

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN SELECTED SHONA NOVELS

by

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DECLARATION

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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN SELECTED SHONA NOVELS.

I declare that the above thesis is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.



SIGNATURE

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DEDICATION

To my husband Edgar, children Lawrence Tinashe, Joyline Lorraine and the twins Elmer and Elton Muhoyi.

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an exposition of the portrayal of women in selected pre- and post- colonial Shona fictional works. The exegesis of the selected Shona novels is guided by Afro-centered perspectives which are Africana Womanism and Afrocentricity. The thesis contributes to the growing body of knowledge on women's studies and discourses on gender. Remarkably, it marshals the contention that the various novels under examination project contrasting and contesting images of women. The first category of narratives espouses fictive renditions of women as the very source of all problems that bedevil society, especially man and other unsuspecting women. These narratives pander to the whims of the colonial state wherein the woman figure is cast in very pejorative and condescending terms, a position that is consistent with Victorian values in which the woman was just a nonentity. Interestingly, daring and courageous women who challenge the colonial state's subjugation of their integrity are mercilessly thrashed with the writer's moral whip. This engenders narrow moralization that blames the woman character for all evil rather than the system that fashions and conditions behavior. This category therefore advances and champions the endemic victim-blame syndrome that largely epitomizes Shona written literature in both the colonial and post colonial dispensations. The second category of novels examined in this study attempt to provide a contextualized portrayal of women characters. In other words, the narratives firmly locate the individual woman in a context that is dominated and controlled by social, economic and historical forces. For that reason, they demonstrate that the Shona woman's performance space has been poisoned by a combination of toxic factors that engender de-womanisation, de-personalization and de-feminization. Such narratives transcend the endemic victim-blame syndrome as they expose the social and economic

factors that inform and fashion behavior. Remarkably, these narratives provide a vision and version of reality that is ennobling and empowering. Given the centrality of women in development, literature is expected to play an important role in terms of raising consciousness. Literature is studied in schools, colleges and universities and therefore cannot escape scrutiny when it comes to the depiction of women.

KEY WORDS

Critical analysis, Portrayal, Afrocentricity, Africana Womanism, Stereotyping, Patriarchy, Gender, Image, Novel and Oppression

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0BACKGROUND

The birth of the Shona novel in Zimbabwe and its subsequent development witnesses an inescapable preoccupation with the images of women characters. This interest in women characters potentially arises from the role of women in society as well as the colonially defined gender roles and spaces that condemn women to the fringes of society. Interestingly, this novelistic tradition depicts women who suffer the triple burden of class, race and gender oppression. Both male and female authors demonstrate a strong penchant to depict the vicissitudes of the Shona woman in both the colonial and postcolonial epochs. It is this interest in the condition of the Shona woman that generates enormous interest among scholars of literature.

Since the Shona novel presents multiple perspectives on women, this study finds it both significant and rewarding to explore the impact such representations have on gender in particular and consciousness in general. For instance, as Gaidzanwa (1985) states that, male authors have tended to portray women in negative terms. Reading these novels leaves one with the impression that women are usually involved in doing bad things yet it is not always the case. A lot of women in literature do not have a say in their day-to-day activities and do not make decisions at all. The oversimplification of women in Shona novels is what encourages the researcher to carry out a study that focuses on the positive and negative issues about women. In addition, it is from this research that readers have an appreciation of the depiction of women in Shona novels as well as the potential effect of such images.

1.1STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The portrayal of women in Shona novels under discussion is of interest to national development since women generally constitute more than 50% of the population. Such a demographic setup motivates researchers to desire to unravel the dynamics that underpin the representation of women in literature. Given the history of colonialism and its penchant for diminishing the position of women in society, it is important to

interrogate how novels either reinforce colonial-type subjugation and stereotypication of women or contribute to their enlightenment and empowerment. For as long as women are disempowered, it is difficult to talk of meaningful national development. Novels are studied in schools and universities and read by a wide section of the Shona speaking population. Schools and universities can be regarded as nurseries that nurture consciousness and attitudes towards life. If the images of women are consistently negative in novels, that has the potential to engineer a disempowered woman who has no voice. To be without voice is the worst form of marginality since it is tantamount to objectification. For as long as literary works consistently depict women who are not subjects, but objects that are acted upon, then society suffers the burden gender disequilibrium. Progress and development happen when each gender plays its role to the best of its ability. It is against this background that the thesis investigates this problem as it relates to the portrayal of women.

1.2 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to have an in-depth study of how women are portrayed by selected Shona authors. Shona novels that display women as their main characters are critically analyzed. This aim is achieved through the use of secondary sources that are relevant to the topic under study.

1.2.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study intends:

- 1) To investigate the portrayal of women by selected Shona authors.
- 2) To interrogate the historical factors that inform the authors' portrayal of women.
- 3) To examine the effects such portrayal of women has on consciousness and attitudes towards life.
- 4) To influence the production of a body of knowledge that can potentially shape the positive imaging of women characters as both deconstruction and reconstruction.

1.2.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that guide the study include the following:

- 1) How do selected Shona authors portray women in their novels?
- 2) What are the historical factors that inform the authors' portrayal of women?
- 3) What effects such portrayal of women has on consciousness and attitudes towards life?
- 4) How does the production of such a body of knowledge potentially shape the positive imaging of women characters as both deconstruction and reconstruction?

1.3 JUSTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As Zulu Sofola cited in Hudson-Weems (1993: xviii) argues that, "the female gender is the center of life, the magnet that holds the social cosmos intact and alive - destroy her and you destroy life itself, women are central to life. Despite the unquestionable centrality of women in life, many forces have concatenated to undermine their integrity. Such forces include patriarchy, colonialism and many others". As a result, a study that focuses on women remains highly significant in the sense that it interrogates such forces as a way of empowering women and ensuring that they rediscover their voice and subject position. Shona novels are potential sources of empowerment and disempowerment of women. To this extent, it is vital that such literature be subjected to far-reaching scrutiny and interrogation. The objective of critical scholarship is to illuminate literature so that readers are able to understand and penetrate all the nuances.

Equally, the study of the portrayal of women in selected Shona novels is very crucial mainly to the society at large, policy makers and to academics. Writers, the general public, schools, tertiary institutions like universities and additional concerned stakeholders benefit from this study. It helps them to know how women are being portrayed in Shona novels and compare to what they see in their society. It also persuades other researchers to carry out extra analysis into the relations among literature and the portrayal of women in their society. Future and aspiring researchers are encouraged to offer a more liberating image of women in the Shona novels.

The study critically analyzes the portrayal of women in selected Shona novels. The novels for this study were selected mainly because the main characters in the novels are women. Therefore, it is easier for the researcher to analyze how women are being portrayed in the novels. Gaidzanwa (1985) affirms that male writers have a tendency of depicting females using stereotypical ways. This means that, male writers always depict women using stereotypical ways. This study looks at both the negative and positive portrayal of females in novels selected. This helps all those who read this study to be aware of the fact that, women in Shona novels have also positive things they did in the novels but they are not emphasized by the writers. Moi (1985) and Gikandi (1992) aver that, when females write their novels; they are taking their space back. This means that, when female authors write, they try to address their problems they face in novels written by males. Assuming that female writers can do better in portraying women characters, this can therefore help those female writers who read this study to know how they are being portrayed by male writers and then write defending them. Therefore, this gives a platform to them to liberate themselves.

The study is also important in that it offers feasible responses to the continuous and irritating queries that readers have about the portrayal of women in Shona novels. Accessible studies on the portrayal of women have a tendency to look at the portrayal of women in Shona war novels. In addition, no researcher in Zimbabwe offered a comprehensive study of the analysis of women in Shona novels. Some theses and dissertations have widened their focus on the depiction of women in different languages such as English, Ndebele and Shona. However, this research considers Shona war novels. To those who did the same research, they did not seriously explain the different factors that are responsible for the way women are being portrayed in Shona novels.

This study also contributes immensely to the understanding of why there is persistent stereotyping of females in Shona novels and why there is existence of various perceptions about the portrayal of women.

In conclusion, it is crucial that an improved and innovative perception of Shona novels about the portrayal of women in Zimbabwe is provided. As a teacher, it is my responsibility to use my talents in contributing towards developing the kind of research

that influences Zimbabwean society in coming out with positive attitudes towards women.

1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Some of the key terms that are going to be defined include the following:

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Critical analysis is defined as a process of dismantling or separating into constituent elements in order to study the nature, function and meaning. (<https://www.tru.ca/>).

In addition, it means to look in depth at an issue from the perspective of a critic. Analyze means to break a topic down into its component parts. Critically means the researcher is going to explain her ideas with specific examples from the books or novels. (<https://www.tru.ca/>).

PORTRAYAL

Williamson (2001) defines portrayal as the representation of men and women by male and female authors in literature. Therefore, on the topic under study, portrayal means how writers of Shona novels describe or depict women characters.

STEREOTYPING

Pickering (2001) defines stereotyping as the process of over-generalizing the characteristics that may or may not have been observed in fact. It often contains a kernel of truth that is impartial and thus misleading. In addition, Pickering (2001) views stereotyping as the perception that someone has about certain people based on race, gender and so on. He also argues that stereotyping means some preconceived conclusion or perceptions about things or people in whatever form, but are not necessarily confirmed to be real. In addition, stereotypes are assumptions made about people. These assumptions are made based on the behavior of the people observed, one's own ignorance, narrow-mindedness or individual past experience with a particular person. When assumptions are made, individuals assign behaviors, characteristics and physical attributes to others. These assumptions may be accurate or inaccurate. All

these definitions imply that, the perceptions that someone may have on another person may be accurate or not accurate.

OPPRESSION

Barker (2003) defines oppression as the social act of placing severe restrictions on an individual, group or institution. The oppressed individual or group is devalued, exploited and deprived of privileges by the individual or group which has more power. The author further avers that oppression as the exercise of authority or power in a burdensome, cruel or unjust manner. He also argues that, oppression refers to relationships of dominance and ill-treatment that is in terms of social, psychological and economic between social classes, individuals and groups inside and outside societies and internationally among whole societies. It is when people reduce the potential for other people to be fully human.

PATRIARCHY

Chitando (2011) defines patriarchy as a culture, structure or nation ruled and controlled by men. This relates to a structure controlled by men unlike women. Patriarchy is also perceived as a social system in which males hold primary power and predominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of property. In the domain of the family, fathers or father-figures hold authority over women and children. Patriarchy is also defined as a social system in which the male acts as the primary authority figure central to social organization and where fathers hold authority over women, children and property. These two definitions imply that, in a patriarchal society, men rule and control the institution and there is subordination of females. It also implies that, societies which are patriarchal are usually patrilineal. This means that possession and title of the family are inherited by male lineage. Patriarchy has been creating a principle that produces chauvinist repression and sex discrimination towards females.

AFRICANA WOMANISM

According to Hudson-Weems (2007:289), “Africana womanism is a theory that allows a specific discussion of the woman of African descent’s existence in reality and in imagined existence. The Africana womanist theory fills a void created by the disassociation of Africana women from movements that foster inequality and keep them languishing on the fringes of the white world”.

Therefore, the Africana womanist theory has the possibility of implementing change and producing significant contributions to the Afrocentric discourse on men and women of African origin.

AFROCENTRICITY

Afrocentricity, according to Asante (2007:47) “contends and rests upon our ability to systematically displace European ways of thinking, being, feeling and consciously replace them with ways that are germane to our own African cultural experience”. This means that, this theory displaces European ways of life and replaces them with African ways of living. Asante asserts that Afrocentricity places the experience of African people at the heart of their lives.

1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

Under this study, it is crucial for the researcher to make a familiarization of what other researchers have found in the similar field of research. Unlike showing gaps left out by other researchers, literature review provides the researcher with some direction. Therefore, the researcher is able to know where to start from.

Literature review inspires, teaches, notifies and assists the researcher to find out her own ideas concerning the topic under study. In short, every researcher carrying out a study usually depends on available information so as to come up with new information. O’ Leary (2004:67) notes that, “research may be done alone but it is never done in isolation. The production of new knowledge is fundamentally dependent on past knowledge”. In simple terms, when carrying out research, it is important to use literature as a crucial part of the process of research.

Literature is an effective tool for the understanding of responsibilities among men and women. Literature like other media enables and portrays a particular and partial view of truth. Through literature, people who write designate or visualize certain customs, norms and values which they view as essential. Those customs and principles that they do not consider valuable or essential may be criticized through literature. Also, these principles and customs that the authors support depend on their visions about social reality. Therefore, the values and motifs of particular authors are crucial in this study in determining how images of women may be portrayed.

With this in mind, a variety of secondary sources are going to be reviewed. Emecheta (1980), rather than simply portraying the African woman symbolically as part of the warm and secure African past, she offers faithful portrayal patterns of self-analysis and general insights into the female psyche, ignored by or inaccessible to, African male writers. Emecheta's perspective on African women in Nigerian society is therefore a welcome occurrence.

She argues that, male writers lack the empathy, sympathy and consciousness of their female characters' psyche. They do not know what it means to be an African woman in an African society. This explains why the multi-dimensional role of African women is not accurately reflected in modern African literature. Emecheta is an advocate of women's liberation and is of the opinion that male writers make African women their housemaids or prostitutes in their books. Therefore, all women suffer oppression and need to be liberated. All the female inhabitants are said to be oppressed victims. Although the author is a Nigerian writer, this information is very useful to this study as it also considers the stereotypes that are attached to African women that are also going to be included in this study. However, the author did not consider why the male authors lack the empathy, sympathy and consciousness of their female characters and why male writers make African women their housemaids or prostitutes.

Mtuzze (1990) analyses different descriptions allocated to females in the Xhosa society. Although this current study is about the images of women in Shona novels, Mtuzze's study is useful in this study. This study puts emphasis on the labels and other symbolic descriptions of women. He compares between stereotypes of women being used by

male authors on one hand and stereotypes of females as being used by female authors on the other. He has also revealed that, women characters play a submissive role and are stereotyped strongly by male writers. Similar to Mtuze's study, this study also considers the female stereotypes used by male and female authors. However, the author did not explain why female characters are stereotyped strongly by men. Therefore, this study considers female stereotypes by male and female authors.

Mtuze (1990) writes an article on the stereotypes of females but is in Xhosa literature and folk stories. The author employs a feminist theory in analyzing the different women characters portrayed in Xhosa folktales. His conclusion is that women occupy a subservient role in society, they are seen but never heard and more privileges and rights are awarded to men than women. The various stereotypes that are presently attached to women can be traced back to folktales. These negative stereotypes influence the way modern writers depict their female characters.

Although the author's study is on folktales, it is very useful under this study as it helps the researcher to know that the stereotypes that are found in literature such as the literature under study originated from folktales. However, the author did not consider what happened in folktales that cause women characters to be negatively portrayed. Mtuze uses a feminist theory but this study adopts African womanism and Afrocentricity as the main principles that guide this study.

Mawela (1996) also did a study on the portrayal of women in Venda narratives. The author analyzed different tasks allocated to females in Venda society. This analysis shows that women in the Venda society are not content with the roles assigned to them by society. There are a number of women who challenge the status quo, but unfortunately their actions are not welcomed by the Venda society at large. This means that a lot of Venda women are not satisfied with the roles given to them by their society. Although this study is on Venda novels, some of the duties allocated to females in Venda society are similar to those assigned to women in Shona novels. Therefore, it is useful to this study.

Masuku (1994) produces an article on the duties of females in folklore and referring to Zulu folktales. This article is important in this study because some of the information raised is also considered under this study. Masuku's article analyzes the stereotypical images attached to women in Zulu folktales. Using the feminist approach, Masuku discovered that women in folktales were expected to get married and bear children, women who are beautiful are regarded as dangerous and they can cause a man's downfall. Women should be able to bear children, if they fail to do so, they are shunned and regarded as unnatural. This means that, every women in folktales should get married and be able to bear children. Failure to do that, they are being avoided by others and considered as supernatural. However, the author failed to consider what makes beautiful women to be considered as dangerous and why they cause the downfall of man. Masuku adopts a feminist approach whilst the present study is guided by Africana Womanism and Afrocentricity theory.

Masuku (1997) also did another study on the portrayal of women in Zulu drama. Although Masuku's study is on drama, the information found in her study is very useful in this study as it considers some of the images of women that are going to be also considered in this study. Masuku showed that some male authors depict women harshly in their literary works and that women writers do the same with their female characters. Men have been raised to believe that women are of the lesser sex while female writers in order for their books to be accepted by the review board, had to ascribe to the same writing formula as men so that they could be published because Zulu literature is dominated by male authors and reviewers. This means that, in order for the books of women to be published, they should stick to the same formula of writing used by men. This is because women are regarded as less important than men. However, the author only considers women portrayal in Zulu drama whilst this study considers the portrayal of women in Shona novels.

Gaidzanwa (1985) presents a discussion on the descriptions of females both in English, Ndebele and Shona literature. However, this study focuses mainly on the selected Shona novels that fall under the Old World and New World novels (Kahari, 1990). Gaidzanwa (1985) studies the leading images of women of black origin in English,

Ndebele and Shona literature in Zimbabwe. Gaidzanwa avers that Zimbabwean literature tends to stereotype the black woman. This is largely the case with works written in Shona and Ndebele. Such a vision has subversive consequences on the development of the nation because women constitute the bulk of the population and the materially and intellectually disadvantaged. This means that, most literature written in Shona and Ndebele usually give negative images of women and this reduces women empowerment. While Gaidzanwa does a study in Shona, Ndebele and English literature, this study differs because it focuses on Shona novels only written by male and female writers. Gaidzanwa (1985) also asserts that, there are two categories of women namely the rural women and the urban women. She also argues that, rural women are the most ideal wives and mothers in literature. Urban women are seen involved in prostitution. However, the author did not consider the factors that cause urban women to be involved in prostitution. Therefore, this study indicates the factors that led urban women to be prostitutes.

Zinyemba (1986:75) argues that, the submissive 'rural-good' women are placed on a high moral plane, while the rebellious 'urban-bad' women are descended upon with a 'heavy moral whip'. Although the author referred the rural women as the idealised, poverty, hardship and underdevelopment of these rural people is ignored. The lack of safe water, services and comfort is not explored. Therefore, women the major population in rural areas suffer all these hardships. However, Zinyemba did not explain what makes rural women good and urban women bad. Therefore, this study gives an explanation of what makes rural women good and urban women bad.

Gaidzanwa's views are helpful in this study since they mirror the route of imaginative awareness in Zimbabwean literature. Although she discusses a number of novels in different languages that focus on the Images of Women in Zimbabwean Literature, some of the information raised in these different novels is useful in this study. It also helps the researcher in such a way that the information is used as cross reference to the study.

Gaidzanwa (1985) also asserts that modern day women who are strong, cooperative and survivors are depicted in negative terms by male authors. They are portrayed as

prostitutes, witches and castrators of men. This imagery points to the facts that women in Zimbabwe do not necessarily accede to being oppressed and victimized. However, when women form supportive alliances with their sisters and mothers, they are trying to change or strengthen their status and situation within and outside marriage. However, a negative image of women delegitimizes 'their struggle for fundamental rights and freedoms such as the right to jobs, education, health and other valued goods and services in society.' Therefore, what Gaidzanwa does not do and what this study does is to explain what influences these male authors to depict women characters negatively.

Gaidzanwa(1985)'s work is similar to Mashiri (1994) that centers on the descriptions of females in Shona novels. Mashiri's study is useful as it lifts various decisive insights on the position and rank of women in Shona novels. However, he does not give reasons why women in Shona novels have got that status. These reasons are discussed in this study.

Musendekwa (2001) looks at the descriptions of females in a small number of chosen Shona novels, predominantly their roles as contributors and sufferers throughout and after the war of liberation. The author affirms that women provided material support, information, entertainment and spiritual and religious guidance as spirit mediums but never portrayed as actual guerrilla fighters. She seems to observe that women are portrayed in Shona novels as victims either of rape or torture from the Rhodesian forces. The study goes on to assert that the majority of women got frustrated and disappointed by what they got after independence. This means that, women played pivotal roles such as provision of information during the war of liberation but never depicted as actual war fighters. In addition, after independence, women did not benefit but got disappointed and frustrated. Also, Musendekwa did not give reasons why these women were not depicted as actual guerrilla fighters. Any comprehensive study of women portrayal in Shona novels should have interest on how women are being depicted. Therefore, this study gives the images of women in Shona novels that are selected excluding war novels.

Kruger (1995) avers that women in the war novels had roles as fighters, educators in refugee camps, providers of food and shelter to the guerrillas and highly trained female

war collaborators or female youths. This means that, women in war novels also played important roles such as being educators and providers of food. While these two authors give a detailed discussion on the images of women in Shona war novels which is very useful in this study, they do not give the images of women in those novels that are not war novels.

Although this study does not include Shona War novels, the above information is very useful. The ideas he raised contribute towards the study's discussion of the portrayal of women in general. The views that are raised are of great value in this study because they provide the investigator with a great deal of desirable background data on the portrayal of women.

Other researchers already carried out a study on the images of women in Shona novels only displayed the stereotypical images of females in selected novels by male writers. Therefore, the researcher differs from those carried out the same study as she analyzes both the negative and positive descriptions of females in chosen Shona novels by both female and male authors.

Chiwome and Gambahaya (1998:165) argue that, "gender stereotyping in Shona literature takes the form of a sexist tradition which portrays female characters in a more or less state of being. It fashions women as the cause of men's decadence in the city, as passive guardians of imagined customs and therefore the refuge of men's escape from the hardships of the colonial experience. They go on to say that, in its negative form, gender stereotyping tends to under-develop female characters by denying them the power to act as individuals. It confines women to the private space". However, these authors did not consider the factors that cause authors to portray women in a more or less state of being. They did not also explain why there is gender stereotyping in Shona literature. This study gives the factors that are responsible for the way women are portrayed in novels. It also indicates why gender stereotyping is common in Shona literature.

Furusa (2006:12) asserts that "women who transgress the various spaces bounded by colonial authority are presented as immoral elements that writers, acting in support of

colonial authority, destroy with all kinds of diseases and all forms of violence. They become desperate prostitutes who fight over men in the city. These reconstructions perpetuate stereotypical images of women. They present the woman as the scapegoat of all ills in the society". Although these women are being portrayed in negative terms, they may feel guilty and apologetic once they behave out of the expectations imposed by the images of women as outlined in literature (Furusa, 2006:12). However, the writer does not consider why women are having such immoral behaviors, become desperate prostitutes and do all forms of violence. This is what this study does.

Furusa (2006:3) argues that, "colonialism bracketed the Zimbabwean woman into restricted roles of wife and mother. Her performance space was the home, with her major staging area as the kitchen". She had restricted access to colonial education and when she was lucky to get an opportunity, she was channeled into academic programmes that 'fitted Western gender ideology that is teaching and nursing – traditionally reserved for women in the West (Seidman, 1984) in Furusa (2006: 3). Gaidzanwa (1985:97) argues that, "most women become teachers or nurses since these are nurturing and expected roles and jobs". Furusa (2006:3) also observed that, "the colonial society in Zimbabwe brought its own gender ideology along with new economic relationships. This ideology constructed roles that Zimbabwean women were expected to play within the context of established institutions and policies". However, this information is crucial to this study because it laysuncovered the negative images females are subjected to in Shona novels. Although these authors were able to give roles attached to women in literature, they were not able to consider how women may also be able to occupy the public space or roles. In addition, they did not also give reasons why women in literature have restricted access to colonial education. Hence, this study considers why women are having limited access to colonial education.

Chimhundu (1987:10) argues that, "in Shona literature, women characters who submit to patriarchal power and authority are idealized while those who challenge it are castigated. Such politics of gender involves dividing women into a 'rural good' and 'urban' bad dichotomy. Rural – based married women are portrayed as the ideal –

madzimai (mothers cum – wives) and not just *vakadzi* (ordinary women)”. Stratton, (1994:172) argues that, “the *madzima* as an ideal gender category are portrayed as the incarnation of the ‘Mother Africa trope being nurturant, perseverant, submissive and forgiving. In contrast, women of the city are depicted as lustful, callous, acquisitive, assertive and rebellious”. However, in his study, Chimhundu does not specify what makes rural women to be portrayed as the ideal women and urban women as the bad dichotomy. Hence, this research considers what characterises rural women and urban women. In addition, the researcher finds out whether rural women are the ideal women and urban women are the bad dichotomy basing on the information obtained in the novels.

Chimhundu (1987) also asserts that, married rural women are being portrayed as the ideal wives and they are being placed on top of the hierarchy. The urban women being regarded as not the ideal women are placed on the bottom of the hierarchy. The above information is used as cross reference by the researcher to find out whether what is found in the novels selected is similar to what is said by Chimhundu (1987). In addition, the information also helps the researcher to find out whether what is said by Chimhundu (1987) is a reflection of what is seen in the novels. However, the author did not consider why the rural women are placed on top of the hierarchy and the urban women on the bottom of the hierarchy.

Other authors like Hafkin and Bay (1976:3) said that, “women in Shona novels were not only denied access to political activities, cultural activities or religious activities but also job opportunities and educational facilities”. Manyonga (1980) also noted that, women in many Shona novels were denied access to education because it is said that educated women bring a lot of problems in marriage. It is also said that, marrying an educated woman is marrying trouble, therefore this causes family disintegration. However, in their studies, these two authors did not consider what is then done by these women after being denied the access to education, political activities and cultural activities. This is considered in this study.

Gaidzanwa (1985:97) asserts that, “working class women outside the home are characterized as insubordinate and difficult to control. This image causes many

husbands and parents to shelter women as wives and daughters from other spheres of life. Some husbands in Zimbabwe will not let their wives work in waged jobs". However, this encourages parochialism in the women and the inability to utilize chances in professional fields such as teaching and nursing when the schools are located in urban areas.

According to Seidman (1984:421-2), "Zimbabwean women were used as 'objects of exchange between lineage groups' and 'lobola payment gave husbands control over their wives'". Seidman's concern, here is to argue for victimization and enslavement of Zimbabwean women by what she considers to be a backward 'traditional culture', she re-invents Zimbabwean cultures as savagery, the western inferior other'. She sees and positions everything in Zimbabwe within normative codes of western discourses. What Seidman does not do and what this study considers is why women were used as objects of exchange between lineage groups and why lobola payment gave husband control over their wives.

Barnes (1999:64) noted that, "in colonial Zimbabwe, while whites, African men and boys had to carry *zvitupa*, African women were exempted from the pass laws as signification of their inferior status. She further argues that, throughout the colonial era, an African woman had the same status of a child, for her whole life, irrespective of her education, finances or marital status". Sodayi, cited by Barnes (1999:64) explains that,

A woman was not allowed to have a bank account: your brother's name had to be written on the bank book. Yes; you had to put a man's name. "Where would a woman get money from?" they would ask... it would be in your father's or brother's name. If your husband died and you didn't have a son you had problems. "A woman doesn't own anything". The relatives would say...everything you had worked for was theirs and you were left... with nothing.

This denial of women's rights to own property was in direct violation of the principles and practices of, for example, Shona culture in which the only person who owns private property is the woman. Whatever a woman owns belongs to her. Therefore, by denying

Zimbabwean women the right to own property, subjecting them to discriminating principles of labour, and restricting the enactment of their presence in the rural areas. Colonialism endowed African men with formal control over women (Furusa, 2006). This information is relevant to this study as it helps the researcher to find out whether this is also happening in the novels analyzed.

Reynolds and Cousins (1989:59) argue that, “women’s responsibility is to grow enough food to feed the family. They went on to say that, migration has meant that, women are left to carry much of the burden of work”. Hafkin and Bay (1976:4) observe that, as Shona men entered wage employment, their womenfolk remained behind in the mostlybarren native reserves, shouldering the extra burdens of agricultural labour. However, in their studies, these authors did not explain why women did not migrate to those areas where men were going. Hence, this research considers why women are not allowed to migrate together with their husbands. Beach in Chiwome and Gambahaya (1998:164) also said that, “women in Shona literature, during the colonial period, has important jobs of being the leaders of the village”.The author also asserts that, “pre-colonial Shona women could assume important public functions such as clan chiefs, village leaders, story tellers, mid wives and religious leaders. Their cultural role in the mediation of the family, village and clan disputes was indispensable”. Women were only given those roles that were not done by men. The author did not consider why this was done. Hence, this study considers that.

Hafkin and Bay (1976:3) say that, “pre-colonial African women did not see themselves as an under-privileged class which had to fight with men in order to seek social equality. Women enjoyed more freedom and power in a complementary system in which both sexes participated as active agents of development and gained access to the collectively – owned means of production like land”.“For these reasons, traditional Shona culture’s sex role plan seems to contest the generalized claim from mostly Eurocentric feminists that women occupied the domestic domain and men the public domain and because power and authority was vested in the public domain, women hadde facto lower status than men”(Couville, 1994:35). In their culturally- sanctioned capacity as the heads of the families, men remained in overall control of the social

organizational structure. However, men could abuse this responsibility taking advantage of it to control women. However, these authors did not give reasons and evidence which indicates that these women did not see themselves as an underprivileged class. In addition, they did not give any example of the freedom that is enjoyed by women except indicating their access to land. Also, the authors failed to consider what causes the pre-colonial women to see themselves as a privileged class who enjoyed freedom and power. This is what is done by this study.

Chitando (2011) argues that male authors have been portraying women in disempowering ways as loose, dangerous, weak and dependent on men. This unjust portrayal of women has been worsened by the prevalence of HIV and AIDS. Women have been depicted as vectors in the spread of HIV, thus perpetuating sexist ideologies. This means that, women are mainly depicted in stereotypical ways such as being weak and loose. These stereotypical images of women has been worsened due to the dominance of HIV/AIDS. Although this study is about literature written in English and by female authors, this information about the portrayal of women by male writers is important to this study as the researcher includes that. In contrast, this current study is on Shona literature written by both male and female authors.

McFadden (1992) says that HIV and AIDS came to be identified as a black women's disease. As a result of that mode of construction in the HIV and AIDS discourse, women were seen as the principal carriers of the disease. Biological, cultural and socio-economic conditions contribute to women's greater vulnerability to HIV. Apart from being more vulnerable to HIV infection, women carry the burden of care. This means that, black women are regarded as the carriers of HIV/AIDS due to economic, social, cultural and biological factors which contribute greatly to their vulnerability. Although this study is not focusing on the representation of female characters in the context of HIV and AIDS, this information is important to this study as it conveys how women are being portrayed. However, the author did not consider why women were regarded as the carrier of the disease and why they are more vulnerable to that.

Gaidzanwa (1985:16) suggests that, “in Zimbabwean male-authored literature, women are either wives or mothers, and are portrayed as loose and dangerous. This descriptor of women as dangerous is not extended to men”. She says:

There are no cases where women get away with adultery, promiscuity and disobedience without incurring drastic punishment. This is in contrast with men who may suffer some hardship for their wrong doing but their punishment is not as drastic as that meted out to women. Men have wives to go back to after committing adultery, brutalizing their families or deserting them. These men’s function is usually to highlight the indecency and evil nature of the central female characters. (Gaidzanwa, 1985:87-88).

Gaidzanwa tends to neglect the pains by several characters to subvert the negative image of females as dangerous. She did not consider why women were punished drastically and why men go back to their families after committing adultery. This study bridges the gap in Gaidzanwa’s approach by considering why women were punished but men were not and why men go back to their families after committing adultery and women were not allowed to go back.

In characterization of females as dangerous and loose, images that demonize females are usually used. Saadawi (2007:521) avers that:

Woman continues to appear on the scene as a capricious vamp, a playful and beautiful slave, a she – devil imbued with cunning and capable of a thousand artifices, an explosive danger versed in all the arts of deceit and conspiracy, a seductive mistress captivating in her passion (Saadawi 2007:521).

These stereotypical images of women depicted as dangerous and the insubordinate other are used by males in order to portray a female in negative terms (McFadden 1992). This information is important as it lays exposed the stereotypical images attached to females in literature. Therefore, it is useful to this study.

Gaidzanwa (1985:12) draws attention to the negative images of women in Zimbabwean literature. According to her, the dominant image of a woman especially in the urban context is that she is a prostitute or loose. As long as a woman has sex with a man who is not her husband, she is held to be prostitute, implicitly or explicitly. Gaidzanwa reveals the patriarchal bias in most works by male authors. This had the effect of encouraging women writers to take up the challenge as outlined above. However, Gaidzanwa did not consider why women were involved in prostitution in urban areas and what causes a woman to become a prostitute. Hence this study considers that.

Furusa (2006:18) suggests that, "most of Zimbabwean women writers are too harsh in their portrayal of gender relations. He posits that, most of Zimbabwean women writers' representations of relationships between Zimbabwean women and men paint a picture of a culture that unleashes a large-scale, barbaric, and indiscriminate abuse of women". Although the author indicates that women authors are too harsh in depicting gender relations, he did not consider what causes these writers to react harshly. Hence this study does this.

In conclusion, the above reviewed references deal with the subject of the depiction of females in Shona novels. They deal with the findings of those researchers who made a research on the topic under study either on war novels or English literary works. However, some of these authors did not consider why women in the novels behave in the manner indicated in the novels. Therefore, determining how women are being portrayed is what this study does. This study utilizes evidence from different authors who wrote something about the portrayal of women in different literature.

1.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Gibbon and Sanderson (2002) aver that an understanding of the theoretical perspective of one's study is crucial because it determines the progression of the researches. This means that, it is important for the researcher to understand the theoretical framework to be used as it helps to show progress of the researches. Hudson-Weems (2004) affirms that the battle for theory marks the battle for the ownership of mind. Ideas that inform the study or reading of literature are therefore critical. A theory of literature is needed to

inform the study or reading of this nature. A theory is defined by Owens (1994) as a thought process or way of thinking about reality which becomes a model of that reality.

Gandari et al., (2012) define theoretical framework as the foundation from which all knowledge is constructed for a research study. It serves as the structure and support for the rationale for the study. Giddens (2006:69) also defines theoretical framework as “the blueprint for the entire dissertation inquiry. It serves as the guide on which to build and support the study and also provides the structure to define how you will philosophically, epistemologically (theory of knowledge), methodologically and analytically approach the dissertation as a whole.” Therefore, Africana womanism and Afrocentricity theories are used in this study.

1.6.1 AFRICANA WOMANIST THEORY

Hudson-Weems established the concept of Africana womanism in 1987. Africana womanism is defined as a theory centered in Africa which puts African people at the midpoint of analysis of outcomes that are related to a woman in Africa. Africana womanism is a useful theory under this study since:

... there is no need for Africana texts to be analyzed and explicated via the use of outside theory. To be sure, all of these theorists' place Europe and whiteness at the centre of their analysis, which we as Africana people should find somewhat problematic for an African perspective (Hudson –Weems, 2007:77).

Hudson-Weems (2007:77) cited in Wasosa (2014) affirms that, “the theory ... advances in a direction best suited for accuracy in authentic literary theory that is, creation and interpretation focusing on the totaling of the Black Women's presence within our own rich and unique historical and cultural zones”.

The Africana womanist is depicted as a self-namer and self-definer who is also family centered with a strong grounding in sisterhood and an unyielding belief in positive male-female relationships as foundations for the survival of African people and humankind (Aldrige and Young, 2000). In the midpoint of Africana womanism is the desire for self-naming, emphasizing the desire for the correct process of giving names of a discipline in Africa by women. According to Gudhlanga (2016), the Africana womanist theoretical

paradigm advocates that, African women and men are compatible and work together to liberate themselves from the evils of colonialism. She further argues that, Africana womanism includes males and females of African origin in fighting against the difficult tasks being faced by Africans.

Moyana (2012:63) asserts that:

Africana Womanism constitutes a resonant theoretical alternative that promotes harmonization of participatory gender efforts.

The author also indicates that, “Africana womanism is not exclusionary but incorporates the male gender in eradicating the challenges that women face” Moyana (2012:63). Hence, this is significant to this study which analyses the portrayal of females in chosen Shona novels as the images attached to females in novels are due to their interaction with men. Therefore, it is necessary for this research to be grounded in African-centered theories such as Africana womanism and Afrocentricity in its analysis of the images of females in chosen Shona novels. Gudhlanga (2016) also asserts that, Africana womanism is a theory which comprehends that, African women are under the tripartite domination of race, class and gender and therefore, helps this research to grasp fully women portrayal in relation to gender.

The importance of this theory to the current study is that it locates the discourse within a specific historical and cultural context. It identifies the woman under study as having her own unique set of experiences. This is vital in that the experiences of women cannot be universalised as is the case with feminism. The study is in a position to raise context specific questions and answers. The literary images are therefore interrogated within a Zimbabwean context that takes into account the unique experiences of the Shona woman. In addition, “Africana Womanism anchors on the eighteen descriptors, among them are, family-centred, in concert with males in struggle, flexible role playing, genuine sisterhood, mothering and nurturing” (Hudson-Weems 2007:77). These are critical in interrogating the authors’ depiction of women.

1.6.2 AFROCENTRICITY THEORY

In 1980, Molefi Asante generated the theory known as Afrocentricity. Asante established the phrase Afrocentricity and is the chief intercessor for the “Afrocentric school of thought”. The other powerful advocates of Afrocentricity are Diop, Karenga, Clarke, Carruthers, Keto among others. These proponents argue that any meaningful and authentic study of peoples of African descent must begin and proceed with Africa as the centre, not periphery, as subject and not object. What this means is that, in order for a study which is about African people to be meaningful, it should place Africans at the midpoint of everything and being the main subject and not at the periphery.

According to Gudhlanga and Makaudze (2012), Afrocentricity theory demands literary works in African literature and their way of living to be seen as well as allocated their sense from the point of view of people in Africa. In addition, the theory emphasises putting the interests of people in Africa at the midpoint. Muwati (1998) notes that Asante who coined the word Afrocentricity described it as, placing African ideals at the centre of any analysis that involves African culture and behaviour.

Gray (2001:3) posits that, Afrocentricity is:

...a perspective which holds that African people should see, study, interpret and interact with people, life and all reality from the vantage point of same African people than from the vantage point of European, or Asian or other non- African people or from the vantage point of African people who are alienated from Africanness.

Afrocentricity theory notices that, by using alien theories or Western theories in order to comprehend African events usually arises in the misrepresentation of the history of the indigenous people and their beliefs and values. Therefore, using Afrocentricity as a theory that guides this study is important as it puts emphasis on the relevance of the existence of African people. It is also the only true ideology that seeks to place Africans where they belong; at the centre of history and not treating them as marginal to Europe (Gudhlanga, 2016). In addition, according to Asante (2007), it is the ideology which calls

for the liberation of the mind from any notion that Europe is the teacher and Africa is the pupil. This means that, this theory was introduced in order to liberate Africans from the oppression by Europeans.

Afrocentricity as a theory is defined by Asante (1998) as, ... literally placing African ideals at the centre of any analysis that involves African culture and behavior. It is the most important theory that can be used to understand African lives, unpleasant emotions, expectations and challenges by power of being at the centre in terms of their beliefs or values and their history (Wasosa, 2014). This tenet of Afrocentricity calls for the harmonizing of the ancient and traditional values of African culture in a manner that would be beneficial and empowering for the Africans.

