

**DECONSTRUCTION OF THE PORTRAITURES
OF THE GIRL CHILD AND THE BOY CHILD IN
THE FOLKTALES, PROVERBS AND
PROVERBIAL NAMES OF THE BAGANDA**

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APPROVAL

This research has been submitted for examination with the approval of the candidate's university supervisors and the supervisors confirm the work has been done by the candidate.

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Literature of Kyambogo University is a result of my original research. It has never been submitted to any University or Institution of higher learning for an academic award.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all parents of Buganda and Uganda at large, who have the task of nurturing young girls and boys. To all teachers of literature, of all levels in the country, who must choose correct literary materials to inspire our young learners to cherish harmony and equity. Finally, to all the Bannabikira (Daughters of Mary) Sisters Bwanda, educators of children, who have generously sponsored my education to this level.

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ABSTRACT

This study is a deconstruction of the portrayures of both the girl child and the boy child in thirty selected oral works of the Baganda. The works include folktales, proverbs and proverbial names of the Baganda. Literature, like all communication reaches a wide audience in any society. It is attractive and appealing because it is often offered in the context of performance. This is why it has often been the medium of the social construction of gender. The Buganda sub-region of Uganda is no exception. In Buganda, oral literature, especially folktales, proverbs and proverbial names, has been the primary means of initiating and incorporating young boys and girls into the cultural norms and experiences. In my investigations, I was armoured with the provisions of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda on human rights, the demands of children's literature, the required international standards of children's literature, the role of literature in development and the modern trends of thought: like gender main streaming.

My analysis of the selected works reveals that the oral literature of the Baganda involves deep seated gender disparities engraved in an age-old patriarchal system. Although folk tales, proverbs and proverbial names of the Baganda have groomed their fore-parents from time immemorial, the same literature has subjected the girl child/woman to multiple forms of oppression, repression, exploitation and discrimination. To the boy child, the oral literature of the Baganda has apparently skewed positive attributes.

Informed by the tripartite theories of deconstruction, post-colonial feminism and reader response, the study undertook the deconstruction of the social constructs of the girl and the boy child characters in the selected folktales and proverbs of the Baganda. The study unearthed embedded contradictions and lies in what appears to be the negative and apparently positive images of girl and boy children respectively. The study proposes new ways of writing folktales, proverbs and sayings to offset the gender imbalances in the oral literature of the Baganda in general.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

In this dissertation, I used a number of key terms briefly defined below.

Folk tales

According to Okumba Miruka in his book; *Studying Oral Literature*; folktale refers to a prose account of people's culture or whole way of life handed down from generation to generation through the word of mouth (p. 12). It is a part of a community's oral art. James Jacobs et. al also in *Children's Literature Briefly*; say that folktales are stories of human experience told in primary colours, the nuisance of life stripped away to reveal the basic component part or themes; fear, love, greed, jealousy, mercy and many other virtues and vices (p.72). His Highness the Kabaka of Buganda Ronald Muwenda Mutebi in his key note to Masembe's "*Engero Zaffe*," says that folktales define community; they reflect its history, traditional values and its accumulated wisdom. He further says that the Baganda traditional stories hold much that reflect the Baganda as a distinct people (p. ii). Every culture has its own collection of ancient and traditional stories that have been orally transmitted from generation to generation.

In the context of children's literature, folktale is a term that refers to the type of literature whose target is the child-reader / listener. James Jacobs J.S. & Tunnel M. further says that folktales are also collectively referred to as traditional fantasy (p. 73).

Child

The term child has a number of definitions. In this study I shall use the term in the context of Peter Hunt. Peter Hunt, a prominent writer of children's literature in his book; *Understanding Children's Literature*; gives three major aspects of a child (girl and boy children): the biological, the legal and the social (p.5). The biological perspective calls anyone, male or female being, before puberty or adolescence a child. The legal perspective puts the child below the age of 18 years. The social perspective, he says, depends on the society's conception of who a child is. In this study, the girl child is any one female before puberty and is still under the domination of her parents or guardian; one who is not yet married or not yet initiated into adulthood. And a boy child is a young male not yet initiated into adulthood and is still under the domination of his parents and still below the age of 18.

Among the Baganda and in many other African ethnical groups, a baby girl was and is still a welcome gift in the family not only as a new member, loved and cherished, but most especially an incentive for future gain, a bank in whom much is saved that would be drawn on the day of her marriage because the future husband will have to bring so many “cows, so much money ...” in form of dowry.

Other definitions such as the one by Clara Chap Delaine, a Rwandan women activist, that says that “there is no official definition of the phrase girl child for no international binding convention or National legislation specifies her status; one can only postulate that she is both a female and a child,” informs this study as well. The boy child is a treasure from the word go.

Patriarchy

Patriarchy is also a very important terminology in this study. It is used to mean the assertion of prevalent dominance of men over women where all the pervasive systems implicitly and unconsciously control the thought pattern of the members of the society in question. It is a social system in which the males especially fathers have central roles of political leadership, moral authority and property. Patriarchy entails institutions of male privilege and female subordination; the Chauvinistic mentality. In the culture of the Baganda men/boys do not have to fight for their place in society like women/girls. Aristotle says that a society cannot be happy unless women are happy too and the feminists look at patriarchy as a social construction which can be overcome by revealing and critically analyzing its manifestations.

Portraiture

This is the art of painting or drawing pictures of a person. In this study, portraiture will include the very image(s) of the girl child that the tales create as well as the specific manner in which these images are revealed to the leader/listener.

Deconstruction

Deconstruction is a theory that argues that a text is not a discrete whole but contains several irreconcilable meanings: A text therefore has multiple interpretations. Hence deconstruction is a philosophical theory that seeks to expose deep seated contradictions in a work of art by delving below its surface meaning. It further questions traditional assumptions about certain identity and truth. It is a synonym of criticizing or demonstrating the incoherence of a

position. The deconstructor looks for the ways in which one term in the opposition has been privileged over the other in a particular text, argument, historical tradition or social practice. Jacques Derrida, the father of the theory argues that women's perspectives, interests or femininity have been suppressed or marginalized in existing cultures.

Stereotype

This is a set of inaccurate, simplistic generalizations about a group that allows others to categorize them and treat them accordingly. It is a too simple and therefore distorted image of a group; such a generalization is usually exaggerated or oversimplified and often offensive, that it is used to describe or distinguish a group. Stereotypes are standardized and simplified conceptions of people based on some prior assumptions. It is a picture in our heads whether right or wrong, an image perpetuated without change.

Feminism

Feminism is a view of life, society and the whole of reality emphatically from the woman's stand point. It advocates for the dignity of and the rights of women as autonomous, independent human beings. In many societies, women and the girl child are often treated unfairly and treated as less important than men and boys as largely exhibited in the Baganda folk tales. So, feminism aims at freeing women from the oppression and exploitation to which they are subjected by men. 'Sometimes', Austin Bukonya says in "*Coming to Birth*", 'Feminism takes the form of militancy, the women fighting what they call "male chauvinism" the belief that men are the only beings that matter.' (p.67)

The women's struggle against men chauvinism is probably as old as human society and culture. Events like the "sex strike" dramatized by the ancient Greek Comedian Aristophanes in *Lysistrata* imply the existence of gender conflict from primeval eras. It is true like the critics say, that the world has never yet seen a truly great and virtuous nation because in the degradation of woman the very fountains of life are poisoned to their source. So, the main feminist concern in literature should include highlighting women's concerns in the writings; exposing and subverting social injustices against women and reading all literature with an actively sensitive awareness of the woman's point of view.

Gender mainstreaming

This concept refers to a strategy to represent women in the core activities of each human society. This requires a consistent use of gender perspectives in all spheres of development. Main streaming essentially offers a pluralistic approach that values the diversity among both women and men so that both genders benefit generally. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. Gender mainstreaming requires an equal representation of women and men in decision making.

CHAPTER ONE

DECONSTRUCTION OF THE PORTRAITURES OF THE GIRL CHILD AND THE BOY CHILD IN THE FOLKTALES, PROVERBS AND PROVERBIAL NAMES OF THE BAGANDA

1.1 Introduction and Background to the Study

This research set out to deconstruct the portraits of both the girl child and the boy child in selected oral literary works of the Baganda: folktales, proverbs and proverbial names. The analysis concentrated on content, portrayal of the boy child and the girl child and the presentation of gender relations in the oral texts under study. There was a five foci basis for undertaking this research project: the misrepresentation of the girl child and the boy child in the oral literature of the Baganda, the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, the required international standards for children's literature, the definition of literature and the demands of modern trends of thought to make every discipline, literature inclusive, gender responsive.

Evidence of the misrepresentation of the girl child and boy child was picked from the following texts: *Engero Zaffe* by Harriet Masembe, *Siwa Muto Lugero* by M. Nsimbi, *Engero Amakumi Abiri mu Ebbiri* by Ekibiina Ky'Olulimi Oluganda and *Ssebato Bafuma* by A. K. Ssegganyi and K.S. Mukalazi, all of which are commonplace readers in many primary schools in Buganda Sub-region.¹ The folktales, proverbs and proverbial names contain sexist language as well as stereotypes that are detrimental to the proper psychological development of the children.

Prior to the epoch of formal education,² Baganda girls tended to sit around their mothers/grandmothers and the boys around their fathers/uncles or their representatives to have

¹The implementation of the thematic curriculum required using local languages as medium of instruction, from primary one to three. There were no specific children's literature texts for teaching reading and writing, so the children in Buganda read readers that were derived from recorded oral literature of the Baganda. Hence they get exposed to the folk tales and proverbs and proverbial names, all of which constituted the content of readers.

²Classroom education is referred to as formal education. It started in early 20th Century.

the folktales, proverbs, tongue twisters being performed. The purpose of these stories and proverbs was double fold, to amuse and to mould the girl child and the boy child into acceptable men and women in society.

Buganda was predominantly a patriarchal society. The founders of the Buganda dynasty used oral literature as a strategy for emphasizing the view that a woman was subordinate to the man. The oral literature which is currently being offered to Baganda children, as reading material in schools, was supposedly composed mostly by men. This literature naturally furthered the interests of men and therefore meant to assert the position of the male gender in society.

Ironically, the boy children, the men of tomorrow, were not wholesomely represented in the oral literature. Although boys were depicted as great, rich, intelligent and independent, a close reading of these texts reveals that this glorious picture of the boy is undercut by the negative attributes embedded in the same accolades given to boys/men. In the stories, the boy child, the man of tomorrow, is depicted as cunning, an overeater, a cannibal, deformed and dirty; all of which run contrary to the great image intended to be given to the man, whose position in the culture this very literature is trying to emphasize.

The second focus of the study was the 1995 constitution of the Republic of Uganda. The 1995 constitution of the republic of Uganda, prohibited all forms of cultural traditions that control and prohibit the freedom of children and women of Uganda, and demanded for protection and promotion of fundamental and other human rights and freedoms of all Ugandans, referred to in Article 4:

Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution the state shall take affirmative action in favour of groups marginalized on the basis of gender, age, disability or any other reason created by history, tradition or custom, for the purpose of redressing imbalances which exist against them. **(Clause1).**

Thus the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda sought to poise the imbalances created by history, tradition and customs, by providing special protection to women and children against suppression and oppression. Special consideration was to be given with regard to the unique roles of women. The constitution further asserted that women shall be entitled to

equal social, economic and political developmental opportunities: “Women shall have the right to equal treatment with men and that right shall include equal opportunities in political, economic and social activities.” By the above decree, therefore, the constitution “prohibited all laws, cultures, customs and traditions which are against the dignity, welfare and interest of women or which undermine their status” (Clauses 4-5).

Thus the gap this research envisioned to fill was that the laws, customs and traditions which had rendered the girls and women of Uganda, subservient, were still abounding. Specifically, the girl child/woman of Buganda is still crippled in manacles of cultural beliefs and traditions conveyed through oral literature.

The oral literature still teaches the girl that the only capital she can invest in is her beauty, a condition which is transient. The girl is depicted as a malleable brainless creature, half human; she must be led and must be given what to eat. The boy, the man of tomorrow is depicted as superior, powerful, rich intelligent and wise. One could adopt the remarks of one character in Chinua Achebe’s novel: *No Longer at Ease*, that the men have “both the knife and the bread.” The other, (the woman) will only eat if she bows to the will of the men.

Ugandan Government has attempted to empower women politically and economically as the 1995 Constitution of the republic of Uganda demands, but these women have not been emboldened psychologically. Ugandan women, especially, the Baganda, still suffer from stereotyping which has been perpetrated by oral literature, time immemorial. This situation has tainted the image and incapacitated the inner spirit of the girl/woman thus hampering full empowerment.

The third focus is the international requirements of children’s literature. The Baganda folktales, proverbs and proverbial names, all of which work as children’s literature, fall short of the required international standards for children’s literature. So, there is need to retell these stories from the view point of the children.

Literature for the children is expected to be amazing, mysterious. This literature is supposed to show the challenges in life but it is supposed to give hope. It must match the children’s experiences and their age. Here is a literature that offers none of the above.

Like all children, I grew up hearing stories being read and being told. The stories made me and my siblings wonder and laugh. However, there were many incidents that made me shudder. Now that I am an adult, I look back and wonder how the children coped with the horrible experiences of young girls in the stories. For instance, I had always been appalled by the punishment given to Nambi in the story of Kintu and Nambi. By all standards of fairness, the punishment of loosing the killer, *Walumbe* (death), on the children, for merely forgetting millet, was too much. The story does not offer hope either. Gulu sends *Kayikuuzi* to hunt *Walumbe* (death). I kept wondering why Gulu, the all powerful father of Nambi did not constrain Walumbe. Why did Gulu simply ask Kayikuuzi to hunt Walumbe well knowing the former can never get Walumbe? The story gives an impression that there is no end to suffering; thus hopeless.

The other story that saddened me was “*Kamasiira*.” In the story, a young girl is seen being taken by an ogre for only eating a piece of meat. In another story a girl is forced to marry a *Kakookolo* (the deformed and ugly man) by her dear father. In the story of Njabala, the mother’s ghost is not allowed to rest, but has to come and complete the task to train the girl. These and other stories very often annoyed and perturbed me.

While doing this research the researcher moved around several Buganda villages and schools, and read accounts in newspapers. The reality on the ground is that even with high education, there are men who are still cruel, selfish, greedy, very assertive, batterers of women and some almost ogre-like. There are many women/girls who are victims of men’s violence. The men still think that girls are weak, stupid, lazy, over-worked, and helpless and have every negative attribute one could imagine.

Among the interviewees, there were those who had more or less institutionalized the abuse of women. To the above appalling situations they say that; “It was the way of the world. Mothers must take care of their girls. They must be aware that those men will devour the girls as long as the mothers are not vigilant or the girls do not behave”. That world is very cruel to the girls. My concern is why the world must be cruel only to the girls? Why must the girls be suppressed and oppressed by unaccounted for conventions?

The fourth focus is one of the definitions of literature. Some of the definitions of literature are that literature is aesthetic. The stories are meant to tell the truth in a very pleasing way. What pleases a person must be anchored in very strong principles such as equality, truth, goodness, wealth and others. But the Baganda oral literature in the selected folktales, proverbs and proverbial names create joy out of distortions of the image of girls / women and boys/men. Literature is supposed to be both true and fictional but stories depict women and girls as stupid. Is it true that women are so stupid, and more stupid than the men as projected in these stories? Men are depicted as great, deformed and man eaters. Is it true that a good man must be deformed or is greatness exhibited in a man eater; must greatness be equated to cunningness? No, the truth is, men must be gentle, accomplished, elegant and presentable. Literature is effective it can create an effect. The children who read this literature will turn into what they read. If we do not want them to turn into ogres, man eaters, lazy, poor and stupid beings, we must give them positive literature.

The fifth focus points to the modern trends of thought like Gender Mainstreaming. Today the world is thinking of promoting gender equality in all aspects of human existence to foster unity and harmony. In other words it promotes gender parity in economic activities, social activities and money/wealth generating activities. And here the folktales, proverbs and proverbial names place the women and girls at the periphery of society, thus preventing them from acquiring major roles in society. One can argue that the Kiganda oral literature is an ideological tool that has played and still plays a big role in marginalizing the girl child thus impeding gender equity. The girl child, the woman of tomorrow, constitute the subservient and oppressed people in society.

Thus current Kiganda oral literature poses a threat to the social and psychological development of the young girls of Buganda, thus impeding gender parity. This oppressive literature has remained unchecked since its establishment. Ironically, the image of the boy child is not wholly appealing either, in the Kiganda oral literature. This situation must change.

Through oral literature, the culture of the Baganda imposes more restrictions on girls than on boys. For instance, it is a taboo for a Muganda girl to talk in public. There is a proverb, '*Oli Nakapanka ng'omukazi asoma ebbaluwa*'; you are as bold as a woman who reads to the

public, or who climbs a tree, rides a bicycle or thatches a house. So a woman must not do strenuous activities like construction, driving and even felling trees. Anybody who does any of the above activities is not a good woman. Yet if a woman is to master her world, she needs to participate in all these activities without any restrictions.

Their counterparts, the male children are excelling in many fields because they are given plenty of liberty to explore and to control the world around them. The boys will know more fauna and flora than the girls who are restricted to the fire place. The boys must learn to ride bicycles, develop their muscles and be brave. Thus before the two children go to school, one seems to be more ready to face the world than the other. This is why boys are prepared to study even harder courses than girls and they excel in many fields of study.

There are a few families in Buganda that do not restrict girls too much and have nurtured women who are strong and brave. In the parliament of Uganda, there are women who are more assertive and eloquent because they are confident. These are the women who have probably grown up doing almost the same things the boys do. Examples of these are: Margret Zziwa, now the Hon. Speaker of the East African Community. One of the prominent women Nambooze Bakireke, the Hon. Member of Parliament for Mukono municipality. The sports world also has very few women such as Suzan Muwonge a simple secondary teacher who has risen to fame as a sports star. Most probably, parents posed less cultural restrictions on these women as they grew up.

The analysis was informed by three interconnected theories: deconstruction, reader-response and post-colonial feminism. First is the postcolonial feminist premise that contends the uneven power balance between the two sexes as being a consequence of the patriarchal ideology, a social construct engendered and promoted by oral literature. The Oral literature of the Baganda like any culture presents the people's core values. However, these values have been formed by the ruling class which once marginalized women and children. The post colonial feminist theory argues that the colonialists used literature to distort the image of the colonized.

By implication, the men of Buganda colonized the women, the girls of yesterday. They used oral literature to distort the image of the colonized. Hence if we want to restore the image of

the woman, the place to go to, is to retell the folktales, proverbs and proverbial names, all of which constitute the literature that our children are exposed to as they learn reading and orthography of the Luganda Language.

The folktales and the proverbs form part of the media used in teaching of early literacy to a large section of Ugandan children who use the Luganda dialect. These stories must portray positive images about girls and boys. The stories must offer hopeful rather than abject situations. But the stories project girls as stupid, dependents, myopic victims of the ogre and good for nothing except their beauty. With the dawn of the 1995 constitution and gender mainstreaming, the oppressed groups came to the centre; a new set of values ought to be recognized. Old values must shift to give way to new ones.

The second theory is the reader response. This theory has many tenets but the researcher focused on the one that says that there are various interpretative communities of any given text. The predominant interpretative community in case of Buganda was the male who seemingly wrote these folktales for the glorification of the male gender. The dawn of gender mainstreaming therefore, has brought a new interpretative community the feminists that have to read these folktales, proverbs and proverbial names from a new angle.

The third theory is the deconstruction theory. The basic tenet used in the deconstruction theory was the argument that there is no absolute meaning of the text. Instead the text is open to various interpretations. Hence these folktales, proverbs and proverbial names can be analysed in many various ways.

Okpewho, Isdore in his book: *African oral Literature*, affirms that some of the major concerns of today are to demonstrate that traditional African culture is not obsolete but can be rendered relevant for the articulation of contemporary needs and goals (p.294). Like in any other folk literature, African oral literature is not innocent in its handling of contemporary issues like gender issues; it is because of our ancestors' awareness of the power of oral literature that they used it to construct gender roles. We can therefore use the same means to enhance the gender equality which is relevant to our time.

It was feared that if these stories are left as they were they would be detrimental to the minds of both the girl and the boy children. While these children are reading or listening to the

stories, they get a rub-off of the values and attitudes contained in the stories. The girls learn that they are servants of men and the boys tend to think they are the kings of the world. This is immoral as it creates low self-esteem. The modern trend of thought designated as gender mainstreaming aims to promote gender justice, itself, a nucleus for peace and harmony in any given human society. It was imperative to examine the above cited works to see whether the Kiganda oral literature promotes the correct images for both genders.

Second, the stories are read by boys and girls at the most critical time of their formation. Children acquire values, skills and attitudes at a very early stage of their lives. Values that are inculcated at this time of the children formation go a long way in shaping their lives. Some of these stories depict women as stupid, malleable, troublemakers and good-for nothing people. The boys are projected as clever, trustworthy, cunning, dirty, deformed and lawless. According to psychological criticism a person is what he or she reads. If our children are exposed to such portraits, they might develop wrong attitudes. Hence the reading materials must be well wrought to promote the correct ideas and forms of expression. The future prosperity of Buganda depends on what we give our children to read.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study deconstructed the portrayures of both the girl child and the boy child in the selected oral works of the Baganda in written form: folktales, proverbs and proverbial names. Equality, development and peace constitute the value package that the world is yearning for. These values are best expressed and advanced in a people's literature.

It is problematic that traditional literature of the Baganda has advanced the knowledge and self-esteem of the male child at the expense of the female child. This lopsided advancement mars the goal of equality, development and peace. More problematic though, is the fact that the boy/man's image is not wholesome in traditional literature of the Baganda.

There was need, therefore, to challenge the patriarchal ideology that did not only deny equality to the girl child but also presented an unproductive and unrealistic picture of the boy child. In this study, I undertook to deconstruct folktales and proverbs of the Baganda, in so far as they distort, according to me, the realities of both the girl and the boy child in traditional literature. The overall purpose is to arrive at a methodology to rectify the situation.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the study was to demonstrate that the girl child as depicted in the folktales of the Baganda is relegated to the lower rung of the social ladder. But the boy child is also not wholesomely represented in the oral literature of the Baganda.

The specific objectives were to:

1. Select and analyze twenty folktales and ten proverbs and proverbial names of the Baganda that feature the girl child and the boy child.
2. Present evidence that the selected folktales, proverbs and proverbial names perpetrate the stereotyping of gender in the folktales of the Baganda.
3. Challenge the stereotypes in light of the decrees of: the 1995 constitution of the Republic of Uganda, the modern trend of thought such as gender mainstreaming, the definition of literature and the required international standards of children literature.
4. Suggest new ways of (re)creating folktales that will depict the girl child and the boy child as equal partners in the overall equation of humanity.

1.4 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

- a) How do the authors of the selected folktales, proverbs and proverbial names depict the boy/girl child?
- b) How different is the depiction of the boy child from that of the girl child in the selected folktales and proverbs?
- c) How do the selected folktales and proverbs of the Baganda conform to the international standards for children's literature?
- d) How do the selected folktales and proverbs of the Baganda conform to the decrees of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda?

- e) What aspects of folktales and proverbs of the Baganda need to be adjusted to create gender equity in the oral literature of the Baganda?
- f) What are alternative ways of (re)creating folktales that will depict the girl and the boy child as equal partners in the overall equation of humanity?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The Conceptual Scope is oral literature. I took the selection from across a broad spectrum of myth, legend and the 'human tale'. These have been recorded in Harriet Masembe's *Engero Zaffe* (trans. Our Tales), collections in J. C. Ssekamwa's *Ebisoko n'Engero Ez'Amakulu Amakusike* (Essential Idioms and Narratives. The time scope is both ancient and modern time. So, all the literature was examined in the contexts of the pre-formal education and formal education in Uganda.

Sampling Scope : I examined twenty (20) folktales, six (6) proverbs and four (4) proverbial names of the Baganda from printed sources), E. K. Kizito, A. K. Segganyi & K. S. Mukalazi's *Ssebato Bafuma* (trans. Stories for the Young) and from Nsimbi Bazzebulala's *Ssiwa Muto Lugero*.

Geographical Scope: The study confined itself to the oral literature of the Baganda in Uganda.

Period Scope: The researcher selected from a wide spectrum the oral tales, proverbs and proverbial names handed down to the Baganda from the 12th century to present day. (These oral forms of literature are available in a written form).

1.6 Significance of the Study.

Little has been written about the portraiture of the girl child and the boy child. So, information provided by this study could fill some gaps in the study of Uganda oral literature for children:

1. The findings could inspire further research aimed to uncover the underlying contradictions in the oral compositions.

2. The findings could guide any audience interested in knowing the hidden meaning of the folktales proverbs and proverbial names the Baganda give to their children.
3. The results of the study could benefit gender equality activists.
4. The study further sparks off intervention in the search for alternative ways inspiring girls and young women greater opportunities by challenging cultural assumptions.
5. The study might empower readers of printed folktales of the Baganda with a (re)creative reading towards a gender balanced praxis.

1.7 Justification

The introduction of the thematic curriculum in Uganda created opportunities for teaching in local languages. The folktales and the proverbs form the reading materials for the children. For literature to be a perfect medium of teaching young ones it must be good and free from cultural or social biases. We need good literature that conveys the correct ideas and positive images about the people and the world in which they live. This constitutes the very reason to revisit the Baganda oral literature to check the suitability of the content of language, images and expressions to teach and shape the minds of the young people in the modern times.

Again, since the inception of the universal Primary Education (UPE) in Uganda, more child friendly policies and practices have been realized. One of the most significant of these is the policy that requires primary school going children in Uganda to be taught in their mother tongues (indigenous languages) from primary 1- 3. This means that all children in primary schools will access literature in their indigenous language; and folktales, proverbs are part of that literature.

The composition of fresh stories, proverbs and proverbial sayings will neutralize the stereotypes in the existing stories. Hence the re-reading and retelling of this literature will empower the girl children by showing them possibilities of their existence. Furthermore, although oral performances of folktales are still vibrant, the educational setting is dominated by the written word. In the school system where the traditional story teller is absent, the written tales act as the surrogate story teller. Again, there is more textual stability in the

printed text. This will ease our point of reference and it will be a handy resource whenever the need to revisit a given tale occurs. This is not possible with the oral performance, since an oral performance can never really be retrieved. The literature the researcher is deconstructing predominantly looks at the girl child negatively and it is related to Harriet Masembe's collection of "*Engero Zaffe*" (Our tales). The researcher took the narrative trend because it is multi generic; expansive in terms of themes; situates stories in an imaginary world; it is multi-disciplinary and has many characteristics like fantasy, humour and subverting order which are crucial to a growing child.

1.8. Limitations of the Study: There were three major limitations. The first was the time frame; one year was not enough to collect data, assemble it and write a report. The second was the scarcity of relevant persons to interview. The third was the scarcity of resource materials. The libraries had very limited related literature about children. The researcher had to retrieve much from the internet and this has been very expensive.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

The study used three theories: the post-colonial feminist theory, reader response and the deconstruction theory. According to Selden, Raman and Peter Widdowson, the post colonial theory is an off-shot of the Marxist theory (p.206). The central argument of the post colonial feminist theory is that the colonizers distorted the image of the colonized, the women, in their literature.

When this theory is applied to the Baganda situation, the men of Buganda colonized their women, girls and children. And like the colonizers they distorted the image of the women and children especially the girls in their oral literature. Therefore, there is need for the colonized to liberate their image from the male dominated literature. There is need to deconstruct the stories, proverbs and proverbial names in order to restore the distorted images.

The post colonial feminist theory therefore challenges the patriarchal ideology which stereotypes the girl child. Among the Baganda it is the patriarchal ideology that conditions the composition and consumption of the folktales. The interpretative community is predominantly male. This is because the men are in the government, the education system formal and informal and in almost all other important positions in society; they form the values to be

exhibited in literature. This is why the folk tales and proverbs put men in the high echelons of society. The writers, male or female will maintain the status quo which constitutes the values of society. The theory is applied to argue that gender differences must be viewed as a basis for complementarity of roles between the two sexes rather than subordination or superiority of one vis-a-vis the other.

The second theory is the reader response theory. The theory operates on the assumption that each individual brings his or her experiences and ideology to the text, hence, will interpret the text differently. That is why there are various interpretative communities of any given text. The predominant interpretative community in case of Buganda was the male who seemingly wrote these folktales for the glorification of the male gender.

Here the researcher examined the plight and position of the girl child among the Baganda as depicted in the folktales assuming that the girl is equal to the boy. The researcher further challenged the portraiture of the girl child as largely distorted within the dominative patriarchal order that characterizes the composition and performance of these folktales. The researcher analyzed the extent to which the rights of the girl child have been jeopardized; the purpose is to foster equal presentation in the lives of both boy and girl children and that is the major work of any literature piece; man must live in harmony and clear circumstances in any given environment.

Furthermore, the study utilized the deconstruction theory to analyze the texts and to justify a fresh reading of these texts. The deconstruction theory enabled me to reread, interpret and respond to the selected oral literature from the perspective of new readers, the girl child and women. The basic tenet the researcher used in the deconstruction theory was the argument that there is no absolute meaning of the text. Instead the text is open to various interpretations. Hence these folktales, proverbs and proverbial names can be analysed in many various ways. So, like reader response theory, a reader brings his mindset or experiences to the text.

From time immemorial, Buganda has been the world of men. So the composition of the tales and proverbs was supposedly done by men who have all along governed the society. The patriarchic order of the time sought to sustain the ideology of the dominant group. Today the values have changed. The marginalized groups are fighting to come to the centre. We must

hear literature that speaks to the souls of the new interpretative communities. To avoid future strife as the once oppressor also become oppressed, the study sought to find ways in which the boy/man retains his rights and dignity while he recognises that of the girl who has long been relegated to a peripheral position.

