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URYA UWAVE UKINOVORA INTUNTU: THE AESTHETICS OF VIOLENCE IN *NINDE*'S DIALOGUE DECONSTRUCTING PATRIARCHAL HEGEMONY

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to identify the tropes that *Ninde* deploys to bring out the gender problematic in ten selected episodes. *Ninde* is a one-off radio drama which utilizes entertainment-education approach (Singhal & Rogers) to inform the people of Burundi on various issues of social concern. The paper employs Goffman's concept of framing and Butler's idea of performative dimension of gender. It unravels what the proverb above evokes in the minds of Burundians, and what images it seeks to bring out (Literal: "If you eat your relative, you will digest grief" meaning: "If you abuse your relative, you will reap grief/regret"). The discussion thus focuses on how *Ninde* deconstructs naturalized unnaturalised ideas about power and sexuality that tend to put the patriarch in position of dominance. The narratives deploy violence as a framing device to arouse and sustain the audience's attention while also passing across important messages. The paper identifies major roots which sustain patriarchal hegemony and how women attempt to challenge this naturalized unnatural. It comes out that Radio *Ninde* is engaged in the project of deconstructing certain beliefs, certain myths and norms about gender relations that are retrogressive and old fashioned. Three general trends emerge out of this framing. First, *Ninde* demystifies the past glorified image of the man. Second, given the frequency of violence in the selected plays, it is clear that brutality in form of oppressions, marginalisation and other traumatic experiences are perpetrated against Burundian women. Third, women are not framed as helpless and passive victims but as a resistant category. Finally, the dramatic narratives draw a picture of changed men/husbands in the image of projected heterosexual relationships.

Key: framing, radio Ninde, deconstructing, patriarchal hegemony, naturalized unnatural



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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this paper is to identify the tropes that the radio *Ninde* deploys to bring out the gender problematic in ten selected episodes from Burundian society and culture. It focuses on how *Ninde* episodes are deconstructing naturalized unnatural conceptions, beliefs, practices and norms about power and sexuality that tend to put the patriarch in position of dominance. The paper employs Erving Goffman's concept of framing whose major premise is that particular frames instil a specific worldview in peoples' minds through priming and making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences; and Judith Butler's idea of performative dimension of gender where she argues that everything, power relations inclusive, depends on how we perform our gender; and so it is possible for individuals to change their performance so as to subvert the social norms and perform various roles.

In this context, the proverb in the title 'visualizes' the gender problematic as warfare opposing the custodians of patriarchal hegemony who are mainly men and the revolutionaries who are mainly women and their respective allies. The revolutionaries attempt to deconstruct the old-aged oppressive and discriminative practices because these are what boost men's superiority over women. This paper unpacks the frame and discusses how the narratives debunk the myth of patriarchal hegemony by making salient the idea that the old sexual power relations based on dominant/subordinate model between unequals enslaves both the victims (women) and the victimizers (men). The proverb used above serves to depict the warning against patriarchal hegemony, and is given in one of the narratives to back up the moral lesson of the vision of deconstructing the exploitative norms and practices of patriarchy that the radio drama is imagining. This paper unravels what the proverb evokes in the minds of Burundians, and what images it seeks to bring out. It is known that human beings normally eat food and not other human beings and they digest food and not grief. The idea of people eating human beings or digesting grief is exaggeration. This paper presents a concept '*uwawe*,' which can be literally translated as 'your own' (somebody), which is deep in meaning, reminding people to handle their own people (could be relatives or anybody considered one's own) with care and not abuse. In the philosophy of Burundians, even when '*uwawe*' (your relative) does something wrong to you, you should never take revenge, as a Burundi saying goes: *Wibora uwawe ugabonya umuryango* /If you take your revenge on your relative, you will exterminate the whole family. What affects him/her does not leave you intact. So the framing uses exaggeration by deploying the phrasal verbs 'to eat' and 'to digest grief' in order to make salient the idea that the negative effects of abusing your own kind come down on your head and to develop emotional response in the drama.

As Kincaid (2002) puts it, drama is a communicative form the essence of which is confrontation that generates emotion. Emotion is the motivational force that drives actions of characters, leading to conflict and its resolution. "By means of involvement and identification, the confrontation and emotional response of the characters generate a corresponding emotional response in the audience" as Kincaid argues (Kincaid, 2002, p.150). By observing such a change in a drama some members of the audience will undergo the same kind of change themselves (Ibid., p.140). The dramatic communication process aforementioned is realized in radio drama *Ninde* through elements of drama specifically action or plot, character, language or verbal expression as discussed in this paper.

Framing is important in terms of (re)presenting correct information to the public. Goffman coined the term 'frame' analysis to describe the process of deconstructing the individual's 'organisation of experience' (1974, p.11). In the same way, this paper unpacks *Ninde* narratives to understand how language and sounds are used in the project of deconstructing patriarchal hegemony. According to Sambai (2014), frames in communication affect the attitudes and behaviour of audiences. The same way politicians deploy framing in an

attempt to mobilize voters to view them positively by persuading them to think in a particular manner, framing in edutainment prioritizes particular definitions and interpretations. Sambai (2014, p.68) notes that dramatic narratives enact life stories that are likely to embrace certain beliefs and values while silencing others. As such, framing effects are achieved through the *abnormalization* of the normal and the normalization of the abnormal. This is what Goffman (1974) terms the aesthetics of ‘abnormality.’ The aesthetic lies in departing from the natural framework. It is a kind of *defamiliarization* where habitual things are presented in “an unusual and strange manner in order to awaken [people’s] critical judgement” (Sambai, 2014, p.170-1). In so doing, there is creation of a new normality. However, there is also risk of reaffirming the old.

Based on the setting, linguistic symbols and the use of character types as strategies deployed in *Ninde* to frame gender-based messages, the paper focuses on the ways the programme presents and (mis)represents the common narratives around gender based violence, its assumed causes and its settlement.

HOW DOES THE PROVERB SPEAK BACK TO THE GENDER DEBATE?

How does the proverb in the title of this paper act as a framing technique in the discourse of gender? It frames for us the relationship between men and women in certain context. The framing endorses that peace begins at home. Gender based violence is barbaric and serves neither the man (villain) nor the woman (victim). The proverb pictures a vivid image of the negative impact of aggressive masculinity that is performed by husbands. *Urya uwawe ukinovora intuntu* can be read as a melodramatic actualization of the narratives of patriarchal hegemony that requires listeners to engage with this issue from a sensitive point of view. In fact, shaking the patriarchal exploitative face requires a strong justification. By ‘visualizing’ aggressive masculinity as harmful not only to the victims (the one who is eaten: the woman in this context) but also to their predators (men), the proverb is used as a warning to people to give a valid reason why patriarchal hegemony should be dealt with. This proverb is not only a warning but also an indirect instruction involving a whole human experience rather than ‘eating one’s relative.’ It is a warning that if you do harm to your own kind or if you do something wrong to your own kind, it will be back on you.

The proverb therefore implies that men should not harm their wives because they are related to them. A woman is a man’s ‘own’, in several ways: mother, wife, daughter, grandmother, lover, sister, his in-law, *et cetera*. By alienating her, the man implicitly alienates himself because their fates are tightly linked. Naturalized unnatural patriarchal ideas about power and sexuality thus enslave both men and women. That proverb raises a fundamental issue that seems to reveal the double effect of the aggressive masculinity that is performed by men which paradoxically affects both women and men. This framing indicates that not only do the aggressive performances damage the ‘other,’ that is, the women, but also the performers, that is, men who perform their masculinity aggressively. The experience has proved that in the present closeness of association between the sexes in marriage, men cannot enjoy material and moral progress unless women acquire an elevated status. Anything that is harmful to the woman absolutely affects the man. This paper shows how the framing in the selected narratives is an extension of the idea that the rigid patriarchal system victimizes both women and men themselves and so it should be deconstructed.

The focus specifically is on how narratives, performance, setting and characters ‘visualize’ the assumed roots of the discords between men and women in the family context as based on the traditional and popular perceptions and beliefs about power and sexuality, which women attempt to defy and how this affects men negatively. The paper further shows how violence is used by men against women as an instrument of coercion to prevent women from challenging openly the male power and refusing to obey to his unfair commands. Additionally, the paper presents analysis of how *Ninde* produces and reproduces certain circumstances and stereotypes that either positively or negatively impact

the struggle for gender equity. *Ninde* is an edutainment programme and as such can risk being read as either purely entertaining or educative depending on the position of the audiences.

The theory of framing offers a way to describe the power of a communicating text (Entman, 2006). The concept of framing comes into play in the discussion of any edutainment programmes because of the dual aim that such programmes intend to fulfill. While the educational aspect in such programmes is in most cases deliberate, the main advantage rests in their ability to attract the attention of people who might otherwise deliberately avoid messages that appear in an obvious educational form (Coleman and Meyer, 1990 cited in Sambai, 2014, p. 68). *Ninde* addresses audiences who are specifically looking for the enjoyment of the creativity through which the plays are presented, while being infused with some doses of moral lessons. The imagined audiences are supposed to consume radio drama narratives as 'real', I quote Ligaga (2008, p.34), "because these narratives are drawn from familiar local spaces, and are renditions of issues that occur in the spaces of everyday life." Nevertheless, since the audience is conscious that they are dealing with a radio performance, they are aware that the so-called reality is reflected upon. Drama is essentially realistic and *Ninde* is one because it illustrates well the quotidian aspects of life. *Ninde* is also realistic given that it is based on the mundane experiences of the ordinary people. It involves social relationships, emotion and an engaging story, the most essential components of drama according to Kincaid (2002). The drama of the everyday life practice is in fact connected to comedy. *Ninde* as exemplified by *Ninde* sample under analysis describes situations that can be observed somewhere. Because *Ninde* is a drama of the everyday life, it gestures more to the comedic. It deploys the everyday material of life to create humour and therefore criticism through a light touch such as satire or lampoon. Radio *Ninde's* comical approach becomes important in the interrogation of patriarchal hegemony and in its challenge.

From the findings, I argue that the the comedic is a framing strategy because Radio *Ninde* wants to tell the audience something extremely 'serious' in a very light touch. The plays satirize people's faults and so make the audience amused. And what are the elements of the comedic that are used as framing? There is irony, dramatic irony, hyperbole or exaggeration, understatement and the like. All that is part of the comedic as framing strategy because it is an expressive way of communicating serious issues in a light way; what Ruganda (1992) in the reading of Francis Imbuga's plays refer to as "telling the truth laughingly" or what they also call strategies of concealment. That is part of the framing: framing through laughter or comedy.

It is true that the relationship between laughter and comedy is an important issue. In some critical discussions the two are treated as synonymous terms. However, this attitude does not do full justice to the complexity of comedy. Entertainment or amusement does not necessarily mean laughter. Therefore, even though the audience may laugh during the performances of some scenes of *Ninde*, comedy cannot be summed up in terms of laughter alone. After all the objective of a pure comedy is not just laughter. In some instances, the framing arouses a feeling of pity.

The fact that *Ninde* programme alludes to real social experiences is one of the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of framing. In fact, this becomes more pronounced if the frame is derived from a credible source, resonating with values that do not contradict strongly held prior beliefs (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 104). To influence the audience towards desired social values and beliefs and adoption of positive behaviour, the drama has first to attract and hold the attention of audiences and provide enjoyment through an engaging story. The stories in *Ninde* are culturally relevant, have believable characters, a wide range of emotional stimulation and a variety of ongoing plots or overlapping subplots. This drama in general has capacity to draw and sustain audience attention and has more effect than many other forms of communication mainly because it involves the audience

emotionally and depicts changes in characters with which the audience identifies ('round' characters), as Kincaid (2002) puts it or depicts stubborn characters whose ruinous outcome serves the exemplary to the audience ('flat' characters).

