Exploring the Implications of a gender responsive curriculum

The novel and gendered identities

Jessica Gesare Gasuku

Thesis submission in partial fulfillment of
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Abstract

In this study, I set out to explore how Literature shapes perceptions of gender among high school students based on discussions of a feminist text, ***the River and the Source by Margaret Ogola.*** By exploring this, I hoped to shed a light on whether transformative learning occurs in the Literature classrooms whereby students can get an opportunity for critical reflection/evaluation of the texts and society, or not. The main questions for analysis were: (1) to what extent is the current Literature text studied in a gender responsive way? (2) what are the students' insights on the manner in which gender is presented? The main variable of the study was gender perceptions, while the assumptions were that the text alone does not determine meaning, but rather, the reader draws from their experiences and contexts and ascribes meaning to a text. Reader response theory and the feminist literary critique provided tools for analysing whether a text questioned or upheld patriarchy. A discourse analysis of the novel identified it as a feminist text. Is the implication that since the text is gender responsive, the education students receive is gender responsive as well? The conflict perspective which has contributed to the main thinking was critical of this conclusion, hence the need for a field study for further exploration. 17 students from three schools were interviewed. The results of the study indicated that female students identified more with the feminist text than the male students. The male students, although displaying changing perceptions on masculinities and femininities, revealed scepticism towards gender equity and equality practices. Recommendations for future research to focus on the how these attitudes (boys') can be averted through the curriculum.

Key words:

Gender, gendering, The river and the source, identity, patriarchy, feminism, reader response theory, feminist literary critique, literature,

Preface

I first conceived the idea of conducting a study on gender perceptions from private conversations about the state of feminism in the African society. The term itself is a maze, with many layers and connotations, and I had to narrow it down to my two passions; reading and teaching, to be able to focus the study. It appeared to me there was an underlying problem in the portrayal of the Kenyan woman, and she did not seem to demand for better. Why did there seem to be a collective oppression of women? And where were the voices of the women and men demanding for change? This was the impetus for investigating this study.

This study is conceived in an attempt to open the conversation on how and why attitudes are formed. I identified teenage girls and boys for the study, because previous research indicates gendered identities are formed at a young age. I chose to focus on how media messages influence gendered attitudes. In this instance, the media form I analyzed is the novel largely due to my teaching background in English Literature. I hope to open up a fresh dialogue on why young adults perceive males and females the way they do, especially the negative perceptions, in order to hopefully change the rhetoric, to a more gender equal society.

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1   Background of the study

1.1   Introduction

The concept of gender is fascinating. The ways in which the term is sometimes used interchangeably in reference to 'sex' -the biological disposition one is born with- and the ways social science reveals it to actually be. Having had no exposure to any intentional feminist reading up until adulthood, I observed the ways in which society played a vast role in creating what is feminine and what is masculine, yet the message communicated to me was that biology is what influences our behavior, over other factors. In spite of questioning this patriarchal doctrine of essentialism, I still supposed that sex determined one's gender roles and not the pervading social and cultural norms.

Later, I came across [1]*the second sex* (Beauvoir, 1966) and *the feminine mystique* (Friedman, 2013). The political nature of words and the various connotations were introduced to me. Developing a language to describe the weak status bestowed on women in society was the light bulb in a dull world painted by ideas lacking concrete vocabulary. I related this to the books by [2]Alice Walker and [3]Maya Angelou that I loved reading when younger. And it is all there, the construction of gender, willfully and unintentionally through the intersectionality of social issues in society and its reproduction.

While in the process of burying myself into volumes of research conducted on gender trying to search for any existing gaps that I could delve into, the news headlines from Kenya peaked my interest into the topic further. Women were being unclothed in the streets by self-appointed 'decency police'. And the public enjoyed every minute of this spectacle at the horror or the women and some of us feminist women.

It then hit me that maybe the public's perception was similar to mine: prior to reading *Beauvoir* and *Friedman*. That respectability politics in terms of gender was expected of women, and there was no room for self-expression or interpretation of decency codes. The

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[1] The Second Sex and the Feminine Mystique are prominent feminist critiques of the condition of women. Despite contrasting ideas to end the oppression, both texts are considered the holy grail of second wave feminism.

[2] A popular black American feminist writer, whose most famous novel, The Color Purple documents the plight of the poor southern black women in America.

[3] A feminist poet and writer from America, whose most famous memoir I know why the caged bird sings documents her life up to age 17.

manner in which the news was reported in both print and video reflected this notion, for example, perpetrators of the violence, usually male, had their faces blurred, while the female victims, usually unclothed were exposed to the world (Jansen, 2016).

1.2 Problem Statement

I was inspired by the idea of conducting a study whereby I could talk to the young adults in secondary schools to find out about their notions of the term gender and its connotations. According to (Eder (1995) Hammersley (2003) and Stokoe (1998), gendered identities of young adults can be established via multiple ways. These include:

- analyzing conversations that reveal how they self-identify in a discourse analysis

- analyzing conversations that reveal how they view the other genders

- analyzing conversations that reveal how they identify other cultures and societies

This led to the research aim: investigating the extent to which interaction with a feminist text influences male and female student's perceptions of gender. It was equally important to assess what the ensuing discussions reveal about themselves. The research is influenced by assumptions about the nature/nurture debates that have identified a correlation between the social world and gender identity development (Creswell, 2003).

1.3 Research Questions and Assumptions

The research questions have been developed from the main purpose of the study: to investigate the extent to which interaction with a feminist text influences male and female student's perceptions of gender. Discussions of a feminist text will reveal male and female students' perceptions of gender.

Research Questions

1. In what ways is the novel the River and the Source by Margaret Ogola gendered?

2. What are students' insights on the ways in which gender is presented?

Assumptions

1. The text alone has no impact on the reader

2. The reader navigates textual meaning from their social world

3. The social world has an impact on the meaning making process

4. Female students perceive the feminist text more positively than the male students do

1.4   Significance of the study

Studies have shown that positive or negative gender self-identifications are linked to positive or negative masculinities and femininities and this is directly linked to empowerment or disempowerment of women, passive or active observance of gender based violence, a culture of misogyny and HIV/AIDS vulnerability or invulnerability in high affected countries (Szymanski, et al, 2009; Connel & Messerschmidt, 2005). Multiple identity studies have been conducted in the past, with a link to the curriculum. However, few studies have been conducted focusing on gender and Literature studies.

Various media studies have sought to investigate the link between various media forms and identity development for example (Waterman, 1982). Most studies have been conducted in the subject of video games, magazines, children's texts including picture books, and film. Few studies have been conducted on the link between the effect of novels on a reader. This is what this study explores. The reader response theory by Rosenblatt (1938) is the main theory that seeks to explain the role of the relationship between the reader and a text. Main ideas from this theory establish that the reader is not a passive actor in the process of consuming texts. The text itself is however not an innocent actor and has effects on readers (Biocca, 1988).

1.5　Feminist theory and qualitative research

I used the feminist theory as a guide in identification of a feminist text, as well as in developing interview questions and a coding system for analysis of the discussions. The theory provided sensitizing concepts for the qualitative research undertaken. Many studies argue that feminist theory principles are more skewed towards a qualitative research strategy than a quantitative one, such as (Eagleton, 2014). Qualitative research is seen by feminists as being associated with sensitivities that quantitative data do not afford. Subjects are provided with a voice. The criteria for valid knowledge in quantitative data do not include a voice. The emphasis on controlling variables through quantitative data is seen as another aspect that a qualitative theory opposes.

Some arguments that quantitative data leads to exploitation of the subjects under study has forwarded the belief that it is incompatible with feminism which offers researchers a chance to give to the respondents as much as they take. However, some within the movement argue that qualitative research exploits the respondents just as much as quantitative design (Bryman, 2012 & Tyson, 2006). What it does provide however is a voice to the respondents, an emphasis on the situated nature of knowledge as well as a direct contradiction of universal laws which are consistent with quantitative designs. While this was not the only criteria for selecting the research design, it bridged the arguments for the research design, and linked the theory to the fieldwork research component.

1.6　Context of the study

The research site selected was Kenya, and secondary schools were selected. This was established a priori. The comparison unit identified was boy schools, girl schools and mixed schools. According to Kilbourne (1999), the period before adolescent age is key to identity development, however, it is in the adolescent ages, 14-19, that the behaviors are reinforced. Research on single and mixed sex schools in the UK found that girls develop a more assertive sense of gender identity in single sex settings than in mixed sex school settings (Belfi, Goos, De Fraine, & Van Damme, 2011; Sax, 2009). Some critics such Sullivan (2009) argued that the influence in these study was exaggerated. It is these rich arguments that generated the comparison level, to determine the different messages students can get from the text based on their environments.

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1.7 Why the River and the source?

The novel, *the River and the Source* by Margaret Ogola has been identified as a feminist text and has won multiple awards (Odhiambo,2006). The matriarch, Akoko, is mentioned across the entire text, and the story opens up an intimate conversation on the situation of women in Kenya. The author chooses to follow up stories of Akoko's progeny after her death, a long lineage of daughters. Each generation of women faces new challenges. The other female protagonists are: Maria, Elisabeth, Vera, Becky, and Wandia.

1.7.1 Synopsis

The text follows three generations of women in Kenya and their progeny. The story spans about a century, taking readers from post-colonial nineteenth century Kenya, pre-British colonial rule, up to the end of the twentieth century. The context spans around the traditional rural village of Western Kenya, of the Luo ethnic group and in modern day Nairobi, Kenya's capital city. The main character in the novel is a female character, Akoko, who is also the 'river', in the title The *River and the Source*. Her lineage confronts cultural upheavals such as introduction of a new religion Catholicism, colonialism and AIDS.

1.7.2 History of the reception of the text

The text was released in 1995, and was the recipient of several awards including:

- the 1995 commonwealth writers prize for best first book Africa region

- the Jomo Kenyatta prize for Literature in 1995

It has also been used as syllabus material for the national certificate exams in 1998, 1999, 2000 and was reintroduced in the syllabus in 2013, 2014, 2015. According to Foulds (2013), syllabus materials undergo rigorous scrutiny in Kenya before recommendation for use in Kenya secondary schools. The government in partnership with development partners such as the World Bank, IMF and the UN have set up gender responsive mechanisms to ensure that Kenya attains the goal of gender parity in education by the end of the post 2015 development agenda as well as attain the EFA and MDG goals. The positive reception for the text indicates a shift towards sensitization of education materials, but this is only an analysis of one text in a congested learning space.

1.8   Chapter Summary

This chapter contextualized the study by situating the study from a personal and impersonal narrative to establish the significance of the study. This section also identifies the main objective of the study, which is to investigate what is revealed about how students perceive gender through discussions of a feminist text: ***The river and the source*** (Ogola, 1994).

The assumptions of the study are developed from nature nurture arguments and ways in which the social world influences our behavior(s). Two main research questions are developed: how the text is gendered and what this gendering means to students. I conducted the study in Kenya, a site which was established a priori and the respondents were 17 male and female students from three secondary schools in Kenya. I used the feminist literary critique theory and the reader response theory to establish theoretical leanings. Both theories are well suited for the discourse analysis and qualitative field research work that was conducted.

2   Literature Review

2.1   Politics of Gender, schooling and Curriculum

What is taught in schools is in part determined by a country's goals, its national interests and on development of citizenry that is not in conflict with the national interests (Foulds, 2013). The national goals are in part influenced by prevailing international goals such as education for all and gender equitable education. Kenya is a signatory of UN policies such as EFA, MDGs, POST 2015 development agenda. It is also a recipient of development aid, which comes with requirements that the education system fulfills these UN mandates (Orodho, 2016). As such, Kenya has set goals in line with the UN mandate of education for supporting a gender equitable education, which are translated in the curriculum by studying gender responsive texts such as the river and the source (Kameri-Mbote, 2001).

Nonetheless, more socialization goes into schools than what is prescribed in the formal curriculum, in what is defined as hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum is the socialization process of learning, and usually reflects the wider cultural landscape of a country (Freire, 1970). Despite overt curriculum goals, structural factors need to be in place to ensure that the curriculum goals are attainable. Critical studies on culture indicate that those in power do not want to relinquish their power, and thus, despite overt displays that they want an equal society, this is usually not the case. Such is the nature of a hidden curriculum (Ibid).

Thus, a highly patriarchal society may indicate in national education documents and policies the need for a gender equitable society, while this is not necessarily the practice (Tomaševski, 1993). Studies into how gender is practiced in schools indicate gaps in provisions for boys' needs vs those for girls. Despite a gender sensitive curriculum, there is a reproduction of prevailing patriarchal culture. Studies indicate that professional development for teachers is low and what is taught is not monitored, therefore, interpretation of the curriculum can be diverse for different teaches (Apple, 1992).

The intersectionality of gender, cultural politics and the curriculum is mediated through socio-economic status, race, and ethnicity, among other societal factors. While it is the mandate of schools to educate, socialization, occurring through the overt and hidden curriculum occurs,

contribute to students' perceptions and attitudes about 'others' (Freire 1970; Aveling 2002; Jackson 1968). The hidden curriculum is reflected through rewarding students for certain behaviors, which usually mimic the dominant group. A systematic review of studies on this intersectionality indicates a struggle between balancing the hidden curriculum with curriculum objectives of gender equity.

Results of a study in Zimbabwe on girl's choice of traditional subjects indicated that the hidden curriculum, capsuled in teacher's attitudes was a contributing factor to their choices (Mutekwe & Modiba, 2012), and note the role of schools through reproduction and structuring the stereotypes. Another study in Zimbabwe on the gender responsiveness of the overt curriculum indicated aspects of the hidden curriculum as causes of oppressive attitudes towards women by both male and female students (Gudhlanga, Chirimuuta & Bhukuvhani, 2012). A study in South Africa on curriculum making and promotion of empowerment and gender equality indicated a belief that equality was unachievable, despite concerted efforts in the curriculum (Simmons, 2014).

The socialization process of the curriculum indicates that schools function as sites for cultural transmission, and are not neutral actors. Apple (1992) notes that legitimate knowledge, or what is to be included in the overt and covert curriculum is a product of the result between power struggles and compromises between identifiable public actors such as politicians, religious institutions, classes, races, ethnic groups, race and gender. He argues that any critical analysis of a text must reflect the complexities involved in its production and use.

2.2 Presentation of findings of studies on development of positive and negative masculinities and femininities and their effects

2.2.1 Controlling Images, myths and stereotypes in media

This section will highlight studies that have attempted to link development of positive and negative masculinities to factors such as patriarchal culture, education, profession, religion inter alia.

A study investigating the truth value of the feminist theory of rape identifies factors including patriarchy and gender as major factors contributing to support of rape (Boakye, 2009). Socialization is a site of perpetuation, with the content of education a key contributing factor. Several of definitions of 'rape myth' by different feminist theorists have been proposed (Burt, 1980). However, one that sums up the myth is by Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994: 134).

they are attitudes and beliefs that are widely and persistently held and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women. They range from victim precipitation, to denigration, stigmatization and deservedness to the trivialization of sexual offence.' (Lonsway & Fitzgerald).

Results of this study revealed that males were more likely to identify with the rape myth than female participants; education was a key factor, but more so the content of education. The researcher called for more studies into this, as this was an exploratory study. Religion was not a factor, as in other studies, and the assumption was that the dominant cultures and traditions played a bigger role in influencing perceptions more than religion did.

In a literature review conducted by Hammer (2009) on the media's controlling images and its impact on women's development, the author exposes the medias' effect on development, and stresses on the need for critical vigilance when interacting with the media. Hooks (1997) reinforces this assertion. She uses the example of the media's portrayal of black women in America within certain stereotypes, and notes that it is framed in a racist and sexist ideology that is aimed at disempowering them.

Hammer discusses studies that show that the self-esteem of women plummets in their late teens, due to more exposure to controlling images such as magazines, advertisements and

television, which Kilbourne (1999) terms as the cultural textbook. Boys are also victims of these images, which portray masculinity as congruent with ruthlessness and brutality. Walker (2005) notes that these images are usually decided upon by the dominant group in society, and the subjugated group does not consent. They also protect the interests of the dominant group, rationalizing power structures operating within the society.

2.3   Gender and Culture

2.3.1   The personal is political

The title is a famous feminist phrase that embodies the notion that whatever happens at the macro level impacts what happens at the micro level. Values attributed to dominant cultures have impacts on the private and public domain (French, 1986). This notion has brought forth discussions on the need for teachers to identify their own prejudices and how this can affect teaching and learning.

Some researchers such as Brock-Utne (1995) in the *'Feminist Didaktik: the why what and how to teach women'* note that often too many times, the voices of women are silenced in production and transmission of knowledge through policies, content and methodologies respectively. The dominant teaching practices in the past have been masculine, including in the use of text books and methodology. The author notes that teachers have to ask the important questions of why the aims, methods, evaluation procedures and texts are used, as they play a potentially crucial role in shaping lives of students.

Ongoing conversations and evidence based research on these ideas have contributed to a shift in teaching in some countries, such as the Nordic countries. Brock-Utne (1995) notes that in the 1870s, girl's education in the high society was encouraged, in what was termed as 'schools for refinement', where Art and French were emphasized. However, boy schools offered broader subjects and competition was encouraged.

The debate on offering girls a similar education led to outcries from men who felt the girls would be less pleasing to men and more competitive. This early conversation has enabled the region today to have higher equality ratios than other areas of the world. A conversation of the politics of education, and how it intertwines with prevailing culture as well as how other macro factors influence what is taught and how it is taught is an important conversation.

2.3.2 Teacher Gendered attitudes

Studies show that teachers play an important role in shaping students perceptions of gender, in terms of challenging accepted norms that may be culturally prescribed, or in terms of upholding these cultures (Millighan, 2014; Hurn, 1993; Jackson, 1968). While ministries of education, schools and curricula may map gender parity and equality as crucial to gender equality, informal mechanisms such as prevailing cultural practices in societies influence how gender is perceived in different societies.

Millighan (2014) notes that while policy reforms and pedagogy practices are important instruments in transforming gender equitable education, these alone are not enough. Teachers are important participants in reviewing gender inequality discourses at the school level. She conducted a study in a rural district in Kenya, with the purpose of exploring the multiple gendered issues facing girls in secondary schools in that province, and its interaction in and out of class.

The results of the study indicated contrasting viewpoints of teachers' notions of gender equality. Some of the teachers interviewed revealed knowledge of the need for adapting school practices for girls in order to enable re-entry of the drop out girls. One of the major causes for girls dropping out of schools in Kenya was due to early pregnancies (Sang, Koros, & Bosire, 2013). Conversations within education reform and equality based on evidence from studies have shifted policy and practice, and it is common for girls now to be allowed re-entry to schools after pregnancies. The 'return to school policy' was adapted in Kenya in 1994 to facilitate continuing education for parenting girls in an attempt to boost the education agenda of education for all (Migiro, 2014).

However, Millighan (2014) observes that that conversation needs to continue as evidence from teachers' language reveal hidden biases, influences of prevailing patriarchal culture and long held attitudes towards women that may delay progress. A teacher described those girls that get pregnant while still in school as *'loose, not serious, and very delicate* (p. 473).' These attitudes towards these girls mirrored in their own descriptions of themselves, for example students saying that they do not perform well in a subject because they are not serious, despite

noting that they are expected to perform chores after school, which may be a factor contributing to this.

2.4 The influence of texts on gender role perceptions via studies of children and young-adult Literature and feminist theory

whether we are aware or not, theories of some sort inevitably must guide our perceptions, our thinking and our behavior' (Lynn, 1998:145).

A literature analysis of critiques on the significance of children and young adult texts on gender perceptions will focus on feminist criticisms of representations, subjectivity, appropriation, binary positions and essentialism that are part of what is referred to as textual politics (Appleman, 2000; Mohanty, 1984; Stephens, 2006; Alarcon, 1997; Anzaldua, 2007; Hooks, 1994; Hill Collins, 2008).

These authors have written critiques of various representations of feminist critiques of children's Literature being grounded in western, white, middle income images, leading to isolation of those that do not fit within these narrow definitions. They caution against the nuanced representations which can lead to unintended consequences when female readers who do not belong to these categories read this literature.

A conversation on the content of children's books began in second wave feminism (Stephens, 2006). While the focus was primarily on the issues of inequality between men and women, scholars challenged representations of female characters compared to males through quantitative and qualitative studies. The first quantitative study by Weitzman, Eifler, Hokada, & Ross (1972) identified stereotyped gender roles for male and female characters in an attempt at deconstructing female characterization. This abetted qualitative criticism which has generated important discussions on identity, agency, and voice of female characters in those texts. Qualitative studies also critique whether contextual positionality of female characters within their social, cultural and political contexts leads to further stereotyping.

