

## The Social Construction of Gender in Kiduo Dance Songs of the Wahehe in Iringa, Tanzania

Daines Nicodem Sanga<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

This paper is an attempt to address the question of gender and the manner that it is constructed in the songs of Wahehe in Iringa, Tanzania. Kiduo dance songs are used as a case in point. The reason for picking Kiduo songs is grounded on familiarity. I participated in singing Kiduo songs as a child and later as a fully-fledged adult. Singing the aforesaid songs for such a long time and being exposed to gender issues I became conscious of the fact that some songs (not all) typecast women in different ways as reproductive devices, poor, weak, sexual outlets of men and individuals who cannot make proper decisions. As a member of the community and current a scholar, I strived to find answers to three questions: how women are constructed in songs of Wahehe; how the social construction is regarded as reality of women; and how this impacts lives of women. Findings for this research were collected through observations and focus group interviews. The paper uses the tenet of constructionism to argue that women in Kiduo songs are projected as dependents of men in decision-making. They are featured as poor and timid in a way that weakens their bargaining power. In some songs women are portrayed as sexual outlets of men and reproductive devices whose sense of purpose in life is void except for getting married and giving birth to children. Examining how women are constructed in Kiduo songs of Wahehe is a profound contribution this paper makes to the scholarship of gender and performance in Tanzania.<sup>2</sup>

**Keywords:** *Gender construction, Kiduo dance, traditional dance, songs, Iringa.*

### Setting the Scene

Similar to women in any other ethnic group in Tanzania, women in Iringa are ascribed low status as reproducers, caregivers, passive beings and sexual outlets of men as opposed to their counterpart men who are powerful, strong, energetic and creative thinkers (Mwendamseke, 1989:67). Such a binary division, which implies superiority of masculine over feminine impacts women's wellbeing in all respects: economically, politically and socially (Osolio *et al.*, 2014, UNICEF, 2006).

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<sup>1</sup> Senior Lecturer, Department of Creative Arts, University of Dar es Salaam

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Women are less likely than men to be literate, to be health and to be financially powerful (UNICEF 2006). Should they engage in farming activities, they face obstacles seeing that the land they use for cultivation belongs to males, the outcome of which is lack of power to use the end products of their labour as they wish (Ellis, 2007: 6-7; Momsen, 2004: 2). If they do, they are obliged to give an account of how the end products or money has been used. Women who engage in poultry farming in Uhehe exemplify the point. During my fieldwork in Iringa in December 2018, women reported that they were not allowed to slaughter chicken without the consent of their husbands. When chicken meat is on the table, it is the husband who holds the right to eat the best part of the meat. This is evident through the saying that goes *Ikidulu cha munyakaye*, which means the chicken thighs have to be kept for the father and the remaining parts to be consumed by the rest of the family, including children. Women do this confidently for they have been shaped to believe that men deserve the best from the hoe to the end products of the hoe. In this paper, I use songs to explore how the aforesaid thinking manifests in the songs of Wahehe.

If the issue of a male gender to be considered better than female gender is inconsequential, women in Uhehe face the dilemma of verbal, psychological and physical intimidation from their male counterparts (Nussbaum, 2005: 1; UNICEF, 2006). Most of them do not have courage to defend themselves for they have been made to believe that they cannot fight against men. Should they seek a legal recourse to overcome the violence, they face obstacles from legal authorities. The legal authorities would tell them to go home and resolve the dilemma at family/clan level (*ibid*). Whilst carefully women rebuff, the majority do agree owing to the dread that if they take the matter further, they might damage their families' wellbeing. Poverty is the reason why women dread to move ahead to find permanent solutions of the dilemma they encounter in their day-to-day lives. Many do not have jobs and/or money to cater living expenses varying from school fees, rent and other recurrent expenditures throughout or at the time during which they demand for justice. In this paper, I show how status of women as impoverished drives women from making wrong choices, some of which claim them lives.

As much as in other African countries, it is uncommon for a woman in Uhehe to inherit family resources (Ellis, 2007). Her natal family is fabricated to believe that if she inherits, the resources will be transferred to another family in the banner of marriage (Brown *et al.*, 2003). In turn, the family resources will benefit another family. What makes the natal family more scared is when her husband dies. The natal family believes that the death of her husband jeopardizes family resources. This is especially the case of a woman whose judicial knowledge is limited and/or has never given birth to children. Her husband's relatives may take advantage of her state to grab resources left in her hands. In this paper, I show how childless women are constructed in songs and how this affects their financial as well as their emotional well being.