1.10 The Literature Reviewed for the Study

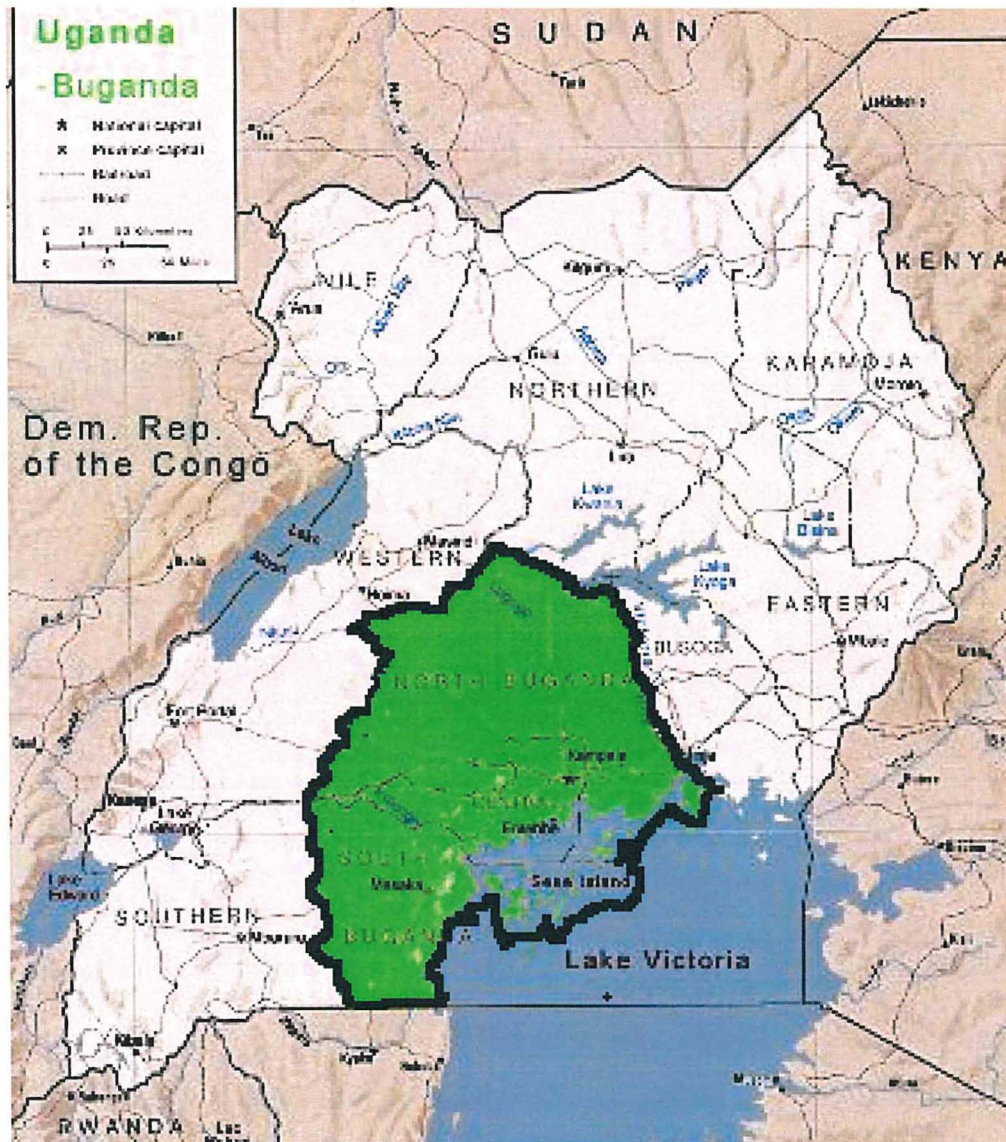
The literature which the researcher reviewed fell under 8 categories and these were: the history and background of the Baganda, the gender related issues in literature ranging from Classical times up to date; the definitions of literature; the role of criticism and the role of literature, recorded Kiganda literature, the writings of Ugandan critics on children's literature like: Aaron Mushengyezi, Cecilia Namulondo, Dominic Dipio and Abaasi Kiyimba, the renowned writers on children's literature like Paul Nodelman, Peter Hunt, James Jacobs and many others, who in a way set the required standards of children's literature and literature as a colonizing agent.

1.10.1 Background to the Community of the Baganda

According to Raman Selden, in *Contemporary Literary Theory*, the Marxist theory recommends historicization in order to gain correct perception of situations (p. 96). If one does not know the history, one is likely to short-circuit situations. So to appreciate the social constructs which the study set out to deconstruct, the researcher needed to first appreciate the history of the entity called Buganda, its growth and its culture.

Buganda is the largest of the traditional Kingdoms in present day Uganda, comprising of all Uganda's Central Region, which includes the Capital city of Uganda. The area covers the present districts of Kampala, Mpigi, Mukono, Masaka, Kalangala, Kiboga, Rakai and Mubende. The Baganda are a Bantu and they speak a Bantu dialect called Luganda belonging to the Niger Congo family. Buganda kingdom has a long and extensive history. The kingdom grew to become one of the largest and most powerful states in East Africa during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. The Baganda make up the largest ethnic group in Uganda. The kingdom has approximately 18.0% of Uganda's population and the total area Buganda covers is approximately 26,120 Square miles. (See the map below)

Map of Uganda showing the location of Buganda Kingdom.



As shown by the map, Buganda boundaries are marked off by Lake Kyoga in the south east, Ankole and Bunyoro in the south west, Victoria Nile in the northwest, Lake Kyoga in the north east and Busoga in the east. (Source: Internet)

1.10.2 The Origin and Expansion of Buganda

In his book *Kingship and State: the Buganda Dynasty*, Christopher Wrigley provides one version of history which relates that the occupants of this region had come from Abyssinia through the rift valley and the mountains of Elgon. One section of the people remained in the present day Mbale district and the more forceful and adventurous group continued westward in search for greener pastures (p. 6).

Another version of history states that the Baganda are descendants of the legendary figure of Kintu³ the first human being in Buganda. The Baganda are a Bantu people who are said to have originated from Central Africa (Katanga – Zaire). The Baganda are the biggest tribe in Uganda (p.19).

Kasirye J. in his book, *Abateregga ku Namulondo ya Buganda* tells the whole story of the origins of Buganda that in the 12th century, a man called Kintu (p. 2) arrived in Muwawa. The ineffectual leader, of Muwawa, Bemba, had run to the present day, Tanzania, leaving the clan leader, Walusimbi Buganda to take over charge of Muwawa. Walusimbi had several sons: Makubuya, Kisitu, Waswa Winyi, and Kato Kintu. When Walusimbi died, his son Makubuya replaced him as ruler. On his death, Makubuya in turn was replaced by his brother Kisitu as ruler of *Muwawa*.

During Kisitu's reign, the renegade prince, Bemba, returned to *Muwawa* from the area of Kiziba in Northern Tanzania today and established his camp at Naggalabi, Buddo. From there he planned to fight Walusimbi and thereafter reinstated his reign of *Muwawa*. Bemba became so cruel and ruthless hence lost the good will of the people. When he attacked Kisitu, the latter became timid and in his fear he vowed to give his chair, *Ssemagulu*⁴, to whoever would succeed in killing Bemba.

On hearing Kisitu's vow, Kintu attacked Bemba and beheaded him. Kisitu abdicated his throne to Kintu with the saying that, "dead bodies constitute the price for kingship." (*Ensi*

³ *Kintu* is a husband to Nambi in the story of Kintu and Nambi.

⁴ *Ssemagulu* was the symbol of authority.

Egula Mirambo). Kisitu remained the overall leader of the clans. He advised Kintu to rename the kingdom Buganda, in memory of their common ancestor Buganda Ntege Walusimbi. The king of Buganda would marry from any clan to give a chance to every clan to have a king. Succession to the throne was not by election but by heredity. Primogeniture was from the male line but the king took on the clan of his mother, in this way each clan got a chance to produce a king.

Reasons Why Women Were Subordinated

The subordination of women in Buganda springs partly from the misperception of the women's contribution to the development of Buganda. The Baganda had an insatiable craving for territory acquisition. Martin Luther Mugambwa in his book *Enkuluze y'Enmono y'Oluganda* explains that the men, led by their king, fought to acquire more territories such as Buddu, Buruli, Bugerere and Kome islands. The women stayed at home to take care of the homes. The women were indoctrinated to love their mother Buganda and so they strongly supported all the wars for expanding Buganda. They even contributed in nursing the wounded warriors when they returned home. Nevertheless, their contribution was never taken seriously (p. 15).

The rest of the counties such as Ssinga, Bulemezi, Buyaga and Buwekula were donated to the Baganda by the British during the 1900 Agreement. The need to acquire territories contributed the honour accorded to men in the Kiganda culture. The women were not taken seriously because they could not contribute directly to the growth of the country. Owing to their potential contribution to the growth and development of Uganda, the men while still boys, were given special education to enable them to receive martial skills. They were taught to be brave because they had to walk long distances and to endure hunger and thirst. They had to learn to fight wild animals. The boys were given special diet to enable them to develop physical power. The girls on the other hand, were given limited information as they were not expected to defend society. The dishes served to the girls were limited. Girls were prohibited from eating chicken because they did not need muscle power.

When the men went to war, they brought home the pillage which included women, animals and other property from the new won territories. The more loot a man could bring the more

honour society accorded him. For this reason men were considered useful while women were just beneficiaries of the loot.

The Buganda Education System

The education system of the Baganda contributed to the subordination of the women. Baganda people recognized three stages of human development and life after: *omwana* (child) *omuvubuka* (youth) and *omukazi or omusajja* (Woman or man). Any of those could turn into *omuzimu* after death. At each stage, a person was given the required education using oral literature.

Otiso M.K. in his book, *Culture and customs of Uganda*, reveals that males and females were taught specific roles that contributed to the formation of a unique Ugandan culture (p. 89).

Mugambwa in his book *Enkuluze Y'Ennono y'Oluganda* continues to say that Baganda people, (boys and girls) were expected to conform to the code of conduct known as *empisa*, morality (p.84). There was one true morality but that true morality was not the same for everybody. There were double standards for measuring morality. For boys it was correct to be aggressive and rough while talking, eating and walking. A man could get away with battering his wife in the name of disciplining her. True morality for men, therefore, included being obedient to adults, greeting visitors properly and knowing how to exert power in one's home. Even as young boys the men treated girls roughly. The more aggressive the boys were the more they were praised. Such praises like: 'that boy will be tough' (Kaliba kasajja), were indicators that they would be real men.

According to Mugambwa L.K the Baganda openly talked to the young people concerning the cultural conventions. However the commonest media of instruction of the young people were the sayings, proverbs and stories. The Baganda preferred this indirect way of instructing children and adults because the folktales, proverbs and wise sayings were interesting and memorable. Children would easily recall the stories and conform to the social conventions even by their own direction. Sex education for girls was more elaborate and systematic than it was for boys. A three-year old girl was taught the mode of sitting, of eating and walking. While a boy of the same age would do things haphazardly. The girl at the age of three was supposed to sit properly, eat slowly and count her steps while walking. (p.82)

Mugambwa again notes that as the girl approached puberty she would be restrained from climbing trees and from eating certain dishes such as chicken, mutton, pork and grasshoppers. The girl was sent to the aunt (*Ssenga*) father's sister. This was the most significant moral authority for girls. Aunts and grandmothers (*Ssengas and Jjajjas*) would instruct girls on how to respect the husband, how to please the husband. They were taught what men appreciated and what they disapproved of. (p.29). The education curriculum for the girls centered on how to please the man. The boys were never taught how to please their wives. Instead, they were taught how to make their power felt in the home.

Mugambwa continues to state that at the onset of their menstruation periods, the girls were secluded from the boys and the paternal aunts started educating them about sexual matters and future domestic responsibilities. Sex education took many forms one of them being: use of riddles and myths, folktales and legends told about the origin and history of the Baganda as well as the work of the real world. Baganda women told stories and legends to the girl children while they were in the kitchen and at the fireplace after supper. The men did the same with the boys. The classroom was the fire place as the boys were never allowed to go to the kitchen. Some of the stories were fables in which local fauna and flora were given human characteristics (souls, brains, logic) by means of which they talk and develop relationships with humans. The fauna and flora seemed to have supernatural elements which allow them to perform tasks only in folktales. (p.83)

After death, one becomes *omuzimu* (a ghost). The Baganda children were taught to respect the dead. The dead continued to control the life of the people. For example, in the story of *Njabala Tolinsanza Muko*, (Appendix 1), the woman whose marriage has failed invokes the spirit of the mother. The mother's spirit returns to complete the work unfinished.

Thus the young generations of the Baganda were always taught about the past of their kingdom and lineage and the life after death. They learnt about their ancestors, cultural taboos, history, values of life and many other things in their clans through oral material passed on from generation to generation through folktales, proverbs, legends, riddles and myths. Hence oral literature was the main source of education in the African life style. Literature was the way to teach the young ones to get used to and to know almost everything about their culture, people and historical background.

Food and Beverages

The staple food of the Baganda people was Matooke served with ground nuts stew, the meats were served when visitors came or on special functions. Some dishes were preserved for men. Cases in point were chicken, grasshoppers and mutton. The purpose was to make men special, to develop muscle power but also to teach women discipline. Common vegetables included cabbages, mushrooms, cassava, sweet potatoes, onions and various types of greens. The fruits which included; sweet bananas, pineapples, passion fruits and paw paws were mainly for children.

Marriage Customs of the Baganda

The marriage customs of the Baganda dictated the position of the woman in the home. Ganda's social organization emphasized descent through males. Four or five generations related through male forbears constituted a clan. The partners in the marriage had no hand in the arrangement of their marriage. All was done by the elders who collaborated with the leaders of the clan. The elders regulated marriage, which was always between two different lineages forming important social political alliances.

Therefore according to Mugambwa, marriage was not merely an affair between a man and a woman. Rather it was a process of acquiring a cook and bearer of children for a man's clan. (p.32) Clan expansion was an issue. This is why the Baganda people were polygamous. Acquiring many women meant that the man would get more children. If the first and second wife did not bear male children, the man could collect more in search for boys. The boys were the children because they would belong to the clan and girls would be given to other clans to help them to expand. One clan negotiated with another as one was not allowed to get a woman from his own clan. (p.37)

After marriage a new dwelling is established in the village of the husband. The husband and a father is a supreme figure in the family and the children and wife kneel in front of the husband, father and provider in deference to his authority. The father is revered and obeyed as head of the family. His decisions are generally unquestioned. The father has an upper hand in deciding and giving consent to the suitor of his daughters and the mother is often left behind.

1.10.2 Gender Relations in the Kiganda Culture

From its origin, the tribe of the Baganda has been male dominated. Baganda Social organization emphasized descent through male children. Primogeniture was from the male line as Nsimbi M.B. says it in his book *Amannya Amaganda n'Ennono Zaago* (p.5). The men exclusively occupied all positions of power. The head of a single unit - family was a father. The king and the clan leaders were men. Mugambwa M.L. in his book: *Enkuluze Y'ennono y'Omuganda*, confirms that it were men not women that went to battle to acquire territories (p.15). This explains why the male child was celebrated more than a female.

Furthermore, this traditionally patriarchal society, dominated, discriminated against and looked upon women as inferior in many aspects albeit in subtle ways. The traditional interpretation of the word marriage was "*Jangu onfumbire*" (come, cook for me). After the wedding, a new household was established, usually in the village of the husband. The husband, who was believed to be the head of the household, took the bride to his house. It was the man who owned a house and a house was a mark of manhood. There were even proverbs praising the young man who had a house: *Akezimbira tekaba kato* (One who builds a house cannot be called young). This proverb referred to men only because a woman was not expected to build and own a house. If she did she would be given a name *Nnakyeyombekedde*: a rebel or an aberrant woman. Such a name implied that a woman belonged to a man. She had therefore to live under the roof of a man where she would assume her role of cooking and producing children.

The folktales of the Baganda demonstrate the extent to which the girl child/woman was subordinated. The same tales show the effect of this negative representation which has impacted on the girl child's character, family experience and attitude to life. The image of the girl child in present day Buganda is oscillating between the negative and positive. However in stories, the girl child is projected as an object that can even be dispensed of. Any abnormal or any unwanted child or unexpected sex was the girl child. If a handicapped child happened to be a girl, she would be hidden until death as in *Omukazi eyaleka omwana omuwala mu kitooke*. (Appendix 1)

On the contrary, a boy with a disability would be nurtured despite the deformity because a man was considered to be a blessing; a sign that a boy / man was born. Some Baganda look at the girl children as extra mouths to feed. Others look at them as resources in terms of labour, security and economics. For some people, the more girl children they beget, the richer they consider themselves because of the high expectations of bride wealth. A father of many girls would count the calabashes of beer, bags of sugar, jerry cans of paraffin and bales of clothes plus the subsequent gifts the sons-in-law are expected to bring. A few optimistic parents though looked at the girl children as a blessing and a gift from God. In all cases, however, girl children were normally associated with innocence and “emptiness” to be filled.

In the folktales of the Baganda, the general moral for children has always been tied on gender, class and status. A boy has always taken the upper hand in everything as the girls lag behind in inequalities and traditional ties that keep them cemented to the ground. In general, the female gender has been presented as being inferior to the male gender and this mentality has been propagated in the media of folktales and proverbs of the Baganda (the oral literature of the Baganda).

It is against the above given background that the study sought to deconstruct the cultural stereotypes of the girl child in the folktales and proverbs of the Baganda. The study argued that the boy child and the girl child are human beings. There was no substantive reason for subordinating one to the other. The cultural conventions that have clipped their freedom are not pure manifestations of human wisdom but merely reflect the interests of the dominant class of a particular historical moment in the history of Buganda.

1.10.3 Definitions of Literature

The definition of literature forms one of the reasons for deconstructing the oral literature of the Baganda. There are six definitions of literature provided by Kelly Griffith in his book: *Writing Essays about Literature*; it is against these definitions that the researcher sought to re-examine folktales to see whether they meet the standards of good literature, especially for the children. According to Griffith, literature is by definition language, aesthetic, fictional, true, expressive and affective (p. 34). An analysis of each of the above definitions is significant for the study.

First, the definition of literature as language means that literature and language are synonymous. Indeed, the teaching and learning of any language cannot be divorced from that language's literature. This is so because literature uses the medium of language to communicate. The writers use the medium of words to express their views. They also manipulate sounds and the rhythm to create pleasure that facilitates the understanding of their messages. This is why literature is the major means of teaching language as it is language itself.

The second definition of literature as aesthetic implies that literature gives pleasure. To create meaningful pleasure literature must contain great ideas because what pleases people has to be anchored in great values not cheap ones. As stated above, equity is one of the foundation values in the human society. The folktales that misrepresent human beings violate equality thus underrating the basis for enjoyment.

In the above respect, one needs to ask what really constitutes pleasure in the Kiganda folktales. What is really laughable? According to the Wikipedia, there are many theories explaining the notion of humour but for this study the researcher zeroed on two. One of these theories is the superiority theory. The superiority theory holds that amusement or humour originates from the recognition that one is superior to others. The reason why the majority of human beings laugh when they listen to the stories is that they recognize the situation or characters who are inferior to them. In other words, people tend to enjoy situations in which they feel they are better than others.

In the folktales, girls and women are rendered inferior to men. They are voiceless, they are penniless and they are people without a brain. For instance, we have instances of girls who fall in love with non-human beings, who eat free food like beggars, who are forced to marry deformed people. The boys and men on the other hand, are depicted as rich, clever, powerful, leaders but also cunning, treacherous, dirty and deformed. Thus the stories make the children laugh at each other. Why not create stories in which all children laugh together over an ideal situation?

Wikipedia gives a second theory of humour as relief. According to this theory, a successful story must have a cognitive riddle or joke. It is this that causes tension as the story develops.

Laughter comes when the audience realises that the surprise or riddle is not dangerous as previously perceived.

However, in most stories we do not see this brain engaging riddle, the stories simply relate humiliating instances for girls and sometimes boys. Some stories give account of terrifying incidents in which girls are devoured by men. If we leave the stories as they are, we shall be sending the message that it pleases to depict the girls as victims of ogres and the boys as devourers of people. To laugh at such anomalous situations is to defeat the purpose for pleasure, indeed to cheapen it.

The third definition of literature according to Griffith is that literature is affective. By this definition, literature is assumed to have power to shape and change people's attitudes and behavior. Literature enshrines the best thoughts expressed in the most persuasive language. This is why in Buganda literature has been used as a tool for advancing patriarchal ideology. The Baganda have used oral literature as a mode of communication to foster their values and comment on topical issues. If we must change the negative attitudes, the place to start is oral literature. We must ensure that our oral literature promotes gender equity

The fourth definition projects literature as fictional. This means that a writer can create situations to depict the desirable and ideal situations that would not be understood in ordinary situations. However, the stories show men as beasts, dirty, rich, clever and women as stupid, eaters of free food and myopic. These situations are created out of the ordinary.

The fifth definition relates to literature as being expressive. Literature enshrines the best forms of thought recorded in the best turns of expressions. Literature is a granary of the people's core values. It is also in respect to the role of literature as being affective that the researcher undertook a critical examination of the folktales. The researcher argued that the tales promote attitudes and assumptions which are not only erroneous but also baseless and contradictory. There was need to deconstruct the stories by revealing the reality and the lies embedded in the social constructs, by not only exposing the negative portrayal of the girl or woman but also by showing the ironical representation of the boy child in the stories and wise sayings.

This is why a people's literature becomes a fount from which young people draw wisdom to guide them in the early days. The purpose for the creation should be to project the ideal situation. This creativity should be based on the fourth definition of literature which claims that literature is true. It is the ideal truth that should be recreated to teach the norms not the other way round. A number of folktales do not have an ideal of their lives. To have an ideal society, therefore, a nation must have great literature. But a peoples' literature cannot be great unless that literature represents all the people of respective society positively and promotes the best of values by all standards of human assessment.

The sixth definition relates literature as effective. This definition points to two core roles of literature as stated by Karl Marx in Selden Raman: to foster change for the better and to inculcate the best values of society. A people's values change as the time changes, for as society grows and develops it adopts new values and outdates old ones (p.96-98). In the past, the Baganda assumed that women are subhuman. Men were expected to be the overall and women as servants of men. That is why we have the folktales of the Baganda projecting men as intelligent, wise and perfect. The folktales were the media to promote the dominant ideology. The literature of that time dictated those values. The children of modern Uganda continue to read the stories as they were then where boys are projected as beasts, deformed and greedy and girls as stupid. Yet the advent of the 1995 Constitution put an end to old values and opened the door of freedom to the marginalised

The children of Uganda have been given freedom to express themselves. The literature we give them must be supportive if the children are to gain in it. The tales could be retold to foster equality, unity and peace between the genders. The new literature will then change the old mindset and promote the new found values.

Contrary to the above mentioned definitions of literature, the authors of Baganda folktales, proverbs and proverbial names consciously and unconsciously portrayed both the girl and the boy child negatively thus defeating the purposes of literature: instructing while pleasing young people. The distortion of the images of the young people does not constitute good reason for laughing. To laugh at a woman being depicted as a snake and a man being depicted as a man eater is to deprive literature of its intrinsic value.

The study therefore sought to establish that some folktales and proverbs of the Baganda are not well wrought considering the demands of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, the definitions of literature and the modern trends of thought such as gender mainstreaming and the required international standards of children's literature. The stories seem to uphold the outdated values of dominative patriarchal ideology. The stories ridicule the girls at the expense of the boys. Unfortunately, the stories inadvertently present a boy child in bad light.

1.10.4 Role of Criticism

The third reason why the researcher deconstructed the folktales is that most people have decoded the stories superficially, so they cannot see the anomalies. The work of literary critic according to Griffith Kelly, is to analyse and formulate meaning; to elucidate by direct examination of the principles of the text. Thus the critic throws light on areas that are inconspicuous to a nonliterary eye (p.24). Kiganda oral Literature, like any other literature, communicates at various levels and in subtle ways; it is easy to misunderstand its message. This is why many people have missed unobtrusive stereotypes in both the proverbs and stories of the Baganda. Hence in this discussion the researcher set out to unearth the subtle negative presentation of the girl child in the selected folktales. The researcher showed the likely psychological implications of the folktales on the girl child, mainly brought about by the negative portraiture in Kiganda oral literature.

1.10.5 Role of Literature

The preoccupation with literature arises from its tremendous contribution to economic development. According to Karl Marx in Raman Selden and Peter Widdowson's *Contemporary Literary Theory*, the economic sector provides the infrastructure of every human society. Human beings constitute one of the major factors of production. If human beings think correctly, uphold the best ideas, and attitudes toward themselves and the society, their correct mindset will in turn translate into productivity (p.97-98). One of the best media for developing correct attitudes is Literature. Literature is food for the mind. According to Philip Sydney's article, "Defense of Poesy": *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, literature texts talk to human beings objectively, generously and confidently, penetrating the

dark recesses of their hearts and pointing out the wisdom without embarrassing the reader or listener (p. 504-526).

With the dawn of the affirmative action programme, the women of Uganda became visible in leadership positions. The 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda made provisions for ensuring the recognition of women's rights. One of these provisions was to involve women in the politics of Uganda by ensuring that one third of the local councillors are women and a good portion of women go to parliament.

The provisions cited above have aroused women's interests in demanding for their rights and the desire to join mainstream politics. Today the speaker for East Africa parliament is a Muganda woman, Margret Zziwa. Her political acumen has been sharpened by the opportunity given to her by the Constitution of Uganda as shown in the *Leadership Magazine* of July 2012 issue 517 p.9, "*Person of the Month*". There are some Baganda women in big administrative positions in the government of Uganda. A few Baganda women have also made to big offices and sports. Cases in point are former Honorable Ministers of Education, Namirembe Bitamazire, Susan Muwonge in automobile sports. However, these are a few drops in the ocean. There is more to be done if the Muganda woman is to be fully liberated.

The mentality harbored by Baganda women that they are not as able as their counterparts, to explore and control their world that the men are naturally intelligent and victorious in every aspect of human existence, must be rectified. Similarly, the misogynistic attitude that Baganda men hold against women and the self-importance that the Baganda men have about themselves has to change.

Stories, proverbs and proverbial names constitute the content for early education of the Baganda. Oral literature has the power to effect change in the reader thus contributing to the formation of both the boy and girl children. If we want the children to change for the better, we must feed them on corruption free literature. The Baganda have passed on seemingly negative gender attitudes about child characters to the young generations through oral literature.

1.10.6 Recorded Kiganda Literature

The researcher sought proof of the adverse portraiture of the girl/boy child from thirty selected works. The works comprise twenty written oral narratives of the Baganda from Harriet Masembe's *Engero Zaffe* (trans. Our Tales), six folktales from collections of J. C. Ssekamwa's *Ebisoko n'Engero Ez'Amakulu Amakusike* (Essential Idioms and Narratives), four tales from E. K. Kizito, A. K. Segganyi & K. S. Mukalazi's *Ssebato Bafuma* (trans. Stories for the Young) and ten proverbs and sayings from Nsimbi Bazzebulala's *Ssiwa Muto Lugero*. To avoid unnecessary repetitions and to utilize the space for the main discussion the researcher did not handle the folktales independently. The researcher clustered the folktales under the various themes and provided examples of the folktales whose themes were discussed. The folktales and their corresponding translations are given in Appendix 2.

1.10.7 International Standards for Children's Literature versus Kiganda Literature

In Buganda there is no specific children literature. The folktales serve as both children and adult literature. In a move to consider the children's rights one must ensure that the materials children read suit the international standards of children's literature. Peter Hunt, in his book: *Understanding Children's Literature*: says that children's literature is most original and lively. Because of these attributes, this literature becomes the site for crudest commercial exploitation. Children are vulnerable, susceptible and must be protected from manipulation (p.209). Children's literature must be simple and straight forward. It must attempt to educate children by teaching them universal truths. This literature must have redeeming qualities to offer to children.

Portraits of Child Characters

The study is a continuation in the ongoing debate about children's literature in general and gender equality in literature. Perry Nodelman, Peter Hunt and Virginia Hamilton all of them icons in children's literature have outlined a number of principles about children's literature. These principles constitute the criteria for judging the portraits of the girl and boy children in the folktales and proverbs of the Baganda. It is revealed that many of the folktales of the Baganda fall short of achieving the ideal of equity and equality between the two sexes (boys and girls) which literature advocates for.

The first principle according to Nodelman's article in Hunt's *Literature for children: Contemporary Criticism*, children's literature offers the basic joy of immersion in a fictional world (p.1). However, many of the Baganda folktales which constitute children's literature do not regard this principle. The second principle is that children's literature, intended for an audience of children, is meant to relate to the interests of children and express real children experiences in order to give spontaneous pleasure thus teaching while pleasing them.

Nodelman observes that in developed countries history shows that there was a time when there was no specific literature for children. The need for children's literature was realized when adults came to believe that children were different from them. The awareness convinced the adults that children needed literature that suited their level, gender and interest (p. 82).

The principle is further emphasized by Hunt who argues that children's literature is generally defined in terms of its audience. However, the concept of that audience shifts with time and place. Children's literature is written for a subservient audience, which leads to a good deal of definition by use; and that use is generally to serve the dominant culture (p. 6).

The third principle is fantasy. Literature should be able to capture and nurture children's imagination. According to James Jacobs et.al, the stories should help children to engage or indulge in the dream land which offers challenges along with hope (p. 77). To confirm this, Osayimwese, in his book, *African Children's and Youth Literature*, also says that 'Folktales are part of the common stock of humanity and are closer to mankind than any written word. They are the delight of our childhood and they are part of our unconscious thought' (p.1, 8).

