

**MASCULINITY AND GENDER STEREOTYPING IN SELECTED NOVELS BY
UGANDAN FEMALE WRITERS**

TIMBYANGA XAVIER KATUNDA

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**MASCULINITY AND GENDER STEREOTYPING IN SELECTED NOVELS BY
UGANDAN FEMALE WRITERS**

DECLARATION

I TIMBYANGA XAVIER KATUNDA hereby declare that this is my original work and that it has never been presented in full or part to any University in fulfillment of the award for a degree of any University.

NAME

TIMBYANGA XAVIER K

SIGNATURE



DATE

11/01/2011

DEDICATION

To my parents who kept the candle burning even when resources were not easy to come by. To both of you, I say you are special in all ways and I thank God for having kept you to see me through.

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To all of you, be blessed.



KYAMBOGO UNIVERSITY

P. O. BOX 1 KYAMBOGO

Tel: 041 - 285001/2 /285037 Fax: 256-41-220464

Website: www.kyu.ac.ug

School of Postgraduate Studies and Research

CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION OF THESIS

- 1. Student's Name: TIMBYANSA XAVIER UACUNDA
- 2. Registration No: 2006/11DD21-MALT
- 3. Programme: M.A.
- 4. Department: LITERATURE Faculty ARTS
- 5. Signature: [Signature]
- 6. Title of Thesis/ Dissertation: MASCULINITY AND GENDER STEREOTYPING IN SELECTED NOVELS BY US ANDIAN FEMALE WRITERS

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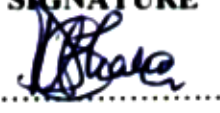
DESIGNATION	NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
1. Principal supervisor	Dr. Okaka Opio Dokotum		11/1/2011
2. Reader Supervisor	Sr. Dr. Frances Nakiwala

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ABBREVIATIONS

FEMRITE	Acronym of Ugandan Women Writers Association started in 1996
CRE	Christian Religious Education
AIDS	Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome
LI	Lotus International

ABSTRACT

Many Ugandan women writers have asserted that although in the sixties and seventies Uganda was producing phenomenal works of literature, “women voices were clearly missing” (Feminist Africa). According to Mary Karoro, the absence of voices of women “has resulted into an omission of women’s experiences from the literary and cultural heritage that shape the society” (Karoro). As a response to this gender inequality and distortion, in the Ugandan context, Ugandan women writers resorted to the pen to rewrite their story. Given the recent dominance of female writers on the Ugandan scene under FEMRITE, the study attempts to examine how Ugandan female writers portray the desires, anxieties, perception and expectations about masculinity. Attention has been paid on how the Ugandan women writers have tried to use their works of literature “to straighten the record in the face of some of the previous writing (by men) which had painted the picture of an all male society” (Kiyimba 32). The research was library based and involved analyzing selected novels of some Ugandan female writers who write under the umbrella of FEMRITE. Barungi’s *Cassandra*, Kyomuhendo’s *Whispers From Vera*, *The First Daughter* and Karoro’s *Child of A Delegate* and *The invisible Weevil* were used as primary sources. Other novels by these authors were used as secondary sources alongside works of various authors. The study addresses itself to the causes and kinds of gender stereotypes and points out both the negative and positive effects of these explicit and implicit gender stereotypes on society. It investigates in details gender power relations from the social, political and economic points of view in the Ugandan context. Chapter one shows how the subordination of women has been popularized by patriarchy through empowerment of men over women. It reveals how power imbalances in society has led to the oppression and stereotyping of women. The chapter shows women’s argument that the oppression of women by men has been extended into their works of literature in form of distortions of images of women. The chapter also highlights the birth of the FEMRITE group of writers in Uganda as a response to the male dominated literary landscape. It shows how these writers came on stage to rewrite the story of women from the women’s point of view in order to clear the image of women. It shows how in the process of correcting the distorted image of women the image of men has also

been distorted. An in-depth literature review has been done to justify the need for the study and the problem of masculine gender stereotyping has been identified. The chapter presents the objectives and significance of the study and stipulates the instruments of the study.

Chapter two picks from there and investigates how inter gender power relations have been key causes of masculine stereotyping. The chapter analyses the social, political and economic power struggles between men and women and how these struggles are represented in women's literature. An investigation of Ugandan women writers' perception of men's social, political, and economic power has also been made through an analysis of several novels by Ugandan female writers.

Chapter three investigates male representation in the works of Uganda women writers with the aim of finding out if these writes have also employed the distortion method in the process of writing the story of women and correcting distortions made in men's literature. An analysis of the writers' style and themes is made and images associated with men characters identified. The motives for which such images and associations are employed are also investigated in order to arrive at an informed conclusion about masculine gender stereotyping in the works of Ugandan women writers. The chapter seeks to establish women's attitude about men through the associations and images these women writers give to their men characters.

Chapter four introduces the sex struggle between women and men and shows how women perceive the idea of sex difference. A thorough study of women's perception about the source of men's power is made. This is done in order to ascertain women's claim that men's power lies in the penis and that this penis is used as a weapon of oppression to the women. An analysis of some women novels has been done to identify the insinuated meanings, implied images and stereotypes made about men. Chapter five is the conclusion that emphasizes the effects of masculine gender stereotyping on men and society in general.

The conclusion focuses on the possible means towards alleviation of gender stereotyping since it has been discovered that some writers, in the process of correcting the wrong image of female characters in works of literature have in many cases unconsciously or consciously stereotyped male characters as well. The study generally considers that keeping quiet about masculine gender stereotyping is as dangerous as using distortions of male images to correct stereotyping of women. It is hoped that the study will contribute to the existing literature about gender stereotyping in general and provoke more studies in relation to the problem of masculine gender stereotyping. The work emphasizes that no gender is free of stereotypes. This study appeals to writers' conscious attention to the construction, and representation of both the male and female characters in order to present a balanced view of life since fiction sometimes interprets and influences people in the real world.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

The stereotyping of women prevalent in men's works of literature is a reflection of the gender inequality problem that has been promoted by patriarchal ideology that favors men over women. This has jeopardized gender coexistence and interdependence by souring the relationships between men and women. In many societies, gender inequality is said to have been promoted by the patriarchal ideology because many African societies favor men over women. This is confirmed by Sherry B Ortner and Harriet Whitehead when they observe that; "everywhere gender categories are hierarchically arranged with the masculine gender over the feminine" (33). The dominance has particularly been seen in men's use of literature to perpetuate feminine gender stereotypes. Male writers have advertently and inadvertently used literature to popularize negative beliefs, attitudes and attributes about women. In an article *Male Identity and Female Space in the Fiction of Ugandan Women writers*, Abasi Kiyimba observes that male writers such as: Robert Serumaga, David Rubadiri, Peter Nazareth, David Sebunkima and Godfrey Karimugogo assigned peripheral roles to women characters (2). Many of the roles assigned to women are characterized by gender stereotypes. Gender stereotyping is the creation of socially constructed beliefs, expectations, values and attitudes about how men and women behave.

In Uganda, women writers have come up to protest what they term as the unfair representations of women by men writers who dominated the literary scene. As a consequence of the patriarchal ideology that governed most African societies, only a small percentage of women was able to acquire formal education which is a key factor in creative writing in English. As a result, it is believed that African literature and African literary criticism have to a great extent been influenced by men. Following this imbalance, Gloria Chukukere, one of the Nigerian women rights activist and writer, in her book *Gender Voices and Choices; Redefining Women in Contemporary African Fiction*, observes that often "women are forced to respond to this literary tradition and frequently insist upon correcting the imbalance in the portrayal of women" (9). To correct

the image of the woman in literature and seek equality, Ugandan women writers have resorted to the power of the pen which is not only the FEMRITE slogan but also in line with the theme used at the launch of FEMRITE events in 1996 that read: "Women and the world; Empowerment through the Quill"(femriteug). Writing has helped Ugandan women writers to construct women characters that they give key roles. In doing so, these writers search for equality that "is one of the most pressing preoccupations of the human condition. Even more pressing, however, is the female quest for equality in a male-dominated world where self and social status are narrowly defined by culture-bound gender roles" (Nabasuta, H., Mugambi and Tuzyline, A., Jita 50). Although some of their male characters seem to take less important roles, some Ugandan women writers recognize the interdependence of both genders. In spite of this trend, there is need to analyze these works in order to find out whether in the process of telling the story of the woman, the masculine gender has not been negatively stereotyped as well. There is also a need to appreciate that no gender is free from these stereotypes.

1.1 Background to the Study

The struggle for proper presentation of women characters is backed by the belief that the unsatisfactory appreciation of the significance of women in life has spilled into imaginative literature (Chukukere 6). Nevertheless, Women writers' struggle against feminine stereotyping is further echoed by Kiyimba when he observes that some women writers emerged as voices of protest against "age-old discriminative habits" (3) that have kept women subordinated to men.

While the reason behind much of Ugandan women literature is clearly the desire to correct the distorted image of the woman, as pointed out by Armstrong, H., A. when he states that "novels published by the FEMRITE imprint are changing the image of woman in Ugandan fiction and society as they explore the issues from the point of view of women characters and establish a legacy of women" (Armstrong H., A), the Uganda women writers should take care not to divert from their intended objective of correcting the image of the woman in literary works. The success of this cause depends on the approach used. If Ugandan women writers have escaped the confrontational and

deconstruction approach their works will stand the test of time, but if they have used confrontational and deconstructionist approach, the struggle against feminine stereotyping is not over. For example, selective portrayal of women characters against men characters is neither healthy nor a lasting solution to feminine stereotyping since it may set in motion counter reaction from men who may try to defend themselves.

Gurein L Wilfred et al (1999) criticize Alice Walker's *Everyday Use* for her selective presentation of characters. They observe that: "In *Everyday Use*, Walker makes a conscious choice to portray women. The only men in the story are dead, absent or unnamed" (232). Such presentation of characters does not only show a biased view of men characters but also shows an unrealistic representation of life; since such imbalance is not true to life. In real life, there are men and women; good and bad men as well as good and bad women.

Although it may now be an undisputable fact that feminine gender stereotyping is a reality, Gurein's observation opens our mind to the fact that masculine stereotyping is silently taking place and not much attention has been paid to it. The prevalent masculine stereotyping is further highlighted by Chris Dolan: "Nobody is Immune: Gender Against Men." Chris Dolan opens the reader's eyes to the silently occurring masculine gender stereotyping when he explains that the new refugee documentary film which highlighted the plight of male refugees that was about to be launched "explores the hidden world of sexual and gender violence against men in the conflicts of the great lakes region; it is a movie about men, violence, and the inability of society to recognize or address male vulnerability in times of conflict (35). The contention by society seems to be that since men are 'strong' and "are a gender that is well known for its violence and aggressive nature than women" (Banham, M. 21); no one can violate men's rights or oppress them. This thinking translates into the belief that men are customarily also expected to protect other members in the family. The observation that men are violent is further made by Helen O'Connell who states that: "Gender violence, and the threat of it, reflects culturally-defined notions of masculinity which serves to reinforce women's subordinate positions" (2). While emphasizing the reality of masculine stereotyping, Moses, A. Nsubuga the information officer refugee law project in a message posted on Pamoya web

site titled "Gender Against Men" said that the documentary on violence about men "demonstrates how male identities are under attack". This observation clearly shows that masculinity is under attack although much of the society seems unaware or even unconcerned.

Ugandan women writers express their concern about the plight of the woman in men's works of literature. This concern is loudly pointed out by Hilda Twongyeirwe Rutagonya in her observation that "Femrite was founded in order to promote, publish and support female writers" (Twongyeirwe, R) so that a woman would be able to tell her story from her own perspective because "a woman's literary voice is relevant as it tells the woman's story as part of society's story" (Twongyeirwe Rutagonya). As much as male writers have stereotyped female characters, male stereotypes are also abundant for example the commonly held biblical concept that males are the heads of the families. This may give an apparently positive image but the impacts are diverse for example, this concept has not only been translated in fiction but also in life experiences. In an article "*Men and power: Masculinity in the Folktales and proverbs of the Baganda*" that appears in *Masculinities in African Literary and Cultural Texts* by Helen Nabasuta Mugambi and Tuzyline Jita Allan, Abasi Kiyimba explains that the man is "the undisputed head of the family, the children belong to him and his word is law" (35). The implication of this undisputed position of man is that he sometimes becomes forceful in order to make his position felt even when he is not worth it. The concept of male dominance is reminiscent in Ken Walibora Waliaula's article: "*Staging Masculinity in the East African Epic*" where he writes that the Waswahili people of East Africa say "Mume ni mume bata akiwa gumegume" (Nabasuta, H. Mugambi and Tuzyzyline, A. Jita13) meaning "a man is a man, however worthless he may be." In spite of these male stereotypes, it is surprising that a section of some women show fear of men's awakening to masculine stereotyping. Allen, Asiimwe an activist of women's rights is one of such women. She warned women to be on their guard since such awareness "might lead to men for men and men against women campaign" (Asiimwe). This warning shows a lot of self-centeredness on the part of this writer. While she wants women's eyes opened to their suffering, she fears men's awareness about the ongoing suffering of men. In response to her fears, Patrick Tumwine

warns people not to close their “eyes and ears as if nothing is happening against men” (Tumwine). Patrick Tumwine’s call helps to further open our eyes to the ignored masculine stereotyping. It also helps us to appreciate that the fight against gender violence and stereotyping against women, is the responsibility of both men and women since some female writers help to perpetuate such discriminative habits. Abasi Kiyimba confirms this observation when he points out that Barbra Kimenyi seems to unquestioningly adopt certain age-old sexist stereotypes in her work. It goes without saying that the village gossip should be a woman as in the character of Nantondo. Also, Maria, the bar woman, is feared by all married women for taking their men (5). This is a demonstration of another common stereotype that bar women are prostitutes and take away other women’s men. From Abasi Kiyimba’s observation the reader realizes that the stereotyping of women is done by both men and women. In fact, we need both men and women to protect and promote women’s rights as well as men’s rights. Proper presentation of both men and women characters in works of literature is the best way forward in the struggle to protect the rights of both genders. Also writing on Pamoya web site, Rosemary Nyakikongoro warns that “it is important to recognize that men sometimes experience violence, and keep quiet about it, and this is where we need them to come out and fight culture and stereotypes that perpetuate violence e.g. men do not cry etc” (Nyakikongoro). Her warning is a demonstration of the awareness of masculine stereotyping and its resultant effects to both men and women. However, the problem of masculine stereotyping has not yet been addressed seriously and this is the concern of this study. The question to ask is whether women literature has sought to end the sex battles or whether it has aggravated them through masculine stereotyping.

The women writer’s battle against male chauvinism has assumed many modes that range from reform of social, political, and economic situations, androgyny which was manifested in doing away with conventions like the dressing code which distinguished men from women. Other forms of fighting male chauvinism included: coming to terms with femininity and celebrating it, lesbianism, which was the formation of sororities in a bid to cut off all masculine dependence and eventually the rewriting of the woman’s story. Different women have adopted these modes of fighting at different times.

In Uganda, some of the above forms of struggle have been used in order to achieve equality. This thesis however, concentrates on women's use of literature to call for equality and respect of the rights of all genders. Like in America and Europe, in Uganda, women writers resorted to the power of the pen. Lillian Tindyebwa in: *Rachel Love* explains that in the struggle to use literature to achieve equality for all genders, FEMRITE was founded among other objectives to: "publish works by Ugandan creative women writers, promote Ugandan creative women writers, including those in the Diaspora...disseminate gender-related information... establish a fully-fledged publishing house" (Tindyebwa 36). These writers hoped that the woman would be liberated if their objectives were realized as women's creative writing would help counteract a world full of female distortions and "create another" (Kyomuhendo) that will present balanced character portrayal.

In an attempt to re-write the story of the woman, some Ugandan women writers construct female characters and give them leading roles. On the other hand, most male characters are sometimes pushed to the periphery. For example, in a collection of stories entitled: *A Woman's Voice*, edited by Mary Karoro, the twelve stories in the anthology illuminate the courage and the endurance of women in the face of hardships and social injustice. Although this is a portrayal of live experiences of women in south western Uganda, the selective use of these stories without considering any case of battered men, leaves this work leaning towards making a statement on behalf of women in addition to portraying them as victims and men as brutes. Similar character portrayal is also common in Karoro's *Child of A Delegate*. Although the novel explores post colonial social-economic challenges such as prostitution, AIDS scourge, the phenomenon of street children and corruption, the author puts men at the centre of these evils. She for example emphasizes the role played by men in the spread of prostitution and the emergence of street children. Although men use their economic status and leadership positions to exploit women, the women should not only play the victim. They should be seen struggling to fight these evil forces and where they act as accomplices, they deserve to share the blame too. By emphasizing that men carelessly throw their seed around not knowing the consequences of their actions and that women are "caught between

desperation and ignorance, providing tilling ground, many a time forced into it..." (17), the author down plays the role played by women in prostitution and looks at men as sex machines. While sometimes women are forced into prostitution by economic problems, this should not be used as an excuse for all the women engaged in prostitution. The unnamed delegate, Cain, the university lecturer and the registrar are all presented as sex beasts while the prostitutes, Sera and Hero are portrayed as female victims. While it is true that there are men who are sexually weak, the portrayal of these male characters is full of excesses. The author clearly demonizes male characters and presents some of the sexually weak women as mere victims. By emphasizing one player in the social evils the novel explores, the author under plays the importance of fair gender representation in the process of re-writing the story of the women.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There has been an outcry by women rights activists that much of the literature of Ugandan male writers portrays women negatively. As a result, some Ugandan women writers under the umbrella of FEMRITE have decided to write the story of the woman and to ensure fair representation of women characters in their literary works. Although studies have been made on Uganda female writers, the question of male stereotyping has not been tackled and yet it warrants attention. This thesis investigates if the methods used by FEMRITE writers to write the story of the woman have been free of masculine gender stereotyping. The study argues that if the correction of the image of the woman promotes masculine gender stereotyping and gender divisions, gender harmony and equality will remain a dream. This thesis, therefore, aims at emphasizing the importance of constructing and portraying stereotype free characters in Ugandan literature.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of this research were to:

- Examine the presentation of the image of the male gender as portrayed by Ugandan women writers.
- Analyze the impact of male stereotyping on the relationship between male and female

characters.

- Use the findings in order to recommend better and realistic presentation of the male and female genders in literary works.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The struggle for proper representation of women characters and equality between the two genders is still an ongoing process. However, fair portrayal of both genders in literary works could be one of the steps towards lessening of the problem of gender stereotyping. In order to analyze the representation of male characters by Uganda women writers, the following primary texts were examined: Violet Barungi's *Cassandra*, Mary Karooro's *Child of A Delegate* and *The Invisible Weevil* plus Goretti Kyomuhendo's *Whispers From Vera* and *The first Daughter*. These novels were selected because they are published during the period in the history of Uganda characterized by growing awareness about the rights of women and the call for equality for all the people regardless of their gender differences. Through their novels, these authors have sought to correct the image of the woman as presented in the works of men. They are also prolific and experienced writers who have authored a number of works many of which have served as secondary sources. In addition, some works by feminist writers and other relevant works were also studied so as to supplement and corroborate the information analyzed in the works of the three selected female writers. The study analyzed portrayal of male characters in novels by Ugandan women writers, the authors' and women characters' views, comments, attitudes, expectations, anxieties about male characters, images of male characters, complex tensions in gender relations operating within cultural, historical and material context in each of the primary sources and some of the secondary sources.

1.5 Hypothesis

If men have used literature to distort the image of women, it is hypothesized that in the process of correcting this distorted image, Ugandan women writers have also distorted the image of men in their literary works.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This research is informed by the Marxist feminist theory that considers that men have dominated women just as the capitalist class has dominated workers. Marxist feminists believe that since men have been placed on the pedestal of leadership in society, men have used this opportunity to dominate, exploit and oppress women. Karl Marx says, “all historical and social developments are determined by forms of economic production” (qtd. in Guerin L. Wilfred et al 202). According to the Marxist feminists, societies have economically favored men over women. In the long run, men have used their economic status not only to influence historical and social developments but also to oppress women. The oppression of women in form of stereotyping is believed to be reflected in the literary works of men. Marxist feminists further attack the capitalistic system that they consider as sexually as well as economically exploitative. They contend that the survival of patriarchy has been partly helped by the capitalistic system that has economically empowered men at the expense of women. According to Jimmy Wales’ (Wikipedia 2007), on the other hand radical feminists locate the cause of women’s oppression in patriarchal gender relations. However, Raman Selden and Peter Widdowson say Millet and Shulamith Firestone in their book *The Dialect of Sex* (1970) consider male “domination as primary and quite independent of other social and economic forms of oppression” (216). While commenting on Millet and Firestone’s argument, Michele Barrett one of the feminist critics insists that by ignoring the articulation of ‘patriarchy’ the critics over simplified a complex process. She instead says several factors must be related, including the economic organization of households and its accompanying ‘familial’ ideology plus the cultural process in which men and women are differently presented and the nature of gender identity (217).

Barrett considers that gender stereotyping is determined by material conditions in history (217). In spite of their different approaches to the problem of gender inequality and oppression of women, all these critics seem to agree that men have used their advantaged position not only to oppress women but also to popularize masculine values. Banham M., et al add that “these masculine values have typically placed men at the centre of power and marginalized the essential qualities of female power” (15). Men champion their

values and this is reflected in their works of literature. In her contribution on gender stereotyping, Gloria Chukukere observes that women have been marginalized and stereotyped in many ways and “the unsatisfactory appreciation of the significance of women in life has spilled into imaginative literature” (6). According to her, because of the trivialization of the role of the women in society, the woman’s colonial experience and its attendant effects and the treatment of women characters through pre-conceived stereotypes “women are forced to respond to this literary tradition and frequently insist upon correcting the imbalance in the portrayal of women”(9). The desire to correct the imbalance in the portrayal of women in literature was one of the reasons that the Ugandan women writers under the umbrella of FEMRITE picked pens to write. In her own words, Goretti Kyomuhendo, while explaining her motivation for writing and commenting on her novel *Waiting*, declares “I write because I am dissatisfied with the world I live in. I want to create another”. Therefore these women set out to write while at the back of their minds was the message “we live in a man-dominated society” (Barungi 147) and some of these writers set to use fiction to show this society the positive roles of a woman.

1.7 Review of Related Literature

This literature has been put into two categories: that which is directly related to the stereotyping of women, especially by men, and that exposing stereotyping of men by women writers. The review of feminine stereotyping is necessary here since masculine stereotyping seems to come as a result of women writers’ effort to portray the right image of the women in literary works.

1.7 (a) Patriarchy and Feminine Stereotyping in Literature

The social structure of many societies, which values men more than women, is believed to have been responsible for the development of feminine stereotyping. The patriarchal ideology has provided men with opportunity to assert themselves over women and as a result, “Women are coerced by a system of sex-role stereotyping of which they are subjected from the early age” (Peter Widdowson and Raman Seldan 214). Societies have

also constructed roles, attitudes and attributes in order to keep women low and men high. According to Abasi Kiyimba in a paper "*Men and Power: Masculinity in the folktales and proverbs of the Baganda*", Male dominance can be traced back in the historical context. Man was and continues to be portrayed as husband, father and societal-political leader and this has worked as a broader strategy to perpetrate a legacy of male dominance in order to promote the patriarchal ideology (Nabasuta and Tuzyline 35). Consequently, this has been translated in literary canons where positive images of men have been represented and distorted images of women portrayed. For example, in Gladys Namukasa's novel *The Deadly Ambition*, when Busagwa goes to collect Ivan from school, he tells him that something grave had happened to Ivan's father. Robbers had attacked him. He cautions Ivan saying, "You have to be strong, like a man" (86). Busagwa, like his society does, associates courage and strength with masculinity. He is even shown insisting that Ivan should not cry since "Men don't cry" (86). According to him, to cry is not manly but womanly. Later, when Ivan Kabuye meets Anna, a girl with whom he shared the same fate (their fathers having been killed), Ivan Kabuye pities her and they both break down into tears. However, Ivan Kabuye "was the first to gulp. As a man, he had to protect her always" (234). The author implies that Ivan Kabuye as a man should not have cried but crying is okay for Anna since she was a girl. Society expects men to be strong and this is what Ivan tries to do.

Oral literature is yet another source of feminine stereotyping. A. Seite in *Efumu Z'omu Runyankore-Rukiga* writes that the Banyankore say "Omwaana mubi ajumisa nyina" (195). This is interpreted to mean that an undisciplined child is a disgrace to the mother. The father is not linked with the indiscipline of the child since he is expected to be perfect, but when the child is brave and disciplined the Banyankore say "Omwaana amanyirwa ahari ishe" (193). This is interpreted to mean; "As the disciplined and brave father, so is the child". Such literature influences men to over stretch themselves to conform to these high social expectations through socialization. In the process, they at times step on the toes of women. Women too try to conform to such expectations and remain subordinated and oppressed by men. Such literature that presents stereotypical portrayals of characters is responsible for the gender disparity and conflicts. This research

will go a long way to show how proper character presentation can alleviate the problem of gender stereotypes.

