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## The Portrayal of Masculinity in Dholuo Ohangla Music

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### Abstract

*Discrimination of either gender is both a linguistic and a social issue. The Luo culture is built on patriarchy and the socialization of the children (male and female) play a critical role in the way they relate to each other. This is because from the onset the girl child internalizes her subordinate status while the male child upholds his dominant status. While the society portrays women as dependent, lazy and childlike in nature, the men are portrayed as independent, aggressive and domineering. Thus positive connotations are used to refer to men while negative ones are used to refer to women. It's on this premise that the paper investigates the portrayal of males in Ohangla, a genre of music where gender stereotypes are rampant. The data utilized was in the form of words and expressions downloaded from YouTube. Purposive sampling was used to get a sample of ten Ohangla songs sung by male and female artists in order to obtain data that was representative. This data was then grouped using the thematic classification borrowed from Weitzer & Kubrin (2009) but was tailored to fit the males who were the subject of discussion in this study. After grouping, it was transcribed and then translated into English, which is the language of study. The songs were finally subjected to analysis based on the tenets of the CDA theory discussed in the theoretical review*

### 1. Introduction

According to Fasold (1984) language is not only used to communicate content but also to make a statement about one's own identity, about oneself in relation to the listener and to define the situation in which language itself is being used. The Luo according to Ochieng' (1985) are Nilotes whose native land is traced around Wau, along the rivers of Sue and Jur in the grassland plains of Bahr-el-Ghazal province of Sudan. The Luo culture is built on patriarchy and the cultural socialization of males and females from childhood plays a vital role in the way they relate to one another. From the onset, males have internalized the status of superiority and dominance to women. They are portrayed as powerful, strong and domineering and they are considered respectable members of the society.

Discrimination of either gender in language is rampant in patrilineal societies. Atanga (2002) supports this by stating that discourses on 'gender differentiation' are most dominant in patriarchal societies where stereotypes regarding gender divisions of labour as well as a range of gender-differential social practices are prevalent. Ohangla, a genre of music, is an avenue through which male gender stereotypes can be observed.

According to Neff (2014) music which is part of people's lives reflects the customs and beliefs of a society. It is an effective medium of communication and it plays a variety of roles such as to inform, educate, motivate, influence, appeal to emotions and entertain. Most studies done on sexist language have focused on the female gender (Lakoff, 1982; Chesaina, 1991; Ndungo, 2006; Githinji, 2008; Qwack, 2015 among others) and in the process the male gender has been relegated to the background. This study therefore seeks to investigate the portrayal of the masculine gender in Dholuo Ohangla music in order to expose the oppressive, manipulative and exploitative tendencies of men as perpetuated not only in music but also in the society at large through systematic and thorough analysis of data.

Ohangla music which provides the basis of this study according to Omollo (2014) was traditionally sung to praise bulls as they ploughed the farm. This genre of music is currently popular and is enjoyed by people from all walks of life for a variety of reasons. Firstly, although it has its origin in tradition, the use of modern musical instruments such as flute and the piano has given it a contemporary feel.

Secondly, its popularity is based on the infusion of two aspects of language into the music that is code switching and code mixing. Davies & Bentahila (as cited in Omollo, 2014) argue that code switching in song lyrics is motivated by the expansion of mass media that provides unprecedented opportunities for people all over the world to be exposed to music originating in cultures other than their own. It is worthy to point out that employing both code switching and code mixing is a way in which the Ohangla musicians 'appease' those who don't share the same background knowledge so that they don't feel left out in the communion of music.