Such assertions inform this study and it may be interesting to discover that the writers and collectors of folktales of the Baganda Harriet Masembe, J.C Ssekamwa and Ssegganyi and others actually occasion a dangerous and a misrepresentation of the taste and ability of many individual children. One may ask whether the Baganda folktale writers and collectors do not write with assumptions that males are a superior gender and could be preserved while women are an inferior gender, discardable and dispensable sometimes at will. Akinwumi Isola, in Osayimwese, has rightly stated that normally the society that structures the physical and

cultural surroundings of children also provides them with their first language which is the seminal foundation of literature. (p. xi)

The study however argues that children's literature actually teaches through subtle ways and Nodelman advises that to educate a child, and more so a girl child requires making literature relevant to the lives of the children. They need a literature which will enrich them by referring to their own experience. Unfortunately, this literature has been written by adults who were trying to guess how a typical child could answer. The adults were paying no attention to what the children know and how they could respond to the text as they read (p. 16, 23). So, if we are to recommend works of literature for children and to children, the recommendations should be based on the aspects of reading that makes committed readers want to read. This is due to the fact that literature is defined as a vicarious experience that offers children insight into the feelings of others as a transmitter of cultural heritage and as a resource for the development of cognitive and linguistic skills.

James Jacobs further says that folktales are alternatively referred to as traditional fantasy. Tales from the oral culture are part of the fabric of every culture. The sheer delight of let's pretend and the eager suspension of disbelief, excitement, wonder and astonishment makes traditional fantasy of folktales attain reality in children's literature. (p. 73). The researcher argued that in many folktales of the Baganda reality is traditionally biased and that any empowered child reader would find reason to question the tales where she is devalued and slighted. As James Jacobs et. al. say, no other literature better prepares children to meet the complexities of adult life. Traditional fantasy is a wonderful metaphor for human existence and because of its rich imagery and dream like quality it speaks to us deeply (p. 77). These scholars further affirm that through fairy tales, a mode for educating children, children may vicariously vent the frustration of being a child controlled by an adult world, for they subconsciously identify with the heroes in the stories who are often the youngest, smallest and least powerful characters (p. 80).

The best example we can have here is the Cinderella story, a folktale that embodies the myth with an element of unjust oppression of a poor orphaned girl by her step-mother and two step-sisters; and triumphant reward of a child living in unfortunate circumstances that are suddenly changed to remarkable fortunes. In such folktales success is often obtained against

overwhelming odds for example, accomplishing an impossible task, spinning straw into gold and slaying invincible monsters. The story lines are often accompanied by typical themes like the reward of mercy, kindness and perseverance where justice is done and evil punished.

Such fantasy, James Jacobs et.al says, offers hope in abundance whatever the hardships of the journey, the days of despair, fantasy implicitly promises to lead us through them and the children who read these stories are also given a sense of hope about their ultimate ability to succeed in the real world. Hope is an essential thread in the fabric of all fantasies - to guide us out of the labyrinth (p. 73).

According to James Jacobs, use of fantasy makes the stories so edifying for children because they provide them with a message of hope that no matter how bleak the outlook or how dark the paths, it is possible to make a break-through and come out on top. Therefore, traditional fantasy has the force and power to (dis) empower for it stretches the imagination of children and cultivates the imaginative thoughts of the child. It is these attributes that play a crucial role later in life.

Smith in James Jacob's *Children's Literature Briefly* says that

Many adults worry that some of the traditional tales will frighten children, causing nightmares and other sorts of distress. However, because dangerous story elements like wicked witches or dragons are far removed in both time and place from the lives of children, they prove much less frightening than realistic stories of danger that focus on real life (p. 81).

Bruno Bettechein, in James Jacobs et.al, says that the evil person in a fairy tale, who meets a well-deserved fate, satisfies a child's deep need for justice to prevail. Sometimes this requires destroying the evil together. Lewis in Jacobs felt that insulating a child completely from fear was a disservice, since it is so likely that they will meet cruel enemies, let them at least have heard of brave knights and heroic courage. Otherwise, insulating them makes their destiny not brighter but darker (p. 216).

Unfortunately in the case of the folktales of the Baganda, as noted by Miruka, many folktales are intended to create a negative mindset. They are geared to emphasize and dramatize the

woman's inherent stereotyped position and the mentality that looking after a girl is like ploughing other people's fields. The tales show gender bias in favour of the male and show an unwholesome reality of the girl child (p.59). It is generally observed that the stories show how adult-centered the Baganda are; children are at the receiving end. The selected tales show that the girl child is at the lower ladder of receiving and the boy child in a superficial position.

The tales portray the traditional truth about the low status of the girl child and instills awareness and a sense of responsibility in those who read and listen to them.

H. Hollindale in Peter Hunt's book; *Literature for Children: Contemporary Criticism*, says that

Each child needs a literature which meets its needs and these are likely to be not homogeneous. For literature is one of the most effective and effortless ways of inculcating in child readers' minds that both boys and girls are equal and have the same aspirations and can achieve the same things in their lives (p. 24).

1.10.8. Literature as a Colonizing Agent

The study is propelled by post-colonial feminism, which in part argues that colonial writing also tended to put women (and children) in general at the periphery of society and to consign them to an insignificant category of the "other" (Mushengyezi, p. 139-140). This position is demonstrable in the content, form and contexts of many folktales of the Baganda which constitute children's literature

Aaron Mushengyezi a Uganda children literature critic has written extensively about children's literature. Commenting on the children's reading materials in Buganda, (folktales and proverbs), in an article that appears in Dipio Dominic and Johannessen's book: *Performing, Change and Identity Ownership and Tradition in Ugandan oral literature*, Mushengyezi critically observes that,

In Ugandan societies, Buganda inclusive, oral forms are largely a product of a patriarchal symbolic order and tend to present negative stereotypes of women and girls thereby downplaying their role in society (p. 71).

Thus the critic says that many things have been skewed in favour of the boy child though against the girl child. In other words, girl children have been stereotyped negatively; and it is this stereotyping that the researcher set out to deconstruct. The researcher argues that stereotyping has made the girl child to lag behind and the boy child to stay in a superficial position.

Kwensi, in Osayimwese, acknowledges the role of literature in strengthening the bond between the parents and the children. He remarks that,

The development of an independent country struggling to get a place in the World community of nations has robbed many a family of the leisure so necessary for telling the folktales and gradually that direct touch between parent and child is being lost in the whirlwind of industrialization, urbanization and fly over. So for this reason, self-illustrative books must be produced to replace the family gathering under the moonlight tree (p.1).

Kwensi's view expressed above induced the researcher to examine the quality of the reading material given to Baganda children.

According to Cecilia Namulondo, in her book; *Primary Education and Social Integration*, the Baganda have to present to their children most especially girls a literature that will make them attain an equally mutual attitude towards self-positive existence and development in the same way the boys do. The idea of superiority and inferiority complex should be ruled out totally right from the grass root. She says that;

Text books and other literary materials at the level of primary schooling together with their contents are not adopted equally well for all learners in the country. This in turn leads to the possibility of reinforcing negative stereotypes about other groups which primary pupils bring along to the school community as a result of exposure to similar prejudiced agents of socialisation like the home, peers and the mass media. (p.38)

Namulondo notes with concern that although the *Uganda Primary School Syllabus* advocates for the educational goal of National Unity, it is feared that if these folktales and other literary

materials are not written well to suit the national goal the reading materials will then impede rather than promote the intended National goals (p. 49, 127).

According to Namulondo, the Baganda have a set opinion in the form of cultural attitudes, beliefs, norms and values which accord them what could be referred to as cultural identity and some of these are often expressions of stereotyped biases or opinions that an in-group has towards an out-group. In this case the out-group is constituted by women/girls. These opinions are often exaggerations of actual differences between groups. The human tendency to maintain a clear mental distinction between the insider and outsider appears to be the main reason behind the natural processes that lead to group stereotypes and miss attributions (p. 47).

Namulondo further remarks that there are many instances of injustice done to the girl child in many of the folktales of the Baganda. For instance, the ogre is presented as one that lives among people, reasons with them, interacts with them but is not friendly to them. It thrives on devouring human beings especially helpless children and women who are considered lazy, weak, defenseless, vulnerable and victims of situations. It is always on the lookout for people to devour and often devise means of doing so; and the girl seems to be the most vulnerable. Here we have an example of a grandmother who wanted to exchange her granddaughter to an ogre with a chunk of meat because the Baganda folktales present girls/women as dispensable and disposable.

According to A. Bukenya, the girl child in literature world over has suffered from both sexism and childish for she is at the intersection of women rights and children's rights. She has been the object of scorn and abuse worldwide (p.43). This state of affairs is evidenced by the gender imbalances that exist across cultures. Many things have been skewed in favour of the boy child. There is need to create a learning environment that captures and nurtures the children's inherent qualities of imagination, curiosity and creativity

Austin Bukenya further affirms that many folktales of the Baganda portray the girl child almost always as a victim of circumstances. Whenever she is the protagonist, she becomes a prey to the ogre. She is devourable, deprived and debased (p. 63). The girl child is exploitable, discardable, fateful, disposable and dispensable. She could easily be exchanged for food,

money or sex. Children like women in literature, have been voiceless and invisible for a long time.

The mentality of relegating children (girls) to the periphery is not unique to Kiganda culture. Even in the western literature, namely the Victorian period, children's rights in general were curbed. The children were seen and not heard; this is why some writers such as William Blake and William Wordsworth wrote literature to liberate children. For example, they both associated innocence and divinity with children and celebrated these attributes of children in their poems such as in *The Nurse's song*:

When the voices of children are heard on the green,
And laughter is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast;
And everything else is still.
Then come home, my children, the sun has gone down,
And the dew of the night arise,
Come, come, leave off play, and let us away,
Till the morning appears in the skies.
(William Blake 1775-1827)

Similarly, in his *Lyrical Ballads*, William Wordsworth records Coleridge's poem "*Fear in Solitude*" which poem shows concern for the feelings of the child. When a child starts crying, at night, the persona pays attention and attempts to calm the fears of the child:

I hurried with him to our orchard plot,
And he beheld the moon, and hushed at once,
Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,
While his fair eyes, which swam with undropped tears
Did glitter in the yellow moon-beam!
(William Wordsworth 1798)

The poem portrays the child not as a liability but a human being, with feelings to be considered.

On the other hand, the majority of Victorian poets saw children as a liability. What they have for them is all horror and depravity. This can easily be noticed in the titles of the poems for their children; “Dreadful Harriet”, “Shock headed Peter”, “Cruel Fredrick”; all poems from *A collection of Little Horrors*. They are poems about nasty children ‘who do not deserve any presents – this Christmas’. Some Victorians like the Kiganda folktales just treat the child as a fellow adult worthy to compete with in the world.

In an interesting way the negative portraiture of the girl child reflects the undermined position of children’s literature in the overall world picture. Children’s literature has remained uncanonical and culturally marginalized. To gain recognition just as the literature of the colonized countries, Hunt, in his book, *Criticism, Theory and Children’s Literature*, says: children’s literature has had to fight against the dominant culture i.e. the academic hegemony of English Literature (p. 1). This argument is basis for saying that the girl child should be also liberated from assumptions made about her in the literary canons. She has to be assisted to overcome many huddles against the dominant beliefs about what she is.

Hunt and Nodelman argue that children are often colonized by adults because adults talk on behalf of them instead of telling them to express themselves. What these scholars call colonization of children in general is often worse in relation to the girl child. Adulthood defines childhood in relation to differences and similarities it perceives to itself. And just as colonized countries have adopted a paternalistic stance towards the natives, and a patronizing one to their writings, the adults have taken the same attitude towards the children most especially the girl child.

Hunt, in *Literature for Children: Contemporary Criticism*, asserts that as adult male literature dominates and women literature taken grudgingly, children’s literature is put at the bottom of the heap, also to a large extent children’s literature is ghettoized and its fabric downgraded (p. 2). This situation applies to Baganda children’s literature, the boy child is exalted and the girl child is shelved. Similar to the situation stated by Lissa Paul in Hunt;

There is good reason for appropriating the feminist theory to children’s literature because women’s literature, children’s literature and the girl child are devalued and

regarded as marginal or peripheral by literary, educational and patriarchal communities (p. 191).

Children, like women are lumped together as helpless and dependent creatures to be kept away from the scene of action and who otherwise ought not to be seen or heard. This is so because they share the same pathetic position.

For a long time, the males among the Baganda have been constructed as superior human beings as opposed to the females. In the folktales of the Baganda, we see the boy or man thriving on the expense of the girl child, he is sheltered from danger, and he fights and overcomes the ogre and leaves the vulnerable girl behind in the pangs of death. Consequently the girl becomes a constant victim of circumstances, lazy, destructive, fateful and sometimes a villain.

Dipio, Dominic in her book; *Theory and Criticism of Literature*, further pointed out that children's literature is ideology laden in terms of gender, race, social and economic roles. The child, and the girl child at that, is thought of as shapeable; constructed as a fool, empty, controllable (even the dead parents will leave behind a ruling / legacy that she should not marry before the dead give their consent), dispensable and can be exchanged for food, money and sex (p. 210). Compared to their male counterparts, the girl children in the selected folktales have been presented either as burdens to be shade off by marrying immediately they become of age. They do not belong to their birth place. They must be taken away or else be served to the ogre or monster which would devour them. It is very evident that this portrait creates a traumatizing experience to the children who read or listen to such stories of fateful existence. This, the critic Dipio believes that it is the result of the dominative patriarchal system that hovers over the cultural heritage of the Baganda and seeks, even in oral art, "to show that the position of women seems naturally true and not at all questionable"

Okumba Miruka says that oral narratives like those in Masembe's collection are vehicles through which the society passes over its wisdom and commentary on life to the future generation. They should therefore focus on important facets of society respectively (p.42). However, Baganda literature does not focus on the needs of the girl child. Instead this literature makes her a victim of violence regardless of her age, nationality and status. She is

fated to suffer scorn due to her gender. Many of the folktales of the Baganda that talk about the girl presuppose a clear intention to make women and girls suffer or enjoy differently from men and boys.

The stereotypical traits of a boy are aggressiveness, braveness, physically strong, handsome and usually a rescuer. On the other hand, the stereotypical traits of a female is not as smart as that of the male; definitely not as savvy, possibly naïve, physically weak, good, blindly obedient and trusting, gullible, but always beautiful. Many times if a female is not beautiful in a tale, she is a creature like a witch, ghostly and extreme physical beauty is equated to helplessness.

Kirsten Backstrom in James Jacobs et.al. says that

No one denies that throughout the world female children suffer abuses based on their gender. Female excision, bride burning, female infanticide, sex slavery and tourism, and servile marriage all affect the female child because she is a female and a child – all positions of vulnerability in many societies(p. 524).

The above outlined abuses are caused by the attitude that the female human being is less human, something to use, discardable, voiceless and defenseless. This attitude is bred and nurtured in literature as seen in the folktales of the Baganda.

Clara, a Rwandan woman activist who worked hard to resettle women and girls after the traumatizing Rwandan genocide of 1994, where many suffered rape and sexual assault, affirms that the ambiguity of the girl child's double edged victimization signifies dual discrimination, based on her gender and age. The mistreatment as we see in Harriet Masembe's collection of tales reinforces the patriarchal cultural behavior which asserts that "a good woman is she who upholds what brand culture places on her and that a bad woman is she who challenges it" (Dipio p. 216).

In Northern Uganda where the LRA war has ravaged the entire social fabric, women and girl children have emerged the worst hurt. And coupled with unfriendly and such catastrophic educational gaps a girl child continues to be battered by a combination of poverty, disease and

the backward cultural practices. There is need to unlock this ugly trend that is paralyzing the fortunes of the girl child among the Baganda.

For ages the Baganda children have been fed on tales of that type passed on to them orally for education purposes. Through such discourses, Dipio says;

the dominant ideology is communicated to members of the society and the principles of the dominant ideology becomes so encompassing and internalized among the members of society that it becomes very difficult to challenge or give alternatives to the patriarchal definitions of social values (p. 210).

In his *Twentieth Century Theory*, Mushengyezi argues that such a mentality is sexist or chauvinistic; the tendency to view things positively only from the perspective of one sex as if the other does not exist or matter (p. 104). Critically examining the folktales of the Baganda one easily notices, like Seth Lerer in his book: *Children's Literature: A Reader's History From Aesop to Harry Potter* that folktales and narratives, if well oriented to the child's understanding, remain a defining form of children's literature. They return again and again to central episodes in childhood life; and from such narratives children learn reading and writing and cultural, social and analytical skills (p. 37).

Moss in Peter Hunt's book *Understanding Children's Literature*, urges that young people should be exposed to a great deal of literature that at some point in their lives, they will return to understand better and even return to for enlightenment they had recognized as being there but had not been readily fully absorbed (p. 80).

In Peter Hunt's *Criticism, Theory and Children's Literature*, Tolkein a literary critic also argues that fairy tales in this modern lettered world,

have been relegated to the nursery as shabby or old fashioned furniture is relegated to the play room, primarily because the adults do not like it, and do not mind if it is misused. It is not the choice of children which decides this because children as a class neither like fairy tales more nor understand them better than do the adults' (p. 58).

The purpose is to instruct, to pose a moral, to illustrate a particular habit, to constrain resistant behavior and shape children's lives to the modern social norms (p. 51); and indeed it could have an ethical force. The tales must be sensitive to modern female and male status and with a female literary sensibility.

Like Walter J. Ong in his book *Orality and Literacy*, I argue that the Baganda folktales are heavily didactic; primarily designed to mold children intellectually, socially and psychologically. However, I feel they should now present freedom of thought. They should be adventurous and mind expanding for both boys and girls (p. 30). Elaine Konigsburg in James S. Jacobs et.al affirms that when one writes for children and about children she or he must try to expand the perimeter of their language, to set a wider limit to it, and to give them a vocabulary for alternatives (p. 24). Good children's literature appeals not only to the child in the adult but to the adult in the child.

Pierre Marchery in his book, *A Theory of Literacy Production*, says that;

Good books can do so much for children. At their best, they expand horizons and instill in children a sense of the wonderful complexity of life and that no other pleasure can so richly furnish a child's mind with the symbols, patterns, depths and possibilities of civilization (p. 34).

Many folktales of the Baganda about the girl child contradict directly with what is expected of the literature for children, as espoused by Hunt. It may seem plain that these stories teach the girl child that she must grow up under strict control, observe the world around her otherwise she will grieve for life.

In his book, *The Women's Movement in Uganda: History and Prospects*, A. M. Tripp shows that the hidden message behind the apparent moral force in the tales seem to be placed on the girl child much more than to the boy child. This in a way is the commodification of girls. Another instance of commodification of the girls and women is evidenced in the taken for granted gender stratifications during insurgencies where it is always said that the soldiers are mostly fond of women and girls just as the loot chicken, cows and other material things like clothes and mattresses" (p. 177).

In almost all stories intended to be humorous, the butt of the joke is a girl, and in contrast, boys are depicted as doing all sorts of adventurous and interesting activities. Girls and women are victims of the prominent culture.

Ashcraft Spivak in *The Empire Talks Back*, theorises the silence of the doubly oppressed subaltern and says that women and girls are historically muted subjects formed as the “other” and voiceless (p.21)

Milles McDowell in James Jacobs says that children’s books tend to favour an active rather than a passive treatment, with dialogue and incident rather than description and introspection; child protagonists are the rule; conventions are much used; the story develops within clear cut moral schematics which much adult fiction ignores. They tend to be optimistic rather than depressive, language is child oriented; plots are of distinctive order, probability is often discarded. (p. 232)

Robert Leeson also affirms the same that the stories the children hear help them to acquire expectations about what the world is like; its vocabulary and syntax as well as its people and places, without the distracting pressure of separating the real from the make believe. And although they will eventually learn that some of this world is only fiction, it is specific characters who and specific events which will be rejected. The current pattern of values, the stable expectations about the role and relationships which are part of their culture will remain. It is these underlying patterns which make stories “an important agent of socialization, one of the many modes by which they are taught the values and standards of their elders” (p. 236).

Leeson however regrets the inappropriateness of the messages and situations presented to and about the vulnerable child. He rhetorically wonders and asks:

Does the child’s culture automatically comprehend the prejudices of the adult culture; male versus female; black versus white; dirty versus clean; acceptable versus un acceptable? (p. 236).

In this study the researcher argued that the folktales of the Baganda negatively exploit the girl child’s mind by relegating her to the periphery. Possible solutions must be sought to promote

equity and equality between the two sexes. Roberts finally proposes a resolution that “one rewarding way of approaching these difficulties would be to involve a total re-reading of the text from the child’s point of view” (p.191). It is this re-reading that the researcher attempted in this study, focusing on a selection of folktales and proverbs of the Baganda.

Children literature must be optimistic, showing that despite the dark cloud, things will become better. This literature must depict the idyllic world from the view point of innocence. It must fantasize about comforts of life, exciting dangers of adventures passing from innocence to experience, the desire to grow but not to grow up.

Children’s literature must express the child’s point of view. It should be about childhood, it should be simple and straight forward but with a spontaneous flow. It must tend towards fantasy showing a symbolic defiance of our knowledge of reality and representing the potential that lies below the surface in each one of us. Children’s literature must focus on action. Subtle psychological events are often implied through narration and comment on action.

In a nutshell, the study set out to examine with a view to deconstructing the negative selected Kiganda oral literature which seems faulty in various ways. One, it depicts both portraitures of boys and girls negatively. Two, it deviates from the role and purpose of literature: to amuse, to educate and to give hope to children. These selected folktales and many others do not subscribe to the principle of fun, namely, the theory of superiority and relief respectively. Finally, the Kiganda selected literature does not meet the international standards of children’s literature. It was against all the above arguments that the researcher undertook to deconstruct the selected folktales and proverbs.

1.11 The Research Gap According to Literature Review

All the above mentioned writers agreed that the girl child has been negatively represented in the oral literature but do not show the impact of this negative representation on the girl who receives this literature. Moreover, the critics are silent about the embedded contradictions in the portrayal of the boy child in this oral literature. Hence the gap that this research explored was the deconstruction of both the portraitures of the girl child and boy child in the oral literature of the Baganda.

1.12 Research Methodology

The researcher used a qualitative research method which involved analyses of 20 selected folktales, 6 proverbs and 4 proverbial names. The researcher read, analysed and interpreted the literature using the three theories; reader response, post colonial and deconstruction theories. The interpretation was backed by various opinions and views corrected from different interpretative communities. These included men and women, girls and boys, school kids and teachers.

The overall purpose is to examine the images of the girl child and their manner of portrayal. The key questions that guided the analysis were as follows:

- 1) Do the folktales help the girl children to discover and realize their full potential and position as a consequence of reading/listening to these tales?
- 2) Could the girl child learn without being negatively indoctrinated by the largely patriarchal cultural constructs that the tales perpetrate?
- 3) How best could society retell the folktales in order to present both the girl and boy child positively?
- 4) What is the likely consequence of indoctrination in the formation of the girl and boy children?

The researcher consulted key informants and experts in the field of children's literature and oral literature to help crystallize the gap and give suggestions. It should be noted that there was hardly any written literature about the girl child among the Baganda.

The researcher surveyed secondary sources on children's literature in general and the girl child in the said literature in particular. Results of the research were organized according to the objectives and questions of the research study and the five reasons why the research was conducted.

The purpose of the interviews was to establish the respondents' view of the portrayures of the girl child and the boy child in the oral literature of the Baganda and to ascertain their interpretation of this oral literature.

1.13 Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation is organized as follows: Chapter one provides the general introduction of the study and it covers the background to the study, statement of the problem, aims and objectives, the scope of the study, significance of the study, justification and the theoretical frame work plus review of the related literature. This buttresses the objectives of the study and lastly, research methodology.

Chapter two delves into the distortions of the girl child in the selected folktales, proverbs and proverbial names of the Baganda. The chapter in a specific way discussed the overt and covert portraitures of the girl child.

Chapter three includes the deconstruction of the portraitures of both the girl and the boy children. The discussion discloses the contradictions in the stereotypes that the girl is a secondary citizen and the boy is the only child. The chapter shows that there is no reason for justifying the suppositions held about the boy and the girl child. The Baganda folktales and proverbs simply portray the situation and mentality that is rather outdated and therefore the stories should be retold to present the two genders as equal and harmonious. The concluding chapter recapitulates the major analysis and provides a way forward of how well these tales and proverbs should present both the boy and girl children.

CHAPTER TWO

STEREOTYPES OF THE GIRLCHILD IN SELECTED FOLKTALES, PROVERBS AND PROVERBIAL NAMES OF THE BAGANDA

2.1 Introduction

Despite a century of modern civic education, gender representation in Baganda oral literature is still as awry as it was in the 12th Century⁵. The literature of the Baganda, like that of other tribes in Uganda, has continued to depict a girl child/woman as a lesser than a man, second class citizen, in fact an alien. In this chapter the researcher analyzed the stereotyping of the girl / woman in the folk tales, proverbs and proverbial names of the Baganda. These ranged from representation of women as temptresses, malleable, good for nothing, brainless, inert, property of men, sexual object and overly attracted to men.

The negative images of the girl child have been unconsciously constructed and perpetrated through categories of literature cited above. There is need for further pragmatic examination of aspects of Kiganda oral literature to understand the complex nature of the gender situations in various societies. This in turn will help to reshape the images of both the girl and boy children. Based on the axiom that a person becomes what he/she reads, we need to provide positive images in the literature that children read. This would foster positive values and attitudes among the young people.

2.2 Unfavorable Representation of the Girl Child

A critical reading of the folktales requires an examination of gender relations and an analysis of the folktales to identify the gender stereotypes in the tales, proverbs and proverbial names. This in turn would guide meaningful deconstruction. Hence in this chapter, the researcher

⁵ As stated in the history of Buganda, the entity called Buganda was founded in the 12th century. This is when Kintu took over power from Bemba. Kintu thereafter formed the kingdom of Buganda. The folk tale of Kintu and Nambi is set in the 12th Century. The story shows the insubordination of women which has lingered up to the 21st Century.

critically analyzed the portraiture of the girl child in each of the selected texts to bring to light the blatant and covert gender stereotypes.

Both the negative representation of the girl and the boy children and the omission of the important characteristics of children's literature make it compulsory to reconstruct the tales. Therefore there is need to retell the folktales for they do not only damage the image of the girls but also darken the image of the boy it aims to glorify by the pervasive presentations. Thus in unmasking gender stereotypes that flow in the Baganda oral literature and in particular through the folktales the researcher considered both female and male children.

Furthermore, the feminist perspective seems unanimous in calling for a transformation of oral literature for the sake of the girl child. It is true the girl child is in a worse state in Baganda oral literature. Hence the researcher argues that the literature should be transformed so that it can shade its gender stereotypes and still recuperate indigenous cultural memory and survival modes that colonialism and culture have suppressed. It is imperative that the girl and the boy children are given chance to grow into strong and charismatic women and men.

2.2.1 The Girl Child/Woman as Temptresses and Trouble Makers to Men

Many Kiganda folktales, proverbs and proverbial names present a woman as temptresses and trouble makers to men. The woman's beauty is taken to be destructive to the opposite sex. The Baganda folktales perpetrate the notion that women are lawless, temptresses, not to be trusted. A case in point is the folktale: *Omuvubuka Eyawasa Omusambwa: a lass that married a ghost (Appendix 1)*.

The story cited above relates that a young man falls in love, first sight, with an extremely beautiful young girl. The title of the story suggests this girl is *Omusambwa* basking in the sun. *Omusambwa* is a generic term for a kind of haunting spirit or simply a demon which may assume any shape, appearance or form. The story reveals that the girl is irresistibly beautiful, so the man is lured into rushing to take her home thus skipping the required rituals of introducing himself to the parents before marriage. But the story shows that the beautiful woman advises the young man to seek the consent of the parents before taking her to his home.

The story is used to demonstrate that the girl's beauty is a temptation to the man. By calling the woman "*Omusambwa*" the author is subtly suggesting that the woman is a temptress. As expected, the young man tastes the bitter cup when the woman turns into a snake while at his home. The image of the snake here implies that a woman cannot be wholly good. Even her beauty which is so desired by men is dangerous. Like the biblical snake the woman's beauty lures the man to break the law. The beauty of a woman is a mere destruction because men are overwhelmed by the beauty of gorgeous women and are trapped into marrying them. The implied moral of the story is that men should be aware of beautiful women. Women are beautiful but behind this beauty lies a real danger. Like Lady Macbeth, in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, women put on a beautiful front. They look like a beautiful flower with a serpent underneath. (1: 3:70-72).

The moral of distrusting beautiful women is repeated in many other folktales. The first case in point is the story called *Akomunku*: (a girl with animal instincts). A very beautiful girl was born to a couple. However she has animal instincts that made her catch small insects and animals and eat them raw. Whenever the girl is in the natural habitat, the forest, her animal behavior resurfaces. However culture had taught her the art to conceal these defects while in the company of people. The implication of this scenario is that woman is naturally wild. She needs to be tamed. Left to herself she can devour people.

Like all beautiful girls, the girl referred to above is soon sighted for marriage. The marriage is soon arranged by the father who although knew the horrendous character of the girl, had left it to the mother and aunts to tame the girl. Men in Buganda owned the girl children but did not participate in bringing them up. The men only surfaced when the girls were ready for marriage.

During the wedding ceremony, the aunt, who happened to be counseling the bride, is overheard whispering to the bride to control her forest/ animal nature. The father-in-law, who happens to overhear the whisper, becomes so anxious about the defect of his prospectus daughter-in-law. He relentlessly inquires about the defects of the girl. Tired of being nagged by the father-in-law, the young lady devours the nagging father-in-law in the process of demonstrating her defects. The intended moral of the story is that beautiful women are wild or animal like.

The theme of distrusting beautiful women is further portrayed in Kiganda proverbs such as ‘*Abalungi mbwa za Namaaso*’; beautiful people are like a dog called Namaaso⁶. This dog could either be a good hunter or hopeless.

