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# THE GLORIFICATION OF PATRIARCHY IN PAUL MATAVIRE'S MUSIC LYRICS

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## ABSTRACT

The late blind Zimbabwean musician, Paul Matavire, mesmerised his audience with a music genre whose lyrics addressed and continue to address contemporary social issues. His music occupies a prominent place in Zimbabwe's music history and continues to portray the normative values of an Afro-traditional music genre. Three of his late-1980s hits, *Dhiyabhorosi Nyoka* (Diabolical snake), *Taurayi zvenyu* (Just speak please!) and *Tanga Wandida* (Love me first), collectively glorify patriarchy while portraying women as subservient to the masculine gender. In *Dhiyabhorosi Nyoka*, Matavire controversially uses biblical inter-textual allusions, humour, and sarcasm to demonstrate that Eve's original sin was the genesis of the challenges besetting contemporary society (and especially men). He deploys a gendered perspective and demeaning language in other songs considered in this article. This article is grounded in a narrative agency perspective in discussing how Matavire's music portrays and glorifies patriarchy through vocal characterisations. The selected songs' lyrics are also examined to determine their implications for educational management, such as gender tolerance and respect.

**Keywords:** gender; music lyrics; language; education management; narrative agency; Zimbabwe

## INTRODUCTION

Musician Paul Matavire, the lyrically gifted son of a school teacher born in the Maranda area of the Mwenezi District in 1963, is one of the finest popular musicians

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to emerge in Zimbabwe after independence in 1980. He was born with normal sight but a glaucoma attack rendered him permanently blind at the age of six; eventually, he dies on 18 October 2005 at his farm in Rutenga, Mwenezi District (Tera 2012; Zindi 2011). He is 'famed for his music composition skills and catchy infectious melodies' (Tera 2012). His music, mostly sung in Shona, one of Zimbabwe's indigenous languages, which catapulted him to legendary status (courtesy of the Jairos Jiri Band), addressed serious Zimbabwean contemporary social issues including male-female relationships, religion, family and domestic concerns, and matters related to people's everyday lives. Matavire, nevertheless, christened himself 'Doctor Love' to project himself as the champion and spokesperson of male-female relations and in particular love issues. His music genre, which is referred to as 'comedy music' punctuated by idiomatic Shona expressions (Chifunyise 2011), and the above-mentioned focus on social and economic issues affecting Zimbabwean society, provide an interesting opportunity for a critical analysis of the narrative agency evident in the songs and the ways in which these songs treated issues related to patriarchal concerns and improved society's social awareness and level of education.

The article considers Pam Nilan's (2000) thesis that gender production contexts are varied, and that masculinity, as articulated by Harrison (2000, 5), is not a 'fixed essence but a shifting gendered social identity' in her study on shifting masculinities in classroom situations, to which I add the musical domain as one such shifting production context. My reading of Matavire's lyrics has compelled me to conclude that notions of masculinity and patriarchy found expression in the space of his music productions. Music facilitates some gender and identity construction processes, especially in African contexts where identities and orientations are expressed and performed orally, and thus explained within the context of the sex-role socialisation theory. This article draws on the narrative agency (elucidated below) to demonstrate that some lyrics of Matavire's songs are intended to communicate gender and educational issues. Chari (2008, 92) has highlighted the significant 'role of music in constructing gender relations' as it communicates various messages. He notes that 'women have been a staple theme of popular music as objects of either caricature or adoration from time immemorial' (Chari 2008, 92). While aware of the above ideas, music's communicative and educational role as well as in mapping stereotypical gendered identities of women, I am of the opinion that Matavire's vocal characterisation critically articulated 'gendered and subjective' (Burns and Watson 2010, 3) notions around men and women in contemporary Zimbabwean society. Therefore, taking note of the notion that music is a form of 'organized sound' (Idolor 2007, 13), this article discusses how and why Matavire's music, especially the record-breaking songs, *Dhiyabhorosi Nyoka* ('Diabolical snake,' 1989a), *Tanga, Wandida* ('Love me first,' 1989b) and *Taurai Zvenyu* ('Just speak please,' 2004), portrayed women as objects of scorn, abuse, and subservience while at the same time glorifying patriarchy. The article seeks to underscore the view that these songs, words, and

