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## **ABSTRACT AND STRUCTURE**

The central problem investigated in this thesis is the role culture and church play in promoting gender inequality and prostitution. In doing this, the study has analyzed field data from Chalinze village in Tanzania. The thesis comprises six chapters. Chapter one has offered a general introduction of the study. It has explained the research problem. It has also delineated the key research questions, as well as the objectives and relevance of the study. The chapter also has discussed the methodological approach and theoretical framework. Chapter two describes the social context in which the problem of prostitution is investigated. This involves reflection on rituals and beliefs among the villagers. The chapter narrates and analyses how the teachings and practices in initiation rituals might be contributing to prostitution in Chalinze community.

Chapter three discusses local perspectives on prostitution, and the way local people handle the problem of prostitution. In doing so, the chapter explores how traditional doctors are important figures in the issue of prostitution. Chapter four focuses on views from church leaders about prostitution. In chapter five, different feminist notions on prostitution are discussed and related to Chalinze context. The chapter also discusses viable solutions for dealing with the problem of prostitution in Chalinze. The conclusion in chapter six summarizes what lessons have been learnt.

## ABBREVIATIONS

The following are the full meaning of the abbreviation used in the thesis.

COYOTE Call Off Your Tired Ethics.

ELCT-MGD Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, Morogoro Diocese

HIV/AIDS Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

n.p no page

STD Sexually Transmitted Disease

TACAIDS Tanzania Commission for AIDS

TAMWA Tanzania Media Women's Association

TANERELA Tanzania Network of Religious Leaders Living With or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS

TGNP Tanzania Gender Networking Program

USAID United States Agency for International Development

# CONTENT

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**ABSTRACT AND STRUCTURE**

**ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1	RESEARCH PROBLEM	7
	Encounter with Sikitu, a Prostitute	8
1.2	PRESEARCH BACKGROUND	10
1.3	AIMS AND RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY	14
1.4	AREA OF STUDY: CHALINZE	15
1.5	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	17
1.5.1	METHODS	17
1.5.2	FIELDWORK	18
1.5.3	ETHICAL CONSIDERATION	20
1.6	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	21
<b>2</b>	<b>SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT AND PROSTITUTION IN CHALINZE</b>	<b>25</b>
2.1	MALE DOMINANCE IN THE MATRILINEAL SOCIETY	25
2.2	SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION OF WOMEN OF CHALINZE	26
2.3	RELIGIONS, BELIEF AND RITUALS IN CHALINZE COMMUNITY	28
2.3.1	WOMEN IN CHURCH	28
2.3.2	RITUALS AND BELIEFS	29
	Girls' Initiation Rite in Chalinze	30
	Effects of Girls' Initiation Rite	33

2.4	IMAGE OF A WOMAN IN CHALINZE COMMUNITY .....	36
	Son Preference in Chalinze and its Effects .....	36
2.5	GENDER RELATIONS IN CHALINZE COMMUNITY .....	37
	Blocked Opportunities to Women .....	39
2.6	MORAL EXPECTATIONS OF WOMEN .....	41
2.7	SUMMARY .....	42
<b>3</b>	<b>PROSTITUTION IN CHALINZE: TRADITIONAL UNDERSTANDING AND DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM .....</b>	<b>43</b>
3.1	POVERTY, PROSTITUTION AND TRADITIONAL DOCTORS .....	43
3.1.1	PROSTITUTION AND THE ANCESTORS .....	43
3.1.2	POVERTY AND TRADITIONAL DOCTORS .....	44
	Traditional Doctors' conditions:.....	46
	Appeasing the Ancestors .....	46
	Demanding Sexual Intercourse .....	46
3.2	TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF PROSTITUTION .....	49
	Traditional Doctors and Women in Chalinze .....	50
3.3	CRUEL ACTS AGAINST WOMEN AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO PROSTITUTION .....	51
3.3.1	RAPING AND SEXUAL ABUSE .....	51
3.3.2	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE .....	53
3.3.3	UNDERPAID AND SEXUAL ABUSED JOBS .....	54
3.3.4	CHILDLESS IN MARRIAGE .....	54
3.4	THE STRUGGLES OF PROSTITUTES IN THE UNCERTAIN ENVIRONMENTS.....	55
3.5	SUMMARY .....	57
<b>4</b>	<b>CHURCH UNDERSTANDING OF PROSTITUTION.....</b>	<b>58</b>
4.1	RELIGION AND PATRIARCH .....	58

4.2	INTERPRETATION OF BIBLICAL TEXTS .....	59
4.3	OBEDIENCE TO CHURCH AUTHORITY .....	60
	Woman’s Moral Expectation in Church .....	64
4.4	CHURCH ANDPROSTITUTION .....	64
4.4.1	PERCEPTION .....	64
4.4.2	CHURCH DISCIPLINE .....	66
4.4.3	CHURCH-PROSTITUTES RELATIONS.....	67
4.5	INJUSTICE FROM CHURCH .....	69
4.6	SUMMARY .....	70
<b>5.</b>	<b>LIBERATING PROSTITUTES: A CONTEXTUAL FEMINIST APPROACH .....</b>	<b>72</b>
5.1.	PROSTITUTION AS AN ASPECT OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION.....	72
5.2.	LOOKING PROSTITUTION IN THE LIGHT OF FEMINIST THEORIES: CHALLENGES AND CONTRIBUTIONS .....	74
5.2.1	FEMINISTS ON PROSTITUTION .....	75
5.2.2	AFRICAN FEMINIST ON UNJUST SOCIAL STRUCTURES .....	76
5.2.3	TANZANIAN WOMEN ORGANISATIONS’ PLEA TO AMBIGUOUS TRADITIONS .....	78
5.3	CONTEXTUAL FEMINIST APPROACH ON HANDLING AND DEALING WITH PROSTITUTION .....	79
5.3.1	EMPOWERING RITUALS .....	80
5.3.2	ARGUMENTS FROM PROSTITUTTES IN CHALINZE .....	84
5.4	SUMMARY .....	85
<b>6.</b>	<b>CONCLUSION: LESSONS FROM THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>86</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>91</b>
	<b>LIST OF INFORMANTS .....</b>	<b>98</b>

## CHAPTER 1

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM

This thesis is a study of prostitution in relation to culture and religion in the Chalinze village in Tanzania. I attempt to explore what compels women into prostitution by critically addressing gender inequality and how prostitution is intertwined with social structures and the socio economic situation of people in the village. The focus is primarily on cultural and church<sup>1</sup> practices towards gender inequality. I also ask how prostitution is perceived and handled by traditional doctors<sup>2</sup> and Christians alike, and how the society and church contribute to prostitution.

My interest in researching this topic grew in 2006 when I was sent to work in Chalinze Centre with a group of four young men for two weeks on a Bible translation project. Since the village was 10km from my home village and we were required to work up to 8.00pm, and since there was no ready transport to take me home every day, I had to stay at one of the Centre's guesthouses. In the first week of my stay, I did not see any other guests, apart from my four working mates. My amazement made me ask a young female receptionist if they were making any profit of the guesthouse. She laughed and invited me to come to the reception after 11pm to see how the guesthouse makes profits. In the following night, I stayed at the reception as suggested. Yes, I saw how the guesthouse made profits. From around 11pm to 12 mid night, many people came, and they were in pairs i.e., a man and a woman. It did not take long until the guesthouse was full.

I learnt from the receptionist that the guests leave very early (sometimes before 5am). She informed me that most of the men who were spending half of the night in the guest house are truck drivers. They stay the night at the Centre before continuing their journey in the following morning. The women, on the other hand, are said to be prostitutes who look for whoever wants to have them for sex. On the subsequent night, I found out that some of the streets were regarded as market place for prostitutes. Women seen around those areas late at night are suspected to be prostitutes. Thus, if a woman is seen alone, the first question

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<sup>1</sup> Unless it is stated otherwise, church in this thesis refers to the Lutheran church in Chalinze.

<sup>2</sup> Traditional doctors in this thesis refers to African Traditional doctors.

she gets from men is, “Have you got a customer already?” On other streets, women stand along the road and keep running after private cars and the drivers choose a woman they want.

I developed an interest in the problem of prostitution because the national statistics on HIV/AIDS shows that Chalinze is among ten areas in Tanzania that leads on HIV/AIDS and prostitution (TANERELA’s Report, 2007:n.p). I pondered over several questions: Why do women prostitute themselves? The high infection of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD’s), including AIDS in the area could be enough to bring about a change in behaviour. But regardless of such alarming facts, some women continue to choose prostitution. Why do they commence and then continue with risky behaviour where having sex can indeed result in terrible suffering and ultimately in premature deaths? I also thought of moral prescriptions and values in the society and in the church in terms of prostitution. The values are very clear that people should not be engaged in such acts. However, the behaviour of prostitutes does not reflect these values. Why do they ignore these prescriptions and the values of the society and of their pastors? Are there existent Christian sexual ethics adequate and sufficient to give them a moral grounding to cope with contemporary choices, issues and problems? These questions brought me to question their participation in sex trade as truly free and celebratory, and to rather look at their practices as possibly framed by male power, authority and dominance.

These preliminary questions moved me to explore and research the life situation of women, and particular prostitutes in the village of Chalinze.

### **ENCOUNTER WITH SIKITU, A PROSTITUTE**

In order to research women’s lives in Chalinze, I conducted fieldwork and had the opportunity to meet Sikitu,<sup>3</sup> a 28-year old woman. After some days of establishing a friendship with her, I requested if I could visit her in her home. In private, Sikitu explained that her father declined to enrol her in secondary school, although she had done well with the prerequisite primary school examinations. Instead, her father and her two uncles betrothed her to be married to an old man of a certain clan.<sup>4</sup> Sikitu pleaded with her father and uncles that if they wanted her to marry a man from the particular clan,<sup>5</sup> she wanted at least to marry one of

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<sup>3</sup> Names which have been used in this thesis are not real names for ethical reasons.

<sup>4</sup> Usually fathers choose men to marry their daughters, based on friendship with the man or his richness. In Chalinze, uncles are highly involved in choosing a husband for their sisters’ daughters. This will be explained more in chapter three.

<sup>5</sup> Sometimes a girl is told to marry from a certain clan depending on the hard work of the people of that clan, absence of inheritance diseases, etc.

the old man's sons. This was refused. She was so unhappy that she ran away from home, and hid herself in the forest. She felt it was better for her to be killed by the wild animals, rather than to be married to the proposed old man. However, her father and uncles hired some young men to search for her. When they got her, they seized her and took her to the old man and she consequently got married with him. During twelve years of marriage, Sikitu bore 4 children, all girls. Her husband was discontent and divorced her chiefly because she gave birth to girls only.<sup>6</sup> She was abandoned with her four children, aged 12, 9, 7, and 5 years.

Sikitu is not educated and lacks employment skills. She owns neither a land nor property, because she did not inherit anything from her father. Only her brothers were given land and other properties.<sup>7</sup> Neither did she get money from her husband nor the properties she contributed before she was divorced,<sup>8</sup> she does not have any capital to run even a small business for her own and her children's living. The only thing she was left with is her children. According to Sikitu, she was not ready to see her children dying of hunger. So she decided to use the last alternative she had for saving her life and that of her children: to 'sell herself.' She became a prostitute to give a better life and the possibility of education to her four children. For her, education would certainly change the situation for her children. However, the money she got from her prostitution business was only enough for food, rent of one small single room, and buying a few clothes. She could not even pay for secondary school education for her first born child when she completed the free compulsory basic education.

When I asked her about the risk of being infected with the STD's, including HIV/AIDS, Sikitu said:

I understand, and I am aware of the risk of being infected by HIV and other STD's. But what can I do? I know, if I get HIV, at least I shall continue to take care of my children for a few years before I become too weak to help them. I believe, by the time when I will not be able to take care of them, they will already be in a position of taking care of themselves. But if I do not do this job now, how can I feed them? How can we survive? It is a question of choosing the lesser evil.

Sikitu, who once was a Lutheran Christian, stopped from going to church after her local church elders reported her as a prostitute. She is now put under church discipline and will be so until she is able 'to live a Christian life once again'.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Son preference is one of gender inequality elements in Chalinze. This and its effects will be explained in chapter four.

<sup>7</sup> In Chalinze, women are 'not worthy' to inherit properties. This will be explained in chapter four.

<sup>8</sup> Women do not get anything when divorce happens, regardless of their contribution. I will elaborate it more in chapter four.

<sup>9</sup> This case will be referred now and analysed in the following chapters.

Sikitu's seems to be typical in Chalinze. It also reflects the situation of young women who opt to be involved in prostitution as their last alternative for survival. Looking into this case, one can notice how prostitution, poverty and violence against women in Chalinze are intertwined. The case also leads to the question of how gender inequality in Chalinze is treated in society and church. As I am looking into the question of prostitution in Chalinze, I also want to consider on social structures, how these produce gender inequality in Chalinze, and how this again can contribute to prostitution. Thus, my research questions which have been the pillar of this research are:

1. Why is a large group of women and girls in Chalinze engaged in prostitution?
2. How is prostitution related to gender inequality and how is gender inequality reproduced?
3. How do cultural and church practices contribute to prostitution?
4. How is prostitution an implicit critique of church and what is the church's response to this critique?

## **1.2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND**

I am writing about prostitution in relation to culture and religion in Chalinze village in Tanzania. In so doing, I will briefly summarize some of the research literatures on prostitution, both in relation to religion and broader.

Writing for the "The Challenges of Prostitution and Female Trafficking in Africa", Ademola Fayemi defines prostitution as "the act of having sex for money" (Fayemi, 2009:202). In the book, "Women and Prostitution, A Social History," Vern Bullough and Bullough Bonnie explains that one of the earliest researchers on prostitution was William Sanger, who did his research in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the Victoria period.<sup>10</sup> Sanger examined the identity of the average prostitute and sought to understand why a prostitute had turned to that lifestyle. He found that the majority of prostitutes were in their late teens or early twenties; they were usually illiterate, poor and from broken families (Bullough and Bullough, 1987:243). Poverty, societal disgraced, and lack of education were among the causes of prostitution. Sanger also noted that some prostitutes had either been expelled from their homes or deserted by their parents and found prostitution as a way to support themselves. Others went into prostitution so their that families might survive. Similarly, many girls who were engaged in domestic work or as servants were forced into prostitution after they had been seduced by their masters and then abandoned (Bullough and Bullough, 1987:243).

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<sup>10</sup> Victoria period is 1837–1901.

Although Sanger's research referred to prostitution in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the reasons listed to explain prostitution do not differ much from the reasons for prostitution in the contemporary period. Graham Scambler and Annette Scambler in the book titled "Rethinking Prostitution, Purchasing Sex in the 1990's" explain that in many countries reasons for prostitution have been associated with poverty, emotional neediness and susceptibility to pressure from friends (Scambler and Scambler, 1997:7). Moreover, prostitution is seen by contemporary society as a crime against morality (Scambler and Scambler, 1997:7). Stereotypically, women working as prostitutes are perceived as bad, disregarding norms of acceptable behaviour, suffering the 'whore' label, and 'increasingly criminalized by the state' (Scambler and Scambler, 1997:3).

Other scholars perceive prostitution as a human right; the right of a woman to do what she wants with her body. In the article, *Prostitution as Violence against Women: NGO Stonewalling in Beijing and Elsewhere*, Janice G. Raymond, a feminist activist against violence against women and sexual exploitation explains this perspective, and call attention to types of prostitution which may be not necessarily be regarded as human rights' violation. The philosophy that some types of prostitution is a human right were advanced in Beijing and in other international women's forums. Distinctions are drawn between forced and free prostitution, adult and child prostitution, and between prostitution and trafficking. These distinctions are used to make some forms of prostitution acceptable and legitimate, trying to revise the harm that is done to women in prostitution into a consenting act and exclude prostitution from the category of violence against women. Based on this move, many Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are working for women's rights to better their conditions in prostitution instead of helping them out of it (Raymond, 1998:1-9). Such NGO groups talk about women's empowerment in prostitution and primarily teach women how to perform better as prostitutes, how to negotiate with customers, and how to get men to use condoms and make it part of having sex. They do not offer women a way out because they believe that prostitution is women's choice (Raymond, 1998:1-9). There are, however, other perspectives on prostitution. Sarah Bromberg perceives prostitution as a "darkened world of sex, abuse and violence" (Bromberg, 1997:n.p). This conceptual position converges with that of Kathleen Barry, who perceives prostitution as violent, thankless, and grim occupation that degrades not only the prostitutes themselves but the whole feminine gender (Barry, 1995:30).

In Africa, a lot of research which touches on prostitution has been done in connection to STDs, including HIV/AIDS. Luiz and Roets (2000), for example, have written an article on Prostitution, STDs and the Law in South Africa. Their research attempted to provide an overview of the workings and nature of the sex market. It focuses on the attitudes and practices of prostitutes regarding STDs. Similarly, Ademola Fayemi's recent research focused on prostitution and African ethics. Her findings do not justify prostitution and female trafficking ethically (Fayemi, 2009:200). She underscores African communal social ethics and classifies behaviours into degenerative and generative. The practices of prostitution and women trafficking are reflective degeneration of values and attitudes, capable of disintegrating the communal bond. Prostitutes and their clients are looked down on with cultural and moral repugnance (Fayemi, 2009:209). Fayemi confirms that the question of regularizing, legalizing or decriminalizing does not arise at all because prostitution never has been regarded ethically justifiable. For her, making prostitution legal will allow the act rather than ignored. She then argues that prostitution cannot be made safer or a little bit better by legalizing or decriminalizing it, concluding that prostitution is particularly vicious institution of inequality of the sexes (Fayemi, 2009:210).

In Tanzania not much research has been done on the question of prostitution. One important research has been done by Female Magazine (FEMA), which also educate young Tanzanians on sexual health. In response to the findings of its research, FEMA (2007, n.p) has started some television programs about sexual education, teaching young people safe sex and how to avoid unexpected pregnancies. FEMA uses edutainment<sup>11</sup> sexual health magazine for young people in Swahili and English, and sexual health information initiative organisations are funded by the Swedish, Danish and Norwegian governments. Other funds are from USAID<sup>12</sup> and TACAIDS<sup>13</sup> organisations.

In the African religious domain, what has been explored about prostitution is not very different from what other scholars have explored in other domains. Bernadette Mbuy Beya in *Human Sexuality, Marriage and Prostitution* portrays how prostitutes are highly humiliated. As many other researchers on prostitution, Beya also explains the major reason for prostitution to be poverty (Oduyoye and Kanyoro, 1992:169). In the same way, the research carried out by Dorcas Akintunde revealed that African women prostitutes do not have power to negotiate for safe sex with their customers. This is due to the immediate need for money to

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<sup>11</sup> They use this term to mean education through entertainment, such as drama, and hip hop music.