When it comes to representation, how are women who do not fit within the margins of 'white, middle class and western represented in this Literature? Who are they? and how do they act?

What are some of the questions asked of the female characters? Some feminist lenses have been critiqued due to portrayals of overly simplistic 'other'. The author and authorial intent are also important elements in a literary analysis based on feminist theory (Alarcon, 1997; Anzaldua, 2007; Hooks & Jhally, 1997; Collins, 2008).

'Insider perspective' is a phenomenon feminist critiques of multicultural children's literature are concerned about. The truth validity of a story necessitates an insider perspective, guarding against appropriation, dominant perspectives from dominant groups, essentialisms and binary positions. Sebestyen (1979) critiques 'outsiders' perspectives on representations of black voices in America, and attributes this to a confusion of what girlhood means in that community as well as further racism within the community. Such writers stress the importance of multicultural books in revealing the social cultural contexts that may prevent female characters from fulfilling human agency.

Conversations on qualitative content of children's literature within feminist ideology led to ideas on appropriation, binary oppositions and essentialism. Reimer (2003:) defines cultural appropriation as:

an art of claiming or appropriating the right to give voice to what it feels or means to belong to a particular group, often promoting unbiased and simplistic representations and reinforced binary oppositions.

Mohanty (1984) criticized multiple representations of women from third world countries within specific categories: resilient and hopeless type, despite multiple complexities of their social, cultural, ethnic, nationalistic, religious, class and even racial realities, which often contradict with western women who often display agency despite the sexism that they also have to go through in their societies (Varga-Dobai, 2013).

Varga-Dobal (2013) presents examples of instances of appropriation, binary oppositions and essentialism in specific literature texts for young adults and children. The texts critiqued include: [4]***Shabanu: Daughter of the wind*** (Staples, 1989); [5]***The breadwinner*** (Ellis 2002); and [6]***The day of the Pelican*** (Paterson 2009). In Shabanu, the image of the Muslim girl is oppressed, seems hopeless and unified with ideas of motherhood as befitting all women. The

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[4] A fictional story by Suzanne Staples through the eyes of 12-year girl, Shabanu, who lives in Pakistan.
[5] A children's novel written by Deborah Ellis, following 11-year-old Parvana who takes on a breadwinner role for her family in Afghanistan.
[6] A fictional account of an Albanian family residing in Kosovo during the Serbia-Kosovo war.

author critiques rescuing of an Afghan girl from the Taliban terming the 'missionary girl power' and alluding it to 'western female gaze; an imagery of colonial discourses, where the western male and female 'save' the third world woman from whatever ails her. A 'western savior cliché' sprung from this, whereby the poor- financially, academically or culturally- third world woman is depicted as in *the day of the Pelican*.'

Gender representations of female characters ought to initiate conversations on the multifaceted nature of the characters, where authors introduce complex characters, such as in [7]*half a yellow sun* (Adichie, Half of a Yellow Sun, 2006) and [8]*Americanah*, (Adichie, Americanah, 2013) both of which are born of the author's 'lived narratives'.

2.5   How can Literature influence behavior?

Multiple studies have been grounded within gender schema theory as well as social cognitive theory, whereby children seek to identify the gender roles specific to them based on their contexts. Researchers have identified the potential influence of children's books, and sought to have the content formed to non- stereotyped representations (Trepanier-Street & Romatowski, 1999; Scott & Feldman-Summers,1979; Pardeck & Pardeck, 1985; Martinez & Nash, 1993).

Experimental studies carried by earlier researchers for example Flerx, Fidler & Rogers (1976) exposed pre- school children to controlled literature texts where females were portrayed in non- stereotypic professions. These studies indicated that children indeed were influenced by these images. This study was conducted after exposure to these books for five days and thirty minutes each day. Theory from social learning theories were applied in this study, whereby repeated interaction with a medium is expected to have more results on behavior than the opposite. Another study by Ashton (1983) produced similar results with the treatment group opting for non- stereotypic toys.

Limitations in research from the above studies included lack of generalizability for some of the studies, especially instances where students had not been presented with other

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[7] A novel on the Nigerian civil war that follows the dynamic relationship of twin sisters by Nigerian feminist writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

[8] A fictional account of a Nigerian immigrant in the USA. The book was shortlisted for the Baileys women's prize for fiction in 2014

occupations. Another limitation that prompted further inquiry was the short term nature of the results, with follow up studies of up to a week reversing results.

A more recent study by Trepanier-Street & Romatowski (1999) which followed up on the earlier studies, with a similar experimental design, increased the occupation roles in the design as well as the exposure time to the students. The results confirmed that stereotypes on occupation roles still persist, but more flexible attitudes on the role of both men and women are developing.

2.6   National and International Efforts

The cultures and beliefs of a people in part determine how they view the genders and consequently dictate conversations on gender equality. Religious institutions in Kenya have a strong grip on politics, cultures and they control discussions on gender as well. Bradley (2010) notes that religious states are among the distractors of gender equality, especially where interpretation(s) of the religious books is narrow, and where the populations are not highly critical. The state ideology on development of citizenry in part is influenced by cultures and religious institutions, and in part influences them as well. These three factors are ideologically connected.

The questions while analyzing how these state actors influence conversations include:

- What do the national policy documents say about gender equality- curriculum, texts, syllabuses, teacher training and recruitment practices?

- Are there attempts to change the practice to conform to better gender equality measures and shift the cultural landscape for example in instances of teacher trainings offered?

2.6.1   Outlook of Kenya National education gender policy

1. The Gender policy document in Kenya (Ministry of Education, 2013).

This policy has been developed in line with the vision 2030 which has the mandate to *provide services and coordination to the public on issues of gender and social development (pg. 6).*

It has been divided into different components that address the holistic nature required in dealing with gender issues such as:

- it works together with the children services, with orphans and vulnerable children and in provision of rehabilitation and counselling services with these children.

- it also has a social development component that involve communities, which is more democratic.

- it also has a gender component that is meant to help in mainstreaming gender including in national budgets to make women more financially independent, as well as to alleviate sexual violence.

The preamble states

the vision of the Ministry is a society where women, men and children and persons with disabilities enjoy equal rights, opportunities and a high quality life (Pg. 10)

It acknowledges that women's roles are not appreciated as they should be, realizing the importance of their contribution to the economy. The policy also has a holistic framework that elaborates the underpinnings of gender inequality, providing comprehensive strategies to curb this, such as affirmative action for women and marginalized communities. The ministry of gender, children and social development collaborates with state and non-state actors to ensure that their work is relevant and up to date, in such instances as information sharing, through partnerships and networking.

2. The Policy framework for education by the Ministry of Education.

This document like the previous one is well written, with gender parity and equality focus at the center of the Ministry's planning, again aligned with vision 2030 goals of attaining gender equity (Ministry of Education, 2013). The targets include enrollment rates of 100% by 2015,

completion rates by 2010 increased transition from primary to secondary school and increasing teacher training institutions outside Nairobi.

It acknowledges teacher training quality as a key development issue countrywide, as well as other social structures such as religion and cultural practices that inhibit equity provision. Development of child friendly schools, which do not discriminate on any basis, is called for as well as a conversation on gender parity in schools and factors which enhance it. The policy document also focuses on the curriculum and how it can be made more gender sensitive, with duties of stakeholders stated to enhance this, including reforms across all levels of education where there is a gap.

A search of other policy documents on public policy showed that gender mainstreaming is an important component of the country, at least on paper. A google search identified these policy documents all dealing with gender in Kenya: Gender mainstreaming in the Kenya national education strategic plan; Training manual on gender mainstreaming; National gender policy; Guidelines on gender in employment policies; The constitution has gender equality as a fundamental right of all citizens.

It may seem like the country has solved the challenge of gender inequality with so many policy documents encompassing a gender component, but that is not the case. Various reports have criticized Kenya's handling of gender issues. These reports will be analyzed in the next section.

2.7   Chapter summary

In this chapter, I provided contextual background information on the politics of gender, schooling and the curriculum. A discussion on the context of the political nature of what is studied in schools, who determines what legitimate knowledge is, and included in the curriculum was be highlighted. Forces, including the national goals of a country, the wider prevailing culture and the international goals come into play here.

A rich body of empirical and qualitative studies, and theory on gender studies have attempted to explain how literature can potentially influence gender perception of readers. A large body of work is dedicated to children's studies, some of which were highlighted. However, few studies have been dedicated to analyzing the influence of literature on young adults, which is the main purpose of my study.

The assumptions that the text alone has no impact on the reader and the reader navigates textual meaning from the social world acted as a blueprint for analyzing the role of national and international actors in developing a gender sensitive curriculum. The social world in this sense is conceptualized as the culture of a people, their religion as well as the state ideology on development of citizenry.

3 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

In this study I sought to explore the extent to which interaction with a feminist text influences male and female students' perceptions of gender, and an inductive study, through the use of critical literary theories was used. It was important that the study was inductive because it involved analysis of a text through discourse analysis before undertaking any field study. Reader response theory and Feminist literary theory were used.

3.1 Reader response theory

The reader response theory emerged from critics of the new criticism school of thought, where the text was posited as objective, with its meaning determined solely by the author (Davis & Womack, 2007). New criticism was the dominant literary theory between the 1930s and 1950s and its central tenet was on the centrality of a text, whose meanings lay open solely to those with a trained eye and professionals, while the majority of readers were seen as passive readers, merely absorbing what the authors intended.

In the 1960s- 1980s, a new school of thought emerged, where factors including race, class and gender were considered in the meaning making process of a text. The term reader response theory was used to explain this position, with Louise Marie Rosenblatt at the heart of the theory's foundation (Rosenblatt L. M., 1978)

Rosenblatt in her text *Literature as an exploration* (1938) and subsequent text *the reader, the text and the poem: the transactional theory of the literary work* (Rosenblatt*,* 1978) developed on the notion of subjectivity of a text, based on the personal characteristics, context and background of a reader. The focal point of this theory is the relationship a reader has with the text, known as a 'transaction'. Works of critics within this school of thought are not necessarily conceptually united in their positions, but the theory denoted those works where critics use concepts such as reader, reader response and the reading process in an investigation of textual meaning. The theory has many tiers, brought forth by other scholars, but the main tenet is an agreement on the role of a reader in subjective meaning making of a text.

3.1.1   Transactional theory- Louise Rosenblatt

The reader, drawing on past linguistic and life experience, links the signs on the page with certain words, certain concepts, certain sensuous experiences, certain images of things, people, actions, scenes. These special meanings and, more particularly, the submerged associations that these words and images have for the individual reader will largely determine what the work communicates to him. The reader brings to the work personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood of the moment, and a particular physical condition. These and many other elements in a never-to-be-duplicated combination determine his interfusion with the peculiar contribution of the text. (Rosenblatt, 1938: 30).

The reader response theory was initially conceptualized as 'transactional theory' with the main frames of reference being a readers' context, as stated in the above quote, including their present and past circumstances, background, and mood. Similarly, the transaction is assumed to be recursive, that is, non-linear, in a spiral shape, to and fro and vice versa between the reader and the text and a continuous process. Hence, a reader can derive different interpretations from each single reading, depending on the context.

This theory was developed by Rosenblatt from observation of textual interpretation and meaning making process of her university students. They used their personal background characteristics such as culture, race, gender, social class, and history among others to make meaning of the same text. Additionally, the transaction processes according to Rosenblatt was dependent on the stance which the reader adopted. Two states of which were established 'the aesthetic and efferent stance'. The aesthetic stance was established when textual meaning was established during the readers lived experiences during the reading event, while the efferent stance was established from what was retained by the readers after the process (Rosenblatt, 1938, 1978)

It is important to note that despite subjectivity of the meaning making process in this theory, not all interpretations are considered valid. The validity criteria are dependent on a number of factors such as (1) the cultural milieu developed, as interpretations within a similar culture are considered valid, (2) no contradiction of interpretation with what is in the text as well as (3) a verbal basis for any interpretation (Clifford, 1991).

3.1.2　The aesthetic and the efferent modes of reading

The kind of reading distinguishes readers in what Rosenblatt classifies as the aesthetic and the efferent stance of reading. The reader is considered an active participant in these two modes of reading, in that they are involved in the meaning making process. However, what differentiates them is what they choose to focus on in the reading process. When readers take the efferent stance, they focus on the facts and explanations of a text such as the structure of a text. This is similar to facts acquisition in a historical text and chemical formulas. Hence, textual meaning of a text can be established by any reader employing critical critic tools in a public reading (Clifford 1991; Rosenblatt 1978).

However, the aesthetic stance incorporates the readers lived experiences in the meaning making process, and includes the personal characteristics and mood they are in when reading in order to explore not only the work of art, but themselves as well. The reading is said to be a private reading because only the meaning established is unique to each reader. However, Rosenblatt (1978) notes that most readers do not necessarily take these two extreme stances, but a variation between the two. Research on how Literature is taught in schools, however, indicates that most of the teaching require that students adopt an efferent mode when reading (Davis, 2007).

Wolfgang Iser of the Constance school of Germany proposed what is referred to as reception theory. Here, there is convergence between what the text says and what the reader brings into the meaning making process. He noted that the convergence comes into play through the meaning brought forth by the text, whose meaning is brought to life by a reader. The idea of total objectivity of the text and total subjectivity of the reader is discounted. The literary work is not identical with the text, nor is realization of the text meaning identical with the reader. These two states are referred to as the artistic and aesthetic realization (Iser, 2005).

Hans Robert Jauss, of the Constance school of Germany uses a historical approach to explain the reading response, termed as 'macrocosm of reception'. The focus of this analysis of meaning production is the historical dimension, whereby the reader negotiates history to make meaning of a text, in what is termed as 'horizon of expectations, whereby the readers cultural expectations and norms at a given point in history shape the understanding of a text (Jauss & Benzinger, 1970).

Another school of thought within reader response theory is premised on the subjectivity of the reader by subjective reader response theorists. Here, meaning is solely placed on a subjective interpretation of readers based on their psychological and cognitive theories. Norman Holland and David Bleich are its most vocal proponents. Norman's psychological background aided development of this theory built on ego psychology. Tenets posit that a child develops her imprint from the mother and thus the responses they make of texts is based on their psychological needs. Each single interpretation is unique whereby readers search for remnants of 'self' while making meaning of texts (Holland, 1976).

The notion of reliance on a stable core self has been critiqued, because the theory does not take into account multiple identities and subjectivities of readers. Bleich as well has been critiqued for his ideas on the centrality of the reader. He proposed that textual meaning is limited to subjective meaning. This is situated and negotiated meaning in what is conceptualized as symbolization and re-symbolization process. The symbolization phase of situated meaning making encompasses perception and identification with the text, while the re-symbolization phase encompasses negotiation of meaning through a community. Here, the meaning is not objective truth, but that which is predicated by a reading community (Bleich, 1975).

The last tenet of reader response theory was proposed by Stanley Fish in socio-cultural reader response theory. He coined the term 'affective stylistics' whose main concerns are the going-on in the reader's mind. He developed the concept of interpretive communities whereby the meaning of a text is situated within a community and as such a reader is constrained by this meaning, in other words, the textual meaning is culturally construed, and not only limited to authorial intent (Fish, 1999).

3.2   Feminist criticism

The aim of a literary critique theory is to explain the values and assumptions upon which a critique rests (Tyson, 2006). Various gender critique tools were analysed for example Marxist criticism on gender, post-colonial criticism and structuralism. Marxist ideology identifies the material circumstances of women as the main determining factor for their weak position in society (McLellan, 2000). Discourses on feminist ideology and principles are used to critique a novels structure, the language of literature and its being. According to Tyson (2006), the feminist literary criticism analyses the way in which a body of work represents women's economic, social, political and psychological experiences by undermining or uplifting them.

There are contentious issues within the feminist movement. Indeed, there are many ideological oppositions, like in any other school of thought, but, there are certain issues feminists agree on. These include analysis of patriarchal ideology and the oppression of women in all states: social, psychological, economic and political as well as undermining the agency of women in order to uphold power by keeping women subdued (Alarcon, 1997; Apple, 1992; Eagleton, 2014; Boakye, 2009; Hooks 2015; Tyson, 2006).

 Secondly, an analysis of the othering of women in texts is analysed. Here, women are the objects and man the subject. A woman depicted as 'object' implies that she is not in control of her physical, psychological social or economic life experiences. Texts that represent female characters as others, including them not owning their thoughts, reinforce a patriarchal ideology. Texts that also objectify women, to be used as tools of men's desires and objections reinforce this ideology. On the other hand, texts that female characters are subjects in charge of their destiny are said to have a feminist agenda.

Another source of consensus by feminists is the notion of gender as a social construct and not biologically determined. Feminists argue against representations of essentialism, whereby biological qualities attributed to men are deemed superior to women. It is rather through social conditioning for example through cultural practices that teach girls to be women. A quote from Beauvoir (1966: 249) speaks to this idea: *One is not born woman, but rather becomes woman.*

Psychoanalytic feminists argue that material feminism cannot have a lasting effect in changing the experiences of woman if their minds are not changed, or what they term as

psychological liberation. Because it is within the mind that subjugation occurs and messages from society are stored and women retrieve these messages regarding behaviour expected of them (Tyson, 2006).

Men too are victims of the societal conditioning on the ideals of masculinity, and its overtones. In many societies for example, men are conditioned to be providers, make more money than their fathers did in order to be considered successful. Hence, those who are unable to, are expected to show their masculinity in other ways. This is sometimes demonstrated in overly aggressive behaviour towards women, who are biologically physically weaker (Beauvoir, 1966).

Fourth, feminists concur that most civilizations are rooted in patriarchy. Situating feminism within a historical perspective in any analysis is especially important because it enables an understanding of why things are the way they are today. For example, Christianity thrives within patriarchal ideology, with the oldest story prescribing the original sin to woman, Eve, showing her weakness in the face of temptation, and as a warning that perhaps women are to be distrusted (Wilcox, 1989).

In most instances, women's history has been erased, with their heroine stories completely erased from history books, and this denial is a form of exclusion and oppression. The Kenyan history for example is colourful with male heroes, during the colonial and post-colonial period. Although evidence suggests that there were many female fighters for example during the [9]Mau uprising, the known heroes are curiously only men for example [10]Jomo Kenyatta and [11]Dedan Kimathis. The female freedom fighters are lumped together, unnamed, as if they belong to a nameless category (Atieno-Odhiambo, 1991; Odhiambo, 2006).

Fifth, another aspect feminist theorists agree on is the need for activism for equality for women. Activism denotes political or social engagement. However, this may not necessarily be so according to Tyson (2006). Activism is conceptualized as work that seeks to ensure that women's experiences are represented in any form of life in society, be it politically, socially, in academia or the grassroots. Anything that represents these experiences, with women as subjects having a voice is activist. Therefore, a critical literary analysis of a text, exposing

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[9] A revolt group against British colonial rule in Kenya between 1952-1960
[10] Kenya's first president after British colonial rule ended in 1963. He was a part of the Mau Mau.
[11] Mau Mau leader

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patriarchal ideologies or feminist agendas, or even ideologically conflicted works brings a discussion that activates the subject of feminism.

3.3   Analysis of Reader Response criticism via feminist lens

In spite of the diverse schools of thought within reader response theory, its main concerns lie in the ability of the reader to be brought into focus in the interpretive process. This was a main criticism of new criticism approach, whereby the text had objective knowledge which the author intended for the readers to absorb (Bressler, 2003). Rosenblatt (1978), Iser (2005) and Jauss (1970) propose that the text as well as reader should be considered in the meaning making process.

Hans (Holland, 1976) and Bleich (1975) put the readers' psychology at the heart of the meaning making process. Fish (1999) proposes that the socio cultural context of a community should be the main focus of textual meaning. At the core of the three is the reader, as subject or actor or in both situations, which is a pre-occupation of any feminist criticism, the notion of an individual as an actor, shunning dominating entities such as institutions or people.

Reader response theory is compatible with conflict theories such as Marxist and feminist theories conceptually. Unlike new criticism, whereby authorial intent was the central focus of textual meaning, conflict theories posit subjectivity of meaning of text based on historical and personal characteristics such as gender, class, and culture.

According to Schweickart (1998) in her essay *'reading ourselves: towards a feminist theory of reading'* reader response theory concerns of the subjective and objective positions of a reader in relation to a text are congruent with feminism. Theories which overlook how race, class and gender account into the establishment of meaning are not in line with feminist criticism. She notes that feminists are interested in one main question: what difference textual meaning makes if a reader is a man or a woman. Reader response criticism is interested in two main questions however,

1. Whether the text controls the reader or whether a reader controls the meaning of a text. Different theorists such as Fish (1999) propose that the reader controls the narrative, while

Iser (2005), in spite of acknowledging the role of the reader, posits the text to control the process.