Chinweizu (1975:496-7) also notes that, “under Afrocentricity, we ought to approach all problems and issues from the viewpoint of our culture in the new global world”. This theory is crucial to this study as it emphasizes the significance of using African history in order to apprehend the present events that are being confronted by people in Africa.

In conclusion, this study therefore make use of views from Africana womanism and Afrocentricity theories in its critical analysis of the portrayal of women in selected Shona novels. It is therefore vital to point out that these theories inform this study and help to locate women’s position within the economy, family, politics and environmental institutions.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Choosing a suitable method of research is a crucial phase in the process of collecting the data in any research study. The initial phase in the process of choosing the suitable method of research is to consider the philosophic point of view within which the study is located. The researcher uses qualitative research design. Qualitative method of research permits the researcher to untie the complicity of social realities in the broader framework of cultural, political structures and socio-economic structures. This research design is more appropriate for this study unlike quantitative research design which involves the use of statistics. Walliman (2006:129) argues that, “qualitative design is based on information expressed in words, descriptions, accounts, opinions and

feelings.” Marshall and Rossman (2006:2) noted that, “qualitative research is an extensive approach to the study of a social phenomenon. Its different types are naturalistic, interpretive and increasingly critical”.

Ambert et al., (1995:881) argue that, “qualitative research, its aim is to learn about how and why people behave, think and make meaning as they do, rather than focusing on what people do or believe on a large scale. Qualitative research frequently falls within the context of discovery rather than verification”. Denzin and Lincoln (1998: 4) also averthat, “qualitative research design is inherently multi – method in focus and the use of multiple methods is an attempt to secure an in – depth understanding of the phenomenon in question”. The phenomenon in question in the case of this study is a critical analysis of the portrayal of women in selected Shona novels. In qualitative research, the main informationcollecting tool is the researcher who uses a lot of time in setting the research, investigating the research subject under study. This allows the researcher to do an inductive exploration of informationin order to take outdata from various sources before one analyzes and makes some conclusions. Concepts arein form of topics or motifs. Information is more of explanatory and narrative in approach.

Moreover, qualitative research recognizes that meaning emerges through interaction and is not standardized from person to person like in quantitative research. Merriam (1998:8) noted that, “qualitative design allows the researcher to study issues in detail, without predetermined categorized analysis”. Mason (2002:1) argues that, “these methods are highly exciting as they are concerned with the aspects of life that matter and in ways that matter”. These methods allow the researcher to appreciate the depth and richness of the data and enabling the researcher to produce cross – contextual generalities regarding the portrayal of women in literary works by men and women.

As a means of collecting data, a variety of primary sources thatare Shona novels were critically analyzed. A broader view of the term portrayal is taken into consideration so as to include within it a wider variety of literary works. Where necessary, other Shona novels not selected are used as cross references. Literary analysis of selected Shona novels is done. A textual analysis of the content of these novels is done so as to show their efficiency in depicting Zimbabwean women. The novelsgiveexamples used to

demonstrate ideas raised by this study and also supplying evidence on research findings. According to Bakhtin (1981) literary analysis or textual interpretations is necessary to be employed in this study because it engages the creative texts in order to reveal how they have depicted women. This means that, it is important for the researcher to analyse the texts as it is where women characters are shown.

The study also analyzes each novel within different chapters. In order to focus on the prerequisite of the depiction of women characters, the researcher selects the works of different writers. Furthermore, the researcher analyzes a variety of novels that is Old World and New World novels. The idea is to build a composite picture of the portrayal of women in different novels. An in-depth analysis of various texts is done in order to develop a deeper understanding of the portrayal of women in selected Shona novels. As a means of gathering information, various primary sources that is Shona novels are critically analyzed. A wider perspective of the word portrayal is taken into consideration so as to include within it a broader variety of fictional works. Where necessary, other Shona novels not selected are used as cross references.

In addition, secondary sources relevant to the topic under study are used. They shed light on the subject of the portrayal of women. Secondary sources that are considered include some works written on the portrayal or images of women that include dissertations already looked at the images of women in different novels including English literature. Secondary sources are very crucial in authorizing the opinions made as well as complementing primary sources. Only justifiable and significant secondary sources with data pertinent to the topic under study are considered as reference point.

Interviews with academics who teach Shona literature are done so as to develop a wider approval of the portrayal of women in Shona novels. The researcher did interviews with four academics from the Departments of African languages that teach Shona literature particularly at the University of Zimbabwe as well as in secondary schools. Four teachers were also interviewed in secondary schools.

In conclusion, in order to attend to the requirements of the portrayal of women, the researcher selects the works of a variety of writers that is Old World and New World

novels. The study uses secondary sources that focus on the depiction of females in literature.

1.8 SCOPE OF STUDY

This study is about a critical analysis of the portrayal of women in selected Shona novels. It is divided into six chapters. Chapter one presents the introduction which specifies why the researcher carries out this research and introduces the reader to the topic and area of research. This chapter also presents the statement of the problem which indicates what is happening at present with regard to the portrayal of women in the Shona novels. In addition, the aim of the study which indicates what is to be achieved by the researcher is also included under chapter one. Objectives that are goals striven for are also included under this chapter. Research questions that guide this research fall under this chapter. The significance of the research which includes the contribution of the research to different people or how this study helps a lot of people including academics is also under chapter one. Definition of terms that is some of the key terms that are used in the study are also included in this chapter. It also includes the scope of the study and ethical considerations. Sources that are used under chapter one especially secondary sources are indicated. Finally, a conclusion of the chapter is also presented under chapter one.

Chapter two deals with literature review which shows how the researchers' work proceeds from the works of others who carry out a similar study. Secondary sources as well as primary sources are included under literature review. Chapter three presents the conceptual framework upon which the study is grounded. Africana Womanism and Afrocentricity theories are used by the researcher to support this study. Chapter four is research methodology chapter that indicates the methods that are used to collect data. Primary as well as secondary sources of collecting information are given. Advantages of using those methods are also elaborated. Chapter 5 is the research findings, analysis and discussion chapter. Research findings from the novels are laid out and analyzed. The analysis and discussion give a conversation or debate concerning the topic under study. Further details on the topic are given. The discussion also includes the analysis of works of those writers of Shona novels indicating how women are being portrayed.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion of the research and where possible, recommendations are given. The conclusion winds up the research by highlighting the main findings of the study.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In conducting research, there is need to observe ethical norms. This element of research is key towards achieving the aims of the study. Ethical standards are critical because they create an environment of trust, accountability, confidentiality and mutual respect between the researcher and the informants. The major ethical issue in conducting research is informed consent. Informed consent is one of the means by which a participant's right to autonomy is recognized, respected and protected. Since the informants are human beings, the researcher ensures that before obtaining their informed consent to participate, she gives clear, detailed and factual information about the study including the possible risks and benefits.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter provides an introduction to the study which mainly states that, most Shona novels depict women characters in a stereotypical way. The main focus of this study as indicated on the objectives is to investigate the portrayal of women by selected Shona authors. In order to do this, a variety of primary as well as secondary sources that deal with the portrayal of women have been reviewed. This study was guided by Africana Womanism and Afrocentricity theories in its analysis of the portrayal of women in selected Shona novels. It was also guided by the research questions such as how do selected Shona authors portray women in their novels. The study also used qualitative research method whereby a literal and in-depth analysis of a variety of selected primary sources was done. The significance of the study was articulated mainly arguing that there has not been a comprehensive research on the portrayal of women in Shona novels in general. Therefore, this study strives to contribute by filling in this gap.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to indicate how the current research is proceeding from the works of other researchers who already carried out research on the same field. It shows the gaps and pitfalls found in previous works done by other researchers. Under this study, it is crucial for the researcher to understand the researches carried out by other researchers in the same field. Literature review directs the researcher. This guides the researcher to know where to start from.

2.1 PURPOSE OF LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review communicates, instructs and notifies the researcher to find out own knowledge concerning topic under study. In short, every researcher carrying out a study usually depends on knowledge that is existing so as to produce another type of knowledge. O' Leary (2004:67) points out that:

Research may be done alone but it is never done in isolation. The production of new knowledge is fundamentally dependent on past knowledge. In simple terms, working with literature is an essential part of the research process.

Chinyowa (1997) observes that, literature is a very powerful device that is used to comprehend the expected behaviours that are connecting women and men. Literature portrays a specific and incomplete picture of an event. Authors of literature usually designate or visualise positive rules, principles or ethics and practices which they see as relevant. The norms and values that are not seen as important are being criticized in literature. He also said that, these principles and positive rules that authors encourage relies on the author's mental images about the events of the society. Therefore, moral convictions and motifs of specific authors are crucial under this study in finding out how women are being represented as the main character. Ogundipe (1994:44) notes that, literature reflects and mirrors a long-standing group of people sharing cultural aspects using a complicated and logically reasoned way as it is a document which shows the social relationships of people, a set of data which shows actions and events of life that

can be used in the study of women and society. With this in mind, a variety of secondary sources are going to be reviewed starting from world scholars, followed by African scholars and finally scholars in Zimbabwe.

2.1.1 WORLD PERSPECTIVES

Johan (2008) did a study on the representations of married women and mothers found in the narratives of Chopin's (1849) but in short stories that are in America. Beauvoir (1952) cited in Johan (2008) avers that, a marriage is created for a woman, that is' in order for her to give birth, to provide sexual acts to her husband and also to satisfy him with sexual activities and to have close attention of her family. Marriage is said to shut up a woman within the circle of herself, that is, a woman becomes the owner of the house and it is the duty of the woman to make sure that the husband is happy. In addition, these duties performed by the woman are considered a service for her husband and the husband should provide the woman with gifts, wedding residence and also being able to provide support to the woman. The author's study is about short stories written in English but this current study is about literature written in Shona. However, in his study, Johan (2008) did not take into account why a woman becomes the lady of the house and why the husband should give a present to his wife. Hence, this research looks at it attentively.

Chopin (1849) showed that, women are usually en-slaved in their matrimony or when they get married. These women are only regarded as being subordinate to their husbands and are being owned by their husbands in order to accomplish the world of tyranny of their husbands. The author also depicts women in her novels as good and dedicated mothers, well planned mothers, loving wives and respectable women in society. In her short stories, Chopin's characters are a representation of a variety of women who are subjected to oppression especially in marriage. Therefore, women are being oppressed and this is caused by the roles they should perform that are of being a wife and a mother. Although the author gives a detailed representation of women in her short stories, she failed to give an explanation of how women can become good, dedicated mothers, respectable women in society and well-planned mothers. This is considered under this study.

Chanda, Yee Lin Ho and Mathai (1997:46) did a study of women in four recent novels in India. Women in India are being represented as women who accept their oppression without making any noise. In India, the concept or image of womanhood is seen as a prominently system or concept that is run by males rather than females and it stresses suffering and quietness of women in literature. These authors observed that:

The new Indian woman has to discover her own voice and representation because the images of her that are in circulation today repeat and inscribe again the nationalist appropriation women's identity although these images are said to be more persuasively presented through advertising and the mass media.

However, these authors did not seriously think about the reasons why women in India are being oppressed and why they accept their oppression. In addition, they did not consider how the new woman in India has to discover her voice and how she can be represented. This is highlighted under this study.

Ferguson (1986) like Beauvoir (1952) did a study which is about the representation of women in American literature. The author notes that, in a patriarchal society, women are being considered as passive when being compared to men. Women are being represented in a stereotypical way such as those who serve as foils, who cause other people to take action, who limit other people to achieve their goals, who give payments and comforting males in an active manner and in their own selfhood. However, the author does not explain meticulously what causes women to be regarded as passive when they are being compared to men and why they are being depicted in a stereotypical manner. This study did that.

Lizarraga (1983) did a research about female characters in American literature which was written by men. A woman is depicted as a person of lower stature, who is biologically destined in a lower position in the building and advancement of society. In the United States of America, the achievements of what is known as the Women's Liberation Movement enables the roles of women to change in their society. The author notes that, women are also participating actively in the politics of the country and they are undergoing a positive change. Lizarraga (1983) argues that, a woman is exploited

greatly than a man when she enters the labour market because of their salaries are not the same. A subordination in power always exists because the salary of a man is always greater than that of a woman. Therefore, a man grants upon himself a position which is of a higher rank due to the fact that he provides a significant part of the economic activities that are required at home. The author also noted that, all women suffer the same degree of discrimination irrespective of their class or race. No matter of what race or class, women suffer some degree of subordination or discrimination. The author shows the exploitation of women but he did not explain in great detail why women are being exploited especially in labour market. Therefore, this study explains that.

Another world perspective on the portrayal of women is by Browning (2007). The author produces an article in Turkish literature which is on the representation of women characters. Browning (2007) noted that, it is a burden to be a woman because she had the responsibility of bearing children, looks after the children and her husband. Female characters have been depicted in stereotypical roles by male writers serving as foils, rewards, coverlets, motivators and as impediments to males who actively undertake their own interests and identities. The author was able to give the stereotypes attached to women but she failed to elucidate what causes men to depict female characters in a stereotypical manner. This is explicated under this study.

Ferguson (1980) is another author who wrote something about the representation of female characters in literature of the world. The author noted that, the images of women are being categorized into stereotypes such as the submissive and dominating wife, the mother, the old maid, the liberated woman, the goddess and the sex object. The author depicts women as sex objects but did not consider why they are perceived that way. Hence, this research establishes, highlights and explicates the reasons for that perception.

Kucukalioglu (2007) produces a journal article of gender studies in Ottoman – Turkish novels. Female characters in the novels are depicted as people who are discontented of which their creativity is greatly affected by European thoughts. Women are seen most of their time performing their household chores. In addition, women are being regarded as

mothers and the one who educates the present generations as their roles or duties. The author also depicts women as ignorant, do not question any subject and are uninterested to the politics and events of their society. In addition, they are also portrayed as people of loose morals because they use their sexual potency in order for them to survive. Women are also presented as wicked and are negatively affected by western values. The author gives a detailed description of the images of women but did not consider why women become loose, sexually promiscuous and immoral. This is analysed under this study.

Seator (1980) did a study on the portrayal of women and men found in the novels of Unamuno in the United States of America. Women are regarded as people who practise a type of power and influence that males do not have. However, Seator was not able to explain what causes women to have that influence and control that is not found in men.

Schwartz (1977) produces a journal article in modern literature about women in novels. Women in the twentieth century in Spain were depicted in a negative form as the shrew, the fuzzy headed romantic, the domineering duchess of Somovia. Women characters are said to be less than admirable. These females include the self-righteous and puritanical, the inquisitorial, the narrow- minded, vulgar and bigoted Carmen and women are sexually subordinate. Women the castrator, the death dealer are very real in the author's novels. In addition, women are having bad characters such as infantile and egotistical, shallow and hypocritical and they need nothing to fulfil their role. Women are also seen as whores or prostitutes who sleep with everyone. The author gave a clear depiction of women in the world but failed to consider the factors that causes the writers to depict women in such a negative way. Hence, this study analyses the factors that cause the writers to give such images.

Rapping (1975) produces a journal article about feminism in women's studies. The author noted that, women are seen as the interpreters and guardians of the common life, maintaining order in life, its meaning and pattern. Women are said to provide the empathy and kindness to men and their children. When things seem to dismember, women hold them together. In addition, women maintain things collectively as soon as they portend to dismember, keep things together when they threaten to be destroyed.

Women also make an addition to things which are not adequate and not complete. Therefore, Rapping regards a woman as a delegate of her house, a person who keeps things going well in her house. The author also said that, besides being locked into rooms and houses, not having access to important public work, not given space to produce her own satisfaction, women are regarded as containers of the supernatural influence and emotional tension which is caused by men but women will not admit it. The writer did not demonstrate what makes women denied access to public work. This is established under this study.

Gesgil (1980:123) notes that, women in America are seen as moral guardians, nurturers, housekeepers and labour agitators. Women in America required the suffrage in order for them to participate actively and be involved in decision making in the politics of America and for them to be visibly seen in the public sphere. Rural women who are seen as uneducated were not allowed to participate in the politics of the country. In America, Gesgil avers that,

A woman cannot testify in court in any matter that is of mutual interest to husband and wife. Whilst in the courts, women are tried and punished more severely than men by the law they have no hand in making and men can beat their wives.

Gesgil was able to give the stereotypical images of women in America but he failed to look at closely the reasons why rural women who were uneducated were not allowed to participate in the politics of the country and why they cannot testify in court. This is addressed under this study.

Davies (2017) did a study on the portrayal of female characters found in novels of Galdos Torquemada. Female characters in the novel comply with the stereotypical images attached to them by males. In addition, female characters were portrayed as the female head of a household and carer. Women are said to give away and being obedient to male sex and also portrayed as profoundly religious. Davies also noted that, women are of the weaker sex, inclined to severe determination, conveying false image and immoderate spending and deeply affected by their reading. However, the author

failed to observe why women are depicted as housewives and carers. This is reflected under this study.

Lebra (1991) did a study on the portrayal of Korean women and society. In Korea, women do not count. Women are depicted as witchdoctors, housewives and other antsy spirits who provide an important service for all students of East Asia, Korea and so on. Lebra (1991) like Davies (2017) failed to consider what factors influenced the authors to depict women in the manner they are depicted in literature. This study deliberately gives those factors that causes the authors to display such portrayals of women.

Jago (1994:90) argues that, women are portrayed as people who spread out and trade the valuable materials of their husbands for money. Women are deceitful, having self-seeking behaviour and are dexterous in performing their actions, deeply religious and superficial. The author also said that, women are dominated and ruled by their males and they are depicted as torturers. In narrative terms, these images of women are represented to the readers through the perspectives of males. Women are more resourcefully, are influential catalysts for change and they are not weak and passive. Women are having powerful minds and always think ahead of men. Women's power is important and beneficial to males and expand outside the private sector. The author gives a detailed discussion of the images of women but she failed to give factors that have influenced women to behave in a manner indicated above.

Dumovska (2010) did a study about women in Charles Dickens novel that is *Oliver Twist* (1994). Dumovska (2010) argues that, women of the middle class in Britain are seen taking care of the family at home. Women spent their time being pregnant. During Victorian period in Britain, early studies of women indicated that, women are represented as being perfect, who behave well and having good morals. Dickens appreciated the portrayals of women as perfect ladies. Women were expected to be at home performing the duties of women. Dickens portrays a woman as a perfect, innocent, a person who do not have any sexual relations and is characterized by thoughtful interaction. Women were also portrayed as the one who are impoverished and they are being harmed by their society. The author gives a description of the images of women in literature but did not carefully considers what causes the authors to

depict women in such a manner found in the novels. Therefore, this is what is done under this study.

Morgan (2007) did a study on the involvement of women in the beliefs and values of their society. The author arguing that, working class and middle-class women were the one who obeys the culture and occupies the larger part in the education sector. The author also indicated that, women who are Victorians also take part in different activities taking place in the public sphere. For example, they are involved in the politics of their country. They also assisted the poor. Although the author was able to give the images of women in literature, he failed to consider why women were being involved in the politics of the country and why they helped the poor. This is what is considered under this study.

John (1984) affirms that, women were responsible for teaching the society and their husbands about their culture and the principles of what is wrong or right in behaviour. Women are made in order for them to make decisions that are great, they should be ruling and not fighting and being able to make order in their society. The author asserts that, the role of a woman is to help in giving order as a member of the commonwealth, in the consolation and beautiful decoration of the state. According to John (1984), a woman is found mostly at home. At home, a wife is protected by her man from the evil things found in the society including the temptations coming from outside society. As a woman still rules the house, she is defended from the fright which is taking place in the public sphere. Here the author noted that, women have greater power at home where they are rulers of their household. John (1984) sees the home as a place which is sacred and is almost a building for worshipping for women. Women were expected to be at home performing their duties. The author further argues that, the duties of women were to give emotional and moral support to their husbands. Women who were able to do this were regarded as expert ladies, gorgeous, righteous and untainted. However, in his study, the author did not analyse how women can escape from the public sphere and also occupy spaces in the private sphere. This is emphasised under this study.

Williams (1984) did a study about women found in the novel and in society in the literature of the world. The author argues that, while women were denied access to

most professions, this is clearly shown in literature. In 1800, women could not vote but the idea was not discussed. Women were not allowed to own property if they get married and on the custody of their children, they did not have any right to them. The author failed to consider why women were not allowed to occupy some professions and why they were not allowed to vote. Hence, this research highlights and establishes the reasons why women were not allowed to occupy some professions.

Williams (1984) also observes that, women are not allowed to occupy any important occupation in their lives. Women who worked outside their home area were being attacked by many people especially males. These women were said that, they pay little attention to their children, were being degraded by male workers and they do not have any knowledge to run a house. Therefore, women are regarded as both inferior and very distinct to men. The main purpose of women is to get married and most of the time they should be at home whilst men are found across the globe where they exercise their talents. Authors of literature argue that, a woman who is honest was not separated from her family. In addition, a woman should perform the duties of her family and should not be respected if she did not comply with the wishes of her family. The author was able to give a description of female characters but failed to reflect on the reasons why women were seen as inferior to men. Hence, this study takes into account why women were said to be inferior to men.

Women were also portrayed by Williams (1984) in the novel as adventuresses. An adventurer woman is a woman with immoral behaviour and her main aim is to be involved in sexual activities so that she may get money and also power. Women were often treated in a vicious manner by men. Women were also seen as shrews that is a young shrew and an old shrew. A woman who is regarded as a young shrew is the one who looks for a husband and she does not care how foolish she is in that process. The old shrew is regarded as a woman who is married and usually intimidates her husband and likely to be a married woman who bullies her husband and anybody else inside her power. Williams (1984) was able to give the characters of women found in novels but failed to consider why they are having such behaviours. Hence, this study emphasises and elucidates why women are having such behaviours.

Korhonen (1999) did a study on the images of women found in novels written by Charles Bukowski in America. Women were seen as not having religious faith, prostitutes or whores. These images reduce women to a lower level. Korhonen (1999) noted that, Bukowski makes women in the novels to look evil or wicked but this applies to all characters in the novels that is both men and women. The author portrayed women as people who give a lot of difficulties to other people. Women were depicted as loose and cheap and prostitutes. Women were seen as people who has desire for sex and then aiming mostly to fulfil their men sexually. Bukowski describes most of the female characters in Bukowski's novels in a harsh manner. A smaller number of women in the authors' novels are represented in a positive way. However, the author failed to consider why women are usually negatively portrayed in literature. Hence, this study did that.

2.2 AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES

Umeh (1980) did an analysis of African women in Africa who are changing from one gender role to the other in a novel written by Emecheta. Emecheta, a Nigerian author portraying the African woman symbolically as part of the warm and secure African past. Umeh (1980) noted that, the views of Emecheta on African women in Nigeria are being welcomed. She argues that, male writers lack the empathy, sympathy and consciousness of their female characters' psyche. They do not know what it means to be a woman in African society. This explains why the multi-dimensional roles of African women are not accurately reflected in modern African literature. Umeh (1980) also observes that, Emecheta fights for the liberation of women and is of the opinion that, male writers make African women their housemaids or prostitutes in their books. Therefore, all women need to be liberated as they are being oppressed. All female inhabitants are said to be oppressed victims. Although the author is a Nigerian writer, this information is very useful to this study as it also considers the stereotypes that are attached to African women that are also going to be included in this study. However, the author does not take into account why the male authors lack the empathy, sympathy and consciousness of their female characters and why male writers make African women their housemaids or prostitutes. Hence, this research explains in great detail why African women were regarded as housemaids by male authors.

Kamal (2018) did a study on the writings of women in Egypt. The author shows the stereotypical images of Arab womanhood. The images of women are shown in a traditional way in the Arab world where women are regarded as helpless and are found on the margins. Women are portrayed as victims of oppression. Women are also depicted as being isolated from other people, being oppressed especially by men and they are not educated. Kamal (2018) did not explain why women were regarded as helpless and marginal and why they are being oppressed.

Another African writer who did a study on the images of women is Siundu (2004). Siundu (2004) argues that, unlike the first male authors' work which depicted women in literature as companions or people of preeminent qualities who protect the main principles of a community, that need to be passed on to the future generations, new writers provide new duties to women that are of encouraging other people and adopting change that is in connection to the values of the society. Earlier writings by male authors, women characters were given limited spaces in their lives. However, male authors are now giving positive portrayals of women as they are admitting the important roles being performed by women in the community. This study explains what causes male writers to depict female characters in a stereotypical manner.

Frank (1982) did a study about an African woman found in novels of Emecheta. The author noted that, in order for an African woman to be unconstrained and satisfied, she should surrender her African identity. This is caused by the unfair discrimination of traditional African culture. If the woman wants to embrace and support her Africanness, she must also surrender her rights to self-determination and feminine independence. Emecheta (1976) portrayed women as marketable commodities. When women were not inherited or sold after the death of their husbands, they may become stolen goods and support herself through prostitution. However, Emecheta did not give reasons why women are seen as marketable goods and what causes them to be involved in prostitution. This study gives an elucidation of why women are marketable goods and being involved in prostitution.

Ohale (2007) did a study on the image of womanhood in African literature. Chukwuma (2004) cited in Ohale (2007) argues that, women characters' roles revolved around

marriage and procreation, cooking meals of the family, honouring the bed of her husband and sometimes merging with the environment of their home in a peaceful way. Ohale (2007) also said that, in the early African novels such as in *God's Bits of Wood*, *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, women were being portrayed as submissive, uncritically satisfied with one's achievements and being voiceless. However, the new, assertive and individualistic female writers depict an image of an African female which is more balanced. The African writers portray women as resilient and resourceful. Chukwuma (2004) affirms that, rural women in Africa have been portrayed as subservient and lacking luster while urban women have been depicted as people who are capable of reasoning, are interested in oneself rather than others and are having confidence. However, these authors did not consider how these women became resourceful and why they are voiceless. Therefore, this is done under this study.

Writing about women in African literature, Mcluskie and Innes (1988) argue that, Ngugi waThiongo who is a Kenyan novelist portrays women as seductresses and prostitutes. They further advance the position that whether women are depicted as partners, bosses or prostitutes, African women are scarcely portrayed except in relationships to men. Women in African literature are depicted as farmers, fishers, lawyers, nurses and teachers. However, colonialism robbed women much of the economic independence and protection they once had. Although the author gives the images of women in African literature, he failed to look at attentively what causes women to become prostitutes. Hence, this study takes into consideration why women are involved into prostitution

Ngcangca (1984) did a study on the representation of women but in Sesotho. The author observes that, the roles of women have changed in Africa. Women are now taking leadership roles where their education and status of their husbands improved her roles in society and assisted to the realizing and approval of their qualities of leadership by the traditionalists. The author gives clear and conclusive pictures of women who are fighting to liberate themselves from the imprisonment of their traditions. Various female characters shown in folktales are courageous, seen as slaves, are suspicious and attractive. What this author did not do and what the current study did is to explain what

causes women to take leadership roles and why they become jealousy. However, this current study is on Shona novels.

Boehmer (1991) noted that Ngugi depicts female characters as icons representing all that is resilient and strong in Kenyan people. Women are portrayed as being oppressed, liberated women and prostitutes. Women found in Ngugi's writings are willingly submitting to their men and this is seen as the order of the day. Hence, men are dominating women and women are depicted as having greater sexual appetite. Ngugi makes visible the current unjust treatment of women by the government. According to Ngugi, in Kenya women are regarded as nationalists because they also participate politically, materially and culturally. However, the author failed to consider why there is unjust treatment of women by the government. Therefore, this current study examines why there is unfair treatment of women by the government.

Ogunyemi (2018) notes that female writers like Nwapa, Emecheta and Alkali provide fiction which contradicts or opposes the negative representations of women found in early literature of Nigeria. Women found in the novels are mainly prostitutes and witches. Women are represented by male writers in novels such as in *People of the City* and *Great Expectations* as weak in terms of their morals and this is said to be caused by their relationship with the city. During the 19th century, women in Nigeria are portrayed in literature by male authors from a patriarchal point of view which makes righteousness not possible for women. Uneducated women are depicted as prostitutes as a means of survival. The city is seen as a degraded place used to represent female characters as prostitutes and also people who provide entertainment for men. Writers of literature are not expressing fully the range of women's being when they are giving negative characters of women in literature. However, they are reducing women to genres and quintessence. Both male and female writers in Nigeria ignite female characters by restricting their invention to the orders of the time in which the literature is written. Ogunyemi (2018) discusses the negative images of women found in African literature. Whilst she gives detailed discussion on portrayal of female character, she did not consider how women can also survive besides being involved in prostitution.

Zulu (2004) produces a South African journal article about the beliefs, values and gender found in the novels written by Mafata. The author observed that, the women are portrayed as dissimilar and are frequently and forcibly imposed patriarchal stereotype. The author noted that, a woman found in rural areas is jealousy in the marriage of another woman and usually she wants to end that marriage. The rural women in rural areas spent most of their time doing nothing and talk out of turn. They are presented as bad women who destroyed the marriage of others and they are jealousy. In addition, educated urban women are sly and knowingly destroy the lives of men. These women are prostitutes and they never get married. Women were also seen as subordinates to men and voiceless against domination. The author was able to give the stereotypes attached to women in the novel. However, he did not give the factors that cause women to become jealousy. The author also failed to analyse why women destroy the marriage of other women. Hence, this study investigates why women are so jealousy to other women.

Nelson (1996) studies the portrayal of both men and women in novels written between 1970s and 1980s in Kenya. The author argues that women found in urban areas are portrayed as wicked. This becomes the most powerful and pervading stereotype which is found in a variety of novels. Prostitutes are also found drinking and dancing in bars. Nelson (1996) shares similar sentiments when marshalling the contention that women in urban areas are depicted as are whores. Women characters are usually seen in novels as directing and attracting men in terms of their sexual activities so that they can attract, lure and tantalize male characters. The author does not consider why urban women become prostitutes. Hence, this study exposes why women are prostitutes.

Moreover, Nelson (1996) also argues that, all urban women should not be respected. He makes the point that sex and drink are twisted in depicting mischievous women of towns. Men and women meet and interact greatly in bars. Women are said to provoke men to drink and also to involve them into sex for them to get money. Men buy drinks for urban women in return for sex or after sex, women are given money and buy drinks for their-selves. Urban women are also seen as debased, always lying and break the rules, deprive men of their masculine vigour and also suck a man dry. A woman in

urban area is depicted in the novels as an unfaithful woman whose dropping into sex work is caused by her betrayal from men. Although the author provides a detailed depiction of women in novels, he failed to consider what causes urban women to be involved in prostitution. Hence, this study considers the factors that cause women in urban areas to become prostitutes.

Nelson (1996) noted that, women in rural areas are portrayed as mothers and wives. The author said that, the way rural women are being represented is an opposite of a woman in urban area who is wicked. A woman is said to be:

A bridge to pure past, a talisman which the beleaguered urban man holds up before him to watch over the temptations and obstacles of town. This is referred by Stratton (1994) as the Mother Africa Trope.

A rural woman is depicted as self-standing, powerful, providing support and maintains the rural home together alone. The author said that, the rural woman is both productive and reproductive. A woman in rural area had accepted that, if a father disowns his duties from the family, a rural woman fully accepted that, it is a right of the mother to take over and look after the family. The author was able to provide an explanation of women portrayal in literature. However, the author failed to illustrate the factors that cause women to be portrayed in the manner displayed by the author.

Rural wives are powerful and they do not complain to their husbands in terms of financial lowness or their abandonment (Nelson 1996). Ngugi also depicted women in rural areas as the carriers of culture. Cochrane (1985: 190) posits that:

It is in Gikuyu women that Ngugi sees the greatest strength of the Gikuyu tribe residing--- that it is they, rather than their men folk who seem to have a better understanding of the needs of their own people and the new Kenya and who seem better able to reconcile these needs with traditional values and customs.

There is a variety of women who are strong in Ngugi's novel. In short, rural and urban women were depicted as warm, loving and understanding of the troubles of other people because they had experienced the pains of childbirth. This research

consider the factors that influenced the author to depict women in the manner they are depicted in literature.

Mtuze (1990) observes that a variety of images that are attached to women in Xhosa society. Although this present study is about the images of women in Shona novels, Mtuze's study is useful in this study. Mtuze's study gives an emphasis on the negative images and other images in terms of symbols that are useful in this study. He did a comparison between female stereotypes of male writers and female stereotypes from female writers. The author also discovered that, females play an "obsequiously submissive role" but they are powerfully stereotyped by male writers. Similar to Mtuze's study, this study will also consider the female stereotypes by both female and male authors. Mtuze did not explain why female characters are strongly stereotyped by male authors. However, this study demonstrates why male authors always give stereotypical images of women in literature.

Mtuze (1990) wrote an article on the stereotypes of females that are found in fiction and folktales of Xhosa. The author analysed female characters that are depicted in Xhosa folktales by using a feminist theory. The author's conclusion was that, women occupy an obsequiously position in society. Although these women are important, they are not respected especially by men. In addition, more rights and privileges are given mostly to men unlike women. The author said, the different stereotypes that are found in literature and attached to women originated from folktales. These negative stereotypes contributed a lot to the manner in which post-colonial writers portray women in literature. Although the author's study is on folktales, it is very useful under this current study as it helps the researcher to know that, the stereotypes that are found in literature originated from folktales. However, the author did not give an explanation of what happened in folktales that causes women characters to be negatively portrayed. Hence, this study closely looks at what causes male writers to portray women in a negative way.

Mawela (1996) also did a study on how women are being depicted in Venda novels. The author was analysing a variety of duties assigned women in the society of Venda. The author's analysis shows that, women in Venda society are not pleased with the duties appointed by their society. The author said that, a number of women did not

accept the situation. However, the Venda society did not welcome their actions. Although this study is on Venda novels, some of the duties given to women in Venda community are similar to those assigned women in Shona novels. Therefore, it is useful to this study. However, this study looks at Shona novels only.

Masuku (1994) produces an article on the duties of women found in folklore but refers to Zulu folktales. This article is important in this study because some of the information raised is also going to be considered under this study. Masuku's article analyses the stereotypical images that are attached to women found in Zulu folktales. Masuku was using feminism as a theory and she noted that, in folktales, women should get married and be able to have children. Those women referred to as cute or gorgeous depicted by the author as perilous and they can cause precipitous decline in man's fortune. She also argues that, the main role of women is to have children. If women are unable to do that, they are being avoided and seen as supernatural. However, the author failed to give an explanation of what makes beautiful women to be considered as dangerous and why women cause the downfall of man. This is what is considered under this study.

Masuku (1997) did another study on the depiction of females in Zulu drama. Although Masuku's study is on drama, the information found in her study is very useful in this study as it considers some of the images of women that are considered in this study. Masuku (1997) noted that, male writers depict women in their literature in a harsh manner. Like male authors, female writers also depict their female characters in a harsh way. The author also argues that, men always thought that women are of the lesser sex and they are less important than men. In order for the books of female writers to be accepted by the review board, they should use the same formula of writing that was used by men. Zulu literature is dominated by male reviewers. The author only considers women portrayal in Zulu drama whilst the current study considers women portrayal in Shona novels.

Machaba (2011) studies women portrayal in Xitsonga literature in South Africa. Mutiso (1987:3) cited in Machaba observes that, in African literature, city dwellers with loose morals are the most memorable ones. Machaba's study covers women portrayal in Xitsonga literature but information he displayed is useful under this study as it shows

some of the representations of women that are also considered in this current study. However, this study considers Shona novels only.

Jones (1989) cites authors such as Ngugi waThiongo, Sembene Ousmane and Wole Soyinka as being outstanding in their representation of women. They represent their women as being resilient, determined and resourceful. Ngugi waThiongo (1981) asserts that, the most exploited and oppressed group of the whole working class are women. However, Ngugi did not consider why women are oppressed and exploited mostly by men. Hence, this study highlights why women are the most exploited and oppressed group. Little (1980) studies the images of women in urban areas in African literary work. He depicts women using images like wives, mothers, girlfriends and good time girls. In addition, women were also being depicted as political women and workers and also prostitutes. This current study includes both urban women and rural women. While the author gives a detailed explanation of female characters in African literary work, he failed to consider why women in African literature became courtesans and prostitutes. Hence, this research considers why women became prostitutes.

Bourdillon (1976) contends that, in African societies, there is misunderstanding in terms of the position of women. The author observed that, a lot of opponents over exaggerate the subordination of women especially in traditional societies. The author writes that:

It is a common misconception that women had little or no status in traditional African societies. There are many reasons given for his view: women are said to be bought and sold in marriage like chattels; at the death of a husband, his widows are inherited with his estate, since women could not present themselves in traditional courts but had to be represented by a senior male relative, it is said that legally they were minors all their lives, wives are said to be completely subject to their husbands who have the right to beat them with limits; women do most of the work in the fields and in the home while the men spend much of their time sitting in idle character. So, some conclude that the traditional position of Shona women is little better than the position of a slave (Bourdillon 1976:50).

The author further argues that, the ways in which the position of women found in society was interpreted is excessive because women also had significant room to move to a higher position. However, the author did not explain why he is saying a certain number of opponents tend to overstate the subordination of women in traditional societies. In addition, the author is focusing mainly on women in the traditional societies without also including those women in the contemporary societies. Hence, this study takes into account women in both the traditional and contemporary societies.

Leuchtenburg (1958) cited in Raub (1992) argues that, during 1920s, women required similar freedom of movement like men and also similar political and economic rights. He also asserts that, far from achieving economic parity with men, female workers were not participating in those occupations that are said to be of men. In addition, they were paid poorly and most of the time were not seen as permanent workers. The author also said that, women were encouraged to vote like what their husbands or fathers did if being allowed to vote. This information is necessary under this study because some female characters included by the author are also included under this study. However, the author did not explain why females were paid poorly, why they are treated as temporary employees and why they are not participating in some occupations. Therefore, this study explains in detail the reasons for those treatments.

Musiyiwa cited in Mguniet *al.*, (2006) noted that, in African society, girl child was not sent to school by her father because he fears that through education, the girl child would have a lot of freedom and be able to go into towns and abandoning their duties they should perform. African men did not want to lose the economic benefits that are present when the daughters get married. Stratton (1994:4) also observes that:

The unequal relationships found between men and women in real life are reproduced at a symbolic level in African literatures. In Senghorian terms, the mother figure is represented as nourishing and caring. However, in real life, the same women are wearing tattered clothes, is hungry and at times is violated sexually by the same men who raise his status through this symbol.

These authors were able to give the pictures of African women in African literary work but failed to explain meticulously the reasons why there is unequal relationships between men and women.

Boehmer (2015) analyses female characters in the novels of Ngugi waThiongo. According to the author, Ngugi waThiongo (1981) portrays images in which working class women suffer the most oppression and exploitation. Ngugi waThiongo depicts his female characters as prostitutes, women as 'nature' and wild. He also comments that:

Women must either wait on the side-lines for the new social order, as structured by men, to emerge, or must usefully contribute to the struggle by fighting alongside their men, without a thought for their own position once arms have been laid down.