## **2 Statement of the problem**

From time immemorial men have been considered superior to women and patriarchal societies have perpetuated this notion by limiting women linguistically thereby encouraging the imbalances that exist in society. The celebrated gender has not only created language but also dictated the norm in which masculinity has always been exalted. The language thus established and used by males has relegated the females, considered appendages of men to linguistic oblivion. Moreover, the men have been portrayed as custodians of power who use aggressive and oppressive propensities to exclude women from crucial social roles. It's on this notion that we wish to explore the portrayal of masculinity in Dholuo Ohangla music with the purpose of pointing out the fact that linguistic sexism is founded in the fabric of the social structure of a society and therefore for sexist language to be eradicated, a total overhaul of the social structure is vital. Consequently, eradicating sexist conceptions entails embarking on a rigorous social reform process to rid the society of sexist undertones that are either overtly or covertly stated.

## **3 Objectives of the Research**

1. To identify the words and expressions used to refer to men in Dholuo Ohangla music
2. To explain the meanings that the words and expressions used to refer to men in Dholuo Ohangla music elicit
3. To investigate the socio-cultural implications of the words and expressions that are used to refer to men in Dholuo Ohangla music

## **4 Rationale and significance of the Study**

Most studies done on sexist language have focused on the female gender (Lakoff, 1982; Chesaina, 1991; Ndungo, 2006; Githinji, 2008; O'wack, 2015 among others) and in the process the male gender has been relegated to the background. As a result, there is need to study how males are portrayed in music with a view of exposing the gender disparities and striving towards developing and enhancing the elusive gender parity in language.

This study will be used to enlighten and create awareness on the need to adopt and use a language that is unbiased. This is because linguistic sexism and gender stereotyping have far reaching implications on both genders. Firstly, this study is significant as it acts as a source of reference to linguistic scholars interested in investigating the effects of language used in society.

Secondly, this study is vital in the field of Linguistics specifically that of Discourse Analysis since it intends to bring into perspective the power struggles exhibited in society and how meaning is conferred and modeled in different ways. Lastly, the study is significant to musicians who may be interested in finding out how the language they use in their songs impact on their listeners' perceptions and thought processes.

## **5 Theoretical framework**

This study used Critical Discourse Analysis theory initiated by Fairclough and Wodak in 1997 (Van Dijk, 1997; Thomas 2004; Johnstone, 2008). Critical Discourse analysis, henceforth CDA, focuses on social relations that exist in a given environment and the way dominance is exemplified in both written and spoken texts. The tenets of the theory that were utilized in the study are:

- Discourse is ideological and can be understood in relation to context
- Discourse analysis is interpretive and explanatory
- Discourse is a form of social action that can be used to make transparent the underlying power relations.
- Discourse constitutes society and culture

These principles come in handy in the analysis of language used to portray men in Changla music. Johnstone (2008) notes that the issue of power is central to CDA since it is in discourse that power relations are negotiated and contested by members of speech communities and such discourse is often ideological. Thus CDA sought to investigate social inequality as it is depicted and established in discourse. It helped in finding out how men who are considered superior are portrayed in Changla music and whether there are instances where they are made subject of ridicule in this genre of music.

Thomas (2004, p.55) posits that CDA is concerned with how power and social relations are negotiated, are legitimated and are contested. CDA therefore analyzed the social relations that are found in Changla music based on the language used in this genre of music in order to point out the superiority of masculinity. Through Changla, the culture of the Luo society is explored and the meanings of the messages conveyed in this genre are made explicit in the contexts in which the words are communicated. Therefore, the data used in this paper is critically analyzed using the main principles of CDA.

## 6. Literature review

Gender is a building block erected on unequal statuses. Moreover, it is a social institution used in establishing significant social statuses for the allotment of rights and duties (Khan & Ali 2012). Studies on different societies show that males and females use language differently (Coates, 1986; Coupland & Jaworski, 1997; Lakoff, 1975; Newman et al, 2008; Wardhaugh, 1998). Their difference in the use of language emanates from a variety of factors such as their socialization process and societal expectations among others. The socialization process for instance has contributed significantly to discrimination which has led to the use of sexist language.

