room there."

"Two hundred shillings are not enough."

"Three hundred shillings?"

"They are not enough, my boyfriend gives me five hundred every morning."

This man was surprised. How did this young girl know about money to that extent? ...

She drank the second beer quicker than her host. The man encouraged her to drink more quickly. ... She did not remember if she had drunk the fifth one. ...

She was in agony. She didn't see even a single cent that the man had given her before.

In his novel, Mtobwa portrays child rape as a way for an abuser to fulfil his sexual desires. Mtobwa describes Rukia as desperate for money and an experienced prostitute, thus her eyes are "crying for him." The perpetrator rapes her after giving her money and drinks. However, he takes his money back and leaves the child in pain. The author places the responsibility on Rukia for accepting alcohol but also, implicitly, on Rukia's mother for abandoning her daughter at the age of eleven. Blaming the mother for being irresponsible is consistent with previous studies (Berns, 2001; Jewkes et al., 2005; J. T. Wood 2004). For example, Jewkes et al. (2005) note that in South Africa, mothers were held responsible if "girls were raped when the mother had left them alone." (p. 1817). Also, they assert that men rape girl children because they find it hard to get an adult partner when they are aroused and want to satisfy themselves.

The discourse of uncontrollable male sexual drive as depicted in Kiswahili novels is further elucidated in *Asali Chungu*, where S. A. Mohamed (1977) illustrates how Zuberi is unable to control his strong sexual desire and so rapes his housemaid, Semeni. Semeni is an orphan girl from the village who works in Zuberi's house as a house girl. Early on in his novel, S. A. Mohamed recounts how Semeni provoked Zuberi's anger by refusing his sexual advances. The author relates Zuberi's anger as reinforcing his sexual desire for the girl:

Kweli sina haki ya kukataa matakwa yako lakini ... jambo ulitakalo ni zito kwangu. Nakuomba uniwie radhi. Nisamehe sana Bwana. ... Mimi nifanye mtumishi wako tu. Nione kama nitakayekunajisi. ... Kesho tu jambo hili litakuwa nje, nalo litaharibu jina lako kuwa Bwana, mwenye enzi yake, kenda na kitumishi chake.

Maneno hayo yalimpaka tope Zuberi. Undani wake alishautoa; fedheha ameipata; na Semeni kamkosa. ... Kwa mara ya mwanzo kakutana na machungu ya kukataliwa – kukataliwa na mtu duni kabisa kwake. Hiyo ndiyo asili ya kupanda mori, akaona atende lolote mpaka amtie makuchani Semeni. (S. A. Mohamed, 1977, p. 17)

Basically I am not supposed to refuse your orders but ... what you have demanded is tough for me to fulfil. I beg you, please forgive me for that. Have sympathy on me my Master. ... Treat me as your servant only. See me as someone who would tarnish you. After a few days it will be all over the place and it will defame you. The Master having sexual affairs with his servant.

These words hurt Zuberi badly. He had already told her what he wanted, he endured humiliation and he didn't get what he wanted from Semeni. ... For the first time he experienced the pain of rejection – from an unworthy person to him. This was the source of his inner turmoil, which forced him to do whatever he could to make sure he did have sex with Semeni.

These extracts depict Semeni's refusal of sexual advances from her boss as a reason for Zuberi's "inner turmoil," as Semeni's words "hurt" and "humiliated" him, and more importantly he "did not get what he wanted" - to have sex with her. The consequences of being rejected by a person of "no worth" are unbearable and Zuberi is ready to do anything to fulfil his sexual desires. This depiction is consistent with Gavey's (2005) assertion that male sexual drive discourse is a "pervasive and powerful influence on male sexuality" (p. 103).

Drawing on this traditional discourse of heterosexuality and women's responsibility to have sex with men irrespective of their own sexual desire (Gavey, 1992, 1996), S. A. Mohamed illustrates how Zuberi uses an adult woman, Biti Daudi (an adult woman who was a house maid in the house), to convince Semeni of the importance of accepting her boss's sexual proposal:

Biti Daudi akamrai akubali ombi lake. ... "Mwanangu, kuna waliolala masikini wakaamka matajiri. Mjukuu wangu, unajivunjia riziki yako 'ivyo, haaaya. ... Kuna walionunuliwa nyumba mama, waliofuliwa vyombo vya dhahabu kochokocho; kuna walioandikwa

vikata na mashamba ya fahari. ... Basi iweje mama, bwana kama huyu kukutaka wewe usimjali. Huoni kwamba unajiharibia hivyo? Eee mwana, unajivunjia riziki zako we! Ee haaaya!”

Biti Dausdi aliona labda amenasishika; lakini wapi! Semeni aling'ang'ania sitara. ... Jambo hilo lilizidi kumghadhabisha Zuberi. (S. A. Mohamed, 1977, pp. 17-18)

Biti Daudi talked to the girl [Semeni] so that she could agree to his demands [sexual advances]. ... “My child, there are people who are living in abject poverty, but they changed and became rich over night. My grandchild, you are putting off your fortune, you will see. ... There were people who got houses, my daughter; others got a lot of golden ornaments, others got plots and good farms. ... How come, my respectful daughter, you are turning down the sexual advances of a great person? Can you see that you are messing up your life? Oh! My child, you are putting off your fortunes! We will see!”

Biti Daudi thought Semeni would change her mind after the advice, and consent to having sex with Zuberi. However, it was not the case. Semeni persisted in keeping her self-respect. ... This reaction increased Zuberi's anger.

Hollway (1989) notes that the discourses of uncontrollable male sexual drive and men's economic status work together. Men's economic status gives them the power to satisfy their sexual desires and positions them as subjects and women as objects. They can pay for sex if needed (Gavey, 2005). Having this understanding, the older woman in the extract, Biti Daudi, perceives Semeni as a “lucky girl” who is not aware of what her boss is really offering her; “you are putting off your fortunes.” Taking advantage of the girl's abject poverty, the older woman tries to convince her to accept his advances, suggesting she will become rich in the process. Also, in the extract, the woman addresses the girl using membership categories such as “my child,” “my grand-child”, and “my respectful daughter,” to ensure that the girl understands that what she is telling her she tells as a close person who is concerned with her life. Despite these efforts, Semeni still refuses to have sex with Zuberi.

Dominant discourses on heterosexuality provide subject positions for women which are relatively passive and which prescribe compliance with men's demands (Gavey, 2005; Parrot & Cumming, 2006). Semeni's refusal to submit to her boss's demands contradicts these dominant discourses. According to Biti Daudi, Semeni's reaction does not fit with the expected response to sexual approaches by

men of high economic status in Tanzanian society. Therefore, her refusal is problematic and inconceivable.

Feminists view rape as the manifestation of men's power and socialisation, which encourages them to fulfil their sexual desires and to expect women to accommodate these needs, which in turn normalises forced sexual access (Scully & Marolla, 1993). An example of this explicit exercise of power is narrated by S. A. Mohamed (1977) later on in his novel. The novelist relates Zuberi's plans to rape Semeni as goal directed in order to obtain what he has been craving for a long time. S. A. Mohamed explains how Zuberi plans to use his power to rape Semeni after attempts to use his economic and social power to have sex with her have failed. These plans include using safety measures, such as covering his feet with pieces of cloth and making sure everyone is asleep and all the doors are closed properly before he enters Semeni's room. Also, he prepares drugs that he uses to make her unconscious so that she cannot scream. S. M. Mohamed's depiction is consistent with Jawkes et al.'s (2005) observation that perpetrators of child rape always take precautions to minimise the possibilities of being caught.

At the beginning of the narration, Zuberi is positioned as a man who is out of control because of his strong sexual desire (Gavey, 2005; Parrot & Cumming, 2006). As the narration continues, the author draws on the discourse of liberal humanist instrumentalism in constructing Zuberi's intention to fulfil his sexual gratification. Later on, S. A. Mohamed explains that Zuberi is proud of his success in raping Semeni and Biti Daudi congratulates him.

The consequences of rape as illustrated in this novel are similar to those identified in other studies. Feminist studies, for example, have long noted that rape has long lasting effects on women's lives (Anderson & Doherty, 2008; Bart & O'Brien, 1983; Cook & Koss, 2005; Gavey, 2005; Meyers, 1997; Scully & Marolla, 1993). Koss et al. (1994) assert that "experiencing sexual abuse changes a woman's life forever" (p. 177). The consequences of rape may include unplanned pregnancy (Beebe, 1991; Koss, Woodruff, & Koss, 1991; Meursing et al., 1995; Parrot & Cumming, 2006), emotional distress (Tang, 1997), depression and suicide (Parrot & Cummings, 2006). In *Asali Chungu*, S. A. Mohamed (1977) details how Semeni suffers all her life after the rape. After escaping from Zuberi's house she

goes to live with Pili, a girl who knew Semeni's mother before she died. A few months later, Semeni realises she is pregnant as a result of the rape, and as neither woman has a job, life is very difficult. After the baby boy (Dude) is born, Semeni is in a worse situation and out of frustration and stress she starts drinking excessively and engaging in prostitution. Finally, she commits suicide after quarrelling with Pili because Semeni has had sex with Pili's boyfriend. Thus, according to the narration, what Biti Daudi told her - "you are putting off your fortunes! We will see" - is reconfirmed by events that subsequently happen in Semeni's life. In effect, the narration reaffirms the societal discourse by showing that it is not possible for women to refuse men's sexual advances, and that they will endure suffering in their lives if they attempt to do so.

Moreover, while the narrative gives detailed information regarding what happened to the victim (Semeni), nothing is revealed about the rapist (Zuberi) after his violent actions. Arguably, this focus on the victim's life, showing how she suffered thereafter, is a technique which has the effect of normalising the violence. Men's use of violence is naturalised and constructed as posing no consequences for men, but as having major consequences for women in general and Semeni in particular, whom this author implicitly positions as responsible for her own demise by refusing the advances of a "great person." Also, regardless of the author's intent, these discursive constructions demonstrate to readers the consequences of going outside the boundaries of acceptable behaviour in Tanzanian society. Certainly, men's perception of women as their sexual property and their related right to use force if they are denied sex is evident in Scully and Moralla's (1993) study on the reasons that men gave for committing rape. In their study, they interviewed 144 convicted rapists to understand their perspectives and reasons for rape. One interviewee, who murdered the victim because she refused to comply, stated:

Rape is a man's right. If a woman doesn't want to give it, the man should take it. Women have no right to say no. Women are made to have sex. It's all they are good for. Some women would rather take a beating, but they always give in; it's what they are for. (1993, p. 42)

With this belief in male sexual licence, Zuberi (the rapist) does not see why he should not use power to get what he thinks is his right, and the author presents no

counterargument to challenge such beliefs. Consequently, it is crucial not only to question the general ideas about women as male property (Gavey, 1992, 2005) but also the Tanzanian patriarchal system that condones and maintains this view.

Another example where men use power to satisfy their sexual desire is illustrated by Mwaijega (2002) in *Mama Baba Yangu ni Yupi*. In this novel, Mwaijega describes Lameck's intention to rape Subi after she had refused his sexual advances when they were at college. Lameck persuades Subi to drink alcohol at their classmate's wedding and when she is drunk, Lameck rapes her. Lameck's intent to rape is apparent in a subsequent telephone conversation when Subi informs him that she is pregnant as a result of the rape:

"Haloo, wewe ni Lameck?"

"Ndiyo mimi Lameck Chuwa, wewe ni nani?"

"Mimi Subi wa Mbeya"

"Unasemaje wewe malaya."

"Sipendi unite malaya Lameck, umalaya wangu uko wapi kwani ulinikuta malaya?"

"Sasa unataka nikuiteje, si ulijifanya mjanja mbona nilikupata."

"Sawa lakini madhara ya kitendo kile mwenzio umenipa mimba..."

Wewe Subi hayo usiniambie mimi, hiyo mimba sina habari nayo kama ni huyo mtoto si wangu ni wa kwako mwenyewe au kampe mwanamume mwingine, usiniletee matatizo ... na sitaki kuniletea maneno ya umalaya wako..."

"Yaani leo unaniambia hivyo Lameck wakati ulinibaka ..."

"Nani alikubaka, si ulevi wako, niondokee hapa." (Mwaijega, 2002, p. 147)

"Hello, is that Lameck speaking?"

"Yes, I am Lameck Chuwa, who is speaking?"

"Subi from Mbeya."

"You prostitute, what is the problem?"

"I don't like you calling me a prostitute, Lameck; did you find me a prostitute?"

"How do you like me to call you, you tried to be clever but finally I got you."

"It's ok, you have achieved your goal, but now I am pregnant ..."

"Subi don't tell me about that issue, I am not concerned with your pregnancy and the baby is not mine. It is yours or you can give it to another man. I don't want problems ... and I don't like to hear your prostitute's words ..."

"Lameck, this is what you are telling me today, when you raped me ...?"

"I didn't rape you, it is your drunkenness, leave me alone."

In this telephone conversation it becomes evident that Lameck planned to rape Subi. The expression "you tried to be clever but finally I got you" hints at the

abuser's intention to rape. In addition, the telephone conversation reveals that the rape was a deliberate punishment of the victim as she had refused to accept the offender's earlier sexual advances. As noted by Scully and Marolla (1993) and Mgalla et al. (1998), men use rape as a means to place women under their control as well as exercising dominance and power. Explicitly, in this extract the novelist positions the abuser as a rational being who has the intention of fulfilling his sexual needs or punishing a woman for not willingly servicing those needs.

Later on, Mwaijega explains that Lameck continues to harass Subi and he wants her husband, Antony, to divorce her. Lameck writes two letters to Antony telling him that their first child, Lilian, is not their child and that he would like to take his child, but Antony does not reply. Lameck writes another letter and informs Antony that he has had sexual affairs with Subi when Antony went to a meeting in another region, and that Subi is only pretending to love Antony. According to the narration, it is true that Antony went to a meeting and at that time Lameck went to Antony's home, but he did not have a sexual affair with Subi. According to the narrative, Lameck wants Antony to divorce his wife because of her unfaithful behaviour. However, Antony does not respond to Lameck's claims. Lameck becomes very upset about not accomplishing his goal.

Furthermore, Mwaijega (2002) subsequently explains how Subi regrets allowing herself to become drunk and going to the hotel with Lameck. This is evident when Subi thinks out loud as she reads the first two letters which Lameck has sent to her husband, telling him he is not the biological father of their first daughter - Lilian:

"Lameck huyo alinipa bia moja nikaonja ingawa sikuwahi kunywa. Lameki kasema twende kulala baada ya kuona ni usiku. Nami kwa ulevi wa kujitakia nikakubali. ... Aaah lakini yote haya ni makosa yangu, sasa napata malipo." (Mwaijega, 2002, pp. 9-10)

"Lameck gave me one beer and it was my first time. Lameck says let's go to the hotel because it was night. As I allowed myself to get drunk I agreed to go with him ... Ohoo but all these now are my responsibilities. I am getting the rewards."

This narrative reconstruction of the victim as blameworthy is consistent with previous literature investigating common beliefs about rape victims. For example, in their study of attitudes and experiences of dealing with gender-based violence

among primary health care nurses in rural South Africa, Kim and Motsei (2002) note that the participants argued that women who were raped “tend to put themselves at risk through their use of alcohol” (p. 1246).

As the narration continues, Lameck asks his relatives to help him to get the child. Traditionally, the Chagga people (Lameck’s tribe) believe that a child belongs to his father and Lameck is certain that his relatives will assist him to get his daughter. However, they refuse to be involved as they are very upset at what he has done to Subi. At this point, the author reconstructs Lameck as being controlled by alcohol and an evil spirit. This is apparent when Lameck visits Subi’s parents to ask for the child, because he is the biological father:

“... siku moja wakati Subi anajiandaa kwa harusi nilimnyweshwa pombe kidogo, halafu akalewa. ... Alipolewa nikatumia nafasi hiyo kutimiza haja zangu mbaya kwa ushawishi wa pombe na shetani”.
(Mwaijega, 2002, p. 184)

“... one day when Subi was preparing for a wedding, I gave her alcohol and she was drunk. I used the opportunity to rape her. I was lured by alcohol and an evil spirit.”

Even though Lameck is earlier depicted as purposely having used his power to abuse Subi, this reading is subsequently undermined as the novelist now externalises the reasons for his actions. Thus, this extract implies that men like Lameck, who abuse women, are not entirely responsible for their actions, which is a discursive shift that also serves to silence the argument that some men deliberately use violence to achieve a particular goal (Dobash & Dobash, 1998; Meyers, 1997; Michelle & Weaver, 2003).

In this novel, Mwaijega (2002) depicts the long-term consequences of rape for women and for Subi in particular, as well as techniques that are used to continue harassing the victim. Mwaijega concludes his novel with Lameck in shock, as Subi’s parents refuse to give him his biological child. While this conclusion appears to challenge what is believed to be a norm within the Chagga tribe, any critique is marginalised as the narrative overall privileges a dominant rape myth and a discourse of male sexual entitlement.

Similarly, Chachage (1991), in *Almasi za Bandia*, illustrates how an abusive man, Merton, uses his power to rape Patricia. Merton is studying with Patricia at

University. Chachage explains that for a long time, Merton has been planning to have sex with Patricia, but because he is living with his wife, it is difficult for him to invite Patricia into his house to accomplish his mission. With his friend (Ayuka), Merton plots ways that he can force Patricia to have sex with him. One day after class, Merton and Ayuka invite Patricia for lunch at Ayuka's apartment. Unaware of the plot, Patricia accepts the invitation. After arriving at Ayuka's apartment, Ayuka uses the pretext of going out to buy drinks to leave Merton and Patricia alone in his house. Ayuka locks the door and takes the key. This gives the go ahead to Merton to accomplish his goal, as Chachage narrates:

Kwa sauti ya kukoroma iliyoathirika na ashiki za kihayawani, Merton aliongea huku kaisogeza mikono yake kwa Patricia. ...

Patricia alisimama haraka na kukimbilia mlangoni. ... Alijaribu kukizungusha kitasa cha mlango. ... Kwa sauti kali ya kutetemeka alimwamuru Merton, "Usinisogele! Ukinisogelea tu nitapiga kelele!" Merton alicheka kifedhulu na kumjibu, "Unapoteza wakati wako bure! Hakuna atakayekuamini." ... Patricia alitamani apige yowe, lakini sauti ilimhaini akashindwa kufanya hivyo. ... Alipofikiri juu ya aibu ambayo angeipata pindi watu wangeingia pale baada ya kusikia yowe, na kisha wakakosa kuamini ambacho angewaeleza. ...

Sasa Merton alikuwa amefaulu ... aliivuta chupi ya yule msichana na kuichanilia mbali. ... [Patricia] akaendelea kupigana ... Kwa Merton, majaribio ya Patricia kujikwamua pale, hazikuwa dalili za kukataa, bali kujaribaraguzwa kwa kike. Kama angekuwa amekataa, basi angepiga kelele. (Chachage, 1991, pp. 70-71)

While putting his hands close to Patricia, Merton spoke in a deep voice affected with strong sexual desire. ...

Quickly Patricia stood up and ran to the door. ... She tried to open the door. ... With a trembling voice Patricia told Merton: "Don't touch me! If you touch me I will scream!" Arrogantly Merton laughed and said: "You are wasting your time! No one will believe you.".... Patricia wanted to scream but she couldn't ... she thought of the shame she would endure if people came and did not believe what she was telling them. ...

Now Merton has succeeded ... he tore her underwear. ... [Patricia] continued fighting. ... In Merton's eyes Patricia was not refusing to have sex with him, rather she was pretending she doesn't like to have sex. If she didn't want to have sex she would have screamed for help.

Walby et al. (1983) note that many rapes are planned, with the place arranged and the victim intentionally sought out. In this second extract, societal stigmatisation of rape is shown by the author to aid and abet sexual violence against women and silence the victim. Furthermore, the perpetrator takes advantage of society's disbelieving attitude towards rape complaints to threaten and arouse panic in the victim. Thus, the stigma associated with rape encourages violent men to abuse women, while also encouraging the victim to tolerate the abuse out of shame and fear that even if she cries rape, no one will believe her (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Meursing et al., 1995; Walby, et al., 1983). This is apparent in the conversation when Merton says to Patricia "You are wasting your time! No one will believe you."

Earlier on, Chachage explains that Merton informs Yakini (Merton and Patricia's friend) that Patricia is his mistress. Yakini knows it is not true and plans to ask Patricia, but he does not. When Patricia tells Yakini that Merton has raped her, Yakini regrets not alerting her. After he has raped Patricia, Merton tells his friends that it was very easy for him to have sex with her. In shock, Yakini responds furiously:

"Unadhani sisi hatujui kwamba ulimnajisi Patricia kwa nguvu nyumbani kwa ... Ayuka?" (Chachage, 1991, p. 75)

"You think we don't know you raped Patricia in ... Ayuka's apartment?"

Merton becomes very angry and wants to beat Yakini, but their friends intervene. However, Merton insists that one day Yakini will know he is an important person. Several years later, Merton is attacked by an unknown person and is injured badly. Merton alleges that Yakini is responsible for the attack. Yakini is taken to a police station and tortured by Inspector Gordon to reveal the truth about Merton's attack, but Yakini does not know who attacked Merton. Later on, Merton explains that he was attacked by Inspector Gordon's friends for business reasons, but he put the responsibility on Yakini as they had quarrelled before. According to the narration, Merton commits suicide a few hours later. Within the narrative it becomes apparent that Merton had planned revenge because Yakini exposed what he thought was a "secret." Presumably, in this novel the author aims to reveal the diversity and complexity of rape in Tanzanian society.

Conversely, Ruhumbika (2001), in *Janga Sugu la Wazawa*, features a girl who manages to fight off a rape attempt successfully. Rev. Joni (a Catholic priest) attempts to rape Bugonoka at her home. He visits her frequently in the name of evangelism. The day he attempts to rape her, he declares that the real aim of his regular visits is not religious conversion but rather to have a sexual relationship with her. Bugonoka tells Rev. Joni that she is not interested in having a sexual relationship with a priest. Nevertheless, Rev. Joni decides to accomplish his goal by attempting to rape her:

Alipotaka kupita pale huyo padre alipokuwa amekaa ili atoke nje, Padre Joni akamdaka mkono, na hapo hapo akamvuta hadi kwenye mlango, akafunga mlango na kubana komea la mlango. Halafu, kwa mikono yake yote miwili, akamshika huyo mwanamke mbichi aliyekuwa anamtia wazimu hivyo na kumbania kifuani kwake, na kusikia joto la matiti yake, huku mkia wake uliokwisha vimbiana kama kifutu anayetaka kuuma mtu unatafuta mapaja laini ya huyo kigoli. (Ruhumbika, 2001, p. 95)

When she tried to go outside, passing where the priest was sitting, Rev. John grabbed her hand and immediately pulled her closer to the door. Then, he locked the door with a bolt. With both hands, he embraced that virgin girl who was driving him mad and squeezed her tightly in his chest, feeling the warmth of her breast. He was already sexually aroused.

In this extract, the author constructs the abuser as fully responsible for his actions. Although Rev. Joni tells Bugonoka he comes to Nyamazugilo parish in order to be with her, Ruhumbika explains that Rev. Joni was actually transferred because of his abusive behaviour. In this novel, Ruhumbika implicitly criticises the Catholic Church for not punishing priests who abuse their power. Ruhumbika's explanation of how the church deals with abuse mirrors how abuse by teachers in schools is handled in Tanzania; teachers who abuse girls are often transferred to another school rather than punished (Plummer et al., 2007).

Later on, Ruhumbika explains that Bugonoka is a hero and role model for women on how to prevent men from realising their intentions. He further explains that women discuss the way Bugonoka fought off the rape attempt, and conclude that it is possible to stop a man from accomplishing his intentions. It can be argued, then, that Bugonoka's description highlights the possibility of a different discourse on rape that offers positions of resistance for women.

Surprisingly, however, as Ruhumbika develops the narrative he offers other contradictory subject positions to Bugonoka, who he describes as a culturally inappropriate woman, a “bad woman” who intends to kill. Consequently, because of her deplorable actions towards a man who just wanted to have sex with her, Bugonoka is murdered and her vagina taken to Rev. Joni, who has converted to Islam and became a Sheikh and a witch doctor. According to the narration, this is Bugonoka’s punishment for fighting off the rape attempt. This narrative reframing thus suggests that women who engage in self-defence violate cultural and traditional gender role expectations of being passive and readily receptive to men whenever they want sex. As Bart and O’Brien (1985) state, “traditional female socialization sets up women to be raped rather than to avoid rape when attacked” (p. 105). Hence, when a woman fights back in self-defence this action is not seen as appropriate within the framework of a patriarchal system, and therefore she is seen to deserve to be punished. Regardless of the author’s intent, this discursive practice potentially serves to silence women and discourage them from fighting back, by suggesting that in doing so they will endure more serious violence. This novel thus reflects and sustains a patriarchal view of women as subordinate within the society and as sexual objects for men to use and abuse at will (Boonzaier, 2006, 2005; Dutton, 1986; Meyers, 1997; J. T. Wood, 2004). The author’s construction of the victim as enduring more violence and suffering as a result of her initial violation of patriarchal social norms serves to reinforce culturally gendered roles. Specifically, this discursive practice of punishing a rape victim within the narrative has the potential social effect of legitimising and supporting what is described as appropriate feminine behaviour in response to unwanted sexual advances from men: submission.

The discursive practice of attributing responsibility to the victim encourages the rape myth, and therefore, as noted by C. A. Ward (1995), allows men to use women essentially as their property. In this way, the construction of rape in Kiswahili novels affirms patriarchal hegemonic interests, and subsequently the novels reproduce discourses which minimise the role of the abuser and society in perpetrating sexual violence. Nonetheless, the location of rape as described in Kiswahili novels links with the image of the rapist as someone known to the woman and rape as occurring in a place thought of as safe (Browne & Williams, 1989, 1993; Harway & Hansen, 1993). Indeed, this affirms what feminist

literature has long maintained - that the home is the most dangerous place for women.

5.2.3 Construction of economic violence against women

Some research suggests that violence against women is a tactic of coercive control to maintain men's power (Bograd, 1988b; Stark & Flitcraft, 1996), which reinforces male domination and female subordination in society (Meyers, 1997; Pence & Paymar 1993; Yllö, 2005). This is apparent in Kiswahili novels, as some novelists seem to be drawing on liberal humanist instrumentalist discourse when they construct a picture of violent men using power to achieve their intended goals. In *Kipimo cha Huzuni*, for example, Burhani (2004) explains how Umari (Halima's brother-in law) uses his 'status power' to abuse Halima by taking her property after her husband's death. Umari uses the power accorded to him by customary law to evict Halima from the matrimonial house:

Aliona kuwa mali ya ndugu yake, Amini, ni haki yake yeye, sio mtu mwengine, kama Halima. ... Alimtafuta mtu na kumtuma kwa Halima, akamwambia, "Sasa eda imemalizika. Huna tena haki ya kukaa katika nyumba hii. Lazima uondoke." (Burhani, 2004, pp. 87-88)

He [Umari] believes that his brother's [Amini] properties belong to him and not someone else like Halima [his brother's wife]. ... He found someone and ordered him to tell Halima, "Now the time for eda²³ has finished. You don't have the right to continue staying in this house. You must leave."

Bhatla, Chakraborty and Duvvury (2006), and Ezer (2006) argue that in developing countries, customary laws and customary practices that limit women from owning or inheriting property contribute to their vulnerability to violence, as they are dependent on men for their everyday survival, economic security and safety. In regard to women's reliance on men, Bujra (1990), Dolphyne (1991), and Meeker and Meekers (1997) all note that men believe women do not need to own property. This is also true in Tanzanian society, where men believe they are responsible for taking care of women; hence, women have no need to own property in their own right. One respondent in a study on why women in

²³ A period of four months and ten days for a Muslim woman to stay unmarried and under the care of her husband's relatives after her husband's death.

Tanzania should pay tax asserted that, “Women don’t need property of their own ... we take good care of them” (Bujra, 1990, p. 56). Bujra argues that the “good care” men claim to give women (wives) is a control strategy and a reaffirmation of men’s power over women. A study on the situation of widows in Tanzania reveals that customary law denies widows their inheritance (Ezer, 2006). Ezer asserts that, the “widow has no share of inheritance if the deceased left relatives of his clan” (p. 609). By uncritically rearticulating this dominant discourse, the author implies that Umaris’s abusive actions are acceptable, as he lives according to traditional practices.

However, according to statutory law, a widow has the right to inherit property and take care of her children, if the children are young. Knowing this, Mariyamu (Umari’s wife) advises her husband on how to usurp that right and take control of the property. Burhani explains that Mariyamu advises her husband to get the legal documents relating to his brother’s property. According to the narration, Umari refuses. However, Mariyamu insists that he has the responsibility of taking care of his brother’s children, as the following extract shows:

“Siwezi kumtoa katika nyumba sasa. Kisheria na kwa misingi ya kiutamaduni wetu, ana haki ya kukaa humo na wanawe.” ...

“Mali ni ya ndugu yako. Na wewe ni dhamana ya kuwaangalia watoto wake.” ...

“Unafikri nitaweza kwenda kumwuliza kuhusu hayo? Au kwenda kutafiti katika nyumba yake?”...

“Kwa sasa! Niachie mimi hayo niyachungue.” (Burhani, 2004, p. 82)

“I cannot evict her from the house now. Legally and according to our culture, she has the right to stay in that house with her children.” ...

“It is your brother’s properties. And you are the guardian of your brother’s children.”...

“Do you think I can talk to her about this issue? Or search her house?” ...

“For now leave the issue to me, I will deal with it.”

Earlier in her narration, Burhani explains that Mariyamu had planned to steal the documents from Halima’s house with the help of her friend Fahamu. However, Fahamu does not get the documents because they are not in the house. Therefore, even though Umari succeeds in removing Halima from the house and taking her properties - a house, shop and manufacturing business - he is not happy because he cannot sell them. Mariyamu advises her husband to go to court to claim the

legal right, which will entitle him to take care of his brother's properties. She also tells her husband to find a lawyer who will speak for him:

“Ninavyoona bora wewe uende korti. Ukadia haki ya kuwachukua watoto wa ndugu yako, uwe nao. Iliyokuwa wewe ndiye mwenye dhamana wa kuwaangalia hivi sasa. Sidhani kama watakukatalia. Hapo tena utakuwa umemweza yule mwanamke, maana wakati huo kila kitu kitakuwa mikononi mwako. Hatakuwa na uwezo wowote.”

...

“Bora umtafute wakili atakayekusaidia. Wapo baadhi, ukimpa chochote atakutengenezea mambo yako yote, bila wewe kuhangaika. Yeye ndiye atakayekuwa msemaji wako.” (Burhani, 2004, pp. 88-89).

“I think you need to go to court. Claim a legal right to take care of your brother's children. You are entitled to take care of them. I don't think they will refuse. Then you will be in total control of everything. That woman (a widow) will have no means.” ...

“It is good to hire a lawyer who will assist you. If you give him money he will do everything you want without any trouble. He will be your voice.”

In these extracts, Burhani emphasises the role played by Umari's wife, Mariyamu, in abusing Halima. Here, Burhani seems to frame economic violence against women as a “women's problem,” as Umari just follows what his wife says. By gendering the problem in this way, the author downplays the role of patriarchy and power imbalance in gender-based violence. This discursive strategy, as Berns (2001, pp. 265-266) asserts, “plays a central role in resisting any attempts to situate social problems within a patriarchal framework.” Furthermore, positioning women as the initiator of violence has the effect of exculpating men in their abusive behaviour against women: it effectively diverts the attention away from men's responsibility for violence against women and other social, economic and cultural factors which support violence against women. Such discursive processes ignore feminist argument that power imbalance and the patriarchal system allow violence against women (Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Gelles, 1983; Gil, 1986; Yllö, 2005).

Earlier on, the author explains that Halima loves her children and is prepared to waive her right to inherit her husband's property, fearing that this will be a reason for her in-laws to harass her children. But later, Umari's lawyer describes Halima

as being a “bad mother” before the judges, and argues that she cannot stay with her children:

[Halima] *“Hajashughulika sana na watoto. Alikuwa baba yao, marehemu, ndiye anayewahudumia wakati wote. Kwa sababu hiyo, ndivyo mzee huyu, ndugu wa baba yao, akaingiwa na wasiwasi.” ...*

“Tena msisahau wazee wangu, kuwa huyu ndiye baba mdogo, mwangalizi wa watoto hao, mayatima, tokea kuondoka baba yao. Anaona itakuwa vizuri kwa wote waliohusika ikiwa watoto hao watakuwa mikononi mwake, chini ya ulinzi wake na ulezi wake; kuliko kuja baadaye kujikuta mikononi mwa mtu mwengine wasiyejua wala kumzoea.” ...