Ngugi waThiongo also adopts a different view of prostitution from that commonly accepted by society which condemns prostitutes as a race of sinful and infectious females infested with vermin. He wants readers to rise above a superficial understanding of the problem and examine the causes of prostitution. He also wants prostitutes to realise that also they have a duty to play in combating the causes of their degeneracy. The author also said that, we are to realise that capitalism is responsible not only for the poverty and misery but also for the rise of prostitution. This information is useful to this study as it helps researcher to understand that those prostitutes do not want to become prostitutes but there are some factors behind which causes them to do that.

Bampoh-Addo (2010) argues that, many African societies which are extensively patriarchal in nature see the woman's role as a homemaker and child bearer. This means that the major roles of a woman are to get married and be able to bear children. The author states that, there are two major roles of women but there are other roles performed by women traditionally which are also very important. The two roles mentioned as the major roles are not the only ones in many African societies. Therefore, they are included in this study.

Elert (1979) analyses the representation of women in novels written by Forster E. M. and Woolf V. Female characters found in novels of these two authors are seen as daughters, prospective brides, wives and mothers. Women are portrayed as prostitutes, respectable wife and mother, single women and widows. These are some stereotypical categories of women. Woolf and Forster also observe that, a woman who is good and bad represents different poles of femininity or womanhood. This information is relevant to this study as it includes some of the stereotypes that are going to be considered in this study in selected novels. However, these authors do not observe why women in their novels were given these stereotypes. Therefore, this study analyses why certain stereotypes are attached to women in different novels.

Rousseau (1761) cited in Elert (1979:132) states that, both women and men have attributes that complement each other and therefore should not struggle to do the same things. According to Rousseau, women are specifically made to make men happy. This is shown by the author concerning the education of women when he points out that:

The entire education of women ought to be in relation to man. To please him, to be of use to him, to love and honour him, to rear his children, to turn him in manhood, counsel, console him, make life pleasant and sweet for him; these are the duties of woman in all ages and what they should learn in their infancy.

The author was able to give a detailed description of the roles of women but did not explain why women are made specifically to please men. Hence, this research considers why women must please men.

Rousseau (1761) cited in Elert (1979) also argues that, in education, women are restricted to a position where they have an unstable balance between superficial knowledge and elementary knowledge. He said that, women depend upon intuition and were imitative unlike creative. Wide spread knowledge which is known as extensive knowledge was said to be important to men. For women, meaningful knowledge was seen as dangerous. This information is relevant to this research as it lays bare the type of education that is given to women that is also included in this research. However, the author did not reflect on the reasons why women were not allowed to become creative

and why deep knowledge was considered dangerous to them. Hence, this study takes into consideration why women were not allowed to become creative.

According to Woolf and Forster cited by Elert (1979:135) women should be soft, modest, submissive and docile while men are regarded as self-assertive, hard, self-reliant and competitive. They also state that, women are unpredictable. Women who are married in novels of Woolf are depicted as mothers, therefore they are treated with an ambivalence of feelings. The authors further assert that:

Side by side with admiration, there is resentment, envy and protest. To their young daughters, mothers are said to be objects of love as well as threats to selfhood. Also, the authors argue that, wives are unable to take part in discussions on intellectual or political matters because as women they are said to have no grasp of fact.

However, these authors failed to give an explanation of what causes women to have no grasp of fact, why they are unpredictable and why they are regarded as objects of love to their young daughters. This is what is done under this research.

Ngara (1989) did a study on women portrayal in African literal work. He said, African women were portrayed as playing an essential role in the struggle of Africans to achieve true independence and cultural integrity. Women are depicted as much more sensible, industrious and patriotic than African men who are portrayed as violent, indolent and greedy. Thus, in times of drought and hunger, women worked hard to sustain life while their men spent their time drinking a drink called ahey. The author was able to give a positive portrayal of women in African literature which is not done by many male authors. The author also argues that, to men, women are mere objects to be acted upon, things who owe a debt and allegiance to men by virtue of their sex. Women find themselves oppressed and exploited at work, at home, everywhere. The author noted that, at places of work, male executives make use of their positions as bosses to demand sex from their secretaries. Unless she submits to her boss's sexual desires, a typist has no hope of promotion. At home, wives are at the beck and call of their husbands. The author was able to consider the problems that are being faced by

females in their lives that is, how they are being treated by their husbands and their bosses at the workplaces. While he gives a detailed discussion on the problems of women, he did not consider why these women were regarded as mere objects to be acted upon by men. This research attentively looks at why women were seen as mere objects by men.

Odonkor and Bampoh –Addo (2014) did an analysis of women portrayal in African prose in literal works of Ousmane and Aidoo. These two authors said that, female characters were portrayed in a biased manner by African novelists. Women have long been portrayed in negative and derogatory terms in many African literary texts especially those written by men. They said that, as victims of male chauvinism, women are seen as docile, unintelligent, illiterate folks whose voices must not be heard in the assembly of men. The authors failed to look at why women became illiterate and unintelligent. Hence, this study closely looks at why women were not able to read and write and were not bright.

Ousmane (1960) and Aidoo (1993) portray women characters in a positive way. They went out of their way to recast a new image for the African women. Ousmane's female characters are seen as partners and not slaves to men. A traditional African woman is seen as sacrifices her personal comfort and even self-dignity for the family's survival. She is selfless and full of motherly care. She is not ashamed to go begging just to feed the family. For Aidoo, her focus was to prove that women are capable of competing favourably with men. Through education and economic empowerment, the authors said that, women can fit into male dominated roles even with greater success. Female characters are presented as people with capabilities who can stand on their feet. Through this, they sought to educate society to change its attitude towards women issues for the betterment of all. Therefore, the visibility and prominence given to the female characters in the works of these two authors attest to the positive portraiture of women. However, these two authors only consider the traditional African woman whilst excluding the contemporary African woman. Hence, this research considers both the contemporary and traditional African women.

Ousmane (1960) and Aidoo (1993) argue that, women have rightfully paid their dues to society, it is therefore unjust to turn a blind eye to their contributions or worse still to try to limit their capabilities. By their natural God-given talents, they are more than worthy partners. According to Aidoo, her focus was to prove that women are capable of competing favourably with men. The author also appreciates and approves motherhood as an important path to social status and personal achievement. For Aidoo, acceptance of motherhood creates a positive image of women. The author also argues that, women are not just vulnerable or weak, indeed, they can be worthy partners in the struggle for social advancement. Although these authors were able to consider that women can also compete with men, they did not consider how they can be educated and empowered economically so that they can also compete with men. This research examines how women can be economically empowered and educated.

Siendou (2006:65) contends that, male authors' writings seem to think that female characters do not deserve any meaningful place in their works. The author affirms that:

While the African writer wrote to destroy the civilized or savage, coloniser or colonized hierarchy, some male writers have tended to build another one: male/female or subject/object.

However, the author failed to explain why female characters are not deserving any meaningful place in the works of males. Thus, this research takes into account the reasons why women were not deserving any place which is meaningful in the works of males.

Mohanty (2003:23) gives a summary of the negative views about African women as indicated below:

Women are defined as victims of male violence; ...depicted as universal dependants who depends on men; are seen as victims of the colonial process and as victims of the economic development process.

However, the author failed to explain what causes women to depend mostly on their men. This study establishes why women depend on men.

2.3 ZIMBABWEAN PERSPECTIVES

Gaidzanwa (1985) gives the images of women in Shona, Ndebele and English literary works in Zimbabwe. However, this study focuses mainly on the selected Shona novels that fall under the Old World and New World novels. Gaidzanwa (1985) looks at those images that are dominant amongst black women that is in English, Shona and Ndebele literature which is written by black authors in Zimbabwe. Gaidzanwa avers that, black woman in Zimbabwean literary works are being stereotyped. Shona and Ndebele literature are where the stereotype is common. Gaidzanwa asserts that, such a view has insurgent repercussions for the nation's development as women constitute the major part of the population and are disadvantaged both intellectually and materially. While Gaidzanwa studies Shona, Ndebele and English literature, this study differs because it focuses on Shona novels only written by male and female writers. In addition, Gaidzanwa confines her study to narratives published prior to 1985 whereas this study transcends this period.

Gaidzanwa (1985) further argues that, there are two categories of women in literature namely rural women and urban women. She also argues that rural women are seen as the most ideal wives and mothers in literature. Urban women are seen involved in prostitution. However, the author did not consider the factors that cause urban women to be involved in prostitution. Therefore, this study examines the factors that lead urban women to be prostitutes. Gaidzanwa's views are useful in this current study because they indicate the direction of expressive awareness in Zimbabwean literary works. Although she discusses a number of novels in different languages that show women portrayal in Zimbabwean literary work, information raised in different novels is useful in this study. It helps the researcher as the information is used as reference to the study.

Gaidzanwa (1985) also asserts that, women of the modern day who are cooperative, strong and survivors are portrayed in a negative way by male authors. Women are seen as castrators of men, prostitutes and witches. This imagery points to the facts that women in Zimbabwe do not necessarily accede to being oppressed and victimized. The author also said that, when women form supportive alliances with their sisters and mothers, they are trying to change or strengthen their status and situation within and

outside marriage. Gaidzanwa also notes that, portraying women in a negative form reduces their power to struggle for essential rights and liberty. Therefore, the author failed to explain what influences these male authors to depict women characters negatively.

Gaidzanwa's work (1985) is similar to Mashiri's work (1994) and it focuses on women portrayal in Shona novel. Mashiri's study is necessary under this current study as it lifts a certain number of extremely important views on the place and position of women in Shona novels. However, he did not give reasons why women in Shona novels have got that status. These reasons are indicated in this study. Gaidzanwa (1985:97) asserts that, working class women who works out of their home are regarded as being rebellious and are not easy to control. This image causes many husbands to see women as wives and daughters from other spheres of life. The author also said that, husbands in Zimbabwe do not let their wives work in waged jobs. However, this encourages parochialism in women and the inability to utilize chances in professional fields such as teaching and nursing when the schools are located in urban areas. This study considers why husbands in Zimbabwe do not allow their wives to work in waged jobs.

Zimbabwe Women Writers (2004) posit that the continuous image of a Zimbabwean woman is a victim of a transforming environment. In addition, women writers portray the Zimbabwean women as helpless and hopeless, being abused and de-womanized. They also assert that, the talents of the woman are undervalued and disrespected, woman's desires are marginalized and she often gets ostracized for stepping out of the boundaries of her socially constructed roles and responsibilities. The authors give an explanation of the images of women in literal works but did not give a detailed explanation of why women are seen as helpless and hopeless and why their talents are disrespected and not valued. Hence, this study gives an analysis of why women are found as useless people.

In addition, women are also depicted by the Zimbabwean Women Writers (2004) as lonely, unfulfilled, voiceless, dependent and gullible. In addition, the Zimbabwean woman is sometimes commingled with the destiny or fate of our country Zimbabwe such

as being raped and abused by her children. These writers also note that, women were being mediated by means of socially ordered roles such as mothers and wives or in relation to the Zimbabwean man's abuse or failure to live up to his socially constructed role as a provider, protector and decision maker. However, these writers did not consider why a woman in Zimbabwe was being raped and abused by her children. This is deliberately considered under this study. Most women writers in Zimbabwe give a depiction of the relationship between men and women in Zimbabwe create an image of culture that releases a big scale, uncivilised and promiscuous abuse on women. These writers also observe that, there are few positive relationships in men and women and few complementary roles in men and women in literature.

Schmidt (1992:103) writes that, during the pre-colonial period women who did not comply by the laws adjusting woman's voice, their movement and sexuality were mostly considered undesirable in their society. In addition, the author notes that, women who were able to have cash were over hoped to have found it by doing wicked things like beer brewing and prostitution. This is done in order to restrain the woman's potential to assume meaningful positions in society. The author is weakening the dignity and the ability of the women to take up positions of power and authority in the community through reinforcing the stereotypes of women as passive and childlike. However, in her study, she does not consider why women who do not comply with the laws are said to be undesirable in society. The author has constructed women characters who are satisfied with maintaining their status quo and women who are knowingly and unknowingly having submitted themselves to the power of both the colonial and the male gaze.

Makhalisa cited in Mguni, Furusa and Magosvongwe(2006) comments that, female characters seem to have no ambition beyond the domestic sphere. She argues that, women are seen as economic dependents of men and that they can go to any lengths to get a man who can provide. Vambe cited in Barnes (1999:66) also observes that, every woman who is not married is regarded as a prostitute. In addition, unmarried women were not allowed by the law from entering urban compounds. This is because they were seen as having disruptive influences and being the carriers of venereal

diseases. Makhalisa does not consider why women become dependent on men. Similarly, Vambe does not explain why unmarried women were seen as prostitutes. Hence, this study gives an exposition of why women who were not married were regarded as prostitutes and why they depend mostly on men.

Matambirofa cited in Mguniet al., (2006) argues that, with modernity, women in literature have also taken up those professions like teaching, secretarial services, nursing and to some extent the uniformed forces. The author also said that, enterprising women in Zimbabwe are also clogged in the informal sector where they are involved into cross – border merchandizing. Many women in literature are also seen as shop assistants, work as beauty salon technicians, house maids and farm labourers. The author did not give an account of why modernity allows women in literature to also occupy those professions they were not allowed during the pre-colonial period. This is considered under this study.

Moyana cited in Mguniet al., (2006) did a study about gender issues in selected Shona novels written by female authors. Moyana observes that, culturally and traditionally, among most of the older people that populate these novels, a wife is not seen as a companion to her husband. She affirms that, a woman gets married in order to bear children, work in the fields and looks after the husband. Moyana is not able to explain why a woman is not a friend to her husband. Hence, this study gives reasons why a woman did not become a friend of her husband.

Ndlovu cited in Mguniet al., (2006) did a study on the stereotypes found in Ndebele fiction which was written by women. Ndlovu argues that, black women were being depicted as witches. In addition, women were being depicted as inferior to men. Also, the colonial policy which was found in Zimbabwe segregated women by controlling their movement into urban areas. They were also denied access to employment and they were paid less than men in those situations where they were allowed to work. Therefore, colonialism made women to become second - class citizens. However, the writer failed to consider what causes women to be involved in such anti -social behaviour. This study considers the factors that cause women to be involved in anti - social behaviour.

Vambe who is in Mguniet al., (2006) points out that, a woman is depicted as unthinking and self – incriminating. A black woman was seen as one who is deceitful but forgiving her man and can love deeply. Stewart and Marvin (1990) argue that, when Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980, all women in Africa whether they are married or not married, were regarded as perpetual minors who were under the guardianship of their fathers, husbands and their male relatives. However, Vambe was not able to give reasons why a woman was depicted as unthinking and is self – incriminating. Hence, this study highlights and explains the reasons why women were seen as unthinking.

Zinyemba (1986:75) comments that, submissive ‘rural-good’ women are placed on a high moral plane, while the rebellious ‘urban-bad’ women are descended upon with a ‘heavy moral whip’. Although the author referred rural women as idealized, poverty, hardship and underdevelopment of these rural people is ignored. Lack of safe water, services and comfort is not explored. Therefore, women who constitute the major population in rural areas suffer all these hardships. However, Zinyemba did not explain what makes rural women good and urban women bad. Therefore, this study gives an explanation of what causes women in rural areas to be good and those in urban areas to be bad.

Musendekwa (2001) looks at women images in a few selected Shona novels especially their function as participators, and victims during the pre-colonial and post-colonial period. The writer observes that, women provided entertainment, information and material support. However, they are not seen as actual guerrilla fighters. The researcher noted that, in Shona novels women are seen as victims of vitiate or torture from the Rhodesian forces. The study goes on to assert that, the majority of women got frustrated and disappointed by what they got after independence. Kriger (1995) like Musendekwa (2001) also noted that, in war novels women perform duties such as educating people in refugee camps, being warriors, provide shelter and food to the guerrillas and female youths. While these two authors gave a detailed discussion on the images of women in Shona war novels which is very useful in this study, they did not give the images of women in those novels that are not war novels. Also, Musendekwa did not give reasons why these women were not depicted as actual guerrilla fighters.

Therefore, this study gives the images of women in Shona novels that are selected excluding war novels.

Although this study does not include Shona War novels, the above information is very useful. The information raised is useful to the current study under discussion that is the portrayal of women in general. Their views are of great value to this study because the researcher is now having background information on women portrayal in Shona novels. Other researchers already carried out a study on women representation in Shona literal works only spread out the undesirable pictures of women in selected novels written by males. Therefore, current researcher differs from those who carried out the same study as she analyses the images of women in Shona novels by female and male authors.

Muringaniza (2006) observes that in our Shona culture, a woman becomes a puppet in a variety of spheres, that is, in the family, a woman is considered to be an inferior child to the brother who will later on become a legal guardian regardless of age. The author also asserts that, when getting married, a woman becomes a piece of property that is supposed to be tossed around, mistreated or even mishandled without voicing her dissatisfaction from all quarters. In addition, she asserts that, if professional at work, a woman faces unequal treatment and if a woman tries to be too challenging, she is sincerely at by all sexes. According to Muringaniza, women are not respected in every sector of society and the author views Shona culture as sexist and abusive to women. Although the author was able to give a description of how women are being portrayed in Shona novels, she failed to consider the reasons why a woman faces unequal treatment and why she becomes a piece of property when getting married. This is what is done by this study.

Chiwome and Gambahaya(1998) argued that gender stereotyping in Shona literature involves portraying female characters in a more or less state of being. It constructs women as the one who causes men's deterioration in urban areas, as inactive guardians of conceived customs and also the refuge of men to free themselves from the difficulties of the colonial period. They go on to say that, in its negative form, gender stereotyping in its negative form tends to develop insufficiently the characters of women by disallow their power to act as individual. Women are restricted to the private space.

However, these authors did not consider the factors that cause authors to portray women in a more or less state of being. Also, they did not explain why there is gender stereotyping in Shona literature. This study gives the factors that are responsible for the way women are portrayed in novels. It also indicates why gender stereotyping is common in Shona literature.

Furusa (2006:12) asserts that, women who transgress the various spaces prescribed by colonial authority are presented as immoral elements that writers, acting in support of colonial authority, destroy with all kinds of diseases and all forms of violence. They become desperate prostitutes who fight over men in the city. The author also argues that, these reconstructions perpetuate stereotypical images of women. They present the woman as the scapegoat of all ills in the society. However, the writer does not consider why women were having such immoral behaviours, become desperate prostitutes and did all forms of violence.

Furusa (2006) also argues that, during the colonial period, the roles of a Zimbabwean woman were to be a wife and mother. Most of the time a woman is found at home and mainly in the kitchen. A woman did not have access to colonial education. If given the access, they were given those academic programmes that enable her to become a teacher and a nurse. These programs fit the Western gender ideology and they are traditionally reserved for women in the West (Seidman, 1984) in Furusa (2006: 3). In addition, Furusa observes that the colonial society in Zimbabwe brought its own gender ideology whereby women in Zimbabwe were expected to play within established policies and institutions. This information is of great value under this study as it gives the negative images attached to women in Shona novels. While these scholars are able to unravel and explore the roles attached to women in literature, they did not consider how women may also be able to occupy public space or roles. In addition, they did not give reasons why women in literature have restricted access to colonial education. Hence, this study considers why women had limited access to colonial education.

Chimhundu (1987) argues that, in Shona literature, women characters who submit to patriarchal power and authority are idealised while those who challenge it are castigated. Such politics of gender involves dividing women into a 'rural good' and

'urban' bad dichotomy. Rural – based married women are portrayed as ideal – *madzimai* (mothers cum – wives) and not just *vakadzi* (ordinary women). Stratton, (1994:172) argues that, the *madzimais* an ideal gender category are portrayed as the incarnation of the 'Mother African' trope being nurturant, perseverant, submissive and forgiving. In contrast, women of the city are depicted as lustful, callous, acquisitive, assertive and rebellious. However, in his study, Chimhundu did not specify what makes rural women being portrayed as ideal women and urban women as the bad dichotomy. Hence, this research considers what characterizes rural women and urban women. In addition, the researcher finds out whether rural women are ideal women and urban women are the bad dichotomy based on the information obtained in the novels.

Chimhundu (1987) also asserts that, married rural women are being portrayed as ideal wives and they are being placed on top of the hierarchy. Urban women being regarded as not the ideal women are placed on the bottom of the hierarchy. The above information is used as reference by the researcher to find out whether what is obtained in the novels selected is similar to what is said by Chimhundu (1987). In addition, the information helps the researcher to find out whether what is said by Chimhundu (1987) is a reflection of what is seen in novels. However, the author did not consider why rural women are placed on top of the hierarchy and urban women on the bottom of the hierarchy.

Other authors like Hafkin and Bay (1976) argue that women in Shona novels were not only denied access to political activities, cultural activities or religious activities but also job opportunities and educational facilities. Manyonga (1980) also avers that, women in many Shona novels were denied access to education because it is said that educated women bring a lot of problems in marriage. It is also said that, marrying an educated woman is marrying a trouble, therefore this causes family disintegration. However, in their studies, these two authors did not consider what is then done by these women after being denied access to education, political activities and cultural activities. This is considered under this study.

According to Seidman (1984:421-2), Zimbabwean women were being traded between lineage groups. Through lobola payment, the husbands have a lot of control over their

wives. Seidman's concern, here is to argue for victimization and enslavement of Zimbabwean women by what she considers to be a backward 'traditional culture', she re-invents Zimbabwean cultures as savagery, the western inferior other'. She sees and positions everything in Zimbabwe within normative codes of western discourses. What Seidman does not do and what this study does is to consider why women were being traded between lineage groups and why lobola payment gave husband control over their wives.

Barnes (1999:76) noted that, in colonial Zimbabwe, while white people, African men and boys had to carry *zvitupa*, African women were exempted from the pass laws as signification of their inferior status. She further argues that:

Throughout the colonial era, an African woman had the same status of a child, for her whole life, irrespective of her education, finances or marital status.

Sondayi, cited by Barnes (1999:64) observes that, a woman was denied access to a bank account. In addition, if the husband dies, the woman does not own anything but all the property is being taken by the relatives of the husband.

Furusa (2006) contend that, to deny women to have ownership of property was in direct violation of the principles and practices of, for example in Shona culture a woman is an only person who have ownership of private property. Therefore, by denying Zimbabwean women the right to own property, subjecting them to discriminating principles of labour, and restricting the enactment of their presence in the rural areas, colonialism endowed African men with formal control over women (Furusa, 2006). This information is relevant to this study as it helps the researcher to find out whether this is also happening in novels that are analysed. However, the author failed to consider why these women were denied the right to own property. Hence, this study elucidates why women were not allowed to have ownership of property.

Reynolds and Cousins (1989:59) argue that, women's responsibility is to grow enough food to feed the family. They went on to say that, migration has meant that, women are left to carry much of the burden of work. Hafkin and Bay (*eds.*) (1976:4) also observe that, as Shona men entered urban areas for wage employment, their women remained

behind in rural areas doing agriculture. However, in their studies, these authors did not explain why women did not migrate to those areas where men were going. Hence, this research considers why women were not allowed to migrate together with their husbands. Beach in Gambahaya and Chiwome (*eds.*) (1998:164) also said that, women in Shona literature, during the colonial period, have important jobs of being the leaders of the village. During the colonial period, Shona women perform functions in the public like being story tellers, midwifery, clan chiefs and religious leaders. Women were only given those roles that were not done by men. The author did not consider why this was done. Hence, this study examines why women were not allowed to do those roles that are being done by men.

Hafkin and Bay (*eds.*) (1976:3) argue that:

Pre-colonial African women did not see themselves as an under-privileged class which had to fight with men in order to seek social equality. Women enjoyed more freedom and power in a complementary system in which both sexes participated as active agents of development and gained access to the collectively – owned means of production like land. For these reasons, traditional Shona culture's sex role plan seems to contest the generalized claim from mostly Eurocentric feminists that women occupied the domestic domain, and men the public domain, and because power and authority was vested in the public domain, women had de facto lower status than men.

As the heads of families, men are in control of the social organizational structure. However, men could abuse women taking advantage of their position to control women. These authors did not give reasons and evidence which indicates that women are failing to see that they are an underprivileged class. In addition, they did not give any example of the freedom that is enjoyed by women except indicating their access to land. Also, the authors failed to consider what causes women during the colonial era to see themselves as a privileged class who enjoyed more freedom and power.

Chitando (2011) argues that, women were portrayed in a dishearten manner by male writers like people of loose morals, unsafe, feeble and relying on men. This negative

portrayal of women in literature is getting worse due to the influence of HIV and AIDS. Women are seen as the carriers of HIV and AIDS. Although the author's study is about literature written in English and by female authors, this information is important to the topic under study as some of the stereotypes stated by the author are similar to those found in Shona novels. In contrast, this current study is on Shona literature written by both male and female authors.

McFadden (1992) observes that, HIV and AIDS are regarded as a disease transmitted by black women. Therefore, women were seen as the vectors of the disease. Women are greatly vulnerable to HIV and AIDS due to cultural, socio-economic and biological factors that affect them. Women are more vulnerable to HIV infection and also have the burden of providing care to the infected. This study is not considering the images of female characters in the context of HIV and AIDS but this information is important to the current study because it conveys how women are being portrayed. However, the author did not consider why women were regarded as the carrier of the disease and why they are more vulnerable to that disease.

Gaidzanwa (1985) suggests that, literature in Zimbabwe which is written by males, images such as mothers, people of loose morals and perilous are attached to women. However, men are not seen as perilous. Gaidzanwa also asserts that, women always commit adultery, are indiscriminate and they refuse to obey their husbands but are being punished severely for that behaviour. If a man commits adultery, he is not punished severely. In addition, a man can go back to his wife after committing adultery but a woman is not allowed to go back (Gaidzanwa, 1985:87-88).

Gaidzanwa tends to look down upon some efforts done by other writers, overthrow the images of women as perilous. She did not consider why women were punished drastically and why men go back to their families after committing adultery. This study fills in the gap in Gaidzanwa's work by considering why women were punished but men were not and why men can go back to their families after adultery and women were not allowed to go back.

In characterizing women as people of weak morals and perilous, pictures that depict women as evil are always used. Saadawi (2007:521) avers that:

woman continues to appear on the scene as a capricious vamp, a play-ful and beautiful slave, a she – devil imbued with cunning and capable of a thousand artifices, an explosive danger versed in all the arts of deceit and conspiracy, a seductive mistress captivating in her passion.

Men depict women in negative terms such as dangerous and seditious other. This information is important as it exposes the oversimplified conception of women in literature. Therefore, it is useful to this study.

Gaidzanwa (1985) gave her attention especially to the stereotypes that are attached to women in Zimbabwean literal work. The author noticed that, the dominant image of urban women is that of being a prostitute or people of loose morals. A woman who is involved in sexual activities with a man who is not her husband is seen as a prostitute. Gaidzanwa shows the patriarchal bias which is common in most works by male authors whereby they always portray women in stereotypical ways. Therefore, this encourages a lot of female writers to produce a lot of literary works defending their selves. However, Gaidzanwa did not consider why women were involved in prostitution in urban areas and what causes a woman to have sexual activities with another man not her husband. Hence, this study explains the reasons why women in urban areas became prostitutes.

Furusa (2006:18) points out that, most women writers in Zimbabwe portray women characters in a rough manner especially their relationships in terms of gender roles. He observes that, most women writers in Zimbabwe represent the relationship between women and men in Zimbabwe in a way that always indicate the abuse of women. Although the author indicates that women writers are excessively rough in their depiction of gender relationships, he did not consider what causes them to react harshly. Hence, this study highlights and explains in great detail the reasons for that reaction.

Mguni, Furusa and Magosvongwe (*eds.*) (2006) observe that, women cause all evil things in the world. The authors conclude that, if murder cases are being examined, it

will always directly or indirectly involve a woman. In addition, women, alcohol and money altogether form their league much to man's misery in the end. However, the authors were not able to look at attentively why women are regarded as causing all evil things in the world. Hence, this study demonstrates why women are doing such bad behaviours.

2.4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the above reviewed references deal with the subject of women in different literary works. They deal with the findings of those researchers who did a similar research on the topic under study either in Shona war novels or English literary works. However, some of the scholars do not consider why women behave in a manner that is indicated in the novels. Therefore, determining how women are being portrayed is what this study did. The study utilizes evidence drawn from scholars beyond the African borders, African scholars as well as Zimbabwean scholars who focus on the portrayal of women in different literary works.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the theories that underpin and undergird the whole analysis and discussion. The theories inform the direction that the study takes as well as the conclusions that are drawn. Without theory, the study of literature is barren and sterile. For that reason, theory animates and sublimates the study of literature while further illuminating various positions that are adopted by authors. Thus, the chapter examines the principles or beliefs of Africana Womanism and Afrocentricity, which are the informing theories. It is necessary to ground this research using Afro-centred theoretical pillars that prioritise the culture and history of Africans. These theories have Africa at the midpoint and as a result locate Africa at the centre of analysis by debunking Eurocentric approaches and perspectives that have significantly malnourished African wisdom and knowledge systems. It also includes the relevance of the theories which render them appropriate theories in this study. An agreeable clarification of the involvement of Africana womanism and Afrocentricity under this research is important for a closer textual analysis of women portrayal in Shona novels.

According to Gibbon and Sanderson (2002), it is crucial for the researcher to understand the theoretical view used by another researcher as it indicates how the research is progressing. Hudson – Weems (2004:89) points out that:

The battle for theory marks the battle for the ownership of minds. Ideas that inform the study or reading of literature are therefore critical. In carrying out a research, a theory of literature is required in order to inform the study or reading of this nature.

What this depicts is that, any research being carried out is grounded in a particular theory. Hence, no research is complete without a particular theory being considered.

A theory was defined by Owens (1994) as 'a thought process or way of thinking about reality which becomes a model of that reality'. Theoretical framework is also defined as

“the foundation from which all knowledge is constructed for a research study”. It operates as a structure and complement for the justification for the study (Gandari, Chaminuka and Mafumbate 2012). The framework is seen as the detailed plan or blueprint for the thesis. It gives a guide on which to develop and give support to the study. It also provides the overall form or organisation to define how the researcher will philosophically, epistemologically (the theory of knowledge), methodologically and analytically approach the entire dissertation [thesis] (Giddens 2001:69). Hence, this research focusses on Africana womanism and Afrocentricity as the two theories that inform this study.

3.1 AFRICANA WOMANISM

Hudson-Weems (1998) propounded the concept of Africana womanism in 1987. Africana womanism is defined as a theory centred in Africa which puts African people at the midpoint of analysis of outcomes that are related to a woman in Africa. Africana womanism is a relevant theory under this research since:

...there is no need for Africana texts to be analysed and explicated via the use of outside theory. To be sure, all of these theorists place Europe and whiteness at the centre of their analysis, which we as Africana people should find somewhat problematic for an African perspective (Hudson–Weems, 2007:77).

Hudson-Weems cited in Wasosa (2014:34) affirms that, the theory “... advances in a direction best suited for accuracy in authentic literary theory that is, creation and interpretation focusing on the totalling of the Black Women’s presence within our own rich and unique historical and cultural zones”. The Africana womanist is depicted as a “self-namer and self-definer who is also family centred with a strong grounding in sisterhood and an unyielding belief in positive male-female relationships as foundations for the survival of African people and humankind” (Aldrige and Young, 2000). In the midpoint of Africana womanism is the desire for self- naming, emphasizing the desire for the correct process of giving names of a discipline in Africa by women.

According to Gudhlanga (2016), the Africana womanist theoretical paradigm advocates that, African women and men are compatible and work together to liberate themselves

from the evils of colonialism. She further argues that, Africana Womanism includes completely males and females of African origin in fighting against the difficult tasks being faced by Africans.

Moyana (2012:63) asserts that:

Africana Womanism constitutes a resonant theoretical alternative that promotes harmonisation of participatory gender efforts.

The author also indicates that, “Africana Womanism is not exclusionary but incorporates the male gender in eradicating the challenges that women face”. Hence, this is significant to this study which analyses the depiction of women in selected Shona novels as the images attached to women in novels are due to their interaction with men.

The roots of Africana womanism is in the disparities between women in Africa as well as European women. Africana womanism was coined because feminist theories were posing a problem and unable to address the requirements of women every time. Therefore, Africana womanism originated from a collection of women found in Africa who hoped to be named in a proper manner as well as defined in an official manner in accordance with their possessions which are different in terms of cultural and historical events. This is a view that would show the state of women as well as men in a reciprocal contention because of the continued existence of their whole nuclear family (Hudson-Weems, 2004).

This theory is also relevant under this research for the reason that, “... it is in the concept of Africana womanism which neatly fits in the category of African literature, criticism and theory in its authentic presentation of Africana life, history and culture” (Hudson-Weems, 2004:132).

Furthermore, this theory is also relevant under this study particularly in the analysis of male-female relations especially when focusing on the issue of prostitution and violence in families. Hudson- Weems (2001:186) notes that, the term ‘Africana’, “identifies the ethnicity of women being considered, and this reference to her ethnicity, establishing her cultural identity, relates directly to her ancestry and land base Africa”.

Aldrige and Young (2000) assert that, the main primary goal of Africana womanism is for women in Africa to develop their own ways for making assessments of their real worlds that is in terms of their actions and way of thinking. Key features of Africana womanism include “self- namer and self- definer, strong, in concert with male in struggle, authentic, flexible role player, whole, genuine sisterhood, respected, male compatible, recognition, strengthen, family centeredness, ambitious, adaptable, spiritual, mothering and nurturing”, (Aldrige and Young, 2000). Hudson –Weems outlined the above 18 important features or characteristics of Africana womanism as a theory. Hudson –Weems avers that, “self –naming and self –definition” as characteristics are seen as an essential component of existence on this account that in order for a person to be in existence, that person needs to be allocated the correct name.

In addition, role flexibility is among the most interesting features of Africana womanism. Hudson –Weems (1998) bases this characteristic with the duties played in history by women in Africa whereby women who are blacks performed similar duties within the society like becoming leaders, warriors and queens. The author also regards role flexibility as a powerful characteristic in Africa because it shows in an equal manner the essential roles of females in their society’s having no regard of their gender. For instance, in the culture of Shona people, a woman may exhibit a manly person, a sire or the chief of a nuclear family on a tree of a family which are the main roles of a woman in a family.

Hudson–Weems (1998:78) also noted that:

Africana women fight oppression hand-in hand with the black male, highlighting the contribution of women in black social movements advocating for freedom and inequality. Africana womanism is a response to the need for collective definition and the recreation of the authentic agenda that is the birth right of every living person.

This theory is essential under this research since it talks of a man and a woman whereby males and females co-exist in the same area jointly with no conflicts. Also, this

theory tends to be useful to this study because it states the actual causes of inequalities found in Africa – colonialist tendencies (<https://southerntimesafrica.com>). In addition, Africana Womanism is also relevant to this study as it expounds the relationships between men and women from the context and history of people in Africa as well as their beliefs and values (Makaudze, 2014).

Moreover, this theory is also relevant under this study as it assists in understanding and grounding the study in the culture of African people and the processes in terms of history that they have developed through. Rooted in African – centred approaches, it is also supported by Adesina (2008:135) cited in Gudhlanga (2016) who avers that, “An intellectual standpoint derived from a rootedness in the African conditions, centering of African ontological discourses and experiences as the basis of one’s intellectual work is particularly crucial to any study of African literature”. Therefore, it is necessary for this research to be grounded in African – centred theories such as Africana Womanism and Afrocentricity in its analysis of the images of women in selected Shona novels. Gudhlanga (2016) also asserts that, Africana Womanism is a theory which comprehends that, “African women are under the tripartite domination of race, class and gender” and therefore, helps this research to grasp fully women portrayal in relation to gender.

Hudson – Weems (1998), points out that, feminism does not reflect the moral convictions of women in Africa. It is loaded with European metaphysical tenets. For example, disagreements in terms of relations between males and females whereby males are regarded as the preliminary adversaries of females. The author also notes how women in Africa do not regard men in Africa as their enemies.

Asante (1998) posits that, Africana womanist theory is a theory confined in the events of people in Africa as they are surviving. In addition, it places the creation of African theoretical intentions in the setting out of African peoples’ actions in history. The author further argues that, Africana womanism is “invented out of the substance of our culture and from nothing else”.

According to Alexander – Floyd and Simien (2006), Africana womanism is regarded as the most credible label for women of African origin concerned with patriarchy because it influences the historical and cultural events of the district that it intends to serve. In addition, the Africana woman gives value to the family as part of her African inheritance. The authors further argue that, the Africana womanist as well looks for “positive male companionship” as well as perceiving it as important to the family as well as reciprocal existence of Black males and females. A certain number of males reject their females whilst a considerable number who are decent heads of the family and sires are not recognized like that. Therefore, according to Hudson –Weems, the connection between males and females who are Blacks is essential to prolong the existence of the race. Each woman of black colour wants a man, “a special somebody to fill a void in her life, one who makes her complete”.

Hudson –Weems (2004) affirms that, Africana womanism is milled in the culture of Africans and mainly concentrating on various events, contentions, requests as well as wishes of women in Africa. Therefore, Africana womanism is useful under this study because it is a credible and functional workable notion, a theoretical framework which is beneficial in showing the real world of a woman in Africa within the environment of a group of people in Africa. The theory is also relevant under this study as, it “fills the void created by the dissociation of African women from movements that foster inequality and keep them languishing on the fringes of the white world” (Ntiri-Quenum, 2007:315).

Gwekwerere, Magosvongwe and Mazuruse, (2012:65) argue that:

African Womanism is not just about African women but all African people regardless of their gender or generation hence the ordering of its priorities in terms of race, gender and class.

Hence, this makes the theory of Africana Womanism relevant to this study as it describes the relationship between males and females of African origin which is important to the conversation of women portrayal in selected Shona novels. Gudhlanga (2016) affirms that, the theory is also relevant to this research as it establishes and positioned the female as the central subject which is not done by feminist theories.

Hudson –Weems (2007) notes that, as a hypothesis that informs this study, Africana womanism allows women of African origin a chance for advancement to connect with each other as well as develop power out of their distributed requirements in examining the connections that restrain them, guiding into foreign solidarity. Therefore, this hypothesis refers to the real events of women in Africa in the continent as well as in its diaspora.

Ntiri –Quenum (2007) contend that, the phrase as well as the discipline Africana womanism “fills a void created by the disassociation of Africana women from the movements that foster inequality and keep them languishing on the fringes of the white world”. The African womanist theory therefore has the ability to effect change and also develop significant “contributions to the Afrocentric discourse on African women and men” (Hudson –Weems 2007, 294-295). Therefore, this may change the way women are being portrayed in Shona novels by different writers especially in contemporary novels.

According to Chitando (2011), Hudson-Weems’ Africana Womanism seeks to encourage the relationship of mutual dependency between men and women. Again, the writer also gives an emphasis on the relationship of men and women in their communities. Gaidzanwa (1985) indicates that, the womanist agenda seeks to retrieve the multiple meanings of gender within socially defined relations between women and men. Hence, this theory is relevant to this study which gives a critical analysis of women portrayal in Shona novels as it highlights the images attached to women as they interact with men especially in the Shona novels.