Goretti Kyomuhendo, in her essay "*FEMRITE and the politics of literature in Uganda*" in feminist Africa web site, further shows how women have been oppressed by men. She observes that in the sixties the literary tradition reflected gender hierarchy. She further observes that men's goals and perspectives dominated literary works while women voices were suppressed on assumption that women's literary voices were simply not important (Kyomuhendo). Goretti Kyomuhendo presents a case of neglect of women's ideas by men on the assumption that these women have no serious issues to advance. I agree with Goretti Kyomuhendo because as earlier shown, men used the advantage of patriarchal dominance to assert themselves over women. Male writers ascribed minor roles to women and in most cases limited them to the kitchen and home responsibilities. Therefore, as Goretti Kyomuhendo advises, women should "write themselves into self-existence in order to achieve self-actualization" (Lillian Tindyebwa 120) although this should not be used as a retribution to men.

In their book: *African Theatre: Women*, Banham M., et al, observe that in some cases, as a result of masculine superiority, women have been represented as mindless, irrational, jealous, hysterical, materialistic and at times downright ridiculous (15). The characteristic traits attributed to women by male writers have been the reason why women have for too long been left behind because women try to conform to the roles constructed for them by men and sometimes by women writers. Archer John and Lloyd Barbara in their book: *Sex and Gender*, observe that in a social psychological study of stereotypes conducted by Bem in 1974, women were associated with the following stereotypes: Cheerful, affectionate, feminine, flatterable, gullible, gentle, sexy, weak, emotional, illogical, inferior, jealous, cowardly, yielding, shy and sympathetic (41-42). These writers observe that such gender stereotypes have been naturalized either consciously or unconsciously.

In: *Women and Politics in Uganda*, Aili Mari Tripp also observes that attributes given to women are a result of stereotyping. The writer points out that some men in Kabale did not allow their wives to join women groups because "they feared women would gossip"

(92). The thinking that women are rumormongers is a common stereotype that runs in many literary works of both men and women. While analyzing Barbara Kimenye's *Kalasanda* and *Kalasanda Revised*, Abasi Kiyimba comments: "Kimenye also seems to unquestioningly adopt age-old sexist stereotypes into her work. It goes without saying that the village gossip should be a woman, as in the character of Nantondo" (5). Kiyimba introduces a new paradigm where women are also seen stereotyping their fellow women as a result of the dynamics of the societies they live in. Kiyimba points out that Kimenye, instead of correcting the image of women, simply adopts sexist stereotypes of her society. As a result of the continuous portrayal of distorted images of women, Gloria Chukukere points out that "Women are forced to respond to this literary tradition and frequently insist on correcting the imbalance in the portrayal of women" (9). However, Gloria Chukukere seems to ignore the fact that some women writers also engage in feminine stereotyping as can be seen in some works of Barbra Kimenye.

Lillian Tindyebwa urges that "the stereotyping of women is due to men's refusal to share in the domestic work or to acknowledge (potentially threatening) sexuality in women." (18) By shying away from domestic work, Lillian Tindyebwa feels men want to look superior. Even so, men still expect that "women are to be angels: hard-working, uncomplaining, submissive and innocent" (18). Lillian Tindyebwa considers that men have in several ways stereotyped women because even "in the canon of African male-authored literature, women are often aligned with the rural, which is itself idealized as the origin of tradition and authentic African life (often in the face of encroaching Westernization, represented by corrupt urbanity)" (18).

The men's intention seems to be the desire to keep the women intact from winds of change probably to keep them submissive. This argument can be justified by the fact that "the Onitsha Market Literature which circulated in Nigeria and in Western Africa dealt with the 'problem' of Westernized African women, labeling them whores" (Tindyebwa 19) even still, "the educated women were seen as 'the worst harlots' because they are very clever to get money from men" (19). Lillian Tindyebwa further shows that even where female characters play a central role as in the text of Ekwensi, these women characters do not escape stereotyping. For example, in Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana*, women

“are distorted according to the patriarchal view”(19) since the author does not address the socio-economic factors related to female migration to urban centers but instead links this urban drift to prostitution!

Gloria Chukukere has also voiced her concern about stereotyping of women in literature by male writers. She maintains that “the massive and spontaneous growth of African imaginative literature and the critical excitement surrounding it have not always given laudable attention to the woman” (1). Her argument is supported by the fact that women characters are treated “through pre-conceived stereotypes” (8) and “are made marginal to the plot of the stories while only a few emerge as powerful and credible protagonists” (7).

Banham, M et al express fear about the “lack of equality between the sexes in terms of dramatic writing ...and fictional representation” (15) and further observes that “although gender-conscious spectators have been offended by such portrayals, very few have taken it upon themselves to correct these recurrent patterns and women have therefore both been misrepresented and under-represented” (15) in works of literature.

Abasi Kiyimba explains the problem of female stereotyping from the socio-historical and socio-political perspectives. He urges that the patriarchal ideology of male dominance remains unchallenged because it is rooted in cultural founding and has been passed from generation to generation. (Nabasuta and Tuzyline 35-50). He contends that “among the Baganda, women are socialized in the early stages of development not only to regard themselves as inferior to men but also to be totally subservient to them”(89). He explains that this is systematically done through culture which “ensures compliance through a barrage of injunctions, taboos and practices, even in the use of language” (89). Abasi Kiyimba emphasizes the use of language as man’s control measure through the reference to the work of scholars such as Kabira and Schipper who urge that man is able to dominate socially and politically because he has put in place forms of control “including oral literature, that enable him to psychologically overwhelm the woman into believing in the superiority of the man as a species” (39-40). Abasi Kiyimba acknowledges the power of oral literature in stereotyping women when he states that the Baganda say: “Annaganja, asooka ddenzi (the one who will become a favorite (wife) begins by giving

birth to a baby boy)” (37) The implication of this proverb does not only present the female as worthless but also put women on tension as they must first produce boys to be favorites. According to Mineke Schipper, there are proverbs which present women as untrustworthy. For example he states that the Baganda say: A woman is like a rat: even if it grows up in your home, it steals from you” (76). The implied meaning here is that a woman cannot be trusted. Such literature gives a negative view of women. Not all women are untrustworthy and not all men are trustworthy or blameless.

The problem of feminine stereotyping is further traced in the historical and political context by Rebeka Njau and Gideon Mulaki who point out that most if not all historical accounts written during colonial and pre-colonial eras describe the African woman “as having been created to conceive, to serve the man and to work hard cultivating the field. She must know no will but that of the man, though it be at variance with her most elementary rights” (7). This is a case of serious gender inequality that demands for the woman’s total obedience even when her rights are being violated.

However, it is worth to note that “after centuries of conforming to female stereotypes created by men, women are slowly taking control of their own image making. Image of being equal to men and being able to face the reality of life on their own without men’s support” (master essays). As Helen Chukwuma writes in her analysis of Buchi Emecheta’s novels, women writers have helped “to fill the gaping gender gap between male and female characterization and shown the other side of the coin” (qtd. in Henrietta, C. Otokunefor and Obiagel, C. Nwood 2) This observation is relevant to most of the Ugandan Women Writers’ literature as shall be seen later.

1.7 (b) Protest against Feminine Stereotyping; Images of Male Characters

With the increase of the number of educated women in Uganda since the 1960’s, a good number of women has started writing fictional works. The trend of events has led to a new literary landscape that used to be male dominated. The women writers in Uganda came on stage as a voice of protest against age-old discriminative habits that kept women behind. Under their association (FEMRITE), women encouraged one another to shed

their inhibitions in order to write their stories. In so doing, FEMRITE demonstrated the power of the pen in the struggle of changing lives through writing.

Although the Ugandan women writers seem to have made a breakthrough by trying to address the disparities that existed between the feminine and the masculine gender, the question to ask is: Has the process of correcting the distorted image of the woman not affected the image of the man negatively? The answer to this challenge seems to lie in Dr. Chris Dolan's *The New Vision* article: "Nobody is Immune: Gender Against Men" in which he appealed to people about the violence meted on men and the inability of society to recognize or address male vulnerability, especially in times of conflict. He observes that society portrays women as perpetual victims and men as perpetrators of the evil against women. He warns that nobody benefits from rendering male victims invisible. Chris Dolan argues that gender should not be seen as a women's issue but should be an inclusive paradigm that considers how gender stereotypes are used to harm both women and men (35). Therefore, Chris Dolan does not only call for the appreciation of the fact that masculinity is stereotyped but also the effect gender stereotyping has on both genders since it influences people's perception.

Archer and Barbara Lloyd in their book: *Sex and Gender*, observe that a social psychological study carried out by Sandra Bem (1974) shows that there are stereotypes associated with masculinity. They point out that men were associated with such stereotypes as: aggressive, ambitious, assertive, dominant, forceful, independent, individualistic, masculine, self reliant, outspoken and skilled in business (41-42). They add that men are stereotyped as typically unresponsive in situations where sympathy is expected and cannot express warmth, playfulness and concern. Their findings are a testimony that even the masculine gender is stereotyped although society many times associates stereotyping with the women. Moses, A. Nsubuga emphasizes his perceived magnitude of masculine gender stereotyping when he states, "male identities are under attack" (Nsubuga). This attack according to Nsubuga is in form of stereotypes against men. This is why the documentary caused mixed feelings amongst some women who thought that awakening men about their suffering and stereotyping was dangerous.

Masculine stereotyping is also commonly demonstrated through drag kings. Drag kings are mostly female performance artists who dress in masculine drag and personify male gender stereotypes as part of their performance (Wikipedia.com). A typical drag king routine may incorporate dancing and singing or lip-synching. Drag kings are said to often perform as exaggeratedly macho male characters. Banham, M. et al, says by trying to imitate male characters, female artistes aim at projecting stereotypes associated with masculinity such as the belief that “Customarily protection has always been the business of male members of the family; they are the gender that is well known for its violence and aggressive nature than the women”(21). Such masculine stereotypes have greatly affected men for example as Texeira Erin, in an article “black men quietly combating stereotypes” observes, “Everyday, African –American men curiously work to off set stereotypes about them that they are: dangerous, aggressive and angry. Some smile a lot, dress conservatively and speak with deference: “Yes, Sir” Or “No, Maam” (Texeria). Males are sometimes stereotyped by women writers and movie directors in books and in the movies, and in almost any type of medium but much of this stereotyping goes unnoticed sometimes. Although in Ugandan drama there is a growing popular trend of men dressing like women, not much literature about this trend has been written. There is a possibility that male dramatists are trying to capture the attention of theater goers who seem to be more attracted to women dramatists than they are to men.

In his opening remarks, Abasi Kiyimba in: “Male Identities and Female Space in the Fiction of Uganda women writers” explains that his paper pays particular attention to the presentations of male characters and the prominence given to issues of male dominance (1). The author acknowledges that women’s images have been distorted in male works and that the women’s rebuttal is timely. However, although in his review of some of the works of Ugandan women writers, Abasi Kiyimba points out the distortions of male characters in the women’s rebuttal, he neither categorizes them as cases of masculine stereotyping nor emphasizes their effects on society. His work shows how in Barbara Kemenye’s: *Kalasanda and Kalasanda Revisited*, Pius Ndawula’s forceful wife drives him into a marriage and takes control over the administration of the home. Kibuka is also presented as a male chauvinist who ridicules Daudi’s scholarship saying the tailoring

related subject he is going to take is for women. The writer considers this as intended to raise laughter about such men who have power but often act foolishly. Although this may be true, this portrayal of male characters is clear case of masculine stereotyping. It projects these male characters lacking the ability to look through their actions.

In their article "African literature; a review of *Cassandra*", Eldred, D., Jones and Marjorie Jones show their dissatisfaction about the portrait of the young men pointing out that it is not convincingly plausible as one is aware of the puppet-master hand as Raymond's son dies and he himself gets a terrible accident and dies later. The reviewers observe that the hand of the writer seems to come in to do for the author what she should herself do to the men. They believe that the writer seems to have used such scenes to settle scores with men because of the images of women in the novels of men. One may to some extent agree with these authors when they observe that: "If a writer belongs to FEMRITE it must be tempting to be one sided, leaning towards propaganda" (127). Although these authors do not directly point out what this propaganda is, the study of the trend of some works of these women writers as already seen above point to the construction of a good image of the women at the expense of that of the men.

In Helen Nabasuta Mugambi and Tuzyline Jita Allan's: *Masculinities in African Literary and Cultural Texts*, Abasi Kiyimba comments on the recurring stereotyping of men in the oral literature of the Baganda people. He points out that in stories told many times by women to the children, "When a man is not greedy or beastly, he is stupid, ridiculous and irresponsible." (44) He continues to say that "in some stories, the man is presented as both greedy and murderous" (44) while in some proverbs man's laziness and irresponsibility are echoed as in the Baganda's proverb: "Omusajja nkoko mpanga tetakulira baana baayo (The man is a cockerel; it does not fend for its children)" (44). Although the writer appreciates the fact that "tales and proverbs like these are, of course, entertaining"(44), he is very quick to warn that "they popularize stereotypes of the man as greedy, brutal, irresponsible, stupid and ridiculous"(44) and therefore, men react towards such stereotyping negatively.

Hosda and Stone found 78 attributed associated with men but observed that "twelve of

the 78 attributes were considered “key” masculine attributes. These were handsome, aggressive, tough, courageous, strong, forceful, arrogant, egotistic, boastful, hard headed, masculine, and dominant (Hosda and Stone). Some writers try to construct male characters along these attributes. Banham, M et el concur with these writers about the prevalence of male stereotypes when they state: “customarily, protection has always been the business of male members of family; they are a gender that is more known for its violent and aggressive nature than women” (21). Such literature categorizes men as one group and forgets their individuality.

Male stereotypes are also common in Ugandan news papers. Some people who write in news papers have not been able to comment on issues concerning men without exhibiting male gender stereotypes. Robert Kalumba’s article: “Must you be a career woman?” has raised a lot of controversy among career and non career women because it perpetuates blatant female stereotypes that cannot go unnoticed in this era. Robert Kalumba writes that “some of these women simply love being known as the woman with a job. They love to be seen sporting high heels and well cut office wear” (14). He further argues that “other women join the work force to portray how independent and bright they can be. They argue that men don’t find stay-at-home women attractive.” (14). Robert Kalumba wonders whether such women are aware of how much they sacrifice and advises that remaining at home and doing some little business that would enable them look after their children and families would be more sensible (14). While reacting to Robert Kalumba’s analysis, Juliet Nakato avers that Robert Kalumba’s word represent male psyche because men never accept responsibility and are always blaming women for their short comings (12). Juliet Nakato categorizes men and believes they share the same mind and are all irresponsible. This is the reason she says that Robert Kalumba represents the rest of the men! The generalization is clear. Harriet Nakiwujjo’s “Parents don’t invest in girls just to stay at home” supports Juliet Nakato in the bid to show Robert Kalumba as a male chauvinist. Harriet concludes that Robert Kalumba as a man sees every thing through male lenses. Robert Kalumba loses his individuality and is judged as a man. Even then, all men are categorized as seeing things in the same way. Her conclusion is that Robert Kalumba is insecure and selfish (11). The stereotype that men are selfish and insecure

when their wives are away is further highlighted by Mulongo when she confesses “we have often thought many times that men are the only controlling parties in a relationship but this vice is now done by both”(Rachael Kabajja 12) men and women.

In a question whether men are better managers than women, some of the respondents especially women could not hide their sometimes biased beliefs about men in relation to management. Some respondents such as Angelita Musiimenta, a human resource expert with Pila consultants, believed that “gender may not be a key issue in defining who a good employer is” (Al Mahdi Ssenkabirwa 15). She believes that the “working environment is a bigger determinant of work output, than gender or other differentials” (15). But her counterpart Ms Lucky Kulabako, a city human resource expert, “insists that women have a competitive edge over men when it comes to management since the former believe in solving problems faster than men”(15). According to her, “men have a tendency to demonstrate a ‘go for kill’ mentality. They try to get as much as possible through pressure, intimidation, and the sheer desire to defeat at any cost whoever is sitting across the table from them” (15). The point Ms Lucky Kulabako makes about men is clear; she believes men are forceful and egocentric which qualities let them down in management.

Alex Gibson advises that men should care about gender stereotypes because “men as well as women are limited by gender stereotypes” (Gibson). He points out that “the idea of men as stupid and sex-obsessed is an enduring generalization that is allowed to flourish...mainly because no man ever stands up and says: hey that is sexist and it offends me!”(Gibson). Gibson believes men are big victims as far as stereotyping is concerned. He states that “men are often characterized as spoilt, helpless brats utterly unable to perform simple household tasks, too stupid to remember anniversaries and appointments ... base brutes ruled by our over reactive sex drives...Basically mentally deficient” (Gibson).

As observed above masculine stereotyping in works of literature is a reality. This could be one of the reasons Abasi Kiyimba in: *Male Identity and Female Space in the Fiction of Ugandan Women Writers* goes at length to examine “the construction of male characters”

(Kiyimba 1) in the literature of the Ugandan women writers. Considering the fact that Karooro's *The invisible Weevil* shows that "the weevil seems to be much bigger than just the affliction of an individual ...it is the entire system of patriarchy that defines people's relationship to each other and to social phenomena in terms of their sex and gender" (Kiyimba 9), patriarchy and men seem to be the weevil and are associated with brutality. Abasi Kiyimba confirms male brutality when he points out that patriarchal ideology is the source of male brutality. He identifies Rex, who rapes Nkwanzu, Genesis who deserts his home, Goora's father for brutally beating Goora and forcefully marrying her off to a very old uncouth man, Goora's rough husband and Cain in Karooro's *A Child of A Delegate*, who refuses to marry Hero as some of the brutal male characters. As Abasi Kiyimba observes, all the Uganda women writers deal directly or indirectly with injustice and discrimination against women, prominence given to the issue of male dominance, power relations between men and women and "the more recent writers on the other hand, deal more explicitly with the question of male- female in the home and in society"(1).

Abasi Kiyimba emphasizes that his study "investigates in depth the presentation in the fiction by Ugandan women writers of the question of male brutality and female vulnerability...the emergence of the unconventional female and the inevitable clash with the intransigent male"(1). This observation enables the reader to realise the presentation of the males not only as brutal but also inflexible and obstinately stubborn. The historical context in which some of the characters are placed does not so much correspond for example with the character of Cain. The rigidity he exhibits especially now that he has also received formal education and is an age mate of Hero appears exaggerated. He appears as rigid as old Kyamanywa and Goora's father in spite of the big age difference between them. The writer observes that there are some incredible incidents such as the Goora's experience with her husband. While commenting on Goora's letter to Nkwanzu, Abasi Kiyimba admits that "the extract has problems of credibility" (8). As the writer observes, the style Mary Karooro uses serves her purpose but that does not tone down the presentation of the male character as inhumanly brutal and foolish. In Mary Karooro's *The Invisible Weevil*, It is not surprising to discover as Abasi Kiyimba does, that "in this work, there is no female villain" (9). This is why Dr. Christopher Kirunda is concerned

about the construction of male characters by the Ugandan women writers. He is “critical of the ‘monstrous’ and ‘grotesque’ male characters which are created by the writers” (qtd. in Tindyebwa 78). The reader will also discover that “The female is either a victim of the system (as in the case of the prostitute who takes Genisis’ virginity) or as a passive accomplice of the system (such as Senga who does not want Nkwanzu to report the rape to the police...” (Kiyimba 9). Although the social-historical factors such as the patriarchal ideology account for the men’s dominance and women’s oppression, there are a number of contrived incidences in which male characters are presented exaggeratedly negative as already pointed out.

Since as seen earlier, many of the Ugandan women writers write to tell the story of the woman in the process protesting against “age-old discriminative habit” (Kiyimba 1), this could be the reason why most of their female characters have few weaknesses compared to their male characters. This is in line with the Ugandan women writers’ struggle to “straighten the record in the face of some of the previous writing (by men), which had painted the picture of an all male society” (32). Although straightening the record is a welcome stage in literature, it would not be rewarding for the Ugandan women writers to trek the path taken by men writers in the past. It is clear that in the process of clearing the distorted image of the woman common in men’s work, some Ugandan women writers have stereotyped men as well. This could be the reason Dr. Christopher Kirunda “accuses women writers now of trying to replace the patriarchy with an equally oppressive ‘matriarchy’” (qtd. in Tindyebwa 77). Male stereotyping by some Ugandan women writers could have been done unconsciously or consciously.

1.8 Research Methodology

The qualitative research design was used. Textual analysis of the content of the studied novels was done. This involved analysis of characterization, plot development in relation to characters’ roles and development plus the authors’ thematic concerns. Five novels by three Ugandan female writers are analyzed. These are: Mary Karoro’s: *Child of A Delegate*, *The Invisible Weevil*, Violet Barungi’s: *Cassandra* and Goretti Kyomuhendo’s: *Whispers From Vera* and *The First Daughter*. The five novels were chosen because they

are representative of the social atmosphere of the mid 1980's -1990's, which is a period in Uganda that was characterized by serious advocacy for the rights of the women and proper representation of images of women in literary works. In 1996, FEMRITE was founded among other reasons to purposely help women write their story and to correct the distorted image of the woman.

The study involved analyzing the male-female power relations in order to examine the images, attitudes, attributes, anxieties and roles of male characters in women's literature so as to discover whether the male gender is stereotyped in the process of correcting the distorted image of the female gender.

1.9 The Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the study will contribute to the existing knowledge about gender stereotyping by showing that stereotyping the masculine gender is not a solution to feminine gender stereotyping in literary works.

The awareness about the dangers of stereotyping and deconstructing images of men in works of literature is expected to urge feminist writers to realize that masculine stereotyping may lead to more feminine stereotyping. This realization may help them to portray balanced characters in their works.

In addition, the revelation and emphasis put on masculine gender stereotyping in literary works by Ugandan women writers is expected to provoke more research in this area.

1.10 Limitations

Although the Ugandan literary scene has been dominated by the literature of women writers since the 1990s, there was lack of representative creative literature by Ugandan Women writers from the 1960s to the 1980s except Barbara Kimenye's literature which was available as early as the 1960s. The imbalance in writing was as a result of Uganda's past colonial, social and educational legacy that favored more men over women in getting formal education. This is what Abasi Kiyimba means when he states that as a result of

this gender imbalance, the list of Ugandan writers was dominated by men (2). Consequently, men's goals and perspectives dominated literary works. In her paper "Femrite and the politics of literature", Goretti Kyomuhendo points out that woman voices were suppressed on the assumption that the women's literary voices were simply not important as a result; there are more novels written by men than those written by women (Kyomuhendo). However there is a sizeable collection of literature from FEMRITE that has been used given that a big number of women has written since the 1990s. Nevertheless, it has not been possible to get exposed to the views, expectations, and anxieties of the female writers in relation to the social, political and economic context of Uganda of the 1960s. Most of the Ugandan women writers emerged in the 1990s with the founding of FEMRITE. This time frame has impacted on these writes since most of them tackle the same issues in their society such as power relations between men and women, AIDS, corruption, political instability and the growing levels of infidelity in love relations.

It is likely that comments on some of these works such as those made by writers such as Eldred Jones and Marjorie Jones who assert "If a writer belongs to an organization like FEMRITE it must be tempting to feel so strongly about gender issues that the writing becomes one-sided, leaning to the propaganda" (127) could have possibly negatively influenced some readers to the extent of reducing the readership of the works. But part of the negative influence could be arising as a result of negative presentation of men characters in some of the literary works by women. As a result, there has not been so much readerships of these works. Goretti Kyomuhendo admits there are obstacles FEMRITE encounters. She explains that "at the institutional level FEMRITE faces difficulties persuading the government that local, female creative writing is worthy of the literature syllabus" (qtd. in Tindyebwa 76). The whole situation is compounded by the fact that some of the people, who have read works like those of Goretti Kyomuhendo, accuse her of being obscene. This is the reason she defends herself and "accuses her critics of chauvinistic bias because you get sex scenes in male writers too, and nobody ever considers them obscene" (Kiyimba 20-21) but Dr. Christopher Kirunda wonders whether for a mature exposed reader these women are saying anything. He is critical of

FEMRITE books exult sexuality so much. To him these women are not only abusing this topic but also doing themselves harm since they are limiting their liberation to a small level. He considers that these women are wasting time and advises that it would be better for them to write about strong female characters without writing about sex (qtd.in Tindyebwa 77-78). I think it is partly because of some or all of the above issues that there are not many reviews on most of these books. The few men, who have tried to give their views on the women's books, have been seen as sexists. For example, Dr. Susan Kiguli is "suspicious of critics who only criticize the content of the novels of these new young writers. She argues that Goretti Kyomuhendo's *Secrets no More* was only criticized because it was a text that dealt explicitly with sex and it was written by a woman" (Tindyebwa 74). Whether such comments have discouraged the potential critics, is not clear but the point made is that there are not many reviews about these books.

1.11 Definition of Terms

Gender:

A system of socially defined roles, privileges, attributes and relations between men and women, which is not determined by biology, but by social, cultural, political and economic forces.

Gender stereotyping:

Is taken to mean attitudes and beliefs an individual or individual's attribute to another/ others basing on the sex of that/those person(s). It shall also mean attaching qualities or roles to individuals according to sex.

Stereotypes:

Shall refer to fixed ideas or images of what a particular person or people is/are like that is not based on scientific or empirical evidence. It shall also refer to socially constructed attributes about how men and women behave.

Ugandan women writers:

Shall refer to all the Ugandan born women writers living in or outside Uganda.