2. What is contained in a text, and ways to distinguish what a text provides from what a reader provides to a text (Eagleton, 2014).

The main concerns of feminist criticism include exposing consciousness to readers by disrupting emasculation of androcentric texts which are usually passed on as universal. Whilst providing alternative interpretations of reading, the main goal of feminist criticism lies in its political aims of changing the world one person to another (Tong, 1989).

3.4   Chapter Summary

The main concerns of a feminist lens employed in reader response encompass:

- establishing context in any interpretive process, including the cultural, socio economic status, class, race and gender and how these multi dimensions combine to produce meaning.

- The importance of establishing voice for subjects. Feminism is a critical school of thought, whereby importance of establishing sources of domination is a main focus, as well as means of finding voice for subjects. The objective stance that was a focus of new criticism is an androcentric tool of establishing meaning, which is critiqued in feminism. Subjectivity and objectivity of actors are important elements in the school of thought.

- Importance of situating texts and theory production within historical contexts, also known as frames of reference is also an important pre-occupation of feminism. This includes the background information and how this links with the present concerns. Situating experiences is paramount in identifying causes and effect of oppression, through analysis of structures such as institutions and how they historically have perpetuated domination within genders

- Feminism is concerned with the importance of aesthetic reading, that is, including one's lived experiences in reading to produce meaning, as meaning is subjective based on one's characteristics which are subjective.

- Feminism is concerned with exposing efferent reading, which has an androcentric perspective, whereby knowledge is situated with the teacher, and readers are seen as passive recipients. The androcentric elements exhibited include exhibiting of control and 'objective' knowledge, which is usually man-centered.

- A feminist lens exposes the ways in which patriarchy has established sexist interpretations of texts and established this as norms in understanding of texts.

- Most feminist criticisms of texts critique grand theories, because of their androcentric perspectives, which usually stress the role of biology in explaining human action or behavior (Adeola,1990; Eagleton, 2014; Mitchell, 2000; Lynn, 1998; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Schweickart, 1998; Beauvoir, 1966).

4 Methodology

4.1.1 Introduction

Validity, reliability, trustworthiness and credibility are terms used in research activity that ensures that the research process and findings can be trusted. This is an important undertaking in social research, and as such necessitates detailed descriptions of the methods and processes that guided the research activity. This section will highlight the methods used for answering the research questions and a justification of those methods.

The qualitative research design was chosen for this section of the study. An interpretive design was selected as the best method for collecting data from the samples. Qualitative research was selected because the purpose of the study was to investigate a social phenomenon, that is, gender perception, which is a unique phenomenon for each individual, and determined by among other things different contexts.

There are many epistemological arguments regarding what is considered as true knowledge, and positivists argue that objective knowledge is that which is gathered by scientific principles and that which is observable (Bryman, 2012). However, those in support of qualitative data as a method of inquiry in the social sciences argue that there has to be a differentiation between studies of objects and people. Inquiries into social phenomena must be ethical and part of that is how they treat the subjects whom they gather data from. According to Creswell (2003), the main debate between qualitative and quantitative research design is not in the methods as both designs are steeped in rich traditions, but in the philosophy of the two approaches.

4.2 Epistemological Considerations

What is considered acceptable knowledge in a research strategy is considered as the epistemological consideration. Philosophers such as Weber, Schutz and Mead who are associated with the qualitative tradition argue against use of natural science methods and principles in interpreting the social world.

'The world of nature as explored by the natural scientists does not 'mean' anything to the molecules, atoms and electrons. But the observational field of the social scientist – social

reality- has a specific meaning and relevance structure for the beings living, acting and thinking within it.' (Schutz, 1962).

From Schutz philosophy, what is clear is that an epistemological tradition is required in the social sciences that will bring about the difference with the natural sciences, and that it is the social scientists role to interpret the social world from the perspective that he or she gains from the subjects under study. Knowledge here should focus on understanding humans and their social world rather than those forces that act on it.

Notable philosophical traditions within the interpretivist paradigm: hermeneutics, phenomenology and symbolic interactionism- which the theory of reader response builds from, have different philosophies about how knowledge is and should be organized in the social world. However, Bryman (2012) notes that in as much as there are key parallels between these traditions, they are all rooted in interpretivist paradigm and share a common antipathy for positivism.

4.3   Ontological Considerations

Ontological consideration in social research is concerned with the nature of social entities, for example organizations or cultures (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2003).

The questions of concern here are:

(1) Are social entities objective in the sense that they are independent with realities external to social actors

    or

(2) Are social entities constructions in constant interaction with social actors, built up from their actions and perceptions?

 The former is known as objectivism and the latter constructionism. The main preoccupation with objectivism is the belief that social entities are beyond the reach of social actors. In an organization for example, the rules, codes and standards dictate actions of workers who inhabit it. The same can be said of cultures, where people internalize the beliefs and way of life and function as per them, in turn being constrained by them. This is the 'classic' way of conceptualizing culture and organizations (Ibid).

However, Strauss, Schatzman, Ehrich, & Sabshin (1973) propose a different ontological position known as interactionism, whereby social phenomena and their meanings are produced by people in interaction with others and this meaning is continuously being revised. Here culture is not a reality that is external to people, rather, it is in a continuous state of modification. Becker however notes that while culture is continuously reshaped by social actors, it has a reality and can be the point of reference.

> *people create culture continuously. No set of cultural understandings provides a perfectly amicable solution to any problem people have to solve in the course of the day and they must therefore remake those solutions, adapt their understandings to the new situation in the light of what is different about it (Becker, 1982: 517)*

Development of a clear ontological perspective is important in formulation and framing of research questions. Research where the formal qualities of cultures or organizations are emphasized leans on objectivism, while those questions that imply the tenuousness of cultures or organizations usually emphasize constructionist nature of social reality.

4.4   Approaches to Answering the Research Questions

4.4.1   Question 1: Strategy- discourse analysis

The first question: How is the River and the Source gendered? has been explored via a qualitative discourse analysis of the main text[12]***The River and the Source*** (Ogola, 1994). A thematic analysis, through constant comparison of communication content was done to analyze gendering of the text. Feminist literary critique theory guided development of themes by examining the ways in which literature reinforces or undermines the social, economic, psychological and political participation of women.

This involved an analysis of the language used within texts with key consideration of the ideas behind the language. Feminist literary critique tools have informed this section with

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[12] A 1994 award winning novel written by Kenyan author, Margaret Ogola. It is a fictional account of three generations of women in three epochs: pre, colonial and post-colonial. The 'river and the source' is a metaphor of the protagonist, Akoko, whose lineage the story follows.

questions such as: what a novel reveals about operations of patriarchy; how a novel is gendered by asking whether characters conform to gender; whether the work questions, accepts or rejects traditional conceptions of gender; whether incidences of violence against women are trivialized; whether female characters function mainly as tokens of male status; and the ways in which sexism is validated by the good/bad girl view of female characters (Griffin, 2004).

4.4.2   Question 2: Strategy- Qualitative field research study

The second question on how male and female students perceive this gendering was explored through a field study, via a qualitative study. Theory was used only as sensitizing concepts in this section. Social cognitive thinking perspectives as well as perspectives on the relationship between reader and text influenced this section with the assumption that meaning making of texts is unique to individuals based on their specific contexts. A purposive sampling was used to gather participants for the study. Three schools from Nairobi county were selected. An all-girls' and all boys' high school and a mixed school formed the level of comparison. Students in their final year of high school were interviewed via semi structured interviews to allow for fluid yet flexible data collection. Focus groups were used for triangulation of data findings.

The main unit of analysis is gender, with regards to texts and whether students realize a link between textual representation of characters and how they perceive gender.

4.5   Context of study

Three schools were selected in Nairobi county a priori. The schools selected were in Dagoretti county. Nairobi schools were selected mainly for convenience of ease of access. This decision was also made with considerations of the main research questions, questioning whether an alternative site in a different county would skew the data. However, considerations from qualitative research on the lack of generalizability of the data supported the assertion. The aim of the research was to get rich details from individual students account and not generalize the findings. The schools selected were based on the different categorizations of schools by the

Kenyan education system. Schools in Kenya are profiled according to performance of the Primary certificate exams [13]KCPE.

Schools in Kenya are categorized as top tier [14]National schools, second tier[15]Provincial schools and third tier[16]District schools. This ranking is limited to the government secondary schools, and there are more choices offered for private schools, where students can attend most schools if they can afford to do so. However, most students usually attend the government sponsored school due to economic challenges, with 50% of the citizens living under the poverty line (Odhiambo & Manda, 2003).

Provincial schools were selected for the study based on the following criteria: similarities in students ethnic and regional backgrounds; similarities in students' economic backgrounds in each of the schools; ease of accessibility within Nairobi; and similarities in test scores based on the end of primary school certificate education. A priori purposive sampling is determined by factors such as the type of research questions and elimination of competing variables. Reducing competing variables will provide for a better chance of interpreting the data Bryman (2012).

Similarly, the choice of single sex schools was determined by some studies on gender development with evidence that adolescent girls are more negatively affected in mixed environments and more empowered in single sex school settings. The choice for selecting the mixed school component was in order to triangulate these prior studies (Hill- Collins, 2008).

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[13] Acronym for Kenya certificate of primary education.

[14] National schools are the highest ranked secondary schools in Kenya, with highly competitive entrance scores and performance. Students selected are from across the country.

[15] Provincial schools are highly competitive but entrance scores are lower than those from national schools. Students are admitted from local provinces and not countrywide as in national schools.

[16] District schools admit students with low KCPE scores. Usually these students have been rejected from the national and provincial schools.

4.6   Sampling of Participants

4.6.1   Inclusion and Exclusion criteria

Students selected for the research fit the following profiles

1. They were students studying at a provincial school in Dagoretti North in Nairobi county

2. They were in their final year of secondary school (form four)

3. They had read the main text that the study was drawing from, and interacted with others on the same course in school

4. They were in a single girl, single boys and mixed secondary school

Students who met the above criteria were selected randomly by English teachers from the various schools. The teachers acted as the gatekeepers within the schools, and helped organize time schedules for conducting the research. Five or six students were selected from each [17]form four class to take part in the research. Selected students had to be in their final year of secondary school because of the following reasons:

➢ Reading of selected texts begins in the third year of secondary school; therefore, selecting students from these classes could mean that some or most of them could have been uninformed on a key instrument in the research process.

➢ The study was conducted in February which is the [18]first term, hence it was very important to select only those students in their final year. Provincial schools were selected due to a higher possibility of covering the novel in the syllabus by the time of the research. February was also a convenient period to be allowed full access to the schools because most schools are not studying for the competitive national exams.

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[17] Denotes the final year of secondary schools in Kenya.
[18] There are three terms or semesters in Kenya secondary schools. The final exams are conducted in the third term, which is between September and November.

The next selection criterion was that the respondents had to have read the text, which was a primary research instrument. This was established by the English teachers of the various schools. The students had to have had regular interaction with the text in the Literature lessons, which according to Rosenblatt (1938) is a main characteristic of the reader response reading. For a text to have an effect upon a reader, they ought to have constant interaction with the text.

The last inclusion criterion was that the respondents had to fit the profile of the schools selected. Six students were selected from the girls' school and mixed school, while five were selected from the boys' school. There were 4 girls present in the mixed school and two boys. This inclusion was random. Due to the nature of the research and interpretive design, the sample sizes was limited to five or six because the aim of the study was not to generalize the findings, but rather understand the main unit of study. The number was also appropriate with time and resources considerations, including time for transcribing large amounts of data as well as the resources, in a self-financed study. Acquiring thick detailed data from each respondent required time, about forty minutes from each student, which was not easily allocated by the teachers.

4.7   Data Collection Methods

4.7.1   Semi structured Interviews

Semi structured interviews were selected over unstructured interviews because it gave the interviewer a chance to follow a schedule but provide flexibility to add follow up questions as well as reciprocate whenever the interviewees required. This is a relevant step in qualitative interviewing, as it provided the interviewer with flexibility to be sensitive to interviewers needs (Bryman, 2012; Creswell,1998).

The interview guide was developed mainly from the text, *the river and the source* and from key principles from the feminist literary theories and reader response theory. I conducted the interviewing, recording and transcriptions of the data recorded. I used a phone as the recording device using the in app Samsung voice recorder system. The interviewees were informed of the objectives of the interview ahead of the interviews and were provided with written consent forms to sign that their participation was mandatory. This form contained

additional information regarding their rights, including that of withdrawal if they chose to do so at any point.

Other regularities with interviewing that are suggested by researchers of qualitative interviewing were observed. This included punctuality, establishing a rapport with the interviewees, probing and prompting whenever necessary, knowledge of the interview schedule, departing from the schedule whenever necessary, maintaining focus whenever departing from schedule, being empathic especially when sensitive issues came up, and trying to break down the interviewer- interviewee hierarchy by feeding back information. Despite all the efforts, it was vital to be aware of unintended biases that could result from this method, especially during the transcription and data analysis period (Hill-Collins, 2008).

See attached personal interview guide form from the cross reference in the attachments section of the paper. (110)

4.7.2   Group Interview

I had to pre-test the recording devices and was prepared to transcribe with more difficulty this data set. All the five or six individual students from each school earlier interviewed were part of the group interviews, this was within a manageable group size. This method was compounded with the personal semi structured interviews for the following reasons:

- ➢ The interviews were conducted to solicit further responses that could have been left out in the personal interviews. Knowledge of the culture of the society was also important as the society is very communal and group interviews could be expected to solicit more responses than personal interviews.

- ➢ The method was also used as a form of triangulation for the data collected in the personal interview section.

- ➢ To breakdown the hierarchy between the interviewer and interviewees in congruent with feminist theory

- ➢ To gather data in a more naturalistic setting as the students discuss issues among each other, controlling the pace and the interviewer guiding some elements of the interviewing (Bryman, 2012; Hill-Collins, 2008).

See attached personal interview guide form from the cross reference in the attachments section of the paper (111).

4.8   Data Analysis

4.8.1   Coding and Category development

Data analysis for qualitative data is synonymous with huge volumes of unstructured data 'detailed descriptions' a major distinction from quantitative data, which as a tradition has developed widely accepted rules of data analysis. Sifting data encompasses theoretical sampling, creation of codes and method of constant comparison. Coding involves reviewing data from transcripts or field notes and labelling those that are relevant to the research questions or the focus of the study (Creswell, 1998, 2003; Charmaz, 2006).

In spite of oppositions on manner of coding in the field, a central agreement on coding encompasses the generation of codes close to the data to higher levels of abstraction. Despite its popularity, critics have raised issue with the concepts developed from codes which are stripped off of context. Similarly, there is a high time requirement through the process of constant comparison (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2006).

4.8.2   Thematic Analysis

This method does not have a long tradition like coding. However, Bryman (2012) notes that it has become more popular since 2000. He notes that in writing the first two editions of his text 'Social research methods' a systematic analysis of the method yielded only 400 hits online. Yet, four years later, a search resulted in 1184 hits on internet searches. This method can be used for grounded theory qualitative studies, critical discourse analysis, and qualitative content analysis. However, criticisms of the method are levelled on its shallow tradition and an unknown identifiable distinctive technique for data analysis.

According to Ryan & Bernard (2003) and Braun & Clark (2006), themes are created similar to codes in the coding process of grounded theory, by establishing repetitions in topics, indigenous speech typologies, what is missing from the data, differences and similarities of

interviewers as well as any uses of metaphors or models related to theory. Despite repetition being an important criterion for the development, the features must be relevant to the study.

This method has been selected as best for the content analysis of the text the river and the source. Relevant themes have been identified through relevant theories, and this will be used in the second section of fieldwork research analysis. The method was preferred over coding because of (1) practicality reasons, whereby the method of constant comparison is not realistic due to time constraints. Secondly, the method is the best suited for the type of results required, whereby context is very important to the results. Thirdly, the method was selected because of ease of development of themes versus development of codes, concepts and categories. Finally, as the results from the content analysis affect the fieldwork component, it was best fit to be consistent with the methods used (Ibid).

4.9   Adapting Reliability and Validity

Two schools of thought operate in qualitative research regarding the use of the terms validity and reliability. One school of thought advocates for assimilation of their terms, playing down contentious terms such as 'measurement' which are incongruent with the qualitative researcher (Mason, 1996). The other group for example LeCompte & Goetz (1982) and Kirk & Miller (1986) note challenges in using terms such as external validity in qualitative research because of the nature of social reality. They have proposed alternative criteria for judging quality in qualitative research; trustworthiness and authenticity (Lincoln& Guba, 1985).

Trustworthiness as a criterion has four concepts that have equivalencies to quantitative validity and reliability These are: credibility-internal validity; transferability- external validity; dependability- reliability; and confirmability-objectivity (Bryman, 2012).

Credibility ensures that a research is carried out in 'good practice'. Submitting to respondents the research-respondent validation- or triangulation is a way to ensure credibility. This research will be submitted to the National research council in Kenya [19]NACOSTI at the end of the process. Similarly, triangulation was employed as an alternative method to ensure correct interpretation of the interviewees.

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[19] The body that organizes, consolidates and controls all research work conducted in Kenya.

Transferability will be ensured by provision of thick details while dependability will be ensured through accurate and detailed auditing across the entire research work process. Lastly confirmability entails acting in 'good faith', which requires that personal values or theoretical inclinations are not the basis for bias (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

Authenticity is another criterion proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). This entails the political impact of a research work. This includes: fairness, ontological, educative, catalytic and technical authenticity. Fairness involves the question of whether views from different sectors were represented. In the research carried out, this was ensured by allowing sufficient time for the responses from the students with proper moderation. Ontological authenticity requires that a research helps people understand their social circumstances better; this is yet to be seen. Educative ontology involves the degree the research has impacted people to understand different viewpoints, while the tactical aspects involves empowerment and social action. His criterion is controversial despite its thought provoking nature.

Discussions from Yardley (2009) have shifted to whether researchers: show sensitivity to context; commitment and rigor; coherence and transparency; and the impact and importance. I conducted this field study component in a sensitive manner, relative to the context for example through dress code. In the recent past women had been stripped off their clothes on the streets due to what was termed 'indecent dressing', which generally involved dressing in any short attire (Sheffrey, 2014).

 Commitment and rigor were employed throughout the data collection process, with constant reading and informing on relevant skills for the process. Transparency has been discussed previously, and the research will hopefully impact the curriculum developers and teachers of Literature.

Perhaps Spencer, Ritchie, Lewis, & Dillon (2003) provide the most exhaustive list for checking the quality of the research work. The list, which can be applied in all sections of the research work can be adapted at different levels. This has been used to conclude this section. A discussion on the extent of the defensibility of the design, as well as sample, and target selection of interviewees is crucial.

4.10   Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a detailed basis and justifications for the methods used to conduct the field research. This is a necessary step in any qualitative research work, as it provides a clear picture of the phenomenon of interest, the epistemological and ontological considerations, the research and interview questions for the personal interviews and group interviews, and the strategies that will be used for analysis of the findings.

The reader response theory using a feminist lens was the main framework of thinking, and these were justified based on the epistemological and ontological considerations. The inclusion and exclusion criteria for sampling of context and participants have also been provided based on the research question as well as the ontological and epistemological considerations. Three schools were sampled, with boys and girls as variables, at the highest level of secondary schools. Semi structured and focus group interviews were conducted with the main questions framed within a feminist perspective analyzing gender as the main variable.

Validity and reliability concerns have been discussed as well as the challenges that were encountered in the fieldwork process. Similarly, a discussion on the criteria for inclusion of cases and documents in the evaluation as well has to be well defended in this chapter. Detailed discussion of how data was collected, and clarity and coherence in reporting is crucial. Clear theoretical assumptions and perspectives that shaped the work have to be detailed and lastly, a detailed account of the process of documentation as well as ethical issues has been tackled.

5　Discourse analysis

5.1　Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the extent to which interaction with a feminist text influences male and female students' perceptions of gender. However, it is problematic labelling a text as 'feminist' without providing any basis for the claims. Such is the criticism of most of the works previously conducted on the text. This section however aims to provide a lens to the methods for determining the gender responsiveness of the text.

Of course there are many ways of conducting a critical reading of a text to determine whether it upholds a feminist agenda, patriarchal ideology or if it is ideologically conflicted. The focus is on the feminist agenda of the text which will be revealed through the characterisation in the text. Furthermore, the criticism will be situated within the three epochs, that is, pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods, which will bring forth how the historical conditions fostered patriarchy as well as how women in Kenya are rising from it. The focus however is not on history, but it draws on familiar history.