Ferris (2006:61) notes that, one major strength of the theory of Africana womanism is the realization that “women are not a monolithic bloc; they are divided by race, class, culture and by life experiences”. Hudson –Weems (2004:66) avers that, the theory of Africana womanism is powerful in its Afrocentric approach. Women in Africa are not provided only with a pleasing situation to transmit information about their continued existence in life in their own terms, but here is a chance for them to display all their positive attributes. The author also said that, “in as much as they are violated in various

ways, they are the very foundation of life whether they know it or not” and “the female gender is the centre of life, the magnet that holds the centre of the cosmos in intact”.

According to Hudson –Weems (2004:53), an African womanist puts high value on the nuclear family at the centre and this is an extremely important part of Africana womanism. The author noted that, an African womanist does not break her act of surviving from that of her whole nuclear family. A woman also continues to have connection to her family and also participating in mutual contention supposing leadership when needed. The Africana womanism proceeds in distributing the task of contributing to the entire liberation of her community. Therefore, inside the Africana womanist theory, males are included in the concerns of women (Hudson –Weems, 2007:314).

In a historic manner, women in Africa strives against discernment in terms of sex and discrimination in terms of class and race. Hudson –Weems (2004:48) asserts that, “Black women have always been equal to their male counterparts inspite of some African men’s endeavours to subdue them on some levels”. Asante in Hudson –Weems (2004:138) avers that:

The fact of the matter is that Africana womanism is a response to the need for collective definition and the recreation of the authentic agenda that is the birth right of every living person.

A true man in Africa is said to be, “moral, fathering, loving, respectful of females, role model, and both males as well as female counterparts are self -definers and self – namers and also ambitious” among the 18 features of Africana womanism. This indicates that, in the past and at the present moment, both Black men and women work with others in order to achieve their liberation and parity making a demonstration that the events and plan of women in Africa contradicts to those of women who are whites as the events of white women disconfirm with the requirements of women in Africa (Hudson –Weems 2004).

This study considers Africana womanism as the relevant theory that informs this study in order to involve it in resolving results that are connected to the portrayal of women in

selected Shona novels. This is because “we need our own Africana theorists, not scholars who duplicate or use theories created by others in analysing Africana texts” (Hudson-Weems, 2004:99). Moreover, Africana womanism is a hypothesis centred in Africa which puts Africans at the midpoint as it is connected to women in Africa. It states that:

Africana womanism is an ideology created and designed for all women of African descent. It is grounded in African culture, and therefore, it is necessarily focusing on the unique experiences, struggles, needs and desires of Africana women and the primary goal of Africana women, then is to create their own criteria for assessing their realities both in thought and in action (Hudson –Weems, 2007:85).

This hypothesis is significant to the researcher because it is a reliable and credible theory which is centred in Africa for women in Africa. Asante cited in Hudson –Weems (2004:55) observes that, “...Africana womanism is a viable and effective method of ascertaining the purpose, role and direction of literature written by or about Africana people”. Accordingly, this theory is a useful theory which informs this study as, the fundamental idea championed in Africana womanism is recognition of the legacy of the prevalence of strong, proud, family –centred women of African descent whose first priority since the intrusion of white supremacy over people of African descent, is race empowerment (Hudson –Weems, 2004:57).

This theory also becomes relevant to this study especially in the examination of the representations given to both men and women characteristics as, “it detests the existence of acrimonious relationships between men and women as these deter development in resolving the problems facing people”. The next section looks at Afrocentricity as another theory that guides this study.

3.2 AFROCENTRICITY

In 1980, Molefi Asante generated the theory known as Afrocentricity. Asante established the phrase Afrocentricity and is the chief intercessor for the “Afrocentric school of thought”. The other powerful advocates of Afrocentricity are Diop, Karenga,

Clarke, Carruthers, Keto among others. These proponents argue that, any meaningful and authentic study of peoples of African descent must begin and proceed with Africa as the centre, not periphery, as subject and not object. What this means is that, in order for a study which is about African people to be meaningful, it should place Africans at the midpoint of everything and being the main subject and not at the periphery.

According to Gudhlanga and Makaudze (2012), Afrocentricity theory demands literary works in African literature and their way of living to be seen as well as allocated their sense from the point of view of people in Africa. In addition, the theory emphasises putting the interests of people in Africa at the midpoint. Muwati (2009:32) notes that, Asante who coined the word Afrocentricity described it as, "placing African ideals at the centre of any analysis that involves African culture and behaviour".

Gray (2001:3) posits that, Afrocentricity is:

...a perspective which explains that African people should see, study, interpret and interact with people, life and all reality from the vantage point of African people than from the vantage point of European, or Asian or other non-African people or from the vantage point of African people who are alienated from Africanness.

Afrocentricity theory notices that, by using alien theories or Western theories in order to comprehend African events usually arises in the misrepresentation of the history of the indigenous people and their beliefs and values. Therefore, using Afrocentricity as a theory that guides this study is important as it put emphasis on the relevance of the existence of African people. It is also, "the only true ideology that seeks to place Africans where they belong; at the centre of history and not treating them as marginal to Europe" (Gudhlanga, 2016). In addition, according to Asante (2007), it is the ideology which calls for the liberation of the mind from any notion that Europe is the teacher and Africa is the pupil.

Afrocentricity as a theory is defined by Asante (1998:65) as, "--- literally placing African ideals at the centre of any analysis that involves African culture and behaviour". It is the most important theory that can be used to understand African lives, unpleasant

emotions, expectations and challenges by power of being at the centre in terms of their beliefs or values and their history (Wasosa, 2014). This tenet of Afrocentricity is what is termed by Gray (2001) Harmonisation which essentially “calls for the harmonising of the ancient and traditional values of African culture in a manner that would be beneficial and empowering for the Africans”. Chinweizu (1975:496-7) also notes that, under Afrocentricity, “we ought to approach all problems and issues from the viewpoint of our culture in the new global world”. This theory is useful to this study as it emphasises the significance of using African history in order to apprehend the present events that are being confronted by people in Africa.

Amuta (1989) also noted that, African literature should be deeply rooted in African history as it is the primary condition of its origin and understanding. Bukharin (1977:186) argues that, Afrocentricity’s special attention on the history of Africans as well as their beliefs and values is also crucial under this research. This is caused by the fact that, “literature reflects social life and one cannot understand a work of art without understanding its connection with the realities from which it emerges”. Zhadnov cited in Bukharin, (1977:55) repeats the above idea when he asseverates that, “writers derive their material for their works of art, subject matter, images, artistic languages, from the life experiences of their societies”. Therefore, Afrocentricity theory by focusing on the history of Africans and their values and beliefs empowers this study to grasp the theme of women portrayal in Shona novels. Hence, Afrocentricity becomes a relevant theory to this study as it uncovers the violations between males and females and what then could be done in order to overcome them. In addition, the Afro-centred theory that is Afrocentricity is also crucial to the present study as it does not submit African people to the outside boundary of the experiences of the Europeans in which “Africans become spectators of a show that defines us from without” (Asante cited in Mazama, 2003:4). Afrocentricity is a theory that enables African people to give a definition of whom they are as Asante interprets and is of significance to the current study which talks about the depiction of women in selected Shona novels both in pre colonial and post colonial Zimbabwe.

Asante (2003) also defines Afrocentricity as a mode of thought and action in which the centrality of African interests, values and perspectives predominate. In regards to theory, it is the placing of African people in the centre of any analysis of African phenomena.

Sefa Dei (2000) notes that, Afrocentricity is defined as an “alternative, non-exclusionary and non-hegemonic system of knowledge informed by African peoples’ histories and experiences”. This theory investigates as well as having an assimilation of events out of an outlook which is grounded in values that are centred in Africa. This theory looks for the centrality of Africans both in the continent and in diaspora that is in terms of their past events in every situations wherever African people are being included. The above given definitions of Afrocentricity indicate that, this theory is deemed relevant under this research since:

It is clear that we need to operate from the start having Africa at the centre of all analyses concerning Africana life and thought, thereby eliminating futile efforts in appropriating outside constructs. To be sure, an authentic paradigm must be mandatory for Africana theorists so that our lives and texts could be accurately construed and interpreted (Hudson –Weems, 2007:85).

Afrocentricity aims at putting Africans into a new position and real world from the mainstreams of European way of thinking, a state of mind as well as beliefs to a mid point, in a positive manner positioned location having a domain of culture and science (Asante cited in Hudson –Weems 2007:30). The author also argues that, Afrocentricity questions the continuance of white people dominion above every pictures. Therefore, Asante cited in Hudson –Weems (2007:31) points out that:

No one constructs or writes about repositioning and re-centering merely for the sake of self-indulgence none could afford to do so because the African dispossession appears so great and the displacing myths so pervasive that simply to watch the procession of African peripheralization is to acquiesce in African de-centering.

According to Asante (2007:15), Afrocentricity as a theory which liberates Africans asseverates that, “Africans possess the cultural aptitude to see, explicate and interpret from the vantage point of their existential location”. The word location in the Afrocentric view, the word location alludes to:

The psychological, cultural, historical or personal place occupied by a person at a given time in history and it follows then that discovering one’s location means ascertaining whether or not a person is in a centred or marginal place with regards to his or her culture.

Afrocentricity is relevant here for the reason that, it gives permission to the researcher to have a recognition of excellence of the portrayal of women in Shona novels. Using Afrocentricity in this study enables an assimilation of the relationships between men and women as they are found in Shona novels. In addition, it also enables the researcher to have an analysis of African events from a position of rootedness in those similar events. It is therefore crucial to confirm “whether or not the discourse engaged by Shona novelists in their portrayal of women posits Africans as subjects and agents of history”.

An agency being at the centre, is an important conception of an Afrocentric view which engenders support with the needs of this research. The Afrocentric school of thought liberates the African through the establishment of the agency as a critical conception of freedom. It is therefore essential to determine under research whether or not the Shona writers’ portrayal as well as conceptualizing of images of women recognising the agency of Africans. This is on the account that:

White supremacy cannot be accommodated in a normal society and therefore when a writer or scholar or politician refuses to recognise or ignores the African’s agency he or she allows for the default position- white supremacy- to operate without challenge and thus participates in a destructive mode for human personality (Asante, 1999:6).

One significant principle of Afrocentricity that enables it to be useful under this research is its special attention given to history. According to Zigara (2016), the main aim of Afrocentricity is to retrieve African dignity, pride and identity which Asante (1998:2)

argues were lost as a result of Africa's contact with the west. Furusa (2002:47) therefore affirms that, "the African worldview that recognises the co-existence and complementary roles of men and women to ensure their survival of their families and communities was altered by history".

Afrocentricity as a hypothesis which disentangle human beings is essential under this study which gives an examination of the images of females in chosen Shona novels. It places the researcher of this study at an advantage in finding out whether or not the authors of Shona novels are in the mid point or at the margin with regards to their portrayal of women because "there could be no social or economic struggle that would be significant if African people remained entangled with the philosophical and intellectual locations of white hegemonic nationalism as it relates to Africa and African people".

Asante (1998:137) noted that:

Afrocentricity is the most complete philosophical totalisation of the African being at the centre of his or her existence. It is not merely an artistic or literary movement, or an individual or collective quest for authenticity, it is above all the total use of method to effect psychological, political, social, cultural and economic change.

Afrocentricity as a theoretical paradigm establishes the agency as necessary for freedom. Asante (2007:40) defined an agent as, "a human being who is able to act independently in his or her own best interest whilst agency is the capacity to provide the psychological and cultural resources essential or relevant for the progression of human freedom". Asante (2013:79) further argues that, Afrocentricity is a frame of reference where phenomena are viewed from the perspective of the African person as an agent in his or her own narratives. Africans were relegated with the composition of white people dominion. Images of African people were removed, leading to a destruction of the supernatural and material selfness of the Africans. As a result, Africans are certainly aware of this peripheralization and search to escape from the margins and be seen as an agent in social, cultural, economic and political terms.

Hunter (1983) asserts that, “Afrocentricity can be a theory of social change that calls for self- transformation among its primary target audiences, black people on the African continent and the diaspora”. This theory orders black people to have a general conscious awareness of selfhood, which is powerful, their past events and beliefs and values so as to deal with some of the problems of their existence in their present moment and in their future. It also represents the great effort for the entire liberation of the African minds out of the results of colonialism, neo- colonialism as well as slavery.

Asante (1991) noted that, a fundamental theoretical view of Afrocentricity comprises of explanation and dismantling out of the view of people in Africa as topics unlike an article on the fringes of the experiences of Europeans. In addition, Afrocentricity is about people of the African origin to have a current and changed consciousness supporting every people. The author also asserts that, Afrocentricity is about people of African origin alluring them their right to the occurrences of the land, the pleasure of their beliefs and values, the celebration of their past events and their continuous survival and being together of the people in Africa, regardless of where they resolved to settle. Therefore, the task of the Afrocentric paradigm is to bringing back as well as to create those native values where possible so as to deliver the requirements and desires of every peoples in Africa of the present age.

Mazama (2003:24) affirms that, “Afrocentricity responded to all forms of African decentredness, marginalization and loss of selfhood in social institutions, aesthetics, science terminology and creative expression”. The author further argues that, as a philosophic worldview which stresses the centre and action of the people of Africa in a historic setting and in terms of the beliefs and values of the people. Afrocentricity is also a refusal of the historical events of the African people that are marginal and racial otherness occasionally shown in the ordinary worldview racial supremacy of Europeans. Asante (1990) contends that, Afrocentricity is a celebration of humanity rather than a separation. In addition, a lot of Afrocentricists view Afrocentricity as, “a much more humane way of approaching African experiences”. Afrocentricity also detains, “a reigning paradigmatic place because it seeks to add substance to the idea of a black

perspective on facts, events, personalities, historical records and behavioural situations”.

Afrocentricity opposes as well as rests on our capacity to supplant in an organized manner, the European methods of thinking, existence, the impression and knowingly restore them with methods that are relevant to the cultural events that belong to Africans. According to Asante (1991:172), Afrocentricity:

tells us, establishes a frame of reference wherein phenomena are viewed from the perspective of the African person.... It centres on placing people of African origin in control of their lives and attitudes about the world. This means that we examine every aspect of the dislocation of African people, culture, economics, psychology, health and religion.... As an intellectual theory, Afrocentricity is the study of the ideas and events from the standpoint of Africans as the key players rather than victims. This theory becomes by, virtue of an authentic relationship to the centrality of our own reality, a fundamentally empirical project... it is Africa asserting itself intellectually and psychological, breaking the bonds of Western domination in the mind as an analogue for breaking those bonds in every other field.

This implies that, Afrocentricity as a theory enables the study of African experiences and events to be done from the view points of Africans and not from any other people who are not Africans as well as putting African people at the centre of everything.

Asante (1990:9) further argues that, Afrocentricity puts events of Africans in the centre of the survival of Africans. Nantambu (1996) noted that, the Afrocentric idea is a strong theory as it exhibits “the most potent challenge to the European power structure (European nationalism) in the past 100years”. Afrocentricity theory puts African people at their midpoint and Africa as the wellspring of the people of the earth and as highly essential notions as well as discoveries. Therefore, Afrocentricity aims to liberate Africans as it generates knowledge that free and empower women.

3.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the current research therefore is grounded in Afrocentricity and Africana womanism in its critical examination of women's portrayal in Shona novels. It is therefore vital to point out that, these theories inform this study and help to locate women's position in the nuclear family, political issues, economical issues and environmental organisations. This chapter also examines the opinions or beliefs of Africana womanism and Afrocentricity providing their relevance under the current study since they are peculiar censorious lenses which are used to obtain an examination of the portrayal of women in Shona novels. Therefore, this chapter has proven that, Afrocentricity and Africana womanism are relevant theories that guide this study. As a theory which is confined to African history as well as moral convictions and ethics which look for the values of African people, ideals and mental focus which are at the centre, Afrocentricity is a suitable guiding principle under this research. In addition, this chapter confirms that the theory of Africana womanism is also an appropriate theory that guides this study because it is a theory that is centred in Africa and puts African people at the midpoint of examination of issues that respond to women in Africa.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This preceding chapter discussed the conceptual framework which guides this research. This chapter focuses on the method of research as well as the data collection methods adopted in this research. Choosing a suitable method of research is a crucial phase in the process of collecting the data in any study. The initial phase in choosing the suitable method of research is to take into consideration the philosophic point of view within which the study is located. Burns and Grove (2003:488) assert that, “methodology includes the research design, setting, sample, methodological limitations and the data collection and analysis techniques in a study.” This means that, research method encompasses research design and research methodologies and data analysis, that is the ways of organising, collecting and interpretation of data.

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research methodology can be qualitative or quantitative. Of the two, qualitative research method was regarded as the superlative method for a study of this nature. In the next section, the qualitative research method is defined, its features, benefits as well as weaknesses are examined. The methods of collecting data used that include interviews, textual analysis are explicated and the method of sampling, which is purposive sampling, is elaborated. The usefulness of the data collection methods in this study is highlighted.

4.1.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study employs qualitative research methods whose fundamental nature is grounded in subjective interpretation of women’s portrayal in selected Shona novels. The succeeding sub section discusses the qualitative research method.

4.1.1.2 DEFINITIONS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD

Devetak, Glazar and Vogrinc (2010:78) define qualitative research method as “an exploratory approach emphasising words rather than quantification in gathering and analysing the data.” Bricki and Green (2007:2) also reiterate that:

Qualitative research is defined by its aims which relate to understanding some aspect of social life and its methods which generate words rather than numbers as data for analysis.

The above quotation means that, qualitative as a method of research involves the use of words in the analysis of information obtained unlike the use of figures. In addition, the methods of collecting data which falls under qualitative research involves the use of words in examining the social aspect of life. It is about looking at life from a critical point of view in order to arrive at different conclusions that are beneficial to society.

Kitto, Janice and Carol (2008) aver that, “qualitative research most commonly involves the systematic collection, ordering, description and interpretation of textual data generated from talk, observation or documentation.” This means that, qualitative research method involves the collection, analysis and interpretation of data that are not easily reduced to numbers.

Qualitative research is also defined by (Jupp, 2006:244) as, “Research that investigates social phenomena which is not quantifiable... it investigates aspects of social life which are not amenable to social instrument.” Punch (2003:4) also supported the above definition and asserts that, “Qualitative research is empirical research where the data are not in the form of numbers.” This means that, the data is not in form of numbers but is in form of words. The authors above concur that, qualitative research focuses on verbal instead of numerical data that are obtained from primary as well as secondary sources. In short, the given definitions above entail that, qualitative research excludes the use of numbers but only words.

This current study searches to elucidate women portrayal in selected Shona novels. Objectives of this study are being generated in words and not numbers. Hence, this renders the qualitative research method most appropriate in this study. The next sub

section focuses on the justification of using the qualitative research method in this study.

4.1.1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF USING THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD

This study which examines women's portrayal in selected Shona novels and how key informants understand Shona novels' portrayal of women is made possible through the use of qualitative research. Silverman (2010:10) asseverates that, "no method of research, quantitative or qualitative is intrinsically better than any other." Therefore, this renders the qualitative research method which focuses on verbal descriptions, understanding life histories and having a holistic approach to phenomena better suited to critically analyse the depiction of women in Shona novels. In addition, this method enables the researcher to be able to understand the key historical issues that fashion the authors' rendition of women characters in various Shona narratives.

Qualitative research methods according to Degu and Yigzaw (2006:3) cited in Mandova (2016),

endeavour to answer questions about the "what", "how" or "why" of phenomenon and not the "how many" or "how much" which are addressed by quantitative methods. Qualitative research seeks to answer questions about why people behave the way they do, how opinions and attitudes are formed, how people are affected by the events that go on around them and how and why cultures have developed in the way they have.

This means that, qualitative research is concerned mainly about giving the reasons why women behave in such a manner, giving the images of women found in novels as an example in terms of words unlike giving the quantity as is the case with the quantitative method.

Qualitative research method is also suitable to this study as it provides findings that are detailed and rich and also provides images and conceptions that inform the study. The researcher is able to have a criticism of the results from the interviews and questions on Shona novels' portrayal of women. In addition, qualitative research method is relevant in this research since it is in line with the Africana Womanism and Afrocentricity theories

which guide this study and emphasise that, in order to have an understanding of people of African origin, “it is imperative to weave in the historical aspects and cultural identities that shape them” (Gudhlanga, 2016).

This research method is appropriate to this research which examines the portrayal of women in chosen Shona novels and presents it in an argumentative form and does not rely on the quantitative way of presenting research evidence. Qualitative research method is also relevant for it enables the researcher of this study to critically examine selected Shona novels portrayal of women as well as the views from key informants elicited through face-to-face interviews on the issue of women portrayal in selected Shona novels.

Gilbert (2008) notes that, “qualitative research most often describes scenes, gathers data through interviews or analyses the meaning of documents.” In addition, Degu and Yigzaw (2006) observe that, “qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena.” Hence, it helps us to have an understanding of the real world in which we live as well as the reasons why things and phenomena are the way they are. Degu and Yigzaw (ibid) further argue that, “by virtue of its concerns about the social aspects of our world, qualitative research seeks to provide answers to the questions relating to,” what are the stereotypes attached to women in Shona novels, what factors are responsible for the way women are portrayed in Shona novels, how do selected Shona authors portray women in their novels and are there any similarities and differences in the portrayal of women by male and female authors. Employing qualitative research in this study allows the researcher to examine the reasons for displaying certain characters by women in novels.

Ambert, Adler, Adler and Detzener (1995:881) affirm that, “the aim of qualitative research is to learn about how and why people behave, think and make meaning as they do rather than focusing on what people do or believe on a large scale.” Denzin and Lincoln (1994:4) asseverate that, “qualitative research design is inherently multi-method in focus and the use of multiple methods is an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question.” The phenomenon in question in the

case of this research is a critical examination of the portrayal of women in chosen Shona novels.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (ibid:4),

In qualitative research, the researcher is the key data gathering instrument who spends a lot of time in the research setting, exploring the research subject under study. This allows the researcher to carry out an inductive analysis of data so as to extract information from different sources before one analyses and makes some conclusions. Concepts obtained are in the form of themes or motifs. Data is more descriptive and narrative in style.

This means that, under qualitative research, the researcher is the main data collecting tool who spends a lot of time finding out the information which is necessary to the study. The researcher analyses information collected from different sources before giving a conclusion. Themes obtained by the researcher are presented in a descriptive form.

Qualitative research method is adopted in this study since the study does not involve the use of figures or statistics. Haralambos and Holborn (2008:793) comment that the qualitative research method is preferred to the quantitative method because:

Compared to quantitative data, qualitative data are usually seen as richer, more vital, as having greater depth and as more likely to present a true picture of a way of life, of people's experiences, attitudes and beliefs.

This means that, qualitative research is more important to this research unlike quantitative because information collected under qualitative research is richer, is in great detail as the researcher is responsible for collecting the information which gives the true picture of how people live, their norms and values.

Wasosa (2014) contends that, "qualitative research is therefore specifically relevant in the behavioural sciences where the goal is to unravel the underlying motives of human behaviour." This research would relate to women characters as well as their depiction in pre- and post-independence novels. Dooley (1990) gave a description of qualitative research as, "social research based on non-quantitative observations made in the field

and analysed in non-statistical ways.” Gerson and Horowitz (2003:199) cited in Muwati (2009) affirm that, “qualitative research always involves some kind of direct encounter with the world, whether it takes the form of ongoing daily life or interactions with a selected group...” In addition, this method is said to be specific in terms of context and this makes it relevant to have a study of women’s portrayal in its appropriate situation.

Qualitative research method is also relevant for this type of study unlike quantitative research method because “it uses narrative, content and discourse” (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:5). Walliman, 2006:129 cited in Chigidi (2009) avers that, qualitative research:

does not involve counting numbers and dealing with numbers but is based on information expressed in words- descriptions, accounts, opinions, feelings...” (Walliman, 2006:129).

This means that, the use of qualitative research does not involve the use of statistics or figures but data collected is only expressed in words. Hence, this means that, since this study does not involve the use of figures but involves a textual analysis of the selected Shona novels, qualitative method is the most appropriate.

According to Merriam (2008:8), “qualitative research recognizes that meaning emerges through interaction and is not standardized from person to person like what is done in quantitative research.” Merriam (ibid:8) also notes that, “qualitative research allows the researcher to have a study of issues in detail, without using a predetermined categorized analysis.” Mason (2002:1) also contends that, “these methods are highly exciting as they are concerned with the aspects of life that matter and in ways that matter.” Therefore, the methods allow the researcher to have an appreciation of the depth and richness of the findings and enabling the researcher to produce cross-contextual generalities regarding the portrayal of women in literary works by men and women.

According to Cooper and Schindler (2011), qualitative research method is:

A process of real-life inquiry that aims to understand social phenomena. It focuses on the “why” and “how” rather than the “what” of social phenomena and depends on the direct experiences of human beings as meaning-making agents in their everyday lives. It is a scientific method used to gather non- numerical data. It focuses on human behaviour from a participant’s point of view. The common assumptions are that knowledge is subjective rather than objective and that the researcher learns from the participants in order to understand the meaning of their lives.

This means that, the main aim of qualitative research is to have an understanding of social phenomena and the researcher learns from the key participants so as to have an understanding of their lives.

Somerset (2014:3) notes that, in qualitative research:

Researchers usually approach people with the aim of finding out about their concerns; they go to the participants to collect the rich and in- depth data that can then become the basis for theorising. The interaction between the researcher and the participants leads to an understanding of experience and the generation of concepts. In other types of research, assumptions and ideas lead to hypothesis which are tested... in qualitative research, however, the data have priority.

The author avers that, in order to collect the information using qualitative method, the researcher have to contact the key respondents in order to collect first hand information which is in great detail. Therefore, that interaction enhances an understanding of events in real life situations.Hence, the method used in this research is therefore inductive and justifies the adoption of the qualitative research method as the most relevant method for this research. After having an understanding of the qualitative research method, it is relevant to have a discussion of the advantages as well as disadvantages of the qualitative research method.

4.2 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD

Qualitative research method has got its own advantages and disadvantages and they are indicated as below. This research method has got a lot of strengths that render it relevant to the current research. Anney (2014:274) avers that, “the qualitative design is significant in that, it enables the researcher to enter into the inner recesses of individuals as they express themselves using flexible language.” Buchler and Puttergill (1997) aver that, “it is easy to understand qualitative data without the sweat most people have from statistical analysis that is under quantitative research method.” This means that, it is easier to understand qualitative research unlike quantitative research. Neuman (2000) cited in Zigara (2016) gave a recommendation of qualitative research method as “the collection of data is not generated by pre- existing hypothesis, but the hypothesis is generated as the research is progressing.” Therefore, it makes it easier and faster to collect the data.

Sinkovics, Penz and Ghauri (2008:967) “emphasise the main aspect of quality that is at the central point in qualitative research method as the researcher takes a deep, quality look at the phenomenon.” Hence, these qualities displayed in qualitative research method encourage the researcher to adopt it.

Qualitative research method is very powerful in presenting data in descriptive form and not in quantity as done in quantitative research. Concerning the descriptive nature of qualitative method, Sarantakos (1998:467) asserts that, “qualitative research ... employ no quantitative standards and techniques....” As qualitative research is concerned about meanings and social phenomena, this makes it appropriate to this current study which examines women portrayal in selected Shona novels.

Furthermore, qualitative research method is also powerful due to its emphasis on detail. Jupp (2006:24) asseverates that, “... qualitative research with its emphasis on depth and detail and interpretation that is often small or micro level.” Patton (2002:14) also agrees with Jupp (2006) who said that, “qualitative research facilitates the study of issues in depth and detail... to produce a wealth of detailed information... which takes the reader to the time and place of interview or observation.” Therefore, this is

appropriate to the current study as it makes it possible for the analysis of selected Shona novels' depiction of women characters and also having an analysis of the chosen key informants who may assist by providing more details to the topic which is being discussed.

A critical analysis of the selected Shona novels and findings from interviewees enable the current researcher to obtain more details about the portrayal of women in selected Shona novels. Therefore, this qualitative research method enables the current researcher to undertake "a descriptive research tradition for things that cannot be instrumentally measured, such as feelings, behaviour, speech, thoughts and culture" (Morrison, 1989:24). The discussion of women portrayal is heavily embedded in the culture of Shona people. Therefore, this can only be understood through the use of qualitative research method.

Moreover, qualitative research method is strong in terms of its inductive nature. This method generates hypothesis and not testing hypothesis as what is happening in quantitative research method. It enables the phenomenon under study to speak for itself. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:479) observed the inductive nature of qualitative research and argue that, "it enables the creation of a holistic and largely narrative description." This is impossible through the use of quantitative research which does not consider the story. Qualitative research enables the current researcher to strongly tell the story of women characters in Shona novels from an Africana Womanism and Afrocentricity views.

Over and above its inductive nature, qualitative research method is not linear as what is happening in quantitative method. Data collection as well as its analysis can be done at the same time. Frankel and Devers (2000:123) also observed the non- linear nature of qualitative research method and aver that:

...because inductive reasoning is emphasised, what researchers learn in the earlier stages of the research substantially affect subsequent stages of the research process... the qualitative research approach is dynamic and often non-

linear to the extent that data collection and analysis can happen simultaneously....

This means that, what the researcher learns in the early stage of research helps her to develop the next stages of the research. Also, the process of research under qualitative method can be changed in order to suit the situation prevailing.

Gwekwerere (2013:136) also concurs with the non-linear nature of qualitative research and asserts that, “the implication of qualitative research flexibility is that, in the light of early findings, subsequent data collection and analysis procedures may be modified to enable the gathering of more specific information and exploration of new and untapped areas of interest.” Hence, this is very relevant to this study which analyses the depiction of women in Shona novels. It also makes it possible to accommodate interview responses and therefore allows the researcher to understand how women are being portrayed in Shona novels.

Qualitative research methodology is also important in this research because it is thorough in data collection. Frankel and Devers (2000:251) also observed the thoroughness of qualitative research and contend that:

...in quantitative research, rigour is reflected in narrowness, conciseness and objectivity leads to rigid adherence to research designs and statistical analyses, rigour in qualitative is associated with openness, scrupulous adherence to a philosophical perspective, thoroughness in collecting data, and consideration of all data in the development of theory.

The above quotation implies that, under qualitative research, there is strictness and the researcher is not able to change the research designs and analysis in terms of statistics whilst strictness in qualitative research is not present, there is flexibility and the collection of data is thorough.

This thorough method of collecting data which is referred to as not rigid and allows the phenomena to enlighten the researcher is relevant to this study which intends to have an understanding of selected Shona novels portrayal of women. Gudhlanga (2016)

avers that, “the qualitative research design is open to get more information instead of being guided by rigid research methods that result in failure to grasp the situation at hand.” Hence, the researcher is able to obtain a lot of information concerning the topic under study without having any limitations unlike in quantitative research.

Qualitative research method was also chosen under this research despite its weaknesses because it enables the current researcher to have an accomplishment of the task at hand. Silverman (2010) also noted that:

The importance of qualitative research in carrying out research that deals with people’s life histories and everyday issues that they face. If you are concerned with exploring people’s life histories or everyday behaviours, then qualitative method may be favoured.

This means that, qualitative research is of great importance to this research as it deals with the life histories of people and events, they face everyday. Therefore, qualitative research becomes relevant to this research.

Corbin and Strauss (2008) aver that, “qualitative research allows the present researcher to get at the inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture.” These authors also stressed that, “through qualitative research, there is the desire by the researcher to step beyond the known and enter into the world of participants, to see the world from the perspective and in doing so make discoveries that will contribute to the development of empirical knowledge.” This perspective is also supported by Gerson and Horowitz (2003) who asseverate that:

Qualitative research always involves some direct encounter with the world, whether it takes the form of ongoing daily life or interactions with a selected group.

This implies that, qualitative research as a method usually involves direct contact with the people having the information necessary to the study.

Flick, von Kardof and Skeinke (2004:1) noted that, “one advantage of using qualitative research method is that, it describes the life- worlds from inside out, that is, from the point of view of the people who participate directly on issues related to the research.”

These authors further argue that:

qualitative research aims in contributing to a better understanding of social realities and to draw attention to processes, meaning patterns and structural patterns. Therefore, one can argue that, the aim of qualitative research is to learn about how and why people behave, think and make meaning as they do rather than focusing on what they do or believe in.

Hence, this means that, qualitative research aims to learn about the ways in which people are behaving and the reasons why they are behaving, thinking and making meaning like that unlike focusing on what people are doing. Frankel and Wallen (1990) affirm that, the qualitative research method is specific in terms of context and this makes it relevant to have a discussion of women characters in its appropriate settings.

Walliman (2006:129) cited in Chigidi (2009) avers that, “qualitative research is relevant for this type of study unlike quantitative research because it does not involve counting numbers and dealing with numbers but is based on information expressed in word-descriptions, accounts, opinions, feelings...” Therefore, this study involves the use of words and descriptions of events unlike the use of numbers. This renders the qualitative method suitable to this study. Muwati (2009) avers that, “the qualitative method dovetails perfectly well with the Afrocentric theoretical paradigm chosen as the epistemological code for this study.” Hence, it is appropriate to this current study as it is also guided by Afrocentric and Africana Womanism paradigm.

Although the qualitative research method has a lot of strengths in analysing the current study, the researcher is also aware of the weaknesses of this method. For instance, Patton (2002:46) avers that, qualitative method fails to be representative. The author further observes that, “whilst the quantitative method allows for a broader study which includes a wider coverage involving a greater number of subjects and limited variables to enhance objectivity, accuracy and generalizability of results, qualitative research

covers a limited area”. This study analyses nine novels only written by both male and female writers out of a plethora of Shona novels. Hence, this may not represent the whole population as the sample size chosen in qualitative research is mainly smaller than in quantitative research method. This study also collects information through interviews from a few chosen key informants on the topic under study.

In addition, the qualitative method is also being criticised on the trustworthiness of the data collected. Robin (1993:383) asserts that “... with qualitative research, the trustworthiness of the data gathered is always a worry... the data gathered from questionnaires and interviews may either be withheld or fabricated.” This means that, the findings obtained through the qualitative research method may not be trusted by a lot of people who may want to use that information.

Qualitative research method is also being criticised since it is potentially biased as it is subjective in nature. In this study as an example, the issue of bias is averted through a comparison of sources where the information is obtained. On the key informants, what they contribute is also compared so as to collect data that is more secure and close to the truth in as far as the portrayal of women in Zimbabwean Shona novels is concerned. Although the qualitative research method has got its weaknesses, it is still relevant to the current study. The succeeding section discusses the data gathering method.

4.3 METHODS OF GATHERING DATA

This section discusses the main methods of collecting data which are categorised as primary as well as secondary sources of data. The researcher employs primary as well as secondary sources of data. In addition, the researcher uses primary sources basing on the chosen Shona novels having the theme to do with the portrayal of women. According to Cooper and Schindler (2011:88), primary data is:

The original work of research of raw data without interpretation or pronouncements that represent an official opinion or position whilst secondary data are interpretations of primary data such as textbooks, previous studies, handbooks, encyclopedia and various articles.

This means that, primary data is original information not yet analysed and is collected for the first time while secondary data is an analysis of information found in published items like textbooks and different articles.

Gudhlanga (2016:90) avers that, “primary sources of information provide the bulk of the research information for any given research endeavour.” Primary source is referred to as the data gathered by the researcher through the use of different techniques of collecting information. Primary data is usually collected specifically for that purpose. It also involves the collection of first-hand information that is directly linked to the requirements of the researcher. Wilson (2006:67) gives the difference between primary and secondary information as:

Secondary data is information that has been previously gathered for some purpose other than the current research while primary data is collected by a programme of observation, qualitative or quantitative research, either separately or in combination.

Hence, secondary data involves information already collected for another purpose and not for the topic under study whereas primary research is gathered for the first time through the use of observation. Also, qualitative and quantitative methods can be combined or used separately.

Haralambos and Holborn (1990:720) affirm that:

Primary sources of information consist of data collected by researchers themselves during the course of their work. This includes data collected by researchers using questionnaires, conducting interviews or carrying out participant observation....

This means that, primary sources of information involve information gathered by the researchers as they are doing their studies. In addition, that data is collected through interviews, questionnaires or using participant observation among others.

A variety of primary sources that are selected Shona novels are critically analysed in order to collect primary data. This study heavily relies on textual analysis of selected

Shona novels in Zimbabwe. The chosen Shona novels that form the bulk of the sources of information include Simango's *ZviuyaZviriMberi* (1974), Mabasa's *Mapenzi* (1999), Mungoshi's *KunyararaHakusiKutaura?* (1983), Moyo's *Uchandifungawo*(1975), Makayi's *MakudoNdomamwe* (2004), Mukonoweshuro's *NdakagaraNdazviona* (1990), Mabasa's *NdafaHere?* (2008), Hove's *RichaveDzerevende* (1998) and Chakaipa's *Garandichauya* (1963). The study analysed chosen Shona novels set from the pre-colonial up to the post- independence Zimbabwe. This enables the researcher to have an evaluation of the visions of different authors on women characters at different historical periods. This also helps the researcher to have a composite picture of women portrayal in different novels. These novels also give examples that are used to have an illustration of ideas raised in this study as well as corroborating the findings of the researcher.

4.3.1 TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

In depth textual analysis of the selected Shona novels makes it possible for the current study to bring to the fore Shona novels' portrayal of women in Zimbabwe. This is made possible by the use of Afrocentricity and Africana Womanism which are Afro- centred theories which focus on weaving in a people's history and culture in any analysis of any literal works of art. Through the critical examination of the selected Shona novels, the research intends to lay bare issues of women characters in Zimbabwe's Shona novels. Textual analysis involves the examination or analysis of the selected Shona novels in great detail in order to find out how women characteristics are being portrayed. A textual analysis of the content of the nine selected novels is done in order to indicate their effectiveness in depicting Zimbabwean women. These novels provide examples used to illustrate the ideas raised by this study and also supplying evidence on research findings. According to Bakhtin (1981), "literary analysis or textual interpretations is necessary to be employed in this study because it engages the creative texts in order to reveal how they have depicted women."

The importance of textual or literary analysis is also observed by Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009:170) who aver that:

The sign of a good qualitative research study is that the analysis provides a new and compelling interpretation of a text. By new, we mean novel, unique, and engaging. By compelling we mean logical and supported by rich descriptive examples that persuade the reader to adopt the researcher's interpretation of the text.

Hence, qualitative research is of great value because the analysis which is done provides a new and unique exploration of a text. Also, examples given in the text which are given in a descriptive form persuading the readers of the text to employ the interpretation of the text by the researcher. The current study therefore persuades the readers to the new critical exegesis of Shona novels which lays bare the multiple and nuanced images of women characters.

