

# A feminist stylistic analysis of the selected poems from *My Heart in Your Hands: Poems from Namibia*

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**ABSTRACT:** This study provides a feminist stylistic analysis of fifteen (15) selected poems from *My Heart in Your Hands: Poems from Namibia* from a feminist stylistic perspective, thus the study examines language and gender in anthropology. The research aimed to examine how lexis is used to represent women in the selected poems; to analyse how syntax is used to show the roles of women in society and to evaluate how gender issues are communicated at the discourse level. In recent years, many Namibian women have turned to language to recast themselves and give a voice to the voiceless and marginalised through literature. The female poets disclosed the subjugation of women by the patriarchal system. Women characters were represented as second to men, wicked, weak and victims of sexual, verbal and physical abuse at the hands of their loved ones. In the poems, women are represented as emotional, and worthless. As the study was a desk study, it adopted the qualitative approach to analyse the sampled poems that were purposively sampled as they are primarily thematic concerns of gender and that are written by women. Moreover, content analysis was used to analyse and interpret the meaning from the selected poems. Finally, the poets used discourse level to communicate the gender issues faced by women such as oppression, discrimination, and exploitation and they are voiceless as men shut them through abuse when they speak up. Therefore, women are portrayed as domestic workers, caretakers, and child bearers. They are given household duties as their roles throughout the selected poems.

**Keywords:** Feminism, feminist stylistics, gender, language, patriarchal, sexism, stylistics.

## INTRODUCTION

Although Namibia has been independent for 34 years, women are still faced with a patriarchal system imposed on them through language. The use of language and the representation of women in literary works have promoted the patriarchal thinking that represents women as inferior, evil, and weak to their male counterparts. However, in recent years, Namibian women turned to writing so as to give other women a voice and correct the stereotypes against them. Thus, in their poetry, they advocate for change in social inequalities and share their experiences as Namibian women. This study, therefore, examines language and gender in the selected poems.

Many scholars in Namibia have studied gender issues from the feminist perspective such as Andima and Tjiramanga (2014) who focused on the oppression of women in African narratives. However, little attention has been paid to the feminist stylistics and only a handful or fewer studies were carried out such as the one for Absalom and Woldemariam (2019) that focused on The God of Women and The Women and The Ogre. Rhode (2003) critically evaluated the silencing of subaltern women and related that to the novel "The Purple Violet of Oshaantu". This study adopted a qualitative research method to examine language and gender in the selected poems.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Feminist stylistics as the term suggests, merges from both feminism and stylistics. Montoro (2014) defines feminist stylistics as a sub-branch of stylistics, which aims to account for the way in which gender concerns are linguistically encoded in texts, and attempts to do so by employing some of the frameworks and models pertaining to the stylistics tool-kit. According to Montoro, the definition of the phrase "gender concerns" has been given several meanings, which has led to the formation of various perspectives that address the idea of gender. This method illustrates how gender concerns and language are incorporated into literary writings as a result of feminist contributions to the discipline (Ahmad, n.d.).

Developing awareness of how gender is handled in texts is the goal of feminist stylistics, which is defined as "a sort of politically driven stylistics" (Mills, 1995, p. 165). She developed the idea and methodology of feminist stylistics and laid the groundwork for it by looking at texts from a feminist perspective, and drawing attention to themes like sexism, how women are portrayed or characterized, and how gender interactions are portrayed. Feminist stylistics is an approach to the exploration of authority, power, and inequality features as part of the stylistic analysis, which pays attention to the formal features of the texts and its reception within a reading community in relation to ideology (Davies, 2004). It is created as a toolset to help the reader comprehend the text's underlying messages (ibid, 2). It is concerned with the justifications for the authors' selection of particular modes of expression over others, as well as how specific effects are produced through language (ibid, 4). In addition, feminist stylistics serve to analyse the writer's ideology.

Feminist stylistics assumes that words can present and perpetuate a particular view of women (Woldemariam, 2018). It excavates the places where ideological knowledge informs meaning at different levels, and the effect of sexist language can be excavated. As Mills stated in her 1995, as cited by Woldemariam (2018) work, feminist stylistics aims to:

- Exposes the working of gender at different levels in text.
- Influence to shape the boundaries of discourse.
- Change structures and ways of thinking.
- Draw the relationship between lexical items and discourse.
- Bring about change in representational practice through critique, teaching and developing a new model of writing.
- Track down hidden assumptions.
- Make readers re-examine the texts in light of gender.
- Create a form of consciousness raising (Mills, 1995).