Society has been constructed with a bias that favours males (Kramarae, 1980; Wodak, 1997; Mbilinyi, 1994) and such biases and prejudices can be found in a variety of languages. For example, Smith (1989) notes that contemporary English usage reveals prejudicial attitudes that glorify men but demean and degrade women. The inequalities reflect themselves in the English lexicon where the generic 'man' for example easily refers to the male thus excluding the female. The current study also wishes to establish whether the males are only glorified in Changla music or whether they are also made subjects of ridicule. The studies above have explored gender differences in language use in different contexts. However, the present study is interested in investigating the portrayal of masculinity through the avenue of Changla music.

The world of music is vast and billions of songs in different genres have been produced over the years with each having a specific message that is channeled through the lyrics. The structure of the lyrics coupled with the words used therein to describe various things has an impact on the interpretation of the song as well as its appearance (Gonevik, 2013).

Music is a powerful means of communication. It not only affects our lives but also the lives of others. Changla, a genre of music on which this study is based, has a huge following which is evidenced by the fact that it is played on national radio as well as television stations in Kenya. Its popularity is further based on the infusion of two aspects of language into the music and that is code switching and code mixing.

In the domain of music men and women have been portrayed differently and the language used is misogynistic especially towards a certain gender. Mundi (2010) notes that majority of Kamba popular songs contain sexist language that creates a negative image of both men and women. This language reflects attitudes that view majority of women and few men negatively.

She further observes that since language is closely related to social attitudes, the negative portrayal of mostly women and few men could be a reflection of the Kamba culture. While this study looks at how men and women are portrayed in Kamba popular songs, the present study's main concern is the portrayal of men and it sought to find out if in Changla music men are portrayed using both positive and negative lexical items and what this kind of portrayal reveals about the Luo nation.

The current study will adopt Weitzer & Kubrin's (2009) thematic classification to examine the language used to portray men in Changla music. Some of the themes that the study will employ are: portrayal of men in traditional gender roles; portrayal of masculinity as superior to femininity; and portrayal of men as objects, sexual or otherwise.

## 7. Methodology

The study employed analytical research design which falls within the qualitative research approach. The analytical research design is crucial because it uses information that is already available in order to conduct a critical evaluation of the material under study. The study employed purposive and simple random sampling techniques of data.

A sample of eight Changa songs sung by both male and female artists was used to secure data that was not only representative but also reliable. The study was limited to a sample of eight songs because according to Mlroy (1987) large samples are not necessary for linguistic surveys since they tend to be redundant, bringing increasing data handling problems with diminishing analytical returns.

The data which was utilized was in the form of words and expressions downloaded from YouTube. This data was then grouped using the thematic classification borrowed from Weitzer & Kubrin (2009) but was tailored to fit the males who were the subject of discussion in this study. After grouping, it was transcribed and then translated into English which is the language of study. The aim of translating the songs into the language of study was to enable the readers who do not understand the base language in which the songs were collected to get the precise meaning of the messages conveyed in the songs.

The analysis involved identifying the words and expressions used to portray the masculine gender as well to describe the men in order to find out the meanings elicited. According to Kerlinger (1973), descriptive studies are not only restricted to fact finding but often result in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and solution to significant problems. The study finally investigated the socio cultural implications of these words and expressions.

The songs chosen were also based on two popular themes in society that is love and politics. These themes were considered since they are rich in terms of data that is relevant for the study. The selection on the basis of the gender of the artists was considered in order to get a balanced view of the language used to portray men by Changa artists. The songs were finally subjected to analysis based on the tenets of the CDA theory discussed in the theoretical review.

## 8. Discussion

The following three songs were examined with the goal of identifying, interpreting and examining the socio cultural implications of the language used to portray men as this was the onus of the study.