FEMRITE:

An acronym for the association of Uganda women writers formed in 1996.

Masculine:

Having the qualities ascribed to men such as strength and boldness, pertaining to characteristics of a man, characteristics of manliness.

Masculinity:

The quality of being masculine; manliness or manhood.

Feminine:

Having qualities traditionally ascribed to women such as sensitivity and gentleness, pertaining to a woman or a girl.

Femininity:

The quality of being feminine; womanliness or womanhood.

Patriarchy:

This is a system where men have all the social power and determine most of the things that take place in their society. An ideology that gives the man authority to decide, act, give or with-hold, access or retain anything.

Matriarchy:

A system where women rule or a social system where an old woman controls the family affairs and all its property such as land.

Androgyny:

Shall be taken to mean a condition where women try to behave as men through the way they speak, dress and act.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Introduction: Power Relations Between Men and Women

In this chapter, I analyze the stereotypes that men are: corrupted by power, proud, selfish, bossy, dictatorial, irresponsible, villains and exploitative, jealous, unreasonable, egocentric, oppressive, rigid, chauvinists, liars, unforgiving, greedy for power, forceful, egocentric, boastful, arrogant, tough, hard headed and aggressive (Hosda and Stone). These stereotypes exist as a result of gender power struggles in many societies. Inter-gender power struggles have been a common occurrence throughout history in many societies. These power struggles are believed to have been promoted by the patriarchal social structure that favors men over women. In many societies, men and women have continuously struggled for dominance over each other. As a result of this struggle for dominance, each group has many times unconsciously and sometimes consciously used gender stereotyping in works of literature in the process of trying to assert itself over the other. The common social, political and economic struggles, in which men and women are trapped world wide, have been characterized by some of these gender stereotypes. Abasi Kiyimba observes that, many women writers have written to examine power relations between men and women and that this is a common theme that runs through all the writings by Ugandan women since these women are pre-occupied with injustice and discrimination of women which they believe is as a result of power imbalances in society (1). It is important to note that many of the Ugandan women's literary works pay a lot of attention to the system of patriarchy that defines people's positions in society, their roles and relationships to each other. The works show how men have used their perception of power to exploit women and as a result of this, most male characters are made to appear as beasts and villains in works of literature by women. The images of men in these social, political and economic struggles are characterized by stereotyped attributes women give to them.

2.1 Social Power Excesses as Men's Tool of Oppression

The problem of social power relations has been a serious concern in the works of many Ugandan female writers. Due to patriarchal ideology that is firmly rooted in the socio-historic context of many African societies, men wield unlimited social power over women. Much of women's literature seeks to show that masculine social power has in most cases been the greatest source of discrimination and oppression against women in many African societies. Abasi Kiyimba for example investigates "the depth of the presentation in the fiction by Uganda women writers of the question of male brutality and female vulnerability and female silence as enforced by the social system" (1). The effect of the patriarchal ideology on women is further echoed by Lillian Tindyebwa in her; *Rachel Love* when she writes that African women suffer as a result of the "patriarchal social structures" (29) because these structures favor men over women. In trying to show the role of masculinity in the oppressing and stereotyping of the woman, Ugandan female writers have largely projected the male characters as full of weaknesses and vices such as pride and selfishness, which they use as weapons to oppress and subordinate women. These writers do not completely paint a picture of female saints and male devils as they also portray women characters that have weaknesses as well, but most of the male characters are given negative images.

The negative picture of most male characters as portrayed by some of the Ugandan female writers is largely dominated by weaknesses which these writers show as gender related. Male characters are portrayed as people who are obsessed with power and like to boss over and subordinate women. This ideology is insinuated by Mary Karoro in *The Invisible Weevil* when Nkwanzi and her brother Tingo are given career guidance by a teacher. The subjects that Nkwanzi wants to take surprise the teacher. The teacher is even shocked the more when Nkwanzi reveals that she wants to become a lawyer. His surprise is clear when he says: "What? Girl, are you mad? Be a lawyer. And argue with your husband?" (90). The author depicts the old-age stereotype of what girls are expected to do versus what men are expected to do as a result of the socio-historical factors that favored men and disadvantaged women. The teacher acts as an agent of male domination

in society. Instead of respecting Nkwanzí's proposed choices; he wants to force choices on her. Even though the teacher is expected to be enlightened and free of bias, he is not. He transcends his authority as a teacher and resorts to bullying Nkwanzí into submission simply because she is girl. It is insinuated here that men do not take advice nor like arguing especially with women because the teacher loses his temper simply because Nkwanzí has refused to take his advice. He becomes a symbol of male pride and dictatorship because he demands to be listened to but he does not want to listen to Nkwanzí. The forces of male domination are also shown when the teacher advises Tingo to take subjects that will make him a boss. He would become a minister or permanent secretary and for Nkwanzí, she should take Home Economics and Christian Religious Education since she must get married and be a good wife. By "a good wife", the teacher implies being submissive.

In a rare display of masculine social power, Tingo, Nkwanzí's brother, demands that he had to be respected despite his young age. He assertively tells his sister: "I' am a senior one boy now and everybody should hearken to my call" (64). Like Nkwanzí's teacher, Tingo is a symbol of alpha male dominance because he strongly believes in masculine social power and patriarchal ideology. Tingo knows that because he is an old boy of senior one, all must respect him as a growing family ruler and head. Tingo's growing assertive nature is a demonstration of the realization of his manliness. Tingo's character change can be attributed to a number of forces. First the social context in which these children grow is structured in such a way that it favors male children. For example, in Mary Karoro's: *The Invisible Weevil*, Kaaka narrates to Nkwanzí how her husband was not happy when Kaaka produced five girls (17) This is evidence that society gives preferential treatment to boys. It is the same treatment that we see the teacher according Tingo when he promises that Tingo will "become a big boss" (92) and therefore must do tough subjects. The immediate effect of pampering Tingo is clear; "Tingo began punching air with his fists... You know Nkwanzí it's true. I will become a big man" (92). Already Tingo's esteem is raised while cultural forces have been used to try and tame Nkwanzí's self esteem. Tingo's pride, growing arrogance and assertiveness are products of the oppressive social forces that determine their life. At an early age, Tingo begins to

look forward to taking up a man's responsibilities in society. His behavior is in line with Mercy Mirembe Ntangare's conclusion that: "In much of traditional and even modern Uganda, a boy gains his social status as a man, or consolidates it if he has already passed through puberty rites, through marriage" (qtd.in Banham et el 58). Through the two male characters, Karooro portrays men as lovers of power beyond recognizing that women are also human beings who need to develop themselves. The author wants to show that men are insensitive, selfish, proud and oppressive. Men are not only represented as family managers but also as rulers. Men are presented as hindrances to the progress of women. Mercy, M. Ntangare adds her voice to emphasize that men are favored by society to assert themselves against women.

In *Cassandra*, the eponymous heroine is meant to be a liberated woman who is determined "to reach the top without using men's coat tails to do so" (Rugambwa Otim). Cassandra lives in a world where many women find conditions difficult to progress without the patronage of men as a result of the socio-historical factors that favored men over women. As an independent minded girl, Cassandra believes that women have more going for them than the subservient roles designed for them by society. She wants to be independent and accountable for her life in order to shape her destiny. She is however disappointed by her fellow women such as Marie who still believed that women are supposed to depend on men, cook for them bear men's children, and boost their egos so that men could pamper and sweeten them (women) by spending on them but Cassandra is not ready to give up her independence. When Raymond comes into her life, he wants to possess her immediately. Raymond's first experience with Cassandra has many lessons for the reader. He offers to buy her a soda and this becomes a trap for her. The casual meeting soon progresses into a serious dating and Raymond gives Cassandra a kiss that ignites emotions of love that subdue and overwhelm her. From this point on, Raymond's power over Cassandra takes a concrete shape. The reader realizes how men use their economic status to control women especially when Cassandra is seen overwhelmed by Raymond's house. Cassandra's life changes and her much wanted independence begins to remain a dream.

Although Cassandra is a radical feminist, she is affected by the disordering power of passion and her stable mind is disturbed and is finally “torn apart by her love relations with two egoistic and jealous brothers” (Barungi). Through Bevis and Raymond, the author emphasizes masculine ego and selfishness. Cassandra’s life changes completely bringing to reality her earlier concern that “Men were the reason why the majority of women were still lagging behind in social, economic and political development. Once you let a man in your life, it was good-bye to ambitions of meaningful existence” (3). Through the *Agutambas* the writer shows that men are dangerous, exploitative and enemies of women. It is true that Cassandra works hard to achieve her goals without compromising her integrity but her path is inexorably barred by her awakened needs and desires for fulfillment as a woman (Musoke Jane N). It is therefore not simple for Cassandra to enjoy sexual relations without wanting to get committed to marriage. Her realization of the needs of a woman brings her face to face with the bitter truth that she cannot completely run away from patriarchal dominance. She begins to accept to be controlled by Raymond and later Bevis. As much as Cassandra’s men have flaws, Cassandra too has her own human weaknesses. She for example gets in a relationship with Bevis well knowing that she is still in love with Raymond. Also, Raymond tells her that he is a married man but she insists on having a relationship with him. Although Cassandra demonstrates her female power to choose her lovers, she does so at her own cost and should be held responsible for the out comes of these relations. The author puts more emphasis on the role played by Raymond in Cassandra’s woes and this may overshadow her own contribution. Nevertheless, the incident shows how the patriarchal ideology has disadvantaged women since it empowers men over women.

In Kyomuhendo’s *Whispers From Vera*, men are further stereotyped as unreasonably jealous. Vera narrates how at a party held at Eric’s office, many people were promoted but the husband of the woman who is promoted was unhappy and sulking because his wife was promoted. He reasoned “that in order for the woman to earn the promotion, she had to leave home by 6 am and not return until as late as 9 pm at times. So the burden of supervising the kid’s homework, feeding and putting them to the bed was left to the

husband” (57). This man’s reason for sulking may not be as convincing as the fact that he really feels his social power in the home has been compromised by his wife’s job that demands that she should leave him alone very early in addition to leaving him to do the chores men believe are women’s; for example, looking after children. He fails to realise that he is living in a changing world where even women go to work. He needs to understand the complementary role the parents play in bringing up children. The fact that his wife is working shows that she is playing some role for the good of the family. Also, by portraying Eric in total agreement with this disgruntled man who gets angry over something good, the author wants to emphasize the point that men are not only unreasonable but also fear their women’s empowerment. Eric soon behaves like his disgruntled colleague when Vera is tipped for a promotion in recognition of her good work when she organized the international conference. Vera discloses “I have been tipped for a promotion... Eric is not about to accept that. He says I should be consolidating my marriage and not my profession.” (90) When Vera asks him what he would do if he were the one he says his case is different and insists the kids still need the mother’s supervision (90). Vera does not understand why she should miss such a life time chance. She later realizes that Eric fears she is “going to be sleeping around” (91). Even Eric is angry when he discovers that his wife owns a third hand car. When Vera reveals that she has also built a house, Eric is very furious. He swore never to trust his wife again (75-76). Although it is human of Eric to get angry, his reaction is exaggerated. The men appear as though they fear being overtaken by their wives whom they seem to look at as their subordinates. Eric’s argument that it is useless to conquer the whole world if you are going to lose your family (57) is as unconvincing as the reasons the promoted woman’s husband gave. The above scenario portrays men as ridiculous and foolish for accepting to be slaves to their egocentric feelings in the name of defending their patriarchal power.

A close study of power relations in many African societies shows how men have oppressed women and relegated them to a lower social status. As a result of this oppression, Uganda women writers seek to address the imbalance through writing their own story though they sometimes end up stereotyping male characters by stripping them of their individuality in the process of condemning patriarchal dominance. In Karooro’s

Child Of A Delegate, Cain does not believe his ears when Hero proposes that they should go for a dance (39). Cain's objection is not directed to Hero as a person, but to her spirit of rebellion against the patriarchal norms that empower men to always propose to women. Cain is presented as an inflexible believer in masculine social power although he is an educated man. He remains trapped by traditional social forces that consider women inferior to men with almost no human rights to be respected. Culture denies the woman power to respond to her feelings because even though she loves a man, she is not supposed to express her emotions. While this may be plausible for the old men of Cain's society, Cain's context does not allow him to think like he does. He is expected to be above that thinking since he is educated and a product of the modern world. Karooro's intention seems to lie in showing that a man remains trapped by negative social forces whether he is educated or not. Although Cain dodges Hero for some time, one is surprised to see him seriously entreating her for marriage. Cain seems to be consoled by the belief that a man has liberty to propose to any woman whenever he wishes since he is socially 'superior' to the woman. By behaving in this way, Cain lives a contradictory life and the author shows that men's power blinds them to the realities of life.

The trend of men's living and acting under the influence of artificial power is further emphasized in Goretti Kyomuhendo's *The First Daughter* where Kyamanywa is portrayed as wielding excessive social power. Kyamanywa is well known for ruling his family with an iron hand. His children and wife fear him very much. When Kasemiire gets pregnant while at school, Kyamanywa over reacts and almost blames every female in his home. He literally disowns Kasemiire and has no kind words for her mother. To Kyamanywa, Kasemiire is "dead" and the name means nothing to him now. Through Kyamanywa, Goretti Kyomuhendo shows that men are rigid and bull headed in matters that need sympathy and understanding. Kyamanywa's exaggerated reaction overshadows Kasemiire's mistake. This biases the reader to think that although Kasemiire betrays her father, it is foolish of Kyamanywa to continue harping on the problem. This is done by presenting Kasemiire as a victim of circumstances and Kyamanywa as an unforgiving father. The writer shows that although men have power, they use it stupidly. This message is clear at the end of the novel when Kasemiire is a successful young lady

despite her trials and Kyamanywa is a spent heartbroken old man in spite of all the power he wielded. While commenting on Kyamanywa's last state, Abasi Kiyimba concludes that Kyamanywa's absurd state is the humiliation of the entire male sex (18). While this may be true, it is important to note that Kyamanywa has not lost all. He is the genesis of his daughter's success because he takes the initiative to send her to school although she later pays for herself. They are both victors!

Kyamanywa's ending seems to be the author's objective right from the beginning of the novel. His last confession to his daughter is unbelievable. It is contrived to suit the author's plot and message. That Kyamanywa the proud and unbending man who subscribes to the thinking that might is right comes around and asks for forgiveness from his daughter sounds contrived since the author does not show the process that leads Kyamanywa to repentance. It comes instantly but Kyamanywa is not the type of man that should come to repentance so abruptly. Even when his daughter tries to greet him, he simply stares at her showing no sign that he has heard her. Although he is heart broken, he is still the old proud Kyamanywa. That the chauvinist Kyamanywa suddenly asks for forgiveness from his daughter looks improbable. The author does not so much prepare her readers for this sudden change of heart. Through the rise of Kyamanywa and his self initiated fall from grace to grass, the author wants her readers to see that the power men hold can be treacherous and illusionary since they use it not only to destroy the women but themselves too. Kyamanywa is a victim of his own folly and pride. He is not ready to accept life's realities when his daughter gets pregnant but he behaves madly towards her and the rest of the family members. Kyamanywa is only brought to reality when it is too late. The author over emphasizes Kyamanywa's weaknesses. His social power excesses has not helped him to become a better man but has simply destroyed him (Kyomuhendo 128). He lives as a proud man and ends up a foolish man. The last we see of Kyamanywa, he is a ghost of his old self. This presentation of Kyamanywa is meant to emphasize men's pride and foolishness for both wielding power and not knowing how destructive it is to both men and women. Although the author does not show much of Kyamanywa's good character, the reader realizes that Kyamanywa risks everything and takes his daughter to school. He triumphs in what seems to appear as his fall. That Kyamanywa

accepts his mistake and seeks forgiveness from his daughter is not unmanly but a point of success in his life. It emphasizes the fact that he is a morally redeemed, understanding and better man than before. The author is credited for bringing out this moment of redemption in Kyamanywa's life.

Goretti Kyomuhendo continues to develop the pseudo nature of men's power and the position of men in *Secrets no More* in which she represents George as an extension of the Kyamanywas of this world. Although George is a married man, he spends nights away from home without telling his wife and "on such occasions, he was always armed with all sorts of excuses to explain why he had not returned the previous night" (148). The author wants to show that George's life is not anchored in truth but lies and that as a man and head of the family, George believes that he has license and power to do as he wishes. The author finally makes her point through Marina, who, as a result of her experience with Matayo and George, makes a conclusion about all men saying that men "were all the same to her: self-centered, pompous men, who acted with a high handedness which irritated her" (136). This observation categorizes men as egocentric and proud beings who think that they are superior to the women. Abasi Kiyimba observes that unlike in her other novels where she tries to balance the faults of both men and women; Goretti Kyomuhendo over-emphasizes the weakness of men in *Secrets no More* (20). The author ably portrays what women think are men's weaknesses by characterizing men as excessively negative with hardly any single trace of grace.

2.2 Political Power Relations; Men and Greed for Power

The study of the political trend in Uganda in the past shows an absurd story of men dominating many political posts as a result of the patriarchal system that invested power in the hands of men. Even when conditions seem to have improved with president Museveni's government's introduction of the affirmative action that empowers women politically and suggests having at least one minister from each district (Tindyebwa 10), many districts still do not field ministers but have only a woman member of parliament each. This scenario has left women powerless while a class of power wielding men has been created. As a result of this trend, some Ugandan women writers seem to draw on

this trend to construct men characters that are obsessed with power. This character representation is intended to imply that men are greedy for power. Although today the trend has changed a bit as a result of the political affirmative action and advocacy for gender equality, men continue to occupy most key political posts with women deputizing them. There are few women today who hold key political posts. This situation is highlighted in Miria Matembe's book: *Gender, politics, and Constitution Making in Uganda*. Chapter four of this book "gives insight into the problems faced by women in the male dominant political arena. This chapter focuses on the writer's experience of being in a minority situation" (Freelibrary). Unfortunately, this power imbalance between men and women has been translated into works of literature by most male writers. As a result of this power imbalance, a big number of Ugandan female writers came on stage to protest the almost non-existence of intelligent, responsible, and inspirational female characters. This gap is confirmed by Abasi Kiyimba who reveals that "women rarely feature as significant characters" (2) in men's works of literature.

In *The Invisible Weevil*, Mary Karoro develops the idea of power struggles. Nkwanzu is the agent of women's resistance and a force of struggle in the process of attaining economic, social, political power and independence through formal education. In this novel, the author portrays intelligent women who question the legacy of patriarchy, which seeks to relegate women from the struggle for freedom and equality. In Nkwanzu and Mama, Mary Karoro's vision is that liberated women should participate in rebuilding Uganda, a country that has been put to shreds by the greed of men and the ignorance of women. Mary Karoro portrays men as too greedy to realize the importance of their motherland and thus end up senselessly tearing it into pieces. The reader realizes that as a result of greed, men are blinded and can't see the importance of their motherland. Rex for example demands sex from Nkwanzu in order to release her fiancée but she escapes by hurting his genitals. Rex is so obsessed by his sexual urge that he uses his political power to act inhumanly to the people close to him. Men are shown misusing their political power for their own selfish gains since instead of rebuilding their country; they are seen destroying it.

In an interview with Emmanuel Gyezaho titled “Party members of parliament demand changes in NRM”, Mary Karoro echoes men’s greed for power while commenting on the in-party fighting in the Uganda’s ruling party the National Resistance Movement (NRM). She insists that the struggles in the Movement party are a result of men’s ego. Karoro says, “Coupled with this succession battle is the issue of the inflated male-ego. They have huge egos... Of all the people who are supposed to be fighting have you heard that there is a woman? That is inflated male ego ...All these problems will be resolved but we must tackle that problem of the inflated male ego” (3). Here, Mary Karoro is supported by Margaret Muhanga (Kabarole woman member of parliament) in the same *Sunday Monitor* who insists that: “the problem in the Movement Party is the men fighting for power and prestige” (3). The two members of parliament see men as an egocentric and proud lot who deliberately refuse to use their hearts when it comes to attaining power. Interestingly, all the men are bundled together although only a few men could be behind the infighting. While it may be true that the infighting is caused by pride and big egos, and while it might also be true that some men are proud and have big egos, it might be less convincing to think that there are no women who are obsessed by female egos. The two members of parliament neither reflect exception of men who are not power hungry nor investigate beyond greed to explain why men fight for power for example there is need to recognize the social and cultural dynamics that have put power in the hands of men as a result of the patriarchal ideology embraced by most African societies. They do not even reflect any woman who is hungry for power. On the contrary, the two members of parliament do not comment on the perpetual presidency as a factor of greed for power. By attacking men who agitate for change and ignoring the president who leads for more than twenty years, the two members of parliament protect the president. In protecting the president, the two members of parliament endorse the same patriarchy. This could be a deliberate omission interpreted to mean that these two women members of parliament are just protecting their political positions and therefore stomachs. One may therefore be tempted to qualify them as greedy for power as the men they criticize since they selectively comment on men who fight for power and ignore the fact that they are also fighting for power.

Ugandan women writers have continued to seriously engage in analyzing the role of men in the leadership of their societies in order to show that men are not only power hungry but use this power to cause havoc. These writers contend that men wield a lot of political power, which has made them domineering in relating to women. In Goretti Kyomuhendo's *Secrets no More*, Marina's home is disintegrated as a result of men's misuse of power. Her mother is raped in a ghastly manner as the family watches, her father brutally killed in cold blood, Petite pierced through the stomach with the murderer's bayonet left stuck there, Pierre struck in the neck and a bullet is put through Mukundane's head (20-21). This horrendous mayhem haunts Marina all her life as she endlessly searches for security and peace in a country strange to her. This extrajudicial and senseless killing epitomizes all the killing masterminded by men as a result of the power they wield. The incident is meant to demonstrate men's misuse of the power entrusted to them. The men are largely portrayed as a personification of oppression in society. They are also seen as lethal weapons of violence and agents of destruction as a result of the power they wield; the reason many women writers portray them as perpetrators of suffering. Instead of using their power to serve their societies, men are shown using it to unleash havoc in society.

Mary Karoro continues to depict men in situations that are consistently negative and out of tune with the people's expectation. Educated or uneducated, all her male characters behave as if it is in their nature to misuse power. She does this to imply that men are so corrupted by power that they use this power to satisfy their sexual urge. This is the idea she suggests in *Child Of A Delegate* when the narrator tells the story of how honorable government officials sexually predate university girls. The narrator tells how one minister goes to the university to pick a friend's daughter and accidentally meets his own daughter. However, when the daughter expressed shock, "the minister pretended that he had not seen or heard her but she heard him murmur something like even old animals eat" (44). Mary Karoro emphasizes that ministers and permanent secretaries misuse their power to predate university girls, many times clashing with undergraduate boys. On the contrary, no woman government official is presented in situations that are negative. The author seems to presuppose that these officials are involved in all this moral degeneration

simply because they are men and wield power. She ridicules the essence of male political power that only serves to propagate moral decadence.

The author makes her point clear when she introduces the incident in which the lecturer coerces Hero. The author writes that towards the end of her course Hero is faced with a serious challenge. Her lecturer tries to lure her into sex insisting that he held the key to Hero's heaven and hell. The lecturer shamelessly adds, "To put it bluntly, unless you cooperate, you will not get a degree, first class or any other" (48). This is an outright display of abuse of power. Although such happenings may be common in some Ugandan universities, there could still be instances of moral decadence that involve women lecturers too but the author selectively shows only men as agents of moral decadence. The lecturer is as corrupted by power as the university registrar who uses his power to demand sex from Hero when she goes to request for accommodation in the university. The registrar too shamelessly tells Hero that if she responded positively to his application, the room would be hers for taking there and then (35). Shamelessly, the registrar gives her a room and demands that Hero pays in kind although she merits the room keeping in mind the fact that Hero is a needy student. There could be men who are morally upright and women who are morally corrupt but the author chooses to show only the men. It could be true that some men are truly womanizers but where are the women who are also sexually weak? The scales tilt towards the male characters yet immorality is not a men's condition but a human condition. This is where the author goes to excesses when she shows misuse of power as an entire preserve of men.

In *Child Of A Delegate*, Mary Karoro further emphasizes her point that men are corrupted by the power they wield when she shows the policemen no better than the rest of the people. The question to ask is whether policewomen are any better? Yet in any society, the police is in place to protect the people and their property, but Mary Karoro's policemen use their power wrongly to sexually molest women. Sex workers call the policemen their occupational hazard because instead of keeping law and order, they are agents of disorder and lawlessness. The policemen find the sex workers in action but only arrest the women and let the men free. The author shows more mockery of justice by men

when the same policemen refuse to be given the little money the sex workers have remained with “in spite of the fact that they had already taken what money they would lay their hands on in the women’s handbags”(9). The policemen claim that such would be bribing the law. Nevertheless the worst of the policemen is shown when these policemen stop the driver carrying them and the prostitutes. In the short moment that followed, sex workers traded their flesh for their freedom. The irony of it all lies in the fact that these shameless men are made to argue that this was not as immoral as bribery and prostitution but was just thanking the law! (10). “The law” in this sense meaning the policemen themselves. The author suggests that men are synonymous with power and law but unfortunately, corrupted by power. Men’s misuse of their political power is further echoed in Goretti Kyomuhendo’s *Secrets no More* where genocide is placed at the doorstep of men (15). Although Chantal is a key accomplice to the genocide, the author keeps her off the filth and shows men as the only people using their political power for wrong reasons. This unfair representation of male characters is intended to qualify men as agents of destruction since they misuse their power.