In addition, where necessary, other Shona novels not selected are used as cross references. Cross references done to other works of literature even those written in English in order to have a better understanding of the Zimbabwean literary works especially those written before and after independence. This helps the researcher to indicate and elucidate the similarities and differences of the issues discussed. Textual analysis as a qualitative research method, aims to study the meanings of words and expressions in selected Shona novels in their endeavour to exhibit women portrayal debate in Zimbabwean literature. It also allows the researcher to have value judgement on the way in which writers of Shona novels portray women characters in their literary works. The novels that were selected are the main sources of information concerning women characters in Shona novels. Besides primary sources of information, secondary sources were also used in this research.

Secondary sources according to Haralambos and Holborn (1990:720) comprise "data which already exist." Secondary sources are of great importance in this research because they raise this study from a mere recount of fictional narratives to a higher level of scholarly discourse. Bulmer, Sturgis and Allum (2009) assert that, "secondary data include both raw data and published summaries. These data can be further analysed to provide additional or different knowledge, interpretations or conclusions." Secondary sources that are relevant to the portrayal of women characters were used and helps to

shed light on the topic under study. Secondary sources that were considered include some works written on the portrayal or images of women that include dissertations which already looked at the images of women in different novels including English literature. Muwati (2009:45) asserts that:

Published sources in the form of critical works and historical works will provide background and theoretical information on the topic under study.

Hence, critical works which are already published as well as historical works provides both theoretical and background information necessary to the topic under study.

Unpublished dissertations, theses, seminar and conference papers, critical works on African literature, journal articles, newspapers and other secondary sources not included here but provided relevant information were also used in this research. These secondary sources are relevant to the study as they raise very useful ideas that authenticate arguments raised in this study. Secondary sources are important in giving a validation of arguments made as well as complementing primary sources. However, only justifiable and pertinent secondary sources with data relevant to the research topic are used as reference point. Reference was made to other relevant materials on literature in general in order to enhance the researcher's understanding of trends in other literatures. Hence, this provided supportive evidence in the analysis of women portrayal in Shona novels. Women portrayal is a real issue in Shona novels in Zimbabwe. Therefore, this study cannot depend on Shona novels alone as sources of information but also on secondary sources. The succeeding section looks at the data collection technique that is interviews.

4.3.2 THE INTERVIEW

In this study, the researcher uses interview as a data gathering technique. A variety of data collection techniques fall under the qualitative research method but the researcher engages interviews only in collecting the information from the key informants due to its strengths. The following sub section defined the term interview.

4.3.2.1 DEFINITION OF INTERVIEW

Berg (2001:66) gives a definition of an interview as, “a conversation with a purpose” as well as that “specifically the purpose is to gather information.” Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016:29) define an in- depth interview as, “a technique designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participant’s perspective on the research topic.” Interviews are also defined by Dawson (2002) as, “a conversation-based inquiry where questions are used to obtain information from participants.” Jupp (2006:157) gives a definition of an interview as, “a method of data collection, information or opinion gathering that specifically involves a series of questions.” David and Sutton (2004:87) affirm that, “interviewing involves asking people questions, but is equally about listening carefully to the answers given.” Kvale (1996) cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2010:349) gave a description of an interview as:

An interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest is characterised by the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production and emphasises the social situation of research data.

This means that, an interview involves exchanging of information between two or more people concerning the topic under study. All the above given definitions of interviews indicated the aspect of dialoguing with the key informants so as to have an extract of data that is important to the topic under study.

The researcher conducts face to face interviews with the key informants and the interviews are usually semi-structured to meet the objectives of the researcher. Interviews with four academics who teach Shona literature are conducted with the objective to create a wider valuation of the portrayal of women in Shona novels. The researcher engages four academics from the departments that teach literature in Shona at the University of Zimbabwe as well as seven secondary school teachers who teach Shona literature at Ordinary and Advanced level. The academics as well as secondary school teachers chosen have first hand information about women characters in different Shona novels. Muwati (2009) avers that, “the engagement of academics in this qualitative engagement is an exercise intended to draw comparative conclusions on how women are being portrayed.” Therefore, the researcher makes a comparison of

results from the key informants interviewed and the results obtained after analysing the novels.

4.3.2.2 TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

There are three main types of interviews, that is, unstructured, structured and semi-structured interviews. Mason (2003) avers that, “structured interviews involve questions that are planned and standardised in advance and pre-coded categories are used for responses.” Dawson (2002) also asserts that, “structured interviews involve a series of questions in which the interviewer asks the interviewee and tick boxes for the responses given.” Unstructured interviews, according to Dawson (ibid), “are those interviews where the interviewer wants to find out about a specific topic but has no structure or preconceived plan or expectation as to how they will deal with the topic.” Under unstructured interviews, usually the “interviewer has the intention of discussing limited number of topics” but would be covered in greater detail.

However, this study employs semi-structured interviews in order to obtain information on the portrayal of women in Shona novels. According to Gudhlanga (2016), “under semi-structured interviews, there is an interview schedule which comprises of a list of questions or topics that need to be discussed.” Dawson (2002) avers that:

In this type of interview, the researcher wants to know specific information which can be compared with information gathered from other respondents. However, the researcher wants the interview to remain flexible so that other important information can still arise.

This means that, under semi- structured interviews, the researcher wants to collect data which is specific and compares it from information collected from other participants. Also, the researcher wants the interview to be dynamic so that other essential information can still be obtained.

Semi-structured interview is the most relevant for this research since it consists of open-ended questions and there is room for flexibility especially in terms of the questions to be asked. In addition, semi-structured interviews also enable the researcher to collect more information on Shona novels’ depiction of women from those respondents

sampled and who have more knowledge on Shona novels' presentation of women characters.

By conducting in-depth interviews using structured questions, the researcher has the intention of obtaining first-hand information from the key participants. The respondents are lecturers at the University of Zimbabwe and teachers in selected secondary schools. Face to face interviews with academics and teachers enable these key informants to provide their own information especially on how women are being portrayed. Through face-to-face interviews, a fruitful dialogue is done, enabling learning together unlike interrogating the participants. The researcher conducts face to face interviews with those key informants she chooses. Jones (1996:140) observed that, "one of the easiest ways of gathering information is simply to ask someone who knows whatever it is you want to know."

The interview method is relevant to this research as it enables the researcher to have a conversation with those people who might help in shedding more light in as far as women portrayal in Shona novels is concerned. In addition, information obtained from the key informants enables the study to balance the information found in Shona novels and that obtained from the interviewees in as far as the depiction of females in Shona novels is concerned. According to Malhotra (2010), "interviews enable the respondents to express general attitudes and opinions that can help the researcher interpret their responses to structured questions."

By using this type of interview, the researcher decides in advance on the areas that are intended to be covered. This type of interview depends on a series of questions that are open-ended and are basing on the area under study. Degu and Yigzaw (2006:90) aver that:

In a semi-structured interview, the interviewer has a set of broad questions to ask and may also have some prompts to keep the interviewee in line with the questions. The interviewer has also the time and space to respond to the interviewee's responses.

Hence, semi-structured interview involves the use of a list of questions, specific time is allocated to each question asked and a space for the responses to be given.

This current study uses semi- structured interviews since it is flexible, that is the interviewer may change the way being used in interviewing the respondent especially if the respondent is not understanding as there is no pre- coding of questions.

4.3.2.3 ADVANTAGES OF USING INTERVIEWS

According to Degu and Yigzaw (2006:34), it is an advantage to use open-ended questions on structured interviews because “apart from defining the topic under discussion, it provides opportunities for both the interviewer and interviewee to discuss some topics in more detail.” These authors further argue that:

An interviewer can also repeat questions which are not understood by the respondent and standardised explanations are given where necessary. Also, an interviewer may ask follow- ups questions or probing questions to the respondent so as to clarify a response. Necessary observations during an interview may help to deal with issues that lack clarity.

This means that, if an interviewee does not understand the questions asked, the interviewer may repeat. This allows semi- structured interviews to be useful in this research as the interviewer was able to repeat those questions that were not understood by the respondent concerning women portrayal in selected Shona novels.

Denscombe (2010:90) gave other strengths of interviews and affirms that:

There is depth of information through probing of subjects and pursuing lines of investigations over a long period of time. They are also a reliable way of obtaining data based on the interviewee’s opinions, feelings and ideas. There is also the advantage of flexibility which enables one to make necessary adjustments and high response rates are almost guaranteed as they (interviews) are arranged prior to the time and validity of the information as there is more personal contact and people tend to enjoy the unusual chance of talking at length to a person whose major purpose is to listen without being critical.

Hence, it is useful to use interviews as they can be adjusted in order to suit the prevailing situation. In addition, they are more reliable as the interviewee is able to give his/her own feelings and ideas about a question.

In addition, it is advantageous to use semi-structured interviews because “if the interviewee has difficulties in answering a given question or giving a brief response, the interviewer may use cues or prompts so as to motivate the interviewee in order to consider the question further. Furthermore, the interviewer also has an opportunity to probing the respondent to elaborate on the original response or to follow a line of inquiry.” (Denscombe 2010). Gudhlanga (2016) affirms that, “interviews enable the researcher to get first-hand information right away. There is no need to wait as in the case with questionnaires. The feedback is immediate and guarantees a 100 percent response rate.” In addition, the use of in-depth open-ended interviews with interviewees allows the researcher to solicit information being used in order to assess the authenticity of what is being presented in selected Shona novels concerning women characters.

Robin (1993:233) observed that, “in-depth open-ended questions provide no restrictions on the content or manner of the reply other than on the subject matter.” This interviewing technique allows the researcher to collect a lot of information from the interviewees. Interviews also allows the researcher to probing further if answers which are inadequate are given. Wellington and Szczerbinski (2007:81) have noted the ability of interviews to probe further and aver that, “interviews allow the researcher to probe an interviewee’s thoughts, values prejudices, perceptions, views and perspectives.” Therefore, the interviewee is given an opportunity to give his or her own views concerning a question asked on the topic under study.

Moreover, by conducting in-depth interviews using semi-structured questions, the researcher has the intention of obtaining original data from the key respondents such as teachers in secondary schools and academics who teach Shona literature. According to Muwati (2009:23), “individual interviews provide the opportunity to examine the nexus between the particular experiences and general factors as they unfold in the lives of

individuals' with a view to problematising and expanding theory and conceptualisation process.”

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2010:123) also stress the importance of using interviews and assert that:

Interviews enable participants- be they interviewers or interviewees- to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view. In these senses the interview is not simply concerned with collecting data about life: it is part of life itself; its human embeddedness is inescapable.

This means that, interviews allow both the interviewer and the interviewee to have a discussion of how they interpret the real world in which they live and how they view situations from their own point of view.

Hence, it is relevant to use semi- structured interviews as Mason (2003:226) depicts them as, “the art of knowledge excavation and construction.” Punch (2005) also noted that, “an interview is a data collection tool of great flexibility and which can be adapted to suit a wide variety of research situations.” Therefore, information concerning this research was gathered through interviews.

The researcher also did a sample on the number of academics and secondary school teachers to be interviewed. There are a variety of sampling techniques that falls under the two main groups of probability and non- probability sampling methods. Wilson (2006:10) defines sampling as, “a process of choosing a sample that is going to be a representative of the entire population.” This means that, the small sample chosen represents the whole population. Gudhlanga (2016:67) defines a sample as, “a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis.” This means that, by observing the characteristics of a sample, the researcher makes certain inferences about the characteristics of the population from which the sample is drawn. A sample can also be seen as a subset of the whole population which may be used to represent the whole population being selected for a particular study. Miles and Huberman (1984) cited in Wasosa (2014:91) observed that, “no study whether quantitative or qualitative or

both, can include everything; you cannot study everyone everywhere doing everything.” Therefore, this study employs purposive sampling technique so as to have a fraction of the study population.

Non- probability sampling is defined by Kothari (2009:59) as, “the sampling method which does not afford any basis for estimating the probability that each item in the population has in being included in the sample.” Probability sampling is defined by Kothari (2009:60) as, “a sample of population where each member of the population has an equal chance of being in the sample.” Probability sampling is also referred to as random sampling. Under probability sampling, Kothari (ibid:60) further stresses that, “each member has an equal chance of being selected to participate in the study whilst under non- probability sampling, each members’ chance of being selected to participate in the study is not known.”

Qualitative research mainly uses non- probability sampling techniques whilst quantitative research uses probability sampling techniques. Convenience, purposive and snowball sampling are examples of non- probability sampling techniques whilst simple- random sampling, systematic, stratified, cluster and snowball sampling are examples of probability sampling techniques.

The researcher did a sample to find out the number of academics as well as secondary school teachers to be interviewed. The succeeding section discusses purposive sampling.

4.4.0 PURPOSIVE SAMPLING

This study adopted the non- probability purposive sampling method in order to have a sample for the research. It is impossible for the researcher to do an analysis of all Shona novels that are found in Zimbabwe. Hence, the researcher took a sample of nine Shona novels both from New World and Old-World novels and these novels are written by both male and female authors. Shona novels whose main theme is on women are analysed. The sample taken is a representative of other novels not chosen. Purposive sampling was also done on the key informants. It is also impossible to interview all secondary school teachers who teach Shona literature in Zimbabwe and all

lecturers in all universities in Zimbabwe. Therefore, four academics from the University of Zimbabwe were chosen as well as seven teachers from different secondary schools in Chipinge district who teach Shona both at Ordinary and Advanced level.

Wilson (2006) defines purposive sampling as, “a procedure where the researcher unconsciously selects a sample that he or she considers to be most appropriate for the research study.” This means that, the researcher chooses academics from the University of Zimbabwe and secondary school teachers because these are the right people who provides her with the exact information about women portrayal in Shonanovels. Cooper and Schindler (2011) aver that, “purposive sampling is also known as judgemental sampling where the researcher selects sample members who conform to some criteria.” The author further stresses that:

Purposive sampling method is effective when only limited numbers of people can serve as primary data sources due to the nature of the research design and its aims and objectives.

This means that, this sampling method is ideal in situations where a small number is used as a sample. In this study, purposive sampling is therefore most relevant as the research only concentrating on teachers in seven secondary schools selected and only one university in Zimbabwe.

Concerning secondary schools that are selected, only seven secondary schools out of sixty- seven secondary schools in Chipinge district were chosen. Seven secondary school teachers in selected secondary schools who teach Shona literature both at Ordinary and Advanced level were interviewed. In addition, only one university out of the several universities in Zimbabwe was chosen. Four academics at the University of Zimbabwe who teach Shona at the Department of African languages were also interviewed. These academics were selected as they have a critique of African literature and appreciate better in terms of how women are being portrayed in Shona novels. Academics and secondary teachers of African literature are most likely to have more information on women characters in Shona novels and hence, are a good source of information required in this study.

The key informants were purposively identified and selected. Le Compte and Goertz cited in Fetterman (1984:34) affirm that:

These key informants were believed to be individuals who possess special knowledge, status or communication skills and who are willing to share that knowledge with the researcher.

Hence, this means that, those people with the necessary information required to the study are used as the key informants.

Muranda (2004:55) also observed the role of key informants and affirms that:

The key informant technique involves conducting exploratory research by seeking out and talking to respondents with known expertise in the research area.

This implies that, finding out and talking to the key respondents with the knowledge required in the research is important. To further support the use of purposive sampling in this study, Palys (2008:3) contends that, “purposive sampling is synonymous with qualitative research. Think of the person or place or situation that has the largest potential for advancing your understanding and look there.” The study obtains valid information that is guiding it from purposively sampled key participants who include teachers and academics of African literature.

The responses from the sampled informants and the information obtained from selected Shona novels was used to draw conclusions on women portrayal in Shona novels in general. Views from academics and teachers in secondary schools are important especially in having a critique of the perspective of the authors such as how they relate women characters to the economic, social as well as political factors that were operating in Zimbabwe during the pre- and post- colonial era in Zimbabwe.

Dawson (2002:34) affirms that:

With purposive sampling, the researcher needs to use her own judgement in order to choose cases that enable her to answer her research questions and to

meet her objectives. The researcher also needs to think carefully about the impact from the decision she takes in order to include or exclude cases on the research when selecting a sample.

This means that, when using purposive sampling, the researcher uses her own judgement so as to be able to answer her research questions as well as meeting her objectives.

Neuman (2005:23) asserts that, “purposive sampling is used when working with very small samples such as when the researcher wishes to select cases that are particularly informative.” In short, purposive sampling is most ideal in this research as the size of the sample chosen by the researcher is very small. The following section concludes all the issues dealt with in this chapter.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the method of gathering data for this research. It has indicated that, qualitative research method is the most ideal method in this research unlike quantitative method. As this study is focusing on an exploration of women’s portrayal in Shona novels, this can be best done by using qualitative research methodology. Definitions of qualitative research method were given. In addition, advantages as well as disadvantages of using the qualitative research method in this study were examined. The justification of adopting qualitative research method in this research was also indicated. The main methods of collecting information used in this research which are primary as well as secondary research were elucidated. This chapter also examined the main information collecting tool adopted in this study which is interviews. Semi-structured interviews were regarded as the most ideal tool employed in this study so as to collect information about women portrayal in selected Shona novels. Advantages of using interviews in this study were clarified. Also, this chapter further discussed the sampling technique used which is purposive sampling. Under purposive sampling, it has discussed how sampling was done as well as the importance of using purposive sampling in the analysis of women characters in selected Shona novels. This study is therefore qualitative in nature.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter gave a discussion of the research methodology. It highlighted that the researcher benefits extensively from interviews that involve the key respondents as well as from a textual analysis of the selected Shona novels. The succeeding chapter consists of the main discussion in that it engrosses the selection of literary works and their depiction of women characters. It involves the analysis and discussion of the research findings from textual analysis and face to face interviews as the main sources of primary data. These methods used to collect data necessitated the examination of the views of people with regards to women portrayal in selected Shona novels. The data in this chapter is given in a descriptive format. An examination of the depiction of female characters by both male and female authors of Shona novels is done in this chapter. The selected fictional works used in this chapter are set during the pre- and post-independence Zimbabwe. These fictional works are *Garandichauya* (1963) by Chakaipa P., *Mapenzi* (1999) by Mabasa I. T., *NdafaHere?* (2008) by Mabasa I. T., *KunyararaHakusiKutaura?* (1983) by Mungoshi C., *Uchandifungawo* (1975) by Moyo A. C., *RichaveDzerevende* (1998) by Hove P., *ZviuyaZviriMberi* (1974) by Simango J., *MakudoNdomamwe* (2004) by Makayi R. and *NdakagaraNdazviona* (1990) by Mukonoweshuro S. This chapter also engages Africana Womanism and Afrocentricity as the two theories that guide this study. The Africana Womanist theory employs the eighteen descriptors that explicate the nature of an Africana woman. Some of the names given to female characters in the novels are looked at in connection to the roles they play in the novels. In addition, titles of some texts are analysed so as to confirm whether they portray gender stereotypes in the novels. The themes of the texts being chosen are also scrutinised so as to figure out if there is any bias in terms of gender. The main argument of this chapter revolves around the fact that women characters are best understood in the context of events found in the society in which people live. In this study, it is argued that women characters are being moulded by the prevailing social,

historical, cultural, political and economic circumstances. This chapter begins by giving a summary of each primary text.

5.1 IMAGES OF WOMEN AS PROSTITUTES IN SELECTED SHONA NOVELS

There is a predictable thread in selected Shona novels of women as prostitutes. This thread is observable in both male-authored and female-authored novels. The term prostitute is defined by Fayemi (2009) as a person who has sex for money and these are usually women. Chimhundu (1996:378) defines prostitute as a woman who sleeps around with many men or a man who sleeps around with many women. Muriungu (2004:287) notes that, prostitution is viewed as an “intolerable social evil that brings moral and physical disaster to all concerned.” This condemnation of prostitution is motivated by the fact that such practice departs from celebrated cultural norms based on morality.

According to Wasosa (2010), prostitution is a result of women struggling for survival and it therefore becomes an economic necessity. Clinard and Meier (2008) define prostitutes as women having multiple sexual partners, especially, to get money and other material benefits. This definition implies that only women are regarded as prostitutes. Clinard and Meier (2008) also define prostitution as a promiscuous and mercenary sexual behaviour with emotional indifferences between the partners. Women in selected novels are forced by conditions beyond their control to be involved in prostitution. This means that, there are factors that push women into such behavior, and one of them is the need to survive the mordant economic conditions.

5.1.1 WOMEN AS PROSTITUTES IN SELECTED SHONA NOVELS

Garandichauya (1965) mainly centres on Muchaneta who is described as a person of loose morals throughout the novel. Muchaneta is seen engaging in a lot of sexual relationships with men for money and material benefits. This woman is seen using her beauty to attract men in the urban area. However, she ends up living a terrible life and, in the end, she is murdered by a man known as Handisumbe, with whom she once fell in love. In the novel, Chakaipa consistently depicts Muchaneta as a prostitute. Traditionally, if a woman engages in multiple love affairs with different men, she is seen as a prostitute. Muchaneta becomes a prostitute because she lacks proper guidance as

well as upbringing from her mother who is after material gains. Instead of guiding her married daughter properly, Muchaneta's mother advises her to become unfaithful to her husband who works in Mutare. She encourages her to fall in love with different men who are wealthy for material benefits as well as for money.

The need for financial and material benefits was caused by colonialism which encourages competition for different things amongst black people. Muchaneta's husband was able to provide her with both material and financial benefits but she continues to have a lot of love affairs with other men. He even buys a bicycle for her but she continues to be unfaithful to him.

Muchaneta is depicted as a whore because traditionally in Shona culture, women are not allowed to have many partners. Hence, a woman with multiple partners is referred to as a prostitute. In order to show that Muchaneta is a prostitute, she confesses that:

*Zvandangandisatindawanikwa,
ndaivanevakomanavashanuvaindipazvosezvanda.
Mudzidzisiwepachikoroapandakambomudya. (p.6)*

(Before I got married, I had five boyfriends who met my needs. I had a boyfriend who was a teacher and I spent his money.)

This means that, Muchaneta was a woman of loose morals even before marriage. She was seen in the novel living with one man after the other. This woman wants financial and material benefits. Muchaneta's moral decadence was caused by the advent of colonialism. Before colonialism, there were no prostitutes in Zimbabwe. Anthropological research on prostitution in Africa shows that there was no prostitution before colonialism. Robertson cited in Muriungu (2004) observed that, the history of prostitutes in Kenya like in most parts of Africa, was brought about by colonialism. This was due to the fact that, colonialism establishes towns which provide employment for men only. Those women who were able to go to towns had no choice but to live with those men who were not their husbands. Crawthorns (1999) affirms that:

Colonialism changed the African economic, social and gender relationships and labour. The author further stresses that, for women, the power and prestige they had before colonialism was taken away. African women were most affected politically, socially and economically. Consequently, they ended up engaging in deviant behaviour including prostitution as a means of survival.

This means that, colonialism affected women mostly because they had limited choices. The advent of colonialism caused women to engage in anti-social behaviour such as prostitution in order for them to survive. Therefore, Muchaneta is involved in prostitution so as to please herself as well as her mother. The behaviour of Muchaneta and her mother in the novel is depicted as purely criminal and deviant. In short, Muchaneta is morally weak and therefore recourse to uncustomary relations with men in the novel. She is depicted as an insubordinate woman who is difficult to control. Muchaneta's prostitution is a sign of the collapse of traditional pillars. There is a collapse of an essential part that should provide support to her. Even her mother fails to provide her with proper guidance hence encourages her to become a prostitute. Muchaneta's mother is the one who is responsible for nurturing the behaviour of her daughter but all was in vain. According to Hudson –Weems (1993), an African woman should be nurturing and family centred. Therefore, Muchaneta's mother is not family centred as shown by what she does in the novel.

Chimhundu (1987:10) avers that:

Female characters are being portrayed in a gender stereotypical way in a more or less fixed state of being. This gender stereotype fashions women as the cause of men's decadence in the city, as passive guardians of 'imagined' customs and therefore the refuge of men's escape from the hardships of the colonial experience.

This means that, only women are portrayed in a negative way. In addition, women are seen as causing moral decline of men especially in cities. Gender stereotyping in its negative form tends to under-develop the characters of females especially by refusing them the authority to perform as individuals. Women are only restricted in the private

sector. A lecturer interviewed at a certain university said that, Chakaipa only blames women in his novel by portraying them in negative terms unlike men. He further says that, men should also be blamed in the novel because they are also doing immoral behaviour in their society which causes instability of the society. The interviewee is worried about the author who only blames women for the ill behaviour. Hence, this creates gender stereotype and reduces women empowerment.

Although Muchaneta's husband was able to provide her with a lot of material and financial benefits, she remains unfaithful to him. This is shown in the novel when Muchaneta asks Mr Muchazvirega another teacher to give her money. Muchaneta contends that:

Hamungandiyamurewoherenemari,

Ndirikudakunotengeraamaitsvigiri. (p.9)

(May you please help me with some money, I need to buy some sugar for my mother).

This means that Muchaneta is after material benefits only but her husband is providing her with them. Culturally, the behaviour she displays above is not expected from a married woman. This may be caused by her mother who gives her improper guidance as shown by the advice below she was given:

Unofanirakuzivakutichavachirunguchino,

Ukadakuteeratsikadzekare,

Unofauriromberokupedzisira. (p.4)

(You must know that these are now modern times. If you stick to our traditional norms, you will die a pauper.)

This means that, Muchaneta's mother fails to guide her daughter in a proper way. She advises her to stick to modern ways of living and turning away from the past ways of living. Muchaneta's mother supports her in doing prostitution so that she can adjust very

well to the new ways of living brought about by colonialism. European imperialism brought with it competition for material things like bread, bicycles, tea as well as money. Therefore, Muchaneta is seen caught up in an inextricable web so that she can have access to those different materials in order to please herself as well as her mother. Colonialism is to be blamed mostly for Muchaneta's character malformation than any other factor. Although her mother fails to provide her with proper guidance, the effects of colonialism should not be underestimated. Women as represented by Muchaneta are also victims of the social and economic problems who find themselves with limited survival options.

Sociologically, most women living in urban areas are depicted as prostitutes. In urban areas, there are no traditional pillars to lean on and the environment which is found in these urban areas encourages people especially women to do anti-social behaviour so that they can survive. Colonialism leads to urbanisation. The type of accommodation found in urban areas did not encourage men to live together with their wives. This means that men were staying for a long time in the urban areas without their wives. This leads to alienation of the family and family insecurity. Family separation becomes a disadvantage unlike an advantage. Those few women who were able to go to urban areas ended up living with those men who are not their husbands. Therefore, this promotes prostitution. Muchaneta is living in the urban area and she ends up living together with Matamba whilst Tsitsi is in the rural area. Gaidzanwa (1985:12) asserts that:

The dominant image of a woman especially in the urban area is that she is a prostitute or loose. As long as a woman has sex with a man who is not her husband, she is held to be prostitute, implicitly or explicitly.

Schmidt (1992:162) also supports Gaidzanwa's view and avers that:

The entrance of large numbers of African women into urban areas cause a certain disintegration to native family--- life, undermining tribal control and native authority...

This means that women who migrated to towns are seen causing a lot of social problems such as family disintegration. A lecturer interviewed at a certain university observed that, due to colonialism, family separation becomes a disadvantage unlike an advantage to a lot of families. This is because due to urbanisation, there is family insecurity as husbands spend a lot of time without their wives in the urban areas. For example, Matambaspends a long period of time living in Gatooma whilst her wife Tsitsi was in the rural area. Matamba ended up living with Muchaneta a prostitute.

Muchaneta is also seen persuading, Handisumbe, a storekeeper to divorce his wife so that she gets married to him. What is observable is that Chakaipa engages in the practice of victim-blame, a major characteristic of Shona literature. Most Shona novelists of the time advance a narrow and narrowing moralist agenda that targets victims of the dehumanizing colonial system rather than the system which brings about desperation and suffering. For that reason, the Shona is often accused abetting imperialism using discourse. It stifles the development of liberating vision among its readers.

Equally, the penchant to blame women falls squarely into the hands of the coloniser. The colonial system had rendered women persona non grata in cities. As a result, novels like *Garandichauya* preach this position by declaring cities and towns as no go areas for courageous women like Muchaneta who breach the colonial policies of dewomanisation. This explains why Muchaneta is blamed for prostitution in the novel yet the men are allowed to remain blemish free. This gives a negative portrayal of women in favour of men. Prostitution involves a sexual relationship between men and women but only women are negatively portrayed. This vision is therefore disempowering.

Chimhundu (1987:56) affirms that:

Negative gender stereotyping of female characters in Shona literature limits the potential of women to exercise their own power as well as authority in the domestic and public spheres. This promotes male dominance, thereby undermining the capacity of women for development. Therefore, gender

stereotyping marginalises women to an extent where they may internalise their own peripheral condition.

This means that, gender bias in favour of men reduces the ability of women to exercise their own authority at home as well as in the public sphere. Therefore, this encourages men to always dominate every part of life whilst reducing women's ability to develop.

Muchaneta is using her beauty for material gains as well as to titillate men. In Shona, there is a proverb which states that:

Mukadzimunakukuregakuroyaanoba.

(A beautiful woman always has a blemish. If she is not a witch, she is a thief.)

As Muchaneta is a beautiful woman, she becomes a prostitute. The author evokes indigenous knowledge to undermine the very Shona people that are supposed to benefit from it. The use of such proverbs makes his narrative view point more compelling to the reader. From an African womanist point of view, critical discussion of the conditions that plunge women into such situations is necessary.

However, in reality, not all women are immoral as well as being stupid. In selected novels again, not all women found in the novels are immoral. For example, Martha in *Kunyarara Hakusi Kutura* (1983), Betty in *Ndafa Here* (2008) Wiridzai's mother in *Richave Dzerevende* (1998), Tsitsi in *Garandichauya* (1964) among others are moral as well as submissive women.

A woman is also portrayed as a trouble-maker as well as very dangerous. Women are depicted as the source of all troubles in life. This comes out through Muchaneta and her mother. Muchaneta also misleads Matamba, a married man, into cruelty. In order to show that the author is against women's presence in the city as per colonial policies of the time, Muchaneta gets punished in the end. Although Muchaneta first enjoys her life as a prostitute in the novel, she ended up dying painful as an erring woman at the end of the novel. In addition, Muchaneta is portrayed regretting her sins as well as her life of being a prostitute whilst she is now living a life which is terrible in the city of Harare. This woman is seen repenting the life she has lived before her death. Muchaneta is now

realising her errors as she fails to live her life in a conventional manner. However, it is too late. In short, Muchaneta is a town prostitute who is punished at the end of the novel for her immoral behaviour. After having suffering a lot in her life, Muchaneta ended up being killed by Handisumbe and dies violently. As Schmidt (1992) argues, , some prostitutes live a happily life but they end up suffering at the end.

In the novel *Mapenzi* (1999), women are also portrayed as whores or prostitutes. Prostitution in the novel is practised mostly by two females namely Magi and Kundai who are students at the University of Zimbabwe. These two females are involved in prostitution because of different factors beyond their control. Most university female students are said to be involved in prostitution due to different reasons. Magi and Kundai are victims of the harsh economic conditions in the country. Economic exigencies of the country during that time the novel *Mapenzi* was written cause a lot of female students in different universities, including Magi and Kundai, to be involved in prostitution because of financial constraints. The financial support which was given by the government to students as payouts was not enough. Rampant corruption by the elite also contributed a lot to women to become prostitutes. The elite group are benefitting at the expense of others.

Unlike *Garandichauya*, *Mapenzi* transcends the mere victim-blame syndrome as it clearly unravels the forces that push women into making such choices. The novel condemns the system rather than individuals who are victims of the system. It is clear in the novel that most people including female students in universities are suffering whilst the elites are benefitting a lot. This forces a lot of female students in different universities to become whores even with married men so that they can be able to survive. In addition, the collapsing of the economy as well as rampant corruption by the leaders force women to become prostitutes. Economic exigencies have negative impacts to people in society especially women. Economic downturn needs to be addressed by the government but fails to do that. Hyperinflation to the extent that these female students including others in other state universities were not able to survive due to the harsh economic conditions. Bromley cited in Muzvidziwa (1997:77) noted that, “most young women without access to significant capital are aware that prostitution may

be potentially the most remunerative form of work". This compels these students to be engaged in prostitution so as to survive. In order to show that these female students are becoming prostitutes because of inadequate financial support given by the government, Magi is saying that:

Also, nyayayekutimariyatino piwaishomakuti ikuitirewozvaunoda.

I just did what most girls are doing pano.

Vanodanananevarumevevanhuvachinyatsoziva,

asi they tell you kutivarikudakungowanamariyekutivararame.

Vazhinjivachovanorambakutimahureasichokwadindeche kutitose titongorimahure.

(p.41)

(Also, the issue that the money we receive is inadequate to meet your needs. I just did like what most of the girls here are doing. They are knowingly in love with married men but they tell you what they need is to survive. Most of them deny the truth that we are all prostitutes.)

This means that, women in the novel are not involved in prostitution willingly but out of their choice. They are not able to survive at the university due to lack of financial support from the government. Muwati and Gambahaya (2007) noted that, the novel *Mapenzi* was written during the time when the economic condition of Zimbabwe had reached its lowest level. The economic recession of Zimbabwe during that period forced people especially females to be engaged in negative activities like prostitution. This novel was written during the time Zimbabwe was facing a major economic crisis triggered by the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme. Therefore, the government provided little support to the students. Hence, this forces them to become prostitutes as a way to survive. These students had no options except to become whores as they are failing to make ends meet. They are being pushed by situations beyond their control. Political, social and economic conditions contribute a lot to women's prostitution.

Magi, a female character in *Mapenzi*, ends up getting involved in prostitution even with married men in order to obtain money and other material benefits that are necessary for her to survive. This means that, financial constraints contributed greatly to Magi and Kundai's prostitution. Haralambos and Holborn (2008) observe that, an attempt should be made in order to elucidate the behaviour of humans, institutions as well as societies in their social context unlike looking to individuals. In societies, there are inequalities in terms of materials as well as differences in power that enable some people to have more opportunities than others. Others are having limited opportunities for survival. This is what is happening to Magi and Kundai at the university, they are having limited choices for survival.

The economic situation in Zimbabwe pushes women to be involved in prostitution. They had closed options for them to survive. Fayemi (2009:45) avers that:

Prostitution is inherently morally objectionable as it is not an act of free choice because of the fact that in most cases it is usually women with fewest choices that are found in the network.

This means that, women do not have open choices but they are closed. Therefore, it is difficult for them to survive, hence engaged in prostitution. Women are struggling to survive in the harsh economic environment of their country. Prostitutes are shown to be the victims of the devilish system of colonialism. A certain lecturer interviewed from a certain university asserts that, for most African people, colonialism was dispossessing rather than acquisition and they are shown to be desperate in making ends meet. Therefore, involving in anti-social behaviour. Fayemi (2009) is able to situate correctly the characters' morality to the poverty they find themselves in. Prostitutes are shown to be acting out of despair because of the evils brought by colonialism in Zimbabwe. As a result, the image of whores one obtains in the novel *Mapenzi* is that of victims of circumstances as they are shown to be acting out of their utter hopelessness. A teacher interviewed at a certain secondary school said that, usually female students in different universities become prostitutes because of competition to obtain material things as well as finance. She further says that, as female students compete against each other, this

encourages some of them to be involved in doing deviant behaviour so as to obtain what they want.

Moreover, it is not out of conscious choice for Magi to become a whore and she also want to have a steady marriage in her life. Magi also asserts that:

NyayayekungoitamunhuasinawakeiyiinotodavanhuvanengeKundaiakapikirahupe nyuhwekusimudzahembekumaAvenues...

ZvanzinaKundai it's not always ndinozviita part time kuwedzeramariyangukanaichishotahere and there! SakanyayadzekuCollegedzekudananevanhuzvekuwanamarizvakatozorambak uperaka!Zvakaoma! (p.158)

(The issue of failing to have a single lover is fit for people like Kundai who has vowed to be a prostitute in the Avenues area... Kundai says she does it on a part-time basis to supplement her money when it is necessary. So, the issue of prostitution which she started whilst at college seems to be permanent in her! It is quite sad!)

This means that, Magi is also involved in prostitution because of being a single mother who is not able to survive and provide support alone. The money she obtains is not adequate enough to support her family. In addition, Kundai also does prostitution in order to have a supplement of the money she already have so that she can survive. These women are employed but the money they obtain is not sufficient enough for them to be able to survive due to economic crisis like hyperinflation. Hence, they become prostitutes.

As argued earlier, Mabasa's strength in the novel is to blame the harsh economic conditions prevailing in the country which force women to become prostitutes. The author is also blaming the government for failing to adequately support the students financially in different universities not only at the University of Zimbabwe. This enable different readers of his novel to sympathise with these prostitutes as it is not out of their choice but they have no options for them to survive. Although Mabasa is negatively

portraying women in his novel, he is not using very strong terms like what is done by other authors.

Kundai, a female character in the novel *Mapenzi* is also involved in prostitution out of choice. She also blames the harsh economic conditions that lead her and other female students in universities to become whores as shown in the following excerpt:

HanzinaKundaindakabvirakuhurazvekusimudzahembekumaAvenuestichirikuCollege: "I did it occasionally to supplement payout when things were not going fine". (p.159)

(Kundai says she became a prostitute patronising the Avenues area during her days at college! "I did it occasionally to supplement payout when things were not going fine".)

This means that, Kundai is not having sufficient funds to meet her needs at the university. Hence, she becomes a prostitute. There are no other options than being involved in prostitution. Life is difficult for Kundai at the university and she becomes a whore in order for her to survive. Kundai also says that:

Shamwarikusirikufandekupi?

Ndakarambwandikasiirwavanatwo.

Ever since we parted, a lot has happened. Mariyanguhaikwaninyangwezvangundinedegree, degreeerinebasareipakukwirakwesuganechingwa?

Handitivamwemakaitanhumbumukachengeterwavanananamaivenyu,

Sakahapanachinombokurwadzai. (p.160)

(My friend, is it not a matter of life and death for me? I was divorced and left with two children. Ever since we parted, a lot has happened. Even though I am a graduate, my money is inadequate, what does being a graduate has to do with the increase of prices of sugar and bread? Some of you do not understand my

situation because you got impregnated and your children were looked after by your mothers.)

This means that, most prostitutes like Kundai do not fear death from HIV/AIDS because they had no options other than to become prostitutes for survival. Like Magi, Kundai is also a single mother and it is difficult for her to survive with her two children. No one is looking for her and her children. Therefore, she becomes a whore in order to have sufficient funds which enable her to survive with her two children. A teacher interviewed at a certain school avers that, urban life and how people are living there affect people's lives which forces them to engage in deviant behaviour like prostitution. The interviewee further avers that, urban life is very expensive and a lot of people lack finance and do not have their own houses. As a result, they find alternative ways best for them to survive. Muwati and Gambahaya (2007) aver that, *Mapenzi* (1999) was written during the time when Zimbabwe's economic conditions had reached its lowest level. The economic downturn of Zimbabwe during that phase forced people especially women to be involved in anti social activities like prostitution. This was regarded as the only option for females as they were unemployed. Therefore, the writer is blaming the economic crisis unlike blaming the prostitutes like what is done by most writers of Shona novels. However, Mabasa seems to have an ambivalent vision on prostitutes. On one side, he blames the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the country but on the other side blames the prostitutes themselves for bringing misery in societies. Hence, readers may not sympathise with these prostitutes. This end up waters down Mabasa's vision as earlier on he had shown that prostitutes are victims of the economic situations.