### (1) Lady Maureen- OLI MA YOM KA BUDHO

*Wuoyi maber ka budho* - A boy as beautiful as a pumpkin

*Rat eng' yomka budho* - The black one who is as soft as a pumpkin

*Oi ma ber ka nyako machwo penj o* - Oi ma is as beautiful as a girl that men ask after

*Wuoyi ma ng'ute opong' chalo si nba* - A boy whose neck is as full as that of a lion

*Rat ego ber ka nyako* - The strong one is as beautiful as a girl

*Oi ma imoro chunya* - Oi ma you make my heart happy

*Osi ep omuga yaye wuod Anyanga* - The friend of the rhino oh son of Anyanga

*Wuoyi kwar ka nyanya* - A boy who is as red as a tomato

*Awero wuoyi ma ng'ute ong'olo nyoyo* - I'm singing about a boy with a ringed neck

*Nyadundo yomka nduma ma jd uo tedo* - The short one is as soft as arrow roots cooked by Luos

*Qi ma yomka budho* wuod Obonyo - *Qi ma* is as soft as pumpkins son of Obonyo

## 8.1 The language used to Portray *nenin Changla* music

The portrayal of men and women in *Changla* music is largely done through the use of figurative language as evidenced in the studies done by different scholars (Cundiff, 2013; Magak & Okombo, 2014; Omollo, 2014; Shandar na & Sulei nan, 2013). Sharnda na & Sulei nan (2013) posit that, 'Figurative language is a type of language that varies from the norm of literal language, in which words mean exactly what they say.'

They further note that figurative language forces the reader to make an imaginative leap in order to comprehend the written message which carries a hidden meaning that has to be unraveled. Masculinity in Dholuo is portrayed using a number of items for instance animals like lion, rhino, elephant, buffalo, bull among others. It is also portrayed using crops like tomatoes, pumpkins, arrowroots and even weeds. Moreover machines like tractor are also used to depict masculinity.

## 8.2 The meanings of the words and expressions used to portray *nenin Changla* music

*Changla* musicians use a variety of figures of speech to portray men for example in the song '*Qi ma yomka budho*,' sung by renowned *Changla* artist Lady Maureen she extends the attributes of *Qi na* by using a variety of figurative language namely: similes, metaphors, idiomatic expressions and symbolism.

### (a) Similes:

Gibbs (1994, p. 40) defines a simile as a figure of speech requiring overt reference to source and target entities and an explicit construction connecting them. Lady Maureen has employed a variety of similes in the song above. The first is *Qi na* is as beautiful as a lady who men ask after. This simile means that *Qi na* is attractive and it could also have a sexual undertone. The implication could be that *Qi na*'s sexual prowess makes many ladies attracted to him.

The second simile is *Qi na*'s neck is as thick as that of a lion. Lions have a variety of attributes namely: they are strong, brave, powerful in the sense that in most narratives they are regarded as the king of the jungle, they are ferocious and untamed. Not all these traits of the lion are passed on to *Qi na* rather the listeners of the song select those that apply to him in the context in which the singer uses them. In this situation, *Qi na* is brought out as a strong and powerful person.

The third simile is *Qi na* is as red as a tomato. Tomatoes have a variety of attributes such as having a smooth texture, soft, it appeals to the eyes and it has a high nutritional value. Some of these attributes of the tomato are passed on to *Qi na*. This simile means that *Qi na* has a soft skin and is brown. In the Luo context, a person who has this complexion is considered beautiful or handsome and those who don't have it go to great lengths even if it means using skin lighteners that are available in the market.

The fourth simile that she uses in the song is that *Qi na* is as soft as arrowroots that are cooked by Luos. Arrowroots are one of the delicacies loved by the Luos and they have a variety of characteristics namely: they are sweet, soft and have a high nutritional value. Some of the traits of the arrowroots that are passed on to *Qi na*. Just the way the arrowroots are soft so is *Qi na*'s skin. What the singer could also be insinuating is that just as the arrowroots are sweet, *Qi na* could also be a good lover. The use of pumpkins and arrowroots therefore intimates the flawless skin of *Qi na*.