Feminist stylistics also refers to a technical term called genderlect, which is the linguistic differences in the way women and men understand social realities (ibid). Therefore, feminist stylistics deals not only with writing but with reality too. Mills (1995) also emphasises that "reality is organised along the gendered line" (p.11) and tries to control oppressive, controlling social structures, by using political viewpoints and socioeconomic factors that permit a language to appear.

According to Shashkevich (2019), linguistics researchers try to identify words and phrases that may unintentionally affect how we and others see the world. He claimed (ibid) that a study revealed how a seemingly innocent statement like "girls are equally good as boys in arithmetic" can covertly reinforce sexist prejudices. Due to the sentence's grammatical construction, it is implied that guys are more likely than girls to be talented in arithmetic. Therefore, the language we use contributes to the oppression, injustice, and discrimination of women.

Sex refers to 'a biological difference' which reveals that a man and a woman are different from each other because of their biological category (Siregar *et al.*, 2020). The term "gender" is helpful in feminist stylistics because it emphasizes the fact that, despite some similarities, men and women generate femininity and masculinity differently (Baladjay *et al.*, 2016). Coates (2013, p.4) defines gender as a term used to describe social categories based on its sex. Thus, sexism is said to be a problem initially raised by feminists and not by linguists since feminists see that language is always biased towards women and that men seem to be the norm (Graddor and Swann, 1989). Graddor and Swann (1989) added that the general understanding of this word is seen as referring to "a social difference between male and female". People's perceptions of the world are heavily dependent on gender. Additionally, it affects how people create, comprehend, and interpret writings.

The term 'gender' in feminist stylistics is used to mean the difference between women and men relational and not an oppositional way (Mills, 1995). Without change in language, sexism will not be directly tackled (Spender, 1993). Coates and Cameron (1998, p.413) describe women's language as weak, unassertive, and tentative and represented as losers and victims. So, language itself is not sexist, but it is the people who use languages who may be sexist or not (ibid). Although it is clear that women are systematically discriminated against as a group in a variety of ways, feminism, according to Mills (1995), implies a commitment to changing the social structure to make it less oppressive to women and for that matter, to men. However, Holmes regarded women's speech as politer than men's. The extreme power structure of dominance in the structure and the use of language can also be avoided by initiating some change in language. Shazu (2014) stated that language is accommodating

enough for any kind of change and space so that sex-biased expressions or utterances can be made sex-neutral: chairman-chairperson, salesman-salesclerk, actor, etc.

In contrast to men, who always use the title "Mr" regardless of marital status, women distinguish their married status by using the titles "Miss" and "Mrs," for instance. Her (ibid) stronger opinion is that language actually causes gender divisions rather than just reflecting them. Therefore, the terms "miss" and "Mrs" do more than just reflect society; they also foster and maintain inequality. According to Talbot (1998), there are two points of view on how gender and language interact.

Hermann (1995) demonstrated that sexism and hatred for women are too pervasive in society, yet this pervasiveness is at its peak at the lexical level. He (ibid) provides a number of aspects of linguistics sexism practised against females, as listed below:

- The use of pronouns in education material tends to be preferred by men, apart from the generic use of 'he' which is most evident outside linguistics.
- The publishing house editorial habit eliminates women's identity when they refer to women, more to their husbands.
- The use of address forms and naming practices such as 'ette' for as 'Miss and Mrs' distinguish based on their sexual availability because there is no appropriate contrast for men.
- The practice of referring to women as belonging to men is more prevalent in society than vice versa, thus women are often referred to a 'John's girlfriend' 'Bill's wife' etc.
- Terms intended for men or boys with the connotation of women also experience the same ranking downgrade as 'sissy' 'effeminate' etc., while the masculine connotation attached to the term girl like 'tomboys' seems to be more beneficial.

Researchers in sociolinguistics also think the formation of language differences is due to the unequal status of males and females (Dong, 2014). For thousands of years, the concept of men outside and women inside has dominated people and men are regarded as superiors of the status and power. They govern the external world and go out to earn money while women are considered to be the weak and only do activities in the family (ibid).