In the novel *Mapenzi* (1999), there is also another prostitute who is uncle Saba's prostitute. Saba, Mai Tanya's husband, brings his prostitute to where his wife is living. Saba beats his wife to the extent that she was about to die. Saba also takes his prostitute to Vincent's homestead who is his cousin in order to have sex but Vincent refuses. Vincent forces Saba and his prostitute to find other means. It seems as if Saba's prostitute does not have a house so she is desperate. This prostitute is unemployed so she is finding other means of survival by becoming a prostitute with married men. After refusing to give them accommodation, Vincent comments that:

Handinawokurekwandakamboenda.

*NdakawanasekuruSabanezimunhuravozvakagumbatiranamuzasimehejipediyone
zvituckshopzvichimedzanamiromo. (p.5)*

(I did not go very far. I found Uncle Saba and his prostitute hugging each other under some hedge kissing each other near the tuck shop.)

This means that, Saba's prostitute is having a big stature and bad morals. This prostitute is being blamed for bringing misery to Mai Tanya who is Saba's wife. However, the author here is failing to blame the socio-economic conditions which force this woman to become a whore.

The situation in the urban area enables women to become prostitutes. Due to urbanisation, young men who belong to the economically active group migrated in mines, towns as well as in farms. Only few women were found in urban areas as very few jobs were available for women. Domestic chores that should be done by women were done by men like cooking and cleaning. Those women who were able to migrate to urban areas were joining together with those men. Living conditions found in the urban areas were not conducive especially for women. This results in those women having love affairs with those men even the married men whose wives are left in the rural areas. Therefore, this promoted prostitution amongst them.

Vincent also expresses the statements below about the prostitute of Saba:

Nezurochaiyevakauyakumbakwangunehureracho.

Rinozimunhurinengegomokukuranemazizamuanengemombedzomukaka. (p.5)

(Yesterday he came to my home with a very ugly prostitute.)

This description above indicates that, Saba's prostitute is a huge woman who did not have her own accommodation. This woman is unemployed and fails to secure her own accommodation. This is why she moves around with Saba from one point to the other searching for accommodation from other people so that they can do their sexual activities. Those women who migrated to towns do not have their own accommodation.

Due to limited options, they were forced to live with those married men who have their own accommodation and involved in prostitution.

In the novel *Uchandifungawo*, the story mainly centres on Smart and his wife, Rumbidzai. Smart migrated to the urban area in search of employment and leaves Rumbidzai in the rural area living together with Smart's mother. Whilst in the urban area, Smart falls in love with Noster Mashiri whom he describes her as an educated and beautiful girl. Smart ends up neglecting his wife, Rumbidzai, in the rural area because he was distanced from her by Noster. At the end of the novel, Rumbidzai ended up saying to Smart her husband, *Uchandifungawo* (you will think about me) that is the title of this novel. This is because Smart no longer provides for the upkeep of his wife.

In this novel, Moyo depicts women as prostitutes through Noster. Traditionally and religiously, a woman is said to be a prostitute if she involves in a lot of love affairs with different men out of wedlock. Noster is depicted as a whore because she is involving in different marital relationships with different men for financial benefits. In short, she always falls in love with any man whom she come in contact with at that particular time. Noster falls in love with Smart just after they met for a day only. Women are only blamed for being prostitutes but those men they are having affairs with are not blamed. This creates gender bias. Smart is not negatively portrayed in the novel but he is the one who proposes love to Noster who is a nurse. Despite the fact that Smart is married to Rumbidzai, he is involved in an extra marital affair with Noster. Smart is not blamed by the author may be because men are allowed to commit adultery. The author is labelling Noster negatively and therefore closing doors for women who want to empower themselves in life. Patriarchy is shown blaming women for being victims of their socio-economic environment but men who are influenced equally by the similar environment are forgiven.

In order to show Noster's prostitution, Moyo affirms that:

NosteruyaanomhanyanematichachaiwonemapurisandiyegangadeSmart!

Kwete. (p.55)

(Noster, who sleeps around with teachers and policemen is the one who loves Smart! No.)

This suggests that, Noster always exchange men who did different jobs. She always wants those men who are employed and have a lot of money unlike those with no jobs. Noster is employed but she still engages in prostitution. Due to colonialism, Noster wants to live an enjoyable life, a life of having a lot of money by having affairs with rich men who provide her with a lot of money.

Noster ends up divorcing Smart as he no longer works. Smart's mother did not want him to marry Noster whom she is saying is a whore living in the urban area. In the urban areas, there are no longer traditional pillars to lean on and this forces women like Noster to be prostitutes. Usually, the environment which is found in urban areas shape the actor. Even if some women in the urban areas are employed, they are still seen doing deviant behaviour such as prostitution because they want good living. Life is expensive for most people in urban areas and everything need money for them to survive. Hence, most people especially women are forced out of their choice to do prostitution. Noster falls in love with Smart because he had a lot of money during that time. Noster distances Smart from Rumbidzai his rural wife. Smart gets overwhelmed by the glitters of the city. Therefore, he does not even visit Rumbidzai in the rural area. After Smart's retrenchment, Noster started to dislike Smart because he no longer has money and started to follow another businessman known as Mupetabere.

In the novel *Kunyarara Hakusi Kutura?* the story mainly centres on Eric Chimbimu who does his engagement party with Martha, his girl-friend, before he went to London. Eric spends seven years before coming back to Zimbabwe. Whilst he is still in Zimbabwe, he fails to be faithful to Martha by falling in love with Lorna, his half brother's wife. When he went to London, he also becomes unfaithful to Martha by falling in love with another girl in London. When Eric comes back to Zimbabwe, he does not bother to visit Martha and he stays at Paul and Lorna's homestead. Whilst staying at Paul's homestead, Eric continues to fall in love with Lorna, Paul's wife. At the end of the novel, Lorna ends up committing suicide after claiming that she was raped by Eric. Eric ends up in jail. What is interesting is the novel's depiction of Lorna as a prostitute.

Mungoshi is another author who depicts women as whores in his novels. In the novel *KunyararaHakusiKutaura?* (1983), Lorna is depicted as a prostitute. Traditionally, a married woman is not allowed to fall in love with another man whilst she is married. Hence, Lorna is married to Paul Chimbimu but she falls in love with Eric, Paul's young brother. Lorna is not faithful to her husband because she is involved in an extra marital affair with Eric. Eric and Paul are regarded as very weak and therefore, Lorna takes advantage of their weaknesses to fall in love with Eric. Lorna's moral decadence is caused by the fact that she feels deprived of the more important issues such as happiness and love from her husband Paul who is said to be equally obsessed by bourgeois consumerism. Therefore, Lorna falls in love with Eric in order to obtain love she is not getting from Paul. However, she ends up committing suicide when Paul discovers the act of infidelity.

Lorna is depicted as a loose and adulterous urban woman who falls in love with Eric whilst she is married. A teacher interviewed from a certain school said that, Lorna is a prostitute who went to University of Zimbabwe to attend a dance whilst her husband went to the rural area. The interviewee also asserts that Lorna is also a prostitute as she kisses Eric which is not expected in Shona culture. Eric is Martha's boyfriend but Lorna is very jealousy of the relationship between the two. Lorna ends up telling Martha that she is not going to get married to Eric. Stratton (1994) contends that:

Women of the city are depicted as lustful, callous, acquisitive, assertive and rebellious. This mothers-prostitutes dichotomy is quite pervasive in early Shona literature.

This means that urban women are usually portrayed as people who are indifferent to the suffering of others. In short, they are not concerned with the suffering of other women. They feel happy if other women are in trouble and suffering because of them.

To express that Lorna is in love with Eric, the following sentiments were expressed by Martha:

Eric!Motsihaarwirwi.

Patoiretiyapambapomukomawako:shamwaridzako,

Shamwaridzangu,

Mukomawakonomudzimaiwakenavamwevavovesvondovarimomumbamenyu,

Uchangobvapakundipfekedzarin'i---patoireti,

Eric;piri,kuEngland,

Hackney,muflatmakomunaNavarrinoRoad,

TsambadzaLornadzainyatsoburitsapachenakutimakanyenganamusaweengagementpartyeduwoyo. (p.30)

(Eric, firstly, your friends and mine, your brother and his wife as well as their church mates were present in your house soon after giving me an engagement ring--- at the toilet. Eric, secondly, I saw Lorna's letters in your flat, in England, Hackney-Navarrino Road, which were showing that you fell in love on the day we had our engagement party.)

The above sentiments mean that, Eric and Lorna love each other as described by Martha. In addition, there is clear evidence that Eric is in love with Lorna. However, only Lorna is described as a prostitute.

Gaidzanwa (1985:87) asserts that:

There are no cases when women get away with adultery, promiscuity or disobedience without incurring drastic punishment. This is in contrast with men who may suffer some hardship for their wrongdoing, but their punishment is not as drastic as that meted out to women.

This means that, mostly women in different literary works are being punished severely at the end of the novel for their wrong doings. However, the punishment given to men is not as strong as that of women. At the end of the novel, Lorna is punished for her immoral behaviour. She commits suicide because she claims that she was raped by Eric. Lorna is punished in line with the expectations of the society.

In the novel *RichaveDzerevende* (1998), the main story centres on Pendeka and Zviregwe, who are female students at Gweru Teacher's College, as well as Wiridzai and his father, Chigariro. Pendeka and Zviregwe get involved in multiple love affairs with different men in return for financial and material benefits. Pendeka is Wiridzai's girlfriend from high school but when she is now at teachers' college, she falls in love with Chigariro, who is Wiridzai's father. Pendeka is in love with the two at the same time. Chigariro provides her with clothes, radio cassette player, food and money among other things. Chigariro is a married man but he is cheating his wife. Zviregwe also falls in love with different men who provide her with money and material benefits. Various scholars have discussed the manner in which colonialism worsened the condition of African women and debauched gender relations that had subsisted prior. For instance, according to Schmidt (1992) under colonialism, the situation of women worsened as they were downgraded to minors. Women were considered intellectually and morally weak, but sexually dangerous. They were involved in different sexual activities so as to obtain money and material things.

In the novel *RichaveDzerevende* (1998), prostitution is seen through the activities of two fictionalised female students namely Pendeka and Zviregwe at Gweru Teacher's College. Pendeka is a prostitute who always has sex with men before getting married to them. In Shona culture, it is not accepted for a woman to do sexual activities before marriage. Hence, culturally and traditionally, Pendeka is depicted as a prostitute.

Pendeka's first relationship happens when she is in high school. The same relationships subsist right up to the time when she goes to Gweru Teacher's College. Wiridzai is faithful to Pendeka but Pendeka fails to remain faithful to her boyfriend as she is now having an affair with Chigariro. Chigariro is a morally decadent man who fails to be faithful to his wife who is Wiridzai's mother, a faithful, submissive and subservient woman to her husband. Most of the time, Pendeka is picked from college by Chigariro in order to enjoy their selves outside the college. Chigariro and Pendeka end up having unprotected sex and Pendeka becomes pregnant. Pendeka lies to Wiridzai that the pregnancy belongs to him whilst she is knowing that it belongs to Chigariro. Pendeka's

moral decadence was caused by the need to have material things such as clothes as well as financial benefits.

Zviregwe is another female student who is having multiple relationships with men for financial and material gains. She is the one who persuades Pendeka to have many boyfriends who can meet her personal needs. Zviregwe also goes out with different men and is given material things including clothes and food as well as money. The need to satisfy their financial and material needs drive these two female students to become prostitutes. In order to show that Zviregwe is a prostitute, she confesses that:

Kubvagiredhi1dakarafomu4,

Reganditidakaranhasi,

Ndinevarairidzivazhinjiavondakaziinuramunzarapamwenekudzimuranyota.

KohaapedzidurakamuenziPendeka,

Uzvizeivozvo.

Mabhazindinongokwiramuripondini.

Hazvirwadzi.

Hazviurayi.

KudaunotyaiyoAIDShameno.)

(From grade 1 up to form 4, let me say until today, I have had sexual intercourse with many teachers. You don't lose anything by engaging in sexual intercourse with someone. I enjoy bus rides and pay with my body. It's not painful. You don't die from doing it. Maybe you are afraid of AIDS I do not know.)

This means that, Zviregwe started to do prostitution whilst she was still a very young girl and was in grade one. She had a lot of love affairs with different teachers in those schools she was learning.

In order to show that Pendeka is a whore, she is always picked by Chigariro as well as by Wiridzai but at different times. Pendeka is seen enjoying in hotels at different times with different men. One day in a hotel, Chigariro asserts that to Pendeka:

Kanazvandinoonazvichingorimumesoangubedzi,

Ndinodairakutirudorwangukwaurindorwauyarwapetwa.

Nhasirwunotobvirasemoto.

Chindiparwakowotisadyemanonoko.

NemazwiayaStephennaCathrenevakambundana.

Rwakaverwevaviri,

Rwiyorwusinamubvumiri. (p.79)

(If what I am seeing is in my eyes only, I noticed that my love to you is now doubled. Today it is burning like fire. Let you give me yours without spending time. With these words Stephen and Cathrene hugged each other.)

The above sentiments mean that, Pendeka and Chigariro are loving each other. Their love is still burning. The first time Chigariro and Pendeka meet each other, Chigariro lies to Pendeka that his name is Stephen and Pendeka also lies to Chigariro that her name is Cathrene.

Pendeka and Zviregwe are having sexual intercourse before marriages. These women are like Kundai and Magi in *Mapenzi*, Revai in *MakudoNdomamwe* and Tsitsi in *Garandichauya* among others who are seen having sex and sometimes unprotected sex with their boy friends before marriage. This enables some of the girls to become pregnant and dumped by their boyfriends. Life for Pendeka and Zviregwe as female students at Gweru Teachers' College is not as tough but they only want financial and material benefits. The need for financial and material benefits was caused by colonialism. Their situation they are facing is different from that of Magi and Kundai as well as other female students at the University of Zimbabwe. *RichaveDzerevende* was

produced in 1998 during the time the economy of Zimbabwe is slightly better than the period of 1999 when the novel *Mapenzi* was produced when there is economic crisis.

Pendeka's pregnancy enables the novel to end in an amazing and contriving way. This is because instead of Hove making a firm decision on the complex issue of Wiridzai and Chigariro possessing one girl friend, the author resort to supernatural as well as spiritual world of spirit mediums in order to overcome this issue which was strange. It is the spirit medium that reveals the identity of the man who is responsible for the pregnancy of Pendeka. This ends the novel with news that are devastating and this was caused by Pendeka who fails to stick to one partner that is Wiridzai.

Hove like Mabasa pointed out that, these female students were after material and financial benefits whilst they are at the college. This love for things was caused by colonialism. Pendeka and Zviregwe like other female students in different colleges and universities were not receiving adequate financial support from the government. This was also caused by economic crisis of the country as well as rampant corruption by the government. Some people were having access to a lot of resources whilst others were suffering. Those people suffering are seen involving in prostitution to obtain money and materials. The novel *RichaveDzerevende* (1998) was written during time the country of Zimbabwe was facing an economic crisis. The government fails to financially support the students and this force them to become prostitutes. These female students like other female students in *Mapenzi* (1999) do not have options at the colleges and universities but only to become whores in order to make ends meet. They are being forced by economic conditions which are beyond their control.

In the novel *MakudoNdomamwe*, women are also depicted as prostitutes. The story of this novel mainly centres on Revai who is having different love affairs with different men at a time and ends up dumped by those men after being impregnated. Revai starts to fall in love with Gutsa an agricultural extension officer whilst she is still at school. She was persuaded with the materials she was given by Gutsa. Revai ends up having unprotected sex with Gutsa and becomes pregnant. Gutsa dumps her because he said that he is having his own girl friend he wanted to marry and Revai should have fall in love with boys of her same age not him. Revai ends up regretting that why she has

unprotected sex with Gutsa. However, this is too late and it does not help. After being dumped by Gutsa, Revai falls in love with Nyengerai who also ends up dumping her because his mother does not want him to marry a deflowered woman who have her own children.

Revai is portrayed as a prostitute by Makayi who is a female author because she is having multiple sexual relationships with different men who dump her. Revai like other girls in the selected novels were given material things such as food, clothes and also money. Revai was dumped by Gutsa a friend to Mr Pedzisai her teacher after she becomes pregnant. Revai's schoolwork starts to decline because she spends most of her time with Gutsa. The author is saying that:

MumazuvaakateveraRevaiakangeasisabvikumbakwaGutsa.

Chokwadimwanasikanaakangeapandukakudarikazvinoitagora.

*Nekunerimwedivibasarakerechikororakangerodzikachosesezvoaingeshayanguv
ayakakwanayokuriita.*

*NguvaaiwanepiyeachitipaingeasirikuchikoroaingainaGutsapaingeasinaye
anengeachingomufunga! (p.27)*

(For the following days Revai was frequenting Gutsa's home. Truly, this girl was now a wild person. On the other side, her school performance started to decline because she no longer had enough time to study. Where would she get the time to study whilst if she is not at school, she would be with Gutsa, if she is not with him, she would be thinking about him.)

This means that Revai and Gutsa were loving each other. This causes Revai's school work to decline because most of her time was spent with Gutsa. However, Revai ends up divorced by Gutsa after she falls pregnant. Gutsa tells Revai that he had his own girl friend who is a mistress and wants to marry her. He also tells Revai to forget about him because she fails to fall in love with boys of her same age and not Gutsa who is very old to her. Revai was very hurt about the incident but it is too late. Gutsa ran away from Revai who is now pregnant. Revai is now regretting that why she had sex with Gutsa before marriage. This is too late and does not help because she is already pregnant.

Revai is failing to learn from her early mistakes of being impregnated before being married. She said she is not going to have another love affair with any men but is seen falling in love again with Nyengerai.

On another occasion, Revai was dumped by Nyengerai her boy friend after he come back from London with another girl friend even though he promised to marry her before he went to London. Revai quickly forgets her problems she once faced because she said that she is not going to fall in love with another man as all men are equal. However, this woman is seen falling in love again with Nyengerai who is now a doctor and become pregnant and later on divorced by him. Nyengerai wanted to marry Revai but his relatives especially his mother did not want him to marry a deflowered woman who had two children out of wedlock. Nyengerai's mother, in order to show that she did not want her son to marry Revai, she says that:

“Mwanawaaniwaatianodakuroora?

*MvanayokwaRunyararoyasukutwazvayonevamwendiyoyoodakunditorerasemuro
ora?*

Vasikanavazerekwazvokutaundinekunokumusha.

Kanaasingakwanisikusvitsashokongaatumevanogona,

Kwetekunotoramvanainonyengwanebhotororekokokora! (p.75)

(Whose child does he wants to marry? A deflowered woman of Runyararo family is the one he wanted to bring to me as a daughter in law? A lot of girls are there in urban as well as in rural area. If he cannot propose love to them, let him sentsomeone on his behalf rather than taking a deflowered woman who sleeps around for a bottle of cocacola!)

The above sentiments mean that, Revai is a woman of loose morals who always have sex with a lot of men. That is why Nyengerai's mother did not want him to marry Revai a prostitute.

Revai wanted to get married as well as having a steady relationship but a lot of men dumped her and she ended up living alone. Collins (2000:160) avers that:

Perhaps for her, wisdom, experience and some passion become important weapons against male abuse.

This suggests that, Revai is able to fight against exploitation from men as she now has the experience and wisdom. Therefore, Revai is now able to face Nyengerai later on and rejects him in the general public. In addition, Revai has the courage to face her own mistakes, analysing them as well as to have a conclusion that all men are equal. That is men are regarded as people who are deceitful as indicated by the title *MakudoNdomamwe*.

However, with regards to prostitution, usually there is bias against women. Prostitution is usually an agreement between men and women but women are only blamed. Women are only negatively portrayed and this encourages readers of any Shona novels to have no sympathy to them. This is because women are said to have all bad characteristics found in the world such as breaking up homes and lives of men. Women are portrayed as destructive as well as unpleasant to others but men are not depicted as destructive. This shows that there is no gender neutral as women only are being blamed.

Makayi also depicts Jane another girl who is at the same college with Revai as a prostitute. Jane is involved in a lot of relationships with different men and traditionally is therefore depicted as a prostitute as this is not accepted. In order to show that Jane is in love with a lot of men, she confesses that:

“UngadarozvakoRevai,

Asindinoonasokutitirishamwarichaidzo.

Ingainindinokuudzawozvanguwani?

UnozivakutimukomanawanguchaiyearikuBulawayo.

*Avavaripanondevekungofambisawonguvachetevachindibatsirawokanatapiwabas
arokuita.*

Zvinoiwe---. (p.60)

(“You may do that Revai, but I feel we are really friends. Isn’t that I tell you my stories? You know that my boy friend is in Bulawayo. These are time pushers and I need them to assist me with work. But you---”.)

This means that Jane is having a lot of boyfriends at the same college because she wants to be helped in doing college work. Therefore, she is depicted as a prostitute. In Shona culture, it is not accepted for a girl or a woman to have multiple relationships with different men. Once one is doing that, she is said to be a

Women are also portrayed as prostitutes in the novel *Ndakagara Ndazviona*. The main story of the novel mainly centres on Revai who claims to be raped by VaMhosva, her father’s husband. It is questionable that Revai was raped because she did not report the case. Revai is impregnated by VaMhosva and getting married to him. Revai is in love with Jemisi her boyfriend but at the same time falls in love with VaMhosva who is a business man and has a lot of wealth. Revai’s mother wants her daughter to get married to VaMhosva unlike to Jemisi who did not have anything. Revai’s mother wants material benefits from VaMhosva that is why she wants her daughter to get married to him. Whilst at VaMhosva’s homestead, Revai continues to entertain Jemisi as well as falling in love with him. Jemisi always visits Revai at VaMhosva’s homestead. Revai is the one who encourages Jemisi to pay her some visits whilst she is married to VaMhosva. This shows that Revai is committing adultery which is not expected from women in Shona culture. VaMhosva ended up killed and Jemisi is responsible for the death of him. After the death of VaMhosva, Revai goes back to her parents and later on married by Jemisi. Revai’s mother is similar to Muchaneta’s mother in *Garandichauya*. These two women give their daughters wrong advice. They want their daughters to be married to rich men so as to have material benefits.

Mukonoweshuro is a female author who also depicts women as prostitutes like male authors. Revai is portrayed as a prostitute as she has many sexual relationships with different men at the same time. Traditionally, in the Shona culture, it is not expected from a woman to have many relationships with different men. Revai is impregnated by

VaMhosva who is a rich man with a lot of cattle, goats, hens as well as a shop. To show that Revai is a prostitute, she double crosses VaMhosva with Jemisi. Revai in *NdakagaraNdazviona* (1990) like Revai in *MakudoNdomamwe*(2006) left school after being impregnated by men who are older than them. Revai's mother is to be blamed for the prostitution of Revai. Colonialism contributed a lot to Revai's prostitution as her mother is after material and financial benefits from the rich man VaMhosva. This is because she is the one who persuades her to get married to VaMhosva. At first, Revai refuses saying that VaMhosva is very old to her and she is having her own boyfriend. Revai is portrayed as being deceitful and encourages Jemisi to visit her.

After the death of VaMhosva, Revai is impregnated by Jemisi who did not want Revai to bring her son Tasara that is VaMhosva's son to his homestead. Jemisi feels unhappy because Revai went with her son to Jemisi's home. Therefore, the two start to have conflicts because of Revai's son. What Revai and Jemisi does that is conflicting against each other is against the requirements of an Africana womanism theory. According to Hudson- Weems (2001), Africana womanism theory speaks of male and female where men and women co-exist together without conflicts. Jemisi kills VaMhosva so that he continues to fall in love with Revai. At the end of the novel, Revai is hurt by Jemisi with a hoe on her head and being admitted in hospital. Revai ends up regretting that why she also continues to have a love affair with Jemisi after the death of VaMhosva. Jemisi tells Revai that he is responsible for the death of VaMhosva. Due to that, Revai wants to go back to her home area but Jemisi refuses saying that she is going to report him to the police. Revai is seen regretting that she becomes unfaithful to Jemisi because she falls in love with VaMhosva at the same time. Women having several marital affairs with men are said to be untrustworthy, unfaithful as well as cheaters.

Mabasa also depicts women as prostitutes in the novel *NdafaHere?* This novel is mainly about Wati, his mother, Kiri as well as Betty who is Wati's wife. In the novel, Wati's mother did not like him to marry Betty whom she referred to as an uneducated woman. Betty left school after being impregnated by Wati and she ends up drop out of school. Wati's mother gives orders to her son even if he is married. This woman refers Betty as a stumbling block to her because she no longer receives the support she was given by

her son before he gets married. Wati's mother together with her daughter Kiri abuse Betty verbally, physically and psychologically. In addition, Kiri and her mother also abuses their father.

In the novel *NdafaHere?* (2008), Mabasa also portrays women as prostitutes. Prostitution in the novel is practised by women who are in Zimbabwe as well as in London. These women are involved in prostitution because they had closed choices. They are failing to make ends meet due to economic challenges. This novel was written during the time the country of Zimbabwe faces its economic crisis. Therefore, a lot of people became unemployed and it became difficult for them to survive. Life becomes expensive for most people and they end up doing deviant behaviour for them to survive. There is hyperinflation and most people were not able to even buy basic commodities like mealie-meal and they end up starving. Hence, women in the novel are seen becoming prostitutes as a means to survive. There are no other means for them to survive than to become prostitutes. Rampant corruption in the country also causes a lot of people to suffer. Life in London is also very difficult due to economic challenges. Musiyiwa cited in Mguni, Furusa and Magosvongwe (ed) (2006) avers that, women who become prostitutes are mere victims of harsh socio-economic conditions. Zimbabwean women in London are struggling to survive, therefore they become prostitutes. Zimbabwean women in London are struggling to survive, therefore they become prostitutes. To show that Zimbabwean women living in London are prostitutes, Wati says that:

NdakanzwanechimwechimokochinohurazvinosemesakunokuLondonzvanzikune mafaro.

ChihurechirikunochichaitakutiLondonisareyangovaneAIDSpesepaunotarisa. ZvanzinaCynthia, "Ko,kanatikasahuramurikudakutivarikumbavatitirikutambudzikak unohere?"

(I was told by another girl who is a prostitute that there is joy in London. The level of prostitution here will infect London with AIDS. Cynthia says, "if we do not get

involved in prostitution you want those back home to know that we are living as destitutes?”)

The above sentiments mean that, there is a lot of prostitutes in London who are involved in prostitution in order to survive. They do not want their family members back in Zimbabwe to know that they are struggling to survive. Economic downturn in London also causes people especially women to suffer a lot. Therefore, they become prostitutes. Muwati and Gambahaya (2007) aver that, women who become prostitutes are not inherently immoral but they are forced by the kind of life they face daily to reinvent their survival strategies in conditions in which poverty is increasing and economic life is changing. These authors noted that, prostitution should be regarded as part of the entire mix of society rather than being singled out as the originator of the various evils confronting people.

In the same novel, Mabasa also depicts Wadza as a prostitute. Wadza is confessing that, it is better to die in London through prostitution than going to Zimbabwe where there is poverty as well as hunger. Wadza says that:

Kanatikafirakuno *Hazvina*
basanekutikumbachaikohakunachirikochekutiungatidaindandorwarirakuZimbabw
endikafirakondikavigwako. (p.24)

(If we die here it does not matter because back home there is nothing you may wish that you get to die there.)

The above means that, women in London prefers to die there unlike coming back to Zimbabwe where there is nothing. Life in London is not as good as people in Zimbabwe think. There are no other opportunities for them but to just becoming prostitutes. A lot of women were not employed so it is difficult for them to survive. Due to lack of employment, women became prostitutes which enable them to earn money for survival. They wanted to please their relatives in Zimbabwe that they are having good living in diaspora. Crawthorns (1995) and Furusa (2006) agree that, colonialism has negative impacts on the economy of Africans. This is because at the end women were being marginalised, losing their economic power as well as the privileges they had before

colonialism. They further agree that, it is these structures that were put by colonisers that encourages Africans to find ways of addressing the issue of sexual starvation and marks the introduction of prostitution in Africa. In addition, it is the introduction of a cash crop economy which forces Africans to look for new alternative ways of survival.

The challenges faced by women in London are similar to those faced by women in Zimbabwe. Political as well as economic factors force women to become prostitutes. Muzvidziwa (1997) affirms that:

Prostitutes represent the underpaid, downtrodden, despised and discarded group by society but nevertheless it is seen as an occupation which brings them food, rentals and clothes.

This means that, prostitutes are mainly those women who are underpaid. Therefore, they become prostitutes so as to obtain money, food and clothes for survival.

Kiri is another prostitute in the novel who is self independent as she obtains money from prostitution. This woman is a single woman with two children and no longer depends on her father. Kiri is not employed but is obtaining money from prostitution. Chiwome (1996) and Gaidzanwa (1985) aver that, it is usually the marginalisation of women especially socially, politically as well as economically that eventually led them to sell their bodies as a means of survival. In order to show that Kiri is an independent woman, she says to her father:

Pachopandinosisangananemindinosikukumbiraidororenyuramunengemuchimwa hereini?

Ko,ingawaniinguvazhinjidzmunogashiradorokubvakuvanhuvandinengendiinavo. Munengemuchitiririkubvakupi?

Munengemuchitiimanairikubvakudenga here?

Pinduraika? (p.48)

(When I meet you, do I ask you to share with me the beer you will be drinking? In most cases isn't the case that you receive beer from the people in my company.

Where do you think the beer you drink will be coming from? Do you think its manna from heaven? Answer the question?)

This means that, Kiri is now a self independent woman because of prostitution. Kiri's sentiments above shows that she does not have respect to her father. What Kiri does is against one of the features of an Africana womanist that she is respectful to elders. Although she is now able to earn a living together with her children without depending on her parents, she does not have respect. Bromley (1982) in Muzvidziwa (1997:77) contends that:

Most young women without access to significant capital are aware that prostitution may be potentially the most remunerative form of work.

As Kiri is not employed, she is obtaining money from prostitution and is able to survive. As a result, the finance Kiri obtains from being a prostitute enables her to have some form of economic independence.

Mabasa is not blaming those women who are prostitutes but is blaming the political, socio- economic factors prevailing in the country. These factors are not conducive for the survival of people especially women as they had limited options for survival. Therefore, they become prostitutes. Mabasa unlike other authors like Chakaipa portrays women as victims of events in the country. These women do not have the desire to be prostitutes but their expectations and aspirations are not able to be met. As a result, these women find other alternative ways for them to survive which is prostitution.

5.2 SUBMISSIVE AND IDEALISED WOMEN IN SELECTED NOVELS

Women who are regarded as idealised and submissive in Shona novels are seen as mothers who are able to fulfil all the expectations of their children as well as their husbands. If a woman is said to be a mother, she is able to provide love, material benefits and affection to her family. A submissive and idealized woman is able to behave in comforting, nurturant as well as non- aggressive ways. An idealized woman is

also docile, obedient and perfect. In selected novels, most women who are regarded as idealized wives and mothers are rural women.

In the novel *Kunyarara Hakusi Kutura* there are submissive women like Martha and Sharon's mother. These women are depicted as mothers who are able to fulfil their children's and husband's expectations. Although Martha is a single woman, she is an obedient or docile woman in the novel. Ruth, Sharon's mother is submissive to her husband and even to the whole family of her husband and the in-laws. What Sharon's mother does in the novel is in line with the expectations of the society of how a woman should behave towards her husband. Although Sharon's father Mazarura is unfaithful to his wife, she remains submissive to him. Ruth also remains submissive to her mother-in-law VaNhangwa although most of the time she quarrels with her. Sharon's mother like Martha are women with respect and dignity. Gaidzanwa (1985:31) avers that about ideal wives:

The women who are idealized are those who are obedient to their husbands even if the husbands are wrong and unreasonable. They are women who do not complain when they are badly treated. They patiently wait for their husbands to recognize their virtue and they may actually shield their husbands from the consequences of unreasonable or cruel behaviour.

This means that submissive and idealized women do not complain even if they are badly treated. In addition, they are docile to their husbands.

Martha is an urban woman who is living an ordinary, conventional and socially approved life. This woman is a single woman having one child and this may help to elucidate why she waits for Eric for a long time. Martha is also submissive to Eric although she is not yet married to him. She is able to behave in a comforting way towards Eric Chimbimu's family. What Martha does is in line with the characteristics of an Africana womanist theory. Under an Africana womanism theory, according to Hudson-Weems (2000), a woman should be family-centered, mothering, recognized as well as respectful of elders. Martha is seen having these characteristics of an Africana woman. She shows a lot of respect especially to the Chimbimu family even to Eric's mother and is very

ambitious. Hence, Martha is being recognized by the Chimbimu family. Martha remains faithful to Eric her boyfriend but Eric becomes unfaithful to Martha as he falls in love with Lorna his half brother's wife. To show that Martha is an ideal wife in the novel, the author said that:

KananazvinokwaperamakoremanomweEricasipo,

Marthatiinayekuno,

Ndichionazvaaaita,

kushanda,chikoro,University,mota,imbayakemunaBainesnezhuzvirimo-

kananazvinondainzwardichingotiwodaindawanawoakaitasaMartha. (p.47)

(Upto today, it is seven years now whilst Eric is absent, while we have observed what Martha has achieved here, working, school, University, motor vehicle, her house in Baines and property inside it-even now I still feel like marrying someone like Martha.)

This above sentiment means that, Martha waits for Eric for seven years whilst Eric is in diaspora. She works very hard during the absence of Eric as indicated by having her own car, her own house and the property inside it amongst others. What Martha does cannot be done by a lot of women. This is in line with Mtuze's (1990:36) observation about women that:

Society expects women to exercise patience while men can sometimes do as they please. Taboos and social norms seem to be one- sided or partisan when it comes to certain actions.

This means that women are expected to be patient unlike men. Even if a man is absent for several years, a woman should remain faithful until the man is back.

Martha was able to gain favour, acceptance and approval from Eric's relatives because of her being obedient, hard working and persistent. Martha is depicted as a dignified and respectable woman in her own right. Eric's mother said that to Eric:

ChengetedzaMarthane kutimukadzianonzwisisa.

Kanaakakutadzira,

Usafewakamurova,

Chingotauranaye. (p.67)

(Take good care of Martha because she is a very obedient woman. When she wrongs you, do not ever beat her up, just talk to her.)

This means that, Eric's mother wants her son to take good care of Martha as she is a docile woman. In addition, this woman does not want Eric to beat Martha. This indicates that, Martha is a perfect and slavish woman that is why her mother-in-law likes her most. Martha is different from other urban women who are disobedient as well as disrespectful. She is depicted as an educated urban woman who is very respectful to a lot of people.

Although Eric does not pay much attention to Martha when he comes back from England, Martha remains submissive to him. Eric was staying with Paul and Lorna but Martha never visited them. Martha is a well-behaved woman even to the Chimbimu family. As a person who spends many years in England without coming back home and seeing her girlfriend, Eric should have paid much attention to Martha and marries her. All was in vain. After the arrest of Eric, Martha continues to be an ideal and faithful wife who waits for another man who may come and marry her. What Martha does to wait for a man who may come and marry her is in line with the Africana Womanism theory. For Hudson-Weems (1998):

Every black woman wants a man, a special somebody to fill a void in her life, one who makes her complete.

This suggests that, every woman of black race wants to get married. No one wants to live as a single woman. This is why Tsitsi in *Garandichauya* waits for the return of her husband Matamba and Martha after being disowned by Eric, she waits for another man who may come and marry her.

Mai Tanya in the novel *Mapenzi*, is portrayed as a submissive wife who is able to stick to the cultural norms and values of the society. Mai Tanya is abused verbally, sexually, emotionally as well as physically by her husband Saba. Each and every time, Mai Tanya is beaten up by her husband whenever he is angry. Facing all these different types of abuse, Mai Tanya remains submissive and obedient to her husband. This shows that Mai Tanya is very strong and this is in line with the characteristics of an African woman that she is strong. Women are being encouraged by the author of this novel to stay in marriage even though they are stressed with it. Mai Tanya spends most of her time starving with her daughter and when she finds the food, she is also beaten up by her husband for that food. Lack of education or knowledge causes Mai Tanya to remain submissive to Saba because she was not able to work for herself. It seems as if the author tends to over-exaggerates the extent to which Mai Tanya remains submissive to her husband taking into consideration all types of abuse she is facing. However, in real life, these types of women are not found. They are only found in literature.

Mai Tanya stays in her marriage until death. A teacher interviewed at a certain school says that, it is difficult to find women like Mai Tanya in real life who continues to stay in their marriages whilst it is stressing. She continues to say that, if the marriage is stressing, most women choose to move out of it than to remain in it whilst being stressed. Saba even brings his prostitute to where Mai Tanya is staying chasing her from the bed so that he sleeps there with the prostitute. Mai Tanya said that:

Munhuanouyewoherenehuremumbamunemukadziwake.

Ndakadzingwapamubhedhaiyeachiraraponepfambi.

Ndakaradzikwapasinemwanawangumumaoko.

Zvosezvaiitikapondaizvinzwa. (p.101)

(Can someone bring home a prostitute where his wife lives. I was chased from the bed and he slept there with the prostitute. I slept on the floor with my child on my hands. I heard everything that was happening on the bed.)

This means that, Saba is not faithful to his wife who is a submissive woman even if her marriage is very stressful. Mai Tanya remains an ideal woman until her death.

Moyo in the novel *Uchandifungawo* depicts Rumbidzai as an idealised wife who is obedient and submissive to her husband Smart and her- mother- in law. Although Rumbidzai is abused by Smart, she remains at her husband's home. Smart becomes unfaithful to her wife by falling in love with Noster but Rumbidzai remains docile to her husband. This causes him to abuse his own wife Rumbidzai because he wanted to marry Noster Mashiri. Smart is saying that, Rumbidzai is ugly and uneducated that is why he wants to marry Noster a beautiful and educated person. Noster is now causing the oppression of Rumbidzai by Smart. Although Rumbidzai's parents are still alive, she did not bother to go back to her parents to live with them. Rumbidzai is contrasted to Noster who is an assertive as well as an oppressive woman. Chimhundu (1987:10) stresses that:

Rural-based married women are portrayed as the ideal *madzimai*(mothers- cum- wives) and not just *vakadzi* (ordinary women.)

This means that rural women are usually regarded as the ideal wives unlike urban women. Therefore, Rumbidzai a rural woman who is an ideal wife is contrasted to Noster an urban wife who is a disobedient woman.

Schmidt (1992) affirms that:

The migration of black women in urban areas causes the segregation of a lot of families and lives. The author further affirms that, women are the ones who cause the destruction of men's lives in urban areas as depicted in Shona novels.

