MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF FILM AND THEATRE

AN INTEROGATION INTO THE INFLUENCE OF PATRIARCHY ON THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN ZIMBABWEAN FILMS. THE CASE OF DAVES GUZHA'S "SINNERS" AND TSITSI DANGAREMBGA'S I WANT A WEDDING DRESS.

BY

PAMELA TSITSI MUNETSI

R125255E

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF ARTS HONOURS IN FILM AND THEATRE ARTS STUDIES DEGREE.

SUPERVISOR: Ms. M PARICHI

JUNE 2016

1

APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have supervised the student Pamela Tsitsi Munetsi's dissertation entitled, an interrogation into the influence of patriarchy to the representation of women in Zimbabwean films. The case of Daves Guzha's "Sinners" and Tsitsi Dangarembga's I want a wedding dress submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts in Film and Theatre Arts Studies Degree at Midlands State University.

…………………………………SUPERVISOR

…………………..DATE

…………………………………CHAIRPERSON

………………..DATE

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF STUDENT: Pamela Tsitsi Munetsi

DISSERTATION TITTLE: An interrogation into the influence of patriarchy to the representation of women in Zimbabwean films. The case of Daves Guzha's "Sinners" and Tsitsi Dangarembga's I want a wedding dress.

DEGREE TITLE: Bachelor of Arts in Film and Theatre Arts Studies

SUPERVISOR: Ms. M Parichi

YEAR GRANTED: 2016

Permission is hereby granted to the Midlands State University Library to produce single copies of this dissertation and to lend and sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purpose only. The author does not reserve other publication rights and the dissertation nor may extensive extracts from it be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

SIGNED   ………………………………….

DATE   …………………………………..

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my precious treasures-: Mrs M Munetsi and Mr D Munetsi.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

Film is a potent tool of communication with a large potential to cement or unsettle social relationships. The study focused on an interrogation into the influence of patriarchy to the representation of women in Zimbabwean films. Sinners by Daves Guzha and I want a wedding dress by Tsitsi Dangarembga were analysed. A qualitative research approach was done to ascertain whether such influence on the representation empowers or disempowers women. The study also examined the possible impacts of such representations on women on the audience/consumers of such films. Interviews with the audience were also done and results revealed that most Zimbabwean films celebrates negative stereotypes of women. Recommendations made are that filmmakers should create images that are gender neutral, images that empower both men and women in the society. Women filmmakers should also stop taking roles that negatively represent them in films.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF FILM AND THEATRE

AN INTEROGATION INTO THE INFLUENCE OF PATRIARCHY ON THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN ZIMBABWEAN FILMS. THE CASE OF DAVES GUZHA'S "SINNERS" AND TSITSI DANGAREMBGA'S I WANT A WEDDING DRESS.

BY

PAMELA TSITSI MUNETSI

R125255E

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF ARTS HONOURS IN FILM AND THEATRE ARTS STUDIES DEGREE.

SUPERVISOR: Ms. M PARICHI

JUNE 2016

APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have supervised the student Pamela Tsitsi Munetsi's dissertation entitled, an interrogation into the influence of patriarchy to the representation of women in Zimbabwean films. The case of Daves Guzha's "Sinners" and Tsitsi Dangarembga's I want a wedding dress submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts in Film and Theatre Arts Studies Degree at Midlands State University.

…………………………………SUPERVISOR

………………………………..DATE

…………………………………CHAIRPERSON

………………………………..DATE

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF STUDENT: Pamela Tsitsi Munetsi

DISSERTATION TITTLE: An interrogation into the influence of patriarchy to the representation of women in Zimbabwean films. The case of Daves Guzha's "Sinners" and Tsitsi Dangarembga's I want a wedding dress.

DEGREE TITLE: Bachelor of Arts in Film and Theatre Arts Studies

SUPERVISOR: Ms. M Parichi

YEAR GRANTED: 2016

Permission is hereby granted to the Midlands State University Library to produce single copies of this dissertation and to lend and sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purpose only. The author does not reserve other publication rights and the dissertation nor may extensive extracts from it be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

SIGNED   ………………………………….

DATE   …………………………………..

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my precious treasures-: Mrs M Munetsi and Mr D Munetsi.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

Film is a potent tool of communication with a large potential to cement or unsettle social relationships. The study focused on an interrogation into the influence of patriarchy to the representation of women in Zimbabwean films. Sinners by Daves Guzha and I want a wedding dress by Tsitsi Dangarembga were analysed. A qualitative research approach was done to ascertain whether such influence on the representation empowers or disempowers women. The study also examined the possible impacts of such representations on women on the audience/consumers of such films. Interviews with the audience were also done and results revealed that most Zimbabwean films celebrates negative stereotypes of women. Recommendations made are that filmmakers should create images that are gender neutral, images that empower both men and women in the society. Women filmmakers should also stop taking roles that negatively represent them in films.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter is the introduction of the study. It presents the background of the study, the statement of the problem, research aims, research objectives, and research questions, justification of study and limitations.

1.1 Background of the study

Film is a potent tool of communication with a large potential to cement or unsettle social relationships. The subtleness and pervasiveness of film messages, however results in the power of film being taken for granted. Film has always had an impact in shaping how the public thinks and how it views things. Films just like any other forms of media have a form of impact on the society be it religiously, socially and even politically. Film has thus been used for personal identity, integration and social interaction, information and entertainment. Through vicarious participation film can actually influence people's behaviour. Films provide information through visual-audio elements thereby manipulating or representing social, economic or political reality. They also enable the audience to relate themselves with characters' emotions, feelings, mood, attitude represented on the screen.

Film directors and writers have taken the power of films for granted and has represented women in ways which are sometimes different from reality. Such representations of women in films be it behind the scenes and on camera too differ due to different producers and directors. According to Polley cited in Block (2012) women are not getting to see the perspectives and voices that represent their population hence they are not getting depicted. Young women in Hollywood films are represented with their bodies constantly objectified and used in a sexual context. In films men and women are represented differently with men

most likely to be portrayed as leaders and are also identified by their occupational status whilst women characters are more likely to be identified by their marital status and unknown occupational status (Lauzen 2012). In Zimbabwe the case with the representation of women and men differs due to different directorial techniques and styles. There are differences in the way how male and female directors represent women hence the role of film in constructing gender relations is increasingly coming under critical lens in Zimbabwe.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Films and representational theories sometimes mislead the society about what exactly will be going on and at the same time having an impact in shaping and forcing the audience to grasp information the way the directors want it to be taken. Previous works that have been done argued that women are misrepresented in films both by male and female directors but no effort has been made to unravel the assumptions that lead to such representations. Therefore the research seeks to interrogate the influence of patriarchy on the representation of women in films.

1.3 Significance of the study

Since the inception of the Zimbabwean film industry, films produced have followed the patriarchal pattern of society and hence this study is significant as it will help show the influence this patriarchal pattern has had on the representation of women in Zollywood films. Films that show issues related to the female body such as health, beauty and sexuality, female identity, the significance of traditional cultural practices versus the consequences and effects of modernity, the interplay between the individual and the community in urban as well as rural Zimbabwean society.

1.4 Research objectives are to:

1. Investigate the way women are represented in *Sinners* and *I want a wedding dress*.

2. Reflect how female and male directors represent women in Zimbabwean films.

3. Find the possible impact of the representation of women in this manner.

1.5 Research questions

1. How are women represented in Zimbabwean films?

2. What influences such representation of women in Zimbabwean films?

1.6 Justification of the study

Many studies were carried out on the representation of women in Zimbabwean films. Other studies focused on the use of language and sexuality. However, not much has been done in interrogating the influence of patriarchy on the representation of women in Zimbabwean films. It is therefore the purpose of this study to take a closer look onto the effect of male dominance to the portrayal of women in selected films. The study focuses on two Zimbabwean films which are Sinners and I want a wedding dress. The two films have different directors and different directors imply different presentations and views of women and men in society.

1.7 Limitations

Limitations are those conditions beyond the control of the researcher that may place restrictions on the conclusions of the study and their application to other situations (Bell, 1991). The study has the following limitations:

1. The study will focus on only two films despite the large number of potential films in Zimbabwe which may not be representative of the issues on the ground.

2. The researcher's findings might not be generalised to the entire film productions in Zimbabwe as the study is to be confined to a small manageable sample.

3. The research will only be conducted and limited to Zimbabwean films in relation to the influence of patriarchy to the representation of women in films.