music are crafted, and hence organised (Idolor 2007, 13) in making a case against women by portraying them as dancing to the whims of men. Nonetheless, this article also underscores the significance of Matavire's music in treating sensitive societal concerns such as religion and marital issues in a humorous way—in a way that concurs with Manase's (2011) submission that songs articulate societal perceptions and generate meanings about socio-economic and political conditions, especially in the southern African sub-region. As noted by Hildegade Manzvanzvike (2012), Paul Matavire's significance is evident in the fact that 'Matavire was a man, and though blind, he sang about everyday issues that affect people in various situations', some of which related to the construction of women as gendered subjects and the sociocultural educational implications under focus in this article. However, as Tawanda Ngena (2013) argues, people are yet to judge if, in the three songs, Matavire solely sang about love or was merely 'good at firing broadsides at the fairer sex'.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The vital role played by oral music in African society cannot be overemphasised. Negus (2012), Vambe (2011), Idolor (2007), and Wilson (2006) advance the notion that music plays an important role in the life of individuals or people. In this vein, Togarasei (2007) is of the opinion that music has been used to entertain, comfort, and motivate people during particular occasions. Music indeed permeated traditional and contemporary societies, and continues to do so. Chirere (2007) claims that oral art's vitality lies in its involvement with life, as especially noted in the way music helps people move. Furthermore, music is a repository for traditionally oral societies while at the same time it 'put to rest notions that [such societies] have no capacity to keep inventory of their belongings' (Chirere 2007, 255). It also provides a 'sense of place ... [by way of its] social dynamics of power and imagination' (Negus 2012, 484) and its different genres become integral to people's lives (Idolor 2007). Through music and song, we transmit culture, rekindle memories, and preserve people's history processes and events (Wilson 2006). Musicians who produce this music play an integral role in validating African societies' memories of leaders, events, and deaths (Wilson 2006): hence Manase's (2011) assertion that music plays a critical role in representing contemporary conditions, generating pleasurable meanings and enabling connections with people's culture in general. Fiske (2000) views such culture as a means of producing meaning and social identity of a people.

The nature and role of music in societies have changed over time. Initially, societies engaged in music for non-commercial reasons or purposes, however, the rise of urbanisation, the cash economy, and capitalism has resulted in music becoming commercialised (Togarasei 2007; Fiske 2000). One characteristic in the lyrics of some popular and commercialised music genres is the conveyance of notions of gender and sexual content. The sexualisation of music lyrics (Hall, West

and Hill 2011) is a phenomenon not confined to Zimbabwean music, but extends to global music as well. A comparative study of the presence of sexualised lyrics in popular music by Hall, West, and Hill (2011) revealed that male black artists' music was significantly more likely to contain sexualised lyrics than those of other groups. Paul Matavire, being a black male, fits quite well into this assertion. Moreover, music lyrics laced with sexual content are noted to correlate with adolescent sexual activity and side effects such as teenage pregnancy and a development referred to as 'Cultivation theory' (Hall et al.). Hall, West, and Hill (2011, 3), citing several studies opine that in 'Cultivation theory', the more a people are exposed to a content dosage of a music genre, the more they are likely to be acculturated into (or adopt) a particular perspective on reality, as noted in their assertion 'that which is seen or heard most, becomes that which is most believed'. Vambe (2011, 1) adds that musicians, for instance, employ 'different linguistic strategies ... of naming reality through alternative versions of music' ostensibly to assist the consumer to buy into the messages.

It is my contention that some of Paul Matavire's lyrical depictions are an epitome of perceptions (and practices) about women and men particularly in the Zimbabwean culture. This fits well with Nzewi's remark, cited in Odolor (2011, 13), that 'it is society that ascribes meaning to ... music', a remark that I consider in my discussion on the ways in which Matavire's music objectifies women while glorifying patriarchy. For instance, the song, *Taurai Zvenyu*, projects Matavire glorifying polygamy as an 'adaptive cultural practice' (Cook 2007, 232). Hence, the article examines the resultant musical objectification of women in Matavire's music and the way it implanted stereotypical notions and practices such as the internalisation of messages of self-pity and objectification in women, as well as the glorification of masculinity in the audience of this music and Zimbabwean society in general.

## NARRATIVE AGENCY: A CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK

Human discourse is replete with narrative (Burns and Watson 2010; Nicholls 2007; Saidi 2015). Language, just as music, enables people to communicate ideas, intentions, commands, and all that needs to be communicated. Ideas have always been communicated throughout history in genres such as tales, novellas, epics, and fables. Narrative theory and analysis make it possible for qualitative research to construct meaning and explore temporality using people's lived experiences (Ezzy 1998). However, the fact that some forms of vocal music confront present and past societal issues as lived experiences makes the use of lyrical narrative appropriate for this study. Such analyses assist us to be socially conscious about the basis of the narrative. Moreover, philosophical narrative theory 'provides a sophisticated response to many epistemological and ontological issues raised by cultural studies' (Ezzy 1998, 170), and thus music, being part of a people's culture, provides a fertile episteme in our quest