This suggests that, those women who migrated in urban areas cause the disintegration of a lot of families as well as lives as these women were involved in anti social behaviour such as prostitution even with married men. Noster who is now living with Smart in the urban area causes Smart to no longer visit her wife in the rural area. In addition, Smart no longer even write a letter as well as sending money to Rumbidzai.

Gaidzanwa (1985:29) asseverates that about an ideal wife:

The ideal wife is one who is totally committed to serving the interests of her husband and her children even at the risk of martyring or sacrificing her own interests.

This means that, an ideal wife is able to meet the needs and desires of her children and her husband. Rumbidzai is committed to get married to Smart although her marriage is disturbed by Noster.

Chakaipa portrays Tsitsi and Handisumbe's wife in the novel *Garandichauya* as ideal, slavish, obedient and passive women. These women are devoted to the societal expectations of women. Tsitsi is a hardworking woman in the rural area looking after her children whilst her husband Matamba is in the urban area of Gatooma now known as Kadoma where he is working. Matamba never came back to the rural area where Tsitsi and her mother-in-law are staying. This is because Matamba is now staying with Muchaneta a prostitute, a woman of loose morals who becomes unfaithful to her husband who was working in Mutare and divorced him in order for her to become a prostitute. Tsitsi and Handisumbe's wife are contrasted to Muchaneta who is a domineering woman in the urban area.

Gaidzanwa (1985:29) asserts that about an ideal wife:

A wife is judged in terms of how she behaves towards her husband and how she looks after him, the household and the children. The ideal wife is one who is totally committed to serving the interests of her husband and her children even at the risk of martyring or sacrificing her own interests.

This means that, in order for a woman to be regarded as an ideal and submissive wife, she is judged in terms of how she is behaving especially to her husband and how she is looking after the children and the household.

Tsitsi is a submissive wife who continues to stay with her mother-in-law even though Matamba abandoned her in the rural area. According to Aldrige (2004), an African womanist is characterised as a "self-namer" and "self-definer" who is also family centred with a strong grounding in sisterhood and an unyielding belief in positive male-female

relationships as foundations for the survival of African people and humankind. An African woman values family as part of her African heritage. Tsitsi is family centred and she values her family most although her husband Matamba abandons her. Tsitsi in the novel is an ideal wife who surrenders her education in order to marry Matamba and she was still a virgin. In order to show that Tsitsi wants to get married, she patiently waits for Matamba for two years to come back from Gatooma but to no avail. Tsitsi ends up visiting Matamba in the urban area where she finds him staying with Muchaneta another woman who is after material benefits. Although Tsitsi is involved in a fight with Muchaneta and being disowned by Matamba as his wife, she goes back in the rural area and remain faithful and obedient to her husband. A lot of men propose marriages to Tsitsi but she turn them down and waiting for Matamba. This indicates that Tsitsi is an idealised woman who is submissive and obedient to her husband even if her husband wrongs her and is unreasonable. Gaidzanwa (1985:87) contends that:

Men have wives to go back after committing adultery, brutalising their families or deserting them.

Men are only allowed to go back to their wives after committing adultery but women are not allowed to do that. Sometimes they may be divorced or even severely punished. Matamba goes back to Tsitsi after many years in Gatooma.

Gaidzanwa (1985) avers that:

Women became ideals through the forces of situations and do not have choices rather than through their own wishes.

This means that, women are not choosing to become ideal wives but they are being forced by situations prevailing. For example, most women in the novels selected are not working so they need to obey their husbands and respect them.

Moreover, Tsitsi is the most submissive wife because she waits patiently for her husband in order to acknowledge her virtue and she even protects Matamba from the consequences of immoral behaviour. Tsitsi waits for Matamba for a long time as a single woman. She did not want to live her life as a divorcee with children who are

dependent on her. Tsitsi knew that a divorcee is not respected unlike a mother and a wife. In the novel *Garandichauya*, Tsitsi is portrayed as the most admirable and moral beautiful woman. Although Tsitsi is beaten up, neglected as well as being disowned by Matamba, she still looks after him when he come back in the rural area being devoid and blind. Stratton (1994:172) avers that:

The *madzimai* as an ideal gender category are portrayed as the incarnation of the 'Mother Africa' trope, being nurturant, perseverant, submissive and forgiving.

In order for a woman to be described as an ideal wife, she should have love, care, should be docile and able to forgive. This is what is done by Tsitsi to Matamba.

Tsitsi is described by Chakaipa as an idealised, virtuous and a submissive wife as she accepts Matamba after he rendered him helpless as well as fruitless at his homestead. This is because he is now a blind man who cannot do anything at his home. Therefore, Tsitsi is regarded as an ideal woman who is depicted as morally virtuous. She is complying to the images of an ideal, submissive wife who is able to obey the orders of her husband even though he is awesome and heartless to her. Tsitsi is hardworking, virtuous, forgiving and submissive rural woman. What Tsitsi does is in line with an Africana Womanist. According to Hudson –Weems (1998), Africana Womanism theory states that:

Women are freely forgiving as they forget the injustices perpetrated by the new African man who has been shaped by colonialism. African women realise the damage inflicted by colonialism and therefore do not hold any grudges against their men.

This means that Africana womanists are able to forgive their husbands and they are not able to hold grudges for a long time. This is what is done by Tsitsi to Matamba her husband, she forgives him. She is physically as well as verbally abused by Matambabut she forgives him when he come back whilst he is now blind. Tsitsi is an honest, faithful as well as a proper wife than Muchaneta.

To show that Tsitsi is an ideal wife, she is described by the author after Matamba came back home.

Tsitsiakatangakuchema.

“Matambandiweiwe!

Uchirimupenyu?

ChokwadiMwariariko.

*Wauyababawavanavangundinofarakutivanavanguvavanababanokutindangandich
inyara,*

Vanavachingevasina baba”. (p.98)

(Tsitsi started to cry. “Matamba you are the one! You are still alive? God is great. You are back, father of my children, I am happy that my children now have a father because I was embarrassed as if my children did not have one.”)

This means that Tsitsi become happy as the father of her children is now back. She says she had been ashamed because it seems as if her children had no father. She is happy for her children since they are now having a socially, recognisable as well as a physically present father.

Tsitsi works hard in the field during the absence of Matamba. What is being done by Tsitsi is in line with role flexibility which is one of the eighteen characteristics of Africana Womanism theory. Most women in the selected novels play roles performed by their husbands. This is caused by the migration of their husbands to urban areas. Therefore, some of the women are performing those duties that are assumed to be of men such as tilling the land. Tsitsi together with her mother-in-law till the land during the absence of Matamba. Hudson- Weems (1998) bases role flexibility on the duties of women in African history whereby black women also play the same duties as men in the society. Role flexibility is a strong feature in African society because it shows the equally crucial roles of women in society regardless of their sex. Therefore, during the absence of their husbands, women also perform those duties that should be performed by men.

In the novel, Handisumbe's wife is another idealized wife who is submissive and obedient to her husband. This woman wanted to get married but her marriage was destructed by Muchaneta who involves in a love affair with Handisumbe a storekeeper. Handisumbe's wife is positively portrayed in the novel by the author as a virtuous woman. Chakaipa describes the wife as:

Mukadziuyuakangaanoungwaru,

Mukadziidakuvakamusha,

Mudzimaiaizivakubatavananomurume wake. (p.11)

(This wife had wisdom, was interested in building her home, and was able to take care of her children and husband.)

This means that, this woman was an ideal and submissive wife to Handisumbe as she was able to meet the expectations of her family.

Before Handisumbe involves in a love affair with Muchaneta, Handisumbe and his wife were loving each other very well. The trouble started when he falls in love with Muchaneta an oppressor to other women. In order to show that Handisumbe and his wife were loving each other, Handisumbe said that:

Chokwadimukadziwanguarikureva;

Handisatindambotadziranaye.

Anondidaasiini-

Ndoitaseinomusikanaanditoramwoyo? (p.21)

(Truly my wife is telling the truth; she never wronged me. She loves me but-
What can I do with this girl whom I admire?)

The above sentiments mean that, Handisumbe's wife never done wrong to her husband and she loves him a lot. However, Handisumbe was broken his heart by another girl by the name Muchaneta.

Muchaneta is a cruel and inconsiderate woman who destroys other women's marriages. She even discourages Matamba not to go to his rural area to attend the funeral of his grandfather. However, Matamba did not listen to her but he goes to the rural area. Also, she encourages Handisumbe to divorce his wife and this man is seen doing that. Handisumbe's wife like Tsitsi, Matamba's wife are rural women who are portrayed as simple, innocent and honest. They are also portrayed as straight forward, are having an uncomplicated, naive character and are always able to forgive. Zinyemba (1987:75) avers that about submissive and idealized women:

The submissive 'rural good' women are placed on a high moral plane, while the rebellious 'urban bad' women are descended upon with 'a heavy moral whip'.

This suggests that, rural women are portrayed as good people and are being placed on a higher position whereas the urban women are depicted as bad people and are therefore placed on a lower level. This gender female stereotype serves to strengthen the limited spaces available to women that is in any type of literature as well as in reality.

In the novel *RichaveDzerevende*, Hove depicts Wiridzas's mother as an idealised woman. This woman is able to serve the desires and interests of her husband together with the children. Chigariro, Wiridzai's father is involving in multiple sexual relationships with women cheating his wife. Wiridzai's mother, a wife to Chigariro is faithful and obedient to her husband but the husband is cheating her. Wiridzai's mother is a hardworking woman. She is described as a farmer who spends most of her time working in the field. She even sells the farm produce to the Grain Marketing Board. This woman also gives her husband the money she obtains from selling farm produce so that they can develop their home. However, the husband is misusing it giving his girl friends. What Wiridzanai's mother is doing is in line with the expectations of an Africana woman. Hudson- Weems (1998) affirms that about an Africana woman:

Africana womanists are not radical but believe in working for the well being of the family and the whole community.

An African woman should be able to work for the whole family and even the community. In short, this woman should be hard working as what is being done by Wiridzai's mother.

To show that Chigariro's wife is a hard-working woman, the author contends that:

MumundaamaiWiridzaiyaiveshumbayepasi.

...Hazvaisavazvokutivoitaseiivovakadaimba,

Zvaivamuropa. (p.10)

(In the field, Wiridzai's mother was a hardworker. This was not because she was a married woman but it was naturally in her.)

Chigariro even left his wife whilst she is sick and went to Gweru to see Pendeka her girl friend. Chigariro lies to his wife that he is going to Gweru to see his friend who is a doctor and he wants to buy strong medications for her than she is using. These are all lies. The author is blaming Chigariro for having a lot of extra marital affairs with other women whilst he is married. She is also blaming the college female students at Gweru Teachers' College for being prostitutes. Life for the female students at the college is not as tough but they only want material as well as financial benefits.

Although a lot of women in the novel talk about Chigariro's adultery, Wiridzai's mother does not care about that. She remains faithful and submissive to her husband taking care of her children. Wiridzai's mother is an ideal wife as she is able to know what is expected of her as a wife and is trying to fulfil these expectations.

Mabasa in the novel *NdafaHere?* depicts Betty as an idealised wife who is obedient to her husband Wati and her- in- laws although she is severely abused in the marriage. Betty is strongly abused in the family she is married especially by her mother- in- law with the help of Kiri her sister- in- law. Although Betty is physically, verbally, sexually as well as emotionally abused in the family, she continues to live with her husband serving his expectations. Schmidt (1992) argues that, women of a younger age who are forced in marriages where they are not wanted continues to stay their even if the marriage is

stressing. What is done by Betty is similar to what is done by Rindai in *NdikoKupindanaKwamazuva* (1975), Mai Tanya in *Mapenzi*(1999) and Rumbidzai in *Uchandifungawo* (1975). Gaidzanwa (1985) affirms that, these women are regarded as ideal women. She goes on to assert that, these women even if their husbands are away from home for a very long time, they wait for them until they are back. No matter how these women suffer, they still continue to stay at the husband's home. What these women are doing is in line with the expectations of an African womanism theory. Hudson- Weems (2000) avers that, African womanist theory allows women of African descent an opportunity to link with each other and build strength from their shared conditions in exploring the links that bind them leading into international solidarity. Therefore, women like Betty and Rumbidzai ended up building their own strength from their experiences in their marriages.

On the other side, it seems as if the author ended up over- exaggerating the extent at which these women are submissive to their husbands. These types of women are not usually found in real life situations. Women like Tsitsi in *Garandichauya*, Mai Tanya in *Mapenzi* and Betty in *NdafaHere?* among others are not seen in real life situations. Gaidzanwa (1985) avers that, these women are those who are only produced by the author but in real life they are not found. Even if Betty wants to go back to her parents, it is difficult for her because her mother gets married to another man. Gaidzanwa (1985) also avers that, a lot of women choose to stay with their husbands even if these men oppress them a lot. This means that, women who are ill treated by their husbands continue to stay with them no matter how stressful the marriage is.

Gaidzanwa (1985:52-53) further stresses that:

Lack of alternatives for women without husbands partly accounts for women's reluctance to divorce even when the marriage is stressful. Socially, it is felt that a wife's place is with her husband and divorce is a sign of failure for the woman in particular since it proves that she cannot use her womanly wiles and virtues to keep her husband contented with her.

This means that women are scaring divorce due to the image that the society hold to them after the divorce. Usually, the image of divorcees is negative. Therefore, a lot of women do not want to live as single women.

Makayi in the novel *MakudoNdomamwe* depicts the female character VaNhamoyangu, Revai's mother as an ideal woman. VaNhamoyangu is obedient to her husband. She is also able to meet the needs of her children. Revai's mother provides her with proper guidance and upbringing so that she grows up as a good child. To show the proper guidance of Revai from her mother, she said that to Revai:

"MwananguRevi,

Zvawadaiwatokura,

Uyehausikuzodzokerapasi.

Sakandinodakutiunyatsonditeereranokutiakupadambandewako.

Nyatsoteereranokutivakuruvakati,

ndambakuudzwaakaonekwanembonjephuma.

Ndiwemwanasikanawanguwokutanga,

uyeunofanirakuitamucherechedzowakanakakumunin'inawakoChenai." (p.6)

(Revai my daughter, you are now grown up, and you will not be a child again in your life. So, I want you to listen to me carefully, because if you don't, you will face the consequences. You are my first daughter, and you should be exemplary to your little sister Chenai.)

Revai's mother wants her daughter to grow up as a good child. What this woman is doing is what is expected from an Africana woman. According to Hudson- Weems (2000), an Africana woman should be mothering and nurturing. She is able to properly guide her daughter. Revai's mother is different from Muchaneta's mother in *Garandichauy* who improperly guides her daughter and encourages her to be involved in extra love affairs whilst she is married. Those rural women like Muchaneta's mother who is not an ideal wife is shown to be motivated by urban values that do not comply with the rural values. Absence of traditional pillars to lean on in urban areas cause a lot

of women not to be idealised wives. Rural women are usually portrayed as innocent, honest as well as simple unless they have been affected by people from urban areas and their norms and values (Gaidzanwa 1985). Revai's mother is similar to VaMunhamo in *ZviuyaZviriMberi* who is portrayed as an ideal woman and is also docile to her husband.

Revai's mother is beaten up by her husband because Revai is impregnated by Gutsawhilst she is still at school and later on abandoned. VaNhamoyangu is seen as a scapegoat. She is blamed by her husband for Revai's pregnancy but in the novel, she is seen giving proper guidance to Revai. The name VaNhamoyangu means that this woman is the sole person having problems without anyone to share with. She is having problems each and every time that never ends. Although VaNhamoyangu is verbally and physically abused by her husband, she continues to be submissive to him. Women in different novels are blamed for the wrong doings of their daughters. However, if the children perform well, they are said to belong to the father. A teacher interviewed from a certain school says that, usually in real life situation, women are being blamed by their husbands especially for the wrong doings of their children. Sometimes mothers try by all means to guide their children but at times, they still doing bad behaviour. This is similar to what is taking place in novels selected.

Tambudzai is portrayed as an ideal woman in the novel *ZviuyaZviriMberi*. She faces a lot of problems in her life but she remains an ideal woman. Tambudzai's father wanted her daughter to get married to Mundogara who is a polygamous man. Mundogara is very old than Tambudzai who is only nine years during that time. VaMunhamo, Tambudzai's mother runs away from her husband's home during the night with her children Tambudzai and Chemwandoita. She does this in order to escape Tambudzai from the marriage of Mundogara. In short, Tambudzai's father wants to pledge her to Mundogara. Tambudzai is a perfect, flawless woman with no defects. Tambudzai's mother is a self- definer. According to Hudson- Weems (2001), self definition serves as the basis for collective action and individual identity. It is the means by which people of African descent can assert their own vision of their reality in opposition to that of the dominant culture. Hence, Tambudzai's mother has her own vision of escaping her

daughter from the trouble of being married to a very old man. Tambudzai's mother liberates her daughter from the oppression she is facing. Asante (2007) asserts that, Afrocentricity theory aims to liberate Africans so it generates knowledge that free and empower women. Hence, Tambudzai's mother is also able to liberate her daughter by running away with her during the night in order to rescue her.

Tambudzai's mother rescues her from the forced marriage by her father. Moyana cited in Magosvongwe, Furusa and Mguni (2006) affirm that:

VaMunhamo is redefining her own parameters and taking control of her own daughter's life, instead of blindly accepting patriarchal control as she sees and defines it, thus defying tradition.

This means that VaMunhamo is described as a woman who is courageous and is different from other women in selected novels. What she does cannot be done by a lot of women. She walks for very long distance together with her children during the night in order to rescue her daughter. VaMunhamo is able to fight the oppression against her daughter by rescuing him. What this woman does is in line with the Africana Womanism theory. Hudson- Weems (1998) avers that:

Africana women fight oppression hand-in-hand with the black male, highlighting the contribution of women in black social movements advocating for freedom and inequality.

This means that, VaMunhamo is able to fight the oppression from her husband who wanted to pledge her daughter to a very old man. She does this by running away with her two children from her husband and she wins the battle. She is able to rescue her daughter from the forced marriage. What VaMunhamo does cannot be done by a lot of women.

After running away from her husband, VaMunhamo as well as Tambudzai are like a free ball. Ramatoulaye cited in Mariamba Ba (1989:40) observes that:

A woman is like a ball. Once thrown, no one can predict where it will bounce and no one has control over where it rolls, and even less over who gets it. It is often grabbed by an unexpected hand.

In short, Tambudzai ends up being educated by missionaries and similar to a ball, she ends up rolling in a profession of nursing. Finally, she gets married to Davy. At the end, Tambudzai is seen enjoying her life very well both at home as well as in diaspora where Tambudzai, Davy and her child have migrated to.

Tambudzai is depicted as a submissive woman who is docile and obedient. She is obedient to her husband Davy and the whole family. Tambudzai is different from other woman in the novels selected. She remains faithful from the start of the novel until to the end of the novel. She gets married after getting a job and helping her family. Other girls in the novels selected are pulled out of school due to pregnancy. Some of them are being disowned by their boyfriends. Tambudzai is different from Revai in *MakudoNdomamwe*, Pendeka in *RichaveDzerevende* and Tsitsi in *Garandichauya* who did not continue with their education because of being pregnant.

Due to the above, the author is successful in balancing male and female joint efforts towards emancipation of the economy. This is what Hudson –Weems cited in Nnaemeka (1998:48) called ‘empowerment of women and individualism... human dignity and rights. Simango unlike other authors is able to positively depicts gender issues in her novel.

Tambudzai is similar to Martha in *KunyararaHakusiKutaura?* who waits for Eric for many years whilst he is in London. Tambudzai waits for Davy who also spends many years outside the country. Rumours circulate that Davy is married to another white woman abroad where he is doing his studies but she remains submissive. However, after waiting for many years, Martha did not get married to Eric but Tambudzai gets married to Davy. Sofola cited in Nnaemeka (1998:63) observes that:

Because of this ‘wifhood’ syndrome, the educated African women spends most of her time panicking over the possibility of rejection by her husband thus making herself less relevant and less effective.

Most educated women panic that they may not get married. Tambudzai is seen indulging in the syndrome of wifedom even though she is still a single woman. Many people including Davy's family members persuade Tambudzai to get married to another man but she refuses. However, Tambudzai remains firm and almost becomes a wife who is waiting. This shows a sign of a woman who is so faithful and so genuine even though she is still a mere girl friend to Davy.

5.3 WOMEN AS OPPRESSORS OF OTHER WOMEN

In the selected novels both pre-colonial and post-colonial novels, women are portrayed as oppressors of other women. That is women to women oppression. Besides being oppressed by other women, women are also oppressed by their husbands as well as their in-laws. In different novels, there are women who are indoctrinated to an extent that they maintain and prolong the existence of traditions which are oppressive. These women are seeing other women as they are born in order to serve the interests and demand of men. In addition, these women are regarded as having no choice and they are destined in order to live their lives exactly in the way in which they have led their own under patriarchal oppression. In the selected novels, women oppression is caused by older women to young women. These older women exercise their power in a cruel manner to the young women. Women are portrayed as human beings who destroy each other's families.

In the novel *NdafaHere?* Mabasa depicts Mai Wati as a woman who oppresses other women. A lecturer interviewed at a certain university said that in the novel *NdafaHere?* women are oppressors of other women. He continues to say that, men are also seen oppressing women but, in the novel, there is mostly women to women oppression. The lecturer also said that, women in *NdafaHere?* should have mercy to other women especially to young women. They should not exploit each other as what is done by Mai Wati to Betty but they should work together as one family. What Mai Wati does to Betty her daughter in law is against the needs of Afrocentricity theory which calls for eradication of all forms of human oppression (Asante 2007). Wati's mother is totally oppressing her daughter in law socially, physically and emotionally. Afrocentricity theory

highlights that Africans are not victims but subjects whose interventions are aimed at removing every form of oppression. Betty should not be a victim of her marriage, therefore her mother-in-law should not oppress her.

Women are portrayed as human beings who destroy the families of other people. Mai Wati is a violent and negligent wife who oppresses Betty her daughter-in-law verbally, physically as well as emotionally. Betty is Wati's wife but her mother-in-law did not want her to get married to Wati. Mai Wati is a cruel and inconsiderate woman who always interferes in the marriage of her son Wati and her wife Betty. Mai Wati is a problem woman who always quarrels with Betty and even her husband. Mai Wati is seen encouraging her son Wati to divorce Betty. As a woman, this type of behaviour is not expected in the culture of Shona people. As a parent, Mai Wati is failing to play her roles as a parent. Betty is a victim of Mai Wati and Kiri. What Wati's mother does is not in line with the expectation of an African womanism theory. According to Hudson-Weems (1998) an African woman should have an opportunity to link with each other and build strength from their shared conditions in exploring the links that bind them leading into international solidarity. However, Wati's mother is oppressive to her daughter-in-law instead of working together with her as a family.

In the novel *NdafaHere* Mabasa affirms that:

NyangwenaivowovakadziMhanduyavondiwemukadzi. (p.1)

(Even women oppress themselves.)

This suggests that, women themselves are the oppressors or cause problems to other women. Mai Wati is seen severely oppressing Betty. This woman is an aggressive woman who always unjustly attacking Betty. She is a verbally violent woman who always giving orders to Betty, Wati and his father. A teacher interviewed argues with what Mabasa is saying that women are oppressors of other women. This woman does not have any respect to her husband. In the novel, Betty is oppressed by her mother-in-law. Her mother-in-law always scolded her for no visible reason. In the novel, Wati's mother is saying that:

Watihaangamboroorikamukadzikatetekanengekanemukondombera.

Haafanirikundobvisaroorasatianditengerashuganehembe. (p.121)

(Wati should not marry a tiny woman who appears as if she is infected with AIDS.

He should not pay lobola before buying me some sugar and clothes.)

This means that, Wati's mother is giving her son wrong advice. In short, she is exploiting her daughter-in-law. Instead of having good relations with Betty, she is exploiting her. Women themselves have got their own war of not loving each other. Most of the time older women are seen oppressing young women that is women to women oppression. Arndt (2002) observes that, in life, women are the oppressors of other women. This means that, the exploitation of women in life is caused by other women themselves.

Mabasa also depicts Kiri a sister-in-law to Betty as also oppressing her. Kiri together with her mother join together to oppress Betty. Wati's mother did not want him to buy Betty anything without her approval. Betty is not able to work because she did not complete her education after being impregnated by Wati. Wati's mother do not want Betty to even answer a call from Wati. Arndt (2002) affirms that women cause the life of other women to be difficult. The author further affirms that, older women use their power to do their wills to other women. They did not consider that they are destroying the lives of their children, daughter-in-law and other young women. In short, Mai Wati is hating Betty her daughter-in-law for no apparent reason. After the migration of Wati to London, Betty continues to be psychologically oppressed by her mother-in-law and Kiri her sister-in-law. Wati's mother is seen assaulting Betty verbally with the help of Kiri her daughter. Kiri and Wati's mother later on follow Wati in London. Betty is left alone at Wati's homestead and she is taken by her friends so that she can start a new life. Mai Wati is an oppressive woman who continues to give orders to Wati and his wife Betty. Women in selected novels are not equally oppressed but usually older women have more power than young women.

Chakaipa, besides portraying Muchaneta as a whore, she is also portrayed as an oppressor to other women. Muchaneta is oppressing other women by having love

affairs with their husbands. This woman is using her beauty to attract men but she ends up living a terrible life. Muchaneta is oppressing Tsitsi, Matamba's wife in Gatooma by falling in love with Matamba whilst Tsitsi is starving in the rural area. Muchaneta is a problem wife throughout the novel and she is described as an interloper who is very cruel and an inconsiderate woman throughout the novel. She is a jealousy and greedy woman who do not want to see other women living a life which is enjoyable with their husbands without destructing it. Sometimes she wanted that marriage to end.

Muchaneta is a cruel and unfaithful woman who causes the oppression of other women. She involves in an extra-marital affair with Matamba in Gatooma causing him to disown his wife in the rural area. Tsitsi is living a difficult life in the rural area because Matamba no-longer come back home as he is now living with Muchaneta. Muchaneta is causing the oppression of Tsitsi. She is viewed as a problem wife throughout the novel who is destructive to other women.

Besides being an oppressor to Tsitsi, Muchaneta is also oppressing Handisumbe's wife. This woman persuades Handisumbe a storekeeper to divorce his wife so that they get married. Muchaneta said to Handisumbe:

Kanauchidakundirakidzakutiunondidachaizvo,

Rambamukadziwakosezvondirikudakuita,

Kurambamurumewangu. (p.24)

(If you want to show that you love me so much, you divorce your wife as I am planning to divorce my husband as well.)

This shows that Muchaneta wants Handisumbe to divorce his wife so that they live together. Muchaneta is a woman who is seen violating the behavioural standards of other people so as to achieve her own desires. She has as affair whilst she is a married woman. She flirts with a teacher and carries on an affair with Handisumbe a storekeeper. Handisumbe eventually gets rid of his wife and continues his affairs with Muchaneta. Handisumbe embezzles his employer's money so that he can spend it with Muchaneta.

In order to show that Handisumbe was persuaded by Muchaneta to divorce his wife, he contends that:

Ndakanyengedzwanomumwemusikanakurambamukadziwangu;

akagondidya.

Apedzakundidyaakagondiitirazvandisingafindakakanganwazvakasakakutindinope dzamakorendirimujeri. (p.88)

(I was fooled by a certain girl to divorce my wife, she milked me. After milking me, she did what I will never forget which caused me to spent many years in jail.)

Handisumbe was fooled by a certain girl to divorce his wife and after that, she stole money from Handisumbe and ran away. This girl being referred to is Muchaneta.

Muchaneta is seen as a woman who dominates those men to whom she falls in love with them. She is a verbally violent woman, a woman barking orders to those men who fall in love with her. Muchaneta causes the divorce of Handisumbe's wife. The wife of Handisumbe got married to another man. All this was caused by Muchaneta an oppressor to other women. Muchaneta's mother is an oppressor to her husband. She poisons as well as killing her husband. What this woman does did not fit the image of a rural woman. Muchaneta's mother is a problem wife who receives her daughters lobola from Handisumbe whilst her relatives are not present. In Shona culture, lobola should be paid in the presence of the brothers of Muchaneta's father. However, all this was not done by Muchaneta's mother.

Mungoshi depicts women like Lorna, Norika and VaKwanhurai as oppressive women to other women in *KunyararaHakusiKutaura?* Lorna in the novel is an oppressor to Martha a girlfriend to Eric. Lorna is married to Paul Chimbimu, Eric's brother but she is involved in an extra marital affair with Eric. Lorna do not want Martha to get married to Eric to an extent that she told her to find another boyfriend. She even visits Martha to tell her that she should forget about Eric. Gaidzanwa (1985) avers that:

Bad women are usually presented as foils to good women, to exemplify what happens to a woman who wanders from the path of virtue.

Usually, those women who are good are usually oppressed by the bad ones. Lorna withdraws Eric's love feelings from Martha so that she can marry him. Lorna is jealousy and destroys the relationship between Eric and Martha. Lorna regards her husband Paul as a weak as well as a stupid man. Therefore, she takes this as an advantage to fall in love with Eric, a half brother to her husband.

Martha waits for Eric for many years whilst he is in London. After Eric come back home, he did not bother to see Martha her girlfriend. This is caused by Lorna who discourages him to go and see her. To show that Lorna is an oppressor to Martha she said that:

As long as akasaitaemotionally involved navochete,

Achirambaamirepaariipapa,

*NdichaedzawokuonakutiMarthaanengeachirabhikambijanambijanamumusoro
make. (p.85)*

(As long as he does not become emotionally involved with them, and remain resilient, I will try to see that Martha is being erased slowly from his memory.)

Lorna is trying by all means that Eric is forgetting about Martha so that she can get married to him. Both Paul and Eric have their own weaknesses, therefore it becomes an advantage to Lorna. Lorna ended up committing suicide after she claims that she is raped by Eric. She falsely cries rape as her husband Paul notices that her wife is in love with Eric. This indicates that Lorna is less strong in answering her misdeeds. However, Lorna should be punished as she causes a lot of emotional problems to Martha that is Eric's girl friend.

Another woman who is an oppressor to other women is VaKwanhurai. VaNhang, Eric's mother is in a polygamous marriage with VaKwanhurai. VaKwanhurai is an oppressor to VaNhang in their marriage because she did not want VaNhang to be supported by her husband. VaKwanhurai is the first wife and VaNhang is the second wife of Eric's father. VaKwanhurai is depicted as a witch who kills VaNhang's children. Chimbimu, a husband to VaNhang and VaKwanhurai no longer lives at VaNhang's homestead but at VaKwanhurai his elder wife. VaKwanhurai is a very cruel and inconsiderate woman

who discourages her husband to look after VaNhangwa and her children. VaNhangwa is a virtuous woman. Gaidzanwa (1985) cited in Furusa, Mguni and Magosvongwe (eds) (2006) affirms that:

Virtuous women are those women who are subservient to male authority and male domination. They are women who endure and face many difficulties without getting tempted to deviate or take short cuts to better lives.

VaNhangwa is a virtuous woman who is facing a lot of problems in her marriage but she is not taking short cuts to have a better life. The problems she is facing are caused by VaKwanhurai the elder wife.

In the novel *Uchandifungawo*, Moyo depicts women like Noster and her mother as oppressors to Rumbidzai who is Smart's wife. Noster is involving in a love affair with Smart in the urban area whilst Rumbidzai is in the rural area. Rumbidzai is living a terrible life in the rural area as Smart no longer supports her in terms of material benefits and even to write her a letter. Noster's mother is also an oppressor to Rumbidzai because she wanted her daughter to get married to Smart who is a married man. Noster is aware that Smart is a married man but she continues to live with him in the urban area whilst his wife is starving. This indicates that Noster is a cruel woman who does not care about the life of other women. She destroys the marriage of Rumbidzai and Smart.

Courville (1994) asserts that, women cause men to do all evil behaviours especially in urban areas. In addition, women cause men to disown their families leaving them starving in the rural areas as shown in selected novels. Noster in *Uchandifungawo*, Muchaneta in *Garandichauya*, Saba's prostitute in *Mapenzi* among others are oppressors of other women in the novels.

Noster in *Uchandifungawo* told Smart to marry both Noster and Rumbidzai but she said that, Rumbidzai is going to be a worker to Noster in the rural area as she is not educated. Lacking education of Rumbidzai does not mean that she should be oppressed. Lwanda cited in Furusa (2006) argues that women cause all the evil things in the country such as the oppression of other women.

Arndt (2000) affirms that female characters in literature are being oppressed both socially and psychologically by other women. Instead of men only oppressing women, women are also seen oppressing other women. The author further asserts that, there is conflicts between women and other women themselves especially mother- in- laws to their daughters-in-law. Even in the politics of the country, it is observed that women do not support other women, they feel jealousy.

Besides being oppressed by Noster, Rumbidzai is also oppressed by Smart her husband. Smart is saying that he no longer loves Rumbidzai because she is ugly looking as well as not educated. This is why he wants to marry Noster a beautiful and educated woman. When Smart proposes love to Rumbidzai, he knows that she is uneducated as well as ugly looking. However, Noster an educated and beautiful woman causes the oppression of Rumbidzai. Schmidt (1992) avers that, the migration of black women in urban areas cause the disintegration of many families, lives of many people as well as lowering of people's respect. Schmidt (1992) further avers that, women cause the destruction of men's behaviour in towns as indicated in Shona novels. As Noster and Smart are in the urban area, Noster is the one who causes Smart to disown his wife Rumbidzai in the rural area.

Kahari (1990) when writing about urban areas, he said that:

He was swallowed by a creature without a mouth.

This means that, coming of the urban areas cause a lot of men being swallowed by the towns ended up neglecting their wives in rural areas. This is caused by women who fall in love with married men in towns. Smart is distanced from Rumbidzai her rural wife by Noster.

Simango in her novel *ZviuyaZviriMberi* also depicts women in the novel as oppressors of other women. VaMunhamo, Tambudzai's mother is being oppressed by her step mothers before she is married to Nhamoinesu, Tambudzai's father. In order to show that VaMunhamo is being oppressed by her step mothers, VaNhamoinesu says that:

Vanhuvakagutanhamovanonetsakwazvo.

*Daipasinainindakatozomununuramudambudzikoraakangaainarokumushakwaker
okushushwanavakadzivababavake,*

Ndinotikaidaikakafaini. (p.12)

(People who are fond of poverty are very difficult. If it was not me who pulled her out from the trouble, she was having at her home of being oppressed by her stepmothers, I think she would be dead by now.)

This means that, VaMunhamo is pulled out by VaNhamoinesu from the oppression of her step mothers before getting married to Nhamoinesu. In short, this woman is being oppressed by other women.

In addition, Davy's mother is another oppressor to Tambudzai. She did not want Tambudzai to get married to Davy her son. Davy's mother is saying that:

DaindirinimurumepamushapanoDavyakatorambakasikanaakakare...

Kudakuurayisamwanawanguchete;

Hapanachimwe...

Asivatetewonhai,

Hamuziviherekutikasikanakabvapanoakakakatoputswazvakokarekare? (p.60)

(If I were a man at this home, Davy would have divorced this girl already... She wanted to kill my child, nothing else... But aunt, don't you know that this girl that was here was pledged to another man long back?)

This means that Davy's mother did not want Tambudzai to be her daughter-in-law. This woman says that as Tambudzai was once pledged to Mundogara by her father, this may cause the death of her son Davy.

Nyengerai's mother is portrayed by Makayi as an oppressor to other women. This woman is oppressive to Revai as she did not want her to get married to her son Nyengerai. Revai is already having a child out of wedlock with Gutsa who is an

agricultural extension officer who rejects her. As Revai is a single mother with a child, Nyengerai's mother did not want her to be her daughter-in-law. To show that Nyengerai's mother is an oppressor to other women, Revai's aunt says that:

“...Ndingadaindaendanewekunhandare,

Mwanawehanzvadzi,

Kutitinoitamuonerapamwe,

zvinoi-i,

ndikafungamashokoamaivakeaya!

Mashokoavoakandigarapamwoyo.

Imharadzichaiyomaivaya,”

vakadarovatetevachiomberamaokonokuzunguzamusoro. (p.81)

(I was supposed to go with you to the airport, my niece, so that we are together on this issue, however, when I think of her mothers' speech! I can not easily forget her speech because it offended me. That woman is a destroyer, said her aunt whilst clapping her hands as well as shaking her head.)

This shows that Nyengerai's mother is a very aggressive woman who do not want Revai to be her daughter-in-law. She is forgetting that she is also a woman. This woman is not submitting to patriarchal power and authority. This woman according to Gaidzanwa (1985), is castigated and is regarded as the urban – bad dichotomy.

Nyengerai's mother in order to show that she did not want her son to marry a divorced woman, she said that:

Mwanawaaniwaatianodakuroora?

*MvanayokwaRunyararoyasukutwazvayonevamwendiyoyoodakunditorerasemuro
ora?*

Vasikanavazerekwazvokutaundinekunokumusha. (p.75)

(Whose child does he want to marry? A deflowered woman who belongs to Runyararo and sleeps around is the one he wants to bring as my daughter-in-law? Girls are plenty in town as well as in the rural area.)

Nyengerai's mother does not want her son to marry Revai a deflowered woman. This woman is seen as an oppressor to Revai because Nyengerai wants to marry her and he loves her a lot. Nyengerai's mother is very aggressive. She ends up quarrelling with Nyengerai to the extent that if he gets married to Revai, she is going to die. What she is doing is not in line with an Africana Woman which according to Hudson-Weems (1998) avers that, Africana womanists are believing for the well being of the whole family as well as the whole community.

Mukonoweshuro in her novel *NdakagaraNdazviona* depicts women characters as oppressors of other women in the novel. VaMuchazvirega, VaMhosva's mother together with Rudo's mother strongly oppresses Revai. Rudo's mother thinks that Revai is responsible for the death of VaMhosva. In order to show that these two women are oppressing Revai, she said that:

AvamaivaRudonaVaMuchazviregavanerimwe.

VatetemaivaRudovanondionasokunotonzindinindakaurayamurumewavo.

AvaVaMuchazvireganyanyo.

Kovanondivengereichaizvo? (p.46)

(Rudo's mother and VaMuchazvirega have one voice. Rudo's mother thinks that I killed her husband. This is even worse with VaMuchazvirega. Why do they hurt me to this extent?)

These two women are using their power to oppress Revai. They see Revai as the one who causes the death of VaMhosva. Instead of loving each other, they are hating Revai. What VaMuchazvirega is doing is not in line with the expectations of an Africana woman. An Africana woman according to Hudson-Weems (1998) should be family centred as well as community centred. In addition, an Africana woman should be

interested in collective results and achievement as a group. The African woman should place value on her family as part of her African heritage.

After Revai is married to VaMhosva, VaMuchazvirega is seen oppressing Revai to the extent that she thinks to go back to her parent's homestead. To show that VaMuchazvirega is oppressing Revai, she said that:

'Aiwatete,

UrevihwunaVaMuchazviregahamunakumbobwuonaaiwa. Nditindibike kwanza sadzarachoharinakuzwamoto.