1.8 Research methods

In the study the researcher will use a qualitative approach. According to Hillena, (2005) qualitative approach refers to the understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern their behaviour. Qualitative approach will be used because it seeks to understand a given research problem from the perspectives of the local population it involves. It is also effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviours and social contexts of particular populations. Qualitative approach will be mainly used because it helps to understand human behaviour, helps to locate the observer in the world of creation, meaning it enables one to study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. It also enables one to be concerned with the practises and process of representation rather than the outcomes of the films. For that reason the researcher will focus on the processes that are occurring rather than the outcome of that process that is the researcher will be looking at the process of how women are used in films.

Some sampling procedures will be implied to the research. Sampling is basically the way a researcher obtains information about a population through questioning or interviews. A sample can be conducted that is only selected members of the population are questioned or interviewed as shall be in this case. Purposive sampling will be used to select films that will help project the argument in a poignant manner and address particular negative tendencies in the content. Patton (1990) defines purposive sampling as a method where subjects are

selected because of some characteristics. The advantage of purposive sampling is that it enables the researcher to select information-rich cases for in-depth analysis. Purposive sampling has however been accused of bias because subjects are carefully selected.

1 .9 Theoretical framework

The research will make use of the following theories:

- The male gaze concept

- Cultivation theory

- Representation theory

Cultivation theory

Cultivation theory is a theory propounded by Professor George Gerbner in the 1960s and it suggests that exposure to television, over time, subtly "cultivates" viewers' perceptions of reality. Gerbner and Gross (1972) asserted that television is a medium of the socialization of most people into standardized roles and behaviors. Its function is in a word, 'enculturation'. Within his analysis of cultivation, Gerbner (1998) draws attention to three entities—institutions, messages, and publics. Cultivation theory examines the long-term effects of television. "The primary proposition of cultivation theory states that the more time people spend 'living' in the television world, the more likely they are to believe social reality portrayed on television" (Cohen and Weimann 2000). Under this umbrella, perceptions of the world are heavily influenced by the images and ideological messages transmitted through popular television media. Gerbner (1998) compared the power of television to that of religion, stating that television was to modern society what religion once was in earlier times. This theory is being used because it helps analyse how the images of women in Sinners and I

want a wedding dress influence the audience's perceptions of the world and of women in general.

Representation theory

Media representation theory was developed by Hall (1997) and it refers to the construction in any medium (especially the mass media) of aspects of 'reality' such as people, places, objects, events, cultural identities and other abstract concepts. Such representations may be in speech or writing as well as still or moving pictures. All media products re-present the real world to us, they show us one version of reality, not reality itself. So, the theory of representation means thinking about how a particular person or group of people are being presented to the audience. A key concern in the study of representation is with the way in which representations are made to seem 'natural.' All texts, however realistic they may seem to be, are constructed representations rather than simply transparent reflections, recordings, transcriptions or reproductions of a pre-existing reality. However, representations which become familiar through constant re-use come to feel natural and unmediated. The theory is relevant because it deals with how a person or group of people are presented to the world and the study mainly focuses on how women are presented to the audience in Sinners and I want a wedding dress and how these representations are made to seem natural.

The male gaze

The male gaze is a concept coined by feminist film critic Mulvey (1975). It refers to the way visual arts are structured around a masculine viewer. It describes the tendency in visual culture to depict the world and women from a masculine point of view and in terms of men's attitudes. Mulvey (1975) posits that the gender power asymmetry is a controlling force in cinema and constructed for the pleasure of the male viewer, which is deeply rooted in patriarchal ideologies and discourses. The male gaze occurs when the camera puts the

audience into the perspective of a heterosexual man. It may linger over the curves of a woman's body. The woman is usually displayed on two different levels: as an erotic object for both the characters within the film and for the spectator who is watching the film. The man emerges as the dominant power within the created film fantasy. The woman is passive to the active gaze from the man. This adds an element of "patriarchal" order, and it is often seen in "illusionistic narrative film". Mulvey (1975) argues that, in mainstream cinema, the male gaze typically takes precedence over the female gaze, reflecting an underlying power asymmetry. Mulvey (1975) also postulates that the female gaze is the same as the male gaze. This means that women look at themselves through the eyes of men. The male gaze may be seen by a feminist either as a manifestation of unequal power between gazer and gazed, or as a conscious or subconscious attempt to develop that inequality. From this perspective, a woman who welcomes an objectifying gaze may be simply conforming to norms established to benefit men, thereby reinforcing the power of the gaze to reduce a recipient to an object. From the male perspective, a man possesses the gaze because he is a man, whereas a woman has the gaze only when she assumes the male gazer role when she objectifies others by gazing at them like a man.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter was an introductory to the research. It is a detailed chapter that provides the introduction, the background of study justifying why the research is worthy doing and introducing the reader to the topic and area of study locating these in appropriate background and logical argument of the chapter, statement of problem, research aims, research objectives, research questions, justification of study, research method, theoretical/conceptual framework and the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter explores works by other scholars who have researched on this subject. There is a rich source published and unpublished literature on issues concerning the influence of patriarchy to the representation of women in films. This chapter will therefore look at literature on:

1. International scholars

2. Regional scholars

3. Zimbabwean scholars

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.1 International scholars' perspective on the issue of patriarchy and the representation of women in films

Patriarchy has for long been operating in our society with men labelled as the first class citizens and women as second class citizens. Women are seen as second class citizens in a world where patriarchy rules and a 'defective part of humanity, having only developed as a mistake when the temperatures during conception was too low' (Weitz, 2003). Our day to day behaviours and attitudes are mostly defined by the patriarchal society we live in. Patriarchy has a tendency of influencing what happens in the society be it in schools, work places and in homes as well. Buckley (2013) avers that 'we see implications of our patriarchal world

stamped across our society, not only in our actions but in the endless artefacts to which we are exposed on both a conscious and subconscious basis'. Buckley's notion here is true because if we trace back to our societies our actions and the way we live heavily acknowledges the power of patriarchy upon us. Buckley (2013) also notes that it is our media that reflects and enables patriarchy. He says that the movie industry in particular plays a critical role in constructing gender roles and reflecting our cultural attitudes toward patriarchy. Furia and Beilby cited in Buckley (2013) postulates that producing representations of gender is, thus, deeply affected by prevailing historical, social and cultural context and ideologies which take form through the images, scenes, characters, dialogue and narrative, among other artistic technical elements that comprise a film. This then explains the reasons why most of the films that negatively represent women have the same traits but my question now is over all these decades of such representations of women in films cant there be a change on the way these women are portrayed and depicted in films? Buckley (2013) wrote about the influence of patriarchy on the representations of gender in Hollywood films however, my research is different from Buckley's because it interrogates the influence of patriarchy on the representations of women in Sinners and I want a wedding dress.

Shendurnikar (2012) in his research on Gender reflections in mainstream Hindi cinema shows that it is appropriate to examine this issue because women are a major chunk of the country's population and hence their portrayal on screen is crucial in determining the furtherance of already existing stereotypes in the society. Shendurnikar (2012) says that although there are existing stereotypes against women, the representation of women in films is worsening the situation. For this reason he goes on to question the realness of the woman characters in Hindi films since he points out that the values, ideals, principles and morals have dominated the frame-work in which films are placed. He goes on to say that women rather than being depicted as normal human beings are elevated to a higher position of being ideal who cannot

commit no wrong. Their grievances, desires, ambitions, feelings, perspectives are completely missing from the scene hence they are shown as not belonging to this worldly life. These representations of women in Hindi films are dominant because the narratives of Hindi cinema have undoubtedly been male dominated and male centric. Themes have been explored from a male audience's point of view. The heroine is always secondary to the hero, her role is charted out in context of any male character which is central to the script. She is devoid of any independent existence and her journey throughout the film is explored in relation to the male character. This kind of straight jacketing limits the woman's role to providing glamour, relief, respite and entertainment (Shendurnikar, 2012). Shendurnikar's (2012) research is different from mine because he focused on the misrepresentations of women in Hindi films and my research focuses on misrepresentations of women in Zimbabwean films.

'What we watch on the screen could and should be interpreted as bearing a latent, and partly hidden, meaning, reflecting the profound concerns of culture it emerges from, thus eliciting emotions, pleasure and pain.'(Sassatelli, 2011). Dutt (2014) adds that since the women's liberation movement, their roles in social, cultural, political and economic life has drastically changed and progressed for better seemingly giving women an equal footing to man in most aspects of life but the male dominance of the film industry, like many other industries around the world , is still evident in the 21st century. Films have been used for personal identity and integration hence they have some kind of impact on the way the public views the world. According to Dutt (2014) films are peppered with messages that reach the audience far and wide. These messages contribute to our perceptions of the world and our perception about women. People tend to believe that which they see in films forgetting that every reality that is brought to the screen is not based on real facts but on speculation. Dutt (2014) goes on to say that although women have made great strides in all aspects of life, their depiction on screen has been stuck to patriarchal stereotypes and normative ideologies that do not reflect reality.