Notwithstanding the fact that education is a means to an end of women's emancipation and liberty, some women in Iringa are denied a space to develop

their mental faculties (Sutton, 1989). Pregnancy is the reason amongst many that impede women's access to schooling. In many cases it happens when supply of family resources is lower than the demand (World Youth Report, 2007). Under such a circumstance, it is the education of a boy that is prioritized over that of a girl (Mbele & Katabaro 2003). The question of how intelligent or dim the boy is oftentimes does not matter. What matters is the sex of the beneficiary in question. This is enforced because society envisages that there is a connection between intelligence of a person and the gender (Ankney, 1992; Affiliated Clinic Service, 2016). In this paper, I show how the perception of society over women as less intelligent affects their access to decision making even in issues that affect them directly.

### **Agents of Gender Socialization**

Gender socialization occurs throughout lives aided by numerous agents including family, education, language, religion, artefacts, laws, music, dance, songs, among others. Being a scholar specializing in performance, I choose to focus on songs to seeking to understand how gender is constructed in songs mainly Kiduo songs of Wahehe. As earlier stated, the paper is an attempt to respond to three questions: how women are constructed in songs of Wahehe; how the construction is treated as reality of women; and how this impacts women's lives. It should be noted from the onset that this paper does not intend to be pejorative about the Kiduo dance songs and the culture of Wahehe in all respects. The goal of this paper is to call attention to songs that construct gender in the society. Before I move ahead, let me give an account of what Kiduo dance means.

### **An Overview of Kiduo Dance**

As a term, Kiduo was derived from the word *dua*, which means 'stamp feet on the ground'. Kiduo dance can therefore be referred to a dance that is performed by dancers stamping their feet on the ground in a rhythmical fashion (Kaduma, 1972). Although both male and female dancers dance by stamping feet, the style of stamping feet varies between genders (Kapingu, 2009). Whereas male dancers stamp their feet vigorously while their bodies are held straight and their chests at ninety-degree angle to the ground, female dancers stamp their feet gently while their bodies bend forward. In terms of patterns, the dance is performed in a circle formed by both male and female audiences while the central part of the circle is left to be occupied by the key dancers. Note that in Kiduo dance there are no specific dancers. After the performance is due audiences transform from being the observers to performers and the vice versa. Nor is there a demarcation between observers and performers. This blurred demarcation between dancers and observers is what typifies Kiduo as a traditional dance. The chief musical instrument of Kiduo dance is handclapping (ibid). Hands are clapped in a style of quarter notes in which one sound plays one beat. The audiences are the ones expected to do the hand clapping. The speed of the music produced by way of hands is moderately fast normally accompanied with whistles and ululation. Ululation is produced by female audience and/or dancers. Being accompanied by songs is another quality that typifies Kiduo as a traditional dance. Songs

have a central role because it is where beliefs and thoughts of the community are stored. Kiduo songs are sung in a high and low pitch. The style of singing follows the response pattern of traditional sub-Saharan African music in which the vocalist sings (usually in high pitch) and the rest respond in both high and low pitch. As a community dance, Kiduo was, and still, is performed to enhance unity and brotherhood (Hanna, 1973; Songoyi, 1988).

Etymologically, Kiduo dance was performed exclusively by the Wahehe. With the lapse of time, the dance is performed by a good number of ethnic groups mainly Wakinga, Wabena, Wanyakyusa, Wapangwa, Wangoni, Wamahanji and others who migrated from their respective areas to Iringa on social, economic, political and environmental grounds. Apart from influence from the aforesaid ethnic groups, Kiduo dance appears to have been influenced by globalization. This is true because the hip-swaying style which women dance while looking at their behinds is a novel style thought to have been reinvented from global media (Sanga, 2019; Green, 1996). Performers of Kiduo are both men and women. Yet, it is probable for a dance to be performed by women alone as it was in this study.

Before I go into depth to explain the theory I used, let me introduce the methods I employed to collect data for this research.

### **Methodological Issues**

This study was conducted in Iringa municipal with 30 women from three zones: Ilala, Makanyagio and Mtwivila. A total of 30 women interviewed for this study, three (3) were windows, two (2) were in relationship and 25 women identified themselves as married. Out of 25 women identified themselves as married, five (5) labelled their marriages as *leo ndani kesho nje* meaning that their relationships were unstable to the extent that today you may find them in their marriages but tomorrow you may find them out from their marriages.