<sup>12</sup> United States Agency for International Development.

<sup>13</sup> Tanzania Commission for AIDS.

cater for basic needs for themselves and their families. As a result, they are treated like objects because the services they offer to their customers are paid for (Phiri et al, 2003:108).

From the above review, why prostitution persists in Chalinze village appears not to have become imperative in previous research. In Chalinze, many people in the religion the domain and in non religion domains have been interested in doing research on other topics. To mention a few which relate to gender inequality in the society, Esther Ngomuo has done research on violence against women, basing it on the exclusion of women from the church leadership. Her main arguments are that the patriarchal system in the society has affected the church as well, so that women in church are not given equal position and opportunities as men (Ngomuo, 2002).<sup>14</sup> In the same way, Niiteeli Panga has also done her Bachelor of Divinity research on children's rights, and she has emphasised children as the 'tomorrow's nation', so, they should be given opportunity to have access to good education. Access to quality education will lead to their good future both individually and corporally (Panga, 2003). Furthermore, Himili Kimweri has researched marginalised groups and dealt with the rights of children and widows in Dar es Salaam, a neighbouring community to Chalinze. Kimweri's main critique to the Dar es Salaam community is that they need to improve social structures to not have any kind of inequality that violates the rights of these groups (Kimweri, 2008).

Apart from research mentioned above, there have been some efforts of women's organisations trying to combat violence against women and children, especially girls. Nevertheless, the situation does not seem to be improved for these marginalised groups in terms of getting equal rights compared to other groups in the society.

On the other hand, none of the research has dealt with prostitution and prostitutes in Chalinze, looking at the forces that compel these young women to get into prostitution. It appears that prostitutes are not recognised as one of the marginalised groups, or that circumstances push them into the practice. In other words, although people recognise the connection between prostitution, violence against women and poverty, it seems that no efforts have been taken to find a solution to the situation. On the contrary, prostitutes have been condemned in society as people who bring curse into the society because of their immoral behaviours, which does not please God. In their religions, they have also been rebuked and judged as the biggest sinners in the community.

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<sup>14</sup> I have not cited pages in Ngomuo, Panga, and Kimweri's works because here I have tried to write the themes of their works, not citing a page(s).

In the research literature on prostitution summarised in the above, poverty is pointed out as the major reason for prostitution. My interest is not only to look at poverty as a reason for prostitution in Chalinze, but also at structures in the society which produce poverty to women, and thus make them vulnerable to prostitution. My interest is also in explaining what the church does on the existing prostitution situation. Also, despite that the previous research has offered little on my key research questions, my analysis draws upon scholarship on prostitution and upon African scholars who have researched and written on gender inequalities in the African context.

### **1.3 AIMS AND RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY**

The thesis project was aimed at:

1. Contribute new knowledge about prostitution when it comes to the role of women in church and society.
2. Deepen the understanding of the problem of gender inequality in Chalinze and how gender inequality contribute to producing prostitution
3. Give a critical account of how the church is dealing with prostitution.

Moreover, I seek in this MPhil thesis to explain some of the socio economic contexts and life circumstances that tend to lead women into prostitution in Chalinze.

I propose to investigate how gender inequalities are embedded in cultural and religious practices in Chalinze, and how they contribute to prostitution. However, the study is not merely a critique against culture and the church. Rather, it is also an examination of the potential of existing elements in the culture and church which may be reinterpreted and used to enhance women's dignity in Chalinze.

The study is also a response to the statement made by the Lutheran World Federation's Committee on the Rights of the Child. This Committee stated specifically to Tanzania that preventive measures of violence against women are inadequate and weakened by the lack of research on the causes and extent of sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography and child sex tourism. The Committee recommended that the state strengthens its preventive measures, including research at regional and local levels, aimed at addressing the root causes, such as poverty and some cultural practices which contribute to the

vulnerability of children to prostitution, pornography and sex tourism (LWF, 2008:1-4). My research is a contribution to this need.

#### **1.4 AREA OF STUDY: CHALINZE**

Chalinze is situated at the coastal zone of Tanzania, in Bagamoyo district in the Coastal region, close to Dar es Salaam (106km east-southeast), the most famous business city in Tanzania (formerly capital city of Tanzania). Other towns close to Chalinze are Morogoro (80km west-southwest), and Zanzibar (106km east-northeast). Chalinze centre is at the junction of highways to the Southern part of Tanzania, the Northern part, and Dar es Salaam. It is located at -6.6 (latitude in decimal degrees), 38.35 (longitude in decimal degrees). The average elevation of Chalinze is 157 meters. It has a population of 34,400 people, according to the Geo Names geographical database (Population of Tanzania, 2011:n.p).

The natives of Chalinze are Wang'hwele. Basically, the Chalinze tribe, Wang'hwele is matrilineal.<sup>15</sup> Men and women of Chalinze are intermarrying with people from other villages, and even from other regions of Tanzania. The field data noted that women in Chalinze feel that being married is being safe. One of the reasons is that if a woman is not married the society perceives her as a prostitute.

People of Chalinze are worshipping within different religions, including Christian, Muslim, and in Traditional Religions (ATR). There are several churches, including one large Lutheran church, one large Roman Catholic Church, and three small Pentecostal churches. There is also one Sunni Mosque. Most of the people in Chalinze belong to one of these worshipping institutions. While ATR have been in the area before influences of other religions, Islam was introduced by Arabs who came into the area long before the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Mitimngi, 2002:8). Christianity was introduced by Roman Catholic Missionaries in 1868.<sup>16</sup> Lutheran came into the area in 1958 (Mitimngi, 2002:9).

Despite of their belongings to Christianity, Muslim and ATR religions, people of Chalinze consult traditional doctors for different reasons, including seeking richness, seeking children, seeking marriages, and also for healing for different diseases. Apart from that, there is also a strong belief that many misfortunes in Chalinze society, including poverty and prostitution are due to the big cross-road which is at the centre of Chalinze village. It is believed that at the junctions there are many evil spirits since many people do rituals at the cross-road for cleansing themselves from different problems and misfortunes.

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<sup>15</sup> This will be explained in chapter three.

<sup>16</sup> The first Roman Catholic church in Africa is in Bagamoyo, the district that Chalinze belongs to.

Another belief is that witches usually meet at the junction for different reasons. So, the combination of the two; witches' meetings at the cross-road and people coming to do rituals at the cross-road make cross-road hold many evil spirits which affect the area. I shall come back to religions and beliefs in the coming chapters, when I discuss how they partake in prostitution in Chalinze.

Chalinze has also been influenced by slavery. The institution of slavery in Chalinze, Bagamoyo district, was introduced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the Arabs.<sup>17</sup> As Arabs came, they decided to use Bagamoyo (Chalinze is in the Bagamoyo district) as the final destination for their slave caravans from the centre of the country. Then, Bagamoyo became not only a centre for the slaves who were transported to Zanzibar, but also one of the places in Tanzania which has been largely influenced by slavery. Slavery has then been one of the historic roots and prime causes of 'indirect slavery' and marginalisation of some groups in Bagamoyo and its villages, including Chalinze. In the society those who have opportunity become 'lords' and others 'slaves'. In male-female relations, due to structures which put women down, men take this opportunity to become 'lords' while women stay in 'slaves' position (Mitimangi, 2002:12).

Economically, the majority of the population of Chalinze is poor. Very few have stable jobs. Many people are self-employed, engaged in small skilled agricultural activities and small businesses. Young men do small businesses (*machinga*), especially with the people who are travelling in buses and other cars. Women, in spite of doing agricultural farming, are also doing small businesses such as selling food (*mama ntilie*). However, these business women are often confronted by the police, and driven off for reasons such as making the Centre dirty. Very often, the police will eat and pour out women's food. Sometimes they oblige the business women to give them some money, lest they report them to the police stations.

Most of the families in Chalinze survive on less than 1US Dollar per day (field description). A large proportion of the Christians and Muslims have started to abandon their faith since they feel abandoned by God in their crucified existence of poor living standards. Women are the most affected by poverty. On one occasion, the President of Tanzania, Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, who is also from Chalinze by birth, said, "Though Tanzanians are poor, Tanzanian women are much poorer. So, another daunting challenge facing all of us is that of economic empowerment of women" (Speech of president Kikwete).

The economic situation of people of Chalinze will be discussed in more detail in chapter two.

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<sup>17</sup> Slavery can be explained as a system under which human beings are the property of others.

## **1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.5.1 METHODS**

This research has been conducted with the methodology of ethnography. Alan Bryman describes ethnography as:

... a research method in which the researcher is immersed in a social setting for an extended period. The researcher makes regular observations of the behaviour of members of that setting, listens to and engages into conversations, interviews informants on issues that are not directly amenable to observe or that the ethnographer is unclear about (Bryman, 2008:402).

Similarly, George Marcus considers ethnography as the practices of fieldwork and writing (Marcus, 1998). According to Marcus, ethnography offers requires the researcher to neither assimilate to ‘naturalized categories’ nor over-theorize the ethnographic inquiry. Marcus explains that, in the pursuit of ethnography, if the researcher does not adopt a multi-sited fieldwork in which various sites are studied together, then, at least, the researcher should take on a ‘multi-sited research imaginary’ wherein there is a narrative of the whole micro-world (knowable subjects) in an encompassing macro-world (the system) (Marcus, 1998:33ff). Such multi-sited strategy is deemed to possess capability for facilitating a thick description of what is going on in the frame of one’s project and field site (Marcus, 1998:3-28).

According to Marcus, ethnography also aims at the exploration of moral ambiguities and contradictions, while developing knowledge of relations and connections that have entered beyond the frames that have held the traditional act of fieldwork in place (Marcus, 1998:21).

Marcus’ perspective on ethnography influenced the research design and data gathered for this study. The challenge was to discover and define more complex and surprising objects of study. I felt the task was to advance the possibilities of making arguments through description, the delineation of processes, the orchestrating, and representation of voice, events, and rituals. It was decided earlier in the project not simply to accept theoretical terms that have been so influential from works and experience over the past years and more in interdisciplinary spaces, but to translate theoretical terms into a design of investigation through fieldwork and to be attentive to what the field research literally moves. So, the task has been to figure out, describe, and explain very complex realities in plain terms before considering theoretical framings, interest, and critiques of ordinary language. Drawing from the ‘multi-sited research’ technique,

the community where the fieldwork was conducted was not treated as an enclosed object of study. It had attachments, such as cosmology, beliefs, ethics, rituals, and relations.

### **1.5.2 THE FIELDWORK**

The bulk of the data were collected from interviews and observations from June 15 to August 10, 2010. This period of time appears to be the official length of time in the MPhil program for fieldwork. Though this period seemed to be short, the fieldwork goals were achieved because I had lived in the nearby village for many years, so, I had some background knowledge of Chalinze village. While in the particular site I decided to focus on a few specific research questions. Bryman distinguishes this approach as ‘micro-ethnography’ (Bryman, 2008:403).

I used random sample in selecting my interviewees from different positions and walks of life. However, my selection was based on five categories of people in the society: Prostitutes, church leaders, traditional doctors, teachers of the girls’ initiation rite. Another category was family members and other informants in the streets.

Participant observation was developed as a method of research by discipline of anthropology. Attempt have been made to adapt and integrate this method of research to settings of sexual high risk behaviour. According to Alder and Alder, when studying a subculture, particularly a deviant group, researchers must assume social roles that fit into the worlds they are studying. According to Alder and Alder, the more secretive and formless the activities of the researched, the more necessary it is for the researcher to participate in their activities to learn about their culture (Alder and Alder, 1987:8). Thus, in collecting data for this research from the prostitute, I had to go on the spot and make observations of the situation of the prostitutes in Chalinze in their daily lives. This, of course, was only observing ‘part’ of their daily lives since I could not observe what they experience and how they are treated by their customers in the rooms.

In the streets, it was not possible to do interview since the prostitutes were there for business. So, apart from observing some of the activities of prostitutes in the streets, I befriended some of these girls and made appointments with them for interviews. I interviewed five prostitutes individually. I invited; three for some soft drinks in the restaurants, and two to my home. Besides that, I interviewed a group of three prostitutes together. I visited them in their room two times. Interviewing these prostitutes was necessary for understanding the reasons behind their involvement in prostitution. Among all the prostitutes I interviewed,

four of them wanted me to pay them for different reasons. Two of them said they did not have anything to eat, and asked me to give them some money after the interviews. One told me that I had used her time which she could have used for resting. Another one told me, “Sister, I know that this is a research, and you have a lot of money for it. So, for everything I have told you, you have to pay me.” I had to pay all of them since the information that I wanted from them was important and relevant for my research.

In the streets, I befriended prostitutes without revealing that I was doing a research. Bryman calls this a ‘covert role’ in which one does not disclose the fact that he or she is a researcher (Bryman, 2008:406). I played this covert role towards the prostitutes because if prostitutes had known my identity as a researcher, they would have rejected me. However, after making friends with them I revealed my identity when I visited them in their homes or invited them to my home. The prostitutes became my friends. In one occasion in the street, I was amazed when one of my prostitute friends, Mwajuma told me that she wanted to go to her traditional doctor to ‘recharge her attraction *juju*.’<sup>18</sup> I never knew that there are *juju* charms for attracting customers in prostitution business. I asked her about this, and she confidently said, “This is a business like any other. Even those guys with big shops and business have ‘their’ traditional doctors to attract customers and to protect their businesses.”

Apart from prostitutes, I also talked with other people. Among them were church leaders. I aimed at knowing their perspectives on prostitution and their attitudes to it. Also, being a Lutheran pastor from a neighbouring village was an advantage to me, especially in gathering data from church. Since I am pastor, I had an access to join in church leaders’ meetings as a guest, and from there I learned many things which are important for my research. Data were also sourced from local people who I interacted with. I interviewed three church leaders in total; two from the Lutheran church, and one from the Free Pentecostal Church. Although my focus is the Lutheran Church, I interviewed the Pentecostal leader so I could have a comparative analysis of the situation. Apart from that, I also attended four church services and three bible studies in the Lutheran church.

I also gathered data from traditional doctor and from a teacher of the girls’ initiation rite. The teacher invited me to her home and we had conversations on why she thinks the initiation ritual is relevant for the girls and the community. I also had an opportunity to attend one of the initiation classes, where girls are taught traditional values and practices.

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<sup>18</sup> *Juju* refers to traditional medicine.

The interviews usually span 1 to 2 hours, while informal conversations were unlimited, depending on the time of my availability and the interviewees' availability. Apart from a few interviews which I did with the clan leaders, a local government leader and one church leader, most of the data were collected through a normal conversation. That means, the research was not guided and closed by some few questions but gave room to the informants. What I have done was posing the subject of the research. As a result, more probing and consequent questions sprang out of the natural in-depth interview and conversation. With this method, the research and the relation between the researcher and interviews as well as the whole discussion became a self-generating process.

Why did I play a covert role to the prostitutes and to some of other informants? The main reason was getting realistic information. This helped me to get a true picture of situation, since when you inform people about the research or of any kind of data collection, sometime, not always, they tend to be not realistic, and they prepare answers to hide the truth, depending on the issue you are researching.

The collection of all the data was possible due to my position as a researcher at a suitable area for research. I could not research and speak from nowhere. Thus, I have done my field work in a fixed location, with a specific cultural, social and political background. Researching about prostitutes does neither mean that I am also a prostitute, nor am I interested in becoming a prostitute, but I wanted to know and reveal the hidden realities about the life choice of prostitutes. I am writing and analysing the field data at the university of Oslo, Norway. Where am situated is important in that I am not currently part of the daily life of the prostitutes I write about.

### **1.5.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

Due to the sensitive nature of the data from on fieldwork, I have decided to replace the real names of the informants with artificial names. This is meant to protect the confidentiality and privacy informants were assured. Also, to protect the confidentiality, interviewees were assured privacy.

Going to the famous prostitution streets, especially at night was not an easy task. Apart from being faced with many difficulties and challenges, it was also a big ethical challenge. As a Lutheran pastor it was unethical to be seen in the streets which are famous for sex-selling business, especially at night. Being at those streets raised many questions for the people who knew me. For them, I had to explain exactly the

reasons of my presence at those areas. Some of them understood me. Yet, others entertained the view that I had been influenced after one year in the 'western world' and had become a prostitute. Because of being in the streets which are famous for sex selling, I also had to dress in a way which made me match a bit with the girls in the streets. It was a big challenge since according to my work context, this was not a proper way of dressing, especially for a pastor. It is considered unethical to dress like this. So, while considering ethical ways of dressing in Chalinze, I had to look more like a prostitute, so that they could give me some of the information I wanted. Another challenge came from the church. Although I intended not to reveal my identity as a researcher at an early stage of my research, I had to inform my church leaders. This helped to avoid suspicion from them in case they noticed me in the areas where 'decent people' are not expected to be seen.

Apart from these more ethical challenges, it was also difficult to get prostitutes to speak about their lives to a stranger. Some suspected I was there for a different mission than prostitution. Beside all that, going to those streets was a risk, including putting myself at the high risk of being raped, being arrested by the police, etc. I had in mind how the situation would be in church and in the society in general if I was arrested by the police, and it was reported that among the prostitutes arrested, one was a Lutheran pastor. Perhaps I would be excommunicated from the church. It was a high risk, but it was worthy taking the risk for gathering enough and good materials for my research.

Generally, entering into the field as a participant observer, I intended to take the perspectives of prostitute, to see the world through their eyes, to feel what they feel, and to experience what they experience. However, this was not possible. I found myself incapable of becoming a complete participant, or 'going native' to join them as a real prostitute because I was neither able to run and fight for the customers, nor worry for not getting a customer. That shocked some of the prostitutes and even the men who came to buy sex. They did not expect to find a woman on those streets at night, who declined the offer of going with a man, while others were fighting for them.

## **1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This thesis is a study of prostitution in relation to religion and culture. It looks into social structures that produce inequality in the society, and hence produce prostitution. As the focus of my research was based on looking into the construction of gender relations which produce gender inequality in the society, my thesis

offers a more thick description of the research problem than a comprehensive analysis of it. I hope the data I offer in this thesis will serve as a resource for further analysis.

Nevertheless, in looking into these social structures, I have drawn from gender studies of interdisciplinary field which analyses race, ethnicity, sexuality, and location. Since this field is very wide, to be specific, my little analysis will be based on feminist theory.