Hakimu mmoja alitaka Halima aletwe mbele ya mahakama ili naye aseme yake. Hakimu alikakania na kushikilia ukweli kuwa msemu pweke hakosi. Hata hivyo, mwenzake alimwarifu kuwa haina haja kwani angemwona chembe baadaye ili apate sehemu yake ya mnofu kutoka kwa Umari. Umari aliulizwa afike hapo baada ya siku mbili ili achukue stakabadhi alizotaka. (Burhani, 2004, pp. 90-91)

“She [Halima] has not been paying much attention to the children. It was the father who cared for them all the time. For that reason, that man, their uncle, has a concern.” ...

“But more important, my Excellencies, this man is the uncle - the guardian of these orphans from the day their father passed away. He thinks it would be good for these children to be under his care and control instead of being under someone else who they are not familiar with.” ...

One judge wants Halima to appear in court so that she can explain her position. The judge insists that the truth will be revealed by hearing both sides. However, his colleague alerts him that there is no need because he would see him privately later to give him his share [corruption] from Umari. Umari was told to go there after two days to collect the documents he needed.

In these extracts, Umari’s lawyer deliberately misleads the judges by misrepresenting Halima’s relationship with her children, so that Umari will be entitled to live with his brother’s children and take care of his wealth. Furthermore, Halima’s right to be heard is denied, as Umari bribes the judges and manages to get the documents he needs. Research has noted that corruption among local officials is a common problem in many developing countries (Bowman, 2003; Mama, 2001; Morrison, Ellsberg, & Bott, 2007). Burhani reveals that because of corruption, the widow is not given an opportunity to show

up in the court and to be heard. Likewise, the judges, although professional about the rights of widows and the legal procedures, use their legal power to grant Umari the right to take care of his brother's children without hearing from the second party in the case.

In a society where corruption is widespread, poor and vulnerable groups are the most affected because they are denied basic services (Narayan, Patel, Schafft, Rademacher, & Koch-Schulte, 2000; Vanderschueren, 1996). As Strickland (2004) argues, an unaccountable legal system contributes to economic violence against widows as they are victimised through corruption and manipulative decision making, which denies their right of inheritance. He proposes that women's rights to inherit can only be achieved when legal institutions are committed to implementing and enforcing laws which support women owning and inheriting property.

Burhani's narrative describes that government officials' misconduct that allows violence against women is not only found in legal contexts but extends to wider social services, such as in hospitals. This is depicted in a later scene that occurs after Umari takes Halima's children once he has obtained the required legal documents. In an attempt to take back her children, Halima fights with Umari, who calls the police and tells them that Halima has been mentally unstable since her husband's death. The police take her to the police station and later to the psychiatric hospital. In the hospital, Umari tells the doctor in charge that Halima is mentally ill and about to kill him. Also, he says that he is concerned about her children as she can harm them, and therefore he would like Halima to stay in the hospital until she has recovered completely. However, knowing that Halima will explain the truth, Umari bribes the doctor to keep Halima in the hospital until he gives him more instructions. According to the narrative, Umari promises Doctor Juma that he will give him a new Mercedes car. Doctor Juma agrees, as he finds that it will be no problem to accomplish what Umari wanted.

Burhani further explains that the doctor accepts what Umari tells him about Halima as the "truth" without examining her, and consequently she is confined to a room and fastened to her bed /*Daktari aliamrisha afungwe kamba kwenye kitanda na pia afugwe mdomo, maana hakutaka kusikia makelelel yako.*/ "The

doctor ordered Halima to be tied down on the bed and gagged as he did not want her to cry out” (Burhani, 2004, p. 14). In addition, Burhani discloses that Halima is not given treatment as this is in keeping Umari’s request. This is apparent when the doctor refuses to attend Halima when he is approached by a nurse, Salama. Also, Burhani reveals that when Halima tries to run away from the psychiatric hospital to see her children, she had to endure more torture from Doctor Juma:

Salama alimwambia, “Daktari! Huyu mgonjwa si mtu wa ghasia, na wewe unajua. Ina haja gani ya kumfunga kama hivi?”

“Alitoroka, na tukimwacha lazima atajaribu tena”... “Ninataka utayarishe sindano. Apigwe sindano hiyo kila siku mara mbili, ili apate kulala na kutulia.” (Burhani, 2004, p. 176)

Salama told the doctor, “Doctor! This patient does not have any problems and you know that. Why should she be fastened like that?”

“She ran away. If we leave her free she will try again” ... “Prepare an injection. She must be injected twice every day, so that she can sleep and be quiet.”

The author suggests that Umari and the doctor both know that if they let her free she will reveal the truth, and probably the doctor will be seen as breaching his professional ethics. The doctor is thus using his power to inflict suffering on Halima, who is already psychologically affected by her isolation and confinement.

In this narrative, the author implicitly attributes responsibility for the violence against Halima to the widespread corruption that exists in legal institutions and hospitals in Tanzania. The author emphasises the failure of the judges to enforce the country’s laws which protect women’s rights to inherit property. This depiction suggests that the legal rights women have are not being implemented. Hence, women are far from realising the benefits of these measures because of social and cultural practices. Benschop’s study on women’s equal rights to land, housing and property in East Africa reveals that:

Even if national legislation will fully recognise women’s equal rights to own, co-own, access, control and inherit land, housing and other property, existing practices will not automatically be changed; wider *changes in social and cultural attitudes* are necessary for this legislation to reach all women. Only then would women be able to enjoy *substantive* equal and independent rights, which entails the

enjoyment of access to rights in and control over land and housing.
(Benschop, 2002, p. 182)

Strengthening and improving the justice sector and addressing systemic problems such as the acceptance of corruption (Morrison et al., 2007) are a necessary component in efforts to end economic violence towards women in Tanzania. In addition, Banaynal-Fernandez (1994) asserts that women themselves, as individuals and as a group, have to fight for their rights since both family and governmental institutions oppress them. In this regard, Burhani details how Doctor Juma threatens Salama, a female nurse, when she tries to fight for Halima's rights in the hospital. Salama courageously refuses to inject Halima when ordered to by the doctor. This action exasperates the doctor and he threatens to fire Salama. However, Salama continues to protest and even when the doctor orders another nurse to do the injection, she prohibits her from doing so. The following example illustrates the situation:

“Sikiliza.” Daktari alisema na huku akimwangalia Salama kwa hasira, “Nani mwenye amri hapa, wewe au mimi?”

“Wewe bila shaka, lakini sio uamrishe jambo la kosa na mimi nikubali,” alijibu Salama.

“Ikiwa hutaki kufuata amri, basi nitamwita mwuguzi mwingine. Na wewe ninaweza kukushitaki. Unaweza ukafukuzwa kazi.”

“Unaweza kunishtaki, kweli. Lakini mimi pia nina haki ya kukushitaki, ikiwa unafanya makosa.”...

Daktari Juma alimwita mwuguzi mwingine na kumpa amri yake, ... Salama alimwambia yule mwenzake, “Hivyo unavyofanya sivyoye. Unajua kuwa mtu huyu hahitaji dawa hii, na huenda baadaye ikamduru.”...

Salama alisogea na kumnyang'anya ile sindano na kile kichupa cha dawa. ...

Mwuguzi yule alitoka kwenda kupeleka ripoti ile. (Burhani, 2004, pp. 176-177)

“Listen,” The doctor said while looking Salama furiously. “Who gives the orders here, you or me?”

“Definitely you are the boss, but this does not mean that I have to obey when you demanded that I do something wrongful,” replied Salama.

“If you don't want to obey the order, I will instruct another nurse. And I can sue you. And you can be fired.”

“It is true that you can sue me. But also I have the right to sue you if you are breaching professional ethics.”...

Doctor Juma called another nurse and told her what to do ... Salama told her colleague, “What you are doing is not right. You know the effects of this medicine and this person does not need it.”...

Salama drew closer and snatched the needle and the medicine. ...
The nurse departed to inform the doctor what had happened.

It is apparent in the example above that ending violence against women, as presented by the author, is a complex issue which requires people being willing to take a strong and courageous stand. The author's description of Doctor Juma is an example of the obstacles an individual may encounter while challenging what people in power think is their right. The opposition that Salama encounters from her colleagues suggests how difficult it is to change the "truth", which has been reinforced by prejudices, stereotypes and myths and which maintains women's subordination in Tanzanian society. Furthermore, Burhani depicts Salama's colleague as a woman who has internalised a position of inferiority and is ready to do whatever she is ordered to do by her boss, even though her actions will oppress another member of her own social group.

In contrast, Salama keeps fighting for Halima's rights, despite the threats from Doctor Juma. It appears that Doctor Juma believes that he has the power to do whatever he wants. Consequently, when Salama challenges his actions, she is threatened in order to silence her. Salama, however, does send a report to her employer about her boss's misconduct. In her letter to their employer, the Ministry of Health, Salama details how Halima was treated by Doctor Juma, despite the fact that she was not a dangerous patient. Doctor Juma also reports to the Ministry of Health what he thinks is Salama's misconduct. Both are called to account for their conduct before the committee. During the hearing, Salama is found guilty by the members of the committee for not respecting her boss and breaching professional ethics, as the following extracts illustrate:

Makosa ya muuguzaji, kwa mujibu wa daktari Juma ni haya:

1. *Kutotii amri ya daktari.*
2. *Kujaribu kuzuia wengine wasifuate amri hiyo na kujaribu kuwazuia wasitekeleze wajibu wao.*
3. *Kumvunjia daktari heshima mbele ya wafanyakazi wengine.*
4. *Kutoa ujeuri na ufidhuli kwa mkuu wake wa kazi. (Burhani, 2004, p. 182)*

"Iliyokuwa hawa watu wawili hawawezi kufanya kazi pamoja, na hakika tukiangalia, daktari amefanya makosa..."

"Lakini haitokuwa vizuri" alikatiza mwengine, "Kumvunja yule daktari. Itakuwa kama tunamvunjia uwezo wake wa kufanya kazi na sisi tunamhitajia."

“Kweli” aliitikia mwengine. “Lakini sasa je? Bila ya kumpa haki yake yule mwuguzi, lazima atahisi ameonewa. Na yeye pia tunamhitajia. Kwa hakika watu kama hao, wenye hisia ya dhamana zao ni adimu, na tunamwuhitaji sana.” (Burhani, 2004, p. 184)

According to Doctor Juma’s claim the nurse has done the following:

1. Disrespected the doctor’s order.
2. Prohibited other staff from obeying orders and tried to forbid them to practise their duties.
3. Lacked respect towards the doctor in the presence of other staff.
4. Showed arrogance and contempt towards her boss.

“It appears that these two people cannot work together, and surely the doctor has made mistakes...”

“However it will not be a good idea,” interrupted another member, “to humiliate the doctor. We will taint his professional ability and we need him.”

“It is true,” replied another member. “How about the nurse? If we do not grant her, her rights, she will feel subjugated. We need her also. For sure people like her, who have such courage, are few and we need them very much.”

In the above example, the committee positions Salama as guilty of offending her boss. On the other hand, Doctor Juma’s charges are not questioned by the committee; instead, the committee positions him as an important person whose reputation is important to the community, even though his “professionalism” is questionable. Focusing on the importance of maintaining the doctor’s professional standing rather than the abuse done to the patient and the employee (Halima and Salama) diverts attention away from the perpetrator’s responsibility and from the system that condones violence. Such a committee would normally be expected to investigate why the patient (Halima) was not given the same rights of care as other patients. Salama (the nurse) had given details about the mistreatment of Halima yet the committee did not take these aspects into consideration in its decision. Instead, the committee positions Doctor Juma as an important person who deserves respect. Here, the author probably aims to suggest that it is difficult to punish abusive men who have “status/power” in Tanzanian society. This can be economic status, like Umari’s, which enables him to bribe the government officials, or social status like Doctor Juma’s; both are therefore “untouchable” abusive men who can continue to abuse women without facing any punishment. This is similar to findings in Gelles’s (1983) and Gil’s (1986) studies, that women are most vulnerable to violence

because of their socially institutionalised inequalities of status and economic power compared with their male attackers.

However, this novel also holds out hope for courageous women like Salama, who confidently challenge the dominant discourses, as the committee members acknowledged that they need “people like her, who have such courage.” Because of Salama’s courage, the author reveals that Halima is transferred to another hospital and Salama looks after her for some time before she is discharged and reunites with her children. Burhani’s depiction of a strong female character is consistent with Munalula and Mwenda’s (1995) perspective that women themselves should inspire other women to fight against gender-based violence.

Research suggests that economic violence against women has serious consequences for children and women (Campbell, 2002; Gordon, 2000; Morrison et al., 2007). Burhani reveals that Halima is affected physically, as her hands and legs are tied down most of the time in the psychiatric hospital, and affected psychologically and emotionally as she is isolated from her children and the community, as well as being denied the opportunity to participate in economic and other social activities. Burhani also details how Halima’s children suffered. Their suffering includes being denied the right to education, verbal and physical abuse, and being brutally forced out onto the street. Halima’s three children live with Ms Rehema after Baraka, a young businessman, finds them on the street. Unlike Mariyamu, the author describes Ms Rehema as a kind-hearted person who loves children. Ms Rehema cares for Halima’s children and takes them to school. She lives with Halima and her children after Halima is discharged from the psychiatric hospital.

Towards the end of the novel, the author explains that Umari is very sick and his wife is looking after him. They are struggling. Halima agrees to help them after she has regained her properties, which were legally under Umari’s care. Meanwhile Salama is promoted and becomes a nurse in charge in the new psychiatric hospital. This conclusion seems to hold out hope for courageous women like Salama.

Similarly, M. S. Mohamed (1976), in *Nyota ya Rehema*, reveals how Karim (Salma’s husband) abuses Rehema (Salma’s stepsister) economically by taking her land after her father’s death. M.S. Mohamed explains that Rehema, Fuad’s

first daughter in his first marriage, was given land by her father, but he did not give her the title deeds. He also discloses that according to Tanzanian laws and Islamic religion, a child born in marriage is entitled to a share of her father's property; therefore, as a legal child, Rehema has a right to keep the property given to her by her father. Knowing that, Karim, her brother-in-law, prepares a document which shows her mother was divorced before Rehema was born. Consequently, when Rehema fights for her right to inherit her father's property, her claim is rejected, as the following extracts illustrate:

Rehema alikuja juu, "Mimi ni mtoto wa marehemu baba yangu Bwana Fuad Salum, na kanizaa mama yangu marehemu Bibi Aziza binti Saidi." (M. S. Mohamed, 1976, pp. 143)

*"Hii hapa shahada ya kuolewa mama yangu na baba yangu."
Bwana Mudiri wa Rawe ... akapokea kile cheti na kukikunjua kwa mchanganyiko wa fadhaa na hasira.*

"Ah, jambo lenyewe ni hilo tu?" ... [Karim] alitoa karatasi na kumkabidhi Bwana Mudiri. ...

*Alicheka Bwana Mudiri wa Ramwe alipokuwa akizilinganisha karatasi mbili. "Sasa mambo yamekuwa sawa" alisema. "Una umri wa miaka mingapi?"
"Ishirini na...na tisa;" , alijibu Rehema hali hana hakika. (M. S. Mohamed, 1976, pp. 144)*

"Si ajabu kuwa hujui" alieleza Bwana Mudiri kwa hakika timamu, 'kwa sababu mama yako aliachwa na marehemu Bwana Fuad miaka mitano kabla hujazaliwa. Cheti cha talaka kinabainisha wazi kuwa mama yako aliachwa miaka thelathini na nne iliyopita, na wewe sasa umri wako ni miaka ishirini na tisa tu." (M. S. Mohamed, 1976, pp. 145)

"I am the child of a late Mr. Fuad Salum and my mother is the late Ms Aziza Said." Rehema shouted.

"Here is my mother's marriage certificate."
Rawe District Commissioner (DC) ... receives the certificate and unfolds it with mixed feelings of confusion and anger.

"Oh, only that?" ... [Karim - Rehema's brother in-law] took a document and handled it to the DC. ...

The Ramwe DC laughed while comparing the two documents. "Now everything is fine," he said. "How old are you?"
"Twenty-nine," answered Rehema while unsure. ...

“Maybe you don’t know,” explained the DC confidently, “Because your mother was divorced by Mr. Fuad five years before you were born. The divorce certificate indicates clearly that your mother was divorced thirty-four years ago and your age is only twenty-nine years.”

Earlier on, M .S. Mohamed explains that the country’s law gives rights to a legal child to inherit. However, the law is breached even when the victim presents the relevant “marriage certificate.” Further, the author exposes different discursive strategies employed by the perpetrator to abuse Rehema economically. For example, Karim’s spokesman’s description of what he knows about Fuad (Rehema’s father) and his children not only aims to report what he believes is true but also to convince the government official (Ramwe DC) that Karim has the “right” of the inheritance. This is apparent in the following statement: */Bwana Karim, Mudiri wa Mjini, ambaye pia ni mwakilishi halisi wa kila kilicho cha mkewe./* “Mr. Karim, the DC of Mjini province, who is also a legal representative of his wife’s properties” (M. S. Mohamed, 1976, p. 143). This description suggests that as an “important” person (the DC), Karim does not need to cheat. Karim’s spokesman’s description of Karim’s role and status thus aims to validate his position and absolve him from any blame.

In this novel, M. S. Mohamed describes Karim as a greedy person and a corrupt leader who is assisted by his relatives, who hold different positions in legal institutions. M. S. Mohamed narrates that Karim uses all the money he receives from his wife’s properties for travel. Subsequently, he plans to sell a farm which Rehema and her husband, Sulubu, have bought. Karim obtains a legal document from the DC that entitles him to sell the farm, but he is killed by Sulubu the day he goes to their farm with two others to take the possession of the property. Sulubu is then arrested and jailed. The author narrates that it is around this time when the revolution occurs in Zanzibar, so Sulubu is set free to rejoin his family. In this narrative, Karim is positioned as being responsible for Rehema’s sufferings. The death of Karim seems to suggest that inhumane treatment of others may not necessarily result in a positive outcome for the perpetrators.

Burhani and M. S. Mohamed both describe economic violence against women as a problem of a system that is unable to enact the existing laws due to discriminatory customary practices, and women’s inability to use the legal

mechanisms that protect their rights due to corruption. Both position the question of corruption as a central issue which prevents women from obtaining their rights. As these authors reveal, the privileged, powerful position men have in the society, both economically and socially, means they are able to manipulate the system to get what they want.

While these authors are implicitly critiquing the social system in Tanzania by showing how unjust it is for women, it is interesting to note that in both novels the victims of economic violence were finally successful. For example, Halima regained her husband's property and Karim did not sell Rehema's farm. In contrast to novels depicting other forms of violence against women, such as sexual violence and domestic violence, the perpetrators of economic violence in both these novels experienced some form of punishment. The depiction of Umari's critical health condition in Burhani's (2004) novel and the death of Karim in M. S. Mohamed's (1976) novel seem to suggest that it is possible to end economic violence against women in Tanzanian society.

5.2.4 Construction of child marriage

Child marriage is a serious problem in developing countries (Betron, 2008; Ezer, Kerr, Major, Polavarapu, & Tolentino, 2006; Nour, 2006) as it violates female children's rights (Mikhail, 2002). In spite of national laws and international conventions and charters which protect the rights of female children, millions of young girls in developing countries are married before the age of eighteen (Mathur, Greene, & Malhotra, 2003). A study by UNICEF reveals that among women aged 15 - 24, 48 per cent are married before the age of 18 in South Asia, 42 per cent in Africa, and 29 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNICEF, 2005). Ezer et al. (2006) report that in Tanzania, 471,000 girls between the ages of fifteen and nineteen are married. They argue that child marriage continues to be a problem in Tanzania because the "Law of Marriage Act authorizes child marriage" (p. 367). According to the Law of Marriage Act of 1971 (Section 13.1), the legal minimum age of marriage for a female is 15 years old; however, a female child can marry at the age of 14 years old with the consent of the parents (Legislation Tanzania, 1971). This practice contravenes human rights conventions, which the Tanzanian government has ratified. The Universal

Declaration of Human Rights 1948 (Article 16.1) states, “Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family”; and (Article 16.2) states, “Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.” Article 1.1 of the 1964 Convention on Consent to Marriage states that:

No marriage shall be legally entered into without the full and free consent of both parties, such consent to be expressed by them in person after due publicity and in the presence of the authority competent to solemnize the marriage and of witnesses, as prescribed by law. (United Nations, 1948)

The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the 1990 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child suggest a minimum age for marriage of 18 years. The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child define a child as a “person below the age of eighteen years” (Ezer et al., 2006, p. 362). In the present study, child marriage is defined as a forced marriage of a female child under eighteen years of age.

The social practice of child marriage, rationalised in the name of tradition, culture and religion (Akpan, 2003), occurs often in Kiswahili novels. The novelists describe the practice as caused by external factors such as poverty, protection of a girl’s virginity, and men’s desire for wealth and social status in Tanzanian society. For example, Balisidya (1975), in *Shida*, relates child marriage to poverty. In her novel, she narrates how a father arranges a child marriage for his daughter (Matika), who is to marry the son of a wealthy family after she completed her primary education. After settling the agreement with the family, Matika’s father informs his daughter about his “good plans” which will serve the family economically through the bride price of forty cows, twenty goats, and seven sheep. The marriage is also said to be to Matika’s advantage, as it will save her from becoming a “prostitute” after completing her primary education, as the following extract shows:

“Wanaleta mahari ukoo wa Mbukwasemwali, nasi tumeamua kupokea mahari hiyo. Sipendi ubishi – utaolewa na Njasulu. Tunafanya hivi kukuokoa na janga, maadamu sasa huna kazi wala chochote, usije ukaingia uhuni.” (Balisidya, 1975, p. 3)

“We have agreed with Mbukwasemwali’s family and they are bringing the bride price. I don’t want any argument - you will marry Njasulu. We are doing that to help you so that you will not be a prostitute, as you have nothing else to do”

However, Matika does not consent to her father’s plans and runs away. In frustration, the father beats his wife:

Huku nyumbani baba yake alipata habari. Alilaani na kugombana na mkewe hata akampiga sana. (Balisidya, 1975, pp. 6)

Later, her father was informed about Matika’s departure. He cursed her, quarrelled with his wife and beat her.

In the first extract, Balisidya reveals that Matika’s father is not prepared to discuss anything with his daughter, as he has already decided on what he wants. The author explains that Matika’s mother is unable to change his mind, although she sympathises with her daughter’s predicament. In fact, Matika’s father is living according to societal practice. As Otoo-Oyortey and Pobi (2003) note, in developing countries “marriage is not negotiable” and girls have to accept their father’s decision (p. 1). The narrative, as told, effectively absolves the father from any responsibility for his violent actions towards his wife and daughter. His violence is justified and normalised, as child marriage is depicted as being beneficial to the family and to the child. Early on in the narrative, Balisidya reveals Matika’s father’s concern about having a grown up daughter living with them after her schooling ends, as she might get pregnant or become a prostitute and bring shame to the family. As the narrative progresses, the father is clearly interested in the wealth he will get from the bride price, which is seen as a solution to the family poverty. This interest is also apparent when he becomes angry after learning that Matika has run away.

Balisidya explains that four years later, Matika’s father regrets forcing Matika to marry and promises he will not do that again if she returns home:

“Kama akirudi binti yangu, haki tena sitamlazimisha kuolewa, wala asitampangia mume. Hili lilikuwa kosa langu.” (Balisidya, 1975, p. 6)

“If she [Matika] returns home, I [Matika’s father] promise I will not force her to marry. It was my mistake.”

Although Balisidya initially positions Matika's father as being responsible for Matika's departure, she later shifts the responsibility to Matika. This is apparent when the author describes the consequences of resisting the arranged marriage as being forced prostitution and unplanned pregnancy. In the following extract, Balisidya illustrates how Matika finds it difficult to get a job in town because of her low level of education and lack of skills. This results in her joining the sex industry and having an unplanned pregnancy. Balisidya also narrates how Matika regrets refusing to follow her father's plans:

“Mimi baada ya kukimbia janga la kuolewa pale nyumbani kabla ya kupenda kwangu, nilipata shida sana pale Dodoma nikatafuta kazi ya kufanya nisipate. Ndipo niliposikia Dar es Salaam ni mji mkubwa zaidi kwa hiyo kuna kazi zaidi. Lakini kazi si kitu rahisi hapa. Kila kitu ni kigumu, pia kinataka jasho. Tukaingia katika mambo yasiyo heshima: umalaya na wizi, matokeo yake tumeyaona. Kazi ya aibu hii imeniletea kuzaa mtoto asiye baba; mtoto atakayeitwa mwanaharamu. Labda ningetulia nisingejiingiza katika kazi hii yasingenikuta haya baba; najuta.” (Balisidya, 1975, p. 72)

“After shunning getting married without my consent, I [Matika] endured a lot of problems at Dodoma town. I couldn't find a job. I heard that Dar es Salaam is a big city and jobs are available. However, finding a job is not an easy task here. Everything is hard to get and you need to toil. We [Matika and her friend] started doing immoral things: prostitution and stealing. We have seen the results. This reprehensible work led me to have a child out of marriage, a child who will be called a bastard child. Maybe if I had listened I would not have got involved in this work [prostitution] and I would not endure these difficulties. I am very sorry my father.”

In this extract, Balisidya relates Matika's adversity as being caused by her non-compliance with her father's wishes. The hardships she experiences after running away from the village are implicitly framed as a punishment for not obeying her father's wishes. This is made explicit in the narrative as she states, “If I had listened I would not have got involved in this work (prostitution) and I would not endure these difficulties.” In this novel, not only does Balisidya exonerate Matika's father, who violates his daughter's rights, she also implicitly positions the girl as in some ways deserving of her victimisation because she has transgressed the boundaries of what is acceptable behaviour in Tanzanian society.

In another example, Mtobwa narrates the story of a stepfather who marries off his daughter (Nunu) to an old man who is sixty-five years older than Nunu, not because of wealth but because he hates the child. Earlier on, the author details how Nunu has endured suffering from an early age. Her mother had died when she was two-years old and her father had married another woman. Both her biological father and stepmother abuse her. The reason given for her biological father abusing her is that she is a different colour, and so her father thinks her mother has been unfaithful to him. When her biological father dies and her stepmother marries another man, the abuse intensified to the point where it becomes sexual abuse by the stepfather. At this point, her stepfather marries her off to an old man. The author tells of Nunu's experience of violence in her marriage. The author explains that her husband beats her when he suspects his sons of having sexual relationships with her:

Mzee huyu alikuwa na watoto wenye umri mkubwa. ... Ni wa kiume ambao walileta balaa zaidi. Walianza kumtamani. Ingawa hakuna aliyewahi kumtamkia kitu lakini njaa na kiu yao ilikuwa waziwazi machoni mwa kila mmoja wao, jambo ambalo liliamsha wivu wa ajabu kwa mume wake hata akafanya kama kanuni kumpiga kila usiku bila maelezo. (Mtobwa, 1990, p. 141)

Her husband had grown-up children ... his sons brought her serious problems. They started looking at her with sexual desire. Neither of them dared to explain his wish, their longing was obvious to everyone. This aroused so much jealousy in her husband that he started beating her every night with no reason.

This extract suggests that men's status is threatened by sexual competition which manifests itself in sexual jealousy, and is described here as a cause of violence against women.

Mtobwa later explains that Nunu escapes from her husband with the help of Ms Pambo, who tells her she could use her body for a living:

"Acha ujinga. ... Njoo mjini, riziki yako inakusubiri." (Mtobwa, 1990, p. 141)

"Stop being a fool. ... Go to town, your fortune is there."

In town, Nunu becomes an experienced prostitute and earns a lot of money. However, Nunu becomes unhappy, as she believes a woman is not an object for a

man's pleasure. Subsequently, she marries Peter. According to the narrative, Peter is a rich man but could not father a baby. So, Nunu has sexual relations with her houseboy and has a son, Peterson. When her husband discovers this, he abuses her verbally: */Malaya, malaya tu ... Nimekuokota ukijuuza kama mnyama.../* "A prostitute is always a prostitute ... I found you selling yourself like an animal..." (Mtobwa, 1990, p. 154). When Nunu becomes tired of her husband's verbal abuse, she moves out and lives with an old friend who is also a prostitute. Later, she becomes pregnant and has a baby girl, Rukia. Due to hardship, she abandons her daughter at the age of 11. Mtobwa concludes his novel with Nunu explaining her life history to her son Peterson and her daughter Rukia. According to the narrative, Rukia becomes a prostitute like her mother and at that time she is Peterson's (her half-brother's) mistress. This novel seems to be a cautionary tale, as the narrative fulfils Nunu's father's claim: */Utakuwa Malaya tu, kama mama yako./* "You will be a prostitute like your mother" (Mtobwa, 1990, p. 140).

A further example of girls being held responsible for their actions is seen in *Vuta n'Kuvute*, where Shafi (1999) positions Yasmin as responsible for her suffering as she provokes her husband's anger by addressing him in a disrespectful way. Earlier in the narration, Shafi explains that after Raza and Yasmin migrated to another country (Mombasa, Kenya) Yasmin was initially happy as she used to see a young man next to their house through the window who attracted her. However, she becomes depressed and unhappy when he leaves. When her husband asks her why she becomes unhappy, she provokes him by answering his questions rudely:

*"Naona siku hizi huchangamki, hata nachi hunichezei tena."
"Kwani umenioa niwe nikikuchezea nachi?" ...*

*"Unasemaje" ...
"Kwani hukusikia?" naye Yasmin aliuliza, amekaa kwa maringo juu ya kiti, ... akimtazama Raza bila ya wasiwasi pua ameikunja, mdomo ameufidua, jeuri ya kitoto anamwenda ndani ya damu yake. Bwana Raza akaona sasa maji yamezidi unga, hajui la kulifanya, Yasmin amechachamaa, amekuja juu kama moto wa kifuu lakini naye akajikaza ikambidi aonyeshe urijali wake. "Siku hizi umekuwa huna adabu!" ...*

Bila kujua anafanya nini, Bwana Raza aliinuka ... akamkamata Yasmin mkono akamnyanyua. ...

“Wewe! Nimekuchukua kwenu hohehahe! Huna mbele huna nyuma unanuka umaskini umekuwa jeuri enh?”

“Nani? Mimi? Unani...” Kabla hajamaliza kuyasema Yasmin alitandikwa kofi kubwa. ... “Unani...” Hajawahi kumaliza akachapwa kofi la pili. Yasmin alianguka juu ya kochi.

Bwana Raza akili hana kichaa hana, midomo inamtetemeka, maneno yemekwama hayatoki kinywani. Alitaka kumnyanyua Yasmin pale alipoanguka lakini Yasmin alichomoka ghafla akakimbilia mlangoni akaufungua. Mbio.

Bwana Raza naye akamwandama, naye mbio nyuma yake akimlaani na kumtukana, ... kanga aliyojifunga kiunoni ilifunguka ikamvuka akawa uchi kama alivyozaliwa. Sasa ikawa kashfa, ... akaona amwachilie mbali, “Mwana kharam yule.” (Shafi, 1999, pp. 15-16)

“Nowadays you are not happy; you don’t dance for me anymore.”
“Did you marry me for dancing?”

“What are you saying?” ...

“You didn’t hear?” Yasmin asked while sitting ... looking at Raza fearlessly. With pride, she continued speaking with childish arrogance. Mr. Raza was confused and he did not know what to do. Yasmin stood firm, strong enough to defend her position. He was forced to use his male power. “Nowadays you have no manners”. ...

Without knowing what he was doing, Mr. Raza stood up ... and held Yasmin’s hand and pulled her up. ...

“You! I took you from your totally destitute family! ... You had nothing, you were living in abject poverty, and you are behaving rudely?”

“Who, me? You are.”... before she had finished speaking, Yasmin received a big slap. ... “You are” She didn’t manage to finish, as she was slapped again. Yasmin fell down on the sofa.

In confusion - not conscious, not angry, but trembling and unable to speak, Mr. Raza wanted to lift Yasmin where she fell but quickly Yasmin ran towards the door, opened it and ran out.

Mr. Raza followed, chasing her while cursing and insulting her ... the *kanga*²⁴ which she had dressed in dropped and she was naked. This was a scandal ... so he decided to leave her alone and gave up the chase muttering, “That bastard child.”

In these excerpts, when her husband reminds her about the destitute life she had before, Yasmin does not respond with gratitude but seems to be challenging his claim. This exasperates her husband and he is unable to control his anger. This

²⁴ Lady’s print cotton wrap.

anger is then positioned as a reason for beating his wife. As Yasmin persists in provoking him, he is forced to use his “male power” to control her behaviour. G. Kaufman (1992) notes that abusive men minimise their responsibility for their abusive actions by claiming to have lost control, but as he argues, they ultimately want to control their wives. Here, the author similarly minimises Mr. Raza’s responsibility, who is left “trembling” and “unable to speak” in the wake of his own violence – “not conscious” and “not angry.”