In maturity terms, women involved in this study their age varied between 35 and 65 years. It is important to note that the initial idea of this study was to examine songs only to explore the manner gender is constructed. The demand to involve respondents came during data analysis stage as some songs needed explanations from people who had experienced the *Kiduo* firsthand. The method to collect data with women respondents was mostly focus group discussion (FGD). With this, women were divided into three groups, each of which had ten women. Division was done to adhere to the FGD canons which state that respondents should not exceed 12 and not below 6 (Laws *et al.*, 2020). The selection of women respondents was purposive grounded on respondents' familiarity with Kiduo dance songs and culture in an overall sense. Being Muhehe was not central criterion to selecting respondents. As a matter of fact, women with migration history demonstrated mastery of the songs and were good at providing meaning of the songs than those who claimed to be originally Wahehe. Of 30 women interviewed for this research, seven (7) were very active in providing their views about the songs notwithstanding their migration record. My selection of 10 women from each zone was geographically relevant for it enabled me to collect rich data from

selected zones in a manageable way (Neuman, 1997: 351). On validity grounds, Bodgan and Taylor (1975) recommend researchers to choose subjects who are strangers. Nevertheless, the opposite was true in this research. The subjects for this research were not strangers because the selection was purposive grounded on the familiarity of setting and the respondents. Choosing respondents familiar to me was cost-effective, as I did not have to think of strategies to be employed to enter the field. Such questions as how to present myself, how to develop rapport and trust to my informants were not much of a concern during collecting data for this research. Observation was another method employed to collect data. Observation was conducted during dance performance event organized specifically for this research. In the course of performances, about 30 songs were chanted by women. On manageability reason, I analyse solely seven songs, the analysis which is backed up with focus group interviews that I administered with women. Data for this study were collected by way of video and sound recorder. Thereafter, data was retrieved, transcribed and translated from Kiswahili into English language. After translation, data was grouped into themes ready for analysis. It should be noted that the songs in this paper are analysed from gender standpoint based on women's reflection on and interpretation of the songs. It is pretty clear that gender is about men and women. However, for the purpose of this study, the focus is mainly on women. The aim of which is to examine how the construction of gender in Kiduo songs impacts women's lives devastatingly.

### ***Constructionism Framework***

Analysing data for this research, I employ constructionism theory. Constructionism is a theory that describes social realities as a product of human interaction. The theory argues that much of what we believe is real was created by humans and acquired the status of being real because individuals have been shaped to see and accept it as such (Vance, 2011). Vance goes further to identify three stages of construction. The first stage she calls externalization where cultural products are created through human interactions. The second stage is objectivism which means individuals lose sight of the cultural products they created themselves and begin to see them as real (Lorber, 1994; Butler, 1999). The third stage is internalization. At this stage people learn the objective facts about the cultural products in their society. The facts are then passed down from one generation to another. In this study the tenet of constructionism is employed as a window into which to comprehend how women are constructed in Kiduo songs and how such a construction impacts lives of women devastatingly.

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

On closer inspection of data, this research reveals that women in songs are constructed in multifaceted ways as reproductive devices, sexual outlets of males, uncreative, wizards and poor. They are portrayed as weak, prostitutes and timid enough to enter into demeaning conversations with men. In this paper, I choose to focus specifically on four aspects mainly the social construction of a woman as reproductive device, as dependant on men in decision-making, as poor and as a domestic worker.



### *A Social Construction of a Woman as Domestic Worker*

There is a great deal of songs that construct a woman as a person whose domain is home. The song titled *Ngombwe ngahile hela*, or, 'I would have reclaimed my property if I have had money' is an archetypal of the songs that construct a woman as an individual whose domain is home. Below are the lyrics.

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<b>Hehe Version</b>	<b>English Translation</b>
<i>Ngombwe</i>	I would have reclaimed (my property)
<i>Ngahile hela</i>	But I did not have money
<i>Ngogopa vana vahangaika nene</i>	Because my children will suffer
<i>Ikijiji hiki ngalinyama</i>	I would have migrated to another place
<i>Nene ku Mwanza ndya ndiwenda</i>	I like Mwanza
<i>Ngogopa vana vahangaika nene</i>	I am scared for my children will suffer
<i>Dar es Salaam nda ndiwenda</i>	I like Dar es Salaam

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The song *Ngombwe ngahile hela* tells the story of a woman who laments about her failure to pay back her creditors because of her fiscal state. As a result, the creditors confiscated her property that she used as collateral for borrowing the money. In lines six and eight a woman laments that she would have travelled to Dar es Salaam or Mwanza where she could perhaps earn money to pay her debts but she had not. In line three she declares that it is her children who fail her mission. She supposes if she travels and leaves her children behind, they may probably suffer. Line four, a woman reveals that there was a time she wanted to migrate to another village but her attempts fell short because of the very reason. Women's inability to move away because of childcare related responsibility is palpable (Momsen, 2004; Salem Press, 2011).

