



**NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION**

**TOPICBODIES SCRIPTED WITH VIOLENCE: RESISTANCE, RESILIENCE AND
COPING STRATEGIES IN KASANDA'S DANTE INTERNATIONAL, SCHOEMAN'S
THIS IS NOT A FLOWERPOT AND BLOOD ROSE BY ORFORD**

BY

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**A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTERS OF ENGLISH AND APPLIED LINGUISTICS
(MEAL) DEGREE AT THE NAMIBIAN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

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DATE: NOVEMBER 2021

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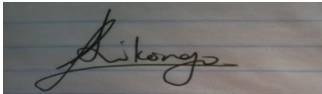
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I, Lesheni Kristine Shikongo, registered student number 219036752, hereby declare that the work contained in the thesis, entitled **Bodies scripted with violence: Resistance, Resilience and Coping Strategies in texts by Kasanda, Schoeman and Orford** is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university or other higher education institution for the award of a degree.



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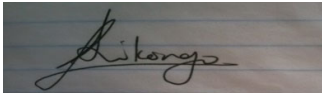
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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to God Almighty my creator, my strong pillar, my source of inspiration, wisdom, knowledge and understanding. He has been the source of my strength throughout this program and on His wings only have I soared. I also dedicate this work to my sister Lesiana and brother Dawid who have encouraged me all the way and whose encouragement has made sure that I give it all it takes to finish that which I have started. To my son Gabes who has been affected in every way possible by this quest.

I would also like to thank my mother Ndapandula for all the sacrifices she made to get me through school and making sure that I achieve what I set my mind on despite any obstacles that I might had to face during this journey of mine. Thank you. My luv for you all can never be quantified. God bless you.

Acknowledgement

I would like to sincerely thank my supervisor, Professor Sarala Krishnamurthy, for her relentless efforts, academic and professional advice and her dedication without which this work would have been sentenced to a painful and premature death. My humble thanks also go to the entire English Department at NUST, my academic home, particularly the lecturers who took us through the ropes of this course such as Dr Juliet Pasi, Professor Zeleke and Dr Hugh Ellis. My special thanks go to my second family, my fellow classmates at NUST for being my fellow travellers during my academic journey. I would not have completed this journey on my own without their companionship. I thank my friends, Frieda, Sofia and Magongo, and my cousin Nelao for the great support they extended, thank you for being my pillars of strength and source of hope. Last, but not in the least, I thank my family for their patience as I spent hours physically present, but mentally absent as I burn the candle studying.

Finally...I want to thank all of those people who, once upon a time, were my teachers and who helped me begin this journey, their names are too numerous to mention, but many of them inspired me to continue learning and sharing with others. Above all, I thank the Almighty.

Abstract

This study is an exploration of the representation of bodies scripted with violence focusing on the notions of resistance, resilience and coping strategies in Kasanda's *Dante International* (2012), Schoeman's *This is not a flowerpot* (2007) and *Blood Rose* by Orford (2007). The purpose of the study was to explore literary representations of violence that is inflicted on the bodies of the victims who are usually women and children. The study also demonstrated bodies that are written with violence are vested with elements of resistance, resilience and coping strategies to fight against violence. In order to analyse the exploration of violence in the three novels, the researcher engaged content analysis method. The study used the corporeal feminist theory which addresses the issue of bodies that have been violated in public and private spaces and how they are vested with agency to fight back. The literary depiction of the bodies that are written with violence using Namibian literary corpus written by women or books set in Namibia is an area which has not been comprehensively explored by scholars. The three novels were chosen using purposive sampling. These novels have been chosen due to fact that they portray characters and themes which fell into the interest area of the researcher as they cover central concerns of gendered violence. Moreso, the study used a qualitative research design to analyse the literary representation of the bodies written with violence in Orford's *Blood Rose*, Kasanda's *Dante International* and Schoeman's *This is not a flowerpot*. The study revealed the following themes that relate to the bodies in *Blood Rose*, *Dante International* and *This not a flowerpot*: violence, resistance, resilience and survival or coping tactics. The study concluded that the chosen novels, *Blood Rose*, *Dante International* and *This not a flowerpot* proffered a valuable insights into the violence that is inflicted on the bodies of the victims. In the process the objectives of the study were attained. Added to that the study concluded that bodies that bear signs of violence shows signs of resistance, resilience as much as they cope with violence they encounter in private and private spaces. This study is a contribution to knowledge of violated gendered bodies within the African literary archive written by women, but more specifically the Namibian literary corpus. Additionally, the study recommends further researches on the study of the bodies that are written with violence that ensue out of the violence inflicted by violators who are no longer only men.

Key words: body, corporeal, gender, violence, hegemonic masculinity, psychopath, Sandra Kasanda, Margie Orford, Amy Schoeman

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed outline to the research as it is the introduction to the study. As such, this chapter is a discussion of the background of the study, statement of the problem, significance to the study, the objectives of the study, delimitations of the study and definition of terms of the study.

1.2 Background of the study

Globally, women and children continue to be exposed to various instances of gender violence. It is clear that the problem of gender violence is not abating as this problem has become a pandemic that mostly afflicts women and children. It is particularly the case with women and children in war-stricken zones that are raped or sexually violated by both the rebel and the government soldiers.

Studies reveal that most gender violence against women serves as a weapon employed to punish or consolidate the defeat of the enemy. According to United Nations (n.d) wars in such countries such as Liberia, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Nepal and other war characterised by high magnitudes of violence perpetrated against women and girls. Statistics show that close to “half a million women were raped in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide [...] 60,000 women were raped in the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and from 1991 to 2001 an estimated 64,000 incidents of war-related sexual violence against women and girls occurred in Sierra Leone” (United Nations, n.d). Besides United Nations observed that “[t]he bodies of women and girls have become battlegrounds, not necessarily for bombs and shells, but for the callous human hands and minds of armed militia and their associates, and for those who take advantage of the chaos of war to inflict sexual violence on the most vulnerable members of their communities” (n.p). However, even in non-conflict zones, gender violence has been widespread and Namibia has not been spared such a scourge of barbaric proportions.

In Namibia, recent years have been marked by an upsurge in femicide otherwise known as passion killing. Passion killing is an example of intimate violence inflicted on women by their

partners. According to Sevenzo (2016, p. 35) “‘Passion killings’ have become a tragic trend in the southern African nation of Namibia over the last three years. The Namibian police described passion killings as murder cases between intimate partners such as husband and wife, boyfriend and girlfriend, and exes.” Additionally, Sevenzo reports that “[d]ozens of women, and in some cases men, have been killed at the hands of their lovers across the country in 2015” with 48 recorded murders compared to 36 in 2014. It emerges that the perpetrators of violence include those whose ages range from 19 to 64 whilst the victims are aged between 18 and 65. It is in this context, this study sought to delve into the subject of gender violence from the women writers who are the usual victims of such violent acts.

The purpose of this research was to explore the literal representation of the bodies written with violence as portrayed in the selected novels that include *Dante International* (2012) by Kasanda, *Schoeman’s* (2013) *This is not a flowerpot* and *Blood Rose* (2007) by Orford. Women abuse continues to wreak havoc in many countries as attested by how women and children were physically, sexually, emotionally and psychologically attacked during the national lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it seems diverse societies in the world effectively overlook instances of gender violence as men’s ways of demonstrating their masculinity. Besides, prosecution, conviction and incarceration of the male perpetrators of murder, physical assault or rape against women and girls pale in comparison to numbers of victims. This means that gender violence serves as a means to uphold and buttress the subordination of women. Even though the notion of gender violence is well-researched in literary studies, it does not imply that there are no research gaps in the current studies since creative works on that subject always bring forth new ideas on the topic.

The study explored how gender violence is scripted on the bodies of women and how such violence is challenged through notions of resistance, resilience and coping strategies. The point of departure in this study, was to examine this topic from the standpoint of women who are traditionally victims of gender violence, by focusing on women-authored texts. In this study narrating accounts of women victims of violence is itself an act of inscribing violence. According to Legal Assistance Centre (2012, p. 157) “the problem of violence against women in contemporary Namibian society is influenced by the historical imbalance

of power between men and women, social structural factors such as poverty, unemployment, and related social problems, including alcoholism and drug abuse. In addition, socio-cultural attitudes and norms contribute to violence against women.” The study, therefore, focused on gender violence that is written on the bodies of women in the Namibian context. Thus, the study examined how Kasanda’s *Dante International*, Schoeman’s *This is not a flowerpot* and *Blood Rose* by Orford.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Despite the fact that gender violence is a dated topic, it remains a major concern in most parts of the world well into the 21st century due to its ubiquitous nature. Of notable importance is that gender violence is mainly written on the bodies of women who are traditionally victims of such violence thereby raising public concern. In diverse African settings, gender violence continues to define and skew the relationships between men and women, but women are now disrupting the debilitating effects on this violence which is carried on the bodies and which remains part of their identity well after the occurrence of violence. Women are breaking away from their victimhood status that violence has conferred upon them. Therefore, the study intends to explore the forms of violence that are written on the bodies of women from a literary standpoint as depicted in the selected novels. The study sought to problematise the notion that treats victimhood as being synonymous with women (and children) as seen in how the selected writers create female protagonists who move from a position of victimhood to a point of assertiveness.

1.4. Research Objectives

The main research objective was to investigate how violence is inflicted on the bodies of the victims in the selected texts. Based on this main research, the following sub-objectives:

- To identify the nature of the violence inflicted on women’s bodies within the given texts;
- To examine the depictions of bodies written with violence in the chosen texts; and
- To explore how bodies written with violence resist, become resilient and cope with violence in the focal texts.

1.5. The significance of the research

In Namibia, there is need to embrace novel approaches as a way to facilitate an improved understanding of the depictions of gender violence in works of fiction. Since gender violence continues unabated, there is a need to analyse this subject from the vantage point of women who find themselves at the receiving end of gender violence. In representational politics advocate the telling of the story from the viewpoint of the victim, hence this researcher chosen to explore the way gender violence is depicted in women's writing. To this point, in Namibia, there has been a lack of concerted effort to embrace a scholarship that is dedicated to exploring the women's experience of gender violence. This study is significantly envisioned to contribute to a nuanced understanding of how gender violence is resisted, coped with and the resilience of the victims and its depiction in literature. The study, therefore, provided a vista to an understanding of a dated topic thereby enlarging the literature of the subject under study. Besides, the notion of the gender violence is a crucial area of scholarly research in the 21st century that has witnessed a global pandemic which further aggravated gender relations in times of national lockdown in Africa and how this has been explored in novels.

This study is, therefore, crucial as it affords an opportunity to critically analyse the literary depictions of gender violence in works written by women. Noteworthy is the fact, since this study focuses on a sensitive issue that continues to afflict pain of the victims who are mostly women and children, the aim of this study is to contribute to the scholarship on Namibian literary canon written by women. Put precisely, this study seeks to create or add to knowledge on the literary corpus on gender violence.

1.6. The delimitation of the research

This proposed study was limited to three novels, *Dante International* (2012) by Kasanda, *Schoeman's* (2013) *This is not a flowerpot* and *Blood Rose* (2007) by Orford in order to enable the researcher to fully address the identified issues in the primary texts. This study provided an exploration of the way violence is written on the bodies of women as represented by the selected female authors. This implies that works written by male writers which dwell on the same subject matter were not to be considered for this study whilst

other texts written by women writers were excluded since the idea was not to cover each and every text that deal with the subject matter.

1.7. Limitations of the proposed research

Though the chosen texts are representative, the findings of this study were not to be generalised to the phenomenon of gender violence. Besides, there was need for easy manageability of the research in view of the limited scope of the research as well as broadness of the topic which is covered in disciplines such as psychology, sociology, gender studies, and cultural studies among other. On that note, this study was limited to the literary understanding of gender violence as depicted in works of literature that use Namibia as their setting.

1.8. Definition of technical terms

- Agency is capacity to act against any unpleasant situation in order to attain self-determination.
- Coping strategies are the mechanisms employed by the victims of to fight off gender violence.
- Gender violence is any attempt to “control, manipulate or demean another individual using physical, emotional or sexual tactics” (Women and Population Division et al. 1999, 20).
- Masculinity refers to the specific attributes or characteristics that given to those possessing male bodies or the bodies that behave in a manly manner.
- Scripting refers to narrating accounts of violence born by women victims.
- Violence against women is any form of violence that is detrimental to women in form of emotional, physical, sexual or psychological violence or suffering to women.

1.9 Chapter Outline

The study is comprised of five chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction of this study which includes outlining the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, significance of the research, delimitations and limitations of the study and definition of terms. On the other hand, Chapter 2 focuses on the review of both global and

local literature on the gender violence in terms of how different scholars view the subject of gender violence and how this subject is represented in works of literature. In addition, the theory that frames this study was discussed and analysed. Chapter 3 is the research methodology applied to collect data for this study. Chapter 4 provides a discussion and presentation of the findings of this study on the subject of gender violence as portrayed in Amy Schoeman's *This is not a flowerpot*, Sharon Kasanda's *Dante International* and Margie Orford's *Blood Rose*. The final chapter is Chapter 5 which is a conclusion to the study and the recommendations on further studies on the literary depictions of gender violence in the literary corpus Namibian canon.

1.10 Summary

This chapter offered an outline of the introduction to the study of gender violence. It discussed the background of the study, the statement of problem, research objectives and the significance of the study. Also, it explores to the limitations and delimitations of the study, and definition of terms. The next chapter delves reviewing literature related to this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review discusses the different perspectives on gender violence. The research further reviewed related literature on how gender violence is inflicted on women and how women resist, cope with and how they become resilient to gender violence. In the process, the review of literature allowed for the establishment of the lacuna that this research sought to fill.

2.2.1 An Overview of Gender Violence

It is important to situate this discussion of gender violence within a context that allows for a greater understanding of this concept. The term has variously been defined. According to World Health Organization, gender-based violence (GBV) refers to “a range of violent acts mainly committed by males against females, within the context of women [as well as girls’] subordinate status in society, and often serves to retain this unequal balance.” (2018b, n.p). Gender violence is usually multifaceted as it includes issues that are overtly and covertly done against women. Alternatively, some scholars now refer what they term ‘violence against women’ (VAM) as a part of gender violence. As such VAM is defined as:

a subset of GBV and includes physical, sexual, verbal, and emotional abuse committed through acts such as rape, intimate partner violence or domestic violence, forced pregnancy, forced prostitution, human trafficking, female genital mutilation, sexual slavery, and early and forced marriage, among others (Seago, 2014, p.2).

The above examples of VAM reveal not only the fact that gender violence is a global problem; it indicates how prevalent it is particularly on the African continent. Besides, even though “there are differences across types of VAW, this violence affects victims physically and psychosocially [and it] affects women’s ability to earn a living and to socialize (Seago, 2014, p.2). According to a 2013 study on gender violence revealed that Africa, Eastern Mediterranean, and South-East Asia regions recorded the highest numbers of cases women who had been victims of domestic violence in their lifetime (WHO, 2018c). Of importance is that different parts of the world experience different forms of violence against women. Whilst some parts of Africa have high instance of female genital mutilation, this form of

violence is no widespread in Southern Africa where there is a high rate of intimate partner violence (p.2).

Intimate partner violence in the form of passion killing is one prevalent example of gender violence in Namibia which speaks to setting of the current study. This provides a backdrop on which to situate the current study which sought to underscore how bodies are scripted with violence which is so prevalent in the greater society.

However, it is important to know that gender violence continues to be a problem that afflicts women and children in different parts of the world. This explains the reason why gender violence forms the gist of this study as it continues to be part of the lived experience of women. One of observations about gender violence is the one made by Edwards-Jauch, (2016) who argues that:

Gender-based violence should not be sought in the biological or psychological essences of individual perpetrators but, instead, in the nature of our society, our histories and ethnographies of violence.

[...]

The magnitude of gender-based violence indicates that it is far from being a question of the occasional individual deviant who commits anti-social acts of aggression against an individual female. Gender-based violence affects large numbers of people. Therefore, our explanations of gender-based violence should not be sought in the biological or psychological essences of individual perpetrators but, instead, in the nature of our society, our histories and ethnographies of violence (Edwards-Jauch, 2016, p. 49).

Edwards-Jauch (2016) raises a number of issues about gender violence that are particularly of importance here. She points out that gender violence is not an essence of biology or psychology of the concerned perpetrator, in case, the man. Precisely put, biology or psychology has nothing to do with men who commit violence against women. The implication here is that men who are violent towards women have no defence in biology or psychology. Tied to this point is that society is the one to be blamed for gender violence especially in the way it socialises men and women by its veneration of male bodily violence and female bodily sensitivity to violence. As such patriarchy engenders male dominance and condones men who act violently. It is for this reason that this study sought extend the

notion of gender violence to the way women's bodies are made to bear the crude signs of such violence and how the victims respond, resist or become resilient.

Noteworthy is the complicity of patriarchy, race and colonialism in propagating violence in a society like the Namibian one. The 1905-1907 war which is now recognised as the 'first genocide' was brutal as it was violent in its extermination of any form of resistance to the establishment of a German colony in what was to be called (German) South West Africa. The legacy of this violence coupled with the war of liberation, are still felt in the present-day Namibia in form of gender violence. In trying to assert what Connell (1995) calls hegemonic masculinity, men in Namibia and elsewhere for that matter, use violence against women as an avenue to attain this venerated form of masculinity which was enjoyed by white males during colonial rule in Namibia. The emasculated black men could only regain their lost manhood by joining the ranks of liberation fighters or by inflicting violence on women who turned to children and later turned to domestic animals thereby creating a vicious circle of violence. The argument is that colonialism has always been patriarchal as it is male-dominated with women featuring as the dominated 'Other.' Even though the selected texts are not located within a colonial period, the prevailing structures of power are masculine which explains the scripting of violence on bodies that are predominantly female.

Though gender violence is a prevalent societal problem, the solutions to mitigate it have often been inadequate if not knee-jerk type of solutions. The case of legislation raised by the High Judge mentioned earlier on, highlights the predicament that women are faced with since even the legislation has been found inadequate in deterring would-be perpetrators from committing acts of gender violence as much as the domestic sphere has become too dangerous for women as they are regularly being murdered within the place, they call home. On this note, Murray (2019, p.2) posits that "intersections of gender, violence and the dynamics of shaming female bodies and women's sexuality to demonstrate how discursive and epistemological constructions of gender create an environment where gender violence becomes the norm rather than an aberration. Feminist scholars have long discredited the notion that perpetrators of gender violence resemble some stranger in a dark alley. Rather, we now know that women are at their most vulnerable in their own homes and with the men with whom they share their lives." Besides, crimes like rape are no

longer a preserve of strangers lurking somewhere in public spaces, but it is being committed by those known and close to women such as uncles, brothers, fathers, cousins, neighbours and pastors or priests known to the family or even teachers and work mates. As such, the state of gender relations that continue to be blamed for violence against women and children requires concerted efforts aimed at providing the necessary interventional mechanisms that go beyond socialising the girl child to be wary of the stranger.