The representation of characters in the chosen episodes dramatizes how modern gender attitudes and behaviours conflict with conventional gender attitudes in the family setting.

THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE FAMILY AND RELATEDNESS IN NINDE

The institution of marriage, which is the base of the family, is one of the areas that benefit male and female differences and their definition against each other. The selected narratives deal more explicitly with questions of male-female discords in the home. According to Goffman (1977), gender defines appropriate roles, behaviour, and power within the family sphere, and also between the public and the private spheres. In turn, the dominant relationships in the family sphere both reflect and support dominant relationships in politics and society. Although there is influence of gender in the definitions of appropriate roles in the public spheres, there is already a noticeable change in various domains in Burundian society. In the outside world, the relations between men and women are clearly regulated. Violence is often witnessed in family when these relation systems are broken, or the power 'arrow' gets inverted as seen in several *Ninde* narratives under analysis.

In my reading of the selected *Ninde* with a gender inclination, the family unit and drinking bars become useful microcosms for representing general societal views on gender issues and an understanding of the programme's conceptualization of feminine and masculine attributes in the context of heterosexual relationship. Masculinity is best understood in relation to femininity. Both are concerned with power relationships that influence the division of roles between the sexes and social construction of sexuality. According to De Lauretis, "the process of constructing, deconstructing and reconstructing gender is ongoing, sustained by social institutions that are considered unquestionable and natural" (cited in Mugambi & Allan, 2010, p. 95). As facets of culture that is itself never static, both masculinity and femininity are contingent and unstable and they are influenced by factors such as epoch, class, age, education and sexuality. Fictional representation is one way of reproducing and deconstructing masculinity (ies) and femininity (ies). It is believed that the dramatic representation of masculine and feminine identities can precede their construction in society. Narratives have the power to create and recreate societies. So, the key to changing attitudes about gender lies in the power of framing as ideas have first to be present in the audience's imagination before it can be present in their lives (hooks in Goddard, 2007, p.5). Masculinity is a social and cultural construct that makes one think of the traditional perceptions of males but does not necessarily coincide with males (Dipio in Mugambi & Allan, 2010). In this study, the terms masculinity and femininity pertain, not to biologically-sex-linked characteristics/roles, but to man's and woman's social status, sex-attributed roles, behaviour and personal qualities and all these surface in *Ninde* narratives through men's and women's spoken word, through performative. As the 'reading' of the narratives reveals, there are men who are considered feminine and women who are viewed as masculine. But since masculinity is a pillar of hegemonic culture in traditional African societies, being viewed as a masculine woman is a social promotion while being considered as feminine man is a social degradation. But in either case, it is pejorative. It is argued here that men's and women's fates are tightly linked, and that they are both victims of the traditional ideological value system that defines who they should be and how they should relate to each other.

Gender performance is one of the means through which the social order and organization in Burundian society is ensured especially in family. A human being is a social being (with emotional and spiritual needs) and more than just a biological substance. In the marriage institution, harmony is very important. But it can only be maintained if both

partners know their rights and their responsibilities towards each other. Masculinity seems to be associated with power and strength and it is linked to man according to tradition as expressed in proverbs (Nibafasha, 2014). Unfortunately, the *Ninde* narratives show that many times the man abuses his power and this causes disharmony. This is consistent with Kiyimba's (2010, p.42) study of tales in Baganda oral literature. According to him, "the overall message of these tales is that a 'real man' must demand the obedience from his wife, even if this means beating her" in order to compel women to accept male authority as the natural order of things (Mugambi & Allan, 2010). The man's right to use instrument of coercion to bring the woman under control is presented in the oral literature of the Baganda as part of the basic understanding of masculinity. It implies that the beating women can get and the silence it can enforce is the ultimate warning to any other woman who might have wished to 'answer back'. According to such customs and tradition of some African societies (Kiyimba, 2010; Nibafasha, 2014), it was shameful for a woman to have verbal exchange with her husband in an attempt to present her case. A good woman was expected to just blindly submit to her husband. This was one of the most powerful methods of enforcing male authority. This unconditional and unquestioned subservience of women however, in the face of social change, and the empowerment of women which to some extent have been influenced by western thought, education, democracy and human rights, seems to be retrogressive and old fashioned conception of femininity, as implied in the title of *Play10* (Things are no longer the way they were in the past or Circumstances have changed).

All selected radio *Ninde* dramas make family the setting not only for their identification of the roots of gender problem but also the solution while bars act as catalyst in tensions and conflicts between spouses. In *Ninde*, men like to go and 'have a bottle' in bars. The 'bottle' is a symbol of the phallus and beer is used to enhance their masculinity. The proverb in the paper title and related indigenous discourse which help to decode the dramas' imbedded notions of masculinity and femininity in heterosexual relations in family provide contexts as well as theoretical grounding for this discussion.

Broadly defined, the family is a basic social unit "which comprises individuals, who by birth, adoption or marriage or declared commitment share deep personal connections" (Levine, 1990 cited in Sambai, 2014, p.70). The argument is that within the context of power and gender relations, the family is presented as a potential arena for domestic violence and yet an irreplaceable institution as a basic social unit for the larger community. The cultural and structural systems assign the man enormous power over the woman in marriage and parenthood. Also, the man has superior physical strength and sometimes abuses his power and beats the woman, especially in the relationship between husband and wife. In some sequences of the analysed *Ninde*, the man is presented as lazy, ridiculous, untrustworthy, dishonest and brutal. But even when the man is clearly in the wrong, he remains the head of the family and the worst that the woman can do is to leave him. If she chooses to remain, she must remain under his authority, his faults notwithstanding.

The family is presented as a potential arena for men's and women's disagreement and consequent domestic violence from the very construction of masculinity and femininity. When men realise that they fail to persuade and subdue their women, they resort to threat and violence. Therefore, domestic violence is given adequate attention in the framing. The family thus becomes an important unit through which gender issues are problematized and the solution imagined. Although the position of men as decision makers in the household may provide them with power and authority over women, several plays present scenarios where they are under pressure to live up to the expectations and positions accorded to them by the patriarchal society. Men who have not earned respect end up manifesting violence against women as a form of compensation to their weakness.

The situation family roles is complex, because in addition to men asserting their manliness and/or masculinity, women (read: mothers) enhance this notion through instilling a sense of manliness in young boys and extolling submissiveness and expected female social roles to girls, as seen in *Play10* in Helena's (Kamariza's mother) words:

- Helena:** *Niviryamire wewe birakubereye mwananje niviryamire / Rest my dear son, that's suitable for you.*
- Kamariza's brother:** *Nagomba Kamariza agende amvomeye amazi noga kuko mpava nja gutembera. /I would like Kamariza to fetch water for my bath before I move out to relax.*
- Kamariza:** *Ewe Mana yanje... /Ooh my God!...*
- Helena:** *Uze ugende were iyo ugiye kandi umugabo wawe uze umugamburukire (Kamariza aca yimyoza). Aba ndiko ndakwigisha mwananje. Umugabo wawe uze umugamburukire umupfukamira niwe mwami... niwe mwami wawe. / May you be lucky where you will go for marriage and may you submit to your husband (Kamariza sucks the air). I am here teaching you my beloved daughter. May you submit completely to your husband and even kneel down before him because he is the lord... he will be your lord.*

From an early age, therefore, a girl is socialized to develop socially esteemed values such as submissiveness, and this kind of socialization is done by the same woman who challenges the husband's absolute power.

Ninde plays, aware of traditional family set up, seeks to create a culture of positive family tie. According to the selected texts, human beings are presented as social beings that have to co-exist, and to ensure harmony in the family, some regulatory frame is inevitable for the harmonious and continued existence of society. *Ninde* narratives creatively and artistically play with the sex binary either to challenge, to question or to perpetuate conventional gender perceptions in the context of heterosexual relations especially in marriage. *Ninde* narratives complicate the gender divide by drawing attention to the paradoxes of gender. There are internal contradictions in the authors'/ actors' framing of masculinity in the selected plays. Overall, although masculinity has traditionally been defined in binary terms with femininity, contemporary perspectives are more attuned to the variability/flexibility of such traits expressed in gender roles for the survival of society. In affirming this, Goffman presents a sociology that is distinctly Durkheimian, in that society is understood as fundamental, without which nothing would exist. Goffman declares that he personally holds "society to be the first in every way and any individual's current involvements to be second" (Goffman, 1974, p.13). Society is not made of a sum total of isolated individuals but of people who are related and interconnected. It is arguable then, that the survival of family depends on how masculinity and femininity cannot be dissociated.

According to Kazina (2002), the concept of family in Burundian society is interrelated with esteem, blessings, and status, as evidenced even by ordinary greeting. When an old person greets a child, (could be his/her grandchild), s/he says: "*Gira so, gir'izina, gir'iy'uva n'iy'uja...*" which means "may you have a father, may you have a name, may you have origin and destination." This greeting encompasses a whole philosophy of life. From this, it is shown that family roots and destiny, blessings and status, are all conceived as one thing. For an ordinary Murundi, being born into a family, where father and mother are together, is something important and therefore desired.

As a patriarchal society, to have a father means to have a guarantee of being recognized and integrated in a given family, and to get a name, family rights and status. In

addition, those who claim to belong to the same father are interconnected by the duties of fraternity. To have a name is also to be recognized and identified in the family as a full member in the long line of family relations. Consider for example Kirundi proverb *Umwana w-umugabo yendanwa ibinyoro* (Nibafasha, 2014, 103), literally meaning that, ‘a girl who belongs to a ‘real’ man is married even when she has leprosy.’ Children born out of wedlock were perceived as signs of disgrace because it was dishonouring to the whole family in general and to the father in particular. This popular perception is framed in some plays. In *Play2* and *Play10*, there is a family conflict around fathers that were ashamed of their daughters who became pregnant before marriage. The fathers felt that their social esteem and pride had been injured, and so blamed their wives for that. Critically speaking, when a child behaves well s/he becomes the pride of the father but when a child behaves badly the burden of responsibility is placed on the mother as exemplified below in the discussion between Bihori and his wife after discovering that their daughter was pregnant (in *Play10*):

- Bihori:** *Ntibamufashe ku nguvu kuko yama yiyerereza.../* Wasn’t she raped because she was always roaming...
- Helena:** *Murazi ukuntu ... murazi ukuntu abagabo mumeze? /* Are you aware... Are you aware of your behaviour, you men?
- Bihori:** *nawe ataco wamira?/* while you never stopped her?
- Helena:** *Nyumviriza! Murazi ukuntu abagabo mumeze? Wareze umwana...ego...siwe... si ukuvuga ngo ni n’ukurera...yagukundiye, uwumugabo yagukundiye umwita ngo uwo mwana ni gwanje. Mugabo bagize agacamwo nabo aca atukwa nyina ngo wareze nabi./* Listen to me! Are you aware of your behaviour, you men? When you have reared a child ...yes...it is not...I cannot even say it’s a matter of rearing a child, but if the child has accepted it... when things are alright, when a child complies with parents’ guidance, credence is given to the father. But when things are not in the right way, it’s the mother who is insulted that she brought up the child in a bad way.
- Bihori:** *WAREZE NABI NYENE! /YOU BROUGHT UP YOUR CHILD IN A BAD WAY INDEED!*

Through this conversation between husband Bihori and wife Helena, we see Bihori, (a man, just like the one who raped his daughter) apportioning blame to his wife and the latter is calling him to reason. The wife takes this opportunity to challenge openly certain assumptions in society with regard to wrong ideologies of manhood. She is quite vocal and firm in this.

