

A Discourse Analysis Examining How Gender Information Is Communicated Through Kipsigis Secular Songs

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Abstract

Since immemorial among African communities, songs have been used to relay information to the society. Secular songs have a significant influence on the way gender information is communicated in the society. However, little attention has been made by researcher to examine how secular songs in Kipsigis communicate message relating to gender. This paper examined how information relating to gender was communicated through Kipsigis secular songs. Specifically, the paper reports the extent and frequency to which various terms, phrases and metaphors have been utilised to convey specific information with regard to gender. This research was guided by social cultural approach to discourse analysis theory and feminist critical discourse analysis. A total of 15 Kipsigis secular songs were selected (sang by both women and male artists). The songs were translated to English from Kipsigis language to facilitate qualitative analysis process. Analysis of data was done through open coding and grounded theory. Research findings revealed that Kipsigis secular songs have a significant influence on the way gender was constructed in Kipsigis culture. Research findings showed that songs by female composers mainly advocated for women empowerment while songs by male composers advocated for female insubordination. The paper therefore concludes that secular song's can shape the perceptions and views of community members towards gender issues. The influential role that music plays can influence construction of gender in Kipsigis society needs not to be underrated.

Key Words: Secular, Songs, Gender, Information