In light of the foregoing assertions that, it is important to underscore that research on gender violence is important as it attempts to comprehend how writers depict instances of gender violence in their fictional creations. Such works usually offer strategies for dealing and coping with instances of gender violence through the way the characters in the story cope with such violence. It is in this light, it can be argued that “a visual focus on suffering bodies can obscure the power relationships that result in inequality and injustice through (1) obscuring the mechanisms and perpetrators of violence, (2) not disrupting dominant conceptual frameworks, and (3) not leaving room for solutions” (Stone, 2015, p.177). However, this study was an attempt to critically interrogate the women’s lived experiences of gender violence in literary texts and how they adopted ways to deal with such violence in order to survive such violence perpetrated on their bodies by their male counterparts from all walks of life.

This research analysed the literary depiction of gender-based violence in fiction written by the male writers in their selected literary works. According to Women and Population Division, Sustainable Development Department and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) “violence can be considered as any attempt to control, manipulate or demean another individual using physical, emotional or sexual tactics” (Women and Population Division et al. 1999, p. 20). Furthermore, gender violence is any interpersonal, organisational or politically oriented violation perpetrated against people due to their social identity or location in the hierarchy of male dominated social systems such as family or government (O’Toole and Schiffman, 1997, p. xiii). It is in this context that this study focuses attention on gender violence in context of Namibia. Thus, the study interrogated gender violence in Orford’s *Blood Rose*, Sharon Kasanda’s *Dante International* and Amy Schoeman’s *This is not a flowerpot*.

A number of studies on gender violence have been conducted. Though, on the African continent and globally, there has been a copious production of articles that delve into the subject of, in Namibia there seems to be a dearth of literary studies in English on the said topic especially studies that focus on literary works by women. It is such a gap in literary studies that this study seeks to plug by critically interrogating how gender violence is portrayed in Namibian English fiction written by women. However, this is not to imply that the issue of gender violence is totally absent from critical studies, hence a review of the existing literature on this topic is the focus on this section. This study complicated the notion of bodies scripted with violence by highlighting that such a situation spurs the victims to resist, respond, cope and be resilient to gender violence. Besides, being mainly seen as victims, women are vested with the agency to overturn their victim status.

Alweendo et al (2018) point out that gender violence is increasingly becoming a serious problem in Namibia. According to their report, 32% of women aged between 15 and 49 in Namibia have experienced physical violence more than once since the age of 15. Additionally, 1 in 3 women aged between 15 and 49 have experienced physical, sexual and/or emotional violence from their spouse. According to UN Women Global Database on Violence Against Women (cited in Alweendo et al (2018, p. 2), "25% of women in Namibia between the ages of 15 and 49 reported having experienced intimate partner violence at least once. These kinds of violence are one of many manifestations of gender inequality in the country." The importance of this study lies in exposing the magnitude of gender violence in Namibia. This serves to demonstrate that gender violence is an important research area which warrants academic scrutiny. However, there is gap in scholarly studies that focus on gender violence in novels written women writers in Namibia. This is the void in research that this study sought to fill by problematising violence that is often borne by bodies of women and children using texts written by women who are the traditional victims.

Writing in a different context, Mathews, et al. (2014) observe that intimate violence is a form of gender violence that is common in Namibia. This form of violence oftentimes leads to the killing of one partner by another. Though this article is not a critical study of works of fiction, it is vital as it delves into the theme of gender violence as shown in cases of intimate

femicide. In the article, the authors argue that “[i]ntimate femicide, the killing of a woman by an intimate partner, is the leading cause of female murder in South Africa” (Mathews, et al., 2014, p.1). This statement, by extension, can be applied to the Namibia where media reports a number of spousal or partner killings. Mathews, et al. (2014) conclude that men who kill in South Africa demonstrates the “psychological damage caused by exposure to severe adversity in childhood, but this alone does not explain the gendered context of these murders” (ibid). Furthermore, Mathews, et al. argue that:

the men sought to perform exaggerated versions of predominant ideals of masculinity, emphasizing an extreme control of and dominance over women. We show killing as an ultimate means of taking back control in a context where gendered relationships legitimize men’s use of violence to assert power and control. Interventions to prevent intimate femicide need to be highly cognisant of the gendered context (Mathews, et al., 2014, p. 1).

From the foregoing citation, it should be noted that gender violence is a result of men who feel emasculated or feel that their manhood is under threat and want to wrestle back their control in an environment where women are becoming more empowered. Such critical insights offered by the foregoing citation provide useful backdrop on which to frame this study. This study unpacks the manner of scripting violence on women’s bodies as a patriarchally sanctioned activity which means any form of resistance by women is considered a deviation from the normative womanhood.

Another important article which offers useful information on gender violence is by Gqola (2014). In particular, Gqola explores gender violence within the South African context which mirrors the Namibian context. The article taps into the South African history so to trace the origins of the ubiquity of gender-based violence in the post-apartheid. Gqola contends that current public discourses about gender, violence and sexuality, are unsurprising as evidenced by rape trial of the then Vice-President, Jacob Zuma. Additionally, Gqola argues in order to deal with gender violence, the patterns of complicity that prop up gender-based violence require historicized feminist undoing. In the same vein, the research study intends to explore how the history of colonialism extended from way back the German genocide reveal the gendered nature of violence either by the colonisers or by the African men emasculated by colonialism. As such current forms of gender violence have to be

understood within the histories of oppression and colonial domination, a point that was fully explored in this current study.

A ground breaking book that tackles the topical issue of gender violence is *Gender Violence: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* edited by Laura O'Toole et al. (2007). An exploration of the depiction of gender violence as outlined in this book is crucial to this current study. In the Preface to the book, 'Conceptualizing Gender Violence', O'Toole et al put it succinctly that the real harm that women face on daily basis in a world that views them sometimes as property, often as pawns, and usually as secondary citizens, is the need of control by men (2007, p xi). As such gender violence ensues from the "extreme application of social control—the use of physical force" (ibid., p. xii). The book delves into specific forms of violence such a rape. As pointed out in this book rape has historically been used as a tool by invading warriors and soldiers to subjugate the vanquished or resistant communities. Other forms of gender violence discussed in his book include wife battering, child abuse and murder. This book echoes the theme of gender violence on which the current study sought to analyse, hence it offers a global perspective on the scourge of gender violence.

2.2.2 An Overview of Gender Violence in Namibia

On a general note, Edwards-Jauch (2016) gives an overview of the prevalence of gender violence in Namibia. In the article, she asserts that there are different so social factors that cause gender violence in the Namibia. Further, she outlines different types of violence which range from physical, emotional to xenophobic. The article provides a critical insight into the genealogy of gender-based violence with special attention on Namibia which is linked to colonialism and the liberation struggle. Edwards-Jauch argues that gender violence needs to be understood through an analysis of a nexus of factors that contribute to the scourge of gender violence. Though, Edwards-Jauch offers a general discussion of gender violence, she traces the trend of gender violence in Namibia which lays the foundation on which to base the study of the literary representations of gender violence in the Namibian literary archive. Edwards-Jauch posits that colonialism, patriarchy and masculinity played are responsible for normalising gender violence in Namibia. In other words, gender violence is accepted as part of doing masculinities in Namibia, hence men who are violent against women are condoned. However, Edwards-Jauch's (2016) study is mainly sociological in

nature, yet this research study is a literary study which sought to foreground gender violence within fictional works. The point to note is that there is a link between the sociological and the literary viewpoints of gender violence as they feed into each other.

One of the most common forms of gender violence in Namibia today, and even in South Africa, is the so-called 'passion killing' or femicide. Whilst the selected texts might not have instances of femicide, they do reflect 'other ways of killing' such verbal, emotional or psychological abuse that destroys women's self-esteem. On this note, it can be argued that "studies of femicide rarely discuss how particular masculinities are associated with differing types of this heinous crime" (Messerschmidt, 2017, p.72). Additionally, it is stated that "it emerges clearly from these and other studies that scholars are now conducting impressive research on how specific, unequal, structured gender relationships between men and women, between masculinity and femininity, and among masculinities are legitimated—they are capturing certain of the essential features of the all-pervasive reproduction of unequal gender relations" (Messerschmidt, 2017, p. 73). As such a study like the current one seeks to contribute to this debate about femicide which is a subject that afflicts the greater society of Namibia where the selected texts are situated.

In an article written by Mogotsi, Van Rooy and Haihambo (2015, p. 10), the argument is that "[g]ender-based violence (GBV) remains a national concern in Namibia despite the existence of legislative frameworks such as the Combating of Domestic Violence Act of 2003 and the Combating of Rape Act of 2000." Further to that that the "[s]ocial factors and causes that contributes to GBV remains rife and varies from gender inequality, to women's economic dependence, alcohol and drug abuse and cultural practices that condone GBV" (Office of the Prime Minister cited in Mogotsi, et. al., 2015, p. 10). What should be underscored here are the collective efforts that are being channelled into mitigating gender violence in Namibia. Different groups in Namibia such as "the police, social workers, church and traditional leaders have put concerted efforts in addressing GBV in the Namibian society" (ibid., p.10). However, despite all efforts to mitigate gender violence in Namibia is increasingly becoming a pandemic problem. Significantly, this study by Mogotsi et.al observes that despite "the outcry to end GBV and the concerted efforts of the government, there is no indication that GBV incidences are decreasing in Namibia." The contention in this article provides a

framework on which to locate this current study which intends to analyse gender violence as it is depicted in fictional works written by Namibian women. Thus, there is an interface between the realities of gender violence as offered in the said report and the fictionalised world of the chosen texts. Subsequently, United Nations General Assembly defines gender-based violence as “any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, men and children, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life (quoted in Mogotsi, 2015, p.10).

Notwithstanding the foregoing contention, Chikuhwa (2011) argues that gender-based violence shows that women are not free to leave their partners without being faced with serious consequences. These threats also extend to the women’s family and children, because threats against family are common (ibid, 2011). These threats usually culminate in intimate partner killing or femicide is on the rise in Namibia (ibid, 2011). Significantly, Chikuhwa (2011) provides a psychological study and analysis of gender-based violence in Namibia. Gender violence emanates from unequal gender relations. A psychological analysis of gender violence is crucial to this study in that the researcher sought to pinpoint different forms of gender violence such as psychological, physical, emotional, sexual, economic or cultural forms of violence against women.

In their article, Mlambo and Kandemiri (2015, p. 53) demonstrate “how literature (fiction) and language open up fissures to spell out the ‘unsayable’, the taboo, and the often whispered and not yet said “other presence” in contemporary life.” It is against such a backdrop that gender violence has and still continues to be entrenched as a social gender practice that keep women in subordinated positions. However, female characters in the texts selected for this study are endowed with agency that allows them to undo oppressive gender norms, values and taboos. As argued by Mlambo and Kandemiri (2015, p. 53) such “a way of questioning, voicing, re-examining and articulating certain truths which are supposedly veiled and unrepresentable, whose grammars of articulation often evade quantitative analysis.” This study demonstrated that the agency of the female characters in the selected texts written by women involves questioning, voicing and revising the language that is employed to perpetrate violence on women.

According to Enaifoghe and Idowu (2021, p.153) “the phenomenon of violence against women is driven by gender norms and societal values that standardise and justify gender inequality or disproportion.” Socialisation is one of the factors that have been blamed for the prevalence of gender violence within different societies. In other words, “[f]rom nuclear family to the general public, gender standards and socialisation are significantly moulded amongst youth” (Enaifoghe & Idowu, 2021, p.153). Put precisely, boys are socialised to be aggressive whilst women are taught to be silent and passive even in cases of violation. It is in this light that Enaifoghe and Idowu (2021, p.154) posit that “[t]he persistence of violence against women and girls is seen to be deeply rooted in gender-based discrimination, social standards, societal norms and gender stereotypes.” As a result, “[a]n attitude shift at the community level, as well as family level, needs to happen to decrease gender-based violence” (Enaifoghe & Idowu, 2021, p.153). In the selected texts, women resist, are resilient to and cope with gender violence as a way to attain gender equality and resolve issues of intimate partner violence and other forms of violence. On a similar note, due to the crippling effect that violence has on women and the girl child, attempts mainly focus on the responses and management programmes for the survivors (UN Women, 2012; Froehling, 2016). This research focused on the resistance, resilience and coping strategies displayed by female bodies that scripted with violence. These strategies provide vistas that give women a fighting chance against the violence inflicted on their bodies. It is not always the case that they succeed in undoing violence scripted on their bodies.

2.2.3 Depictions of Women’s Bodies in Namibian Fiction

Ogbeide (2013) discusses the depiction of gender violence in Neshani Andreas’ *The Purple Violet of Oshaantu* which resonates with this study of gender violence. Ogbeide focuses attention on gender violence as portrayed in Neshani Andreas’ *The Purple Violet of Oshaantu*. Of importance is that Ogbeide examines how women are depicted as victims of spousal abuse. Noteworthy is the fact that this article specifically deals with the theme of gender violence as depicted in a novel written by a woman which dovetails into the current research study. Ogbeide contends that “[w]omen are often the victims of spousal abuse which male writers, in their reductionist preoccupation with socio-political issues of the

moment, often down play” (Ogbeide, 2013, p.53). What should be underscored here is the observation that male writers who depict gender violence in their works tend to downplay this social problem as they mention this issue almost as an afterthought or is given little attention. The article, therefore, questions the misrepresentation of female characters in fiction written by male writers. Male authored novels are seen as unable to address the theme of gender violence since the complicit as they belong to the perpetrating group. In short, Ogbeide (2013, p.53) argues that “wife battering continues courtesy of the silence of the fairer sex themselves in deference to the oppressive yoke of patriarchy which has come to define their existence.” The current study intends to contribute to such a debate on the topical issue of gender violence in Namibia where femicide is often erroneously called ‘passion killing.’ The claim in this study is that femicide as form of gender violence cannot be equated to passion killing because we do not kill those we love, but instead we can kill for those we love if need be (killing for passion). In fact, the researcher agrees with Ogbeide’s contention that a network of friendship among the women allows women to attain a sense of agency that equips them to deal with gender violence as illustrated in Neshani Andreas’ *The Purple Violet of Oshaantu*.

Ogbeide’s views resonate with those expressed by Weiss (2006) who focused *The Purple Violet of Oshaantu* which was compared to other novels written by women in Southern Africa. Weiss discusses images of women as depicted in novels written by women by broadening the horizon by undertaking a comparative study of Yvonne Vera’s *Stone Virgins*, Bessie Head’s *Maru* and Neshani Andreas’ *The Purple Violet of Oshaantu*. Weiss (2006) points out the female in these texts are empowered as they have a sense of agency that allows them to have a voice. Voice is an instance of agency which is vital in breaking the silence that women endure in societies such as Namibia. Weiss (2006) illustrates how the main character in *The Purple Violet of Oshaantu* acquires her agency or voice as lambast the oppression of women by the twin forces of patriarchy and culture. The current study, therefore, seeks to broaden the debate on how patriarchy and culture are complicit in victimising and oppressing women, yet women are emerging from this overburden by exercising their own agency. Crucially, women authored novels depict women not as simply

the subalterns of society, but as capable of exercising their own agency which permits them to be resilient and cope as well as resist gender violence.

Similarly, Andima and Tjiramanga (2014) delve into the gender violence within Namibia as depicted in the short stories that appear in the collection, *We must choose life*. Using an anthology of short stories compiled by Elizabeth !Khaxas, Andima and Tjiramanga (2014) explore how different cultural practices are responsible for oppressing women especially in Namibia. It is in this vein that “cultural practices and beliefs that are harmful [in that] [t]hey disrespect, devalue, suppress and destroy human dignity” (Andima & Tjiramanga, 2014, p.76). The article relates to this current study in that the authors critically interrogate gender violence as depicted in chosen narratives written by Namibian female writers. As such, this article provides useful and critical insights into gender violence in the Namibia which resonates with research study. Those cultural practices identified as being detrimental to women include widow cleansing and girls’ initiation. Thus, this current study seeks to analyse gender violence as portrayed in novels written by women. Of importance is that selected stories written by women which “are a testimony of the courage of Namibian women who express their agony and suffering in their own words” (Andima & Tjiramanga, 2014, p.76) and they provide insight into the different ways used to inflict violence on women’s bodies.

2.2.4 The Body in South African Crime Fiction

In an unpublished doctoral thesis, Van Heerden (2015, p.30) brings forth incisive views on the notion of the body in the midst of violence. Van Heerden (2015, p. 30) argues that “[i]n the human voice...the body can be said to extend into the world without any definitive end point, complicating separations of body and world.” This implies that even when written with violence, bodies tend to extend themselves into space where they show different forms of resistance, resiliency and coping strategies. Van Heerden succinctly notes that “language certainly plays a crucial part in this understanding, in that it creates, directs, and structures categories of perception, but also actively participates in making meaning. Literal and figurative bodies are often thought – and written – in analogous ways, as well as effortlessly conflated and interchanged in discourse” (Van Heerden 2015, p. 31). As such

what makes the body central to this study is that it forms a space for the individual to indirectly and directly resist, be resilient and cope with instantiations of violence. On a similar note, Young (2020, p. 158) argues that “The strategies a new generation of feminist activists have used in making visible the impact of gender-based violence and intimate aggressions have rendered bodies legible in the public discourses that challenge the social norms of everyday life in post-apartheid South Africa.” The use of nakedness in protest action has a long history and aligns the students with previous generations of women protesting against war and injustice in apartheid South Africa and elsewhere on the continent.”

Commenting on Coetzee’s *Disgrace* and one of Orford’s crime novel, Every (2016, p.31) “*Disgrace* and *Like Clockwork* portray bodies that bear the lasting effects of violence somatically as well as psychologically.” These views echo the ways bodies in Orford’s *Blood Rose*, are littered with violence. In fact, in her corpus which include *Blood Rose*, Orford “is broadening her scope, although she acknowledges that violence against women is a particular problem in South Africa, she does not wish to elide the experience of other women globally and historically” as well as “the pervasiveness of the image of “the damaged female body” (Every, 2016, p.38). These views can also be applied to *This is not a flowerpot* and *Dante International*.