The WHO (2021) estimate indicates that about 1 in 3 (30%) of women worldwide have been subjected to either physical or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime. Lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic and its social and economic impacts have increased the exposure of women to abusive partners and known risks while limiting their access to services (WHO, 2021). They are faced with many issues such as lack of education, violence and abuse, period

poverty and stigma.

Women are faced with gender-based violence/violence against them. In Namibia, 5961 gender-based violence cases were reported from September 2019 to September 2020 with 74 murder cases (Amakali, 2021). By mid-June 2020, 21 women and children have been killed by intimate partners in the same country (ibid). Traditional and cultural stereotypes are major contributors to gender issues faced by women (Rapport *et al.*, 2002). Although the first women's rights convention was passed on 19-20 July 1848 during a Seneca Falls Convention organised by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott (Rampton, 2015), women were still treated like they had no rights at all.

## METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The study was a desk study that used qualitative approach to explore language and gender in the selected poems. Fifteen poems: *Mother* by Bronwen a Beukes, *There's Depth in Mother's Strength* by Anne-Marrielssa Brown Garises, *Unconditional Love (a letter to my mother)* by Gloria Ndilula, *What's Wrong?* By Saara Kadhikwa, *Stir not my Dear One* by Anneli Nghikembua, *You Broke Me, Daddy* by Jane Mungabwa, *Domestic Worker* by Ina-Maria Shikongo, *Dear Perpetrator* by Tulipomwene Kalunduka, *Violence* by Kina Indongo, *Let Me Be* by Saara Kalumbu, *It Never Happened* by Veripuami Nandeekea Kangumine, *Perm Blues* by Maria-Oo Haihambo, *Hail to the Queen* by Zemha Gawachas, *Darkness* by Tuli Phoenix, and *This is not a Poem* by Omaano Itana were analysed using content analysis checklist, which contained all the three levels of feminist stylistics proposed by Mills (1995), analysis at word, sentences and discourse level. Purposive sampling was used to select 15 poems from 141 poems from the anthology *My Heart in Your Hands: Poems from Namibia*. The selected poems were sampled, as they are written by Namibian women, based on their experiences, roles, and gender-related issues that affect women.

Furthermore, a constructive paradigm was used to unload and interpret the presentation of women in the selected poems using a feminist stylistic model of analysis. This paradigm helps to undress the understanding of the world as others experience it and in this case the women poets. In addition, a content analysis was used to obtain in-depth analysis and to answer the objectives of the study. Using content analysis obtained meaningful interpretations from the selected poems, which enabled the study to have a well-informed conclusion. Thus, the study adopted a checklist that made it possible for the selected poems to be analysed from a feminist stylistic perspective. As the study was a desk study, only available secondary resources were used, and what was not accessible was not considered. Finally, the study was limited to one anthology titled "*My Heart in Your Hands: Poems from Namibia*".

## MAJOR FINDINGS

### Sexism in language

Sexist language made women in the selected poems to be regarded as less human than men. Women are portrayed as the cause of other women's misery. Through the use of sexist language, women became voiceless, powerless and inferior which led to them being abused, discriminated, oppressed and exploited in the poems. Women are unable to defend themselves because they are women and the sexist language that is attached to them. Words such as "sad", "scared", "fear", "cold", "displaced power" and "thin" were used to describe the women characters. In addition, women are considered to be dull and narrow-minded which implies that women can only do cheap labour or work that does not need one to be intelligent like house chores, domestic work, and raising children while men are given challenging jobs such as taxi drivers. Being an African woman, the female character cannot say anything about her husband's infidelity, as she has no voice. Women are also represented as voiceless. The narrator uses the term "My truly, "for better, for worse" to show that women have no right to divorce as they have sworn in church and they have to endure and accept everything they get in marriages as African women. Women can do anything to destroy others' homes even when they know well that the man is married.

Women are enslaved by their roles, as they work for low wages they are as good as slaves that they work for long hours just for N\$90 a day. Women are also oppressed by the justice system as they just look at women being exploited but they do not say anything. In the poem *Domestic Worker*, words such as "slave", and "little fairy" were used to describe the character. Although she works hard, she is compared to a little fairy as her work is recognised but she is regarded as worthless. This showed that women are exploited and oppressed. She worked for five years and there is no improvement; she is still not getting money that would help her improve her living condition.