The purpose of this section is to understand the text and why it was chosen for the field work, as well as to draw comparisons between the student's thoughts and my thoughts. Of course I realise the duality of my position as critic and 'objective' researcher. However, the very notion of objectivity is frowned upon by feminists as a male construct, as we are subjective participants in everything. I will begin by presenting the questions, guided purely by feminist literary critique that guided the analysis. These questions have been provided by Tyson (2006), and guided development of the research questions as well.

5.1.1 Questions Guiding the Literary analysis

There are many approaches to conducting a critical analysis of a text using feminist theory. However, in an analysis of the River and the Source, I used a set of questions provided by Tyson (2006), which are a set of broad questions that guide feminist thinking. These set of questions will merely inform the broader discussion and keep it in perspective.

- What is revealed about the operations of patriarchy through the social, economic, political and psychological representations of female characters?
- Objectification of female characters, do they simply function as tokens of male characters or are they subjects and independent selves with a voice
- Does the work uphold imagery of the good girl vs the bad girl representations of female characters?
- On internalized patriarchy, do the female characters mirror internalized patriarchy in their thoughts and actions?
- Is there a sympathetic portrayal of male characters more than there is for female characters exhibiting similar characteristics?
- Are representations of patriarchy merely to engage the readers critically through mirroring patriarchal representations?
- Are there instances of ideological conflicts in the text whereby on one hand the author condemns patriarchy and on the other undermines it
- How do social issues such as race, culture and class intersect with gender issues in the text?
- How is sisterhood presented by the author as a chance of resisting patriarchy in the text? Feminists argue that the relationships and solidarity formed between women is their best chance for resisting the patriarchal norms in society
- Lastly, a discussion on the history of reception of the text will explain a lot about the society

5.2   Analysis of representations of the situation of women in the text

5.2.1   Presentation of an alternative family structure

He was so angry that he stood up and raised his hands…but left the house (pg. 54)

Domestic violence was (and still is to some extent, albeit socially and not legally mandated) a common phenomenon during the pre-colonial times according to the Kenyan traditional customs. In fact, there were laws governing how it should be conducted and at what circumstances a man was allowed to beat his wives (Kameri-Mbote, 2001). Up until now the characters have been living in traditional union within marriages, and although the author hasn't focused explicitly on any domestic incidence, they have been rather implied, this is the first incidence she brings forth the conversation of domestic violence within households.

Ogola (1994) brings forth the conversation in a different light, unlike some male writers in the region such as Thiong'o (2006) in [20]*Wizard of the Crow* or Achebe (1958) in [21]*Things fall Apart*, whose novels detail violence suffered by women in their homes in the name of traditions and customs. The character (from the excerpt) has been taunted by his wife because of a miscarriage suffered and the author opts to show an instance where the partner understands the moral implication of battering his own wife, and chooses to walk away.

She brings forth this conversation deliberately, perhaps as an attempt to provide space for an alternative image to domestic relations between a husband and a wife. This is important because this scene, which happens in the first chapter of the book when the country had just attained independence, is the only scene that explicitly depicts a violent or almost violent situation. Although [22]Otieno, a sadistic character, beats his wives, the author does not detail any of those incidences, except for a quick mention, and has also disposed him with a vilifying character which most readers may not want to associate with. It is also imperative to note that the male protagonists of the text, including [23]Owuor Kembo, a man of status and a

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[20] A fictional satirical novel by Kenyan novelist Ngugi wa Thiong'o on the betrayal of independence by the corrupt Kenyan government

[21] A fictional account by Chinua Achebe, one of Africa's most celebrated and prolific novelist that follows the protagonist Okonkwo

[22] A most vile character, Akoko's (protagonist) brother in law.

[23] Akoko's husband and chief

chief, a great position in pre-colonial times, are depicted in loving and non-violent relationships with their spouses.

5.2.2   Un/Alternative presentation of stereotypes

'... He did things for Elizabeth that would never have even crossed the mind of a full-blooded African man- with a low opinion of women bred into him (p173)'

The second section will highlight the authors presentation of stereotypes, and alternative presentations, an attempt to expose what the text reveals about the operations of patriarchy through representations of the social, economic, psychological and political conditions of womanhood. The discussion will span from the post-colonial to contemporary age as the structure of the book follows. The impetus for the authors presentation of the pre-colonial times is perhaps because of what Odhiambo (2006) and Kanogo (2005) refer to as the erasure of the African woman's history. Including them in the historical narrative gives them a voice, and traces the roots of society's domination of women in present day Kenya. Gendering of roles and expectations is a common feature of a patriarchal society.

The novel present stereotypes as an attempt for readers to criticize it. In the first section of the text, an improper reading of the novel or what Bean & Moni (2003) term as reading with the grain in critical reading will make a reader draw biased conclusions. The aim for presentation of stereotypes in the first section of the text is to situate and retell the story from a historical perspective. Despite many male authors from Africa situating their novels within pre-colonial period, the difference in ***the river and the source*** (Ogola 1994) is how the representation of women is done. She mentions brief vestiges and accounts of the culture, but chooses to focus on the individual unique stories of female protagonists with agency.

The quote above is from the first section of the book, it's an attempt to provide an alternative image for manhood or masculinity, a distance from the traditional image. The author is presenting this as an invitation of criticism of patriarchy, and how it chains men to roles that they may not be interested in. Tyson (2006) notes that men are victims of patriarchy just as women are. A 'full blooded' African man by society's standards situated historically was expected to harbor 'hardness', and a general disinterest in anything considered remotely

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'womanly or feminine'. The authors intention is to ridicule this type of man, and she does this by presenting a wholesome picture of his marriage, whereby he enjoys life as a result of that and becomes successful due to the positive family background he has.

Ogola also presents another deviation from what was expected of a 'full African man' through [24]Akoko's children, a further critic to patriarchy. The only boy, is married off to a wealthier woman, and she also gives off her only daughter for marriage to a poor man who couldn't afford dowry. Similarly, despite a strained relationship between [25]Aoro and his father, he emulates those characteristics he admired about the way Mark treated his mother, Elizabeth, and in turn shows his wife equal respect and support in her family life and career (pg. 278).

5.2.3   Presentation of masculinity and femininity

Aoro is a lucky boy…. I would never have credited him with the brains to get a girl like you. Some empty head, pretty face perhaps, but not a woman with character. (p273)

Different schools of thought operate within feminism, also known as feminisms, and the debate of presentation of femininity is a still debated. Some feminists argue against the overly feminine ideals of womanhood, or femme phobia, as a factor that limits women's capabilities engrained within patriarchy, through objectification and catering to the male gaze. As such, they advocate for a more butch physicality for women, especially in the appearance such as clothes (Tong, 1989). In the literary world, such feminists argue that a writer's portrayal of female protagonists as stereotypically beautiful is a manifestation of patriarchy, catering to the male gaze. In this regard, they see women as being further isolated if they do not possess the mainstream beauty standards that patriarchy has imposed.

Hence, when critiquing a text from this perspective, analysis of portrayals of females' physical appearance is required. Does the author subscribe to patriarchy covertly, even when the texts intention is to empower women? Research conducted with the aim of exposing the impact of sexually suggestive comics on female readers indicated that after reading comics with sexualized female protagonists, female readers showed less inclination towards female empowerment than those who read non-sexualized comics with female protagonists. Critics

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[24] Novel's protagonist

[25] Mark's eldest son, an important element in the family in traditional Luo society

however disagree with this school of thought arguing against this as further ascribing to masculinity and masculine standards, and as imposition of what woman is and what woman can do, thus further adding to the marginalization and disempowerment of women (Tandon, 2008).

Ogola (1994) presents a balance of the two dichotomies in presentation of the physical attributes of the female protagonists. This is especially important as it shows that woman as an entity has many dimensions and attributes to her. Her most feminine character, or what has been ascribed to femininity in contemporary today is a character named [26]Becky. She is able to perform femininity from a young age to get what she wants and does not *'waste her time on gawky boys'* (p92). However, Ogola fits her within the usually erroneous stereotype of very beautiful women as having nothing else to show for themselves other than their looks. She is presented as less academically gifted than her twin sister Vera, less pleasant, and selfish, with an overly investment in self. A different reading of the character could cause an ideological conflict, however Ogola's praise of [27]Wandia's character exposes the author's leanings.

It is as if the attribute of intelligence in a woman and physical beauty are mutually exclusive, and a force of nature when they coexist in a woman. This phrase in itself is propagating notions of patriarchy that makes men the 'norm' in society: equating them with 'normal' physical qualities, and intelligence and women, the opposite. The presentation of the character, [28]Vera as less attractive and academically more gifted further supports the stereotype. Wandia is also described as 'not beautiful' (p104), further reinforcing the stereotype.

The representation of Akoko, who arguably is the protagonist of the novel, however is more wholly presented. Although she is described as 'captivatingly beautiful', which enabled her to be married off well, it is her character that stands out, more than her physical beauty. She has been described as bold, and a superb orator, independent of thought, assertive and myriads of other positive qualities. In a sense, her beauty is not the center of focus, there is a shift in the conversation of her physical presentation. In some instances, however, she seems like an almost idealized character, with qualities that are not relatable, almost exalted, thus isolating her from womanhood or the core of woman. In as much as she is a female character who has

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[26] Becky is portrayed as an independent woman, and from a very young age has the knowledge of what her beauty and sexuality mean in a patriarchal society
[27] Wandia becomes the first female vice chancellor of a University
[28] Becky's twin sister

been portrayed positively, not fitting in any stereotype, she still seems to surpass womanhood, her wholeness has been taken from her through her almost mystic qualities.

The third stereotype that will be presented is [29]Ogola's presentation of career choices for women and men. It is here that she is most successful in setting her agenda for an alternative presentation of woman. Despite situating the narrative within a historical [30]epoch, female characters are presented overwhelmingly as having agency, even within highly patriarchal times. Akoko for example shows agency by being portrayed as the source of wealth in her matrimonial home, she has industry and resolve and increases the wealth in that home tenfold, that is the subject of a dispute and envy from her brother in law after her husband's death. (p 35).

The next generation of women, [31]Awiti and Elizabeth, follow this lineage of female agency. They seek a new world, to better their lives after a dispute at Akoko's home. Awiti seeks religion, Elizabeth is the first female teacher professional to graduate after the attainment of freedom in her village and this provides her with agency, despite still subscribing to a lot of patriarchal whims, such as prioritizing child bearing over other matters in her life such as career. However, it is her mother who ensured that she was the first girl to go to college to better position her chances in the patriarchal world. The ideological conflict whereby on one hand she shows agency and on the other she displays elements of internalized patriarchy is not an isolated case with Elizabeth.

> *'…Therefore when I reach home I shall request the Council to convene proceedings for a separation…such a thing was unheard of. Didn't a man own a woman body and soul?'* *(pg. 36).*

The above quote is situated in pre-colonial traditional [32]Luo society where women were considered the property of men under the [33]traditional customs. As property of males, women, either wives or daughters at their fathers' homes were expected to live in the shadow of men. Hence, when Ogola brings this character who not only bashes these customs, but she does this publicly, it is revolutionary at the time. From the early conception of the narrative, Ogola shows her motive of an alternative presentation of womanhood despite opposing forces.

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[29] Margaret Ogola, the author of the novel, hereafter referred to as Ogola.
[30] Pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial.
[31] The second and third generation of Akoko's lineage.
[32] One of Kenya's 42 ethnic groups, from which the story is told from.
[33] This was the legal mandate, before the British introduced formal representation such as chiefs.

The quote above reinforces discussion on the question of whether the work upholds the notions of good/bad girl imagery of female characters. The guiding principles for tackling this section is provided by feminist literary critique (Griffin, 2004). Establishing the gender responsiveness of a text includes questioning whether: females have a right to control their own bodies; a dormant or dominant view of their sexuality put forth; they sexually assertive if themes of sexuality are tackled and how this is handled by the author through the characters.

Feminists critique texts which exalt a hetero-normative ideals of woman- praising Madonna like qualities of: fragility, domesticated women often rewarded by marriage, unassuming, self-sacrificial, putting the needs of others in her family always before hers, always worrying about others in her care without tiring and in matters sex only interested for procreation or their husbands. (Tong, 1989).

On the other hand of the dichotomy is the presentation of woman as 'bad girl' such women are presented as worldly, violent, aggressive and monstrous and possess such character traits as jealous, gossipers, sexually forward usually with multiple sexual partners, almost as many as a 'normal' man, and at the end of a narrative are usually used by men and discarded. The presentation of the two dichotomies for women, do not provide a space for a discussion of the multifaceted complexities of women, shaped and influenced by different circumstances and contexts in their lives. This one-dimensional presentation is patriarchal in that it positions women as being dependent on the projections of male desire (Ibid).

Ogola presents multifaceted complexities of the feminine condition, with desires, faculties, ire's, conflicts and lusts through her characters. She creates a space for showing all sides of womanhood, the good the bad, the intimate, the brush, and erases internalized patriarchal norms whose whims afflict both male and female authors. She posits this in a historical perspective, tracing the history of womanhood from precolonial times in traditional Kenyan Luo culture, which like most cultures in Kenya was patriarchal (Kameri-Mbote, 2001).

The dowry presentation of Akoko is an example, but, she chooses to tell the story from an angle where despite the prescribed traditions, Akoko still challenges preconceived notions of womanhood. An example is when she does not allow her in-laws to shame her for not conceiving many children, as was a requirement for women, instead she rebukes them for this (pg35).

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The successive female characters are well developed, their portrayals avoid leaning on either side of the dichotomy. Similarly, female assertiveness is discussed positively, with varied examples from the female characters. The most notable is when Wandia decides to propose marriage to [34]Aoro (Pg. 250), an occurrence that is still considered rare in present day. Ogola's portrayal of bold female representations is rampant in the text, with [35]Vera choosing to have an unmarried life, despite Tommy's marriage proposal.

5.2.4   Language of patriarchy

...the women's hall of residence, 'the box' as it was known was the hunting ground for all and sundry, and big cars were very evident especially on Saturdays, when well dressed, well-to-do men descended upon the place. There were two categories of girls- the fast moving 'Mercedes' types and the clipboards. (pg. 212).

The above conversation has opened up space for a dialogue on whether there is a sympathetic portrayal of male characters more than female characters for exhibiting similar characteristics.

Ogola brings forth the conversation of stereotyped roles for women as angelic or 'whore' by discussing how the female is viewed in campus, where there is more freedom of interaction between the sexes. The girl's halls of residence are referred to as 'the box' a vulgar reference to a vagina, while the boys who frequent these rooms are referred as 'happy hunters'. The bad girls are grouped as 'Mercedes types' a crude reference to women as [36]'gold diggers', or 'clipboard types' those who are typified as the good ones because they are not worldly (Pg. 199). Ogola deliberately opens space for a critique of patriarchy which has different rules of engagement for boys and girls.

Psychoanalytic feminism propose that any credible feminist literary critique need investigate oppression of women at the site where the most psychological subjugation occurs: within language. It is within language whereby repressive attitudes and oppressive terms of reference for women are established in patriarchal cultures, in what is referred to as 'phallocentric thinking'. This is thinking that is male oriented in terms of its rules of logic, what is considered objective knowledge as well as in its vocabulary (Burt, 1980).

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[34] Wandia's classmate in medical school and later husband.
[35] Mark's eldest daughter, who despite high career success chooses an unmarried life as a member of the Opus Dei, an institution within the catholic church practiced by lay members.
[36] Women who form relationships with men for the financial benefits.

Just as Marxism would attempt to explain the ways in which women's social and economic position has been weakened by forces which undermine their economic capacity, deconstruction aims at exposing ways in which literary language reinforces patriarchy. This can occur in terms of direct physical appropriation of women's state to that of material objects, to be used at the discretion of men and discarded.

Ogola illuminates and critiques this narrative through her form and style of writing where she uses quotation marks when mentioning 'the box' as well as when mentioning women referred to as 'Mercedes types' or 'clipboards'. As such the intentionality of the author is recognized for introducing such themes: to invite the readers to criticize patriarchy and to expose its double edged morale.

5.3   Intersectionality of social issues such as ethnicity, culture, and class with gender issues in the text

Multiple gender studies posit that women suffer double or sometimes multiple forms of discrimination. These may be gender based and due to other structural factors such as class, culture, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation, among many others (Adeola 1990; Apple 1992; Hartsock 1983; Collins 2008; Hooks 2015). In Kenya, gender inequality is in part reproduced and mediated by regional and ethnic politics in addition to patriarchal structures which influence the contemporary economic systems (Crisp, 2014).

Studies indicate that women in rural areas are more disadvantaged than those in urban areas. This includes in their own homes as well as in working conditions at their places of work, which are normally informal and in farms. Postcolonial land reforms are a major contributing factor to this as most women have access to ancestral land but cannot acquire credit through banks for financing as they do not possess legal documents such as title deeds to prove ownership (Suda, 1996). In addition to the legal structures impeding agency, cultural practices in most ethnic groups are patriarchal and women are left with the heavy burden of housekeepers in their homes, which is not remunerated, and increases to their burden.

A study by Suda (1996) found that most working women in Kenya have double shifts, at their places of employment as well as full time jobs at their homes, as home carers. The working

lives of female entrepreneurs is also constrained by cultural barriers that reinforce gender inequalities, with most of them requiring permission from their husbands to set up businesses, prescribed to be home at specific times to cater to their husbands and children, as well as because of an attitude set by patriarchy to police decency in women, including what times a respectable woman must be home.

Finally, the politics of ethnicity play a role in the experience of gender inequality for Kenyan women. Ethnicity cannot be separated from an analysis of social structures in Kenya as it plays a key role in organizing the way of life in Kenya. The question therefore would be whether ethnicity affects women more than men. According to a study by Strolovitch (2006), structural disadvantages, be it class, race, ethnicity, religion are more detrimental to women than men existing within those communities. This is because women's problems are normally silenced in societies, and as such in cases of affirmative action to attempt to erase the disadvantages, it is men who normally benefit from them. Kenya has 42 tribes, with those belonging to the larger tribes more recognized in terms of representation in government and other institutions in the state. Women belonging to the smaller ethnic groups are normally voiceless, with structural barriers preventing them to access good education.

The above discussion is necessary in order to situate the working Kenyan woman's experiences of gender inequality. Ogola represents women's struggle with class and ethnicity within patriarchal political, social and economic structures in her text within the Luo culture. It is important to note that Ogola herself is from this ethnic group and this opens up an interesting conversation on ethnicity (Odhiambo, 2006).

Ogola also presents possibilities for erasing ethnic divide, which has the harshest effects on women, by shifting the narrative to be inclusive of cross cultural intermarriages. Wandia and Aoko are from [37]opposing ethnic groups, albeit large groups, with a traditional disadvantage for those of the Luo community (ibid). It is her female characters who have an easier time breaking ethnic borders through marriages than the male characters. Wandia's mother expresses her concern for the mixed marriage, which is largely based on communication barrier and understanding, but does not oppose the marriage

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[37] The Luo and Kikuyu ethnic groups have been culturally opposed post Kenya's independence.

don't you mind that he is not of our tribe? Marriage is hard. Sometimes it is necessary to talk to a man in a language that he understands thoroughly. Apart from that I don't see any other reason against marrying a man from wherever you wish. (Pg. 260).

However, male characters have the hardest time accepting inter-ethnic marriages. Aoro's dad is used for this purpose and to bring forth the conversation on ethnic stereotypes on women, which further the sexist ideology.

you can never tell. She is a Kikuyu after all-they have a thing about money. In any case why don't you wait a little? I'm sure there is a nice Luo girl somewhere who'd make a perfect wife for you. (Pg. 271)

Ogola attempts to dismantle the common negative stereotypical belief of women from the Kikuyu tribe which has been perpetuated by sexism, veiled as stereotypes against a community. This is especially important especially from a Luo woman, Ogola, and a chance at reinforcing sisterhood, to show women that it is when they wholly reject notions of ethnicity, that there will be a chance to fight sexist ideology.

5.4   Sisterhood as a chance of resisting Patriarchy

Studies of literary critiques of common children books such as [38]*Cinderella*, have criticized such texts for their sexist portrayals of female- female relationships. Stereo-typified portrayals of 'feminine' traits such as jealousy, hate and betrayal of other females is usually over petty issues, such as seeking the attention of men as well as romantic interests. It is as if women have no other interests in their lives, and their worlds are painted by the men around them (Eagleton, 2014). Rejecting this notion of patriarchy and embracing sisterhood is a means of shifting the dialogue and combating sexism. Feminist writers of fiction such as Ogola have embraced the tactics in their narratives, a strategy which is political.

Don't worry about him. You see if you don't go it is something that will haunt you- a lost chance is something very difficult to live with. We will all chip in to give him a hand with the children…they will be ok. Just organize your affairs and go do what you have to do (Pg. 297).