The reasons for choosing to focus on texts written by women from different backgrounds, lay in trying to explore how these writers appropriate literature to revisit and rethink a dated problem which keeps on mutating over different time spans. This is due to the fact that “literature, in itself, has the potential to be a space where issues that are difficult to talk about and that tend to be shrouded in shame and secrecy – such as gender violence, female sexuality and women’s bodies – can be brought to light and explored” (Murray, 2017a, p.24). Further to that “literary criticism offers an additional space where those conversations that are opened up in fiction can be taken further, and can benefit from the extra insights provided by theoretical interventions [since] [w]hen it comes to gender, epistemic and discursive violence can never be completely separated from their psychic and physical manifestations on the minds and bodies of women” (ibid., p.24). This clearly resonates with the thrust that this study seeks to adopt in exploring how bodies scripted with a depicted through resistance, resiliency and coping strategies employed by women

characters to deal with gendered violence. It is because this study concurs with Murray's observation that "literary texts open up creative spaces where authors can expose the persistence of patriarchy; simultaneously, they can resist and oppose widespread patriarchal views by positing alternative, less oppressive understandings of women and their experiences in societies" (Murray, 2017a, p.23). The creative space provides an important platform to talk about violence which is usually considered passable by society as the doing of manhood.

Consistent with the foregoing views, Orford (2013, p. 225) posits that "[t]he demonisation of the woman as the femme fatale can make it appear that any fate that befalls her is, in some fundamental sense, her just deserts. Misogyny is part of the grammar of crime fiction, as if the male hero, so central to the genre, is premised on a dead or silenced woman." Misogyny is quite rife in the texts under study including Orford's text, *Blood Rose*. It is clearly that women find themselves under threat of gender violence which at times culminated in serious crimes such as murder or rape. Further to that, Orford (2013, p.225-226) argues that

crime fiction is a genre that is capable of revealing the workings of the psyche, and the masculine psyche in particular. Crime fiction is, however, a flexible genre that can be bent enough out of shape to tell women's stories too.

The foregoing citation is in resonance with the issues that are covered in *Blood Rose* and *Dante International* where the mental state of the male perpetrators. Though one of the texts covered in this study does not fall within the genre of crime fiction, there is the undercurrent of gender violence that is penetrated on women by men.

Noteworthy is the contention that "crime fiction is, centrally, about a crime and its investigation" (Worthington 2011, p.1; Seago (2013, p.2). Two of the texts selected for texts fall within the genre of crime fiction, it is important that such fiction delves into crimes, in this case, against women. In reference to crime fiction, Seago (2013) pointed out that:

Because crime fiction engages with the motives and means of how a crime is committed, it is deeply concerned with characterisation, psychological motivation and the minutiae of everyday life which give the investigating detective clues to departures from what is considered normal. Crime and criminals are indicators of what a particular culture views as legitimate and

crime fiction functions as a barometer of a society's values and morals reflecting and interrogating what is inscribed as crime. The central engagement with what, who and why a particular behaviour or action is deemed deviant gives insight into structures and ideologies of power and is indicative of cultural and social anxieties at a particular time in a particular culture (p.2).

From the foregoing the society's values and morals are employed to keep women within subservient positions. In fact, when a crime is perpetrated against women is mostly done on the basis that women are considered inferior to men. As such, the given texts were interpreted in the context that the victims of crime are usually women.

2.2.5 Doing Gender: To Write and Resist, Cope and be Resilient to Gender Violence

One of the reasons that explains why bodies of women are written with violence is to be found in the way men perform their masculinities. It is in this light that Connell (2005) proposes four types of masculinity that are prevalent in contemporary Western society, namely, hegemony, subordination, complicity, and marginalisation. Connell's contention is that within any specific time, in any particular society, one type of masculinity in form hegemonic masculinity is culturally glorified above others. In essence, hegemonic masculinity represents an ideal or aspirational form of masculinity. Added to that, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005, p.832) note that hegemonic masculinity refers to an embodiment of "the currently most honoured way of being a man." It is when men try to attain this form of masculinity that they perpetrate instances of gender violence on the bodies of women in order to prove their manhood. This is because hegemonic masculinity "express widespread ideals, fantasies, and desires" and "provide models of relations with women and solutions to problems of gender relations" (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, p.837). The texts chosen for this study amply demonstrate various performances of manhood which thrive towards the ideal hegemonic masculinity, but this is done through inflicting violence on women since violent is exalted as a manly trait.

Messerschmidt's analysis (2016) of masculinities and femicide is crucial in understanding gender violence in the Namibia literary texts. To this end Messerschmidt (2016, p.71) asserts that femicide" is "the intentional killing of girls and women by boys and men

because the victims are girls and women” (emphasis in the original). Furthermore, Messerschmidt argues:

Historically, feminist approaches to feminicide have turned to the concept of “patriarchy,” arguing that feminicide is simply one of the oppressive dangers girls and women face in a male-dominated, patriarchal society (2016, p.71).

What emerges from the above citation is that the killing of females by their partners is an example of the oppression of women in a given society. In some societies, women are killed under the pretext of ‘honour killing’ which another erroneously named act that is exist in the same context with passion killing. What draws the researcher to this article is the connection that the author establishes between masculinity and feminicide. In the like manner, the current study analyses the intersection between gender and violence which translates to gender violence.

Women as the conventional victims of gender violence have been seen to devise ways that they can engage to resist, cope and to be resilient to violence. It is in light that Shigwedha (2018, p.3) posits that “coping strategies refer to the specific efforts, both behavioural and psychological, that people employ to ‘master’, tolerate, reduce, or minimise stressful events.” Added to that Mlambo (2013, p.60) “To cope with the crisis and be able to survive, the story also suggests that there is a need to embrace the new, the unfamiliar, and the yet-unknown; particularly using the urban setting.” The mechanisms that the victims employ to deal with gender violence are vital in fighting the scourge of this violence. Coping mechanisms can be categorised into two broad groups such the problem-solving and emotion-based mechanisms. Taylor (cited in Shigwedha, 2018, p.3) “[p]roblem-solving strategies are efforts to do something positive to alleviate stressful circumstances, while emotion-focused coping strategies involve efforts to regulate the emotional consequences of stressful, or potentially stressful, events.” The study delved into different forms of gender violence such as murder, emotional, verbal and physical assault as well as sexual harassment which were perpetrated against women and children.

Moreso, in her article on ‘To the Black Women We All Knew,’ Murray (2017b, p.16-17) adopts “an interdisciplinary approach and uses various strands of feminist theory to offer a literary analysis of representations of gender violence and resistance to such violence that

become archived in the racialized and gendered bodies of the female characters.” Such an approach resonates with the theoretical lens (corporeal feminism) employed in this study which is a strand of feminism. To this end, Murray (2017b, p.16) contends that *To the Black Women We All Knew* (2014) depicts “four women friends whose lives are, in various ways, shaped by social efforts to exert patriarchal control over them and their choices.” Crucially, these “women are all trying to negotiate their way in a context where gender violence is rife and where the danger of being relegated to mere victims is as profound as the need to “claim space and the right to do something”. Murray (2017b, p.16) argued that the female characters show their “stories [...] would not necessarily warrant a space in the formal archives, yet their experiences of gender violence are etched onto their bodies as much as their psyches and these bodies constitute a corporeal archive that is at once personal and profoundly political.” It is in line with this thinking that this study focused on the bodies of women which act as archives for the violence visited on them. The subject of gender violence that is depicted in *To the Black Women We All Knew* “reveals that these women are subjected to different forms of gender violence and they experience these attacks on their bodies and psyches in diverse ways” (Murray, 2017b, p.17). This contention dovetails into the focus of this study which is unpacking instances of gender violence that is scripted on the bodies of women and children.

However, it should be noted that women characters in the selected texts are docile bodies bearing signs and markings of gender violence. These women are invested with agency which allows them to adopt different forms of resistance, resiliency and coping strategies. In line with this thinking, this study draws from the contention by Mantymaki (2013, p.442) that “the recognition and valorisation of female agency and subjectivity, aspects traditionally denied women both fictional and real, have always been central to feminist critique.” Female agency enables women to deal with gender violence. However, when such agency is “produced through murdering, an obvious ethical problem arises, since killing can hardly be regarded as a sustainable way to construct a positive female identity independently of the underlying social circumstances” (Mantymaki, 2013, p.442). Though the female characters in the texts under study do not necessarily kill men, nothing can stop them from doing so in the slightest of the moment.

One of the most common forms of gender violence in Namibia today, and even in South Africa, is the so-called 'passion killing' or femicide. Whilst the selected texts might not have instances of femicide, they do reflect 'other ways of killing' such verbal, emotional or psychological abuse that destroys women's self-esteem. On this note, it can be argued that "studies of femicide rarely discuss how particular masculinities are associated with differing types of this heinous crime" (Messerschmidt, 2017, p.72). Additionally, "it emerges clearly from these and other studies that scholars are now conducting impressive research on how specific, unequal, structured gender relationships between men and women, between masculinity and femininity, and among masculinities are legitimated—they are capturing certain of the essential features of the all-pervasive reproduction of unequal gender relations" (Messerschmidt, 2017, 73). As such a study like the current one seeks to contribute to this debate about femicide.

It in conjunction with notion of female agency that there is need to underscore that by treating gender as a social and cultural construct, women with agency tend to perform their gender against the expected norms. As such this study draws from Butler's (1990; 1993) theory of gender performativity where she argues that gender is not given but as performatively constructed through a ceaseless reiteration of culturally pre-gendered acts which serve as a productive starting-point for a discussion of gender performances that cross the boundary between normative and deviant reiteration. What appeals to incumbent study is the element of transgression which in this study is denoted by the notion of 'resistance', 'resiliency' and 'coping strategies.' This resonates with Butler's (1990; 1993) subversiveness of reiteration that goes against the norm and integrates the possibility of making visible and questioning the discourse that reproduces gender categories.

More so, Butler (1993, p. 95) argues that performativity is the engendering of subjectivity in relation to norms which are foregrounded on proscription and taboo. By choosing to resist, to be resilient and to devise coping strategies, the women in the selected texts debunk the metanarratives that come in form of taboos which tend to act as constraint to female bodies. This can be due to the fact that women's bodies have for long been under control. For that reason, writing about the phenomenon of rape in South Africa, Gqola (2015, p.67) argues that "[w]e are not speaking these truths enough, and until we are able to address them as well as the long histories we come from, approach them with imaginative new ways

to break the patterns, we will continue to live with the scourge of gender-based violence.” Thus, it is this inclination to refrain from talking about the ubiquity of gender violence that makes inscribing women’s bodies with violence a daily act which is accepted in our lives—something that the primary texts of this study hotly dispute through the empowered female protagonists.

2.2.6 Bodies under Scrutiny

Writing about bodies under surveillance in her selected texts, Murray (2018a, p.71) asserts that “[t]he female characters in these texts are aware that their gendered behaviour and sexuality are being watched and judged, and that any deviation from acceptable norms renders them vulnerable.” This implies that bodies of women are socialised to behave in a particular manner which means any non-compliance with such conduct is deemed to be a ‘dissident’ or ‘deviant’ act. This is due to the fact that “gender is always embedded in and produced by specific temporal and spatial contexts” (ibid., p.71). Despite the fact that this study seeks to analyse texts that have different backgrounds, what ties such texts together is ubiquity of violence is written on their bodies through surveillances that these bodies have to endure a part of the experience of being a woman. It is on this note that, Murray (2018a, p.71) further contends that:

women may experience these policing tactics differently according to the intersections of other identity markers of difference such as age, race, class and sexuality, but they are all represented as acutely aware that a failure to conform to gendered expectations will have very real consequences and they vary their behaviours accordingly. Their vigilance, however, often prove to be futile as male violence recurs with often increasing intensity in their lives.

From the foregoing citation it is clear that conformity to gendered expectations, though variously experienced by women, is one of the significant ways in which bodies are inscribed with violence which might be subtly affected. Similarly, writing about gender and sexuality, Murray (2018b, p.71) “[t]he female characters in these texts are aware that their gendered behaviour and sexuality are being watched and judged, and that any deviation from acceptable norms renders them vulnerable. Gender is always embedded in and produced by specific temporal and spatial contexts. Thus, women are socialised to tow the straight line of normative womanhood as their bodies are always under scrutiny. This is due to the fact

surveillance represents an instance where “symbolic economy of ownership, one that is concerned with the right to own one’s pain and the power of narration’, is curtailed. In concurrence with this contention, Gunne argued that “[e]ntangled with this symbolic concept of ownership are economic and material notions of possession, which apply to land and property and also conspicuously to women, who in this constellation are commodities in a patriarchal system of exchange” (Gunne 2014, p.1-2). In addition, the focus of the selected texts written by women is “the female body being beaten, broken, burnt, and all that displayed in words for millions of readers to see” (Pinheiro, 2015, p.147). In this study, scripting bodies with violence in *Dante International*, *This is not a flowerpot* and *Blood Rose*, is achieved through the way men claim ownership of different women.

Like Murray and Gunne, Evans and Williams (2013, p.183) attests to the fact that Foucault’s work is vital in understanding the notion of placing bodies under surveillance when argue that “disciplinary power operates through omnipresent surveillance that compels subjects to internalize, and hence perform, norms of social control.” What this means is that the experiences of women concerning these disciplinary practices “are fundamentally gendered and, for women, patriarchal power structures facilitate very specific types of consequences for non-adherence.” This current study seeks to demonstrate that the consequences for non-adhere are firmly inflicted on bodies of women as gender violence as depicted in the focal texts for this study. Similarly, in her exploration of Foucault’s theory on disciplinary practices, Bartky (2010, p.404) demonstrates how expansively gendered disciplinary practices are responsible for moulding the lives of women through the “production of “docile bodies. Such a production demands an uninterrupted coercion be directed to the very processes of bodily activity, not just their result; this micro-physics of power fragments and partitions the body’s time, its space, and its movements” (ibid., p.404). This is somethings that proffers insightful views into the ways that bodies become variously written with violence. Furthermore, writing about the South African women’s conditions, at length, Nkealah (2017, p.122) states regardless of:

the achievement of crucial milestones in the form of legislature that protects women from various forms of abuse –sexual, emotional and physical – and prosecutes perpetrators of gender-based atrocities, women’s experiences in the home, at the workplace and within religious organisations continue to point to the dominance of patriarchal control, resulting in the persistent

subjugation of women's will to act for self, to develop their individual potentials. Women keep on tolerating violent men and the statistics for femicide keep on increasing (Nkealah 2017, p.122).

The excerpt alludes to the fact that despite the most progressive Constitution in South Africa, on paper, it provides commendable protective measures against women's abuse; this picture that emerges out of the practical experiences of women speaks a different story. As will be illustrated in this study, women are susceptible to all forms of violence, both in public and private spaces.

Furthermore, two of the texts studied in this research (*Blood Rose* and *Dante International*) covered crimes such as murder as seen by the bodies of victims that are discovered. This implies for the crime of murder is hinged on the discovery of a dead body or bodies which necessitates an investigation. Put differently, the body is central to crime fiction. On that note, Anusauskaite (2016, p.37) contends that the dead victim is usually the primary and the most noticeable feature of forensic fiction. This is because "the victim is reduced to being nothing more than a body – he or she is objectified, not only by the criminal, but also, in a way, by the investigator" (Anusauskaite (2016, p.37). The murders that are committed in the two of the selected texts attest to the presence of gender violence since the majority of the victims are women and children who are the typical victims. Crucially, Anusauskaite (2016, p.37 asserts that "in the case of a serial killer, the victim is only a means to certain ends (be it the achievement of a goal or a subconscious repetition of a trauma). Instead of being a principal object of value (not to mention a subject), it is merely a secondary object that helps achieving other goals." Thus, the body or the corpse is important in unlocking the forms of gender violence inflicted on women.

2.2.7 Overview of Margie Orford's *Blood Rose*

Margie Orford's text, *Blood Rose* is one of the primary texts that this study covered. The text delves into the subject of gender violence as seen by the street children that are found dead. According to Murray (2013) though "the victims in this text are homeless boys who are murdered in Walvis Bay, the novel nevertheless offers significant instances of

misogyny.” The presence of misogyny is seen even among the police officers who are tasked with investigating the crime of murder. Of significance are that instances of misogyny that are manifest in the detection of the murders since Clare is made to work in conjunction with the Namibian police team that have some male officers who have misogynist tendencies.

In furtherance of the foregoing assertions, Murray (2013) argues that despite the fact that in Orford’s *Blood Rose*, a various women have high profile roles in the investigation of the dead boys. Female characters such as Clare, Tamar and Dr Helena Kotze, the pathologist, are tasked with resolving cases in an environment that is rife with misogyny. However, the character of “Tamar, who is heavily pregnant at the start of the case, is represented as a strong, competent woman who is also unambiguously feminine” (Murray, 2013, p.70) resonates with the strong-willed female protagonist in Dante’s *International*. As one of the texts studied in this thesis, *Blood Rose* is extensive representation of the strong-willed women who stand against patriarchy. On the same note, Warnes (2012, p.990) posits that in most cases Orford “sensationalise[s] misogynist violence in order to fulfil the expectations of the genre, which risks impeding the feminist struggle she is claiming to wage.”

With the foregoing in mind, Vincent and Naidu (2013, p.56) argue that “[f]or Orford’s representations of violence against women to achieve credibility and not be viewed as mere gratuitous entertainment for the crime thriller fan who expects scenes of graphic violence, a discernible broader feminist narrative strategy in her texts needs to be identified.” Of importance is Orford’s crime series known as the Clare Hart series, the lead character is a female protagonist who is endowed with feminine agency. However, the concept of femininity is vital in understanding of gender violence that is prevalent in *Blood Rose*. As stated elsewhere, gender violence results from the differential positioning of femininity and masculinity in a given society. Using the textual society of *Blood Rose*, Vincent and Naidu (2013, p.56) note that “[t]he traits of idealised masculinity in a patriarchal gender order are defined in contrast to femininity, resulting in a series of binary discourses in which the masculine is privileged while the feminine is that which is lacking in some way.” Further to that Vincent and Naidu (2013, p.56) assert that within the gender structure of a patriarchy “masculinity is associated with authority, status, public action, rationality, strength, courage, hardness, toughness; while femininity is characterised as emotion, irrationality, deficiency,

subordination, fear, weakness, incapacity, domesticity, softness, vulnerability, passivity.” These elements were present in Orford’s text as well as in the other texts covered in this study especially This is not a flowerpot. These differences between men and women are seen as being the drivers of gender violence as exemplified by three texts discussed in this study.

2.2.8 Victims or Victimiser?

In cases of gender violence, there is always the question of the victim and victimiser. In most of the cases, the conventional victim and victimiser are respectively women and men. However, in the texts covered in this study, women are endowed with agency that enables them to resist, cope with and be resilient to gender violence. In this light, Walker, Ashby, Gredecki and Tarpey (2017, n.p) contend that “violence perpetrated by women has often been viewed within the context of victimisation and self-defence, particularly in response to provocation by abusive men.” Additionally, Leisring, (2013) indicate that studies reveal that the violence of women basically works to dispel the negative emotions as well as avenge and obtain the attention of their partners. Researches have demonstrated that women are more inclined to be involved in emotional abuse thereby illustrating that such conducts that are regarded as coercive and controlling (Hines and Douglas, 2010).