### (b) Metaphors:

Lakoff & Johnson (1980) posit that in the course of our communication, we unconsciously use the device of metaphor to help us make sense of reality. Metaphors shape and structure our perceptions and understanding, lending a framework within which our experiences are interpreted and assigned meaning. Lady Maureen uses a number of metaphors to refer to *Qi na* and his friend Omondi Anyanga for instance, she says that Anyanga is a buffalo. This means that Anyanga's attributes are comparable to those of a buffalo and in this context the positive traits of the buffalo are passed on to Anyanga.

In the Luo society a buffalo is an animal that is revered because it is strong, brave and resilient. It also has a thick skin which enables it to survive in its habitat. Anyanga is therefore brave, strong and resilient. Being a member of parliament for Nyatiike Constituency, these characteristics come in handy.

A leader must be strong because those he/she leads look up to him/her for direction, assistance and development. He/she must also be brave and fight for the rights of his/her subjects. Being a loyal lieutenant of Orange Democratic Movement, Anyanga articulates the issues that concern the party without fear regardless of the repercussions. For this reason, one needs to have 'a thick skin' because some issues attract heated debates and by extension criticisms from different quarters. Anyanga indeed has the 'thick skin' the reason he is referred to as a buffalo.

### (c) Symbolism

The artist also uses symbolism to describe Qi ma. According to Kitsao (as cited in Omollo, 2014) symbolism is the use of a sign which stands for something else within a speech community. In the song *Qima yomka budho* (Qi ma is as soft as a pumpkin), Lady Maureen refers to Qi ma as Ratego (the strong one) and Rateng' (the black one). Ratego is an attribute given to a man endowed with physical strength, symbolically it could mean one who can withstand a lot of challenges, it also means a provider and a hardworking person.

By referring to Qi ma as Ratego, the artist implies that she is safe in the presence of Qi ma because he can take care of her needs both material and sexual. Qi ma is also referred to as Rateng' (the black one) this is a description that is symbolically used to refer to a man who exudes power and confidence. Such a man is physically endowed and is also highly rated in the Luo society.

### (d) Idiomatic expressions:

In the same song the artist uses idiomatic expressions to refer to Qi ma. She says that Qi ma's neck has beautiful rings. A ringed neck is one of the parameters of beauty in the Luo nation and it is an attribute that is associated with females therefore to allude to the fact that Qi ma has a ringed neck means that Qi ma is extraordinarily handsome. This song therefore portrays men in their traditional gender roles, as superior to women and as sex objects.

## 8.3 The socio cultural implications of the language used to portray men in Changla music

In the Luo perspective men still play the gender roles assigned to them by the society such as providers, protectors, defenders, leaders and by extension lovers. Listeners of Changla and other songs therefore accept the objectification of men into domains that are set aside for them by the society. Since music is a socializing agent it influences a person's perception about himself/herself and others.

Therefore, a male youth listening to such songs will grow up knowing and accepting the position bestowed upon him by the society as a protector, leader, defender and provider while a female youth will also grow up looking up to the man for protection, guidance and support since that is the way they have been socialized by the society.

### (2) Onyi Papa Jey- HON OMONDI ANYANGA

*Omondi wuod Anyanga si nba-* Omondi son of Anyanga the lion

*Omuk leja Nyatiike mwal o-* The rhino of the plain fields, one from Nyatiike

*Omondi wuod Anyanga osiepayoo-* Son of Anyanga my friend

*Gi ma oniy o awero wuod Anyanga -* The reason why I sing about son of Anyanga

*Omuga luonga buore -* The rhino calls me to Nairobi

*Parliament house adhi li ne -* I go to Parliament house to visit him

*Jayadha penjo jangoma idwaro ang'o? -* My boss friend asks the musician what he wants

*Ni ye ati mo onbugu -* The one whose stomach has stubborn weeds

*Wuod Anyanga konyo mond liete gi nyithi kiye* - Son of Anyanga helps widows and orphans