The above analyzed examples emphasize a major point; that although patriarchy has entrusted men with power, they have unfortunately misused it instead of constructively using it to promote harmonious gender relations. While it could be true that some men use their power negatively, it may be judgmental and stereotypical to assume that all men misuse their power and that all women use their power properly. In *Whispers From Vera*, Goretti Kyomuhendo tries to balance her character presentation when she portrays one of the women leaders misusing her power. She mistreats and disrespects her fellow women. Her behavior becomes a point of discussion by the women she heads. These women concur that “Women bosses are always trying to undermine their fellow women” (40). Isn’t this misuse of political power? Is this done because one is just a woman or it is an individual’s weakness? This case of misuse of political power by a woman as a result of big egos and pride helps us to dispel the stereotype that only men misuse power. Barungi could have done justice to her readers by bringing out more of those women that misuse power.

While it is true that some men misuse power, one may argue that there are instances of shifting positions that the women writes sometimes show that women are accomplices to their oppression and actively perpetuate patriarchal dominance. In Goretti Kyomuhendo's *The First Daughter*, Ngonzi is a clear accomplice of patriarchal dominance when she reprimands Kasemiire for having beaten her brother. Ngonzi in addition gets a cane and beat them severely and even more Kasemiire all the time saying "since when did women start beating men...?" (21). Also, in Mary Karoro's *The Invisible Weevil*, Nkwanzi's mother promotes patriarchal dominance. She rebukes her daughter for having eaten the goat's tongue. She seriously cautions her "never eat tongue. It's for the owner of the house. It's only eaten by boys and men: women and girls never eat it" (43). While answering why a girl should never eat it, she adds: "she becomes proud and thinks she should speak like a man. It's only a man's tongue that should speak loudest in a home, not a woman's. A woman speaks once and a man twice. A man is the head, a woman the shoulder and the two can never be the same level" (43). On the other hand, Nkwanzi's Senga becomes an accomplice of men's abuse of power when she insists that Nkwanzi's rape should not be known by other people saying it is a shame (205). It is clear that many times people act the way they do not because of their gender but because of their individual weaknesses. Sherry B. Ortner and Harriet Whitehead in their book *Sexual Meanings; The Cultural Construction of Gender and Sexuality* support the view that our failures and character traits have nothing to do with our gender when they observe that "Gender, sexuality and reproduction are treated as symbols invested with meaning by the society in question as all symbols are" (1). This observation clearly shows that there are no character behaviors inherent in any gender. What behaviors and attributes that are associated with any gender are simply societal constructions. This observation suggests that men do what they do not because they are men but because they are human beings. Women could as well behave as men do since they too are human beings. However, the fact that different sexes are socialized differently cannot be dismissed completely since some people's behavior could to some extent be as a result of their sex.

Violet Barungi in *Cassandra* further explores the theme of political power relations in order to show how men misuse their power. Through the Nairobi trip that Cassandra

declines to get involved in, Violet Barungi uses Wakilo to show that men use their power to exploit women sexually. Cassandra's friend Marie fears that Cassandra's inclusion on the list of the people going for the trip is Wakilo's tactic to trap her since he has of late been trying to make sexual advances to her. When Cassandra declines to give Wakilo a go a head in his advances, she is immediately replaced with Juliet who it was rumored was Wakilo's soft target (17). When Cassandra is later by passed in promotion following Ndiwalala's self exile, Marie suspects that "Cassandra might not have been promoted simply because she had spurned Mr. Wakilo's sexual advance" (182). By presenting this scenario, the author insinuates that men are corrupted by power to sexually molest women. Even the man who becomes general manager after the death of Wakilo is not spared. It is rumored that Mr. Mulindwa "seemed to have come with the sole purpose of lining his pockets regardless of whether the company went bankrupt" (237). By quickly labeling the new managing director as a corrupt man without giving him ample time to prove so or not, the author seems to be advancing quickly to make a final statement on masculinity; that men use their power irresponsibly. They demand sex from their juniors and by pass some women in promotion simply because such women have resisted their sexual advance, and worse still, misuse public funds. This is meant to justify the thinking that men are: corrupted by power, opportunistic, proud and egocentric. While these events and claims about men could be plausible in the context they are presented, it is worth noting that the author almost makes all the men devils. The absence of at least a sane male leader exposes the exaggeration in male character presentation.

2.3 Economic Power Relations; Money as Men's Tool of Oppression

Through the economic power struggles investigated in many works of Ugandan women writers, a lot more can be seen about masculine stereotyping. Some writers try to rationalize that men mistreat women because these men are economically more powerful than women. For example, In Violet Barungi's *Cassandra*, Cassandra considered that Horace Kalanzi was "a beast" because he used his financial status to mistreat his girlfriend Mellinda. Horace is believed to belong to the school of thought that thinks that if you can have one girl you can have them all as long as you can manage them (19). As a result of this, "Mellinda was getting more and more disillusioned with him but he had a

very persuasive tongue and the money he spent lavishly on her aided his cause” (19). Barungi implies that Horace mistreats Mellinda because he is a rich man who is able to use his money to pacify her whenever he cheats on her. This assertion could be right in this context putting in mind the Marxist feminists’ observation that societies have economically favored men over women leaving most of them dependant on men. Although it is true that money empowers an individual, it is important to also consider the individuality of some of these characters which could be working together with the economic factor to make the overall impact on a person. Cassandra finds it strange that Mellinda continues to be loving, loyal and faithful to a man that cheats on her. On the contrary, her friend Marie belongs to a different school of thought. She advises Cassandra that men and women are allies so “we cook for them and bear their children, and boost their egos and they pamper us up by spending on us” (13). Through Marie, it is suggested that men are supposed to be the family breadwinners. Marie’s view is true as it is based on the patriarchal structure that puts men at the helm of everything in the family. It is true that as a result of the patriarchal dominance in many societies, especially in Africa and Uganda in particular, men have had advantage to go to schools, buy and own property and as AnneWangusa Ayeta and Violet Barungi observe in *Téars of Hope*, “most girls are not considered part of the clan and when family property is divided, they are naturally left out” (3). It is true that as a result of patriarchal dominance, women are left to totally depend on the men. This economic dependence has left most women at the mercy of men but it would be an assumption to think that all men use their economic power to oppress women though the fact that some men use their economic power to oppress women cannot be dismissed. For example Cain looks down upon Hero because he comes from a well to do family. Also, the fact that individual character plays some role in behavior formation is another option that calls for attention. There is need to recognize that men’s oppression of women sometimes arises as a result of the complex human relations rooted in socio-historical factors.

As already analyzed, oppression of our fellow human beings is a human condition sometimes geared by financial power. It would therefore be a generalization to think that all men that are economically powerful stereotype and oppress women as much as it

would be a generalization to think that economically empowered people do not use their position to oppress their fellow human beings. There is need to acknowledge the exceptions. In Mary Karooro's *Child Of A Delegate*, the author blames men for using their financial power to harass women and lure them into sex. Some men take Sewa for group sex and she does not refuse. It is in her power to choose whether to give in or not because she is not forced into sex. It is not worth risking her life well aware of the AIDS scourge. Although Sewa is poor and has many financial constrains, prostitution does not remain her only alternative. Sewa is not seen trying for example working as a house girl. She does not consider going to the village to dig. She looks at town life as the only option before her. It could be possible that Sewa just wants to live in town and get good life. For Mary Karooro to say that Sewa "knew they were going for group sex, something that many of their lot detested but what could they do?"(7) is only to expose her unreserved sympathy for Sewa and all the Sewas of this world in order to show women as victims of circumstances. Sewa is presented as pitiable and the men that take her for group sex as villains. What the author seems to intentionally ignore is the fact that it takes two to 'tango'. Both men and women share equal blame in the prostitution plague in the same way that they have the same role to play in stopping it for example if the Sewas of this world accepted to earn a living for example by doing manual work, they would survive and they would have no need of selling their bodies.

The author continues to portray her negative attitude about men through the male delegates that come for the conference on the rights of children. These male delegates are shown as sexual maniacs as they are shown buying sex. The writer's camera seems to focus on the male delegates and nothing is said about the female delegates. By ignoring to present the other side of the coin and completely leaving the women delegates out of her focus, the author overemphasizes men's flaw since in spite of these women being delegates, they remain human. Although it is clear that in the context of a society in which social forces still have an impact on women, such dignified women may not come out boldly to look for men for sex; one would expect them to show other human flaws. Such character portrayal may not have much to teach the men folk since it seems to selectively go over the bar to present the excesses of men's weaknesses. By demonizing

the men, the struggle for gender equality and proper representation of female images may be jeopardized. On the other hand, this unrealistic character portrayal gives women a false view of themselves and life in general since they are almost presented saintly. The author emphasizes the view that money makes men senseless. Their financial status dictates what they do and this is why after the conference, “as night wore on, some of the males moved to discrete corners and whispered to the bell boys: Where can I get a woman to give me a massage?”(4). This incident looks contrived to suit the author’s purpose of presenting male villains and virtuous females. Female delegates are given the heart to appreciate the problem of street children and have sympathy for them but their male counterpart only wards one of the street children off his car and rudely tells him to go and look for his parents (3). Also, a female delegate comments that the society is responsible for the creation of street children (3-4). By commenting like that, she shows understanding and sympathy for the street children. None of the female delegates goes for a drinking spree though they too are financially well off. They seem to be financially disciplined which could be possible but the fact that none of the male delegates is financially disciplined reduces the credibility of the author’s character presentation. While it be true for some delegated to go for cheap and unsophisticated street women, the fact that none of them goes for sophisticated and decent women defeats logic. It seems intentionally created to show how money can make men base and crazy for sex. Why some of these men do not go for their fellow delegates is not established. This is meant to confirm that money makes men mad since these delegates can stoop so low to go for the poor street women. Mary Karoro’s presentation of the male delegates inevitably raises as many masculine stereotypes as the feminine stereotypes it tries to condemn. Later in *Child Of A Delegate*, it is in the same spirit that we see rich government officials flocking the university for young girls (44). These men are not only supported by the fact that they have power but also the fact that they are financially well off.

By portraying important men involved in such moral decadence, the author wants to show that a man remains corrupt and rotten regardless of his financial and educational status. This is why Mary Karoro is quick to show “how big men, respectable men, men of all categories change as the world becomes dark and start sowing indiscriminately.

some of their seed falling on fertile soil later to sprout into wilting street children” (17). The author holds men responsible for littering the streets with street children. On the contrary, both men and women should be blamed for it is the women who accept the money and end up producing the street children. Although these women find themselves in difficult situation of poverty, this cannot be taken as license for them to sell their bodies for money. They do not try other options. The fact that they are poor does not make prostitution lighter and acceptable. Such women could do small business for survival but most of them seem to be attracted by the quickly got money. They do not even try to solve their problem by pulling their already earned money to start a safe business however small it may be. Men should not be blamed alone then. The author’s efforts in trying to categorize men and finally show them, as a bunch of senseless individuals is understandable. It is an effort aimed at touching men from all walks of life in order to emphasize men’s immorality. This is why Mary Karooro uses one of the men to tell her readers that immorality was the disease of all men (49) in order to show how men use money as a tool of oppressing women.

The idea of looking at money as men’s weapon of oppressing women is even treated from its opposite angle to further show that when men have no money to empower them, they are still oppressive to women. While Mary Karooro emphasizes men’s abuse of their economic power, Goretti Kyomuhendo suggests that men are still oppressive to women when they are poor. There are behaviors she believes are characteristic of men as a result of poverty. In her novel *Whispers From Vera*, Goretti Kyomuhendo shows how Jacinta’s husband begins to fear simply because his wife has got a small job as a cleaner. He thinks that his wife will no longer respect him now that she will be economically powerful. He also fears that he will lose grip on the family members since he will no longer be the prime breadwinner of the family. Therefore, instead of being supportive to his wife, Jacinta’s husband ridiculously insists that his wife should not take on the job (21). Such images of men who fear economic empowerment of their wives are not uncommon for example as already seen; Eric does not like the fact that his wife owns an old car and a house. While there are could be men who become insecure as a result of the economic empowerment of their wives, Jacinta’s husband’s case appears blown out of proportion

since his wife is just a mere cleaner/ receptionist who earns only what they spend before she gets another wage. Even when he begins to complain that his wife no longer fulfils her marital duties ever since she got the job, the situation looks exaggerated. The author stereotypes men as fearful of women who are rich. For men to think that women who are rich are a problem emphasizes their inability to look at women as their fellow human beings and allies that can bail them out in case of financial problems. Although it could be argued that Jacinta's husband could be taken to represent a type, still the situation is not made better. What readers learn about him may corrupt some to think that it is normal behavior which they too could emulate. As Kelly Griffith observes, although "works of literature are "fictional" they have the capacity of being "true"...Literature can be faithful to the facts of reality...it interprets the real world even when it distorts, ignores or alters facts" (37).This observation shows the power of literature in affecting or influencing those who read it so the representation of Jacinta's husband's character whether real or not, could have an impact on readers.

2.4 Conclusion

The chapter analyzed the images the Uganda women writers give to their male characters. These writers contend that men have been favored by the patriarchal system which has given them excessive social power. The writers argue that as a result of this social empowerment, men have consequently become economically and politically powerful. The writers argue that as a result of men's unlimited power, men have dominated and oppressed women. So the women writers try to deconstruct male characters and create powerful female characters in their fiction in the processes of telling the story of the woman from her own perspective. However, such an approach may exacerbate the already bad situation. Instead of alleviating the feminine gender stereotyping problem such literature may rouse men to counteract masculine stereotyping with more feminine stereotyping.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Introduction

Stereotypes are social construct. As discussed before, men have constructed women images to keep women in a position of subordinates. In the same spirit, women have in their Literature constructed male images. In this chapter, I examined how Ugandan women writers have stereotyped men through the construction of male characters and the images associated with the male characters. Male characters are represented as: failures in family responsibilities, powerful but foolish before strong women, naïve and simple minded, sexually weak, brutal, chauvinistic, cruel, domineering, angry and fearful of women's liberty.

3.1 Male Images; Construction of Male Characters

The analysis of some of the Ugandan women writers' novels reveals that most female and male images have been constructed by society basing on who has the pen. Some writers argue that men have been the leaders and rulers and have consequently used their position to construct images and roles for both men and women using works of literature. This observation is supported by Gloria Chukukere who explains that the woman's limited opportunity in writing "has been shown to originate from history. Only a small percentage of women has acquired university education which is a great advantage for creative writing in European languages. As a result, African Literature and African literary criticism have largely become a male oriented and male controlled cult" (9). Abasi Kiyimba further explains that as a result of the above scenario, "the list of Uganda writer's has been dominated by men...women rarely feature as significant characters in men's writing...women are assigned peripheral roles " (2). While this may be true, it would not be fruitful to deconstruct men in the process of creating significant women characters. Abasi Kiyimba is supported by Gloria Chukukere who argues that "the ideal female created by male writers in fiction often acts within the framework of her traditional roles as wife and mother" (7). Much of what has been written has largely been influenced by social power struggles in society. In these power struggles, men have been seen taking an upper hand because society upholds the patriarchal system. They have used their dominance to construct female

characters though in the long run they have distorted the image of the woman. As a result of this misrepresentation, the birth of FEMRITE, growing number of educated women and the peace prevailing in Uganda among other reasons, have prompted Uganda women writers to write.

As a result of the mistreatment and oppression men have meted on women, there are many images that women associate with men. In the process of reconstructing the image of the woman, the Ugandan women writers have distorted some masculine images. According to Abasi Kiyimba, Ugandan women writers try to straighten the record in the face of the previous writing by men that had distorted the image of a woman and created a society dominated by males (32). As some Ugandan women writers try to question the concept of patriarchal dominance and attack established injustices and stereotypes about women, they unfortunately trek the same road as men and end up stereotyping men through the distorted images the writers give to male characters. Some Ugandan women writers deconstruct the normal images of men in the processes of constructing images of women in works of literature. This is what Beverley Nambozo Sengiyunva in her article “Women Re-writing Uganda” implies while commenting on the birth of FEMRITE. She explains that right from the founding of FEMRITE, Mary Karoro the founder “was determined to see that any gender stereotypes, by which women writers were disadvantaged should be obliterated from Uganda’s literary landscape” (African-writing). So in the process of erasing what men have written about women, women writers have stereotyped and distorted images of men characters.

Sylvia Tamale’s metaphorical book title *When Hens Begin to Crow* (1999) reveals a lot about the expectations of Ugandan women writers. The author opens her book with the following comment: “Female chickens normally do not crow. At least popular mythology claims they cannot. Hence in many cultures a crowing hen is considered an omen of bad tidings that must be expiated through the immediate slaughter of the offending bird” (qtd.in Kiyimba 2). The subject of Tamale’s book points to gender and parliamentary politics in Uganda and reviews the impact made on Ugandan politics by women who had the courage to step where only men initially stepped. If applied to the literary scene, the title implies that women can now also write although it used to be the preserve of men

since society has done away with some of the past hindrances to women in their struggle for equality. However, the hens do not have to crow in order for their power to be recognized. Power does not lie in crowing. What about laying eggs! The biological significance of the crowing of the cocks does not necessarily point to the idea of being powerful but rather to the fact that the cocks are biologically and naturally endowed with the faculty to crow as much as the hens are endowed with the faculty to lay eggs. While Sylvia Tamale has a point regarding the roles men and women share, her analogy appears unnatural for the hens are not supposed to crow! I think the title instead warns that this may not necessarily mean complete exchange of roles. The truth of this unsaid but inherent meaning of the metaphor used in the book title can be traced in the Luganda proverb from which the title most likely originates which runs: “Enseera ne bwe’yiga okukokolima, esigala nga y’erina okubiika amagi n’nokugaalula” (qtd. in Kiyimba 32) translated to mean “Even when the hen learns to crow, it still has to lay eggs and to hatch them” (qtd. in Kiyimba 32). Although there could be need to do away with some patriarchal images in order to alleviate the distortion of women images and oppression of women, it would be wrong to disregard the positive tenets of patriarchy. To do away with all the values of patriarchy would be unrealistic and uncalled for. The values that do not oppress and misrepresent men and women should at least stay and be upheld as the proverb teaches. The best way of addressing the gender disparities as the Marxist feminist contend, would be the revision of the capitalistic system which is believed to be responsible for the survival of patriarchy. To only do away with some patriarchal values deemed oppressive to women would only be treating the symptoms and not the disease!

Tamale’s metaphorical title becomes relevant to this literary situation in the sense that the exchange of roles between the hen and the cock does not mean women doing all that men do or vice versa. It rather points to the fact that there are roles that men and women can play equally well and sometimes even with women doing them better. However, men will still remain men and women will remain women. The title calls for revision of unfair cultural beliefs that disadvantage women in society. In *The First Daughter* for example, Goretti Kyomuhendo depicts Kyamanywa as a failure. As a result of his failure, his role as a family head in charge of its welfare is assumed by Kasemiire. She looks after her

mother and siblings and generally becomes the new family head. She ably sustains the family like Kyamanywa would. By economically empowering Kasemiire, the author is in line with the Marxist feminist belief that “all historical and social developments are determined by forms of economic production” (qtd. in Guerin L. Wilfred et al 202). Kasemiire must first be economically empowered in order to be a capable head of her family. With her economic power, the author also intends to empower her socially in order to comfortably stand in the shoes of Kyamanywa. While it is realistic that some men deteriorate and their children fill their places as in the Kyamanywa-Kasemiire case, the argument here is not about Kasemiire’s new role but Kyamanywa’s state of irresponsibility and neglect of his family for no good reason. What good reason is there to make him so desperate and hostile to almost everybody? True, Kasemiire has disappointed him and shattered his dreams by getting pregnant while in school after spending so much money on her but this is not the end of his life. He has lived before Kasemiire was there! Kyamanywa abruptly becomes irresponsible and useless to his family simply because his daughter has become pregnant. One even wonders why a young woman would choose to elope with the penniless old Kyamanywa. Surprisingly, Kyamanywa accepts his worthlessness and we do not see him complaining when he loses his power to his daughter and is rendered a mere figurehead. The once purposeful and powerful Kyamanywa starts to live in his own shadow. While Kyamanywa’s new state is possible, as Abasi Kiyimba observes, “this kind of development is completely out of step with the facts of the story as given to us earlier in the novel. It would therefore seem like Kyomuhendo is now witch-hunting Kyamanywa, seeking to make him a bigger devil than he already is” (18-19). This argument points to fact that Kyamanywa seems to be deconstructed in order to make Kasemiire shine.

Some Uganda women writers contend that men still rule the roost since according to them, women are still stereotyped. They further argue that it is men that hold the key to knowledge in society today and according to them, power naturally follows knowledge. In order to correct the distorted image of women, many Ugandan women writers started writing to tell the story of the women from the women’s own point of view. In so doing, some of these writers present men characters that are riddled with excessive weaknesses

plus new and positive images of women in order to make the women characters shine. In Violet Barungi's *Cassandra* for example, the author's image of Wakilo, the managing director of Lotus International (LI) is a demonstration of deliberate deconstruction of male images in order to suit the author's attitudes and beliefs about masculinity. Wakilo is largely shown as a man with no moral fiber since he sexually exploits almost all the girls that work under him. This is meant to suggest that men are immoral. Violet Barungi's physical description of Wakilo matches his moral decadence. Through *Cassandra*, Violet Barungi describes Wakilo as "...a massive man, with a build reminiscent of the fairy tale gorilla" (10). The author stereotypes men as ugly and sometimes dirty. Although *Cassandra* adds that his kindly face and soft voice compensated for his unprepossessing appearance, even the complement seems not well intentioned. It is carefully used to emphasize why women are attracted to him so that they may not appear foolish for getting attracted to such a morally corrupted ugly man.

The images of ugly and shabby men continue to appear in *Cassandra* when Bevis visits his friend Dr. Mugodi after the bizarre sexual relationship with Cassandra. Dr. Mugodi's wife had walked out of their stormy marriage leaving Dr. Mugodi alone. Barungi shows the effect of the woman's absence when she writes that Dr. Mugodi's room was "shabby but masculinely comfortable. It was hard to believe that the same room had once glittered and sparkled under the expert management of James' ex-wife, Helen" (106-107). It is a reality that the presence of a woman motivates a man and contributes to the neatness of a home but when the author says the shabby room was masculinely comfortable it sounds as if men enjoy shabbiness. By making such a comment, the author seems to intend to associate men with shabbiness and ugliness. Mary Karoro emphasizes this stereotype through the construction of Goora's husband in *The Invisible Weevil*. While it is plausible for a person to be ugly, Goora's husband's ugliness, uncouth behavior and manners are exaggerated beyond a human perspective. He is vividly described through Goora's letter to her friend Nkwazi as: "a short stump of a man, with mean, cruel eyes...he had rolled up his torn trousers and the calf of his leg stood out like the head of a hammer. The flesh of his buttocks peeped out of two gaping holes in his trousers" (88). As if this is not enough character distortion, the author adds "His whole body seemed to be a granary of

dust...his nails were torn and had obviously not been cut for a long time , may be his teeth doubled as a razor blade...his teeth were coated with the millet of yester-years” (88). Whether one would argue that these are words of a young ambitious girl who has dropped out of school and is not happy about her forced marriage to an old man she did not like, there could be reason to suspect some authorial intrusion. The reader will also agree that in some cases, characters act as the author’s mouth piece. It does not sound plausible that this man who wields a lot authority and has so many women can walk in torn trousers with uncut nails. He may be poor but still he can afford to buy a razor blade and a roll of thread for cutting nails and sewing his trouser respectively putting in mind that he already has ‘free labor’.

These writers try to portray masculine incongruity and create their own world, a world of gender changed roles and images. This is summed up in Gorette Kyomuhendo’s words when she admits “I write because I am dissatisfied with the world I live in. I want to create another” (Kyomuhendo). Indeed as Gorette Kyomuhendo states, many of the Ugandan women writers focus on creation of a new world.

3.2 Creation of Male Villains and Female Victims

In the process of creating a new world as seen above, some Uganda women writers have had to project new pictures of the two genders with men projected as villains and women as victims. This is the scenario that Chris Dolan questions when he says “What makes us portray women as perpetual victims and men only as perpetrators? Who, if anybody, benefits from rendering male victims invisible?” (35). As Chris Dolan rhetorically points out, nobody really benefits from hiding the truth about the silently on going masculine stereotyping and oppression of male characters.

An analysis of Mary Karoro’s works shows that the image of brutal men is a key

subject. Male characters are portrayed as villains while her female characters are largely presented as victims. By doing this, the author fails to broaden the focus from gender stereotyping as a women's issue to an inclusive paradigm, which considers how gender stereotyping is used to harm both men and women in society. In Mary Karooro's *Child Of A Delegate*, Sewa is used to paint women as victims and men as villains. On many encounters with men, Sewa's role in prostitution is swept under the carpet in order to paint men as villains. Sewa's encounter with the delegate is described with vividness to show the reader how vulnerable she is. When the delegate proposed unprotected sex, the writer tells us of how so many things ran through her mind with AIDS on top of her list. She wondered why the delegate was not scared and almost concluded that he must have been infected already. Sewa's decision to accept live sex although she has the choice to insist on protected sex makes her appear so much of a victim and ignorant of the AIDS scourge. Although the situation in which Sewa lives is hard since she is poor, no amount of money and no weight of problems should convincingly justify the risking of her life. The author exonerates her when she shows Sewa as beleaguered by so many responsibilities and problems. The landlord has threatened eviction if she did not pay the following morning, there are many orphans whose school fees she must pay and worse still, there was the deadly AIDS. The reader is made to see Sewa as a victim since she is faced with many challenges. Her male counterparts are simply shown as driven by sexual addiction.