Asking why her mission to travel fell repeatedly, women respondents argued that a woman in Uhehe has been constructed to believe that a role of caring for children belongs to her. Thus, nobody can do better than her. Such a belief contributes to women's reluctance to leave their homes no matter how difficult the situation is. To demonstrate the magnitude of the dilemma, a respondent shared a story of her neighbour who died as an upshot of such a belief. Her husband used to beat her now and then. Her neighbours including herself advised the woman to go away before things got worse. The woman said she was not primed to go away and leave her children alone. Despite her husband's tendency to beat her brutally now and then, the woman was not geared up to quit. Regrettably, a woman's story ended with fatality because one day her husband beat her to death. This is why Lorber (1994) urges women to stop thinking about care as their biological role. Instead to see it as a pursuit that is socially constructed (Butler, 1999; Salem Press, 2011).

Commenting on the question of construction of women as it is portrayed in songs and how it affects lives of women, a woman respondent used line one

and two of the song to argue that women in Uhehe suffer economic hardships because they spend most of their time in unpaid labour. As a result of this, most of them do not have money solve their business dilemmas or to start up businesses. As result, many depend on *Vikoba* to gain access to capital. Instead of using the money for starting up a business, they use it to solve family problems. In the end, they fail to pay back. This is why many encounter the challenge of their property like TV, radio, sofa set and others being confiscated.

It was stated that the content of the song *Ngombwe ngahile hela* presses women to believe that their domain is home. Thus, those who travel in search of opportunities are considered as wicked women. Indeed, one woman shared a story of her friend who left her home in search of business opportunities. Before she left the town to the mines, she fried and sold fish. She did the business for so long but the money she was earning was hand to mouth. Seeing that she was earning very little, she decided to travel to the recently discovered mining area to work as a food vendor in Kiswahili term *Mama lishe*. She made up her mind because she thought it might be a good opportunity for her to make money. As she was at the mining area, people began to gossip about her. Some said she abandoned her husband and children at the expense of money. Some said she is a bad mother because she lacks emotional love with her children. Some said she left her family for prostitution. Some said she has married another man and became pregnant. Some said she had been pregnant but aborted. When she went back and heard all the rumours, she was very disappointed and decided to give up her new business and got back to her old business notwithstanding the promising future that she noticed in her new business.

The song *Ngombwe ngahile hela*, above is not the only song that constructs a woman as domestic worker. Another well-known and attention grabbing song with the very same theme is titled *Uwifu mwiko*, or, 'Jealousy is a taboo.'

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Hehe	English Translation
<i>Uwifu mwiko</i>	Jealousy is a taboo
<i>Mkomi gu mtela</i>	The wooden spoon is a main solution
<i>Sangilu vako</i>	Cook for your husband
<i>Wiyawule</i>	You will feel liberated

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The song *Uwifu mwiko*, narrates the story of a woman who was envious of her husband. The song tells the woman to stop being envious of her husband, instead to invest her time in cooking because cooking can make her win over her husband. In line 2, a woman is told that there is power in a wooden spoon employed in cooking including a power to create harmony and peace with her husband who will subsequently make her relax. Reflecting on the content of song, women during focus group interview alleged that the song is obsolete because it portrays a woman as a cook, a role which can be played by anyone. It was also stated that the song is trivial in this age of HIV and AIDS because it urges women to

stop questioning their husbands' behaviour, instead, to focus on cooking as a means to resolve their marital dilemmas. They argued that the song inculcates the culture of silence in women, somewhat they considered miserable. On the contrary, they insisted women to initiate conversation with their husbands if they notice something strange in their relationship.

### *The Construction of a Woman as Reproductive Device*

Similar to women in other ethnic groups, a woman in Uhehe is obliged to marry and give birth to children (Momsen, 2004). A woman who does not bear children is as good as nothing (Whitehouse & Hollos, 2014: 124). Particularly critical is that the dilemma relating to family infertility when happens in a couple, it is a woman who is blamed for the predicament (Tungaraza, 2015). Women being held responsible for family infertility state is palpable in the song titled *Ndaigenda ndifumbike*, or, 'I walk down the street while my hands rest on my back.'