In Tanzanian society, social relations between people of different hierarchy are governed by the notion of respect, which establishes appropriate practice in speech and actions. Jewkes et al.’s (2005) study reveals that female children in African society must show respect when speaking to adults, especially men. Moreover, they note that the need to show respect is strengthened by strict rules from an early age. Drawing on this traditional discourse of women’s socialisation, the novelist’s description of Yasmin as a girl and not a wife suggests that she deserves to be punished as she is showing disrespect to an adult man. This is apparent when the author says, “speaking with a childish arrogance.” In Tanzania, unequal power relations that exist between a young girl and an older, mature husband mean that her husband has total control over her (Ezer et al., 2006). In addition, Jensen and Thornton (2003) argue that men prefer to marry young girls, as they are easily controlled and less confident because of their lack of physical, mental and emotional maturity. Consequently, Yasmin’s response contradicts her husband’s expectations; hence, he is “forced” to beat her. In this way, this discursive construction normalises violence against the female child and exonerates the perpetrator, as he is only acting according to accepted cultural practice.

Shafi relates that the outcome of Yasmin’s disrespect towards her husband and her decision to leave him is rejection by her family, unplanned pregnancy, and harassment by the police. In the following extracts Shafi illustrates how Yasmin is rejected by her uncle and her mother, from whom she sought shelter after escaping from her husband:

“Enhe, hebu nieleze vizuri.”

“Nimeshindwa kuishi na Bwana Raza. Kwa hakika mimi sikumpenda wala sikumtaka.” ...

“Kama hukuweza kuishi na Raza basi na sisi hatuna pa kukuweka,” mjomba wake Yasmin alisema kwa kelele. “Tena upesi tuondokee mbele ya macho yetu utafute pa kwenda. Toka!” alifoka mjomba. ... “Nakwambia toka! Nenda zako! Nenda kamtafute huyo unayempenda.”

“Niondoke niende wapi na hapa ndiyo nyumbani kwetu?” alisema Yasmin kwa unyonge.

“Hapa palikuwa kwenu kabla hujaolewa. Sisi tulikupa mume ili tupungukiwe na mzigo. Sasa madhali umemkimbia mumeo, tafuta pa kwenda.” (Shafi, 1999, p. 18)

“Umekujisha kufanza nini hapa wewe mwenaharamu, umeaacha Raza Mombasa umekujisha Zanzibar kufenza uhuni kutilisha sisi aibu. ... Toka! Toka kwenda zako! Mimi sitaki ona hata uso yako. Kama vee nakuja tena hapa mimi taita askari, tasema veve miji nataka iba. Muhuni ve, mwenaharamu, toka!” (Shafi, 1999, pp. 42-43)

[Yasmin in her uncle’s house]

“Eh, tell me clearly.” [Yasmin’s uncle]

“ I could not live with Mr. Raza. I did not love him and I did not like him.” ...

“If you could not live with Raza, well we also have no place for you,” shouted Yasmin’s uncle. ... “Quickly go away, find a place to go. We don’t want to see you here. Get out!” ... “I tell you go out! Go away! Go and find the one whom you love.”

“Where shall I go, here is my home?” said Yasmin with no hope.

“Here was your home before you married. We married you off so that we could reduce the burden. Now because you have decided to leave your husband, find another place to go.”

[Yasmin in her mother’s house]

“What have you come to do here you bastard child? You have left Raza in Mombasa and come to Zanzibar to be a prostitute and bring shame to us. ... Go out, go out! I don’t want to see your face here. If you come here again I will call the police and say you are a thief. You prostitute, bastard child get out!”

Studies on violence against women note that the lack of support from the family for women who leave their abusive husbands places those women in a vulnerable situation (Bent-Goodley, 2005b; Dolphyne, 1991; Jewkes, 2002; Kim & Motsei, 2002). By the same token, Jensen and Thornton (2003) note that poverty results in a female child being viewed as an economic burden; therefore, parents prefer to marry them off at an earlier age and encourage them to continue their marriages.

In African societies, once girls marry they are told to stay in the marriage because their parents are worried about having to pay back the bride price if they divorce (Dolphyne, 1991; UNICEF, 2005). As girls internalise these dominant discourses about marriage, which justify men using force to control women, they find violence in marriage has to be accepted and they have to tolerate it (Jewkes, Levin, & Penn-Kekana, 2002). Yasmin's decision to leave her abusive husband thus contradicts social norms and dominant discourses that expect girls to tolerate adverse situations and be responsible for the survival of the marriage.

In the above extracts, Yasmin's decision to leave the abusive relationship is portrayed as bringing shame to her family. She is also positioned as a burden to her own family for two reasons. First, she is now part of her husband's family and their responsibility. Second, any value or benefits she brings will be appropriated by the husband's family. The second view is common in many tribes in Tanzania, where parents refuse to educate a female child because she will not benefit her family, as she will marry and thus assist her husband's family. Ezer et al.'s (2006) study reveals that some parents favour male children and discriminate against female children by sending boys to school and leaving girls at home, to prepare them for marriage. Also, Shafi reveals that, unlike her uncle who listens to her, Yasmin's mother is not prepared to listen to her daughter. Presumably, she is shocked by her daughter leaving a rich man who has given her everything. This view is emphasised later on in the scene, as Yasmin's uncle berates his niece for her decision to leave Mr. Raza. Although the author reveals that Yasmin's parents are the source of her suffering (forcing her to marry a man she does not love and rejecting her when she leaves her abusive husband), he positions her as being responsible for her own suffering when she has no place to go.

Later in his narration, Shafi explains that Yasmin marries another man, Shihab, after getting a legal divorce from Raza. However, Yasmin also endures violence in her second marriage, as the following extract illustrates:

Alikuwa haendi harudi, yumo ndani tu kama kizuka, kwa sababu ya wivu aliokuwa nao Shihab. Wivu wa Shihab ulikuwa ni ila yake kubwa aliyojua kila mwanamke mjini Tanga na kwa sababu ya wivu wake huo, aliwishawaacha wanawake watatu na Yasmin sasa ni mke wake wa nne. (Shafi, 1999, pp. 196-197)

She was not able to go out, but stayed inside as a secluded widow, because of Shihab's jealousy. He used his jealousy as an excuse so that he could continue to be unfaithful and all the women in Tanga knew this. He had already divorced three wives and Yasmin was his fourth wife.

Although the author discloses Shihab's infidelity as a reason for confining Yasmin, he reiterates that his "jealousy" is the underlying problem. This is reconstructed later in the narration as Yasmin's friends discuss her suffering in her second marriage and also when Yasmin complains to her friend Mwajuma when she visits her:

"Lakini Denge hata wewe, mtoto mzuri kama yule utawacha kuwa na wivu."

"Kuna wivu na wivu Mambo wa mumewe si wivu ni wazimu..."
(Shafi, 1999, p. 207)

"Wivu babu, nasikia mwanamume ana wivu huyo! Sijapata kuona."

"Mtu lazima awe na wivu kwa akipendacho."

"Aa, wivu mwengine umefurutu ada maana inakuwa si wivu ni maradhi..." (Shafi, 1999, p. 209)

"Mwanamume yule! Ana wivu, ana gubu, ana nogwa kama mwanamke," Yasmin alilalamika. ...

"Kumbe Bwana yule mgonjwa, sasa anakufunga ndani kwani yeye kakukuta wapi?" (Shafi, 1999, p. 211)

[Conversation between Yasmin's previous boyfriend (Denge) and his friend Mambo]

"Look here Denge, she was such a beautiful girl you must have been jealous."

"There is jealousy Mambo; her husband is not jealous, he is mentally sick..."

[Conversation between Yasmin's friend (Mwajuma) and Denge]

"Jealousy, I [Mwajuma] hear that her husband is so jealous! I have never seen such jealousy."

"Yes, you must be jealous about someone you love."

"Ah, this type of jealousy is more than normal: it is too much, it is more than jealousy, it is a sickness..."

[Conversation between Mwajuma and Yasmin]

"That man! He is jealous, annoying and whinging like a woman," lamented Yasmin. ...

"That man is sick. Why is he confining you, where did he meet you? Did he find you in seclusion?"

Here, the author uses different characters to reveal Shihab's jealousy and repeatedly constructs it as pathological. These characters describe Shihab's jealousy about his wife as an external problem, a sickness, over which he presumably has no control – consistent with the discourse of medical pathology. In this way, both Yasmin's friends and Yasmin herself believe that Shihab is not normal - he is sick. Shihab is consequently repositioned, not as dominating and oppressive towards his wife, but as suffering from psychologically dysfunctional behaviour that leads him to control his wife. In this way, Shihab is partially exonerated from his violent behaviour of isolating his wife from the social and economic spheres.

Towards the end of the novel, Shafi explains that Yasmin marries Bukheti (a young man who attracted Yasmin in Mombasa) after her second husband, Shihab, dies. It is only then that Yasmin is reunited with her family. Shafi's representation of Yasmin's accomplishment of what she "believed" was her right, */kupata mume kijana kama yeye mwenyewe/* "to marry a young person like herself," suggests that those who hold the idea of forcing and/or choosing who to marry will change (Shafi, 1999, p. 1). This is apparent when Yasmin's uncle states, */Potelea mbali, wacha nimwoze mwanagu mume amtakaye./* "Let it go. I am marrying off my daughter to the husband she loves" (Shafi, 1999, p. 276). Shafi's depiction reflects that girls who are forced to marry and are ready to fight for their rights will likely have to endure suffering. Nevertheless, he seems to suggest that if they hold on to hope, eventually they will get what they wanted.

The problem of child marriage is also represented in *Nuru ya Bhoke*. Wambura (2004) features the stories of two men who marry off their daughters (Nyambura and Monika) to rich men immediately after the daughters' primary education has been completed. Nyambura marries Mzee²⁵ Mwita, who has seven other wives. Mwita pays forty cows, ten goats and five sheep as a bride price for Nyambura. Monika marries Makindi Rubago, who has two other wives, after he has paid thirty-five cows. Monika wants to marry John Magubika, but her father, Mzee Machotta, refuses because John could not pay the required bride price, as the following extracts illustrate:

²⁵ Honorific name for a man.

Monika kwa mawazo yake binafsi alipenda sana aolewe na ndugu John Magubika, mganga wa zahanati ya kijijini. ... Monika alipojaribu kumgusia baba yake juu ya jambo hilo Mzee Machotta alikataa na kumuuliza Monika kama huyo Mganaga ana ng'ombe wa kutosha kutoa mahari.

Ndugu Magubika baada ya kuelezwa hayo alikiri uwezo wa kutoa ng'ombe kiasi kikubwa namna ile hakuwa nao. (Wambura, 2004, pp. 94-95)

Monika in her view wished to marry Mr. John Magubika, a doctor in the village dispensary. ... When Monika expressed her wish to her father, Mzee Machotta refused and asked Monika if the doctor had enough cows for the bride price.

When Monika told Mr. Magubika what was needed, he acknowledged that he did not have such a quantity of cows.

In these extracts, Wambura depicts a desire for wealth as a reason for fathers forcing their daughters to marry particular men. This suggests that a father considers a female child to be a source of income for the family, and is able to use his power to force her to marry a man she does not love. This illustration is supported by Akpan's (2003) study, which reveals that in African societies a female child is perceived by her father to be property with an exchange value, and hence a source of wealth to the family. In this case, the author positions the father as responsible for denying his daughter the right to choose whom she wants to marry.

Child marriage puts girls in situations where they may experience violence if they are unable to fulfil the expectations of the roles of married women. Ezer et al. (2006) note Tanzanian marriage laws allow a father to treat a female child as a person without decision-making capacity. Consequently, fathers are absolved from violating the female children's rights and putting them in vulnerable situations within marriage, as they are living according to law and social practice. In this regard Wambura (2004) narrates how Nyambura endures violence in her marriage when she is unable to accomplish her duties as a wife, which includes herding cattle - a normal job for married women in her tribe. One rainy day some cows wander off and she is unable to locate them. When her husband learns that some cows are missing, he becomes very angry and beats her severely.

Wambura (2004) goes on to explain that Nyambura runs away after the beating. Her decision to leave her abusive husband is positively received by her friends:

Monika alionekana kushangilia sana kitendo hicho cha shoga yao Nyambura kuamua kutoroka kutoka kwa mume wake kutokana na vitendo vya kibaradhuli alivyokuwa akifanyiwa na mumewe mara kwa mara. “Hawawezi kutubabaisha hata kidogo watu hawa. Dawa ni kuwa na uamuzi thabiti wa kutatua matatizo. Maji yanapozidi unga hakuna njia shoga.” (Wambura, 2004, p. 29)

Monika [Nyambura’s friend] was happy about Nyambura’s decision to leave her husband and run away because of his repeatedly abusive actions. “These people cannot continue treating us like that. The only way is to have a firm way of solving problems. When the problems are too much, there is no way my friend.”

Through Monika, the author suggests that young girls need to work out a solution rather than tolerate abusive actions by their husbands. However, the men in the novel view this idea as socially unacceptable. Early on, the author explains that when Nyambura runs away from her husband, she spends a night at her friend Bhoke’s house, and that night plans to go to the neighbouring country to escape her abusive husband. The following day, Bhoke’s father, Mzee Gesimba, wants to take her back to her husband but she has already gone. His daughter (Bhoke) lied to her father by saying that Nyambura has decided to go back to her husband. However, Mzee Gesimba decides to follow up to make sure she has returned. Therefore, Bhoke is interested to know what her father’s reaction will be:

*[Bhoke] “Vipi baba, Nyambura ulimkuta ameshafika kwa mumewe?” Bhoke alimuuliza babaye apate ukweli wa mambo.
[Mzee Gesimba] “Wacha mwanangu! Nyie watoto wa siku hizi mna matatizo sana! Kwanza hamna uvumilivu hata chembe. Mna tama ya maisha ya ajabu.” (Wambura, 2004, p. 29)*

[Bhoke] “Nyambura atakuwa amefanya kitendo cha kimapinduzi kama ataamua kutokurudi kabisa kwa mwanamume yule...” (Wambura, 2004, p. 30)

[Bhoke] “Dad, have you met Nyambura in her husband’s house?”
Bhoke asked her father to know what happened.

[Mzee Gesimba] “Don’t ask, my daughter! You children of the new generation are very troublesome! First you have no patience. You are greedy and never satisfied.”

[Bhoke] “It will be a revolutionary action if Nyambura decides not to return to her husband...”

Certainly, the author's description seems to hold out hope that child marriage could be abolished if young girls are collectively willing to challenge their situation. Although men are obviously not ready to accept the changes, the author shows that young girls are now tired of the way their fathers and their husbands are treating them and they are taking control of their lives.

However, any hope for the future seems somewhat clouded since as the narration continues, the author illustrates how Nyambura finds it difficult to find a job, and when she manages to get a casual job in a bar the money is not enough, and so she starts working as a prostitute to make her living. Even though Nyambura eventually gets a trustworthy husband who changes her life and her family's life in the village, including paying back Nyambura's father the bride price which Nyambura's husband demanded, building two modern houses and buying a car for her father, the author concludes the narrative with her dying of HIV/AIDS as a result of previously engaging in unsafe sex. Effectively, this narrative conclusion seems to convey that if a girl resists what is believed to be the accepted "way of life," she will eventually regret her actions. Dying of HIV/AIDS is a shameful death in Tanzanian society. Given the stigma attached to the disease, presenting the reader with a courageous young girl who fights for her rights and helps her family, but later dies a shameful death, potentially serves to silence other young girls and maintain the dominant discourses which circulate in the community. As expressed by a well-known Swahili proverb, "If you don't pay attention to what your elders say, always you will regret it." Also, this discursive strategy could be said to safeguard men's interests and exculpate them from their abusive actions.

In the second story featured in this novel, Wambura suggests that the consequence of forced child marriage is unfaithfulness. He explains that when Monika's father refuses to allow her to marry a man she loves, Mr. Magubika, Monika plans to continue having a sexual relationship with him even after her marriage. This eventually results in murder, physical injury and suicide, as the following extracts illustrate:

Wakiwa ndani ya kichaka waliuanza mchezo wa kawaida wa kuvunja sheria ya ndoa. ...

Mara mumewe Monika alitokea ghafla. ... Alishusha pumzi kwa kasi sana. Fahamu ilimruka. Alichomoa sime ... na kumkata kiuno Ndugu Magubika na kumtenganisha sehemu mbili za kiwiliwili. ...

Makindi alikuwa amemjeruhi vibaya Monika na kuipoteza kabisa sura ya asili. (Wambura, 2004, p. 120)

Watu waliokwenda kumsaka Ndugu Makindi huko porini, kwanza, walikuta maiti ya Mganga. ... Waliuona mwili wa Makindi ukiwa unaninginia mtini. (Wambura, 2004, p. 121)

While in a bush, they started having sex. ...

Suddenly Monika's husband appeared ... he took a very deep breath, as he was confused. He took a sword ... he cut Mr. Magubika's waist and separated his body into two pieces. ...

Makindi [Monika's husband] injured Monika badly and destroyed her physical appearance completely.

People who went to find Mr. Makindi in the forest first saw the doctor's corpse. ... Then, they saw Makindi's corpse hanging from a tree.

In these extracts, Mr. Makindi (Monika's husband) is partially exonerated from his violent actions - murdering the doctor and injuring his wife - as he is described as out of control, "confused" and full of anger. This is apparent as he continues cutting Mr. Magubika after killing him. However, when he realises that his wife is running away, he runs after her and tries to kill her. Wambura's presentation of the death of both male protagonists while leaving the female alive but disfigured seems to suggest that forced marriage may have a negative rather than a positive outcome. I presume this novel aims to suggest that society should take responsibility for ending forced child marriage.

Wambura also explains the importance of government laws which prevent greedy parents from marrying off their daughters before they complete their primary education or when they pass year seven exams. Furthermore, he reveals how fathers break the laws to achieve their intended goals. In this regard, he relates the story of a third father, Mzee Gesimba, who plans for a long time to marry off his daughter, Bhoke, immediately after she finishes her primary education so that he can use the bride price to marry a third wife. Learning that his daughter is doing well in school, Mzee Gesimba bribes the head teacher to hold back his daughter's

educational progress. The teacher accepts the bribe but encourages and helps Bhoke to study hard:

“Nitafanya juu chini kuhakikisha Bhoke haendelei na masomo ya sekondari. Siwezi kuwakosa ng’ombe kwa jambo la kipuuzi hivyo.”
(Wambura, 2004, p. 36)

Aliamua kumpa mwalimu mkuu ng’ombe mmoja kama hongo ili mwalimu huyo akwamishe maendeleo ya mwanawe. Mwalimu Nkwabi Meta alipokea ng’ombe ili kumpunguzia Mzee Gesimba mawazo na maasumbuko ya kwenda huku na kule kutafuta mbinu za kutaka kumkwamisha mwanawe katika masomo. (Wambura, 2004, p. 74)

“I [Mzee Gesimba] will do whatever is possible to make sure that Bhoke does not continue with secondary education. I cannot miss the cows for an unnecessary thing like that.”

He [Mzee Gesimba] decided to give the Head teacher one cow as a bribe so that he would impede his daughter’s progress. The head teacher, Nkwabi Meta, received the cow to lessen Mzee Gesimba’s worries and troubles for finding techniques for hindering his daughter’s progress.

In these extracts, the author articulates liberal humanist instrumentalist discourse when revealing Mzee Gesimba’s intention to deny his daughter the right of education in order to fulfil his goal of getting wealth. Here, Mzee Gesimba is using his economic power to achieve his goal. The extracts further reveal that, unlike other government officials in developing countries who maintain corruption is normal (Bowman, 2003; Mama, 2001) and conspire with abusers in violence against women, the head teacher accepts the bribe in order to stop Mzee Gesimba finding other ways to fulfil his intention. Indeed, Wambura’s narrative affirms Bent-Goodley’s (2005b) assertion that community support can help to end violence against women. Bent-Goodley argues that the wider African community is a powerful means to change belief and behaviour and can help those who are less powerful and not connected to legal or professional institutions. At the beginning of the novel, Wambura illustrates how Mzee Gesimba prevents his two daughters from continuing with primary education, marries them off, and in the process becomes wealthy after getting seventy cows as a bride price. However, he is unable to do so with his third daughter, Bhoke, because of the introduction of government laws.

As the above extract reveals, Mzee Gesimba decides to conspire with the head teacher to achieve his goal. However, the head teacher instead uses his power to prevent Mzee Gesimba carrying out his plan to marry off his daughter and initiates a plan which eventually impels Mzee Gesimba to pay for his daughter's secondary education. In a meeting organised by the head teacher following Bhoke's successful exam result, Mzee Gesimba clarifies why he was not prepared to pay for his daughter's studies:

Mzee Gesimba ... "Kwa kweli wanangu nawaomba mniachie wale ng'ombe niolee mke wa tatu. Wazee wenzangu hapa kijijini wameoa wanawake wanne hadi wanane. Mimi ninao wake wawili tu mpaka sasa. Tegemeo langu lilikuwa ni huyu mwanangu Bhoke, aolewe ili na mimi nioe, angalau wake wanne." ...

Mwalimu mkuu ... "Ndugu Gesimba, utakumbuka ... ulikuja kunihonga ng'ombe?" (Wambura, 2004, p. 92)

Mzee Gesimba ... "Please, don't take the cows. I want to marry the third wife. My companions in the village have four to eight wives. Up to now I have only two wives. My hope was to marry off my daughter, Bhoke, so that I can marry at least four wives." ...

The head teacher ... "Mr. Gesimba, you will remember that ... you bribed me with a cow."

In the first extract, external social pressure is forcing Mzee Gesimba to deny his daughter her right to education. The author is thus positioning Gesimba as not being fully responsible for denying his daughter the right to education, particularly before the meeting. In contrast, when the head teacher exposes his previous plan to hold back his daughter's progress in her studies, Mzee Gesimba is shocked. As the author says, */Kitendo hicho hakukitegemea kama kingeweza kufichuliwa hadharani/* "He didn't expect that deed would be revealed explicitly" (Wambura, 2004, p. 92). The head teacher's courageousness is supported by the village leader's decision to sell Mzee Gesimba's cows to pay for Bhoke's secondary education. Indeed, Wambura's narration hints that it is possible for the power of the community to mobilise against fathers who deny their daughters the right of education but also the importance of responsible people being ready to fight for the rights of female children.

Interestingly however, the author in some respects minimises Mzee Gesimba's responsibility for his behaviour by attributing his actions to ignorance, as the head

teacher states, */yumo gizani ... hafahamu faida ya elimu/* “he is still in darkness ... he does not know the importance of education” (Wambura, 2004, p. 93). This interpretation is reaffirmed later in the novel, as after Bhoke’s success in her studies she becomes a medical doctor in a referral hospital, the largest public hospital in the country, the Muhimbili Medical Center. The author explains that when Mzee Gesimba is very sick his daughter is able to take him from the village to the referral hospital for treatment. After his recovery, he attends his daughter’s wedding before going back to the village. Observing what his daughter does for him he becomes very troubled and regrets his earlier actions. In this novel, while Wambura explicitly critiques the cultural practice of child marriage and offers alternative discourses, contradictions within the narrative are also evident. The narrative thus echoes the discursive struggle that is occurring between the dominant discourses and alternative discourses within the wider society.

As Kiswahili novelists reveal and research has suggested, child marriage is a serious problem in Tanzanian society. One of the most common justifications the authors gave for this type of violence against female children is poverty in the family, which leads to a female child being viewed as property. As I have discussed, in several cases this treatment of girls as property is discursively normalised in the novels. This normalisation potentially undermines efforts to fight against child marriage in Tanzanian society, and continues to put girls in a vulnerable situation. Furthermore, the discursive practice of positioning female children as partly blameworthy for what happens subsequently when they refuse to marry, or when they leave their abusive husbands’, potentially helps to sustain the patriarchal system and silences girls’ efforts to take control of their lives. In addition, ratifying laws without proper enforcement strategies will not end child marriage in Tanzania, because of the widespread social norms and practices which normalise forced child marriage and exonerate the perpetrators, as is evident in Kiswahili novels. It is also important to note that while the accepted social practices and dominant discourses most often frame authors’ depictions of child marriage, sometimes the authors introduce or emphasise alternative perspectives, evidently in an attempt to disrupt these hegemonic discourses. Kiswahili novels can thus be seen as complex cultural sites where dominant discourses are articulated and most often affirmed, but also occasionally challenged. They are sites of discursive struggle, although to a limited degree.

5.3 Conclusion

As articulated in Kiswahili novels, gender-based violence is a complex phenomenon shaped by forces from different levels – individual, community, and the wider society. In the narratives they create, Kiswahili novelists reveal the factors that promote gender-based violence, such as excessive use of alcohol, poverty, men’s jealousy, men’s power, corruption, male sexuality, and social norms. Some of the authors emphasise these factors in ways that seem to exonerate perpetrators from their abusive actions towards girls and women. Foregrounding these factors may serve to minimise the role of men’s power and control in violence against women. Furthermore, a number of authors uncritically depict traditional feminine roles which emphasise girls’ and women’s responsibility to respect, obey and serve men, and which affirm men’s rights in ways that position the victims of violence as blameworthy and responsible for their victimisation. In this way, these authors reflect the excesses of the patriarchal system but do so uncritically, and subsequently privilege discourses that minimise the role of the abuser and society in perpetrating violence against women. Moreover, several authors merely reflect existing social norms and uncritically rearticulate and reproduce dominant discourses of violence against women. This is problematic because unchallenged representations of violence against women have the potential to promote and even cement the attitude and/or belief that violence against women is a “normal” part of women’s lives in Tanzanian society, and an inevitable result of their inferior status. In addition, by privileging dominant discourses and marginalising alternative viewpoints, these novels negate the possibility that readers might assume new discourses that are more conducive to challenging and changing beliefs and attitudes that sustain violence against women. Instead, readers may come to believe that what is depicted in the novels is the way the society is meant to be and always will be.

Somewhat differently, a few authors do critique the social system and cultural norms which oppress women by introducing new discourses as they describe violence against women. However, these new discourses are often silenced or marginalised within the narrative. While it is not clear whether this silencing is deliberately intended, it is significant to note that in all of these cases, the alternative discourses and the subject positions they offer are later negated. Thus,

the ultimately unfavourable narrative outcome may encourage the view that it is not possible to challenge the “fabric” of society. As textual analysis cannot predict either of these scenarios it is important to look at how actual readers make sense of novels and their depictions. Hence, the next chapter turns to an examination of young Tanzanian readers’ responses to these textual representations of violence against women in Kiswahili novels.

Chapter Six: Young Tanzanians' Interpretations of Discursive Constructions of Gender-Based Violence in Kiswahili Novels

6.1 Introduction

This chapter extends my analysis of textual constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels by synthesising young Tanzanians'²⁶ understandings of these textual constructions. The chapter draws from 12 focus group discussions with young people on how Kiswahili novelists construct gender-based violence. In these focus group discussions, five extracts drawn from novels featured in the senior Kiswahili school curriculum were used to stimulate the discussion and to shift participants' attention to another form of violence, when required. Given that students were familiar with the narrative structure of these novels, and the description of violence against women was explicit in the extracts used, it was easier for students to relate the particular form of violence being discussed to its depiction in other novels (see 4.5.3). As outlined in Chapter 3, the data from the focus group interviews were analysed according to Michelle's (2007, 2009) composite model of modes of audience reception. The composite model identifies four distinct modes of reader response to fictional texts: transparent, referential, mediated, and discursive. However, this study addresses only referential and discursive modes of reception, as the other two were not apparent in the focus group interviews.

In reading and analysing the transcripts, I noted that many of the participants drew on extra-textual sources such as experiences of other people in the community and "knowledge of the wider macro sphere in which they live" (Michelle, 2007, p. 201) to interpret the textual construction of violence against women in Kiswahili novels. The participants who adopted this referential mode compared the depicted reality of gender-based violence in the novels to aspects of social life in their community. This does not necessarily mean that they accepted the dominant view of the text; rather, it highlights their awareness of the message depicted in the text and their evaluation of it in comparative terms (Schröder, 2000).

However, the participants who adopted the discursive mode critiqued those textual constructions and viewed them as problematic. They scrutinised the

²⁶ In this study, young people and young Tanzanians are used interchangeably.

portrayal of violence against women in the novels and expressed concern about the potential effect of these textual depictions on readers and ultimately society. Furthermore, a few of these participants rejected the novels' "preferred meanings" (Michelle, 2007, p. 211), as they drew on alternative discourses in interpreting the textual construction of gender-based violence in the novels.

In the following section I will present and analyse examples drawn from the interviews with young people. By using the composite model, and particularly drawing on characteristic features of the referential and discursive modes, I will illustrate how young readers made sense of the textual construction of violence against women in the novels, what experiences and knowledge they were able to draw on in evaluating those depictions, and their own views about the potential effect of those representations on women and girls in Tanzanian society.

6.2 Violence against women is rooted in the society: Readings in a referential mode

In this study, most of the participants employed their knowledge and experiences of social practices to respond to the textual depiction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels. These participants compared the textual constructions of gender-based violence in the novels to what is happening to girls and women in Tanzanian society. According to some participants, the depiction of gender-based violence reflects how cultural practices and norms oppress women and girls. They argued that novelists are members of society and their work reveals how women are abused, powerless to make decisions, and dependent on men to live, as the following examples show:

Bravo: I would say that violence against women as portrayed by novelists emanates from the patriarchal system which controls our society. We see that a man is the one who controls everything - owns land and other important resources in the family, making all decisions and it is well accepted as normal.

Rodin: What I can say about the cause of violence against women as depicted in the novels is lack of equality, which is the source of wife-beating in the society. At home, a father is the only adult person and he equates his wife with his children. So if he wants to beat her he will, as he perceives her to be inferior to him.

Many participants stated that both in the wider society and as constructed in the novels, the patriarchal system encourages men to abuse women. In their view, society sustains violence against women and they saw the novels as realistic reflections of actually existing social practices.

Kakaa, a participant who had attended a workshop on violence against women, described how Kiswahili novels depict the “real life” of many women and girls in Tanzanian society. He cited examples from the novels and related them to his experiences in the village where he grew up, as well as those of his extended family members, as the following extract shows:

I want to say that what we read in the novels is what is happening in our society. I grew up in the village and in my neighbourhood there was a man who always beat his wife, like Zakaria [a character in *Rosa Mistika*]. ... My aunt married an abusive husband. He always beat her. Unfortunately whenever she came home, her parents told her to go back to her husband, just like what happened to Yasmin [a character in *Vuta n'kuvute (Pulling one Another)*]. ... The problem of violence against women is common in our country. ... I attended a workshop on violence against women organised by Women's Dignity, TAMWA, TGNP and TAWLA. Survivors of violence against women from different parts of the country attended the workshop. ... After I had heard stories from the victims of violence against women, I understood what the authors are trying to tell us in the novels. ... From that day I have decided if I have a daughter, I will tell her if the marriage does not work do not hesitate to end that relationship.

Different sources of information enabled Kakaa to affirm the scenarios portrayed in the novels as the reality for many women in Tanzanian society, and prompted him to consider what he would do in future if he had a daughter who wanted to marry.

In another example, Abdul made a connection between the depiction of violence against women in the novels and the real world and asserted that the social world, both in real life and in fictional texts, encouraged girls to be good wives and mothers; therefore, it would be difficult for a woman to seek a divorce because of what she has internalised as a way of living:

Abdul: African culture prepares a girl to be a caring wife and a good mother from an early age. For example, at the age of three years old, a girl will be taught by her mother how to take care of a

baby by caring for a doll. And as she grows up she will be taught how to be a good wife. So she will always think her vital role is to be a good wife and a mother. Also, when she starts school she encounters the same emphasis in her readings [novels]. Don't expect that girl to divorce when she marries.

While Abdul viewed the social practices that girls and women internalised as a reason for women to stay in abusive relationships, Sabrina utilised her knowledge about societal reactions to make sense of what happened to women characters depicted in the novels who tried to leave abusive relationships. She noted that both in the novels and in society when women go against the norm, which is to preserve their marriage, they experience rejection by their birth family:

Sabrina: What we read in the novels is what is happening in our society. A good example of what is happening in our society is when Yasmin ran away from her husband. She was rejected by her family because she was not expected to leave her husband even when he is abusive. ... We know that in our society a woman would be encouraged to stay with her husband; it does not matter that her husband beats her; she has to tolerate it.