Even when Sewa is taken by another man who offers to pay her a lot of money and pays half in advance, the problem of rent is brought back again in order to mitigate Sewa's role in prostitution. In order to paint an image of a real villain, the author says that "the man had two male organs side by side and both had erected" (6). That Sewa threatened her client saying sex workers walk in pairs and have hidden cameras in order to get the remaining money and escape without having sex with this man looks too contrived to suit the novel's plot. It does not look probable that Sewa manages to threaten the man and escape having sex with him but takes her full pay. The reader continues to see more images of male villains through Sewa when two men also paid her some advance money for sex and drove with her towards Muyenga. Sewa narrowly survives being sacrificed

because she was not a virgin. At the climax of her trials, white men subjected her to sex with their dog. Though this ghastly experience is heart rending, the *Bazungu* clapped with ecstasy shouting with excitement “Ride on, ride on Bull” (8) as she screamed. Her horrors are not yet over until these villains brand her with a red-hot metal. Even the policemen that should be on the side of the helpless people are shown exploiting these prostitutes to make the already bad situation worse and show that these women have no one to turn to in order to make these prostitutes more pitiable. The author strongly blames men for prostitution and the rising number of street children.

Most of Mary Karoro’s male characters are presented as irredeemable villains. For example, Cain is an allusion to the Biblical Cain who kills his brother Abel. Cain assures Hero of his love and easily betrays her when he learns that she is a street child. Although the betrayal takes place at the time the two are about to be married officially, Hero is not devastated. She is hurt, but the ‘hero’ that her name suggests keeps her strong and focused. The villain in Cain is clear at the moment of Hero’s revelation of the truth. His “face was a contorted mask of mixed emotions and Hero’s was calm although one wrinkle of worry had formed” (110). As Cain wondered about Hero’s street child background, he grimaced and his nose wrinkled in disgust. He showed impatience and hatred for Hero. His behavior finally completes the image of the biblical Cain when he shatters Hero’s hopes and trust. He has metaphorically slain Hero who had built her trust in him. His behavior brings to truth the aunts’ advice to girls preparing to get married. The old women seriously warn girls about their future husbands and counsel them about men to “never open your heart and all its secrets to him never trust a man. Never cushion all your secrets in him or think he will remain faithful” (109). The above observation makes the author’s statement loud and clear. According to her, men are unfaithful villains that deserve no woman’s trust. The author bundles the men together and shows no exceptions of faithful men and unfaithful women. The reader will recall when Hero like the other university girls accepted money from a man who wanted to have sex with her. She understands the man’s intention of giving her the money, but she goes ahead to receive it. Instead of reciprocating, Hero dodges the man and she is happy that the man goes to the toilet in the processes of tracing her room (45). Instead of looking at Hero as

unfaithful, the author down plays this incident. She presents Hero as a “Hero” and the fooled man as a villain who deserved the mistreatment. The author disregards the fact that Hero should have kept a clean record by avoiding the man’s money since it was in her power to do so. One may argue that a host of situations make Hero vulnerable, that she is for example poor, orphaned and young. It is true that she is poor and orphaned but she has been surviving in her poverty and orphan state and she has fortunately accepted herself as she is which is partly the reason she merits to be called Hero. Even at the university, Hero is no longer naive though not very old. This is why she is able to resist the peer pressure from her fellow university students and resorts to dressing in a simple way because that is what she can afford. To try and exonerate her is only being lop-sided. She is as guilty as the man who gives her the money.

The image of villain men and women victims is further extended in Mary Karooro’s *The Invisible Weevil* where Goora’s father is represented as the personification of brutality and masculine insensitivity. He rules his family with an iron hand. He beats Goora severely when she becomes pregnant. He insists that he has wasted a lot of money on her. True he had used much of his hard- earned money on the girl and feels betrayed but his brutality and villainy goes to extremes when he beats Goora’s mother and withdraws all Goora’s sisters from school. This representation of Goora’s father is intended to show men’s excessive brutality. Also, Goora is forced to marry a beastly man who does not love her. The behavior of this man confirms the writer’s belief that men are villains. In demonstration of male chauvinism, this man forces Goora into sex in a room that accommodates his thirty children and four wives (89-90). Incredibly, the man is not bothered by the presence of his children and goes ahead to have sex with Goora. The context in which the story of Goora’s forced marriage is placed waters down the credibility of the bizarre sex between Goora and her husband in the presence of the children and the man’s other wives. It could be argued that in this African society that still upholds and respects polygamy and the authority of the family head, sex is still treated with so much sanctity that children need never know that their parents play sex. In spite of Goora’s young age, she is even able to realise the weirdness of what her husband is leading her to. To imagine that this old man does not know the secrecy, with which sex

is treated in Africa, is to make a very big assumption. But weird as the incident appears, the author uses it to emphasize the point that men are villains and women are victims.

More masculine brutality and villainy is portrayed in *The Invisible Weevil* through Matayo who pretends to be a born again Christian but rapes Nkwanzi while she is still a baby. Her woes are not about to end and when Nkwanzi is a mature girl; she meets Rex who tries to force her into sex. Although she ignores his sexual advances, the same man finally rapes her on her wedding eve. This shatters her dream to “redden her traditional white sheets and honor her parents as according to custom” (Kiyimba 6). The dexterity with which the author weaves the plot in which Nkwanzi and Rex keep crossing each other’s path is a mark of artistic prowess. The motives for which these foes meet several times is the writer’s design to finally qualify the likes of Rex as pure villains. In this novel, although the invisible weevil on the surface seems to refer to AIDS, the deeper meaning points to sexual harassment and rape as a demonstration of patriarchal power. The whole patriarchal system is portrayed as a real weevil as it tries to destroy femininity. Although Mary Karoro does not glorify her female characters; her male characters are many times represented negatively. It is as a result of such character construction in *The Invisible Weevil* that Abasi Kiyimba concludes that in this novel, “There is no female villain. The female is either a victim of the system... or a passive accomplice of the system ... or a fighter... or in transition like Nkwanzi herself” (9). By selectively representing women characters as victims of circumstances, the author fails to present a fair picture of life. This unrealistic picture of women characters gives women readers a false picture of themselves as it does to men. Such demonizing works may neither help men to change their attitudes towards women nor end distortion of women’s image in literary works by men.

Masculine stereotyping continues to be reflected through the images of masculine brutality portrayed in a number of works by some of the Ugandan women writers. In Violet Barungi’s *Cassandra*, the eponymous character Cassandra is used to expose the weaknesses of many male characters. The protagonist’s name has a lot of meaning. She is empowered to live an almost independent life. As her name suggests, she is not supposed

to be an ordinary person. The name Cassandra can be traced far back in Greek mythology. The legendary Cassandra is a daughter of Hecuba and Priam, the king of Troy. Apollo gave Cassandra the power of prophecy. It is told how this god wanted to sexually satisfy his desires but Cassandra refuses to have sex with him. Apollo is disappointed by her refusal to let him have sex with her. As a result, the god proclaimed that, although Cassandra would retain the gift of prophecy, no one would ever believe her. The same god that made her destroys her. The story of the Greek Cassandra becomes a vivid allegory of Barungi's Cassandra. Although Cassandra is a woman made of metal and is a radical feminist with a heart of flesh, she is brought down by the amorous moves of men. She fails to live like the legendary Greek Cassandra who resisted the sex advances of Apollo. First Raymond uses her and then Bevis Agutamba comes into her life in the sleep walk incident in which she is made pregnant. Cassandra eventually becomes a source of conflict between the two brothers who fight for her love. Although she finally settles down with Bevis, her ambition of leading a life free of men is shattered and she must depend on a man. She is finally used to prove right the author's opinion and belief that "Men were the reason why the majority of the women were still lagging behind in social, economic and political development. Once you let a man into your life, it was goodbye to ambitions of meaningful existence" (3). Like the legendary Cassandra, her fall is as a result of male villains who involve her in love affairs.

Through Cassandra, Violet Barungi emphasizes the image of brutal and villainous men who are the architects of the suffering of women. Raymond and Wakilo are considered as architects of women's oppression, destruction and deconstruction according to the author. Although the author suggests that Cassandra is brought down by men, on the contrary she is the architect of her own destiny and therefore her own enemy. She in the first instance encourages Raymond to love and make sex to her when she insists on going with him to his home and later asks him "will you please take me and love me before I disintegrate?"(34). She is not even bothered by Raymond's revelation that he was married (31). She almost falls prey to George whom she decides to use as a human shield to protect her from the advances of men at Lotus International and even insists on penetrating his privacy at home (29). Through Cassandra's experience with men, it is

evident that feminine liberation does not mean rejection of men and repudiation of a woman's role in society and family.

Kyamanywa's mistreatment of Kasemiire and his wives is another example of masculine brutality shown. Kyamanywa believed that a man should have as many women as he wanted as long as he could manage them. He produced many children but he "believed that loving and showing any sign of tenderness for them was a sign of weakness (6). He provided his family with all the necessities because he believed it was a man's duty to provide for his family but in return, he "expected total obedience and his word was always final" (6). It is told how Kyamanywa once beat his second wife thoroughly for disobeying him and visiting her parents when he had restrained her from going. When the woman cried out for mercy, Kyamanywa "led her to the bed and ordered her to spread her legs wide apart, then spent a full month without visiting her" (7). It is not surprising that Kyamanywa beats his wife severely for her disobedience because right from the beginning of the story, Kyamanywa is represented as a male chauvinist. He for example believed that "women were put on this earth solely for men's pleasure and therefore he held a low opinion of them" (6). The socio-historical context in which the story of *The First Daughter* is placed gives credence to the fact that Kyamanywa was a chauvinist. As a man whose word was final, to say that he was brutal is to confirm that he was a product of patriarchy which gave men excess power over women. Nevertheless, Kyamanywa's brutality is blown out of proportion when the author insinuates that Kyamanywa took his wife to the bed and played so much sex with her that he believed it would take her for a month probably out of the fear that she could have gone to see other men. This assertion is out of tune with the facts of the story for Kyamanywa beats his wife out uncontrolled anger. It would therefore not be plausible to say that in the heat of anger Kyamanywa goes ahead and makes sex to his wife! He has emotions of anger and these really can not all of a sudden turn into emotions of pleasure and sex. Playing sex is not like injecting a person for ones sensual feelings must be aroused first and this can't be instant. He has got to first get in mood for sex but the writer does not show such progress. It is clear that Kyamanywa's brutality is exaggerated in order to associate him with brutality.

But as for Kasemiire, it might be wrong to look at Kyamanywa's reaction as a case of men's brutality. Kyamanywa risks being isolated by his fellow men and takes Kasemiire to school. But she betrays him by getting pregnant while in school. His reaction is realistic. It is the reaction of any disappointed parent because by getting pregnant, Kasemiire has not only wasted her father's money but has also ashamed herself and her entire family. Many of the Ugandan female writers that have dealt with the problem of men's brutality consider that the concept of male superiority that is deeply entrenched in the patriarchal system is the source of men's brutality. They also observe that women are vulnerable because society has relegated them to the position of second-class citizens. The common opinion in many of these works seems to point to the fact that men are villains as a result of the excessive power entrusted to them by the system of patriarchy. Although patriarchy empowers men, there is need to observe that not all men misuse their power. Sometimes, it is a case of individual character that one becomes brutal. There is need to also regard men and women in their individuality. Although Martin Banham et al in their book *African Theatre: Women* observe that "men are the gender that is more known for its violent and aggressive nature than women" (21), this may not be taken to mean that all men are violent and no woman is violent. At least the writers consider men "more violent and aggressive" which means women too share these qualities.

3.3 Male Losers and Female Winners

A number of works of literature by men has projected women as inferior and losers. On the other hand, men have been presented as superior, strong and winners.

Some Ugandan women writers contend that men are enigmatic and that their mystery arises from the favors society gives them. Many of these writers strip men of what they think contributes to their mysterious character in order to make them losers and show women as victors. In *Child of A Delegate* for example, Hero is a symbol of feminine victory and most of the men she encounters symbolize masculine failure. The delegate is introduced as a man of airs with a very high regard for himself. When the street children tried to come to him, "he shouted with unconcealed venom" (3). He even insists that the bastards should go and look for their parents and went ahead to spray his car to fight the stench of the beggar boy. His fall comes so quickly when the same man that night goes

for a prostitute and “after two minutes of intense mating, the delegate disgustedly threw 500 dollars at her and ordered her out of the limo” (6). This delegate becomes a shadow of his old self so quickly. He perpetuates the filth that he at first sneered at and becomes part of this filth himself when he fathers a street child. He is an example of those men who have power but use it stupidly to shoot their own feet. However, before he dies the delegate recognizes Hero as his child and decides to help her. He acknowledges his degeneration, accepts his fault and confesses. This redeems him and he dies an invincible man and in this sense he is a winner.

Sewa’s triumph over the man who had two male organs is contrived, but the author makes her point. Sewa is a victor and these male ‘beasts’ are the losers (6). Sewa’s fighter spirit and victory is extended to her daughter Hero. As the name suggests, Hero is a real man in a woman. Her several encounters with men demonstrate feminine victory. She is used to undoing greedy men. Through her, Mary Karooro shows no qualms for the university registrar and Hero’s lecturer. For while both think they have power to get whatever they want, they are knocked down speechless when Hero wittily beats them. She tells off the registrar whom she threatens to expose if he should try to evict her from the university hall or to blackmail her. At the end of the day, the registrar is left speechless and helpless and is presented as a total loser. He loses both his target and face because Hero cunningly challenges him. In the end, Hero has the room at no cost and she is the hero of the day (37). Even the lecturer who threatens Hero to co-operate if she wanted a first class or any degree at all is defeated when Hero threatens him that she walks with a tape recorder (49). The lecturer ridiculously believes Hero’s simple threat and his so-called power is completely annihilated. Hero successfully gets her degree and escapes the lecturer’s amorous moves. She deals a final blow to the proud men when she tells Cain about her street life background. Cain decides to have nothing to do with her but Hero is not shattered as Cain expects her to be. He is more devastated than Hero herself. At the end of the novel, Hero declares Cain a street child and we last see him taking no specific decision and direction. But Hero has no regrets and is determined to join her group. She victoriously declares, “Water can never forget its origin” (111). Hero is hurt but her spirit is not bruised at all. She is able to walk away and she joins her fellow

street children to live a focused life. Her victory lies in the fact that she is able to tell Cain the truth about her life. When Cain rejects her, she is welcomed by her tribe, has a house for them and will be able to send her fellow street children to school. The Cain-Hero relationship is an allusion to the Biblical Cain- Abel relationship. Like the Biblical Abel, Hero's innocence instead of saving her is used to reject her. Cain becomes a loser by refusing truth and innocence. By going against his inviolate vows that his marriage and Hero would be a success story (107), Cain loses both his self and Hero.

The images of male losers and female winners common in, *The Invisible Weevil* continue to show masculine stereotyping. Nkwanzu the protagonist beats all odds and offers law at the university against the advice of her career teacher (90). She becomes a successful graduate of law ready to shake off all shackles that hinder all women from advancing in life. She works with Mama to usher in a new regime. They contest authority not to superficially have it but to restructure it and bestow it into institutions that are accessible to both men and women in the spirit of equality and equity. Their taking on responsibilities and ably executing their roles, leaves the idea of patriarchy challenged for thinking that men are the only ones who can make things move. By empowering these women who successfully execute their responsibilities, the author tries to break the patriarchal structures which the Marxist feminists believe have helped men to dominate women just as the capitalist class has dominated workers. Nkwanzu demonstrates proper use of her power when she accepts the dying Genesis after he had foolishly run away from her simply because she was promoted. Instead of celebrating his wife's promotion as a minister, Genesis deserts his home and gets himself a prostitute. He pays dearly for his foolishness when he catches the deadly AIDS. As a defeated and dejected man, he comes back to Nkwanzu who though now powerful and independent, accepts to nurse him. Through Nkwanzu's rare gesture of forgiveness, Mary Karoro ridicules masculine power that is normally unforgiving and blind and she advocates for power that understands and forgives. Genesis is a defeated man and a complete loser. At the end of the novel, he has lost both power and credibility and is only surviving on Nkwanzu's generosity. Mary Karoro's Nkwanzu moves against all odds to succeed. Matayo had tried to rape her but did not destroy her esteem. Rex rapes her but her purity of heart and

strength of mind remains untouched. She is able to move ahead even after all these trials. The perpetrators of her woes are no better than her at the end of the novel. Their evil has neither destroyed her nor derailed her from her objectives in life it has instead destroyed some of them. She is focused on success and nothing else can derail her from success.

Nkwanzi's kind of determination and resilience is also seen in Goretti Kyomuhendo's Kasemiire the heroine of *The First Daughter*. Men are shown as obstacles in Kasemiire's life and the road to her success. She has to assert herself in order to move forward but her woes begin when she is impregnated at school. Her father disowns her and leaves her to fend for herself. Her woes at the Mutyaba's are many. Mutyaba's son Michael is madly in love with her but she tells him off. Then Mr. Mutyaba wants to have sex with her. He walks naked in her room as Mrs. Mutyaba is on a trip. She manages to over power him (90) but her woes are not about to end. When Mrs. Mutyaba comes to know of the incident Mr. Mutyaba denies everything and instead accuses Kasemiire of seducing him. She is unceremoniously dismissed and she joins the hostile world. However, her fighting spirit does not die. She achieves success in her studies, pays Katutu's fees and helps her mother. Like Nkwanzi, she demonstrates the virtues of feminine power by realizing that she wronged her father by getting pregnant while at school and needed to apologize to him. She tells her father "First of all I want to apologize to you for the disgrace I must have caused you when I dropped out of school... I therefore understand how much you must have been disappointed when I let you down. I want you to forgive me" (127). Kasemiire's gesture is very important. She demonstrates that the mark of power is not rigidity and pride but simplicity and humility. Kasemiire becomes victorious in her simplicity by realizing that what cannot bend must break. By accepting her mistakes and seeking forgiveness, Kasemiire suppresses all her past mistakes and is presented as a victor in her struggles. However, Kasemiire reaches this point of triumph after falling several times. Her victory is reached through learning experiences. She accepts her woes and does not allow them to completely conquer her. She learns that the mark of success is not lamenting ones fall after falling but standing up when you fall.

Although Kyamanywa is contrasted with her to project men as losers, his weaknesses do

not mar his virtues. Kyamanywa has been rewarded by hard work. He owns ten acres of land, many goats and some cows. He personally looks after his animals and plantation. His milk is strictly for his children for he believed that it was a man's duty to provide for his family. Kyamanywa saves his money and he does not take any form of alcohol. His children were among the few who went to school. Surprisingly, Kyamanywa had a passion for formal education although he never went to school. He believed that it was important for the survival of his children and always promptly paid school fees for them (7). The reader may rate Kyamanywa as a victorious head of a family because he provides his people with all the necessities.

Unlike most men in his village, Kyamanywa even sent his daughters to school. This earned him scorn and ridicule from the drunken man who tells him "...the only damn thing I have ever seen you do is sending your daughters to school" (8). Kyamanywa takes this challenge calmly. By taking his daughters to school when other men have not, Kyamanywa is a victor. The author redeems Kyamanywa by showing this great side of him. His colleagues could be seen as losers in failing to send their daughters to school but one has got to realize that they are products of their society; a society that does not attach much value to the education of girls. Kyamanywa's colleagues do not deny their daughters formal education simply because they are men. They are influenced by societal limitations and women are part of this society that perpetrates stereotypes that oppress women. For example, Kasemiire's mother beats her harder than her brother when she finds the two children fighting. Her reason is clear when she challenges Kasemiire saying "since when did women start beating men...?"(21). Kasemiire's mother believes that men should be treated differently from women since she is already socialized in the patriarchal system. To think that it is men who solely stereotype women is to miss the point. But to stereotype men so as to correct the images of women in men's literature, is to make the already bad situation worse since men may try to counteract distortion of their images.

Although Kyamanywa is well meaning when he takes his daughter to school, he is greatly devastated when Kasemiire gets pregnant while still in school. Her pregnancy is a big blow to Kyamanywa. His son was already a disappointment because he had failed his

primary seven and was shy and lazy (10). He had a special attachment to her since she resembled her mother and was both bright and hard working. His eyes were now fixed on her since she proved to be on her road to academic success by scoring 295 out of 300 in her primary leaving exams. Kyamanywa's reaction when Kasemiire gets pregnant is therefore justified only at the point he beats her like any parent would. But when Kyamanywa beats her savagely, withdraws her sister from school and sends Kasemiire and her mother away from home, his reaction and anger seem to be excessive. In desperation Kyamanywa gets married to alcohol and runs away from home and starts living with another woman. This presentation makes him a loser in the eyes of the reader because the writer succeeds in taking Kyamanywa to excesses of reaction and behavior. Kyamanywa's redemption and victory comes when he finally acknowledges his mistakes. He asks his daughter to forgive him and considers himself unworthy to forgive her. He tells her "who am I to forgive you? I have done more wrongs than you have. Life has changed, I 'am a poor man now, no longer the harsh uncompromising and proud father I used to be" (128). By acknowledging his mistakes, Kyamanywa is a victor and not a loser. He introduces an important life value that has been missing in his patriarchal dominated society. He demonstrates the truth that power does not lie in insisting to be right all the time but in acknowledging one's mistakes and accepting to be corrected when one is in the wrong.

The losers-winners paradigm is further stressed in Gorette Kyomuhendo's *Whispers From Vera*. Although many men try to block women from advancing, there are many men losers and female winners. In the novel, the lives of Vera and Eric are used to demonstrate male losers and female winners. Eric does not want his wife to get involved in business or any developmental project. Vera buys a plot and a car and builds a house without her husband's knowledge. Although Eric is against such developmental projects himself, Vera successfully accomplishes her projects because she believes "like they say, behind every successful woman, there is a surprised man" (74). Vera becomes an example of female winners and Eric is a symbol of masculine failure. He neither builds a house nor thinks about buying any plot. He is reduced to nothing especially putting into consideration the fact that Eric insisted that Vera could not do any business successfully

since she lacked business acumen. The reader would imagine that Eric himself has such business acumen but he does nothing to prove this!

Eric's effort to block Vera from going abroad when she gets a promotion is met with resistance. Vera willfully goes to West Africa and takes up a new job. She decides to ignore Eric because every time she asks him what his opinion was, Eric simply discouraged her. Vera tells us "When I ask him what he thinks, he answers that he maintains his initial stand on the issue. He does not think I should go, but it's really up to me to make the right decision" (94-95). Eventually, when Vera makes her decision, she is proved right because every thing goes on well. The skeptical Eric is lastly portrayed as a loser when his wife comes back after successful execution of her work. He had no wonder behaved like the husband of his workmate who was unhappy about the promotion of his wife. This man argues "in order for the woman to earn the promotion, she had to leave home by 6 a.m and not return until as late as 9 p.m at times. So the burden of supervising the kid's home work, feeding and putting them to bed was left to the husband" (57). Men are presented as standing in the way of their wives instead of supporting them to move forward. The reasons these men give make these men appear as losers. These men are not convincing enough but seem to block their wives simply because they are their husbands and feel they must have a say in all matters concerning their families or are simply jealous.

Samson is another male loser in Goretti Kyomuhendo's *Whispers From Vera*. He insists that Sheila should not help her in-laws. Samson is so mean that he does not even help his parents. "He claims that the money they are currently making should be used to look after their two girls and try and put up some constructive and income generating projects for the future" (36). Although Samson manages to stop his wife from sending any help to her in-laws, Sheila successfully helps her half-sister. Samson is said to have gone haywire but all the same, Sheila had already helped her half-sister (37). Samson is an inflexible man who demands that his views must be respected. When Sheila comes back home from abroad to do her research, Samson "does not want her to go back for the final year because he says his home is breaking apart... He is also worried that Sheila might be

keeping someone else's home clean where she is" (86). In spite of all this resistance, Sheila goes back all the same. Samson can be considered a loser for nursing what the author calls pedestrian thoughts and again failing to stop his wife from going back. Kyomuhendo's women are clearly successful while most of her male characters are portrayed as losers in the struggles they start.