Feminist theories are outgrowth of the general movement to empower women worldwide. They can be explained as a recognition and critique of male supremacy combined with efforts to change it. Feminists seek to promote the idea that men's aggressive sexual nature is not biological, but rather culturally engendered and therefore capable of being modified (Feminist theory, 2011:n.p). Feminist theories are used globally to challenge patriarchal structures. They tend to recognize and criticize male supremacy in an attempt to change it.

Heidi Armbruster in *Feminist Theories and Anthropology* gives a review of feminist theories in history. According to Armbruster, the emergence of feminist thought in anthropology has been discursively embedded in the wider field of academic feminism and in anthropological theory formation. In the 1960's and 1970's feminists set out to correct the 'male bias' in anthropology by focusing on women in the societies they studied. In the 1980's the claim to universalism changed. Feminist anthropologists studied 'gender', the culturally variable understandings of what it means to be a woman or, with less emphasis, a man (Armbruster, 2000:n.p). Armbruster cited Henrietta Moore (1988) as she gives a thorough account of the shift from studying 'women' to studying 'gender'. The shift to gender as an analytical category reflected the fact that the concern with female lives could not just be about 'women' but about relations, practices and politics in which gendered identities were construed, and socially and culturally mediated. In the 1990's feminist thought has fully embraced the notion of differences as an explanatory concept for identity and subordination. In other words, within three decades the question has shifted from, "why are all women oppressed?" to "how is a female embodied subject constituted?" (Armbruster, 2000:n.p).

Judith Butler is one of the feminist scholars who contributed to this shift, especially in 1990's. In her work "Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (1990)", Butler contends that being female is not 'natural' and that it appears natural only through repeated performances of gender. These performances in turn, reproduce and define the traditional categories of sex and/or gender. In her second edition of "Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity", she focuses on gender performativity. In Butler's terms the performance of gender, sex, and sexuality is about power in society (Butler, 1999:9). She

locates the construction of the 'gendered, sexed, desiring subject' in 'regulative discourses'. Partly, Butler's argument concerns the role of sex in the construction of 'natural' or coherent gender and sexuality. In her account, gender and heterosexuality are constructed as natural because the opposition of the male and female sexes is perceived as natural in the social imaginary (Butler, 1999:9).

Different feminist scholars have argued on the question of construction of gender in the society. Howard and Hollander in their "Gendered Situations, Gendered Selves" suggest that gender is consciously and unconsciously constructed as the result of cultural and social activities. It takes into account the complex interactions of human agency with the 'constraining nature of social structure' (Howard and Hollander, 1987:43).

However, this view of gender construction is not held by all gender theorists. Other areas of gender study closely examine the role that the biological states of being male or female have on social constructs of gender. Specifically, in what way gender roles are defined by biology and how they are defined by cultural trends.

As my focus is how the construction of gender relations implies gender inequality, my analysis will employ these concepts and see ally them to the situation in Chalinze. They can be useful in an attempt to reform gender relations in Chalinze and in the church.

Apart from that, I will also draw from ritual concepts. How do perspectives from ritual studies also facilitate an understanding of prostitution problem? Functionalist definitions approach ritual in terms of the purposes it serves in individual or community life. This view of ritual often portrays it as maintaining social cohesion and cultural coherence in the face of various kinds of threats. Religious ritual in particular is said to enable people to face the boundary situation of human existence. Catharine Bell (1989) acknowledges that Victor Turner and Mary Douglas are among the most influential scholars who focus on the role of ritual in the maintenance of social groups. Those scholars tend to see ritual as a mechanism of continuity, resisting forces that could fray the fabric of the community. Emile Durkheim and Clifford Geertz are prominent among those who focus on how groups change through ritual (see Durkheim 1965; Geertz 1973). "According to this perspective, ritual is seen to facilitate meaningful social change by focusing on community's general conceptions of the order of human existence with the actual circumstances of its daily life" (Bell in Bradshaw and Melloh 2007: 168).

From these approaches to ritual, I hope to identify in my analysis the subjective and objective conditions under which some of the villagers participate in healing rituals and initiation rites. The analysis will also observe how adulthood initiation rite and healing rituals have resisted against change when viewed from the actual situation of gender relations in Chalinze village. How do these rites integrate traditional cultural values and social ethos, and how does such integration freeze equality between male and female villagers? Have these rituals influence social change or resisted meaningful reforms in the village? These shall constitute important questions in the analysis of the data from fieldwork.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT AND PROSTITUTION**

#### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, I attempt to describe the daily life of people in Chalinze. In describing people, the emphasis is on their socio-economic activities, their beliefs and ritual practice. I also attempt to lay a background of understanding gender inequality in Chalinze. In so doing, I explain how women are constructed to fit in Chalinze society. Hence, I give a clear explanation of girls' initiation rite. I also show the treatment of women in Chalinze community. In showing more of daily lives of many women in Chalinze in terms of their relations with their husbands, I devote a section in explaining gender relations by citing a case and explaining it. I end this chapter by showing women's moral expectation in Chalinze community.

#### **2.1 MALE DOMINANCE IN THE MATRILINEAL SOCIETY**

Chalinze Centre and the nearby villages have the similar characteristics. The houses are very close to each other.<sup>19</sup> People usually have good relations in terms of talking, helping each other in difficulties such as sickness, sharing material things for common use, and even to some extents, helping each other with food to each other. They also celebrate in different festivals, and mourn together when people die. This reflects the *Ubuntu* philosophy, "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am," (Mbiti, 1990:106). However, there are particular issues which are taken as more family issues. For example, when a family (in this case uncles) decide to stop a girl from school that she marries, no neighbour can question about that. Also issues which are related to love affairs are also taken as family issues, and no neighbour can question about that too. It is on this base, that even when a man is beating his wife it is taken as more family issue, unless a woman asks a help from neighbours.

As I have described in the first chapter, the Chalinze tribe (Wang'hwele) is matrilineal. In a matrilineal society the status of children is established through their mother's clan. In other words, the mother's clan has more power and authority over children than the father of the children. However, being matrilineal culture does not help to placing women in Chalinze with the same position and status as men. The field data shows that male dominance in this matrilineal society is easily noticed. Male dominance can be explained as the power of men; a familial, social, ideological, or political system, in which men (by force, direct pressure, through ritual, tradition, law and language, customs, education, and division of labour)

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<sup>19</sup> This refers to high density.

determine what part women shall or shall not play. In male dominance system, females are everywhere subsumed under the male (Ackermann, Draper and Mashinini, 1991:130; Osmerah, et al, 1996:37; Lerner, 1986:239). This ideology seems to limit women in decision making about sexuality, loving and labouring, centralising the socially constructed idea of motherhood as an ideal. Molaria Ogundipe-Leslie observes that in many African societies, whether patriarchal or matrilineal, gender hierarchy, male supremacy or sex asymmetry was known and taken for granted. Ogundipe maintains that even in the matrilineal societies, women are still subordinated to men and are considered next in place to men (Ogundipe, 1994:34).

The findings noted that in Chalinze many decisions, including decisions about women's own lives are made by men. This can be realized, for example when it comes to the matters related to children. Because the society is matrilineal, on issues concerning children, uncles are always the decision makers of their sister's children. For instance issues concerning schooling of children, marriage of girls, are decided by their uncles and not parents. This relates to what Rosemary Edet and Bette Ekaya observed in *Church Women of Africa: A Theological Community*. They observed that in most parts of Africa, women are still the properties of men. They also observed that in some societies, it is the uncle who has control over a woman's life (Oduyoye and Fabella, 1988:6). In the same way, Phiri observed that though the Chewa matrilineal society gave woman a high status and certain amount of freedom, still a woman was heavily dependent and fully controlled by her uncles and brothers who had total power over her (Phiri, 2000:35). Similarly, in Chalinze community, men are dominant in private and public life of women.

As seen in chapter one, men are the decision makers in many aspects. Women, for instance, are not given chance to speak up, especially in the traditional meetings. The findings in this study revealed that if a woman happens to speak in the traditional meetings, all people, including her fellow women get surprised. This suggests that there is social-psychological discrimination against women in this society. Since this situation has lasted for quite a long time, it has become a norm, and as a result, the oppressed group seems to oppress itself.

## **2.2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION OF WOMEN OF CHALINZE**

As revealed in chapter one, many people of Chalinze are engaged in agricultural farming. The field transcripts show that women are the main producers in the agricultural activities. In most cases men are interested in business; therefore they do not like to engage in agricultural activities. The data from the field

show that often the business that men do is based on the crops produced by women. It seems that after production, everything becomes under men's control. Women have nothing to say on this. This suggests that, since a woman belongs to a man, whatever is produced by a woman is controlled by her husband. This seems to be very common in developing countries. Beverley Haddad described women as the main producers in agricultural production as compared to men in most of sub-Saharan African countries. However hard they participate in production, their contribution is not recognised by men (Boserup, 1970 cited in Haddad, 2000:113).

Apart from agricultural farming, women also provide food for the family, take care of children, and sometimes, they take care of education for their children, especially, when men seem to not be responsible in providing these needs for the family. As such, women do not have opportunity to choose what to do. They have to do everything that men do not want to do for the survival of their families. Mercy Amba Oduyoye observed this in many African societies, as she explains:

In assigning roles based on gender, the theory of complementary plays a negative role for women in domestic ... allows a man to choose what he wants to be and to do and then demands that a woman fills the blanks. Generally, the woman has little or no choice in the matter; she has to do 'the rest' if the community is to remain whole and healthy (Oduyoye, 2004:94).

In such life, women in Chalinze seem to suffer hardships. One of my informants related these duties as heavy burdens on them. She says this idiomatically that all these burdens are heavy enough 'to break a camel's back'. However, despite the fact that women are hard-working, they are the poorer in the poor society. Economically, everything belongs to men. Consequently, women have to depend entirely on men.

Arguing that women's oppression and sexual difference is the primary power relations in the society, Irigaray explains that there has been an oppressive male domination throughout the history which has branded women as subordinate. Irigaray discusses class and economic conditions within a patriarchal economy, arguing that women have been merely 'commodities' in a phallogocentric order, and that, "all the social regimes in 'history' are based upon the exploitation of one 'class' of producers, namely, women" (Irigaray, 1985:173). Although Irigaray was arguing in a general perspective, this is relevant also in an African context, such as Chalinze, where a patriarchal system has been dominating for a long period of time. Even so, my findings from the field demonstrate that in Chalinze community, women seem to comply with this situation though it seems to exploit them. They also agree with the structure which produces this situation. Some women have even seen such structure as divinely instituted, and therefore they should not be challenged.

After looking at the economic situation of women in Chalinze, the following section describes religions, beliefs and some of the rituals which are practised in Chalinze.

## **2.3 RELIGIONS, BELIEF, AND RITUALS IN CHALINZE COMMUNITY**

### **2.3.1 WOMEN IN CHURCH**

As stated in the introduction chapter, the people of Chalinze are Christians, Muslims, and practitioners of Traditional Religions (ATR). Researching prostitution in relation to religion and culture, I was curious to know what the church teaches, especially on the question of moral and ethics in the society. My interest was also increased as I wanted to know what the church teaches and preaches on justice and equality in the society. In this regard, I attended four church services and three bible studies in the Lutheran church, as how I have noted in chapter one. In two services, the preaching was about women's obedience to men. In the third service the preaching was about love of God, and in the last, the preaching was about tithes. In the three bible study I attended, two times the teachings were about women's obedience to men and one time it was about love of God. This might draw a conclusion that women's obedience to men is one of the main themes in preaching and teachings in the Lutheran church in Chalinze. Also the way women's obedience was taught implied that, a woman is ought to be humble and submissive to her husband. She should not argue against her husband because the husband is the head of the family. I wanted to know why women's obedience was so much emphasised in church. I talked to Reverend Mahimbo, the pastor in-charge of the Lutheran church in Chalinze. According to Rev. Mahimbo, the main point of emphasising women's obedience to their husbands is to keep harmony and peace in the families and in the society at large, and hence, to avoid quarrels. In addition to that, the church emphasises that marriage cannot be broken in any way until death happens to one of the spouses (*Mwimbieni Bwana, 2004:322*).

Curious about what the church does to prostitution and ethics in general, I found out that when a woman is identified to be prostitute, she is put under church discipline. This includes any pregnant woman before marriage. However, the findings in this study depicted that it is only a woman or a girl who is put under church discipline. A man who has impregnated a woman/girl is often not put under church discipline. The measures which are taken to people under church discipline include restriction to partake the Holy Communion.

Another important aspect is that women seem to be excluded from leadership positions in the church. In the constitution of ELCT-MGD<sup>20</sup> (1994:10), there is no policies restricting women from leadership positions in the church, and in fact women's leadership is encouraged. However, there is not even one woman in top church leadership in Chalinze. According to Mama Mmari, a parish worker in the Chalinze Lutheran church, this is attributed to culture and traditional social structures. Mama Mmari explained that although the constitution encourages women's leadership, there are a lot of discouragements from the existing leadership and the society at large, discouraging women that they can not do anything in church's ministry or any other leadership position. She said that women are just given position of teaching Sunday schools, prepare the worship and do home visitations. In chapter four, I shall discuss about women in church in more detail.

### **2.3.2 RITUALS AND BELIEFS**

In chapter one I have stated that people in Chalinze observe and do some rituals. In this study I have chosen to discuss two rituals; a healing rite (basing on the traditional doctors) and girls' initiation rite.

In Chalinze, people, regardless of their religious affiliations, seek help from the traditional doctors. While Muslims are going to these traditional healers openly, Christians do not, as they say their faith does not allow. So, they do not like people to know that they also go. Most healing rites are done by traditional doctors (*'mganga wa kienyeji'* in Swahili). In the healing process, different techniques are used including singing, divination, etc. These go with pre-conditions, such as, how a client should get to the room. In most cases, a client is required to enter backwards. In many traditional doctors' rooms there are different objects, such as people's skulls, and animals' horns. These are among the things traditional doctors use in the healing process. Divination is used to detect the problem or source of the problem of the client. It is believed that through divination there is direct communication between the traditional doctor and the world of spirit or divinities.

Apart from the healing processes practised in traditional doctors' houses (depending to where traditional doctor has suggested) many ritual healings are practised at the cross-road of the highways. It is very common to see the objects like dead chicken, hatched eggs, or broken coconuts can be found at the junctions of the highways. These objects are believed to be connected with practising ritual healings. The traditional doctors and their contribution to prostitution in Chalinze will be examined more in subsequent

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<sup>20</sup> Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, Morogoro Diocese. This is the Diocese where Chalinze belongs to.

chapter. More about traditional doctors and people's belief in these doctors will be examined in the subsequent chapter.

### **GIRLS' INITIATION RITE IN CHALINZE**

Another ritual that I would like to explain in details in this thesis is the girls' initiation rite. This rite seems to have a very special role in Chalinze community, especially in regard to a gender-relations construction. Therefore, I have decided to describe it clearly in this chapter as a background of the discussions in the following chapters. In the course of describing this rite, I have by and large used the research findings and some literatures for clarification. In so doing, a concept of gender construction is clearly revealed.

In different cultures of Tanzania, girls' initiation rite is where a woman is constructed according to the specific community's desire. This rite is called '*unyago*' (Lema, 2004:39-45). When she was researching in the Southern part of Tanzania, Maia Green (2003:92) observes the importance of making 'a woman' through *unyago* as she puts:

Male and female are differentiated through rituals that affect the constitution of their physical substance, facilitating a cumulative gender differentiation on which the ritual division of labour, premised on age and sex is founded. This process begins with a rite of female initiation (*unyago*) in which pubescent girls are endowed with the capacity to reproduce themselves and sustain the growth and development of offspring.

Among the Wazaramo, a neighbouring tribe to Chalinze people, the girls are taught about male physiology, sexual intercourse, pregnancy, childbirth and the responsibilities of a good wife and mother (Mbunda, 1991:62).

In Chalinze, when a girl reaches puberty stage, she has to be kept in-door for one to three years, depending on the decision of the family especially the uncles. At this stage, she is called '*mwali*'. If she is still a student, she has to covering her head and almost the whole face with a piece of clothes (*khanga*). Somebody is assigned to go with her to school to show her the way. A month before the in-door period ends, her relatives ask permission from school that she may stay in-door completely for preparation of her 'getting-out ceremony' known as 'the getting-out day'. For all the time when she is in-door men are not allowed to see her, not even hear her voice.

A week before her getting-out ceremony, some special women go to her room to teach her about life, such as hard-working, and perseverance. They also teach her about becoming a good wife when she marries. The

day before ‘the getting- out ceremony’ is called ‘*Siku ya mkoleni*’ (*mkole* day). On this day, the girl is taken to the *mkole*<sup>21</sup> for further teachings. All men and girls who are not yet grown up are strictly not allowed to participate in these occasions. The first reason for excluding men is that some of the teachings which are given to the girl at the *mkole* are women’s secrets. The second reason is because the girl is completely naked, sits in the midst of the group of women under the *mkole* tree. On 20<sup>th</sup> July 2010, I got an opportunity to attend and observe the *mkole* occasion at Gumba village, a half kilometre from Chalinze Centre.

I observed that a girl is inspected at *mkole* to see if she is still virgin. This is done through their traditional way of proving virginity of a girl, examining the hymen. Another important observation is that the girl is given some teachings. Although every woman in the group is allowed to give a girl some teachings, however, there is one special woman who will give these teachings. This woman is called ‘*kungwi*’. The teachings are divided into two categories. First, a girl is taught how she should behave in the society. In this category, the teachings involve being humble, respectful, subordinate to men, passive, submissive, and not argue against men. Moreover, the teachings prepare the girl to be a good wife. So, the girl is taught how she should handle and take care of her husband. The girl is more emphasised to be humble, gentle and submissive to her husband. In most cases, these teachings are given in idioms. The idioms mostly used are such as “*Mumeo anapozungumza, weka maji mdomoni, usiyameze*” which literally means that, “When your husband is talking, you should put water in your mouth and not swallow it”. This implies that a wife should keep silent when her husband is talking. Another one is ‘*Sikio halipiti kichwa*’ literary means, ‘An ear does not exceed a head’, which means a wife (ear) cannot overpower her husband (head). In addition, a girl is emphasised that in any way she can not be as equal as her husband.

The second category of the teachings at the *mkole* is the teachings where the girl is taught how she can satisfy her husband sexually. The key message in these teachings seems to be that women are a gift to men, so, they should please them.