In these narratives, the concept of family is presented through exaggeration that men have failed. They hang idly in bars, associate with harlots (good-time girls), waste family income, are unfaithful and ungrateful to their hardworking wives, and so on (Examples in *Play1*, *Play6*, and *Play7*). Critically speaking, the plays portray men with tarnished father image. This has serious social implications in the Burundian community that go beyond the scope of this study.

The narratives also present circumstances where men are willing to change their behaviour after advice. Most of the men in the plays change their behaviour, and live happily thereafter with their families while those who do not change have a tragic end so that it can serve as a warning to the audience. The aforementioned family conceptualisation constitutes the context within which the roots of the gender problem are understood while reading *Ninde*.

While acknowledging that interactions in family are often the proximal causes of violence against women, the family is also a potential source of women’s power. Men sometimes need and want love and care from women enough to be willing to trade power for it. Love for mothers, daughters, sisters, and friends may even be a force that “propels

some men into becoming allies in a feminist movement” (Deutsch, 2007, p.122). These men embody what is known as progressive masculinity. It is the old construction of masculinity that causes men to have recourse to violence in order to establish power in their home when women attempt to assert themselves and to resist to injustice. When women challenge men’s privileges that traditional conventional masculinity entitles them to, masculinity disguises itself and comes back in form of violence. In other terms, from the analysis of the narratives, men who are denied their ‘rights’ construct their masculinity in violence.

‘VISUALIZING’ THE ROOTS OF THE PROBLEM: MALE BRUTALITY AND FEMALE VULNERABILITY

In this section, I discuss how domestic violence is framed in *Ninde*. In particular the focus is on the causes of the problem and where responsibility is assigned, and the suggested solutions for the problem. The study assumes that the authors/actors of *Ninde* have presented us with a true structure of Burundian society and appropriate data to understand that society from which the work of art comes. So from that presentation, we can see why the desired direction in the authors’/actors’ views about gender and *Ninde* performances become an important component of Burundians’ performativity.

For this study, domestic violence is defined as physical, sexual, psychological, economic and/or emotional abuse that occurs between a man and a woman in an intimate relationship such as spouses or parents and children. According to Berns (2001), how to label the problem continues to be debated. The term domestic violence is criticized for not identifying the roles of victim and offender. Other commonly used terms, such as, *battered women*, *abused women*, *wife abuse*, and *wife beating*, identify the victim but obscure the offender. Terms such as *wife abuse* and *spouse abuse* are also criticized for ignoring abuse outside of marriage (Berns, 2001, p.279). But this study focuses on abuse within marriage and family. The radio *Ninde* makes salient male aggressiveness and its consequences both for the victim and the perpetrator. In gender theories we are told that masculinity is performed through aggression. However, violence in the drama *Ninde* is manifested as a form of coercion to the women engaged in the project of deconstructing patriarchal hegemony. As seen, when a woman challenges unfair treatment from her husband, he resorts to violence in order to subdue her. How does *Ninde* dialogue frame violence between men and women? The naturalized unnatural conceptions and practices about power and sexuality are the roots or the cause of tensions of the gender-based violence in the narratives because men use violence as an instrument of coercion when women interrogate the unfair patriarchal cultural order.

The analysis of gender violence in *Ninde* benefits from Kuypers ideas of doing frame analysis. According to Kuypers (2009), framing is a process whereby communicators consciously or unconsciously, act to construct a point of view that encourages the facts of a given situation to be interpreted by others in a particular manner. Frames operate in four key ways: they define the problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgements and suggest remedies. Kuypers (2009) posits that frames are often found within a narrative account of an issue or event, and are generally the central organising idea. The argument is that the four key ways of frames in drama *Ninde* can be reduced to three: (i) they diagnose causes of a problem (the old definitions of masculinity and femininity that lead to sexual power relations based on dominant/subordinate model between man and woman in the case of the episodes subject to analysis), (ii) they make moral judgements (this inequality disadvantage both the woman victim and the perpetrator man); and (iii) they suggest remedies (a redefinition of the terms ‘man’ and ‘woman’ that can lead to fair and practical sexual relations befitting the contemporary society). This resonates Entman’s (1993, p.52) observation that “frames diagnose, evaluate, and prescribe”. It is during the ‘prescription,’ that is, the final revelation or final stage of *Ninde* that the lesson(s) and suggested remedies come out. Frames operate by making some information more salient than other

information in order to influence beliefs and attitudes in the perceptions of some specific issues. *Ninde* uses for example the comedic and metaphorical signification as framing strategies to bring out the gender based violence within the family setting. The narrative structure of *Ninde* follows the original Aristotelian conception of dramatic structure consisting of “a beginning, middle and an end” (Sachs, 2004, p.3). In the selected *Ninde* plays, certain stands are adopted by characters, reflecting the society’s perceptions concerning what are the diagnosed causes of discords between a man and a woman. This is implicitly about masculinity (ies) and femininity (ies). In fact, the way they are defined has a direct implication on their relationships.

In order to make salient domestic violence in public opinion, *Ninde* narratives mainly focus on the frequency of the theme of domestic violence. All the selected plays portray a woman brutalised or abused by a man in one way or another. Men are presented as the source of women’s troubles. Domestic violence is thus examined here as a gender issue. Many scholars have suggested that domestic violence is a means by which men construct masculinities (Anderson and Umberson, 2001; Connell, 2005). These studies find that masculine identities are constructed through acts of violence and through batterers’ ability to control partners as a result of their violence. According to these studies, violence is a “resource for demonstrating and showing a person is a man” (Anderson & Umberson, 2001, p.359). This is also consistent with Moreel’s idea that men who feel their masculinities are undermined develop counter masculine discourses to help them regain their control over women. (Morrel, 2001 cited in Sambai, 2014, p.117). This includes being physically aggressive and violent. Being part of the old conception of masculinity, the man’s right to use instrument of coercion to bring the woman under control is framed in *Ninde* plays and presented as an old fashion understanding of masculinity to be undone.

In an attempt to raise public awareness of domestic violence, *Ninde* performances highlight violence and abuses of men against women, and suggest solutions and this theme of domestic violence cuts across all the ten plays (the aesthetics of abnormality according to Goffman). *Ninde* singles out various roots of this problem but all reflect the faces of masculinity some of which are evil. *Ninde* uses the same biases to deconstruct them with all what it can imply in terms of perpetuating stereotypes and gender biases.

The first very root of the discord which leads to female vulnerability in the selected episodes is around traditional conception of male superiority even before he is born, without even knowing how his masculinity as a social notion will be like. A baby boy is much more valued than a baby girl. This is the primary root of the problem and others are secondary. In scene two of *Play10*, Ndinzemensi is ill-treated and verbally abused by her husband Masatura accusing her that she has given birth to ‘substandard’ children because she just bore a second girl and not a boy, that the home does not belong to her and that “those who are able to give birth to boys will take over”. Masatura continues his abuse, by refusing to help her or buy necessary materials like loincloths for the baby. The following is an excerpt of how her husband threatens her:

Masatura: *Wewe...wewe...wewe iyo uvyaye umukobwa ukongera ugasubira, uraja ngabo ukanika ameenyo ukaja ngabo ugatentamara ngo waravyaye? Ngabo ubona wavyaye iki?/ You...You...when you give birth to a female baby for the first time and do the same for the second time, do you stand there and rejoice and celebrate thinking that you have given birth to a child? What have you given birth to?*

Masatura breaks in with a stream of verbal abuse. His aggression is perceived through the words he uses and the tone of his voice. From Masatura’s words, it can be noticed that in the traditional conception, the power of man is felt even before he is born. Like in many African societies, bearing a baby boy is powerful ‘ammunition’ a woman has, an instrument

at her disposal to earn honour in a patriarchal society. She can use it to find her way to a better position in society, especially in the clan where she has gone for marriage (Kiyimba in Mugambi & Allan, 2010, p.37). The lack of a son is as near to a social death for Masatura. That is why there is no reward being offered to Ndinzemenshi for having produced two baby girls, even though it is logical to imagine that there are men who may have only baby boys and be proud of it. Ndinzemenshi, literally meaning “I endure a lot of hardships”, symbolizes how a hegemonic patriarchal system subjugates women who are forced to bear hardship in order to survive. From this traditional conception of the superiority of a baby boy, it follows that boys do not get as involved in the domestic routine as the girls do, as framed in *Play5* and *Play10*. In *Play10*, the girl’s absorption into the mother’s domestic work routine enables her to receive thorough instruction in the social and cultural norms and taboos of the society, some of which actually exclude the boy from this work by defining him as different from the girl. This is what Helena does to her daughter Kamariza, who is overburdened with house chores while her brother stays idle. While Kamariza’s brother has got chance to attend school, Kamariza has not because she is a girl. The boy does not help Kamariza and her mother to till the land when he is on vacation because he is a boy and the mother supports this behaviour. Bihori, the father of Kamariza also says that sending a girl to school is wasting time and money. In this play, the scenes of Masatura and Bihori are contrasted with the scene of Majamberes in which Majambere has no discrimination during work and education of his daughters and sons. Majambere’s example is used in the play as an evidence that the more “balanced” the roles are within a family, the more stable and advanced the family might get – although “balanced” might also be a relative term cross-culturally.

One can deduce from radio *Ninde* that the societal inequalities embedded in gender roles survive even today as satirised. Linguistically, some scenes of *Ninde* use the phrase *Ndi/uri umugabo* (literally, ‘I/you am/are a man’) in order to acknowledge or congratulate notable performances of both men and women, which reflects that traditionally, hard work and diligence were for men. As Gallimore argues, by calling the successful female performer a man, the society symbolically deprive her of her feminine identity. In granting her the honorary status of a man, the patriarchal order says noteworthy and worthwhile performances are out of the reach of women (in Mugambi and Allan 2010).

In *Play5*, the boy Rusimbi does not want to help his aunt in domestic chores and only wants to eat and play. He says he cannot do the washing, he cannot clean the house, and he cannot cook because he is a boy. He quarrels with his aunt and starts insulting her that people from a background of poverty remain selfish however rich they may become. The aunt throws him out of the house. This scene reminds us of the traditional division of labour between males and females where there were roles and responsibilities exclusively for girls or boys.

The biological sex differences impact on gender identity constructions because people tend to do socialization mainly on the basis of the sex differences. While the girl is completely absorbed in the mother’s routine, the boy on the other hand is not completely absorbed in the father’s life routine. In *Play10*, when the father goes to idle around, or to drink, the boy is rendered redundant, while his sister is busy helping her mother with chores such as preparing the meal, fetching water, and firewood, tilling the land. This gives him a certain sense of false independence and confidence that prepares him to be the leader of the home and of the wider society. This concurs with Butler’s argument that one’s gender is created by one’s acts, in the way that a promise is created by the act of promising. There are just socially established ways of ‘being a man’ or ‘being a woman.’ The naming of the girl or the boy at birth initiates a continuous process of ‘girling’ or ‘boying’, the making of a girl or a boy, through an ‘assignment’ of compulsory repetition of gender norms. As a consequence, it seems that there is a direct relationship between gender identity construction and gender power relations which results in male dominance and female

subservience from that kind of socialisation. *Ninde* frames expose how men abuse their power as men over women and how women challenge it with resistance and counter-power. So men make recourse to violence and perform violence as a form of asserting their masculinity and maintaining their position. The argument is that while trying to undo that gender issue in such a frame, there is no doubt that the language used helps to promote the notions of male superiority and violence in the real world.