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[38] A popular children's fairy tale, that follows the protagonist, Cinderella, and her three evil step sisters, seeking the love of the prince.

The above quote comes from Wandia's mother in law, encouraging a mother of three to leave her husband and children, to further her studies in America. This contradicts Elizabeth's earlier belief about the relationship between mother and daughter in laws

'I thought mother in laws and daughter in laws were supposed to hate each other.' *(pg. 277).*

Ogola presents an opportunity to correct misconceptions about female- female relationships through a positive portrayal of a classic misrepresentation of relationships between mother in laws and their sons' wives. She does not simply portray an idealistic world where everything between women and other women is positive and perfect, as she earlier shows a more strained relationship between Akoko and her mother in law. She however dwells and dedicates longer in depth analysis for the more positive relationships, deliberately to shift the conversation.

Other positive female- female relationships in the text are through female role modelling of Akoko, Wandia and many other women who inspire generations in the narrative. Akoko's negative portrayal of a negative sisterly relationship between the twin sisters is not treated in a stereotypical fashion, but she attempts to present their complexities. Women are each other's confidants, they share secrets, seeks advice from each other, run to each other for solace and comfort and look up to each other.

Studies indicate that marginalized groups have to tackle oppression from uniting forces against the oppressors, in this case patriarchal structures overridden by a sexist ideology (Eagleton, 2014; Tyson, 2006). Therefore, women's liberating movements are an important component in feminist ideology, and a literary critique presenting this is considered feminist.

5.5   Instances of ideological conflicts

Aoro is a very lucky boy……I would never have credited him with the brains to get a girl like you. Some empty head, pretty face perhaps, but not a woman with character. (Pg. 273)

It is imperative in a literary critique to identify instances of ideological conflicts by assessing the intentionality of the author. This means asking the question:

- what does the author invite in a criticism when she includes certain elements in her work?

- Does a specific narrative invite a reader for criticism or does it forward patriarchal notions which she may be intending to critique?

Tyson (2006) defines herself as a feminist, albeit a recovering patriarchal woman, unlearning patriarchal beliefs socialized in her from an early age. She notes that it is important to shift the critique to the author, in order to uncover intended or unintended instances of ideological conflicts in a book. This kind of analysis one can argue is covered in all instances of a critique and does not require its own space. I have noted this as well, and to avoid repetitiveness, will only use one criteria provided by feminist literary critique to uncover this. That is, the physical description of the female characters.

I argue that the approach to a physical description is an important indicator as it dives into stereotypes of feminine performance. Sexist ideology in patriarchal writing operates by providing women with a limited space for expression in all forms (Kolodny, 1980). The pervading narrative for the good woman fits in the adjective box: 'beautiful', 'approachable', 'easy going', and rarely intelligent or witty. The opposite is for those female characters who do not perform femininity as required.

This opens the conversation on whether the writer represents patriarchy by fitting her female characters within stereotypes of the mutual exclusivity of beauty and intelligence in a woman. Descriptions of female characters commence with a mention of their appeal, while for male characters it does not open that way. She describes Akoko as strikingly beautiful and she is rewarded for her beauty, Becky is described as 'dazzling' 'exquisite' and 'physically perfect' and interestingly is presented as an unlikeable character. Patriarchy has developed stereotypes of the mutual exclusivity of 'beauty and brains' in women (Case, 2007). Similarly, two characters, Wandia and Vera who succeed in their professional fields which are predominantly male are described as being physically 'ordinary'. Ogola here fails to break down this narrative that woman can do it all.

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5.6   Chapter Summary

It was important to conduct a discourse analysis to determine the gender responsiveness of the [39]novel according to the feminist literary critique. Although previously done works by scholars on the text have identified it as a feminist text, a critique using tools provided by feminist theory was conducted. The text has been a source of many analysis, both theoretical and empirical, lending itself to scholars from around the globe of all genders including (Odhiambo, 2006; Adeola, 1990; Kanogo, 2005; & Katwiwa, 2007).

 The rationale for provision of this analysis is for future critique on the research topic, and for expanding discussions on of the scope of femininity of the text. Furthermore, the questions posed while identifying the gender responsiveness for the text were the basis for the formulation of the research questions. The feminist literary lens lends partially to the critique. Other ideas on gender such as historical materialism by Hartsock (1983), Reader response theory by Rosenblatt (1938), and psychoanalysis by Mitchell (2008) have lent ideas.

A discourse analysis of the text was developed from feminist literary critique, as it provides an exhaustive list of questions for a researcher interested in analysing female and male representation or lack of in texts, and the ideals of patriarchy. The questions were divided into quantitative and quantitative elements. The quantitative elements included: representation vs invisibility of male vs female characters, gendering of texts with regard to stereotyping male and female characters along traditional roles in professions, locus of activity (at home or away from home), and use of androcentric terms such as representation of the masculine pronoun 'He' to represent both sexes. Qualitative elements included analysing the definition of femininity by text, to include such aspects as good vs bad girl, ideals of masculinity such as the macho male, the use of language for repression, including instances of upholding one sex for some virtues and shunning the other for the same such as promiscuity viewed differently from the male and female perspective (Tyson, 2006).

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[39] The river and the source by Margaret Ogola

6 Data Collection, Presentation and Analysis

In this section, I will detail the methods chosen for collecting, presenting and analyzing the data. The data analysis began early in the data collection phase. This included thinking about the data during the collection stage and organizing it into logical thought. The method used to organize thought in this paper is qualitative analysis whose main preoccupation is in meaning, and not in numbers. I obtained meaning of the data from notes and observations made during the fieldwork period, the audio interviews and transcripts.

The first step in analysis involved familiarizing myself with the data, which I did by listening and re-listening to the audio transcriptions. Then I transcribed the data from audio to text file on computer through reading and listening to the interviews. Afterwards, I was able to have a general feeling of the communicated messages and a blurred picture of the kind of results that could arise. However, it was only when I conducted a systematic and rigorous review of the data that I could get a sense of the enormity of the data.

Formal systems of qualitative data analysis have been developed in order for researchers to derive at their data easily, as well as to provide credibility and trustworthiness of the data (Bryman, 2012; Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2014) . They include techniques such as coding where a researcher can seek similar underlying ideas in a data set, which they could further group into categories that will enable easier development of themes or related ideas. The data I will presented has been anonymized as described in the methods chapter. The names used are all fictional for protection of those interviewed.

6.1   Hyperresearch data software analysis tool

I used the qualitative data analysis software tool, Hyperresearch, for the data analysis section. This section will provide a brief description of the tool. This will entail its advantages and disadvantages and why it was picked over other qualitative software for analysis. I downloaded the program from the University of Oslo IT desk and installed on my home computer.

Hyperresearch program was developed for easier analysis of qualitative data. It helps with organizing research data, including audio, texts, and diagrams on any windows or mac computer. Development of codes is essential when using this tool of analysis. The codes are used for tagging important phrases, from the source material.

Qualitative data analysis was originally performed laboriously by hand, and computer assisted software has improved this tradition. Researchers had to first transcribe the source data, after which they had to read through physical scripts and assign codes. Hyperresearch follows a similar sequence in analysis of data, however the software has made it easier to handle large amounts of data, store, retrieve and display on prompt. The software can auto code, build theories and assist in summarizing the data (Researchwire , 2015).

The first step in coding involves opening a source file, which is the file that is uploaded into the study file and contains specific cases. Afterwards, you select a portion of material from the source file and select a code that fits in that section. The software records the exact reference the code has been selected from and stores this as your work. It is possible to retrieve all references of a single code in once click, regardless of the number of source files the codes have been retrieved from.

After a complete and thorough coding of all the cases designated to the study, data analysis can be conducted through diverse methods. Filtering of cases is one of the ways issued to conduct data analysis. This step involves selecting a subset of cases and working on those independently. I created two subgroups in this study, one for boys' responses and the other for girls. Afterwards I analyzed individual codes, building themes from those.

6.1.1   Organizing the data

Any valid analysis is immensely aided by data displays that are focused enough to permit viewing of a full data set in one location and are systematically arranged to answer the research question at hand. (Huberman & Miles, 1994: 432).

The above quote stresses the importance of focused organization of a data set in the analysis process. The first step I took in organizing the data for analysis involved a focused analysis of the research questions and topics. Second, I identified and separated those that were essential to making meaning from those that were useful for other purposes. This was an important step

in helping to manage the enormous data collected that can take a lifetime to analyze. I organized the data into questions and cases, cases involving individual student responses and isolated poignant responses as categories for comparison.

A quote from Marshall & Ross (1995:114) speaks to the importance of this section in data analysis

> *Identifying salient themes, recurring ideas or language and patterns of belief that link people and settings together is the most intellectually challenging phase of the analysis and one that can integrate the entire endeavor.*

This quote speaks to methods a researcher can adopt in order to be efficient in data processing and analysis. I followed the following steps:

- I searched for frequently used words and phrases in the responses, including ideas that frequently come up as well as those which are different

- I analyzed meaning through the language used by interviewees. In some cases, analyzing the choice of words used is important when analyzing feelings, attitudes, perceptions or beliefs, that go beyond what is said. I detailed the transcription to include facial expressions and tone in order to capture this. According to Bryman (2012), it is advantageous when a researcher comes from the same cultural community as the interviewees. However, this advantage can play as a disadvantage sometimes. I asked the interviewees to verify several expressions to avoid this pitfall.

- I watched out for those unexpected responses 'rich points', following through whenever I felt interviewees were delving into unexpected territories.

- Some interviewees communicate strong ideas through stories, and as a result it is possible to establish interesting themes and meanings from them, I looked out at these stories to get a sense of the data.

Organizing data sets into codes and categories

Question/topic	Responses	Categories
what do you think is the role of a man or a woman in society?	A. A man is supposed to be the head but respectfully. This is in a way that he should respect his wife and not dominate over her forcing her to follow his way. When he respects his wife the wife will acknowledge him being the head of the house and	Patriarchal thinking informing thinking without knowledge of genesis

	respect him, even feel secure whenever with him, just like Akoko and Owuor Kembo. Women are supposed to be leaders and show their children the correct way. She is actually the home because if I can quote ' a home without a daughter is like a spring without a source.' I support this statement fully because in the contemporary society men find it very hard to live without a wife.	Stereotypic thinking of the role of a woman, typecast as home carers, yet still progressive notions as 'leaders'
Who do you admire the most in the text	Q1, 2 Wandia Coz I find her similar characteristics to mine and she really took up the challenge with the guys in the medical course which is something I really like doing, I'm not afraid to fighting the guys, if it's what you deserve, something u want to do, want to get, I'm ready to go for it. She proved to the opposite sex that women are also capable. Another thing I like about her is She saw that Aoro was wasting a lot of time not proposing and she went ahead and proposed this is something many people may find weird, many women may say I'm going to wait for this guy to propose to me or do this, but I usually say if I really love this guy ill not waste time I'll go for it.	new woman new feminist feminine ideals

Table 1: An example of the process of grouping data sets into themes and categories.

6.1.2 Development of codes, categories and themes

The process of category development is usually lengthy, and often leads to development of similar or repetitive categories for the data. It is therefore necessary to build overarching themes from these sets of repetitive data sets, by collapsing them under one theme. In the example above of, the student response implying 'a new feminist woman' and 'go getter' can be collapsed into a general theme of empowerment. This method was used throughout the data analysis stage.

Ensuring validity and reliability is an important step in development of themes. Bryman (2012) notes that this stage should not be a final stage in the research process, but should be integrated in the entire research. Ensuring validity and reliability can be especially difficult when a researcher is working independently. I developed codes and categories from feminist theory, and while this provided a reliable means of checking the validity and reliability, I also tested the 'outliers' which Miles & Huberman (1994) define as those ideas which deviate from the normal patterns of data.

The figure below represents a computer screen shot of all the codes developed from the HyperResearch data software analysis tool.

▼ All Codes	navigating female subjectivity through agency
a feeling of men in crisis	negative impact of patriarchy on male personhood
acceptable equality in patriarchy	negative views of affirmative action
acceptable female agency	negative views on gender equality
acceptance of patriarchy	negotiated masculinity
active female agency	negotiating female identities
awareness of transformative power of literature	notion of patriarchal masculinity
belief in mutual exclusive nature of gender equality	opposition to male domination
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	patriarchal perspectives
changing femininities	patriarchy indoctrination
changing perceptions on femininities	perverted power relations
changing perceptions on gender roles	political conscious
changing perceptions on masculinity	politically unconscious
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norms	positive views on affirmative action
changing perspectives on being valued as women	positive views on gender equality
coded language	psychological and concrete manifestations of patriarchy
collaborative mutuality of gender equality	psychological patriarchy
condoning sexist violence	recognition of cultural constraints
disapproving sexist violence	recognition of patriarchal practices
double edged gender messages	reflective observation of gender relations
double punishment	refusal of traditional customs
embracing feminist thinking	reinforcing patriarchy
embracing patriarchal thinking	repeated language
false interpretation of disturbed behaviour positively	respectability politics
female empowerement embodiment	restoring natural social order
flexible sex role patterns	rigid sex role patterns
gender blindness	shunning respectability politics
gender policing	sisterhood
gender transgression	social expectations of femininity
good bad woman stereotype	social expectations of masculinity
hopelessness feelings on state of equality	social expectations of masculinity and femininity
influence of cultural norms	social transgressions
influencing religious indoctrination	societal constraints
inherent patriarchy	sterotypified view on nature of relationships
institutionalized sexism	unacceptable equality
lack of control of one's actions	unconscious rules of patriarchy
lack of language	undifferentiated gender roles
maintenance of status quo benefiting members	wholesome overview of gender roles
maintenance of status quo disadvantaging members	wholesome view on nature of relationships
marginalization	women negotiating subjectivity

Fig 1: list of all codes derived from feminist principles

6.2   Data Presentation and Analysis

I will present an overview of the results of the qualitative data analysis from Hyperresearch. The Hyperresearch software for analysis is capable of presenting qualitative data quantitatively, using numbers. This will be done through production of frequency reports. The frequency reports include references to the code names and the occurrences of the codes in the study. The frequency report displays this through bar graphs, standard deviation, mean, maximum and minimum.

The term minimum represents the smallest distribution or use of codes across the cases in the study, while maximum denotes the opposite. The mean in statistics refers to average use of the code across the other cases, while the standard deviation shows the variation of use of a code across the cases. A large standard deviation represents a sparse distribution and a number closer to zero showing even variation in use (Researchwire , 2015).

The student responses were grouped into two groups: boys and girls. The boys group consisted of 7 students, two from the mixed sex school and five from the single sex school. The girls group had ten students. Six from the single sex school and four from the mixed sex school. The frequency tables presented will first present results from the two groups. Similarly, individual student results will be presented and discussed in the data analysis section. The data has been anonymized by changing students' names.

6.2.1   Results from group 1: Female students

Data Analysis from female students from single-sex girl secondary schools

Student 1: Mary

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norm	5	0	5	2.5	3.536	
changing femininities	4	0	4	2	2.828	
embracing feminist thinking	4	0	4	2	2.828	
negotiating female identities	4	0	4	2	2.828	
changing perceptions on femininities	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
gender transgression	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
recognition of cultural constraints	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
social transgressions	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
women negotiating subjectivity	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
active female agency	2	0	2	1	1.414	
awareness of transformative power of literature	2	0	2	1	1.414	
belief in mutual exclusive nature of gender equality	2	0	2	1	1.414	
female empowerement embodiment	2	0	2	1	1.414	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	2	0	2	1	1.414	
opposition to male domination	2	0	2	1	1.414	
political conscious	2	0	2	1	1.414	
positive views on gender equality	2	0	2	1	1.414	
changing perspectives on being valued as women	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
hopelessness feelings on state of equality	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
influence of cultural norms	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
influencing religious indoctrination	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
inherent patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
perverted power relations	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
recognition of patriarchal practices	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
reflective observation of gender relations	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
refusal of traditional customs	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
shunning respectability politics	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
sterotypified view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
unconscious rules of patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
wholesome view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 2: A frequency table displaying Mary's responses.

The students' results featured themes of empowerment and an awareness of feminism. Her observation of the characters in the text and their roles opens a glimpse of how the student views gender and gender roles.

Mary's insight to the intertwined relationship between the characters' lives is shown in her responses. Her highest score was on the changing perceptions on *religious and cultural norm., changing femininities, embracing feminist thinking and negotiating female identities*. An awareness of the political nature of cultural and religious institutions is a key factor in challenging gender norms, which are normally guised under strict moral and cultural codes (Wilcox, 1989).

She uses phrases such as '*I am not afraid of fighting the boys', '...she proved to the opposite sex that women are also capable'*, this in reference to Akoko's character. According to Adeola (1990), women in Africa have largely been underrepresented in the gender spectrum because of cultural practices that encourage them to be take care of their homes and not challenge men. Mary is challenging this notion and observes that a woman can and is able to compete with men if these cultural codes are broken.

The student also scored highly on the code of *gender transgression, recognition of cultural constraints, social transgressions active female agency* and *women negotiating subjectivity*. Her responses on this were as follows: on the idea of a woman proposing to a man, her views are as follows '*...many women say I'm going to wait for this guy to propose to me or do something, but I usually say if I really love this guy I'll not waste time and go for it.'* This notion directly answers to the theme of empowerment. She recognizes the cultural constraints that bar women from certain empowering roles such as proposing to men marriage, and this shows an analytical assessments of the motivations of the characters.

On responding to the question on whether the African culture is ripe for equality, her response illuminates despair on the influence of the African culture on gender *equality '...I don't think equality can happen coz we're Africans. I don't think that is something we will ever come out of because no matter how much women are strong. It always ends up with men being the majority.' (of women in parliament).*

Mary also coded highly in the code *'embracing feminist thinking'* whereby she shows a self-awareness that is needed if women are to fight for gender equality from society. She asserts

that she is *'courageous, determined and no-nonsense type girl*, who will demand for her rights starting from her home *'...I usually say that when I get married to a guy it will be a contract-like friendship that is mutually beneficial, that we'll sign and I tell you things I hate for example, never drink in the house, never cheat on me, and if you do these things I will leave and I'll stand by it.'* This type of assertiveness will surely bring transformation to the way gender is viewed if this is an indication of the future.

She coded highly on transformative codes and very low on the patriarchal codes, such as unconscious rules of patriarchy. She commends Mark for refusing [40]Becky to be an airhostess, submitting to unconscious patriarchal attitudes of work stereotypes as well as refusing females agency to decide on a professional path. This also subconsciously gives a nod to patriarchy and the observance that male dominated professions are better than those dominated by females. Being an airhostess historically has been viewed as a majorly feminine profession and consequently both men and women who choose this career path are deemed as not contributing enough by the patriarchal society (Beauvoir, 1966; Friedman, 2013).

Student 2 Diana

The second student I will analyze is from the single sex girl school, Diana. The figure represents a frequency table with her scores.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
wholesome view on nature of relationships	4	0	4	2	2.828	
changing perceptions on femininities	4	0	4	2	2.828	
embracing feminist thinking	4	0	4	2	2.828	
female empowerement embodiment	4	0	4	2	2.828	
women negotiating subjectivity	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	2	0	2	1	1.414	
positive views on gender equality	2	0	2	1	1.414	
opposition to male domination	2	0	2	1	1.414	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	2	0	2	1	1.414	
gender transgression	2	0	2	1	1.414	
changing perceptions on masculinity	2	0	2	1	1.414	
awareness of transformative power of literature	2	0	2	1	1.414	
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norm	2	0	2	1	1.414	
active female agency	2	0	2	1	1.414	
negotiated masculinity	2	0	2	1	1.414	
changing femininities	2	0	2	1	1.414	
gender blindness	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social transgressions	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on gender roles	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
political conscious	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
recognition of patriarchal practices	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 3: A frequency table displaying Diana's responses.

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[40] Vera's twin sister, independent, self-assured and determined to carve her own destiny, her way, which contrasts with her father's way.

Diana also scored highly on *changing perceptions on femininities*, which includes codes indicating empowerment themes such as *embracing feminism thinking, navigating subjectivity through agency,* and *opposition to male domination.* The student did not have any score on inherent patriarchy. She mentioned the following on the themes of empowerment which were discussed.