Apart from that, the girl is taught that if it happens that her husband does not give her a child, she should ‘find a child’ outside her marriage, and maintains that the child belongs to her husband. According to one of the respondents, this is done to save the marriage, since if there is no a child in the marriage, the

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<sup>21</sup> *Mkole* is a tree where teachings which are part of *Unyago* teachings are given. Since the teachings are done under *mkole* tree, the teachings also are called *mkole* teachings (*mafundo ya mkoleni*). The *mkole* teachings are only for girls who are ‘becoming’ women in Chalinze community (and neighbouring communities, such as Walughuru, Wakutu, and Wakami communities). *Mkole* teachings is part of *unyago*.

marriage is likely to break.<sup>22</sup> In the same way, a girl is told that even if her husband gives her children, still she should have at least one child from another man. For, if it happens in the lineage of her husband there are some inheritance diseases, at least one child is saved. The philosophy which is used here is *'kitanda hakizai haramu'*, which means all children born within wedlock belong to the same husband. This goes with other teachings that a girl, apart from her husband, should have other men to satisfy her needs sexually. Several informants said that in most cases after marriage, the husbands do not care about their wives' sexual feelings, so, this helps wives to have extra men to satisfy them sexually. The teachings use an idiom of having *'mafiga matatu'*, literally means three stones which are used in cooking, and a pot is put on top of them. As a pot cannot sit on one or two cooking stones but three, so the girl should not remain with only her husband, but should have others besides her husband.

After *mkole* day and its teachings are over, it comes a ceremony day for the girls' initiation rite. This is a very big ceremony which is done in a big open area in the village. Almost everybody in the village and the nearby villages attend, both men and women. On this day, the girl is carried on the shoulders of one of her uncles (*kunema*), almost naked. She just wears a piece of clothes, covering the area below stomach. There is a time when she stands in the midst of the people, dancing by moving her waist (*kukata kiuno*). This is a very special dancing that shows men that she is qualified in satisfying them sexually.

One of the aims of this celebration is to announce that the girl is now ready for marriage. Sometimes girls get men to marry them from these occasions. In most cases, after the celebration, men who are interested in marrying the girl go and negotiate with the uncles of the girl, and pay the dowry. Then, the girl is informed that there is somebody who has paid everything for her, so she has to get prepared for marriage. Most of the men who win in these types of marriages are old men who can convince the uncles of the girls, either by means of their good words and promises; or by money which they have invested; or just because of friendship. So in most cases, these girls end up marrying men who are of their fathers or uncles' ages. Few young men can win the negotiations because they do not have money.

During the celebration, local beer, which is made from maize is free for everyone. Large amount of maize is used to make this kind of beer for such a big occasion. Soon after these celebrations some families start to starve since they have used almost all the stock they had.

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<sup>22</sup> It is more than norm that marriage should have children. This will be explained in chapter four.

## EFFECTS OF GIRLS' INITIATION RITE

The I explanation of the teachings and practices of the girls' initiation rites in Chalinze shows that in the girls' initiation rite, a woman is constructed to become a person as what a man wants her to be. She is expected to be submissive, passive, and a sexual object of man, and almost without her own identity.

Making 'a woman' as a symbol which fits in a society through rituals is very common in many African societies as Maia Green explains:

Symbolic constructions of gender are embodied and incorporated into male and female person through rituals that establish and consolidate gendered identities by the manipulation of both physical substances and cosmological powers capable of affecting the body. Participation in such rituals is not merely experienced in symbolic terms of representations, but as progressively emotionally affecting those who participate. Representations of gender are not confined to the abstract level of symbolic discourse, but are enacted and experienced through specific ritual roles of gendered interdependencies (Green, 2003:91).

In discussing women and ritual in Africa, Mercy Amba Oduyoye observed that African ritual ideology aims at controlling in a conservative way, the behaviour, the mood, the sentiment, and the values of women for the sake of the community as a whole. She continues by arguing that ritual is a means by which humanity controls, constructs, orders, fashions, or creates a way to be fully human (Oduyoye and Kanyoro, 1992:26). This shows that in ritual a person is constructed according to the 'definition of man or woman' in a specific society.

In Chalinze, as in many other African societies, rituals have a big contribution to women's (and men) construction in the community. Whereas girls are socialised and constructed in the *mkole* to be submissive and inferior to men, the findings show that boys are constructed and socialised to be real men in the initiation rite called *jando*. They are constructed to be superior and lords. They are taught what it means to be the head of the family. The teachings seem to be almost opposite to what girls are taught in *mkole*.

It is in these rites where division of labour and different roles in the society between males and females are prescribed. Thus, construction of gender, therefore, goes with division of roles in the society. Not only that, but also different rights, such as inheritance, opportunity for education, ownership of properties, and many of the like, are all determined by men. It is in these occasions where a woman is defined and justified as inferior to man. Gerda Lerner (1986:220) explains these differences as the constructions of men and women within the patriarchal system. She says that in the patriarchal system, women have internalised the idea of their own inferiority and lived their lives under the confines and restrictions of patriarchy. On the

other hand, males are seen as the norm and the female as deviant; the male as a whole and powerful, the female as unfinished, mutilated, and lacking autonomy.

As I have explained, ritual teachings and practices prepare girls for marriages (compare to Green, 2003:97). So, from the first day of her marriage, a girl will be expected to meet all the conditions required by the society. From the data of the initiation rite above, the way a girl is prepared for marriage is by emphasised to be obedient and subordinate to her husband and that she must not argue against him. This is what is expected to be seen in her marriage. One might argue that subordination may consequently open a door for domestic violence.

Moreover, there are other practices which seem to tantalise sexual desire. For example, *kukata kiuno* (dancing by moving waist). Such practices are likely to not only prepare girls for marriage, but also make girls perceive themselves as sexual objects of men. The teachings of this kind seem to define women's bodies as male's properties, and give ownership of them to the male, and place women under the control of men. This might be also argued that in Chalinze, sexual act goes with, and partly is contributed by, ritual contents. In this way, ritual teachings might play part in prostitution. Also, as reported above, the philosophy of *mafiga matatu* (three stones) is for sexual satisfaction. However, further research shows that this philosophy also seems to be for economic reason as well. This means, when a husband does not provide enough for the family, a wife can use 'another stone' (wife's lover outside her wedlock) to help her economically. The philosophy (three stones) can also be for peace building and maintaining harmony in the family. According to Anna, one of my informants, many conflicts between the spouses in Chalinze are due to economic reason. In most cases, when a husband is not providing enough for the family, and when a wife demands more for the survival of the family, a conflict is likely to occur. To avoid this, instead of the wife asking her husband to provide enough, she uses her 'other stones' for the economic needs of the family.

As I have explained it above, dancing at the ceremony of girls' initiation rite aims at giving men an opportunity to choose a woman to marry by looking at how these girls dance. This seems like putting a girl on the market where anybody can buy and go with her at a high price. It is not a girl's choice, nor is it love that matters in these types of marriages. The winners, mostly in terms of paying much dowry in form of monetary terms marry the girls. The girl's choice and feelings are not considered at all. Can this be one of the reasons for a girl to apply the philosophies of *mafiga matatu* (three stones) for her love satisfaction?

One important thing to observe is how these teachings are observed, kept and practised. It does not matter what they 'do' to a certain group of people in the society. In this sense, these teachings can determine how the society will be in terms of gender relation, and even division of different roles and prescription of rights in the society. Apart from that, even when the teachings seem to humiliate one group of people in the society, they are still kept. For example, traditional dancing on the getting-out ceremony of the girls' initiation rite, girls are dancing almost naked, and in a way which seems to humiliate. Ideally, this is to make men happy, regardless of how women are humiliated by those dances. Apart from that, dancing half naked seems to have negative effects, such as sexual motivation which can result in HIV/AIDS. However, women seem to comply with this situation. One of my informants, a teacher in the *mkole* teachings told me, "I am very proud to pass these teachings and practices to other generations." This suggests that, even women themselves believe that if a woman has not gone under these ritual teachings, she is not a complete woman. It is from this ideology that in Chalinze, women from other tribes are referred as 'Mnyambenyambe', which means 'who is not belonging to us.' For other tribes, like Shambala, the non-Shambala people are called 'Mnyika',<sup>23</sup> while Chagga in the North of Tanzania calls others 'Chasaka'.<sup>24</sup> These differences are derived from nowhere else but from the treatment in the initiation rites, where other tribes think of others as not having right teachings of how a person should behave in the society.

Showing the importance of *unyago* and its teachings, Elieshi Lema writes:

*"Unyago ni jadi. Unyago ni daraja liinlokutoa katika dunia ya utoto, linakuvusha na kukufikisha katika dunia ya utu uzima. Usipovuka hilo daraja unabaki umetekwa nyara katika dunia ya watoto. Wote tutakucheka. ... unakufa. Unakuwa kikagarosi-mtu maisha yako yote (Lema, 2004:44).*

### **My own translation:**

*Unyago* is a tradition. It is a bridge which takes you from the world of childhood to the world of adulthood. If you do not cross this bridge, you remain in the world of childhood, everybody laugh at you... You become like a dead person. You become an artificial (not real)-person the whole of your life.

Lema's words seem to be confirmed on how people in different communities observe the *unyago* practices and teachings, such as Chalinze community.

The discussion above on the girl's initiation rite in Chalinze lays a foundation for how gender relations and gender inequality are produced in Chalinze society. The following section explores women's daily lives, looking into how they are treated in Chalinze community.

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<sup>23</sup> Who is not belonging to us.

<sup>24</sup> Who is not belonging to us.

## 2.4 IMAGE OF A WOMAN IN CHALINZE COMMUNITY

### SON PREFERENCE AND ITS EFFECTS

The way a woman is treated in Chalinze community seems to put her in a low status and marginalised position. She faces inequalities in many opportunities from the family level to the society level. To name a few, these inequalities include inequality in education between girls and boys, inequality in employments and promotions, and inequality in inheritance. The field data show that these treatments are linked to the construction of gender relations in the initiation rite.

Since a woman is regarded to be inferior, this appears to affect even preference of children in the community. My findings demonstrated that from the day when a baby boy is born, the extended family including women become very happy compared to when a baby girl is born. The wife is happy to get a baby-boy, since she knows that apart from her husband's happiness, the relatives will be happy too. Further, she feels to have acquired some prestige, status and dignity. Moreover, she feels that she is now safe in her marriage. There are cases, such as Sikitu's case in the introduction where a woman is divorced only because she could not bear male child, and so 'she is not extending the clan' for the clan is determined by having many male children.

In Chalinze, it is not normal to call a grown up person by mentioning her or his first name. Married people are called by their first born children.<sup>25</sup> However, this is not true when a first born is a girl. A woman is only called 'Mother of...' her eldest child if and only if the child is male. If the child is not male, then the woman will continue to be called '*Mwali*'<sup>26</sup> means 'a wife of my/our son', or '*Biti*...' (the name of her father) means 'a daughter of...' (her father) until when she bears a son, then she will be called 'Mother of...' her male child, even if the baby boy has his elder sister(s). Therefore, when a woman bears a baby-boy, she feels that she has got a person who will give her a name and identity in the society.

This suggests that women seem not to have identities of their own. It further reflects how a woman is viewed as less valued compared to man. Even her identity depends on man's identity. This relates to what Irigaray observed as he argues that female sexuality is dependant on male sexuality. Women's nature is always defined only as 'the other' to men's nature, and it is reduced thereby to a function of masculine identity (Irigaray, 1985:99). In Chalinze, it seems that woman's identity and value is determined by her

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<sup>25</sup> If men do not have children they are called by their surnames, and women are called 'daughter of..', e.g., '*Biti Salumu*' means, 'a daughter of *Salumu*'.

<sup>26</sup> '*Mwali*' can also mean, 'a grown-up or matured girl,' even if she is not married.

relationship to other members of her family. She is brought by her husband, and when she bears children she loses her own name and becomes 'Mother of...' her eldest son.

Born a female has been seen as an inferior status, not only in Chalinze, but in Tanzania and in Africa in general. For example, Oduyoye says that among the Ibo of Nigeria, a girl was little more than a piece of property (Oduyoye, 2001:68). In the same way, Muhammad Ali, the former United States boxing champion once was asked how many children he had fathered, he answered, "One boy and seven mistakes (Human rights, 2011:n.p)." This shows that the problem of son preference is present in many other countries as well. It seems like a female child is not a full human being when she is born in the society. This stereotype has been institutionalized for years. As a result, Oduyoye observed that some women wish they were born men instead of women (Oduyoye and Kanyoro, 1992:112).

In Chalinze, the son preference has affected raising up children. The field data noted that boys are treated well in the family, getting time to play and do their school assignments, while girls do not get such opportunities. Girls are in most cases supposed to help their mothers with all domestic duties, including cooking for the family, fetching water for the family, washing clothes of the members of the family, and taking care of their siblings. This can lead to children themselves grow up with a notion that a boy is superior while a girl is inferior. Moreover, it can affect the whole system in gender relations in the society. It might result to inferiority of a girl, which affects her in many areas, including decision making, and speaking up for her rights. If this is true, one can argue that in the girls' initiation rite, a girl is only emphasised of what she has been socialised in the daily life. In this way, the concept of gender construction makes it clear that girls and boys are actively involved in constructing their own gendered identities.

## **2.5 GENDER RELATIONS IN CHALINZE COMMUNITY**

During my field research, I had an opportunity to visit a family of Mr and Mrs Kumbuka. I stayed with this family for two days. Mr Kumbuka and his wife have six children; first born are twins, a boy and a girl (15 years old), followed by two boys, and then two girls. The first born (a boy) is in the secondary school. However, her twin sister had run away from home. The other children are in primary school. In the two days which I had stayed with this family, I observed that most of the time when we were chatting, it was only Mr Kumbuka who was talking with me. At least the old son was also commenting in some points. I sometimes posed a question purposely direct to Mrs Kumbuka, just normal question about their lives, but she was only laughing. In the evening Mr Kumbuka went to the club to join his company and drink local beer called '*mnazi*'. His wife told me that it was his daily routine to go there, he could not miss unless he is

very sick. Their two daughters went to fetch water, very far, and could take up to two hours. The woman was preparing food and I was helping her. Their three sons were in the neighbouring village, joining their peers watching football match.

Regarding Mrs Kumbuka's silence before her husband, she told me that she has been told that when her husband is talking she should not speak, especially arguing with him. She said that it is her behaviour. She is not commenting anything to her husband, except agreeing whatever her husband tells her. Mrs Kumbuka believes her silence has contributed to their marriage survival for 15 years now, and they have six children. She gave examples of women who 'did not obey' by observing such manners ended up divorced long time. After a while, the daughters came back, with 20 litres of water each. They joined their mother in other home duties. When the food was ready, we could not eat until the boys came. They came around 9 pm, and therefore we ate. After eating, boys continued with their stories, mostly discussing about the match they watched. Girls washed all dishes. Around 11.30pm Mr Kumbuka came back. Suddenly, he slapped his wife, and she was crying bitterly. The girls were still awake. I could not help myself, and as it just happened I had to ask them what was going on. The elder girl told me that it is normal; when their father comes from drinking he batters their mother.

In the following morning, Mrs Kumbuka and I went to the farm. Their children went to school while Mr Kumbuka went to his businesses. Then, I got a breakthrough for asking her about their relationship. She told me that if it was not her children she could have divorced her husband long time. She said she is trying to please him for everything, but in turn, her husband treats her badly. She even told me that she is not sleeping in the same room with her husband. Whenever her husband 'needs' her sexually, he calls her in his room. Further, in many occasions her husband comes home drunk. He forces her to make love with him, which she no longer enjoys, but just fulfilling the role of being a wife. In the day-time, he locks his room after he has given the family what they can use for the day; such as maize flour, beans, sugar, and the like by measuring them.

For the case of the whole family relationship, Mrs Kumbuka said at least her husband could spare some times to sit and talk to his children (though here it is only boys). She told me that in other families men do not have time to talk to their children. They leave home very early, and some of them come home very late. Those who come back home early cause a lot of tension and chaos to everyone at home. I asked about her escaped daughter and sadly, Mrs Kumbuka expressed her sorrow:

Always when I remember my daughter I just cry. I don't know if she is still alive. She did not perform well with primary school national examinations to qualify her join secondary school. Her father wanted her to marry, and she did not. Everyday her father was rebuking her, insulting her, telling her that she should find a place to live since she did not do well in her studies. After some months of this mistreatment, she ran away.

When I asked Mrs Kumbuka if she was forced to marry, she told me that nobody forced her to marry but she married him only because she did not want to remain unmarried.

This case portrays relationship between men and women in the families, and their relationships to their children; boys and girls. From the case, Mrs Kumbuka said that she was married only because she did not want to remain unmarried, not because she loved her husband. This draws another assumption that, sometimes a woman in Chalinze, even if not forced by her uncle to marry a man she does not love, she marries to a man because she does not want to remain unmarried. This appears to be one of the effects of perception in Chalinze that if a woman is not married, then she is a prostitute. But why do men treat their spouses like this? Do they marry because they love a girl or there are other pressures for them to marry? This could be another point of interest to look at, however, my consideration is on women in Chalinze.

Looking at Mrs Kumbuka's explanation, she told me her husband is often coming home drunkard and forces her to make love with him, which she is no longer enjoy, but just fulfilling the role of being his wife. Moreover, she is sleeping with her husband only when her husband 'needs her'. The husband does not care when her wife 'needs him.' One can ask what kind of marriage is this? A woman seems to be in a marriage to fulfil man's desire, working for him, giving him children, and satisfying him sexually whenever he wants. A woman can not even demand sex in marriage but have to submit to their husband's demands. This also may confirm the *mafiga matatu* (three stones) teachings at the *mkole* where girls are taught to have other lovers beside their husbands for sexual satisfaction when their husbands do not care about their feelings.

### **BLOCKED OPPORTUNITIES**

The case above gives a clue that in Chalinze there are unequal opportunities for education among boys and girls. Boys have all time to study, play and even time to watch football matches. For girls, they start the day very early in the morning by doing some home activities before they go to school. They get to school when they are tired already. After school, no time for their assignments, no time to play, but helping home activities. At the end of the day, they go to bed tired. This suggests that boys are given opportunity for better education in schools, while girls are encouraged to take domestic activities (relate to Osmerah, et al.

1996:21, 39). It is not surprising when girls fail in their school examinations. It seems they are not prepared to succeed. A good example is a twin girl in Mr Kumbuka's family. The situation suggests that she was not given equal opportunity for going to school as her twin brother. As a result, the girl did not do well in her studies. Strangely enough, her failure in the national examination was taken to be a punishment for her whole life. Consequently, she ran away from home. The sad part of this truth is that Chalinze society seems to confirm this situation. It seems all these oppressions are what girls and women in general deserve.