Second, the source of discord between men and women is around education of children. In *Play2*, Budodwa and her husband Mibare quarrel over their pregnant unmarried daughter. He unjustly accuses his wife saying: *Hewe, ukaba wamuragiriyekeo ibimwenyi, biragusha* (“Woman, if you have let crooks impregnate her, that is your own business.” Mibare, who is the symbol of those who impregnated their daughter, puts all the responsibility of this illegal pregnancy on his wife. The latter tries to explain that bringing up children is a shared responsibility between parents and that when the child misbehaves the burden must be shared. The idea of sharing responsibility in raising children which is stressed here defies the traditional conception that it is only the woman who should be in charge of education of children and be accountable of their faults. Mibare does not want to accept this new conception of relations, arguing that he is not a woman, and that it is the responsibility of a woman to bring up the children. He argues that Budodwa should have accompanied her wherever she goes, even when going to fetch water or collect firewood. Budodwa goes on demonstrating that she is not responsible for what happened to their daughter. In his anger, Mibare utters *Uba wafyume umubeza muri icyo nda yawe bako uywara uwuzozza kumaramaza* /“You would rather have kept her in your womb forever instead of giving birth to someone who would come to bring shame on me.” Mibare even goes further by threatening to kill his wife Budodwa. The idea of shared responsibility in bringing up children is also highlighted by a woman who comes in to intervene in the tension and conflict between Mibare and Budodwa around their pregnant daughter. From a gender perspective, when child behaves well, s/he is the pride of the father. When s/he behaves badly, the blame falls on the mother. The scene between Mibare and his wife Budodwa seeks to deconstruct that gender bias.

In *Play6*, conflict rises from a disagreement between Nyirigo and his wife on forcing their two daughters into marriage, a traditional practice in some regions in Burundi, which is still being carried out, interfering with the growth and development of young children, especially young girls. While the father wants his two daughters to drop out of school and get married so that he can get dowry to become rich, the mother wants them to pursue their studies. The young daughter called Shantare listens to her father and gets married. Jozerine the older daughter continues with her studies. The father is proud of the one who drops out of school and does not understand Jozerine while the mother sides with Jozerine and values her choice. These different perspectives on the future of their children become the cause of the tension and conflict between Nyirigo and his wife. Nyirigo and his wife quarrel over Jozerine and the latter is thrown out of the home by the father. Nyirigo’s power to decide for his daughters as a father stems from male power enshrined within the social structures. According to patriarchal structures, the man is the ‘owner’ of the children and the ultimate source of social legitimacy for them. The society of Burundi is patrilineal and therefore accords an elevated position to the father as the provider of the line through which a child descends from the ancestors. In the past, he used to take the important decision of when and who one would marry, which is now deconstructed in the narrative. Nyirigo unsuccessfully attempts to use his social position, power and ownership rights to threaten his daughter of a curse if she does not carry out his order of dropping out of school and getting married. He finally throws her out of the home because she has held on her position to continue her studies.

Similarly in *Play10*, Bihori beats his wife Helena almost to the point of killing, just because their daughter is pregnant subsequent to a rape. Bihori shouts at his wife: *Nokuniga*

uramaramaje. /“I can strangle you, you have just put shame on me”, accusing her that she does not know how to bring up children well. This again recalls the traditional perception of socialisation of children which was same-sex based. The frame intends to deconstruct this construction as evidenced in the intervention of Mudandaza when he comes in to help Helena. He says: “*Umviriza! Indero y’abana muyijejwe mwese abavyeyi.*” (Listen! Both of you parents are responsible for the upbringing of your children).

Third, the root of the problem of domestic violence that is framed in the chosen episodes is unequal division of labour between husbands and wives which puts much weight on the woman while earnings from the harvest are pocketed by the man. In *Play1*, Nkinahoruri asks his wife Ngendanganya to make local wine from bananas and to go and collect timber while he goes to relax in bars. The wife struggles hard and succeeds to get the wine from bananas and she is almost done with this activity when his husband comes in before she has gone to collect the timber. Ngendanganya tries to explain to her husband the reason why she has not yet gone to collect the timber but in vain. He starts beating her, because the wife tried to make him reason, thereby questioning his masculinity. By being violent, he is trying to declare his masculinity and self-esteem which he feels was threatened by the woman’s argument. When Ngendanganya cries and screams, men from the neighbourhood who hear the cries come in for help. Ngendanganya starts explaining and defending her case. Nkinahoruri interrupts her and tells the men: *Muri mwebwe hari uwufise umugore nk’uyu atumva?* / “Is there somebody who has a stubborn wife like mine among you?” This question insinuates a male’s normalized categorization and generalization of women as submissive and docile. His thinking reflects the society’s negative perception of women who try to cross traditional patriarchal boundaries by firmly asserting their rights. Such women are branded as stubborn and arrogant. But after listening to the explanations of the wife of Nkinahoruri, these men see reason and in return end up blaming Nkinahoruri, who will unfortunately continue to beat his wife until she gets mad.

The same unequal division of labour is framed in *Play10*. In the home, the woman Helena works harder while her husband Bihori always remains idle or goes to drink beer, but ironically controlling the bulk of the income which the wife produces through hard work (*Play10*). One of the scenes of the play represents Bihori who wants to sell beans that his wife has harvested without asking for her permission. When Helena opposes the idea of selling her beans, she is seriously beaten by her husband. Bihori beats Helena because they do not agree on the management of their crops which Bihori thinks belongs to him because he says that he brought Helena so that she may cultivate for him. Bihori plays the conventional masculinity where all the material resources and the property of the household belonged to the man, including crops. In Bihori’s patriarchal thinking, women are subordinate subjects, not to question male authority.

The two men Nkinahoruri (in *Play1*) and Bihori (in *Play10*) are portrayed as irresponsible and brutal who want to keep their power as men at all cost. Therefore, it is true that men who feel their masculinities are threatened develop counter masculine discourses to help them regain their control over women (Morrel, 2001 cited in Sambai, 2014, p.117). This includes being physically aggressive and violent. It is this evil face of masculinity which is questioned and challenged in the narratives.

Muhindo is contrasted with Severino in *Play8* while Bihori and Masatura are contrasted with Majambere in *Play10*. The two men Severino and Majambere help well their wives in work traditionally known as feminine. The narratives present them as serious men who look for the understanding in the family and who help their wives in roles traditionally known as feminine. They live with their wives in peace, understanding, fulfilment, cooperation and true love. Bihori’s and Masatura’s situation of refusing to cooperate with their wives is contrasted with that of Majambere who lives harmoniously and peacefully with his wife to prompt change in men who still hold retrogressive ideas concerning women.

Female vulnerability is caused by various aspects. Deutsch (2007, p.121) blames lack of access to material resources is being the distal (i.e., institutional) causes of women's oppression. Traditionally, masculinity was closely linked to the economic status of a man (Nibafasha, 2014). It conferred economic responsibilities upon him, one of the most important of which is to get a house of one's own. This idea is defied in *Play2* and *Play5* where the Mibares and the Rusimbis live in their wives' properties. It is also defied in *Play4* and *Play9* where young women have rights to property and can fund their boyfriends. However, it does not matter whether the woman has everything she needs in material terms or whether she has been given fair opportunity to compete for the available resources and opportunities with men, she is still the victim of gender bias because of her culture as a woman, and is often subjected to male ridicule. This ridicule sometimes degenerates into brutal force when the woman attempts to assert her culture (Kiyimba, 2001). The women Budodwa in *Play2*, Sabokwigura in *Play4*, Rozata in *Play5* and Yoranda in *Play9* are still vulnerable because they are women and they are abused by their husbands.

Fourth, the root of the problem that leads to brutality of men against women is the health issue, and particularly reproductive health. *Play7* frames infertility or barrenness as a source of women's trouble. The drama is centred on a married couple, Matayo and Karorina who have been unable to bear children in their marriage, and as expected, it is the fault of the woman; thereby depicting stereotypes of childlessness and infertility. Ironically, the problem of barrenness is on her husband Matayo. Initially he decided to marry a second wife who already has a child to be sure she was fertile. This second wife makes life hard for the first wife by cherishing herself before the husband to the detriment of the first wife. Matayo utters angrily to Karorina: "*Wewe uraja ngabo ukanturubikira umwiyeyi, ukaja ngabo ukanika amenyo ngo uri umuntu?*" / "You cause trouble to my dear wife and would-be-mother of my children, and then you sit there and laugh, thinking that you are a human?" According to Matayo, not to bear children deprives Karorina of her characteristics of human beings. Matayo and Karorina quarrel and clash over this second wife. Matayo gets angry and beats Karorina his first wife and chases her away accusing her of infertility. Karorina tries to fake pregnancy, with the intention to incite Matayo to restore her rights. The second wife does not become pregnant either, and Matayo even tries to make other women pregnant, but in vain. Karorina later on use her lie and borrow from her sister a child who will be a 'passport' for her to come back to her husband's home Matayo. Finally, the play ends with the man proven impotent, shifting the blame of infertility from his wife. This play draws attention to how Burundian culture deals with the problem of infertility in marriage and suggests a new perspective that views infertility as something that can also happen to men. The play deconstructs the traditional idea 'feminizing' barrenness.

Play3 and *Play8* are in the framework of sexual and reproductive health in general and of prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV/AIDS in particular. They dramatise conflict in the life of two married persons around whether to go or not go for visits to the clinic for a check up so that they can produce a generation free of the HIV/AIDS. In *Play3*, there are Banzubaze and his wife Riyera, and in *Play8* there are Mibare and his wife Njerina. While the wives are willing to go to the clinics for checks, their husbands are not and this is the cause of trouble for women in the life of these couples. The husbands do not only refuse to get tested but they also forbid their wives to do so. Women are brutalised by their men who use their power to take decisions against the will of their women. It echoes Connell's (1987) argument in her theory of gender and power which explores the depths of sexual inequity as well as gender and power imbalance. According to her, there are three social structures that make up the theory of gender and power: sexual division of labour, sexual division of power, and the structure of cathexis. These three constructs are distinct but are overlapping, and work together to define and explain the heterosexual relationship between men and women and have an influence on women's health (Connell, 1987). The basis for the sexual division of power begins at the societal level with the inequality of

power between men and women. The sexual division of power, at the institutional level, is maintained by abuse of power, authority, and control (Wingood & DiClemente, 2000). Courtenay (2000) discusses the theory of gender and power but does so from the perspective of the male and this is the perspective that helps us to explain Banzubaze's (*Play3*), Matayo's (*Play7*), and Muhindo's (*Play8*) negative health attitude. Maybe if Matayo had gone to the clinic for a medical check up, he would have gotten healed of his infertility and bore children. At least Banzubaze and Mibare accepted to go to the clinic after being seriously persuaded by their peers, and not by their wives. The refusal by these men to go to clinic for test screening is because they want to fit into the traditional ideal male concept. In order to fit the mould of society's ideal regarding the dominant role, it means that these three men must reject certain qualities that are traditionally thought of as being feminine such as going to the doctor for a check up. It is the quest for power and dominance that leads Matayo, Banzubaze and Mibare to unhealthy behaviour and to be violent toward their wives, especially Banzubaze toward his wife Riyera when he learns that she has tested HIV positive. This men's behaviour affirms Connell's (2005) observation that men construct their masculine identities through relationships with both their fellow men and women. Men are expected to demonstrate features of dominant forms of masculinity, such as power, courage and aggressiveness. For Connell, men are expected to actively struggle for dominance and this active struggle for dominance is actually fundamental in redefining what a normal male gender identity should be. Therefore, societal culture and rituals of the everyday practices encourage men to take up dominating roles over their wives, and women should be unquestioning, submissive, passive, and obedient to their husbands. According to Connell (2005), patriarchal ideology legitimizes violence towards women as a result of the hegemonic masculinity's superiority over them. From patriarchal perspective, I may say that these men are performing masculinity through violence in the process of asserting their power before their women. However, Connell ([1995], 2005)) argues against essentialists' perception of patriarchal ideology because according to her the essentialists believe that, the construction of male gender requires one to be moulded into a masculine behaviour or role which presupposes autonomy, competition, and aggressiveness, and the domination of the innate human needs for connectedness, intimacy, and self-disclosure. The essentialist patriarchal ideology rests on the idea that a man behaves in a certain way because he has to prove his manhood. Men need to prove their manhood because they have been socialized to believe that their masculinity is actually biologically inherent, and not ascribed, and therefore has to be continually maintained and enhanced through the externalization of masculine behaviours. This essentialist idea is challenged in the characters of Banzubaze and Mibare when they change their mind and cooperate with their wives in going for HIV-test.