Another proverb that mocks the beauty of a woman is ‘*Werigomba ngomulungi akomba ensaka*. This proverb points to the belief among the Baganda that beautiful people are hopelessly vain: They can even starve themselves for fear of appearing awkward. The idea is beautiful women are convinced all people’s attention are on them. They also clamor for this attention.

The notion of ridiculing beautiful women is further seen in some of the proverbial names given to girls. A case in point is ‘*Nvannungi*’ (good sauce). In Buganda good sauce is meat stew, fish or groundnuts. Since the traditional Baganda had no refrigeration they just kept left over sauce by simply covering it. This sauce was known to go sour quickly. To call a woman good sauce is to say that her beauty lasts for only a short time. She is not to be trusted. A beautiful woman is therefore like fish, which rots fast.

Other proverbial names which indicate that beautiful women are not to be trusted include, ‘*Birungi’ tebiggwa mirembe*’, which means that beautiful women are dangerous. A name like ‘*Kulabako*’ which means a woman’s beauty is for window shopping only.

The stories and proverbs mentioned above abuse women in two ways. First they equate a great attribute of women, beauty, to danger, poison, destruction, deception and transience. Yet beauty is a desirable attribute, in fact a given gift. According to Shakespeare all people yearn for beautiful partners in marriage:

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauties rose might never die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heir bears his memory

⁶ Namaaso was a particular breed of dogs. This kind of dog had a spot around its eyes and it made the dog look exceptionally beautiful. But the common belief was that such a breed could not be trusted. They could turn out to be hunters or a good for nothing dog.

(Sonnet 1: ll.1-4)

It is therefore a natural law to love beauty and to desire to multiply beauty not ugliness. So, why would the story teller go against the grain as it were by promoting a negative attitude toward beauty? Must one be ugly to be trusted? Should we distrust all beautiful women?

Philip Sydney says that literature instructs better than moral philosophy or History because it exploits the principle of pleasure. Literature uses all pleasurable devices of art to make instruction palatable (p.125). The stories teach by conveying their moral truths artfully much like sugar coated pills. One of the pleasing qualities utilized in literature is beauty. It is great to read about beautiful girls like Cinderella doing good things and being chosen among all other girls because of her beauty. The film industry has prospered because it has utilized this great attribute of beauty. All film stars must be good looking. So why would the folktales ridicule beauty?

The second way the woman is abused is the over emphasizing of the attribute of beauty. Every story opens with the convention, "Once upon a time, a beautiful girl...." The repetition seems to say that a woman is not good for anything except beauty. Yet beauty of the body though desirable it is a transient quality. The men are depicted as intelligent and wise. They have physical prowess and have money. All these attributes are more lasting than beauty which as Shakespeare says is "Times fool". The "rosy lips and cheeks" are subjected to time. (Sonnet 116)

Ironically, to say that a woman is a temptress is in a way to condemn the man to lawlessness. The media is awash with debates in which men blame women for wearing miniskirts and dressing indecently. The assumption is that women are tempting men. While the researcher does not condone with unethical dress codes of some women, the researcher argues that the obligation of being ethical should bind both men and women. Men can tempt women as women do tempt them. Therefore to hold a debate or to write an article in which the women are presented as temptresses is to claim that women should be the moral force while the men can be left to do what they want.

The portraiture of a woman both as a temptress, lawless and destruction is not limited to Baganda literature. Since the early times, literature of other cultures has sustained the patriarchal belief that the men are wise, morally upright and sober. Their counterparts, the women, are always presented as trouble makers. For every mistake a man makes, it must be a woman who derails him. So the women are regarded as morally frail, and destructive to the men.

In Hebrew literature, human misery, ugliness and death all of which were consequences of the fall of the first man, Adam, are attributed to a woman, Eve, who is said to have tempted Adam to eat the forbidden fruit. Subsequent Western literature such as that of Geoffrey Chaucer a renowned writer of the 12th Century has continued to present a woman as a temptress. In the *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer echoes the Biblical view of the woman as a temptress. (Gen. 3) The wife of Bath provides a catalogue of assumptions about women as follows: her husband Jenkins read her a cursed book about accusations against women.

First, from the Bible, Eve the first woman brought misery to all mankind because of her wickedness. She disobeyed God and dragged her husband into her sin. The sin of Eve had terrible consequences like death and untold suffering of Christ to save mankind. Jesus was slain in order to redeem mankind from the sinfulness committed by a woman.

Another bad woman referred to in the Bible was the wife of Samson. Then the husband Samson lost his hair, source of power, because of a woman. As he slept, his mistress cut it off with her scissors. Through this treachery Samson lost his invincible power and both eyes.

In the Greek Classics, Hercules set fire on himself because of his wife Dejanira. Socrates suffered many tribulations with his two wives. The first wife Xantippe emptied a chamber pot to his head and the poor man sat as if he had died. He wiped his head and dared only to say, "Before the thunder stops the rain comes!"

According to the Wife of Bath, the husband disclaimed the disgusting lust and lechery of Pasiphae, queen of Crete and the story of Clytemnestra the adulteress who murdered her husband. The wife of Amphiaraus, who for a golden brooch exposed the hiding place of her husband, as a result her husband was killed in Theses (p. 166-167).

The cursed book further reveals that women can never keep a secret. They are frail. An example is Ovid's stories where the wife of Midas, who having discovered that Midas had two ass's ears growing on his head under his long hair and that he was able to hide this defect cunningly from the sight of everyone, except his wife, no one else knew of it. Midas loved his wife deeply and begged her never to reveal this disfigurement. The wife swore never to tell anyone, keeping a secret so long. However, the desire to tell (disclose) pained her so much that she thought the words would burst out of her mouth.

The negative presentation of women seems to subside in the literature of William Shakespeare whose works are considered a cornerstone of literature. For this reason the works are widely read. A good section of Shakespeare's works show him as a fair presenter of women. In his works, Shakespeare creates exceptionally intelligent and brave women. Cases in point are the two Portia's in *The Merchant of Venice* and *Julius Caesar*, respectively. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare presents a very beautiful woman, Portia. Men come from all over the world, even Africa, to seek her hand in marriage.

But Shakespeare does not stop at Portia's external appearance. Unlike in the folktales of the Baganda, where women are praised for their beauty only, Shakespeare balances the scales for this woman by giving her exceptional wit. She breaks the gridlock by overturning tables on Shylock. Shylock the Jew holds all people at ransom in the court in Act 4 scene 1, when he insists on killing Antonio. Shylock's instance of the pound of flesh almost turns the play into a tragedy. However, Portia by her exceptional wisdom saves the play from having a tragic end *The Merchant of Venice*, (Act IV, Scene: 1, lines 300-390). Thus Shakespeare liberates the women from the traditional accusation that the women are trouble makers and good for nothing except their beauty.

In *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare celebrates the Roman culture among other themes. In this culture the women were considered as secondary citizens because they did not go to war. They were taken to be frail. However, Shakespeare redeems the women by giving them attributes of the noble Romans. One woman, Portia, wife of the noble Brutus, proves to be as brave as the noble Romans. She sustained big scars of once deep wounds as proof for her stoicism. *Julius Caesar*, (Act 11: Scene 2: lines 230-300). So she is not frail as is expected of women in the Roman society. She also meets her death in the most heroic way of swallowing

live charcoal. It was done in lamentation for the long absence of her husband Brutus. The latter, like a stoic Roman runs on his sword. So Portia is as brave as her husband Brutus. There are many other great women in Shakespeare.

However, the same great writer falls into the footsteps of his ancestors when he states that women are “*frail in nature.*” In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare presents a very beautiful woman Gertrude, whom Claudius cannot resist. By this presentation, Shakespeare suggests that women are temptresses. In the *Twelfth Night* Shakespeare presents Olivia, a beautiful woman who has hardly vowed not to marry when she falls in love with a mere servant who also happens to be a shadow of a man, *Twelfth Night*, (Act 1: Scene v, lines 182-291).

In *Macbeth*, (Act 1, Scene 3: lines 40-80) the women are presented as forces that bring about Macbeth’s downfall. The witches are women who ignite his ambition. Lady Macbeth augments it when she becomes a master planner in the killing of Duncan and also challenged Macbeth’s manhood up to the point of making him act beyond his conscience. She further seeks the power of the witches by going to the underworld. It is the witches that still tempt Macbeth, to commit more murders thereby bringing his downfall.

According to feminist scholars, it is this portraiture of a woman in oral and recorded literatures that has been responsible for the subordination of the woman in western civilization. To curb the suppression of women through literature, the women had to deconstruct the above cited literary texts.

2.2.2 The Girl as Something Disposable

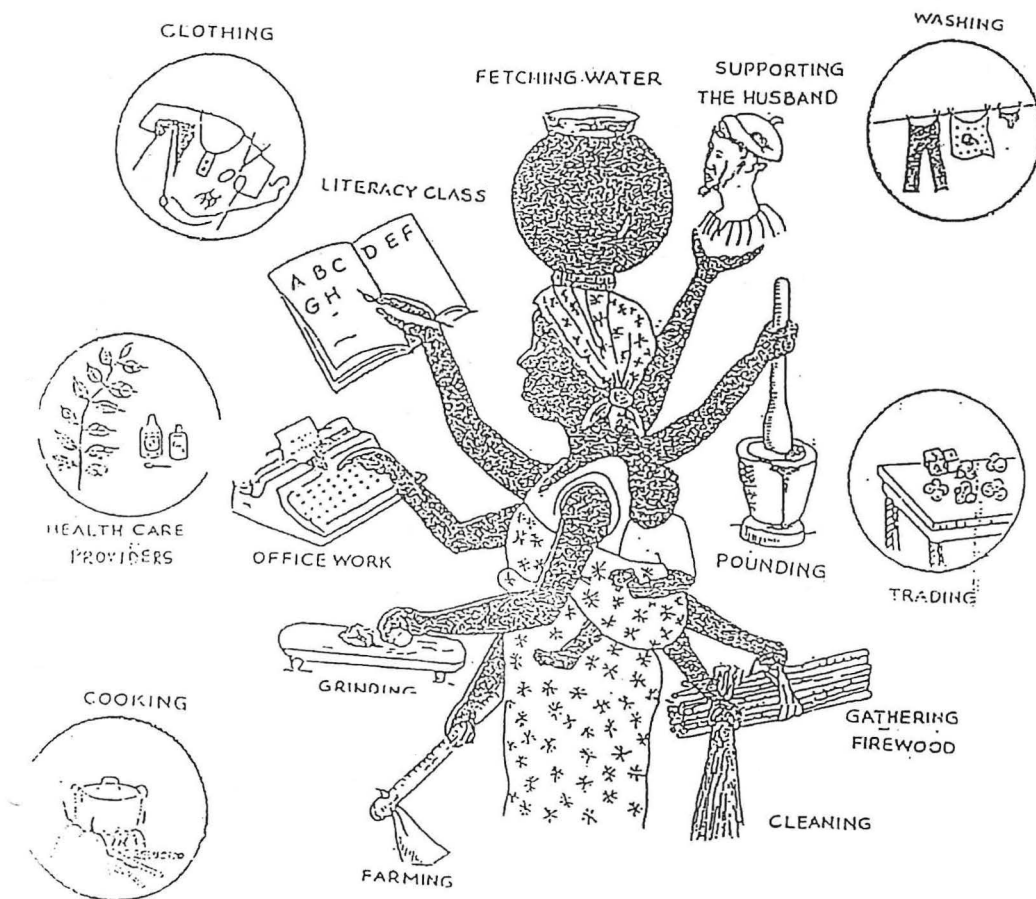
In the Kiganda culture, the girl child is not considered as a child. Rather the child is a thing that can be disposed of or exchanged for something considered more valuable. This is seen in the proverbial names given to the children. When a mother has a peaceful pregnancy she sadly predicts that the baby will be a girl (*Gannemerredde; failure*). This is because girls are expected to be of any use to society apart from producing children. When the expectant mother gets a disturbing pregnancy where the baby kicks and the mother becomes sickly, the mother ironically rejoices that she is going to produce a man. The more violent the pregnancy is, the more the expectant mother rejoices as she muses: ‘*Kaliba Kasajja*’ he will be a great man. This manhood is measured by the degree of aggressiveness of the baby. When a woman

produces a boy she rejoices that she has produced: '*Nnaatukirira*': (I have accomplished the task). It is like she says; it is consummated! Hence, it is the male child who is taken as a human being. The girl is a good for nothing, an off cuff thing.

Both men and women authors of the stories have subscribed to society's expectations of girl/boy children and of woman and man. The stories show that a girl is not a child. She is the 'other'. The woman goes to the labour ward as if to shop. If she fails to get the right child who is a boy and gets a substitute, this other childlike thing does not satisfy the men who control the world. So they give it a name '*Gannemerredde*': I have failed. The use of the first person point of view in this proverbial name; *Gannemerredde* reflects the guilt the woman feels for not producing a male child. According to Dominic Dipio, the girl children in Baganda folktales are presented as burdens to be shade off by marrying them off immediately they come of age. Dipio further asserts that girls even do not belong to the home. When they grow, they are either married off or "served to the ogre". (Dominic Dipio, p. 210)

The girls are tolerated, as the 'other', due to a uniquely female potential to bear children. From point go the girls who later turn into women are viewed as uniquely suited for domestic and reproductive activities such as child bearing, food preparation, washing and cleaning, health maintenance and child care. Because men cannot produce children, they take it that they are freed from the burden to nurture, educate, feed, wash, and protect the children. The patriarchal system assigns the labor over the woman in marriage, politics and social status.

The women then who are condemned to be useless, develop myriad hands to accomplish all chores.



The myriad hands a woman/girl must own. (Source: Association of the Religious of Uganda (ARU) files)

As shown in the illustration above, the literature of the Baganda then presents a servile image of a woman/girl but a glorified image of the boy child whom culture assigns a more elevated social position than that of the girl. The boy is the most welcome child at birth and is the leader even when he is still a child.

The boy/men are freed from domestic chores and find their place in the open where they can learn and acquire higher skills which enable them to know and control the world better. They therefore monopolize the external world of resources and become security officers, food providers, and fighters. In a materialistic world, these roles render men more useful and

preferable to their counterparts who seem to be dependents and only good for nothing except producing children and eating.

The folktales of the Baganda support the above expressed attitude towards women. Women and girl children are portrayed among other things as disposable. A tale that most testifies to the above position is: *Omukazi eyaleka Omwana mu Lusuku* (See Appendix 1); A woman who discarded a baby girl at the plantation. This story relates a man who, desperate to get a male child, wagered a cow to a woman who would produce a boy. When one of the wives got twins, she discarded the girl, picked the boy and rushed to get her prize. The story reveals many complicated issues of gender relations.

First, the fact that the man wagers a cow confirms that the men are rich and they are the prize givers. The women being poor have nothing to give but to struggle to win the favour of the prize givers. The women forget their identity of motherhood as they have to dance to the tune of men.

Second, motherhood has no value unless the child is male. This is so because people rejoice over the worth of a female goat but find reasons for discarding a female of the human being! In this regard, an animal is deemed more valuable than a girl child. The goat or a cow will be prized on the basis of how many females they produce not male animals. But the honor for motherhood of human beings depends on the production of a male child. If it is a girl, both the baby and the mother are no bodies. The honor of motherhood should depend on the capacity to produce a child.

There are cases of good literary works that celebrate motherhood. A case in point is the play “*The Bride*” by Austin Bukonya. The play presents a character Mukumbu, who rejoices over the skeleton of her deceased child Letie, her only child. According to Mukumbu the skeleton is a testimony that she was once a mother. For this reason, she will never sit with the barren, she once conceived though her child is dead. The instant of Mukumbu’s celebration shows that the honour of motherhood should depend on the gift of fertility not on the gender identity.

The strange incident of denying motherhood also reflects the deep seated preconceived notion against the girl children. A girl child is assumed to be a thing not a person. In the same way, the pressure to present the desired child in a male dominated society made a woman forget the

fact that both infants were children entitled to equal rights. Her role as a mother was not to compete for the cow but to give care to another human being and her fulfillment would come from that.

According to the population census, world over, the ratio of men to women seem to be 1:3 as a result of having so many women and less men, women are seen as things not people. This attitude explains why in one of the tales a girl is exchanged for food during famine.

In the tale “*Namunene*” (Appendix 1), two orphaned children boy and girl are abandoned by their relatives. The boy ventures with hope but the girl who is assumed to be vulnerable and a dependent is taken into the custody of a grandmother. In the culture of the Baganda, Grandmothers are considered generous and loving. Despite this experience the author of the story depicts a grandmother who is extremely insensitive. During famine, the grandmother easily exchanges the girl for food.

In another account, the grandmother marries the girl not to a normal person but to a *Kizike*. The *kizike* refers to a disfigured person, an ogre. As explained before, the image of the disfigured carries deeper meaning both in the traditional culture and in the current Uganda context. The meaning ranges from being ugly, sick and impotent, to being morally depraved. In the present day Uganda context, it could refer to HIV AIDS victim. That the grandmother marries her granddaughter to somebody deformed, for food, indicates that the girls are disposable; they are a medium of exchange. Hence the story privileges the boy child over the girl. The message sent by the story is that the boys’ position in society is central and the girls’ is peripheral; there is no need to waste time on her upbringing or protection. The reality is however contrary. The girl is the mother of tomorrow. She needs to be handled with care as she will not only give life but also nurture it.

The above position is confirmed by the practices of the Baganda. When the Baganda men marry, one of their principle expectations in the marriage is to get a son to perpetuate the lineage of their fore fathers. In the Kiganda culture, succession is from the male line. This is why a lot of pressure is put on the women to bring forth baby boys. Another proverbial name, “*Omuzigu azaala Mpanga*”, the tough one produces males, emphasizes the honour society accords to a mother who produces a male child. By implication, the proverb means, all women

are useless and frail except that one that bears a male child. Producing baby boys is potent ammunition that the woman has at her disposal in this deeply patriarchal society. She can use it to score a victory against her co wife or to fight her way to a better position in society. In many folktales among the Baganda and elsewhere in east Africa, hated women redeem themselves by giving birth to a baby boy. If a woman has only baby girls, she is held responsible by relatives and society for not giving the man an heir. It is such pressure that causes the women to do inhuman things like abandoning the girl children as in the folktale cited above; “a cow for the mother of a boy”. When she produces twins she decides to leave the girl in the banana plantation and only take the boy home. She abandons her baby girl.

In Buganda society, as discussed before, the prospect of a boy brings much joy to the mother. The mother usually knows from the way the baby kicks in the womb. The more this boy kicks, the more the mother rejoices saying, *Kaliba Kasajja*; will be a boy! And long before the baby boy is born, he has already a head start over the girl by virtue of being born a boy. Girls may be praised for their beauty but their expectation does not bring joy. There are no cases where women have been rewarded for giving birth to a baby girl. This is why most stories use the convention of a man marrying off his beautiful daughter to a man. In other tales, women are forced to steal their co-wives male children in exchange for female ones. This shows the importance the Baganda attach to the boy as a treasure whereas the girl is not so much treasured except for the production of boys. The patriarchal structure, in this society, makes life so difficult for the girl child from the word go. The scenario featured in the folktales also extend to real life among the Baganda where there is over whelming evidence that a male child is still considered more valuable than female ones.

One of the selected proverbs idolizes the woman who produces a boy and imposes a feeling of guilt upon the woman who has produced only girls. A case in point is the ‘*Anaganja asooka ddenzi*’ to become a favorite wife, the first born must be a boy; indicates that producing a baby boy goes beyond the physical act of bringing forth a child of the male sex. This proverb indicates that a girl is a slave to use to support the boy or the men; the boy is the only real child. The proverb is about the power and dusting of the particular individual that has been born vis-à-vis his female counterpart.

Another proverb: '*Ssenkuzaale nkuzaale ng'omwana ow'obulenzi*', (to produce a boy is to produce ones parent), highlights the importance that society gives to the baby boy. The boy is projected in the position of a parent: he is an heir of the husband of his mother. This near to glorification is central to the understanding of what it means to be male among the Baganda.

In situations where a boy and a girl have to look after themselves, without elders, the boy emerges as the natural leader and dutifully protects his sister even if the sister is older. The girl continues to be portrayed as weak, dependent and vulnerable however intelligent or old she may be. Many folktales and other African literature originate and consolidate stereotypes of male superiority in this way.

The contrast between boys and girls is as well powerfully captured in proverbs, idioms and other folktales. In the grand story the creation of Buganda, when Nambi produces her first born boy child she calls her *Nnatukirira*; a proverb which means "I have succeeded". This proverbial name indicates that Nambi had a case to answer. It was that of bringing the correct child into the world. Had she failed, she would have declared herself a failure, "*Gannemerredde*." In fact this is what she says when she produces her first girl. She pronounces the traditional belief that to be accomplished one has to produce a boy.

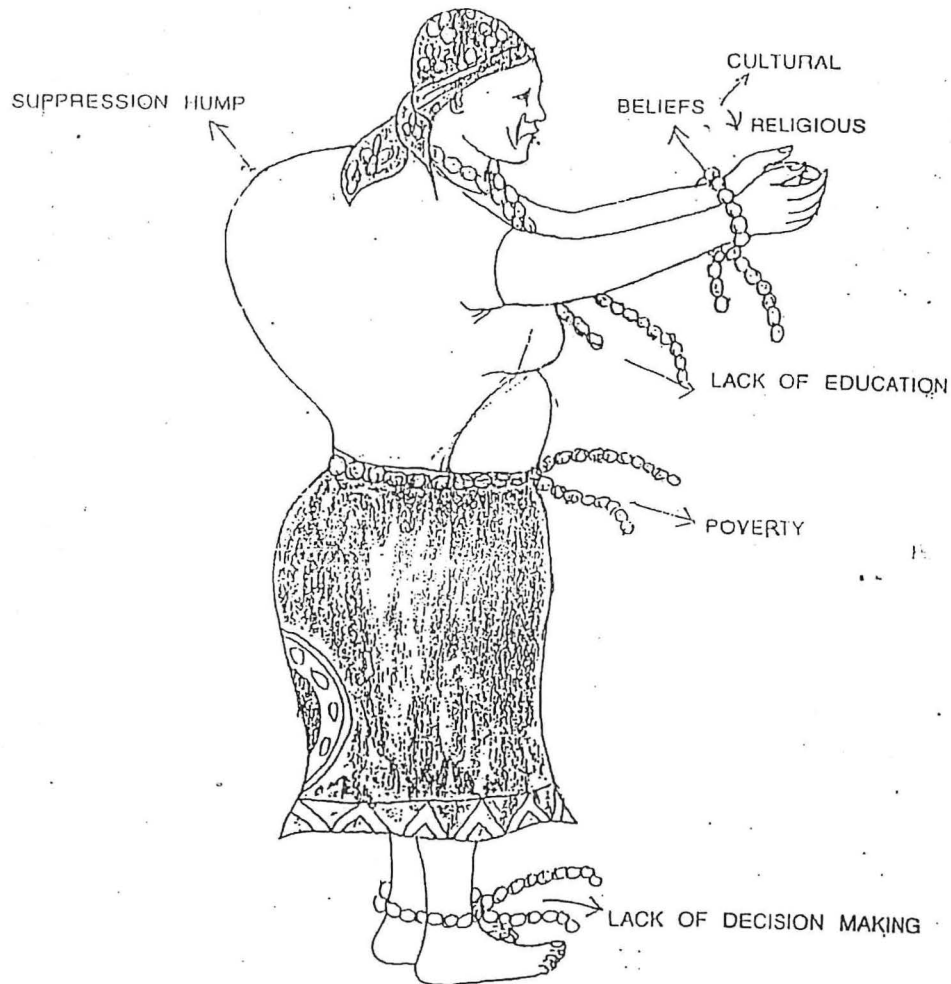
The craving for a baby boy is a sign of the unequal gender power balance and the outstanding feature of the relationship between men and women as husband and wife. The proverbs above imply that the boy has to be successful. If he does not, the social consequences are great and unbearable. The girl is not expected to be competent because she is only a woman and society will forgive her many failures but it will not forgive the man.

The references to the male child as *Nnatukirira* and the girl child as *Gannemerredde* have adverse impact on both male and female children both of which need these stories. The boys are likely to be vain, invincible and self-willed with no consideration of the worth of their counterpart. The girls are likely to be withdrawn as they are made to believe that they are failures. This situation explains why most girls in Baganda culture are not ambitious. In the story, "Nnaggamba and his Bride", (*Nnaggamba ne Mukyala we Omugole*) the author shows clearly that a woman is taken as nothing. A newlywed man leaves his bride by the tree shade and goes to drink. When he returns, he finds his wife has been taken by another man. The

story depicts women as commodities to be exchanged in many hands. Women do not matter; they can wait, for they are not going anywhere. Their job is to please the man. This point especially is seen in the story of "*Ennongosereza*." The man marries two women and their job is to make him look good. From sunrise to sunset, the wives prickle up both black and grey hair according to the man's whims.

The power of masculinity that emerge from the folktales and proverbs of the Baganda promote male dominance. According to Dipio, a father's power is felt even beyond the grave. In the folktale "*Namunene*", the girl must present her marriage partner to the grave of her father for blessing. Rituals are performed to invoke the ghost. The ghost has to consent to her marriage.

On the other hand, *Namunene*'s brother Musisi who is about to get married does not have to seek the consent from his father. He chooses a wife and freely gets married. This situation implies that a male child is superior to a woman. He is a fellow man among men even to his own father. As mentioned, the image of the girl child as portrayed in the folktales of the Baganda is so negative. The manner of presentation of the girl child vis-à-vis the boy child creates a thick line between the two genders which foster discrimination. The girl child is not free. Tradition binds her tightly. The boy is free. He suffers from no cultural restrictions. (See illustration below)



The girl child/woman of tomorrow is tied from all sides (Source: Association of the Religious of Uganda, ARU, files)

As the researcher observed in the introduction to Chapter 1, women and female children among the Baganda were and are still dominated, discriminated against and looked upon as inferior in many respects, yet both sexes are complementary to each other in building and developing the nation. The gender dissonance is entrenched in the culture that has been established through the folktales. The Baganda use stories, proverbs and other forms of oral literature to indoctrinate their young ones. As Osayimwese observes, “juvenile Literature is very instrumental in developing people’s cultural values.” In Buganda, this educative media

has promoted a dissonance between girl child and boy child and between men and women at large.

A Tanzanian poet and novelist Kazilahabi tells the story of the birth of a mysterious female child spirit presented as both gazelle and a beautiful woman who promises hope for a world dominated by Masculine Philosophies. Nevertheless, it exposes ways in which women are being exploited, discriminated against, oppressed and short changed. Sensitive to gender, the novel denounces domestic violence, sexual objectification on women by local and international sexual tourists (p. 93,103). The girl child should not be a sex machine, yet the African women are presented as sex vessels. Women and girls are presented as prostitutes, evil or victims of gullibility.

The amendment of the negative literature that Kazalahabi recommends cannot be realized unless we change the stories to emphasize the rights of both children. Oral literature presents the basic interest of the African's imagination. The purpose of oral tradition involves modification. The modification of earlier texts would offer a site of engagement between old ideologies and cosmopolitan way of thinking. Some of the major concerns of today are to demonstrate that traditional African culture is not obsolete but relevant for the articulation of contemporary needs and goals. Okpewho, a famous Nigerian novelist also affirms that like in any other folk literature, African oral literature is not innocent in its handling of gender issues (p. 2940); it is because of their awareness of the power of oral literature, (orature), to entrench expression that feminists who have analyzed the art call for a gender transformation.

While insisting that orature is an important element of cultural heritage, feminist readings of the art have revealed embedded stereotypes in the artist's presentation of women. Much of this literature presents women as voiceless and victims of men. The images that come through are those of the women as voiceless individuals and therefore have to be totally depending on men. And yet women all over the globe are independent. The best means to show this fact is by revising the folktales of the Baganda and portraying the girl child and woman in a more realistic positive and just manner.

2.2.3 The Girl Child as Brainless

In several stories, girls / women are portrayed as brainless. In the story “*Ebyomunju tebittottolwa*” bedroom secrets should not be disclosed (*Appendix 1*). The story is about a young woman who although is battered by her husband cannot run away. Every time she attempts to run away, she is policed by a dog that sniffs her out of her hideout. The story depicts the dilemma of a woman who has not been educated to think, reason and there be able to control the world around her. The woman does not know her rights as a human being. First, she thinks it is normal to be beaten. Second, this woman lacks simple knowledge about watch dogs. The first time she runs away, the dog finds her. The second time she takes the dog with her, the dog runs back to its master and thereafter directs the man to the hiding place. The story could be interpreted as a reflection of the stupidity of women. First, they cannot solve simple problems through dialogue. Second, the woman lacks knowledge of the environment. She does not know much about the behavior of the dogs. Besides being helpless, the narrator depicts the woman as being irredeemably stupid. She cannot control her environment because of very little knowledge that even her husband’s dog is more intelligent than she is.

The story further portrays a situation of a silenced woman as the title of the story suggests, keep silent, and do not wash the linen in public. She is not expected to say anything about the undesirable situation. She is alone on a limb. She has no recourse for pouring her soul. Even the parents, the people who brought her into the world and who probably arranged the marriage for her do not protect her from being battered by her husband. The story is silent about the parents’ interaction.

In ‘*The Kiyiri*’ tale (*Appendix 1*), the narrator reveals that the girl child is stupid at the time when she is most beautiful. In the story three girls who go to fetch firewood are trapped in the cave of the beast like man. Being cunning, the man serves very delicious meat to the girls. The older girls, believably mature girls, restrain to eat the meat but the young, cheeky and careless beautiful one eats the meat. In the story, the man turns into a monster and demands to be paid for the gifts he gave. The older girls return the meat but the young has nothing to return so she is captured by the monster like man. The girl cries over her ordeal in vain. She has to reward

the monster by offering her body in marriage. She later gets used to the monster and produces children.