On other circumstances, although both boys and girls attend school if the parents can afford the fees, however, if there is not sufficient money for both to attend, a boy is usually favoured. A girl has to remain home to help her mother in home activities, including taking care of her siblings. Perhaps this is because women are mostly considered as only house wives. Hence, the society does not notice the importance for them to be educated. Despite that the government is always insisting that all children; boys and girls should go to school, the implementation for girls ends in primary schools. When it comes to secondary school education, the situation in Chalinze suggests that they are subjected to marriage. Sometimes this is done without their consent.

Difference access to educational and training opportunities leads to low proportions of women in the formal sector and their subsequent concentration in low paid production jobs with limited career prospects. It also leads to inferiority complex among women in the society since they feel uneducated compared to men. As a result, they cannot argue for anything, even in defending their rights. This complies to the ritual teachings they get, where a woman is not allowed to argue with a man (refer page 31).

When we look at leadership in Chalinze context, women are also excluded in leadership. Leadership is very important aspect especially in making different decisions on different issues in the society. It is from these important leadership positions where women could express and speak about their rights. However, they do not have place in the chances in these leadership positions. This seems to be contributed by the cultural belief that a woman is always considered as a person who cannot make decisions even for herself, and can not lead. Hence she always needs a man to lead her (relate to Kurubai, 2008:59).

In Chalinze, women are also deprived of their rights to inheritance. They do not have the right to inherit land or any property from their parents. They are considered to be belonging to the clans where they are going to marry (relate to Oduyoye, 1995:163). This appears to be another reason to why women feel safe to be married, since in this way they can depend on their husband's properties, including land for their living. However, this does not mean are supposed to own anything from the clan that they are going to marry. All

properties belong to men/husbands. Therefore when a woman is divorced, ends up frustrated because neither does she get anything from her divorced husband, nor does she own anything at her parents' home.

## **2.6 WOMEN'S MORAL EXPECTATION IN CHALINZE COMMUNITY**

In Chalinze, a married woman is expected to do whatever her husband wants her to do, as how the case of Mrs Kumbuka portrays. A woman is expected to be quite, regardless what man is doing to her. My research findings revealed that a woman in Chalinze, if not married, is not expected to have sexual relations. A girl is expected to have her first sexual intercourse on her wedding day. It is shame, not only for a girl, but also for her family when it is realised that a girl has a boyfriend. This becomes more serious if it happens that a girl is pregnant before marriage. That is considered as a big shame to the family, especially if the pregnant girl is not yet gone under the puberty rites. This is not realised in Chalinze only. Oduyoye reports that among the Asante tribe in West Africa, pregnancy is abomination if the puberty rites have not been performed, and the prospective mother and father may be banished (Oduyoye and Kanyoro, 1992:12).

Apart from that, in Chalinze, there are other things which can make a woman to be judged as immoral. During my fieldwork I observed that a woman can be judged to be unethical depending on how she is dressed up. When a girl dresses in a way which is not proper according to Chalinze community, she is perceived as a prostitute, i.e., she is selling herself.

Likewise, a woman can also be suspected as a prostitute when she is seen in some particular places (streets), especially at night. During my field work, I was surprised when I was asked, "Have you got a person already?" just because I was in one of those streets which are categorised as selling sex areas. One of my informants confirmed this. She said It was normal, when a woman is in those areas, everyone perceives her as a prostitute. That suggests that when women are seen in those areas, they are 'for sale'. This suggests that ethics are also reflected in the way women wear and the context.

The description of women in Chalinze shows that social recognition constructed by the existing social norms in the society values men and women differently. They allow realisation of men as superior in the society while women are inferior. Further, even when women's rights are violated, it is like nothing wrong has been done in the society. It seems violence against women is perceived as one of women's rights. Butler, arguing on the question of realisation and derealisation, says that derealisation is one thing to argue, that in the society, certain lives (people) are not considered as lives (people) at all. They cannot be

humanised, they fit no dominant frame for the human. She continues to say that these ‘people’ are dehumanised, and seen as ‘not real’. Their dehumanisation gives rise to a physical violence that in some sense delivers the message of dehumanisation that is already at work in the culture. If violence is done against those who are unreal, then, from the perspective of violence, it fails to injure or negate those lives since those lives are already negated (Butler, 2004:33). Butler sites the example of 200,000 Iraqi children who were killed during the Gulf War and its consequences, i.e., it was like nobody cared of what happened (Butler, 2004:34). This gives an implication that these children were not ‘real’, social norms did not recognise their existence, thus, no death had happened since ‘it happened to unreal people’ (Butler, 2004:34).

Taking this understanding to Chalinze context, it is likely to be that the social norms recognise a woman ‘was made’ to meet man’s requirements; making him happy, satisfying him sexually, serving him, bearing him children, his production tool, etc. ‘A woman’ is just something which was made to satisfy man, not a real person. Hence, when a woman fails to meet her owner’s requirements (husband, father, brother), or if it happens a man is not satisfied by woman’s service, a man can do whatever he wants on her, including beat her, with no question.

## **2.7 SUMMARY**

So far in this chapter, I have described people of Chalinze and their daily activities. I have shown that people are poor, depending on agricultural farming small skills. I have also introduced religions, beliefs, and rituals. After describing people and their beliefs, I lay a thick foundation of gender relations in Chalinze community. This has been done by clear explanation of girls’ initiation rite, its teachings and practices, and its role to the society. I have explained how through the explained rite a girl is constructed to be a woman fits in Chalinze community. Also I have explained how the construction of women leads to gender inequality in the society, and how this affects the whole structure. The effects go even to children preferences and the way girls and boys are raised in the family. It also affects women in having different opportunities, such as inheritances, education, and employment. The whole situation seems to place women in vulnerable to poverty.

Having acquainted with poverty in the society and gender inequality both of which are constructed during the girls’ initiation rite, I consider these two aspects (gender inequality and poverty) and explore how they contribute to prostitution in Chalinze community.

## CHAPTER 3

### 3.0 PROSTITUTION IN CHALINZE: TRADITIONAL UNDERSTANDING

In this chapter, I attempt to show how poverty leads many women into prostitution in Chalinze. Then, I explain how the villagers perceive and handle prostitution. In the chapter, I also explain why people go to traditional doctors. The effects of this would be looked at. Cruel acts against women are also discussed to be a combined consequence of teachings from the girls' initiation rite and treatment from the traditional doctors. Moreover, I will examine how prostitutes struggle for survival in the village. I start the chapter by showing how people in Chalinze associate problems, including prostitution with the ancestors.

### 3.1 POVERTY, PROSTITUTION, AND TRADITIONAL DOCTORS

#### 3.1.1 PROSTITUTION AND THE ANCESTORS

In many African societies such as Chalinze, many problems are associated with the ancestors and the world of spirits. Some scholars observe that many people in African cultures believe that ancestors in the form of spirits can punish the society if the society has done something wrong. This is connected to the idea that prosperity flows from a good relationship with the invisible world (Ellis and Haar, 2004:125). In such societies, according to Ronald M. Green, human misfortune and suffering are commonly explained with reference to the spiritual world. Green writes,

Misfortune in Africa is never merely a 'natural' occurrence ... people do not fall ill, suffer hardship, poverty, or famine, or die just because they have been unlucky or have fallen victim to impersonal natural forces. Rather, these misfortunes are caused by a spiritual entity whose malevolence is motivated in some morally understandable way (Green, 1988:27).

Understanding this perspective is important in a research on prostitution. This is because many of the people in the studied village are said to believe that the moral order of the society is maintained by the world of spirits. This is not unique to the village, it is found with other African communities (see Green, 1988:32). According to Green, the ancestors act as retributive agents to punish moral wrongdoing among living descendants or community members (Green, 1988:28). The belief is that the ancestors can punish the society for misconduct. The punishing spirits/ancestors might cause serious diseases or drought in the society. They may also cause children to be disobedient or even become prostitutes. From such conception, prostitution is said to be caused by the ancestors out of anger against too much freedom ascribe to women in the modern community.

In Chalinze, prostitution is also associated with witchcraft. It is believed that a person can be bewitched and becomes a victim of anything, according to the wishes of the one who bewitched him/her. According to Divyele, an elder in one of the Wang'hwele clans, a person bewitched can become poor, sick, mad, prostitute, be infected with HIV, or even die. The reasons for being bewitched can be quarrels among people, or from sheer jealousy over someone's success. From this belief, a successful woman or a potential successful girl can be bewitched to become a prostitute. Maia Green also wrote about this belief when she researched in Ulanga community in the Southern part of Tanzania. Green observed that the idea of witchcraft is intimately connected to more general notions about morality, sociality, and humanity (Green, 2003:124).

### **3.1.2 POVERTY AND TRADITIONAL AFRICAN DOCTORS**

The field data noted that elders of families and clans mostly handle problems that are associated with spirits/ancestors. These elders usually perform certain rituals to appease the ancestors. Other problems which are believed to have connection with witchcraft are taken to the traditional doctors in hope for solutions. These doctors supposedly possess spiritual ability for solving a wide range of problems. However, they rely upon and consult the divinities for guidance. Socio-economic problems such as difficulty in getting a life partner and poverty are interpreted as a curse, which the traditional doctors are endowed to alleviate. They offer *juju* traditional charm to their clients in the process of removing a curse. This process of removing curses is called '*kuosha nyota*' (cleaning up star). The villagers (Chalinze) believe each person has a star and any misfortune in their life is partly because their star is defiled. Their complex understanding of star might relate to the soul or human spirit.

According to Tboatobo, a traditional doctor in Chalinze, many men visit him 'to clean their stars' in order to be successful in their businesses and become richer. Women use the traditional doctors so that their stars might be purified and hopefully get them good marriages. Sometimes to make their husband love them more and other times to get children. Prostitutes also clean their stars in hope for attracting more clients in their 'jobs'. One can ask himself or herself: If men can go to clean their stars and become rich, why then are women not going to the traditional doctors for the same purpose. Responding to this question, Mrs Kumbuka told me that even if women become rich and successful in their endeavours still everything would go back to the men. Further, my field data noted that a woman in the village is considered as one of the properties a man can own. She supposedly 'belongs' to him, so whatever she has also belongs to him. For the unmarried women, it was observed that many of them do not think they can own properties without the aid of men. Four informants out of five insisted that it was impossible for women to own properties or

run big businesses outside the leadership of some man. I have wondered over what is influencing such mentality. It may have some connections with traditional culture and church practices. Oduyoye might agree with this because she wrote that most African “...women have been brought up to believe that a woman should always have a suzerain, that she should be ‘owned’ by a man, whether he is a father, uncle or husband” (Oduyoye, 1996:4).

In Chalinze, along with *cleaning up stars*, traditional doctors are believed to have ability of helping a person to become rich by giving him *juju* called ‘*chuma ulete*’ (literary means ‘find and bring’). It is said that by using this *juju*, a person miraculously become rich. Rulenga, an administrator in the local government narrated stories in which a person became rich at the expense of another person’s properties. However, Rulenga admitted that belief in the magic power of *juju* make many people not interested in working. At the end only few people strangely become rich and many other adversely remain poor. He also pointed that the traditional doctors in many instances subtly dupe their clients and become better off than them. Rulenga continued to say that the problem is that people have been looking for the easy solution of their problems. Traditional doctors seem to provide such easy solutions.

While traditional doctors are believed to make people rich by giving them *chuma ulete juju*, witches, on the other hand, are believed to have the ability to take people in a miraculous way, mostly at night and make them work in farms. This apparently makes those people very tired when up in the morning and are unable to work efficiently in their normal activities. This may be part of the reasons for extreme poverty in Chalinze community. Ellis and Haar observed similar thing among certain communities in South Africa (Ellis and Haar, 2004:123).

In Chalinze, therefore, many people go to the traditional doctors for help in curing diseases, obtaining wealth, protecting their properties, and also for protecting themselves that they may not be taken by the witches for night work on other villager’s farms. The previous analysis do not only reveal how people in Chalinze trust traditional doctors, but also they reveal how poverty could be linked to the activities of traditional doctors.

## **TRADITIONAL DOCTOR'S CONDITIONS:**

### **APPEASING THE ANCESTORS**

The data from the field noted that in most cases, *juju* from the traditional doctors come with conditions. These conditions are mostly in two categories. The first category is about appeasing the ancestors by giving them blood sacrifice. This includes taking animals or birds to traditional doctors that they may sacrifice their blood to the ancestors. The sacrificial animals and birds include goats and fowls. Sacrifices are usually performed at crossroads. It is believed that, by doing so, all misfortunes might be left at the crossroad. Consequently, people associate crossroads in the village with evil spirits. These spirits are allegedly behind problems, curses, misfortunes, accidents, and even bad manners. What comes clear in from this data is that the village do connect its social problems with the invisible world (spirits). According to the informants, also witches are usually meet at the crossroads. Thus at the crossroads of streets and roads in the village there are supposedly many misfortunes, jinxes and curses. From this belief, many villagers in Chalinze associate witchcraft and misfortune to the big crossroads at the centre of the village. Evil spirits at those crossroads are commonly said to be part of the causes for poverty, moral decadence, and prostitution. According to Mtenda, an elder in one of the Wang'hwele clans, the evil spirits easily attack female villagers because they are apparently the weaker vessels.

The above finding compare with the view that though spirits are invisible, their influences are strongly felt in traditional society ( Ellis and Haar, 2004:52). This belief that at the junctions there are many evil spirits and misfortunes is said to have increased the rate of people who seek spiritual protection from the traditional doctors. Consequently, they get more conditions, and some of them are known to have resulted in female clients having sex with strange people or with their relatives.

### **DEMANDING SEXUAL INTERCOURSE**

While the first category of conditions given by the traditional doctors to their clients is about pacifying the ancestors by giving them blood sacrifice, the second category do with having sexual intercourse. Sometimes, the sexual intercourse has to be done with client's biological daughter or sister, or any other close relative. The belief is that if a client has sex with a girl who is a virgin, then the *juju* works very effectively and fast. This seems to contribute to rape cases in Chalinze. The findings show that fathers, brothers, and other close relatives of girls sexually abuse them.

During my fieldwork, I talked with girls who belong to student union, locally called UKWATA. I gave these girls small papers and asked each girl to omit her name, but write her age and a brief narrative of her first sexual experience if any, and also mention the place and with whom, and also indicate whether the intercourse was forced. To my surprise, most of them had their first sex at a tender age (between 9-13 years old) at home with a close relative. In addition to that, most of the responses indicated that it was a forced sex. Does this have anything to do with the traditional doctors who ask clients to make sex with all sort people to make their *juju* potent?

I also had opportunity to talk with Mbawala, a successful businessperson in Chalinze. He had known me in the community as a Lutheran pastor. Being haunted, as he indicated in our conversation, he confessed to have had sexual intercourse with his biological mother as was required from a traditional doctor in hope to be rich. He confessed to me believing that I could offer some spiritual advice. He appeared repentant when narrating that he got rich to the extent he wanted. Yet he did not have peace in his heart. The traditional doctor allegedly gives him new conditions every so often. Mbawala has been asked to have sex with his two daughters once in a month in order to secure his wealth and he finds this no more bearable. This new change of heart, as he mentioned, was due to the fact one of his two daughters had run away from home after he had raped her twice.

My further research shows that these acts are increasingly more and more. But why the society is quite to such acts which can be seen as against human rights? One of the reasons which were observed during my field research was that many of these acts, even when known, they are not reported. One of the informants, Maria, said that mothers whose daughters are raped, although do not agree with this, do not want to report the case because they feel that reporting it would embarrass their daughters, and it would also prevent men wanting marriage with them. But is this helping the girls? Is it not making the problem worse?

Apart from mothers of the girls to be unwilling to report the cases, the community also, although living a communal life, perceives these cases where a man rapes his daughter as more family issues. So, even when some of the village members know, they do not want to interfere family issues. Furthermore, it is exposed that, as these acts increasingly daily, people perceive as normal acts. One of my informants said that, villagers can report when a man rapes a girl who is not his daughter. But when he rapes his own daughter, people tend to leave those issues to be handled in the family level. My informant continued to say that they call this act as “*amekula kuku na mayai yake*”, which is literally means “a man has eaten chicken and its egg”, where ‘chicken’ represents ‘his wife,’ and ‘egg’ represent ‘his daughter.’ The findings from my

fieldwork show that this saying (...eating chicken and its egg) is very common. This implies that the cases are many, and people are not even getting surprised when they hear such cases. But, if it is clear known that traditional doctors' conditions are the core source of this, why the government authorities are quite about the situation? Is the government not aware of the happenings to its people? Is it not concern to such violent acts? Further research noted that although the government is against of all these violent acts, there is no law which restrict traditional doctors from doing healings. What the government does for is suing whoever is reported to go against human rights. The problem arises is that, many of these cases are not reported.

Again, why do people continue to practice those conditions which seem to humiliate women to such extent? As it can seen in Mbawala's case, there are other people who would like to get rid of these sexual relations with their close relative. But there is dreadfulness that if they withdraw their situation will be even worse (poorer), or even they will die since they have provoked the oracles. In Mbawala's case, he said that, traditional doctor insisted to him that some of the conditions are from the oracles, so they should be fulfilled. Once a person has introduced to such conditions, he or she should not get out. Getting out is also regarded as provoking the oracles. This can draw an assumption that some people are threatened, especially when they are told they will provoke the oracles if they withdraw. So, they keep on fulfilling the traditional doctors' conditions to please oracles.

The field data revealed that there are few families in Chalinze which have complied and are happy with these conditions. Some of the families are even persuading daughters to accept having sexual relations with their biological fathers or any other close relative. One rich family, owning a big transporting company (name of the company withheld since it will reveal the persons) is among the families in Chalinze which agree with this. In this family, the first born has sexual relations with her father. All members of the family and even neighbours know. Members of the family are all happy since this is for the benefit of the whole family, i.e., becoming rich. However, the girl seems to be so much oppressed with this situation. The wife<sup>27</sup> has divorced for being against the plan of the family. Talking to her, she told me that she had been forced to leave her matrimonial home for fear of being attacked by the whole family for being against their plan.

Can this seen as sacrificing a girl to get into sexual relation with her father for the richness of the whole family? Although the whole family is happy for the richness, and although the father provides the girl with every thing she wants (material things), the daughter seems to be left traumatised with the situation. In such

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<sup>27</sup> Mother of the daughter.

circumstances, it is not a surprise when she runs away from home, though the family is rich. This leads to another conclusion that even if the girl is provided with everything, other reasons such as violence can lead her to getting into prostitution.