In addition to the foregoing line of thinking, Seymour (2011, p.2) note that “the dichotomised construction of violence, [...], therefore has important implications for the ways in which violence is, and is not, named, identified and addressed.” The implication herein is that the normalisation of gender violence is a result of the way such violence is defined, recognised and dealt with in a given society. Instead of treating gender violence as a pandemic that afflicts women, different societies tend to accept this violence as a constituent of women’s lived experience. Moreover, Seymour points out that “the resilience of culturally dominant beliefs regarding men and masculinity, women and femininity, in particular the association of masculinity with power and femininity with passivity, contextualised within the ‘cultural fact’ of women’s victimisation” (2011, p.2). Since the typical culprit in the violent act is man, it means that the violence of men is regarded as natural and therefore accepted as part of cultural practices. Moreover, Hearn and McKie

(2010, p.140) point out that “men are supposed to know when and where and to whom they may be violent.” From this standpoint, men who are the violators are those who feel they need to do their masculinity which normally to intensify into the gender violence. Subsequently, some types of gender violence are seen to be condoned or accepted within the society of the text which makes it difficult to transform the gender relations that culminate in gender violence.

Furthermore, Nafuka (2012) argues that the tendency of men to be seen as more superior to women in society is prevalent in the society of the novels as much it is reflection of the greater Namibian society. Of importance, women and men are socialised with different attitudes, gender roles and perceptions. It is for this reason that women feel inferior to men because they are socialised to be docile or submissive as well as to be reliant, weaklings and subservient whereas males are socialised to be aggressive and domineering. It is in this light that gender is analytical tool that was employed in this study to interrogate how the conduct of men results in the gender violence that is inflicted on women in society of the text. Thus, the domineering behaviour of men tends to have an adverse effect on women which results in gender violence. However, rather than perpetuating female victimhood, such conduct produces a woman who is ready to stand for herself and other victims by resisting instantiations of bodily violence.

In a number of cases, the root of gender violence seems to lie in the way the notion of gender is constructed on exclusionary and inclusionary bases. Using the South African novel, *David's Story* (2001) written by Zoë Wicomb, Negri (2017, p.93) discusses the nature of exclusions and inclusions that accrue from gender within the South Africa's period of transition to democracy. These inclusionary and exclusionary tendencies of gender in the period South Africa transitional period is based on the nature of female and male bodies. Negri (2017) posits that:

the women who inhabit both David's past and present are described as having steatopygous bodies. Besides its literal, purely denotative meaning – an “accumulation of large amounts of fat on the buttocks, especially as a normal condition in the Khoikhoi and other peoples of arid parts of southern Africa” (OED) – the term also works as a symbolic link between the numerous steatopygous women in *David's Story* and Sarah Baartman, and implicitly

points at their transgenerational interconnectedness through societal sidelining and silencing (p.83).

It is against this backdrop that bodies of women are used to exclude them from the metanarratives or to include them when it suits the political exigencies of the apartheid regime which was based on racial categories. The effect of these inclusions and exclusions of women is that it rendered women objects that were at the disposal of men which tended to breed gender violence. Nonetheless, the selected texts feature strong women who are able to reclaim their rightful positions in societies that render them helpless.

In an article, Becker (2014, p.116) illustrates how “the discourses of trauma, victimhood and silence regarding local agency contributed to the production of the nationalist master narrative in postcolonial Namibia.” Such master narratives seep through the layered gender relations where women appear only as appendages to the nationalist discourse of Namibia. It is in this context that Becker (2014, p.116) writing about the Namibian situation, posits that “the repositories of memory beyond the narratives of victimhood and trauma [...] began to add different layers to the political economy of silence and remembrance in the mid-2000s.” what emerges from such a situation is the over-riding silence concerning the lived experiences of women in the nationalist movement. Gender violence has a tendency of muting the voices of the victims, but female characters are continually being vested with agency that allows them to undo such silences. The main contention of this study is that creating female protagonists flies against the dominant discourses of violence that put men at the forefront of the process of scripting violence on women’s bodies.

In an article based on the analysis of Mda’s novel *Ways of Dying*, Twalo (2017) shows that societal norms are employed to normalise gender inequalities that elevate men above women. Twalo (2011, p.47) demonstrates pointed out that the “misuse of masculine power and authority attests to the patriarchal perception of women as the ‘other’, the ‘secondary gender’, and trivial.” Patriarchal dominance is shown even in mundane rituals such as burials which in Mda’s novel *Ways of Dying*, where men occupy a more important role as compared to women. This dominance of men in the novel is exemplified by Toloki who is depicted as the professional mourner whose duty is to provide mourning services at

funerals. The mourning process is conducted using a specified hierarchal order that is based on the superiority of men where the shaving of heads as mourning ritual starts with men, followed by male children in terms of the seniority, followed by women and all the girl children. In this text, as argued by Twalo (2017, p.47), “the order of this ritual clearly illustrates the second-class status of women in a patriarchal society and Mda questions the basis for this female subservience and male hegemony.” Women and girls are treated as second class in the society of the novel even in issues that commonplace. It is for this reason that in case of gender violence, society casts a blind eye to the violation of women. Put differently, gender violence is accepted as part and parcel of the experience of being a woman or a girl child. This is something that this study sought to complicate by analysing ways in which the victims respond to, resist and cope with violence.

2.2.9 Gender and sexuality

The notions of ‘gender’ and ‘sexuality’ are central in the understanding of gender violence that is captured by the primary texts of this study. There is a tendency to conflate the two terms as if there are synonyms. In this vein, United Nations (cited in Aghtaie & Gangoli, 2015, p.6) defines violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.” In this study, forms of gender violence such as physical assault, sexual harassment, psychological were discussed using the selected texts. Further to that, Aghtaie & Gangoli (2015) contend that women are more susceptible to domestic violence and assault in comparison to other types of gender-based violence.

According to Lee (2011) point out that sexuality is a wide-ranging concept that encompasses the physical traits that are linked to sex and other issues such as the attire, sitting posture and walking which can be seen as feminine and masculine. Makombe (2015, p. 188) argues that “sexuality is not only about sexual acts, but also about the meanings they carry, the desires motivating them and the social interaction through which they are accomplished, and sexual acts themselves encompass a range of possibilities beyond those implicated in reproduction.” This implies that individuals and societies differ in terms of theorising sex

and sexuality. In concurrence, Armstrong and Reissing (2015, p.992) argue that sexual drive among women results in psychological gratification as the most crucial driver for sex among women of diverse sexual orientations. Even though, it can be said that women possess their views on sex, different societies are not receptive to a situation where women willingly express their sexuality, especially in public. On the same note, Masvawure (2013) posits that sexuality is influenced by a number of factors such as social and political forces and is linked in a number of ways, to power configurations concerning issues such as class, race and gender.

Adding to the above assertions, World Health Organization (WHO, 2018) posits that during human life sexuality is a vital part of human beings and includes host of issue such as sex, sexual orientation, intimacy eroticism, pleasure, reproduction, gender identities and roles. On the same note, Tamale (2013) notes that sexuality includes a host of issues such as beliefs, thoughts, desires, behaviours fantasies, attitudes, roles, relationships, norm, values and practices. Scholars treat sexuality and sexualities as two different yet related words. On a similar note, Scott (2010) argues that sexuality is a part of human, social activity and a sociological field of inquiry, whereas sexualities is the individual sexual practices, identities or lifestyles. Moreso, Oakley (2015, p. 77) observes that the concepts of 'sex' and 'sexuality' have been conflated to mean one and same thing, yet sex is the "biological maleness or femaleness [while sexuality is the] behaviour related to copulation." Conversely, gender encompasses all features that differentiate women from men (Scott 2010). This study explored engaged the notions of sexuality and sex relationships of women as well as gender as depicted in the selected texts to comprehend the prevalence of gender violence. These two notions have been used by men for inflicting violence on women's bodies since it is men who define what is normative sexuality and femininity. By resisting these labels, the victims are showing that bodies are merely slate that are written on.

Writing about Chimamamnda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, Washaly (2018, p. 2042) argues that "[t]he issue of gender violence has become a novel field of study in literature and cultural studies particularly with the emergence of feminist movement in the twentieth century [because] gender violence became an everyday phenomenon in different societies, and had increasingly dominated social issues." In this text, gender violence attributed to a nexus of factors that include religion, patriarchy, culture and colonial education. In her text,

Chimamanda Adichie delves into the subject of gender violence by showing the effect of “religious fanaticism on family relations as well as how education and knowledge are pivotal in empowerment and enlightenment.” This study attempted to illuminate on gender violence by drawing parallels with texts written by women from the African continent such as Chimamanda Adichie whose texts focus on the lived experiences of women.

Researches indicate that there is a plethora of factors that impacted on gender narratives and practices in Namibia such as diverse forms of colonialism that the country was subjected to. Such a situation led to the categorization of Namibia into two distinct zones during the era of colonisation starting with the German rule in 1907 (Miescher, 2012). According to Becker (2019, p.2) “[s]outhern and central Namibia was referred to as the “Police Zone” to which white settlement was directed [and] was governed directly by settler colonial rule.” The same scenario followed after World War II where the South African apartheid policies were adopted in southern and central parts of Namibia. On this note, it should be noted that the “regions north of the “red line”, which marked the border between the two distinct areas, experienced colonial rule more akin to the British doctrine of indirect rule” (Becker, 2019, p.2). Despite the fact that these divisions represented political decisions on how to govern Namibia, it is not difficult to note that gendered nature of these colonial forms of administration. What this means is that in addition to the Namibian traditions, colonial administration perpetuated and further created a gulf between men and women through inequalities with the white placed at the apex of the social ladder. On the other hand, African men were placed a rung below the white women with black women further down the hierarchy. This colonial arrangement emasculated the black man who had to reclaim his masculinity by using violence against black women. However, as a point of departure the novels selected for this study demonstrate that white women are not immune to gender violence as they are also victims of domestic violence and other forms of gender violence.

Examining two novels, *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half a Yellow Sun* written by Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, da Silva (2012, p. 455) argues that “Adichie returns the reader to an aesthetics of excess firmly grounded on potently disturbing images of the ‘body in pain’.” Further to that, de Silva (2012) posits that the two novels can be read alongside

Scarry's (1985) memorable phrase about "the battered, bruised and scarred body" as "a key image, a corporeal evocation of the individual self that is traced in both novels to a legacy of colonial and post-colonial relations, and specific gendered configurations" (p. 455). In addition, da Silva contends that "through confronting and graphic representations of what often are semi-ritualistic occasions of domestic violence, of rape and mutilation, [Adichie's] novels articulate an aesthetics of excess that calls attention to the difficulty of speaking the unfinished business of nation-making in the post-colonial nation." However, what speaks to the current study is how Adichie's novels address the ubiquity of the female corporeal which is brutally violated through physical forms of gender violence as well as a result of emotional, economic and sexual violations and misogyny. It is in this light that the three selected texts were read as portrayals of the female body a "foil for [a] self in the face of physical pain and psychological distress" (de Silva, 2012, p.455).

2.3 Research gap (s)

The representation of women in public and private spaces which collude in writing violence on the bodies of women appears to be a lacuna in literature focusing on this particular area. The agency of women and the notion of female protagonists as forms of resistance, resilience and coping strategies, remains an area that requires constant research due to the way gender violence keeps on mutating as evidenced by the spate of violence recorded during national lockdowns in different parts of the world. Despite researches on gender violence in Namibia, none is yet to focus on fringe or not-so-popular texts such as *This is not a flowerpot* and *Dante International*, which serves as a research gap on studies on gender violence in Namibia.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Hearn (2012, p.1) contends that in order to comprehend gender violence there are two important perspectives that should be considered, that is 'hegemonic masculinity' and 'the hegemony of men' (emphasis in the original). In other words, men's violence to known women emanates from how men perform their gender. The perspectives suggested by Hearn are vital in terms of understanding men's violence to their partners which is quite

prevalent in Namibia. According to Hearn the notion of 'violence' is not a fixed set of behaviours; rather the very construction of violence is related to historical intersections of gender power, social divisions, ideology, and indeed hegemony (Hearn, 2012, p.3). In addition, hegemony "highlights domination with degrees of consent, even if contingent and backed by force (ibid., p.3)." It emerged in this study that hegemonic masculinity is an ideal that men thrive for, but it is this attempt to access such masculinity that is responsible for inflicting violence on women's bodies.

As such by performing a set of masculinity known as hegemonic masculinity, men perpetrate violence against women. This is vital in framing the current study within a theoretical paradigm. Furthermore, Grosz (1994, p.203) contends that:

the female body has been constructed not only as a lack of absence but with more complexity, as a leaking, uncontrollable, seeping liquid; as formless flow; as viscosity, entrapping, secreting; as lacking not so much or simply a phallus but self-containment – not a cracked or porous vessel, like a leaking ship, but a formlessness that engulfs all form, a disorder that threatens all order.

The foregoing depiction of the female body is meant to objectify and treat it as disgusting thing that can and should be discarded as of no use or after use. This typifies what transpires in the texts selected for this study, especially with reference to Dante's treatment of women in *Dante International*. Added to that Grosz's hypothesises that "women's corporeality is inscribed as a mode of seepage" as well as the "association of femininity with contagion and disorder [and] the undecidability of the limits of the female body...find expression in discursive links between female bodies and 'strong revulsion' and 'deep-seated fear of absorption'" (1994, p.203). It is in this manner that women's bodies become scripted with violence as this study intends to illustrate. This study problematised corporeal feminism by demonstrating that bodies of women are a resource that the victims turn to when they want to resist, respond to, cope with or be resilient to the violence scripted on bodies. Bodies scripted with violence become the starting point for female resistance, response, resiliency and coping mechanisms against their victimisers.

In line with the foregoing assertion, the notion of hegemonic masculinities was vital in understanding the behaviour of the male perpetrators of violence. The texts under review

demonstrated that men were the predominately abusers of women because they felt the need to dominate women. To this end, Dube (2016, p.76) posits that “hegemony as domination theory limits the active and progressive potential of hegemony because it represents only one side of hegemony, especially hegemonic masculinity, that privileges dominative forms of “hegemonic masculinities.” In other words, hegemonic masculinities are expressed in opposition to other forms of masculinity. This means this type of masculinity does not permit “the possibility that hegemony is complex and offers sites of alliance in the political struggle for gender order transformation – as seen through concepts such as “alternative masculinities”, “non-hegemonic masculinities”, and “minority masculinities” (Dube, 2016, p.76). This implies that the doing of hegemonic masculinity is relational which makes men to be violent in order to appropriate this form of manhood as illustrated in the three texts covered in this study. Additionally, Dube (2016. p.76) pointed out that:

hegemonic masculinity” gender order, but also in terms of how resistance to that gender order is possible even within the hegemonic system itself as some of the studies analysed in this article demonstrate with regards to emphasis on the notion of “alternative masculinities.” understanding of power provides us with an opportunity to examine the discourse of the “crisis in/of masculinity.

From the above citation, it is clear that hegemonic masculinity is responsible for the continued violence that is perpetrated against women as evidenced by the societies of the selected texts. The rise in the number of empowered women poses a threat to hegemonic masculinity. The only way to protect their positions in society is men employ violence as an outshoot of hegemonic masculinity. Even though, corporeal feminism provides a framework in which to situate the discussion of bodies scripted with violence, the texts selected for this study that seem to invite a special dialogue with this theory. Precisely, the texts are engaged in such a way as to establish a special dialogue with theory in terms of how women’s bodies are treated in metanarratives and how such bodies revolt against such discourses. In short, the texts speak to the theory as much as the theory provides critical lenses with which to view the treatment or representation of women’s bodies.

2.5. Summary

This chapter focused on the review of literature that is relevant to the study. Besides, the researcher discussed literature related to the resistance, resilience and coping strategies of bodies that scripted with violence as depicted in literature. The notion of hegemonic masculinity and corporeal feminism were discussed as they allowed for the unpacking of gender violence portrayed in the selected texts. A lacuna in literature centred on the different researcher have focused on literary depictions of gender violence whereas the present study focused on the way female characters are responding to gender violence.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an outline of the research methodology employed in this study. It delves into the research design, research paradigm, research methods and text selection criteria. Also, it discussed research instruments, data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.2. Research Design

According to Burns and Grove (2003, p.195) a research design is “a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings.” This study was conducted so as to examine the way gender violence is scripted on the bodies which are mainly female as depicted in the chosen novels. Additionally, a research design refers to “the researcher’s overall for answering the research question or testing the research hypothesis” (Pilot, Beck & Hungler, 1993, p.167). Moreover, according to Creswell and Clark (2011, 58) a research design is “procedures for collecting, analysing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies.” In this study, an explanatory research design was employed since it “looks for causes and reasons and provides evidence to support or refute an explanation or prediction” (Boru, 2018, n.p). Besides, it aims to “discover and report some relationships among different aspects of the phenomenon under study” (ibid., n.p). The thrust of this study was to establish the various aspects of gender violence written on the bodies of women such as the modes of resistance, resilience and coping that are employed by female characters to deal with gender violence.

3.3. Research paradigm

This study was framed within the interpretivism which is a paradigm “rooted in the fact that methods used to understand knowledge related to human and social sciences cannot be the same as its usage in physical sciences because human interprets their world and then acts based on such interpretation while the world does not” (Pham, 2018, p.3). It is anticipated that an interpretive analysis of the given texts will allow for a clearer and deeper

understanding of the phenomenon of gender violence that is depicted through the bodies of women. To this end, Denzin and Lincoln (2017, p.3) argue that interpretivism enables the researcher to “deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand.”

3.4. Research Methods

Qualitative approach was used in this research study. According to Bui (2014, p.14) “qualitative approaches collect non-numerical data to answer research question(s). Non-numerical data are narrative data (i.e., words)”. Further to that, Denzin and Lincoln (2017) contend that qualitative research refers to a varied, extensive, and unceasingly developing range of research interpretive paradigms, evaluation practices, methods, approaches and products. This implies that a qualitative approach uses words to proffer answers to the research questions in contrast to numeric data. This study, therefore, provided a critical analysis of thematic concerns and characters of the focal texts in order to arrive at the results of this study. More so, Bui (2014) asserts that qualitative research can be viewed as a system of inquiry which seeks to build a complete, mainly narrative, description of social or cultural phenomena so as to enhance the researcher’s understanding of the given situation. In this study, the social phenomenon was gender violence that is represented in the selected texts. Therefore, the six short stories were examined through qualitative literary approach which is hinged upon literary criticism which is a way of exploring fiction in the short stories.