Some other participants drew on their existing knowledge of the issue of street children in Tanzanian society and asserted that the authors' depictions of women staying in abusive relationships were intended to encourage women to look after their children. Some participants suggested that it is not a good idea for a mother to leave her children to a stepmother, as they will definitely suffer. For example, Amika stated that in Tanzanian society it is mothers who look after the children and protect them, particularly in abusive families; therefore, leaving them behind would be a "tragedy." She argued that the authors' depictions of women with children tolerating abuse in their marriage deliberately showed the vital role of a mother in relation to her children:

Amika: Many women in our society continue living with their abusive husbands because of the children. They are worried if they leave them it would be a tragedy for her innocent children. ... Some women believe that their husband will marry another wife and she will mistreat her children. This would be a reason for her children to go onto the street to escape the sufferings. ... Therefore, the authors purposely portray women with children tolerating abuse in their marriage to encourage women to look after their children.

Apple agreed with this reasoning, that it is better for a woman to tolerate her abusive husband rather than leaving her children behind with her husband. She

argued that because it is difficult for a woman to take her children with her, especially women living in villages where it is difficult to find a place to live with their children, the only option is to tolerate the abuse and to take care of her children:

Apple: In the village it is difficult for a woman to take her children with her. Her parents would not allow her to stay in their house. Therefore, when women read these novels, they learn from other women who persevere in their marriage and they will tolerate the abuse to keep their children from becoming street children or enduring violence from a stepmother.

So again, the novels were seen as accurate reflections of the reality of what is happening to women in Tanzanian society.

In interpreting the depiction of bride price in the novels, Abby and Nikole drew on their knowledge and experiences of social practices and suggested that fathers are treating their daughters as commodities and placing them in vulnerable positions where they become susceptible to violence:

Abby: A father says, "if you want to marry my daughter you should pay fifteen cows." Therefore, it is like selling his daughter for fifteen cows. When her husband beats her, sometimes he says, "I have paid fifteen cows and you are disrespecting me." Like what Raza told his wife in *Vuta n'kuvute*. Therefore, as Shafi revealed, in our society the bride price acts as a source of wife beating.

Nikole: If the family is poor and life is so hard, the father prefers to marry off his daughter to get cows and goats, which are paid as a bride price.

In the past, bride price was viewed as an act symbolising appreciation to a woman's family and as constituting a bond between the two families (Denzer, 1994). However, currently, the bride price, as depicted in Kiswahili novels and interpreted by some young people and also demonstrated in research, has become akin to the purchasing of wives and serves as a justification for women's subjugation.

In line with O'Neill (1998, 2000) and O'Neil and Nadeau's (1999) studies, a number of participants identified that the dominant constructions of traditional gender norms, both in society and in the novels, contribute to violence against women in society. In this view, girls are socialised to be submissive and

respectful to their husbands, and boys are encouraged to be domineering and strong, as the following comments illustrate:

Juliana: Before marriage, a girl is taught to respect her husband. But a man is not taught to respect his wife. Rather, he is taught that he is the head of a household and superior to his wife. It is clear that a man knows he is the one to control his wife, and it is clear that a wife must respect her husband. So our society prepares a girl to be submissive and a man to be domineering. That is why Yasmin's mother could not understand why her daughter left her husband.

Uface: From a young age and during the kitchen-party²⁷ a girl is encouraged to respect and obey her husband. ... She is the one to keep her marriage. ... Therefore, when her husband beats her, she just tolerates it, as she must keep her marriage.

Bancroft (2002) and Miedzian (2002) suggest that attitudes and beliefs about what it means to be a man that are instilled at a young age encourage boys to engage in violence towards women.

In addition, some participants responded to the textual depictions of violence against women in the novels by referring to the teachings communicated to girls from time to time about what is the most important thing in their lives:

James: Girls are told from a young age that marriage is the best way of making life and not about something else, like having a career. That is why a mother tells her daughter: "If you behave like that who will marry you?" You see her worry is who will marry her. ... But for boys the emphasis is on a good job and not marriage.

Kazi: Girls are mostly prepared to be a wife. As a result, when a girl reaches a certain age, the only thing she has in mind is to get a man who will marry her. But for a boy he is encouraged to study hard and have a good job. Therefore, when you try to compare girls and boys, you will note that girls are already prepared to be dependent. Their thinking is not directed to their own success in a career but to have a husband and children. ... This is very different from boys, who always think of being independent.

In the above extracts, James and Kazi related the representation of violence against women in the novels to their knowledge about girls' socialisation and noted that girls are given only one option for their life – to marry. The opportunity to aim for a career and an independent life is given to boys. This kind

²⁷ A ceremony held before marriage to teach a girl how to live with her husband.

of socialisation, as observed by Dweck, Goetz and Strauss (1980), prepares girls to be passive and dependent in their life and seems to create fear in women, who are unwilling to take risks or accept challenges as they are afraid of the outcome or failure. As a result, women have a tendency to avoid new initiatives, such as leaving an abusive husband.

Other participants drew on their knowledge and experiences of the wider social world and argued that what boys observe from their family shapes their behaviour:

Shoni: What we read in the novels is what is happening in most families. Many people believe that wife beating is part of married life. ... We know that if a man beats his wife nothing happens, not only in novels, but also in our society. And children (boys) learn from their parents.

Bravo: What a child observes in the family shapes her/his behaviour. For example, if your father beats your mother and nothing happens, you (a boy) learn that this is the way things are done and when you (the boy) grow up you will behave like your father. That is why there are families which are well known for wife beating, and it is difficult to get rid of because it is part of their life. The grandfather used to beat his wife, the father is beating his wife and a son will beat his wife.

According to these participants, violence against women, particularly wife beating, is perceived as normal because it is learned at a young age within the family environment. This practice is reinforced by the lack of questioning of male domination in the family. As Shoni articulates, “children (boys) learn” and believe that they have the right to chastise their wives in the same way that they saw their fathers do. This view is consistent with the discourse of tabula rasa learning identified by O’Neill (1998).

Likewise, a number of participants drew on their knowledge of social practices and asserted that a woman who comes from a violent family is likely to accept violence as normal, and if she tries to go back to her family she is likely to endure more violence from her father and worsen the position of her mother who will be seen as not having clearly shown the daughter what her role as a wife will entail. Her return will also bring shame to the family, as expressed by Rinda and Yusufu:

Rinda: If you come from an abusive family where your father beats your mother, and it happens that you marry an abusive man, there is

no way that you can think of going back. If you go back you will witness your father abusing your mother twice, as she had failed to teach you properly, that is why you have failed to live with your husband. And your father can beat you as you bring shame to the family for being unable to sustain your marriage. That is why some women tolerate their husband's abusive behaviour rather than going back to their family.

Yusufu: In most cases women who come from an abusive family accept violence as a way of life because they have seen their mothers experiencing the same thing and tolerate it. ... Most of the time these mothers tell their daughters to be prepared to endure violence when they marry.

Rinda's and Yusufu's views are consistent with Jewkes et al.'s (2002) findings, which note that while boys from violent families learn to be violent, girls on the other hand learn that violence in marriage is normal and to be expected.

Another similarity was noted between the novels' depictions of gender-based violence and traditional masculinity discourse, where boys are constructed as strong and aggressive and girls as weak and prone to being victims of violence. In this regard, prior understanding of Tanzanian cultural practices was drawn on by some young people when responding to the textual depiction of violence against women in the novels, as Ngunyi's and Apple's comments show:

Ngunyi: ... generally male characters in the novels are always strong compared with female characters. ... This is also true in our society, where boys are taught that they must be tough. If a boy is playing and he happens to be hit by a girl, if he reports it to his parents he will be mocked: "how come you are beaten by a girl and you are a man?" He grows up knowing that men hit women.

Apple: A girl is socialised to obey orders from her birth family. And if she is aggressive, her mother will tell her "you are not a man" or "who will marry you?" She grows up knowing that it is Ok for a man to be aggressive but a girl is supposed to be silent. Therefore, she will behave like that and even when she marries, she cannot stand up for her rights.

As noted by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005), men are expected to demonstrate features of dominant forms of masculinity, such as power, courage and aggressiveness, which are more accepted and socially affirmed. Therefore, societal practices encourage men to take up a controlling role over wives, and women are prepared to be submissive, passive, and obedient to their husbands.

Interestingly, a number of participants drew on their understandings of cultural practices and argued that if a father could not fulfil the culturally expected masculine role as a household provider, his authority as the head of family would be questioned, and to defend his position, he would beat his wife:

Hasani: We all know if a man does not have a job he is powerless and because of stress he beats his wife, just like what novelists write.

Mtambo: Poverty contributes to wife beating. If a man cannot afford to buy food, clothes or pay school fees for his children, he feels “hopeless.” ... Because of that stress, if his wife asks for money, he will just beat her.

Ngunyi supported this idea and commented that a poor man is ridiculed by his friends, which exacerbates his frustrations:

Sometimes a jobless man’s frustration is provoked by his friends. They mock him and call him bad names: “you are just like a woman.” ... When this man arrives home, all of his anger will just go to his wife.

According to these participants, the depictions of violence against women in the novels accurately depict what happens when a man cannot fulfil his expected cultural roles. Indeed, some research suggests that men living in poverty have their masculinity challenged (Boonzaier, 2005, 2008; Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2003; Schwartz, Waldo, & Daniel, 2005) and in order to reassert themselves, they turn on their wives to re-establish power and control (Eisler, Franchina, Moore, Honeycutt, & Rhatigan, 2000; Moore & Stuart, 2005; Schwartz et al., 2005). H. Moore (1994) suggests that men’s violence towards their partners is a result of thwarted identities that give rise to contradictory positions on how to enact masculine gender roles, pressure to conform to a specific subject position, and failure to take up the appropriate subject position.

Elaborating further on the theme of male dominance, a number of participants argued that the novelists represent how men in Tanzanian society use their power accorded by society to oppress and abuse girls and women:

Malyo: The novelists show that in our society, men are privileged. Because of that, they use their economic power and status to do

whatever they want. That is why they believe they can do anything and nothing can be done to them.

Malenga: We all know that men beat their wives to show their power. They believe that women cannot do anything.

Furthermore, in the discussions, societal silence around violence against women was drawn on by a number of participants to reaffirm the textual realism of the representation of violence against women in the novels. Kamango, for example, compared men's intention to abuse women in the novels and in society, and concluded that men do this because this action is seen as socially acceptable:

Kamango: Wife beating in the novels, like in our society, shows how men purposefully exercise power over women. It is not true that men are mad. If they were mad we would expect them to beat other people as well. But why do men only beat their wives? It is clear that they are doing it intentionally because no one questions them.

Likewise, Mfupi believed that men exercise power over women, particularly their wives, both in the novels and in the wider society, because they could:

Mfupi: We read a lot about men prohibiting their wives from working in paid jobs. ... It is very true that you may find a woman is working in a paid job but once she marries, her husband tells her "I have married you, I don't want you to continue working, I want you to stay at home." This is because he has the power to decide what his wife can do.

Again, novels were seen by these participants as correctly reflecting power inequity in Tanzanian society.

A number of participants reaffirmed the novelists' portrayals of men controlling women, particularly in sexual relationships, by alluding to the patriarchal view of manhood that holds that men are entitled to control relationships and have the right to discipline women. These participants clearly believed that women have no right to end heterosexual relationships:

Kazi: A man marries (oa²⁸) but a woman does not marry. She is married (olewa²⁹). Likewise, it is a man who seduces. It is unusual

²⁸ In Kiswahili language a man marries 'oa' (active).

²⁹ A woman gets married 'olewa' (passive).

for a woman to seduce a man. That is why a man has a right to end the relationship (heterosexual relationship) or to divorce.

This perspective was supported by Jamlosi, when he said:

We know that a man is the initiator of heterosexual relationships. Even in the Bible, God creates a man (Adam) first and gives him power. Then a woman was created to help him. Therefore, a man has the divine power to control a woman. I think sometimes novelists relate to these ideas as well in their writing.

It was interesting to discover that language and religious discourses grounded in the Bible were used by some young people to compare and affirm the textual depiction of violence against women and men's power in Tanzanian society. This view is not new; Petersen's (2009) study reveals that in patriarchal societies, Bible scriptures are used to justify and sustain male dominance and female subordination. Thus, Nason-Clark (2004) suggests that religious leaders have the responsibility to hold abusive men accountable for their actions and not to encourage the victim to tolerate abuse.

Some young people reaffirmed the textual accuracy of the depiction of women as untrustworthy, by drawing on their understandings of the wider social belief that a woman is untrustworthy and therefore it is difficult for a man to trust his girlfriend or wife:

James: It is true what we read in novels; women are untrustworthy and it is very difficult for a man to trust his wife.

Jamlosi: Men are told from a young age and more emphasis is put when they marry as they are told: "Don't trust a woman; if you trust her, she will ruin your life."

In the same way, Kamilus reconfirmed the textual representation of the link between violence and sexual jealousy, and noted that it is a common practice for a man to punish his girlfriend or a wife:

Kamilus: A man cannot trust a woman. If he trusts her, it is easy for that woman to have affairs with other men. ... It is common for a man to beat his girlfriend or a wife if he suspects that she is having a sexual relationship with another man.

Another notable source of extra-textual referential knowledge used by some participants to interpret the depiction of gender-based violence in the novels was

their understanding of men's sexual desires. Similar to findings from previous studies about the male sexual drive discourse (see for example Gavey, 2005; Hollway, 1989), some participants positioned men as forced by "nature" to seek fulfilment of their sexual needs. Several students drew on male sexual drive discourses as they responded to the novelists' depictions of rape in the novels, as the following extract shows:

Malenga: Men's sexual desire is the main reason for rape. When you think of an adult man seducing a girl, what drives him is desire and that is why he uses all techniques to convince her. If she does not accept his advances, he will just rape her.

In discussing how rape is depicted in Kiswahili novels, most of the participants cited examples of men whom they believe cannot control their sexual desires and suggested that they rape girls if they fail to find a woman to satisfy their sexual needs. In their view, the authors are revealing what is happening in Tanzanian society, as Malick stated:

People like Zuberi who cannot control their desires are many in our society, and a writer portrays Zuberi to represent many other men.

Further, one participant drew on personal experience to explain how difficult it is for a man to control his sexual desires if he is aroused:

Abdul: The source of rape is a man's natural sexual desire. We can just recall our own experiences about how much we have been sexually aroused. Even when you marry, the desire to have sex with other women will be there.

Some students questioned Abdul's position by arguing that it is not true and that it is possible to have one sexual partner. They asserted that some men have several sexual partners but that such men should be punished, as the following example shows:

Ngunyi: It is not true that you cannot be satisfied with one woman. People like Zuberi want to demonstrate their power over women. ... I believe people like Zuberi in our society must be punished for their actions and it would be a lesson for others.

In this extract, Ngunyi suggests that people like Zuberi should be accountable for their actions and that their actions should not be considered as simply "natural." Similarly, Gavey (2005) suggests that constructing men's sexual desires as natural

places girls and women at risk from violence, as they have to be available to meet men's "natural" sexual needs.

In the interviews, a considerable number of participants stated that in Tanzanian society, some men believed that girls had no choice but to accept men's sexual advances, especially girls from low socio-economic backgrounds:

Happy: A man believes that a girl cannot reject his sexual advances; therefore, he will make sure he punishes that girl by raping her. ... What we are reading is what men always do. They always make sure their needs are fulfilled by all means.

Katrina: Housemaids³⁰ are from poor families. A man who seduces a housemaid knows that she is from a destitute family and she needs money. He believes he can do anything and that girl has no right to say no. ... Some men are just like Zuberi [a character in *Asali Chungu (Bitter Honey)*]. If the housemaid refuses to accept his sexual advances he will rape her. Sometimes we wonder why Semeni [a character in *Asali Chungu (Bitter Honey)*] did not report the sexual abuse. Even if she reported the matter to the police, Zuberi would just go and bribe the police and nothing would happen to him.

In the extracts above, while Happy utilises social practice knowledge to affirm the realism of the situation depicted in the novel, Katrina draws on her understanding of problems of poverty and corruption, which undermine a rape victim's rights in Tanzanian society, to interpret why Semeni (a fictional character) did not report the sexual abuse to the police. In this regard, characters' motivations and actions are understood with reference to extra-textual knowledge of how things work in the real world and how people like those depicted would behave.

A number of participants affirmed the textual depiction of poverty as contributing to violence against young girls because many are forced into prostitution. They argued that girls from poor families who migrated to towns and cities to find a better life were often forced to engage in prostitution to make their living:

Feni: Life's hardship is a main source of forced prostitution. Girls from poor families have no means of living, especially those who moved to town with a hope of getting unskilled jobs, such as a housemaid. ... You will find that when they are unable to cope with the families, like what happened to Semeni [a character in *Asali*

³⁰ In Tanzania, housemaids are girls between 12 and 20 years of age who are from poor families.

Chungu (Bitter Honey)], they have no other way of taking care of their life. The only option they have is to use their body.

Again, what characterises this extract as fitting within a referential mode is that novels are seen as realistic in relation to students' own understandings of the real world. Others drew on their experiences based on the wider macro context, noting that the depiction of excessive use of alcohol in the novels reflected how women and children suffer in the wider society, as illustrated by Honlight's comment:

Honlight: It is common for a drunken man to beat his wife and children, not only in the novels but we have examples from our society. This is a serious problem because this woman takes all responsibilities for the family, but because of her husband's behaviour she cannot concentrate on what she is doing and sometimes she is badly injured and unable to continue working. The same happens to her children in that they cannot concentrate in their studies, as they are affected by what is happening in the family.

By the same token, Feni reaffirmed the textual depiction of the link between violence and alcohol in the novels as she related poverty in society to excessive drinking and subsequent wife beating:

Feni: In our society, excessive drinking contributes to wife beating. ... For example, in *Mama Ntilie (Street Food Seller)*, that man beats his wife because of his excessive drinking. And he started beating his wife when he stopped working. You can see that poverty contributes to that man beating his wife. This is very common in many families in our community.

Overall, participants who adopted the referential mode utilised their knowledge and experiences of Tanzanian society to make sense of the depiction of violence against women in the novels. It is apparent that these students drew from different sources of referential knowledge and experiences of Tanzanian society, such as the patriarchal system, cultural practices, religious dogma, language discourses, and personal experiences, in the process of affirming textual realism and accuracy in the novels. However, a number of students adopted a discursive mode as they responded to the textual constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels, and thus perceived these representations as attempting to communicate a particular message about the wider social world, rather than simply reflecting reality.

6.3 Challenging and reconstructing the dominant discourses: Readings in a discursive mode

Readers who frame their responses in an oppositional discursive mode critically examine the content of the message that the text is attempting to communicate and attempt to uncover what was not articulated (Michelle, 2007, 2009; Richardson & Corner, 1986). In this study, participants adopting a referential mode assessed the “reality” of textual depictions of gender-based violence in the novels by drawing on their knowledge and experiences of Tanzanian society, while participants whose readings were framed in a discursive mode critiqued these depictions by drawing on alternative discourses of human rights and the wider social good, which did not feature in the novels. These participants criticised the authors’ tendencies to emphasise cultural practices, traditional masculinity, and external factors as reasons for violence against women in Tanzanian society.

Some participants challenged the authors’ construction of wife beating in the novels, as they felt it mitigated the incident and exonerated the perpetrator from responsibility for his violent actions while blaming the woman for her victimisation:

Balkisi: It seems authors agree with what men are doing to women in our society. They show how husbands beat their wives but nothing is done to them. Mostly they explain that a woman has done something wrong, like not taking care of the children or cooking properly.

Happy: In the novels, wife beating is not portrayed as something serious. ... But if a woman does something wrong to her husband, detailed information will be given and punishment. Why are authors not punishing men who beat their wives?

Some participants drew on *tabula rasa* discourse to challenge the way Kiswahili novelists depict the problem of alcoholism in the novels. They argued that alcoholism is a learned behaviour and if that behaviour is not controlled it will ruin society. In the novels, the authors show that the wife and her children are the ones who suffer, but these participants believed that alcoholism is not an individual problem but rather a societal problem. In their view, authors must show how alcohol consumption endangers all sectors of society, as illustrated by Kishingo’s comment:

Alcoholism is a calamity which starts silently in the family. As a father continues drinking he neglects his wife and children. Then he starts quarrelling and beating his wife. ... Because that man is drinking excessively he will not concentrate on his work. Therefore, in order to have money for drinking he will sell family properties, such as land and furniture, or take his wife's money. Also you will find that his children are not doing well in school because of family problems. ... Authors mostly reveal that when we read these stories we don't think deeply. But how much time is wasted by capable men not working because of their drinking? How many women are injured and/or live in fear because of their husband's alcoholic behaviour? How many children are not studying because of their abusive father? Authors should portray the big picture.

Kishingo's ideas focus on the future of the society. She names precisely the concerns which she thinks authors should highlight in order to let people know the consequences of alcoholism in a wider perspective. She calls on the novelists to provide more nuanced views that aim at creating an awareness of the relationship between alcohol abuse and gender-based violence, and hence, opening up space for new perspectives or different approaches to intervene in the problem of alcoholism in society. Other participants also believed that the authors' silence about abusive alcoholic men affirms societal tolerance of that behaviour and in turn endangers the society as a whole.

As research on violence against women has demonstrated, excessive consumption of alcohol can also be used as an excuse for men to behave violently. A number of interviewees argued that the practice of authors depicting men as drunkards, while abusing women, encourages men to use this as a rationalisation for their violent actions. This idea is elaborated in Cindy's comment:

Novelists show that husbands beat their wives when they are drunk. ... I know a man who always beats his wife when he is drunk. He always says: "I do not beat my wife when I am sober." Therefore, it is clear that men know what they are doing; drinking is just a way of avoiding to be questioned as he will simply say: "I was drunk."

In this extract, the participant illustrates concern about the possible social consequences of the textual depiction of alcohol abuse as a reason for violence in the novels.

Participants in a discursive mode also treated the issue of inheritance rights critically, arguing that Kiswahili authors maintain cultural practices instead of

taking a role in campaigns to end violence against women related to the issue of inheritance. According to the Right to Own Property Act No. 15 of 1984, Section 6, “every person is entitled to own property and has a right to the protection of his property held in accordance with law” (The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977). In practice and in the novels, women are not experiencing that right and the protections stated in law. This has long been reported in research (Bhatla, et al., 2006; Bujra, 1990; Ezer, 2006) and is constructed in Kiswahili novels as a reason for violence against women in Tanzanian society. Sharifa argued that novelists should criticise societal practices which oppress girls and women. In Sharifa’s view, a strong moral perspective is needed:

Sharifa: Widows are mostly oppressed by the societal norms even when she has children. When her husband dies, her in-laws grab all the properties and her children. A man’s relatives believe that if they leave their in-laws with the property, she will take the wealth and marry another man and that the wealth will belong to another man’s family. ... I think novelists should condemn this norm and not just reveal what is happening.

In discussing the representation of rape in the novels, some participants challenged Kiswahili authors’ tendency to portray rape incidents uncritically. They argued that by doing so they are defending abusive men in Tanzanian society instead of taking a role in campaigns to address the issue of rape:

Kamjua: It is difficult to understand why authors write only about victims and reasons for rape. ... If they detailed what happened to the rapist, for example that he is jailed, it would help to stop other men who intend to do the same thing.

Chabby: The way authors portray rape is very discouraging. ... It is true that in our society rapists are not punished, but authors should not support what is happening in the society.

Writing about the relationship between discourse and the novel, Tölölyan (1988) argues that the novel is shaped by dominant discourses in a society. Consequently, it “reflects, foregrounds, underplays and subverts such discourses” (Tölölyan, 1988, p. 230). Therefore, it is not surprising that the novels do not depict the consequences for men, because as Jullu (2005) asserts, in Tanzania it is not uncommon for perpetrators of rape to be exonerated as police fail to follow the law, hence weakening the proper functioning of the law against rape. However, some students clearly challenged the authors’ tendency to exonerate the

perpetrators of rape while punishing girls who stand up for their rights and fight against rape. This view is illustrated by Herieti's and Mfupi's comments:

Herieti: When you try to comprehend why Ruhumbika³¹ killed Bugonoka³² several years later as revenge for what she did to Rev. Father John, you will know that authors reaffirm what is happening in the society.

Mfupi: Kiswahili authors show that women are the objects of men's pleasure. And when women try to resist they undergo suffering. For example, Mohamed³³ first portrays Semeni³⁴ as a well-mannered girl who courageously refuses her boss's sexual advances. But strategically, Mohamed creates the environment for Zuberi³⁵ to fulfil his goal of raping Semeni.

Reflecting on the ideas raised in the excerpts above, these two students are suggesting that the authors' support of dominant discourses is apparent in their development of the characters. These interviewees clearly agreed that although their intention is perhaps to reveal what is going on in Tanzanian society, authors have to broaden their insights by suggesting what should be done and by explicitly challenging what is not right. For instance, instead of showing rapists how to achieve their goals, these participants suggested authors should propose ways to deal with the problem and help the victims:

Masuke: In my view, the novels should not show how rapists accomplish their goals. ... Readers comprehend the stories presented in the novels in different ways. For example, in *Asali Chungu (Bitter Honey)*, when Zuberi failed to persuade Semeni to have a sexual affair with him, he raped her. A reader with the same intent - who seduces a girl unsuccessfully, if he reads this story, would say "Ah, now I have a new technique."... So I think instead of giving these details, authors must show what they are doing is not right and help the victims by giving them advice.

Here, Masuke highlights the possible effects of the message on other readers, and expresses concern that some men may use the story to continue abusing women who refuse to comply with their demands.

³¹ The author of *Janga Sugu la Wazawa*, one of the novels used in this study.

³² Bugonoka hit Rev. Father John's testicles with a stone as he tried to rape her.

³³ The author of *Asali Chungu*.

³⁴ A housemaid in Zuberi's house.

³⁵ Semeni's boss.

Likewise, Kaka, a participant who initially adopted a referential mode and strongly agreed that the textual depictions of gender-based violence were a reality for many women in Tanzanian society, shifted to a discursive mode of reading which underscored the authors' intention to foreground the belief that men have the right to abuse women:

Kaka: When you read these novels you see authors' attitudes towards women. For instance, when you read how the author represents Maua in *Pesa zako Zinanuka (Your Money Stinks)*, clearly you see that he intends to keep women in their oppressed role. ... The author emphasises the belief that a woman is weak but he does not describe why she is weak or decry that what happens to her is not good. For example, Boni (a character) said, "If a woman refuses my advances, I will show her who I am." ... So we can see that the author shows that a man has a right to abuse a woman.

Again, novelists are invited by this participant to challenge societal practices instead of supporting what is happening in society. Kaka believed that authors have to both accentuate and denounce the often-cited reasons underlying gender-based violence. By so doing, they would help to transform the society by opening up another perspective on the way perpetrators and victims of rape are constructed in society. With this understanding, these participants viewed authors as educators who have a role to play in guiding society. Thus, for them, literature has a role to play in revealing and challenging what is happening in the wider social world.

The socio-economic status of a family in poverty featured in the interviews as a "cause" of girls' forced early marriage. However, according to some participants, maintaining the idea that poverty is an imperative reason for forcing girls into an early marriage supports the idea that a girl is family property. They believed that authors must emphasise the consequences of girls' early marriage, such as vulnerability to domestic violence. Also, fathers³⁶ must be held responsible for these consequences:

Uhai: Authors are only focusing on blaming a girl for not respecting her husband, which results in wife beating. ... Also, authors always prioritise the family's need for money and not the consequences that the child will undergo because of her physical and psychological immaturity, which will not help society to change.

³⁶ Mostly it is a father who arranges to marry off his daughter and negotiates the bride price.

Kaka: As in our society, fathers who marry off their young daughters in Kiswahili novels are not punished. The authors highlight poverty as a reason and forget to stand up for the rights of that girl.

Another participant argued that initiators of a girl's early marriage (a girl's father and her husband) must be held accountable:

Rinda: If novelists show that a girl's father and her husband are punished, it would be a lesson for other men who intend to force their daughters to marry at early ages.

Nevertheless, as demonstrated by research (Ezer et al., 2006) and discussed in Chapter 5 (see 5.2.4), it is difficult to punish the initiators of girls' forced marriages unless the marriage laws change, because the Tanzania Marriage Law Act, customary law and Muslim law all support child marriage. More importantly, the authors' tendency to emphasise traditional practices or external factors, such as poverty, in order to exonerate fathers from responsibility for violating girls' rights, was argued by these participants to contribute to violence against women:

Angela: It is very discouraging to see authors revealing only factors contributing to girls' forced marriage while leaving fathers unpunished. ... Describing the factors and consequences of child marriage will not help fathers to change. At the very least, we expect authors to challenge their actions and make them responsible.

Furthermore, these participants perceived the authors' preference for maintaining traditional gender roles by punishing girls who go against dominant accepted discourses as another powerful source of sustaining violence in Tanzanian society. They argued that as girls read these novels, they are confronted with the continual appeal to conform to societal practices, as Kamjua illustrates:

Mostly novels side with what is happening in the society. In that way novels play a big role in encouraging readers, especially girls, to respect what their parents offered them. That is why Yasmin, (a character) in *Vuta n'kuvute (Pulling one Another)*, was rejected by her family. Reading the way Yasmin was harassed by her family you think a girl will be ready to leave her abusive husband? She will just comfort herself and continue staying with her husband rather than leaving him and enduring more violence.

These interviewees suggested that authors should challenge traditional practices by constructing characters who rebel against these traditions and are supported by their birth family and community. By so doing, they believed that authors would help to dismantle traditional oppressive attitudes.

Apart from challenging cultural practices, some participants made reference to the wider social good and noted that stories which framed the issues differently would help society to have different attitudes towards violence against women. These participants argued that stories which gave readers different perspectives towards women would augment the efforts to end violence against women. For instance, Rinda, a participant who attended a girl's leadership seminar, asserted that:

In *Asali Chungu (Bitter Honey)*, the author could depict Zuberi as a kind man, treating Semeni as his own daughter, taking her back to school and later depict Semeni having a reasonable life. ... If another man who employed a housemaid reads the novel, he may think how he could help his housemaid instead of thinking how he could rape her. ... I think novels should inspire people for change.

Another participant proposed that authors may have to change the way they emphasise the vital role of the male protagonist in representing violence against women in the novels, by creating positive depictions of women as strong characters:

Kimada: In *Pesa zako Zinanuka (Your Money Stinks)*, the author starts by narrating how Dora got pregnant and dropped out of school without naming who impregnated her. ... Kandiri, the man who was responsible for the pregnancy, continued with his studies and had a good career. ... However, he did not help his family nor Dora and her child. ... If authors reversed the outcome and had Dora as having successfully finished her studies instead of Kandiri, it would help readers to understand that a girl can do things differently.

Rinda and Kimada both discerned an underlying message in the novels and re-interpreted it critically. Some students mentioned that not all readers would read the novels critically. These students asserted that sometimes it is difficult to understand what authors actually mean in novels regarding violence against women. Given that the majority of the readers are ordinary people, it is possible that they would take the literal meaning, especially when they have examples from society that affirm textual realism:

James: I think to understand what authors' real opinions are about violence against women you really need to read carefully. Sometimes, I believe they want to ridicule men's behaviour, but how many readers may think like that. It is very difficult for many readers to have that perspective; many would just accept what authors say about women.

In the interviews, polygamous marriage in relation to Islam was singled out as contributing to gender-based violence. Participants argued that allowing a man to have as many as four wives creates much suffering among the wives themselves and their children, but more significant is men's tendency to abandon the previous wife/wives and children after marrying a new wife. In the discussion participants asserted that men's power and women's subordinate position in Tanzanian society enable Muslim men to have many wives, but Kiswahili novelists fail to reveal this inequality:

Shazia: The Quran explains that if a man wants to marry another wife, he must inform his wife and get consent from his first wife. ... But because a man has power to do what he wants in his family, he does not do that. ... If he wants to marry another wife, he marries. In Kiswahili novels the issue of religion is foregrounded. For example, in *Nyota ya Rehema (Rehema's Destiny)*, Mohamed shows that Fuad marries another wife because of God's order.

Halifa: It is true that no woman would agree to her husband marrying another wife, but because of women's subordinate position, Muslim men marry another wife, leaving the first one to suffer with her children.

Shazia's and Halifa's understanding of men's power in the polygamous Islamic religion is similar to Niaz's (2003) view on how patriarchal values influence Islamic teachings. Niaz argues that Islam gave women the legal right to own property, to marry and divorce; however, patriarchal societal values which emphasise female subordination have been absorbed into Islamic teachings and transmitted to the younger generation.

Participants examined further the problem of polygamous marriage by drawing examples from Bâ's novel *So Long a Letter*³⁷, which features the stories of two women; Ramatoulaye, who suffers after her husband (Modu) marries another

³⁷ ³⁷ This novel, originally written in French by a Senegalese female writer in 1980, has been translated into 18 languages. The Kiswahili translation was published in 1994 and it is used as a text book in high schools in Tanzania.

wife, and Aisatu, who divorces her husband (Maudu) after he has married another wife. According to Chumbani for example, the arrival of the second wife, as is depicted in the novels and in society, brings suffering to the existing family as the husband abandons his first family and concentrates on supporting his new family:

Chumbani: Bâ, in *So Long a Letter*, reveals what is happening in our society. ... Ramatoulaye suffers with her twelve children after Modu [Ramatoulaye's husband] marries Binetuu [a new wife] and uses all his money on Binetuu's family. We have a lot of women like Ramatoulaye, who are living in abject poverty after they have been abandoned by their husbands.