Last but not least, the root of violence that is framed as a potential cause of women's vulnerability is polygamy or men's involvement in several love affairs (male promiscuity), which brings a link between that masculine construct with virility. In my opinion, there is nothing that threatens the security of a wife than the thought or the sight of another woman competing for the attention and affection of her husband. Nothing is more insulting, belittling and degrading than that. While high value was placed on virility in the past as it was needed in conjunction with polygamy to ensure a sufficient labour force to till lands, and the siring of a large progenitor, especially boys, today's world is beset by HIV/AIDS, and an uncontrolled virility can be a cause of contamination and a cause of marriage breakdown. Polygamy and sexual promiscuity are dramatized in radio *Ninde* as a source of conflict in families because it causes jealousy and rivalry in 'co-wives' where the husband sides with the younger wife against the older one. Communication through *Ninde* media is used to encourage individuals to tame their virility and guide it into 'grazing in only one field'. There are instances of polygamous men in *Play1*, *Play4*, *Play5*, *Play6*, *Play7* and *Play9*.

Play1 for instance dramatizes the many troubles caused to Ngendanganya by her

husband Nkinahoruri. One evening, he comes home very drunk with a good-time girl he met in a bar and tells his legal wife Ngendanganya to get out of the house. When she tries to resist, he batters her until she runs away for her safety. He brings her back home and continues with the habit of beating her. She becomes mad because of trauma and it is this insane state of this woman character that is used to stigmatize male brutality and to deconstruct this masculine vice. *Play4* represents the character of a sexually promiscuous man Gihushi who wins the hand of a sexually promiscuous girl called Sabokwigura and marries her after having sent away other wives with threat of killing them. While he is planning to marry Sabokwigura, his friend Handereya advises him to give up that habit of changing wives like cloths and to be a 'man' like others. In return, Gihushi replies that he is even manlier than others, that he is a man five times. In Gihushi there is a representation of the traditional conception of masculinity in terms of virility manifested in polygamy. However, as the play intends to dramatize that the so-called conception is old fashioned, Gihushi's friend Handereya tells him:

Hewe ndakubwire, uriko wibaza ngo ugomba ku... ngo uriko urondera umunzero ariko uzosanga ubashiriye. / "May I tell you my friend, you think ... you are seeking joy but you will find yourself in jeopardy".

As the storyline shows, what Gihushi predicted wasn't long coming. Through Gihushi's regret, we are confronted with the effect of men engaging in multiple sexual relations as a way of constructing their masculinity. Later on, the play shows a man paying a high price for such a relationship as it ultimately diminishes him instead of elevating him. On the other hand, through the characters of the man Gihushi and the woman Sabokwigura, there is a removal/ a defying of double standards in the society's judgement of men's and women's sexual behaviour because all the two characters have a bad end because of their promiscuous behaviour. Promiscuity is shown to be bad both for women and men.

In *Play5*, Rozata marries Rusimbi on her own plot of land, something that is not common in the Burundian culture. In one of the scenes, one can hear how they enjoy life together vowing to remain faithful to each other. Rozata loves her husband so much. However, their joy does not last long. The husband starts thinking how he can sell this land and go away with the money to seek other women. Rusimbi tells his former henchman Rishari that he is going to pretend to be ill so that his wife Rozata can sell the land to get money for treatment. Instead of breadwinning for the family, he misuses its income by promising all sorts of good things to his good-time girl. By wooing this girl in a bar, he puts a lot of energy into the reassertion of his potency and authority vis-a-vis this 'other woman.'

Another instance of polygamous nature is described in *Play6* where Papa Fiston comes home with a good-time girl from a bar. When Mama Fiston comes from the fields, she is angry at them. She tells the young woman to leave the house immediately. Her husband Papa Fiston sides with that woman and seriously beats Mama Fiston and threatens to kill her. She runs back to her parents' home for safety. The worst of punishment that a woman may receive in Burundian culture is to be sent away from her husband's home. Repudiation for the woman is a socially heavy punishment because a woman who has returned to live in her parents' home is scornfully regarded by her parents and the community at large.

Play7 still dramatizes another instance of polygamy by showing how after staying with his wife Karorina for some time without producing any children, Matayo leaves her behind and enters into a polygamous relationship with the intention of getting children because he has the traditional conception that infertility is only a woman's fate. *Play9* portrays a young woman called Yoranda who dates a young man called Yakobo. She takes her money and gives it to Yakobo so that he can build a house in which they will live when they marry. When the house is almost getting ready, Yakobo disappoints Yoranda and enters into

another relationship with Karita, Yoranda's sister. He betrays her trust. When Karita learns that the cause of Yoranda's insanity is Yakobo's betrayal, Karita automatically breaks her relationship with Yakobo. After breaking with Karita, Yakobo tries to enter into another relationship with Matama who is already aware of his lack of seriousness. She spitefully rejects his proposal. It is the young woman Matama who lectures him, and through her the audience that he and men like him should mind about their swindling behaviour which is the source of trouble for women.

The portrayal of the mentioned male characters in the six plays above shows that men construct their masculinity through virility. The traditional masculine culture regarded men as entitled to sexual gratification and the final revelation of the stories seem to deconstruct this oppressive idea because all these men end up losing. Overall, although the concept 'man' is generally powerful, the framing of the man in the chosen narratives reflects a certain link between masculinity and irresponsibility, brutality, dishonesty and untrustworthiness. Certain images of him are comic, ridiculous, and contemptible, on account of his excessive selfishness and irresponsibility, and in such a case, the only tool he remains with to assert his masculinity is violence. The motif of masculine violence is so recurrent in the narratives that at times it eclipses the subject matter which is basically a satire of gender relationships that intends to improve these relationships.

The complex nature of oppression is that in some instances, women also perpetuate or encourage violence against other women. This is evidenced in *Play3* when Riyera is being beaten by her husband when she comes back from the clinic and tells her husband that she has tested HIV positive; the mother-in-law fuels the discord in the following words:

Banzubaze's mother: (*Nyina aca ashiduka*) RAHIRA! KUBITA WICE MWA-NANJE! NA WEWE YARAHEJEJE KUKWICA SHA! / (*The mother is startled*) SWEAR! BEAT HER TO DEATH MY DEAR SON! SHE FINISHED KILLING YOU TOO!

Riyera: *Ariko ga nyoku... ariko ga nyoku? Uko niko uriko urakokeeeza ga nyoku ngo kugeza anyishe? / But Grandma... Grandma? Is that the way you set the blaze telling him to kill me?*

Riyera's mother-in-law sides with her son to make the life hard for her. This surely reminds the 'reader' of the mother-in-law motif in African oral traditions.

The selected *Ninde* plays also feature young women who seem to be so naive to an extent of accepting to interfere in between husband and wife as co-wife or good-time girls, and hence becoming a source of other women's unhappiness particularly in the family. This is evident in *Play1, Play4, Play5, Play 6 and Play7* where there are women who accept to enter into intimate relationship with married men without caring about the fate of their wives.

Critically speaking, with this kind of framing domestic violence, there is risk of normalization of the intimate violence. My argument is that by dramatizing domestic violence, the latter receives the most attention and there is risk for the audience to be shaped by violence rather than avoidance of it. The repetition of an issue influences the mind of the audience. As Butler opines, gender performativity and identity become established through discourse. There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender. Identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results (Butler, 1999, p.33).

Overall, with regard to power and gender relations, the selected *Ninde* narratives construct the problem of domestic violence as a result of cultural and structural system of patriarchal hegemony which women attempt to challenge. This implicitly means that lack of agreement between men and women mainly due to the traditional construction of masculinity is largely to blame for domestic violence. *Ninde* frames domestic violence in a

way that demoralise the abuser who is a man in most of the cases. Plays like these are of course entertaining but popularise stereotypes of the man as untrustworthy, dishonest, irresponsible, brutal, inhuman and ridiculous. This implicitly can affect the authority of the father figure in real world. It is evident from the performances that the woman is not subjected to the male brutality passively. Women characters are represented as resistant victims. In the performances, women dare to challenge this gender divide by challenging patriarchal dominance from all its roots. In the narratives, women are dominated and empowered at the same time. They are abused until they say ‘this is not right, this is not acceptable, I will not allow it to continue.’

DARING THE FORBIDDEN: DEBUNKING THE NATURALIZED UNNATURAL IDEAS ABOUT POWER AND SEXUALITY THROUGH PERFORMANCE

Ninde dialogue presents women as resistant victims through the way they use words and through the tone of their voices. The naturalized unnatural oppressive face of patriarchal tradition is deconstructed from all its roots in the selected *Ninde* episodes. The framing shows that this attitude to deconstruct long-held tradition of patriarchal unfair practices can temporarily bring to the woman more troubles or even injury than before for patriarchal hegemony to be ousted, but that is the only way to. This reminds one of the common truths that every birth comes with some blood.

How a woman who participates in the resistance or in the project of deconstructing patriarchal hegemony is conceived and framed? Where does she get the power for new normality? This woman who deconstructs norms, ideas and practices that had been constructed from the perspective of man in order to set new normality or to create a ‘new order’ must not be an ordinary woman in the traditional sense of the term. In the chosen plays, the women who are engaged in the project of deconstructing patriarchal hegemony are not empowered by academic degree but by the hardships or traumatic experiences (examples of Ndinzemshi, Ngendanganya). They are equally empowered by the fact that not all men are against them /oppressive. There are pro-feminist men. In the following lines, we look at the framing of the character of these women.

It is through how they use words that the study identifies their forms of resistance. Framing is an inevitable process of selective influence over the individual’s perception of the meanings attributed to words or phrases. In Kuypers’ (2009) assumption, frames are powerful rhetorical entities that ‘induce us to filter our perceptions of the world in particular ways, essentially making some aspects of our multi-dimensional reality more noticeable than other aspects. They operate by making some information more salient than other information. The dramatic form of *Ninde* allows characters, especially women to challenge patriarchal dominance. Their attempt to recreate the community by destroying long established patriarchal norms is a way to assert themselves in a society where societal rules govern and hold females in bondage. Goffman (1974) proposes in his theory that solving disputes provides social ideas that help viewers interpret different events. Framing theory supports the idea that gender stereotypes are changed and disputed through the media, and in the case of the present research, the framing of gender in the radio drama *Ninde* allows women not to be identified as helpless victims but as a resistant category.

The analysis is guided also by Butler’s thought on power and subjection. One of the intentions of all of Butler’s work is to think further Foucault’s understanding of power and subjection, especially the way in which power is both restrictive and productive of subjectivity. She has wrestled with how exactly this process works, focusing particularly on the question ‘How does discourse “materialize” a set of effects in the social field, including the “effects” of subjectivity and gender, and the associated notions of normal and abnormal, speakable and unspeakable?’ Butler is not only interested in language and power in this sense, but also in how their mutual implication creates the possibility of resistance to power. Power, however ubiquitous it appears in a Foucauldian world, is also vulnerable, because its norms are never solidified once and for all, but rather are continually in the

process of discursive reproduction. Power is sustained by reiteration, but it can also be subverted; “chains of iteration” can be deflected, parodied, turned against dominant norms (White, p.881). From this way of thinking, power and resistance always go hand-in-hand.