3.5. Text Selection Criteria

This study explored the representations of bodies scripted with violence specifically focusing on how such bodies are written with violence, how they become resilient as well as resist and cope with instances of violence. The study focused on three texts namely, Sandra Kasanda’s *Dante International*, Margie Orford’s *Blood Rose* and *This is not a flowerpot* by Amy Schoeman. As such, the selection of the three texts as primary sources for this study is motivated by a number of factors. Primarily, the three texts selected are set in Southern African countries of Namibia and South Africa, hence they share interface of the setting.

Historically, the two countries share a colonial with the later having occupied the former during apartheid era. Such a history, therefore, proffers a deeper and insightful understanding of how gender relations were hierarchical structured during apartheid times and how such a gender order was projected into post-apartheid settings in the three texts. Whilst two of the texts were written by Namibians, that is, Sandra Kasanda and Amy Schoeman, Margie Orford is a South African writer who once lived in Namibia and her story is also set in Namibia.

The other factor which motivated the selection of the focal texts on which the study is based on, is the fact that they are all written by women who tackle a dated topic, yet in a new way. Thematically, all the texts under study delve into the subject of gender violence, which is explored from a feminist point of view. More so, being women themselves, the writer provides an insider knowledge on how bodies of women are scripted with violence at the hands of men, hence they offer nuanced ways of comprehending gender violence. Added to that, the three writers, in their multifarious ways, invest their characters with agency that enables them to resist and become resilient to gender violence as well as devise coping strategies that allow them to deal with gender violence. Additionally, the three texts permit a comparative study of bodies that are scripted with violence from the experiences of women across the racial divide. The writers consist of three female writers, with two of them, Orford and Schoeman being white whilst Kasanda is a black woman. Even though they belong to different racial groupings, these writers tackle the topic of gender violence from different angles which, however converge on the bodies of women that form an integral part of each of their works. It is due to the outlined reasons that the mentioned texts were selected and will be made to dialogue with each other on the issue of resistance, resiliency and coping strategies employed by women characters in the texts when violence is inflicted on their bodies.

3.6. Research instruments/ Data collection tools

This study employed desktop study to analyse the way violence on the bodies of women and how female characters resist, cope with and become resilient to violence inflicted on their bodies by male perpetrators. Desktop research involves a situation of where a

researcher conducts interviews or use questionnaires. However, in this study, the researcher read and analyse different secondary sources to draw conclusions on the subject matter. As such, this approach will be used in this study so as to examine and answer the research questions of this study. In essence, this study will make use of the primary sources that will include *This is not a flowerpot*, *Dante International* and *Blood Rose*. According to Bui (2014) primary sources refer to first-hand information which is written by the writer and not by second person. For the purposes of this this study, three novels were studied.

3.7. Data analysis

Data analysis was done using content analysis as framed by the theory of corporeal feminism. This involved examining the characters and themes which were derived from the selected novels as based on the research objectives. A narrative report was composed and presented. The content analysis method was engaged to analyse the data that was collected by analysing and exploring the ways violence is depicted in the bodies of women in the chosen novels. According to Krippendorff, (2013, p.36) content analysis is an “analysis of the manifest and latent content of a body of communicated material (as a book or film) through classification, tabulation, and evaluation of its key symbols and themes in order to ascertain its meaning and probable effects.” More so content analysis refers to “a systematic reading of a body of texts, images, and symbolic matter, not necessarily from an author’s or user’s perspective” (Krippendorf 2013, p. 40). Subsequently, the findings of the study were obtained from a systematic analysis and critical reading of the focal texts of this study. It is in this context that three texts, *Dante International*, *This is not a flowerpot* and *Blood Rose* were purposively chosen from other women-authored literary texts and analysed using content analysis.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

Being a woman, the researcher averted personal biases in the analysis of the three novels by being objective in exploring the way bodies of women are written with violence. The information will, therefore, presented as it was obtained from the analysis of the three novels, since this is a desk top study. All the sources which were used in this study were duly

acknowledged. The researcher was as objective as possible by focusing on the truth that emerged from the exploration of the three novels. No part of the three novels was reproduced for personal gain, but they were used strictly for study purposes. Prior to conducting the study, the researcher obtained an ethical clearance from the Research and Ethnic Committee of Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST).

3.9. Summary

This chapter outlined the methodology used in this study. It focused on the research design, the population and sample, the research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis and ethical considerations. The next chapter focuses on data presentation and analysis.

Chapter 4: MAJOR FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an evaluation of the data that was gathered from *Blood Rose* by Margie Orford (2007), Sharon Kasanda's (2012) *Dante International* and *This is not a flowerpot* by Amy Schoeman (2013). Different forms of violence that are perpetrated on the bodies of the vulnerable members of the society such as women, girls and homeless boys are discussed and presented. The findings are presented under different themes and characters in accordance with the research objectives. The novels by Orford (2007), Kasanda (2012) and Schoeman (2013) demonstrate how their characters are affected by violence and how they become resilient and cope with such violence. The settings under which Orford, Kasanda and Schoeman depict bodies encrypted with violence shows how the subalterns of the society such as women, girls and boys find ways to cope with and be resilient to violence. As such, this chapter offers a critical and literary analysis of how bodies that are usually marked with violence are transformed in such a way that they manage to cope with and be resilient to violence.

This chapter is, therefore, subdivided into three sections. In this chapter, firstly the summary of the three novels is given. Thereafter the literary representation of gender violence is critically analysed. This discussion offers a comparative analysis of Orford's *Blood Rose*, Kasanda's *Dante International* and Schoeman's *This is not a flowerpot* which was published in 2013. These texts are put into conversation on the topical issue of bodies that are encrypted by violence.

4.2 Textual Summary

Set in Walvis Bay in Namibia which was previously called South West Africa, *Blood Rose* chronicles the story of three street boys who are found dead on the streets. The case sucks in Clare Hart, an investigator from South African who normally works in conjunction with the police to solve criminal cases. Orford's *Blood Rose* (2007) is the second instalment in the Clare Hart series featuring a female investigator and crime profiler, Dr Clare Hart. The novel mainly focuses on the mysterious deaths of boys in the street of Walvis Bay, in Namibia

which was formerly called South West Africa and the attempts by Clare Hart to help unravel the killer. With the setting of the story being described as “South Africa’s Wild West” (192), it is foreboding with violence that is firmly encrypted on bodies. Granted such a background, it is not surprising that the bodies of street boys are vulnerable to violence that threatens the lives of these boys. At the request of the Namibian police, Clare Hart heads for Walvis Bay where she is to be part of an investigative team headed by a female captain, Tamar Damases who is also the head of Sexual Offenses and Murder Unit. It is when three street boys lose their lives which all points to a serial killer, that persuades Tamar to enlist the help of Clare who is a crime profiler who’s jobs includes assisting the police in detecting the signs that can be used to identify the killer.

On the other hand, *Dante International* (2012) narrates the story of Dante Dumeno who is the owner of a company called Dante International Storage (DI) and is a partner in an advertising firm known as HD Advertising. Told in a third person, the story focuses on Dante Dumeno’s life as a man-made man who after the death of his mother is left with responsibilities of fending for his two young siblings. His father was well-known for wrong reasons as he was a hopeless alcoholic who abdicated his role to fend for his family to his wife. However, the interest of this discussion lies on the way Dante’s womanising activities inscribe violence on the bodies of women. Despite the fact that Dante has a troubled childhood due to his actions of his abusive father and the poverty-stricken conditions that he grew up. However, it is a string of murders of women who had sexual relations with Dante that heightens the scripting of violence on the bodies of victims. The text is set in Windhoek, the capital city of an independent Namibia. The events of the story transpire between Sunday, 1 April to Sunday, 20 May in an unspecified year. Told in a third person, Kasanda’s *Dante International*, is a story of Dante Dumeno who runs a storage company, Dante International (DI), and is a partner in an advertising firm, HD Advertising. Dante is a known womaniser who has a string of casual sexual relationships with different women that include his female employees. When the cases of mysterious deaths of women that are known to him as casual sexual partners, surface, Dante is arrested as the prime suspect. He is later shot and dies in a hospital. However, the focus of this analysis is on the ways violence is presented using the bodies of women in the text. In other words, the analysis

proceeds from exploring the victims prior to factoring in the perpetrator as denoted by the victim-perpetrator configuration.

On the contrary, *This is not a flowerpot*, is told in the first person narrates a tale of Lizelle, a woman who finds that her marriage to Edward is toxic and feels like being trapped because it is a loveless and unproductive relationship. With its setting being South Africa, England and France and different parts of Europe, the story traces how Lizelle met, fell in love and got married to her husband who is extremely impulsive and has good and bad part to his character. In other words, Edward is portrayed as an abusive man as a result of his low self-esteem and insecurities which he imprint on his wife's body. It can be said that the narrative depicts a woman who fights against patriarchal constraints that seek to muffle the voices of women especially those that are wives. Her struggle to annul her marriage represents the greater struggle by other women to unyoke themselves from oppressive institutions as a way to re-assert s sense of self-determination. As such, *This is not a flowerpot* by Schoeman delves into the lived experiences of a married woman who finds herself living under a toxic marriage. Through the seemingly mundane instances within the institution of marriage, the female protagonist finds herself emotionally, financially and physically abused by her husband.

To a great extent, the texts that forms this discussion depicts various ways that are being employed by female characters to free themselves from oppressive conditions they find themselves in across the racial divide since the characters in the texts under study are both black and whites.

4.3 Literary Representations of the nature of the violence inflicted on women's bodies in *Blood Rose*

This section offers a critical analysis of the literary depictions of violence that is inflicted on the bodies of women using *Blood Rose*, *Dante International* and *This is not a flowerpot*. These texts variously represent violence that is perpetrated on the bodies of women. Whilst there are dead bodies in *Blood Rose* and *Dante International*, *This is not flowerpot* does not have any dead bodies, but the living bodies are not spared the markings of violence. The depiction of bodies that are scarred with violence resonate with a contention by Edwards-

Jauch who identifies different types of violence that are inflicted on the bodies of the victims. It is in this line of thinking that Edwards-Jauch posits that:

Common definitions of gender-based violence are limited to physical and psychological violence in the interpersonal sphere for example assault, rape, sexual harassment, abuse by authority figures, trafficking for prostitution, child marriages, dowry-related violence, honour killings and sexual assault. But this direct form of interpersonal violence takes place in a broader societal context of structural violence (2016, p.50).

From the above citation, one can clearly note the different forms or the nature of violence that is perpetrated on the bodies of the victims. These could be as broad as being physical and psychological to being specific such as “assault, rape, sexual harassment, abuse by authority figures, trafficking for prostitution, child marriages, dowry-related violence, honour killings and sexual assault” (ibid., p. 50). From the foregoing extract, shows that the marking of violence on the bodies of the victims is done through various ways as alluded to in the citation. In *Blood Rose* and *Dante International*, there is murder, sexual assault or rape as evidences of violence that the bodies are subjected to. On the other hand, there is psychological and emotional violence in *This is not a flowerpot* where the narrator is made to feel insignificant or worthless as she is deemed not to have achieved anything in her life. Subsequently, it can be underscored that violence is variously imprinted on the bodies of the victims as demonstrated by the three primary texts.

Furthermore, when Edward and Lizelle were on their honeymoon in Belgium, he scolds her: t “You’re in a whole lot of shit, missy. When we get back to Paris, I’m going straight to the Embassy to get this farce of a marriage annulled” (Schoeman, 2013, p. 30). He further verbally assaults Lizelle by shouting at her: “You’re nothing but a selfish, spoilt little brat, Lizelle, letting yourself get sunburnt like that on our honeymoon. You did it on purpose. It’s just the way your warped little mind works” (ibid., p. 30).

As eluded earlier on, the focal texts portray different forms of gender-based violence. In Schoeman’s novel, marriage is portrayed as a patriarchal institution that allows instances of gender violence which are deemed acceptable, normal and part of the lived experience of women, girls and boys. Such cases of gender violence are mundane and subtle, but they inflict untold sufferings on the bodies of the victims who are traditional women, girls and boys. Whilst Orford’s and Kasanda’s texts focus on the literary representation of bodies that

bear marks of violence in public spaces, Schoeman's depicts how the violence in the domestic sphere as a space where the ubiquity of violence that is made familiarised on the bodies. It can be posited that violence that is inflicted on the bodies of the victims needs to be framed within differential instantiations of gender relations. Thus, the three texts need to be read against this context which allows for the opening of new vistas into understanding and interpretation of the gender relations that are unevenly matched thereby leading to high cases of gender violence is prevalent in Namibia.

One can draw parallels between Edward in *This is not a flowerpot* and Tate Petrus Dumeno in *Dante International*. Through the characterisation of Edward and Tate Petrus Dumeno, the reader is able to see how the slightest mundane activities which society oftentimes pay scanty or no attention to, are responsible for diminishing the position and sense of self of women such as Lizelle and Meme Priscilla Shiweda in *This is not a flowerpot* and *Dante International*, respectively. Edward verbally abuses his wife by consciously degrading her as a way to put a dent on her self-worth and self-confidence. Very earlier in the story, Edward says blatantly to his wife: "Tell me, Lizelle. What have you ever achieved in your life?" (Schoeman, p. 2). This question is meant to mock Lizelle as a way to deflate her self-worth after the two had been involved in a heated argument on the kind of accommodation they should acquire for their family. In fact, the question was meant to "floor [her]" (ibid., p. 2) by casting self-doubt in Lizelle who is forced to self-introspect on this question: "What had I ever achieved?" (ibid., p. 2). On the other hand, Tate Petrus Dumeno publicly demonises his wife, Meme Priscilla Shiweda by describing her as a village/town harlot and a witch. In one among many occasions, he tells anyone who cares to listen that: "I was the man of this location, they respected me! That woman, she could not keep her legs closed she opened them for every man at the shebeen! Her evil spirits, they ruined me" (p. 11). This is despite the fact that he openly spends his wife's hard-earned money on beer and women as if he is entitled to engage in prostitution.

On the other hand, in *Blood Rose*, the reader encounters vulnerable street children whom society has neglected. For the society of the novel, the elimination of these children is desirable as it is akin to good riddance of societal nuisance as it would affect the town's tourism industry. This is evidenced by the conversation between Mara who is a volunteer

teacher for English at the local school and a woman who worked at the bakery. Woman begins by saying to Mara:

'You shouldn't talk to these street boys.'

'They're good kids...living a bad life.'

'It's easy for you foreigners to feel sorry for them, but we have to live with them. Aids orphans are just trouble. [...]. Look at that one who got himself killed. And the other two they found in the desert. What do they think that'll do for our tourism?' (p.70).

From the above passage, the woman who seems to be echoing the general sentiments of the people in this coastal town is not concerned about the lives of the street children let alone about their deaths. In life and in death, the street children are loathed because alive they are considered a nuisance and in death, they are blamed for affecting tourism activities within the town. As a rejoinder to the above conversation, Tamar sarcastically says to the woman shopkeeper, "I'm sure they'd have avoided being shot...if they'd known what their murders would do to your business" (p.70). Later on in this text, the reader encounters another instance that aptly captures sentiments of the town authorities and the general public in a conversation between Clare and another teacher at the local school, Darlene Ruyters, who says:

'They don't care if he's dead or not, anyway. He was just street rubbish to them,' she said.

'Who doesn't care?' asked Clare.

'The police. The municipality. You ask them. They don't care about this dead boy or Nicanor Jones and Fritz Woestyn. They threw them into the grave to save themselves the trouble. There are so many orphans now that in their hearts people are glad when they're eliminated. They just hope it's the one who might've smashed their car window.'

'You care.'

'That's why they came to me, those boys. I didn't judge them, or want anything from them. They were like my children. They wanted me when they needed something' (p.134).

It is clear from the foregoing extract that the street children were not only vulnerable to abuse, but they were cast-outs that no-one wanted to be associated with the exception of the likes of teachers such as Mara and Darlene Ruyters. As such the literary representations

of the nature of the violence inflicted on the bodies of victims include societal rejection and as well as physical elimination of the street boys. Another example where street children are seen as social outcasts is revealed by one of the investigative officers, Karamata who says to Clare: ““Street children. There are so many now. He [Van Wyk] says it’s just Aids orphans; that they’re going to die anyway. A lot of people think like that.”” (p. 105).

Furthermore, an exploration of Kasanda’s *Dante International* aptly demonstrates that the markings on the bodies can be carved by violent acts such as murder and physical assault as well as non-violent ones like sexual harassment emotional and financial abuse in both private and public spaces. Dante grew up in an environment where his father, Tate Petrus Dumeno was a known alcoholic who was abusive to his wife, Meme Priscilla Shiweda. Through the side stories, Kasanda clearly demonstrates the pervasive nature of gender violence that has a tendency to make bodies bearing signs of violence a routine doing of hegemonic masculinity. This type of gender is visibly displaced on the surfaces of bodies of vulnerable members of the society such as women, girls and boys. This is captured through the characterisation of Meme Priscilla Shiweda who is Dante’s mother. She is emotionally abused by her husband who after squandering her money “on beer, meat, and women” (p. 11), declares to Dante and his siblings that, “I was forced to marry your mother” (p.11). Similarly, Lizelle is subjected to the same type of emotional abuse by her husband.

However, the spousal abuse or violence is a topic that does not feature prominently in discussions as it is considered to home affairs issue that should be resolved in privacy. In both Kasanda’s and Schoeman’s texts, women are abused physically, emotionally and sexually by their spouses with no recourse to state interventions such as the legal system. In fact, such cases do not have any legal definitions that can lead the victim to seek legal action especially in cases of emotional abuse that Lizelle and Dora (This is not a flowerpot) and Meme Priscilla Shiweda (*Dante International*) are subjected to in their marriages. Even though depending on his wife’s hard earnings, Tate Petrus Dumeno is not only unappreciative, but he emotionally manipulates his wife by throwing a diatribe at her as evidenced by the wild accusations he levels against her. On one such an occasion, Tate Petrus Dumeno remarks: “That woman, she tricked me. She’s a bad spirit” (p. 11). Instead of leaving this toxic marriage, Meme Priscilla Shiweda maintains her position as an obedient wife who is forever ready to serve him regardless of his abusive conduct. In one such

incident, is shown where Meme Priscilla would “patiently clean off [the vomit] off [Dumeno’s] face” (p.11). Like vituperative words that spew out of Tate Petrus’ mouth, one encounters the same situation where Edward says to Lizelle: “So you think you’re free to do what you like, do you? Well, I’ve got news for you. You’re married to me now, so you can write your so-called freedom on your backside” (Schoeman, 2013, p. 33).