Interestingly, however, the participants praised how Bâ presents the problem of polygyny in her novel. Many of the participants considered that her novel enlightens readers, especially in terms of her depiction of wives who have been betrayed by their husbands:

Sabra: Bâ's novel, *So Long a Letter*, shows that a woman can leave a husband who betrays her and marries another wife. For example, Aisatu did not tolerate her husband's [Maudu] betrayal. ... When her husband married another wife, she moved out with her children without fearing what people would say. Her husband was shocked at his wife's decision but he couldn't stop her. ... This is a very good example for women who are betrayed by their husbands.

Chabby echoes Sabra's comments by arguing that Bâ's novel demonstrates that women who are abandoned by their husbands when they marry other wives are capable of taking care of their families:

Chabby: When you read how Ramatoulaye courageously takes care of her big family of twelve children, planning all family issues, managing financial matters - it shows exactly what some women are doing in our society. Ramatoulaye did all these tasks and accomplished her plans despite the obstacles. She is a role model for other women who are betrayed by their husbands.

According to Sabra and Chabby, Bâ's novel creates new options for women who are betrayed and abandoned by their husbands. In this novel, Aisatu refuses the positions offered to her by Islam (co-wife status) when her husband marries a second wife. Instead, she leaves her husband and starts a new life with her children. By challenging discourses which promote control and domination, Bâ helps change the way women and men think about polygamy and shows that change is possible, as suggested by Malenga and Paula:

Malenga: Men believe that women, once they marry, are not courageous enough to leave their husband because always women are told to take care of their marriage, husband and children. Kiswahili novels also emphasise this idea. ... But Bâ's novel is different; she shows that even though the religion [Islam] allows a man to have up to four wives, a woman does not need to stay in her marriage if her husband does not love her anymore.

Paula: Maudu [Aisatu's husband] was astonished when he saw a letter which his wife left before moving out with her children. ... Aisatu's ability to leave her husband and not go back even after being advised and her decision to study and find a job is a good sign for other husbands who oppress their wives, believing that they cannot take care of their life.

Here, both participants suggest that Bâ has successfully challenged what men believe to be the truth about a woman's position as a wife in a polygamous marriage. She showed that women can take the initiative on how to live their lives. Implicitly, these participants suggest that this awareness breaks the "silent habit" in the Islamic religion, whereby men use the privilege accorded to them to marry up to four wives without fulfilling the law of consulting their previous wife before taking another wife and supporting all wives equally.

Drawing from their knowledge of Kiswahili novels where the new wife lives happily with her children and the first wife endures suffering after her husband's abandonment, the participants contended that Bâ's construction of Binetuu's (Modu's second wife) suffering after her husband's sudden death and not Ramatoulaye (Modu's first wife), was intended as a message to other women who agreed to become a second wife. Furthermore, the participants argued that women themselves have the power to refuse to be in a polygamous marriage, either by leaving husbands who betray them, like Aisatu, or by not accepting the role of a second wife, as with Ramatoulaye after her husband's death. The participants noted that Ramatoulaye's courage to turn down Daouda's³⁸ proposition showed that widows could refuse to be second wives if they want. This view is consistent with Zeitzen's (2008) argument that women themselves are the primary determinants for polygamous marriages in Africa. Zeitzen claims that if women refuse to be "part of a polygynous union, no legislative ban will be needed to eradicate the practice" (p. 178). By refusing the subordinate and

³⁸ Daouda was a married man who wanted to marry Ramatoulaye after her husband's death.

submissive positions accorded to them, women would be able to challenge the dominant discourses (Chukukere, 1995; Gatenby & Hume, 2004; Tölölyan, 1988), develop new ways to make sense of their lives, and initiate new discursive positionings for women (Davies, 1989; Davies & Harre, 1990; Gavey, 1992).

However, participants also noted that unlike many women, Ramatoulaye and Aisatu in Bâ's novel were able to refuse the position offered to them: Ramatoulaye was a school teacher while Aisatu studied and worked as an interpreter after leaving her husband. The economic independence, creativity, life skills and critical thinking ability that are obtained from successful schooling are vital elements in thinking of alternative ways of life and taking action when required (Cantor, Bernay, & Stoess, 1992; Meena, 1996). According to these participants, Kiswahili novelists have an important role to play in the efforts to end violence against women in Tanzanian society by showing what is happening, challenging what is not right, and suggesting ways to change the existing conditions with respect to violence against women.

Somewhat differently, a few participants viewed the textual depictions of violence against women in the novels as a cautionary tale for readers. This means that these students focused on the message that they felt Kiswahili authors intended to present to readers. These students asserted that the depiction is intended to alert readers to what is happening in the wider social world. They argued that as people read these stories, they may become more aware of the causes of violence against women and can start to think how they might help to end violence against women. In this regard, a number of students mentioned that the authors showed how a lack of education puts girls and women at risk of violence. They further noted that girls are forced to join the prostitution industry and women remain in abusive relationships because they lack qualifications. Therefore, they believed the textual representations alerted readers to the need to educate girls and for girls to study hard, as the following examples reveal:

Hanifa: Authors show that lack of education for women is the main reason for abuse. In *Rosa Mistika*, Regina did not have education. ... I guess if she had education she would find a job and look after her children. ... The same thing happened to Semeni; if she had qualifications she could find a job, but because she did not have any

options, she continued living in Zuberi's house and subsequently she was raped and later joined the prostitution industry.

Lanina: By reading novels we understand that lack of education is among the causes of violence against women. ... It is likely that if someone who has a daughter reads the novels, she would give her a good education so that she would not undergo the same sufferings. Many people learn only after knowing the consequences. I am studying hard, as I read how women are abused by men, and because I don't want to experience the same situation in the future.

It is interesting to note that Lanina highlights the "inspiration" she draws on as she reads the novels to understand what other women are going through. Her view was supported by other students, who suggested that authors aimed to send a message to readers, especially women, to understand their society. They stated that reading stories about wife beating and forced prostitution broadens their knowledge about their community. Some female participants mentioned that the textual depiction of gender-based violence alerted them to men's behaviour and therefore the need to study hard in order to be independent:

Kamjua: When we – female students – read these novels, we are able to get an idea that we must have a goal in our lives. If you are educated with a career and your husband becomes abusive like what we are reading, you will be better able to take care of your life and send your children to private school. The novels forewarn us of what we see in our society and prepare us to be independent in the future.

Like Lanina, Kamjua believes that education will enable her to leave an abusive relationship and to break the cycle of violence. Kamjua's and Lanina's views concur with Ledbetter's (1996) assertion that novels have the "power to liberate the victims of our society" (p. X).

A few participants believed that the textual depiction of violence against women in the novels is intended to help those who would like to work in legal and human rights institutions. They considered that reading the novels extended their understanding of what is happening in the wider society regarding the problem of gender-based violence and that helped to find out possible ways to end gender-based violence in Tanzanian society.

Hanifa: These novels are read in schools. ... We are exposed to various ways in which women are oppressed in our society. I think

it is an opportunity for those who would like to be lawyers, police or human rights activists to know what they would need to do in order to end violence against women.

While many participants focused on individuals as they responded to the depiction of violence against women in the novels, some thought that the novelists' representation of this issue aimed to reveal how the government officials impeded efforts to end violence against women. Specifically, these participants compared the representation of corruption in the novels to the prevalence of corruption in society. They suggested that the authors' intent is to show how widespread corruption sustains violence against women, as abusers manage to bribe the legal institutions. Moreover, they claimed that many perpetrators take advantage of the poverty of many women because they are sure these women will not be able to compete with them in Tanzanian society:

Junia: There is a question of bribery. A person is accused in a rape case but because he is rich or someone's son [having a father who has a position in the government] the case will be postponed and later on the police or judges will say there is not enough evidence. If you try to find out what happened, you would realise that the police or the judges were given money. ... When authors write about corruption and violence against women, it is for the government. That the government has to investigate the way things are done.

In this extract, Junia highlights the possible implications of the message for the Tanzanian government. He suggested that the representation of corruption in relation to gender-based violence may prompt the government to "investigate" how officials are dealing with the issue.

6.4 Conclusion

In this study, participants drew on their knowledge and experiences of Tanzanian society to variously affirm or examine critically the textual construction of violence against women in the novels. This is not surprising, as Michelle et al.'s (2012) study of cross-cultural responses to *Avatar* (2009) notes that readers who frame their responses in the referential and discursive modes have exposure to extra-textual knowledge and experiences. However, while the participants who adopted a referential mode affirmed the textual constructions of violence against women in the novels and viewed them as a "reality" for many girls and women in

the society, those who adopted the discursive mode clearly critiqued those constructions and viewed them as problematic. Students who adopted a referential mode asserted that the authors offered instructional advice as they broadened readers' understandings of gender-based violence in Tanzanian society.

In contrast, students who adopted a discursive mode advocated that authors should go further and transform readers and society by offering alternative ways of understanding their ways of being in the world. These participants believed that reflecting and critiquing societal practises that sustain gender-based violence would offer readers new options for understanding and reflecting on their lives. This is similar to Tuchman's (1983) assertion that some readers use novels to find ways to solve their daily problems. Tuchman further argues that media (novels) help readers to make sense of their community, and thus they sell "consciousnesses" to readers. From the feminist poststructuralist point of view, which is the position taken in this thesis, the vital role of novels for readers in general, and for women in particular, lies in their ability to construct "different subject positions offered in imaginative alternatives" (Weedon, 1997, p. 167). Furthermore, Weedon notes that in securing women's liberation, fiction plays an important role in directing readers towards radical subject positions and positive heroines.

Significantly, a number of participants adopting a discursive mode noted that rationalising violence against women by emphasising factors such as excessive use of alcohol and poverty, which externalise the reasons for abusive behaviour, will not help to end violence against women. Those students believed that Kiswahili authors should expose readers to alternative discourses, which according to Gee (2007) would enable readers to reflect on their lives critically, as they related the dominant discourses in society to the alternative discourses presented in the novels. Conversely, maintaining dominant discourses and silencing/marginalising alternative discourses has the potential to help maintain women in their oppressed role.

Furthermore, a number of participants also considered that novelists should portray women as being capable and responsible for their own lives and not as dependent on marriage for their protection. This view suggests that challenging

the dominant discourses that lock women into dependent lives and promoting alternative discourses that offer positions of resistance to traditional roles will inspire women to take agency in their lives. As Gavey (1996) suggests, opposing the hegemonic discourses that constrain women in their traditional roles can gradually promote different ways of being in the world and make these possible for women.

As stated in Chapter 4, the focus group discussions included girls and boys, as I wanted to know whether there were gender-based differences in the interpretations of the construction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels. However, I found that the differences in students' interpretations were not due to their gender, but rather, appeared to result from the fact that some students had previously participated in Girl's Leadership Seminars, which had offered alternative ways of understanding women's position in Tanzanian society. These seminars aimed at empowering high school girls in terms of knowledge and skills, to enable them to gain control over their lives, articulate their needs and participate in community decision making (Adolwa et al., 2012). It was apparent that the girls who had undertaken the programme challenged the representation of violence against women in the novels and viewed these constructions as problematic, in contrast to both boys and other girls who had not attended the programme.

Students' interpretations of the textual representation of gender-based violence in the novels throw light on how dominant discourses of violence against women are maintained in Tanzanian society and the potential effects they have on readers. Potentially, engaging readers in discussions about dominant discourses and alternative discourses in relation to gender-based violence using the novels may contribute to the wider effort to end violence against women in Tanzanian society. Chapter 7, therefore, explores teachers' views on how novels could be used in the effort to end gender-based violence.

Chapter Seven: The Discursive Construction of Gender-Based Violence in Kiswahili Novels and Socio-Cultural Practices in Tanzanian Society

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the views Kiswahili teachers have on the relationship between discursive constructions of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels and socio-cultural practices in Tanzanian society. As stated previously, the development of effective gender-based violence intervention programmes requires an understanding not only of the dominant discourses that sustain violence against women, but also their connection to the cultural and social practices of society.

While this chapter deals mainly with discourses affirming a link between gender-based violence and cultural and social practices, which O'Neill (1998) refers to collectively as socio-systemic discourse, these discourses are inextricably linked with those discourses the students drew on in Chapter 6 as they responded to the textual construction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels. In what follows, I present and analyse extracts drawn from in-depth interviews with Kiswahili teachers addressing the relationship between Kiswahili novels and social-cultural practices, and how novels might be used as a "teaching tool."

7.2 Socio-systemic discourse

Cultural practices influence social institutions such as educational systems, gender roles, and ways of living that are acceptable to the community (American Psychological Association, 2003; Levesque, 2002). Cultural practice discourse positions cultural forces as the primary determinants for the creation and maintenance of violence against women in a society (Levesque, 2002). O'Neill (1998) refers to this discourse as socio-systemic discourse. This discourse focuses on the social situations and social environments within which violence takes place. In this study, six Kiswahili teachers were interviewed and all agreed that the discursive construction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels reflects socio-cultural practices in Tanzanian society. According to these participants, women's perceptions and their inferior position in society render women vulnerable to violence. They further elaborated that, given the role of literature in disclosing what is happening in a given society, Kiswahili authors expose girls'

and women's subordinate status and position in Tanzanian society. As Esta's comment illustrates:

Kiswahili novelists aim to reveal how girls and women are perceived and treated in our community. Women are positioned as inferior compared to men. For example, in some tribes, a baby boy is respected more than his mother. He can make the decisions of what is to be done in the family but not his mother. Do you think that boy will respect his own wife or give his children (boys and girls) equal position?

Other participants concurred with this view:

Magoire: What novelists are doing is to draw awareness of what is happening in society. These stories are experiences which girls and women in our society go through.

Maua: Kiswahili novelists show how the patriarchal system oppresses women in our society. I think when authors chastise girls and women only for going against norms and beliefs, it is not true that boys and men are perfect. Take the example of what happened to Bugonoka in *Janga Sugu la Wazawa (Ongoing Sufferings of the Native)*; Ruhumbika punishes Bugonoka³⁹ to show what she did is not right according to norms. I believe Ruhumbika and other authors are doing so purposely to show how society privileges men and oppresses women.

Mangi believed that in order to grasp the causes of gender-based violence in Tanzanian society, it is important to probe into the socio-cultural system and outline the factors which prepare men to be superior and respectable members of the society, and which socialise women to play an active role in the process of supporting the dominant group:

Mangi: In African societies, it is believed that a girl is not a person to stay in her natal family. If she is born in family A, one day she must marry and move to family B. Therefore, from the day she is born she is perceived as someone who is not a "permanent" family member. Consequently, discrimination follows; she will not be treated like her brother who is a "permanent" member of the family. When the question of education comes, a boy receives first priority. In fact some parents say openly, "how can you dare to invest the little wealth you have in a girl who will marry after her studies and leave the family. It is very important to invest in a boy because you are sure he will remain in the family and take care of the family." This belief also applies to inheritance. Girls/women are not entitled

³⁹She was murdered by Sheikh Father John several years after she had refused to have sex with him. When he tried to rape her, Bugonoka fought back and was able to escape the rape.

to inherit properties such as land, simply because she is not a “permanent” family member. Because of that girls/women learn that they must marry and remain in their matrimonial family at any cost. More importantly, men know women have no rights in our society, and that is why husbands do whatever they want to their wives.

Underlining the societal contribution to violence against women, Magoire affirmed:

In some of the Kiswahili novels, authors disclose that violence emanates from our culture, which devalues women. Societal norms and values are the main reasons for violence against women. It is the norms and customs which determine how women and men should be treated, who is entitled to get what and who is not; what is wrong and what is right; and so on. It is clear that from a young age girls learn what to expect and how to behave in the family and in society. Girls and women know very well their position and status in the family and in society. In the family for example, when a child does something wrong, instead of correcting her/him, a mother says, “I will tell your father.” Why not take action? Why not correct him/her immediately? This is because she has already internalised her position as someone who cannot make decisions and/or she is not supposed to do that, she is not in charge of family matters, she is inferior etc. Similarly, boys know they are more powerful, valued and respected than girls/women. It is very clear that the society socialises boys and girls differently. When you read stories about girls and women being denied their rights or being abused by men it is the effect of the societal practice. Because of that, in order to end violence against women, we must start by changing how we treat boys and girls in our family and in society - treat them equally.

From these excerpts it is apparent that some teachers believed that girls’ and boys’ socialisation provides a strong background for men and women to behave differently – boys learn to be superior, leaders and decision makers, whereas girls learn to be submissive and inferior. Subsequently, men feel more powerful, privileged and entitled to resources, while women feel diffident and their life is entrusted in marriage (Kahurananga & Kileo, 2003). These power relations between men and women inhibit freedom of choice and opportunity for women, and these beliefs, which are culturally supported and maintained, form a basis for men to devalue and abuse women (Fernández, 2006; Perilla, Bakeman, & Norris, 1994). The belief that women have to marry and sustain their marriage is exacerbated by the rejection, isolation and punishment imposed by their natal family for breaking cultural norms, as demonstrated by Mangi:

Mangi: ... Once a woman marries, first she has no place in her natal family any more. ... Sometimes she is told, “this is your family now [marital family], these are your parents.” Also, for a woman to fail to sustain her marriage is an insurmountable problem. That is why her family insists she must keep her marriage and will not allow her to go back. ... When a woman thinks about the consequences accompanied by leaving her husband, such as losing her status as someone’s wife, shame to her family, rejection, isolation and names/labels she will have as a result of her leaving, she prefers to stay with her abusive husband.

In this discourse, societal structures shape women’s experiences in intimate relationships. Women have to weigh up the costs of abandoning the “status” of a married woman – “rejection,” “isolation,” “shame” and stigmatisation – before taking the initiative to leave their husbands. Leaving abusive husbands becomes impractical for women in cultures which abide by this worldview (Yoshioka & Choi, 2005).

In line with discourses of femininity which position women as nurturing (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004), Mangi concurred that women’s beliefs about the role of a mother also hinder women with children from leaving their abusive husband. He argued that it is impossible for a woman to divorce when she thinks about what will happen to her children. She will endure extreme violence, but she will not leave her children:

Mangi: Children are very important to a woman. If a married woman has children, even though she endures violence to death, she is ready to die rather than divorcing. Unfortunately she does not think of what will happen if her husband kills her; who will take care of the children she claims to protect? As in *Ua la Faraja*⁴⁰ (*Consolation Flower*), for example, several women die from HIV/AIDS. They know that their husbands are unfaithful, yet they cannot leave. Given their position in the family they cannot tell their husband to use a condom. As a result, what happens to Tabu⁴¹ has already happened to many women whose husbands are unfaithful.

Societal practices which define appropriate behaviour for women shape the way women interpret violence, particularly in marital relationships, as elaborated by Maua:

⁴⁰ This novel is used in this study.

⁴¹ A character in *Ua la Faraja* who died from AIDS because her husband was unfaithful.

Maua: A society which believes in certain values such as mothering and not in personal weakness, shapes the way people think. Women for example believe that leaving the abusive husband according to societal values is attributed to women's weakness and women are more concerned about the consequence from the society. But looking more closely, the action of a woman who leaves an abusive husband who threatens her life and goes on to start a new life in a safer environment is a commendable action. However, this is viewed as a failure in marriage which must not be tolerated. According to societal norms it is not the husband who is the problem, instead it is the woman; that is why she should sustain her marriage. From childhood, girls observe and learn from the family, watch on television and read in novels that she should make sure that when she marries, she keeps her marriage. Therefore, it is very difficult for women to divorce.

Narrative works such as novels enable readers to understand the world we live in through others (Bach, Choate, & Parker, 2011; Ledbetter, 1996). Berns (2001) argues that in trying to understand the problem of violence against women, individuals utilise magazine articles, newspaper reports and television movies to make sense of what is normal and acceptable in society. A number of teachers in this study considered novels to be a "teaching machine" (Giroux, 2002, p. 6); therefore, they believed the novels' construction of violence against women reinforces what girls observe from the family and how they are supposed to behave in a culturally appropriate manner, as elaborated by Tumi:

Tumi: ... When reading novels, girls learn more about their position in the society. We all know that readers relate characters they come across with people in the society. ... In one way these stories teach girls how they are supposed to behave in a culturally appropriate manner. ... Similar to what their mothers teach them – to be submissive and obedient to their husband.

Here, Tumi suggests that readers draw from the experiences of the characters and position themselves in the situation. Hence, changing the position of girls and women as victims in such narratives could potentially create a new position for readers, who will then be ready to take an active role if needed in their own lives. As Ledbetter (1996) suggests, reading novels helps women become attuned to their position in a male dominated society. Certainly, readers learn to adjust their behaviour according to what they believe is acceptable in the society. Tumi provides an example of the role of literary works in preserving and perpetuating societal practices. She states:

Tumi: ... A good example of how literary works are used as a vehicle of transmitting societal norms is Mwanakupona's⁴² poem. We know according to norms and traditions, before marriage a bride is taught how to live with her husband in order to maintain her marriage. The teachings are mostly similar to what Mwanakupona taught her daughter. This contributes to some of them believing that physical abuse from their husband is part of married life. Like in Mwanakupona and the teachings given to brides by kungwi⁴³, Kiswahili novels do not offer a different perspective.

This extract illustrates how literary works are used to ensure that women internalise cultural expectations about the importance of married life and accept the domination of their husband.

In another example, participants argued that Kiswahili novelists disclose the effects of girls' discrimination in education. They asserted that novelists' tendency to depict men as leaders and decision makers show society's biases regarding the question of equality among people. However, these participants rebuked the authors for just describing the problem and not challenging or condemning it, and for not suggesting what is to be done. Some participants believed that by doing this, authors play an active role in strengthening inequality and oppression against girls and women, as Magoire's and Mangi's comments illustrate:

Magoire: ... Novelists aim to show how biases in education affect women in our society. It is not that women are not as clever as boys and therefore they cannot be leaders. ... Discriminating against them in education and socialising them as people who depend only on men is the main reason for women not getting chances in leadership roles. Unfortunately the novelists do not challenge that inequality and show how both women and men should be treated.

Mangi: ... Novelists are doing very good work in presenting what is going on in our society. But this is not enough. ... They must go further by challenging and condemning practices which oppress girls and women. They can also suggest what should be done in order to help women. An example is when authors reaffirm the societal belief that if you educate a girl she will marry and join another family, or she will not finish her studies because of pregnancy. Emphasising these beliefs does not help society to think differently. In that way novels contribute to oppressing women

⁴² This is a famous poem among the Waswahili, which has drawn attention among scholars. Some scholars argue that it encourages women's submissiveness and subordination.

⁴³ A traditional marriage instructor, particularly for a bride; her main work is to teach the bride how to live in the matrimonial family and how she is expected to treat her husband.

instead of liberating them. ... I think in order to solve the problem of violence against women we must take initiatives in challenging the beliefs. Authors have a vital role in that matter, by suggesting techniques and encouraging girls and women to refuse what society offers to them.

Authors' attention to women's behaviour as a reason for their victimisation was identified as another similarity between the novels and what is happening in Tanzanian society. One interviewee posited that portraying women as a cause of gender-based violence, particularly in relation to prostitution and wife beating, diverts the focus away from the root cause of the problem, thus making it difficult to initiate appropriate intervention measures:

Maua: ... As you read novels you come across many stories where girls join the prostitution industry. I don't believe that these girls wanted to become prostitutes, only circumstances forced them to do so. ... A good example is young girls who are engaging in prostitution in Dar es Salaam. If you ask them they will tell you that they don't want to do what they are doing, but they have no alternative. They have no education, no job, what do you expect? If you examine the issue clearly you will know that the system forced them to do what they are doing. However, like in the novels, they are blamed for what they are doing. I think the government has the responsibility to give them necessary skills and education, and not just keep arresting them.

Another theme that emerged in the interviews was the relationship between violence against women and religious practices. All participants concurred that religious teachings play a strong role in perpetuating gender-based violence, but noted that some teachings can also play an important role in ending gender-based violence in society. A study by Pew Research Center (2010), addressing the role of religion in individuals' lives, noted that in Sub Saharan Africa, religion is a source of hope, and Muslims and Christians believe in the literal truth of the scriptures – both in the Bible and the Koran. Furthermore, this study affirmed that a huge number of people (Muslims and Christians) attend regular services at least once a week, praying and giving religious alms. Generally, in Tanzania, participating in religious services is also part of social networking that is formed through religious affiliation. Consequently, it is not surprising that, as revealed by the Pew Research Center (2010), 93% of Tanzanians affirmed that religion is very important in their lives, compared to 7% of people in the Czech Republic (Pew Research Center, 2010, p. 3). With this understanding, it is clear that there is a

link between daily life and religious teachings in Tanzania. This was noted by the participants, when they asserted that women may want to leave an abusive relationship but religious teachings encourage them to endure suffering silently. They suggested that if women hear respected people, like religious leaders, saying that “safety” is the most important thing in marital life, women in abusive relationships will be given the strength and courage to leave. Participants also noted that this could only happen if the religious leaders supported the women who decided to leave abusive relationships and commended their actions:

Esta: Religious leaders have a unique influence in our communities. Given their position and power it is obvious they can change people’s attitudes and beliefs. Many people respect religious leaders even more than government leaders and they follow what they teach. I think if they insisted on safety and the consequences of not taking action, women who tolerate violence will start thinking about their lives. ... However, these leaders must also reprimand all types of violence against women and help women who want to leave their abusive husbands. I mean in their teachings these women must be seen as strong and not weak.

Furthermore, participants emphasised that religious leaders have a key role to play in condemning men who misuse the scriptures to justify their domination and control over women. Comments from Esta and Tumi typify this idea:

Esta: ... As we read from the book of Genesis, Eve was lured by the devil in the Garden of Eden and accepted the fruit which God told them not to eat. Because of that, a woman is considered weak and she must be controlled, otherwise she will do more evil things. Leaders must illustrate the context of this scripture and teach people how to interpret it accordingly.

Tumi: ... Men misuse religious teachings which state that a man is the head of the family and the decision maker. And a woman must be submissive and obey all of her husband’s orders. It is the role of leaders to insist on religious teachings which maintain that in matrimonial life, a man and a woman became one and whatever they do, they must agree. In this way, religious teaching will bring equality in marital relationships.

Research on violence against women shows that religious values and ideas that support stereotypical gender roles promote female submission and male domination (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2003; Levitt, Swanger, & Butler, 2008). Similarly, Fortune (1991) notes that in some situations abusive men misuse scriptures to justify their abusive actions. Thus, as noted by Esta and Tumi,

religious leaders should condemn misuse of scriptures and work together to end the tolerance of gender-based violence as a “normal” behaviour in Tanzanian society.

7.3 Kiswahili novels as part of the cultural realm

Unchallenged portrayals of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels were viewed by a number of teachers as helping to perpetuate the problem of violence against women in society. They viewed novels as part of the problem of gender-based violence, in that they support a culture that condones violence against women. They further asserted that merely presenting gender-based violence as it occurs in society does not empower women and girls; rather, it reflects patriarchal domination, which rationalises women’s subordination. In the view of teachers, communication channels such as novels could provide models of alternative ways of living for women and girls by challenging the dominant discourses which sustain and support beliefs and norms that perpetuate violence against women in Tanzania, as is evident in Esta’s and Magoire’s comments:

Esta: ... Novelists report episodes of violence against women uncritically. ... If writers are silent about what is happening to women in the society, who is responsible for women’s liberation? Certainly, this can be compared to societal attitudes and beliefs about violence against women. Many people do not see it as a major problem which needs attention.

Magoire: ... Kiswahili novels do not promote gender transformation. ... If we consider the role of literature – novels in that case, among other things are meant to educate society - then novelists have to write works which change people’s attitudes about women as a subordinate group in our society. Showing what is happening is not enough; they must punish the perpetrators. By absolving perpetrators it is clear that they accept what is happening to girls and women.

Changing people’s attitudes and beliefs about violence against women requires numerous methods, among which is educating society about the detrimental effects of violence on women themselves and the community in general. Certainly, laws and policies which address violence against women are important (Jullu, 2005); however, as Hashi (2003) suggests, collective efforts from individuals, families and communities at national and international levels are needed to end violence against women. She insists that by working together,

oppressive behaviour at the family level, in the work place, and in the community at large can be changed. Discussing the role of novels, Ledbetter (1996) points out that novels are the “problem-solvers” (p. 4). Kiswahili novelists’ reticence around the question of gender-based violence not only subverts efforts to end violence against women in Tanzanian society but also shapes how readers, especially students, think about violence against women. According to Esta and Mangi, students’ awareness and understanding of gender-based violence is partly shaped by what they read in Kiswahili novels:

Esta: ... Novelists write about girls’ and women’s sufferings in our society. What we read in novels about women and girls is true; however, authors focus only on victims. Why are they not writing about men who abuse women? ... These stories do not help our students to think differently about how girls and women in our society should be treated.

Mangi: Authors’ focus on women and girls only as weak and vulnerable to violence affects readers. Authors mostly write about reasons which put women at risk for violence, such as poverty, life hardship and women’s submissiveness. Rarely do they write about the father being punished for forcing his daughter to marry, or a husband jailed for beating his wife. Their preference for sustaining the belief that women are weak and vulnerable to male violence shapes how readers, particularly young people, think about women.

Given the nature of the patriarchal system in African societies, Nwankwo (1986) argues that it is very difficult for African women to escape the vicious cycle of violence in their lives. She notes that both in real life and in fiction, women suffer as a result of social norms and beliefs. Likewise, the teachers insisted that most of the novels justified violence against women by entrenching the societal norms and beliefs that place women in a vulnerable position, rather than making men accountable for their actions. Participants questioned the authors’ silence on abusive men, as is evident in the following comments:

Magoire: ... Authors mainly focus on why women are controlled by men. How about men? Why not disclose what is wrong with these men [abusive men] clearly? I think novelists should describe men’s wrongdoings and condemn them rather than just relying on expressing attitudes and beliefs which maintain violence against women and leaving individuals unaccountable. Making them responsible will help others to see the consequences of certain behaviour.

Esta: Generally, in novels violence against women, such as wife beating and rape, is justified. Authors narrate the story in such a way that women are blamed for their victimisation. For example, authors use women's failure to fulfil traditional gender roles, such as cooking, or being disrespectful, as reasons for wife beating, or girls going to men's houses or drinking alcohol as reasons for rape. This way of writing encourages men to believe that they are responsible for disciplining women, especially wives. I think authors should explain why men abuse women - I mean how men's behaviour contributes to violence against women. That will help to change the common belief that violence against women is a women's problem.

Magoire's and Esta's arguments focus on the construction of men in the novels. According to these participants, unchallenged representations of abusive men legitimate the traditional belief that "men are responsible for disciplining women," instead of encouraging readers to reflect critically on the reasons for violence against women in Tanzanian society. Indeed, as Hamisi notes, women are vulnerable if they violate the codes of acceptable behaviour, whereas men seem to be unscathed by their actions:

Hamisi: Novelists can change culturally rooted beliefs that men cannot be challenged. All people - men and women - deserve equal treatment in whatever they do. For example, if a husband wronged his wife, his wife also has the right to question him and it is not only a husband who can question and even chastise his wife. I believe this is what authors need to show in their novels. Just because you are a man does not mean that no one can challenge your deeds. Justice must be in place for both men and women. In that way it will help people to change.

The extract above suggests that novels play a part in shaping young people's understanding of what to expect if they do not conform to social norms. Participants suggested that a lack of recognition of women's efforts and contribution in the society, and a lack of female heroines in Kiswahili novels, is another silencing strategy for keeping women under control. This observation is well illustrated by Hamisi's comment:

Boys have a lot of examples around which inspire them to have dreams for their future lives. How about girls? Who is their role model? Who inspires them? At least if novelists create stories with inspirational characters it will help girls to recognise what they can do and start having dreams and a vision for their lives. Otherwise it is just difficult for them to change what they observe and learn from the society.

Talking about how these discursive constructions of violence against women affect girls and boys in the classroom setting, Esta suggested that focusing on women only in the novels, as mandated in the Kiswahili curriculum, implies that women are the source of the problem and that women have to change to fit into what society expects:

Esta: ... In our analysis we only focus on how women are constructed in the novels. ... Students believe that women are the problem and they need to change. Even in exams the questions focus on women's experiences and their position in the society. That means there is no room for examining how men behave in our society. ... In my teaching, one day I asked students to examine how men were constructed in Kiswahili novels. Straight away one student said, "we cannot look at how men are portrayed in novels. Normally we examine how women are depicted. Critics also focus on women." ... It is true that in our teaching we only focus on women's characterisation. With the best of my knowledge I have never come across a study on Kiswahili novels focusing on men and their position in our society. It is obvious that we need to focus on men as a source of the problem of violence against women. By doing so we will be able to examine how men contribute to violence and what are the factors which enable men to condone violence mostly to women, and not to men.