Thus Dutt (2014) adds that through a visual analysis of the semiotics of women with Hollywood, he found that while some genres portray women as independent, powerful and agentive individuals, many still succumb to patriarchal constructions. Though we have come far in our depictions, we still have a long way to go before women are represented in a more realistic manner. Dutt here focused on how filmmakers still succumb to patriarchal constructions in their films leading to negative portrayals of women in Hollywood films. My research also looks at how patriarchal constructions still affect the representation of women in films the only difference is that it focuses on two Zimbabwean films which are Sinners and I want a wedding dress.

2.1.2 Regional scholars' perspectives on patriarchy and the representation of women in films

Lindewe Dovey (2012) an African feminist from South Africa says that from the earliest days of non-commercial, expressive African-authored film production on the continent in the 1960s, to the present moment, there has been a consistent stream of films that focus on strong women characters, powerful and positive matriarchal cultures and a critique of tyrannical, patriarchal cultures. It is important to recognise how rare it is in the history of cinema that filmmakers from a particular region have collectively paid attention to upholding the value of women and to critiquing patriarchy. African films such as *Black Girl (dir. Sembene, 1966) A World Apart (dir. Sembene, 1976) Flame (dir. Sinclair, 1996) Kare Kare Zvako (dir. Dangarembga, 2002*) to name only a few of relevance from the canon, one begins to sense how differently African directors have tended to centre women in their films.

Dovey (2012) goes further to say that the female characters in the classic African films listed above are unconventional, rounded, sometimes idiosyncratic, sometimes fighters and in the broadest most positive sense of the world: they are women prepared to go out to work to

support their husbands and families, they are willing to stand up for their beliefs and convictions, they are also women unafraid to engage in political combat or to critique patriarchy and corruption. She also adds that they are women who if they have no other choice, courageously sacrifice themselves to save their children and communities, they are women who speak out, stand up and even take up arms when they see necessary. "The aim of feminism has been to establish the humanity of women-women's fundamental equality to men where human rights are concerned" (Dovey 2012). Gloria Steinem cited in Dovey(2012) has noted in this vain, that feminism is much more a celebration of women's differences from one another than their similarities, since the ultimate goal of feminism is to have women recognised as unique individuals rather than as part of a stereotyped group. Dovey's research looked at how women filmmakers empower women in their films. The gap in Dovey's research is that she did not address the fact that other women filmmakers are still not making justice to the representations of women as in the case of I want a wedding dress.

Bisschoff (2009) cited Gant-Britton (1995) who said that the 1970s and 1980s saw the emergence of a number of female African novelists whose work challenged existing regimes of representation. Writers such as Mariama Ba and Aminata Sow Fall from Senegal and Tsitsi Dangarembga from Zimbabwe created complex female characters in their work, providing an alternative discourse to persisting patriarchal representations of African women. Even though progressive gender representations had also been created in the work of male writers such as Ousmane Sembene from Senegal, the work of these emerging female writers complemented the work of male writers as women writing about women rather than female characters and issues being represented by male writers (Bisschoff, 2009).

African film theorist Frank Ukadike (1999:194) as cited in Bisschoff (2009) states that African women filmmakers are facing the challenge of regaining for women the power of self-definition and self-representation. Bisschoff (2009) adds that according to Ukadike

(1999) the social and political currents in contemporary Africa involve new levels of critical awareness and new challenges to western intellectual hierarchies. Cinema when used as a tool in this process of awareness-raising, becomes a contested terrain in which conventional representations are challenged and African women's subjectivity reclaimed.

"Female filmmakers are taking part in the process of redefining identity and reclaiming subjectivity for African women. This emerging African women's cinema aims to revise stereotypical western representations and critique persisting traditional patriarchal structures through creating alternative representations of African womanhood- a cinema of advocacy, education and awareness-raising through documentation, story-telling and myth-making." (Bisschoff, 2009).

She adds that African women filmmakers address a multitude of themes related to their livelihood in their work. They explore identity in which filmmaking becomes a form of self-expression, they examine male-female and female-female relationships, they delve into the concerns of African nation hood and issues related to the female body are investigated. The tension between tradition and modernity an issue which is of crucial importance to their filmic representations. Bisschoff (2009) continues to aver that their work regularly challenges stereotypical representations of African women as silent victims on the one hand, and 'mother of the nation' and 'backbone of their society' on the other hand, depicting instead the diversity of African womanhood. Ayari as cited in Bisschoff (2009) uses the Peuhl proverb, "a man cannot imagine what a woman can do", to support her convictions that representations of women by male filmmakers will always be incomplete, partial and flawed. In her research Bischoff focused on the fact that women filmmakers deal with themes related to their livelihood and they challenge stereotypes against women but her research did not address the influences of patriarchy on the portrayal of women. This marks the difference between Bischoff's research and my study because it seeks to address this gap.

2.1.3 Zimbabwean scholars' perspectives on patriarchy and the representation of women

Mangena (2013) in his research postulated that Zimbabwean women seek to write differently the official historiography and contest the exclusion and misrepresentation of woman experience in mostly male-authored works. In this context these narratives become 'new discourses that recover the repressed narratives of women' (Mandivavarira and Muponde 2005). In this respect, women writers resist social silencing and place women at the centre of their textual representation and represented women's resistance lies in 'their refusal to live their lives only in response to oppression'.

In spite of the many "gender specific deterrents" that women in Zimbabwe have to triumph over, the independent nation brought an increased publishing literary activity (Primorac 2006) and women began to let their voices be heard. Mangena (2013) says that Dangarembga has since made an immense contribution to Zimbabwean literature and film as a novelist and a filmmaker. She has had a lot of publication and has also produced a number of films. In all her creative works Dangarembga protests against various forms of oppression as they affect black women's existence. In *Nervous Conditions*, the battle for black women in a colonial state has two dimensions. Like men, they suffer the colonial burden but over and above that, they have to deal with patriarchal domination. Some of the beliefs contested in nervous conditions include the belief that did not prioritise the educating of girls.

In his study Mangena (2013) also examines Masitera's works and he said that Masitera though not well known has written interesting works that belong to the women tradition. In 1996, she published *Militant Shadow*, a collection of poems that militate against emotional and physical exploitation of black women as mothers, wives and children in a male

dominated society. In *Now I Can Play*, Masitera contests the various forms of women oppression. Mangena (2013) realised that Zimbabwean women have peculiar elements of oppression that affect them and that the women writers are forced to protest against these in their writings. Primarily Zimbabwean women writers write against patriarchal dominance and history that glosses over women existence and sensibilities. Mangena (2013) says that unacknowledged women experience is a result of silence imposed upon them by patriarchal domination.

Be that as it may, Mangena (2013) says that the Africana womanist theory also insists on genuine sisterhood as a 'catalyst by which other Africana womanist qualities are advanced to a higher level' and is defined as 'one of the key components for human survival, that the security and harmony of women undergird the strength and structure of society and all its participants' (Hudson-Weems 2004, 66-67). Yet in represented reality women are not always capable of maintaining genuine sisterhood amongst themselves, not only in Zimbabwe but the world over. Hudson-Weems (2014) acknowledges the animosity that normally exists among women. She asserts, "Although we would like to see more sisterhood among women this ideal unfortunately is not the norm" (2004, 70). In as much as Zimbabwean women have to deal with other forces that work against them enmity has always existed amongst themselves.

Chitando's (2011) thesis argues that prevailing images of women in Zimbabwean society and literature are incapacitating. Male authors have been portraying women in disempowering ways as loose, dangerous, weak and dependent on men. Chitando (2011) presumed that women authors can do better in their depiction of female characters thus she did a research to investigate whether female authors differ in their representations of female characters. Her study also applies the notion of agency as a means of evaluating the extent to which women employ nonconformist acts in order to undercut patriarchy and other oppressive socially

25

constructed ideologies. Chitando (2011) notes that patriarchal societies have always felt the need to control women and their sexuality. Patriarchy has always wanted and tried to put women under control especially the assertive ones. They use disempowering images of women in order to destroy their dignity and confidence.