to understand contemporary society and trends such as perceptions on gender and masculinity as expressed in the music under study. Matavire indeed used self-authored vocal narratives to champion contentious social issues. He also used both deep but 'pure' Shona language lyrics and an 'increasing use of pan-ethnic *lingua francas* or urban vernaculars of local origin' in conveying his messages (Makoni, Brutt-Griffler, and Mashiri 2007, 25). Saidi (2015, 58) describes these as 'Deep Shona phrases and expressions [that] ... use urban lingo, proverbs, idioms and comments done within a very rich Shona language ... while carrying the message'. Manase (2011, 83), drawing on Veit-Wild, describes such lyrical creativity, especially the 'inventive contemporary urban ghetto lingo [as] ... Zimbolicious'. Matavire, through his lyrical creativity, thus expresses ongoing societal changes wherein the Shona language was not oblivious to such changes that witnessed chiShona borrowing 'lexical terms from English to fill a gap in its linguistic requirements and through a multiplicity of word building processes' (Nyoni, Grand, and Nyoni 2010, 73). The use by Matavire of what one may call 'language endangering lyrics' is nevertheless a blemish rooted in colonialism where missionaries strove to 'codify indigenous dialects' while former colonialists attempted to unify such dialects (Makoni, Brutt-Griffler, and Mashiri 2007). It is some of these terms or languages that Paul Matavire uses in his lyrics to convey meaning to his audience. Our task as listeners and researchers therefore becomes that of decoding and constructing (subjective) narrative interpretations of the lyrics in question, with a particular focus in this article on how the lyrics objectify women and glorify patriarchy.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the study is to analyse the portrayal of gender content in lyrics of Matavire's three music hits. The study contributes to the subject on how some songs glorify patriarchy and portray the feminine as subservient to the masculine gender. Moreover, the study aims to show that sexualisation in the lyrics has implications for people's construction of gender and in educational management settings of a society. These are the nebulous entities that the analysis seeks to add onto the discourses on African music, perceptions on gender, and music's sociocultural educative role.

## METHOD

The study adopts an interpretive research design, in which a purposive sampling technique was used to select three of Paul Matavire's songs and to analyse their lyrical content. In short, the study sought to find meaning and gender constructions in the lyrics of three of Paul Matavire's hit songs by assigning meaning to them.

## Sample

Three songs were conveniently selected for analysis. These are *Dhiyabhorosi Nyoka*, *Taurai zvenyu* and *Tanga wandida*. These songs were selected on the basis of their focus on women and men in Zimbabwean society and use of deep and humorous Shona language lyrics in the portrayal of their subjects. The selected songs were produced over twenty-five years ago and yet their message is as relevant as ever, hence, Negus's (2012) assertion that popular songs mediate the human experience of time.

## Procedure

The songs' lyrics were listened to, transcribed, translated, and interpreted in an effort to decode their satirical, metaphorical, and humorous aspects. The researcher carefully listened to the lyrics of the selected songs and transcribed them as he was not been able to locate any documented lyrics of the three songs. This is despite the arrival of the internet or World Wide Web (Griffiths 2012), wherein the words to some recorded songs can easily be located. Griffiths (2012) opines that when words are listened to or published, they not only foster precise musical performance, but act as an invitation for study or contemplation. He adds that such words are a memory of the recording and are akin to literature. Thus, the lyric texts in the current study were examined critically and thereafter, coded for easy interpretation with a view to revealing some themes to be discussed below.

## Analysis of Paul Matavire's hit songs

### Use of *lingua franca* (language of endangerment)

Two of Matavire's songs, *Taurai Zvenyu* (Just speak please (literal translation) or You can say that again!) and *Tanga wandida* (Love me first ... before I can extend any favours to you (Manzvanzvike 2012)) are classic examples of the use of *lingua franca*. In the hit song, *Taurai zvenyu*, Matavire starts off by saying the following words in a manner that mimics a polygamous man to his wives, maSibanda, Maphosa, Matshazi, Madhumani:

*Zvamurimi munokomburena,*

It's you that **complain (komburena)**,

*Zvamurimi musingagutsikane nerudo (x2)*

it is you that are never satisfied with love

*Ndiminika munokomburena*

It's you that complain [Matavire is referring to the wives].

*Kana Murimi vaMaSibanda musambodarokawo, nokuti hana yangu inorova **fasti***  
As for you (my wife) **maSibanda**, don't say anything as my heart will beat **Fast**

*Ndichatotaura nevanogadzira **mari yebepa**, vadhinde misoro yenyu pama pama **teni dhora***  
I shall persuade those that make paper money (notes), to inscribe your facial photograph on  
**Ten Dollar Notes** (to appease you!!) [Own translation]

The words in bold have been corrupted from English mainly into a domain some Shona speakers euphemistically call *Shonglish* (*Shona-to-English*) or what Makoni, Brutt-Griffler, and Mashiri (2007, 37) call 'chiHarare ... an unstable, admixture of chiShona and English, plus switches and borrowings from other languages ... a by-product of urbanisation and cosmopolitanism'. Manase (2011, 83), drawing on Veit-Wild (2009), describes such language as 'Zimbolicious'. The use of such words for communication purposes conveys meaning to the contemporary listener. Nyoni, Grand, and Nyoni (2010) have argued that subsuming lexical terms from English into Shona has been prompted by societal changes such as those wrought by hitherto unknown diseases such as HIV/AIDS. This 'superstratum influence' (borrowing from English to Shona) has seen people such as Matavire 'phonologizing' (Nyoni et al. 2010, 74) terms as shown in the above citation and also noted in the other two songs examined in this study.

The song *Tanga Wandida* (Love me first) portrays the corrupt phenomenon of sex for a job that is faced by various job seekers. Men are generally in charge of hiring other men and women into business organisations and in the song, Matavire gives a classic example of the use of the language of endangerment when the song's persona addresses a prospective female job seeker he had singled out of the multitude and instructed to accompany him to his office:

*Eeh ... Basa ndirorika muofisi muno umu, **puromosheni iri kuvuya chimbi-chimbi***  
Yah! This is where you will be working in this **office**. **Promotion** prospects are just by the corner

*Mari yeRanji, neyeTranzipot, musaita wari nhaika? ndinoSota*  
Do not **worry** about **lunch** and **transport** costs. I will foot the bills/ I will **sort** that out.