The story shows that women are victims of the clever men. Whether they love them or not they will marry them. The men use their brain not appearance to win themselves the most beautiful women. Furthermore, the story shows that girls are most stupid at the point when they are most beautiful. They are deceived by the apparent hospitality of men. Owing to their stupidity, the girl children are portrayed as victims defenseless in the face of adversities. They become victims of the monster because they are myopic.

The monster on the other hand, represents men who are clever, cunning and rich. They have the means by which to bait the girls and to plot for their downfall at the time the girls are most attractive. The story further shows economic imbalance. The man in the story owns the essential needs. He has a house, a cave and food however bad, and he can therefore use his resources to get what he wants. The girls being poor they are at the mercy of men.

Three respondents with whom the researcher discussed the story of *Kiyiri* claimed that indeed girls are stupid. They will be lured by food into traps set by men. The respondents cited that another story: *Nambi and Kintu* (Appendix 1) about the creation of Buganda equally projects the stupidity of women/girls. According to the respondents the notion that girls are innately stupid is well underscored in the classical story of Kintu and Nambi. This is a story which is read by almost every child in Buganda. The story also has its version in many dialects of Uganda. It is in several of Bantu dialects: Lusoga of Eastern Uganda, Lumasaaba of Eastern Uganda, Runyankole, Rukiga, and Lutoro.

In the story a young girl sees a man Kintu and offers to marry him because the latter is lonely. She leaves her father and brothers and the comfort of her home and vows to marry a stranger she has seen for the first time. Every effort to dissuade her is lost because she is head over the heels in love. One respondent compared Nambi with Shakespeare's dumb Desdemona in Othello. The latter deserts her culture and parents to embrace a stranger who later kills her.

Another respondent argued that Nambi's stupidity is underscored by the act of forgetting the millet for her chicken. On the surface, the act of forgetting to carry the millet is a simple one;

not worth of condemning a person. However in an interview with two senior male citizens, I was convinced that the story teller meant to project Nambi as being stupid, irresponsible, visionless and improvident. Chicken in the life of a Muganda man was a very important sauce for the husband and in-law. Chicken feed on millet, so forgetting millet meant that Nambi was neglecting her important duty of rearing chicken. Her marriage would fail over this because a serious wife must feed her husband on chicken.

Another respondent was of the view that the story was perfect for its own time and social cultural contexts. The story to him aimed to show the inherent stupidity of women. In his view he could not fathom how a woman could forget such an important item. A Muganda woman was expected to show love for her husband by preparing the best dish and this had to include chicken. Not to do so, was an act of utmost negligence which often led to broken marriages. Nambi had to go back for millet because millet was food for the chicken. Chicken was so central to the marriage of the Baganda. It was the only sauce for the husband and in-laws. A home without chicken was useless and the wife would be divorced for this. So, to fail to raise chicken was to run a failed marriage. This position was supported by another interviewee who responded by saying that indeed the woman is treated as a nuisance because by forgetting millet for the chicken she makes a return journey only to be seen by her brother Death. Death insisted on accompanying her, and being a woman she had no power over Death for he was a man. Hence the woman is worse than merely being stupid. Her stupidity is a misfortune, a cause of sadness.

A woman's stupidity is portrayed further in the story of *Muzirannenge* (Appendix 1). A single mother raises a child who turns out to be immoral in many respects. She does not get married as she lacks any practical and social skills. When she died, society refused to give her an honorable burial because she was nobody's wife. The birds had to announce her death because she was murdered and her body left to rot. The moral of the story is that the mother is the educator of a child. Any mistake a child makes is attributed to the mother. The story further shows that a woman is made somebody by a man. Without this she is considered as a failure. The story indicates that a woman who does not get married is nobody. To learn life skills one must have a father and yet it is the mother who is the moral force. The second conclusion is that a woman has no rights except those given to her through the marriage

institution. Thus the girl was not given her right to burial because she was not somebody's wife.

In the story: *Ssebikazi Byasiriwala*: Women are innately foolish (*Appendix 2*), during a period of famine a husband of four women fools his wives that he is going to a faraway place to work. Evidently he is avoiding his responsibility to provide for the family during the scarcity of food. He instructs the wives to put food in the calabash every evening. None of the wives asks the purpose of putting the food in the calabash. They simply obey. The man who evidently hides in the house helps himself to the food every time his wives are away. He sings that the women are stupid. His children sight him and take the report to their mothers. The story, if read as it is; it is very dangerous to the development of the children. It projects the view that women are stupid. They accept whatever the men tell them. The men are clever; they can avoid responsibility by simply using their brains. The message sent is that men are clever, women are fools. The boys who read the story can develop a false impression that boys are good while the girls take it that they are supposed to be stupid.

According to Namulondo Nganda, this idea supports Cohen's "glass concept" in which he says that we develop belief about ourselves based on the messages we get from others, (Cohen, 1971). So, the information children are exposed to either stereotype, distort or bias them. (p. 66, 71)

In using the postcolonial feminist approach the researcher examined the plight and position of the girl child among the Baganda as defected in the folktales and challenged the pervasive image of the girl child as largely distorted. The researcher definitely identified that the dominative practical order characterizes the composition and performance of these folk tales. The theory challenges the patriarchal ideology which stereotypes the girl child. Mushengyezi says that it is applied to argue that gender differences must be viewed as a basis for complementarity of roles between the two sexes rather than subordination or superiority of one against the other (p.103). Folktales of the Baganda as a medium of instruction considerably contribute towards the shopping of ideas / attitudes as well as reflecting and reinforcing popular beliefs. The researcher therefore argued that the stories should be retold so that the stereotypes exhibited in the selected folktales which include the depiction of women as stupid, gullible and monsters could be rephrased.

2.2.4 The Girl Child as Man's Property

There are many instances that show that the girl child is commodity to be dispensed of by the fathers whenever they want. This fact is repeatedly depicted in the tales. Baganda folktales for instance, "*Byeyuna Mugaga*" (the rich will even get more), relates the parents of a very beautiful girl who rejected a poor suitor for their daughter. The girl would have had a choice for a husband but her father opted to give her off to the highest bidder as it were. And the highest bidder was a deformed man; of course a cannibal who ate her up and the mother-in-law who came to check on her was also eaten up by the same man.

In another story: *Ennongosereza, enasula Omutego*, a young man marries two wives. These women are depicted as servants to the whims of their husband. They do nothing all day long apart from picking hair from the head of the husband. One picks grey hair and the other picks black hair. Eventually the man becomes bald as all the hair is gone. The story shows terrible wastefulness of time all done in serving the man. Making the man look handsome does not take two people, more over doing a useless activity of no tangible results. One conclusion emerges that women are simply servants of men.

In the majority of folktales, the convention of a father marrying his most beautiful daughter to the richest or cleverest man is common among the Baganda. For instance in "*Kakokoolo*", "*Byeyuna Mugagga*", "*Namunene*" and "*Nsalala*," (See Appendix 1) the fathers prefer beast like, deformed, ugly, rich men to normal but poor suitors. When the rich man comes with all the property the father wanted, the girl is given to him only to realize, he was a beast (ogre/chimpanzee). The girl child here is depicted as innocent and a victim of her parents' greed and materialistic desires. Exploitation of the female gender ends up being oppressive since it is done in favour of the males and the girls do not gain from the same. This kind of treatment simply spells that a girl is not a child rather she is a property of man to be disposed of as he likes. It is true and a common belief that Baganda tenderly tend and care for the girl child, consider her vulnerable as far as it is his child or wife - but otherwise little is considered about every girl. As Dominic Dipio remarks, any girl who reads this story will not have the guts to claim her self-esteem.

Furthermore, the girls are married off at early ages without their consent and the worst part of it is that they are married off to the men of the father's choice. The one being taken as wife here has no say in the matter and whatever ways the process goes, she has no knowledge about it. They are taken as property to the parents. The groom has to pay "ransom" in the name of bride price which goes to the girl's parents. In the majority of the folktales the mothers of the girl children face a number of challenges like having no say of who their daughters marry; women are in many matters of the social wellbeing kept behind closed doors. They are not given chance to say anything about the marriage of their daughters.

In the story entitled "Byeyuna Mugagga", all is for the rich, the man depicted with special powers, marries a wife, does not allow anybody to accompany the young bride to a new home. While in the bridal chamber, the man turns into a monster and amputates his wife. The man becomes so morose about everything that his wife finds no joy in being with him. All efforts to save her are defeated. The mother who attempts to rescue her daughter ends up by also being amputated. The story does not indicate whether the man was panelized for this double murder. This omission simply emphasizes the traditional belief that a man can do whatever he wants with his wife. She is his property.

A similar instance of commodifying the girl child is seen in another version of '*Kakookolo*' (Appendix 1) where the best competitor for the girl's hand is a man who turns in an ogre: The ogre itself is hateful, ferocious and cunning. News of the mistreatment reaches the girl's home. But the father does not make any follow up about the child after marriage. It is the mother of the girl who follows up. Unfortunately, she too is devoured. The situation reveals that a girl once married stops being a child and becomes a man's property. And because a man has many wives, he is not bothered if one of them is devoured in an attempt to protect her daughter. Women like daughters are property of men to be treated as they wish.

Another story entitled "*Kyambe Wagala*" (Sharpen the Knife), shows the woman as a man's property. In this story, a man marries a wife. The latter is accompanied by her little sister. While in the man's house the wife and the little girl are regarded as his property. He can choose to eat them up. Every night the husband who is supposedly a cannibal sharpens the knife to cut them up. They are only saved by the watchfulness of the little girl.

In the discussions the researcher held with various groups concerning the depiction of the girl child as a property of man, in this particular folktale, many people seemed to support the status quo. For instance, the notion of marrying young girls to the men chosen by only the fathers, most people thought it was prudent because the girls tend to be unruly. They need to be guided. Besides, children belong to the father not mothers. The scenario of a man wanting to devour a woman, many men accepted that murder is horrible. However, they seem to consent to the view that once married, the woman belongs to a man. This position is attributed to the fact that a man pays so much money to get a wife. The women are so oily that if they are not threatened sometimes by death, they can outwit men. One respondent gave many examples of women who have produced children for men other than their husbands. It is due to their unruly behavior that men subject women to such threats.

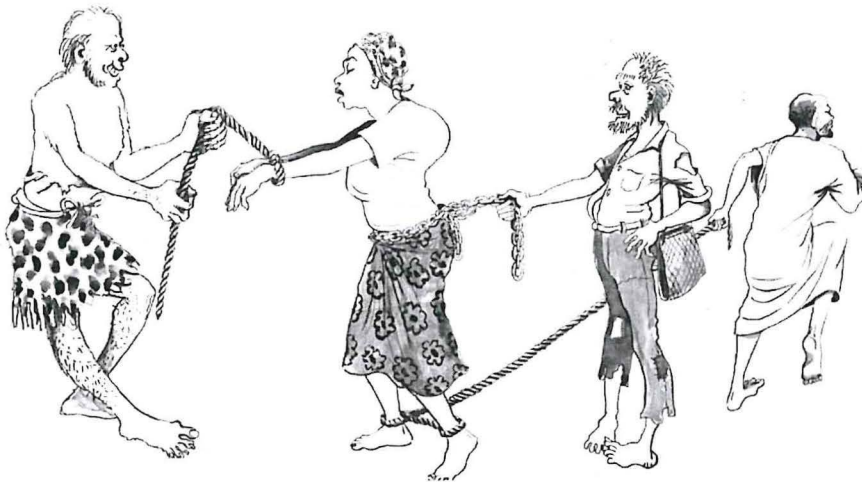
With regard to the scenario of a deformed person winning the hand of the beautiful young girl, like in the “*Kakookolo*” story, many middle aged respondents did not see it as shocking. The respondents simply pointed to the moral of the story that young girls should not lose sense over the appearance of the latter. Rather they should abstain from despising men basing on the appearance. The men, no matter what they look like, are the rulers of the world. A recent song of Ronald Mayinja, a Uganda popular singer includes a line: *omwami nebwaba yakula atya omugonderanga* (women must submit to the authority of the husbands in spite of the latter’s unpleasant looks). The conclusion is that a woman is just a property of man. She is a thing to be chosen and not to choose.

A similar view of equating beauty of a woman with stupidity is expressed in the story of a lass who married a ghost (Appendix 1). The beauty of a woman is considered dangerous. The story shows the girls are most dangerous when most beautiful. It is as if beauty is the fault. This is negative. They need to be assisted by writing stories to teach them to be assertive, to rise above their vanity and preserve their beauty rather than becoming victims to men. The story further shows that girls become wise only after they have grown up, i.e. after losing the outward show/beauty they gain wisdom. We need to equip girls with both attributes.

Surprisingly, however, all stories emphasize the beauty of women as a requirement for marriage. Beauty can mean perfection or wholesomeness. So it is the perfect woman that has a chance to marry. The ugly one has no chance. The men on the other hand, have unlimited

chances of choosing who they want and to reject whom they detest because women are property of men.

The tales demonstrate that the girl child is not only property to her husband but also to those who brought her into the world. Most of the time, the winners are unfavorable to the girl. A case in point is the recurrent story of the “Kakookolo” (The Disfigured One). The people identified as Kakookolo were suffering from many defects ranging from body sores, missing limbs due to sickness and even being impotent. In our times, these men would be compared to HIV/AIDS victims. There are two versions of this story. In both stories Kakookolo performs the hard task and emerges as the winner. Despite the deformity and the girls’ rejection of the suitor, the father consents to the marriage. The girl’s feelings are immaterial as long as the father gets his wealth and his will.



A girl child is torn to pieces by greedy men! (Illustration drawn by Deo Ssenyondwa; August 2012)

Thus the girl-child is depicted as property for the husbands and even those would be her best friends, the parents. Reading such scenarios in stories has adverse impact on the psychological development of the girl. Consequently, the young girls may hate themselves for being girls. The girls may mistrust anybody called a man as they will associate them with owners not friends of women. The girls may grow up with the spirit to revenge on men. A Nigerian film running on Bukedde TV (Sept. 2012) shows a young lady of forty two, who killed a man for having abused her when she was fourteen. These stories are read by children

early in life and the girls can grow up thinking that they are a property to men and that they will never make a choice in life. This explains why now many a girl takes long to decide. They are brought out to think that somebody somewhere will decide for them and they will follow. Furthermore, the girls will never trust men as their fathers betray them to terrible suitors.

Whereas most women are silenced and sit behind and watch as their rights are being deprived of them, some intelligent ones have used literature as a tool to expose the stereotypes and voice out their dissatisfaction. In Gorretti Kyomuhendo's, "*The First Daughter*", the drunkard Kyamanywa is against women's education that they will never be able to perform anything they are capable of on earth; to be sold off when they are ripe, just as a farmer sells a ripe pumpkin, then bring home cows and produce heirs (p.8).

The age-old system of patriarchy defines men and women differently. There is need to create and educate empowered female characters as a bid to eliminate these miss-presentations of their image. The protest voices in *The First Daughter* are set against the core of the patriarchal social cultural system whose definition of power flits in favour of the male.

Ugandan women writers, FEMRITE, have made a significant contribution to the mission of empowering society to bring down discriminatory practices against women and girl children. With that intent, the researcher highly recommends a rereading of the folktales of the Baganda and see to the deconstruction of the tarnished image of the girl child into a positive and equal to that of their male counter parts.

The practice of marrying off the girl child at a tender age is common among the Baganda. Here girls are denied the opportunity to attend school, rights to work, but permanently restrained and locked up in the house to cook food and cater for the boys and men. The trends for the girl child are extremely alarming and we need to find ways of ending this uncouth treatment of the girl child and elevate the dignity of all women in Uganda.

In northern Uganda where the LRA war has ravaged the entire social fabric, women and girl children have been the worst hurt. Coupled with the unfriendly and catastrophic education gap, a girl child continues to be batted by a combination of poverty, disease and backward cultural practices.

These factors especially, cultural practices that are part and partial of most Ugandan tribes have continued to deny the girl child of her right to education and freedom of expression. However, the civil society ought to be at the forefront of making sure that the girl child gets to realise her dream of freedom and equality. This ugly trend that is paralyzing the fortunes of the girl child in this country should be unlocked.

A very strong reason for retelling these tales is to create good reading materials for both boys and girls who read Luganda. When UPE was introduced in Uganda, many girls had chances to attend school but such dreams could be shuttered if we do not stream line the reading materials. If stories continue to depict women / girls as a property of man and man / boy as free to own woman / girl and other properties, we shall nurture girls / women who are unable to dream, to earn a living alone and to nurture a very intelligent nation. For this matter, the researcher undertook to deconstruct the folktales so that children can read stories relevant to their needs. One of the needs of the children is to change their attitudes by believing in themselves, respecting each other's' rights and learn to trust others. These values could be achieved through reading material which shows that both men and women are created equal. They both have the right to develop fully.

2.2.5 Girl Child as Sex Object

The concept of regarding a woman as a sexual object is not only entrenched in the mindset of the Baganda but also in the rest of Ugandan literature. Many a critic of the literature and culture of Uganda have mentioned it. As shown in the related literature, Miruka (p. 59) states that, to many people, raising a girl child is indeed ploughing in another person's field. Any time the girl will be taken by a man to produce that man's children. The metaphor of the field applies to the woman as well. She is a field to be ploughed as well.

According to Dominic Dipio, girl children are considered as burdens to be shade off by marrying them off immediately they become of age. They must be taken away or else they will be served to the ogre which will devour them. The metaphor of devouring has sexual connotations. In her presentations of girls, Kyomuhendo also shows the mentality of many people that girls are sexual objects. Kyamanywa believes that women live solely for men's

pleasure (Kyomuhendo: p.23). Many girls are trapped in the age-old complex of traditional power relations.

This theme is brought out in most of the stories. Out of the 20 stories selected 80% has the following convention of beginning: “Once upon a time there was a man who had a ‘beautiful daughter’ ...” What follows is that arrangements were made to have the daughter married off. The emphasis on beauty is brought out by the persistent use of the convention of phrase “beautiful daughter”. There are two implications here: the first is that, the women are good for nothing except their beauty. Yet beauty is a transient quality. Hence women do not have a lasting value. Many women come on the stage of fools to display their beauty and when the season is over, they leave the stage. The convention of the beautiful woman also implies that the person who is not beautiful should not think of marrying. Yet marriage is a right to all.

The men on the contrary, are portrayed as active members in the field. For example, they are shown as passing tests like when Kintu performs three hard tasks given to him by Gulu the father of Nambi. One of the tasks is to identify and pick his cow from among the many; the second is to break a rock and the third is to eat several baskets of food. All these tasks are performed successfully by Kintu. The tasks reveal several Kiganda societies’ expectations of the man. The man is clever, strong and is supposed to eat well. To identify one’s cow among many shows that Kintu is observant, has memory as opposed to Nambi, his wife, whom the narrator portray as forgetful. The attributes of observation and good memory are given to Kintu to make the readers/listeners of the story believe that Kintu is superior to Nambi.

The second test of breaking the rock emphasizes the muscle power and prowess of Kintu. Kintu was the first king of Buganda. Kintu had a philosophy that power and wealth come out of besieging other tribes. The proverb: *Ensi egula mirambo* (Dead bodies constitute the price for power). That is: One achieves leadership only after spilling blood, spelt out the Kintu philosophy of achievement. This philosophy was permeated in the Kiganda culture. The Baganda men had to feed well and to perform heavy tasks like chopping wood, clearing forests, hunting and walking long distances to develop muscle power for martial purpose.

The task of breaking the rock is just a metaphor for Kintu’s ability to fight and to maintain power both in his small kingdom, the home and in the Buganda kingdom at large. In the

home as a husband, Kintu was expected to be the producer and owner of property. The woman must recognize the man's power and must remain subordinate.

The final task of eating basketfuls of food indicated that men were supposed to be eaters. This was one of the criteria for showing a great man. A man must eat as a man. This points to the special powers and liberty given to the man with regard to food. A man must eat a lot of food, and good food. He must eat whatever he wants because he is the king. He must not be restrained. In traditional Buganda, there were restrictions on the dishes a woman / girl had to eat. For instance, women did not eat chicken, grass hoppers, mutton and pork. But men were free to eat all these. The dishes were delicious. Due to their scarcity and tastefulness, they were reserved for men so they could eat to their fulfillment. The liberty to eat also meant men are not expected to feel abashed. They were supposed to do many things without shame or embarrassment. The purpose was to enable them to venture into the social world freely and to develop the muscles to the full to enable them to fend off wild animals and to protect society.

The stories therefore, should be retold to show that girls like men can be valued by other standards other than the external beauty which according to Shakespeare's Sonnet 1 is; "Rosy lips and cheeks can be eaten by time. However, what cannot be eaten are the attributes of the mind".

Third, the person whose body is beautiful has no chance to choose whom to please with her beauty. The bodies of women were also objects for men's pleasure: the pleasure ranged from: producing children, laboring for men, to becoming food for men. The men on the other hand can choose as they want. Their choices are determined by rather lasting values like money, braveness, intelligence and others. The above themes are brought out clearly in the folktales of the Baganda.

In the worlds represented in the stories, the men are the family heads even if the women do the bulk of the work at home. For instance, in the story of *Kintu*, it is Nambi who brings the seed for the food. She is a resourceful person in this regard. In the tale of "*Ssebikazi Byasiriwala*" it is the women who remain home to take care of the children and produce the food. The man unashamedly steals it every time the women are away in the fields. The girl child lags behind, as

the saying goes, 'in the kitchen' and does all the work there. Otiso says it all that females have specific roles that contribute to the formation of a unique Uganda culture (p. 89).

Furthermore, as mentioned above Uganda is a patriarchal society in which males have more access to the country's social economic resources and privilege than the female. For instance, even in marriage the girl's role amount to no more than giving her consent. She is to be used as a tool to give birth, work around the home, oversee on the children and they are home keepers. There are many gender biased disparities among the Baganda as mentioned.

The folktales selected portray the boy and his father in a privileged position, whereas the girl child and her mother are in many instances looked at as material property to be acquired and disposed of if found socially 'worthless'. For instance, gender parity is embroidered in cultural norms and practices, socialisation processes and into the frame work of patriarchy, which is fundamental to the social structure of the Baganda. It is these structures that also find expression in the folktales. Over years, women have been looked at as a commodity to be accumulated. The Baganda take gender stratification for granted, because they have not yet (maybe) realized the vitality in equity and justice for both genders.

Another objectification of women is, during marriage the girl's life and wishes are interpreted in terms of how she relates to the husband. Women and girls do not select. Rather they are selected. Sometimes they are gulled into marriage union with terrible partners like ogres. They cry desperately and thereafter, forget the threatening features of the transformed animals, the men and learn to accommodate them. Here, the young girls are assumed to be foolish and with small brains, sometimes they forget easily that men are beasts once they get used to them. Most of the time they are exiled from their homes, they do not remember the way back home.

According to Cecilia Namulondo, objectification of women is entirely political. The human need to maintain clear material destination appears to be the main idea behind the national process that leads to group stereotypes and misattribution. Some groups have a set of opinions in form of cultural beliefs, attitudes, norms and values which accord them some sort of cultural identity. For example, the Baganda are prejudiced towards the boy child and against the girl child, that is to say, they tend to emphasize the positive aspects of one group while

denigrating the other. Stereotyping of one group's shared image of another group leads to erroneous beliefs (p.57).

2.2.6 Woman/Girl as Overly Attracted to Men

Perhaps the most pervasive representation of women is their inability to resist their attraction to men. This belief is as old as the Bible. In the book of Genesis, Eve is given a punishment of being a sexual slave to Adam: You will be attracted to your husband. (Gen 3). Although the authors of the Kiganda tales could not have been influenced by the Bible, the folktales seem to echo the view that women are doomed to enslavement to men. The tales depict weak women who cannot be entrusted with their senses and emotions.

The assumptions about women's weaknesses are reflected in various ways. In all the selected tales, the young girls are not expected to express their preference over this matter nor choose a partner. The marriage is negotiated by the fathers and the in-laws. There is no mention of the mothers anywhere during the courtship process. In the marriage of the first lady of the kingdom, Nambi, the story is silent about Nambi's mother. We only hear about Gulu, father of Nambi and his two sons. The marriage of Nambi with Kintu was negotiated by men. There was even controversy over Nambi's choice of Kintu. Her two brothers advised Nambi to seek the consent of Gulu, the father and the mother is silenced in this rather lengthy story.

In other stories such as the two versions of '*Kakookolo*', '*Noga kali akali ewala*', '*Kyambe Wagala*' and '*Nsalala*', women are assumed to be brainless and with slick hearts not to be trusted with the affairs of the heart. A very degrading incident is told in the story of '*Balinda ne Tungulu*' where a beautiful woman falls in love with a plantain wishing it were a man. The plantain hears and makes the dream come true. The story shows the girls as crazy about men. They secretly burn with the desire to marry and therefore they can marry any man even one plantain like. This is the most debasing depiction of a woman because all human beings by law of nature must look for their kind and moreover the best of their kind not every Tom, Dick and Harry.

A similar degrading incident is the tale of *Kakookolo* (2) where a beautiful girl is lured by the song of the deformed man. The tale shows that any man can get a woman. It does not matter what condition he is in. The other assumption is that on one hand, the women are

commodities to be chosen on the other, the women are so cheap that they can be bought for a song. The men are exalted by their presentation that winning a woman does not require much. It is their manhood that matters. (As mentioned earlier, stereotypes are very strong and are ingrained into children's teachings). In the story of "*Kintu and Nambi*" we see Nambi leaving her safe haven to go to a man who has only one cow. Nambi leaves her parents to live with a stranger because she considers him lonely. This aspect of the story reflects the old age assumption that a woman must sacrifice herself for a man. Surprisingly, a man is not expected to sacrifice for the woman. He can marry as many women as he wants to get comfort but the woman is expected to comfort her only one husband. Children's literature is intended and designed to teach. It is acceptable when the purpose is to instruct as in Encyclopedias and reference books. A problem arises when the moral or social issue becomes too transparent or more important than the story. In the folktale of the Baganda, the story dies and the morals in the story are more transparent, and highly emphasized than entertaining the children.

Children are very impressionable, and take stories for reality and take the characters very seriously. They always look for motivations and inspiring characters from which they base their ambitions. They find characters they can relate to, who are often by their gender. These children are affected by these characters and their view of the world. They continue to be affected by the same as they grow into adults and raise their own children in the same trend. This is a vicious cycle of the inferiority complex.

Sometimes the work of art tends to be a story but actually it is a thinly disguised lesson. Readers do learn lessons from good works of art but those lessons come as by products from having experienced a good story. If the lesson becomes more important than the story, the book suffers injustice. As soon as the story ceases to be an experience, it becomes didactic and an instruction instead of discovery. Such texts usually lose their potential to become powerful reading experiences and become vehicles of indoctrination as the folktales of the Baganda seem to be.

By virtue of the definition that Literature is true and not true, a writer is expected to extend his or her imagination but within believable or sensible parameters. If the writer exceeds the mark, the literary experiences become dangerous especially to the innocent readers such as children who are likely to believe and emulate whatever they read. The folk tales of the

Baganda include incidents that project the woman as being unnatural. The convention of a foolish woman that falls in love with a shadow of a man is repeated in the folktales. In the story of "*Balinda*" a young girl admires "ettungulu" the red plant, to the extent of wanting to get married to it. Another instance is the girl who falls in love with a well-shaped tree and wishes it were a man to marry her. The woman is rendered so low, brainless, and short sighted to wish to marry a plantain.

Children imitate what they see and hear. This is why incidents in their literature should be imitable. They need to be taught to actively intervene in and even manufacture their own reading experience. Children literature should basically focus on narrative because as a predominant form of literature it is the form that young people are likely to encounter most often.

Unfortunately, the folktales which the Baganda use to teach morals show that women are not to be trusted and the reading materials to the children are full of negative events about women. The children are terrorized and terrified both by the ogre and imaginary monsters that emerge from their fearfulness. In the story of *Kiyiri*, the female children are the victims and the man is depicted as man eater. This story impacts the children in two ways: The possibility of eating another human being sends cold shivers into the child's heart. The second impact is that women are vulnerable. The stories lack plot development showing cause and effect. The stories also lack that objective presentation of the world in the story. The authors are in a hurry to depict what society expects: a woman is inferior to a man.

The girl's counterparts, the boy/men are presented as adventurous, brave, leaders, intelligent, rich, and powerful and decision makers. Ironically, every missile aimed at a woman has bounced in the face of the man. In other words, every effort, to glorify a man or a boy in the tales, has left a dark mark. All clever men in the stories have a moral or a physical deficiency. If they are brave their braveness is unnatural if not bestial. They are represented as extremely greedy, insensitive and overly materialistic. They have defects and deficiencies like malformations, cannibalism and inability to appreciate life and beauty.

2.3 Conclusion: Woman as Scapegoat

One can conclude that the overall depiction of the girl child is that woman is a natural scapegoat. The notion of woman as scapegoat is age old. In the stories selected, it is shown that women “do not even own their own children”. Their job is to produce, nurture and feed the child until she gets married if she is a girl.

Yet, the mother takes the blame for every wrong deed the child commits. In the story of ‘*Njabala*’ (Appendix1), an iconic narrative of gender issues among the Baganda, we have a situation of a woman who cannot work in the garden. She cannot cook, do the washing, nor do any of the house chores successfully. In other words, she is a failure as a woman. The husband evidently blames Njabala’s failure on her mother who is long dead. Njabala invokes the ghost of her mother to come to her rescue. Mothers work themselves to the bone but even after their death, they are not allowed to rest. They have to return and labour again.