Gaidzanwa (1985) cited in Chitando (2011) suggests that in Zimbabwean male authored literature, women are either wives or mothers, and are portrayed as loose and dangerous. This descriptor of women as danger is not extended to men. She says: "There are no cases where women get away with adultery, promiscuity and disobedience without incurring drastic punishment. This is in contrast with men who may suffer some hardship for their wrongdoing but their punishment is not as drastic as that meted out to women. Men have wives to go back to after committing adultery, brutalising their families or deserting them. These men's function is usually to highlight the indecency and evil nature of the central female characters." Gaidzanwa 1985; 87-88. Male authors show images of women that can no longer be fixed. In other words reversing negative images of women in literature creates a new culture and empowered images of women deliberately created and depicted as a counterpoint to destructive tendencies in male and female writings. Moyana (2006) cited in Chitando (2011) elaborates on this point when she makes reference to the educated, economically empowered, sensitive, selfless and accommodating Mrs Gwaze in Mungoshi's short story, *"Did you have to go that far?"* (1997). In Mrs Gwaze, one witnesses a new breed of women redefining themselves to counteract negative predispositions. Moyana's exploration of Mungoshi's stories is insightful in so far as it reveals images of passive as well as assertive women in literature. This characterization of women is significant because as Kristeva (1985) notes, women's marginality can help them enhance their ability to subvert oppressive systems even by those women that men think are passive and, therefore, underdogs of society. This

moral economy of resistance that women possess is often glossed over in analysis that search for women's agency in open rebellious acts only.

As noted above, Gaidzanwa (1985) cited in Chitando (2011) drew attention to the negative images of women in Zimbabwean literature. According to her, the dominant image of a woman, especially in the urban context, is that she is a prostitute or loose. For Gaidzanwa, "There is no distinction made between lovers, mistresses, concubines and prostitutes. As long as a woman has sex with a man who is not her husband, she is held to be prostitute, implicitly or explicitly" (1985:12). Gaidzanwa (1985) reveals the patriarchal bias in most works by male authors. This had the effect of encouraging women writers to take up the challenge as outlined above.

According to Zuidberg, McFadden and Chigudu (2014) cited in Muwonwa (2011), Zimbabwe is a patriarchal society, historically and culturally characterized by the exclusion of women from participation in the major decision-making structures and processes, and from ownership of the critical productive resources. Muwonwa (2011) is of the view that The National Policy acknowledges that access to information is critical to enable individuals and communities to make decisions about their lives. The policy highlights that the media continues to portray women negatively and it continues to perpetuate cultural, social, political and economic stereotypes, attitudes and practices. However, what is lacking in the policy are tangible strategies to transform the media and make it gender sensitive in output by training media personnel, ensuring the inclusion of gender and media modules in media training institutions and facilitating the positive portrayal of women by the media to fight negative cultural practices and traditions in order to enhance equality among women and men. Mawarire and Nyakuni (2007) cited in Muwonwa (2011) argue that whatever the authorities choose to do or not do, becomes policy in the absence of a written document. Such policy gaps are responsible for the damaging and stereotypical representations of women in media

programs. The programing at ZTV does not show much gender sensitivity and balance but continues to mirror and mainstream male figures as the standard citizens of the nation, to reflect patriarchal dominance. Mangena and Chitando focused on the negative portrayal of women in literature texts by male authors. Their arguments are similar to those in my study just that this study now looks at the same issue but analysing films not books.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to elicit the various meanings embedded in the languages and images of the films I want a wedding dress and Sinners the following theories will be explored;

1. Cultivation theory

2. Representation theory

3. Male gaze theory

2.2.1 Cultivation theory

Gerbner's (1960) Cultivation theory suggests that exposure to television, over time, subtly "cultivates" viewers' perceptions of reality. Gerbner and Gross assert: "Television is a medium of the socialization of most people into standardized roles and behaviors. Its function is in a word, 'enculturation'. Within his analysis of cultivation, Gerbner (1960) draws attention to three entities—institutions, messages, and publics. Cultivation theory examines the long-term effects of television. "The primary proposition of cultivation theory states that the more time people spend 'living' in the television world, the more likely they are to believe social reality portrayed on television" (Cohen and Weimann 2000). Under this umbrella, perceptions of the world are heavily influenced by the images and ideological messages transmitted through popular television media. Gerbner (1960) compared the power of television to that of religion, stating that television was to modern society what religion once

was in earlier times. Cultivation theory is valid in the study because it helps into examining how Sinners and I want a wedding dress affects the way the audience think and understand things after watching the films. It also helps the researcher in examining how the films affects the audience's perspectives of life and of women in general. The theory thus helps the researcher in identifying the impact of films in shaping public opinion.

2.2.2 Representation theory

 Hall's (1997) representation theory refers to the construction in any medium (especially the mass media) of aspects of 'reality' such as people, places, objects, events, cultural identities and other abstract concepts. Such representations may be in speech or writing as well as still or moving pictures. All media products re-present the real world to us, they show us one version of reality, not reality itself. So, the theory of representation means thinking about how a particular person or group of people are being presented to the audience. A key concern in the study of representation is with the way in which representations are made to seem 'natural.' All texts, however realistic they may seem to be, are constructed representations rather than simply transparent reflections, recordings, transcriptions or reproductions of a pre-existing reality. However, representations which become familiar through constant re-use come to feel natural and unmediated. This theory is therefore useful to the study because it will help the researcher analyse how women are represented in Sinners and I want a wedding dress. It also helps in analyzing the reasons why the directors of sinners and I want a wedding dress constructed images that can affect the viewer's perceptions of women. More so, this theory enables the researcher to show that films are just a medium used by filmmakers to stand between the real and the spectator and to show how the director's cultural background can influence his work and how the content of his/her films will be determined by his culture.

2.2.3 The male gaze

The male gaze is a concept coined by feminist film critic Mulvey (1975). It refers to the way visual arts are structured around a masculine viewer. It describes the tendency in visual culture to depict the world and women from a masculine point of view and in terms of men's attitudes. Mulvey (1975) posits that the gender power asymmetry is a controlling force in cinema and constructed for the pleasure of the male viewer, which is deeply rooted in patriarchal ideologies and discourses. The male gaze occurs when the camera puts the audience into the perspective of a heterosexual man. It may linger over the curves of a woman's body. The woman is usually displayed on two different levels: as an erotic object for both the characters within the film and for the spectator who is watching the film. The man emerges as the dominant power within the created film fantasy. The woman is passive to the active gaze from the man. This adds an element of "patriarchal" order, and it is often seen in "illusionistic narrative film". The male gaze may be seen by a feminist either as a manifestation of unequal power between gazer and gazed, or as a conscious or subconscious attempt to develop that inequality. From this perspective, a woman who welcomes an objectifying gaze may be simply conforming to norms established to benefit men, thereby reinforcing the power of the gaze to reduce a recipient to an object. From the male perspective, a man possesses the gaze because he is a man, whereas a woman has the gaze only when she assumes the male gazer role when she objectifies others by gazing at them like a man. This theory links with the study because women in Sinners and I want a wedding dress are used as objects of desire for the male character and they are given passive roles and the male characters are the ones who are the dominant powers in the films. It also helps in analyzing how patriarchy manipulates and consume the images of women through the female body with its curves and cleavages.

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher looked at different literature done by other scholars which is somehow related to the influence of patriarchy on the representation of women in films. A theoretical framework that guides the research was also done examining the representation theory, cultivation theory and the male gaze.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS

3.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a detailed account of the research methods that are to be implied to the research. Research methods are the techniques and procedures used in the research process. In this study the researcher will use a qualitative approach.

3.1 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

3.1.1Qualitative approach

Qualitative approach refers to the understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern their behaviour (Hillema 2005). Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. Qualitative research is a type of scientific research which seeks answers to questions, systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the questions, collects evidence and produces findings that were not determined in advance. It also seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves. Qualitative methods are also effective in identifying intangible factors such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity and religion whose role in the research issue may not be readily apparent.

3.1.2 Advantages of Qualitative Approach

It helps to understand human behaviour, helps to locate the observer in the world of creation meaning, it enables one to study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. It also enables one to be concerned with the practises and process of representation rather than the outcomes of the films. For that reason the researcher focused on the processes that are occurring rather than the outcome of that process that is the researcher will be looking at the process of how women are represented in films and how patriarchy has influenced such representations.

Qualitative is also crucial for use when studying human phenomena it give room to the researcher to evaluate findings based on personal interpretation, respondents' observation and understanding of meaning of the language and images used by directors in filmmaking.