In the foregoing instance, marriage is presented as prison where one relinquishes his or sense of freedom. This lack of freedom is epitomised by the characters of Dora and Eva in Schoeman’s text who decide against leaving their abusive husbands whom they continue to serve unreservedly. In such instances, violence is normalised as part and parcel of the married life. One example that demonstrates how marriage resembles a prison where women lose their sense of self-determination is captured on the occasion Lizelle and Edward decide to visit their friends, Dick and Dora. The reader is told:

As the evening wore on, the two men steadily became drunk and Dick more abusive towards Dora, who continued to smile at him vacantly as if she hadn’t noticed. She was either very good at pretending, or she’d become so accustomed to Dick’s insults that she’d become immune to them” (pp.71-72).

It is this docility displayed by Dora who echoes which Meme Priscilla Shiweda’s behaviour that aptly demonstrates how the selected texts represent the nature of the violence that is inflicted on the bodies of women and young children. From the above passage, the narrator uses words like ‘accustomed’ and ‘immune’ to show how domestic violence is normalised and made acceptable while phrases such as ‘smile at him vacantly’ and ‘good at pretending’ reveal that the victim is expected to remain docile amidst such violence.

Added to the foregoing assertions, Tate Petrus Dumeno alleges that his wife was known as a harlot or a prostitute who made it her preoccupation to sleeps with different types of men. In one incident, he says: “I was the man of this location, they respected me! That woman, she could not keep her legs closed she opened them for every man at the shebeen! Her evil spirits, they ruined me” (p. 11). Even though he does not physically assault his wife, the reader is told that “Dante always knew his father was capable of violence but was just too lazy to inflict it, and so his tongue lashed back and forth between the three children and his long-suffering wife” (p.11). It is evident that Tate Petrus Dumeno was still a violent man whose words were as painful as any physical blow. Unlike in Dante International, the nature

of violence that the victim encounters is mainly three-fold; financial, psychological and emotional.

There is significant evolution in the character of Lizelle who is initially made to feel worthless by her abusive husband. It is when she meets with Tobias, a student on a sight-seeing spree, that she attains the courage and confidence to be assertive. As if in response to Edward's earlier question, she is a creator who liked "to make things" (ibid., p. 17). This comes as Lizelle had asked herself: "What had I ever achieved?" (p. 2). Her husband had made her feel that she had achieved nothing in her life even though when she was a student at university and had accomplished an array of things. She had been involved in activities that included making décor for dances and other social events, drawing and painting. It is easy to see why Edward believed that such activities could not be considered an achievement because all these represented the creative arts. People had a tendency to be dismissive of art as they are considered to be something done by the society's outcasts. Of importance is that she did not need to measure her achievement based on Edward's definition of an achievement, but has the right to decide where her interests lie. This allows her challenge patriarchal domination which sought to make her invisible by erasing her sense of self-worth. The point to note here is that Lizelle regains her capacity to decide what she is good at and challenge her husband's attempts to make her feel inferior on account that she has not achieved anything worthwhile based on his definition of what achievement entails.

Besides, her husband who does not believe in her, Lizelle's mother failed to celebrate or acknowledge her school achievements, for example, when she sent a letter to her about winning the first prize for drawing a portrait of her friend. In her response to Lizelle's letters, her mother chose not to compliment her on her achievement as she considered art to be only for the Bohemians and not for her daughter. In connection with her achievement, Lizelle says:

I waited impatiently for my mother's reply, but in her answering letter she didn't mention the portrait, or the prize. I read the two typed pages a few times to make sure, almost tearing them in my impatience. "You never said anything about my prize," I wrote back. "The one that I won at the

Agricultural Show for my drawing.” In her next letter there was still no mention of the prize. “It was almost as if she were doing it on purpose, to impress on me how unimportant it was” (Schoeman, 2013, p. 19).

On a similar note, Farusja is another female character who is vested with agency that enables her to dictate the terms of engagement when dealing with Dante. As noted elsewhere, Dante was a womaniser who was known to have bedded most of his female employers. For him women were like trophies that decorated in display and represented his accomplishments, but could not have his way with Farusja. Unlike other Dante’s conquests, Farusja was an immigrant from Zambia who presented the most difficult challenge as her name attests to someone who is a female fighter. She tells Dante that her name which is “an unusual but beautiful name” (p. 49), was a name of a slain Somalian journalist Farusja Amra who championed the rights of African women’s all over the continent. She says:

[Farusja Amra] died in Somalia, where she was stoned for protecting a woman accused of adultery after she was raped. [...] the woman she was trying save proclaimed Farusja the bringer of strength, insight and new hope to women like her, before she was also stoned (Kasanda, pp. 49-50).

The name that Farusja inherited makes her to embody the fighting spirit of the deceased journalist as she also stands up for other women who are victims of sexual harassment perpetrated on them by Dante. In short just like journalist she named after Farusja is presented as a woman who has a capacity to decide when and how and with whom to have a sexual relation with. Despite the fact that Dante claims not to know about the slain journalist, Farusja tells him that: “It was never newsworthy, how ironic, a journalist’s death not to be newsworthy. Outcry over her death flared-up and in a week was silenced. She was one of my parent’s closest friends” (p. 50). What should be underscored here is that women are capable of fighting against the violence that is inflicted on their bodies by perpetrators who are in most cases are men. Men like Naks, Dante in *Dante International*, Edward in *This is not a flowerpot* and Gretchen and Renko in *Blood Rose* choose to use bodies of women, girls and boys to accomplish their version of hegemonic masculinity in order to be called real men.

Furthermore, another female character who is vested with agency is Clare Hart. Agency allows her not only to defend herself but to also seek justice for the victims of violence such as women, girls and boys. In *Blood Rose*, Clare has to leave South Africa for Namibia to investigate the murder of the homeless boys. What drives Clare to agree to go to Namibia to

help the police in their investigations is the fact that the case involved the senseless killings of young boys who are living on the streets of Walvis Bay. Superintendent Phiri of the South African police in Cape Town persuades Clare to go to Namibia by telling her that:

‘A dead child. Bizarre killing. The body displayed in a school-yard. Bullet to the head, but ritual marks and other peculiarities on the corpse. Reminiscent of a least one other. Maybe more’ (p.29).

What emerges from the passage is that Clare is one of the people who has dedicated herself to fight for the rights of the victims of violence like helpless boys. It is for this reason that she agrees to leave for a place whose weather conditions she did not like, but chooses to ignore this weather element of the Namibian coastal town of Walvis Bay. It is same quest for justice for the vulnerable that motivates Tamar to take the lead as well as assemble a team of investigators that include Captain Riedwaan Faizal from the South African police and the prominent crime profiler, Dr Clare Hart. On the other hand, Farusja and Lizelle, in their different ways, fight for the rights of the victims of violence by refusing to remain locked in a state of victimhood. In Kasanda’s novel, demonstrates how Farusja Mumba does not allow Dante to sleep and use her and discard her afterwards like most of the women in his life. As mentioned earlier on, being named after journalist who died fighting for the rights of the victims of gender violence, Farusja does allow herself to be a victim of gender violence. She is the only one who has the courage to stand up to Dante who is a known perpetrator of violence on women. She says to Dante in one of their confrontations: “I’m nothing but a game to you, a target who you just happen to be attracted to. [...]. Yes, something did happen between us, but to you it’s just another case of being bored and finding a toy to play with. For me, this is my life and because of you I find myself in a terrible position of having to move again!” (p.117). Dante targets women who are desperate for a job as some kind of a ‘game’, but Farusja is ready to tender her resignation letter at HD Advertising despite being an immigrant without another job offer.

Implicit in the narratives of Kasanda, Orford and Schoemann is an overt literary representation of the nature of the violence inflicted on women’s bodies. One of such examples is the way narratives of Kasanda and Orford open with victim-perpetrator relations that reveals the unequal positions they occupy. This unequal relationship leads to the death of the victim at the hands of the perpetrator. Kasanda’s novel opens with the

murder of Frieda Lyme at the hands yet-to-be-known killer. Frieda is the secretary to Dante as well as one of the many women that Dante sleeps with in his game to conquer the female species. The narrator says:

He would make them pay for what they had done to him; the despair that had become a part of him would become theirs and he would make sure their lives become a living hell of bitterness, unforgiveness and the sweetest of nightmares.

He shuddered now as he felt her skin grow cold under his touch; her body cooling like the heat had suddenly been switched off. He was kneeling beside her, stroking the curly black kinky hair on her head. It has seemed so alive a few moments ago and now clung to her lifeless body, shrouding the top of her head with the inky blackness. Tears of joy streamed down his face and he wiped them away hurriedly, the transparent gloves covering his hands absorbing the liquid before they could stain her perfect ebony skin. He had only been trying to take the pain away (Kasanda, p.1; emphasis in the original).

The psychological make-up of the killer is driven by his desire for revenge for something that happened to him in an unnamed time. The reader is exposed to the workings of the serial killer who targets any women who has a sexual history with Dante. Put precisely, the killer believes he had a mission to cleanse the nation by eliminating women. Thus, the killer's vendetta was to make women "pay for what they had done to him" (p.1). Kasanda presents a psychopath who makes it his mission to create a better place in a world that has been defiled by who should be eliminated. On a similar note, Orford's novel opens with a Prologue that depicts the imbalances between the perpetrator and the victim. The Prologue of *Blood Rose*, there are two unnamed characters which the reader can assume to be the perpetrator and the victim based on the graphic description that is given in this one paged Prologue. The bizarre encounter is graphically described, thus:

Later, the heft of a piston in your hand. Perfect. Circled forefinger and thumb slide down to trace the blind eye. A fingertip dipped inside the barrel fans desire, warms our cold body. Pace back one step, two. He watches the target. Hands bound. Breath held. Eyes riveted. Filled with the hope that you mean something else. Not this. Not you. Your finger curled round the trigger anticipates the weight needed to fire. Uncurls, extends the ecstasy. Your eyes on the metal marker, an erect nipple on the barrel. Breathe out. Your breath mists the desert air. Breathe in. Breathe out as you beckon. Release. The force of it explodes through your arm, chest, head, groin and erases everything. (2007, n.p).

The above passage demonstrates how Orford portrays the violence that the perpetrator inflicts on the unsuspecting victim. The played by the perpetrator in the ensuing scenario clearly spells out the position occupied by the victim. Despite what seems to the desperate position of victim as denoted unpronounced thought: “Not this. Not you” (Prologue, n.p), the victim’s life is not spared. It is this power relationship between the victim and the perpetrator that leads to the introduction of the investigator whose role is to trace and identify the killer in order to attain justice for the victim or victims of such violence.

Furthermore, Kasanda tries to demonstrate the various ways that are employed by perpetrators to emboss their violent acts on the bodies of the victims. It is such acts as personal vendettas and unstable minds that drive an individual to commit violent crimes. This evidenced by the way the intensity of the killer’s action is enhanced in the reader’s mind by misogynistic views that are simultaneously coursing through the killer’s mind. The omniscient narrator says:

He looked around; everyone was dressed up in their finest clothes. The women had painted their faces, all those bright colours made them look like parrots, and they did not stop talking. He ground his teeth restlessly. He was angry at his elaborate display of excess. He needed to cut these people down to size and remind them how expendable they really were, how naïve. It was easy to get into their lives and destroy them. Just as his life had been destroyed the women revolted him, all hoe tight dresses that showed off every part of their bodies; he could see everything, the curve of their hips, the shape of their bosoms – it left nothing to the imagination. Some even had the indecency to go around bare-shouldered. The men were just as bad, indecent in body and mind, chasing after these mindless and promiscuous women like it was the only thing they lived for. He breathed deeply. He had to act soon. He could feel the shake starting in his fingers again. Once the shakes began, he had very little time left to do things right and the glow of joy that had surrounded him after Frieda was starting to fade. He had to free his next one from this life of excess tonight (Kasanda, pp. 41-42, emphasis in the original).

The foregoing passage reveals the nature of misogynistic tendencies that breed gender violence. on psychological and somatic trajectories which may be taken by narrative pleasure. In Dante International, Michael’s hatred of women is epitomised in the way he viewed women especially the manner of their dressing. Similarly, in *Blood Rose*, the reader

is exposed the hatred towards the street children that is embodied by the likes of Van Wyk, Calvin Goagab who is the head of cleansing in the town, and other people that Clare encounters in her investigations. They regard street children as noted already, they are regarded as a nuisance that negatively affected the town's sole economic activity that is the tourism industry. When Clare makes her observation about the speedy burials of street children, one of the investigative officers, Karamata, says: "Street children. There are so many now. He [Van Wyk] says it's just Aids orphans; that they're going to die anyway. A lot of people think like that." (p.105). In fact, these street children are considered to be "[j]ust a piece of rubbish" (p.105). This came as result of the over-fishing that led to the collapse of the fishing industry which was the mainstay of the economy of the coastal town of Walvis Bay. Thus, it can be argued that when Michael thinks it is his solemn duty to "cut these people down to size" (p.41), the same statement can be applied to other two novels in a more or less similar manner. For instance, in *Blood Rose*, this statement is shown in the actions of killing the boys at point blank which resonates with action of cutting these people down to size as alluded to by Michael. On the other hand, in *This is not a flowerpot*, Schoeman describes the way emotional abuse is employed by the likes of Edward and Dick to cut or reduce women to size which entails putting women in their rightful place as subservient to the whims of their husbands or men in general.

Unlike Kasanda's and Orford's narratives, power spectrum in the narrative by Schoeman is presented through the relationships that exist between men and women with the patriarchal institution where men seem to enjoy a free reign that permits them to wilfully abuse their wives. Commenting on the relationship between Dick and Dora, we are told that: "Thinking about Dick and Dora, Lizelle says, 'Perhaps marriage was at best a compromise, but what a compromise in this case'" (p.73). What should be stressed here is that the power scales in the relationship between Dora and Dick reveal that the scales were tilted in favour of Dick. This due to the fact that Dora seems to be the only one who had to compromise, in order to accommodate Dick's abusive behaviour. In the process, she cannot assume any form of agency in her marriage since her husband; Dick thingified her as she has to wait upon him. Put differently, Dick typifies hegemonic masculinity as shown by the way he oppresses his wife by demanding that he do even those little things which he can do for himself.

Another example of a couple that demonstrates the power inequalities within the marriage institution abound in this text is that of Eva and Hymie. Their relationship reveals the master-slave configuration since Eva is portrayed as a wife who is there to serve her partner, Hymie, diligently every time he wants something done for him. In one such an incident, Hymie remarks: "Eva, light me a cigarette...Eva, take my camera out of the sun...Eva, put some more lotion on my back..." (ibid., p. 29). However, Edward tries to demand similar devotion from Lizelle, thus: "Fetch my book for me, will you?" (ibid., p. 29), she retorts: "Where I come from, we do our own fetching and carrying, equality of the sexes, and all that. You fetch your books and I fetch mine is how it works" (ibid., p. 29). Lizelle demonstrates the transformation in her characters as she is able to stand against the patriarchal structures as embodied in the character of Edward.

In *Blood Rose*, the reader is interested to know who murdered the street boys who are found dumped in different parts of Walvis Bay. In relation to the female detectives, Orford's text is seen to be empowering the female investigators with the investigative competencies and clear-sightedness that is required to unmask the killer or killers of the young boys. On the other hand, *Dante International* and *This is not a flowerpot* empowering the female characters to fight against gender violence rather to remain fixed in their victimhood. As such, the three narratives allow the readers to understand the psyche of the perpetrators concerning the factors that spur them to be violent against vulnerable and traditionally powerless sections of the society such as women, girls and boys. These female writers engage with the elements of corporeal feminism as a way to provide as a lens through which to view and critique social structures that normalise gender violence. The underlying current running through the three narratives is social commentary that underscores the vulnerable position of women and children as much as it demonstrates the transformation in the conditions of the victims. Besides, these texts explore the opinions of selfhood of women in relation to the manner they relate to their intimate relationships.

Unlike, *This is not a flowerpot*, Orford's *Blood Rose* and *Dante International* by Kasanda represent the violence that is inflicted on the bodies of the victims through their constructions of serial killers. The killers like Naks, Michael, Gretchen and Renko believe they have a cleansing mission that requires that they erase the presence of those people they consider to be undesirables, unwanted or social nuisance. They are eliminating such

people, they believe they would be doing the world a great favour. In *Blood Rose*, the street children are seen to be a threat to a booming tourism industry whilst in *Dante International*, one of the killers believes that women are defecating the society through their immoral acts, hence there would be a better place without them. Gretchen and Renko's victims include Kaiser Apollis, Nicanor Jones, Fritz Woestyn, Lazarus Beukes as well as, Mara Thomson. The two specialise in killing the homeless boys whilst Mara, a young woman, is killed as collateral damage due to her association with the boys as their soccer coach. The other killer believes his mission is to end the suffering of these women particularly sparing them from the sexual predators such as Dante. In Orford's narrative, the modus operandi of the killers is shooting the boys at close range, keeping their bodies hidden before moving them to another place. On the other hand, one of killers, Naks kills his mother and sister, Lima before graduating to killing every other woman that has been 'contaminated' by Dante using a knife and car bombs as his weapons. The other killer, Michael, kills his victims through strangulation. Between them, Naks and Michael's victims include Frieda, Erica, Orabella and Sidney and a failed attempt to kill Farusja. In the end, Naks shoots and kills Dante who uses his body to shield Farusja. Naks confesses to having murdered all those women who were initially blamed on Dante as he says: "Your girls are free from you don't understand? I loved playing with them too" (Kasanda, p. 242). Added to that, Naks goes on to say:

'I left such a beautiful smile on Frieda's face, did you see it? I don't know why Erica struggled, she knew me. I did everything I could to keep her perfect. I didn't want to beat any of them. I wanted to free all the girls at DI,' he smiled, an almost serene look crossing his face. 'Them being with you was wrong, they would have all become rotten, just like my Lima' (Kasanda, p. 242).

From the citation above, it is lucid that Naks is a psychopathic killer who considered himself a mission killer. His long-standing grudge with Dante emanated from the fact that his biological sister, Lima, had chosen to love Dante instead of him. In other words, he desired a relationship with his sister regardless of the fact that it would have been an incestuous one. As such, he loathed and blamed Dante whom he accused of snatching his lover — a crime he never forgave him for and for which he had to pay for. He murdered his Lima to stop her from loving Dante and his mother paid with her life for having discovered Naks' incestuous feelings towards his biological sister. These two murders set in motion a killing mission as

Naks sought to be even with Dante. For him the aim of his mission killing was to 'set free' every woman that had slept with Dante by hastening their journey to a better place as a way to save them from his destructive influence. He even intended to kill his and Dante's childhood friend, Roberta Erlichmann, with whom they interchangeably slept in an awkward threesome arrangement. as he tells Dante that: "I was saving Roberta for last" (Kasanda, p.243).