In the story of “*Nambi and Kintu*” (Appendix 1), which is a central and defining myth of the Baganda, the suffering of humanity is blamed on a woman’s heedlessness, forgetfulness and carelessness. Nambi therefore becomes the original scapegoat, just like Eve is in the Bible. In another story, *Muzirannenge*, society blames a mother whose daughter cannot find a marriage partner yet the daughter’s ‘failure’ is a result of the latter’s irresponsible behavior. The daughter is reckless and adulterous. When she eventually dies, nobody misses her; she is not accorded any sort of burial, and is actually left as carion flesh. The people haul abuses on the mother, not the father, for producing a failure. These stories help to sum up woman as scapegoat.

CHAPTER THREE

DECONSTRUCTION OF THE PORTRATURES OF THE GIRL CHILD AND THE BOY CHILD IN THE FOLKTALES, PROVERBS AND PROVERBIAL NAMES OF THE BAGANDA

3.1 Introduction

The process of deconstructing the folktales, proverbs and proverbial names involved reasons for privileging boys/men over girls/women, how the stories intended to reflect the defects of women and also reflect those of men, how the subordinate status accorded to women also applies to men. Ultimately the researcher suggested ways to retell stories in a manner that will lead to attainment of gender equality.

In the introduction, in Chapter One the researcher declared a five foci basis to conducting the study. In this chapter the researcher gives four specific reasons that spurred on the deconstruct the folktales and the proverbs and proverbial names. All four reasons are rooted in the theories cited to inform the study and in the oral literature genre.

First, according to Jacques Derrida, the father of the deconstruction literary theory, it is believed that a text is not a “discrete whole but contains several irreconcilable meanings: a text has therefore multiple interpretations” (Griffiths, p.23). Derrida argues that deconstruction exposes historical constraints within the history of philosophy that has been practiced at the price of contradictions, denials and dogmatic decrees that are at work in any given text. Hence in deconstructing the folktales, proverbs and proverbial names the research revealed and unmasked contradictions, denials and dogmatic decrees are at work in the selected texts

Second, the deconstructionist reading is supported by the reader-response view that, a text is not complete until it is read. Each reader brings something to the text according to his/her mind set. So as a post colonial feminist critic, the researcher brought the following to the text: all attitudes toward women that are explicit and implicit in all works of literature. Also as a feminist critic the researcher sought to bring to light all the assumptions about women and

sought to understand why certain literary conventions such as: beautiful but dangerous women are used in the stories.

Third, in support of the deconstructionist approach the feminists' argument that interpretations of literature have been influenced by a community of readers. These interpretative communities have changed over time, and so are the people who form them. In the case of Buganda, the researcher argued that these communities were originally formed by men. It was the men who determined the plots, characterization and style of the stories that we read in Buganda now. These stories were written to advance the beliefs and values of men. The stories project women according to men's expectations. As a result, there are hardly any works in which women are presented with equal rights to men. There are no works in which women are depicted as winners. Instead, the works have presented a distorted image of women.

The fourth reason refers to the observations that oral literature, the folktale, in particular, uses contemporary history to express topical struggles. Consequently, the folktale is a powerful gender ideological tool. This tool is often used in the gender socialization process. It mediates and intervenes in gender struggles. Hence oral literature must be checked to ensure the principle of equity in the socialisation process.

As observed in chapter I the process of deconstruction involve showing the embedded constructs and contradictions within the portraiture and suggesting ways in which the tales should be retold to inspire both girl and boy children grow up with a "correct" attitude toward their respective counterparts.

Furthermore, deconstruction refers to demonstrating the incoherence of a position. The deconstructor looks for the ways in which one term in the opposition has been privileged over the other in a particular text, argument, historical tradition or social practice. For instance, in many cultures: Greek, Jewish, Roman, African, European, et cetera, masculinity has been privileged over femininity because it is considered the general, normal central case while femininity is considered to be special, exceptional/peripheral or derivative. Masculinity is privileged because it is taken to be truer, more vulnerable, more important and more universal than femininity. Deconstruction therefore, involves perusing the view to the point of exposing

the supposed contradictions and internal oppositions upon which the ideas were founded, showing that those foundations are irreducible, complex and unstable or impossible.

With regard to the contexts provided above, the researcher analyzed the texts in order to expose the inconsistency upon which the assumptions about the girl child/women such as: women are temptresses, brainless, objects of sex, property to be owned by men and many others, were formed. The researcher also exposed the contradictions in the assumption made about the boy child. For example, the stories reveal unproved assumptions like: boy/ men are wise, morally upright, sober, adventurous, hardworking, providers for families.

The process of deconstructing the folktales of the Baganda involved suggesting new ways of retelling these tales into appropriate positive ones that present both the girls and boys as children with equal rights and dignity.

There are five major reasons for recommending the retelling of the stories and these are in tandem with the thrust of the study: the gross distortion of the image of the girl child and boy child in oral literature, the need to mainstream gender, the recommendations of the 1995 constitution of the Republic of Uganda, the fact that literature is a public property, the need to adopt ideal characteristics of children literature in African children literature and giving holistic education to both boys and girls.

As explained in chapter one, the images of both children are grossly distorted. In the case of boys, it was revealed that they are better than girls as they are intelligent, brave, rich and leaders. However, behind the façade of the great persons in society we witness cruelty, cunningness, greed, bestial behavior and deformity with almost every male character in the story. The very literature meant to exalt the boy ends up by tarnishing his image. This means that if we adjust the media for educating young men and women of Buganda, the wrong attitudes they harbor now will automatically change.

In the case of girls, the misrepresentation included being: property for men, brainless, discardable material, temptress, weak. For example, men get away with greed because they are expected to eat a lot, eat anyhow. They are also expected to be beastly because they are viewed as innately incapable of being tenderhearted, sympathetic, self sacrificing. Society cites the men's inability to give birth as excuse for misbehaving. The reality is that men and

women are people with dignity. They are both moral forces in society. They are therefore expected to be role models. To deny a man these attributes is to be unfair to men. So stories must be adjusted.

Furthermore, men are expected to be superior to women. Therefore women are supposed to wait on them. The men are expected to be the heads of the households because they tend to have more muscle power and therefore do more physical work. The men tend to have entitlement over the resources. This implies that boys will grow up knowing they are the only people that matter. They are at liberty to do whatever they will, even if they beat their mothers and their female siblings. Thus gender constructs lead to the stifling of the nurturing capabilities, emotional intelligence and living in harmony with their partners at household level.

The second reason why the folktales have to be retold to meet the required standards for children's literature is that as the researcher indicated in Chapter One, there is lack of the distinction between adult and children literature in Buganda. Children grow up hearing the same stories meant to educate adults. Some of these tales contain graphic incidents like the husband eating up his wife piecemeal. Deformed and dirty men win the hand of beautiful girls. Beautiful girls turn into beasts. In the majority of the stories the element of fantasy was lacking. The story events were arbitrarily put together to state a moral intended. The negative representation of the children with the horrible incidents and lack of virtuoso in the composition of the stories, all of these do not present good and wholesome literature for fostering the values and life skills we want in the children of the modern age.

The third reason for retelling these stories is the recommendations of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. Among other things this document prohibited any forms of oppression, be it cultural, economic, physical, etc under the guiding principle that men and women have equal rights and should be treated so. Some aspects of the current Kiganda oral literature is oppressive to girls. Both boys and girls are given proverbial names.⁷ But those

⁷**Birungi** a girl's name meaning one should not trust beautiful women. as opposed to the boy's name **Ssajjabi** means that however ugly a man may be, he will always have redeeming qualities.

given to girls prophesy danger while those of men however bad, they are tugged with redeeming messages.

The fourth reason is the desire to make pave ways of composing suitable children's literature. As discussed before, the current literature has many omissions and therefore not suitable at all for the children.

The fifth reason for retelling the stories and proverbs is to make them fit within the modern trend of thought. Today there is an attempt to integrate Gender Mainstreaming in all disciplines, literature inclusive. To tell stories that are not gender responsive is to remain behind the times.

According to Tamale et. al., there are possibilities of women using oral forms to cultivate solidarity and political self-determination among African women or as channels or enunciating women's self-healing and self-assertion. What Tamale does not emphasize though is the bringing on board of the male child. If we change the stories and tune them to teach the girl child to be assertive, her counterpart must also learn how to relate with the changed person. In chapter two the researcher argued that the boy child needs also to be retrained to respect and recognize the girl as a fellow human being with equal rights. Hence in retelling these tales we must take into consideration the adjustment of the image of the male child as well. This is why in the following subsections I deconstruct the negative portrayal of the boy child as well.

3.2 Deconstruction of the Stereotype of the Woman as Temptress

The stories: *Omusajja Eyawasa Omusambwa*, and *Akomunku*, present two extremely beautiful brides: one turned into a snake and another turned into a beast and devoured her father-in-law. Both incidents took place in the bridal chambers. The stories are meant to teach the moral of not over-relying on the beauty of a woman. By implication, beautiful women are evil.

As discussed in chapter two, there are three conventions used in these and other folktales both of them spell out that beautiful women are temptresses: The first convention is the over use of the convention of "once upon a time, an extremely beautiful woman got married..." The

second convention is that the woman's beauty was so irresistible. In the first story, the man skips the ritual of visiting the girl's home before marriage. In the second story, the woman's beauty even lures the father-in-law to the bridal chamber.

The third convention is that the beautiful woman turned into a snake in one story and a lion in another. The reference the snake evokes the traditional symbol of sorcery and wickedness in Buganda. In Buganda, a snake was even never called by name for fear one would be possessed by evil. So the image equates a woman with evil.

However, as shown before, the stories are riddled with contradictions. Why would a great attribute such as beauty be abused so? As stated before, all people are pleased by nice looking people. Moreover, the very story that aims to smear the woman with evil turns out to expose the men as lawless people. In both stories; the women who are expected to be evil become the moral force. In the first story, it is the woman who directs the man to be law abiding by advising him to seek consent of the girl's parents. Had the boy followed the girl's advice, the terrible marriage would not have taken place; because by seeking the customary consent from the girls' home, the boy would have discovered that the girl was a "musambwa". For "misambwa" were homeless.

In the second story: "Akomunku" (the forest nature implying a wild nature) a beautiful woman has an animal nature in her. She too is depicted as a temptress posing great danger to the men. However, this woman keeps her animal nature under control until the father in-law pesters her to reveal the defect referred to as *Akomunku*. In the process of showing the defect to the father in law, the woman becomes a lion and devours the man. So, the intended moral of the story is that women, especially beautiful ones are not to be trusted, that their beauty is a cover of monstrosity.

The story reveals that a woman who assumed to be a misfortune is lawful and has self control. She keeps her wild nature under control as long as she is not provoked. However, a father in law who is not even allowed to step anywhere near her pesters her to reveal her wild nature. The incident has sexual implications. For a father in law to talk so closely to his daughter in law suggests that the man was trying to seduce her. He sexually desired the woman and sneaked into her room, otherwise, this kind of conversation could never have happened in

public. One can therefore say that a woman may be wild like other human beings. However in the story, which is intended to depict her wild nature, it is the man that brings trouble by insisting that the woman reveals her wild nature. The man is therefore depicted as lawless. He sneaks into the chamber of the daughter in law. This was and still is an abomination. So if it is assumed that women are trouble makers, men are too. They set the laws and they break them. They cannot even direct their subordinates to keep the laws.

In Western literature, the first man, Adam, accuses his wife for tempting him, but the story omits Adam's attempt to resist the temptation. The man simply picks the fruit that Eve presents and eats. He acts in accordance to the offer of the woman. Couldn't the lawful Adam, leader of the family, the most intelligent and powerful, resist this unlawful behavior of his wife? One conclusion emerges from all this. As stated in the Bible, the woman came from the flesh of the man (Genesis 2: 18-24). A woman therefore is like a piece of rock hewed from the parent rock. This pebble could not look different from the parent rock. So is the situation between man and woman. If a woman is therefore brainless, stupid, lawless, a temptress, all this means she is behaving like the parent rock. Like the parent like the child. If women have deficiencies the men too, have them because men and women are one and the same person. The apparent differences are mere assumptions constructed by society for political purposes.

3.3 Deconstruction of the Portrayal of a Woman/Girl as Overly Attracted to Men

The stories depict women and young girls as being foolishly attracted to men. Young women are portrayed as overly desperate for male attention. They could marry anything in a man's appearance even a plantain. In the story of *Balinda n'ettungulu* a young girl sees a beautiful plant and wishes the plantain was a man to marry her. In the story of *Kintu ne Nambi* a beautiful young girl falls in love with Kintu at first sight.

The tales selected for this negative portraiture are downright immoral. The assumption behind these depictions is that a woman is subhuman. She can conjugate with a nonhuman. This is abuse of nature. These constructs are perpetrated through folktales and proverbs and with time people tend to call them natural whereas they are merely political/social constructs. Ironically, these constructs have not privileged the men either. They contain many incidents

that reflect negatively on the man whom they intent to put in the center. In the above cited story, the man is depicted as ogre, deformed, dirty, cannibal and deceitful. He deceives the innocent beautiful girls. This kind of story leaves the impression that men are evil and girls are vulnerable. The stories then have to be retold on two levels: first, to change the negative images of the female children; second to adjust the image of the male child.

3.4 Deconstruction of the Image of Woman as Man's Property

As revealed in the analysis of the tales in chapter two, the woman is projected as a property of man. This is emphasized by a repeated representation of the marriage institution in five of the selected tales. "*Ssebikazi Byasiriwala, Kyambe Wagala, Kalikyejo, Byeyuna Mugagga and Nsangi Nsangi* (Appendix 1). The traditional term for marriage was "*Jangu onfumbire*" (come, cook for me). The term *kufumbirwa*, in marriage vocabulary, refers to women only. It points to the role of a woman as a cook not a partner. The term used to denote that a man had acquired a wife is *kuwasa*. This term has bestial innuendos. It describes the man not as a husband to take care of the woman, but as one to mate with her. The semantics used in marriage therefore points to two fundamental chores for women. One is that the woman is a property of man and one to cook. In cooking she does all that is related to the home: washing, fetching water, taking care of the relatives of the man. The second chore is production of the children. The woman is a field to be ploughed by the man. The man sows his seed and leaves it to a woman to produce children for the clan of the man. So from these images attached to marriage in the Kiganda context, one does not see any indication of perversion!

This is why after the wedding a new household was established, usually in the village of the husband. The girl (newly-wed lady) would settle down and cook for her husband. A woman never returned home unless somebody had died or when the man wanted to visit his in-laws. The situation shows that a woman was not expected to show feelings of attachment to her home. All her feelings had to be sacrificed for the man who she did not even choose. So a woman was a commodity sold by her father to any man who offered an attractive price. For Osayimwese says that, "a woman is a cloth in the market place. There are no price tags on the items for sale. The customer and the trader or merchant can spend quite a good deal of time

haggling over the price of an item (p. 6). The trader wants good money or good gain on his merchandise and the customer wants a good deal or bargain. The haggling is often a friendly one and also a communal one. This was the attitude toward marriage in the unadulterated Kiganda culture of the 12th century in which the stories were set.

One would think that the perception of marriage as in the analysis above was a universal African culture. But this was not the case. A similar culture is depicted in the play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, by Ngugi wa Thiongo and Ngugi wa Micere. In the play cited, the dramatists represent the concept of marriage in the traditional African context as a “covenant between two people”. A covenant implies an agreement that must be made between two people who have equal rights, intelligence and interest. The dramatists make this statement to deconstruct the view that African marriage was unholy. Thus there is a precedent that Africans, like the Greco, Semitic, and the entire western civilization, understand marriage as an agreement between equal partners. Hence the Kiganda way of treating a woman as a property was an abnormality even by African standards of the 12th century. It was constructed by the Baganda men to control women.

Contrary to the view of marriage as a mutual consent of partners, the tales, as discussed in chapter two show that the young girl is a commodity to be bought. The father of the girl and the prospectus husband negotiate the bride wealth. The girls’ choice is not considered. This is not marriage. It is trade. Moreover, in all these tales the father gives away the daughter to any man no matter old, dirty, sick, deformed or depraved. In several cases the young bride is abused even before leaving the bridal chamber and there is no penalty to a man that abuses his wife.

To continue to read or narrate the above cited stories to children of Uganda today would be contradictory to the decrees of the 1995 constitution of the republic of Uganda Article 4; Clause2. The document referred to, prohibited an oppressive cultures, customs and laws and put in place provisions for protecting the dignity of all human beings. In a gender sensitive society, the readers of the stories (boys and girls) need to be exposed to a literature where each partner in the marriage is treated as a whole human being with full rights. To choose a partner for the girl is to assume that the girl has neither feelings nor mind. The reality is that, a woman has feelings and intelligence and therefore can choose a partner, just like the man.

As argued in chapter two, both the girl child and the boy child are born with equal attributes in terms of their cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. Both girls and boys do not know what they are until society frames them into specific gender roles. It is the socialization process that prepares boys/men to be adventurous, risk takers and curious. Their counterparts are not encouraged to be as such. Today the women of Buganda are still mediocre earners, withdrawn, fearful and indecisive. These are not innate characteristics; rather the girls/women acquired them during the socialization process which indoctrinated them as young girls into being dependants. The indoctrination is done in oral literature; stories, proverbs and proverbial names. The latter has been the forum for extending the values and attitudes to generations. For ages, literature has formed the mentality of the Muganda woman. Right from childhood, the Baganda girls have always taught all the dos and don'ts to their children, through stories and proverbs.

However, woman should not be projected as a passive being to whom things happen. Rather she should be shown in these stories as a human being with all faculties. The researcher argued that the stories should be retold to show that the girl consents to the marriage and she has the right to choose a partner. The stories should also indicate measures to control any forms of abuse for either husband or wife. The culture should be clear on laws of dealing with bad boys and girls. This way the children will learn that marriage is a social institution. If they choose to go into it they can be protected by society.

The stories should maintain the best practices in the Kiganda culture but borrow the best practices in other countries namely consultations before marriage to avoid forced marriages. The stories should show that all the stakeholders are consulted. This is because marriage is a social institution. Marriage conferences would lead to elimination of bad, deformed and sick partners. The girls should have a say in whatever changes happen to them, most especially changes like marriage, education and all other social positive changes that the males experience.

Several interviewees cautioned that in the event of rampant HIV / AIDS and other disasters, it would be unrealistic to have children read stories in which one of the partners is not involved in choosing a partner for life. This is why the researcher calls for equitable treatment of genders, equality and justice.

Some cultural and religious leaders, who were interviewed, supported the recommendation to retell the stories. According to them it was absolutely necessary to have our stories capture the relevant information that children need to know in modern Uganda. A priest, who teaches Religious Studies in one of the seminaries in Masaka, suggested replacing the old stories with new ones that reflect joy and peace in marriage. A positive marriage story should show that girls are not bypassed in the consultations over the matter of their marriage. The stories should be retold to show the current practices of young men talking freely with the girl during courtship. A story written according to the above suggestions would signal that checkups before marriage are required. The information will also teach young people to respect each other and to know their rights and values.

Six Secondary School male teachers in Masaka expressed concern about the stories in which men are presented as deformed. They argued out the present day forms of deformity such as: HIV/ AIDS. The children should not read stories where a young girl is donated to a deformed man. With regard to the dirty suitor who won the hand of a beautiful young girl, the men agreed that many men disregarded external appearances but it was wrong to expose this defect to boy children. Such incidents do not help boys to build their self-esteem.

To offset the gender imbalances the interviewees argued that there should be literature to advocate that both boys and girls are human beings with equal rights. There should be new stories reflecting both genders as smart and good looking. Other alterable situations could be the presentation of both young men and women as clean, neat and honest. Before marriage, the young people should show clear evidence that they have been tested for HIV/AIDS and other diseases and they are healthy. Otherwise, if the stories are read as they are, the message they send is that it does not matter what form the men present themselves. That it does not matter what kind of a man a girl marries. This situation will continue the slave attitude that most people hold towards the girls/women. One of the criteria for children's literature is that this literature should offer the basic joy of immersion in the folktale. However, the story in which a girl is married to a deformed man will not attract this kind of absorption or grip to the reader who is the child.

3.5 Deconstruction of the Stereotype of Women as Brainless

As discussed before, six of the selected stories depict women as shortsighted and unable to read between the lines. For this reason, men can easily deceive women and enslave them. The same tales show that men are rich and independent. The women, on the other hand, are poor dependants. They are often a group of helpless individuals so they can be lumped together as co-wives.

The stories that reflect the above mentioned assumptions are: *Kiyiri*, *Sebikazi Byasiriwala*, *Kyambe Wagala*, *Kintu and Nambi*, *Wakayima ne Mukyalawe* and *Ebyomunju Tebittottolwa* (Appendix 1). In the first story, a foolish beautiful girl eats up the meat cunningly offered by a deformed man. When she is asked to pay back, she has nothing to present but her body. The poor girl has to enter into a marriage union with the deformed man she abhors. There are two intended morals in this tale: one that women are objects to be devoured by men and two that women are stupid, they can fall in love with a shadow of a man. They must always be watchful not to be fooled by men. Second, men are of the privileged class. They are rich and that they use their money to get what they want no matter their qualification.

The notion of the stupidity of women is further emphasized in the story “*Ssebikazi Byasiriwala*” (women are innately stupid). The story shows that women are ready to believe that the husband is going to a faraway place. They are not inquisitive about his order to keep food somewhere in the house. The worst part of it is that women can be deceived for a long time without detecting the lie. In the story referred to above, it is the children that discover the prank not the women.

While one agrees to the existence of stupid women, many a girl is deceived by men about their HIV status, one must agree also that many a man have been hoodwinked into dangerous love relationships. Hence, it is equally a human condition to be stupid at times; no human being can be alert all the time. So to depict women as the only gender deceived is not only unfair but also deceitful.

Instances of stupid men are abounding in the selected literature. In the story of (*Omuvubuka Eyawasa Omusambwa*) “the man who married a ghost”, the man is projected as stupid. He like Shakespeare’s Romeo, falls in love at first sight. In failing to take the girl’s advice, the

young man is projected as pig-headed, which is equivalent to stupidity. The young man fails to see reason and to take advice. Indeed the boy is punished by the transfiguration of a woman into a snake. While the moral of the story is to distrust beautiful women, the other perspective would be men are pigheaded; they too are not to be trusted for they do not reason once they are in love.

In the story of *Kiyiri*, men are projected as being clever. They can trap unsuspecting girls with their wealth and ravish them. However the very tribute of cunningness resounds with perversity. It is negative to take advantage of another person, especially a junior. The story then shows men are immoral. They take advantage of less intelligent people and by doing so they are not playing according to the rules. A person should deal with another person of equal intelligence; to do otherwise is to be dishonest.

Moreover, this man is referred to as *Kiyiri*: an ogre. This description underlines his perversity. The story shows that men are cunning and therefore not to be trusted. They give with the right hand and take away with the left, as in the story. Besides, men are reflected as beasts to devour people. To give such a story to young people is to send a signal that men are beasts and women are their prey.

The story therefore reflects both men and women negatively. The warning against men reveals that men cannot be trusted. They are using their wealth to trap the women who are poor. Hence, the attempts to hero worship the boy/man have been futile. The boy or man has been depicted as a creature without feelings, values and attitudes. As shown above, the negative depiction of boys/men ranges from ogres, cunning, liars, improvident, dirty, deformed, and bestial. The stories show that men are beasts not really human. The story narrator refers to men as *Kiyiri/Kizike*. *Kizike* refers to chimpanzee, an ape of a man so they are not really human. Thus the story teller unwittingly tarnishes the image of the men.

The reality is that both men and women are capable of deceiving each other but this situation is not desirable. Hence if the story of *Ssebikazi Byasiriwala* were to be reread this part would reflect the fact that boy/men and girls/women are human beings capable of being good or bad. There should be exposition of the culprits and the penalty given to the deceptive people. The

story should send a warning that there are malicious people men and women out there so all people need to be watchful not to take people at face value.

In the story of *Ssebikazi Byasiriwala*, the women should be portrayed as being clever, inquisitive and being able to see through the pranks of the husband. They should be asking where the husband is going and why he should leave the home at the critical moment such as famine time. The women should ask further, why they are instructed to put food in the calabash. Such a story would teach children to be critically alert. The retold story should reveal the value of one husband to one wife or if there must be many wives, the context must be clearly shown. The story has to reflect the reality of the African society. In Buganda the man is the provider of food not the woman.

In the folktale of *Wakayima ne Mukyala we* (Mr. Hare and his wife) we have a situation of an unfaithful wife. Wakayima an improvident husband forces his wife not only to cheat on him but also to plot against her husband, Wakayima. Wakayima cleverly escapes the plot and the story ends with reconciliation of husband and wife. This story like the others depicts a woman in a very embarrassing situation. She is unfaithful, she is a revenger and she lacks the ability to scheme successfully. The woman ends up by doing three wrongs while the man has one. The moral here is that like all revengers, a woman cannot win. She is the loser on top of being stupid.

However, a closer reading reveals that Wakayima is negatively depicted. Men are genetically and biblically meant to be providers but Wakayima is improvident. It is the duty of a man to care for his family. As shown in chapter one, men were served very sumptuous dishes such as chicken, mutton, grasshoppers and pork. Society preserved these dishes for the men, with the understanding that they work hard. However, Wakayima represents man who eats too much for nothing. So he is a failure as a man. In all Ugandan literature, Wakayima has been depicted as a very clever animal. He is expected to be cunning, wise and successful.

Furthermore, Wakayima is a failure because he fails to keep his family together. If a man is the head of the family, he must be able to maintain order by controlling his wife. Here is a situation where the wife of Wakayima gets another lover when Wakayima is totally ignorant about the affair. So while the story praises the man, it also lampoons him into a cuckold.

3.6 Deconstruction of the Image of a Woman as Disposable

In two stories discussed in chapter two, two women, a mother and a grandmother dispose of girl children, one for a prize and another for food. In the first instance, the prize giver sets criteria of the boy child. In the second, a girl is exchanged for a perishable good: food. The stories therefore show that if the people of the Kiganda society had a choice they would keep a boy and give away a girl. Indeed there are many instances in the history of Buganda and that of other tribes where girls have been exchanged for food during famine and war. The boys cannot be touched. Surprisingly, even mothers and grandmothers forget maternal instincts and abandon their girl children. This shows the extent to which society devalues a girl child.

As stated in the history of Buganda, in Chapter One, there are three major reasons why male children were preferred to female children. The first was for political purposes. The boys were candidates for the Kiganda army. So they were required for the battles. Such battles brought tributary to the kingdom. Again, the men were warriors. They contributed to the expansion of Buganda. Thus when a baby boy was born, he was announced as *Nnatukirira*: fulfillment. The mother felt fulfilled because she has produced a warrior, a defender of the kingdom.

Additionally, men/boys were considered to be the providers of the essential needs such as: housing, food, clothes and security and leaders and providers of society. On getting a baby girl, the woman felt she was a failure for many reasons: first the girls were always many and boys were few. Hence producing a baby girl was a commonplace thing. Second, they did not go to the battle. They stayed home and enjoyed the comfort of their families. They were thought good for their beauty only. This is why the girls became merely the means by which to expand clans and to acquire material wealth through bride price. This is why a woman in one of the stories abandoned the girl child and rushed to present a boy to the powers that be. In another story a grandmother gave away a girl child in exchange for food during famine. For a boy child the woman had to think twice because society would have blamed her for killing a man.

An interview held at Bwanda village on the 23rd of August 2012, with six middle aged men about the plight of women revealed that this attitude is still abounding among the Baganda.

All six interviewees confessed that a woman was created to assist a man in the homes. They are no full people like men. One man reported that he could never understand a woman or reason with a creature called woman. A woman will say one thing when she means the other just to derail you. On being asked whether he had a wife; he responded that he had several but all were things to be used not to reason with. He said one drunkard could reason better than ten women. When asked why he did not get rid of them, another man said surprisingly that a man cannot be a man without a woman!

The attitude such as expressed above, towards women, rhymes with the Kiganda notion of calling a girl child a failure. This mentality is not only wrong but also inhuman and it defeats all logic. First the girls/women are human beings like the boys. To say they are good for nothing, less human than a man, failures and good for nothing except for their beauty is to fail to see the contribution of women to the wellbeing of society. The women do all the chores and the men come home to eat. If the women are useless why do they get married to them? In most stories, every man is looking for a woman. The truth is that men need women and they cannot live without the women as the old man confessed in the interview referred to above.

Besides, the women give birth to these very men that pose as untouchable. Shall we say that these children are begot with people who are less human? Does this then explain the madness in the world today?

The story of the woman who left one child in the plantain should be retold to show the following, one: a prize given to celebrate child bearing not producing a male child. Two, the society in the story should exert a penalty for the action of discarding a child. The reality is, however, that women are income earners. They contribute 70% to the economy (Museveni 2006: 61). If what makes men is their contribution to the GNP, producing a girl child/woman should be reason for celebrating. The stories should be retold to show prize giving for motherhood not producing of male children. In a world where women outnumber men their contribution to the economy is incredible. Women educate their own children and take care of homes. Most children's education and wellbeing is a work of women. Although they do not get big salaries like men, they generously use the little to educate their children indiscriminately.

3.7 Ironical Representation of the Boy Child in the Folktales

As discussed above, folktales were conduits for transmitting the cultural beliefs and values of the Baganda from generation to generation. One of the beliefs was that man was perfect and lucky. Therefore to meet a man in the morning meant one was going to have a good day and blessings all day long. In the folktales, men are presented as society expects. They are adventurous, brave, leaders, intelligent, rich, and powerful and decision makers. For example, in the *Kintu and Nambi* story, Kintu is a keen observer. He is able to locate his cow among many. He is very strong, he can break a rock. He is an excellent eater! He can eat all the food provided by Gulu, his prospectus father-in-law.

While the researcher concurs with Tamale's observations concerning the adverse representation of women/girls, the researcher argues that the boys and men are not favorably represented either. Both girls and boys are children and if they are, they must have access to good literature. They have to read material that suits their level and therefore correspond to their needs and values.