On the code '*changing perceptions on female empowerment'* she says '…Akoko was the source of transition of women from being child bearers to assertive working women. One of her granddaughters goes on to become a vice chancellor in University *'it's like bringing change, a person does not expect that of a woman, this brought the motivation for women to pursue what they want.'*

She also brings up the notion of a fierce woman who inspires fear in men, on Akoko, she notes *'...Otieno is a coward because he is afraid of Akoko, he retreats even when she just looks at him.'* On an awareness of the need for symbolic figures in underrepresented sections of society (Martinez & Nash, 1993), she notes that *'...their actions bring about respect to the women in society. We see that the society is male dominated but the above characters show that women are also important, they show that women can make it in life.'*

The student also codes highly under the code 'wholesome view on nature of relationships'. According to Lupri (1983), the family structure is a reflection of the moral and cultural code in a society. The societies where the family structures practice gender equality, reflect societies which are more gender equal. Diana coded equally as high in this code by observing that '*Akoko's marriage is successful' although monogamous'* in a time when it was unheard of for men to take up only one wife.

Diana again scores equally high on themes on female empowerment. She despises the notion of undermining women *'Otieno thinks that all women are sluts'*…the society is male dominated but the characters show that women are important, and can make it in life. She also notes that '*all are equal in life and should be respected as such.'*

Student 3: Emily

The third student I will analyze is from the single sex girl school, Emily. The figure below represents a frequency table with her scores.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
women negotiating subjectivity	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
changing perceptions on femininities	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norm	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
inherent patriarchy	2	0	2	1	1.414	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	2	0	2	1	1.414	
acceptable equality in patriarchy	2	0	2	1	1.414	
embracing feminist thinking	2	0	2	1	1.414	
changing femininities	2	0	2	1	1.414	
wholesome view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
opposition to male domination	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
psychological and concrete manifestations of patria	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
negotiating female identities	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
gender transgression	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
awareness of transformative power of literature	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
recognition of cultural constraints	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
political conscious	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
recognition of patriarchal practices	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
female empowerement embodiment	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
active female agency	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
collaborative mutuality of gender equality	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 4: A frequency table displaying Emily's responses.

Like the previous female students, Diana, Emily coded highly on themes of female empowerment and changing the status quo of a male dominated society. However, some of her responses reflected elements of inherent patriarchy. The student codes highest on 'women negotiating subjectivity' a form of coping mechanism or reaction to living in a male dominated society.

Beauvoir (1966) explains that women who challenged patriarchy have always developed coping mechanisms as a survival mechanism and tool for resistance. Mary (student 1) notes this idea in the text and observes that *'Akoko encourages her daughter to embrace religion, which at the time was seen as a source of hope for outcast women who had been rejected by their societies.* The church gave them hope through education and teaching them new skills for adapting, after which they were self-sufficient.

As a result of development of coping mechanisms, for example through education, there is now a changing perception on femininities in society. Emily notes '...when her mother in law was focused on the traditional way of marriage whereby she was to have many children and the husband had to marry many wives, *Akoko was determined even though she had not given birth to many children to live her own way the way she had planned it*.'

She also scorns the notion of women being able to get ahead just from their beauty. She notes that 'Becky was not so much hardworking because *she had put all her trust in her beauty*. She believed that everything comes easy as long as you're beautiful.' because this is a very

limiting form of existence as beauty fades in the long run, and skills, hard work determination are more assured means of getting ahead in life.

She also notes that 'the mother in law is so focused on the *traditional way of life,'* a realization that the cultural code is one of the main tools of patriarchy and opposition to gender equality, as men want to maintain power and the status quo in society (Hooks, 2015). She also has scores depicting inherent patriarchy. This is a byproduct of constant societal gender messages such as gender policing of both men and women from a young age Tyson (2006) explains that many seasoned feminists struggle on a daily basis on unlearning the patriarchal messages imparted in them by society from a young age. The process of unlearning may take profusely long if the society isn't adapting gender equality measures.

Emily's responses also depicted another form of coping mechanism which has been coded as 'acceptable equality in patriarchy and negotiated gender equality'. I explain these codes as 'by products' of instilled gender messages in girls and boys from a tender age. She used phrases such as *'polygamy is not that good, maybe somewhat acceptable,'* and *'men should be hardworking and role models and women should be role models to their children.'* The former statement shows a compromise in the stance against backward cultural practices such as polygamy, while the latter statement despite calling for an active role in women in their households, still ties women's roles to the home while men's roles are fitted in the traditional confines of outside the home. These views are formed due to societies prevailing gender messages and codes that are not easily shifted, despite best intentions (Apple, 1992).

Student 4: Amy

The fourth student I will analyze is from the single sex girl school, Amy. The ensuing figure represents a frequency table with her scores.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
embracing feminist thinking	6	0	6	3	4.243	
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norm	4	0	4	2	2.828	
female empowerement embodiment	4	0	4	2	2.828	
changing femininities	4	0	4	2	2.828	
social transgressions	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
wholesome view on nature of relationships	2	0	2	1	1.414	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	2	0	2	1	1.414	
negotiating female identities	2	0	2	1	1.414	
gender transgression	2	0	2	1	1.414	
women negotiating subjectivity	2	0	2	1	1.414	
changing perceptions on femininities	2	0	2	1	1.414	
awareness of transformative power of literature	2	0	2	1	1.414	
active female agency	2	0	2	1	1.414	
changing perspectives on being valued as women	2	0	2	1	1.414	
influence of cultural norms	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
inherent patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
patriarchy indoctrination	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
opposition to male domination	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
psychological and concrete manifestations of patria	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
acceptable equality in patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on masculinity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
influencing religious indoctrination	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
coded language	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
political conscious	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
acceptable female agency	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
sisterhood	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 5: A frequency table displaying Amy's responses.

She, like the previous female students discussed, coded highest on themes embracing feminism as shown in the figure. However, the student also has low scores on themes illuminating patriarchy such as inherent patriarchy, as well as 'patriarchy indoctrination. The code 'embracing feminist thinking' coded highest for the student followed by 'changing perceptions on religious and cultural norms', 'female empowerment', and changing femininities.

On the code of embracing feminist thinking the student uses phrases such as 'I detest Otieno because of his *male chauvinism'* she criticizes usage of the term *'ordinary woman'* used as a derogatory term in this instance during bride price negotiations, a common practice at the time. She also critiques this character's usage of the term *'sluts'* to refer to women. However, this criticism brings forth the question whether the student understands the political implication of the term, and as such the necessitated criticism or whether she is simply critiquing this as a sign of inherent respectability politics (White, 2010).

Another instance is when she applauds Akoko for '*not fearing* to talk to her husband as the tradition required a woman to be *shy before her husband'*. In the later section of the text, she applauds Wandia for breaking societal norms and to some extent the cultural code by proposing to a man. She displays recognition that the personal is political (Beauvoir, 1966), and that norms have to be broken in order for emancipation to occur.

However, the student also coded on themes of patriarchy when she answers the question of the role of a man and a woman in the family. She responds *'... a man is supposed to be the head of the family,* he should respect his wife and not dominate over her, and when he does this she will acknowledge and respect him.' There is nothing wrong with a family having a head, but the patriarchal notion that the head has to be male is consumed without question, an element of inherent patriarchy, which still plagues those brought up in the feminist tradition. According to Hooks (1995), the process of unlearning years of patriarchal indoctrination is a daily struggle amongst even the most experienced in the field.

Student 5: Rose

The fifth student I will analyze is from the single sex girl school, Rose. The ensuing figure represents a frequency table with her scores.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
embracing feminist thinking	4	0	4	2	2.828	
active female agency	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
shunning respectability politics	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
good bad woman stereotype	2	0	2	1	1.414	
negotiating female identities	2	0	2	1	1.414	
gender transgression	2	0	2	1	1.414	
changing femininities	2	0	2	1	1.414	
collaborative mutuality of gender equality	2	0	2	1	1.414	
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
wholesome view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
women negotiating subjectivity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on femininities	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
flexible sex role patterns	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perspectives on being valued as women	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
refusal of traditional customs	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
repeated language	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
reflective observation of gender relations	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
disapproving sexist violence	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 6: A frequency table displaying Rose's responses.

The general overview of her results indicates a strong feminist approach to interpretation of the text. Rose, with the exception of one code, the 'good-bad woman stereotype' leans on themes on changing perceptions on femininities, awareness of transformative power of Literature and changing perceptions on religious and cultural norms. The ideas that code highest include: embracing feminist thinking, active female agency and shunning respectability politics.

She was well spoken and opinionated. She assertively took a stance that did not necessarily reflect the group and stood by this. The student deviates from the other students by picking

Becky as her favorite character. Becky, is a character who Ogola must have included to represent a flawed woman who chose her own path regardless of the consequences. It is interesting that she picks her as her favorite character, the only one to do so and to give reasons for doing so.

An insight into her responses indicate a political awareness of feminism. On her most coded response 'embracing feminist thinking', Rose notes that 'she likes Becky the most because she is '*independent minded*' and goes against her strict father's wishes to choose her own career path. 'she goes after her dreams and really becomes successful, as much as she leads an irresponsible life'. 'she still proves responsible for her kids and leaves them an organized inheritance on her death.' '…I think she's just a great character and *goes after what she wants'*.

She also admires Wandia for proposing marriage to the Aoro, Ogola's attempt at tipping the relationship scales in favor of feminism. This was a popular topic of discussion with the female students so far discussed. The student uses phrases such as' *strength of a woman'*, 'we are all *created equal* before God and *desire win win relationships,*' 'no one should be oppressed and vice versa'. She ties in the link between literature and her life when she compares the strict father to her own, and as such one can be convinced to think that she has forged her own path in spite of her father.

This student also coded highly on 'active female agency', which is closely tied with the previous code of 'embracing feminist thinking'. According to Griffin (2004), agency is the power to do. In this sense, Rachel admires Becky for doing what she wants to do by being an air hostess. She also observes the despised position of women in the family, especially '*back in the day'* referring to generations back, where women's predetermined position in the household was in the 'kitchen'(cite). She also uses phrases such as 'decisive', 'independent', to describe Becky, all traits which are feminist.

An important theme Rose coded for was the idea of 'shunning respectability politics', a dominant theme in the oppression of women, veiled in religious and cultural codes. Recognition of the guise is an important step in taking down patriarchy, which operates through invisible mechanisms such as culture and religion that are bigger than any human figure of authority in a society (White, 2010). She identifies the notion of women proposing

marriage to men as one of the characters does, seeing this as a positive sign in 'win-win relationships between men and women.

The analysis for this student as a whole indicates awareness of the political nature of patriarchy and embracing feminism principles in her analysis. The student is able to identify the link between Literature and society and the ways in which themes in the text double up in real life in the form of oppression or empowerment of women.

Student 6: Sharon

The sixth student I will analyze is from the single sex girl school, Sharon. The ensuing figure represents a frequency table with her scores.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
recognition of patriarchal practices	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
opposition to male domination	2	0	2	1	1.414	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	2	0	2	1	1.414	
awareness of transformative power of literature	2	0	2	1	1.414	
refusal of traditional customs	2	0	2	1	1.414	
negotiating female identities	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on femininities	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
flexible sex role patterns	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
recognition of cultural constraints	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
embracing feminist thinking	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on gender roles	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
political conscious	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
female empowerement embodiment	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing femininities	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
collaborative mutuality of gender equality	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perspectives on being valued as women	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
repeated language	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
reflective observation of gender relations	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 7: A frequency table displaying Sharon's responses.

Sharon's responses shadowed the trend of the previous female students from the school. Her responses heavily feature themes of empowerment such as changing perceptions on femininities, an awareness of the transformative power of literature and changing perceptions on religious and cultural practices.

The student is able to identify patriarchy in society and has the proper language to express herself. She observes that '*Akoko strives to break from social dynamic systems of male superiority in the society from a male dominated society.*' This is the first student that has taken a step further from identifying associations of feminism, to having a well-articulated vocabulary to explain herself. According to Gee (2004), feminism, as other theories can be alienating due to the technical jugular used in the tradition by scholars. In turn, those who do not possess this language can end up feeling ostracized by the movement.

She goes further to note that '*men's superiority to women is a stereotype in our society*' which she explains further by stating that '*we are all equal and deserve everything in equality*'. The student is able to identify the strategies the writer has used to unify women in equality through her characters. She notes that 'Ogola does this throughout the plot by ensuring women '*emerge victorious*' in tough fields such as medicine and in other careers such as teaching.'

Of the character whom she identifies most with, Susan picks Akoko, but it is the language in which she uses to describe Akoko that is interesting. She observes '*Akoko strives to free women from the oppressive demeaning social systems in this male dominated society. She simply advocates for liberal gender relations in a humanistic way,*' Her language gives her power of communication. She identifies clearly the ways in which Literature has transformative power and the political implication of patriarchal practices.

Data Analysis of Results from Girls from the mixed-sex secondary school

Student 7: Eva

The seventh student I will analyze is from the mixed sex school, Eva. The ensuing figure represents a frequency table with her scores.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
active female agency	4	0	4	2	2.828	
changing perceptions on femininities	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
wholesome view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
opposition to male domination	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
negotiating female identities	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
acceptable equality in patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
politically unconscious	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
awareness of transformative power of literature	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
recognition of cultural constraints	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
embracing feminist thinking	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
acceptable female agency	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
female empowerement embodiment	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing femininities	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perspectives on being valued as women	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
undifferentiated gender roles	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
refusal of traditional customs	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 8: A frequency table displaying Eva's responses.

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This student coded highest for 'active female agency' and 'changing perceptions on femininities'. She also scored highly on themes on empowerment, awareness of the transformative power of Literature and changing perceptions on religious and cultural norms. Her scores follow the trend from girls in the single sex secondary schools, with all except for one indicating tolerance towards patriarchy 'acceptable equality in patriarchy' code.

She notes that Aoko 'triples her husband's wealth' after marriage, and learns how to 'live with people', 'Elizabeth becomes a teacher', and [41]Nyabera *'finds solace in religion'* when she could not find a place for a widowed woman in the village. She also notes *'a woman has a place in society, no matter what people think, no matter what men think or say'*. She quotes *'the City of the beast'* and depiction of girl power in that text. This includes tales of girls who could control nature by talking to animals, things which she notes that 'men could not do' in situations where 'men are afraid'. And notes that *'I get so encouraged when I read and get the will to fight on.*

The virtue of hard work and pressing beyond one's life circumstances-resilience, is seen as a redeeming virtue for women to be able to play a role in controlling their own narratives. Most of the responses so far have identified this, and this student notes that 'Akoko was able to achieve her wealth and respect through hard work 'she leaves her matrimonial home to fight for property and also all that was *rightfully hers*.

Another highly featured code was that of changing perceptions on femininities. She notes that Otieno '…is a man of no character and has no respect for women', and it is possible even for women to get what they want when they focus. She identifies the intention behind the authors writing as *'it focuses on women to show women are equal to men in order to encourage then to fight for their rights'*.

Student 8: Janet

The eighth student I will analyze is from the mixed sex school, Janet. The ensuing figure represents a frequency table with her scores.

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[41] Later converts her name to Maria due to Christianity.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
embracing feminist thinking	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
changing perspectives on being valued as women	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
awareness of transformative power of literature	2	0	2	1	1.414	
wholesome view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
gender transgression	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
women negotiating subjectivity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on femininities	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norn	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
repeated language	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
reflective observation of gender relations	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 9: A frequency table displaying Janet's responses.

Janet coded highest for themes on changing perspectives on femininities, awareness of transformative power of Literature and changing perceptions on religious and cultural norms as shown. On division of labor in the home, she notes that 'the role of men and women is to assist each other in all aspects of life like dividing the housework and assisting each other'. The burden of household chores in the past has been left to women unfairly and Kanogo (2005) asserts that a recognition of this unfair practice is a must to ending domination. Household responsibilities are among the least paid works, and women are disadvantaged in home situations where men work in paid employment and they stay home doing unpaid work.

She notes that women '*were expected to stay home and give birth to many children, equivalent to their bride price*'. She also notes that '*men are not more superior to women*, and if women were given a chance to work to their perfection, they can achieve more than what men have achieved.' This is an interesting assertion showing that the student is able to use the text to mirror society today. She embraces feminist thinking principles through her responses, for example when she talks about the equality of the sexes and society's role in creating inequalities.

Janet shows contempt for the treatment of women in the patriarchal society created by the author. She condemns polygamy and the poverty that can be associated with it, misogyny and the treatment of women as if they were object '*Otieno treated his wives as if they were 'sluts', 'slaves' and 'prostitutes'*', condemns the notion of equating the number of children a woman should give birth to the amount that was paid for her bride price.

Also highly featured is the theme 'awareness of the transformative power of Literature', where the student quotes another text where the main protagonist the female is changing the

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discourse on femininities. '…she runs away with the child, getting married to another man to secure the well-being of her child, fighting to get custody of a child that doesn't belong to her.'. She ties in this character with that of Akoko as exemplars of how women can transform between generations if they take up arms and fight for it.

Student 9: Paula

The ninth student I will analyze is from the mixed sex school, Paula. The ensuing figure represents a frequency table with her scores.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
positive views on gender equality	2	0	2	1	1.414	
changing perceptions on femininities	2	0	2	1	1.414	
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
wholesome view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
embracing patriarchal thinking	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of femininity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
women negotiating subjectivity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
flexible sex role patterns	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
awareness of transformative power of literature	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norm	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
embracing feminist thinking	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 10: A frequency table displaying Paula's responses.

Her results follow a similar trend from the results from the previous female students discussed. The themes of empowerment, changing perceptions of femininities, changing perceptions of the cultural and religious norms as well as an awareness of the transformative power of Literature feature heavily. The student's results do not indicate any coded themes on patriarchy or inherent patriarchy.

The student coded highest for 'positive views on gender quality and changing perceptions on femininities. On the question on how or whether Literature has played any role in their gender self-identification, the student observes that '…yes, because the generation we live in men are considered to have a say in everything but it has influenced me in a way that men and women both have a say in society.' She goes on further to give an example of the question she will ask when reading a book where gender equality is not promoted '…I will ask the question for the book, *what is the role that the woman plays as the only female in the text,* coz if she plays to be discriminated, then me as a woman I will do the opposite of what she is going through.

The student also displays political awareness in her answer to the question of gendering in the text, where she notes that Wandia 'beats' all the boys in her class in anatomy, a field touted as masculine, and in the instance she does so, she questions gender stereotypes.

Student 10: Sarah

The tenth student I will analyze is from the mixed sex school, Sarah. The ensuing figure represents a frequency table with her scores.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
embracing feminist thinking	4	0	4	2	2.828	
changing perceptions on femininities	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
awareness of transformative power of literature	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
active female agency	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
collaborative mutuality of gender equality	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
changing perspectives on being valued as women	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	2	0	2	1	1.414	
changing perceptions on gender roles	2	0	2	1	1.414	
female empowerement embodiment	2	0	2	1	1.414	
changing femininities	2	0	2	1	1.414	
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
positive views on affirmative action	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
positive views on gender equality	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
opposition to male domination	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
unconscious rules of patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
psychological and concrete manifestations of patria	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
respectability politics	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
negotiating female identities	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
women negotiating subjectivity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on masculinity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norn	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
recognition of cultural constraints	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
recognition of patriarchal practices	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 11: A frequency table displaying Sarah's responses.

Sarah again follows the same pattern in her responses as the girls that have answered prior to her. Her responses indicate empowerment themes, recognition of the political, cultural and religious constraints that limit gender equality as well as the political nature of the text. Her coding patterns are as indicated in the figure above, with 'embracing feminist thinking' coding the highest.

On Akoko's power, she says, '…she's outstanding in the society, when you look back to where the story is based she comes from a society where the women are always looked down upon and she *stands up* and says '*I'm not going to let any man step on me.*' She wants to bring out the real change in society, she stands up and tells all women, *you don't have to sit down and wait for men to do things*, even you guys can do it, I love the way she gives women

the zeal to say, 'yes we can do it'. She doesn't look at the challenges and obstacles on the way.'

She also applauds Akoko for going to the government to fight for her land and observes that 'she has done the right thing, because *if men were to be given the opportunities to take advantage of women, yes women in society will not have a say, and therefore it is right that she had to go against the gender norm and fight for her rights as a woman.*' The theme of fighting for what one is owed features heavily in her responses. This echoes Hooks (1994) sentiments on a call to arms in resisting patriarchy for all those against it, both men and women.

On the awareness of the transformative power of Literature, the students' response indicates the mutuality of the relationship between texts and readers. She says '…when you read Literature texts, you get the sense that *even women have a place in society to do something* as long as you got that determined heart, and when you read these books, your self-esteem is raised and you can walk bragging '*I'm a woman'*, I can do something and make it coz I read that book and it inspired me and I got the story of that person and I was very much inspired and I want to be like that person.'