In traditional doctors, while men are given conditions to have sexual intercourse with their relatives, the findings show that one of the conditions given to women who visit traditional doctors is to have sexual intercourse with the doctors themselves. In these cases, women are told that they are not doing sex with the doctors but the oracles. Being told that it is the oracles who want to have sexual intercourse with them influence women not to object the request of the oracles. In some cases this has resulted to women having children, and the doctors have been telling them that these children are the oracles'. This can be perceived that women's acceptance of doing sex with the traditional doctors might not only because they want to succeed to whatever problem brought them to traditional doctors, but for the fear to anger the oracles, which might bring more disaster to them.

I have so far in this chapter explained how traditional doctors seem to contribute to poverty in the village. One observation that might be deduced from the preceding analysis is that conditions which are given by traditional doctors seem to contribute to prostitution. But what could serve as a fruitful approach to solving prostitution problem in the village? The following section will try to discuss this question.

### **3.2 TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF PROSTITUTION**

As it has been noted above (refer page 43), prostitution is perceived as a punishment from the ancestors. With this understanding, leaders of the clans are always doing rituals on behalf of all people of the clan in handling the problem of prostitution. They are also insisting people not to do things which will anger the ancestors.

The field data show that another measure which is taken by clan leaders is to make sure that women are not given much freedom in the society. This is because it is believed that too much freedom of women leads them to be prostitutes. In addition to that, traditional doctors are consulted to give *juju* for treatment of prostitution. There are some parents who use *juju* for their daughters. Wandema, one of my informants gave her 17-years old daughter this *juju* that she could stop her 'selling herself' business. Wandema said that her daughter was at first shown signs that *juju* had worked. But that did not last longer. Now,

Wandema's daughter has gone back to her 'selling herself' business. I had an opportunity to talk to Wandema's daughter, Sijaona. She told me that she cannot stay at home waiting to die for the situation at home is bad. Thus she decided to go back to her business. She told me:

My sister, I am doing this not for my pleasure, not out of my love, not out of my free will. Moreover, I am not doing this for my own benefit. It is for the whole family. It is for the survival of my three young sisters, and for my child. It is also for my survival and my of mother who is depending on selling firewood business which gives her up to \$1 per day. These are not enough for the whole family.

Basing on Sijaona's case and other field data, it seems to me that what these traditional doctors do in 'treatment of prostitution' is traumatising prostitutes, especially by relating the *juju* with the oracles. Prostitutes become frightened and traumatised. They try to live according to the conditions of the traditional doctors. This seems to be so artificial kind of life. However, the real life situation, poverty, makes them not bear it. They feel prepared to whatever punishment they will get from the oracles.

### **TRADITIONAL DOCTORS AND WOMEN IN CHALINZE**

Although people trust traditional doctors and consult them in search of solutions to their problems, the treatments in most cases seem to oppress and humiliate women so much. These doctors associate witchcraft<sup>28</sup> with women. Apart from that, the big issue is how the conditions from the traditional doctors humiliate women and motivate them to prostitution. Though we can see treatment from traditional doctors as abuse against women, the findings show that many people continue to go to these doctors daily. Many businesspersons seek *juju* for their businesses to succeed, workers seek promotions and political leaders, especially during elections, go there to get *juju* to win in the elections, and people with different problems go to traditional doctors to get solutions. Married women have not given up in finding solutions for protecting their marriages; prostitutes are also continuing to seek *juju* from these doctors that they can get many customers.

Why do people keep on going? One of the reasons can be deduced from the preceding data that when people have introduced to go to the traditional doctors, they are frightened that they must continue to go, rather their condition become worse. Another reason might be peoples' faith in traditional doctors. They believe that traditional doctors' *jujus* work. When it happens that the *juju* has not worked, people tend to think that perhaps there are some conditions which have not properly fulfilled.

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<sup>28</sup> Witchcraft is not going to be much explained in this thesis.

### **3.3 CRUEL ACTS AGAINST WOMEN AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO PROSTITUTION**

In this section, I will explain how the combination of traditional ritual teachings and traditional doctors' treatments are likely to contribute to cruel acts to women in Chalinze village, and hence put them vulnerable to prostitution.

#### **3.3.1 RAPING AND SEXUAL ABUSE**

Consider Sitakiwi, a girl who was only 15 years old when she entered in a sex-selling business. Most of the time, her family was unhappy. Her father turned alcoholic and frequently beat her mother, and her mother constantly gave excuses for her husband's behaviour. Sitakiwi would hide in fear when she heard her father approaching for she knew that he would harshly batter her mother in any way he want. Her mother was afraid to divorce. Her father was unable to hold onto a job, so there was never enough food in the house. Sitakiwi felt very insecure and alone. She found home intolerable. At school, she felt awkward in her torn clothes; yet, school offered a refuge from the trauma at home.

One day after school when her mother went to collect firewood from the bush, Sitakiwi found she was alone with her father. Her father approached her while she was alone in her room and forcefully started undressing her. She was raped. Sitakiwi was only 9 years old at that time. This continued for the next six years, always accompanied by her father's threat, "If you tell anyone, I'll kill you." Sitakiwi's sense of self continued to deteriorate and no one understood why she did so poorly in school. At the age of 15, Sitakiwi decided to run away from home. Thus, she went to Dar es Salaam, and she worked as a house-girl in Mr Pindua's house, and she was paid \$10 per month. Nevertheless, Mr. Pindua started seducing her. Sitakiwi declined, and her boss become very angry and finally fired her. Failing to get another job in Dar es Salaam, Sitakiwi decided to return to Chalinze.

Few days after her arrival in Chalinze, a man offered to take her to his home so she enjoys some social comfort. Life was seemingly comfortable and promising in her newly found apartment. After a week, her friend began to bring home pornographic movies, which they would watch for hours. After some weeks, her man told her that she needed to pay him back for his kindness. He wanted her to go out and practice what they saw on the videos. She was to come back each night with a certain amount of money. If she tried to run away he would tell his street friends and her life would be endangered. Sitakiwi finally, made her way into the world of prostitution.

I would agree that the above data is an evidence of domestic violence and among the social problems that girl's experience in village. The family is supposed to be the basic unit of the society where there is support, love, and care for its members. Yet, the above data appears to indicate a different sort of family relations. Has the family turned to be an oppressive institution? One might even see the presented data as an indicative of mistrust and suspicion within some families in the village. The data also compare with a research that was done in Eastern and Central Africa, which observed that women are in more danger in their own families than their male counterparts (Osmerah, et al, 1996:29). In the similar way, research which was carried out on *Human Sexuality, Marriage and Prostitution*, Bernadette Mbuy Beya observed that domestic violence is one cause of prostitution with the danger of being infected with sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Beya says that an abused, battered wife is compelled to flee from her husband, and often she has no other recourse if she hopes to support herself (Oduyoye and Kanyoro, 1992:167). In Chalinze, this seems to extend to the children, especially girls.

Similar question asked in the section of *Demanding sexual intercourse*, (refer page 48) can raised again: Why are all these cruel acts happening in the community, yet the there is no measure taken by the authorities? The interviews revealed that many women and girls abused do not see the importance of reporting these issues because they think nothing will be done. On the contrary, Maria, a teacher in Chalinze secondary school said that it is because many women do not know laws which protect them. She said that even those who know the laws do not report such abuse because there is misused bureaucracy which cause cost of time and money. Similarly, there are others who do not report such cases because they are either threatened, or fear to bring shame to the family, especially when the one who violated others' rights is a member of the family.

Talking to the one of the officials of Tanzania Media women's Association (TAMWA), she said that it is very sad that many of these issues happen in the society, and the society is just quiet. Perhaps this is because all these issues are considered as family issues. She said that her organisation (TAMWA) is trying to educate women on their rights, and that they should speak out whenever they are abused. However, it seems women still fear or discouraged by men.

From the data above, one can argue that ending domestic violence and cruel acts to women will need women themselves to be open up and be ready to confront men on their cruelty. Oduyoye challenges women's silence in the injustice structures, she argues that women should speak up since this is the way to liberation (Oduyoye, 1995:33).

### 3.3.2 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Raping and sexual abuse are not all about violence in the family. As I have pointed above, there are some other brutal actions that are done in the family which make some of the members of the family, mostly girls to run away from their own families. One of my informants, Mwajuma, told me that she could never have a baby because of what her divorced husband had done to her. Mwajuma said that she was married, but her husband was too harsh to her. “Apart from many punishments he was giving me, he was always beating me like a drum,” Mwajuma said. She also said that one of those beatings were very severe and caused Mwajuma’s two-month pregnancy to abort. Her husband did not take her to the hospital for treatment for he knew that she could not get any treatment until she signs Police Form 3 (PF 3), which will mean to report the case to the police station. He decided to treat Mwajuma with local medicine. Consequently, her husband divorced her because she could not give him children. Mwajuma is now depending on prostitution for life.

I had an opportunity to talk to Upendo, a nurse in Chalinze dispensary about this kind of life in the village. She told me that it is very sad that women are treated like a certain machine or a kind of properties. Upendo said that many men tend to value women when they think they can gain or have a certain satisfaction or benefit from them. When the value of a woman seems to be diminished, a man just throw a woman like how he could throw another property which has expired. In the case of Mwajuma, for example, though her husband is responsible for her disability of having a baby, still the husband think Mwajuma has no value because she can not give him children, and so he ‘threw her away’, and probably get a new ‘property’ which can give him children.

I also asked her about what are women themselves say about the situation. Upendo said that apart from violent acts which are done to them, there are some behaviour which even women themselves do not seen as violence. For example, beating wives is not seen as violence. It is considered as a sign of love (also see Osmerah, et al, 1996:15). Being raised up in the neighbouring village, this was not new to me. But one can ask, what kind of love is it when one keeps beating one’s spouse, to a extend that it causes her agony and sometimes disabilities? What kind of love is it when is very brutal? Is there any love in beating a pregnant woman and cause her abortion?

Upendo continued to say that there are some men who restrict their wives from doing office work. One of my informants who was working in the National Bank of Commerce said that her husband told her to

choose between office job and marriage, i.e., if she chooses work with the bank, her husband was to divorce her. She decided to choose marriage. Men restricting their wives from work in the offices are not seen as violence. Even some women themselves think it is out of love. However, this creates an environment where women depend only to men, which in return, other violence acts start.

It is amazing that men restrict their wives from work in the offices, but not from domestic and agricultural activities. Conversely, all what women do, whether domestic or agricultural duties seem not to be considered as contributions to the family economy. They are unappreciated and unpaid, and instead taken to be their home responsibility and also only a sign of love for their families. This confirms Buckley's argument, that women's functions in the homes is not natural but a social and political construction that manipulates them to the point that they are kept in fixed situations to engage in the work that is an extension of their domestic roles (Kalven and Buckley, 1984:6). In the same way, Nantawan Lewis commented that:

...traditional gender role are historically create the sexual division of labour which puts women in the domestic sphere, assuming the sole function of reproduction, and naturally places men in the public sphere of production, attached with prestige, power and authority. This results in the infliction of a double bondage for women: domestication and social retardation. The domestication of women involves women not only in being responsible for household work which is economically invisible but also in being sexually attractive to men. The later allows our societies to tolerate and accept the commoditization of women's bodies in the sexual business (Forenza and Carr, 1987:68).

I have explained the violent acts against women in the domestic sphere and their effects. There is another area where violence against women is highly observed. This is where young women and girls work for very low payments. The following section explains this.

### **3.3.3 UNDERPAID AND SEXUAL ABUSED JOBS**

In Chalinze, girls who have primary schools qualification commonly work as house maids. They are specifically known as house-girls. The field data show that many house-girls in Chalinze, in spite of being underpaid, they are also sexually abused in their work places. Often, household males (including sons, fathers, and male neighbours) force house-girls into sex, based on a belief that house-girls are not infected with sexually transmitted diseases since most of them are very young. In many cases, the girls are threatened with losing their jobs if they refuse sex with their bosses or other males occupants. However, once these girls become pregnant, they are usually chased out of their domestic work place into the streets or back to their villages. Many of these end up in commercial sex works due to economic strains.

Another group of girls are those who are working in bars. The field transcript noted that these girls are forced to wear clothes which attract customers (mostly men). They are also obligated to agree to whatever the customers want to do to their bodies, including touching them gently in a romantic way, etc. They are not allowed to decline what the customers want, lest they lose their jobs. The customers manipulate the bar maids and manipulate them into sexual acts. These girls are despised in the society, perceived as only prostitutes who rob husbands from their wives. Apart from manipulating sexual environment, they are also paid very low amount which is not possible to make them survive until the next payment.

### **3.3.4 CHILDLESS IN THE MARRIAGE**

In Chalinze in Chalinze, marriage is always expected to have children. With this definition of a marriage, it seems that after marriage, the whole society looks forward to see a married woman becoming pregnant after few months. If that happens, people say that '*ndoa imejibu*,' literary means 'the marriage has brought an answer.' When it happens that a husband cannot impregnate his wife, the clan members (mostly extended family of the husband) force the wife to have sex with one of the relatives of her husband to bear her husband children, hence, to cover his shame. It is considered a shame for a man not to be able to impregnate a woman. On the other hand, if the problem of bearing children is from a woman's side, she is divorced, and the whole family would support this. She is said to be of no benefit to the family. According to Anna, a divorced woman because she is barren, this sometimes tempt women to apply a philosophy of '*kitanda hakizai haramu*' (every child born in wedlock belongs to the husband of the wife' (refer page 32), especially when they realise that their husbands cannot impregnate them. In other occasions, women have visited traditional doctors for the belief that they can help them get children to save their marriages. In this way, one might not be wrong when think that a woman in this society is regarded as just a fertile field in which a man plants his seeds. When it happens that a woman is barren, she is considered useless as she was equated to an infertile field that would always exploit the owner (man)

The data presented in this chapter can bring a major argument that women's rights seem to be violated, mostly due to gender inequality in the society. Gender inequality distorts the quality of human relations, and it continues to deny the parity between women and men, or to accept female and male as equivalent expressions of being human (also see Oduyoye, 1995:34, 63). How this situation may change to bring equality in the society?

I have noted above the situation and environments that make women vulnerable to prostitution in Chalinze. However, the situation which make all these possible seem to be gender inequality in the society, which

play a great role in making women very poor in the society. The following section explores some of the acts that are done to prostitutes by their customers.

### **3.4 THE STRUGGLES OF PROSTITUTES IN UNCERTAIN ENVIRONMENTS**

Poverty plays an integral part in the problem of prostitution. Most girls who become prostitutes are from poor families in the village. Prostitutes are vulnerable to diseases, arrest and frustration from the police officers. They are also despised by the society. Furthermore, most of their customers treat them harshly. In the case of Mwajuma above, she further told me that she is doing her 'selling-herself' business in a very difficult situation because there is high competition as many young girls have joined the business, hence the customers would prefer them over the old women. In that sense, Mwajuma has to agree with whatever the customer wants, otherwise she loses her customer. These include doing sex without condom, if that is the wish of the customer. It seems, because of poverty sex workers have little power to negotiate how they should do sex, including the use of condoms. Supporting this, Zainabu, one of my informants whom I made her a friend said, "Sometimes some of my customers enjoy putting an empty bottle of beer in my vagina. In fact, they do many other traumatising acts to us. Because we need money, we have to accept. Sometimes they treat us as if we are animal." But why a human being be treated like this? Is it because another person has paid his money 'to buy' her? Can a value and dignity of a person equated to money?

This kind of treatment to the prostitutes proves that they are forced by the circumstances to engage into prostitution. Beya, who argues that it is very rare for a man to treat prostitutes with a respect, also observed this (see Oduyoye and Kanyoro, 1992:169). Similarly, Dorcas Akintunde argues that African women prostitutes do not have the power to negotiate for safe sex with their clients. They are treated like objects because the services they offer to their clients are paid for. Akintunde continues to say that prostitutes' immediate need for money to cater for basic needs for themselves and their children, force them surrender to unprotected sex (Phiri et al, 2003:108). This is the life of the prostitutes. They risk their lives in every minute. This also seems to increase women's vulnerability to STD's, including HIV/AIDS, which leads to more poverty in the society.

Apart from that, prostitutes lose their dignity. While African woman is a wife and mother, and that it is by bringing children into the world that she wins respect (refer page 36), for prostitutes' motherhood is misfortune. A child is regarded as an obstacle. For this matter, abortion, mostly in local way is normal to prostitutes. This sometimes results to healthy problems, and even deaths. On the other hand, the field data

show that in most cases, for those prostitutes who get children, their children are left to fend themselves, growing untended, and when they are old enough, they begin working on the streets with their mothers (Oduyoye and Kanyoro, 1992:169).

### **3.5 SUMMARY**

In this chapter, I have described how the villagers perceive and handle prostitution in Chalinze. I have tried to show that for many of the villagers, prostitution is a curse and punishment to society. As one of the main problems in the community, I have tried to show how traditional doctors handle prostitution. I have also described how hopes in the traditional doctors contribute to prostitution in area. Furthermore, I have shown how the conditions given by the traditional doctors tend to adversely affect the women in Chalinze, and how majority of them end up in prostitution. In the chapter, I have also exposed cruel acts done to women as a combination result of passiveness teachings from the girls' initiation rites and beliefs in the traditional doctors. Being poor may force women into making difficult choices that makes them vulnerable to prostitution.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **4.0 CHURCH UNDERSTANDING OF PROSTITUTION**

In this chapter, I intend to reflect on the position of the church towards prostitution in Chalinze. I start by giving a brief survey of how women have been perceived in the church from historical context. In the chapter, I also explore how interpretations of some biblical texts in Chalinze local church seem to justify women's subordination to men, and what influence the interpretation has on prostitution. I also intend to show the perception and handling of prostitution in Chalinze by the church. At the end of the chapter I will explain the ideal role of the church in the society. This will be done mostly by using the arguments of different scholars.

### **4.1 RELIGION AND PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM IN THE HISTORY**

Joseph Runzo and Nancy Martin explain that religion or religious tradition consists of a complex set of social elements. These include symbols and rituals, myths and stories, concepts and truth claims, which community believes they give ultimate meaning to life by connecting the religious adherent to a transcendent (Runzo and Martin, 2001:19). However, these traditions create discrimination to some group(s) among their believers. In Christianity, one of the discriminated groups has been women. This is due to the influence of patriarch system in the church, as how it is explained by Rosemary Ruether below.