In the first *Kakokolo* story, the man who has come to pick a wife can sing so well. In the second version of the *Kakokolo*, the clever suitor man can reach impossible heights to pick the leaf. He is therefore exceptionally clever! In the *Kiyiri* story, the ogre is not only cunning but resourceful. He has both the brain and the bread. With these he can get the most beautiful woman.

However, there are numerous instances that reflect disgusting images of boy/man underneath the glorious ones. If these stories are left as they are they will send a signal that to be a man means being a beast, a devourer of women, dirty, deformed and a cannibal. These images would not be useful in glooming young boys and girls who read these stories.

One interviewee credited the stories that reflect the reality of men as beasts. Women should not fool around with them. If this is the case we can say that men are not fully human. So there is no reason for degrading women whom men assume to be imperfect and impossible. It is easier to control a half man than to control a beast.

Boys tend to associate with men just as girls do with women. The boys will take men as their role models because the men of today were the boys of yesterday. This observation implies that male children who read these stories will imitate whatever pertains to the men in the stories. In any case, it is not good to sub grade men as it has been unwittingly done in the folk tales shown below.

In Harriet Masembe's story of *Nampiima* (p. 28), where men are represented in the forms of a frog, and an ogre, presenting themselves as suitors and neglected by the girl, one feels men are debased also. In *Noga Kali akali ewala* (p.22), a very dirty and foul-smelling man comes to court a girl but is totally rejected by the beautiful girl. Ironically, every effort to glorify a man or a boy in the tales has left a dark dent on them. All clever men in the stories have a moral or physical deficiency. If they are brave, their braveness is unnatural if not bestial. For example, in the story of *Omuko owomululu*, Nambi and Kintu go to visit her parents. As expected, Kintu as an in law is served with chicken while Nambi is served with goat's meat. The greedy Kintu in the attempt to get goat's meat as well breaks the curtain that separates him and his in-laws. He is embarrassed. In the story of the *Kakokolo*, the suitor is clever, passes the test but is deformed. In the story *Ebyomunju tebittottolwa* (Appendix 1), the husband of a beautiful woman is presented as a batterer of women, so the men are portrayed as extremely greedy, insensitive and overly materialistic. They have defects like malformations, cannibalism and inability to appreciate life and beauty. Some batter beautiful women and disfigure them. Others devour them. So, men on the whole are projected as inhuman.

So, even if the folktales tend to promote the ideology of the dominant gender by depicting men with high values like intellectual alertness, braveness, ability to change into new forms and being perfect in every way, the story tellers unwittingly represent men / boys disapprovingly as well. Their faults range from being deformed, lawless, and gullible, to being monstrous.

Thus, the purpose to present men as superior to women is totally defeated as men are as defected as their counterparts even worse in some cases. This stereotype is equally detrimental to the psychology of the boy child. Greatness does not lie in being abnormal as most men are shown in the stories. It is not a credit to be deformed, lawless, gullible and bestial. According to Nodelman one attribute of children's literature is that it should offer joy

to the young readers. However, this kind of portraiture is not healthy for young people. Hence it is necessary to analyse the various ways in which boys are adversely projected in order to re-tell positive stories. The analyses of the stories shown below reveal the defect of men.

3.8 Depiction of Boy Child/Man as Gullible

The first case of gullible men is cited in the story of the man who married a haunting spirit: "*Omusajja Eyawasa Omusambwa.*"(Appendix 1) The story uses the old convention of a woman's beauty being irresistible. This convention points to the old time belief that women are temptresses. However, there are facts in the story to show the man as lawless and the woman as a moral force. Instead she who is assumed to be lawless is the one who advises the man to seek the consent of the parents before marriage.

Ironically, it is the supposedly intelligent lawful man who insists on the unlawful union (he takes the woman to his home without the consent of the parents as is expected in the context of the stories). To insist on taking the woman without the Baganda customary rites, indicates two faults: first, men are egoistic. It is the man's will that must prevail. Second, the men are lawless whereas the women are a moral force. The above observed facts are highlighted by the consequences of the marriage. The woman turns into a snake and the condition is unbearable to the man. The story reveals that if women are gullible, men are equally so. They are fooled by appearances and not disciplined enough to take advice.

3.9 Depiction of Men as Dirty, Sickly and Bestial

In the majority of the stories, the narrator uses the convention of "Once upon a time, there was a man who married a beautiful girl / wife ...". In the negotiation of the marriage the fathers (not mothers) are represented as decision makers concerning choosing husbands for their girls. In the Baganda culture the suitors are supposed to exhibit perfection during courtship. They dress well and look their best. They eat properly. Beauty a sign of perfection is emphasized.

However, in every tale, beauty, cleanliness and morality are ignored qualities in relation to men. Instead, their negative aspects are emphasized. For example, the condition of the men at the time of courtship is terribly agonizing. It ranges from untidiness, monstrosity to deformity. (See the illustration below)

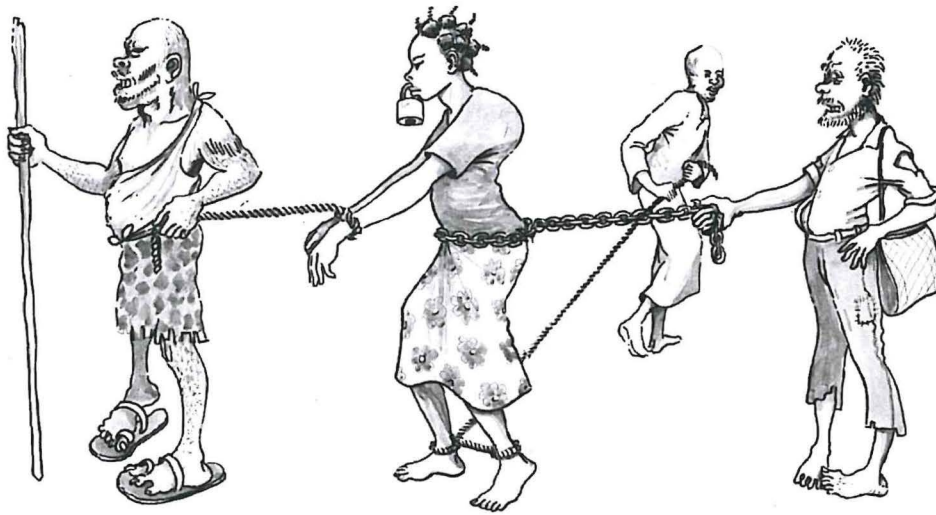


Illustration of the dirty deformed men taking a silenced girl child. (Illustration drawn by Deo Ssenyondwa, August 2012)

Depiction of men as being cunning, dishonest always looking for ways of cheating. Is this what society wants men to be? If men are leaders, the stories should depict them as exemplary people, negotiators, well groomed and responsible beings.

For instance, in the story *Nsalala*, a very beautiful girl is courted by two men. One man is dirty and another clean. The father of the beautiful girl chooses the dirty man because he has much money and rejects the clean one who is rather poor. In the two versions of the story of the *Kakokolo*, the suitors are ugly and disfigured. Even the girls who are expected to be submissive dare to express unwillingness to marry the men. In three tales *Kiyiri*, *Balinda* and *Kyambe Wagala* (*Appendix 1*), the suitors came in shape of human beings but later turn into beasts.

In an interview with six focus groups all respondents agreed that the folk stories distort both the image of boys and girls. The boys/men are presented as *Kakokolo* (*deformed, Sewazike*,

bestial), dirty suitor. Such presentation is detrimental to the self esteem of the male child, they may fail to get role models in the stories they read. The girls may think men have to be beasts, deformed and dirty. This can cause fear of starting relationships. These images are not near to equal to real lives they lead.

The conditions of the suitors in the above cited stories raise issues about the glorious men. First, the greed of the fathers who value money, braveness and intelligence at the expense of good health, morality and the will of their daughters all of which are required in marriage. If the suitor is dirty, barren and deformed in any way, there is no penalty given to them. Second, the fathers are not concerned about the bestial nature of the suitors. In the story of *Kyambe Wagala*, we hear of instances of a man who devoured the wife after marriage. The mother follows to see what happens to the daughter but the father does not care. The omission of the father's concern leaves one to conclude that the mother is the only parent. So whereas women are presented as stupid, brainless, weak and submissive, their counterparts are not any better. Behind their glorious image of braveness and intelligence are the untidy, bestial and greedy beings. These images are not wholesome.

The worst image is perhaps the equating of men with death. In relation to the story of *Kintu and Nambi*, one male interviewee said that the impression he got about the boy child was devastating. In the above story, the character Walumbe, "Death" is a male. By implications, the males are associated with death, Walumbe, the most malicious and inhuman person. He is not ashamed at all to kill the children of his sister. He is a killer that enjoys seeing the tears of human kind, he is malicious. Much as the story projects the man as the owner of the world the image of death annihilated all the dignity accorded to the man. This negative image is contrary to that which society would expect to accord to the male child today.

3.10 Terrorizing Instances in Literature

One of the definitions of literature used in this study is that literature is fictional. The definition as exemplified in Griffith implies that the reader of the stories sets them apart from real life. This is because the characters, events, dialogue and setting all exist in the imagination of the writer. There is no one to one correlation that exists between them and anything that actually exists. In fiction, "human beings can fly, perform magic." However,

the same critic as observed before defines literature as being real. By this, he means Literature is an “interpretation of the real world even when it distorts it and alters facts.” The events may be fantastic but the lessons they teach are true to our own experience. Seen from the point of view of Griffith’s explanation, the Baganda tales represent situations that are not true. The reality is twisted to suit the desires of the dominant group. According to Nodelman children’s literature should be able to offer joy and hope. However, this attribute is contradicted in Baganda oral literature.

In a number of cases, the children mainly boys/men, are presented to be more monstrous than the monster in the folktales of the Baganda. A case in point is the story: A man who ate his wife piecemeal; a husband who turns into a monster at night; the man who devours his wife; the man threatens to eat up a woman with the little sister. The stories are estimated to teach that men are supposed to be respected and feared because they have unusual powers. But to prove the power of men the men have to be made beasts. It is like saying men speak no other language other than that of beasts. This kind of portrayal does not foster harmony and productive presentation.

Furthermore, the case of a husband who ate up his wife piecemeal and then turned to the mother in-law and also feasted on her, shows that men are not people with feelings. They are beasts. They are not husbands in the strict sense of the word, they are cannibals. They eat their own kind. In the present day Uganda where child sacrifice is a norm, children can easily believe the story is true and associate the practice with men and develop homophobia.

According to Michael Handsbarg (1987) good literary materials expand horizons and instill in the children a sense of wonderful complexity of life. So, recommendation should be based on aspects of the reading that makes committed readers want to read the inspiring, motivating and well balanced literature that has no biases and stereotypes whatsoever.

Children’s literature is a site of cultural transmission. The folktales, proverbs and proverbial names of the Baganda entertain while moralizing. In this way, they negatively transmit the image of the girl child since the society is patriarchal. The moral of this oral literature lies invariably with status, class and birth (Lerer Seth p. 35). The unwitting presentation of men’s quirks in a literature meant to render them supreme to their counterparts, the women, implies

that both men and women are equal in that they all have faults. Their differences are exaggerated by society. A society has to see that both genders and complementarity should be considered first. Both genders can play the same vital roles to the wellbeing and building of society. Hence it is absolutely necessary to retell the tales and the conventional wisdom sayings.

3.11 Rectifying the Image of the Boy Child and the Girl Child in the Stories

As argued above both boys/men and girls/women have been negatively portrayed in the oral literature of the Baganda. I have shown how the image of the girl child could be restored. In this section I will concentrate on the male child. The boy/man has been depicted as an ogre, murders, deformed (Kakokolo) a beast (Wazzike), cunning and deceitful. This negative portrayal has been responsible for the violent and bestial behavior of men. The presentation of boys/men as masters, rulers, and free people has been responsible for their big ego and irresponsibility.

The formation of the person begins at an early stage in life. The earliest education of the children determines success or failure. Early in their life, the girl and boy children, through the folk tales, proverbs and proverbial names should be reflected to be independent not objects, one to whom things happen, one who has no control, a follower not leader, stupid, one good for nothing apart from producing children.

Like the counterpart of the boy child, the girl child should be shown as capable of being a leader, pathfinder, initiator, provider, her looks do not matter, always important, has supernatural powers, and has liberty to responsibly do whatever she wants. This presentation is what literature should perpetrate to create harmony between the two genders and to increase the contribution of women to development in Buganda.

Folktales, a sub-genre of oral literature, are part of a people's oral narratives in many cultures. Oral literature is not only a purveyor of culture, but also a means through which social perceptions and relations are expressed, reproduced or redressed within their fabric and historical frameworks and contexts (Ngugi 1986:10-13; Ogwang 1994). As a living art form, oral literature often adjusts to changing veracities and social necessities. Thus, one could argue that contemporary realities and apprehensions are often confined and expressed through

oral literature performance, the folktale inclusive. The researcher preferred the folktale in this study partly because it is one of the most entertaining genres of oral literature.

Secondly, the folktales of the Baganda involve a multiplicity of other genres such as song, proverb and idiom. Moreover, the folktale tend to be expansive, compared to, say, the short forms such as proverbs or riddles. Thus the folktale tends to deal with a lot more realities than other genres of oral literature. Therefore, the folktale affords the listener/reader a broader and deeper spectrum when deconstructing the images portrayed therein.

Both men and women are human beings and are capable of making errors. The folktales should not capitalize on the errors of women but should reflect society as it is. However the Baganda folktales have been told from the perspective of the dominant ideology. These stories are more often than not a reflection of the truth about women rather they are a reflection of the desires of the men's expectations. The reality is; a child is a child. Both a girl and a boy are children. Following the stereotyping in these stories the researcher was forced to deconstruct the stories in a manner that will show that a girl child is a good innocent child who can learn all good skills, she is intelligent. A boy child is not a beastly savage, demonic subhuman cannibal child. A girl can be taught football, a boy can be taught to take care of a baby and vice versa.

3.12 Positive Folk tales

A positive story should portray that both boy and girl children are treasured. The children should be portrayed with good attributes. If the women are beautiful the men should have the same quality. If the men must choose a partner let it be expressed that the woman has a choice as well. So the stories should project women initiating a love relationship. The stories should also depict women rejecting sexual advances of men they are not interested in and succeeding in doing so.

There are a handful of wholesome folktales in the selected tales. These present men and women as human being with positive attributes. Some of the good stories among the selected works include: *Omusajja ne mukazi we Abagya abaana mu ntula*: A couple that got children from berries. A couple that did not have children consulted a diviner who prescribed picking berries and placing them in the cradle. The berries later turned into children. This story is

positive by three counts: the title of the story depicts both the boy and girl as children (*abaana*) with equal rights. The girl is described as a *Gwalajjana: bouncing baby*. The name suggests that the baby is beautiful and healthy. This is contrary to the demeaning name *Gannemerredde*, which is given to Nambi's baby girl in the story of *Kintu and Nambi*.

Another positive story is that entitled: *Byereta(Appendix 1)*. In the story the woman is depicted as independent; she does her work and the husband does his. The woman is depicted as a very intelligent woman. She saves her husband and the entire family from famine. She also outwits the monster that had haunted the whole village. This woman heroine can be likened to Oedipus who, in *King Oedipus*, saved the Thebans from the sphinx.

The girl child needs to be given a voice since she has been manipulated and exploited and yet tradition and modernity has reduced the girl child to silence and mimicry. I wish the Baganda women to strongly demand and reclaim their very much silenced identities and rights as stipulated in the 1995 Constitution of the republic of Uganda, Clause 4.

Women ought to use orature and vernacular in form of folktales to deconstruct both colonial and patriarchal domination. The women and the girl child in Uganda should lightly oppose blind acceptance of marriage. The female gender has been marginalized for a long time and they ought to be incorporated into the mainstream society.

If the major purpose of folk stories, proverbs and proverbial names is to instruct, to pose a moral and to illustrate a particular habit of mind, the stories should be reconstructed so as to have an ethical force for both boys and girls. The process of constructing and deconstructing gender is on-going, sustained by social institutions that are considered unquestionable and natural (Dominic Dipio 2009). And if this is to be done easily, children's literature is an interesting and influential discipline to exploit for the same.

Whatever the intended audience for fiction, children should be at the forefront, at the heart of writers, authors and composers. What is clear from many of the ghost tales is that even in the absence of younger characters, fear often reduces grownup men to whimpering babies. The girl child in the destructive pangs of the ogre is often unforgettable and the narrator intends to imprint such images on the young minds of the audience.

As observed earlier on in Hunt, children's literature must be in close contact with the realities of human experience. It must be in touch with ordinary life. One must provide insight into human experiences and examine the problems that most concern society (p. 10). Children's literature is about emotional training. There is need to create a learning environment that cultures and nurtures the children's inherent qualities of imaginations, curiosity and creativity. However, the folktales of the Baganda create a stereotyped society that does not practice equitable living. There is a precious center literature occupies in the learning life of a child mostly as they keep reading and listening to the tales. This strengthens the linguistic and literary skills of the children. Children's literature entertains, educates and strengthens ideology as seen in the folktales of the Baganda. It is meant to strengthen children to face the realities of adult life.

As argued before, the principal of equity is what would render these stories educationally valuable. It is on the basis of the above principle that the researcher re-reads the tales with a conviction that both the male and female children have been misrepresented. Unless one re-examines the stories, gets back into the shoes of the girl child and boy child and experiences the injustice done to both children, the stories will continue to promote a superficial image and will collapse soon or later. The researcher therefore argues that it is possible and imperative to (re)create these folktales in a manner that treats both the boy and the girl child positively as a means to inculcate the system to equality, justice and equity.

The representations of the boy/man and girl/woman created in the stories are hollow. As argued above, the boy child/man has been represented as wholesome, flawless as the most blessed creatures of the human species. But underneath the apparently glorious image one can detect undertones of artfulness, intelligence, abnormality, thoughtlessness, gigantism, monster like and the rest. In a number of stories men are depicted as killers without any cause. This takes away the human quality which would make men very attractive. The men often kill the ogre with a single blow. They have supernatural powers. They can beat the laws of nature. So they are marvelous creatures. This kind of representation sends their counterparts in biased and unrealistic jackets.

As discussed in some stories, the females should simply not have any positive quality, if they do, then they are evil and dangerous. Such tales as these have to be deconstructed to examine

the portrayal of the man critically and to revise the stories to promote images of equity, remove negative images of both the boy and the girl child and present them in a more positive and realistic manner.

Apart from realigning the content of the stories to render them educationally valuable, there are two strong reasons for deconstructing the stories: First, the proponents of deconstruction argue that literary texts are nebulous hence their meaning cannot be paraphrased nor concluded hastily. Literature is by definition language. Language is fluid hence the meaning of the words cannot have definite edges. Based on the above argument, one needs to revisit aspects of the texts to explore the conscious and unconscious meaning given to the text.

The second reason is that literature is written for an audience and the audience change according to the needs. Today the Buganda community is becoming aware of gender equity and so the literature must address the changes. The depiction of black and white images of either sex is not constructive.

3.13 Conclusion

Based on the reasons given above, the researcher set out to deconstruct the negative and apparent positive images of girls and boys respectively. The researcher argued that the boys/men in the stories are represented in awkward images as well. The men are gulls, thieves, slave owners, bestial and cannibals. All these negative images do not befit children's literature. Children's literature should be in contact with the realities of human experience. Children's literature should be in touch with ordinary life and provide sun light into human experiences and examine the challenges that most concern society (Hunt 1999:10).

Children's literature should exhibit positive qualities of both boys and girls. However, in the Kiganda folktales we have negative portraiture of both girls and boys. If we do not make necessary changes, the girls who read these stories grow up being told either directly or indirectly (for instance, through the folk tales, and other oral pieces) that they are frail, vulnerable, evil, bad, helpless, naïve, gullible and deceitful as well as worthless to the society.

And boys/men will consider themselves as kings, invincible and far better than the girls women.

There is need to re-read the folktales of the Baganda and deconstruct the images of the girl child and the boy child to a better realistic one. The girls ought to be motivated and inspired as the boy children are and this will encourage gender equality, equity and justice.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

4.1 Summary of the Findings

This study set out to deconstruct the portrayures of the girl child and the boy child in 20 folktales and 10 proverbs and proverbial names of the Baganda. There were five major reasons for the deconstruction and these were: the distortions of the images of the girl child and the boy child, the 1995 constitution of the Republic of Uganda, the required international standards for children's literature, the definitions of literature and the modern trends of thought.

According to Selden oral literature is a powerful gender ideological tool (p. 25). This tool is often used in the gender socialization process. Oral art makes use of contemporary history to express the topical struggles. Hence oral literature mediates and intervenes in gender struggles. As observed in chapter one, Buganda was a male dominated society. This means that it were men who designed all the ideological apparatuses such as literature. All the content and style of stories and proverbs were well calculated to perpetrate the ideology of the dominant class, the men.

The study anchored in the above expressed views proceeded to expose explicit and implicit misrepresentation of the girl child and the boy child and contradictions within the misrepresentations. The study proposed new ways of retelling the stories.

The researcher selected and analyzed the relevant oral literature thus achieving the first objective of the study. The analyses were informed by three theories: the post-colonial feminist theory, the reader response theory and the deconstruction theory.

From the post-colonial feminist point of view, the researcher sought to create a new interpretative community. This was none other than the grieved community of the girl children and women. These did not have a hand in the composition of the stories and proverbs. It could be argued therefore that they had been denied the voice to express themselves and to author the oral literature. The tales were written by the dominant class and

they promoted the ideology of that class. The researcher sought to examine the attitude towards women and to examine the assumptions made about men.

From the reader response and post-colonial feminism perspectives, the researcher mapped the world of women, their concerns, and feelings onto the stories. In other words, the researcher sought to examine the stories and proverbs from the women's perspective. It was argued that the woman was silenced by the male dominated society and now she is reading her experiences of suppression into the folktales, proverbs and proverbial names that have been used to subdue her. The researcher sought to deconstruct both the negative attributes associated with women and the supercilious accolades awarded to men by revealing the contradictions within this complimentary presentation.

In order to get a complete interpretation of the folk tales, proverbs and proverbial names the researcher sought the opinion of various stake holders. These ranged from children, male and female teachers, old men and women and feminist scholars. The researcher interviewed them and their respective responses were incorporated in the interpretation of the folktales.

4.2 Summary of the Analyses

The second objective of the study was to present evidence of the stereotypes of the girl child and the boy child. Thus answering the questions of how these children have been depicted in the oral literature and how the depiction differs. The above analysis was done in chapter two and could be summarized as follows:

The examination of the selected literatures led to a discovery of many misrepresentations of the girl child/ woman. These included attitudes of women as sexual objects, tempresses, property of man and second class citizens. Women are treated as good for nothing but sex. Women are like flowers that exist just to satisfy the desires of men after using them they are discarded. This attitude is implicitly portrayed through the frequent use of the convention of "Once upon a time, there was a very beautiful girl, married off to a man". This convention is repeated in all the 20 stories that were examined (Appendix 1). The repetition of the convention meant that women are valued by one standard; their looks, yet beauty is a transient quality. This view is underscored by the fact that their male counterparts were judged by other

attributes such as, intelligence, valour, wealth and ability to entertain an audience, all of which are more lasting than the attribute of beauty.

Another misrepresentation of a girl child /woman was that they are second class citizens. If we follow up with this image, women are represented as people who must pay a high price to deserve to exist. They are the “other.” This is shown by their being commodified by even those who brought them into the world. The fathers marry off daughters, without consultation with them, to unsuitable, bestial, dirty, sick and deformed suitors. The mothers and grandmothers can dispose of the girl child when the situation dictates.

Furthermore, husbands treat women as they want; there are men who beat up women. Others devour or mutilate them. Surprisingly, the stories were all silent as to the penalty that could be given to a woman abuser by either society or father of the girl. Once the man takes the bride, the business is finished. The cultural laws to punish the violent men do not exist. The conclusion that emerges from this omission is that women are a property not people. The husbands own this property and are at liberty to treat the women as they want.

The stories present girls/women as brainless. Women are not curious or inquisitive about everything that happens to them. Even the children are more curious than their mothers. For instance, in the story where a husband deceives his wives about giving him extra food during famine, it is the children that bail the women out when the latter are hoodwinked by the husband. In other stories women are presented as hopelessly obsessed by men. Women are presented as being so stupid that they can fall in love with shadows of men.

The stories present women as scapegoats. In case of faults made by men it is the woman to blame for tempting them. In case of children’s misbehavior, the mothers are blamed for not bringing them out well. Based on the above analyses the researcher concluded that the girl child/woman has been adversely represented in the tales. Her counterpart the male child has to be intelligent, clever, rich, assertive and able to communicate.

As king of the world, a man can marry several wives and manage to control them. Even beyond his grave, the man remains in charge. A girl whose father was dead has to kneel at the grave to search for consent of the deceased father not mother! By using his intelligence any

man can pass the test and win a beautiful girl. Deformed men can also marry beautiful women, so can the beastlike, all because they are able to pass the test.

By using his wealth, a man however ugly can marry a wife. The rich are free to appear in any form they want. No restrictions of beauty are put on them. Rather, the value a man is measured by is higher compared to a woman who is measured by her looks which are subject to time.

The third objective of the study was to challenge the stereotypes in light of the 1995 constitution of the republic of Uganda, the required international standards of children's literature, the role and definition of literature and the modern trends of thought. The analysis revealed that the portraiture of the boy child/man is not consistently positive. There are contradictory aspects in the idolized masculinity of "fulfillment, heir, master and lawful male." For every credit given to a male child there is a shadow of discredit. For instance, the stories present clever men as being deceitful, dirty and deformed. These quirks point to the absence of perfection and wholesomeness. By rendering them as dishonest and unable to compete on clear terms, the men become less attractive than they are intended to be. Their deformity is a sign of lacking completeness. In this regard the men do not offer role models for young boys. Besides even, women get a negative impression about them.

Men are clever, but behind this facade is cunningness, deceitfulness all of which are exemplified in the folktales above. They deceive women for even cheap reasons like wanting to eat food for free. In the story of *Sebikazi Byasiriwala*, one man who owns several wives deceives his wives that he is going on safari. He orders the women to keep food in a container and he helped himself to the food. Sometimes the men deceive for purposes of wanting to ravish a woman. This undermines their integrity as well as the human dignity. According to Karl Marx as quoted in Roman Selden, human nature is supposed to be sweet and transparent but the stories reflect them as being bad. This is why today many men continue to deceive young girls and use them to satisfy their desires. To exploit the ignorance of a subordinate does not reflect power; instead it shows wickedness and cowardice.

The argument that emerges from the above is that although men have grave flaws like greed and lustfulness, and because they are the authors of the stories, they give themselves a credit,

hide their faults and proceed to capitalize more on women. For this injustice society gives the lame excuse that women are the moral force. They are the trainers of children so they have to be exemplary. But this begs the question: whose children are they? As shown in the discussion, the children belong to the clan of men therefore children of men.

The women are depicted as breeders. This being the case the men should undertake the responsibility to train their children. After all, why should the men entrust the training of children to brainless and good for nothing people? Nuwagaba in his '*Situational Analysis of women in the Ugandan Political Economy*' says that Women are marginalised and 'caught in the classic human contradictions, they are deprived and impoverished yet make immense contribution to the nations' socio-economic development. Such deprivation exists in inheritance, literacy, and schooling and in only secondary access to land i.e. through their husbands and it is rooted in culture (p. 15-30).

Marxist and post-colonial feminist scholars argue that one of the most important functions of oral art is its service as a tool for social protest. Whenever there is injustice and oppression in society, people always find solace in oral performance to vent their concerns. In the same vein, Isabel Hofmeyr in her work recognizes the role of oral performance in gender struggles. She argues that, "the limitations that circumscribed women's lives were nowhere more apparent than in the area of speech and performance" and yet, she adds that oral literature performance probably contributed much to the informal power of women (Isabel Hofmeyr, 1993: 27-28). It is the researcher's argument as well that in the folktales of the Baganda, the girl child in particular and females in general, have been rendered powerless through the performance of the tales. Hence, folktale performance an ideological arena and means for gender construction can be the means for changing the negative image of the girl child.

So, the empowerment of women, as Christine Obbo says in '*East African Women, Work and the Articulation of Dominance*' and '*Gender Stratification and Vulnerability in Uganda*', will come from their having access to and control over societal resources – land, livestock, and children as well as information. (p. 210-222).

Whereas the 1995 constitution of the republic of Uganda decreed that men and women are equal and all forms of oppressions and suppression of the girls/women must be removed, the

suppression created by literature have not been removed. The girls of Buganda still suffer from the cultural and colonial hunger over permeated through folktales and proverbs. Hence they have not fully developed to full capacity in their performance on different levels. Buganda is a prototype of many cases of suppression of the girl child in Uganda. It is necessary to study these forms of suppression since women in Uganda contribute over 50% to the economy and the development of human resource.

The researcher therefore argued that this domination of the women in general and the girl child in particular is a discounter to the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. Hence this analysis answered research questions 3 and 4 of this study.

Negative depiction of girls is against the human rights. What is worse is that it can lead to a disaster. Although the collectors and authors of the tales and proverbs may think that they have beaten the women into submission, the fear of the researcher is that there is already a go-slow strike which is even more dangerous than the overt strikes. An interview held with several corporate women reveal that several women are said to commit outrageous deeds like hacking their husbands, some have poisoned them and others have hidden the Wills on seeing that all what they have struggled for is leaving their property to people who never labored for it. More often than not this behavior signals long harbored grudges that have not been vented.