Female pride sentiments expressed expose the changing times from when Ogola wrote the three stages of the text, until now when girls are proud just to be who they are and also realize that agency is achieved through hard work and not depending on men for a livelihood. The student observes that the author *willfully 'lowered men and developed women'* in the text, trying to tell society that it's time as a society we get out of the mindset that women are nothing in society, that we give ladies a chance to show themselves, not all men are able, even *women can do it and much greater.'*

6.2.2 Results from group 2: Male students

Data Analysis from male students from single-sex boy secondary schools

Student 1: Owen

The first male student I will present results from is from the single sex boy school, Owen. The ensuing figure represents a frequency table with his scores.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
a feeling of men in crisis	9	0	9	4.5	6.364	
inherent patriarchy	9	0	9	4.5	6.364	
negative impact of patriarchy on male personhood	9	0	9	4.5	6.364	
psychological and concrete manifestations of patria	8	0	8	4	5.657	
restoring natural social order	8	0	8	4	5.657	
false interpretation of disturbed behaviour positively	7	0	7	3.5	4.95	
patriarchal perspectives	7	0	7	3.5	4.95	
acceptable equality in patriarchy	6	0	6	3	4.243	
embracing patriarchal thinking	6	0	6	3	4.243	
influence of cultural norms	6	0	6	3	4.243	
notion of patriarchal masculinity	6	0	6	3	4.243	
patriarchy indoctrination	6	0	6	3	4.243	
unconscious rules of patriarchy	6	0	6	3	4.243	
good bad woman stereotype	5	0	5	2.5	3.536	
social expectations of masculinity	5	0	5	2.5	3.536	
women negotiating subjectivity	5	0	5	2.5	3.536	
negotiating female identities	4	0	4	2	2.828	
rigid sex role patterns	4	0	4	2	2.828	
social expectations of femininity	4	0	4	2	2.828	
sterotypified view on nature of relationships	4	0	4	2	2.828	
institutionalized sexism	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
maintenance of status quo benefiting members	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
respectability politics	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
unacceptable equality	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
changing perceptions on masculinity	2	0	2	1	1.414	
negative views on gender equality	2	0	2	1	1.414	
psychological patriarchy	2	0	2	1	1.414	
reinforcing patriarchy	2	0	2	1	1.414	
acceptance of patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
condoning sexist violence	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
double punishment	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
lack of language	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
perverted power relations	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
positive views on gender equality	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
wholesome view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 12: A frequency table displaying Owen's responses.

The concept of men in crisis is coded largest for this student. The student responds with words such as '*low value of manhood'* to the question of equal shared responsibility with women at home.

'I think it is a low value of manhood when a man stays at home and a woman goes to work…*a man should be very commanding*; he should be someone who should actually be the head of the house. When a man remains at home and a woman goes to search for something, maybe go outside to work, he will not be the head of the house now.'

'...the bad thing with women nowadays is that when they are given that role, *they urinate on the heads of men.* They may say they are more powerful than you as a man because they have a lot of money so the man ends up depending on the woman.''

'...it has gone to an aspect in that community or even the *society has forgotten the boy child*…. for example, there are some organizations or even the bodies that fight for the females or even for the girl child, for example we talk about [42]FIDA many houses have domestic problems, like domestic violence and it's not something that is abnormal to see that a woman is beating a man, but a man cannot go and report this, that he has been beaten by a woman and even harmed. There is no one that stands in to fight for the right of a man, but there is a body that has been laid to fight for the right of a woman which is FIDA, you see, so that brings some bitterness.

On the question of double standard sexual expectation of men and women, Owen responded saying

'...we expect a man to be a man…I mean you get a woman, or two or three, you settle down'

'...they (women) may say they are more powerful than you as a man because they have a lot of money, so the man ends up depending on the woman. *That is not manhood, the value of manhood is absent.'*

On the question of gender role stereotypes, his responses included '...I think we don't want to undermine women in terms of career, but there are some jobs which is an issue of daredevil, for example in engineering if you compare the ratio of men to women doing it, men win it. *That job is difficult and requires a lot of thinking, just a few women are meant for that, only the 'iron ladies',* men have the *natural quality* of being iron men, the one who is not that is said not to have the quality of being a man.

The result of the inherent patriarchy on the student is shown in the category 'negative impact of patriarchy on male personhood. Owen's responses give a sense of being 'chained' or 'enslaved in patriarchy. Phrases such as 'low value of manhood', 'a man should be commanding', the feeling of mutual exclusivity of gender equality contained in phrases such as 'the bad thing with women nowadays is if they are given the role, they urinate on the heads of men,' '...a man should be strong'

The code reference: 'Restoring natural social' order was conceived after the category of 'men in crisis.' Owen's responses indicated an almost wishful tone, which would see the natural

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[42] The International Federation of Women Lawyers in Kenya.

social order, including roles and responsibilities divided along gender lines be restored. This student's responses were coded this way based on such responses:

'Akoko is my best character because she is very motherly, she nurtures her children even after her husband's death'. Another quote supporting this is '…it's *out of place* for a man to stay at home while the wife is the one who is outside.' Third, *'a man should be commanding*, actually a man should be the head of the house.' Fourth '…you feel like a man should be strong …you don't expect him to be timid, in the normal nature of human culture, *in African culture we expect women to be timid, not men*.' 'when I started talking, I talked about the rights and concerns are not too much, you see, too much on the side of women.'

The good woman bad woman stereotype category is another prominent category coded from the students' responses. These include phrases such as: '...she is very principled', '…motherly and nurturing', '...some jobs are difficult, just a few women are meant for that.'

Student 2: Caleb

The second male student whom I will present results is from the single sex boy school, Caleb. The ensuing figure below represents a frequency table with his scores

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
changing perceptions on femininities	5	0	5	2.5	3.536	
unconscious rules of patriarchy	4	0	4	2	2.828	
changing perceptions on masculinity	4	0	4	2	2.828	
influence of cultural norms	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
positive views on gender equality	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
inherent patriarchy	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
patriarchal perspectives	2	0	2	1	1.414	
restoring natural social order	2	0	2	1	1.414	
notion of patriarchal masculinity	2	0	2	1	1.414	
opposition to male domination	2	0	2	1	1.414	
a feeling of men in crisis	2	0	2	1	1.414	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	2	0	2	1	1.414	
respectability politics	2	0	2	1	1.414	
good bad woman stereotype	2	0	2	1	1.414	
social expectations of femininity	2	0	2	1	1.414	
social expectations of masculinity	2	0	2	1	1.414	
acceptable equality in patriarchy	2	0	2	1	1.414	
unacceptable equality	2	0	2	1	1.414	
double edged gender messages	2	0	2	1	1.414	
wholesome view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
maintenance of status quo disadvantaging member	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
psychological patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
rigid sex role patterns	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
psychological and concrete manifestations of patria	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social transgressions	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
gender transgression	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
women negotiating subjectivity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
politically unconscious	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
awareness of transformative power of literature	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
coded language	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
wholesome overview of gender roles	0	0	0	0	0	

Fig 13: A frequency table displaying Caleb's responses.

Caleb's responses on gender perception were mixed, unlike the first male student analyzed, Owen. While the most coded theme was 'changing perceptions on femininities and masculinities', the student is still influenced by the social and cultural prevailing patriarchal dogma. His most admired character is a female character because of her wit, while his most detested character is a man because of '…*he looks down on women'*.

He is aware of the changing times with regards to gender, he says '[43]Elizabeth stunned very well when she did very well in a field dominated by men, *this was a period when girls were used to household chores and early marriages*.' He recognizes that the gender equality movement has progressed and that women are no longer relegated to the inferior position they had at this time epoch in the text.

He also notes on the question on whether equality of the sexes is a realistic phenomenon 'maybe *not currently*, but maybe eventually it will come to be *seen as a normality in future* years. There is still an aspect of the current generation and the previous generation. Others were born in the time when women were looked down upon, so for them to see sudden change in equality is the one that is bringing difficulties in being realistic. Inglehart & Norris (2003) explain that a major problem of gender equality implementation is the generation gaps between the past and the present generation.

His second highest highly coded score was 'unconscious rules of patriarchy', which I am going to discuss in addition to 'influence of cultural norms', inherent patriarchy', 'restoring natural social order', 'notion of patriarchal masculinity and 'a feeling of men in crisis'. The student used phrases such as 'the role of men is to provide for their families and to *provide protection for women and children'*, 'females who have relationships with many men are usually looked down on because they are seen to be *cheap* and they are not *principled*, but for males, most of them are involved in this practice and no one really cares or even has time to bother with them, it is just a *norm* in society.' The student talks of the double standards set for man and women in society and his take on it.

Furthermore, Caleb notes that careers that are traditionally viewed as 'masculine' are more important and better than those traditionally 'feminine' careers. He says 'A flight attendant job is well-paying but you cannot compare it with being an electrical engineer, *anyone can*

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[43] She is Mark's wife, and first in her lineage among women to have a profession dominated by men at the time, a teacher.

become an airhostess.' He also observes that the result of the focus on gender equality is at a risk of men rights and this speaks to what Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) discuss breeds contempt amongst men towards women rights. Caleb says 'I think the result is women being despised by men, the way women rights are being fought for makes male rights go, *it's even like we're not people*, people don't even consider their rights at all.'

Student 3: Fred

The third male student I will present results from is from the single sex boy school, Fred. The ensuing figure represents a frequency table with his scores

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
acceptable equality in patriarchy	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
changing perceptions on femininities	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
perverted power relations	2	0	2	1	1.414	
a feeling of men in crisis	2	0	2	1	1.414	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	2	0	2	1	1.414	
politically unconscious	2	0	2	1	1.414	
awareness of transformative power of literature	2	0	2	1	1.414	
recognition of cultural constraints	2	0	2	1	1.414	
wholesome view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
sterotypified view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
influence of cultural norms	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
negative views on gender equality	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
positive views on affirmative action	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
positive views on gender equality	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
inherent patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
embracing patriarchal thinking	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
patriarchal perspectives	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
reinforcing patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
patriarchy indoctrination	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
condoning sexist violence	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
negative impact of patriarchy on male personhood	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
rigid sex role patterns	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
false interpretation of disturbed behaviour positively	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
opposition to male domination	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social transgressions	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on masculinity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
influencing religious indoctrination	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
double edged gender messages	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
coded language	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norm	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
belief in mutual exclusive nature of gender equality	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on gender roles	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 14: A frequency table displaying Fred's responses.

The student shows both support and fear of gender equality measures. According to Case (2007), the fear comes from relinquishing a position of power, for the unknown. Fred scores highly on themes such as: acceptable equality in patriarchy, changing perceptions on femininities, perverted power relations, a feeling of men in crisis and social expectations of masculinities and femininities. His results also indicate a lack of political awareness of the links between privilege and power nor the awareness of the transformative power of Literature.

Acceptable equality in patriarchy is defined as a compromise position taken for a more palatable gender equality, in which men still feel as if their privileged position has not been

entirely taken away from them (Ministerråd, 1998). It has been defined as a coping mechanism in the age of women rights. Frank observes that it would be best for men to work and women to stay home take care of children like it was in the previous chapter in the text. He notes that '*It is not normal for a man to stay home and take care of children while a woman goes to work. It should be the other way around.* 'He also says that it is not normal nor acceptable for a man to be beaten by a woman in their studies.

Still, his responses indicate the tense position men remain in with regards to gender equality. He expresses opinions that support the call. '*…the fight for women's rights does not make me feel bitter or furious* because over the year's women have always been suppressed, so that means women are vulnerable. If they are being supported *it's good because you are able to build them up, give them courage and hope*, *but men have always been at the top*, so it doesn't make any difference, it just brings equality.' This response echoes sentiments the boys have expressed throughout, that while they support the notion of equality, it could be that they want to be a part of the fight, to be included by women. When he says 'it's good if they are supported, because you are able to build them up', it indicates this.

Continued mixed responses came from Caleb. On the question of gender norms, the he says 'Akoko is not afraid of males as is expected according to the African customs', however, he mentions that '*I have seen women who beat men today, who get higher positions, women who are bosses to men*, and so it's not about gender.'

Student 4: Max

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
wholesome view on nature of relationships	5	0	5	2.5	3.536	
patriarchal perspectives	4	0	4	2	2.828	
changing perceptions on femininities	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
awareness of transformative power of literature	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
gender policing	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	2	0	2	1	1.414	
positive views on gender equality	2	0	2	1	1.414	
patriarchy indoctrination	2	0	2	1	1.414	
opposition to male domination	2	0	2	1	1.414	
unconscious rules of patriarchy	2	0	2	1	1.414	
psychological and concrete manifestations of patria	2	0	2	1	1.414	
respectability politics	2	0	2	1	1.414	
good bad woman stereotype	2	0	2	1	1.414	
social expectations of femininity	2	0	2	1	1.414	
acceptable equality in patriarchy	2	0	2	1	1.414	
unacceptable equality	2	0	2	1	1.414	
gender blindness	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
influence of cultural norms	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
inherent patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
restoring natural social order	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
rigid sex role patterns	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
a feeling of men in crisis	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
marginalization	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social transgressions	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
gender transgression	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on masculinity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
double edged gender messages	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
politically unconscious	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
flexible sex role patterns	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norn	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
belief in mutual exclusive nature of gender equality	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 15: A frequency table displaying Max's responses.

This student scored highest on the themes on wholesome relationships, patriarchal perspectives, changing perceptions on femininities, and gender policing. He had mixed results on perceptions towards gender equality, a trend that has been common with the male students so far. On the highest coded concept of wholesome view of nature of relationships, on marriage, he comments *'...I believe in one man one woman, even in the Christian community, there are some who still practice polygamy but I believe you should be in a truthful and monogamous state.'* Polygamy is one of Africa's oldest traditions and source of marital problems and disease (Njoh, 2006).With highly patriarchal cultures and new legislatures encouraging a man to take up many wives, it is interesting that this student has contrary opinions, veiled in religious belief.

He also admires the loving relationship between Wandia and Aoro and says *'it's a relationship I would very much love to have*…they're a perfect example of how a family should strive to be as they work hand in hand towards success…*loving, supporting and ready to capacitate love*.'. He also says '…man is supposed to have responsibility and be a source of direction and inspiration to many and a woman is likewise supposed to take charge and coexist with a man.' His views on relationships are contrary to patriarchy, whereby power in relationships is unbalanced, with men in privileged positions.

However, quite contrary to the previous code, he coded equally high on patriarchal perspectives such as gender policing on women's dressing. The student scored highest on the code 'gender policing' among all the boys and girls coded. He observes that '…there is something called change. Now putting on clothes that portray yourself to be seminude that is not culture.

'…it was a wrong measure to strip the women, *but they had to accept that they were indecently dressed.* This is the influence of the western culture because in the past women did not dress skimpily.' This was a conversation that sprung up following political developments happening in Kenya at the time of the research (Sheffrey, 2014). He also feels Ogola '*downgraded* 'Becky by making her a flight attendant. Old beliefs about the profession still prevail. He echoes the same sentiments as Curtis on the double standards of society on men and women. He says '*a man may have more lovers than a woman may have in society, it is more accepted that way.'*

Student 5: Yusuf

The fifth male student I will present results from is from the single sex boy school, Yusuf. The ensuing figure represents a frequency table with his scores.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
embracing patriarchal thinking	4	0	4	2	2.828	
changing perceptions on femininities	4	0	4	2	2.828	
influencing religious indoctrination	4	0	4	2	2.828	
maintenance of status quo disadvantaging member	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
influence of cultural norms	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
inherent patriarchy	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
double edged gender messages	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	2	0	2	1	1.414	
sterotypified view on nature of relationships	2	0	2	1	1.414	
patriarchal perspectives	2	0	2	1	1.414	
unconscious rules of patriarchy	2	0	2	1	1.414	
acceptable equality in patriarchy	2	0	2	1	1.414	
unacceptable equality	2	0	2	1	1.414	
wholesome overview of gender roles	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
gender blindness	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
maintenance of status quo benefiting members	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
positive views on gender equality	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
acceptance of patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
patriarchy indoctrination	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
notion of patriarchal masculinity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
false interpretation of disturbed behaviour positively	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
a feeling of men in crisis	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
respectability politics	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
double punishment	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
good bad woman stereotype	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
institutionalized sexism	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
gender transgression	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of femininity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
women negotiating subjectivity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of masculinity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on masculinity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
politically unconscious	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 16: A frequency table displaying Yusuf's responses.

The pattern developed thus far follows with this student. His results show a partial acceptance of gender equality measures, as well as inherent patriarchal beliefs limiting his perceptions. Yusuf coded highest for embracing patriarchal thinking, changing perceptions on femininities and influence of religious indoctrination. He also coded highly for: inherent patriarchy, maintenance of status quo disadvantaging members and influence of cultural norms.

'A man in the Muslim community should not have more than four wives.'

The student does not question the validity in this statement and why the norm is, but rather he takes it as the absolute truth, that a man is superior to a woman is God given. He justifies this with a follow up claim '…In Islam, polygamy is highly encouraged because it reduces the rate of sexual pervasion *so that men won't go looking for women elsewhere*. They say that one is never enough. *Women can't deal with many men*, it is a culture that was practiced from early days, so women we believe that as long she is married, she should not be looking for other men.' Still, the student's views on changing perceptions on femininities by the students

encompassed phrases such as '…. God created human beings with equal intelligence', *'...what a man can do a woman can do better'*,

The above commentary on marriage and equality illuminates the intersectionality of religion, culture and society and how they combine to continually undermine women through dogma (Bradley, 2010). In spite of Yusuf's changing perceptions on femininities, as long as structures in society continue to have the same beliefs, the fight for gender equality will be undermined.

He displayed an awareness of the transformative power of Literature and its importance in the fight for gender equality. He says 'I believe Literature makes one to identify himself or herself because in many texts, if you're a woman and you're reading a text, it makes you somewhat proud to be female when the characters are well represented.'

Data Analysis of Results from Boys from Mixed sex secondary schools

Student 6: Brandon

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
opposition to male domination	2	0	2	1	1.414	
awareness of transformative power of literature	2	0	2	1	1.414	
recognition of cultural constraints	2	0	2	1	1.414	
embracing feminist thinking	2	0	2	1	1.414	
wholesome overview of gender roles	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
sterotypified view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
maintenance of status quo benefiting members	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
positive views on gender equality	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
inherent patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
notion of patriarchal masculinity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
acceptable equality in patriarchy	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on masculinity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on femininities	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
politically unconscious	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
coded language	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norm	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on gender roles	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
political conscious	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 17: A frequency table displaying Brandon's responses.

Unlike his counterparts in the single sex boy secondary school, whose results were generally mixed, showing propensity towards gender equality whilst leaning towards old privileges associated with patriarchy, this student's results were largely leaning towards gender equality.

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The student coded highest for: opposition to male domination, awareness of transformative power of Literature, recognition of cultural constraints and embracing feminist thinking, the first boy to score so highly on this. The student also showed a propensity for stereotypic thoughts, but this was not the trend.

His thoughts on mutuality of existence: '*A man and a woman are complimentary* in that they should uplift and bring about a good family.' He also mentions that he displays a recognition of cultural constraints that shape inequality such as polygamy which he states *'...it is the children who suffer'.* He shows awareness of the transformative power of Literature as well as the authors intentions when he mentions '…the writer used strong female characters in her book to show that *a man and a woman can perform the same duties*, which is not a bad thing for men.'

Brandon's responses dissociate him from those who are anti gender equality. This however does not mean that the student does not observe it in society. He says *'equality is a long way off, because I think people are traditional* and think men have to be the head in a home and take all the roles and women take care of the house. It is interesting that the student disassociates himself from this and also uses words such as 'think' to indicate he does not think that is the case.

Student 7: Saul

The seventh male student I will present results from is from the mixed sex secondary school, Saul. The ensuing figure represents a frequency table with his scores.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
inherent patriarchy	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
changing perceptions on femininities	3	0	3	1.5	2.121	
patriarchal perspectives	2	0	2	1	1.414	
patriarchy indoctrination	2	0	2	1	1.414	
rigid sex role patterns	2	0	2	1	1.414	
perverted power relations	2	0	2	1	1.414	
unconscious rules of patriarchy	2	0	2	1	1.414	
psychological and concrete manifestations of patria	2	0	2	1	1.414	
acceptable equality in patriarchy	2	0	2	1	1.414	
awareness of transformative power of literature	2	0	2	1	1.414	
gender policing	2	0	2	1	1.414	
wholesome overview of gender roles	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
sterotypified view on nature of relationships	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
maintenance of status quo benefiting members	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
maintenance of status quo disadvantaging member	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
influence of cultural norms	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
positive views on gender equality	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
embracing patriarchal thinking	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
restoring natural social order	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
opposition to male domination	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of femininity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of masculinity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
changing perceptions on masculinity	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
politically unconscious	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
coded language	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
recognition of cultural constraints	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
political conscious	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	
acceptable female agency	1	0	1	0.5	0.707	

Fig 18: A frequency table displaying Saul's responses.