The employer then goes on to suggest the strategy. Such a strategy was to be privy to the two prospective love birds, as Matavire lustfully suggests. He says:

*Asi ndinoda kuti titange taita mutamba kwese: kunzungu nekunyimo seMhembwe*  
But my plan is that we initially play hide and seek ... like a Duiker which survives by stealing groundnuts and round nuts from fields alternately

*Apandinorevaka kuti toita **Puraivheti lavhu** yedu yetinodhonza muno muofisi*  
I suggest we engage in a **private love affair** here, in this **office**

*Uku kumba munenge muchiLavhana nemurume wenyu. Yanga yakaipeyi?*  
At the same time, you need not abandon your husband, you continue **loving** him. Is this plan out of order?

Then the employer instructs the female job seeker to turn around to display her back.

*Imbofuratirai uko ndivone ...Kuzoti dai muri **sidhudya** (sidudhla) ... ha ha ha ... moto muzhinji*

Just turn round and let me see your bums ... ha ha ha! ...

If you were heavily built, that would be hot!

The use of a *lingua franca* or 'phonolised' words (in **bold black** above) in the two citations above serves to show how the local indigenous languages have been 'invaded' by urban vernacular and demonstrates communicative reasons for using these. The lyrics in the second citation show how the speaker entices the desperate female job seeker using a blended *lingua franca* laced with humour that indicates the musician's social satire against sexual harassment at workplaces. The boss entices the female job seeker with promises of perks such as promotion, transport allowances, and lunch money in exchange for illicit grand romantic sessions in the office out of sight of an unsuspecting husband. Manzvanzvike (2012) opines that such tendencies by men are extreme forms of sexual harassment that are a manifestation of gender imbalances. Moreover, the song inverts words/terms in bold italics such as **dhinde**, **maSibanda**, **Sidhudya** and **dhonza** in the two citations, which are isiNdebele derivatives (*ukudinda*, *umaSibanda*, *Isidudla* and *ukudonsa*), respectively, where terms such as *maSibanda*, a feminine totem used as a sign of utmost respect in Zimbabwe, are used by the lustful men as bait for their sexual conquest. Furthermore, other words such as *Dhonza*, which literally means 'pull', are used by the singer to express the intended action of 'doing' or 'conducting' '**Puravheti lavhu yatinodhonza muno muOfisi**' – 'A private love affair [that] we conduct in this office'. In commenting lustfully on the lady's physical structure, Matavire says '*Kuzoti dai muri **Sidhudya** (Isidudla in isiNdebele) ... ha ha ha ... Moto muzhinji*' (If you were heavily built ... ha ha ha ... you would be really hot!). These examples demonstrate how the Shona language has infused other languages (isiNdebele and English) into its body politic, making it relatively easy for people to communicate in contemporary urban and rural settings. Zimbabweans have thus been able to borrow, coin, and create terms for use in particular disciplines such as music (Nyoni, et al. 2010), and Matavire demonstrates how *lingua franca* could be used to abuse women using sophisticated cynicism.

## The glorification of patriarchy

*Dhiyabhorosi Nyoka* (Diabolic snake) or 'The devil is a snake' is a song whose lyrics are based on the Bible verses, Genesis 2 verse 7 and verses 15–25, but fundamentally Genesis Chapter 3. In the song, Matavire blames the female gender as the originator of the predicaments besetting contemporary society. The Biblical Eve is viewed as 'The mother of all evil'. If we use Rwafa's (2015) 'blame shifting game' concept in

analysing Matavire's song, we could conclude that it 'curries favour' with Adam who equates bachelorhood to freedom from sin. Zvokomo (15 October 2012), writing a brief Facebook commentary in response to a newspaper article (newsdzeZimbabwe.co.uk) of a man who had been arraigned before a court for failing to provide his wife with financial support for bus fares to seek medical treatment, describe the man as akin to the 'diabolical snake' that Matavire alludes to in his song. While Zvokomo (15 October 2012) equates the husband with 'the snake', the lyrics in the song apportion blame to the 'woman', that is, Eve. The opening lyrics in *Dhiyabhorosi Nyoka* begin by blaming women:

*Dai vasiivo Nyika iye ino, ingadayi riri sango remichero mudya ndigere*

(Were it not because of THEM (*Dai vasiivo*), this earth would be a vast forest of fruits, a pensioners' paradise)

*Dai vasivoo nyika iye ino, ungadayi uri munda we Michero, mudya ndigere*

(Were it not because of THEM, this earth would (have been) an Orchard ... a pensioners' paradise)

The pronoun 'THEM' in the translated lyrics refers to women. However, the song has an interesting twist in that the backing vocals distinctively and paradoxically expressed by females deny the accusation and ironically invert the snake trope in their denial of the blame for society's difficulties:

*Musandinakurira nyoka mhenyu iyi veduwe, totochema nekunyengera Dhiyabhorosi Nyoka*  
(x3)

Do not throw a live snake at me please, let's cry and blame the Devil snake (Serpent)

Matavire, as the lead singer, then continues in sermon-like tones to draw on the biblical story about Adam's and Eve's fall to underscore the women's original sin and hence their responsibility for society's predicaments:

*Adam asiti awana, akanga asina chivi; murume ichiri tsvimborume akanga ari mutsvene,*

*Chivi chakazovuya pashure Eva anyengerwa nenyoka, Chivi chakazovuya pashure mukadzi anyengerwa nenyoka, Kudya muchero wapakati pomunda weungwaru neruzivo*

*Kudya muchere wokuziva zvakanaka nezvakaipa, Eva adya huri huchi, akapawo Adam,*

*Vavirivachipedza kudya, nyadzi ndokukunda rufu, Vakazvivonavasina nhembe, ndokuzosimira mashizha, Mwari aona zvakadayi akavarova neshamhu, shamhu yavakarobwa nayo, nhasi yogwadza isu, Totochema nadzo hama idzi; Nhai veduwe!!*

Before Adam got married – He was sinless; The sin came after he married Eve; When a man is a bachelor, he is holy; The sin came after Eve had been deceived by the snake/serpent; The sin came after the woman had been deceived by a snake; The snake deceived the two to eat the fruit at the center of the orchard; The orchard of the good and bad; Eve ate the honey-tasting fruit and also gave Adam; After eating, the two realised that they had committed a

grave sin. The embarrassment was greater than death as the two found themselves naked. God beat them with a *sjambok* whose pain we continue to feel to this day. Let's cry and blame these, our relatives (women)!

In subsequent lyrics, 'the Sermon' continues with an interpretation of Genesis chapter 2 and 3. When God reportedly called Adam after failing to locate him in the Garden of Eden, Adam is said to have replied '*Mukadzi uya wamakandipa Ishe*': 'The wife that you gave me my Lord!' Matavire says towards the end of the first segment of 'sermon' that because of woman things have never been 'right' for man. He says:

*Mukadzi rakava Mboko chena yakaparira parere nhema; rikava gangaidzwa revavigi kunhuwa kwewakafa. Hazvina kuzomborurama kubva nhasi. Totochema nadzo hama idzi; Totochema nadzo hama dzedu.Eeee*

[From thereon] ... Woman became the source of all evil ... akin to the stench from a corpse. From there on till now, things have never been right. So that's why we blame them (these, our colleagues). Oh my God!

In the second segment of the 'sermon', Matavire, in a style that mimics a priest and the speech-figure, Adam, takes God to task by being defensive and presenting 'facts' and questions intended to absolve himself from the sin. He says:

*Pamusoroyi varumeee. Ndobokumbirawo nzeve dzenyu zvino nokuti vhangeri riya ratanga. Manje, kwanzi Adam mumunda we Eden, achiri ega; toti raiva Bhachura nhai? Haana kana chimwe chete chaakadzira Nyadenga. Chivi chakazovuya pave pava, kwasikwa vaHosi Eva Mai vevanhu. Ndovane hama dzimwe dzatiinadzo nanhasiuno mudzimba dzedu; Ndobviraka hama dzedu dzenguvo refu; ivavaka vane mashoko akatetepera kunge sadza remurwere; vemanzwi anotapira nekutonhorera kunge dhiringisi yemufiriji. Ndokunyengerana nenyoka yainzi Dhiyahhorosi paya zvikanzi "Iwe! muchero wemunorega uyu huchi" Eva akadyavo ndokubva ati "Huchest Huchest"*

Excuse me gentlemen. I hereby request your attention as our sermon has begun. We are told: Adam in the Garden of Eden, was alone/single. Let's presume he was a bachelor, ok? To that day he had committed no sin. The sin only came when Eve, the mother of creation, was created; she is the relation to some of our colleagues we stay with in our homes. I mean those that put on long clothing; who speak fluently, who speak softly as patient's food; whose voices are sweet and cool as a cool drink. They connived with the Devil snake. Eva said "Yoho! This forbidden fruit tastes like honey!" After eating, she was bewildered. She began singing "Honeyst! Honeyst!"

A few issues can be discerned from the citation. Matavire begins by saluting the audience in typical male-centered stereotypical fashion, 'Excuse me gentlemen', common among Zimbabweans. Addressing audiences in that way means that some women, including those in leadership positions, such as at educational institutions, salute the audience by recognising men or 'Fathers' first, and women and children

later. The 'normal slogan' or salutation is '*Pamusoroi vana Baba nana Mai*' (Excuse me, gentlemen and ladies). The female contingent is rarely recognised since it is the men who run such shows. This misogynic tendency could be attributed to deep-rooted cultural practices (social role orientation) which entrench the preeminence of the masculine gender. The caption above also reveals the use of direct but subtle satire using Biblical wit in apportioning blame to the woman (Eve). By suggestively asking 'Let's presume he [Adam] was a bachelor, ok?' Matavire is indirectly implying that Adam was a bachelor, hence romantically sinless. In a later segment of the same song, Matavire, playing Adam poses the following questions and answer to God 'For how long have I been in this orchard as a bachelor? What sin did I commit before this woman was created? Check my record!' Throughout the song, the following chorus is distinct, '*Dai vasivo Nyika iye ino, ingadayi riri sango remichero mudya ndigere* (Were it not because of THEM (women), this earth would be a vast forest of fruits: a pensioner's paradise)'. This is meant to cement the notion (in the listener) that women are to blame for humankind's predicaments.