Incidents of women revenging on men are full of our literature world over. One classic example is that of Miss Havisham, in Charles Dicken's, *Great Expectations*. Havisham is dumped by a lover on the wedding day. Many men do this because of two assumptions: they are the bosses. The men choose, they are not chosen. Because Havisham could not find a voice to oppose the oppression she was subjected to, one of the things she swore to do was to revenge on the male gender. Two young people, Stella and Pip became victims of her revenge. Anybody who reads *Great Expectations* weeps at the punishment exacted to the two young people. Pip's heart is broken when Miss Havisham marries off her ward to another man other than Pip. But this is what human beings do if they are pushed to the wall.

In a recent Nigerian film a young woman stabs to death an elderly man who abused her when she was still little. She had no voice when she was young. The law did not protect her so she decided to do it herself.

Man and woman are created equal each with the three parts of the psyche. No man or woman was *created* to be subordinate to another. Like the Shakespeare's Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, Shylock is willing to forego ten times over the money offered to him to forgive Antonio in order to get rid of a man who has wounded his ego (Act 4:4,37). Women have feelings similar to those of men. Like men, women cry when their egos are sacrificed.

So, that is why the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action declared restorative justice for complementarities in favour of the girl child. The declaration recognized that the girl child of today is the woman of tomorrow. Children are very impressionable and take stories for reality and the characters very seriously. They find characters that they can relate to which often are by their gender. These children are affected by these characters and views of the World and will continue to be affected as they grow into adults and raise their own children. The skills, ideas and energy of the girl child are vital for full attainment of the goals of equality, development and peace (par. 41). Based on these declarations therefore, we need to challenge those ideologies that are not gender responsive. For this reason, in this study, the researcher proposed a re-reading or deconstruction of the folktales as a step in the direction of achieving gender equality and equity.

4.3 Way Forward

The fourth objective of the study was to suggest ways of recreating or redressing the situation in order to depict both the girl child and the boy child as people with equal rights in the oral literature of the Baganda. This would answer research question 5 and 6. So, writers and publishers of our folktales, proverbs and proverbial names have to challenge both colonial and patriarchal dominations that seem to be perpetrated in the kind of written orature our children are currently reading.

Writers and publishers of Uganda should oppose blind acceptance of all the distortions that have been outlined in Chapter Two and Three. The female gender has been marginalized for a long time and they ought to be incorporated into the mainstream society like their male counterparts. There is need to compose new stories that tell both the boy child and the girl child that they are recognized as citizens with equal rights and dignity. The composition of this literature must conform to the dictates of the 1995 Constitution of the republic of Uganda,

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APPENDIX 1 : FOLKTALES AND THEIR TRANSLATIONS

Engero ensonge mu Luganda (Zifunziddwa).	Folk tales in English Translations (Paraphrased)
<p>NJABALA</p> <p>Awo olwatuuka nga wabaawo omusajja ng'awasa mukazi we nga bazaala omwana waabwe omuwala omulungi ennyo, Njabala. Nnyina teyamuyigiriza kukola mirimu. Nyina wa Njabala teyalwa ng'afa. Njabala naye ng'afumbirwa. Bweyatuuka eyo ng'alina okulima naye baaba nga tabimanyi.</p> <p>Awo nakaabanga ng'akowoola nnyina nti 'maama ggwe wankola ekyejo, kati simanyi kulima. Nkole ntya?' Yali ali awo nga teriri busa, ng'omuzimu gwa nnyina gujja gutandika okumuyambako okulima n'okusalira ensuku nga guyimba nti:</p> <p><i>Njabala x3, Tolinsanza Muko</i></p> <p><i>Bakazi balima bati, Njabala, tolinsanza Muko</i></p> <p><i>Nebatema nebawala, Njabala, tolinsanza Muko.</i></p> <p>Gwakolanga bwegutyo ne mu mirimu emirala Njabala gyeyali tamanyi kukola. Olwali olwo omwami n'agendako mu nnimiro alabe mukazi we gyalima. Yasanga omuzimu gwa nnyazaala we gwefuumula gulima bweguyimba. Kyeyava agugoba nakuba mukazi we emiggo mizibu.</p>	<p>NJABALA</p> <p>A beautiful daughter Njabala is born to a couple. The mother loves Njabala so much that she gets spoiled. Soon after the mother dies, Njabala gets married. She cannot run her home because she is so lazy. Her husband is about to divorce her. While at work she invokes the ghost of the mother who comes to work for her. Whenever the ghost comes to help her, it sings:</p> <p><i>Njabalax3</i> <i>Let not the in-law find me.</i> <i>Women do dig and till land, save me of the shame!</i></p> <p>One fateful day, the in-law found the ghost of Njabala's mother digging for her and singing. He slashed the ghost, beat Njabala and divorced her.</p>
<p>OMUKAZI EYALEKA OMWANWE OMUWALA MU LUSUKU.</p> <p>Olwali olwo ng'omusajja awasa bakazi be ng'abagamba nti omukazi yenna alinzaalira omwana ow'obulenzi ndimuwa ente yange eno sseddume. Telwalwa ng'omukazi omu afuna lubuto lwa balongo, ng'abazaala. Ngaddirira omulongo omuwala ng'amukweka mu kitooke ng'atwalako oli omulenzi, ng'agenda amukwanga bba, nga yefunira sseddume. Oli omuwala eyasigal mu lusuku teyamujjaayo.</p>	<p>A WOMAN WHO ABANDONED HER CHILD IN THE PLANTATION</p> <p>A polygamous man desperate to get a male child wagers a bull for any woman who produces a son. One of the wives gives birth to twins a boy and a girl. She picks up the male child and rushes to get the prize, abandoning the newly born child girl in the plantation.</p>
<p>KINTU NE NAMBI</p> <p>Edda ennyo, kuni kwaliko omuntu omu ye Kintu. Yabeeranga n'ente ye yokka. Mu ggulu waaliyo Ggulu n'abaana be. Abaana bwe bajjako mu nsi, ne balaba omusajja ono bambi ngali yekka. Omwana omuwala Nambi n'akwatibwa ekisa nasalwo ajje abeeranga naye ku nsi Ggulu nagamba nti amale kugezebwa, bwayita ebigezo bya Ggulu, olwo anaatwala omuwala. Ggulu kitaawe wa Nambi nagamba nti ayagala okulaba omusajja oyo atwala muwala we, amugeze alabe oba asaanidde. Kintu taludde</p>	<p>Long ago there was only one man on earth and this was Kintu. He lived with his one cow from which he got all that he wanted. Food and water. Up in Heaven, lived Gulu with his children. One day, Gulu's children came down on earth to play. They met this lonely man Kintu. Nambi the elderly girl felt pity for this lonely man and went back and told her father that she would come back on earth and live with Kintu.</p>

<p>azze ewa Ggulu, yajja butoola n'ente ye. Ekigezo ekyasooka kwekuddira ente ye nebagigatta mu ggana liri eddene nebagamba Kintu agiggyeyo. Ye Kintu yalina evvuuvumira aryamuyamba nerigenda nerigwa ku nte ye, n'asobola okugiraba. Nebamuwa ekigezo eky'okubiri, okulya entamu z'emmere ennyingi, Kintu nasala amagezi ettaka ne lyeyabuluzamu emmere emu n'agiteeka mu ttaka. Baagenda okujja nga ebisero byonna bikalu. Ekigezo eky'okusatu kyali okwasa olwazi. Kintu yasaba Musisi Najja n'ayasa olwazi era olwazi baagenda okujja nga yalwasizza dda.</p> <p>Awo omuwala Nnambi nebamumuwa. Naye Nambi yali agenda, kitaawe Ggulu n'amukuutirira obutabuulirako Walumbe Mwannyina kubanga yali wamutawaana nnyo. Ekyakabi, Nambi neyerabira obulo bw'enkokok ze. Yawalirizibwa okudda emabega eyo gyeyasanga Walumbe n'amubuuza wa gyabadde alaze ng'amulese. Nambi namugamba nti agenda ku nsi, naye tateekwa kugenda nabo. Walumbe n'agaana. Namugoberera.</p> <p>Bwebaatuuka kungsi, Walumbe n'asaba Nambi amuwe ku baana abeere nabo Nambi n'agaana. Ye Walumbe n'atandika okubalya ng'attako omu omu.</p> <p>Kitaabwe Ggulu bweyawulira ebiri eyo, n'atuma muto we Kayiikuuzi anone Walumbe amuzzeyo mu ggulu. Walumbe n'adduka era Kayiikuuzi n'amugoberera mu binnya by'ettanda gye yaddukira. Nakati Walumbe ali kungsi kuno adoobya abantu olw'okwerabira kwa Nambi.</p>	<p>Gulu wished to see the man and test whether he was fit for his daughter. On invitation, Kintu came with his cow to heaven. Kintu was subjected to a number of tests. First, he was asked to identify his cow among a multitude of Gulu's cattle. A beetle helped Kintu to identify his cow. Next, he was presented with a lot of food and asked to eat all. Kintu ate what he could and asked the ground to cover the rest. Thirdly, he was asked to break the rock into pieces. He prayed and the earthquake came and broke the rock into pieces. By the time Gulu came, Kintu had performed the tasks that they expected him to do. Gulu gave Nambi to Kintu and warned Nambi that her brother Walumbe (death) should not know where Nambi and Kintu were going.</p> <p>Unfortunately, Nambi forgot to take the millet of her chicken. She made a comeback and Walumbe asked her where she had gone without informing her. Nambi told him that he should not follow them. But Walumbe insisted on following Nambi to earth. Thereafter, he started killing Nambi's children.</p> <p>When Gulu heard of that, he sent his other son Kayikuuzi to go and bring back Walumbe to heaven, Walumbe refused and ran away. Kayikuuzi chased him and he hid in the abyss found at Ttanda. So, Walumbe is on earth killing the children of Nambi (man) because of Nambi's forgetfulness!</p>
<p>OMUVUBUKA EYAWASA OMUSAMBWA</p> <p>Omuwubuka omu aba atambulatangulako, n'asanga omuwala omulungi omubalagavu awo ku kyaziya ng'ayota akasana. Omulenzi n'amwegomba, n'amusaba akkirize amuwase. Omuwala n'agaana n'agamba omulenzi agende amale okulaba bakadde b'omuwala abasabe bamukkirize amuwase.</p> <p>Omulenzi n'akomba kwerima, nagaana ye namwegayirira ng'amuwaliriza bagende bugenzi bafumbirwe. Omuwala n'akkiriza, nebagenda. Kyokka omuwala ono yali musambwa era nga talina waka waabwe.</p> <p>Bwebatuuka mu bufumbo bwabwe, olumu bannyina b'omulenzi nebasanga nga mulamu waabwe afuuse omusota ng'asaanika emmere. Nebadduka nebagenda babuulira omulenzi . Omulenzi yatya nnyo, n'agenda ku mulubaale okwebuuza kiki eky'okukola. Omulubaale n'amugamba azzeeyo mangu omuwala gye yamuggya.</p>	<p>A LASS WHO MARRIED A GHOST</p> <p>A certain boy saw a very beautiful woman – but she was a ghost- seated basking in the sun. He admired and asked to take her home and marry her. The woman first asked him to go and make inquiries about her home about her; but the boy pestered her for the marriage. At the boy's home the girl turned into a snake while cooking. When the boy was informed by his sisters, consulted the medicine man who and ordered to take back the girl from where he found her.</p>
<p>AKOMUNKU</p>	<p>AKOMUNKU</p>

<p>Olwari olwo, omusajja ng'awasa mukazi we nga bazaala omwana waabwe omuwala omulungi ennyo. Kyokka omwana baamuzaala nga ebigere bye bya mpologoma, era nga naye alimu omuze ogwokulya obukoko obuto, obuwukawuka newandibadde obusolo obutonotono obuto.</p> <p>Taludde atuuse okufumbirwa. Bwebaali bamwanjula, enkuba nejja n'etonnya nnyo. Abantu nebeggama. Ssezaalawe ye yeggama kumpi n'ekisenge omwali omuwala era nga mwebamubuulirila. Ssenga w'omuwal bweyatuuka okumubuulirira, n'amugamba ng'amukuutirira nti; "mwana wange, Akomunku okalekanga. Akomunku, olikakeka? Okalekanga mwana wange." Ssezaala weyali neyeebuuza 'akomunku' kekaki? Nayagala nnyo okukamanya. Yaloozo oba omuwala gwebatutte musezi? Nayagalira ddala okukamanya.</p> <p>Tebaludde batutte muwala, ssezaala amwetegererezza ebbanga, Akomunku nga takalaba. Kyeyava yevaamu n'amubuuza nti, 'owange 'Akomunku' kebaakugamba kekaki? Omuwala ye n'atamunyega. Naddangamu ngamubuuza 'Akomunku' kyekategeeza.</p> <p>Olumu omuwala nga yetamiddwa, nagamba ssezaalawe kwolwo yetegeke bulungi era ategeke ekiraalo, akionje bulungi, era akizimbe kinyweere, ayite abantu bokukyalo, ye amulage Akomunku.</p> <p>Obudde tebuludde butuuse; omuwala teyalwa n'afuuka empologoma nasooka okulya ennyana yent ate oluvannyuma nadda ku ssezaala n'amulya. Ensi yonna nejjula entiisa.</p>	<p>A couple produced a very beautiful girl but with lion's paws. She could devour small insects and animals and even fellow kids. At the time of courtship, the father in-law also went with the entourage. When it rained, he sheltered near the place where the bride was being counseled from. He overheard the aunt strongly warning the girl to discard the horrendous habit. The father in-law grew anxious about what that could be. He thought the girl was a night dancer. He became inquisitive and later pesters the daughter in-law to tell him what the aunt meant by "Akomunku". So curiosity breeds contempt. The woman later ate up the father in-law in the process of showing him "Akomunku"</p>
<p>NAMUNENE</p> <p>Olwari olwo, newabaawo omusajja ne mukazi we nebazaala baana baabwe babiri, omulenzi omu ne mwannyina Namunene. Tebaalwa ng'abazadde baabwe bafa. Kyokka baali tebannafa nebagamba muwala waabwe nti bo abazadde bebateekwa okumulondera omusajja ow'okuwasa, era ne bwebaliba bafudde, omuwala aliteekwa okugenda ku malaalo gaabwe okwebuuza. Era bwegwali. Yakwata omusajja asooka namutwala ku malaalo nga bw'ayimba. Nnyina namugaana. Bweyaleta omusajja omulala ku malaalo ga nnyina, Nnyina namukkiriza. Olwo n'alyoka agenda afumbirwa. Omulenzi Musisi tetwaddamu kumanya bimufaako.</p> <p>Nange awo wennalabira.</p>	<p>NNAMUNENE</p> <p>A brother Musisi and Namunene his sister born and Namunene must present her partner before marriage to her parents even when they were dead, first she had to take the man to her parents' tombs for them to decide for her whether she can marry that man or the other. The brother did not have to perform this ritual.</p>
<p>KIYIRI VVAAWO MPITE</p> <p>Olwatuuka nga wabaawo omusajja ng'awasa mukazi we nga bazaala abaana baabweabawala babiri, omu nga wakyeko nnyo.</p>	<p>KIYIRI VVAAWO MPITE</p> <p>There were two girls one spoiled (Kalikyejo) and another well behaved and cautious. Both went for</p>

<p>Olwali olwo abaana bano nga bagenda mu nku. Baba bali eyo, enkuba n'etonay nnyo. Nebanoonya aw'okweggama. Tebaalwaq ne balengera akakka akanyooka. Baagenda okutuukawo nga temuli muntu. Nebayingira nebeggama. Ekizike tekyalwa nekikomawo, nekibasangamu. Nekifumba obunyama bwakyo nebumere. Nekibawa balye. Ye omuwala Kalikyejo naalya ate oli omulala ye Natalya nabitereka. Enkuba bwe yakya abaana ne baagala okugenda ewaabwe. Ekizike nekidda ku mulyamngo, nekisaba obunyama bwakyo n'obumere. Ye oli eyabitereka n'abiwaayo ate ye Kalikyejo nga talina. Ekizike nekiwaako oli okugenda ye Kalikyejo n'asigal nga ayimba bwagamba nti:</p> <p><i>Ondabiranga maama, Kiyiri omulangira;</i> <i>Nti omwanawo Kalikyejo, Kiyiri omulangira,</i> <i>Omwana wo gwoyagal, Kiyiri omulangira,</i> <i>Ekiyiri kimulidde, Kiyiri omulangira.</i> <i>Kiyiri vvaawo mpite, Kiyiri omulangirax2</i> <i>Ondabiranga taata, Kiyiri omulangira.....</i></p> <p>Awo ekyavaamu ekiyiri nekifuuka omuntu, omusajja omulungi nekimuwasa.</p> <p>Nange awo wennalabira.</p>	<p>firewood. It rained and they sought for shelter. They found it in the Kizike's hut. The Kizike came back and found them and it prepared food and meat. The cautious girl did not eat the food but the spoiled girl ate all. When it stopped raining, the girls wanted to go. The animal asked for its food and meat. One presented it but this other one had eaten it already. The spoiled girl was forced to stay with the Kiyiri and the other one went away. Kalikyejo sang and told her sister to tell their mother and father that she was eaten by the animal.</p> <p>SONG</p> <p><i>Tell mother, that the ogre has eaten your beloved daughter.</i></p> <p><i>Tell father, that the ogre has eaten your beloved daughter.</i></p> <p>Later, the ogre became a handsome man and married the girl.</p>
<p>MUZIRANNENGE</p> <p>Olwatuuka nga wabaawo omusajja ng'awasa mukazi we nga bazaala omwana waabwe omuwala omulungi ennyo. Kitaawe teyalwa n'afa omuwala ono nasigal ne nnyina. Omuwala ono teyagunjulwa nafuuka malaaya. Yatambulanga n'ekiro nga ava eyo mu mikwano gye.</p> <p>Lwali lumu nagwa mu batemu ne bamuttira ku kkubo. Omulambo gwe negusigala awo nga tewali amanyi na gyeguli.</p> <p>Maama w'omwana yamulinda nga tamulaba. Aba ali awo, nga ekinyoni kijja Kiyimba nti;</p> <p><i>Muzirannenge, Muzirannenge...</i></p> <p>Nnyina w'omwana kwe kukigoberera okutuusa lwe kyamutuusa ku mulambo gwa muwalawe.</p>	<p>MUZIRANNENGE</p> <p>An irresponsible mother spoils her only daughter. She fails to get married and becomes so reckless. She moves at night. One fateful night the girl is murdered. Her body is left to the prey of birds. She could not be given a descent burial because she is nobody's wife.</p>
<p>SSEBIKAZIBYASIRIWALA</p> <p>Olwali olwo, omusajja ng'awasa bakazi be babiri, nga enjala egwa mu kitundu nga emmere ebula wonna. Omusajja yalaba enjala emutta kwekusala amagezi nagamba bakazi be nti ye</p>	<p>SSEBIKAZI BYASIRIWALA</p> <p>A man married to two wives. One day during famine time the man deceived his wives that he was going</p>

agenze Ssingo kunoonya mmere nabo basigale nga banoonya. Yabalagira okuteeke emmere ennungi etali ya muwogo na lumonde mu nsuwa emu eyali wammanju wenju awo nti mwalimu Lubaale waabwe.

N'abakazi bwebaakolanga. Omusajja yalabanga abakazi bagenze, ye nga yeddira mu nsuwa ng'alya mmere, nga bwayimba nti:

Ssebikazi Byasiriwala, nnalaarira

Bbaffe yagenda Ssingo, nnalaarira

Yagenda kusaka obutta, nnalaarira,

Bwendaba bagenze okulima, nnalaarira

Bwe kku nze ngandi mu kasuwa, nnalaarira.

Olwo ng'abuuka ngagwa mu kasuwa. Ekyo yakikola emirundi mingi. Lwari lumu abaana ne bamuwulira. Nnyaabwe bwe yadda, ne bamugamba nti; 'Tuwulira eddoozi lya taata oba ali ludda wa?' Abakazi nebasooka okuwakana, ekyavaamu ne beekweka okulaba abaana kyebagamba. Baba bali awo nga bbaabwe atandika okuyimba. Abakazi ne bavaayo ne bamukwata ne bagamba nti, 'Yii bbaffe, watulimba...nebamutwala nebamuwawabiira... abakazi bonna ne bamunobako.

Nange awo wennalabira.

on safari. He ordered the to keep food in a pot.

The two foolish women did not ask why they should keep food in the pot every evening. Every morning while the wives were at work, the man helps himself to the food singing a song about the foolishness of women saying:

SONG

These innately foolish women, they think I went to Ssingo for food, but when I see that they have gone to the garden, I come around and eat.

The children heard him and reported to their mothers. The women could not at first believe the children, but when they hid, they saw their husband come up and eat the food. They got hold of him, and reported him to the public. They all later divorced him.

BYEYUNA MUGAGGA

Olwali olwo ng'omusajja awasa mukazi we nga bazaala omwana waabwe omuwala omulungi ennyo. Buli musajja eyajjanga okumuwasa nga bamugaana nti mwavu. Nga bo balindayo omugagga.

Olwali olwo, omusajja omu Najja nga Mugagga nnyo era olwalaba nga musajja Mugagga, abazadde nebawaayo muwala waabwe. Omusajja n'agamba nti mukazi wange mmutwalirawo. Baali bamugamba agende ne Ssenga we, omusajja nagaana. Nagenda ne mukazi we yekka. Bwebaatuuka eyo mu kkubo, ewala ennyo, nebadde mu bisinde by'ente nebagenda eyo mu gubira ogunene.

Omusajja bweyatuuka eyo, n'afuuka ezzike. Neritandika okumulyako emikono n'ebitundu eby'omubiri ebirala. Lwali lumu, nnyina w'omuwala nagenda okumulabako. Yasanga muwala we wattulu, era nga mulemalema. Ezzike naye lyalwa edda ne rimulya. Kyenkana yalyetwalira.

IT IS THE RICH WHO GET MUCH

A couple begets a very beautiful girl and wants a rich man to marry her. So, they reject all advances from any poor being until a very rich man who later turns into an ogre came with all they wanted for their girl.

They gave in their girl. The rich man said he was taking his wife. When the aunt said that she was escorting them, the rich man said no and gave an excuse of the very long journey.

He took his wife and when they reached in the forest far away from the girl's home, the man turned into an ogre and started eating her bit by bit beginning with the hands.

One day the mother of the girl thought of going to see her daughter. She found her daughter maimed. When she tried to run away, the man/ ogre ate her also.

<p>ENNYONGEREZA ENASULA OMUTEGO:</p> <p>Olwali olwo, omusajja ng'awasa bakazi be babiri. Yabagaalanga nnyo ate buli omu n'amuwa omulimu ogw'okukola. Lwali lumu omukazi omu namugamba ye amujje enviiri enzirugavu mu mutwe ate omulala amujje envi.</p> <p>Abakazi bombi nebatandika omulimo gwabe. Bwagenda okuwungeera nga omusajja takyalinako kaviiri konna ku mutwe gwe are ng'alabika bubu nnyo. Abakazi nebamunobako.....</p>	<p>A man married to two women wanted each to serve him specifically. One day he ordered them to prick his head. One was ordered to prick away all the grey hair and the other to prick all the black hair. At the end of the day, the woman was totally bald for all hair had been pricked off.</p>
<p>KYAMBEWAGALA</p> <p>Olwatuuka nga wabaawo omusajja ng'awasa mukazi we. Omukazi yali agenda mu dda, n'atwala muto we omuwala. Bwe bwatuuka ekiro, omusajja n'atandika okuwagala akambe nga bwayimba nti:</p> <p><i>Kyambe, Kyambe wagal, ngenda okusala ku nnamunyama, ngenda okusala enviiri za nnyabo ngenda okusala ku nnamusava.x2</i></p> <p>Omuwala eyali omujagujagu era atebaka n'atemya ku baaba we nti ; baaba wulira mulamu by'agamba. Omusajja n'abuza omuwala lwaki yali teyebaka, omuwala n'amugamba nti, ye okwebaka bamala kumwokere gonja oba kumukimira mazzi nga gali mu kiseru.</p> <p>Omusajja bweyaddamu, akaana nekazuukusa baaba waako ne badduka. Baba badduka nga balaba ekikere ne bakyegeyirira kibamire kibawonye omusajja ajja abanoonya. Ekikere nekibamira. Omusajja bweyasanga ekikere, n'akibuza oba kyali kirabye ku bantu abo. Kyo nekimugamba nti nedda.</p> <p>Ekikere nekidduka nekitwala omuwala ne baaba we eka waabwe. Kyasanga basogola, nekiwandula awo abaana bano bombi. Nebakyegeza nnyo nebaakiwa ebite by'omwenge, okuva ku lunaku olwo, ekikere nekifuuka mukwano gwa bantu. Abantu wano mu Buganda, tebatta bikere.</p>	<p>KYAMBE WAGALA</p> <p>A woman marries, goes with her sister and the man wants to devour both. The young girl is clever and alert than the adult woman who sleeps off in times of trouble. Young girl warns the sister about the man's advances and intentions to devour them. Man bribes the girl into sleeping by providing whatever she mentions. Later both run away and a frog swallows them to save them from the man who is hunting them. Later the frog throws them to the relatives and it is rewarded by calabashes of beer and it wins friendship with the human being.</p>
<p>OMUWALA NAKAKOKOLO</p> <p>Olwatuuka omusajja n'awasa mukazi we ne bazaala omwana waabwe omuwala ate nga mulungi nnyo. Kitaawe w'omuwala n'agamba nti omusajja alising okumpa ensimbi ennyingi y'alitwala muwala wange.</p> <p>Abasajja bangi nebagezaako, naye nga baavu. Akakookolo bwe kaawulira ko nga kalia ensimbi zaako ne kaggya okwogereza. Kitaawe w'omuwala n'akwa muwala we.</p>	<p>A YOUNG GIRL WITH THE DEFORMED MAN</p> <p>A very beautiful girl is admired by many men of the village. The father wants a man with much money to take his beautiful daughter. Many come in and they fail to raise the amount of money the father wants in his girl. Then Kakookolo comes in with all that the father wants. Father, who had already committed himself so, gives in the girl to the Kakokolo.</p>

<p>BALINDA N'ETTUNGULU</p> <p>Omuwala yagenda ne jjajja we mu kibira okusennya enku. Bweyalaba ettungulu n'alyegomba nti ssinga libadde musajja, lye ryandimuwasizz. Ettungulu neriwulira. Baba baddayo eka, ettungulu neryesiba ku muwala ye Jjajjawe n'agamba omuwala nti, alitwale anti yeyali alyegomba. Ettungulu nerigemda nabo, nerisabanga okulikolera buli kimu ekyavaamu nerifuuka omusajja omulungi neriwasa omuwala oyo.</p>	<p>BALINDA AND THE PLANTAIN</p> <p>A Girl went with her grandmother to collect fire wood. She found a ttungulu (plantain) and muses that if the plantain were a man she would get married to it. The plantain herd and insisted to be taken home. The grandmother forced the girl to take the plantain for she had wished to marry it.</p>
<p>NSALAALA</p> <p>Omuwala omulungi omubalagavu yayagalwa abasajja babiri omu nga mujama ate omulalala nga muyonjo nnyo kyokka nga mwavu. Bazadde be ne bamuwaliriza okufumbirwa omujama eyalina ensimbi ennyingi n'alekawo omusajja omuyonjo.</p>	<p>NSALALA</p> <p>A very beautiful young girl admired by 2 men. One dirty and the other clean. She rejects the dirty one and accepts the clean one. But her parents forced her to marry the dirty one because he had enough money.</p>
<p>NSANGINSANGI MWANA WANGE</p> <p>Omukazi yazaala omwana we nga mulungi nnyo, abasajja bangi nebegomba okumuwasa. Nnyina w'omwana nagira ng'amukwese mu mpuku nga gyamutwalira emmre era ng'ayimba kayimba omwan nategeera.</p> <p>Ebizike n'abasajja abegomba omuwala ono baaketta nnyina ng'amutwalira emmere, ne bamanya kyakola. Bwe baalaba agenze, nabo nebatandiak okuyimba,</p> <p><i>Nsangi x43 Mwana wange tonnamera bbeere, lwolimera ebbeere lwendigenda naawe. Nsangi ggulawo nsuuleyo akalo ko.</i></p> <p>Nsangi naggulawo, ebizike nebimutwala nebimulya.</p>	<p>NSANGI NSANGI</p> <p>A mother bore her beautiful girl and many men and animals wanted to marry her. She hid her in a cave and used to stealthily take food there to her.</p> <p><i>Nsangi X3 Nsangi my daughter, you have not yet got breasts, When you get them, then I will go with you.</i></p> <p>The suitors (Ssewazzike / ogres) spied where the girl was and found her, they sang like the mother and when she opened they ate her.</p>
<p>NAGGAMBA NE MUKAZI WE OMUGOLE</p> <p>Naggamba yawasa mukazi we Omugole, baba bagenda eka, Naggamba n'akyamako okunywa ku twenge.</p> <p>Agenda okudda ng'omugole taliiwo baamututte dda!</p>	<p>NAGGAMBA AND HIS BRIDE.</p> <p>Naggamba married a new wife and as they were going home, he left her under a tree and went to take some beer at the nearby station. By the time he came back, the bride had been taken by another man.</p>

APPENDIX 2: A LIST OF PROVERBS AND SAYINGS

1. Akezimbira tekaba kato (The one who constructs a house is not a child)
3. Nnakyeyombekedde (A rebel woman)
2. Werigomba Ng'omulungi Akomba Ensaka (Shyness makes the beautiful starve)
4. Nvannungi (Good source get spoiled quickly)
5. Birungi tebiggwa mirembe (Good things never give peace)
6. Kulabako (A beautiful woman is for window shopping; she vanishes quickly)
7. Gannemerredde (I have failed)
8. Kalibakasajja (He will be a strong man)
9. Nnatuukirira ((I am accomplished)
10. Omuzigu Azaalampanga (The great one will bear a son)
11. Anaganja asooka ddenzi (One who will be a favourite bears a son as the first born)
12. Ensi egula mirambo (A political chair costs shedding blood)