### The semantic derogation of women

The derogatory word "cold" was used to refer to women and men. According to the English Oxford Dictionary, to be cold is when lacking affection or warmth of feeling; unemotional. In the poem, the narrator gets affection from women who have no feelings, no emotions and abusive just like her father. Through this adjective, the narrator represents herself as unfriendly, emotionless and loves to be abused by other people who have no emotions or sympathy just like her father. The fact that the binary term "men and women" is used in the same poem, the narrator is expressing that men are superior to women in society

and will always remain secondary even in the use of language. In the English language, the elements which come first are generally seen as the most important in information processing, thus women in this case are seen as less important.

The words "little fairy" and "little" were used. Little Fairy shows that the women's work is regarded as small but magical, although her work is recognised but she is not, being women in this world, their work is more important than they are. In *Dear Perpetrator* "You stole my life because money was way more important than the growth of a little girl" The word "little" implies something small or rather not enough in this case, although the ten-year-old is big enough is brought forward as worthless and less important to have her alive. Through her, women are not human enough that is why she is killed and sold because money is more important than women.

### How syntax is used to show the roles of women in the society

#### Metaphors

The poets used linguistic devices such as metaphors to bring to light the gender roles that women are expected to do in society. Through the metaphoric language used, women are represented as domestic workers and child bearers in society, women are also given the role of providing and putting food on the table for the family like in *Domestic Worker*, the female character works as a domestic worker to provide for her family. Also, women are expected to raise their children, do household chores and work in the field to provide food for their husbands and kids. Hence, when there is not enough food women have to starve for their family to eat.

"Women like me climb summits, defy step and seed" was used to refer to women being rebellious and resisting the patriarchal system against women. The role of women in their society is to stand up for other women and fight the oppressive system they have been facing. "Women like me are born with sword in hand" also means women are born to resist, to stand up and fight for their rights and to be equal to men. "Word that births planes and plans" is metaphoric that shows that women have power through words which symbolises literary work, women can have a voice through writing, they can change their future through words and those words can travel around the world just like planes in order for them to conquer the patriarchal system, thus women have to starve for their family to eat.

#### Ideology

We live in a man's world and men are considered superior to women, and as such there is a sexist ideology that

dictates that the male is the more valued child. "What's wrong with having a girl child" "One after the other, with no son in sight or last?" These examples show that a boy child is more important in the African culture than a girl child as women are considered to be inferior and cannot be the heir of the family, therefore only a son is considered as the heir of the family as they are superior and have authority than girls do. Another sexist ideology grants a man the right to physically harm women; this ideology is illustrated in "Stir Not My Dear One, You Broke Me, Daddy, Dear Perpetrator and Violence. These poems portray the men in a household as a symbol of abuse, the sexism realised in this notion is how the man is seen as the disciplinarian who punishes women for being kind and for standing up for themselves which in many cases leads to domestic violence and passion killing as the men are made to think that women are their properties.

In addition, the ideology of gender roles assigns women to domestic workers. Instead of being seen and treated as equals in families and marriages, women are sometimes seen as quasi-servants whose role is to keep the home and perform domestic chores for the husband, family and other people. Although the woman works long hours as a domestic worker, she has to come back home and cook for the family because cooking is her role and the family members do not care if she is tired or not, as a woman she has to do her chores no matter what. Through this ideology, women are exploited, and oppressed by their families through the gender roles that are assigned to them by the patriarchal system. So, their main chores are to care for and look after the family. Finally, in *Let Me Be*, women have to suffer and walk long distances to fetch water for the family. In *It Never Happened*, women have the easier chores, just to heal and care for the children and heal them. Their palms of hands have hardened because of the work they do, as they are poor, and their feet cracked due to the long distances that they travel now and then to do their chores.