Rosemary Ruether traces the background of patriarchal Christianity that came to dominate the Christian Church in classical orthodoxy. She explains that a patriarchal system completely denies women's participation in the image of God because women are considered to be bearers of sin and therefore less spiritual (Ruether, 1983:94). Ruether points to Augustine as the classical source of patriarchal anthropology. According to Ruether, Augustine of Hippo held that even though a woman can attain salvation, she still remains inferior, for she is sin-prone, and she is only secondarily in the image of God while the male normatively possesses the image of God (Ruether, 1983:96). Aquinas, in the same manner, continued with the Augustinian tradition by justifying the inferiority of women using pseudo-biological argument whereby referring to women's reproductive role as the 'subversion by female matter' to produce a 'defective human species'; female. For him, a woman is inferior in every way. This includes a weak body, less capable of reasoning, and being morally inferior. This inferiority, he contended, is compounded by sin (Ruether, 1983:96).

Similarly, Ackermann, in “Women Hold up Half the Sky: Women in the Church in Southern Africa” explains that patriarchy is found in all cultures, even in theology where God’s voice is ‘the voice of man.’ Admittedly, in theological circles, God as a father is perceived as the ‘great patriarch in heaven’, who rules over human beings on earth (Ackermann et al, 1991:96).

Along with that, Njoroge, writing on “An African Christian Feminist Ethic of Resistance and Transformation” says that missionaries also have their contribution to women inferiority in church domain. According to her, in many African societies the traditional teaching of missionary initiated churches propagated the notion that women’s important role was in the domestic and not in the public domain (Njoroge, 2000:58-102). This agrees to what James had observed, that during missionaries’ times, women who became Christians were taught how to make tea, gardening, cleaning and nursing children of the whites as ayahs. This was then expanded in the church, so women in the church were cleaning the church building, arranging flowers and other care services. According to James, this has extended until now. Many women see their role in the church as cleaning the church building, and arranging flowers (Getui and Obeng, 2003:110-111; see also Kobia, 2003:115-129). In this way, missionaries’ teachings used suggestive biblical passages to domesticate women’s minds. Following that trend, African Church which is highly patriarchal and (some churches) had experienced missionaries in different periods has continued to use the same strategy to ensure control of women in the church. Oduyoye and Kanyoro observed that the attitudes of controlling women in church have been taken for granted from the period of the early church. Further, such attitudes were confirmed by the socio-cultural influences of communities that have embraced Christian religion. Those churches continued to misapply generic terms to promote male supremacy over female, who were already experiencing unfair treatment in various spheres of their lives (Oduyoye and Kanyoro, 1992:140).

In Chalinze, women’s discriminations and oppressions in the church are most likely to be contributed by the interpretations of some of the biblical texts, together with male dominance which exists in the society. The following section shows how the interpretations of some of the biblical texts seem to empower male dominance in Chalinze community towards women subordination.

## **4.2 INTERPRETATION OF BIBLICAL TEXTS**

In her book, “Beads and Strands: Reflections of an African on Christianity in Africa”, Mercy Oduyoye shows how biblical interpretations have been used to reinforce the traditional socio-cultural oppression of

women (Oduyoye, 2004:92). She says that the church in Africa continues to use the Hebrew Scriptures and the epistles of Apostle Paul to reinforce the norms of traditional religion and culture (Oduyoye, 2004:91). This sounds to be in many parts of Africa. In the writings *Understanding Human Sexuality*, Otutubikey Izugbara states:

The ascription of a powerfully significant first position to men intervenes to silence women and to discourage other oppositional tendencies. Religious narratives depict man as God's first born, who was created to dominate the earth. Woman is only as a second thought, to provide comfort to the domineering active man. This discourse which surrounds creation in Christian texts spills into their constructions of sexuality and sexual identities (Izugbara, 2004:13).

In Chalinze, just like the societies, some of the biblical texts seem to be interpreted in a way which supports women's subordination to men. The field data noted that texts are from the epistles of Apostle Paul, especially those texts where Paul teaches on submissiveness of women and that women should not talk neither teach in the church (e.g., 1Corinthians 14:34f; 1Peter 3:1; 1Timothy 2:11f) are used to justify women's subordination in the society. The interpretations of these texts go with the belief that in the Old Testament, God put it clear that man is destined to be in charge and women to be governed by men, "...and he shall rule over you" (Genesis 3:16).

Apart from that, women's obedience to men, as how I have pointed out in chapter two, has been used to support subordination of women in the church in Chalinze. In chapter two, it was said that women's obedience to their husbands is emphasised to avoid quarrels in the families, and hence maintaining peace and harmony in the families and in the society in general. However, the field data show that some men seem to take this for granted, become so aggressive to their wives. It is surprising that when the church teaches women's obedience to men, texts such as, "*Men love your wives as how Jesus loved the church*" and "*Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh to them*" (Ephesians 5:25, Colossians 3:19) are not taken into consideration. If the intention of the church of Chalinze is to maintain peace in the families and the society, why the texts which emphasise men to love their wives are not emphasised? Is it not from true love that the quarrels would be avoided?

### **4.3 OBEDIENCE TO CHURCH AUTHORITY**

Interpretations of biblical texts go hand in hand with people's trust on the religious leaders. People trust and obey whatever religious leaders tell them even what they are told seems to oppress them. People believe

that religious leaders represent God on earth. The field data noted that, where there is government pronouncement and church pronouncement, it is obviously that the church pronouncement will be observed over the government one.

In supporting of how people trust what they are told by the religious leaders, Zainabu, one of my informants told me that her marriage was broken due to the preaching of one servant of God.<sup>29</sup> According to Zainabu, the servant of God preached on connection of golden materials to the evil spirits. “The servant of God told us that gold has connection to evil spirits, so, having anything made from golden materials is opening a door for evil spirits in the life. Therefore, saving from this situation is by submitting all golden things to the servant of God that he can pray and burn them,” said Zainabu. She continued to say that honestly she submitted her golden ring to the servant of God because she did not want to open the door for evil spirits in her family. However, this opened a door for her divorce since her husband did not understand her story.

This proposes how people obey and trust in whatever they are told by the religious leaders. One might come to a conclusion that the trust people have in the religious leaders makes them obey even when the teachings in churches discriminate and oppress them. On the contrary, it is surprising that although people observe and believe in everything they are told by their religious leaders, people are still observing and keeping traditional teachings and the cultural practices. Why has been difficult for the church to eradicate the teachings in the traditional ritual teachings and practices? Further research revealed that people believe there is a direct communication between people and divinities in these two domains (in church and in the ritual teachings). What counts on which should be observed most depends on the worldview and attitude of the people.

It seems that the church has not yet been able to change people’s worldview on traditional beliefs. This can be seen even to where people go to seek a help when they have problems. In chapter three, I have tried to show how people go to traditional doctors for different problems. Seeking help from the traditional doctors seems to imply that many people in the village put their faith in traditional beliefs more than in Christ or Muhammad. Christianity or Islam may turn into merely ‘form religions’, but its ‘meaning’ is not in

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<sup>29</sup> In Chalinze a preacher who is neither a pastor nor an evangelist is referred as servant of God. In most cases, these servants of God preach in special programs after Sunday services. These services, though they are in Lutheran church, but the teachings and emphasises are of the Pentecostal churches.

peoples' worldview. It seems that people (Christians) go to worship in churches as mere formalities, but their faith is in traditional beliefs, and that is where they go to seek help when they are in troubles.

Similarly, people seem to be still keenly observing what they are told and taught in the traditional rituals than in the church. As a result, people have been combining the two; teachings in the traditional rituals and Christian teachings. A combination of traditional teachings on marriages and church preaching on women's obedience to men make women more passive, and become vulnerable to oppression and violence against them. Sometimes this has placed women into vulnerability to prostitution.

Another informant, Mariam, was talking to me while sick, and was laid on a mat. She told me that her husband abandoned her and their children for couple of years, went town to 'spend'.<sup>30</sup> Mariam reported the issue to her husband's family and to other places where she thought she could get help to restore their marriage. She did not get any help, rather, she was told to be patient. She decided to seek a help from church. There she was told the same words; that she should be patient. After three years her husband came and asks reunion. She refused. Mariam told me that she had no love for her husband for what he had done to her. She also feared to be infected by the STD's her husband might be contaminated. However, the family and the church compelled her to reunite her husband. "The pastor told me that I have to obey my husband, and that it is only death which can separate us," said Mariam bitterly. She then cried bitterly as she told me that last year, a year after reunion with her husband, her husband died of AIDS. She told me that she is now very disappointed. She said:

I have lost hope in my life. I am only waiting for my day to die. I am very sorry for my children. They are still very young. I cannot help them any more for I am very weak now. I feel so bad when I see that I have to depend on my 16 and 14 years old daughters for food and paying rent of our room, while I know that they are not employed. I know that they get all those money for selling them selves. I feel very bad, but I do not have anything else to do.

Looking to a role the church has played in this case give a clue that sometimes the church has stuck in her theology of tolerance and perseveres in the marriage, not bothering to find the core problem and try to solve it. Is perseverance the only advice the church can give to the couples, especially in cases like Mariam's case? Ideally, the church wants marriages to last forever, until death separates the couples, as how it is suggested in the wedding liturgy in the *Mwimbieni Bwana* (2004:322).<sup>31</sup> However, the ways and strategies

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<sup>30</sup> To 'spend' is a term used to mean a person using money in a luxurious way and sometimes becomes extravagant.

<sup>31</sup> This is a Lutheran Hymns' book for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. It also has liturgies for different occasions of the Lutheran services.

the church is using appear to be biased and oppressive to women. In most cases, church leaders keep on telling the couples 'to carry their crosses to the end'. One can asks himself or herself, "Is this the only advice that the church can offer the couple? Is the church blind to see how this has turned marriages to be oppressive places to women? Sometimes, this has led even to more problems. In the case above, the church seems to have played a role in Mariam's HIV infection, since even when Mariam showed her hesitation to re unite with her husband, the church kept on saying that she must re unite with him, for, "*...it is only death which can separate them...(Mwimbieni Bwana, 2004:322)*" and that Mariam, as a wife "*...does not rule over her own body, but husband does (1Corinthians 7:4).*" The impacts of this have not ended to Mariam, but to her daughters as well. From the case, it has been noted that Mariam's daughters have been involved in prostitution since their mother is no longer able to take care of them.

Church's theology of perseverance and tolerance in marriages seems to be observed very well in Chalinze community. Five informants out of fifteen said that they live in their marriages only because they are pressurized by their families and their religious leaders to stay. Three informants told me that they are tolerating in their marriages because they do not have anywhere to go and also they do not have anything to support their lives. Other three informants said that they are tolerating and continuing to stay in their marriages for the sake of their children. They think if they chose to leave, their children will suffer more. Two informants said they continue to live with their husbands only because they fear the shame in the society of failing to live with their husbands. On the other hand, two informants said they are happy with their husbands in their marriages. From this statistic, only two informants said they are happy with their husbands in their marriages. This suggests that in many marriages there is no love between husband and wife. They live together only for other reasons, including pressure from the church leaders. These kinds of marriages seem to open a door for application of the philosophy of '*mafiga matatu*' (three stones) which women are given in the traditional teachings in the initiation rite (refer page 32).

Likewise, Mariam's case above also depicts how sometimes interpretation of obedience might lead to negative effects to the society. Isabel Phiri observed that some Evangelical Christian women do not argue anything with their husband, even in sexual matters, for, "A good Christian woman does not deny her husband's sexual advances except for prayer." Phiri says that, such beliefs disempowering Christian married women in challenging their husband's infidelity (Phiri et al, 2003:13).

So far, I have explored the some of the outcomes of interpretation of some biblical texts and people's obedience to the church authorities in Chalinze. On the other hand, as other churches and most of world religions, the local church in Chalinze has been very strict to keep the Christian ethics. The following section explores church's moral expectation to women in Chalinze.

## **WOMAN'S MORAL EXPECTATION IN THE CHURCH**

One of the important aspects which religions are very aware of them is sexual morality. Most world religions have sought to address the moral issues that arise from people's sexuality in society and in human interactions. Each major religion has developed moral codes covering issues of morality. Runzo and Martin explain that moral meaning is an inextricable part of any religious meaning of life, and moral structures are a critical part of religious conceptions of the structure of reality. So, part of what it means to follow the religious life is to follow the moral life (Runzo and Martin, 2001:19).

In Chalinze, what determines woman's morality in church does not differ from what a woman is expected to be in the society (refer page 41). On the sexual relations, while a married woman is expected not to have sexual relations with other men than her husband, an unmarried woman is expected not to have any sexual relationship before she is married. If it is realised that the unmarried woman has sexual relations with a certain man, she is counted as a prostitute, a sinner whom disciplinary actions have to be taken against her. This becomes more serious if she becomes pregnant before marriage.

## **4.4 CHURCH AND PROSTITUTION**

### **4.4.1 PERCEPTION**

During my field, I noted that, in the church, prostitutes are related with negative opinions, and that they are the most sinners. The situation shows that the church is more condemning prostitutes than looking to the situation which makes them to be in prostitution. However, this seems to draw its background from how people are raised and treated. In many Christian families in Chalinze, children are taught that they should not discuss about sexual issues because it is a sin. These teachings are also taught in non Christian families, basing on cultural ethics, that discussing sex is immoral and dirty. Consequently, from the 'dirtiness of sexuality', it has been difficult to discuss on sexual matters in any level; in religious domain 'it is a sin', while in the cultural domain 'it is not ethical'. The negative teachings about sex contribute to young women

falling in sexual relations blindly. It also seems to contribute in perceiving the prostitutes as the most sinners in Chalinze society.

On the question of the reasons for prostitution in Chalinze, the Lutheran church in Chalinze perceives it as more related to moral decay which is mostly influenced by the new technology. Rev. Mahimbo said that some years ago 'at their times' the moral situation was not like nowadays. He said that nowadays is like whatever pastors and other preachers preach is nullified by new technology, including television and internet. According to Rev. Mahimbo, in the village, there are some television shows where young people go and watch and see different things, including dress styles, and even pornographies videos and apply them.

Talking on how this affect young people in Chalinze community, Rev. Mahimbo said, "You can see how girls wear nowadays. It is not surprising to see a girl in mini skirt, short, or trouser. This is not our way of dressing. It is unethical! This is tempting to men. No wonder when you hear a girl is raped." In supporting of this, Mwenda, an evangelist in the Lutheran church in Chalinze argued that parents contribute a lot on moral decay in the community for they give too much freedom to their daughters, and do not insist them to attend church programmes.

Looking at how different people perceive and deal with the issue of prostitution in Chalinze, I wanted to know how the Pentecostals deal with it. Thus, I talked to pastor Gumbo of the Free Pentecost Church in Chalinze. Pastor Gumbo said that, apart from Pentecostals associating prostitution with moral decay in the society, they also link it to the sins and curses of the fore fathers from many generations back in the society. This means, for them, prostitution is the result of sins and curses of the forefathers of a specific family, clan or the whole society. Pastor Gumbo said that, a girl can be possessed or affected by these sins and curses whether she likes or not. So, a girl gets into prostitution automatically, unless the 'root of the sin'<sup>32</sup> is cut off. The sins and curses which affect women and put them into prostitution turn to be 'a prostitution demon'. Helping women and girls who have been possessed by these prostitution demons is done by rebuking and casting out the prostitution's demons out of the girls and also by praying that the roots of sins and curses which lead women into prostitution are uprooted.

The notion of prostitution in Pentecostals is more like how the traditionalists perspective it. They both connect prostitution to some kind of spirits' forces behind, and also with the dead people (ancestors). While the traditionalists perceive that the ancestors can punish the living ones and make them fall into

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<sup>32</sup> Root of sins here are referred to the sin of the forefathers which are believed to affect the living people.

prostitution, Pentecostals say that the sins of the ancestors can affect the living ones, if not repented. In the same way, rebuking the prostitution demons in the Pentecostals matches with the way some of the treatments by the traditional doctors are done, such as talking direct to the ancestors (spirits). In this way, it is like Pentecostals replace traditionalists in a Christian way. No wonder nowadays many Christians go to the Pentecostals than the Lutheran Church. They see Pentecostals match to what they believe is the right way of dealing with the problems. This can be confirmed by the research carried out in South African societies. This research observed that one of the important reasons for the popularity of new movements is because people are searching for a place where they can get solutions to their problems, and many of these new movements, like in traditional doctors, promise solutions for contemporary problems (Ellis and Haar, 2004:95).

#### **4.3.2 CHURCH DISCIPLINE**

My field transcripts noted that in Chalinze, judging and condemning prostitutes go with some ways to discipline them. In chapter two I have explained that one of the measures which are taken to a person under church discipline is not allowed to per take the Holy Communion until when she/he has repented. The repentance has to be in front of the congregation that congregants may witness her repentance. Ideally, church disciplines all who have gone against Christian ethics. However, the implications appear to favour men and only apply to women. For example, in the cases of pregnancy outside wedlock as how it has been briefly explained in chapter two, it is always a woman who disciplined for 'her sin'. However, the responsible man for impregnating her is always not included in the disciplinary action. Sometimes a woman mentions who is responsible for the pregnancy but no action is taken to the father of the child. This suggests that the perception of many people and the church is that men are not responsible for the sin of sex outside wedlock, but only women.

During my field research I talked to different people on the issue of church discipline and its measures, focusing on the prostitutes and girls who become pregnant before marriages. Mwenda, an evangelist in the Lutheran church said that it is very necessary to keep church ethics by putting prostitute under church discipline. According to Mwenda, prostitutes bring shame to the church since prostitution is one of the major sins which put the church into shame. "As leaders of the church," he said, "we have to keep the holiness of the church." Mwenda also said that the bible teachings come in stronger on prostitution since it regards prostitution as sexually immoral. He said, "Sexual immorality can lead to all kinds of depraved sin. That is why God instructed sex to be only practiced between husband and wife." He continued to say while

referring to some biblical texts, “People who practice prostitution and adultery will not inherit the kingdom of God as how it is written in Galatians 5:19-21. So, when we isolate them in spiritual services we remind them that the sin they had done has separated them from the Kingdom of God until they repent.” Likewise, Kusaka, a church elder compared the church and the prostitutes as the light and darkness, and said that light and darkness cannot stay together.