Nditikuhuni,

Kwanza wauyanotutsotso.

Kanatodyaunonzwavotaurangano.' (p.42)

(No, aunt, you did not witness VaMuchazvirega's talkativeness. If I cook sadza, she says it is not well-cooked. If I fetch firewood, she says you bring tiny sticks. When we are eating, she tells folktales.

VaMuchazvirega as a mother-in-law to Revai have more power than Revai. Therefore, Revai become a victim to her mother-in-law. VaMuchazvirega even quarrels with Rudo's mother with no apparent reason. VaMuchazvirega is a talkative and oppressive woman. She says that:

'Chibudaimuindekumbakwenyumugonoparidzananyayadzenyumavaikoko.'

MaiVaRudovakapinduravamwenevavovoti,

'Munorevaanikonhaimai?'

'Imimese.

Budaimumbamangu!' (p.25)

(‘Get out and go to your home and preach your stories there.’ Rudo’s mother responded to her mother-in-law saying, ‘who are you referring to mother?’ ‘You all. Get out of my house.’)

VaMuchazvirega is a cruel, very talkative and a heartless woman who ill treats and exploits other women. She is depicted as a bad woman in the novel who oppresses other young women. As an old woman, she should be seen guiding and provides advice to other women especially to young women.

Women besides being oppressed by other women in selected Shona novels, they are also seen being oppressed by their husbands. Mabasa portrays Mai Tanya as being oppressed by her husband Saba. Saba brings his prostitute to where his wife is living and chases her from the bed so that he sleeps there with his prostitute. In the novel, Mai Tanya says:

Munhuanouyewoherenehuremumbamunemukadziwake.

Ndakadzingwapamubhedhaiyeachiraraponepfambi.

Ndakaradzikwapasinemwanawangumumaoko.

Zvesezvaiitikacondaizvinzwa. (p.101)

(How can someone bring a prostitute into the same house where there is his wife. I was chased from the bed and he slept there with his prostitute. I slept on the floor with my daughter in my hands. I heard everything that was happening on the bed.)

This shows that Saba is strongly oppressing his wife to the extend of bringing his prostitute to where his wife is. This type of oppression is not expected from a married man. Saba shows no respect to his wife. Hobsbawn and Ranger (1983) avers that, colonialism brought about differences between men and women. Women are seen as less important people. The authors further assert that, gives men power and authority to redefine women in terms of ‘us’ and ‘them’ a tradition which was borrowed from colonial paternalism. Instead of authors of Shona literature fighting the oppression, they seem to

come together marginalising women. As a result, this enables the women who are being colonised to accept the colonisation from their colonisers.

Moreover, in the selected novels, women are looked down upon them. This causes women to continue to be on a lower level whereas men at a higher position. Hence, women are not able to even show their powers as well as their human rights. Absence of human rights causes Mai Tanya to leave her husband taking away the bread and milk whilst she is knowing that she is going to starve. This is oppression at a higher level which is done by Saba to his wife. Saba also infects his wife with a sexually transmitted infection. Saba does not care about his family and other people. He did not even respect his wife and he usually call her a witch. This man also threatens to kill Mai Tanya. McCaghy and Capron (1997) affirms that:

The poor by the mere fact of being poor encounter stress a mere ingredient of their lives for the poor and the rates of violence among poor are usually high.

Mai Tanya as a poor woman is being stressed by her husband. She is living a life which is terrible, being emotionally, verbally, sexually as well as physically abused by Saba.

McCaghy and Capron (1997) also observe that:

Victims do not readily seek the help of outsiders because the victims are indifferent or ignorant, feel powerless, fear retaliation or are reluctant to do anything that jeopardises their relationship with the assaulters.

Mai Tanya is not able to seek help from other people because she is powerless as well as fearing her husband. Mai Tanya dies due to sexual as well as physical abuse from her husband. Later on, Saba also dies after committing suicide whilst he is in prison.

Saba had not paid lobola to Mai Tanya's parents but he is seen oppressing her a lot. He is not a responsible father because he fails to even buy food for his family. He had one wife and a child but he fails to provide them food. In order to show that Saba is an oppressor to his wife, his cousin Vincent says that:

Handisikutindinemusoro,

AsizvasekuruSabazvinondishamisa.

Hurehere?

Mukadziwavoanogarouyakunokuzondikumbirahupfu,

Kanashugayekubikiramwanaporiji... (p.50)

(I am not saying I am sensible but uncle Saba's behaviour surprises me. A prostitute? His wife comes here always to ask for mealie-meal or some sugar to prepare some porridge for her child.)

This shows that Saba is not responsible for his family. He spends his money with his prostitute without buying food for his wife and children. His family is always starving but he did not buy food for them. Mai Tanya is not working but is surviving through selling cool drinks. Her husband does not want her to sell these drinks. This is a form of abuse by Saba to Mai Tanya as he is not providing her with food.

McCaghy and Capron (1997:196):

It is women's dependence on men which makes them to be exposed to abuse. The great power of a man over his wife, as a consequence of his economic preponderance, may equally be a demoralising cause. It is certain that there will always be abuse of power on the part of a number of those whom social circumstances have clothed with a certain authority.

When women are not working, they depend on their husbands. This causes them to be abused in different ways. Mai Tanya has to endure the abuse from her husband. Saba is failing to provide comfort to Mai Tanya and her one child. This man causes a lot of misery to his wife. After Saba having sex with his prostitute, he sexually abuses Mai Tanya. In fact, he forces Mai Tanya to have sex with him saying that was she was crying for. In order to show that Mai Tanya is forced sexually by her husband, she says that:

*Anzwakutindirikuchemaakamukapaaivenehureriyendokundirovazvakaomrarane
zvibhakera.*

Akandizvakatsazvekutindakaitamazuvandichitadzakusvinurakanakudya.

Paakandirovaafungakutizvakwana,

Awonazvekutianeta,

Akachindibvarurirahembedzangundokundimanikidza,

achitindizvozvandengendichichemera,

Sakaakangaondipawomugovewangu. (p.101)

(When he heard that I was crying he woke up from where he was sleeping with the prostitute and started hitting me with clenched fists. He severely assaulted me to the extent of spending some days without seeing properly or eating. After beating me and feeling that he had done enough, he tore my clothes and forced me to have sex saying that is what I was crying for.)

Saba is having sex with his prostitute in Mai Tanya's presence. He physically as well as sexually abusing his wife in the presence of his prostitute. This shows that Saba is a man who does not care about his family as shown by his behaviour of bringing his prostitute to where Mai Tanya is living. Mai Tanya is living in a one roomed house which is poorly constructed.

5.4 WOMEN AS GOSSIPERS AND LIARS

In the novels selected, different authors depict women as gossipers and liars. Moyo in *Uchandifungawo* portrays women as people who are liars as well as gossipers. Mai Chipanera in the novel is portrayed as a gossip. Rumbidzai says to her friend about Mai Chipanera's gossiping:

Waitazvakanakashamwari,

Rumbidzai.

SaMaiChipaneravanozovenemakuhwa.

Ndivovandatyashamwari.(p.97)

(Thank you, my friend, Rumbidzai. Mai Chipanera is a gossip. I fear her my friend.)

These words are said by Rumbidzai after she receives her letter from Smart and she wanted her friend to read the letter on her behalf as Rumbidzai is uneducated. She is fearing Mai Chipanera who is a gossip.

Gambahaya and Chiwome (1998) aver that, women in Shona literature are being portrayed as people who always change each and every time, people who do not have mercy for other people, spend time gossiping about other people and they love money too much.

Mabasa in *Ndafa Here?* also portrays women as gossipers and liars through Mai Chipere. This woman wakes up early in the morning and visits Wati's mother to gossip about another woman who was beaten by her husband. To show clearly that Mai Chipere is a gossip, Mabasa confirms that:

*VanhuveKwayedzahavazivivanhuvekupabasakutivavatsvagirenhauchokwadi.
KanaMaiChisambaShowiya,*

*DaiyaikokawovamwevanhuvakangozvipengerawozvavosavanaMaiChipere,
vainzwirira. (p.12)*

(The publishers of the weekly tabloid, Kwayedza, do not know the right people to engage as sources of news. If the Mai Chisamba Show was to invite other people like Mai Chipere, surely, they will be dazzled.)

These words indicate that this woman is a gossip in the area where she resides. Although Gaidzanwa (1985) blames male authors for portraying women characters as people who do bad things all the time, there is evidence in the *Ndafa Here?* That women's sororities flourish on the basis of these. However, this is a very narrow view that fails to locate women as pivotal to social development. The vision propagated by most authors, including Mabasa is rather energy sapping. When female readers

consistently come across such negative labels the temptation to develop a debilitating zero-image is always there. This is the case particularly in schools.

AmaiChipere and Betty's mother-in-law in *NdafaHere* are seen to be maliciously talking about Betty. She is accused of waking up late whilst the surroundings of the house are not swept and the sink is full of plates that are not cleaned. Wati's mother said that Betty is not able to work hard but she is the one who performs all household chores. AmaiChipere wants to know a lot about personal matters of other people so that she can be able to preach the gospel from one place to another. AmaiChipere is a woman who cannot keep secrets. In the same novel, Mabasa also portrays Gari's mother as a woman who gossips all the time. She visits other people's homes early in the morning gossiping. Hudson- Weems (1993) states that, African women are family- centred as well as community centred, interested in collective outcomes and group achievement. This means that, Mai Chipere is not worrying about the achievement and development of the community.

In *Mapenzi*, Mabasa also portrays Charity as a woman who is afraid to go to the shops because she is fearing those women who point fingers to her saying that:

NdiyekaanemukomanaakafaneAids.

Ainyanyakuvhairanemafleamarketsemariyemurumewaakauraya. (p.165)

(She is the one whose sister died of Aids. She was pompous due to the flea markets she acquired from the man she killed.)

This means that women always tell what they want about other people. It does not matter whether they are relatives to them or not.

In the novel *NdakagaraNdazviona*, Mukonoweshuro portrays women as liars. VaRegedzai is shown lying to her sister-in-law that she is not aware about what causes Revai to fall sick. However, VaRegedzai is aware of Revai's sickness because she is the one who put medicine in Revai's tea in order to abort Revai's pregnancy. VaRegedzai is saying that:

Hameno.

Zvimwezviripozvaakadyiswamwanawangu.

Mwoyoyavanhuyakaipa. (p.8)

(I don't know. Otherwise, my daughter ate some love portion. People are evil.)

Revai's mother is lying because she is aware of the cause of Revai's sickness.

Revai is also depicted by the author as a person who always tell lies. Revai is portrayed lying to her uncle, VaBhande, that she wants to go and see her friend Dambudzo but she wants to see her boyfriend known as Jemisi. This comes out in the following extract from the novel:

'Ndangandichidakumbonoonashamwariyangu.'

Shamwariyako ani?

'UnonziDambudzotaidzidzatesepaGutu.' (p.77)

(I want to go and see my friend. What is the name of your friend? She is Dambudzo. We learnt together at Gutu.)

Revai is lying because she wanted to meet with Jemisi where he is staying.

In the novel *RichaveDzerevende*, Hove depicts women as gossipers and liars. Women are seen gossiping about Wiridzai's mother who is being cheated by her husband. These women are jealousy and they are saying that about Wiridzai's mother:

Nyangwerikavhairanemari,

MurumetinongonzwawokutihaasiyimunhuZvishavaneyose. (p.8)

(Even if she becomes pompous of having money, the husband sleeps around in Zvishavane.)

In addition, to show that women are gossipers, it is said that in the novel:

GuhwacheteraiuyanevaibvaZvishavanendoraverotangakamotokamberevere.

(p.19)

(Gossip talk from the people coming from Zvishavanewas the source of problems.)

Women in the novel are also depicted as liars. Pendeka is a woman who is seen lying in the novel. This woman is lying to Wiridzai her boyfriend that the money she has was given to her by her father whilst she got it from Stephen. Pendeka says to Wiridzai:

Ndianianokupamariyeseiyi?

Ndibaba.

Ndakatoipiwaarimazanamaviriemadhorakuchinzinditengehembe.

Ndakazotengadhirezirimwe,

Ndokuchengetaimweapondakangonzwakutiuchauya. (p.62)

(Who gives you all this money? It's my father. I was given two hundred dollars to buy clothes. I bought only one dress and kept the other money when I heard that you were coming.)

These are lies because she is being given the money by Chigariro. Pendeka also lies to Wiridzai that she is now pregnant but the pregnancy belongs to Wiridzai. However, Pendeka is impregnated by Chigariro who is Wiridzai's father. In the letter wrote by Pendeka to Wiridzai, she also says that:

Ndatinditaurirewoiwe,

Sezvokanapanechiripo,

Chinotozivaiwebedzi. (p.89)

(I decided to tell you, that if there is anything, you are the source.)

These are also lies because Pendeka is also involved in another love affair with Chigariro who impregnates her. Pendeka also lies to Chigariro that her name is

Cathrene whilst Chigariro also lies to Pendeka that his name is Stephen. These two are lying to each other.

Simango in the novel *ZviuyaZviriMberi* depicts women as gossipers. VaNhamoinesu's other wives are gossiping about VaMunhamo, that is Revai's mother. They do this thinking that VaMunhamo is still asleep when she in fact ran away with her two children during the previous night. These women were saying that:

Wainyanyakuganhirasekungendiyechetemukadzipasipano.

Goreraaroorwapanonesadzatakangatobikatichirasa. (p.10)

(She was so arrogant and showy as if she is the only woman on this planet. When she got married, she would not eat sadza and we would just throw it away.)

This means that these women are gossipers as they are gossiping about Revai's mother during her absence.

Women are also depicted as gossipers by the author. A lot of girls who were sitting at the hospital gossiping about Tambudzai who is with Davy, her boyfriend, in his motor vehicle. One of the girls says that:

'Ndakatikudiimusiuya,

Vamwemukatidzaivenhema?

Zvinotariraimuone.'

Umwendokutiwo,

'Lizyakazvionatinoonererachokwadi!'

UmwezvemusikanandokutikunaFumiso,'

Iwe,

Unataurirashamwariyakokutiirikutambedopepasinamvura.

TambuwakoyoanozvzivaherekutiDavyarikudakuendamhirikwamakungwa?

Anosiyiwaaitwazvimwetikamuseka.’ (p.52)

(What did I say on that day, yet others said I was lying? Then someone said, if Lizy sees this surely that will escalate things. Then the other girl said to Fumiso, ‘You go and tell your friend that you are inviting trouble. Does your friend Tambu know that Davy intends to go out of the country. She will be tricked and we will laugh at her.)

These women are portrayed as gossipers because they are gossiping Tambudzai and Davy who are together in Davy’s motor vehicle. Once people are talking about someone who is not present there, this is gossiping.

Mungoshi in the novel *KunyararaHakusiKutaura?* depicts women as gossipers through Norika. To show that Norika, Eric’s sister, is a gossip, Eric says to Martha during the time they have some disagreements about Lorna’s extra-marital affair with Eric:

‘NdaifungakutipamwemakuhwaateteNorikachete.

Ndinovazivamaitiroavo.

IzvozviuchanzwavoparidzashokorokutihapanamukadziakaitasewaPaulnapamusa napekafive dollars kavakapiwaikako.’ (p.94)

(I thought it was aunt Norika’s gossiping. I know her doings. Immediately you will hear her preaching that there is no woman like Paul’s wife because of the five dollars she was given.)

Norika is depicted as a woman who cannot keep secrets as shown by what she does in the novel. She is a gossip.

In the novel *Makudo Ndomamwe*, the author depicts women as liars and gossipers. Beside being involved in a lot of affairs with different men, Revai is portrayed as a liar. For instance, Revai lies to her mother that after being dismissed from the church, she left with other youngsters. All this is untrue. Revai says to her mother:

“Amaika,

Paperamisatazosaratoitamusanganowevechidiki.

Tangetichirongakutimwedziunorunyararorwedutoitirakupi,

sakapangapainemakakatanwa,

vamwevachitikuParishivamwewovachidakwaMurindagomo.

TazopedzaavemasikatichaiwotichibvatazoendakwambuyamaiTariro.

Ivovangavachikufarisaichose.”

*AkarambaongoropodzakudaroRevaikurikuedzakuvharazvaaingeabvunzwanamai
vake. (p.24)*

(Mother, after church dismissal, we were left doing a meeting for youngsters. We were planning on where to hold our church this month, so there were disagreements, others were suggesting it to be held at the Parish, others wanted it to be held at Murindagomo. We finished in the afternoon and went to see Tariro’s mother. She was greeting you. Revai kept on talking trying to get away with what she was asked by her mother.)

Revai is lying to her mother because they were dismissed earlier from the church and she went to see Gutsa her boyfriend at his homestead where she ends up doing evil things.

On another occasion, Revai also lies to her mother when she came early from school and she told her mother that she is not feeling well. However, Revai was feeling well but she became unhappy because of the photos she saw in Gutsa’s house. These photos belong to Gutsa’s girlfriend. Revai thought that she is being cheated by Gutsa who is saying that he already divorced his girlfriend. Revai said to her mother when she asked her:

*“AsiurikurwarahereRevaikuzogarawakabatarushayanguvadzinovamwevarikuchik
oro?”*

Honguamai,

*“musorowanguurikundirwadzazvikurusakandachimbizakudzoka,”
akapinduramwanaasingadekusanganidzanamazisoneavo. (p.28)*

(“Are you ill Revai, why are you sitting touching your jaw this time of the day while other people are at school?” Yes mother, “my head is aching thus why I came back early”, she responded and did not want to look her mother straight into her eyes.)

Revai is always seen lying to her mother in the novel. She also lies to her mother that she did not eat sadza and chicken during the night because she spent her time reading her books. These are lies because this girl no longer likes to eat some type of food because of being pregnant. Revai’s mother said that to Revai:

“Ko,

NhaiweRevai,

Zvausinazvekudyasadzarakomadeko?

*Zvinounofungakutiunganonyorabvunzoukabudiriraidzonyokadzichingoriramudum
bu?”*

Akadaviraachirikupeturazvakemusorowakeachiti,

“Amaizvenyuka,

ndakazorambandoyeverwanokuverengadzamarandakotsirandakabatabhuku.

Ndazopepukamangwananianondichionabhukurakatotazvaronemasiriri!” (p.36)

(“Revai, why didn’t you eat your sadza last night? You think you will be able to write the exam on an empty stomach?” She responded whilst combing her hair saying, “Mother, I got attracted to reading a book until I got asleep with it in my hands. I wake up this morning only to see that my book was damp with saliva.)

These are lies to her mother because she tries to eat the food but she vomits.

As if that is not enough, Revai is also depicted by the author lying to the headmaster of Chirasauta secondary school where she is looking for a form four place. She lies to the

headmaster when he asked her why she once left school. Revai lies to the headmaster that she was looking after her mother who was sick. The author said that:

*Mukuruuyuakazodakuzivakutiaingeamboregerereichikoro,
iyendokuzongonyepawokutiaingeambochengetamaivakevairwara. (p.53)*

(The headmaster wanted to know why Revai once left school, and she lied that she was looking after her sick mother.)

Revai is lying because she left school due to pregnancy. The reason she gives to the headmaster may help her to be given a form four place.

Revai and her friend Diana are also depicted as gossipers. They are seen gossiping about their teachers when they are going home from school. They are saying that:

*“Zvimamedhemuzvenyuzvinodakushamisirakwazvo.
Handisirinindakazvitadzisakupfimbwawonemadhomeniavanogaronditukira.
Chimwendichachiputitsirabhorakumeso!”
akadaroRevaivachibvavarovachikweevosenaDiana. (p.30)*

(“Your mistresses want to be very pompous. I am not the one who caused them not to be proposed love by the extension officers for whom they are always scolding me. I will strike the face of one of them with a ball!” said Revai and they laughed together with Diana.)

The above sentiments reflect that these two women are gossipers.

5.5 WOMEN AS WITCHES AND MURDERERS

Different authors in selected Shona novels portray women characters as witches and murderers. Witchcraft is seen as binding together the relationships of women. The researcher did not come across a situation where male characters are also described as witches. Zvarevashe cited in Killeff and Killeff (1992) asserts that, the word ‘witch’ refers to a woman all the time. Schmidt (1992) also asserts that, issues to do with witchcraft to the Shona people is always found among women and most of the time are married women as well as those very old women whose husbands are dead. Gelfand

(1967) affirms that, a witch in Shona culture is a woman all the time but in the long run can also be a man. Bourdillon (1976) did not give an exploration of a witch in his works but he said that there are women who are witches and not men.

Moyo in the novel *Uchandifungawo* describes women as witches. Rumbidzai is seen greeting her husband Smart after coming back from town. After they greet each other, Smart said to Rumbidzai:

Tinotyiraimimunogaramunomumaruzevhamuzerezvichemberezvinoroya. (p.5)

(We are more concerned about your safety because you stay in this place that full of old women who are witches.)

These words mean that women unlike men are only seen practising witchcraft. In the novel *NdakagaraNdazviona*, Mukonoweshuro also depicts women as witches through women characters such as VaChiramwiwa. VaChiramwiwa gave Revai's mother some medicine to abort Revai's pregnancy. The author is saying about Revai's mother:

Vakambofungakutiangavamabvireemimbayachoiwayo.

ImwepfungwayavondokurangarirazvavaingevamboudzwanaVaMuchaparevazvokutiVaChiramwiwavaifungidzirwakutivairoya.

'Bvamwanawanguakafa,

Tinganosvitsanakwamvurayachekamakumbo.'

VakadaroVaRegedzaizvinovodirausvusvumundiro.' (p.9)

(She once thought of whether it could be abortion that took place or not. On another thought, she remembers what she was once told by VaMuchapareva that VaChiramwiwa is said to be a witch. 'If my daughter is going to die, we are going to face each other. She said VaRegedzai whilst pouring porridge in a plate.')

The above sentiments suggest that VaChiramwiwa is depicted as a witch in the novel. Wasosa (2010) argues that, witches are known to be bringers of misery among the people which include diseases as well as death.

VaChiramwiwa and VaRegedzai are also depicted as murderers in the novel. These two women give each other some poison which Revai's mother, VaRegedzai, puts in Revai's tea without her knowledge. These women are murderers as they want to cause abortion to Revai without her concern. They also want to kill an innocent soul. Lwanda cited in Mguni, Furusa and Magosvongwe (ed) (2006) believes that, women cause all the evil things in the world. If murder cases are scrutinized, it will always directly or indirectly involve a woman. In order to show that these women want to do abortion, the author said that:

*VaRegedzaivakazofumavoindapamanapaVaChiramwiwavondopiwamushongauy
awokutivabvisemimbayaRevai.*

*SezvovakangavawanaVaChiramwiwavachingovandivovaripopamukovapavovaka
bvavangosvikorongedzerwazvavaida. (p.6)*

(VaRegedzai wake up early and visited VaChiramwiwa at her homestead to be given the medicine they want to use to abort Revai's pregnancy. She found VaChiramwiwa alone at her place and was given what she wanted.)

This means that, these two women are portrayed as murderers as they want to end Revai's pregnancy.

Chakaipa also portrays women as murderers through Muchaneta's mother in the novel *Garandichauya*. Muchaneta's mother kills her husband. However, she ended up living a terrible life as a blind woman without anyone looking after her. Muchaneta says that:

"Ndizvozvavaida.

Vakaurayamurumewavo,

Vakandifurirakutindirambemurumewangu.

Dzimwenguvandaidaindakatorandichidainhasindichivachengeta."(p.77)

(That's what she wanted. She killed her husband, and persuaded me to divorce my husband. Otherwise, I would have taken her into my custody and looked after her well.)

Muchaneta's mother is a murderer as she kills her husband. This woman ended up regretting that if she did not persuade her daughter to divorce her husband. This woman persuades Muchaneta to fall in love with rich men so as to be given material things. She is now regretting because she is now sick, living alone as a blind woman at her home. Muchaneta's mother also said that she is not going to repeat that again that is to encourage her daughter to have extra marital affairs with rich men if she is going to become fit.

Mungoshi in *KunyararaHakusiKutaura?* also depicts women as witches through VaKwanhurai who is Paul's mother. To show that this woman is described as a witch, VaNhangha, Eric's mother says:

KutiukubabavavovanondibataneminweinezvimbinairworukadzirwavokKwanhurairu royizvarworwadaikundipedzeravanavangu...

daivakararamamaitivesevaizoitawomapenzi here? (p.1)

(On the hand their father mistreats me and on the other hand Kwanhurai's acts of witchcraft threaten to kill all my children...If they were all alive I don't think all of them would have been irresponsible?)

VaKwanhurai is described as a witch by VaNhangha because she killed her children. These two women are in a polygamous marriage, so there is competition. VaNhangha is being neglected by his husband in favour of VaKwanhurai. VaKwanhurai means a woman who kills other women's children in a polygamous marriage set up. Most of the time, for a person to be described as a murderer, he/she would be destroying other people's lives. Gaidzanwa (1985) affirms that, if women are disobedient through prostitution and murdering, they are punished severely by their men. The author goes on to affirm that, these women can be beaten up or divorced. Yet those men who commit crimes are not punished severely.

In the novel *Mapenzi*, Mabasa describes women as murderers through Magi. Magi is a prostitute who always does abortions during the time when she is a student at the University of Zimbabwe. Heaven is another woman who is depicted as a murderer by the author because she kills her husband Eddie as he impregnates Saru her mother's

housemaid. This shows that Heaven is a murderer. Furusa (2006) avers that, if there are murder cases, this may involve a woman.

The novel *Mapenzi* portrays women as witches through Heaven. Heaven is described as a witch by Hamundigone because of what she always does to other people, including Reuben. Bourdillon (1976) observes that, witches are seen bringing misery to people as well as causing death.

5.6 WOMEN AS BEAUTIFUL SOULS

In the selected Shona novels, both male and female authors portray women as beautiful souls. Chakaipa depicts women as beautiful souls in *Garandichauya*. Tsitsi and Handisumbe's wife are depicted as beautiful souls. In *ZviuyaZviriMberi*, Simango also depicts women as beautiful souls through Revai. Mai Tanya in *Mapenzi* is also depicted as a caring woman by the author. These women are regarded as caring, beloved ones as well as comforting ones. They are able to provide love, affection and material benefits to their families. Gaidzanwa (1985) asserts that, these women are depicted as strong and firm, being feared and admired as long as they try to get the best for their children such as in schooling and other material benefits. These women are depicted as the most admirable, having morally beautiful character. For example, Tsitsi in *Garandichauya* sacrifices her education to marry Matamba. In addition, Tsitsi is neglected, beaten as well as being disowned by Matamba but she looks after him when he is destitute and blind. Tsitsi is caring because she agrees to look after her husband after he has rendered himself helpless and unproductive around the home. Martha in *KunyararaHakusiKutaura?* is also depicted as a caring, sensitive and empathetic woman especially to the Chimbimu family.

In terms of physical beauty, women are also portrayed as beautiful people. However, a woman like Muchaneta is using her physical beauty as a bait. Muchaneta is seen using her physical beauty to lure different men who can provide her with financial as well as material benefits. To show that Tsitsi is a beautiful woman, it is said that:

*Matambanadzozvaakaonamusikanauyu,
akafungakutiarikurotapamusanaporunakorwake.*

Uyumwanaakangaarimutete,

Mhunoichingeyakatipwasha,

Nomusorounengeunomukwasvati,

Aching murefuzvishomanana. (p.70)

(When Matambanadzo saw this girl, he thought that he is dreaming because of her beauty. This girl was slim with a flatitish nose and of a medium height.)

This means that, Tsitsi is a beautiful woman as described by the author. The author also said that her dress fitted her nicely. Tsitsi as a beautiful woman is not misusing her physical beauty as compared to Muchaneta and Pendeka other beautiful women in selected novels. Tsitsi is faithful to her husband and is not seen attracting other men as what is done by Muchaneta and Pendeka.

Muchaneta is also described as a beautiful woman in the novel. Traditionally, a beautiful woman is usually lazy. Muchaneta is a lazy woman who is not able to work for herself even when she was still at her fathers' homestead. Most of the time, her mother performs all household chores whilst Muchaneta is sleeping. In many African cultures, a woman who works hard is greatly respected. In order to show that Muchaneta is a beautiful woman, she is saying that:

Iyepanopasipanemunhuangandikundakunakahere?

Kanazvandakaitamuchiringirozviriizvo,

Hapana... (p.6)

(Is there anyone in this world who is more beautiful than me? If the image in the mirror is true, there is no one---)

Muchaneta is a beautiful woman in the novel. Her physical beauty is described graphically, she smells nicely, dresses well and provokes with her body and its movement. However, Muchaneta uses her beauty to become a prostitute. In addition, her beauty causes her to be killed by Handisumbe a storekeeper.

Hove in her novel *RichaveDzerevende* also depicts women as beautiful people. The author depicts Pendeka as a beautiful woman. To show that Pendeka is beautiful, the author said that:

Hapanachainongedzwapamwanauyukutindichochakanaka.

Waingovemutiusinabunha.

Kutarisamusoronenhengodzawodzosedzinotivananzeve,

meso,

mhinonezvimwezvose,

vechirumevaiteukaziya. (p.3)

(She was totally beautiful. Men would admire her magnificent beauty, from her head to toe.)

Pendeka is portrayed as a beautiful woman in the novel. As Pendeka is a beautiful woman, she also uses her physical beauty as a bait like what Muchaneta is doing. She is misusing her physical beauty. She ends up getting involved in a love affair with Chigariro besides her boyfriend Wiridzai from high school. Women are using their physical beauty to lure and compete for husbands who did not belong to them but those who can provide them with material and financial benefits.

5.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed that women are being portrayed in different ways in selected Shona novels. It has discussed and analysed how women are being portrayed in Shona novels taking into consideration the theories of Afrocentricity and Africana Womanism. This chapter has argued that Mabasa blames those women who became prostitutes as well as the failure of the government to support these people. In his novels, Mabasa portrays women as prostitutes, women as being oppressed by their husbands, murderers, witches and as gossipers and liars. On the issue of prostitutes, he also blames the socio-economic conditions of the country which force women to be

involved into prostitution as they have no option. Hence, the author has an ambivalent vision of blaming both the prostitutes themselves and the socio-economic conditions of the country. However, Mabasa's weakness in the novels is that he uses very strong words to depict women characters unlike male characters. This portrayal of women in negative terms promotes gender bias while negatively affecting the development of the country.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the conclusion of the study and therefore summarises the research findings. The study has analysed how the authors of the following selected novels namely *Mapenzi* (1999), *Garandichauya* (1963), *Ndafa Here?* (2008), *Uchandifungawo* (1975), *KunyararaHakusi Kutura?* (1983), *RichaveDzerevende* (1998), *MakudoNdomamwe* (2004), *Ndakagara Ndazviona* (1990) and *ZviuyaZviriMberi* (1974) portray women in their novels. The novels selected were written during the pre-colonial and post-colonial epochs in Zimbabwe. In analysing the selected Shona novels, other fictional works published in Shona were used as cross-references in order to have a clear picture of how women are being depicted. Images of women discussed include women as prostitutes, women as submissive and idealised people, women as gossipers and liars as well as women as oppressors of other women. Data collected from face-to-face interviews was used to lift the study from simple narration of what the authors have said. The selected Shona novels discussed in this study collectively discuss the images of women from an Afro-centred perspective by using Africana Womanism as well as Afrocentricity Particular attention was given to the images of women found in novels as well as to the factors contributed to women behaviour. Apart from presenting the research findings, the chapter also gives recommendations for future research.

6.1 RESEARCH FINDINGS

It has been observed that, women are given stereotypical images by most writers of selected Shona novels. This gives readers an impression that, women are responsible for the problems other people face in their lives. Images of women found in the novels selected include women as prostitutes, submissive and idealised women, women as caring people, women as witches and murderers, women as oppressors of other women as well as women as gossipers and liars. It has been noticed that, economic, political as well as social factors assisted a lot to the behaviour of women found in selected novels. Some of the novels selected were written during the time the country

faces economic downturn. Economic downturn was responsible for producing different images of women in novels. Harsh political as well as economic environments erode the behaviour of women as they struggled to survive. Some writers seem to have a problem of blaming women for the bad behaviours they are displaying without blaming the factors that are shaping their behaviours. The colonial and post-colonial forces are shown as responsible for most of the problems affecting women. Therefore, it is erroneous to blame women in their individual capacities as Chakaipa does in the novel *Garandichauya*.

This study has also discussed that Chakaipa depicts women characters in his novel in negative or stereotypical ways whilst men are depicted in positive ways. Chakaipa uses very strong negative terms to depict women in his novel. He depicts women as murderers, prostitutes as well as witches. Muchaneta is negatively portrayed throughout the novel by the author. Chakaipa unlike Mabasa blames women who became prostitutes without looking at what causes them to become prostitutes. Chakaipa has a weakness of portraying women in a stereotypical way whilst men in a positive way. Prostitution involves a man and a woman but only women are being blamed for becoming prostitutes and disturbing the stability of the society. However, these men are married and cheating on their wives but are not blamed. For example, Handisumbe is not negatively portrayed in the novel.

In this study, it has also been discussed that, Mungoshi tries to strike a balance by giving both negative as well as positive images of men and women in his novel. Eric is depicted in a negative way in the novel as he falls in love with Lorna, her half brothers' wife, whilst Martha her girl-friend is portrayed in a positive way.

This study has also argued that Simango in her novel does not use very strong negative terms to describe women characters. The author tries to run away from the tendency of male authors to depict women in negative stereotypical ways that affect their development. Simango is acknowledged for being able to give images of women who are very different from other novels by other authors. In the novel, Tambudzai is depicted as a dedicated woman up to the end of the novel. From all selected Shona

novels, Tambudzai is the only one who did not drop out of school because of being pregnant.

In this study, it has been argued that Hove also tries to strike a balance by giving both positive and negative images of women in her novel. This is important as this shows that women in the novel are not only involved in doing bad things but there are also positive images of women like being submissive to their husbands.

This study has also discussed that Makayi in her novel depicts women characters in a negative stereotypical way unlike men. Revai is portrayed in a negative way throughout the novel. Most women in the novel are portrayed in negative ways. This promotes gender bias in favour of men. This study has also argued that Revai is failing to learn from her mistakes and ends up regretting in her life.

This study has also discussed that Mukonoweshuro's portrayal of women in her novel is balancing. Her portrayal of women characters is similar to that of Chakaipa and Mabasa although she does not use very strong terms to describe women. She describes women characters mostly in negative terms.

In this study again, it has been discussed that, Moyo portrays women characters mostly in negative ways whilst men are not negatively portrayed. Moyo like other authors, also portrays women as prostitutes, gossips and liars as well as oppressors of other women. Moyo portrays women in a stereotypical way but men in a positive way. Smart is a married man who is falling in love with Noster but is not negatively portrayed. Only Noster is being blamed for her bad behaviour. Hence, this diminishes the value of women in society. Images that authors create are powerful examples of how society is supposed to be organized. Consistently negative images engender a rather disempowering consciousness that promotes a lopsided gender plane. For as long as women are negatively portrayed in literature, then the gender pendulum remains unbalanced.

In this study, it has been argued that, there is no need to blame women for being prostitutes as it is not out of their choice but they are forced by factors beyond their control. Writers should give the actual causes of prostitution and this may help the

readers of different novels to have a true picture of prostitutes as victims of pre-colonial as well as post-independence disillusionment. On prostitution, it has been observed that, it is a survival strategy used by women as they have closed options to have meaningful lives. Some of the women who are involved in prostitution include married women and college students. They become prostitutes because of economic crisis. College students in *Mapenzi* namely Magi and Kundai become prostitutes due to lack of financial support from the government as well as from their families. Unemployment also contributes to women's prostitution.

In *NdafaHere?* women become prostitutes as an economic necessity. They were struggling to survive and saw prostitution as an only option. The collapsing economy is shown to have effects on the morality of the people and family disintegration as they are reeling from the effects of the economy. The debilitating effects of the economic crisis have effects on the behaviour of the people. It has also been observed that, colonialism also contributed a lot to women's prostitution. The need for material and financial benefits force women to become prostitutes. In *Garandichauya* and in *RichaveDzerevende*, women become prostitutes due to the need for financial and material benefits brought about by colonialism.

However, it has been noticed that, Chakaipa blames women who became prostitutes without taking into consideration the factors that drive them into prostitution. On the other side, there is ambivalence in the way Mabasa handles issues related to prostitution in *Ndafa Here?* and *Mapenzi*. This is due to the fact that, there are incidents in which he castigates prostitutes as social renegades who bring distress to society by transmitting diseases like HIV/AIDS as well as causing family disintegration. This results in watering down his vision because earlier on he indicated that prostitutes are victims of the economic environment. The colonial and neo-colonial forces are responsible for shaping the behaviour of women found in novels.

As for women as oppressors of other women, it has been observed that, mother-in-laws mainly oppress their daughter-in-laws. They take advantage of being older than the daughters-in-law. It has been noticed that, the daughter-in-laws are being oppressed socially, psychologically and physically by their mother-in-laws. It has also been noted

that, the oppression is mainly a result of the stressful conditions that the mother-in-laws find themselves in because of the complications of life during the economic crisis. Their living conditions are not conducive in order for them to fulfil their responsibilities as mother-in-laws to daughter-in-laws in families. Therefore, it is out of frustration that they become oppressive and violent to the daughter-in-laws.

In short, the novels analysed in this study display different images of women of which some images are negative whilst others are positive. Notwithstanding this observation, the overarching position is that of negative labelling of the female principle. Such labelling is triggered by a clearly pathological obsession with the need to moralise on the basis of cultural values that are no longer sustainable in a changing and transforming world. As a result, the narratives advance a narrowly contoured moralistic agenda that enshackles women's agency. Therefore there is need for the Shona novels to espouse a more empowering gender sensation and vision. This would make it possible to socialise women and girls into a world of positive actors and doers, rather than negative actors and doers, those who act positively rather than who are acted upon as objects. This is only possible if the Shona novels positively invests in the power and force of a positive example.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the research findings, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

1. This present research focused on selected Shona novels. As such, further research could also be done to see how other genres of literature such as poetry, drama and short stories portray women.
2. Since literature should reflect what is going on in society, it would also be interesting to have further research on the portrayal of men in literature.
3. It would also be interesting to compare how male and female authors depict men in their novels.
4. Since there has been emerging literature on women images in different languages namely Shona, English and Ndebele, therefore it is necessary to compare literature in

different languages in order to determine whether the images of women are consistent in the literature produced in different languages found in the country.

5. Gender should be a subject taught in schools and universities.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ALL INTERVIEWEES

- 1) How do female authors portray women in their Shona novels?
- 2) How do male authors portray women in their Shona novels?
- 3) Are there any similarities in the portrayal of women between male and female authors?
- 4) Are there any differences in the portray of women between male and female authors?
- 5) What are the stereotypes attached to women in Shona novels by female authors?
- 6) What are the stereotypes attached to women in Shona novels by male authors?
- 7) What do you think are the factors responsible for the way women are portrayed in Shona novels?