In an apparent act of appeasement Matavire praises women sarcastically though, but reverts to mocking them. He says:

*Ngatifambirei mberi neVhangeri tione. Vamwe venyu vangangopindwa nepfungwa dzekuti Adam akakasira kupindwa chiNdoendavo akaita zveZimutevere ndokuva gudzadungwe. Asi ngatimbozvivhunzai varume: Vangani vedu mudzimba vanganzinamadzimai avo "Nhai Baba vaTombi, nditirei chakati" vakaramba? Tose tonovonekwa tichigutsurira musoro, kuteendera pamusoro chaipo ... nokuti rurimi rwavanhu ava rwagara runotapira. Raiti. Iye zvino izvi ndinoda kuti mumwe nemumwe murume kana mukomana pauri ipapo ungotarisana nemusikana kana mhamha vari padhuze newe. Makatarisa here? Musatya henyu kutarisa nekuti ziso haribi chemhunhu. Tarisai chete. Munoono here kuti kuvakwa kwakaita vanhu ava, vane iya inonzi pachirungu attractiveness nekuti maziso ako kungovaona chete anobva aguta. Zvino maiti Adam ndiye waizodii?*

Let's continue with the sermon. Some of you might think Adam was peer-pressured into acting the way he did. But let us ask ourselves this question: How many of us can reject a command from a woman? We all assent to such a demand .... Isn't it? ... because they have a sweet tongue. Alright! ... I now request that you, man or boy, take a closer look at the girl or woman seated next to you. Don't be afraid! The eye does not steal any one's property! Do you see that the way they are moulded (by God) epitomises "attractiveness". Looking at them satisfies one's eyes and ego! So, why [do you] think Adam could just let go?

The preceding citation shows how Matavire uses sarcastic words to praise women, arguing that Eve was beautiful to the extent that Adam was blinded by her attractiveness. Such a description naturally puts women in a dilemma, resulting in patriarchy carrying the day.

In the song *Taurayi zvenyu*, Matavire demonstrates male hegemony by mimicking the behaviour of a polygamist. Invariably, polygamy is endemic in most African

societies, particularly in Zimbabwe. The man in Matavire's song manages the stormy polygamous relationship mostly by harshly reprimanding them for complaining too much: 'For not being satisfied with love!' The backing vocals (again, distinctly female) render the distinctive alliteration 'Taurai zvenyu' ('You can say that again!'). The polygamous man is further portrayed as dominant and disapproving of the fierce competition and tactics that the five women engage in to win his heart. The man boasts about his power, abusively describes the physical stature of the women, and declares that they are all his property. Suddenly, he sarcastically regrets having married so many women alleging that chaos reigns supreme. The sophistry in the lyrics is illustrated through poetic humour:

*Inzwaah! Pamusha pangu panga pasisina rugare nikisi.*  
 Listen! My home knew no peace!  
*Anga ava masvanhi kongonya kutarisana kwavakarambana.*  
 It was more like a divorcees' circus  
*Mapindirikumyengu bandavuko redzvinyu;*  
 Very chaotic [as a lizard's forelegs movement]  
*Chibatira pamashizha vusavi hwapanhamo.*  
 Poverty stricken as a food shortage at a pauper's funeral  
*Bokoshindi, burusasike, dzvitsvi reZvidzvororo*  
 Chaotic, very chaotic [as the noises of nocturnal mongooses]  
*Misodzi mumaziso aMai Tsvoti waya musi nenguri*  
 Tears time and again  
*Makombureni hobho hobho so*  
 Too many complaints  
*Hini ndaba(isiNdebele)*  
 Why??

Despite lamenting that polygamy 'is hard as praying', the imaginary husband nevertheless declares his intention to marry more women. He sarcastically asks '*Ungagomirira mudzimwe umwe wave Hangaiwa here?*' ('Why have one wife? Are you a rock pigeon?'). Elsewhere in the song, he boasts '*Ikozvino ndine faifi paChirungu*' [Speaking in English, I can say: I have five wives]. *And I still want some more*'. The narrative or vocal characterisation in *Taurai Zvenyu* thus epitomizes a typical Zimbabwean polygamous lifestyle as Matavire's lyrics fictionally reflect the real (life) patriarchal tendencies in some African societies. It is such tendencies and practices that Paul Matavire depicts satirically through word and sound.

It must also be noted that the song *Tanga Wandida* (Love me first) typifies patriarchy at its best. As intimated earlier on, the lyrics reveal that a typical company is run by powerful men, as noted in the song's lustful male boss who uses both subtle coercion and reassuring words to helpless and hapless woman. The song starts with the lyrics (an apparent offer to the hapless job-seeker):

*Basa riri pano, mari haizivani, kana wada ini uchapura nyemba nemusana (x2) Uchava mukuru kune vamwe vose, kana wada ini uchapura nyemba nemusana (x2)*

The job is available, money is abundant (x2); if you accept my love proposal you will sit pretty. You shall be the boss (in this company)(x2).