3.4 Male Chauvinism

Patriarchy has been associated with empowering men over women. Some Ugandan women writers argue that patriarchal dominance has favored men and that men have misused their power to the detriment of society. The images of male chauvinist run across many of these works since women believe that man's superiority has influenced him to portray the wrong picture of women. Whatever men do that disturbs women is traced back to patriarchal dominance and masculine chauvinism. Men are believed to haughtily look down upon women. Although most of these writers attribute men's superiority to patriarchal dominance, they seem not to realize that women are part of the system that suppresses women and elevates men. In David Cook's *Origin of East Africa*, Namukwaya's story entitled "Then Hen and the Groundnuts" is such an example. The narrator, who is a woman, reveals to us that as she moved up and down preparing a meal as instructed by her mother, the boys were merry making. The narrator complains: "I would hear my brothers laughing merrily as they played cards with our neighbours' children on the grass in front of our house" (137). Although this girl is not happy, she simply complains silently for fear of her mother's wrath if she complained openly or rebelled. Through this story, the author suggests that society gives men preferential treatment. She shows that chores like cooking are meant for women only. It is also evident that although women writers believe that stereotyping of women is done by men, women are accomplices of the system. The narrator for example fears complaining because she did not want to provoke the wrath of her mother.

Blaming men for believing that they are 'superior' over women is self-defeating since women themselves are accomplices in making men feel 'superior' and perpetuating

feminine submissiveness sometimes in the name of enforcing discipline at home. More often than not we hear mothers telling their daughters not to do this or that. The reader of these works will realize that no social construct survives without the support of both genders. It is important to note that in many cases, the effect of socialization has a big toll on both genders. Men and women try to behave in a way that is acceptable in their society and in the long run popularize stereotypes. Although in *The Invisible Weevil*, Nkwanzi's father tries to emphasize equality between boys and girls by insisting that both boys and girls should do the same work as can be seen in Nkwanzi's confession that, "Taata always insisted that both boys and girls had to do the same household chores. I don't want to hear this talk of this job's for boys and that job's for girls..." (28), the same man gives preferential treatment to himself and his sons. For example, he takes only boys when he goes to slaughter (40) and the tongue is supposed to be eaten by himself and his sons (43). Also, his wife impresses it upon her daughter that a woman should sit on a mat for example, when Tingo arrives from school for holiday, "they sat in the kitchen, on a mat as usual, but Tingo was given a chair and a table to sit on" (73) her mother is even the one who insists a girl should not eat the tongue lest she became proud (43). Nkwanzi's Senga also perpetuates stereotypes that make women inferior to men when she tells Nkwanzi to always make her husband happy but the Senga is not ready to hear Nkwanzi's argument that the man should also aspire to make her happy (199). All these characters are as socialized as Kasemiire's mother who tells Kasemiire that a woman should never beat a man (21) even when a man beats her.

The concept of male chauvinism is a common topic in Mary Karooro's works. In *The Invisible weevil*, Nkwanzi has got to nurse Genesis' ego, which is hurt when she is promoted. The idea behind this is to show that men are not comfortable when their wives are promoted because they fear that their power will be questioned. The writer wants to say, because of their ego, men believe they should always be at the helm of society. It is with the same spirit that Cain in *Child of A Delegate* decides to desert Hero when she confesses that she was a street child. Cain's behavior is attributed to male chauvinism, instead of being looked at as an individual case. The author echoes the fact that Hero missed out on an important advice the domestic advisers always give their daughters

before marriage to; “never make a man your pillow and blanket... never trust a man. Never cushion all your secrets in him or think he will remain faithful” (109). This thinking is supported by the belief that men are always looking down on women and are happy whenever women are suffering especially as a result of men’s doing. The writer thinks that men feel very proud to know that women are dependant on them. Mary Karooro is supported by Violet Barungi in her novel *Cassandra* where Cassandra is advised by Samantha about men thus: “You don’t want to let him know he has power over you. Never let a man know he’s the beginning and the end of everything for you...They’re bad enough without our going out of our way to inflate their egos” (43-44). Samantha’s guess is that there must be a man behind Cassandra’s tears since many women commonly believe that men are women’s source of suffering. This incident takes place when Samantha finds Cassandra crying as a result of Belinda’s attack on Raymond and Cassandra when Belinda finds them partying. Belinda’s conclusion that men will always be men on learning that Cassandra was twenty-four years younger than Raymond is meant to show that men always want to show their prowess on young women and even when they are old, they would not like to be associated with old age since it may be linked with lack of virility.

The images of supermen continue to commonly appear in many works of Ugandan women writers as a result of the anxieties, expectations and opinions these women have about men. Violet Barungi’s Raymond is a macho male whose fascination with women is in trying to know how easily he could sexually exploit them (201). He is made to appear as though he feels he can get any woman at any time he wants. The author insinuates that Raymond considers women easy to exploit as long as one has his money. It is as if Raymond considers the women cheap and less important than men. The author seems to focus her attention on Raymond’s weaknesses as far as women are concerned in order to bias the reader towards looking at him as the source of Cassandra’s woes later. Raymond changes her life for good only to shortly make her life hard when he reveals that he is already married. The insinuated message here is clear; that men are the source of women’s trouble because of their selfishness and pride. On contrary, Raymond cannot be held accountable for Cassandra’s woes. He openly tells her that he was married but

Cassandra insisted that there was nothing wrong with it (31). Raymond does not consider himself worth to enter a relationship with her and “he felt a strong desire to keep her untouched by evil as she was now” (31). But Cassandra urges him to take her and love her. Raymond accuses himself of breaking her virginity. This shows how much he tries to preserve her. Cassandra is therefore responsible for her woes. In this case, Raymond could be looked at as a victim although one can argue that both are at fault since Raymond started a romantic relationship and fails to resist Cassandra’s amorous advances.

The author represents male characters as proud and selfish. This is demonstrated when Cassandra is bypassed during promotion although she was more senior than the man who was promoted. The author shows that men think that they are better than women. Ugandan women writers trace the origin of this opinion as far as at birth where parents value boys over girls. Ayeta, A. Wangusa and Violet Barungi in *Tears of Hope* show that men prefer boys to girls. The narrator, Edisa Zayaga Njunaki reports how her “father was not very happy with the daughter for a first born. He called her Bakeitwara, meaning the in-laws took the bride price for nothing when their daughter could not give him a son at the onset” (2). When a boy is finally born, Zayaga’s father “smiled all the time. He called his son Kurinamanyire, which means, I wish I had known” (2). He seems to be regretting why he did not treat well his wife now that she has given him a boy. The name seems to be a statement of reconciliation with his wife for having neglected her on the birth of Zayaga. The incident of Zayaga is based on a true story. It is a manifestation of the social forces that are so deeply rooted in societies that they control the lives of people. The preference given to boys is one of the major factors that sometimes make some men proud. The biggest challenge is not the fact that men and women stereotype each other but the need to do away with cultural values that disadvantage men and women.

The worst nature of male chauvinism is portrayed in Gorette Kyomuhendo’s *The First Daughter* where Kyamanywa is shown senselessly discrediting women. He considers women and girls as part of his property. We see him seriously telling his wife that according to the Banyoro “Women and children are a yard stick to measure a man’s wealth!”(23). Kyamanywa uses this explanation to rationalize his cause for planning to

marry another wife. Kyamanywa even threatens marrying off Kasemiire and using her bride price to get himself a new bride. Kyomuhendo's description of Kyamanywa shows the picture of a real male chauvinist. In addition to his nasty temper, Kyomuhendo says "Kyamanywa was also a man who believed strongly. For instance he believed that women were put on this earth solely for men's pleasure and he held a very low opinion of them" (6). That Kyamanywa held a very low opinion of women may not be disputed but the fact that the same Kyamanywa sends his daughters to school against all the discouragement from his fellow men projects a different Kyamanywa. By willingly sending his daughters to school when the rest of the men did not, Kyamanywa shows love and respect for women or at least good gender relationship. This picture of Kyamanywa shows that not all men are chauvinists. In addition, the projection of Kyamanywa shows that chauvinism is not a permanent human condition since Kyamanywa changes over time. Kyamanywa's colleagues are equally presented as male chauvinists. One of his friends is said to have rudely pointed out thus "A woman's place is in the kitchen. Give them education and they will rebel" (8). His other colleague considers women as "the weaker sex" (8). These men are seen generally agreeing that if these women are given education, they will refuse to be sold off to bring home cows. Their valuing of girls is only limited to fetching cows. Back at her mind, the author seems to be aware that this is not these men's personal problem but a problem of the society whose constructs they subscribe to and must respect. The author's portrayal of these male characters is reminiscent of the Marxist feminist argument that men have been put on the pedestal of leadership in society and have consequently used this opportunity to dominate, exploit and oppress women. By vividly bringing out the effects of this patriarchal societal structure, the author makes a humble appeal towards revision of such injurious beliefs.

Goretti Kyomuhendo further demonstrates male chauvinism through Kasemiire's brother Mugabe. Mugabe feels incensed when his sister abuses him for finishing up the water that they were using for bathing. Their quarrel soon develops into a fight that attracts their mother. Surprisingly, Mugabi's mother is seen perpetuating male chauvinism when she rhetorically asks her daughter: "Since when did women start beating men...?" (21). As a result of their mother's reaction, Kasemiire had to run to escape her wrath. In

another incident, when Steven learns that he has impregnated Kasemiire, he gets tormented and starts crying. Surprisingly, Kasemiire is more moved by Steven's state than hers. She observes that "she had never once seen a man cry. Steven was too gentle to have been a man" (55). It is such anxieties, expectations and beliefs perpetuated by women themselves that lead men to become rough and chauvinistic sometimes. Society holds that men never cry and men try to live according to this social construct. Fortunately, the Ugandan women writers in the process of showing male chauvinism have helped to expose women as accomplices in entrenching masculine chauvinism. This is a welcome trend towards fighting gender stereotyping. These writers have awakened the women to realise the role they play in gender stereotyping. For example, Kasemiire's mother is shown completely resigned to what she thinks is her fate. When Kasemiire asks her mother why she was always sad, her mother retorted that her sadness was due to the curse of being a woman (22). The thinking that men are a better sex is partly inculcated in society members by women themselves through socialization. Her thinking is justified because society has favored men over women as a result of capitalism which has been responsible for the survival of patriarchy and private ownership of property by most men according to the Marxist feminist. Men have been favored doubly to own private property by not only capitalism but also by the patriarchal social structures. This is why Marxist Feminism focuses on the dismantling of capitalism as a way of liberating women. Marxist feminists believe that private property which gives rise to economic inequality, dependence, political confusion, and unhealthy social relations between men and women, is the root of women's oppression (Wikipedia) Therefore Kasemiire's mother occupies a disadvantaged position in society and cannot be happy about it when she is even treated as a man's property.

Goretti Kyomuhendo further develops images of male chauvinists in *Secrets no More*. Marina's experience with Matayo, who rapes her in spite of the confidence and trust she had in him, is used to show that men are a self-centered lot. When she later meets Dee, "Marina had no interest in him. But she knew that his name was Dee. They were all the same to her: Self-centered, pompous men, who acted with a high-handedness which

irritated her” (136). The circumstances Marina has gone through have been hell for her. Her experience with men has been so repugnant that she can not see any man who means well. The horrendous murder of her family members at the hands of men exposes her to her endless woes with men. Matayo rapes her and George is bully as a husband so the probability that Dee is the same seems high to her. Through Marina, the author emphasizes the fact that men are proud and selfish. The author’s opinion as expressed through Marina seems to generalize all men as proud. Matayo is therefore used as a representation of masculinity and what he does is not seen from an individual level but is used to answer for all masculinity. Although Matayo has been good to all the young women, the moment of passion in which he rapes Marina is used to judge not only him but also the rest of male kind. His opinion about women is also questionable. By commenting that the sound of the dogs they heard is that of dogs which don’t bite because “they are toothless and as cowardly as an old woman” (57), Matayo qualifies to be a real male chauvinist whose opinion about women is low. Such opinion about women is further developed through Marina’s husband’s behavior. George chases away all the maids and insists that Marina must do all the housework. He believes that “An African woman was supposed to cater not only for her husband’s needs but for those of his whole clan as well, and in this case, his friends” (137). George is presented as a chauvinist who regards women as beasts of burden. He is projected senselessly mistreating Marina simply because she is a woman. He seems not to see that Marina is as human as he is. He is blinded by the fact that he has a penis and Marina does not. This representation of George and Matayo goes over board because there is almost nothing good shown about them. They are represented as an incarnation of the devil.

George does not even hide away his former girlfriend’s photograph from Marina. The author shows how disrespectful of women George is. George even shamelessly and proudly explains that the photograph was of his former girlfriend Lisa (146). Like Kyamanywa in *The First Daughter*, he seems to believe that women were put on this earth solely for man’s pleasure (6). Goretti Kyomuhendo’s intention to present images of male chauvinists is finally summarized in *Whispers From Vera*. In her narration, Vera reveals how they got a new boss. However, the opinion of men about the new female

boss is so negative. “They say they don’t want to be ‘ruled’ by a woman...They say women bosses can be very unreasonable, petty and moody...you can never trust them to make a clear judgment when they are ovulating” (40). The men’s opinion therefore directly attacks the intelligence of women in order for men to appear more intellectually gifted than women. The author demonstrates the thinking that men always think they are more intelligent than women. She also shows that the women’s opinion about their fellow woman is not positive either, but she under plays it by showing that it only touches on the boss’ social life in order to emphasize men’s negative opinion about women.

More cases of male chauvinism are shown in Mary Karooro’s: *Child Of A Delegate*, when Cain and Nkwanzu discuss the importance society attaches to virginity. Although they observe that society does not insist on the virginity of boys, Cain is not ashamed to explain that “a man’s ego will be inflated when on his first encounter with a girl he realizes he was the first to plough the field. But after that, it doesn’t matter really” (103). Cain is used to show how men want to marry virgins when the men do not preserve their own virginity. By saying that after the first encounter with a virgin girl it doesn’t matter, Cain shows how men use women as their pleasure objects. Cain is used to further demonstrate male chauvinism when Hero asks him what he would do if a girl he was about to marry decided to go back to her ex- boyfriend. Scared that Hero could be referring to herself, Cain begins agonizing and quoting Shakespeare saying: “frailty, thy name is woman” (108). Cain implies that women are weak but Hero quickly awakens him to the fact that although she loves Shakespeare’s works, they “had a strain of male chauvinism” (108). Through this comment, Hero warns Cain of trekking Shakespeare’s road. In *The Invisible weevil*, Genesis’ father is another serious case of male chauvinism. He dismisses his son and wife when they disagree on a political party announcing: “I’m a man with two testicles and my word is final...a woman to question my authority! I’ll not hear of it. A woman listens to her husband and goes wherever he goes” (170). According to Genesis’ father, a man is always correct and a woman has no right to oppose his decision. He is a product of a patriarchal society that has survived on the principles of capitalism which economically empowers men. Man’s economic power has been transferred to gender relation where men demonstrate absolute social power. Male

chauvinism is also shown among young and educated men for example, in Goretti Kyomuhendo's *The First Daughter*, the university students are no better. One of Kasemiire's boyfriends who was a doctor kept on telling her that "men were supposed to be superior to women in all aspects. He based his facts on biological factors" (101). Eventually Kasemiire parted with him and got another one who was very rich. This one was even worse. He insisted that "women should keep behind men because they were the weaker sex" (102) he added that whatever Kasemiire said or thought did not matter because "women would remain inferior to men, their level of education or riches" (102). These two examples in Kasemiire's relationship with men are cases of coincidence which the author skillfully weaves in her plot to emphasize that men are chauvinists. Although such cases may not appear plausible and look so much like the Greek plot that depended on predestination as a result of the power of the gods, the author still makes her point. The works emphasize the point that men are chauvinistic. Although it may be true that some men are chauvinistic as a result of the privileges they enjoy due to patriarchal ideology, it may be stereotypical to conclude that all men are chauvinistic. The writers should endeavor to make a proper character representation.

3.5 Conclusion

Ugandan women writers under study create various images of men that are riddled with a lot of flaws. Some of their male characters are sometimes given peripheral roles while a good number of their women characters play important roles. The women writers believe that men have been able to keep women low and subordinated by constructing roles for them and demanding that the women must abide by these social constructs. By constructing roles for men, the women writers aim at not only 'taming' men but also liberating women from patriarchal forces that have for long disadvantaged women. They also hope to obliterate gender stereotypes by which women have been trapped and as they say, to straighten the record through writing themselves into existence.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 Introduction

In their novels, some Ugandan women writers try to question the source of man's power in society. They sometimes consciously or unconsciously portray the cultural assumptions that masculinity is predictably accompanied by certain character traits that are believed to be a demonstration of man's dominance. The writers project men as proud, selfish, brutal, forceful, disrespectful of women, discriminative, beastly, callous, unthinking, sex maniacs and sexually oppressive, enemies of virginity, insincere, shameless, and rapists. Some women writers assert that men take themselves to be superior to women and try to protest men's presumed superiority. The chapter presents the writers' effort in deconstructing male characters as they strip them of the power which the writers believe men use to oppress women.

4.1 The danger of Man's Illusionary superiority

Goretti Kyomuhendo portrays some of the cultural assumptions that are believed to be the result of man's presumed supremacy when she projects Kyamanywa as proud, selfish, brutal and forceful (6). Kyamanywa is presented as a man with low opinion about women. He expects to get total obedience from all his family members and his word is final. His brutality is shown when Kasemiire gets pregnant. He is represented as a man obsessed by his power. On the other hand, Violet Barungi uses Raymond, Horace and Wakilo to suggest that men are sex maniacs who are also obsessed by the power believed to be derived from the penis. It is insinuated that Raymond runs after anything in a dress. The author indicates that every woman in town below the age of seventy knows him (5). Horace believes he could have as many girls as he could handle (19). He changes women like clothes while Wakilo is a poor apology for a public official since he uses his position to exploit women working under him (10). In *Child Of A Delegate*, Mary Karoro emphasizes the fact that men are sexually weak and lustful through her presentation of the male delegates, the university lecturer and registrar. She even suggests that men are: liars, unfaithful, dishonest, pretenders and selfish through the relationship between Hero

and Cain. The author's attitude about men is clearly developed when she states that "men are dishonest and philanderers by nature" (107). Her warning to her readers is on cue when she counsels to "never make a man your pillow and blanket. Never open your heart and all its secrets to him never trust a man. Never cushion all your secrets in him or think he will remain faithful" (109). By this conclusion, the author assumes that all men are similar and deliberately use their position in society for the destruction of women.

Although what women writers say about men may be to some extent correct, the fault lies in their approach to the problem. By exaggerating men's weaknesses and demonizing men, women writers do not solve the problem of distortion of women images. Although novels are works of literature, they exert an influence on the readers. Works of literature present an imaginary world but the experiences portrayed carry lessons for people in the real world. It is pertinent to bear in mind Kelly Griffin's words that "even when works of literature are "fictional", they have the capacity to be true" (37). A novel that presents strength and weaknesses of characters realistically would go a long way to convince men to change their behavior, attitude towards women, and the way they present women in works of literature. However to consistently depict men as perpetrators of evil and women as victims leaves the battle lost. Women writers seem to disregard the fact that men are human beings whose psyche is different from that of animals. By showing men discriminating against women and considering themselves better than women, these writers put men's wisdom to question. Indeed Violet Barungi in her *Cassandra* openly refers to Horace as 'an animal' and 'a beast' (19) while Mary Karooro in *Child Of A Delegate* says men can do worse things than animals (16). She also uses animal images such as 'mating', 'animal lust' (17) to describe the Delegate as he was having sexual intercourse with Sewa. Also, the description of the incident in which a woman finds her husband feeding his sexual fantasies from a pornographic magazine almost leaves the reader convinced that there is no difference between men and animals. The author explains that the man was obsessed with the magazine, "his tongue hanging out, panting like an animal on heat" (57). Such representation of male characters may not have much to teach men towards respect of the rights of women.

The continued projection of men characters as exceedingly selfish and discriminative basing on sex difference continues to put men's wisdom to question. Men are projected as obsessed by the id. This projection of men is based in Sigmund Freud's theory that every human being is born with various instincts. Sigmund Freud, an Australian psychoanalytical doctor observed that id is the mental representation of the biological instincts. He adds that id does not distinguish between internal mind and the outside environment since it is a person's unconscious instinct (The World Book Encyclopedia, volume7, page 457). Like animals, men are shown forming territories and discriminating against women. They are presented as ridiculously refusing to accept human differences and only looking at themselves as the better sex. The Kyamanywas and drunkards of this world are given bestial qualities. For instance the drunkards believe males are the only human beings while Kyamanywa has a very low opinion of women. They base their pride on physical differences such as women's lack of the penis and squatting down while urinating. These men do not reason beyond petty appearance so as to realize that these differences are neither deformities nor curses. By failing to accommodate women, these men appear as animals that are ruled by the id (Kyomuhendo 8). The ability to accommodate is a human quality because human beings can reason, negotiate and appreciate difference as a means of attaining completion in life. In Goretti Kyomuhendo's *The First Daughter*, there is no single man who is elevated beyond low-level reasoning. Like other Ugandan women writers, Goretti Kyomuhendo seems to say that men cannot reason beyond sex differences but simply go by appearances. These writers by painting such a picture of men put themselves on the same level as the men writers they criticize. These writers ignore the fact that even women have the id instinct. By representing only men obsessed by id, they water down their works. This character representation is contrived for purposes of plotting.

The distortions of male images by women writers may leave the reader with no option but to believe that the struggle between masculinity and femininity seems to have roots in their biological differences. The reduction of Freud's theories to crude biological tenets, seem to have influenced many writers in the past. According to Raman Selden and Peter Widdowson in the book *A Readers Guide to Contemporary Theory*, In the United States,

Freud's theories have been reduced to crude levels and according to them, "the female child, seeing the male organ, recognizes herself as female because she lacks the penis. She defines herself negatively and suffers inevitable penis envy" (222). Penis envy, according to Freud is universal in women and responsible for their castration complex, which results into their regarding themselves as 'hommes manqué' rather than a positive sex in its own right. It seems lack compels some writers to envy those they feel have what they lack. This in the long run seems to be the source of struggle between males and females. The concept of phallus seems to influence much of feminist writing.

The Gender conflict based on sexual differences is further seen in Goretti Kyomuhendo's *The First Daughter* when Kyamanywa sends his daughter to school. The drunkards challenge Kyamanywa's action using sex as a parameter. They chauvinistically tell him "the only damn thing I have ever seen you doing is sending your daughter to school...A woman's place is in the kitchen... Give them Education and they will rebel. The weaker sex...they have to squat down when urinating..." (8). Kyamanywa's friends believe that educating a girl is dangerous as well as useless simply because a woman does not have a penis. To say education will make a woman a rebel is to miss the meaning of education. This is low-level reasoning. While sometimes some men's belief in the superiority of their sex makes them proud and foolish, it would be an exaggeration for Kyamanywa's friends to mainly base on women's lack of penises to judge whether education will be useful to them. In the context that Kyamanywa takes his daughters to school he has already seen chances of success for girls who go to school and his colleague could also have been aware. Unless the author shows that these men are joking and not serious, which she does not, their level of naivety remains doubtful. This could be meant to show the readers how men's belief in the superiority of their sex makes them ridiculously proud and foolish.

Seldan and Widdowson submit that Virginia Woolf while examining the problems facing women writers rejected a 'feminist' consciousness and wanted her femininity to be unconscious. She did this in order to avoid the confrontation with femaleness or maleness struggles that characterized most feminist works (207-208). Accordingly, Woolf adopted

the Bloomsburg sexual ethic of “androgyny”, hoping to strike a balance between the extremes of male self-realization and female self-annihilation. Woolf acknowledges that the male sex looked at themselves as superior to the female sex while the female sex believed they lacked something and strove to exterminate the female in them since they thought that doing away with that which causes the ‘lack’ in them would end the ‘lacking’. Woolf aimed at projecting a female that had some love for femaleness. This observation points to the fact that male characters have a self esteem that drives them towards self acceptance, unlike female characters that lack self esteem to accept themselves. As earlier submitted, the whole issue arises from the concept of men having the penis and women lacking it. Much of the feminist writing suggests that men assert themselves over women because they have penises. This is the message Goretti Kyomuhendo gives readers of *The First Daughter* through the projection of the drunkard. These men disrespect women simply because the women squat down while urinating (8). If women writers want to correct the image of the woman in men’s writings, they need to rise above gender biases and present a plausible view of life where there are good and bad human beings men as well as women!

In a number of works by some Ugandan women writers, some men characters have been presented as living symbols of masculinity and patriarchy. They are epitomes of a society that oppresses women because they are convinced that the lack of a penis is a natural inferiority. Most characters are therefore made to use their penis to show their manliness over women and on the overall, this makes them domineering, benevolent, callous, egocentric, proud and unthinking. As can be seen, male characters are made to gain their power from the mere fact that they have penises. This reason renders them low, unreasoning, unimaginative and uncivilized. Anybody, especially, any man who takes time to think and anybody who has self-esteem would not accept to be described like this. Such presentation of male characters may trigger a counter reaction as men may try to defend their images and in so doing, jeopardize gender co-existence.

4.2 The Penis and Sex; Weapons of Torture

Sexual differences have been identified as a source of gender stereotypes and conflicts in society. Some women writers seem to have capitalized on the declaration that the female is female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities and that a woman is an imperfect man as advanced by Aristotle and St. Aquinas (Raman Selden and Peter Widdowson 203). The result of this influence has been the creation of imperfect men and super women. Where strong men characters are created, they are presented misusing their power and sometimes using the penis as a weapon of torture. Some Ugandan women novels become a lament against the traditionally conceived supremacy of the males over the females. In an effort to demonstrate masculine brutality and blind male chauvinism, some Ugandan women writers present men characters in excesses of their weaknesses.