*Si mbni ogero tara gana* - He has built several huts

*Si kunde be ogero tara gana* - He has also built several schools

*Nyatike duto puoyo* - The whole of Nyatike is full of praise

*Yadh dhok odonjo Suna Mgori gi nyin'g Omondi* - He has also brought drugs for cattle

*Jakoyo ka Mdi wo toi mosna Otada* - Greet for me Jakoyo son of Mdi wo the stubborn

#### **8.4 The language used to portray men in Changla music**

In this second song the artist Onyi Papa Jey sings about Hon. Omondi Anyanga the Member of Parliament for Nyatike constituency. Masculinity is portrayed using figurative language in which two dominant animals that is a lion and rhino are used to refer to males.

#### **8.5 The meanings of the words and expressions used to portray men in Changla music**

In this song, the artist vividly describes his subject using the following metaphors and symbolism

##### **(i) Metaphors**

In the first line he metaphorically refers to Anyanga as a lion. A lion is an animal that has the following attributes: it is strong, brave and powerful in the sense that in most narratives it is referred to as the king of the jungle. It is a protector especially if it's the head of the pride. So, the attributes of the lion are passed onto Anyanga who is portrayed as strong, brave and powerful. These attributes come in handy especially in his position as a leader whose constituents look up to for political direction and matters related to development.

In the second line the artist uses another metaphor to refer to Anyanga as omuklela (The rhino of the plain fields). This means that Anyanga's attributes are comparable to those of a rhino and in this context the positive and some negative traits of the rhino are passed onto Anyanga. A rhino, a massive animal in size, is herbivorous. It grazes not in the forest but in the open fields where there is lush pasture. In the Luo society, a rhino is an animal that is revered because it is strong, brave and resilient.

Moreover, it has a thick skin which enables it to survive in its habitat. However, this animal is violent especially when provoked and it is also stubborn. Anyanga is brave, strong, sinewy and resilient. Just like the rhino that grazes in dense pasture Anyanga also traverses his constituency hunting for votes. His ability to endear himself to his constituents makes him get many votes against his opponents.

However, omuklela (the rhino of the plain fields) is a special type of rhino in the sense that it has an element of stubbornness therefore some of the negative traits of the rhino are also passed onto Anyanga who just like the rhino is stubborn and when provoked may become violent especially in the murky game of politics.

##### **(ii) Symbolism**

The artist has also used symbolism in the song when he refers to Jakoyo as otada (headstrong). He is used as a symbol of tough headedness. He is regarded as a fearless, stubborn, intimidating, forceful and sly individual. He doesn't shy off from supporting ideologies that are dear to his heart even when the consequences are dire. He speaks his mind and dares the powers that be in matters that he feels are not handled as they should. He intimidates a number of opponents in political duels into stepping down or quitting the political race altogether a trait that he exploits especially during campaigns. This last trait is a negative one.

A second symbolism which also has a negative connotation is used. Onyi Papa Jey refers to an unnamed individual as ombugu (stubborn weed). This symbolism could be used to refer to one who has perpetual parasitic tendencies. Weeds compete with plants for food by feeding on the nutrients that are supposed to be used by the plants therefore interfering with the proper growth of the plants. This type of weed is deep rooted and it is not easy to uproot. This by

extension implies that such a man depends on others and does so without budging. In the Luo nation, men are expected to be providers and not dependent. For this reason the artist refers to this unidentified man as a stubborn weed. These two symbols thus portray men in a negative light which is a deviation from the norm. This song not only portrays men in their traditional gender roles but also ridicules some of them.

## 8.6 The socio cultural implications of the language used to portray men in Changla music

Changla musicians use their songs to put emphasis on gendered roles assigned to males in society. In the traditional Luo set up, men were socialized to be providers and protectors and that is the role that Anyanga plays when Onyi Papa Jey says that Anyanga takes care of widows and orphans and he has also built schools and huts. To cap his development record, the musician says that it is through the legislator's efforts that drugs for cattle found their way to Suna Mgori.