Esta's observation is consistent with the findings of Low and Sherrard's (1999) study, which notes that the content analysis of media, including novels, has mainly focused on women's representation. More specifically, analysis of Kiswahili novels so far has focused mainly on the portrayal of women (Mbughuni, 1982; Mlacha 1993; Ohly, 1990; Swilla, 2000).

Another issue that emerged in teachers' discussions was inequality in education. A number of teachers contended that reflecting but not challenging inequality in education would not help to change women's subordinate position in Tanzanian society. In this regard, Christian seminaries were singled out for their practice of not admitting girls to their schools (seminary schools). Participants argued that these schools are among the best schools, and more importantly, the low tuition fees in these schools as compared with other religious schools and private schools would allow more girls who are already marginalised to receive a quality education. They considered that not admitting girls to these quality schools promotes women's subordination and disempowerment, as it restricts women to

narrowly defined roles while supporting men to excel in the patriarchal societal system. As Mangi and Magoire illustrate:

Mangi: ... We all know the importance of education. Yet novelists do not challenge how discrimination in education affects girls. ... Novelists are in a better position to challenge what is happening in society. Taking for granted that it is a creative work, it nevertheless has power to influence readers and bring about change. A good example here is how religious schools discriminate against girls. Seminaries for example are the best private schools with low tuition fees, but girls have no access to these schools. ... I have never come across a novel questioning this practice.

Magoire: Our society is not yet giving equal opportunity for both girls and boys, particularly in education. If we have novels which construct girls and boys equally, it will help people to change their attitude that boys are cleverer than girls. These novels will help them to see what exactly contributes to the stereotype that girls are weak. We have a few girls' schools where girls are doing very well in their studies. However, these schools are very expensive, hence only a few parents can afford the fees. If other schools, like Christian seminaries which are very good and less expensive compared with other good private schools, enrolled girls, I'm sure we will have more women in leadership positions and this will help other people to see the importance of educating girls.

This observation about seminary schools echoes Galabawa's (1995) critique of the role played by seminary schools operated by Catholic Church in embedding women's discrimination and inequality in Tanzania. Galabawa's study notes that out of 27 seminary schools operated by the Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC), 25 schools are for boys and two are for girls (p. 72). Although the seminaries are mainly for training future religious leaders, the majority of the students join the labour force and very few continue with the religious ministry after completing secondary school (Galabawa, 1995).

7.4 Missing discourses

Participants drew attention to the lack of central female protagonists in Kiswahili novels, a trend that was also revealed in Swilla's (2000) study. The teachers noted that the novelists seemed to be unable to portray active female characters in their works, as Mangi's comments illustrate:

Mangi: The influential side of women is not shown in the novels. In our society we have courageous and valiant women who

managed to refuse what society demands from them. ... We also have famous women leaders nationally and internationally.

Mangi added that it is important for authors to understand that societal beliefs and attitudes towards women are changing and that it is their role to reflect these changes in their writings to open up new subject positions to readers:

Mangi: Writers are expected to be an eye opener to readers. Generally they have a wider understanding of what is happening in the society. ... But if a writer for example selects his characters in one place, say in a rural area, he will have a narrow view of what is happening in the society. As a writer, we expect him to have a broader picture when constructing characters. They have to depict strong characters who are able to fight for their rights, women who are progressive and those who are really victims of norms and traditions. ... A diversity of characters will help readers, especially girls and women, who are struggling to know how other women managed to stand up for their rights. ... It is not true that Tanzanian women are only enduring violence silently.

Mangi's observation was echoed in Magoire's assertion that the tendency of novelists to provide pass female characters reinforces violence against women. He asserted that constant exposure to discourses which affirm the taken for granted position of women in society does not inspire women to advocate for change, as this comment further illustrates:

Magoire: Novelists' tendency of persisting in portraying women as weak and ready to tolerate violence while we have strong and active women, sometimes more than men, reveals authors' inability to recognise women's efforts. ... If authors construct active characters who pioneer change, it will help readers, particularly women, to learn and know that it is possible to stand up for their rights. A good example is Aisatu⁴⁴, in the novel, *So Long a Letter*. Reading how Aisatu made up her mind and decided to leave her abusive husband shows that women can have another choice for their lives.

According to Luke and Freebod (1997), texts construct the "possible world" and position readers to "interpret that possible world in a particular ways" (p. 219). This means that by comprehending and making sense of other people's experiences, readers are exposed to different and/or alternative ways of living and may discover new techniques available to deal with certain situations (Ledbetter, 1996). More importantly, new experiences can open up new alternatives for

⁴⁴ A character in *So Long a Letter* who leaves her husband after he marries a second wife, and starts a new life successfully with her four children.

readers as they discover their own potential and power for change. As Enciso (2001, p. 167) argues, “social positioning” in texts affects readers’ actions and influences their expectations. Conversely, if novelists support stereotyped myths about violence against women which are underpinned by patriarchal ideology, this has the potential to limit the possibilities for change.

Kiswahili authors’ apparent incognizance of NGOs’ efforts to end gender-based violence in Tanzanian society was another concern aired in teachers’ interviews. A number of teachers asserted that for over more than two decades, NGOs have been at the forefront of raising awareness about the detrimental effects of violence against women and helping women in relation to different issues, such as in legal matters around inheritance. However, due to financial constraints, it has been difficult for these NGOs to reach many women, particularly women in rural areas who experience violence and who are not aware of their rights. Participants equated the reluctance of novelists to support the work of the NGOs, particularly in raising awareness of women’s rights, with a wider lack of political will regarding the issue of violence against women. The following comments illustrate this:

Hamisi: ... We have famous NGOs such as TAMWA, TAWLA and others, which help women with different problems and educate people about the effects of violence against women in our society. Unfortunately only a few women are aware of these NGOs. I think if the authors drew attention to what these NGOs are doing it would help those who are not aware to know where to go in case of a problem.

Mangi: ... The patriarchal system has influence over how things are done in our society. Among other things which hold back the efforts to end gender-based violence is a lack of political will on the whole issue. This has direct effects on NGOs working on women’s issues like TAMWA, TAWLA and TGNP. Many of these NGOs are unable to reach people, particularly in rural areas, because of lack of funding. Like the government, novelists are not interested in telling women and girls where to go or what to do - I mean informing them about these NGOs, they are just explaining women’s suffering.

7.5 The power of novels

Through understanding the power of literary works, especially novels, feminist researchers have shown that fiction can be used to deconstruct social meanings and values about gender (Weedon, 1997). As discussed in this study, Kiswahili novels can play an essential role in the process of ending violence against women in Tanzanian society. One way in which this can be achieved is by including empowering discourses in the novels, which will serve as a resource or alternative method to give voice to women who have been marginalised and silenced by the dominant cultural practices. The majority of the participants believed that Kiswahili authors could potentially deconstruct historically entrenched cultural practices which put women at risk of violence, as Magoire and Hamisi illustrate:

Magoire: The available Kiswahili novels do not inspire changes in the society. ... We need novels which provoke changes in society and which help readers to think. I mean novels must help people to act differently, not always to abide with societal values and beliefs. For example, on the issue of domestic violence, authors can change how society thinks about divorce. If they insist that a woman has a right to make a choice to leave her abusive husband and both her family and the society respect her decision, this will help people to think differently.

Hamisi: Instead of showing that women tolerate violence silently, authors can construct active characters who are ready to take the initiative and who refuse to accept how society treats them. I mean courageous women who are able to change how society perceives them.

In explaining the importance of authors writing stories in which characters deviate from accepted cultural practices, Maua stated:

... Authors can help women to realise their power, to know they can stand up for their rights, choose the life they want and take care of their life. Constructing women as silent and submissive does not help women or the society to change. By constructing role model characters, readers [women] will learn they can do something to change their lives. ... A good example is Aisatu in Bâ's novel.

Elaborating further on how novels could provide courage to women, especially those who live in abusive relationships, Maua said:

You know there are women who believe that divorce is impractical; they are ready to die rather than divorce. This is the effect of

socialisation and what they see on television. ... I believe novelists can change this belief by depicting various ways in which women can make their living and not always end up in a more disastrous situation after divorce.

Participants believed that the construction of alternative discourses would encourage women to recognise their ability and their responsibility for their own lives. Participants called on the authors to suggest ways for women and society to change, and more specifically how to change the attitudes towards violence against women. Most of the interviewees insisted that “information is power,” arguing that not knowing what to do contributes to women continuing to tolerate violence and not report the abuse:

Magoire: When you are well informed on what to do and how to do it you feel strong. For me, information is power. One way of getting information is by reading novels. ... Therefore novels help us to have different perspectives depending on how authors narrate or describe episodes. This can help readers to change their attitudes about what they believe is impossible to accomplish.

Esta: A good novel can help you move from point A to point B. I mean it can change the way you think or even the way you live. By reading different stories you will know the importance of making changes. That is why for me getting information from various sources is very important. ... The good thing about novels is you get details from another person’s experience - what happened, what she did to overcome the situation, what were the challenges, etc.

Another participant related the power of information to the awareness created by activists campaigning about female circumcision in the country, when she said:

Maua: ... Before activists campaigned to stop female circumcision, in some tribes it was believed it was an important ritual for women. And circumcised women got more respect and status than uncircumcised women. Also, it was well known that an uncircumcised wife brought bad luck to her matrimonial family and she was not allowed to cook for her in-laws. However, activists’ campaigns promoted the health issue, which gained government support, and eventually the dominant belief changed. This shows that it is possible to change what people accept as truth after educating them. Therefore, if novelists start challenging the cultural practices which oppress women, it will help people to understand the detrimental effects of unreasonable practices.

Different subject positions offered in fiction provide women with a voice (Nwankwo, 1986) and new possibilities for their lives (Weedon, 1997). It was

argued that positive heroism is vital in supporting efforts to end gender-based violence, as evidenced by the following comment:

Esta: Authors have the power to change the society. ... If they decide to stand and speak for women's justice, certainly this will strengthen the efforts of other groups working on violence against women. I remember one author, whose novel was just a good story and readers, especially women, were so impressed by the way he wrote. Not only does he enlighten people on the problem which they thought was impossible to solve, he details the possible techniques to solve it. It was like ah! Yah! It can be possible. You see, this way of writing helps readers to see the possible ways or choices to deal with their problems.

Novels are a potential source of hope and encouragement for changing individuals' lives (Ledbetter, 1996). Hamisi argued that constructing characters with positive stories will inspire women who experience abuse to take action and hence change their lives:

Hamisi: Sometimes women are afraid to go against societal expectations because they are worried about the consequences - isolation, rejection and punishment. If they had different perspectives on how they can handle different situations, things would be different. Authors can help that by creating stories which encourage women to take action.

Deconstructing societal practices which victimise women in society will alleviate their suffering in different contexts (d'Almeida, 1986). Clearly, these participants believed that changing the position of women characters in Kiswahili fiction from that of victims to agents of change would contribute to the effort to end violence against women in Tanzanian society.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter has revealed that teachers perceived Kiswahili authors as maintaining the societal status quo through their construction of gender-based violence in their novels. According to participants, the construction of girls and women as weak, subordinate and marginalised mainly reiterates what is happening in the wider society. While focusing on the victim and the reasons for their victimisation, authors provide little information or strategies in terms of how to address the problem of violence against women in Tanzanian society.

Participants believed that Kiswahili novelists' strategy of not challenging socio-cultural practices that contributes to violence against girls and women reveals the power of cultural forces to determine what is included in literary works. Furthermore, participants noted that novelists made little effort to empower girls and women through their fictional characters. To borrow Rosenblatt's words, they have not realised that fiction brings into the reader's consciousness "life experience ... certain concepts, certain sensuous experiences, certain images of things, people, actions and scenes" (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 30). While some might argue that novels are just imaginative works, reader-response theory has long noted the power of novels to transform individuals' behaviour. Similarly, participants were certain that novels could change women's lives by deemphasising the role of victim and empowering women to realise their own potential and their ability to implement change in their own lives and communities. Thus, novels were seen as being able to give voice to and open new subject positions for girls and women.

Some participants regarded the novels as a source of information to transform society. They suggested that novels could achieve this by, for instance, revealing the effects of discrimination against girls in education and its negative impacts on girls' and women's lives. These participants argued that novels could play a vital role, by raising awareness about harmful social and cultural practices which lead to violence against women, and by providing the mechanism to end these practices. Drawing on this understanding, participants suggested that Kiswahili novels could be used in school settings to enable students to reflect critically on the problem of violence against women. They strongly believed that if students reflected critically on the problem of violence against women they would broaden their understanding and come up with constructive ideas to intervene in gender-based violence in Tanzanian society. Specifically, they suggested that teaching strategies which encourage critical thinking - such as discussions, debates and essay writing - would offer an opportunity for students to engage in efforts to end violence against women in Tanzanian society. They also proposed that it is centrally important to have workshops and seminars where students and teachers would meet different people who are working on the issue of violence against women. This would be one way of reinforcing and extending students' understandings of the problem of violence against women. Thus, Chapter 8

explores the specific ways in which novels can be used in classroom and school settings to help end gender-based violence in Tanzanian society.

Chapter Eight: Novels as an Educational Tool in the Effort to End Gender-Based Violence in Tanzanian Society

8.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on different ways of using novels as an educational tool in classroom and school settings to intervene in gender-based violence in Tanzanian society. The chapter draws from six in-depth interviews with Kiswahili teachers, which aimed to explore how Kiswahili novels might be utilised in classroom and school settings as part of wider attempts to intervene in gender-based violence in Tanzanian society (see 1.2). The interviewees noted that intervention programmes which encourage critical thinking and problem solving techniques would enable students to have more understanding of the problem of violence against women, and most importantly, empower them to respond to gender-based violence. The teachers identified discussions, debates, essay writing competitions and seminars/workshops as effective ways to involve young people in efforts to end violence against women in society.

In this chapter, then, I present a model of a school-based intervention programme, informed by my participants' suggestions in tandem with relevant scholarship on violence against women. Before presenting this model, however, I wish to acknowledge that even the most well-intentioned programmes carry with them an element of risk to their participants, especially given that (as I have shown in the Tanzanian context) many young women have lived experiences of gender-based violence. Hayden (2012) and Watts et al. (2001) suggest that prior to initiating an intervention programme it is important to develop strategies to ensure participants' safety, and to place their safety at the heart of the intervention at all stages. These strategies should include, but not be limited to, ensuring a safe environment where all participants can share their ideas, opinions and experiences (Carter et al., 2010; Watts et al., 2001), actively facilitating participants' understanding of the importance of respect, trust and confidentiality, and developing appropriate ways of responding to different emotions from participants (Carter et al., 2010). Likewise, this study proposes that participants' safety should be at the heart of the intervention programme. This means that in order to achieve the objective - empowering women and contributing to women's safety - the intervention process should match with what it tries to achieve.

Therefore, it is crucial to create a safe environment where participants will feel safe, respected and trusted as they contribute their ideas and views on how to end gender-based violence in society using Kiswahili novels.

According to Freire (1972), critical awareness is the key strategy for empowering the oppressed to understand their situation and take action. He notes that liberation struggle involves two important steps. The first step is for the individuals to become aware of their lives as an oppressed group, and the second is for the oppressed to fight for their emancipation. Freire argues that without critical reflection the oppression is regarded as normal, and the oppressed see themselves as being responsible for their oppression. Furthermore, he asserts that this situation is exacerbated when the oppressed accept this reality and adapt to it without questioning or even attempting to change it. Freire maintains that in order for the oppressed to get involved in liberation struggle they must be aware of their oppressive situation. He postulates that “critical and liberating dialogue which presupposes action” should be conducted by those who are involved in emancipation (Freire, 1972, p. 41). For Freire, these critical and reflexive discussions would enable the participants to understand their situation, problematise it, and create new ways to move beyond the mere understanding of their situation to come up with new expectations. As this study is focused on ways of empowering young people to participate in the effort to intervene in gender-based violence in Tanzanian society using Kiswahili novels, I see critical discussion as an essential tool in this process.

Critical engagement with narratives, particularly novels, has increasingly gained acceptance as an educational tool in management education (Cohen, 1998; Guillet de Monthoux & Czarniawska-Joerges, 1994). Likewise, research has shown that fiction written with knowledge of the cultural values of a given society can influence behavioural change and transform beliefs and norms (Lauby, Smith, Stark, Person, & Adams, 2000; Yoshioka & Choi, 2005). The use of novels as an intervention strategy in the campaign against gender-based violence is a long-term measure. Clearly, short-term measures, such as programmes and counselling services that address the needs of abusers and victims of violence against women, are also important (Fortune, 1991). However, such measures are not sufficient to end the problem of violence against women in society, as they do not specifically

seek to change the attitudes and beliefs that foster violence against women at a societal level. Thus, in this chapter, I will describe different methods which can be utilised in the effort to end gender-based violence in Tanzanian society. This is in line with Fortune (1991) and Sundermann et al.'s (1995) suggestions that educational approaches which aim at changing attitudes and conditions that support violence against women in society will have a more lasting impact. In this respect, schools are an ideal context in which educational programmes that increase youth awareness about violence against women can be initiated, using various approaches which will be discussed in this chapter.

8.2 Discussion method

The discussion method, in a classroom setting, promotes critical thinking and involves students in problem solving (Omatseye, 2007). It deepens students' understanding of the subject matter and allows them to accept new knowledge (Trounstine & Waxler, 2005). Most of the Kiswahili teachers interviewed in this study were confident that using novels in schools to discuss violence against women would inform students about the consequences of violence against women and would offer an opportunity to encourage young people to discuss the issues and come up with constructive ideas and measures to combat this issue. Furthermore, it would be a venue for students themselves to learn that violent behaviour is unacceptable, as comments from Mangi and Tumi elaborate:

Mangi: School is the best place to introduce new ideas and discourage violent behaviour in young people. Using novels to discuss violence against women in the class will broaden students' understanding of the problem of violence against women in society. ... Discussions in small groups will enable students to respond, challenge and share what they think about violence against women and reflect on how authors position girls and women in their novels.

Tumi: In group discussions, students will discuss why women are a target group for violence as revealed in novels. This will be an opportunity to extend the discussion on how these beliefs and attitudes are reflected in society. Characters in novels will be a good source for discussion and will help students to discuss the issue of violence against women without mentioning particular individuals. At the same time students will acquire knowledge and may change the way they think about violence against women.

Collectively examining stories of violence against women would enable students to discuss possible causes and effects of violence against women. Also, engaging students in discussions about characters could potentially enrich students' knowledge and raise their awareness of what they could do to change the situation of that character, which may inspire them to advocate for change (Trounstine & Waxler, 2005). The importance of using fictional characters is further illustrated by Hamisi and Mangi:

Hamisi: ... By using characters in novels students will be comfortable to discuss and learn different techniques disclosed in novels. But another important thing is that focusing on fictional characters enables students to disconnect and discuss freely the different reasons for violence against women.

Mangi: In the classroom students will be able to discuss ways of changing how people think about girls and women. This will be an opportunity to deconstruct the belief that women are weak and men can just abuse them. Strong female characters in novels will motivate girls to see they are capable of doing things.

Hamisi and Mangi's suggestions are in line with the findings of Oatley's (1999) study, which established that fictional characters have the power to change an individual's beliefs. The process of learning from fictional characters was further explained by Esta, who proposed that discussion of techniques used by characters to overcome violence in novels would impart to students skills which would enable them to respond to different types of violence. Also, as they talk, students may develop their own strategies to respond to gender-based violence:

Esta: In discussion groups it is possible for students to learn how to manage different types of violence in schools and in the community, as they learn from characters and discuss how they can overcome violence. Also, students will be able to suggest ways in which things could be done differently in real life, as compared to how characters are depicted.

In another example, one teacher compared novels with oral stories, which were used previously to teach good morals to children and young people. She asserted that having discussions on novels would allow students to think more about how to apply this knowledge in a real-life situation. She believes that it is more useful for students to practise what is directly related to their daily life than what they just learn for passing exams:

Maua: We used to learn a lot from oral stories and asked questions about why characters behave in a certain way. ... I think using novels to discuss violence against women will help students to question how characters have been depicted. Sometimes students learn because they want to pass exams. But if they know that they are learning to improve their life, they will be curious to know more about how they can change their lives and that of others.

Students' inquisitiveness about issues experienced in their daily life, as highlighted by Maua, was also identified in the *MEMA kwa vijana* (Good things for youth) programme. This was a primary school-based adolescent sexual health intervention programme, involving 62 primary schools in Tanzania, which was implemented from 1999 to 2001. An evaluation study of this programme by Plummer et al. (2007b) noted that students asked questions and wanted to know more about what to do in case of sexual health problems, using examples of characters from the stories.

Cohen (1998) suggests that students need not only knowledge about how to solve problems, but techniques to recognise the complex nature of the problems. She uses an example from management education where novels are employed as useful teaching materials as they allow students to think critically. Insisting on the importance of novels in teaching, Guillet de Monthoux and Czarniawska-Joerges (1994) assert that using novels in teaching enables students to access tacit knowledge which guides them to think critically and come up with new ideas and ways of understanding problems in society. With this understanding, Kiswahili teachers considered the richness of narrative in novels to be a source of knowledge and understanding about violence against women for young people, as novels expose them to a wide range of types of violence against women, both from individual and societal perspectives. They argued that this information, which is easily accessible, would provide grounding for students' discussions, as Maua's comment further illustrates:

In novels students come across in-depth descriptions of different types of violence against women, which are difficult to obtain in real life. For example it is not easy for a girl to explain about her experience of rape. But students learn about rape in novels. By discussing characters' experiences students learn about the many forms of violence and their consequences.

The way novels reflect and depict social problems is another feature which influences readers' cognitive understandings of the magnitude of the problem. The narration of social problems, such as violence against women, situates the problem in a context with exhaustive description, which is not usually part of a research report on the same topic (Totten, 2006). Potentially, this would enable students to grasp the problem of violence against women and sympathise with the individual characters. Consequently, reflecting on different episodes of violence could motivate students to take action, as Hamisi clarified:

Hamisi: ... Discussing different types of violence in novels will enable students to understand and see the effects of violence against women in our society. A teacher will guide students to form discussion groups, give them guiding questions and select novels to use in their discussion. Then, each group will present their ideas and students will ask questions and seek clarification after each presentation. Different perspectives from the groups will allow students to have more understanding of violence against women and they can suggest ways to solve the problem, such as raising awareness about the effect of violence against women in the society.

Another teacher took the point further by suggesting that group discussion of violence against women in the classroom could lead to the formation of a "social issues club" where different social problems could be discussed. He asserted that young people need a forum where they can freely discuss matters affecting their well being, including gender-based violence. He further noted that discussion of novels would enable students to capture concrete instances of different types of gender-based violence in different contexts, which could be a vehicle to understanding the complex nature of this problem. This understanding would help students to discuss and share with other students what they have learned from the novels about issues related to their lives, as the following remark illustrates:

Mangi: ...There are topics which affect everyone in one way or another. We know that violence against women is a problem which touches many people in our society. Discussion groups in classes will be a good start for students to see the effects of violence against women in a broader way. Their awareness can inspire them to educate others as well. They can have a social issue club formed by Kiswahili students and other students (those who are not studying Kiswahili). The purpose will be to share what they have learnt about societal issues through novels.

Mangi's idea of a social issue club as a forum for young people to focus on societal issues connects well with the idea of engaging students in solving social problems. This process would give students an opportunity to develop their critical thinking abilities and learn how to examine different interpretations of violence presented in novels (King-Shaver, 2005). Through discussions, students would learn new possibilities and new ways of thinking (Trounstine & Waxler, 2005) which are likely to influence individual behaviour. Moreover, students would learn how to solve and overcome problems in a non-threatening context and also could realise how they have played a part in perpetrating the problem, as Magoire noted:

Magoire: What students discuss in groups has an effect on individuals' way of living. It is different with lecturing. In discussions participants learn from each other as everyone contributes his/her ideas. Students think of what others say and how their ideas are applicable in their daily life. ... Talking about violence against women using novels will establish a non-threatening forum for students to discuss and share knowledge about what they know about violence against women, but also it will help students to see how they are involved in the process of abusing others.

Magoire's view of students employing skills learned in discussion groups to respond to life challenges was also highlighted in the *MEMA kwa Vijana* (Good things for youth) programme (Plummer et al., 2007b). In addition to focusing on sexual health, this programme used stories to discuss how to empower schoolgirls to resist sexual harassment from teachers and peers. A recent report by Antonowicz (2010) to UNICEF has shown that schoolboys are increasingly responsible for sexual violence against girls in schools. The report notes that in the Central African Republic, 42.2 per cent of secondary schoolboys in Bangui city acknowledged having perpetrated sexually violent acts in school. In Cameroon, 30 per cent of sexual violence against girls in schools was perpetrated by schoolboys. The report also reveals that in Ghana, 14 per cent of rape cases had been perpetrated by schoolboys (Antonowicz, 2010, p. 23). A study by Wubs et al. (2009) on dating violence among students in Tanzania and South Africa revealed that the percentage of schoolboys who perpetrated violence against girls in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) was higher than in South Africa (see section 2.5).

However, Visser, Schoeman, and Perold's (2004) study showed that teachers found it difficult to discuss sexual violence issues with students because the teachers consider the topic to be private and sensitive. On the other hand, Plummer et al.'s (2007b) study indicated that the teacher-guided participatory and peer educator approaches created the possibility of a safe environment for discussing sexuality issues. For instance, the *MEMA kwa Vijana* programme uses story reading, guided discussion, and questions and answers in familiarising primary school students with sexuality issues. This programme had been reported to break the silence and change attitudes among youth about HIV/AIDS, using condoms and pregnancy prevention. Stories read in the *MEMA kwa Vijana* programme emphasised the importance of good behaviour. Students learnt the importance of a particular behaviour through the stories. The intended behaviours were emphasised by teachers' explanations and peer educators' role-plays. Furthermore, peer educators in the programme have been reported as helping their friends within school and out of school and younger and elder sisters in matters relating to sexual health, as they had a better understanding of different mechanisms and techniques. Additionally, peer educators felt more comfortable than their teachers in talking with their peers about sexual health and risk reduction behaviour.

Clearly then, there are grounds to assert that group discussions of the depiction of violence against women in novels may assist in encouraging behavioural change as students challenge each other's beliefs and attitudes about violence against women in a non-threatening environment. The teachers also identified the debate method as another possible method of engaging students in the effort to end violence against women. Thus, the next section discusses the importance and potential benefits of employing the debate method.

8.3 Debate method

Debate as a teaching and learning method has been used widely in psychology courses (Elliot, 1993; Moeller, 1985) as well as in nursing and health programmes (Darby, 2007). Proponents of the debate method argue that it offers an opportunity for students to research controversial issues and come up with evidence to support their position (Moeller, 1985; Tumposky, 2004). Furthermore, debate develops students' critical thinking as they participate

actively in a subject by preparing the materials in advance and presenting them in an argumentative manner to support their views (Elliot, 1993). For Esta, focusing on novels would inspire students to engage in social issues through examining how different authors depict violence against women in their novels. Furthermore, she noted that the discussion would encourage students who would like to write novels to look at the issue of violence against women in different ways:

Esta: Our students represent future writers. If they have an opportunity to reflect on and challenge what is written in novels, it is a motivation for those who will engage in the writing industry to have a different approach to how to present societal problems such as violence against women.

Esta also viewed the debate as a method of developing creativity among students as each participant tries to argue his/her point. She believed that as students discuss the fictional characters, it would be possible to understand students' view points as they relate the narrative to their life experiences or relate characters to real people in society. She further argued that students would do a close reading and try to understand the depicted message before searching for more information to support their viewpoints:

Unfortunately, in our literature classes, we do not assess how literature affects readers. Besides that, our teaching does not inspire students to find more details about the characters. If students participate in debate classes, they will try to understand what the author means about a particular character and relate it to what is going on in society or their experience.

Accentuating the importance of debate classes on the issue of violence against women, Mangi drew from the concept of possible selves⁴⁵ (Markus & Nurius, 1986), as he insisted that students would realise their potential to respond to violence against women as they argued around different themes related to such violence. He stressed that thinking about how to express their ideas during peer interaction would deepen their understanding of the topic. Furthermore, debate would help students to develop interaction skills that involved logical reasoning.

⁴⁵ According to Markus and Nurius (1986), "possible selves" refers to the knowledge of what an individual would like to become, such as being creative, successful or rich, and also what she/he is afraid to become in future, for example incompetent, alcoholic or unemployed.

By this process, he believed, students themselves would become more aware of what they could do regarding the issue of violence against women:

Mangi: Using novels in debate classes would help students to discuss what is happening in society, because they will need to support their arguments when challenging what authors are saying in novels. They will also learn how to use different examples from society to explain fictional characters in the novels. I believe as they engage in discussions they will know that they can do something to solve the problem of violence against women in our society.

In order to have effective discussion in debate sessions on violence against women, participants suggested that it would be important for teachers to help students in framing or structuring the topic for debate. Help from teachers would also involve assisting the debate facilitators (students) to focus on constructive ideas on how to end violence against women in Tanzanian society. Hamisi and Maua's comments expressed this view:

Hamisi: In debate classes, students come up with different viewpoints about what they think about violence against women. Novels will facilitate students' understanding about violence against women. However, it is important that a teacher discusses with debate facilitators [students] in advance if they have any questions, so that they can have a clear understanding of what they want to share with other students.

Maua: By reading novels we understand different techniques used to abuse women. Therefore, when framing a topic for debate on violence against women, we must frame it in a way that it aims to find out strategies to end the problem of violence against women in our society.

Another possible outcome of employing the debate approach is that of fostering young people's active participation in finding ways to end violence against women in society. In debate sessions, teachers would have the opportunity to encourage participants to take an active role in raising awareness as part of the effort to end violence against women:

Tumi: Debate will be a challenging venue for students to share their ideas. At the same time, teachers should insist on what students should do in responding to violence against women both in school and out of school. For example a concluding remark can be "if we see someone abusing a girl or a woman we can apply these methods to help the abused. We have to put in practice what we are

discussing.” By doing that students will be good ambassadors of what they learn in debate classes.

Debate was also seen as a way to familiarise students with the complexities of violence against women. One teacher asserted that debate would help students and others who have no opportunity to read novels to know what is involved in gender-based violence. Further, he emphasised that those who are studying novels were in a good position to read different stories of violence against women. The opportunity for students to share knowledge learned through reading novels which evoke emotions and reflections through the depiction of characters was viewed as another benefit of the debate method. Hamisi’s comment captured this idea:

Hamisi: We can organise a debate on an issue of violence against women and invite students who are not studying Kiswahili and other people. By using different examples from novels students will construct their arguments focusing on how perpetrators employ different techniques to abuse women and the possible ways to respond to different types of violence against women. By doing so, participants, both students and non-students, will learn from these characters.

The importance of fictional stories in making sense of situations and taking action (Schank & Berman, 2002) is apparent in Hamisi’s ideas. Hamisi believed that open discussion and debate about stories of violence against women in novels would help the audience to assess the situations presented and the explanations given. The idea that stories could raise students’ awareness centres on the view that people understand more when the information is drawn from a context with which the reader is familiar (Schank & Abelson, 1995). According to M. C. Green et al. (2004), readers create a mental picture of events and people featured in novels, which may lead them to sympathise with the characters. In a similar way, Mangi argued that by employing stories from novels, students’ debates about violence against women would engage listeners and deepen their understanding of the magnitude of the problem in Tanzanian society. Like Hamisi, Mangi asserted that students’ arguments and examples might move the audience to think about and possibly change their own behaviour:

Mangi: ... As students discuss violence against women, participants who engage in violence against women will reflect on their own

behaviour and learn from the discussion as they sympathise with the victims (characters).

One teacher considered that debate would provoke the audience to reflect on the issue and think about ways to intervene in cases of violence against women. Again, as highlighted in the previous section on the discussion method, engaging students in societal problems through stories is likely to inspire them more than statistical reports (McKee, 2003). This is a similar view to that of Woodside (2010), who claims that stories provoke listeners to take action, mainly because stories are enriched with details which enhance listeners' comprehension and understanding. It is worth emphasising that utilising novels in students' debates on violence against women was seen as an intervention which would have immediate results for students themselves and the people around them:

Mangi: Sometimes it is hard to change people's attitudes because they have held these for a long time. But involving students to start learning how to respect women, and take a role in raising awareness about what they learn with others, this will help students and those around them. For example, once a student knows how to respond to violence against women s/he will also explain this to his/her sisters and brothers, but also s/he can educate his/her family. Once students are well informed, it is possible to influence many people.