3.1.3 Strengths of qualitative analysis

According to Bernard (1995) qualitative analysis has these strengths:

1. It allows depth of understanding.

2. It permits flexibility. This means that it can allow less formal relationship between researcher and participant.

3. Field study does not require much preparation so one can always engage into field whenever the occasion arises.

4. Since it comprise of field study it is inexpensive for instance one can conduct this with only a pen and a paper.

5. It uses open-ended questions and probing which gives participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses, as quantitative methods do.

3.1.4 Weakness of qualitative analysis

According to Bernard (1995) qualitative analysis has the following weaknesses:

1. It cannot cover large populations; it is not a good way of arriving at statistical conclusions for large groups.

2. It is not trust worthy because it is based on personal observation.

3. It lacks reliability.

3.2 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

3.2.1 Face-to-face Interviews

To collect the data the researcher will use interviews in order to explore what other people think about the influence of patriarchy on the representation of women in Zimbabwean films.

The Oxford dictionary (1991) defines an interview as a conversation in which information is elicited. It is therefore a conversation between two or more people where questions are asked by the interviewer to elicit facts or statements from the interviewee. The researcher will include some quota sampling a method which will help decide while designing the study how many people with which characteristics to include as interviewees. Characteristics might include age, place of residence, gender, class, profession, marital status etc. This criteria will allow the researcher to focus on people she thinks would be most likely to experience, know about, or have insights into the research topic. The researcher will then go into the immediate community and find people who fit these criteria.

The researcher will have interviews with students at the Midlands State University and these will be one on one interviews that will probe and elicit detailed and fined answers to the posed questions. For the interview the questions will not necessarily be planned the interviews will just go on like a normal conversation in which the one being interviewed guides the direction of the interview.

3.2.2 Reasons for choosing interviews as methods of data collection

1. Data is collected from the primary source hence issues are investigated in a depth way

2. The process of interviewing is flexible and one collects large amounts of data.

3. Interviewers can use illustration of the things discussed about such as pictures or images and observe the reactions of the responded and their behaviour. (Bernard 1995)

The researcher will focus on visual and verbal presentation of women in selected Zimbabwean films. The focus will be on the participants' perceptions and experiences and the way they make sense of their lives through the influence of patriarchy on the representation of women in films.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the research methods and methodology which will be used in the collection of data and the analysis of the study. The method of data analysis was described giving the reasons for choosing it, its strengths and weaknesses. The method of data collection was also looked at giving the definition of interviews and the reasons for choosing them.

CHAPTER FOUR: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter will look at the Rooftop Promotions' core business. Rooftop Promotions is the company that produced the film Sinners by Daves Guzha. The chapter is going to focus on the organisation's background history, mission statement, objectives, funding mechanisms and the organization's operations.

4.1 Brief history of Rooftop Promotions

Rooftop promotions is an arts promotion and management organisation whose products and services range from performing arts and music production and promotion to audio video production and distribution as well as events and projects coordination and management. Inspired and driven by the vision of its founding producer Daves Guzha in 1986, Rooftop promotions has evolved dramatically in the last 20 years repositioning and realigning with the dynamic times to serve the arts and society more purposefully and more effectively. From inception the organisation has remained sworn to the fundamental objectives of arts promotion and development guided by ethics and principles that underpin astute corporate governance.

In the company's transformation, from a one-man outfit two decades back, Rooftop promotions have assumed a fairly large and determined organisational outlook with

formalised corporate structures designed to meet the challenges of a dynamic society and the increasingly developing art. Over the years the arts initiative promotion and management of the organisation has grown from the civic related programs and projects to exploring some of the hitherto unchartered waters for us and creating commercial portfolios that can tackle socio-economic challenges through the engagement of the whole spectrum of the arts.

In that endeavour the organisation has created five business units whose product service market focuses on the promotion and development of artistic initiatives and in the process influencing policy through community mobilization. The company's core business units that define today's Rooftop promotions and shape and influence our tomorrow's vision are: Theatre-In-The-Park; Technical Support Services; Marketing and Publicity; Special Events and Film (www.rooftoppromotions.org).

4.2 Mission Statement

Rooftop Vision: To be southern Africa's leading provider of home-grown artistic initiatives by   (2020).

Rooftop Mission: We promote and develop artistic initiatives. Through the encouragement of free artistic expression, we give voice to community concerns.

Rooftop Motto: It's Not Just Art…It's A Way of Life!

Core values: customer satisfaction, cinema excellence, innovation, teamwork and integrity

4.3 Objectives

➢ To promote and develop home grown artistic initiatives.

➢ To encourage post production discussion platform for our consumers.

➢ To strive for freedom of expression through our productions as we speak for the voiceless.

➢ To influence policy through community mobilisation

➢ To be a one stop shop in the arts industry inclusive of all arts by the year 2020

4.4 Table 1: Company's Organogram

```
                    ROOFTOP BOARD
                          |
                          v
                      PRODUCER
                          |
        ------------------------------------------
        |                 |                       |
     PROJECTS           MEDIA               ACCOUNTANT
        |                                         |
        |                                  ADMINISTRATION
        |                                    ASSISTANT
        |                                         |
        v                                         v
```

RECEIPTIONIST

INTERNS
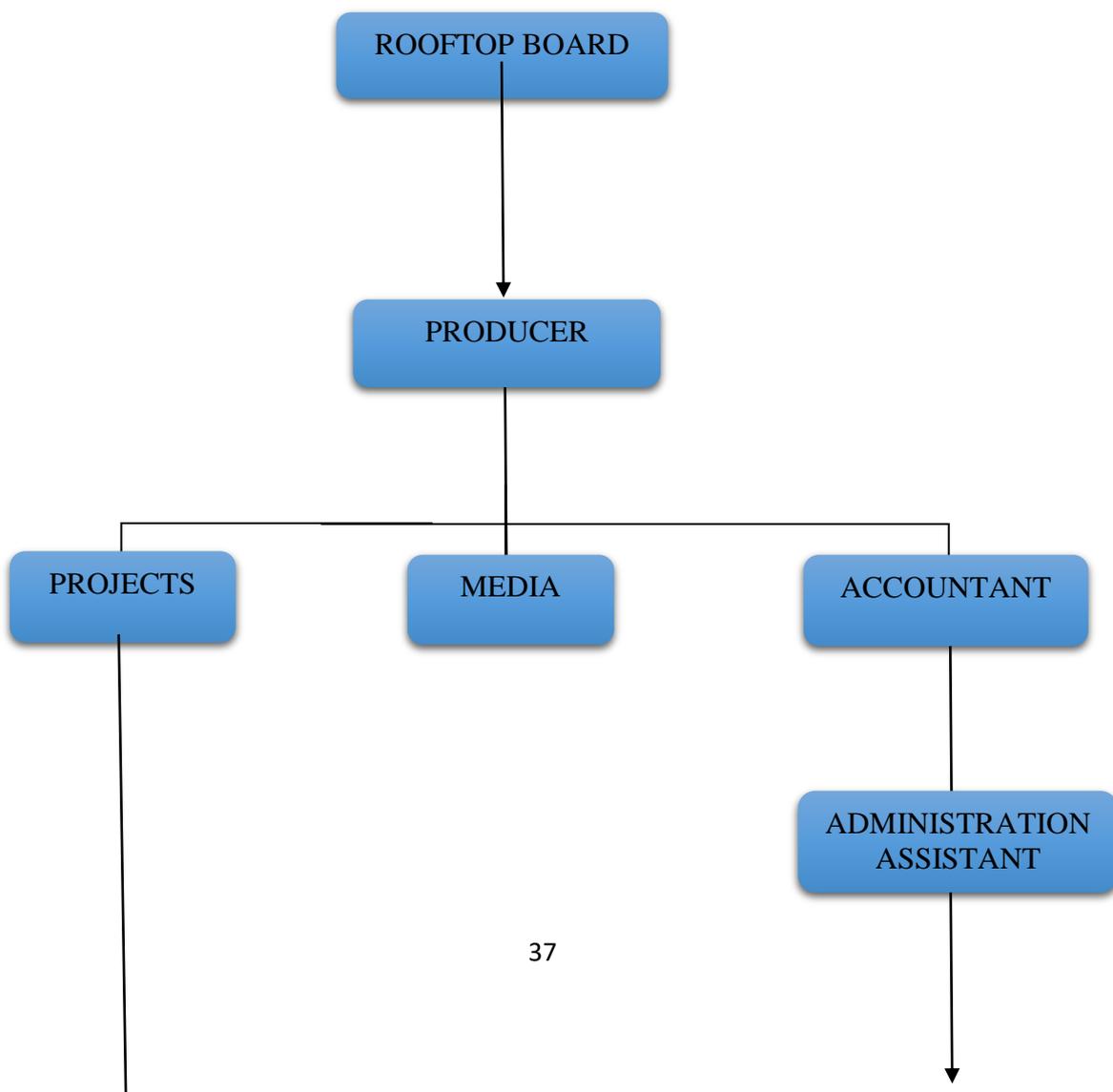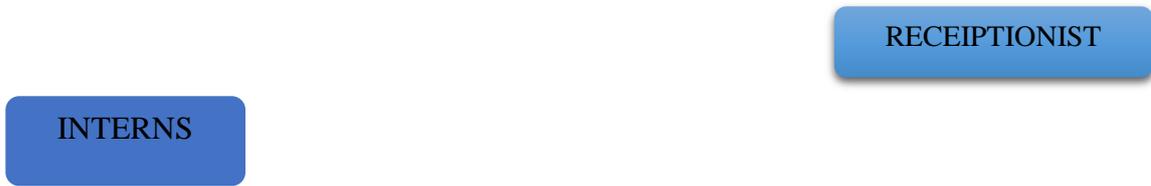
Fig. 1