### (3) Lady Maureen- **RAILA JAKOM**

*Raila awero wendi wuo nya Alego-* Raila I'm singing your song son of the lady from Alego

*Agwambo omi n Aki nyi ...si nba-* The mysterious one brother to Aki nyi .li on

*Awero wendi ti nga omi n Adhi a nbo-* I'm singing your song tractor brother of Adhi a nbo

*Amol o wuod Nyalego jakom-* Amol o son of the lady from Alego chair man

*Pi ny dum buru ki ongee-* When you are not around the world is full of dust

*Jii opong'ondara-* People are full on the roads

*Raila kaituo to jokenyatuo-* Raila if you are sick Kenyans are sick

*Amol o wuod oganda mano sinba-* Amol o son of the people you are the lion

*Omi n Aki nyi an adendi ni jowi-* Brother of Aki nyi me I call you buffalo

*Omi n Aki nyi an adendi ni samba-* Brother of Aki nyi I praise you as the lion

*Kaiyanyo ti nga to wakowi dala-* If you abuse the tractor we escort you home

*Wuo nyalego to in omuga ma kedo-* Son of the lady from Alego you are the rhino that battles

*Wuo nyalego to in eliech -* Son of the lady from Alego you are the elephant

*N'gam aot d o Raila to wadwoko dala-* If you speak ill of Raila we take you home

*Amol o wuo nyalego rwat h-* Son of the lady from Alego bull

*Ukabila ionge godo wuod nyalego-* You don't have tribalism son of the lady from Alego

*Amol o wuod nyalego ohero jii-* Son of the lady from Alego loves people

*Raila wendi kawero jodongo gweyo-* Raila when I sing your song the elders chant

*Mon goyo si gal agal a wuod nyalego ti nga-* Women ululate son of the lady from Alego tractor

## 8.7 The language used to portray men in Changla music

In this song Raila is referred to using a number of figures of speech. Raila is the de facto leader of the Luo who depend on him for political direction. He is referred to as jakom (chair man) since he is a leader; he is in a position of authority therefore makes political decisions and is influential and powerful. The singer also uses a number of

items to present masculinity such as animals and objects. The animals used in his song are those that are considered influential with regard to the roles that they play in the Luo narratives.

## 8.8 The meanings of the words and expressions used to portray Raila in Ohangla music

The artist has used several metaphors and symbolism to refer to Raila. He is referred to as a lion, an elephant, a rhino, a buffalo and a bull. Moreover, the artist uses symbolism when she refers to Raila as *agwambo* (something that is mysterious, unpredictable, unique and queer).

### (a) Metaphors

Raila is metaphorically referred to as a lion, an animal that has the following attributes: it is predatory, cunning, strong, ferocious, brave, and powerful in the sense that in most narratives it is referred to as the king of the jungle. It is a protector especially if it's the head of the pride. So, some of these attributes of the lion are passed on to Raila. Just like the lion, Raila is the leader of a political party and those who belong to his party look up to him for direction. In the recent past, he has participated actively in what has been dubbed the second liberation of the country which saw him and others arrested by a previous regime.

Raila is also powerful in politics and this is evidenced by the political clout that he commands especially in his Nyanza backyard where he is so influential that he determines a person's fate politically. He is undisputed and his decision is final hence those who try to challenge him are 'crippled' politically. This could be negative since it infringes on people's democratic space. However, he is a strong political leader who friends and foe admire and revile in equal measure.

Another metaphor used to refer to Raila is *tinga* (tractor). The attributes of the tractor are transferred on to Raila. A tractor is a multi purpose vehicle that does a myriad of duties like ploughing, hauling, harrowing, clearing, weeding, planting, harvesting, and removing tree stumps among others. This vehicle is used in coffee and tea plantations, wheat and dairy farms and it can move on rough and smooth terrains while consuming little fuel.