As mentioned in the previous section, teachers also suggested that it is essential for the teacher or chief facilitator of each debate session to conclude by emphasising the importance of appropriate behaviour and advocating that participants and the audience learn from the characters and teach others about the detrimental effects of violence against women in society. They argued that it is important to encourage participants to help others at home, at school or in the community, by taking action when they see a girl or a woman being abused. Stressing the issue of behavioural change, Tumi asserted:

A teacher must emphasise the importance of desirable behaviour, referring to how characters who abuse women were rebuked in the discussion and encourage everyone to take it as a lesson and not to do the same thing as those characters; rather to be good role models, educating others and helping the society to end violence against women.

In sum, then, the teachers believed that using the debate method would encourage young people to raise awareness about violence and potentially change behaviour

among young people and others. Participants also singled out essay competitions as another method that could be used to involve students in efforts to end violence against women using novels.

8.4 Essay competitions

The essay competition, as a method of getting ideas from young people, particularly those in schools and colleges, has been used for a long time. The Royal Commonwealth Society has sponsored an essay competition for more than 100 years to give young people an opportunity to express their views about social issues (The Royal Commonwealth Society, 2010). In Tanzania, essay competitions have focused on topics such as HIV/AIDS (Seleman, 2005), good governance (Mweji, 2007), and environmental issues (Goima, 2009). All six teachers agreed that an essay competition would be an effective way of gathering information on what students know and think about the depiction of violence against women in novels, and also their views on how novels might be used to discuss the issue of violence against women. The following comments illustrate this idea:

Tumi: Getting students involved in writing about violence against women focusing on novels will enable teachers to know how they can use novels and what type of novels to use.

Magoire: An essay competition will provide a vision of what young people know about violence against women and what they think should be done. An essay competition will definitely encourage students to think about how to use novels and this will help teachers to know what to do in order to be successful.

Chapter 6 looked at students' interpretations of the depiction of violence against women in Kiswahili novels, in which some students affirmed the patriarchal construction of violence against women, while others critiqued those constructions and viewed them as problematic. Certainly, giving them the opportunity to express their ideas in a competitive manner would be a way of recognising their contribution and understanding students' perspectives, as Mangi further noted:

In an essay competition, students' experience and creativity will be revealed. For example, a student can imagine if she was a character in that particular situation what she would do. I believe as students

start taking different roles they will reveal different techniques which can be used in ending violence against women.

Determining how young people respond to novels would be an essential step in the process of using novels in schools. Furthermore, teachers argued that the essay competition would encourage students who are not comfortable with presenting their ideas in group discussions and/or in debate to express their views in their “comfort zone.” Some students are not confident enough to express their views in public forums as they are shy, but they are happy to express them in writing. The following comment captures this idea:

Maua: The advantage of an essay is that students who are very shy to speak will give their ideas. Sometimes students have very good points but once they are asked to present their ideas they become nervous. Because of that they prefer not to talk.

The competitive aspect of the competition was singled out as a motivating factor for students to participate. In an essay competition, competitors would aim to show how they can help to solve the problem of violence against women in society. And because of that motivation, many students would potentially work hard to come up with more convincing methods or techniques:

Magoire: Students are keen for recognition. When you engage them in finding ways to end violence against women in a competitive way, they work very hard to show how they can engage in societal issues which are important in their life and others. That is why I believe in essay competitions. We will have diverse ideas of what students think.

An essay competition was also cited as a way of developing critical thinking and involvement in the task of ending violence against women in society. In the teachers’ view, violence against women is a problem with consequences for the education of children, family stability and for society in general. Consequently, if students were to become involved in thinking about the characters’ lives and the issues highlighted by the novels, this would help prepare them to deal with societal matters when they are future leaders and administrators, as the following comment suggests:

Tumi: It is very important to involve youth in understanding the problem of violence against women because in the future they will

take different roles in society. That is why it is necessary to mould youths' thinking and make them aware of social issues in advance.

In addition to essay contests, a number of teachers suggested that it would be necessary to have workshops and seminars where novelists, activists, teachers and students could share knowledge on what needs to be done in order to make novels more effective. The next section focuses on teachers' ideas about workshops.

8.5 Seminars/workshops

Some teachers suggested that a learning opportunity could be created by bringing together various experts, such as activists working on the issue of violence against women, students, teachers and novelists. They considered that workshops and seminars would enable students to see their role as an educator in addressing gender-based violence in society. As Tumi explained:

The opportunity for students to attend workshops about violence against women will enable them to learn more about the issues. It is very powerful when students get access to learn from the experts and also get an opportunity to share their ideas.

Maua echoed Tumi's idea, as she believed that combining different perspectives would lead to collective ideas about how to use novels in schools to intervene in violence against women in society. She argued that students' interpretations of the depiction of violence against women in novels would bring new insights, which could be utilised in the programme:

Maua: Students may have more clues on how novels affect readers, especially young people. They read novels, see what is happening in families, schools and in the community. It is very possible they interpret how novelists depict violence against women very differently, and their understanding would be very helpful in our project.

Another notable contribution of workshops, particularly those involving activists, would be to enlighten novelists, teachers and students about what activists are doing. Such forums would provide opportunities to hear the professionals' points of view and their experiences in dealing with the issue of violence against women:

Esta: Activists have experience in dealing with violence against women. If we have a workshop and experts from these activist organisations attend it will be a very productive opportunity for

teachers, novelists and students to hear from them. These experts will deepen our understanding about the problem of violence against women.

Furthermore, teachers viewed workshops for students and novelists as a venue for students to share what they learn from novels and for novelists to receive constructive feedback from readers. This idea was emphasised by four teachers, who maintained that for issues like violence against women, novelists have to be alerted to their role as educators:

Esta: Workshops for novelists and a group of students would be a good opportunity for students to discuss with novelists what they read and also for students to ask questions.

By the same token, workshops between teachers and novelists could be an opportunity for teachers to discuss the challenges they face when teaching novels in schools, particularly in relation to the question of violence against women. Interestingly, it was argued that it would be useful to hear from authors as to why they seemed to advocate societal practices which oppress women and did not actively support efforts to end violence against women:

Esta: For the novelist, they will get a picture that they need to change their perspective on how they write about the issue of violence against women. We are in a new era and novelists need to change to accommodate societal efforts to end violence against women.

Magoire: Teachers [Kiswahili teachers] have unanswered questions arising from novels. Sometimes they cannot answer questions raised by students, but because there is no forum where teachers meet with novelists, they only try to do what they think is right.

According to Bertocini (1989), writers like Mbotela in *Uhuru wa Watumwa (The Freedom of Slaves)*⁴⁶ seek to please those in power by encouraging people to comply with those in power. Presumably, in regards to the issue of violence against women, some novelists aim to favour the dominant class and support the patriarchal system. Therefore, discussion between teachers, students and novelists would potentially raise different issues, including how to obtain novels that could be used in school programmes to intervene in violence against women in society. The following section addresses teachers' suggestions regarding the types of

⁴⁶ *Uhuru wa Watumwa (The Freedom of Slaves)*, is a novel published in 1934. It was among the first Kiswahili novels published in standard Kiswahili and its orthography.

novels needed in intervention programmes for violence against women in Tanzanian society.

8.6 The importance of “good novels” in changing behaviour

Trounstin and Wexler (2005) argue that a “good novel” offers exploration of complex issues and challenges human behaviour. While a number of participants were confident that novels would be a useful tool to intervene in the problem of violence against women, they also highlighted the importance of using novels which challenge societal practices and advocate change. They argued that these types of novels would allow readers to think about what is happening in society by making comparisons with the characters depicted in novels:

Magoire: Novelists must aim to challenge what is happening in the society, especially how people view violence against women. ... Supporting norms and practices will not help society to change. Novelists have to create another perspective, another way of seeing things which inspires readers to act.

According to Magoire, novelists should not reinforce the dominant culture, which privileges men and oppresses women, and hence positions women as at risk of violence throughout their lives. Instead, as suggested by Cloud (1992), if novelists depict alternative ways of doing things, this acts as a means of challenging societal practices which oppress women, and persuasively calls readers into action as they identify with characters’ voices and interpret their actions.

Furthermore, the Kiswahili teachers were convinced that reading good novels has the potential to inspire individuals to change their behaviour, as this example further reveals:

Tumi: I am one of the judges in a reading competition which is organised by the Children’s Book Project⁴⁷ every year. Reading students’ essays and from my own experience as teacher, I can see there is a big difference in the way those students in the project write compared with others on different issues about society. That

⁴⁷ The Children’s Book Project for Tanzania was started in 1991. The project receives manuscripts from authors, evaluates them and selects those suitable for publication according to the project goals. The project also organises training and workshops for writers, editors, illustrators and publishers.

is why I am certain that if we have good novels, the prevention programme would be more effective.

Given the influential position of novelists in Tanzanian society, they can contribute to challenging and changing societal practices by providing readers with experiences and models of alternative modes of thought and action through the characters in their novels (Heibrun, 1989). In this study, readers' involvement with characters' actions was further linked with students' ability to reflect more deeply on what is happening in society. Kiswahili teachers argued that students could be involved in the effort to end violence against women, particularly in raising awareness, which would change the way people think about the problem. The last section of this chapter describes a model of how novels could be used in the school setting and also presents a Kiswahili teacher's toolkit guide.

8.7 A model for using novels as an educational tool for curriculum intervention

This section presents a model of how novels could be used as an educational tool to instigate discussion about violence against women in Tanzanian society. Through creative engagement with narrative stories, students would learn to recognise the plurality of readings such narratives might promote, gain necessary skills to raise awareness about violence against women, and share their knowledge with others.

Discussion method

Discussion about gender-based violence using novels in small groups enables students to build their confidence in expressing ideas, challenge each other's thinking, and ask questions based on the characters' lives, motivations, actions, and experiences.

Table 1: An example of preparation for a discussion session in a classroom setting

Topic	Resources	Teacher's responsibility	Students' tasks
Rape	Novels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Almasi za Bandia</i> [Spurious Diamond] • <i>Asali Chungu</i> [Bitter Honey] 	Preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute novels and other materials to students before the group session (for reading). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the novels and the articles before the session. • Ask any questions they may have about safety

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mama Baba yangu ni yupi?</i> [Mother, who is my Father?] <p>Research articles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wubs et al. (2009) Dating violence among school students in Tanzania and South Africa. • Mgalla et al. (1998) Protecting school girls against sexual exploitation: A guardian program in Mwanza, Tanzania. <p>Newspaper articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M. Williams (2005) Mwalimu mbaroni kwa kumbaka mwanafunzi [A teacher charged for raping a student] • Williams (2006) Mwanachuo wa Ushirika Moshi kortini kwa kubaka [Ushirika Moshi student charged with rape] • Simaye (2012) Amuua aliyembaka bintiye [Father kills a man for raping his daughter] 	<p>Actual session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe safety issues and ground rules to be followed during the session. • Convey information about possible emotional reactions. • Address the questions raised. <p>Introduce the goals for the session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness about the complexity of rape and effects of rape • Discuss skills needed for awareness raising <p>Map the procedures</p> <p>Explain the discussion process.⁴⁸</p> <p>Ask each group to select a volunteer to record key points for presentation at the end of the session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell the participants how much time they have for discussion, presentation and questions and answers. • Assign each group a task with guiding questions. • Monitor discussion and encourage constructive discussion in small groups.⁴⁹ • Interact with students in 	<p>issues and ground rules.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the topic using guiding questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do we learn from the story about violence against women? Is this a good message? 2. What causes gender-based violence as represented in the novel? Are there other causes that are not mentioned? What might be problematic about the way the author represents the causes of gender-based violence? 3. What are the implications of gender-based violence that happened to the characters? 4. How are the experiences of violence against women depicted in the novel similar or different to what is happening in our society? 5. What can we do to stop violence against women in our community? <p>Presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives of each group to report to the whole class. • Ask questions focusing
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⁴⁸ Outline the guidelines for the discussion. For example, one person is to speak at a time, everyone is free to give his/her opinion and the group has to respect different views. Also, the participants have no obligation to share experiences.

⁴⁹ If the participants disagree on certain points, the teacher can assist by drawing on other information grounded in human rights and/or legal instruments rather than telling an individual that he/she is not right.

		<p>groups (if they have any questions).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in clarifying students' queries that arise in the presentations. • Summarise the main ideas after students' presentations. • Present a conclusion emphasising the intended goals. • Thank all participants for their contributions and suggestions. 	<p>on presentations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer questions from other students after their presentation.
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Debate method

Kiswahili students who participate in the small group discussions will be involved in sessions with other students who are not studying Kiswahili novels. Again, with the help of examples from novels, students will organise their ideas about a given topic about violence against women, supporting their arguments with examples they draw from novels along with research articles and newspaper articles. During preparation it is important for the teacher to emphasise that the purpose of the debate is to raise awareness of the problem of violence against women. Consequently, it is important to encourage both teams (affirmative and negative) to prepare for both sides of the issue in order to articulate effective rebuttal⁵⁰. With this understanding, students will explore reasons for and consequences of the selected topic, such as rape, hence aiming to discover what should be done to end the problem of violence against women in Tanzanian society.

⁵⁰ During preparation it is important for teachers to help students in finding materials to support their arguments. However, teachers must encourage students to incorporate other materials in their debate besides those given by the teachers.

Table 2: An example of the preparation for a debate session in a school setting

Topic	Resources	Teacher's responsibility	Students' responsibility
		Preparation	
Rape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials used in the discussion group session • Materials to support the other propositions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the exercise of making teams (one team to argue the affirmative position and the other to advocate the negative view point). This can be done by preparing cards with the words "Affirmative" and "Negative" and having students draw cards. • Prepare the guidelines for the debate. • Introduce the proposition for the debate session to students. "The constructions of rape in Kiswahili novels exonerate the perpetrator." • Distribute materials⁵¹. • Meet with each team separately at an agreed time to discuss any questions they encounter in their preparation. In that meeting the teacher can emphasise which points each group needs to focus on in their presentation and encourage main speakers to have their main points and supporting evidence in written form. • Facilitate the exercise of selecting the main speakers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pick a card to form a team. • Prepare arguments for the session using novels and support their arguments using other sources. • Decide on a time to meet their teacher before the actual date for the debate to ask questions or seek clarification.⁵² • Select the main speakers for the debate session and decide the order of speaking. If possible it is good to have four main speakers from each team.
		Presentation ⁵³	

⁵¹ Additional necessary materials which were not in the discussion session will be distributed to students.

⁵² The purpose of the debate is to raise awareness about the problem of rape among students and others using Kiswahili novels; therefore, it is important for students to be sure what information they want to share with others and how to share that information effectively.

⁵³ Phases in presentation are adopted from Darby's (2007) structure. This style facilitates reflection and engages the audience to contribute to the issue under discussion.

		Introduction	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe safety issues and ground rules to be followed during the session. • Convey information about possible emotional reactions • Address questions raised. <p>Introduce the opening speaker. [The speaker, preferably an outsider,⁵⁴ introduces the topic for debate. Describing the complexity of the issue of gender-based violence and the need for deeper understanding, the speaker highlights the importance of young people taking the initiative in the effort to end gender-based violence in Tanzanian society.]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask any questions they may have about safety issues and ground rules <p>Listen carefully and note important points.</p>
		Constructive phase	
		Invite two main speakers from each team - the affirmative position and negative position - to present their opening arguments, one after another.	Each team to present their constructive arguments based on the novels while drawing on examples from other sources.
		Rebuttal phase	
		Invite speakers from each team to challenge the constructive arguments.	Each team to reflect on the issues raised by the first speakers.
		Class interaction phase	
		Invite the audience (debate viewers) to ask questions or make contributions by taking another viewpoint.	Audience to participate by sharing any viewpoints which were not raised during the discussion, making suggestions, asking questions or seeking clarification.

⁵⁴ The outside speaker will motivate participants to see the significance of the issue under discussion and they will know that they are working as a team in the effort to end violence against women.

		Follow-up session	
		To meet the teams, affirmative and negative, to answer any concerns they have after the debate.	Both teams will share their experiences and what they think they need to work on to make future presentations more effective.

Workshop session

In a workshop session participants will learn from experienced people in the field of gender-based violence. Presumably, teachers and students will have different questions regarding the construction of violence against women in novels. For example, teachers would like the novelists to address their concerns as educators who face challenges in trying to use novels to address the issue of violence against women. Also, they would like to be well informed in order to address questions raised in discussion groups and debate sessions. The students could focus on how they can raise awareness by learning from the experts. But it would also be their opportunity to converse with novelists about the construction of violence against women in novels.

***Workshop model for teachers, novelists, and activists*⁵⁵**

The workshop will be organised by Kiswahili teachers and activists. The workshop model provides a way of organising the workshop session and suggests tasks for facilitator(s) and participants which will allow teachers, novelists and activists to have meaningful discussion about how novels can be used to support efforts to end violence against women. Based on their experience as educators, teachers have a considerable knowledge base to discuss the influence of novels on young readers, particularly students. Small group discussions in workshops will broaden novelists' viewpoints on the issue of violence against women. With the help of activists and teachers, the novelists will understand how they can reconstruct violence against women in their novels. Furthermore, the activists will provide examples, strategies, information and skills that could be utilised by novelists and applied to the real world.

⁵⁵ Activists will include lawyers, police officers, counsellors, media people, researchers and others who are resource persons in the field of violence against women.

Table 3: An example of the workshop session for teachers, activists and novelists

Activity	Facilitator's tasks	Participant's tasks
<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a friendly environment to start the session, by involving participants to identify their expectations. • Allow participants to introduce themselves and their positions in the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute plain cards to each participant • Ask each person to write two expectations of the workshop. • Collect the cards and re-distribute them randomly. • Ask each participant to read the card and to introduce himself/herself. • Record the answers on flip charts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write two goals on a card. • Read the goals recorded on the redistributed cards and introduce each other (name and position).
<p>Main session Part One: Novels</p> <p>Introduce the session and highlight the goals for the workshop (emphasise some of the expectations listed in the flip charts).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the role of novels in ending gender-based violence. • Identify the potential gaps in novels regarding the construction of gender-based violence. • Recognise the impact of the gaps in novels on the efforts to end gender-based violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline safety guidelines to be followed during the workshop. • Convey information about possible emotional reactions • Address questions raised. • Divide participants into small groups of four to five (include a teacher, novelist and activist where possible). • Ask a volunteer to record their key points on a flip chart. • Facilitate the group discussion. • Using the factors identified by the groups, summarise what could be done by emphasising the important points. It is important for the facilitator to make sure that none of the factors absolve the perpetrator of any responsibility for violent actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask any questions they may have about safety. • Discuss the role of novels in ending gender-based violence, based on their professional experience. • Discuss the gaps in novels regarding the construction of gender-based violence. • How do these gaps affect readers, especially young people? • Discuss which novels would help in the effort to end violence against women. • Based on discussion about the “good novels” to be used in ending violence against women, identify currently existing novels (if any) that could be used in the efforts to end violence against women. • Present key ideas discussed in a small group. • Ask and answer questions (after each presentation).
<p>Part Two:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the procedures for

<p>Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest an action plan for using novels for awareness raising in ending gender-based violence. 	<p>discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarise suggestions for implementation procedures. 	<p>obtaining novels that could be used in the programme of ending violence against women in Tanzanian society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can be done to empower youth to use novels in raising awareness about the issue of violence against women?
<p>Part Three: Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Propose methods and/or procedures to be used to evaluate knowledge learnt from novels in school setting and community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the group presentation. • Summarise the suggestions given about how to evaluate the exercise of using novels in the effort to end violence against women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the procedures that could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of using novels in school settings and the community.
<p>Closing</p>	<p>Thank all the participants.</p>	

Workshop model for activists, novelists and students

The workshop will be organised by teachers and activists. This model suggests tasks for facilitator(s) and participants - students⁵⁶, novelists and activists. In particular, the model aims to equip students with the necessary information to assist their efforts to end violence against women using novels, and to give them the opportunity to share their views on how novels can be used to further this aim. Given that the students who will participate in this workshop would be those who have been keen on raising awareness, it is anticipated that they would like to learn and seek more information and skills that can be applied to the real world. While this workshop aims to give students more information on how to raise awareness, the facilitator and other participants have to acknowledge students' skills, abilities and viewpoints on how the novels influence readers. Consequently, it is important to allow students to voice their opinions freely.

⁵⁶ Student representatives will be selected from schools where the programme of using novels to end violence against is being practiced.

Table 4: An example of the workshop sessions for students, activists and novelists

Activity	Facilitator's tasks	Participant's tasks
<p>Introduction (establish a friendly environment for the session)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate 5 minutes for participants to exchange information - name, position and interest in the topic. • Have each person in the pair introduce one another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the participants to get into pairs • Facilitate the introduction by asking a volunteer pair to start. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange information in pairs. • Introduce one another.
<p>Main session Part One: Novels</p> <p>Explain the goals for the workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explore how novels construct violence against women in relation to what is happening in society. • To raise awareness of the possible influence of novels on young readers. • To identify the potential gaps in novels, focusing on how violence against women is constructed in there. • To recognise how these influences affect young readers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline safety guidelines to be followed during the workshop. • Divide participants into groups of four to five - professional(s) and students. • Ask participants to select a volunteer to record their key points on a flip chart. • Assist group discussion if participants have any questions or need clarification. • Facilitate group presentations. • Summarise the presentations by highlighting the key ideas. It is important for the facilitator to make sure that none of the factors absolve the perpetrator of any responsibility for his actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask any questions they may have about safety. • Identify types of violence in novels which are found in society. • Discuss the possible influence of novels in sustaining/ending violence against women. • What could be done by novelists to better support the effort to end gender-based violence? • What are the possible influences of the construction of violence against women on readers?
<p>Part Two: Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest an action plan for using novels for awareness raising in ending gender- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the group discussions and presentations. • Summarise suggestions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the procedures for getting novels that could be used in the programme of ending violence against

based violence.	for implementation.	women in Tanzanian society. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could be done to support students' involvement in the task of ending violence against women in society?
Part Three: Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Propose procedures to be used to evaluate knowledge learnt from novels in school settings and the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the group discussions and presentations. • Summarise the suggestions given on how to evaluate the exercise of using novels in the effort to end violence against women. 	What measures could be used to assess the effectiveness of using novels in school settings and the community?
Closing	Thank all the participants.	

8.8 A toolkit for Kiswahili teachers

The toolkit offered in this study is for a primary prevention programme that focuses on giving students skills and knowledge to enable them to work with other students and the community to create awareness about the effects and consequences of gender-based violence. Thus, this primary prevention programme, adapted from the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (2010), Carter et al. (2010), and the Cleen Foundation and Project Alert on Violence Against Women (2006), seeks to change individual and community attitudes, beliefs, and values which promote violence against women.

Gender-based violence prevention programmes, unlike academic courses, require new skills. According to Kivel and Creighton (1997), facilitating a group in a violence against women prevention programme entails guiding the group to ensure “analysis, definition and widespread participating” (p. 13). Therefore, the facilitator needs many skills, such as listening, checking on the participants in the group as they work, guiding discussions, dealing with difficult behaviour, and responding to harmful points of view.

Toolkit overview

This toolkit aims at guiding Kiswahili teachers to:

- Raise awareness amongst young people on issues connected to gender-based violence using Kiswahili novels;
- Encourage young people to critically reflect on the depiction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels in relation to what is happening in Tanzanian society, and to share that knowledge with other people in the community;
- Help young people acquire knowledge, skills and build self-confidence in order to be involved in the effort to end violence against women; and
- Encourage young people to become informal advocates of positive, non-violent interaction with family, friends and sexual partners.

Therefore, in order to have a meaningful discussion on gender-based violence using Kiswahili novels, Kiswahili teachers need to be knowledgeable on issues connected to gender-based violence and to be able to connect with people in the field of violence against women. The specific knowledge needed include:

1. An understanding of the importance of maintaining the safety of participants involved in the intervention programmes at all times:
 - How to create a safe and supportive environment for participants to share their ideas, opinions and experiences;
 - How to encourage confidentiality, respect and trust among the participants;
 - How to prepare a list of the contact details of counsellors before the intervention sessions and make these available if necessary;
 - Understanding of the safety guidelines to follow in violence against women intervention programmes.
2. Definitions of key terms such as:
 - Violence
 - Gender
 - Gender-based violence
3. Understanding of the roots of violence against women in Tanzanian society
4. Beliefs and facts about gender-based violence

5. Types of violence against women, such as:
 - Physical: such as slapping, hitting, kicking, stabbing, shooting, pouring acid or any other corrosive substance, and murder.
 - Sexual violence: this includes rape, indecent assault of young girls, incest, sexual harassment, and child pornography.
 - Harmful traditional practices: for example, those relating to widow inheritance, female genital mutilation and child marriage.
 - Psychological abuse: for example, threats to life, threats of physical abuse, and verbal abuse.
6. Short term and long term consequences of gender based violence socially, economically and politically.
7. Existing legal frameworks in the field of gender-based violence in Tanzania. The legal frameworks can be divided into three – national, regional and international instruments.
 - National level: Constitution, the Criminal Code and State Laws.
 - Regional level:
 - a) The African Charter on Human and People’s Rights;
 - b) The Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa;
 - c) The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Declaration on Gender and Development.
 - International level: The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
8. Risk factors that primary prevention seeks to address across different levels, such as:
 - Individual
 - a) Belief in strict gender roles
 - b) Desire for power and control
 - c) Low self-esteem
 - d) Witnessing or experiencing violence as a child
 - e) Lack of empathy towards girls and women
 - Relationship
 - a) Abuses of power
 - b) Dominance and control of the relationship by one partner over the other

- c) Male dominance in the family
- Community
 - a) Negative portrayals of women in the media:

In Tanzania, gender-based violence is supported by many societal-level influences. One of the major ways that this happens is through mass media, including images and language used in television, music, movies, radio and magazines. Primary prevention programmes could address mass media literacy by raising people's awareness about the messages they receive through media. By becoming a critical consumer of mass media, people may make choices about the kinds of media they consume as well as advocate for change.
 - b) Weak community sanctions against domestic violence perpetrators:

How the Tanzanian community responds to gender-based violence may affect the overall levels of violence against women in the Tanzanian community. The prevention programmes could mobilise community sanctions against gender-based violence.
- Societal
 - a) Institutional structures that promote unequal power between men and women:

Primary prevention programmes may raise awareness on how inequalities in economic and decision-making power in the household contribute to violence against women in Tanzanian society.
 - b) Social norms which support violence against women:

Here, the prevention programmes would mobilise people to change the beliefs and attitudes that foster violence against women in Tanzanian society and emphasise alternative ways to resolve conflicts rather than using violence.
 - c) Women's and men's socialisation processes:

Prevention programmes would focus on better understanding the mechanisms through which women's and men's socialisation in Tanzanian society serves to encourage violence against women and girls.

9. Studies undertaken on violence against women in Tanzanian society. These studies will help to show the pervasiveness and impact of violence against women and the importance of prevention programme in schools. Reports of violence against women from local newspapers will also help to reveal different types of violence against women in the Tanzanian community.
10. Building networks with other people and/or organisations working in the field of violence against women. These are people who are well-informed about the effects of gender-based violence and can share their experience with students and teachers. Working with them will also demonstrate that many people are actively involved in the effort to end violence against women in Tanzanian society, and this will motivate students. In the school setting, school nurses, counsellors and health teachers who are interested in the prevention programme can be involved in seminars/workshops.
11. Evaluation: The evaluation process aims to determine if the intended objectives have been achieved and if the programme had the desired effect.

This is a brief toolkit; a more detailed toolkit, which includes detailed sessions for the prevention programme, will be developed before initiating the actual project. Also, Kiswahili teachers who will be involved in the prevention programme will attend training workshop(s) in which the detailed toolkit will be discussed.

8.9 Conclusion

This chapter has described specific methods by which novels could be used in a school setting as part of ongoing efforts to end gender-based violence in Tanzanian society. In the teachers' views, these methods - discussions, debates, essay competitions, and workshops – would deepen students' understanding of the complexity of violence against women in Tanzanian society. In the teachers' views, these methods would also enable students to develop critical thinking skills that would empower them to scrutinise the problem of gender-based violence from a wider perspective and develop constructive ideas aimed at raising awareness about this problem.

Furthermore, the teachers noted that there would be direct benefit to students too, as they would have a forum to discuss social issues relating to their well being, including gender-based violence. It was also observed that as students argued and

challenged each other in a non-threatening environment, this would assist students to learn that violent behaviour is unacceptable. This is in line with Flood, Fergus, and Heenam's (2009) assertion that schools are one of the environments in which young people "learn, negotiate and potentially contest the norms and attitudes that encourage and maintain interpersonal violence" (p. 12).

As noted elsewhere in this thesis, a number of teachers emphasised the importance of novels that challenged readers' attitudes and beliefs about the problem of violence against women. Thus, holding workshops between teachers, students, novelists, and activists, among other things, would aim to determine ways to obtain novels which would be more effective in the effort to end violence against women, particularly in terms of raising awareness which would change the way people think about the problem of violence against women. The final chapter, Chapter 9, discusses the main findings of this study and offers recommendations for further research.

Chapter Nine: Discussion of the Main Findings and Suggestions for Further Research

9.1 Introduction

In an effort to understand the problem of gender-based violence from a different perspective, this study has examined the textual representation of violence against women in Kiswahili novels and young peoples' responses to these constructions. Drawing from a review of the dominant discourses of violence against women, as discussed in Chapter 3 (see 3.3), the analysis of the novels examined the way in which Kiswahili novelists depict the causes and consequences of violence against women, and identified which discourses are used to exonerate those men who are abusive towards girls and women. By paying attention to the constitutive force of discourses (Davies & Banks, 1995), this study revealed that the novels reflect, reproduce, and at times challenge the dominant discourses in the field of gender-based violence.

On the one hand, this study has revealed how Kiswahili novels have helped maintain the dominant discourses of violence against women in Tanzanian society. On the other hand, this study has demonstrated that novelists could emphasise more the discursive strategies that empower victims to play an active role in resisting these dominant discourses. In this endeavour, the composite model of reception (Michelle, 2007, 2009) was helpful as it provided an effective means of understanding the nature and form of young peoples' responses to the textual depiction of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels.

Furthermore, this study has revealed that socio-cultural practices play a significant role in the portrayal of violence against women in Kiswahili novels. More importantly, perhaps, the teachers' interviews highlighted how novels could be used for intervention programmes in high schools as part of ongoing efforts to end gender-based violence in Tanzanian society. In this final chapter, I reflect on the study's main findings and suggest possible areas for further research.

9.2 Reproduction of the dominant discourses of violence against women in Kiswahili novels

The analysis of the novels revealed that the abuse of male power was the main reason offered for the depicted violence against women. Men's economic and/or status power was presented as an essential component in relation to violence against women in the novels. However, the novelists simultaneously foregrounded factors such as alcoholism, uncontrollable jealousy, poverty, and cultural practices when explaining perpetrators' behaviour. While it is important to understand how these factors contribute to gender-based violence in Tanzanian society, representing them uncritically may potentially over-simplify the complex nature of this issue and minimise the role of men's power and domination in violence against women. In many instances, the dominant power of perpetrators was taken for granted and unchallenged, whereas the victims' behaviour was highlighted and depicted as causing the violence. In this regard, novelists' tendency to uncritically rearticulate dominant discourses about gender-based violence may undermine the possibilities for opening up alternative subject positions to women and girls. I argue that, in order for Tanzanian women and girls to resist adopting powerless subject positions in the wider society, they need access to alternative discourses to guide them to different viewpoints. For example, the depiction of girls and women as powerful and capable of resisting dominant discourses which oppress them, along with fictionalised representations of the strategies they use to achieve those new subject positions, would empower girls and women to know that it is possible to make changes in their lives if they want or need to.

This study also found that both the individual and the societal reasons for violence against women represented in the novels linked to discourses which shape the way violence against women is understood in Tanzanian society. By not acknowledging that the abusers had made choices about their behaviour and needed to take responsibility for their decisions, the authors potentially help to sustain violence against women in the wider society and do not encourage abusers to change. For example, in the narratives about domestic violence, the power imbalance between husbands and wives, in terms of status, economic and cultural privileges, remained unquestioned. While men (husbands) were depicted as being

decision makers, economically powerful and dominant, women (wives) were depicted as being obliged to obey their husband's orders, economically dependent, and submissive. As I have argued in this thesis, this uncritical mode of representation of the gender status quo encourages women to comply with accepted cultural practices in Tanzanian society.