Source: *bvumavaranda dikito*

4.5 Principal services

Rooftop promotions is a leading arts promotion and management organization whose products and services range from performing arts and music production and promotion to audio video production and distribution as well as events and projects coordination and management.

4.5.1 Theatre

Theatre is the core business of Rooftop promotions with the famous theatre in the park. They are working on the designs of the new 500 sitter theatre in the park venue which is of international standards endowed with the state of art facilities which will be opened soon in Harare gardens. Theatre in the park is a vibrant venue for artists and the general public where artists converge to share information and exchange ideas and interests and have a sense of belonging to, measured by, among others, increasing numbers of artists patronizing the place as members. It is a vibrant and self-sustaining venue that is able to have resources revolves for growth and sustainability and is run and managed by rooftop promotions.

Theatre in the park comprises of the following: a Performance Space where artists can do live performances before audiences, a Sitting area for 500 audience members. Theatre in the park acts as a meeting hub for artists and the general public where they meet to share ideas,

exchange knowledge, information, publicize their shows and productions, get direct feedback from their audience for perfection and even record their productions.

4.5.2 Film

Rooftop promotions has a film department Creative Native offering services including films(adapted from theatrical plays, theatre films and short films), documentaries, talk shows, music videos, corporate videos, event documentation among others. Some of the films made were Positive, Life and Sinners which won a NAMA award for the best actress 2013. Rooftop promotions is also working on another new feature film titled Wedding Night.

4.5.3 Technical support services

The product and line services line for the unit is responsible for hiring out of equipment: film, multimedia, duplication of DVDs, editing and sound projectors.

4.5.4 Funding mechanism

Rooftop promotions is a donor funded organization. Some of its funders are Cultural fund, Global fund, IOM and HIVOS.

4.6 SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Successes

> ➢ Construction of the new dedicated 500 sitter theatre in the park venue.

> ➢ Remained functional in face of the harsh financial challenges

> ➢ The evasion of cessation or downsizing of the organisation due to funding constraints after the closure of the major source of income can be attributed to special events. This unit managed to bring in funds that kept the organisation afloat.

Challenges

> ➢ The closure of theatre in the park.

> ➢ Getting a lease from the city council was no walk in the park.

> ➢ Persecutions of touring crew

> ➢ Lack of donor funding

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter mainly focused on the organizational analysis that is the structure of the organization (organogram), background information of the company, organization's background history, mission statement and vision statement and how the organization operates.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses all the data gathered in the field through qualitative analysis. Face-to-face interviews were used to collect data. The aim of the research was to interrogate the influence of patriarchy to the representation of women in the films I Want a Wedding Dress and Sinners. The objective of this research was therefore to assess I want a wedding dress and Sinners' role in the representation of women and to assess the extent in which patriarchy has influenced the representation of women in these films as they play an important role in influencing the socio-cultural values, norms, practices and attitudes of the public.

5.1 SYNOPSIS OF THE FILM I WANT A WEDDING DRESS

I Want a Wedding Dress is the story of young Kundisai Sande, who desperately wants to get married but finds herself in a sexual network with disastrous consequences. Her boyfriend

Terry deserts her, only to find himself in the same sexual network. Mahachi, the successful, promiscuous businessman who seduces Kundisai, brings infection to the marriage bed. In the midst of their misery, the players in the sexual network come to realize that only love can conquer all. But not before a number of questions rear their sickly heads and threaten to derail all the plans they have for love and life. Can love overcome HIV? Can love overcome infidelity? Can love overcome rejection? Can love overcome mistrust? The rest of the film takes us on a bittersweet journey where some of these questions are answered and others are left simmering in our minds.

5.2 SYNOPSIS OF THE FILM SINNERS

Sinners is a notorious Zimbabwean story about prostitutes who have been lured to a good business deal which turns them into female rapists. The title of the film is appropriate because of all the prostitution, adultery, betrayal and taboo that happens in the film. The women in the film turns to prostitution as they try to survive on their own because they are victims of poverty, child abuse, domestic violence and peer pressure. Each and every one of the women in this film has a story to tell however the story revolves around Samantha who is a victim of child marriage, domestic abuse and peer pressure. The film through Samantha enlightens one on the day-to-day problems of a girl child especially those in university. Samantha is a rural girl who is betrothed to an older man and a university student who finds herself in a complicated love triangle. Conflict between tradition and modernity is rife in the film. She is visited by her maternal aunt who asks her to go back to the village to carry out the forced wifely duties to the old man. In the film innocent men, hitchhikers are offered transport, driven to a secluded place and gang raped. Sinners completes the cycle of gender violence starting from child marriages perpetrated by tradition, domestic violence, sexual abuse on women, children and men.

5.3 OBSERVATIONS

Representations of women in I want a wedding dress and Sinners

5.3.1 Objectification of women

Women in films are presented as objects of adoration often with unusual beauty. This has resulted in the sexualisation of women where they are presented as 'playthings' under the control of men or simply as sex objects. Sexualisation of women in films entails accentuation of a woman's looks and body parts such as thighs, breasts, legs and backside. Inevitably women are presented in restricted sex roles such as mistresses, girlfriends, sex partners, prostitutes or victims of sexual exploitation. Thus in I want a wedding dress and Sinners women are scantily clad thereby satisfying what Laura Mulvey (1975) call the Male gaze and symbolizes to be looked-at-ness meaning that the female character is the object of desire of the male character and she in return enjoys being the centre of attraction. For example in I want a wedding dress Chido is always inadequately dressed and finds pleasure in being looked at by men. In Sinners, almost all the female characters are presented in a shameful way with their bodies exposed. This has a negative effect to the women who watch these films as they cannot find any role models to identify with instead these misrepresentations of women in films leads to continued stereotyping of women hence women will always be seen as mere objects of desire and play things for men. It also leads to violence against women and it disempowers women instead of empowering them. Women's beauty and body parts are accentuated more than their personalities in films suggesting that they are valued more for their physical appearance then their intellect, attitude and behavior. There is a lot of focus on the body shape, hips, lips and less on personality. Continuous consumption of films that demean women may with time cultivate contemptuous attitudes against women or even encourage violence against women.

The pictures above shows women in sinners and I want a wedding dress scantily clad

5.3.2 Women and material things

Women are also presented as parasitic beings with an obsession for material things. The desire for money and material things forces women to get into sexual relationships and prostitution. Kundi in I want a wedding dress finds herself in a sexual relationship with Mahachi because she desperately needed a wedding dress and her boyfriend could not afford. On the other hand her mother was pressurizing her saying that she warned her that her boyfriend was poor and was not right for her ('…andina kukuudza here kuti kamukomana kako kamurombo hakaite…'). She is also obsessed with material things hence she wants a rich husband for her daughter. This kind of presentation is unjust to women and it can also affect their relationships in the real world. Men can have negative attitudes towards women and view them as people who get into relationships for money yet in reality some women are financially stable and they do not love for money. These representations also make the world view women as people who does not like working but instead prefer to sale their bodies to get a living. These presentations also have an effect on women because some of them especially young girls can think that their bodies are sexual objects. The films dramatizes the dilemma of morally bankrupt women who has an obsession with material things. Patriarchy influenced the representations of women here because men are viewed as the providers and women as the spenders.