Masculine stereotyping is a common occurrence In *Secrets no More* where Goretta Kyomuhendo denounces men's sexual brutality over women. Although the genocide in this novel is a political issue, which involves indiscriminate oppression and killing of political opponents, unbelievably men use this opportunity to sexually oppress women as they use the gun and penis to wreck havoc. In this war situation, women are shown as vulnerable and endangered species. The political war soon deteriorates into a sex war that selectively targets women such as Bizimaana's wife. Marina is later to remember with sadness how her mother was gang raped by soldiers on the floor, as away of bringing down the Tutsi minority. She recalls how "A giant soldier was towering over her, consciously rubbing his manhood which was slowly forming a bulge in his trousers ... She watched as the Colonel with a vicious thrust of his body entered her mother"(17). Although this incident is just one, Goretta Kyomuhendo's graphic description of the rape scene is intended to emphasize men's use of the penis to wreck havoc in times of war. The author takes the readers through the details of the ghastly incident in order to arouse their feelings. The description cinematically blends the brutal murders and rape and at the end of the description the reader is not only traumatized but also doubts whether these soldiers have human feelings. This graphic description helps to magnify the destruction men cause using the gun and penis and shows the vulnerability of women in war

situations. What began as a political war now turns into a sex rampage as the Colonel and his men decide to torture and rape Bizimaana's wife as a way of torturing the husband and the Tutsi he represents but the greed for sex tarnishes the political agenda. The rape and murder incident are common occurrences in war torn areas and the author uses this incident to emphasize the fact that in war situations and tribal conflicts which breed a lot of hatred, men are capable of using all the weapons at their disposal. This is why the soldiers use rape as a means of revenge on their enemies.

The brutal sex scene so greatly impacts Marina that her running out of the room is not the end of her woes. Men still use their lethal sex organ to oppress her and her peace is momentary. These men play the villain in her life. It is only Father Marcel who offers her hope and meaning in life. Like the Colonel did to her mother, Matayo takes advantage of her, and the subsequent pregnancy is a result of this act. The author graphically takes her readers through the gruesome scenario of how Matayo pinned her to the ground and, "...began forcing himself inside her...he pumped at her and probed inside her with his enormous manhood...Matayo was making animal sounds and his eyes were closed (59). Like the Colonel, the once meek Matayo uses his sexual power to shatter the life of Marina. She is reminded of her mother spread-eagled on the floor and her agony filled sounds. The brute in Matayo is finally developed when the author presents Matayo as an animal considering the sound he makes while raping Marina. When Marina later makes a resolution that she would never trust any man again, she earns the reader's pity and sympathy. Her experiences with the Colonel and Matayo make her lose interest in men. Her inability to have meaningful relationships with men is a result of the deep psychological wounds that she is trying to heal. She is judgmental when Dee tries to attract her attention, because she is already prejudiced about men and this contributes to her failure to immediately return his love and enter a meaningful relationship with him. Her husband does not make things better either. He is rude and sexually insensitive to Marina claiming he is taking revenge against the women who have betrayed him. His selfishness notwithstanding, marital rape to Marina ironically forms part of the weapons he employs to exact revenge against women and Marina is thus seen as an extended traitor who must be paid her due. George lacks all the humility and civility to respect his

nuptial obligations and responsibilities to Marina. He turns into a sex bully and resorts to demanding sex from his wife (139). George unfortunately uses sex not to satisfy and relieve Marina of her sexual urge but instead to molest her. He runs several women although he is married to Marina. He is presented as unfaithful to his nuptial obligations and responsibilities, but the saddest part of it is that he is neither bothered by his behavior nor is he repentant. The colonel, Matayo and George appear as sex brutes who instead of using their sex organs to give sexual satisfaction to women turn these organs into weapons of torture.

Goretti Kyomuhendo further explores the concept of male brutality through the weapon of the penis in *The First Daughter*. Through the women's hilarious conversation as they catch grasshoppers we hear that Kisebo's daughter "got herself pregnant before marriage and now the boy responsible has denied her" (4). Kyomuhendo emphasizes the point that men use their sexual organ as a weapon for oppressing women. When men do not rape the vulnerable women, they are shown making them pregnant only to desert them. According to the author, men treat women as their playthings. In *The First Daughter*, Mutyaba tries to rape Kasemiire although this girl has been brought up as his own daughter and worse still, Mutyaba is an old man who is supposed to act like a father towards Kasemiire. He also has a wife but he closes his eyes to all that and goes to rape Kasemiire (90-91). Also, Kyamanywa uses his penis to punish his disobedient wife for going to her home without his permission (7) He gives her too much sex for the day and sexually starves her for a month as a punishment. In Mary Karoro's *The Invisible Weevil*, there are similar cases of oppression. First there is the pretentious Matayo who hides in reading the bible, singing christian songs and telling children stories to win the confidence and trust of Nkwanzu's family members. He lures little Nkwanzu to the field in the name of showing her the little bird he had been singing about. The little girl innocently follows him only to end up being raped (33). His luck runs out when Nkwanzu's mother notices her walking awkwardly. She checks her and after that takes her to the doctor only to find that he had also infected her with gonorrhoea. He is last seen led by policemen hands tied behind. Nkwanzu is later raped by Rex on the eve of her wedding (201). Men's violence suggests lack of temperance, ability to reason and failure

to balance their temper. It is as a result of these character imbalances that men are shown behaving like animals. However, the author also shows that there are good men. For example, although Steven makes Kasemiire pregnant and goes away, he has genuine love for her. He has got to leave for his further studies, so their separation is inevitable. When Steven later learns of Kasemiire's plight, he is so saddened. He wishes nothing bad ever happened to her. Steven is an exception and so much of a perfect man. The only mistake he makes is making Kasemiire pregnant. He seems to be a representation of the man women would like to see.

The author also depicts the Banyoro society using sex difference as a weapon of oppression. Right from childhood, the young boys are trained to be assertive or rather oppressive towards their female counterparts simply because they are males. This is what Ngonzi demonstrates when Mugabi fights Kasemiire for abusing him when he finishes the water they are bathing with. Although Ngonzi intervenes and beats both children, we learn that she beats Kasemiire the more. She is all the time asking Kasemiire "Since when did women start beating men?" (21). Ngonzi's argument presupposes that men are supposed to be given preferential treatment and in such case as a quarrel, the woman is expected to let the man free to beat her or back out. Through Ngonzi, the author shows that men believe that they are at liberty to mistreat women simply because they are men. Other than perpetuating this feminine oppression, Ngonzi shows that she is resigned to the fate of being a woman. The reason she unquestioningly accepts being subordinated.

Kasemiire's experience with Mutyaba is meant to emphasize men's misuse of their status as males. Mutyaba accepts Kasemiire in his home and treats her as a daughter. Although Mutyaba is presented as an angel of light he changes like a chameleon and tries to rape Kasemiire. Through Mutyaba's seemingly saintly character and unexpected behavior, the author implies that however innocent a man looks, he is still dangerous and undependable. The Mutyaba-Kasemiire sour relationship is meant to serve as a warning to women about men's appearances. Mutyaba shatters her future dreams when he tries to rape her. She is later to be rewarded with expulsion as Mrs. Mutyaba accuses her of seducing her husband. The reader wonders as Kasemiire herself wonders, "Who could

have thought that Mr. Mutyaba would think of seducing her!”(93). A man who is twice her age or even more! Her situation is worsened when Mr. Mutyaba denies having attempted to rape her and accuses her of seducing him. The reader is shown that at the centre of Kasemiire’s suffering is a man and his sexual brutality and Mrs. Mutyaba is an accomplice because she ignores the option that Mutyaba wanted to seduce Kasemiire and instead takes Mutyaba’s conjured story that Kasemiire was trying to seduce him.

In *Child Of A Delegate*, Mary Karooro also explores the theme of sexual brutality to great length. The protagonists Sewa and Hero are used to expose man as an oppressor. In her trials, Sewa is taken by a man who had two male organs side by side. Mary Karooro’s view of man points to animalism. At another time, Sewa is picked by three white men who end up subjecting her to having sex with their dogs. Through this incident, the author emphasizes the fact that black men and white men are the same. They both use sex as a weapon of sadistic oppression. This attitude is so eminent in Mary Karooro’s novel to the extent that even her minor characters are used to emphasize it. The street kids caution Hero to always beg with them for if she doesn’t “men with huge, swinging things between their legs will hurt you” (13). The idea of sexual oppression is so serious that the author goes to the extent of reducing the male organs to things. Mary Karooro openly attacks masculinity through Hero’s experience on the street. Hero meets the Delegate on the street and her likeness to the Delegate’s mother is striking. The Delegate is astonished and cries in wonder. However, Hero’s attraction to this man is cut short when she recalls that her fellow street children had warned her to fear men whom she was told could do worse things to her than dogs could (16). The author takes her readers through many life scenarios in order to present men always behaving as sex beasts. Male characters are represented wrecking havoc using sex. The street children fear them as much as they fear wild dogs.

The havoc done by the Rexs of this world who use sex as a weapon of torture has far reaching consequences to society for example, Nkwanzi is both physically and psychologically hurt as her dream to redden her white sheets is shattered since she is no longer a virgin. Her new status introduces a crisis in her relationship with Rex and their

marriage in general since she doesn't know how to account for the lost virginity. The author insinuates that men do not reason beyond what is obvious. This is why Nkwanzu believes it will be an uphill task to explain her situation and be understood by her husband to be without raising more misunderstandings. Nkwanzu's aunt as a product of a society that has accepted to live with male sexual brutality suggests, "this terrible matter is buried in our stomachs... This unspeakable act of rape is a weevil and the only way we can keep this evil buried is by keeping quiet. If we talk, the weevil will come to the surface" (182). On the contrary, little does this old woman know that Nkwanzu belongs to the new brand of women who are fighting for equality so she decides to report to police so that inconsiderate males do not continue to assert their power over the female sex using rape. In Goora's gruesome incident with her husband, Mary Karooro shows how men use sex to tame and subordinate women. Goora gets pregnant while at school and her furious father withdraws her from school as if this is a solution to the pregnancy. As a punishment, he forces her to marry a dirty and beastly old man that already has several wives and thirty children who sleep in one room. On her first night Goora's subhuman husband forces her into sex. The author uses this man and the unnamed man who impregnates Goora to show that men are subhuman and use their sexual organs as lethal weapons of oppression. Mary Karooro presents most of her male characters as sex brutes. Like her contemporary Miria Matembe, the fiery advocate of rights of women who believe "all men are potentially rapists" (Matembe 30), it could be possible that Mary Karooro presents a lopsided view of men.

Goora's description of her new surroundings is as revolting as it is incredible. It is intended to serve as a manifestation of men's sexual brutality that goes on unchecked daily. Goora writes to her friend Nkwanzu thus "I lay down on the grass-covered floor... Then I felt "groom's" hand move roughly between my legs. My God, in the presence of these children and his wife! Roughly, he threw my legs apart. I gritted my teeth and creased brow awaiting the worst. I could not refuse" (89). This scene is so grim that it seems to overshadow other incidents where man uses his sex organ as a lethal weapon for the oppression of women. Matayo's attempt to defile baby Nkwanzu is overshadowed by Goora's grim experience. These incidents show the danger of a dominating patriarchal

system that empowers men to think that might is always right. However, the conspicuous absence of female villains in Mary Karoro's two works leaves the point half made since it is not possible for men to perpetuate oppression of women without the support of the women. Nkwanzi's aunt is so mildly brought out that her role in perpetuating the oppression goes unnoticed. In order for men to appreciate the need to change their negative attitude and associations about women, women writers need to present to men a plausible picture of life. The distortion of male images and exaggerated presentation of male inadequacies is not the way forward.

4.3 Men and Sex for Pleasure

Some Ugandan women novels are characterized by scenarios in which the entire male establishment is generalized as sex machines. The theme of men and sex as a source of pleasure runs through many of these works. On the forefront is Gorette Kyomuhendo whose *Whispers From Vera* is a cinematic description of sex encounters with men at the helm. The novel, though a tell-it-all private deep hearted story about friendship, pain and joy, magnifies the role of man in sexual relationships. Vera graphically leads the reader through her escapades with different men. These men are presented initiating the love relations and sexual intercourse. Mark for example, manages to engage Vera in a love relationship when he is even married. Vera lives in the dark of all this until Mark one time lets the cat out of the bag. Vera's next boyfriend Casanova is not any different. He is believed to have "a string of girlfriends and all sorts of women" (5). The author seems to insinuate that men take much pleasure in having as many sexual relations as possible. Why for example should Casanova keep a host of lovers if he does not take pleasure in it? Casanova's character is used to give credence to the author's belief that "men can be as unpredictable as weather" (7). This is not a compliment obviously but a stereotypical generalization about men as far as sex and relationships are concerned. Men are depicted lacking human attributes such as the ability to sustain a peaceful and serious relationship. Their pride is reduced to sex power. They seem to spend much of their time and energy in sexual encounters. Mark is projected as an unfaithful man who secretly runs many love relationships without the knowledge of these women. As for Casanova, he is presented as a beast because he does not stick to one woman but moves from woman to woman as

though he is a bull in the herd. He seems to seek sex outside love since he is not shown having any serious relationship with any particular woman. He is used to suggest that men find pleasure in sex but not satisfaction. It is as though sex is men's hobby. Like beasts mate not for love but for heat, the author insinuates that men engage in sex not for mutual relationship and enjoyment with women but for their own selfish pleasure.

Eric's behavior is also suspect. He stays out on many occasions and to pacify his wife, he pretends to be cooperative the next day. But as fate has it, it is not long that Vera discovers the other side of Eric. It turns out that Eric has a child with another woman. Probably he has more children now with his habitual night absenteeism. His behavior is used to stereotype men as unfaithful. The author through Vera's sister Jacinta unwaveringly makes her statement that "all men have children outside marriage" (22). Jacinta is even annoyed that Vera should have bothered her with Eric's behavior. She calls everything trivial and gives Vera's woes an I don't care attitude implying that what Eric has done is normal with all men. Her reaction is meant to show that Vera is only strange for not knowing that men are like that. To Jacinta, men's sexual behavior is common place knowledge that should not raise anyone's eyebrows. The author presents no good man and labors to graphically take the readers through the scandals men characters are involved in so as to emphasize men's weaknesses.

In *Whispers From Vera*, Goretti Kyomuhendo ridicules male characters that only value women in terms of sex. When Vera brings catering service girls to help her serve her visitors, the men visitors shamelessly "could not stop ogling" (56). Even when Vera and her husband go for a party at Eric's place of work, Eric's boss commented on how elegant Vera looked and even scratched her palm and winked at her in a sexually suggestive manner. It is not clear why this man who is old enough to be Vera's father should behave to her like that even in the presence of Vera's husband. The behavior of this man is symptomatic of his lack of self respect because in spite of his age, status and even the circumstances, he goes ahead to behave like that. Although there are men who look at sex as hobby, the behavior of this man appears exaggerated for purposes of emphasizing the fact that men have a distorted view of sex. Men are shown as distorted

creatures whose understanding of the importance of sex is distorted too. As a confirmation of the distorted thinking of men, Vera narrates how she provoked her husband into sex even though she was stressed and did not enjoy the whole experience at all. In spite of that, Vera says “he was giving me some time to come around but ‘yours truly’ did not enjoy it at all...I was surprised that Eric could still enjoy it minus me. I guess it is easier for men” (64). Although Vera’s views might be true from her own point of view, she seems to be subjective. She fails to recognize the dynamics of a successful sexual relationship and imagines one party can enjoy when the other is not participating. While a one way sexual enjoyment may be possible for men who rape, it may not be true for such a case as theirs. Her observation is a manifestation of her belief and expectations about men as far as sex is concerned. This could be an assumed belief that men enjoy sex without the participation of women. Such belief would therefore explain why some women writers show men taking sex as hobby.

Goretti Kyomuhendo further carries the ‘men and sex for pleasure’ motif in her novel *Secrets no More* where she graphically through Sister Bernadette tells how David lures Sr. Bernadette into a relationship when he was already married. David breaks her heart when he refuses to marry her after making her pregnant (75). It is after this experience that Bernadette seeks solace in church and turns into a nun. But it is incredible how David pleurably devoured every moment they spent together. What makes the whole scenario more incredible is the fact that David is a married man. Through the character of David the author emphasizes the fact that men, in addition to misunderstanding the importance of sex, are also sly, shrewd and unfaithful. The ugliness of the men’s attitude about sex comes clear through George. George has of recent become a rich man after toiling for long. He decides to throw a party for his friends. When his guests finally leave, he is relieved because he was exhausted from the events of the evening. Surprisingly, instead of looking forward to a sound sleep “all he wanted to do now was find Lisa and go to bed. Yes, may be a good screw would ease the tension in his muscle” (113). Although it is true that sex played in mutual understanding relieves tension, George objectifies Lisa. He looks at her as a past time object for relief since he wants sex for his

personal relief. Meaningful sex should be able to benefit both partners.

Goretti Kyomuhendo also focuses on important and high class men in order to bring out their attitude and behavior as far as sex is concerned. For example, in a party that George throws for his friends, Simon sexually strays with George's girlfriend Lisa. Simon's behavior contravenes rules of hospitality. He not only surprises George but also seriously annoys him by extending his sexual urge to his girlfriend and worse still, in George's own premises. By encroaching on Lisa, Simon seems to be saying that partying is all about enjoying and Lisa is one of those things to be enjoyed! Simon's behavior is blown up and not much is commented on Lisa's betrayal! Simon is strangely known for having sex at the back of his car as the driver looks on (117). To justify that men are unreasoning and blind when it comes to sex the author also talks about big men in government. These men are shown lacking any sense of self-restraint as far as sex is concerned. The purpose of these sex scene details, however unconvincing they sometime appear, is to emphasize that men shamelessly use sex as a past time activity for pleasure. Simon is used as an epitome of what goes on in the world of men. This is intended to ridicule men and the patriarchal system in general for not respecting the sanctity and privacy of sex. The author contends that as a result of men's obsession with sex, they spend much of their time discussing women. Marina's husband and his friends are culprits of such behavior (140).

The theme of men and perverted sex is further developed in Violet Barungi's *Cassandra*. Although Cassandra is an emancipated woman, she soon falls prey to the advances of sexy men. Raymond Agutamba has just separated with his wife Belinda and Cassandra comes in his life when he badly wants a woman to give him pleasure and to bring excitement into life. To present Raymond as a sexy man is to miss the point because it is human of him to accept Cassandra's love especially since Cassandra made herself available for him and now that he is lonely. Cassandra is totally responsible for what happens to her since it was in her power to control the situation. She does not have to respond to all advances by men. It is surprising that Raymond's gentility is held in dispute by Cassandra's sister Melinda who scornfully tells Cassandra that: "Every

woman in town below the age of seventy knows about Raymond Agutamba” (5). The credibility of this piece of information is as questionable as the author’s attitude about Raymond in particular and men in general. Raymond is made to appear as a sex maniac who moves from woman to woman regardless of their age. When the reader finally comes to fully meet Raymond, the mathematical precision with which he does things and the neatness of his house contradicts the thinking that he is a sexually crazy man who goes for any woman. The mere fact that he decides to go for Cassandra shows that he is choosy. Nowhere else do we see Raymond with other women. To say every woman in town below the age of seventy knows him is an unfair judgment and stereotyping of Raymond and men generally. However, the author deliberately comments on him to justify that he is a womanizer that hunts for sex for mere pleasure.

In Mr. Wakilo the managing director of Lotus International (LI), Violet Barungi advances a more serious case of men who greedily seek sex for mere pleasure. Wakilo is a man who has chosen to use his position to sexually exploit most of the girls that work under him. In spite of his advanced age, Wakilo shamelessly approaches any girl, young or old. He is commonly known to be a womanizer by all the people working under him. He stops at nothing when his advances are not reciprocated. He sometimes acts unprofessionally so as to satisfy his sexual urge. He is associated with Cassandra’s is bypassed for promotion when Collin a junior to Cassandra is promoted following Mr. Ndiwalala’s absconding from his work and his eventual self-exile (182). In what seems to be a point of poetic justice, Wakilo pays for his unrestrained sexual excesses when he succumbs to AIDS (237). Interestingly, none of the women he has been having sexual relations with is said to be infected. Whether this omission is deliberate or unconscious, it all points to the fact that the author wants to take it out on men and this she does through Wakilo. Wakilo is used to show that men’s urge for sex is so unrestrained that they don’t fear diseases. The reader of *Cassandra* will see how punishment to those who randomly involved themselves in sex for pleasure, is not fairly apportioned and that much of Wakilo’s behavior is stereotyped and largely contrived for purposes of showing men as sexually perverted.

Through Cassandra's friends George and Bevis, the author hits at the heart of the matter of her work. George is initially seen as a man who has no appeal for women and every girl at work sees him as an introvert and protective; the reason he is recommended to Cassandra to work as a sort of human shield from the sexual advances of men in Lotus International. Bevis on the other hand is largely seen as a proud self-loving fellow even by the members of his sex. Although it is normal and human for a young man like George to feel used to a girl and wish he had sex with her, his change of heart comes abruptly. The author shows this change of heart when George regrets why he had not taken advantage of Cassandra when she visited him (29). Bevis practically sleep walks and ends up having sex with Cassandra who interestingly is not aware! The sudden change of heart and character by Bevis and George is improbable. Human beings do not change so suddenly as though they were metals dropped in corrosive chemicals. However, the author seems to project them in such images in order to justify her conclusion that "There were few men who could rise above their baser nature" (104). The author declares that all men are despicable as far as sex is concerned. She makes this conclusion when Bevis sleep walks and has sex with Cassandra. Bevis, like George does not shown interests about females and is always cynical about women but he incredibly quickly gets attracted to Cassandra to the extent that he goes to her bed in a sleep walk in which he impregnates her. The author ignores life realities by presenting Bevis in a sleep walk that ends in his having sex with Cassandra without her knowledge. That Bevis sleep walks to Cassandra's room, goes onto her bed and finally has sex with her when Cassandra is not aware and Bevis is still asleep is unnatural and sounds like folk tale scene. The author sacrifices credibility at the altar of rewriting the story of the women and ends up seriously stereotyping men as sex beasts.

Mary Karooro echoes men's sexual perversion in *Child of A Delegate*. The delegates who have just spent one hour in the city go for prostitutes that very night. The delegates' behavior is questionable since they have just left their homes and have been with their families. What drives them to quickly go for women and prostitutes at that, shows the ugliness of men when it comes to sex. The delegates forget their status and the reason why they are here. They end up contributing to the problem of street children that they

decry. The male delegates are ridiculously portrayed and there is nothing admirable about them. They consider sex as part of their menu without which they cannot survive. On the contrary, their female counterparts are not seen going to look for men. Why should the delegates enjoy what the author describes as “a non impassioned game, like a chewing gum, chewed until all traces of sweetness are sponged out” (4). The author takes this craze for sex to another level. She considers men as lustful. The authorial intrusion cannot be missed when the delegate meets Hero on his second coming to the city. Hero is considered a seed sown in a meaningless moment of animal lust. The author’s point of view is engraved in the statement “men carelessly throw their seeds around not knowing the consequences of such action!”(17). The author considers men so mad about sex that they are unconcerned about the outcomes of their sexual exploits. Men are shown as insensitive when it comes to sex. They are ready to take all the risks for the pleasure of sex. This delegate who involves himself in unprotected sex with a prostitute in an AIDS era is used to show how stupid men can become as a result of sexual lust.

To emphasize the universality of the problem, the author even says “big men, respectable men, men of all categories change as the world becomes dark and start sowing indiscriminately” (17). The emphasis cannot be missed. The detailed categorization of different kinds of men is meant to show that all men are the same; careless and crazy about sex. The author condemns men and exonerates women whom she insists are “caught between desperations and ignorance” (17) when they provide tilling ground. Even the learned university registrar and lecturers are not exceptions as much as the minister who meets his daughter at the university as he goes there to pick a girl is not spared. The author’s low opinion of men in matters of sex continues to unfold as she comments on why pornographic magazines exist saying that “many men especially feed their sexual fantasies from those Magazines” (56). Mary Karooro ignores the fact that the women who pose naked in those magazines are not forced into this act but cooperate and help to sustain the existence of the pornographic magazines. On the contrary, Mary Karooro slowly takes her readers from man’s enjoyment of sex to man’s bestial obsession with sex. She even justifies this assertion by portraying a scenario in which a woman finds her husband deeply engrossed in the Kitten Magazine. Mary Karooro projects a

caricature of this man. The author describes how the woman finds her husband emitting queer noises, caressing the picture of the nude girl panting like an animal and saliva dripping out of his mouth. The man had even had an erection (57). This scene brings this man and the image of men to the lowest ebb of morality. It is possible that nude pictures could sexually arouse a person especially if that person is obsessed with pornography. But the author overemphasizes the whole situation for her own advantage when she says that the man was panting and saliva was dripping from his mouth. This man is reduced to a beast. For a human being to salivate upon seeing a nude picture of a woman puts him to the level of dogs that salivate when they see meat. Human beings salivate when they see or smell appetizing food. One wonders whether this man is going to eat the nude picture. That this man had an erection may not be refuted. But that the nude picture appeals to his physical sense of taste does not only defeat logic but presents the highest level of men's sexual perversion.