This student's responses followed the grain of those from the single sex boy secondary school. The most coded themes included: inherent patriarchy, changing perceptions on femininities, patriarchal perspectives, patriarchal indoctrination, rigid sex role patterns, perverted power relations, unconscious rules of patriarchy and so forth. Apart from changing femininities, the rest of the scores exposed inherent patriarchal perceptions brought on by culture and/or religion.

Statements coded under inherent patriarchy included: 'the role of a man is taking care of the family and providing for them while the *role of a woman in a family is to take care of the husband and children, satisfying her husband conjugally bearing children for her husband and obeying and submitting to their husbands.*' He also says 'what Akoko became is unexpected of a woman', When I pressed the student for further details on what 'submitting to the husband' meant, he answered, '*it is to humble or to give themselves to their husbands or to be under their husband's rule and authority because you can't have two leaders leading the same role maybe difference in ideologies, to avoid that you have once alpha in the family.*'

In spite of the very strong opinions on the gender roles, the student's responses gave an insight to what was coded as 'changing perceptions on femininities. He said '…a woman can also be an alpha but it depends on the situation.'

6.3   Chapter Summary and Conclusion

6.3.1   Student responses to gender concepts

I presented a multitude of gender concepts derived from feminist theory to answer the main research question. This is depicted in a tabular representation below. The ensuing table shows the codes collapsed under similar themes. These include: Shifting perspectives on gender equality; Transformative thinking; persisting cultural codes; Influence of social actors; Coping mechanisms.

THEMES DEVELOPED FROM SIMILAR CODES AND CATEGORIES				
A: Shifting perspectives on gender equality	B: Transformative thinking	C: persisting cultural codes	D: Influence of social actors :	E: Coping mechanisms
Changing perceptions on femininities, embracing feminist thinking, navigating female subjectivity through agency, women negotiating subjectivity, wholesome view on nature of relationships, changing femininities, , active female agency, positive views on gender equality, negotiating female identities, female empowerment, changing perspectives on masculinity, challenging views on gender role stereotypes, changing perceptions on religious and cultural norms, gender transgression, changing perspectives on being valued as a woman, social transgression, changing perceptions on gender roles, recognition of patriarchal practices,	Awareness of transformative power of literature, political conscious, political unconscious,	Inherent patriarchy, acceptable equality in patriarchy, patriarchal perspectives, unconscious rules of patriarchy, psychological and concrete manifestations of patriarchy, embracing patriarchal thinking, patriarchal indoctrination, restoring natural social order, good woman bad woman stereotype, notion of patriarchal masculinity, negative impact of patriarchy on male personhood, false interpretation of disturbed behavior positively, respectability politics, double edged gender messages, maintenance of status quo, perverted power relations	Influence of cultural norms, social expectations of masculinity and femininities, social expectations of femininities, stereotypical view of nature of relationships, rigid sex role patterns, social expectations of masculinity, influencing religious indoctrination	A feeling of men in crisis, unacceptable equality, opposition to male domination, collaborative mutuality of gender equality,

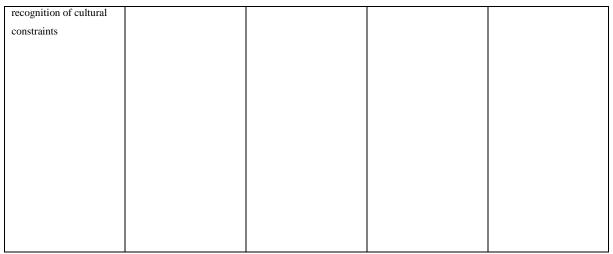| recognition of cultural constraints				

Table 2: Collapsed codes and categories under arching themes

The question on how students perceived the gendering of the text indicated an awareness of the political nature of the text and its implications. Generalizability of the findings however is not aligned with principles of qualitative studies as well as the main theoretical leanings of reader response theory and feminist theory (Creswell, 2003). Hence discussions on what the results mean will be derived from the frequency table showing the summary of findings. In line with the comparison level of the study: male and female, I will compare findings from the two groups and their significance to the study.

The ensuing figure 19 (female respondents) and figure 20(male respondents) represents a summary of the results from the female and male students respectively from both schools.

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
embracing feminist thinking	30	30	30	30	0	
changing perceptions on femininities	23	23	23	23	0	
changing femininities	18	18	18	18	0	
active female agency	17	17	17	17	0	
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norm	17	17	17	17	0	
awareness of transformative power of literature	16	16	16	16	0	
female empowerement embodiment	15	15	15	15	0	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	15	15	15	15	0	
women negotiating subjectivity	15	15	15	15	0	
changing perspectives on being valued as women	12	12	12	12	0	
negotiating female identities	12	12	12	12	0	
wholesome view on nature of relationships	12	12	12	12	0	
gender transgression	11	11	11	11	0	
opposition to male domination	10	10	10	10	0	
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	9	9	9	9	0	
collaborative mutuality of gender equality	7	7	7	7	0	
positive views on gender equality	7	7	7	7	0	
recognition of cultural constraints	7	7	7	7	0	
recognition of patriarchal practices	7	7	7	7	0	
social transgressions	7	7	7	7	0	
political conscious	6	6	6	6	0	
refusal of traditional customs	5	5	5	5	0	
acceptable equality in patriarchy	4	4	4	4	0	
changing perceptions on gender roles	4	4	4	4	0	
changing perceptions on masculinity	4	4	4	4	0	
inherent patriarchy	4	4	4	4	0	
reflective observation of gender relations	4	4	4	4	0	
shunning respectability politics	4	4	4	4	0	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	4	4	4	4	0	
flexible sex role patterns	3	3	3	3	0	
psychological and concrete manifestations of patria	3	3	3	3	0	
repeated language	3	3	3	3	0	
acceptable female agency	2	2	2	2	0	
belief in mutual exclusive nature of gender equality	2	2	2	2	0	
good bad woman stereotype	2	2	2	2	0	
influence of cultural norms	2	2	2	2	0	
influencing religious indoctrination	2	2	2	2	0	
negotiated masculinity	2	2	2	2	0	
unconscious rules of patriarchy	2	2	2	2	0	
coded language	1	1	1	1	0	
disapproving sexist violence	1	1	1	1	0	
embracing patriarchal thinking	1	1	1	1	0	
gender blindness	1	1	1	1	0	
hopelessness feelings on state of equality	1	1	1	1	0	
patriarchy indoctrination	1	1	1	1	0	
perverted power relations	1	1	1	1	0	
politically unconscious	1	1	1	1	0	
positive views on affirmative action	1	1	1	1	0	
respectability politics	1	1	1	1	0	
Total: 79	343					

Fig 19

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
changing perceptions on femininities	42	19	23	21	2.828	
embracing feminist thinking	32	2	30	16	19.799	
awareness of transformative power of literature	26	10	16	13	4.243	
inherent patriarchy	25	4	21	12.5	12.021	
acceptable equality in patriarchy	22	4	18	11	9.899	
navigating female subjectivity through agency	22	7	15	11	5.657	
women negotiating subjectivity	22	7	15	11	5.657	
changing perceptions on religious and cultural norm	20	3	17	10	9.899	
wholesome view on nature of relationships	20	8	12	10	2.828	
patriarchal perspectives	18	0	18	9	12.728	
changing femininities	18	0	18	9	12.728	
unconscious rules of patriarchy	18	2	16	9	9.899	
opposition to male domination	18	8	10	9	1.414	
active female agency	17	0	17	8.5	12.021	
influence of cultural norms	17	2	15	8.5	9.192	
positive views on gender equality	17	7	10	8.5	2.121	
psychological and concrete manifestations of patria	16	3	13	8	7.071	
negotiating female identities	16	4	12	8	5.657	
a feeling of men in crisis	15	0	15	7.5	10.607	
female empowerement embodiment	15	0	15	7.5	10.607	
changing perceptions on masculinity	15	4	11	7.5	4.95	
challenging views on gender role stereotypes	15	6	9	7.5	2.121	
gender transgression	14	3	11	7	5.657	
social expectations of masculinity and femininity	14	4	10	7	4.243	
embracing patriarchal thinking	13	1	12	6.5	7.778	
patriarchy indoctrination	13	1	12	6.5	7.778	
restoring natural social order	12	0	12	6	8.485	
changing perspectives on being valued as women	12	0	12	6	8.485	
good bad woman stereotype	12	2	10	6	5.657	
recognition of cultural constraints	12	5	7	6	1.414	
social expectations of femininity	11	1	10	5.5	6.364	
notion of patriarchal masculinity	10	0	10	5	7.071	
negative impact of patriarchy on male personhood	10	0	10	5	7.071	
sterotypified view on nature of relationships	10	1	9	5	5.657	
social transgressions	10	3	7	5	2.828	
rigid sex role patterns	9	0	9	4.5	6.364	
false interpretation of disturbed behaviour positively	9	0	9	4.5	6.364	
social expectations of masculinity	9	0	9	4.5	6.364	
unacceptable equality	9	0	9	4.5	6.364	
respectability politics	9	1	8	4.5	4.95	
politically unconscious	8	1	7	4	4.243	
political conscious	8	2	6	4	2.828	
double edged gender messages	7	0	7	3.5	4.95	
recognition of patriarchal practices	7	0	7	3.5	4.95	
collaborative mutuality of gender equality	7	0	7	3.5	4.95	
influencing religious indoctrination	7	2	5	3.5	2.121	
maintenance of status quo benefiting members	6	0	6	3	4.243	
perverted power relations	6	1	5	3	2.828	
changing perceptions on gender roles	6	2	4	3	1.414	

Fig 20

6.3.2 Changing perspectives on gender equality

This theme had the largest representation of codes identified as highlighted in the frequency table: embracing feminist thinking and changing perceptions on femininities. Changing perspectives on gender equality here denotes a willingness of respondents to practice gender equality, have a voice and use one's lived experiences in discussions on the text. This can be through asserting oneself, or changing the conversation on gender inequality.

The results confirm studies showing that feminist media sources have a positive influence on girls exposed to them (Ashton, 1983; Bean &Moni, 2003; Hammer, 2009; Rios, Stewart, & Winter, 2010). The results were highest for: Changing perceptions on femininities, embracing feminist thinking, navigating female subjectivity through agency, women negotiating subjectivity, wholesome view on nature of relationships, changing femininities, , active female agency, positive views on gender equality, negotiating female identities, female empowerment, changing perspectives on masculinity, challenging views on gender role stereotypes, changing perceptions on religious and cultural norms, gender transgression, changing perspectives on being valued as a woman, social transgression, changing perceptions on gender roles, recognition of patriarchal practices, recognition of cultural constraints.

The frequency figure 20 shows that the boys coded highly for changing perspectives on femininities and embracing feminist thinking. However, on a whole, they scored quite low on this theme compared to the female students who had over 200 codes of the 343 from this theme. The male students identified less with the text than the female students did. They had a large representation of scores for patriarchal codes such as: inherent patriarchy, acceptable equality in patriarchy, patriarchal perspectives, unconscious rules of patriarchy, influence of cultural norms, psychological and concrete manifestations of patriarchy, and a feeling of men in crisis.

The individual male student responses discussed in the previous chapter reveal the reasons for this gap. Most of them indicated anxiety about their status in society as arising from a push for gender equality. Males enjoy high status in society as the norm, relinquishing this position is bound to cause anxiety about the future.

6.3.3 Transformative thinking

Here I grouped codes that indicated an awareness among the students of the political nature of gender development as well as the transformative power of Literature. I also included those codes that indicated an awareness of the political nature of societies. These included: Awareness of transformative power of literature, political conscious, political unconscious. The theme answers the second research question: whether students identify gendering in texts. The code: awareness of transformative power of Literature was among the highest, from the frequency table. The students were able to link Literature to society in their responses.

Again, the girls scored higher here than the boys. However, despite lower representation, boys scored their third highest score here. Appleman (2000) prescribes steps to counter these narratives through: familiarizing students with core concepts of feminist theory, which will provide them with tools on how to read, and think critically, noting the potentially transformative nature of texts on how young students live their lives. Concepts from feminist theory will enable students to link gendered concepts in texts with their world, such as the politics of power and privilege that comes with it.

6.3.4 Persisting cultural milieu

This theme incorporates the codes: Inherent patriarchy, acceptable equality in patriarchy, patriarchal perspectives, unconscious rules of patriarchy, psychological and concrete manifestations of patriarchy, embracing patriarchal thinking, patriarchal indoctrination, restoring natural social order, good woman bad woman stereotype, notion of patriarchal masculinity, negative impact of patriarchy on male personhood, false interpretation of disturbed behavior, respectability politics, double edged gender messages, maintenance of status quo, perverted power relations.

The girls did not code highly for this theme, with majority of their responses under the transformative codes and changing perspectives on gender equality. This answers to the sub questions 3, 4 in the interview guide. Of the total 343 codes, there was only 20 coded under this. These results are significant because they indicate that girls are not constrained by oppressive cultures where women are second class citizens.

The boys coded highly on this theme, with a majority of their answers reflecting thinking that is grounded in patriarchal dogma.

6.3.5   Social Actors

The assumptions of the paper from the onset was that social agents have an impact on behavior, as posited by theory. The theme was developed from the collapsed codes: Influence of cultural norms, social expectations of masculinity and femininities, social expectations of femininities, stereotypical view of nature of relationships, rigid sex role patterns, social expectations of masculinity and religious indoctrination.

The female interviewees scored low on this theme, while the male interviewees had mixed results, with some depicting rigid sex role patterns and others more open to the changing cultural landscape.

6.3.6   Coping mechanisms

This is a survival strategy, which in this case is in form of the maintenance of status quo. The status quo in a predominantly patriarchal Kenya is that men are the ones in power and women are not. This perspective, from the results of the study is however quickly fading away. The theme encompasses: A feeling of men in crisis, unacceptable equality, opposition to male domination, collaborative mutuality of gender equality,

The female interviewees scored low on this code, while the male students scored highly here, having their fifth highest score here.

7 Conclusion and Recommendations

Research indicates that gender equality empowers women, their families and communities. Empowered women delay marriage, make empowered sexual decisions, have fewer and healthier children and account for income in the family and the richness of a country (Tomaševski, 1993). The rate of return of investing in a good education for girls is high. Hence, this research aimed to investigate whether the curriculum exposed to learners was gender responsive, and if so, what kind of learning went on in schools.

Research indicates that a focus on girls, through gender equity and equality measure does not sufficiently engage male students in ways of confronting norms and attitudes of the many ways in which inequality is perpetuated (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Case, 2007).

The statement of the problem: to investigate the extent to which male and female students are influenced by interaction with a feminist text was answered through a qualitative study. Hence, it was through the rich, detailed descriptions that the answers were revealed. The tradition of qualitative writing with an interpretivist approach is critical of generalizability of results from qualitative studies. The feminist theory as well as the Reader Response Theory are also critical of attempts to suppress the voice of respondents. The theories are aligned with principles of subjectivity.

Still, the empirical findings of this study suggest that female students identify more with a feminist text than male students do. The results from the female students were uniform across the samples, while those from the male students were more diverse. The findings agree with the assumptions set out at the onset of the study. The impact of the social world, including the contexts, culture and customs, social economic status and gender affect how male and female students see their world.

The *River and the Source* (Ogola, 1994) was successful at questioning gender based stereotypes, and challenged representation of male and female characters in African novels, by use of empowered women and feminist male figures. The texts main focus was on deconstructing patriarchy's concept of femininities. The female characters represented are wholesome human beings: bold, meek, courageous, cowardly, beautiful and ugly.

The female student responses were empowered across the samples. Many of them admired the female characters in the text and wanted to emulate them. Akoko was the favorite pick for the female students. In her, they saw a woman raised in patriarchy, but who showed agency and resolve.

However, the results from the male students was more diverse. The findings indicate a partial solidarity with the feminist movement and a partial skepticism. Works discussed indicate that this is a common manifestation of those in power in a society. The dominant group does not want to relinquish power on one hand, and on the other, they want gender equality for their sisters, wives, aunts and mothers in society.

7.1   Policy Implication

The significance of a gender responsive curriculum has been established by scholars in women studies, whereby the main focus is on exposing students to women via both content and academic scholarship in the curriculum (Rios, Stewart, & Winter, 2010; Case, 2007; Henderson-King & Stewart, 1999). Evidence from these studies point to a positive impact of the students studied, especially the female students in gender discrimination awareness and gender related consciousness. Similarly, this study has used empirical findings to show that a feminist text has positive impacts on both male and female readers, with regards to gender equality. However, this is still mediated by societal and cultural factors.

These studies are reinforced by theory, for example the theory of representation and accessibility, which posit that gendered assumptions of male and female roles can be countered through repeated exposure to gender non-conforming females and male exemplars (Nosofsky, 1988; Smith & Zarate, 1992). This is shown in a study by Dasgupta and Asgari (2004), in which students displayed a higher likelihood to identify female leaders after repeated exposure to such themes, compared to a lower identification by those who were not exposed to this model.

Studies further indicate that it is important that male and female students are presented with matched exemplars, as this has an effect on academic and career decisions they make. A study

by example Lips (2004) found that despite girls indicating a positive self-perception of traditionally 'male dominated' fields, they were less likely than male students to imagine a career in the respective fields for themselves. Feminist scholars have advanced the discussion on a critical analysis of curriculum content, challenging pedagogical and epistemological practices in curriculums (Bender- Peterson & Kroner 1992; Stewart et. al, 2008).

7.2   Limitations of the study

There were several challenges to conducting fieldwork. Firstly, the process of acquiring government authorization was lengthy and bureaucratic. Research permits from Kenya and Norway were both required. However, the research permit from Kenya required that these documents had to be handed in: a professional CV, research proposal, affiliation request with a local university in Kenya, request from the vice chancellor of the University of Affiliation, and money transfer of 100usd if applying from a foreign university.

Once the research permit was issued, the lengthy process of locating and seeking permission from a secondary school ensued. This involved lengthy waiting hours in school reception halls, compounded with the fact that admissions for [44]form one were still ongoing, hence I had to queue with the parents. Once I acquired permission from the school heads, scheduling proved to be a challenge with teachers not willing to give up important learning hours. It proved a disadvantage here to interview form four students because of the rigorous teaching schedules. Because of this, I had to cut back on the group interviews and have single group interview sessions in all the schools.

Transcribing was a laborious activity, especially since the number of students was high, and the transcription software could not recognize the Kenyan English, which was the language used to conduct the interviews. Additionally, in the data analysis phase, it was a stringent process to develop relevant codes and limit them for easier use. I developed over 200 codes initially, which was too dense, and I had to condense and collapse them to 79 in the end.

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[44] The first year of secondary school in Kenya. Admissions take place in February.

7.3   Future Research

Appleman (2000) has written a critique of various representations of feminist critiques of children's literature, being grounded in western, white, middle income images, leading to isolation of many women who do not fit within these narrow definitions. The author cautions against representations which can lead to unintended consequences when girl readers do not belong to these categories.

A literary review of gender studies and controlling media influences reveals limited literature from an African perspective. Hence, more studies need to be focused on Africa. The book I have analyzed is grounded in an African environment but is challenging traditional African gender roles. There are few books of this type. The analysis shows that the book makes students think and wonder about their own lives.

More studies investigating the root cause (s) of gender inequalities and why they still persist especially among boys needs to be conducted in order to facilitate systematic transformative changes within the education system.

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Appendices

Appendix 1A: Semi structured Interview guide for personal interviews

The following questions acted as guides for the interviews and deviations were made whenever necessary.

1. Which characters do you admire the most in the text and why

2. Which character do you detest the most and the reason/s

3. Which character do you feel acted against their gender norms and what they thought about that trait, is it acceptable or not in their opinion

4. What do you feel is the role of a man or a woman in society?

5. Do they feel women represent this role in the text? What about the men

6. Which character do you identify with the most and why

7. What is your opinion about the family dynamics, and is this representative of how a couple should be?

8. What do they think about the representation of men and women in the text?

Appendix 1B: Semi structured Interview guide for group interviews

1. Do you think Literature plays a role in gender self-identification? If yes, which roles

2. Can you identify instances of gendering in the text?

3. What do you think of representations of stereotypes in the characters?

4. What do you think of representations of the strong female characters in the text?

5. Is the view of equality of the sexes a realistic expectation?

6. Which characters do you see yourself in and why

7. If you could select a best character who could it be and why

8. What are your perceptions of the unmarried, divorced and promiscuous female characters in the text?

9. What are our views on the twin sisters career paths?

10. What is your take on the bride price cultural ritual?