Raila on the other hand, plays multiple roles like leading, advising, supporting, giving directions to his subjects, initiating and completing development projects. As an opposition leader, he has to play the watchdog role and keep the government on track. The tractor's little consumption of fuel could insinuate Raila's zero tolerance to corruption. Similarly, the tractor's ability to move on both smooth and rough terrains implies Raila's ability to wade through different political storms regardless of their intensity and still remain relevant.

The artist in addition refers to Raila as a buffalo. The attributes of the buffalo are passed on to Raila. A buffalo is a dangerous animal once charged it does stop at anything. Because of its strength, it withstands a lot of strain and hardship in the jungle. It is worthy to note that lions can only attack a seriously sick or wounded buffalo or when the lions are in a pride. The buffalo attacks its enemies with so much viciousness that it is not easy to overpower it. The buffalo also lives in the jungle where the 'constitution' is survival for the fittest. Some of these attributes of the buffalo are applied to Raila.

Just like the buffalo, Raila is strong given the fact that he sails through the numerous political upheavals. He is also domineering and it is not easy to defeat him in a political duel. He will go to great lengths to secure his political base no matter the cost and he doesn't bow that easily. While the buffalo lives in a jungle where it forays for food, Raila too lives in a political jungle where he hunts for votes. This hunt is dictated by a delicate ethnic balancing that in most cases is highly volatile and which requires that one becomes witty in order to remain politically relevant.

Another metaphor that has been used to refer to Raila is that he is a bull. The attributes of the bull are passed on to Raila. A bull is a strong animal that performs key roles in the society for example, pulling the ox plough, pulling a cart and it is also kept for breeding purposes among others. For this last purpose the bull must protect its territory so that others don't invade it.

Raila on the other hand, possesses some of these traits. Just like the bull, he performs several functions for instance, as a leader people look up to him for guidance, protection and provision of resources among others. He performs all these functions with ease because he is a strong personality. Raila also protects his political territory. He has a strong grip on his Nyanza stronghold as well as Western and Coast. Moreover, just the way a bull does not entertain

another bull interfering with its territory so does the politician. This metaphor could also have a sexual implication in the sense that just like the bull that plays a vital role in breeding thus ensuring continuity so does Raila and this is evidenced by his offspring.

### **(b) Symbolism**

Raila is referred to as Agwambo which is a word used to symbolize something mysterious, complicated, queer and unique. As a politician, Raila's maneuvers cannot be predicted by his political nemesis hence the name Agwambo. His obscurity in the Kenyan political landscape has left many a wed for example he is able to unearth government operatives long before they become common knowledge to other politicians. A case in point is when he blew the whistle about the presence of the Artur brothers who were believed to be government mercenaries.

## **8.9 The socio cultural implications of the language used to portray men in Changla music**

In this song, the artist reiterates the power relations that exist in the Luo community. Raila plays the traditional gender roles assigned to males in patriarchal societies, that is to lead, protect and give direction. Males are also lovers and by extension main participants in the procreation process. The sexist ideologies propagated in such music are imbedded in the minds of those who listen to the music and who with time become accepting of these ideologies and help to further propagate them using different avenues.

This study agrees with the finding of Sharndama & Suleiman (2013) that figurative expressions used in the composition of songs are rooted in the traditions, culture and history of the people. In addition, most of the elements of the figurative language used are derived from the social and physical environment of the artists. Similarly it agrees with the finding of Neff (2014) who notes that, music that is sexist in nature has the potential of causing the listeners to support sexist ideologies.

### **9. Conclusion**

Metaphors and other figures of speech are avenues through which indirect communication is achieved and the contexts in which they are used make the interactants decipher meaning. This study sought to examine the portrayal of masculinity in Dholuo Changla music. In the Luo society, masculinity is portrayed both positively and negatively. However, there are more positive connotations that are used to refer to men than negative ones. Moreover, masculinity is rated highly in the Luo society and the men are at the top of the hierarchy in the power structure.

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