Ninde offers, to quote Kerr (1998 p.21), “an important medium for women to express their happiness over domestic achievements, or, more commonly, their distress or protests over domestic problems” in the public. As already mentioned the tradition had that no woman would have said anything against their husbands or fathers, because that would have been deemed dishonourable to the family. In the narratives, women break the silences and refuse to accept male tyranny as the natural order of things through various subversive actions, however small they may be. The dramatic form offers a better framework to satirise these relationships between men and women as husbands and wives and as fathers and daughters.

Ninde performances enhance the performative nature of gender. Through re-enactment in plays, specific gender traits are passed on as ‘new’ natural and acceptable while others are demystified as out of date. Butler (1999, pp.42-3) argues that repeated performance of specific gender traits serves to make what is unnatural appear natural and legitimate. Butler points out that since gender/sex is performative it is possible to change the way we perform our gender. This offers a possibility for change or alteration of some of the normative heterosexual notions of gender. Now, if this ‘unnatural’ notion of male strength, power and superiority, which has been naturalized through “repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame” (1999, p.43), is pitted against an equally ‘unnatural’ notion of female physical weakness, a powerless and inferior female and used to deter domestic violence against women, this gender performance should be subverted.

Understanding female deconstruction of the naturalized unnatural in the aforementioned context, *Ninde* gives a voice to both females and males as characters and accords them a pride of place and makes ample provision for their fulfilment and active participation in societal affairs. This is exemplified by the way women are given voice in the various episodes and how they speak their mind. Women are not presented as passive victims but resistant victims. From a genre-based performance of gender in *Ninde*, it is noticed that the radio drama *Ninde* frames empower the Burundian woman by enhancing and encouraging her oral skills to pull her from the subordinate condition. They give females some kind of power to influence minds, to put their views across, to get their feelings and distress known rather than keeping them secret. The performative aspect contributes in the self-assertion of women. For instance, Kamariza in *Play10* breaks the silence and says that a girl is a real child and that she should be treated like her brother:

Kamariza: *Ewe Mawe n’ukuri jewe kuvy’ukuri na jewe, n’ukuri kw’Imana jewe na jewe mwarantyoje. M’hu!* You Mummy, in truth I am really...to tell the truth of God you have beleaguered me. Hm!

Helena: *Bagutyoje mu biki?!* In which way have you been beleaguered?

Kamariza: *Kuva mu nyomvyi nashubije, inkwi nasatuye [Ego], ivyombo nojeje, nakubuye, akazi kandubishije, mugabo ngo ningende kumvomera amazi yoga peee? Mbega jeha mwibaza ko ntaruha? Mbega neza nico gituma mwanse...mwanse no kuja kunsomesha mu mashure ngo nta bwenge mfise? Na jewe ubwenge ndabufise. / Since dawn I warmed food, I fetched firewood [Yes], I washed dishes, I cleaned the house; I am tired now because of the many domestic chores but you really tell me to go to fetch water for him to bath? Do you think I don’t get tired? Is it the reason why you didn’t...you didn’t send me to school pretending that I am not intelligent? I am as intelligent as others [boys].*

Kamariza denies standing the injustice in silence. She brings out her concerns for others to know and find an equitable way out.

Various female strategies used to challenge the naturalised unnatural through performance are represented in the plays, ranging from breaking the silence (examples of Kamariza and Ndinzemenshi in *Play10*), self-asserting and demystifying male superiority (examples of Rozata in *Play5* and Helena in *Play10*), to the engagement of a verbal war (example of Karorina in *Play7*), to withdrawing (example of Mama Fiston in *Play6*) and to running mad (examples of Ndinzemenshi in *Play1* and Yoranda in *Play 9*). They question male power and protest against illogical norms as the natural order of things. They form counter-power alliances with men-Bashingantahe (here referred to as gentlemen) or 'real men' in egalitarian sense to challenge the tyrannical power. In the excerpt below from *Play10*, we have an example of such men who intervene to rescue from danger women engaged in the project of deconstructing patriarchal hegemony:

Helena: *Ee nyica nyica! Ee! / Eh kill me kill me! Eh!*

Kamariza: *Ugomba umunige? / Do you want to strangle her?*

Helena: *Nyica! / Kill me!*

Kamariza: *(Kamariza aca ashira urushi ku munwa) Ugomba umunige Mawe?(Aca yongera agakoma induru)/. (Kamariza screams out) Do you want to strangle my mother? (She screams out again).*

Bihori: *Ndekura! Ndekura jewe ndamukunkumure! / Please set me free! Set me free so that I can kill her!*

Kamariza: *(Kamariza aca ashira urushi ku munwa) Tabara tabara Mushingantabe tabara! / (Kamariza screams out for her mother's help) Please gentleman, help help! Help my mother from being strangled by daddy.*

Mudandaza: *Ndabarabiye ntimusubire! / I swear on you, don't fight again!*

Kamariza: *Nonebo Mawe baramunize! / Goodness! My mother is strangled!*

Mudandaza: *Ndabarabiye ntimusubire! / I swear on you, don't fight again!*

Helena: *(Avuga nk'uwo bafashe mu kanigo) Uribenda sha! Uribenda sha! / (She speaks like somebody being strangled) You are fooling yourself! You are fooling yourself!*

Mudandaza: *Ndabarabiye...ndabarabiye ntimusubire. / I swear on you don't...I swear on you, don't fight again!*

Helena: *(Avuga nk'uwo bafashe mu kanigo) Uribenda sha! Uribenda sha! / (She speaks like somebody being strangled) You are fooling yourself! You are fooling yourself!*

In their resistance, women such as Helena express fearlessness even before death when their husbands threaten to kill them. This fearlessness before death is itself an oppositional stance and female self-assertion. The dialogues imply a level of acceptance and cooperation by men that is worth celebrating. These men like Mudandaza join the block of 'revolutionary' women, strengthen it and sustain it. In the various plays, this category of men appears whenever there is a dispute. This frame continues however to propagate a biased idea that only men can settle conflict and can be guarantors of peace and public order, and that the key to women's full empowerment is in the hand of men.

In the narratives, the challenge to the husbands is conducted within a dramatic framework defined and controlled by the aesthetic performance-determined criteria of the drama. This is consistent with Kerr's idea that "[p]lays allow licensed protest by women against their husbands or male relatives" (Kerr, 1998, p.236). Authority figures are criticized quite frankly in a way which would have been unthinkable in a straightforward Burundian context. There are key characters whose roles accentuate the power question, as discussed below.

It is important to note that new generation of women are represented as challenging patriarchal dominance by breaking the silence. Kamariza that is mentioned in the previous lines and Ndinzemenshi represent this category. Ndinzemenshi openly says that violence against women should not be kept a secret. She thinks that change can happen if the domestic problem is brought up into public debate.

Ndinzemenshi: *N'ukuri bobishi...nobishira hejuru wosanga uku guboboterwa kwacu baraku...barakudufashijemwo.* / Verily if they [women] speak out...I speak out they could help us deal...deal with this abuse.

Ndinzemenshi's mother: *Iyo ni ivy'ubu, ntumbaze.* / That is a modern way of thinking, don't ask me.

Ndinzemenshi: *Nemere? He Ma? N'ukuri ubu jewe n'ukuri ndakwiye kuja kubishi...hariho abantu bakuzze babona kure. Ndakwiye kuza kubibabwira.* / Accept? Hey Mum? In truth it is time now for me to go truly and disclose it ...there are important people out there who are enlightened. I have to go and tell it to them.

Kamariza and Ndinzemenshi represent women who refuse to endure hardship in silence. It is also interesting to note that in various scenes of the selected plays, women perform the subversion of the male power in order to demystify the male superiority over female. In *Play6*, Shantare subverts masculinity through insults that challenge and hurt her man's masculine ego. She deconstructs the male power by reducing her man into a criminal, evildoer.

Shantare: *Urazi amagogwa wari unteye ga wa mugesera we?* / Do you know how serious are the troubles that you were causing me, you evildoer?

Papa Fiston: *Ubwo bugesera!* / You evil!

Shantare: *Ndigiriye na kare wari undiye urakaribwa n'umuswa.* / I am going away because you have been ill-treating me. May you be eaten by termites!

Shantare insults her husband that he is a criminal, an evildoer and wishes him to be eaten by termites. As in battle, the insults aim at 'wounding' and even destroying its target. Insults render the husband Papa Fiston emasculated.

In one of the scenes of *Play10*, Ndinzemenshi uses the dramatic license to tell her husband Masatura that he is 'stupid' because he denied to send his girls to school and refused her to present her candidacy in the election. Out of performance context, such an act would be construed as an aggression to the husband. However, it is acceptable for the wife to ridicule or even insult the husband within the realm of performance. In the performance, she uses a reported speech to insult her husband:

Ndinzemenshi: *N'ukuri, urazi Majambere ukuntu yaciye ambwira? Ati nabo urya mugabo wawe ari ikijuju, ati ni ikijuju kimwe ca mbere [Mb], ati urabona yuko yanse gushira abana mw'ishure, aguma agutuka ngo uyara abakobwa, ati yaranse kubashira mw'ishure, ati jewe ngomba ndamwereke y'uko jewe nzi ibintu, ndamwereke. Ati kandi umubwire y'uko uti ibi vyose ati nabihawe nababakobwa yanka. Wa mukobwa wive ntuzi y'uko aberuka gubeza? Wa wundi nawe yabeza mu mwaka wabera [Mb], ubu ntasigaye ari Buramata-tari? / Truly speaking, do you know what Majambere told me? He told me this, 'Even if that husband of yours is stupid, he is very stupid indeed [Mb], you see he refused to send children to school, and kept insulting you for the simple reason that you give birth to girls, I want to show him that I know things, I want to show him'. That is what he said in fact. He further asked me to tell you*

that all what he possesses have been given to him by the female children you look down upon. Don't you know that his daughter has just graduated? And the one who graduated last year [Mb], isn't she now a Governor?

For Masatura, to be told that he is stupid is to project his failure as a man; and it is an insult to his culturally defined manhood. No man wants to be laughed at through performances for not being man enough, and throughout his life, he will strain to perform the gender attributes assigned by hegemonic discourse to the masculine term.

For men whose yardstick of power is dominant masculinity, Shantare's and Ndinzemensi's insults are too much for their husbands to bear. The insults have the performative power of the threat (Butler, 1997) and an attack to the male ego.

It is important to note that through performance, these women try to subvert and resist the existing gender situation by changing the way they perform their gender, sometimes by running away from their culturally prescribed gender identity and the corporate gender identity of the category 'women' which expects them to be docile before their aggressing husbands. While acknowledging the existence and the importance of the category 'women' in the survival of the community, the performance of *Ninde* puts a difference between men and women as 'being' but attempts to reduce the gender space as 'doing'. It implies that the problem is not on 'women' as a category of people but on the definition of the term 'woman'. The narratives raise the need of rethinking the definition of 'women'. The current socio-economic situation and the empowerment of women have dismantled gender structures and increasingly inspire a kind of tragic-comic mediation on the challenges to masculine power. In fact, socio-economic changes have affected conventional gender roles and male sexual behaviour. Owning a house or owning a plot of land is traditionally perceived as masculine but we have in the narratives women owners of plots.