However, the job-seeker expresses displeasure at the proposal. Matavire uses proverbial and metaphorical language in expressing how the woman spurns the offer. Initially and repeatedly she says, 'That's not what I came here for (*handizvo zvandavinga pano*)', to which the boss also repeatedly asks, 'So why did you come here for?' (*Saka wavingei?*). Then, inwardly, the woman job-seeker is tormented and talks to herself (but inwardly telling the man). The translated lamentation below typifies what many women go through in their quest for survival in a male-dominated capitalist cash economy:

Dindingwe rinonaka richakweva rimwe hee hee Vanhukadzi tine nhamo (x2). Kana iro rokwebwa zvonzi "Mavara angu azarevhuuu". Wako akateiwa nedovi negonzo unganzwa seiko? Ida wekwako sezvauzvida iwe iwee Bhaiberi rinotaura. Chaunoda kuti akuitire, newe muitire ichocho. Ndati chaunoda kuti akuitire, newe muitire ichocho. Vamwe varume havagoni kupfimba. Vanopona nemavara seShato, inobata mhuka yakayeverwa. Vanotungamuidza mari mberi. Ini mukadzi kuti nditsvagewo basa, zvonzi naManeja "tanga wandida". Nomuzvitoro ndozvavanotiita .... Ukandida unowana zvese. Vedzimotikari monyepera tsiye nyoro ... murume kubhutu ini mukadzi mberi. Chinangwa chavo chiri chimwe chete.. Chokutidzidzisa kubira varume vedu ...

Manomano emuroyi kunyepera kutya dzvinyu, akasungiraira nyoka muchiuno ....(x3)

The cheetah derives joy through pulling another cheetah's tail but complains when its tail is pulled, alleging that its tail has been soiled. We women have challenges. How do you feel if your woman is similarly trapped? "Love your neighbour as you love yourself", the Bible says. Some men cannot simply propose love. Their survival is akin to a python that strikes an absent-minded animal. They use money as bait. Seeking employment is a nightmare for a simple woman like me, as managers demand sex/love first. Even shop-owners make similar promises of manna. Car owners likewise are pretentious: my husband is placed on the backseat and I in front; but in all cases, their (men's) aim is the same: to steal from our husbands. This is typical witch behaviour: pretending to fear a lizard while a snake is coiled around their waists.

Later in the song, the boss continues with the emotional abuse and objectification of women by, among other things, requesting that the female job-seeker turn herself around and show him her backside. Needless to say the woman left in a huff, protesting that she made an oath to God that she shall have no other man except her husband. She storms out after remarking 'Hard luck for me. I would rather suffer. I'm gone'. Such protestation shows that despite the abuse, women can be principled by standing up against patriarchy. While these scenarios appear to show male domination and

female objectification in the main, Matavire's songs provide snippets of women's resistance to such abuse.

## Women's resistance to patriarchal tendencies

Later in the song *Tanga Wandida*, Matavire presents a scenario of a butchery owner who (ab)uses his position to woo the hearts of married women by promising them offal (a delicacy in traditional Zimbabwean cuisine). The 'butcher man' fails dismally too after a female customer spurns his advances. In yet another scenario, Matavire demonstrates how a male car owner/driver driving a bakkie (or pickup truck) tries to hoodwink a couple on an errand who are seeking a lift. The imaginary driver lustfully offers the front seat to the unsuspecting woman but ushers the husband to the back of the truck. The woman requests the driver that she swaps seats with her husband, to which the driver winks at her and says, 'I am honouring you lady! Can't you see that you are smartly dressed? You want to spoil your dress? Then you go around claiming that drivers are discourteous. Oh come on! Take the front seat.' When the woman makes it clear that she does not approve of his wink, ('talking with the eyes' according to Matavire), the driver speeds off, leaving the couple stranded. More typically misogynistic lyrics are found in another song. It is this context that the women characters in Matavire's songs can be viewed as rising up against male chauvinism and misogyny in the face of an unbridled patriarchal onslaught.

## DISCUSSION

The lyrics of the selected songs by Paul Matavire examined here focus on women, love, men, and language in society. In the hit songs *Taurai Zvenyu* and *Tanga Wandida*, Matavire uses both deep Shona language lyrics that an earlier commentator described as 'pan-ethnic *lingua francas* or urban vernaculars of local origin' (Makoni, Brutt-Griffler, and Mashiri 2007, 37). The use of these 'language endangering lyrics' is rooted in colonialism where missionaries and colonial masters sought to codify and unify indigenous dialects. As such, some of the lyrics have urban influences that enable listeners to comprehend the messages with ease. The language evident in the songs, in which the indigenous Ndebele and Shona languages and English are mixed, lives in the public domain and has been embraced by local Zimbabweans. It is clear from the songs that chiShona has borrowed and incorporated words that include '*Komburena*' (complain), '*Puomosheni*' (promotion), '*Dhora*' (Dollar); '*Bhachura*' (Bachelor) from English and 'poached' as well as corrupted words from isiNdebele such as 'Dhonza' (pull), 'Dhinda' (to stamp), 'Hinindaba' (Why?), 'Nikisi' (No), 'Sidhudya' (heavily built woman) and others. Such words have become part of the vocabulary of specific disciplines, be it education management, sociology or mathematics. The use of such an admixture distorts English language acquisition particularly by young learners. Nevertheless, Matavire uses this 'language of endangerment' (Makoni, Brutt-