Similarly, in relation to sexual violence, particularly rape, women were portrayed as responsible for their own victimisation. The representation of rape in the novels was highly contradictory. In some instances girls and women were depicted as challenging the dominant discourse of an "uncontrollable" male sexual drive, but later they were depicted as sexual objects either forced to satisfy men's desires, or punished for not accepting men's advances, or both. Accordingly, the depiction of sexual violence in the novels may perpetuate the view that women are primarily sexual objects and potentially encourage women to believe that it is impossible and unacceptable to fight off rape attempts. Furthermore, the rape myth, which reinforces women's vulnerability and victimisation, was maintained in the novels. However, the role that the patriarchal system plays in women's positioning within the larger society was not presented. In the interviews with young people, it became apparent that there were different views regarding the portrayal of rape in the novels. Those students who adopted a discursive mode criticised the portrayal of rape as sustaining men's abusive behaviour, whereas those who adopted a referential mode drew on male sexual drive discourses to affirm the representation of rape as realistic and did not express concern about the possible social influence that such representations may have on women and men in Tanzanian society.

The novelists also foregrounded cultural practices as the main reason for child marriage and thus absolved fathers from their responsibility for violating their daughters' rights. In a few cases, novelists attempted to introduce alternative discourses and challenged the dominant discourses regarding child marriage. However, these new ways of understanding the issue were ultimately silenced in the narratives and girls were later depicted as experiencing different types of violence, particularly sexual violence, in what I argue comprised "cautionary tales" about the consequences of non-compliance with parental expectations.

Indeed, a number of students argued that such representations aimed to encourage girls to comply with their fathers' demands.

In some narratives the novelists suggested that we live in a violent society. In this regard, violence against women in the novels reflects what is happening in Tanzanian society. Although this representation has some legitimacy, especially the way violence against women is accepted and normalised in the wider society, it fails to question the complexity of social relations and particularly the patriarchal institutions that tolerate and sustain violence against women in Tanzanian society. Uncritical textual representations of violence against women have the potential to promote the attitude or belief that violence against women is acceptable. Whether such depictions of violence against women were deliberate or not, the magnitude of gender-based violence in the novels was not clearly addressed as a societal problem. Furthermore, in some narratives the depiction of gender-based violence centred on victim-blaming, and violence was attributed to women's lack of compliance with accepted social practices.

The novelists underlined factors such as dependency, fear of rejection, isolation and blameworthiness as reasons for women to stay in abusive relationships. While these factors continue to shape the lives of many girls and women in Tanzanian society, as a number of students commented, men's power in terms of controlling women and prohibiting them from engaging in income-generating activities remained unchallenged. Representation of how the patriarchal system works to maintain gender-based violence would offer an alternative understanding of how women are constructed and sustained within certain subject positions in Tanzanian society. Galtung (1990) suggests that in order to end violence in society, it is important to understand aspects of culture which are used to legitimise violence. He claims that aspects of culture such as religion, ideology, language and art can be used to legitimise violence in a form of cultural violence. According to Galtung, cultural violence renders structural and direct violence as acceptable in society. He asserts that in many instances, attention has been focused on direct violence more than structural violence because direct violence is visible and can be registered, whereas structural violence is silent and may be seen as a natural act (Galtung, 1969). Galtung (1969, 1990) argues that structural violence is embedded in the social order and it is reinforced in society in two

ways. First, the subordinate group are socialised to internalise and accept the dominant view of the society by giving them limited options to understand what is happening in the wider society. Second, the powerless group are marginalised and prevented from supporting each other. Galtung's observations on structural violence were evident in the novels. In the novels, girls and women were isolated and encouraged to behave according to the acceptable social practices. I argue that reinforcing dominant discourses available in society may serve to keep women and girls in subordinate positions and prevent them from understanding the world in a different way.

The depiction of traditional forms of femininity and masculinity in the novels was another noticeable site for the reproduction of dominant discourses in relation to violence against women. These constructions re-emphasised the notions of masculinity as powerful and femininity as weak. In the novels, men were portrayed as controlling women, particularly their wives and daughters. On the other hand, women were depicted as accommodating men's orders and desires. These versions of masculinity and femininity are constructed through everyday practices within different institutions – in the family, at school, and in society at large – and were actively reinforced in the novels, potentially strengthening the basis for women's subordination and men's domination in Tanzanian society. But as some respondents argued, depictions of alternative "modes" or ways of "doing" masculinity and femininity could inspire readers to act differently, and this could become a useful foundation for consciousness raising among readers, particularly girls and women.

In addition to reiterating dominant and traditional understandings of masculinity and femininity, this study revealed that novelists made reference to socio-cultural practices in ways that implicitly affirmed or normalised unequal relations of power in Tanzanian society. Comments from some students who adopted the referential mode suggested that the novelists aimed to reflect Tanzanian women's inferior position, which is maintained by the patriarchal system. Again, this way of depicting violence against women regulates and normalises practices that keep the dominant discourses in circulation, while marginalising or keeping out of circulation alternative discourses that challenge and seek to deconstruct patriarchal social relations. As this study has illustrated, the depiction of violence

against women in the novels as a relatively “normal” part of Tanzanian society and the almost inevitable result of their inferior status may have the potential effect of discouraging women from attempting to resist cultural practices and thus compels them to endure violence silently. Thus, the circulation and implicit affirmation of dominant discourses of violence against women, as illustrated in the novels, is connected to power relations, creating a complex system of multiple constraints that govern the production and reception of dominant discourses.

9.3 Discursive struggle in challenging the dominant discourses of violence against women in Kiswahili novels

This study also revealed tensions, ambiguities and contradictions when some novelists attempted to challenge the dominant discourses about violence against women in Tanzanian society. In reflecting gender-based violence in their novels, a number of novelists tried to disrupt the social status quo accorded to men. Hence, although this study has questioned the uncritical depiction of violence against women, it has also acknowledged the attempts made by a few authors to challenge the dominant discourses. Discursively challenging cultural practices relating to violence against women within novels potentially provides readers with a means of understanding the system and anticipating challenges and conflicts that might happen in the process of ending gender-based violence in Tanzanian society. More importantly, however, the contradictions and tensions created in these narratives opened up a space for legitimising alternative and competing discourses. Examining these contradictions critically offered a way for a number of students, particularly those who adopted a discursive mode of reading, to suggest different subject positions for girls and women that the novelists could introduce. It was evident that the discursive struggle apparent in some Kiswahili novels enabled some students to see the effect of different discursive strategies on wider society and to articulate alternative discourses. For example, some students drew from discourses of human rights and the wider social good, which did not feature in the novels, to reframe and/or challenge the portrayal of violence against women in the novels.

Moreover, the difficulties novelists evidently encountered in attempting to challenge what some men believe are their rights opened up a discursive space for examining how novelists could portray violence against women differently. In

this regard, the tensions within the novels encouraged a number of students to think critically about why authors punished girls and women who did not comply with social norms. Of much concern was why authors initially depicted girls as courageous, but later punished them because of their brave actions. Emerging from these questions, students suggested ways of depicting gender-based violence that could inspire readers to seek change. With this understanding, the contradictions depicted in Kiswahili novels guided some students to draw on alternative discourses as they (re)interpreted scenes of violence against women. Students believed that their alternative discourses would offer different subject positions to girls and women and would be an inspiration to readers in terms of encouraging them to resist attitudes and beliefs that sustain violence against women in Tanzanian society. Toward this end, discussion of the contradictions within and between Kiswahili novels was a useful foundation for considering the possibilities of challenging dominant discourses of violence against women in the wider society.

9.4 Changing the dominant discourses of violence against women as depicted in Kiswahili novels

This study examined the dominant discourses of violence against women as represented in Kiswahili novels in order to draw attention to sites where alternative discourses can be articulated. Davies and Banks (1995) and Gee (2007) proposed that by challenging the dominant discourses we can get a glimpse of alternative discourses – different ways of seeing the world which, when applied, might serve the task of dismantling structures of domination and creating a more egalitarian society. In the process of deconstructing the dominant discourses of violence against women, it is important to focus on the discursive strategies that are used to maintain them. In the novels, for example, women were mostly represented as vulnerable to violence and men as perpetrators of violence. However, students who adopted a discursive mode argued that novelists should problematise these constructions and underlined alternative ways of understanding gender-based violence in Tanzanian society. According to these students, novelists should challenge dominant discourses that portray women as at risk of violence and introduce alternative discourses that would enable women to access different ways of understanding their lives. Their argument is in line with Gee's

(2007) claim that “bi-Discoursal people (people who have or are mastering two contesting or conflicting discourses) are the ultimate sources of change” (p. 167).

Given the complexity of the manifestation of gender-based violence as reflected in the novels, it is apparent that ending gender-based violence cannot be achieved by only focusing on abusive men’s behaviour. Rather, it must also involve political actions to challenge the patriarchal system that produces and sustains violence against women. Denial of alternative discourses in the novels limits women’s autonomy in their social and sexual lives and maintains different forms of violence against women that are grounded in the wider patriarchal society. Connell (1995) noted that “men gain a dividend from patriarchy in terms of honour, prestige, and the right to command. They also gain a material dividend” (p. 82). It is thus apparent that efforts to end violence against women must examine the role of the patriarchal system in relation to men’s violence against women. Toward this end, it is important to both locate and challenge dominant discourses that maintain oppressive social relations in society. Focusing on the patriarchal system that fuels and sustains violence against women can potentially uncover the processes that shape and maintain individual behaviour.

Similarly, Galtung (1990) asserted that to end violence in society, we need to deal with both structural and direct violence. This means prevention programmes that aim to end violence against women must address the beliefs and attitudes that sustain violence against women. The representation of violence against women as a learned behaviour, rather than a social norm, as noted in Chapter 6, would facilitate the process of understanding that behaviour can also be unlearned. This kind of depiction, which would underline how men and women are shaped by gender pressures, would help readers to understand how their own thinking and actions have been shaped by the dominant discourses. The implication is that readers might see it is possible to change behaviour that is learned at an early age.

In addition, while the position of men as decision makers in the household may provide them with power and authority over women, it may also exert pressure on men to live up to the expectations and positions accorded to them by society. Failure to live up to these expectations in a patriarchal society was depicted in the novels as manifesting itself in violence against women. Conversely, if novelists

emphasised discourses that critique societal practices that pressure men to be dominating and controlling, along with discourses that encourage women to be independent and responsible for their lives, it would promote different ways of being in the world. Arguably, understanding how men are constructed and located in multiple relations of power and how the dominant discourses are related to cultural practices that sustain violence against women is essential to support efforts to change the attitudes and beliefs of men regarding violence against women.

Furthermore, in representing violence against women in the novels, the authors revealed the connections between gender-based violence and the powerful positions men have in Tanzanian society economically and socially. While these illustrations enabled readers to understand the discursive practices used by men, especially government officials, to oppress girls and women, several students suggested that it was also important to challenge these discursive connections and construct alternative strategies to those offered by the dominant discourses.

A number of students stressed that introducing wider social good and human rights discourses would promote different ways of seeing the world. A different representation of the problem of violence against women may encourage people to change the views they had previously taken for granted of violence against women as being “normal.” Equally, teachers believed that Kiswahili novelists should foreground alternative discourses that could change women’s lives by deemphasising the role of victim and empowering women to realise their own potential and their ability to implement change in their own lives and communities.

Some young people believed that reframing the problem of violence against women would empower girls and women in Tanzanian society. In their view, novelists could locate the problem of violence against women in a particular politicised context, where it could be viewed as a structural problem stemming from the patriarchal nature of Tanzanian society. As girls and women understand how they are constructed within dominant discourses, they would then be able to actively resist the dominant discourses or look for possible ways to subvert the patriarchal system that encourages them to be passive and dependent on men.

Clearly, girls and women need to understand how they have taken up these dominant discourses in their everyday lives and what other subject positions are available to them, and their implications, before they can make an informed decision to liberate themselves (Davies & Banks, 1995). With this understanding, this study suggests that critical representation of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels would facilitate the process of making visible ways in which resistance to the dominant discourses might be possible in order to make changes in individuals' lives and in wider society.

While the inclusion of alternative discourses in novels would offer different subject positions to readers, particularly girls and women, some readers may need to learn how to accommodate these new ways of being. Developing awareness raising programmes in schools might help readers to understand the ways in which they are constrained by the dominant discourses in society. They may then also understand that they can resist a particular position available to them if they wish to, rather than cling to that position because they believe they should do. Furthermore, textual discursive strategies that provide critical framing of the issues depicted in a text would enable readers to identify areas for resistance and change. The task here is to provide new ways of understanding and challenging the accepted dominant discourses (Weedon, 1997) and produce discursive strategies to help readers understand how they are positioned to believe they are vulnerable to violence or justified to perpetrate violence.

9.5 Possible areas for further research

This study has opened up several areas for further investigation. It would be of value to explore other fiction works such as Kiswahili drama and poetry to determine their tendencies and discursive strategies employed in portraying gender-based violence. It would be worth investigating whether, and to what extent, different literary genres jointly reproduce and maintain cultural practices that oppress women in contemporary Tanzanian society.

In the current study, all schools were located in Dar es Salaam city, and a number of students who adopted a discursive mode had attended a workshop on violence against women and/or a girl's leadership seminar. It would be interesting to examine how young people from schools located in rural areas, where workshops

on violence against women and girl's leadership seminars are rare, would respond to the textual depiction of violence against women in novels.

Morley (1992) contended that writers employ different techniques to privilege certain meanings and suppress others, and these open up different interpretations to readers. On the other hand, Weedon (1997) maintained that it is important to trace the established meaning in relation to power in society and find "how power is exercised, whose interests are silenced, marginalized or excluded and how open it is to change" (p. 164). From this perspective, it would be helpful to extend the findings from the current study by looking at factors that impel authors to reproduce, uncritically, dominant discourses of gender-based violence in the novels.

Previous studies conducted in developed countries, particularly in the United States (e.g. Brozo et al., 2002; Farrell & Meyer, 1997; Strange & Leung, 1999), have demonstrated that fictional works, such as novels, can potentially change people's beliefs and attitudes about a social problem such as violence against women. Thus, it would also be valuable to look at how the textual construction of violence against women in Kiswahili novels plays a role in changing an individual's values, beliefs and attitudes in relation to gender-based violence.

In sum, this study has contributed to our understanding of how textual representations can serve to maintain gender-based violence in society. In doing so, it has highlighted how dominant discourses in the field of gender-based violence have been rearticulated and reinforced in Kiswahili novels. Offering possibilities for social change as part of ongoing efforts to end gender-based violence, this study outlines a curriculum template for critical engagement with novels in school settings, in order to facilitate the process of challenging dominant discourses that sustain violence against women and making visible ways in which resistance to these dominant discourses might be possible, in the hopes that this may in turn encourage changes in individuals and in the wider Tanzanian society.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Guide questions for focus group discussions*

1. Tell us your name, where you come from and your favourite Kiswahili novel.
2. Let's talk about violence. What does the word 'violence' mean to you?
3. When you hear the words 'violence against women and girls' (gender-based violence) what comes to mind?
4. Can you give examples of violence against women and girls (gender-based violence) written about in Kiswahili novels?
Take a few moments and look over the extracts of violence against women and girls (gender violence) as written in Kiswahili novels. (The extracts will be based on themes, such as: a) wife beating b) rape c) forced prostitution d) incest e) violation of widows' rights).
5. How do authors write about different forms of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels?
6. How do authors write about the perpetrators? What are they like? What kind of people? Positive representation?
7. How do the authors write about the victims?
8. According to the authors, what are the causes of violence against women and girls?
9. In your opinion, what do you see as the causes of violence against women and girls?
10. What messages are conveyed by the authors about the violence against women and girls in Kiswahili novels?
11. In your opinion, how do Kiswahili novels shape Tanzanian society's attitudes towards violence against women and girls?
12. In your view, what is needed to prevent violence against women and girls in Tanzanian society?
13. What are the barriers that get in the way of ending violence against women and girls in Tanzanian society?
14. What is needed to overcome these barriers?
15. Is there anything else on how gender-based violence is written in Kiswahili novels that anyone would like to comment on?

*English version was translated to Kiswahili language.

Appendix 2: Extracts for focus group discussions

1. Wanawake kupigwa (Wife beating)

Kezilahabi (1971) *Rosa Mistika*

Riwaya hii inaeleza hali ya maisha ya wanajamii na mikasa mbalimbali wanayokumbana nayo katika jamii. Regina mmoja wa wahusika katika riwaya hii anapigwa na mume wake kutokana na sababu mbalimbali. Mwandishi anasema:

Katika kijiji cha Namagondo hapakuwa na mwanamke aliyekuwa anapigwa karibu kila juma kama Regina. Wanawake wengi kijijini walijiuliza kwa nini hakutaka kumwacha bwana wake. Wengine walimwonea huruma; wengi lakini walimwona mjinga. Regina, alikuwa na watoto watano wasichana. Matumaini yake ya kukaa pamoja na watoto hao kama alivyoambiwa na bwana wake - yalikuwa katika mimba ya miezi mitano aliyokuwa nayo sasa. Regina hakutaka kuachana na watoto wake, bila yeye, mumewe alikuwa hawezi kuwatunza (uk 1). ... Tangu Ijumaa mpaka Jumapili Zakaria alikuwa anakwenda kunywa na siku nyingine za juma alijifanya mgonjwa kitandani. (uk. 6)

2. Ubakaji (Rape)

Chachage (1991) *Almasi za Bandia*

Miongoni mwa visa vikuu vinavyojenga riwaya hii ni kisa cha msichana Patricia. Patricia alikuwa ni mwanafunzi katika chuo kikuu. Chachage anaeleza jinsi Metron mwanachuo anayesoma na Patricia anavyfanikisha azma yake ya kufanya mapenzi naye nyumbani kwa rafiki yake Ayuka. Anaeleza:

Patricia alisimama haraka na kukimbilia mlangoni. ... Alijaribu kukizungusha kitasa cha mlango. ... Kwa sauti kali ya kutetemeka alimwamuru Merton, "Usinisogele! Ukinisogelea tu nitapiga kelele!" Merton alicheka kifedhulu na kumjibu, "Unapoteza wakati wako bure! Hakuna atakayekuamini." ... Patricia alitamani apige yowe, lakini sauti ilimhaini akashindwa kufanya hivyo. ... Alipofikiri juu ya aibu ambayo angeipata pindi watu wangeingia pale baada ya kusikia yowe, na kisha wakakosa kuamini ambacho angewaeleza. ...

Sasa Merton alikuwa amefaulu ... aliivuta chupi ya yule msichana na kuichanilia mbali bila huruma wala kujali. Alikuwa anahema kama faru na kutoka udende wa uchu. Na sasa mwili wake wote ulikuwa juu ya Patricia naye akaendelea kupigana naye hata baada ya kuona kuwa mambo yameharibika. Kwa Merton, majaribio ya Patricia kujikwamua pale, hazikuwa dalili za kukataa, bali kujibaraguza kwa kike. Kama angekuwa amekataa, basi angepiga kelele. Hivyo ndivyo Merton alivyoamini (uk. 70-71)

3. Ukahaba wa kulazimishwa (Forced prostitution)

S.A. Mohamed (1977) *Asali Chungu*

Said Mohamed anaeleza jinsi wanajamii wanavyokumbana na matatizo mbalimbali katika safari ya maisha. Semeni ni miongoni mwa wahusika wa kike katika riwaya hii, akiwa katika harakati za kupambana na maisha anaangukia mikononi mwa Bwana Zuberi. Baada ya Zuberi kushindwa kumshawishi Semeni afanye naye mapenzi kwa njia za udanganyifu, Zuberi anaamua kumbaka Semeni. Semeni anaondoka nyumbani kwa Zuberi na kuanza kuishi mtaani kabla ya kukutana na Pili, kama anavyoeleza mwandishi:

Pili alimchukua Semeni siku ile alipomwona anazururua ovyo mitaani. Akamchukua na kuishi naye mpaka leo. Semeni akaona imefungukia milango ya heri, atakaa nyumbani kwa Pili mpaka Mungu atakapomfungulia riziki yoyote. Ikiwa kuposwa akaolewa au kupata jema lolote lenye faida na yeye. Mtu angalidhani yale yaliyomfika Semeni aliyataka mwenyewe, lakini si kweli kabisa. Ingawa nyumba ilikuwa bohari ya laana na uchafu, alifumba macho na kutia vizibo masikio siku nyingi; akaufunga moyo wake asitamani, hasa baada ya tendo alilotendwa na Zuberi. Wenzie wakaingia mle na watu wao, ...wote wailikuwa na ngoma zao. ... Kama maradhi ya kuambukiza, akajiona anaingia katika ngoma hizo kidog kidogo. Baadaye akaonja, na ule mwonjo hatimaye ukamkomaza. ... Mara nyingi hakukusudia kuwa hivyo. Hakutaka kuhunika na kuwa kitanga na njia, lakini kulikuwa na neon moja lililomfanya asiweze kwenda kinyume na yale yaliyomshawishi. Haja hiyo ndiyo ilyombdilisha. Moyo wake mgumu ukalainika. Akakubali yale ambayo kwake yalikuwa magumu kuyatenda. Akasalimu amri na kutoa lile ambalo watu wakilichimba. (uk. 48)

4. Wajane kunyanganywa urithi (Violation of widows' rights)

Burhani (2004) *Kipimo cha mizani*

Burhani anaeleza matatizo wanayopata wanawake baada ya kufiwa na waume zao. Kwa kumtumia mhusika Halima mwandishi anaweka bayana jinsi shemeji yake Umari pamoja na mke wake Mariyamu walivyoweza kumdhulumu Halima mali waliyochuma na mume wake Amini. Mwandishi anaeleza:

Siku ile waliporejea nyumbani, Mariyamu alinuia kumweleza Umari dhahiri shahiri dharura ya kuanza sera na mikakati ya kuyatwaa mali ya marehe Amini. Alisema, "Unajua kuwa Halima karibu atatoka eda?" Sasa umefikiria mpago gani. Alimwona Umari akimwangalia kama mtu asiyefahamu swali lake, akaongeza, " Kuhusu watoto na nyumba." (uk. 81)

Umari sasa aliona kuwa lazima achukue hatua nyingine, kabla hajakosa kila kitu kama Mariyamu alivyosema. Aliona kuwa mali ya ndugu yake, Amini, ni haki yake na sio mtu mwingine

kama Halima. Kwa nini amwachie kila kitu? ... Alimtafuta mtu na kumtuma kwa Halima, akimwambia, “Sasa eda imemalizika. Huna tena haki ya kukaana katika nyumba hii. Lazima uondoke. ... Ingawa Maryamu na Umari walifurahishwa na ile hatua ya Halima kuondoka, lakini walikuwa na wasiwasi, kwani walijua kuwa hawana haki yoyote kisheria. Mariyam alitoa shauri, akamwambia Umari, “Unajua! Ninaona bora wewe uende korti. Ukadai haki ya kuwachukua watoto wa ndugu yako uwe nao. ... Sidhani kama watakukatalia”. (uk. 87 -88)

5. Ndoa za Utotoni (Child marriage)

Shafi (1999) *Vuta n'kuvute*

Katika riwaya hii Shafi anaeleza kwa kina kuhusu watoto wa kike wanaolazimishwa kuolewa na wazazi wao wakiwa na umri mdogo na matatizo wanayokumbana nayo katika maisha ya ndoa. Kwa kumtumia mhusika Yasmin Shafi alaeleza:

Mara tu baada ya kuvunja ungo, Yasmin aliozwa mume. ... Alikuwa ni mume asiyelingana naye hata kidogo. Si kwa umri wala tabia kwani wakati Yasmini ni kigoli wa miaka kumi na tano tu, mumewe Bwana Raza alikuwa zee la miaka hamsini na mbili. (uk.1)

Yasmin anaondoka kwa mumewe baada ya kupigwa kwa kosa la kukataa kumchezea mume wake Ngoma. Yasmini anakwenda kwa mjomba wake. Anapofika kwa mjomba wake mwandishi anaeleza:

“Mume wako yuko wapi? ... Nakuuliza mume wako yuko wapi?” Aliuliza mjomba wake Yasmini.
“Yuko Mombasa, mimi nimerudi nimeshindwa kuishi naye.” ... Kama hukuweza kuishi na Raza basi na sisi hatuna pa kukuweka,” Mjomba wake Yasmini alisema kwa kelele. ... “Tena tuondokee mbele ya macho yetu utafute pa kwenda. Toka!” Alifoka mjomba. ... “ Nakwambia toka! Nenda kamtafute huyo unayempenda.” (uk. 18)

Appendix 3: Guide questions for in-depth interviews with Kiswahili teachers*

1. How long have you taught Kiswahili novels?
2. Let's talk about gender-based violence as depicted in Kiswahili novels. When you hear the words 'gender-based violence' what comes to mind?
3. How prevalent do you think is gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels?
4. In your opinion how do authors depict different forms of gender-based violence in Kiswahili novels?
5. What do you think the novels depict as the causes of violence against women and girls in Tanzanian society?
6. In your view, do the novels contribute to the increased risk of violence against women and girls in the community? How?
7. In your view, how can we utilize Kiswahili novels for gender-based violence discussions in classrooms/schools?
8. In your view, what is needed in order to use Kiswahili novels to intervene in gender-based violence in Tanzanian society?

* English version was translated to Kiswahili language.

Appendix 4: Information sheet*

The University of Waikato
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Department of Societies and Cultures
Private Bag 3105, Hamilton
New Zealand

1. Researcher: Ernesta Simon Mosha
46b York Street Hamilton East
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New Zealand

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BOX 35040
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2. Supervisors: Dr. Jo Barnes
Senior Lecturer, Head of Department, Societies and
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Phone : +64 7 838 4466 ext. 6826
Email: jobar@waikato.ac.nz

Dr. Carolyn Michelle
Senior Lecturer, Convenor of Women's & Gender Studies
Department of Societies and Cultures
Phone: +64 7 838 4466 ext.6828,
Email: caro@waikato.ac.nz

3. Topic of the research: Gender-based Violence in Kiswahili Fiction and
Young People's Interpretations

* English version was translated to Kiswahili language.

4. **Sponsor:** Self
5. **The participants' role:** Students participants will participate in a group interview which will take around 120 minutes. Kiswahili teachers will participate in an in-depth discussion about the topic under study and this in-depth discussion will take around 60 minutes.
6. **The major outcomes of the research:** The major findings for this research project will be used for the completion of my doctoral thesis at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand.
7. **The degree of confidentiality and anonymity:** Participants in the focus group interviews will be encouraged not to disclose personal information in relation to the topic under study, rather to speculate and comment on fictional stories. Participants will be asked to treat discussions as confidential. The participants in group interviews and in-depth discussions will choose a pseudonym and their actual names will only be required once, when they sign the consent form.
8. **Storage of the data:** All data relating to the group interviews, in-depth discussions and any transcripts will be stored in the home of the researcher in a specific locked filing cabinet. If any information pertaining to the interviews is kept at the University of Waikato for any reason, this data will also be placed in a locked filing cabinet, where only the researcher and the researchers' supervisors (Dr. Jo Barnes and Dr. Carolyn Michelle) will have access to the key. Five years after submission of the thesis, the tape recording, transcripts of the interviews and consent forms will be destroyed.
9. **Access to findings:** If requested participants may receive a summary of the result of the study.
10. **Participants' rights:** Participants have the following rights:
 - a) To refuse to answer any particular questions.
 - b) To withdraw from the study at any time during the group interviews or in the three weeks following the group interviews. For the in-depth

discussions participants may withdraw at any time during the in-depth discussion or in the four weeks following the discussion.

- c) To ask any questions you have about the group interview questions and the focus of the interview either during the group interview or at any other time and/or about the in-depth discussion questions and the focus of the in-depth discussion, either during the discussion or at any other time.

11. This research project has been given approval by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to:

Contact: The Secretary of the Human Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton
New Zealand

Email: fass-ethics@waikato.ac.nz

Appendix 5: Consent form for focus group discussions*

University of Waikato

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Department of Societies and Cultures

Gender-based Violence in Kiswahili Fiction and Young People's Interpretations

Consent Form for Focus Groups Interviews

Dear Participant,

1. I would like to hold a group interview to explore gender-based violence in selected Kiswahili novels and how young people interpret these depictions. Extracts of gender-based violence from Kiswahili novels will be used as a basis for discussion. Questions will include how you understand different forms of gender-based violence and what your views are in relation to how Kiswahili novelists depict different forms of gender-based violence.
2. This group interview will take approximately 120 minutes and non-alcohol drinks such as fruit juice, Coke, and Pepsi will be provided.
3. I would like to tape record the interview so that I can obtain an accurate record of your views.
4. Your full name will only be required once, when you sign this consent form. You are requested to choose a pseudonym for your privacy and anonymity.
5. When the tape recording and any transcript of it is not in use, these will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the home of the researcher, for five years after submission of thesis, after which they will be destroyed.
6. The information you provide will be used for the completion of my doctoral thesis at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand.
7. There may be occasions where aspects of the data will be used for publication in academic journals, books or used at conferences.
8. To prevent violations of your own and others' privacy, please do not disclose any of your own or others' private experiences that you would consider too personal or revealing.
9. You have an obligation to respect the privacy of the other members of the group by not disclosing any personal information that they share during our discussion.
10. This research project has been given approval by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.
11. If you agree to take part in this group interview, you have the following rights:
 - a) To refuse to answer any particular questions.

* English version was translated to Kiswahili language.

- b) To withdraw your consent at any time during the group interviews or in the three weeks following the group interviews and you do not need to give any reasons or explanations for doing so.
- c) To ask any questions you have about the group interview questions and the focus of the interview either during the group interview or at any other time.
- d) To make any complaints you may have about the ethical conduct of this research project, please contact my supervisors, or the Secretary of FASS Research Ethics Committee, or myself:

Dr. Jo Barnes, contact phone: +64 7 8384466 ext. 6826,

email: jobar@waikato.ac.nz, or

Dr. Carolyn Michelle, contact phone: +64 7 8384466 ext.6828,

email: caro@waikato.ac.nz, or

The Secretary of the FASS Research Ethics Committee,

email: fass-ethics@waikato.ac.nz, or

Ernesta Mosha, contact phone: +64 7 8564374, +64 2102463251

email: esm3@waikato.ac.nz or ernestasimon@yahoo.com

Please print your pseudonym here:

If you would like to receive a summary of the result of this study,

please print your email address here:

“I have read and understood this information and I consent to take part in the study”.

Name: Interviewee: _____ Signed: Interviewee: _____ Date: _____

“I agree to abide by the above conditions”.

Name: Interviewer: _____ Signed: Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

Thank you again. Your time and input are appreciated very much.

Appendix 6: Consent form for in-depth interviews*

University of Waikato
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Department of Societies and Cultures

Gender-based Violence in Kiswahili Fiction and Young People's Interpretations

Consent Form for In-depth Discussion

Dear Participant,

12. I would like to have an in-depth discussion with you to examine how gender-based violence is depicted in Kiswahili novels. Questions will include how different forms of gender-based violence are depicted in Kiswahili novels, whether you perceive these depictions as contributing to the understanding of social/cultural practices in Tanzanian society, and how Kiswahili novels might be used as an educational tool to end gender-based violence in Tanzanian society.
13. This in-depth discussion will take approximately 60 minutes and non-alcohol drinks such as fruit juice, Coke, and Pepsi will be provided.
14. I would like to tape record the in-depth discussion so that I can obtain an accurate record of your views.
15. Your full name will only be required once, when you sign this consent form. You are requested to choose a pseudonym for your privacy and anonymity.
16. When the tape recording and any transcript of it is not in use, these will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the home of the researcher for five years after submission of thesis, after which they will be destroyed.
17. The information you provide will be used for the completion of my doctoral thesis at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand.
18. There may be occasions where aspects of the data will be used for publication in academic journals, books or used at conferences.
19. This research project has been given approval by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.
20. If you agree to take part in this discussion, you have the following rights:
 - e) To refuse to answer any particular questions.

* English version was translated to Kiswahili language.

- f) To withdraw your consent at any time during the in-depth discussion or in the four weeks following the discussion and you do not need to give any reasons or explanations for doing so.
- g) To ask any questions you have about the in-depth discussion questions and the focus of the in-depth discussion, either during the discussion or after discussion.
- h) To receive a summary of the result of this study.
- i) To make any complaints you may have about the discussion or the research project, please contact my supervisors, or the Secretary of FASS Research Ethics Committee. or myself:

Dr. Jo Barnes, contact phone: +64 7 8384466 ext. 6826,

email: jobar@waikato.ac.nz, or

Dr. Carolyn Michelle, contact phone: +64 7 8384466 ext. 6828,

email: caro@waikato.ac.nz, or

The Secretary of the FASS Research Ethics Committee,

email: fass-ethics@waikato.ac.nz or

Ernesta Mosha, contact phone: +64 7 8564374, +64 2102463251

email: esm3@waikato.ac.nz or ernestasimon@yahoo.com

Please print your pseudonym here:

If you would like to receive a summary of the result of this study,

please print your email address here:

“I have read and understood this information and I consent to take part in the study”

Name: Interviewee: _____ Signed: Interviewee: _____ Date: _____

“I agree to abide by the above conditions”

Name: Interviewer: _____ Signed: Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

Thank you again. Your time and input are appreciated very much.