For instance in *Play5*, Rozata decides to remain at her parents and to marry a man from there in her own house, what is contrary to the common practice of patrilocality, thus subverting the idea that women do not have right to property and that they have to leave and go to live in the man's property. The texts criticize not the assumed biological binary concept of sex but the frequently accepted biological determination of culturally conditioned traits as exclusively masculine or feminine traits. Above all, the texts criticize those traits employed in justifying the unequal and unjust treatment of women. Owning a house or a plot has nothing to do with having a male organ. Rusimbi marries a woman (Rozata) at her home and yet he is a husband and she is a wife. The same applies to *Play2* where Budodwa advises her husband to sell his land for the reason that it is less productive. So the family goes and settles in Budodwa's clan. At this point in the narrative, genetics seems to count less than the socialisation in the making of 'a man'. While the identity differentiation between masculinity and femininity is necessary, it should not be constructed as a hierarchical opposition corresponding to dichotomy between masculine and feminine. As Lorde puts it, "[t]he contemporary challenges require men and women to develop new definitions of power and new patterns of relating across difference" (Lorde in Kolmar & Bartkowski, 2005, p. 342). In *Play9*, Yoranda has a plot and she sells her goats and pigs. With the money she gets, she funds her 'fiancé' and so they start building a house where she will live with her husband when she gets married. In the performance of *Play2*, *Play5* and *Play9*, we see the female Budodwa, Rozata and Yoranda denying the 'unnatural' but naturalized gender notion of patriarchal property ownership and patrilocality. So, these narratives bring out the 'demasculinization' of private property ownership and family location.

Another interesting scene demystifying patriarchal hegemony is in *Play5*. When Rozata catches her husband Rusimbi cheating on her, she calls for a family meeting and publicly

declares that she no longer wishes to live with Rusimbi. She throws him out of the house the same day. For Rozata, to have a 'worthless' husband is worse than not having one at all. Implicit in Rozata's act is the demystification of the popular perception of a man as fundamentally special and superior to the woman even when he is worthless. The casting out of Rusimbi during a family meeting is a public humiliation for a man and a message that manhood must have boundaries if it is willing to co-exist with womanhood. This presentation of Rozata explains that a woman can change her feminine performance despite the patriarchal system by challenging its dominating and subordinating ideology. Rozata's divorce from Rusimbi is a sign of disapproval of his deeds.

Another important frame to point out about public humiliation of a man is in *Play10*. Various instances show the husband's struggle to hold on to a beleaguered masculinity put on trial by an empowered wife who publicly humiliates him. In one of the sequence of *Play10*, Ndinzemenshi publicly bursts out of anger when her husband claims that she gives birth to 'fake' children:

Ndinzemenshi: *Yooooo! Kandi burya jewe ndakwiye kukwikangurira. / My goodness! You know what? I have to wake against you and stand up for my rights.*

Masatura: *Abubwo vuga buhoro...vuga buhoro ntibagutwenge. / Speak at a low voice...speak at a low voice so that they will not laugh at you.*

Ndinzemenshi: *Jewe ntakwikanguriye, ntakwikanguriye n'ukuri jewe ndabona wandengeye. None muri jewe na wewe ubu bavyara nde? Uwuyara ni nde? / If I don't stand up for my rights... verily if I don't stand up for my rights, you are about to overdo. Who is responsible for creating babies between you and I? Who is responsible for creating babies?*

Masatura: *Jewe ndakubwiye nti... MVA MU MATWI! I tell you this... SHUT UP!*

Ndinzemenshi challenges her husband Masatura through provocative and contemptuous questions in order to hurt his ego. It implies that man is hurt if a woman's contempt for him is made public, and this is the nerve that the woman Ndinzemenshi wants to get on in order to bring him down. The crisis in performance is triggered when wives publicly expose their husbands' shortcomings. Such attitude is set against the cultural construct which says that domestic 'matters are not for public consumption.'

Another interesting scene of resistance is Helena's opposition to her husband's act in *Play10*. Her major bone of contention is the husband's behaviour of grabbing whatever she works for, coffee, bananas or beans, and using them not for the benefit of the family but for his own selfish interests. During the discussion between Bihori and Helena, Helena's words oscillate between surprise, sarcasm, ridicule and outright rejection of the husband's behaviour. She uses the very cultural sense of masculinity of man as provider to show how despicable her husband is. That is illustrated in the following discussion with her husband:

Helena: *Iyo mfashe isuka ngenda kurima, ufata ibarabara ryo ku marigara. Nyomba uja mu makarata, nyomba uja kunywa urumogi, nyomba uja mubipfuye nabi, mugabo ukaza gusa wasamika amanwa ngo mpa indya. /When I go to till the land, you take the road that leads you where you waste all your time in nonsense. Whether you go to play cards, or to take drugs, or for whatever evil, I don't know; but you dare come back with your big mouth widely open to only ask for food.*

Bihori: *Kwegera umunwa biyo! /Shut up!*

Helena: *Kaba ari akawa, ni jewe nsezera. Wewe wibereye ku marigara. Mugabo hageze ko ako kawa kera ...hageze kugira gute, ukarya amashurwe sha. Aba narashavuye sha*

naratuntuye ku mutima./ Even coffee, I do every task to grow it while you are wasting your time outside there. But at harvest ...and you dare sell it when it is still in full bloom. You can't imagine how I have been abused and angered by your behaviour.

Helena exposes Bihori's failure as a man. He does not grow coffee which is a role conventionally done by men. He does not provide for the family. In another sequence of the same *Play10*, the confrontation takes place when Helena publicly shows contempt for her husband. She rudely responds to his call to stop their previous discussion in front of the intruder. Instead of the customary polite attitude of keeping the silence (to save the face of her interactant) expected of a wife, Helena makes a subversive reaction, to the shock of her husband:

Mudandaza: *Mupfaso? Ndagize Gakeye.* / Madam? Good morning.

Helena: *Iyo atambwira ukuntu vyamugendeye [Mupfaso? Gakeye], nari kuvuga ko yatoye ubwoko bwa se, hamwe wirigwa kw'irigara. None umwana wanjye ntivyigeze ayerera na rimwe./* If she hadn't told me what had happened to her [*Madam? Good morning*], I would have said that she has inherited from her father's bad manners like when you stay useless outside there. Fortunately, my child did never roam.

Bihori: *(Arabuze ico avuga. Biboneka ko yagomba gubindura icyo bariko baravugaga uwo aje ngo ntabimenye) Mbega... i...i...iyo ...iyo mpene...iyo...?/* (*He is embarrassed. He wants to change the subject of the conversation to cover up the tension*) So.... that...that ...that goat...that...?

Helena: *None ho!... Uuuu! Oya oya ndakubwiza ukuri.* / And besides!... Uuuuh! No, no, I will tell you the truth.

Bihori: *Urakora ikibi ntuzze!* /You woman, you are so wicked!

Such public display of Bihori's weaknesses angers him. Kamariza's mother attacks her husband Bihori who represents the system that violated and raped her daughter Kamariza. The woman's contempt for the man is made public in order to hurt him. The woman Helena is an example of women who speak their minds and protests against age-old oppressive habits because these are what boost men's power over women as they privilege the patriarchal practices as the best version of culture. She publicly exposes her husband's irresponsibility and this irritates the husband Bihori who feels his masculinity is under threat, and this is true. As Mugambi (2010) argues, when masculinity is oppressive, such masculinity is "under threat from women's proclivity and ability to challenge oppressive masculinities and opt for alternative forms more conducive to female survival" (Mugambi in Mugambi and Allan, 2010, p.82). For instance, instead of humbly changing the topic as the husband pretends to, Helena publicly humiliates the husband declaring him idler before the *mushingantabe* (the gentleman) who comes in during their quarrel about their pregnant daughter. This declaration is the ultimate act of contempt a woman could commit against a husband. Instead of the customary feminine behaviour, she blurts out a subversive reaction, to the shock of her husband. Such public display of insolence knocks masculinity off-balance because a concealed contempt of a wife leaves a husband's image harmed. To restore 'indomitable' male power, Bihori re-asserts his power by beating the 'insubordinate' wife. In fact, after realising that he cannot persuade Helena, Bihori resorts to threats and violence to the point of almost strangling Helena had it not been the intervention of the *mushingantabe* (gentleman) Mudandaza for rescuing Helena.

Relating the males' intervention and the deconstruction of patriarchal unfair and unjust norms, practices or beliefs in *Ninde*, there is implication that Ngendanganya and Helena and the like, as women, cannot change this harmful situation by themselves without support

from males. This fact endorses the idea that the change depends on males' understanding and taking measures against negative performances that are harmful to all members of the community. This situation implies that without a supportive contribution of males, the rigid patriarchal hegemony will continue to ignore and suppress women, and perpetuate existing power imbalances that favour men. This view is contrary to Beauvoir's opinion in *The Second Sex* where she argues that it is impossible for "men to settle the question of women because they would then be acting as both judge and party to the case" (cited in Butler, 1999, p.15).

The narratives reveal that the crisis in male identity is triggered when the women bring their defiance and contempt for their husbands into the public arena. Matayo's public humiliation in *Play7* becomes excruciating when his wife divulges the true parents of 'their' child (a child that she borrowed from her sister and used as a 'passport' to come back to her husband's home) before the family meeting and blames their lack of progeny on Matayo's infertility. Thus, *Play7* completely inverts the traditional masculine plot to reveal an impotent male identity. The stereotypical belief that it is always the women who are barren is disproved or deconstructed through the male character Matayo. There is defeminization of barrenness. The true source of their childlessness is placed on Matayo during a family gathering and Karorina uses that occasion to give a 'lecture' that barrenness can happen to either man or woman.

One can draw another level of resistance by comparing the way men and women respond to the same issues. The example here is the way Jozerine's father and mother in *Play6* take the news that their daughter has chosen not to get married but to pursue her studies. Jozerine's father hopes to rise to honour and nobility from the two daughters' dowry while their mother would like them to pursue their studies and marry later when they have a degree. He tells his wife, who has sided with the daughter Jozerine who does not want to marry, that if Jozerine does not go to a husband as he has decided, both will be chased away. The mother sees things differently. She argues that a child has the right to decide on her destiny. An anti-genealogical performance, Jozerine's mother in *Play6* counteracts the phallogocentric performance that precedes it, those whose main purpose was the maintenance of a genealogy of morals based on male domination. From hegemonic patriarchal perspective, patriarchs seem not to trust the mental abilities of women to choose for themselves what they want. As a result, they are told what to think and what to do. This type of patriarchal mentality is outrageous and unacceptable to Jozerine and her mother because they consider all human beings, both women and men rational. Jozerine says 'no' categorically to her father's order to go to marry and chooses to study no matter what her father does.

It is furthermore important to note that the naturalised unnatural polygamous nature of men is also challenged in the performance. The traditional social construction of masculinity with a polygamous nature is explained in the way male characters get involved in several love affairs with different women. Sex becomes a tool of domination in such cases. So the number of wives a man has enhances his masculinity. This is even more apparent in marriage. However, the legal woman protests against this practice and she is helped by other men who have already understood the benefits of living with one woman faithfully. We have instances of this in *Play1*, *Play4* and *Play7*.

In normal cases, wives' and husbands' public confrontation with wife or husband exposing each other's weaknesses violate the maxim of politeness. Goffman (1950) similarly suggests that a persistent consideration of interactants is to protect one another's public self-esteem, or 'face.' In doing whatever people are doing, they take into consideration the moral standing of themselves and their co-interactants that their doings project. In the ordinary course of the events, this consideration entails the protection of the positive moral standing of the self and of the others. The break off of this norm in *Ninde* or what Goffman calls abnormality is what makes the comic in *Ninde* as illustrated in the scene

between Bihori and Helena in Play 10 when an intruder comes in during their quarrel about their pregnant daughter. We can develop Goffman's observation by noting that certain actions- typically actions that occur in response to other actions can be marked as unpreferred: that is, problematic in one way or another. It is an expression of resistance to the naturalized unnatural which in turn faces counter-resistance and the cycle goes on.