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Hehe	English Translation
<i>Ndaigenda ndifumbike</i>	I walk down the street
<i>Amawoko kumugongo</i>	while my hands are on my back
<i>Ngendele piya</i>	Where should I walk then
<i>Nige mwana ndihela</i>	While I don't have a child
<i>Ndongela nani</i>	To whom should I talk
<i>Nige mwana ndihela</i>	I don't have a child
<i>Ngenda be</i>	I will travel here and there
<i>Ngenda Ndimuwonage</i>	Until I know the one who caused the problem

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The overall theme of the song is about a woman who feels pity for her childless state. In line three, the woman asks which path to take to avoid meeting people because she feels useless and uncomfortable (Mill, 2014). Commenting on the song, most of respondents were of the view that songs of this nature cause women to feel guilty for family infertility while in reality, it is both a man and woman who may be a source of the dilemma. Provided that the society has been constructed to believe that women are always the source of the dilemma, it renders women to pay the price of the fate. Unhappy lives that most of childless women live in societies were associated with blames and intimidations poured to women through different means including songs.

Further discussion on childless women and the challenges they face, I had a conversation with one of the childless women who was one of my respondents. She associated the pain she was going through with lots of factors including songs that are chanted in the society which compare childless women with nothing. During interviews she said that childless women in the society are affected both psychologically and fiscally. She spoke about the way her properties were confiscated when her husband died. Their house with six rooms was ready for roofing. Two women claiming to have borne children with her husband came



to visit. They each came with a child to demand money to facilitate her child's life. Although her husband's relatives were not informed about the children, they came up with the idea of selling the house and divide the money equally between the window and the two women. Such a decision can have one argue that the husband's relatives felt it better the house to be sold and the money to be divided to strangers than to leave the house in the hands of their sister-in law who toiled to own it.

Taking a closer look at some Wahehe customs mostly that of burying a childless woman, one may assertively argue that not only is the childless woman hurt in real life but also in her afterlife. In Uhehe there is a custom of burying a childless woman with *kibunzi* or a maize cob, or *kijinga cha moto*, a half-banned kindling. The ritual of burying her with *kibunzi* or *kijinga cha moto* is done not without a purpose. The purpose is to cleanse the remaining family from bad omens of infertility. Women interviewed added that apart from cleansing, the ritual functions as a metaphor for the void and purposeless life of the deceased on earth. The maize cob (without grains) means she was unable to fulfil her objective role as the producer of seeds (Interview July, 2017). A culture of excluding childless women in their afterlife is observable not just in Wahehe culture but also in some African cultures as well. Whitehouse and Hollos (2014: 124) conducted a study and disclosed that in a place known as Ekiti in Nigeria, a childless woman is as good as never been born. When she dies, her body is buried in an outskirt of the town.

### *Women's Unintelligence in Decision Making*

There are a good number of songs that depict a woman as an individual who depends on men in decision-making. The song titled *Baba ndihela*, or, 'I have no father' is a classic example.

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<b>Hehe</b>	<b>English Translation</b>
<i>Iye iye baba</i>	Ooh dad
<i>Nani valile</i>	Who knows to count?
<i>Baba mutamwa</i>	My father is sick
<i>Mulaswe kuipamba</i>	He is admitted at Ipamba
<i>Ndongela nani</i>	To whom can I communicate my problem?
<i>Kaka ndihela</i>	I have no brother
<i>Mjomba ndihela</i>	I have no uncle

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The song idea is built around the woman who mourns as a result of a mishap she experiences in her marriage. She sings that her brother and uncle died long ago and her father on whom she depends is in a critical condition at Ipamba Hospital. She imagines to whom she will report her concerns if her father also dies. Women interviewed about the song contended the song portrays a woman as person who cannot survive without a man. Neither can she make decisions. In order to have proper decisions, she has to seek advice from male counterparts.

During focus group interview with women in Iringa they narrated that a Mhehe woman when verbally or physically assaulted by her husband, she cannot divorce unless her male relatives comply with her claim. Male relatives are the ones believed to be intelligent enough to weigh up the predicament and determine if she really needs to divorce. It does not matter how wise or stolid the male member involved in decision making is, as long as it is a male, he is believed that he is wise enough to make appropriate decisions (Mill, 1998: 3; Cranny et al., 2003). Such a masculine style of authority has created in a Mhehe woman a dire need of male relatives in her family.

This is why a woman in the song mourns the demise of her male relatives. Campbell (1994) conversely perceives it as wrong to use one's own biological make-up as a barometer to study somebody's capability when he argues that the biological make-up may tell more about biological character of an individual but less in other ways.