4.4 Sex; Men's test for Manhood

One of the biggest gender landmarks the patriarchal system has entrenched in many African societies has been the empowerment of men over women. Women believe that men use this opportunity to exert their sexual power over them in many aspects especially through sex. The Belief that men exercise their sexual power on women is a common motif in many works of Ugandan female writers. In *Cassandra*, Violet Barungi develops the belief that men test their manhood on women when Belinda finds Raymond having fun with Cassandra. Belinda comments on Raymond's relationship with a young girl. When Cassandra tries to defend Raymond, Belinda comments "men will be men. You and I know that some old reprobates have been known to marry children young enough to be their grandchildren" (41). The author implies that men are not only licentious but also sex maniacs since they exercise their manhood on women young enough to be their daughters. Violet Barungi further suggests that men's libido is so strong that they go for women who are young and strong enough to contain the men's sexual strength or to prove that they are still virile. Wakilo's escapades are cases of testing manhood. He sexually exerts himself on almost all the female employees under him. He is presented as though he wants to show his sexual prowess to remind the women that he is their boss.

In Mary Karoro's *Child Of A Delegate*, Bill's reaction after Hero's refusal to accept his request to go with him is important to note. It points to his insecurity upon being turned down. Bill could not believe that any girl could say no to him (38). The implication is that Bill has been sleeping with many girls in order to show the rest of the university boys that he is a man. When Hero turns down his offer, he feels that his pride has been gravely injured especially now that his manhood has been challenged. Bill appears to have taken all girls for granted. He thinks his manhood must be respected by all the girls. Although rape is an unacceptable practice in many African societies, Mary Karoro in addition to presenting it as men's weapon of torture to women suggests that it is used by men so as to assert their manhood over women. For example, Abasi Kiyimba writes that when Genesis rapes Nkwazi on her wedding day, Nkwazi's friend Mama insists that they should report the crime to "police and break the cycle of silence... otherwise, inconsiderate males will continue to assert their masculinity over the female sex using rape" (7). The author contends that rape is usually carried out by inconsiderate men to show how masculine they are. The author shows that men do this to prove their manhood. Although this may not seem convincing, the point made is clear; that men use sex in all forms to prove their manhood over women.

In *The First Daughter*, Gorette Kyomuhendo joins her contemporaries to also show that men use sex to prove their manhood over women. Kyamanywa is presented as a male chauvinist who has little regard for women. He even believes that any boy worth the name should bed girls before he marries. Kyamanywa is disappointed by his eldest son because in addition to being short for a boy of seventeen and as shy as a woman, Kyamanywa "did not believe that he had ever bedded a woman!"(10). Kyamanywa is both disappointed by Mugabi's physical appearance and lack of masculine prowess. To Kyamanywa, Mugabi is a poor apology for a man. This is why he now focuses his attention to his eldest daughter Kasemiire. The underlying meaning is that Mugabi is an effeminate worthless shadow of a man. This is the reason why he invests all his hope in his daughter Kasemiire even though he is a male chauvinist. The author emphasizes that man's power lies in the penis. Mugabi by failing to: bed any woman, appear strong and

tall, be assertive, excel in education and be hard working, fails to prove that he is a man. This is why Kyamanywa considers Mugabi an effeminate boy.

Kyamanywa practices what he believes and preaches. When his second wife disobeys him and goes to visit her parents, his reaction is according to pattern. In a demonstration of his manhood, he thoroughly beats her until she cries for mercy. In a strange turn of events, Kyamanywa leads his wife to the bed and “ordered her to spread her legs wide apart, then spent a full month without visiting her bed chamber” (7). Kyamanywa both physically and sexually demonstrates the man in him but the unfortunate part of it all is that he is used by the author to associate manhood with oppression. He in the first place beats his wife mercilessly and again gives her too much sex for the day and decides to sexually starve her for a full month as a punishment. Kyamanywa seems to have suspected that his wife could be going to see a lover. This could be the reason why he savagely sleeps with her to demonstrate that he is manly. The author uses this experience to show that men turn violent and brutal when their manhood is put in doubt.

Goretti Kyomuhendo amplifies the concept of testing manhood in *Secrets no More*. She writes that in the years father Marcel had spent at the parish, “he had come to learn that African marriages survived on the credibility of the woman more than the man” (28). Father Marcel learnt this lesson by discovering that many boys had children before marriage. Father Marcel, though strict as he is, seems to accept the fact that the boys can be ignored so he insisted on the women being faithful for the marriage to survive. This is demonstrated by the way he seriously interrogated women but lightly questioned men. The author’s picture of men is a distorted one intended to comment on men. But, the ignored truth is that these men produced children with women. The author shows that whenever the priest asked the men whether they had bastards, they were uncomfortable. The implied meaning is that these boys did not expect the priest to look at having bastards as strange and as such, “the boys had learnt to answer in the negative whenever he posed the question” (30). The author suggests that men have license to test their manhood. She shows that women are oppressed since they are not at liberty to practice their womanhood. However, the irony is that these men test their manhood on women

and not animals. Therefore while men openly test their manhood, it is clear that women test their womanhood behind curtains. The patriarchal society is only burying its head in the sand and ignores the truth that even some girls do test their womanhood.

In *Whispers From Vera*, Goretti Kyomuhendo continues to develop the theme of masculinity and testing of manhood through Jacinta. Jacinta is surprised that Vera is vexed by the fact that her husband has a child with another woman. She counsels her not to lose heart since “all men have children outside marriage” (22). Jacinta seems to suggest that men are always testing their manhood on as many women as they come across and children are the products of such tests. Her counsel points to the fact that all men are similar so there was no cause for alarm. This generalization is a serious stereotype of men intended to take it out on them for having stereotyped women for a long time. The emphasis given to the idea of sex and testing manhood is sometimes exaggerated and meant to expose how much society has been so unfair to women in order to raise sympathy for the women and condemnation for the men. Jacinta becomes an accomplice of patriarchal dominance because she speaks in support of the fact that it is not wrong for men to have children outside marriage. Her advice that women should expect and accept such occurrences shows her support for the practice. She has been affected by socialization.

4.5 Men’s disregard for Virginity

The theme of men and sex continues to dominate the selected novels of Ugandan women writers in different aspects. Men are presented as unconcerned about the preservation of virginity. While many societies attach a lot of importance and value to virginity, the focus is unfortunately on feminine virginity and that of the masculine gender is not deemed necessary. The demand to protect virginity weighs heavily on females although the joys of a virgin daughter are shared by all family members regardless of their gender. It therefore still remains a big irony that people expect one section of society to preserve what they value while the other section-the males are free to lose theirs.

In Mary Karoro’s *The Invisible Weevil*, Nkwanzi and her fiancée Genesis have loved

each other for a long time. However, Genesis wants to involve Nkwazi in pre marital sex but she will not because she wants to remain virgin up to her marriage day. Nkwazi boldly declines Genesis' persuasion even when she is sure that Genesis will marry her and will not demand that she accounts for her lost virginity. Her dream is to "redden" the traditional white sheets according to custom (Kiyimba 6). Genesis however is not bothered about protecting his virginity and he decides to seek a prostitute for sexual pleasure as he waits for their marriage. Through Genesis' behavior, the author emphasizes two points: one; that society has given liberty to men to sexually behave the way they like and two; that men are sexually weak since they lack the least strand of restraint. For his lack of self-restraint, Genesis is later to pay when he catches the deadly AIDS. Genesis' suffering is overemphasized both to show the effect of the invisible weevil (AIDS) on society and the effect of masculine sexual liberty.

Genesis later flees to the bush to fight the government in power but is arrested. Rex, once a university colleague, runs the torture chambers and Genesis is one of his prisoners. In order to secure freedom for Genesis, the condition is that Nkwazi should first offer him sex. Nkwazi has got to make a choice between the freedom of her fiancée and her virginity both of which she values so much. Nkwazi quickly hatches a plan to secure the release of her fiancée by tricking the sex hungry Rex. Genesis is finally released and Nkwazi escapes from the forced sex by hurting Rex's genitals. The great value that Nkwazi attaches to virginity is clear when she refuses to give in well knowing that the freedom of her fiancée hangs on her decision. The glaringly contrasted experience of Nkwazi and Genesis and their different reactions is meant to emphasize the fact that men lack sexual restraint. While Genesis easily gives in and seeks sexual pleasure from prostitutes willfully, Nkwazi resists the force and trickery of Rex.

The fact that Rex remains a menace in the life of Nkwazi and Genesis helps to emphasize the point that men are sexually weak and do not value their virginity. Rex is later seen on Nkwazi's wedding day when he finds her "naked on her bed, fantasizing about the pleasure she was about to give Genesis, and succeeds in raping her" (Kiyimba7). Nkwazi's dream of "reddening" the traditional white sheets is shattered.

Her desire to see her parents happy and proud of her chastity wanes as the whole experience introduces a serious crisis in her life. While she may not have to labor much to account for the lost virginity, she has an uphill task of coming to terms with the humiliation of the rape. She realizes that the rape has put a permanent scar of shame on her life. Through her worries, the author highlights the weakness and unfairness of the patriarchy which demands that girls should remain virgins and fails to put in place measures of protecting them in such cases as rape.

Mary Karooro's *Child Of A Delegate* is an artistically woven piece of literature that exposes the effect of patriarchy in many African societies. Cain and Hero have been living together as man and woman after Cain had paid the dowry. They have both given up the idea of virginity with Cain most likely losing his while at the university and now Hero losing hers on the demands of Cain who argues that she is now legally his wife. Surprisingly, Cain expects Hero to put on a snow-white dress on her wedding day to symbolize purity. But when Hero insists that she sees no point in pretending since she is no longer a virgin, Cain's reaction is questionable. He reasons that by not putting on a snow white dress on the wedding day, Hero would be making a public statement that she is not a virgin (102). Cain's reaction is on cue. It shows how men such as Cain go on a sex rampage and yet want to show the public that they have married virgin girls. Why do such men value virgin girls yet they go around breaking girls' virginity? This shows hypocrisy on the part of the Cains of this world. It is ridiculous that Cain wants Hero to put on a snow white dress to lie to the public that she is a virgin when he well knows that they have been living as man and wife as the public watched. The concern and effort Cain puts in to conform to public opinion about virginity before marriage is not reflected in what he does. He rather works hard not only to lose his virginity but also that of Hero. His concern about virginity is vain. He is only burying his head in the sand. The whole scenario is in line with the author's agenda to present men as unconcerned about their virginity yet they are happy when they marry virgin girls. This behavior does not only show how ridiculous the patriarchy ideology is but it also shows what a contradictory life men lead.

The author finally makes her statement through Hero who unlike Nkwanzu does not believe virginity before marriage is still an issue in the twentieth century. Hero is a revolutionary voice characterized by the fighter spirit. She is a voice against old age discrimination against women in matters of sex. Although Cain admits that virginity is not a serious issue, the fact is that he still subscribes to the social forces and public opinion that demands that virginity before marriage especially that of the woman, is observed. He insists that “a man’s ego will be inflated when on his first encounter with a girl, he realizes he was the first to plough the field. But after that, it doesn’t matter really” (103). Mary Karoro shows how ridiculous men can be for valuing virginity and at the same time failing to aspire to maintain it. Although this observation is true to some extent, she does not consider the fact that there are male virgins. What the author seems to be saying is that men are possessed by the urge to break women’s virginity.

Mary Karoro’s point is clearly made when she urges that society should ensure that both boys and girls abstain from sex before the age of consent. The author asserts that “Society makes virginity a one sided affair. A girl is supposed to remain a virgin before marriage and a boy is encouraged to practice sex long before marriage ... (103). The whole argument sounds as though no boy can ever be a virgin before marriage. This distorted image of masculinity betrays the author’s negative attitude about masculinity and sex. It is vanity for society to encourage boys to practice sex before marriage in the name of perfecting the art of sex when society well aware knows that these boys must practice on girls whose virginity will in the long run be broken. Men are therefore presented as selfish and unrealistic to expect girls to be virgins when they are being used for ‘practice’! Interestingly Kyamanywa, in Goretta Kyomuhendo’s *The First Daughter* is worried that his son Mugabi now seventeen may not have bedded a woman (10). But when his daughter Kasemiire gets pregnant having been bedded by Steven, Kyamanywa disowns her and as for his wife, “he blamed her for his daughter’s bad behavior” (54). This clearly shows Kyamanywa as foolishly inconsiderate. He should expect sons of other men to also bed girls and if such girls get pregnant, we do not expect him to get angry. But there is a lot of authorial intrusion. Kyamanywa is shown overreacting when his daughter is made pregnant. Yet the same Kyamanywa is not happy when he suspects

that his son has not slept with any girl. Kyamanywa is used to show men as selfish and foolish.

Like her contemporaries, Violet Barungi, in *Cassandra* tries to show that men have low regard for virginity and are comfortable at losing it. When Raymond first had sex with Cassandra, he expressed utter shock that Cassandra was still a virgin. His astonishment is clear when after waking up he exclaims “Christ, Cassandra, I didn’t know as God’s my witness. You should have told me...indicated...Goddamn it, Cassandra I’m talking about your...You’re still a virgin” (35). The knowledge that Cassandra was a virgin strikes Raymond as a thunderbolt. There is a lot that the author wants to show through Raymond’s reaction. Violet Barungi insinuates that although Raymond seems to appreciate and like a girl that is still virgin, he himself is not seen preserving his virginity before he married Belinda. The author suggests that men don’t value their virginity and that of women. Barungi shows that even when he is already married, Raymond shamelessly sleeps with other women. She uses Raymond to show that men are morally decayed since Raymond shows utter surprise that Cassandra was still a virgin at her age. The author’s underlying meaning in Raymond’s surprise is that Raymond does not expect Cassandra to be a virgin. On the contrary, Raymond respects virginity and didn’t want to corrupt Cassandra. He considers himself unworthy to deflower Cassandra since she had preserved her virginity up to such a time. Raymond is guilty. Although he does not openly say it, he feels haunted that he has contaminated Cassandra. He wished she were deflowered by a virgin boy. His reaction is as a result of his knowledge that he himself was not a virgin. He feels he was not the right man to deflower Cassandra. He is rueful and sorry for Cassandra. Although Mary Karoro in *Child Of A Delegate* asserts that “a man’s ego will be inflated when on his first encounter with a girl, he realizes he was the first to plough the field” (103), Raymond is not excited by the fact that Cassandra is still a virgin. He is instead sad, sorry and rueful for having deflowered Cassandra. He regretfully tells Cassandra “I’ve no right to touch you, I mean, if you’ve managed to keep yourself intact this long, it would not be right to deprive you of your virtue through a casual affair” (35). This shows how much he respects and values virginity. He is not driven by the ego to go around breaking girls’ virginity. The reader of *Cassandra* may wonder whether Cassandra values her virginity. She knows Raymond is married and

cannot marry her. But she is the one who compels Raymond to make love to her when she tells him “will you please take me and love me before I disintegrate?”(34). The reader cannot exonerate her since she freely surrenders her virginity to him. She is totally responsible for what happens to her. Although Raymond finally breaks Cassandra’s virginity, he rises above the rest of the men who are hungry to break women’s virginity. His case needs emphasis in order to show that there men who still respect the purity of girls.

In Goretti Kyomuhendo’s *The First Daughter* for example, Kasemiire’s loss of her virginity and her consequent pregnancy cannot entirely be blamed on Steven. Both Kasemiire and Steven are to blame for her loss of virginity. There is need to also bring this case to the fore front in order to show the other side of the coin. While in the other cases mainly men have been responsible for contributing to the girls’ loss of virginity, such a case where the two share responsibility needs highlighting in order to avoid presenting a one side view of the situation in the text. Her mistake is overshadowed by Kyamanywa’s brutality to her. The author does not consider the fact that Kasemiire greatly disappoints her father by betraying him and getting pregnant while still at school. Kyamanywa is a man more sinned against than sinning, but the way he is presented does not call for sympathy for him from the readers. The problem of gender and virginity remains half answered as much attention is paid to the attitude of men towards virginity while females who lose their virginity to men are only treated as vulnerable victims of the patriarchal system

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter presents the women writers’ belief that a man derives his power from the penis which he many times uses not only in his quest for sexual pleasure and testing manhood but also for torturing and breaking the virginity of women in order to demonstrate his manliness. The women writers portray men using the penis as a weapon of torture to the women. As a result, many male characters are consequently represented not only obsessed with power but also wrongly using it and many times behaving like beasts.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 Conclusion

Ugandan women writers have stereotyped men as much as men writers stereotyped women. They have distorted the images of male characters in the process of re-writing the story of the women. Male stereotyping has for quite some time been ignored and accepted in contemporary society. Ugandan women writers have not acknowledged the fact that all stereotypes, especially gender stereotypes hurt people regardless of one's sex. These stereotypes make it easy to ignore people that we do not know. In worse cases of gender stereotyping, even the people we know may be ignored and discriminated against. The Ugandan women writers need to know that everything we read constructs us. It makes us who we are, by presenting the image of ourselves as either women or men. It is very important therefore for writers to be cautious of the effects of gender stereotypes and avoid popularizing them in their works of literature.

Authors and writers should aim at providing gender balanced character representation in texts. There's need to realize that many readers identify with characters of their own gender in the books they read. The relative lack of a certain gender in a text may negatively affect the opportunity for some people to identify with their gender. On the other hand, the distortion of one gender may inversely affect the members of the distorted gender because instead of appreciating themselves and their role in society, they may end up developing a low self-esteem and sometimes hatred for the other gender. In both cases, the backlash of such experience is inevitably very dire for the entire society. There is need to avoid closing our eyes and ears as if nothing is happening against men. Society should understand that the fight against gender violence and stereotyping against men and women applies to both sexes.

The truth therefore is that the manner in which genders are presented in Literature

impacts the readers' attitudes and perceptions of gender appropriate behavior in society. The way characters are presented may dangerously affect readers since the readers may accept the way they see and read the world in literary works. For example, Sandra Bem of Stamford University believes that stereotyped men are typically unresponsive in situations where sympathy is expected. He believes that such men cannot express warmth, playfulness and concern. Such men believe that expressing "feminine" traits will make them seem like "sissies" or negate their "macho" image. Such trend of behavior could be a result of a long time experience of reading stereotyped masculine characters in literary works. For example, many works analyzed here popularize the thinking or opinion that men should be aggressive, assertive, domineering and should not cry. In trying to conform to such beliefs and opinions, many men have ended up being uncompromising and consequently oppressive not only to women but also to their fellow men.

There is evidence that boys and men are rarely described as people demonstrating emotions of sadness and fear, having occupations that are not stereotypically male and in roles where they are not competing or meeting high expectations. Men are many times represented as archetypal characters and women as pitiable victims of forces beyond their control. These stereotypes limit both genders from acting freely. They pressure men and women to behave in ways that are believed to be gender appropriate rather than ways best suited to their personality and abilities. Such literature may influence men to overstretch themselves to attain these high social expectations. In the process, they at times oppress women. Women too sometimes try to conform to societal expectations and remain subordinated and oppressed by men. Writers should try to avoid exaggerating distorted images of each gender and present a plausible view of life in order to encourage harmonious gender co-existence.

Gender stereotypes are unfortunately dangerous not only to the stereotyped individuals but to society as a whole. Feminine and masculine stereotypes are constraining and therefore limit individual's potential in the same way, pervasive negative stereotyping in a culture serves to normalize biased portrayals of individuals and make such stereotyped

opinion popular and appear as acceptable social trends. The more such stereotypes are popularized the stronger they entrench themselves in the lives of people, and the worse it becomes for such a society since doing away with those stereotypes becomes difficult. Members of society may end up forming opinions and attitudes that live even after them. This is not only dangerous to them but also to the generations that come after them.

Attitudes may be one of the most detrimental factors to success, participation, and achievement. Unless such people's attitudes are rid of stereotypes, achieving social progress remains an uphill task. These external influences on characters work together with internal preferences to influence an individual. These influences impact negatively on members of both genders. As a result of this external and internal influences, both genders face difficulties in career decisions sometimes. External forces such as social, cultural and obsolete traditional manifestations stereotype men and women career roles and behavior, subsequently streaming them into predefined dichotomous roles. Many men may be seen shying away from such careers as secretarial and nursing while women may shy away from engineering. Even where there are opportunities, men may be forced by social expectations to ignore such open opportunities. Writers should realize that cultural norms exert overt pressure on individuals to take up certain careers and adopt lifestyles created by society. Therefore, the continued portrayal of such scenarios only helps these stereotypes to get deeply entrenched in societal ways and may cause debate.

It may appear unrealistic to hold writers responsible for popularizing gender stereotypes but through the writers' use of most subtle techniques and mechanisms, the work of art serves as a powerful identification tool in society. Works of art have a great affect on people. The works help people to see characters, admire them, identify themselves with them and model their lives along such characters. It is pertinent therefore; that writers become conscious of the way they project or present their characters to their readers. What roles, expectations, actions and motives such characters are given must first be looked through carefully in order to guard against distortions and exaggerations that may negatively impact on society. The words and actions of characters may subtly show gender set expectations and roles, hence popularizing gender stereotypes among readers.

Writers should realize that everything we read has a great impact on us since it constructs us, and makes us who we are. If women writers hope their work should challenge female gender stereotypes, then in the same vain, they should not promote male stereotypes.

The process of conforming to gender roles is a complex long life experience that goes on consciously and in many cases unconsciously. Writers should not simply create 'mini' worlds in their texts without carefully studying and analyzing the relationships and actions of the bigger world or real world that serves as the basis of their works. It is clear for example that through a combination of behavioral modeling, rewards and punishments, women and men are socialized to conform to gender-stereotyped roles and expectations. These roles inevitably shape women and men's attitude, preferences, emotional, and physiological reactions and behavior. The conforming nature of gender roles and obligations inherent in these roles only serve as gender stress factors. Men will always try to suppress characteristics associated with femininity for example, showing sadness thus the belief that 'men don't cry.' They also focus on status and physical dominance; the reason why they are always trying to be tough, forceful and domineering. The writer therefore, by only emphasizing a world of domineering, assertive and forceful males, is only popularizing such gender stereotypes by emphasizing and resuscitating some of them. There is need to sometimes present the middle way world of moderate males.

The construction of parent characters should be carefully made since these parents have the strongest influence on gender role development and seem to pass on, both overtly and covertly, their own beliefs about gender to their children. This, they normally do in order to extend themselves and see themselves in their children. Parents aspire to provide their children with a sense of security and belonging. Nevertheless, in spite of the security they offer, gender stereotypes are limiting and perpetuate negative attitudes, suppress emotions and hinder the growth and potential of people. For example, the constant associating of gender with subjects hinders children's abilities and potentials since they may be discouraged to make an effort in some subjects they are told are not supposed to be done by their gender category. For example, in Mary Karooro's *The Invisible Weevil*,

Nkwanzi is advised to take Christian Religious Education and Home Management in order to become a good wife and discouraged from taking literature while her brother is encouraged to take subjects that will make him a boss. By bringing up this case, the author advises that children should be encouraged to look at subjects as equally useful to both genders whenever they are making career choices.

Generally, since this study underscores that it is what society says, does, and demands to see being done by masculinity that determines male characters' lifestyles, it is pertinent that writers thoughtfully do character construction. Men and women must be presented interacting in a plausible manner. This could help men and women to realise that they play complementary roles in life and this can only be done if there is harmony between them. As characters work and live together, they should be represented trying to understand each other, appreciate their differences, accept them and learn to live with them and accept them as merely differences rather than the right or wrong, unexpected or expected behavior. Flexibility of characters is therefore an important pre-requisite for teamwork and harmonious co-existence of characters in order to break gender barriers and biases that have for so long characterized many works of literature. Characters should be depicted realizing that they are different individuals but play a complementary role and cannot exist in isolation. Men and women must either sail together or drown together. Meaningful and healthy co-existence is therefore a must because of the forces of natural instinct as manifested in the whole essence of the creation of human beings. Writers should realize that the continuance of life's journey depends on the equal strength of the wheels of the chariot. This is why writers should focus on showing both men and women playing complementary roles in life. For men and women to lead a meaningful life they must all be seen moving side by side. Men and women must be seen working as these wheels of the same chariot. Although it may be urged that it may be hard to prescribe to writers of fiction what they should write, it is important to recognize that if writers want to use literature to change the world, then that literature should be thoughtfully constructed towards that purpose.

The community should be availed with literature that portrays balanced characters of both

genders. Both genders should be portrayed in a positive light with active and dynamic roles. Where the characters are negative, it should not be seen that the flaws of one gender are exaggerated. Writers should provide literature that does not portray either gender in a stereotyped manner. Gender-neutral literature should be written if gender stereotypes are to be minimized or even eliminated. The language used should be gender stereotype free and characters should be presented as logical or emotional basing on the situation they find themselves in but not on their gender. These characters should be given gender free occupation and their failures and achievements should not be evaluated on the basis of gender but on individual capabilities. Therefore, portrayal of individuals with distinctive personalities irrespective of gender becomes paramount if gender stereotypes are to be avoided. This study underscores that shining a spotlight on this often unspoken and unconsidered masculine stereotyping will demonstrate how gender based stereotypes often operate as barriers to the true personality of men. Men and women should be shown living interdependently.

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