5.3.3 Women as victims of violence

There is a significant amount of representation of women as victims of various forms of violence. The levels of violence vary from subtle emotional violence to outright physical subjugation. In Sinners and I want a wedding dress women are verbally, physically, emotional and sexually abused. Physical violence is a form of ideological disciplining or controlling of women (MacDonnell, 1986). Thus Simba in Sinners beats his ex-wife in public when she tells him that he never satisfied her in bed. In I want a wedding dress Mahachi also beats Kundi when she says that she is no longer interested in their relationship hence she wants out.

The picture shows Simba in Sinners beating his ex-wife in public

Women are also presented as victims of verbal abuse in these films as they are called all forms of names by men. Mahachi in I want a wedding dress verbally abused Kundi calling her all sorts of names ('…kapfambi kasina musoro…kahure'). Sexual violence is also prevalent in the two films. Women are sexually abused meaning to say they are forced to do sexual things. In Sinners Samantha is forced to have sex with Sekuru Shaya against her will. She is shown in the film struggling to free herself from Sekuru Shaya. In I want a wedding dress Mahachi tries to force his wife to have sex without protection when she wanted protected sex. These representations gives men power to trample on women through sexual abuse and violence as they can get away with all these bad acts as shown in the films. In the two films women are abused but not one woman has the courage to report the case to the police.

The picture shows Samantha in Sinners struggling to free herself from Sekuru Shaya

5.3.4 Women as cunning

Moreover, in the two films women are also presented as evil beings. They are projected as agents of immorality, vectors, husband snatchers, loose and dishonesty. The association of women with evil deeds creates the impression that women are the root of all evil or that they are inseperable from evil. Hence the title of the films sinners tries to show that women are indeed the evil ones given all the taboo, prostitution and betrayal that is in the film and being done by men. The director carefully created his own reality and made sure that every person who saw the film Sinners would agree that women are full of evil. Hence the concept of Stuart Hall's representation theory which says that all media houses re-represent reality to the audience and make those representations seem natural. In sinners the evil nature of women is shown when the women give lifts to innocent man and then gang rape them. The way the rape scenes are presented is in such a way that the audience will feel compassion towards the vulnerable men and hate the women forgetting the fact that men are getting their reward for raping women.

The picture shows Kere raping a man

5.3.5 Women and HIV/AIDS (vectors and victims)

In I want a wedding dress women are presented as vectors of HIV/AIDS. This is because most women in I want a wedding dress hop from one relationship to the other and some are even two timers who seduce innocent men into sleeping with them. This is shown through Chido who is in a sexual relationship with Mahachi but seduces innocent Teri into sleeping with her. Be that as it may, women are also presented as victims of HIV/AIDS and their gullibility makes them vulnerable. For example in I want a wedding dress Kundi is tricked by Mahachi and he infected her with the virus this is because she was so naïve she had unprotected sex with him. In sinners kere's sister was tricked into having unprotected sex because the boy told her that he was not going to put it all and she got infected too. Representations of women being vectors of HIV/AIDS has led to the pandemic being given a female face. For example a 2006 calendar that said 'women, girls, HIV/AIDS' implying that those three are the same involve yourself with a woman and you are dead but in reality not only women are spreaders of HIV/AIDS. In other words in the two films HIV/AIDS is framed in such a way that everyone who watches the films believe that indeed women are the

46

perpetrators of the pandemic. Even the color of their skimpy dresses have meaning for example the reds and blacks which signifies danger.

Kere and her sister receiving HIV/AIDS test results

5.3.6 Patriarchy and women in Sinners and I want a wedding dress

The films *I want a wedding dress* and *Sinners* represented women as people who perpetually depend on men. In *I want a wedding dress* the women are shown fighting for attention from the same man even if they know he is married. Vicky even goes to the extent of using juju so that Mahachi can only see her and stay by her side. She also strives and wishes to be Mrs. Mahachi even if she knows that he is married. Her statement to Mahachi when she says, '…uchandiroora riini ndodawo kunzi mai Mahachi' confirms women's desperation and dependency on men. Mai Mahachi is shown as a subservient and passive woman who remains in marriage even if she knows that her husband is promiscuous. She even asks Mahachi that you afraid that you will be left by your other women if you don't go to work (…mukutya kut mowana ana mainini vatorwa…). This shows that women's actions are somehow influenced by patriarchy because mai Mahachi goes to work she can sustain herself but she continues to be in an abusive marriage since patriarchy gives men all power to do have many wives as they can. This shows women as mere second class citizens who are

47

dependent on men. More so, women are given jobs that will always make them less powerful to men for example men are accountants and business men yet women are dress makers and vendors. These presentations makes other women in the society feel that their place is at home and they must always be subservient to men.

Moreover, in the same film dependency on men is also shown on Chido's character who plainly tell Teri that she needs someone who can take care of her not someone who is always broke(…ndoda munhu anokwanisa kundichengeta…nekuchoboka kwaunogara wakaita ungazvigina iwe.). This also brings out the infantilisation of women and the materialistic nature of women in the film. Infantilisation means that women are seen as children who desperately need someone to take care of them and their materialistic nature is shown in their love for money or their love for rich men. The power of patriarchy on women is also shown when Mahachi says '…unotoita zvandinoda…yangu mari haienderi mahara'. This shows that because men have the money women will forever be vulnerable to men. They cannot do what they want but what the men wants. Thus through these films dependency becomes a justification for the ideological subjection of women. Words and images in Sinners and I want a wedding dress demonstrate patriarchal hegemony at work. The images of women in these films do not inspire hope among women and could possibly lead to reduced self-esteem among girls.

In the film *Sinners* patriarchy also affects women and its effects on women influence their actions and behavior. In this film every women is one way or the other affected by patriarchy and resorts to prostitution for a living. Samantha a university student enters into the prostitution business to free herself from family bondage. She says that she was born to Sekuru Shaya's wife ('…ndakazvarirwa Sekuru Shaya, he has been taking care of our family since then and I am his wife in return…I figured if I can raise money for my mother's memorial service I would be freed from this family bondage. Samantha's character shows that men abuse women to suit their own needs. Hence this shows that patriarchy influenced Samantha into prostitution so that she cannot depend on a man again. She even rejects Romeo's marriage proposal because she doesn't want to be bonded to a man again. Patie also advices Samantha that life is all about choices hence one can choose "to move from one source of bondage to another" thus they can do little things to survive and be independent women than depend on men. The film sinners shows the abuses girls undergo because of patriarchy and how women fail to fight for each other but instead supports patriarchy. Samantha's aunt is shown convincing her niece to come back to the village and perform her

duties as wife to a man who already has five wives or else her little sister is given to him as a wife too. She does not even see anything wrong with that instead she supports the stupid patriarchal values. This shows that women cannot stand up against patriarchy but just continue being submissive to men.

More so, mai Chido's character also shows that even if women want to free themselves from men if a rich man wants to marry they can do it for the money. This shows that women are so obsessed with material things even if they want to be independent. Her statement to Vero's side kick shows that she even depended on her husband but he abused her hence she says,'…I had a boss I gave him two children…I don't need a boss but kana aine mari well I can do it for the price.'

5.4 DATA ANALYSIS FROM INTERVIEWS

The researcher interviewed students who watched the films sinners and I want a wedding dress asking them to comment on the representations of women in the films and the assumptions that lead to such representations.

From the interviews the majority of the interviewees agreed that women in the films are presented in a derogatory way. More comments were made on the issue of costume and on the dependency of women on men yet in reality it is not actually true. In the first interview Hybatroy Muchabaiwa commented on the character of Kundi and said that through this character women are presented as people who cannot make firm decisions hence they are portrayed as a confused lot and as they go back and forth on their decisions they end up getting into trouble. The interviewee went on to justify the representations of women in the films saying that they are just a reflection of reality because women now walk around dressed in worse clothes than those in *Sinners* and *I want a wedding dress*.

The second interviewee who was interviewed by the researcher said that prostitution has been attached to women hence women are the ones viewed as commercial sex workers yet there are other men who are commercializing sex 'ngochani' being paid. The student also commented on the title sinners saying that sinners and characterization of women means that women are sinners so it shows that it is a man who is giving a certain bias towards women. The student is also of the view that if it was a woman who directed the movie she would not

give such negative images to women hence from what happens in the movie it shows that there is some influence coming from patriarchy.