It is through the murderous actions of Naks and his accomplice, Michael that Kasanda succeeds in depicting the violence that was inflicted on innocent women by a psychopathic killer who was driven by the twin motives that included a cleansing mission and personal vendetta. It is in this context that Morton (2004, p.48) posits that a sociopath or psychopath refers to a person who displays an antisocial personality disorder which is "a repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviour in which the basic rights of others or major age-appropriate societal norms or rules are violated." Furthermore, Kasanda writes:

The shaking in his hands had stopped; he was okay for now. Until it started again. He was releasing them from the bondage of this ugly life. He loved to watch their rescued souls escaped from their gaping mouths, tongues flapping like the wings of a bird rising in flight. He was happy. This hell on earth that created illusions of happiness and of peace, and ended up crushing them by bringing people to their knees in death and suffering had ended for her. He blinked as his vision blurred, the ecstasy he felt destabilising him. This hell had taken so much from him, it was up to him to put things right, and maintain the balance (p. 61).

Furthermore, incidents that exemplify the literary representations of the nature of the violence that is inflicted on women's bodies are shown the action of the serial killers in both Kasanda's and Orford's texts. The violence that is depicted in these texts assumes different forms such as sexual, physical, emotional and psychological. However, it should be pointed out that Kasanda's narrative delves into the workings of the mind of the psychopaths so as to understand the nature of violence inflicted on the bodies of the victims. In her text, Kasanda writes that:

He had to do it, he had no choice. If he did not, they would be caught in the deceit that had been spun around them and would fall, doomed to live as slaves. He was changing that; he was the one who would save them and crush the source of the evil that held them captive

He had freed another one today, wrapping his hands lovingly around her neck to gently urge her to leave. This was what he was meant to do, and he did it so lovingly; not even their fathers, not even their families, would treat them as lovingly as he would. The one today had not been as desperate as Frieda, but she had been on the list all the same. She was now in a better, safer place, and he shaking had stopped. Thank God, the shaking had stopped (2012, p. 61).

The word 'freed' denotes a cleansing process that the killer believes he has to perform as kind of bizarre responsibility. He believes his actions reflect his ordained duty as he sees himself as providing love and compassion to the women by purifying them through act of killing. To this end, Pistorius (2002) states that sociopaths are usually individuals who are deceitful, manipulative, and display little penitence for the consequences of their actions, yet they are seen to be rational, logical, competent, charming and persuasive. Such a behaviour gains the trust of the victims who let down their guard and pay with their lives. This is clearly the case with the homeless boys who were killed at close range revealing what Clare refers to as the intimacy of murders. This implies that they had been killed by someone they must have trusted. For instance, an Angolan waiter told Clare that he saw Kaiser getting into a car which drove towards the desert with someone who the boy must have trusted.

On the other hand, Mara lived with Gretchen without knowing she was a killer and she ended up losing her life as well. Similarly, in *Dante International*, the women who were killed by Michael knew or worked with him including Farusja who almost became his other victim. Farusja had, at one point interacted with Michael without knowing his darker and sadistic side. It is this such actions that allow perpetrators to inflict violence on women as the victims get charmed by the persuasive and manipulative killers as captured by Orford and Kasanda's novels. It is in this context that O'Toole and Schiffman (1997, xii) posits that violence is "extending from individual relationships to the arrangement of power and authority in organisations and institutions." Thus, it is this patriarchal arrangement of power that exposes women to violence which as depicted in bodies.

An instantiation to of sexual harassment in Kasanda's text is evidenced by one of Farusja's confrontation with Dante. She retorts: "I'll be reporting you to the union or employment tribunal for sexual harassment first thing on Monday morning" (ibid., p. 57). In response to

Farusja's accusations, Dante remarks: "I am the tribunal, I am the courts and I am the police" (ibid., p. 58). Despite the fact that Dante is known for sexually harassing his female employees, he has the audacity to claim that he is untouchable as he is beyond reproach. However, it is what he alludes to in his outburst that reveals how the various arms of the state seemingly collude to entrench violence on women which allows men like Dante to believe that they have some kind of immunity against persecution. On the other hand, Dante's words seem to point to the corruption that exists in the arms of the state that are meant to protect the vulnerable members of the society. The same point is echoed in Orford's *Blood Rose* where those entrusted with the investigating crime and affording the victims of crime are seen to be corrupt or, in a way, criminal. This is seen in the character of Van Wyk who is suspected of beating Kaiser who is one of the boys who was found dead at the school playground. Besides, when Clare asks Mara about the charge of child abuse, she had laid against Van Wyk, she responds, thus: "there've been rumours that he offers protection that he offers to the girls working the docks. You know, like...they have no choice but to accept it in return for a cut of their fee" (p. 125). This is a clear indication that corruption was also present in the police structures which were tasked with protecting the vulnerable members of the society. In *Blood Rose*, Orford alludes to the inefficiency or the corruption of the police as exemplified by an incident where Faizal asks Mrs Hofmeyr if the police had ever apprehended the person who murdered her husband, thus: "'No,' said Mrs Hofmeyr, acidly. 'How often do the police find anyone?' Riedwaan shifted in his chair. He had no answer for that" (2007, p.202).

Of importance is that the three female writers invest agency in some of their female characters. Such agency equips these women with the capacities to challenge the notion of female victimhood as a way to cope with and to be resilient to violence. Female characters that include Clare Hart, Tamar, Farusja, Roberta, Orabella and Lizelle have the capacity to challenge the violence that is written on the bodies of the victims. For some of these women, despite their attempts to fight against their assailants, they end up losing the fight. In other cases, some of the women believe that the only way to cope with and be resilient to violence is to collude with the men in the oppression of other women such exemplified by Lizelle's mother in *This is not a flowerpot*. On the other hand, in *Date International*, Frieda and Erica tried to fight against their killer, Naks, but he overpowered them resulting

in their death. Added to that, Orabella put a brave fight against Naks leaving him a grave injury as he lost an eye in the process. Kasanda presents different characters who stand up against their perpetrators, but it is Farusja that shows her resilience to and also copes with such violence. Her resilience as evidenced by the way she resists the attempts by the serial killer. Earlier on in this text, the reader is told Farusja declares that “she would not be another trophy for Dante that was for sure” (p. 42). It is in this light that the reader is told that:

Michael’s sentence finished in a scream as Farusja aimed for his eyes, the fingertips of both her hands digging deep into the soft tissue of his eyeballs mercilessly. With the chains now only on her feet she swiftly got up, shaking unsteadily on long unused feet, ignoring Michael who was writhing on the floor in front of her in agony as she yanked the chain and keys off from around his neck, hobbling across the room as the chains drew themselves through the hop they have been threaded through, freeing herself (Kasanda, 2012, p. 238).

From the passage above, it is apparent that her state of vulnerability as shown by the fact that chains had been used to prevent her escape, Farusja is able to free herself by attacking her captor using her fingers. Significantly, Farusja’s agency is depicted through the actions serves to illustrate the power that enables her to fight against any form of violence. Added to that she also frees Dante by removing the chains that held him a prisoner of his childhood friend, Naks. It is along this line thinking that agency is meant “to show how stories of agency can work with stories of determination.” (Steele, 1997, 108). It is self-determination that permits Farusja not to succumb and become yet another victim of violence. Put precisely, female agency makes it possible for women to challenge their state of victimhood in instances of violence. It is against this backdrop that in the case of women, resistance is “often conceptualised as an exit from the abusive relationship.” (Patterson, 2010, p.1). Thus, women like Farusja, Lizelle, Clare, Tamar, and Dr Helena Kotze who was the pathologist are depicted as empowered as they are able to extricate themselves from the conventional position of womanhood. When contextualised within corporeal feminism, the empowered women take it upon themselves to resist and cope with the violence that marginalises them in the world of the text.

The violence in the primary texts of this study is depicted sexually, physically, emotionally, psychologically or economically. However, it can be argued that in a number of cases the

violence which oftentimes is regarded as sexual can also be inflicted physically and emotionally or psychologically. Physical violence ranks as the most common and most discernible forms of violence which is usually sanctioned by the patriarchal and normative treatment of women as physically weak. Based on the assumed physical weakness of women, girls and boys, violators who are mostly men use their physical strength to perpetrate violence on their bodies. As a result, gender-based violence is considered to be one of the most traumatic forms of violence that women, girls and boys are exposed to. Such violence is oftentimes employed as a way to effect control on women as well as a punitive mechanism for those women are deemed to have strayed from social expectations. This can be contextualised within the novels written by Orford, Kasanda and Schoeman who, through their characters depict how such violence is inflicted, normalised and familiarised on the bodies of the victims. The patriarchal society considers women, girls and boys as deserving the violence they experience at the hands of men. In Orford's and Kasanda's narratives, this form of physical violence goes beyond the battering of women by their lovers, spouses, partners or strangers to murder. In both texts, there are serial killers who target vulnerable members of the society such as woman and homeless boys. The killers seem to justify their actions as some kind of personal vendetta (Naks and Michael in *Dante International*) and a form clean-up operation (Gretchen von Trotha and Janus Renko in *Blood Rose*).

Despite the presence of men who are violators, there are a number of male characters in these texts who can be said to represent the possibilities that men can be redeemed from being perpetrators of violence to the defenders of women who are the victims of violence. Such men include Karamata, Riedwaan and Phiri as well as Piet Mouton who work together with Tamar, Clare Helena Kotze, and Rita Mkhize to find justice for the vulnerable members of the society in *Blood Rose*. In *Dante International*, Detective Miles works hard to find the serial killer responsible for killing women while in a nameless student in *This is not a flowerpot*, helps Lizelle to gain a sense of self-esteem that allows to realise that achievement was a unidirectional notion as suggested by Edward.

In short, Kasanda's *Dante International* depicts a plethora of gender violence which includes sexual violation, sexual harassment, physical abuse, murder, economic, psychological and verbal abuse. Even though most of the women in *Dante International* are victims of gender

violence, Kasanda invest agency in some of her female characters that enables them to be resilient as well as cope with gender violence. On the other hand, *Blood Rose* depicts a series of violence such murder, pornography and sexual harassment and physical assault which are all scripted on the bodies of boys and women. Schoeman's *This is not a flowerpot* delves into forms of violence that can be considered subtle such as emotional and financial abuse as well as marital rape. However, the underlying current that runs through the three texts are women who raise above their condition of victimhood to become agentic and strong female characters who have authority over their bodies and their sexualities. These characters include Clare Hart, from *Blood Rose*, Farusja in *Dante International* as well as Lizelle in *This is not a flowerpot*. Character who choose with whom to be intimate with. Such characters include Roberta who has an open relationship with two men who are all her friends, that is, Dante and Naks. On the other hand, only sleeps with Dante on her own terms. Unlike the women that Dante had slept with before, Farusja proves to be a hard and elusive target for Dante who ends up falling in love with her and dying trying to protect her.

4.3 Depictions of bodies written with violence in the chosen texts

In this section of the chapter, an attempt is made to examine the depictions of bodies written with violence in the *Blood Rose*, *Dante International* and *This is not a flowerpot*. The depictions of violence in these texts do not render the victims immobilised in their victimhood. Instead, the victims demonstrate the capacities to shatter the borderlines that hem bodies within the spectrum of violence. In other words, the victims are imbued with the abilities to disturb the violence that is pockmarked on the bodies.

In Schoeman's *This is not a flowerpot*, Lizelle's body is marked with sexual violation as she is exposed to marital rape perpetrated by her husband, Edward on the night of their marriage. In order to consecrate their union, Edward demands to have sexual intercourse with this wife without her express permission. He believes by marrying Lizelle he has rights over her body including having sex against her will. He heaves himself on his wife, roughly turns her other side as he seeks to forcibly enter her from her behind. In other words, he demands to have Asian sex with her which is euphemism for anal sex despite the fact that Lizelle is not

agreeable to this form of sexual act. In retaliation, Lizelle resists his move which in the process enrages Edward. Moreso, Edward is only interested in satiating his sexual cravings as he does not have a pre-sexual loving making as quest to have Asian sex with her. One can argue that Edward only married Lizelle as a way to have total control of her body in more than one way. Put differently, he perpetrates marital rape which is one of the crimes that remains largely unacknowledged or rarely reported as it is considered unheard of for a married man to rape his spouse within the institution of marriage.

The depictions of bodies written with violence in *Blood Rose* and *Dante International* involved the crime of murder. In both texts, there are serial killers who are responsible for the murder of the victims both women and young boys. In *Dante International*, Naks who turns out to be the serial killer, is a close and childhood friend of Dante who decides to kill every woman who has had an association with Dante. He has a lingering personal vendetta against his friend. On the other hand, in *Blood Rose*, the dark mission of Gretchen and Renko is to rid the streets of the homeless boys which society would not miss as they are an affront to social norms. In *Blood Rose*, surmises that the killings could be an indication of “some kind of a mission killer” (p.140) who was on a cleansing process. Ironically, there is a cleansing department in the town council whose manager, Calvin Goagab is later found to have been part of a smuggling of uranium syndicate as well as working in collusion with the killers.

Orford mentions in passing the signs of a bodily violence as shown by the bruises in characters such as Sylvia and Darlene Ruyters, a teacher at local school as “there was a bracelet of bruises around her [Darlene’s] wrist” (pp.135-36). More so, the narrator says “[t]hose bruises, fingered around a resisting wrist, were fresh, a few days old [especially on a woman who lived alone.” Other cases of physical abuses of women are mentioned in line with the sailors who were known to beat up transactional workers with impunity. One of the deceased boys, Kaiser as Mara tells Clare that: “I only know that Kaiser was with [Van Wyk] and that afterwards he could barely walk” (p.126).

It is interesting to note that in *This is not a flowerpot*, the writer draws attention to the representations of violated bodies within the institution of marriage. Put differently, the

institution of marriage is space that is marked by gender violence which otherwise go unnoticed or simply neglected by society. For instance, the subject of marital rape is one of the topics that Schoeman chooses to focus her attention on in her text. The fact that Lizelle falls pregnant does not reflect that she had consented to the sexual act(s), but tends to reveal the unromantic nature of the sexual act. This is due to the fact that Edward engages violence as a tool to superimpose his sexual power over Lizelle which resonates with some of the definition of marital rape which refers to unwanted sexual acts by a spouse without the consent of the other person. Besides, for him this sexual act is for personal gratification rather than a shared or mutual enjoyment by consenting parties.

Similarly, Dante sleeps with most of his female employees to gratify his sexual needs at the expense of the women who only sleep with him to save their jobs. Even though Dante's actions cannot entirely be defined as rape, they, however, represent sexual harassment. Clearly, both Kasanda and Schoeman depict those incidents that society would rather turn a blind eye to or simply ignore as something inconsequential. In this case the husbands on one hand (Edward and Dick) and the employer on the other (Dante) have elevated positions that give them power over the women who have no voice of their own. However, as demonstrated elsewhere, it is amidst such violence that the two authors create characters who are able to rise above their victimhood status to a point where they are able to contest violence within the work and domestic spaces.

However, in *Blood Rose*, through backstories, Orford reveals the mundanity of violence that women and children have to live with. This shown through the bruises on Sylvia's face which was a result from the beating she received from her boyfriend, Wilhelm who did not want her young brother, Kaiser to stay with them. This is despite the fact that "[Sylvia] tried to look after him when their mother died. How does that work, a child-headed household? Bullshit. There is no household. Those kids just sit there, waiting to be picked off" (135). It is in this context that Orford creates strong characters like Clare and Captain Tamar Damases who heads Walvis Bay police's Sexual Offenses and Murder Unit whose role is to seek justice for the subalterns of the society's such as the murdered street children. Thus, in these novels, there are female characters such as Lizelle, Farusja, Clare and Tamar among others who actively challenge the conventional victimhood status that society ascribes to women

across the racial divide. These women, perhaps, with the exception of Lizelle, seek justice for the victims of violence.

Furthermore, the three novels, *Blood Rose*, *Dante International* and *This is not a flowerpot* graphically capture how bodies are written with violence through the depictions of sexuality of the victims who are mostly women and young boys. In Schoeman's text the subject of female sexuality is centred on the notion of virginity which Edward decides to use to wrench Lizelle's control over her sexuality. This is evidenced by an instance in which Edward remarks thus: "Tell me, Lizelle, how come you're not a virgin?" (p. 32). In her response, Lizelle retorts: "For goodness's sake Edward, I'm twenty-eight, not fifteen, surely you didn't expect me to be a virgin?" (p. 32). Being not a virgin would imply that Lizelle had already had sexual experiences which would make her someone with loose morals thereby devaluing her as an upright woman. However, Edward's virginity is not put under the spotlight because as a man he believes he has a right to engage in sexual adventures. On the other hand, in Kasanda's novel, women's sexuality is important as far as gratifies man's sexual escapades. Most of the women that Dante encounters throw themselves at him with the exception of Farusja who only sleeps with him on her own terms. It is interesting that Roberta who is Dante and Naks' childhood friend, also join the fray of women who sleep with Dante to the extent that there is animosity between her and Farusja when the latter comes under Dante's barometer. This represents instances where sexuality is a weapon that men use to divide and conquer women so that they cannot join their hands and face their common enemy.

In Orford's text, sexuality is used to control women's bodies on one hand, while on the other, it used for assertive purposes by women. The likes of Van Wyk act as a pimp for the vulnerable girls who live through prostitution as he uses his position to demand payment from the transactional workers. On the other hand, Janus Renko entices Gretchen to be part of his killing mission as he had saved her after being thrown into the sea by a Russian sailor. Additionally, Sylvia's boyfriend, Wilhelm, controls to an extent that he orders to chase her brother, Kaiser from the place they were staying. On the other hand, in *Dante International*, Sidney connives with Naks and Michael to abduct Farusja in exchange of some payment despite the fact that the two were friends. In the end, she is killed in a car bomb that was

planted by Naks and later denoted by Michael. Another example of a woman who is controlled by patriarchal norms and values is Lizelle's mother who castigates her daughter as an irresponsible person as she wanted to make her passive and non-questioning whilst her husband, Edward expects her to perform all the house chores even when she is pregnant. Thus, the gendered control structures which are present in the three novels amply depict the violence that exists in gender relationships. Such control shows that children and women are mostly portrayed as victims of violence. It is against this backdrop that violence is said to "extends from individual relationships to the arrangement of power and authority in organisations and institutions" (O'Toole & Schiffman, (1997, p. xii). What should be stressed here is that the violence which is depicted in these texts is encountered in public and private arenas, thereby implying that the violence that women and children are subjected to has reached pandemic levels as wherever they are, women and children are not spared any form of violence.