### **How gender issues are communicated at discourse level**

Discourse-level language was employed to highlight and convey the gender challenges that women, as portrayed in the chosen poems, experience. Due to their gender, women face discrimination, exploitation, violence, and oppression from both society and their loved ones. They are shown as uneducated, narrow-minded people who must labour in the fields to make ends meet, and as destitute people. The female character in *Domestic Worker* has five years of experience and remains at the same level. "I've turned into a slave to the machine. Get up, clean someone's house, and then go home." "Where is the justice and pride in earning ninety Namibian dollars a day?" and "Cook for eight people?" These demonstrate

how women are subjugated and have devolved into slaves. Despite her weariness, she continues to prepare meals for the family after work since she is a woman. In addition to being oppressed by society, women are also subjected to oppression by the legal system, since they are paid as low as ninety Namibian dollars for working as slaves. Women are oppressed by the patriarchal society and confront numerous obstacles as a result.

Women are oppressed through their jobs and they are given low wages like N\$ 90 a day. The patriarchal system has considered men as superior and women as inferior. Gender issues widened the inequality gap between men and women. This shows how the gap is created in education as women do not get a proper education because they spend their time doing house chores. In *Domestic Worker*, women are portrayed as domestic workers in the poems while men are taxi drivers in *Dear Perpetrator*. Women are then treated differently, they are abused and discriminated against. For instance, in *Domestic Worker*, the female character has to leave work and come do house chores such as cooking for her family and talking to her children leaving little time for herself. There is an inequality division of labour. Women raise their children while men go out to look for other women. Their social interaction with other people is limited too as they must rush from work to home to do chores. Finally, a girl child is not considered as important as a boy child, which brings in the inequality between children (boys and girls) in the houses and the society.

### **DISCUSSIONS**

It is clear from the analysis of the language of the fifteen selected poems using the feminist stylistic approach that although poems are written by women, they are represented in a negative way as inferior to men and voiceless. The main question of this study was, to analyse language and gender in the selected poems paying more attention to the representation of women, their roles and how the poems communicated the gender issues in the poems written by different women.

The findings of David and Woldemariam (2020) and Absalom and Woldemariam were supported by this study's findings from the selected poems which agree on the representation of women as victims, wicked, voiceless, inferior, emotional, and narrow-minded. The study found that the majority of the poets represented women in the poems as "the other". The poets used language that placed women as second to men. The importance of paternal love was emphasised in *You Broke Me, Daddy*, as the narrator became cold as she did not get the father's love although the mother was there to give her love. The poet also used "men and women", which connotes that women are inferior and will always come second to men. This indicates that the maternal love is not important to a

girl child but the paternal love is the most important.

Moreover, in *What's Wrong?* the narrator questioned "what's wrong with having girl children, one after the other, with no son in sight or last?" this shows that a girl child is not as important as a boy child. Eckert and McConnel-Gnet (2013) argue that we say 'Mr and Mrs Jones' mentioning men before women and this is overtly determined by the ideology which implies that men are worthier and should be mentioned before women as men are seen as supreme to women. Thus, women will always come second as even a girl child is not seen as worth being the heir of the family.

The findings of women being portrayed as inferior to men in plays and the overview of the gendered position of women in Namibia by Andima and Tjiramanga (2014) contributed to a better understanding of the claim by Mills (1995) that "literature is one of the many forms of writing which play a role in the construction of the subject and the reproduction of messages about what women and men are like in society (p.17).

It is evident from the findings of the study, the poets being Namibians although they are all women, represented women as they are perceived or appeal to the actual Namibian society. Victims of physical, sexual, and verbal abuse is another representation of women characters that was found in the selected poems as the poets portrayed women going through violence at the hands of husbands and people they trusted. In *You Broke Me, Daddy*, the narrator's mother is abused by her husband in front of her child. In *Stir Not My Dear One*, the woman is not only physically but verbally abused by her husband and in *Violence and Dear Perpetrator*, the women are physically and sexually abused by people they trusted which led to their deaths. This abuse does not only lead to death but also conveys a message of worthlessness to the victims. This is collaborated by this: Patriarchy necessitates violence or the subliminal threat of violence to maintain itself. The most unsafe circumstances for women are not an unknown man in the street or even the enemy in wartime, but a husband or lover in the isolation of their own home (Edwards-Jauch, 2013, p. 396).

The second research question of this study was to seek how syntax is used to present the gender roles of women in selected poems. Ambunda and De Klerk (2003) state that gender roles are the characteristics, duties and responsibilities attributed to members of the two sexes by virtue of the fact that they are male or female. The study found that the poets used different linguistic devices to show the roles of women in society. The poets used metaphors assigned to women characters to demonstrate their roles in society such as being child bearers. In *Mother*, the narrator uses a metaphor that carries a strong connotation that can be understood as childbearing, "For I am keen to leave this sac, and burst into this world you fear". In *There is Depth in Mommy's Strength*, the narrator says "And bare her flowers (and fruits)".