In another interview Mrs Zhou said that the film sinners was directed by a man and that alone means that men as representations of patriarchy will definitely utilize the opportunity to cement and enhance the role of patriarchy in society. Even if the male director attempt to emancipate women in their films, they will always have a misinformed point of view in terms of the challenges women face under patriarchal dominance. The student went on to say that the director might have represented women in such a manner because he comes from an African/Zimbabwean setting which is predominantly patriarchal and thus they will always be biased/oblivious to the ways of the dominance of men in their society. When asked to comment on the fact that I want a wedding dress was directed by a woman but the presentations given to women are not that favorable Mrs Zhou was of the view that women can also be proponents of patriarchy and they may but rarely represent other women so as not to seem biased as well as not to sensationalize the plight of women.

Moreover, during the interviews the student also asked the interviewees if there are any assumptions that lead to such representations of women in the films and the interviewees had this to say; the first student interviewed was of the view that some narratives has to do with the filmmaker's identity hence no work of art can ever be distanced from the peculiar circumstances of its creator. This means that if someone's background or the society one grew up in taught him that women are prostitutes, whenever that person makes a narrative he will label women as prostitutes. Another student said that for Dangarembga it may have been from criticism that she exaggerates the oppression of women and she seeks to redeem herself as an objective director who is open minded and can outline the flaws of women and the necessity of patriarchy.

On the same issue Blessing Chigwenhembe a level 4.2 student from the film and theatre department also said that the issue of film making has two ways hence one can sit in the director's role or producer's role. He said that narratives can be pushed by the funders hence the issues of ownership and content for example when Dangarembga made everyone's child she said that she was not prepared to do yet another AIDS movie but the funders influenced the narrative but in the case of Daves Guzha he will be the director and also of the producers so already it influences the type of narratives that will come out of his films. So a film might

be directed by a woman but she will be doing so under the mentorship of a man or under the influence patriarchy.

The first and second interviewees also commented on the possible effects of such representations of women in films saying that the representations gives women a certain benchmark that they cannot achieve things beyond 'chihure' (prostitution) or being house wives. Thus the cultivation theory says that over exposure to something makes it seem real and natural to women. However the student also noted that not everyone who watches television or these films is gullible and takes things as they are presented on television and accept such negative representations of women instead there are women who oppose such representations and those people make an effort to make films that try and emancipate women breaking the stereotypes and others may form feminist groups.

Another student Thabiso Phiri also commented on the effects of the representations of women in films to the public saying that it repeatedly enhances the position of patriarchy in their respective societies. Film is an exercise of power by the class that owns the means of production as a result the films repeated regurgitate and cultivate ideals of patriarchy which would influence how the public perceives issues of gender. It therefore means that women will be continuously oppressed and would not be empowered as the films will always present the misrepresentation of women as reality which would also result in women losing their self-esteem and motivation to challenge the oppression of patriarchy. On the issue of a female director misrepresenting women he commented that women would be demoralized when they see such stereotypes and their oppression coming from another woman.

Be that as it may, the stereotypical representations of women imposes concrete ceilings on the girl child who hardly has positive role models in the media. Tuchman (1978) cited in Chari argues that girls exposed to this kind of representation of women may be tempted to resist work or responsibilities outside the home.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter was mainly based on the presentation and analysis of findings from the research. The main aim of this research was to analyse the portrayal of women and the influence of patriarchy to the representation of women in the films sinners and I want a wedding dress. Through interviews and observations the student managed to get some the information required for the research.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.0 Summary of the study

The study was focused on interrogating the influence that patriarchy has on the representation of women in Zimbabwean films. Two films were analysed and these were directed by different directors a female and a male director. The researcher reviewed various literature which was relevant to the study and done by international, regional and Zimbabwean scholars. These scholars had different views towards the influence of patriarchy on the representation of women in films. Most scholars however were the view that women are underrepresented and misrepresented in the media.

Theories such as cultivation, frame, representation and the male gaze were also used in the study. Each theory had its own unique link towards the study and this helped in analysing the films and the data from the interviews. The study made use of the qualitative approach in gathering data through the use of face-to-face interviews and observation. The interviews were done with students from the Film and Theatre department so as to get their views on the representation of women in the films sinners and I want a wedding dress paying attention on the influence of patriarchy towards those representations.

From the study the researcher found out that women are negatively presented in Zimbabwean films and this is because of the strong influence patriarchy has on the filmmakers. Women are given inferior roles that tarnish their images and make them depend on men. In the films sinners and I want a wedding dress women are shown as people who cannot survive without a men hence they even fight to get attention from the same men and they even go to extremes to achieve this. The study also found out that because of patriarchy most women's lives have been messed up and to get a living they resort to selling their bodies and do some evil things but however patriarchy is not blamed for this but instead the blame is given to women. On the issue of HIV/AIDS, the study also found out that women are also blamed for spreading the diseases as if women get sexually active alone without men.

6.1 Recommendations

- Production houses must try and produce films that do not tarnish the images of women.
- Filmmakers should know that they have a social responsibility to instil correct moral values to the public.
- Directors of local films must produce films that provide solutions to problems not present something that will cause problems to other groups for example the film sinners and I want a wedding dress obviously created problems to other single women in the society as they are now labelled as prostitutes.
- Women filmmakers must also be independent from the influence of patriarchy and call for positive representations of women in films, representations that empower women not those that destroy them.
- Female actors must not agree to take roles that stereotype women. They must first respect themselves for men to respect them too. They must also first think how the roles they take in films can affect them and other women in real life not just acting for the sake of acting.

6.2 Conclusion

The chapter provided a summary of the study from the literature reviewed, the theories used, the type of approach used in gathering data, the findings from the study and some recommendations. This chapter is the conclusion to this study.

Bibliography

Berberick, S. (2010). <u>The Objectification of Women in Mass Media</u>. The New York Sociologist: vol 5

Bourdieu, P. (1984). <u>Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste</u>. Routledge: London

Brownmiller, S. (1985), <u>Femininity, New York</u>: Ballantine Books.

Buckley, B. (2013), <u>"Bridesmaids"</u>: a modern response to patriarchy.

Chari, T. (2008). <u>Representation of women in Male Produced "Urban Grooves" Music in Zimbabwe.</u> Online Journal*: http://www.tandfonline.com*

Dovey, L. (2012). <u>The Rise of African Women Filmmakers</u>. Columbia UP: New York.

Dutt, R. (2014), <u>Behind the Curtain: Women's Representations in Contemporary</u> <u>Hollywood</u>. Research. Media @lse: UK

Furia, S. and Beilby, D. (2009) <u>"Bombshells on Film: Women, Military Films, and Hegemonic</u> <u>Gender Ideologies."</u> *Popular Communication* 7.4: 208-224

Gaidzanwa, R. (200<u>6) "Continuity and Change in Women's Shona and Ndebele Writing in Zimbabwe</u>: A Gender Analysis", (Eds.). Harare: College Press, 195-211.

Gappah, P. (2009), <u>"An Elegy for Easterly"</u>, Faber: London.

Gerbner, G. and Gross, L. (1976). <u>Living with Television</u>: The Violence Profile. 26, Journal of Communication.

Gerbner, G. (1998). <u>"Cultivation Analysis: An Overview"</u>, Mass Communication and Society.

Goffman, E. (1974). <u>Frame Analysis: An Essay on the organisation of Experience</u>. Harper and Row: New York.

Hall, S. (1997). <u>Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices</u>. (ed) Open University Press: London

Hudson - Weems, C. (2007), "Africana Womanist Literary Theory" (A Sequel to Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves), Africa World Press: Trenton.

Hudson - Weems, C. (2007), Nommo/Self-Naming, Self-Definition and the History of Africana Womanism. In "Contemporary Africana Theory, Thought and Action: A Guide to Africana Studies", (ed.) Africa World Press: Asmara.

Mangena, T. (2013), Theorising Women Existence: Researcher's World Journal of Arts Science and Commerce. Vol. IV

Muchemwa, K. (2005), Some Thoughts on Historical Memory and Writing in Zimbabwe. Weaver Press: Harare.

Mulvey, L. (1975). Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema. Oxford UP: New York.

Primorac, R. (2006), "The Place of Tears: The Novel and Politics in Zimbabwe", Tauris Academic Books: New York.

Ross, K, and Carolyn B (2006). Women and Media: A Critical Introduction. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Sassatelli, R (2011). "Interview with Laura Mulvey: Gender, Gaze and Technology in Film Culture." Theory, Culture & Society 28.5: 123-43.

Shendurnikar, N. (2012), Gender Reflections in Mainstream Hindi Cinema: Student's Research, Global Media Journal: India.