The most interesting frame to challenge the naturalised unnatural ideas about hegemonic masculinity in the selected narratives is the character Ngendanganya the madwoman in *Play1*. As a madwoman, she represents the very extreme periphery of the vulnerable groups, first as a woman and then as mad, yet she is also the symbol of the authors /actors and visionary who can dare to raise her voice and say things that cannot be said by normal women. She uses her licence as a madwoman to bombard the patriarchal territory. She keeps on singing words *umugabo arya umugore imisi iramuberanye*. / "the days of a man who abuses his wife have come to an end." Everyone understands her case and one cannot help pitying the vulnerable Ngendanganya. This is indeed power with authority. As long as she speaks, she's but a madwoman, keeping the people amused. Ngendanganya is ironically and subversively powerful when running mad on streets. To take her to the trauma healing centre for medication is subversion itself to her man. The fact that it is a group of other men who go and advise Ngendanganya's husband is also meaningful. It is a rhetorical element that tells the man Nkinahoruri and other men who are still behaving like him that it is high time they changed. The naturalised unnatural male tyrannical power and female vulnerability are challenged in this play.

To empower her for this magnificent mission of attacking and challenging the male ego, there is this connection with madness in this kind of character for her to do, to challenge the existing order constructed from the perspective of man, and to create new normality heedless of what people might say. As a madwoman, Ngendanganya is a credible character for this task of deconstructing long established patriarchal norms. There is this connection with insanity, this notion of psychiatric disorder in this kind of character for her to subvert the patriarchal dominance. She dares to do or to say things that women with good mental conditions cannot do or say. Ngendanganya makes a fool of men with sarcastic, subversive and blasphemous pronouncements about them. She obliterates the facade of masculinity that patriarchal order has created: she insults men for all to hear. Ngendanganya is now a thorn in the side of these patriarchs since they are unable to dominate her. She moves around, taking off her clothes, insulting men, threatening to bite them and spitting at them as we can hear from her words, from the words of the women in the market and from the two men on Ngendanganya's way. In warfare terms, one could say that Ngendanganya is using the tactics of the weak to defeat the strategies of the strong, which is to deconstruct age-old oppressive habits. And as an insane woman, she does not need to ask for a permission to pronounce her prophecy. In the performance, Nkinahoruri's wife Ngendanganya erupts in a subversive song that predicts the end time of male tyrants (read: brutal husbands):

Rab' imisi irababeranye (Look! Your days have come to an end)

Imborerwa irababeranye (You drunkards, your days have come to an end)

Raba imisi irababeranye (Look! Your days have come to an end)

Uranyumva mugenzi (Listen to me my dear friend)

Ugusambura si ukujandajanda(Breaking down one's family is not a synonym of relaxing)

Umugabo arya umugore imisi iramuberanye.(The days of a man who abuses his wife have come to an end)

Ngendanganya prophetically announces that doom is pending for men who are still abusing their women (read: wives). 'Breaking down one's family is not a synonym of relaxing' because it makes not only the wife suffer but also the husband because there are bonds

between the two as exemplified through Ngendanganya and her husband Nkinahoruri. Without women, men are depicted as helpless. It implies that it is the women who prop up the men's ego and without women the male's masculinity is in danger. When Ngendanganya becomes mad, Nkinahoruri appears foolish before other men until he decides to collect money and take her to a trauma healing centre. This echoes Connell's (1987) argument that the family is one of the most complex product/institution of the society. The interior of the family is a scene of multilayered relationships folded over on each other like geological strata. In no other institution are relationships so extended in time, so intensive in contact, so dense in their interweaving of economics, emotion, power and resistance" (Connell, 1987, p.121).

The scene presents the madwoman erupting and announcing her 'prophecy' in the market place, a place that is symbolic of public, announcing the same message and hurling insults at men when she passes by two men, who could be possible victims of this prophesy if they do not take it seriously. She publicly insults men that they are evildoers, killers, magnifying their eyes and their head, shrinking their teeth and spitting at them. She moves around and boldly declares her message to counter the male tyrannical power, to deconstruct egocentric masculinity. Through the words of the madwoman, the time of such kind of masculinity has come to an end. Both the women at the market place and the two men see in her more than just a madwoman and the two men are bothered by her insults. Driven mad by the husband's inhumanness, Ngendanganya nonetheless remains a threat to male chauvinism. She uses her licence as a madwoman well. 'Insanity' or 'madness' is deployed in *Play1* as a dramatic strategy to subvert the naturalised unnatural patriarchal hegemony. Male dominance over women which traditionally appears to be natural is challenged through the woman's insanity.

However, while the mad character Ngendanganya in *Play1* vilify all men by associating them with domestic violence, men as a group refuse to be held accountable for the behaviour of a small, aberrant minority. The two men insulted by the madwoman decide to go and persuade her husband Nkinahoruri to take her to a trauma healing centre. Using men's voices in such framing is critical for dissociating domestic violence with patriarchal system. At the end, Ngendanganya is seen again in a harmonious married life with her husband, when she has recovered back to her normal mental state. The subtle power and hope in *Ninde* lies in its framing of absolute power of masculinity as powerlessness once women and their allies begin to wake up.

The resistance to egocentric masculinity and change as a process is always at work in social institutions. In this process, 'revolutionary' women form alliance with 'real men' to challenge the exploitative face of masculinity still strongly sustained by men and the older generation of women. Women characters are represented as a challenge to the status quo. Although the performances may not provide conclusive answers to the gender problem, they reveal that the survival of any type of male identity is likely to depend on women's accommodative or subversive potential. In the various frames, there is deployment of satire to focus society's gaze upon outdated masculinity (ies).

In the various conflicts, men are featured as the ultimate losers. Through characterization of Nkinahoruri in *Play1*, Banzubaze in *Play3*, Gihushi in *Play4*, Rusimbi in *Play5*, Papa Fiston in *Play6*, Matayo in *Play7*, Muhindo in *Play8*, Yakobo in *Play9* and Bihori and Masatura in *Play10*, we learn that as modern man enslaves himself in traditional definitions of manhood, he ends up with a deteriorating marriage, poverty, loss of hope and eventually divorce. This serves as a lesson to the audience and encourages them for change. Overall, challenges from women in the narratives under analysis force men to respond either defensively with anger, violence or withdrawal; or by welcoming the change in their relationship and reworking their sense of themselves as men within the new context.

CONCLUSION

This paper has unpacked some of the framing devices that the radio *Ninde* uses in debunking the myth of patriarchal hegemony or dominance. The radio *Ninde* under study seems to be engaged in the project of deconstructing certain beliefs, certain myths about gender relations that tend to dominate the woman and other men who do not comply with hegemonic masculinity. Major roots in the drama/text which cause tensions and conflicts between men and women have been identified. Violence is used as a trope and the frequent occurrence of the theme of domestic violence in *Ninde* testifies to the seriousness and scope of this evil in community. The frames of gender in the Kirundi radio drama *Ninde* are broad and complex like gender itself, but three general trends emerge.

First, *Ninde* demystifies the past glorified image of the man. In some plays, the man is presented as lazy, ridiculous, untrustworthy, dishonest and brutal. This puts the woman, who is the man's counterpart, in vulnerable position. However, the framing presents the privileged masculinity in traditional societies as losing the ground. It 'visualizes' what used to be dominant masculinity as outdated nowadays. *Ninde* plays increasingly question the evil face of masculinity by exposing traditions and practices that not only cause untold troubles to women and society at large but also diminish the humanity of its perpetrators. The beating is presented as the man's very last ammunition from his toolkit for self-assertion of masculinity when the man feels that his masculinity is threatened or doubted.

Second, given the frequency of violence in the selected plays, it is clear that brutality in form of oppressions, marginalisation and other traumatic experiences are perpetrated against the Burundian women. Overall, violence is presented as gendered where men are perpetrators while women are the victims of violence. There are women characters depicted as villains as there are male characters who help the 'subaltern' (Spivak, 1995) to improve their conditions. This discursive strategy demonstrates the complex nature of gender issues. In that kind of frame there is negation of collectivity of oppression. Individual men oppress individual women and this is something that can be blamed on individual men who oppress individual women. This implies that domestic violence is not associated with patriarchy but with individual men who must be treated as individuals. The framing accomplishes two opposite things at the same time: gendering the problem as male while degendering the blame on men. This perspective undermines any attempt to situate domestic violence within a patriarchal explanation. *Ninde* narratives are essentially reformist and do not challenge the patriarchal structure of society itself. They only attack those patriarchal practices that are found unfair and unjustified. This framing explains that a woman can change her feminine performance despite the patriarchal system by challenging its dominating and subordinating ideology. Through the performance, *Ninde* attempts to loosen the patriarchal hold. Women can live in a patriarchal society but operate in non patriarchal ways. The social comment that this framing makes is far-reaching and can be true elsewhere.

Third, women are not framed as helpless and passive victims but as a resistant category. In that way, they are presented as people who have agency in determining their destiny. They violate the traditional principle which says that domestic matters are not for public consumption. The roots of patriarchal hegemony are disclosed, challenged and demystified in the public by not only the female victims but also what the narratives call '*Abashingantabe*,' that is, the real men (read: men who are sensitive to the cries of the vulnerable). The performance offers the woman enormous opportunity to deconstruct the naturalised unnatural habits in marriage and parenthood.

The plays end with a question. Implicitly, it means it is time for self-examination and conscientisation among the listeners (audiences). The sensitivity of *Ninde* authors/actors in framing traditions and practices that affect gender is a sign of hope that change is gradually affecting cultural practices such as masculinity and femininity that once in history seemed eternal and immovable. It has been noted that the *Ninde* narratives subject to analysis

deconstruct and undermine the configuration of patriarchy that favours the traditional masculine and feminine definitions and perceptions. Through male and female characters, radio *Ninde* explicitly demystifies patriarchal hegemony. Women threaten the binary and hierarchical gender framework through their resistance to patriarchal dominance. The framing mirrors and satirises hegemonic masculinity in transformation in favour of equitable gender relationship. The dramatic narratives draw a picture of changed men/husbands in the image of projected heterosexual relationships.

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'Playography' (Primary sources)

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- Play1:** *Urya uwawe ukinovora intuntu (2008)* / If you eat your relative, you will digest grief, (00:53:06).
- Play2:** *Ivyo utipfuzza ko bikubako, ntukavyipfurize n'uwundi (2014)*/Never do to the other human being what you would not wish to be done to you, (00:50:18).
- Play3:** *Izija gubona zibera mu rubongore (2011)*/ For cattle to get exterminated, it all starts from the cowshed, (00:53:54).
- Play4:** *Intabarirwa ibarirwa n'uko amaso atukuye (2006)*/ A person who never listens to advice is convinced when his eyes get reddish, (00:56:34).
- Play5:** *N'iyi yibaruriye (2015)*/ He is the one who made his own way, (00:56:01).
- Play6:** *Aha nibho mba ndi (2014)*/ That is where I would have been, (00:59:53).
- Play7:** *Bishikira bese (2014)*/ It happens to both women and men, (00:57:25).
- Play8:** *Imbanyi ni iya twese (2012)* / The pregnancy is for both of us (wife and husband), (00:58:18).
- Play9:** *Ugira ngo ubemukiye abandi ugasanga ubemukiye ubuzima bwawe (2015)* / When you think of disappointing others, you find yourself disappointing your own life, (00:58:00).
- Play10:** *Ivyari imagera vyarageruye (2012)* Circumstances have changed, (00:56:12).

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