Andima and Tjiramanga (2014) assert that despite the

laws protecting the rights of women after independence, the notion that men are superior to women continues to affect women in postcolonial Namibia. Much of the discrimination and oppression against women take place in their homes and this is perpetrated by their husbands, families, and their communities. These areas of discrimination and oppression are usually based on long-standing cultural practices. In *Stir Not My Dear One*, the female character is abused verbally and physically. "Insults spur out in arrows" and "For the heavy hand, many times thudded my body". Also, in *Dear Perpetrator and Violence*, the abuse of women leads to their death. The 10-year-old girl in *Dear Perpetrator* was tortured and killed and her body was mutilated, which shows the extent of gender issues women face in the real world.

These findings contradict O'Neil (1941) theory that states that men who strongly believe in masculine gender norms, particularly with regards to providing for one's family, may be more likely to perpetrate violence if they feel these norms are being violated, and Goode (1971) who believes that women are abused by men who think they lack the power to obtain power in the relationship. Women are mostly abused because of the patriarchal system and as men want to show their superiority. For instance, in *Dear Perpetrator*, the male character abused the child because he saw her as worthless, and he used her body parts to get income which contradicts O'Neal's theory.

Women characters are discriminated against, and oppressed. Woldemariam (2018) concluded in his sociolinguistic study that discrimination of gender through language does exist as women are regarded as emotional while men are resourceful. This study's findings support Woldemariam's findings as women in the selected poems are discriminated against because of the patriarchal system and the stereotypes. In *Let Me Be*, the narrator is discriminated against for being "thin", "short" and "dull" because of their appearance and the lack of education. However, in "*What's Wrong?*" and "*Hail to the Queen*" the poets gave a platform for women to fight the discrimination and oppression they face in the world. They stood up against the patriarchal system by questioning the system and the stereotypes against women which is supported by Rapport *et al.* (2002) who believe that women are faced with these issues because gendered organisations do not support women's advancement efforts as their policies are based on traditional gender stereotypes. Traditional and cultural stereotypes are major contributors to gender issues faced by women (ibid). Thus, women have to stand up and fight against the stereotypes on their own.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study adopted a qualitative, desktop approach and the poems were interpreted through content analysis. The main aim of this research was to analyse language and

gender in the selected poems from a feminist stylistics standpoint in line with the following objectives: To examine how lexis is used to represent women in the selected poems, to analyse how syntax is used to show the roles of women in society and, to evaluate how gender issues are communicated at discourse level in the selected poems.

The study revealed that, most of the poets represented women as victims rather than survivors in the poems. In *Dear Perpetrator*, the female character is represented as a victim of sexual and physical abuse at the hands of the person she trusted. Moreover, in *Stir Not My Dear One* and *Violence*, women are abused by their husbands in their homes. Furthermore, in *Domestic Worker* and *Let Me Be*, women are represented as victims of oppression and discrimination. They are also discriminated against and oppressed by their family members and by the society at large.

Moreover, the poets used linguistic devices such as metaphors to bring to light the gender roles that women are expected to do in society. They are represented as domestic workers and child bearers in society, women are also given the role of providing and putting food on the table for the family like in *Domestic Worker*, the female character works as a domestic worker to provide for her family. Also, women are expected to raise their children, do household chores and work in the field to provide food for their husbands and kids. Hence, when there is not enough food women have to starve for their family to eat.

Finally, gender concerns encountered by women as portrayed in the chosen poems were revealed and communicated through discourse-level language. Due to their gender, women face discrimination, exploitation, violence, and oppression from both society and their loved ones. They are shown as uneducated, narrow-minded people who must labour in the fields to make ends meet, and as destitute people. These demonstrate how women are subjugated and have devolved into slaves. Despite her weariness, she continues to prepare meals for the family after work since she is a woman. Not only are women oppressed by society, but they are also abused by the legal system because they are treated like slaves and only receive as little as ninety Namibian dollars in compensation. Thus, women are oppressed by the patriarchal society and confront numerous obstacles as a result.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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