### *The Social Constructs of a Woman as Impoverished*

Extending the discussion of social construction of woman in songs, there is a good number of songs that construct a woman as poor. The song titled *Yuva Mwimbe*, or 'Mother Mwimbe' is a good example. The lyrics below are fine example.

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<b>Hehe Version</b>	<b>English Translation</b>
<i>Yuva Mwimbe</i>	Mother Mwimbe
<i>Sawikalaga wiyena</i>	You will stay alone
<i>Ehe ndeju mwana</i>	I have given birth to a child
<i>Mgaya mbeleko</i>	Without a baby carrier
<i>Ehee shangazi yake anashangaa</i>	His aunt is wondering
<i>Ehee na yu baba</i>	His father
<i>ye maonyesho</i>	Looks like a person to be exhibited

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The song tells the story of a woman who laments about her impoverished condition. She sings that although she has given birth to a child, her baby does not have carrier. In line five, she laments that the child's aunt wonders why she does not have a baby carrier. Commenting on a song, anonymity respondent glimpsed that the song portrays a woman as an impoverished person incapable of buying even a small thing like a baby carrier. Taking a closer look at the song, poverty in the song appears to be a problem facing not just a woman who gave birth to a child but also other women in the song. An aunt for example, instead of supporting her sister-in-law to buy a baby carrier, she is portrayed wondering. Similarly, the mother whose daughter has just given birth, although her daughter communicates the problem to her, she does not seem to provide a solution to her daughter's problem most likely due to poverty. Women's impoverished state was noted by scholars like Brenner (1999), Mencher (1988), and Corta & Magongo (2010).

An extra but well-known song that projects a woman as poor is titled *Ningelikuwa na pesa*, or 'If I had money'. The lyrics below offer some details.

Hehe Version	English Translation
<i>Ningelikuwa na pesa</i>	If I have had money
<i>Ningeandika barua kwa baba</i>	I would have written a letter to my father
<i>Ilavilagu mwandiko</i>	So that he sees my handwriting
<i>Mumu va vene</i>	A man of the people

From gender point of view, the song tells the story of a woman who was inquisitive to write a letter to her father but her curiosity fell short because she did not have money to purchase a paper and a pen. In line 1, she laments that if she has had money, she would have bought a pen and a paper so that fulfil her mission of writing a letter to her father. Commenting on the song, respondents pointed out that the song portrays a woman as a person living in abject poverty in a sense that she cannot buy a pencil and a paper. It was also stated that songs that portray women as poor are outdated because women of these days try to find activities to do to fulfil their needs and those of their families.

For example, the song titled *Usinitumie Chui* or 'Do not send me a leopard' is another example of songs that portray women as poor. Below are the lyrics.

Hehe version	English translation
<i>Usinitumie chui</i>	Don't send me a leopard
<i>Inipalue usoni</i>	To scratch my face
<i>Mume wako sikumwita</i>	It is not me who proposed your husband
<i>Alikuja mwenyewe</i>	He came himself
<i>Na kipande cha sabuni</i>	With a bar of soap
<i>Na soketi mkononi</i>	With cash in his hands
<i>Ngongongo mlangoni</i>	He knocked at the door

In this song a woman is constructed as impoverished individual ready to sell her body in exchange for money and other material wealth. This is evident from line one to six when the suspected woman sings that the suspect should not send her a leopard to scratch her face because it is not her who proposed her husband but rather her husband. It is her husband who approached by giving her a bar of soap and money, which of course motivated her to accept the proposal. Commenting on the song, the majority of women disapproved the song on grounds of portraying a woman as poor in a sense that she falls short to buy even a bar of soap. Apart from normalizing poverty, women lamented that the song is outmoded for it authorizes dating as the behaviour of men.

## Conclusion

This article describes how women are constructed in the selected Kiduo songs of the Wahehe. It reveals that women in Kiduo songs are constructed in many ways as reproducers, poor, weak, prostitutes as well as people who cannot make appropriate decisions. This paper is of the opinion that construction of women as reproducers, fearful, weak or prostitute usher society to take the representation as true characters of women. As a result of this, woman who attempt to engage in pursuits that aim at reconstructing their image are viewed and strange and wicked. This study proposes songs that represent women devastatingly shall be amended or forbidden to be chanted in the society whatsoever. Such a pursuit nevertheless, requires going side by side with the composition of new songs that will boost women's confidence and self-esteem. To achieve this, women shall be part and parcel of the composition process.

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