Griffler, and Mashiri 2007) in music lyrics unashamedly to glorify patriarchy and at the same time to convey meaning in his social commentaries on the way women are objectified and demeaned by men.

Matavire also mixes chiShona, English, and isiNdebele lyrics in the three songs with a view to capturing the attention of a wider audience. In so doing, Matavire exhibits an educational aspect in which his songs seek to create awareness in a larger audience. The three selected hit song lyrics are also laced with sexual content. It was earlier noted that black male artists' music such as that of Matavire was more likely to contain sexualised lyrics than that of other groups. The three songs triangulate well with this assertion as they glorify violence against females while objectifying and degrading them in the main. These lyrics assist us to understand the gender dynamics and nature of male-female relationships in contemporary society.

The glorification of patriarchy is thus a staple theme in Matavire's music lyrics. Though the interpretation of some of the lyrics can be contentious given the sophistry of the language, it is the writer's contention that these lyrics glorify patriarchy and project women as subservient to the masculine gender. Matavire uses sexist jargon (albeit humorously) to portray men in leadership positions and how they seek to exploit women sexually as noted in *Tanga Wandida* wherein a company boss abuses his position when recruiting female labour (objects). Matavire also cites car owners/drivers and butchers as people who abuse their privileges and positions in an attempt to hoodwink and entice women into their romantic world. In conveying these messages, Matavire uses humour, sarcasm, metaphors, and satire to put across the illicit messages from the privileged bosses. The lyrics also show instances where women resist patriarchy and its manifestations. The women in *Tanga Wandida* rejected the advances of the boss, as well as the butcher's and truck driver's demeaning and sexual offers. Such a theme offers women an educational opportunity whereby they are encouraged to resist illicit male advances. The narrative is presented through Matavire's distinctive voice that blends well with the lyrics and as such, one can easily comprehend the characters projected in the songs. It is this context that the selected songs' lyrics were examined to determine their educational and social implications to discern themes such as the glorification of patriarchy, gender abuse and tolerance, and notions of respect and resistance.

The chronology of the musical narratives represented by Matavire assumes real life scenarios that are a manifestation of the patriarchal nature of the Zimbabwean society in particular, and other African societies in general. This observation endorses the contention that music communicates and is a vehicle through which gender relations are portrayed. By singing about women and to some extent 'denigrating' them, Matavire confirms how women are a staple theme in some popular music. Matavire's lyrics project women as objects of both scorn and adoration. In educational organisations, women tend to be assigned subservient roles and some have come to accept this scenario, albeit unconsciously, under the guise of culture. In the main, leadership is the preserve of men. Most urban schools in southern Africa have a

larger female staff complement while school management is male dominated. This scenario is projected in Matavire's song, *Taurai Zvenyu*, wherein the shenanigans of a polygamous relationship are portrayed. The lyrics in *Dyiyabhorosi Nyoka* are reminiscent of the adage 'How the mighty have fallen'. The biblical-based song or novella narrates how Adam was hoodwinked by Eve but were both punished by God. Contemporary education is replete with stories of male leaders that have fallen due to trappings of office instigated by women. Music cements these communicative portrayals as the public consumes the lyrics. Such are the controversial issues we can discern in Matavire's songs.

## CONCLUSION

Paul Matavire's comedy music addresses social issues such as love, religion, and gender. The three songs examined here convey sexualised and gendered lyrics. Matavire's music thus assists us better to understand male and female roles and behaviours in formal settings. Such an understanding is enhanced through the use of a *lingua franca* or 'language of endangerment'. Matavire has an added distinction in that he is a master in the use of humour (Saidi 2015), sarcasm, satire, and metaphors in conveying meaning (Fiske 2000). In essence Matavire uses lyrical wit to exalt males to glorify patriarchy and masculinity. In the process, women are projected in music discourse as a caricature of scorn, and playing to male whims and discursive practices. Matavire is pretentious in eulogising women and this work attempted to reveal how music has been used by a popular male artist to project the subservient nature of the feminine gender. This does not imply that women are homogeneously subservient. Some women have stood up against the extremes of patriarchy as was the case of the male persona: the boss, the butcher, and the truck driver. The masculine gender is portrayed as dominant in the interaction of males and females. The songs *Taurai Zvenyu* (Just speak please/You can say that again!) and *Tanga Wandida* (Love me first) illustrate men's preponderance over women. Matavire presents us with a musical dialogic contestation wherein gender domination and resistance are at play. It is this domination that women, especially those in educational settings, should strive to challenge and uproot.

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