Though, it has been argued in this thesis that women and children constitute the largest segment of the population that is considered to be the victims of violence, there are instances where some women emerge as perpetrators of violence as much as there are women who are not victims to such violence. In *Blood Rose*, Gretchen defies the conventional conceptions of a serial killer as she is a woman who should be a sufferer of different forms of gender violence. By becoming a serial killer, she deviates from the norm even though she colludes with Renko to kill the boys whom she claims 'were mine.' If Clare had not timeously intervened, she could also have killed Riedwaan, who embodies state authority as he is a police officer. Initially, a sailor had almost killed her by throwing her into the sea but was saved by Renko who became her godfather and taught her how to kill with a gun. Her stripping before the intended execution of Riedwaan symbolises her removal or stripping off of her traditional victimhood status thereby making her free of such an inferior position that patriarchy uses to oppress women by constraining their position to that of passivity, invisibility and powerlessness.

Furthermore, the representation of violence that is written on the bodies of the victims is usually ignored by the victims until it is too late even though the signs were too clear to be dismissed as a none event. In this light, even though, there were signs that Edward was an

abusive man, like the other victims of domestic abuse, Lizelle chooses to ignore the tell-tale signs when she marries him. For instance, Mrs Coetzee who was her mother's friend, forewarns Lizelle not to marry Edward, as she says: "That man's bad news, my dear. Whatever you do, don't make up with him. And for God's sake, don't say you'll marry him. He's not good enough for you." (Schoeman, 2013, p. 21), In another instance, an acquaintance, Andries advises Lizelle that: "Lizelle, I'd be careful if I were you. Whatever you do, don't fall for Edward" (Schoeman, 2013, p. 35). Added to all these warnings, Edward was abusive to girlfriend, Anja whom he left stranded in Amsterdam without caring to let her know that he was leaving without her. What can be gleaned from such behaviour is the way the potential of domestic abuse tends to be dismissive of people like Edward who are controlling with the hope that the abuser will inflict violence on them when they are married to each other. To this end, Women and Population Division et al. (1999, 20) stated that "violence can be considered as any attempt to control, manipulate or demean another individual using physical, emotional or sexual tactics."

Of importance is the fact that in Schoeman's novel violence is also depicted in economic terms. While in the other two texts, violence mostly assumes a physical form, in *This is not a flowerpot* there is some violence that is economic in nature. When Edward obtains a job in Durban, South Africa, he starts abusing his wife in economic terms. There are plenty examples of economic abuses in Schoeman's novel. Unlike Orford and Kasanda's texts, Schoeman delves into the way women suffer economic abuse as depicted by the characterisation of Edward. Despite the fact that his wife works hard to maintain their house, Edward feels her daily chores are what a wife should be seen gladly undertaking. One such routine work is washing the clothes for the family; he refuses to buy her a washing machine to lessen her burden as he says to Lizelle: "My mother never had a washing machine" (Schoeman, 2013, p. 127). Despite this economic abuse, Lizelle's character undergoes a significant transformation. As an illustration of the growth of her character Lizelle moves from being a victim of gender violence to a point where she has the capacity to speak back to her abuser. Her character demonstrates her resilience against the different forms of violence as well as her coping with such violence. Her husband, Edward, physically slanders her by degrading her racial allegiance by saying: "Are all Afrikaners so fucking

stupid?” Lizelle responded by “hitting him between the eyes with the back of [her] hand as hard as [she] could” (Schoeman, pp. 33-34). However, Lizelle learns to answer and speak back against the abuse that defines her marriage to Edward.

4.4 Bodies written with violence resist, become resilient and cope with violence in *Blood Rose*

This part of the chapter focuses on how the three texts selected for this study, that is, *Blood Rose*, *This is not a flowerpot* and *Dante International*, illustrate the way bodies that are replete with violence become resilient and cope with violence. In different ways, the three texts have female characters who climb out of their passivity to a point where they actively regain ownership of their violated bodies. Whilst in *This is not a flowerpot* and *Dante International* the victims are mainly women; in *Blood Rose* it is the boys that are cast as victims of violence.

As mentioned earlier on, in *Blood Rose*, the young homeless boys, Kaiser Apollis, Nicanor Jones, Fritz Woestyn, Lazarus Beukes as well as the volunteer female teacher, Mara Thomson were victims of violence which ended in their demise. These boys are found dead after they have been murdered by a yet unknown killer. The bodies of the young boys are marked with different forms of violence. Put precisely, the diseased images of the bodies of boys are denoted by the fact that prior to their demise, they are forced to engage in prostitution as a means to survive the harshness of street life. In the process, they are exposed to the threat of HIV/AIDS which scripts their bodies with disease. The killers decide to abandon the bodies of the homeless boys in public arenas that include common travelling spots and the local school.

Despite being written with violence, the bodies of the victims are seen as resisting and becoming resilient to and coping with the presence of the violence. In other words, the bodies challenge the violence that is firmly lodged on them by the male violators who are bent on doing their manhood by any other means possible. In *Blood Rose*, the killers, Gretchen and Renko, decide to dump the bodies at the scenes where the victims were killed in the remote desert.

In *Blood Rose*, the omniscient narrator alludes to the “violent secrets encrypted on [the bodies of boys caught, killed, displayed, buried which] turned Tamar’s mind to Dr Clare Hart” (p. 15). As noted elsewhere, the coastal town’s Sexual Violence and Murder Unit is led by Captain Tamar Damases who is also in charge of the team that is tasked to investigate a series of murders of the street boys. In this text, for example, Clare thinks that the bodies of the dead homeless boys bore the evidence of the intimate death. Clare tells Riedwaan that ““All the boys are small for their ages, feminine looking. They were shot at such close range. There is a kind of intimacy to that. I suppose, a complete absence of empathy and a need of total control. I think the killer needs his victims to witness what is being done to them. They have to watch you as you kill them”” (p. 139). Though the victims in *Blood Rose*, are the boys, it does not diminish the vulnerability that bodies encountered due to various forms of violence that the subalterns of the society such as women, girls and boys. Mara, a young volunteer also falls the victims of murder just like the street children.

In Orford’s text, though dead bodies do not speak, it is Clare’s occupation to unlock the signs that are written on the bodies of the victims. Far from being nameless or inconsequential, the bodies of the street boys are brought to the limelight as they help identify the killer. This is captured by the fact the bodies of the boys are not simply marked with violence, but are entities that bear names such as Kaiser Apollis, Nicanor Jones, Fritz Woestyn and Lazarus Beukes and the female teacher, Mara Thomson. Whilst in their lives, the boys are discarded by the mainstream society, in death they attract much attention that leads to an investigation that includes Clare Hart, a female investigator from South Africa who is later joined by her lover and partner, Captain Faizal from the South African police. In fact, Tmar tells Clare that: “Gender-based violence is the government’s flavour of the month” (p.46) and “dead boys don’t attract many tourists’ (p.47). This explains the fervent attention and the involving of the town mayor, D’Almeida and his manager for cleansing, Calvin Goagab.

It is interesting to note that in *Blood Rose*, politics as a terrain is marked by uneven-ness that contributes to the increasing numbers of street children in Namibia particularly in Walvis Bay. As attested by two female teachers at the school where the third body of the boy was found, politics has turned good children into society’s menace. As a public relations

exercise, the mayor of the town, D'Almeida, invites Clare to his office ostensibly to offer moral and material or whatever support Clare may need in conducting the investigation into the murders which were not good for business. Orford's story is set in the context of a country that is facing an economic blizzard due to the over fishing that led to shutting the fishing industries. Orford writes:

Two years ago, the factories perched like hungry cormorants around the harbour had gorged on the bulging catches. Clare had filmed vessel after vessel offloading their silver harvests. Namibia's suited elite, circling like sharks, had allocated ever-bigger quotas to themselves, buying farms and BMWs hand over profligate fist, ignoring the scientists and their warnings. Now the fish had all but vanished and an eerie lassitude pervaded the town. The bounty that had followed the retreat of the South African army, itself leaving a gaping hole in the town's coffers, was gone. (2007, p.44).

From the passage above, what emerge here are the historical conditions that are partly to blame for creating conditions that where deadly diseases like AIDS/HIV virus that lead to the increase in orphans and street children. It is these street children who fall prey to sexual predators and criminals. In essence the boys end up contracting the disease. Their diseased images of the boys are reflective of the damaged conditions of Walvis Bay. Walvis Bay becomes a place where the murdered boys are discovered with their bodies displayed in open places.

In *Blood Rose*, the dead victims speak to Hart through their earthly remains. This is shown by an incident when Hart, accompanied by Tamar, visited the sister of Kaiser, one of the deceased boys where she asks to see some of the boy's things. She finds the pyjamas of Kaiser Apollis which she tries to use in order to understand and have a feeling of the boy's last life moments. The incident that transpired is aptly described as follows: Orford describes Hart's experience of finding, one of the murdered boys:

The faded Superman [sic] pyjamas brought her up short with the realisation of how recently the dead boy had been a child. She slipped her fingers inside the frayed blue cuffs. His skinny wrists and ankles would have protruded from them as he grew into his malnourished and delayed adolescence. She picked up the top and held it to her nose, breathing in the lingering, wood-smoky smell of him (2007, p.82).

The above citation Clare is able to decipher the signs that are emitted by dead bodies through tracing their life moments such as interacting with the clothes of Kaiser, one of the deceased boys. It is through deciphering the bodies of the dead boys that Clare would be able to profile the killer. Her work as crime profiler allows Clare to assume the maternal position which enables her to place herself in the position of Kaiser by using her torn pyjamas.

In *Blood Rose*, for instance, like Farusja who rescues Dante, the man she has come to love, Clare also rescue Riedwaan who she is in love with, she employs violence as evidenced by the instance she shoots Gretchen who is known as Der Blaue Engel or Blue Engel. Gretchen had stripped naked as she usually did at the strip club where she was a pole dancer, in order to execute Riedwaan. Clare shoots Gretchen on her shoulder so as to stop her from killing Riedwaan, who is tied to a tree floor with a gun pointed to his head. Gretchen was ready to fire as her “knees parted and bent just a fraction” but “[b]efore [Clare’s] mind had a chance to even register, she fired” (p.342). In this text, the notion of female agency is manifest in the presence of strong female characters such as Clare who is in a position where she is able to defend herself as she keeps fit through physical exercises such as running.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings of violence encrypted on bodies using Orford’s *Blood Rose*, Schoeman’s *This is not a flowerpot* and *Dante International* by Kasanda. These novels using various plots, themes, side stories and characters clearly demonstrated the violence that victims such women, girls and boys have to endure as part of their experience. Among the different forms of gender violence as portrayed in this chapter which include psychological, emotional, physical, economic and emotional abuse as well as sexual harassment. The next chapter provides a discussion of the summary of findings, conclusions of the study. recommendations and suggests areas for further studies.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The main aim of this research was to explore how bodies written with violence resist and cope with violence. As a result, this chapter provides a conclusion to the study, a summary of the findings that were obtained from Orford's *Blood Rose* (2009), Kasanda's *Dante International* (2012) and Schoeman's *This is not a flowerpot* (2013). The study sought to address the following objectives:

- To identify the nature of the violence inflicted on women's bodies within the given texts;
- To examine the depictions of bodies written with violence in the chosen texts; and
- To explore how bodies written with violence resist, become resilient and cope with violence in the focal texts.

The study employed corporeal feminism as an overarching theoretical framework because of its concerns with among other issues the woman's body or corporeal. As such, this chapter delves into the summary of the findings and the conclusions that were made based on the research findings. Additionally, the chapter discussed the recommendations that ensued from the findings of the study.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.2.1 The nature of the violence inflicted on women's bodies

The first research objective raised by this study was to identify the nature of the violence inflicted on women's bodies within the given texts. This study has demonstrated that Namibian literary corpus written by women provide literary representations of bodies that bear signs of violence which explains the need to study in Namibian literature in English. This study showed that women are capable of addressing age-long, yet persistent issues such as gendered violence with an African and European settings for their stories. The three

texts depicted the nature of violence that is written on the bodies of the victims, namely; murder, sexual abuse, harassment and violation as well as emotional, psychological and economic violation.

In *Blood Rose*, the nature of violence written on the bodies of the victims is mostly in form murder as exemplified by the discovery of bodies that are dumped in different parts of Walvis Bay. The writers also invest some of their female characters with agency to enable them resist and cope with violence in *Blood Rose* (2009), *Dante International* (2012) and *This is not a flowerpot* (2013). The overarching themes that emerged from the three texts are hinged on representation of the body which seemed to be forming a conversation of the subject of violence. This is in line with the contention by literal and figurative bodies that are usually treated and written in similar ways, as well as fluxed and swapped in discourse (Van Heerden 2015, p.31). Thus, writing about the nature of bodies of victims would be incomplete without the involvement of female writers who usually form the largest constituency of those considered to be the traditional victims of gender violence. The novels; *Blood Rose*, *Dante International* and *This is not a flowerpot* have characters who are the victimisers and victims as well as victim-turned-victimiser who use violence to deal with their experiences of violence. In turn, the findings reveal that the notion of victim and victimiser are in a state of flux.

Significantly, in this study the notion of “bodies written with violence” had three related meanings which all help to unpack the way violence is scripted on women’s bodies. Firstly, the term is in reference to the scars and bruises, physical and emotional that are described by the writers as a form inflicting violence on women’s bodies. Secondly, the term refers to how corporeal inscriptions should be read as literally symbols that need to be deciphered to reveal resistance, resilience and coping strategies of women and children who are abused. Lastly, the terms mean that the authors in the respective narrations depict instances and contexts which reveal sociological violence which expose women victimhood in gender-based violence. These senses of “bodies written with violence” were used in this study to underscore the magnitude of violence that is often borne by women’s bodies. As such, these various understandings of “bodies written with violence” reinforce each other in the argument raised in this study. As shown in this study, *This is not a flowerpot* is a text that mainly focuses on the intimate violence that prevails in the domestic arena which is mostly emotional, psychological and involves sexual abuse. This is how the victim’s body is said to be

inflicted with violence. On the other hand, in both *Blood Rose* and *Dante International* bodies are scripted with violence physically, sexually and emotionally. In *Blood Rose*, women are physically abused through beatings and children are murdered whilst in *Dante International*, women are killed, sexually harassed and mentally abused. It is against such a backdrop that three senses of “bodies written with violence” was employed to reinforce the contention raised in this study.

5.2.2 Depictions of bodies written with violence

The second objective that this study addressed was to examine the depictions of bodies written with violence in the chosen texts. It is Ogbeide who argues women are usually the victims of spousal abuse which male writers tend to down play. This notion of spousal abuse emerged in the discussion of *Dante International* and *This is not a flowerpot* and to a certain extent, in *Blood Rose*. The reason that explains the omission of spousal abuse in works by men emanates from the patriarchal structures that condone and entrench violence of women’ bodies. This resonates with the view that detrimental cultural practices and beliefs that are manifest in the disrespecting, devaluing, suppression of human dignity (Andima & Tjiramanga 2014). One of the crucial emerging themes in the texts was infliction of violence on stereotypical bodies of victims as demonstrated by the primary texts that formed part of this study. This was indicated the women and young boys who were murdered, sexually harassed or emotionally violated by culprits who were mostly men.

However, a departure from the stereotypical victimiser, *Blood Rose* presented a female killer thereby deviating from the societal norm on the gender of the killer. A woman that kill is topic that has oftentimes been omitted from the discourse of gender violence unless if that woman kills in self-defence. In other words, traditionally women are not seen a capable of inflicting violence on a body, but in *Blood Rose*, a woman kills as part of a two-person team which is a subversion of metanarratives of gender violence. Therefore, violence that is inflicted on victims’ bodies lead to the senseless killing of children and women by psychopaths who believed they and cleansing mission to perform for the benefit of the society. To this end, De Silva (2012, p.2) argues that the female body a “foil for [a] self in the face of physical pain and psychological distress”. The researcher concurs with this contention since the findings of *Blood Rose* and *Dante International* reveal how the bodies

are depicted with violence that comes a result of murder committed by serial killers. In summation, out of the three texts studied, two of the (*Blood Rose*, and *Dante International*) portray both dead and living bodies that are inflicted with violence. The researcher concluded that *Blood Rose*, *Dante International* and *This is not flowerpot* graphical depict bodies that show signs violence.

5.2.3 How bodies written with violence resist, become resilient and cope with violence in the focal texts

The last objective of this study was to explore how bodies written with violence resist, become resilient and cope with violence in the focal texts. The researcher engaged this objective in order to focus on the bodily resistance and coping with the violence they encounter as part of the lived experience. What emerged from the findings of this study is that Orford, Kasanda and Schoeman equipped their agency that allows the bodies have the capacity to resist, being resilient to and coping with violence. This was imaginably the case because of the way the protagonists are able to deal with violence is written on the bodies of the majority of the victims. Although, Schoeman depict her main character as victim of emotional, psychological and marital rape, the character undergoes some transformation that enables her to confront the violence she had to face in her marriage and finally breaking free from her toxic marriage. It is in this context that Walker, Ashby, Gredecki and Tarpey (2017, pg20) argue that the violence that is conducted by women is usually seen in the light of victimisation and self-defence as a response to incitement by abusive men.

The notion of female agency emerges prominently in *Blood Rose* (2013), *Dante International* and *This is not a flowerpot* as shown through bodily resistance, coping way and resiliency. On this note Murray (2017a, p.23) pointed out that literary texts provide creative spaces where gender violence be can resisted and opposed. The researcher concluded that three novels capture the different facets of agency that shown through the notions of resistance, resiliency and coping ways as presented in each of the primary texts that were discussed in study. Also, the researcher concluded that Orford, Kasanda and Schoeman's novels echoes Mantymaki's (2013, p.442) view that the acknowledgement and celebration of female agency and subjectivity which are traditionally denied to women within the fictional and

real worlds are central to feminist perspective. In summary, *Blood Rose*, *Dante International* and *This is not a flowerpot* depict how female agency challenges violence that is written the bodies of the victims.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it emerged that the victim's body is central to the question of violence that women, girls and boys have to endured as part of their lived experience. As such, the researcher proposed the following areas as requiring further investigation:

- Further research needs to be conducted into the subject of bodies written with violence using texts written by Namibian male writer so as to establish the ubiquity bodies that are marked with violence in the Namibian literary corpus.
- The three texts used in this study showed that violence against women, girls and boys was an important theme. As a result, there is need for a comprehensive exploration how the bodies written violence can resist such violence by turning the violence against the victimisers.
- An examination of violence written on bodies can be further discussed using a comparative approach of male and female written Namibian texts.

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