The presented data seem to reveal that the church does not want to mingle with the prostitutes because the church is holy while prostitutes are sinners. But perception of ‘holy church’ in regard to the case of prostitution in Chalinze can raise a question: What is the holy church in Chalinze? Perhaps those people who are not under church discipline just because they are not counted as sinners, according to the canon of the Chalinze church are what is referred as the ‘the holy church’. One can ask: Is a prostitute sinner more than all others who are not under the church discipline? What about those men who buy sex from these women but are not disciplined? Are they not among the ‘holy church’, going to church and celebrating all spiritual services without any questions?

In the following section I explain how the church in Chalinze relates to prostitutes. I start the section by giving an illustration drawn from a movie, which depicts cues of church-prostitutes relations in Chalinze.

#### **4.4.3 CHURCH-PROSTITUTES RELATIONS**

The preceding discussion on how the church perceives prostitutes and the disciplinary measures the church use against them constitute an essential aspect of the relations between the church and prostitutes in the village. The movie, ‘*KAHABA*’ (means Prostitute) presents a pastor who ministers to the prostitutes. The movie featured three main characters; church officials, a pastor, and a prostitute. The church officials sent a pastor for a meeting in the city. The pastor changes the mission of attending meeting in the city, and goes into the streets, looking for prostitutes to provide counselling or ‘rehabilitation’, as he calls it in the movie. Thinking that the pastor was interested in paid sex, the prostitute treated the pastor as a potential client and asked, “How much will you pay? The pastor replies, “How much do you want?” He pays what the prostitute wanted. The pastor took her to a hotel. His intention for getting her in the hotel room was not for prostitution. Despite difficulties and obstacles he passed through, at the end he succeeded to bring this prostitute to the church and she became a good preacher of Christ’s message of love, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

My interest is the way the three characters interact with each other in the movie. The critical issue in the movie is on how the church officials treat the pastor. They did not believe in his self-assigned new mission with prostitutes, suspecting promiscuity. His parents, associate pastors, bishops, all perceived him as a deviant. The reaction from them seems to imply that prostitutes are too low in sin that it is unholy for any church member to approach prostitutes.

Among other things, the movie reveals a relationship between the church and prostitution. Similar to what was depicted in the movie; I also found different cases of stigma against prostitutes in the village where my fieldwork was done. Stigmatisations here come from the church in the village. The church in the village has not been working to convert prostitutes. Perhaps the church entertain similar view that prostitute are so unclean and do not deserve what the pastor in the movie has done. If this is true, the church could be seen as perceiving herself too holy to be mingled with prostitutes who are unholy. The church would not want to be defiled. This appears to be true. Consider the following data.

I visited five prostitutes who live in one small single room. One of them said she doesn't believe that there is a pastor who could visit them. She became surprised to know later that I was a pastor myself. According to this prostitute, it has been the police who come to frustrate them, demanding for money or sex, lest they arrest them. I felt a bit guilty since I also went there only at a time of fieldwork when I wanted data from them. Nevertheless, we had good conversations. I asked them if they go to church. They said that they would have continued going to church but for the stigma and rejection from the church. On the other hand, they said they would like to stop living as prostitutes. They would like to marry and have respect in the society. And they maintained that they do not have any seed capital to start a new business. For them, 'selling themselves' for money is the last and the only alternative for their survival.

This data raises some questions. Clearly, from the above, the prostitutes want us to believe that they are not supported by the church in their problem. One could argue here that what the prostitutes are claiming is evidence that they have hope in the church helping them out of prostitution. The church could then regard the prostitutes' claims not as indictment, but as a call for help. But in which way can the church respond to such a call? One way could be that church disciplinary measures will include inspiring prostitutes to believe that they are loved by God. In that way, the prostitutes are likely to feel that they are like sheep with a shepherd. That is, they are part of the community and the church. Such an approach might also redefine new identity for the prostitutes and in consequence obscure old identities such as sinners, outcast or unclean.

The field transcripts noted that the church in Chalinze seems not bothered to find out why many women get into prostitution. She has been much concerned with the spiritual issues, ignoring social life of people, and what people are going through in this visible world. It may be from this basis that even when people suffer in marriages or in any social aspect of life, the church keeps on telling them to persevere, and focus on going to heaven. This aspect of the field data has puzzled me a lot. I have been reflecting on the relationship between religious life and social life. Why does the church in the community tend to pay little attention to what is social? Granted that the social conditions of the members of a church have some effect on their spiritual life, it would make sense to say that the church must pay attention to social problems in the community. Perhaps when the church redefines her mission and begins to contribute to solving social problems, in this case, prostitution, in the village, the spiritual life of the people might be improved. Consider when the prostitutes mentioned that they have ceased from attending church because the church supposedly didn't care for them. In the village, so it seems, the problem of prostitution will be meaningfully dealt with when the church see a positive interplay between society and religion.

#### **4.5 INJUSTICE FROM CHURCH**

In Chalinze, preaching the message of God's love has been a traditional role played by the church. The Christian God is presented as a God of justice. My field transcripts also show that many preachers are regarded as God called men when they preach on women's obedience to men. For these preachers, obedience has the characteristics of being humble, subordinate, submissive, and accepting whatever an authority proposes. The authority is usually defined to mean God and men. Men here are understood to be husbands, fathers, brothers and uncles. According to the apparently God called preachers, the authority of men over women are so ordained by God. Scripture like the following are commonly cited to buttress this dogma: *"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established"* (Roman 13:1).

It seems to me that the above data indicate a narrow perspective about the themes of love and authority. For instance, the church in the village overtly denies any possibility for an understanding of authority that would recognize women as possessing authority. But since women are also being given key positions in government and in church it would appear simplistic to attribute authority to only men. At least those women who are key players in society would have to be ordained also by God. Submitting to the

‘governing authority’ (Rom. 13:1) would therefore not preclude submitting to women. It might be that if the church updated her default view about authority and God’s love, the love of God would distinguish itself from discriminatory power relations. It will also mean that when the church preaches on justice, women will be beneficiaries of the practical importance of that message; preaching of justice will spread its wings to bear justice in power sharing. The forgone interpretation seems laudable as scholars have impressively argued that love and justice are mutually defining (Wogaman, 1993:227).

Writing on “*Christian and human liberation*”, Gichia challenges the church to take seriously her prophetic role, that is, the church should help the society going to the right direction. (Mugambi, 1989:100). In a similar way, Musimbi Kanyoro, urges the church to walk on the road of the oppressed group and feel its pain. She says that, the witness of the church in Africa will not be credible unless the church takes into consideration the traumatic situation of the millions of women and the perilous conditions of the outcast of our societies (Kanyoro, 2002:80). Though these scholarly arguments pose a challenge to the church in Chalinze, one can see them as a wake up. Their intend will be that the church will be able to give society new knowledge about justice rooted in the Word of God, which will bring true redemption of the whole society.

Having new knowledge of justice may help to find ways of responding actively to concrete situations of injustices in the village. That might ensure co-responsibility over the problems in the village. With this understanding, perhaps, the church would give room to listen to the prostitutes as her preaching would be shaped by the reality of social problems experienced in the village in which the church finds its existenc (refer Bevens, 1992:17)

#### **4.6 SUMMARY**

In this chapter, I have explored how prostitution is understood and handled by the church in Chalinze. I have tried to show how women are treated in the church. I also looked at the views of local preachers on authority and God’s love. The analysis involved a reflection on how some biblical texts are interpreted and used to justify violence against women in the name of obedience to men. It was observed that the church has been less active in reforming default discriminatory existing structures.

Moreover, the chapter offered data about how prostitutes in the research village suffer stigma from the church and from the community. They are regarded as the most sinful among all other people, and people who bring shame to the church. This tended not as only for keeping the holiness of the church, but also reminding the prostitutes that prostitution separates them from the Kingdom of God. A major argument in

the chapter is that dealing with prostitution transcends condemnation and stigmatisation. It involves closer refinement of cultures and structures that are potent to breed inequality and injustice.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **5.0 LIBERATING PROSTITUTES: A CONTEXTUAL FEMINIST APPROACH**

In the previous chapters, I have tried to show how prostitution, gender inequality and poverty are intertwined. I have also explored how prostitution is perceived and handled in Chalinze traditional society and in the church. In this chapter, I intend to look at certain perspectives, which if taken into consideration and applied to Chalinze context might help solve the problem of prostitution. The chapter also discusses cultural practices that in a way make prostitution an aspect of gender discrimination. This involves a review of feminist arguments on prostitution and gender inequality in societies. I intend to look further at women dominated organisations in Tanzanian and their contributions to curb gender inequality. Moreover, the chapter reflects on views from the prostitutes I talked with during the fieldwork. Ultimately, the chapter aim at discovering what could help solve the issue of prostitution in the area.

### **5.1 PROSTITUTION AS AN ASPECT OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION**

I have demonstrated in the previous chapters that prostitution is supported by various injustices in the society. Thus, prostitution can be explained as a practice that is constructed by male and reinforces male supremacy which creates and legitimizes the mentality that prostitutes are for satisfying men's desires. In that formulation, prostitution would symbolise men's dominance. Mappes admits this argument (Mappes, 1987:248-62 cited by Overall, 1992, 711). If this perspective is applied to the situation in Chalinze then one would say that in Chalinze prostitution is a commercial enterprise that tend to earn economic benefits for the participating women and not as an expression of an independent choice of work. This seems to be true since the prostitutes I interviewed did not explain their involvement in prostitution as a sign of love, freedom, or passion for a new type of job (Fiorenza and Carr, 1987:68). Following this analysis, it may not be wrong to see the situation in the locality as an example of what has been called abuse of women and sexual slavery (Brock, 1986:8-9; Gornick and Moran 1971:100-102).

In chapter three I have explained how sometimes solid objects are used in the sex act, including beer bottles (refer page 56). These data may support the view that prostitution is a slavery business. Could this conduct be regarded as practices of subordination and objectification of women? Are the women treated as sex machines that can be controlled and customized at will by the operator? This seems more vivid when operator in this sense is understood as the male customer while the machine is metaphorical of a female prostitute.

The field transcript also noted that prostitutes are regarded as commodities in the market. They are purchased and patronized for their outer appearance, including skin colour, body shape, and other physical features preferred by their customers. I have tried to understand how this relates to what Carole Pateman postulate about sex. For Pateman, sex becomes a commodity in the capitalist market when bodies and selves are also commodities; the prostitute cannot sell sexual services alone. What she sells is her body, her humanity, and her dignity (Pateman, 1983:562). In this way, women's bodies become 'for sale' to men. The prostitute sells herself in the most intimate way; her body and her sexual skills are appropriated for the pleasure of the customer. She is objectified: treated not as a complete being but as a means to the customer's sexual ends. This supports the hypothesis that many prostitutes get into business not by their choice, but by socio-economic problems. Andrea Dworkin (1987:143) argued that prostitution is not a simple matter of choice but is one of the institutions that impedes any experience of intercourse as freedom. Thus prostitution negates self-determination and choice for women. Sijaona, one of my informants said, "What men buy from us is power, humanity and dignity. We are supposed to please them in any way they want, just because they pay us. They can tell us what to do, and we are supposed to follow their orders, lest we lose our customers." Sijaona mentioned that the price prostitutes charge depended on different variables including beauty and poverty level of the prostitute, and on where the sex act is to be done. For example, the 'high class prostitutes' are paid for roughly \$30 per night, while the 'low class' ones can be taken for \$10 per night. There is also price for short time sex, ranges between \$ 3 to 5.

Sijaona's words confirm that prostitution is also an act of violence against women. It is a traumatic act against prostitutes (relate to Farley et al 1998:405). In this way, prostitution seems to demean women by encouraging men to view women as sexual objects. Sex in this form is divorced from love, respect, commitment and relationship. I think this concurs with what Giobbe writes because he says that a prostitute symbolizes the disvalue of women in a society. Prostitution is paradigmatic of women's social, sexual and economic subordination (Giobbe, 1990:77 cited in Scoula, 2004:344).

The field data also show that sometimes prostitutes have some strange behaviour to their clients, including robbing. Sometimes they use drugs to make their clients sleep deep so that they can rob money or anything else that they find helpful from them. The prostitutes secure themselves by hiding their identities and postal addresses, giving fake ones instead. This may reveal that prostitution is not a thing they do due to mere sexual desire as society might think of, but they are in it because of the socio-economic problems facing

them. What they do to their clients in hope for economic gains might affirm that prostitution in Chalinze is much linked to socio-economic problems that confront most of the local women. Moreover, the data revealed that within the realm of sex work, there is stigmatisation embedded in prostitution. Consequently, prostitutes are talked about as immoral, desperate and exploited addicts. Society seems to reduce them to mere metaphors and disembodied stereotypes, a one-dimensional object without individual identity. This seems to make a division between prostitutes and everyone else, perpetuating a sense of isolation and stigmatisation.

Besides stigmatisation, the field data show that the local police officers are hesitant to arrest prostitute but quick to ask money from them. In my visitation to the prostitutes, one of them told me that the policemen regularly go to the prostitutes' streets and terrify the prostitutes that if they do not give some certain amount of money, they would arrest them. This relates to what Nantawan Lewis had observed in her research in Asia. She says that although women cleverly use prostitution as a strategy of survival, however, other agents involved share a larger amount of their income from prostitution and in the end their prior economic hardship persist (Fiorenza and Carr, 1987:68). And even their clients do not pay, sometimes, they charged money. For this reason, it has been difficult for those of the prostitutes who would have wished to save money from prostitution, and use it as capital for a different business.

The above analysis has been on the situation of prostitution in Chalinze. The following section explores feminist views and their relevance to the question of prostitution.

## **5.2 LOOKING AT PROSTITUTION IN THE LIGHT OF FEMINISTS THEORIES: CHALLENGES AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

I begin the section with the feminist concepts which challenge prostitution in general. Then, I will look at what African feminist scholars have contributed, especially in challenging male dominance and gender inequality in African context. Thereafter, I will look at what women's organisations in Tanzania have done so far in challenging gender inequalities.

### 5.2.1 FEMINIST SCHOLARS ON PROSTITUTION

In chapter one when I was exploring the “*Research background*”, I observed that the topic of prostitution has been researched from different perspectives. One perspective understands prostitution as not violence against women, and so not a human rights violation. With this perspective, what prostitutes demand is that they are given their rights to be prostitutes, valued, having dignity and liberty of their work (see Bell, 1987:81-87; 100-102; Pheterson, 1989:52-102 cited by Overall, 1992:705-706). With this perspective also, prostitutes do not want to be the targets of pity or rescue work. This is confirmed in the statement from the Second World Whores’ Congress, “Prostitutes reject support that requires them to leave prostitution; they object to being treated as symbols of oppression, rather, they demand recognition as workers” (Overall, 1992:706). Based on this perspective, groups like COYOTE in the United States promote prostitution as a women’s personal choice (Raymond, 1998:1-9). I am interested to know how this notion relates to the situation in Chalinze.

Another perspective on prostitution is based on the argument that prostitution is violence against women, and a product of gender inequality. Feminist scholars who view prostitution as the absolute embodiment of patriarchal male privilege (Kesler, 2002:19 cited in Scoula, 2004:343) support this. In her work, *Current Controversies in Feminist Theory: Annual Review of Political Science*, Mary Dietz discusses the subjection and objectification of women through gendered relations, and she expresses her thoughts on equality, rights, liberty, autonomy, dignity, self realization, recognition, justice and freedom (Dietz, 2003:399). Her discussion supports the notion that prostitution is a movement against gender inequality. Jody Freeman has also noted that there are some feminists who do not view prostitution as a victimless crime, but as a situation where men reduce women to an image of mere sexual objects (Weisberg, 1996:241). How does this relate to the data from Tanzania?

There is another perspective which conceives prostitution as unethical. In “The Challenges of Prostitution and Female Trafficking in Africa”, Ademola Fayemi gives her views on prostitution. Fayemi argues that the question of regularizing, legalizing or decriminalizing prostitution should not even arise at all, because prostitution has been arguably established to be ethically unjustifiable. For her, making prostitution legal will allow the act to be managed rather than ignored. Fayemi condemns not only the acts of prostitution and female trafficking on both moral and legal grounds, but also she condemns prostitutes, their clients, traffickers and the trafficked as immoral agents (Fayemi, 2009:208).

Other feminist scholars have challenged traditional structures and the institution of church for supporting and empowering male dominance in society. The following section surveys some of the arguments of African feminist scholars on the topic.

### **5.2.2 AFRICAN FEMINISTS ON UNJUST SOCIAL STRUCTURES**

In chapter one, I noted the question of prostitution appears not to be imperative for many African feminist theologians. Nevertheless, they have worked extensively on other questions, including male dominance and gender inequality in Africa. One of the arguments that these feminist scholars argue about is on how culture has been used as a tool for dominating women. Oduyoye observed this as true with many African cultures. She writes, “Although culture can provide women their communal identity and sense of belonging, it can be manipulated and used as a tool of domination” (Oduyoye, 2004n.p). She pointed that oppressive practices are allowed against women in the name of culture. Women are not allowed to give out their views; they are not allowed to inherit properties. It is surprising that there are certain elements of culture which discriminate against women yet are not abandoned. More surprisingly, there are many things adopted from other cultures, such as clothes styles, but when it comes to the cultures that oppress women it is said that culture should not be renewed. Why society allows changes in some of their default culture and stick on others, especially those that oppress women? Does this relate to power relations in society?

Within the social structures, there are also cultural practices and beliefs which do not only humiliate women but oppress them as well. Faithfully, women obey and practice them. In Chalinze, for instance, I have mentioned in chapter two how traditional dances on the getting-out day of a girl in the initiation rite humiliate women. Kanyoro observed this situation in African societies. She observed that African women have guarded cultural prescriptions strictly governed by the fear of breaking taboos. As a result, harmful traditional practices are passed on as cultural values, and therefore not to be discussed, challenged or changed. Women have to agree with all these cultural practices, even though they oppress and humiliate them. According to Kanyoro, these illustrate the reality of women’s powerlessness and vulnerability in the face of cultural prescriptions. Men, the strong group in the society tend to use this opportunity to oppress women in the name of cultural practices (Njoroge and Dube, 2001:37).

Apart from African feminist scholars challenging male dominance in the society, they also challenge religion, specifically the church in Africa. This is because there are many discriminations and oppressions to women in church. Oduyoye argues that church, instead of being liberative agent; has turned to be a place

where oppression, inequality and injustice to women are practiced. These are sometimes practiced in obedience to supposedly biblical order. In this way, cultural oppression seems to be part of church system. Oduyoye says that cultural oppression in the church shows that Christianity has not changed the world view of the people. People are still in the bound of their cultural structures. This means that Christianity has converted people to a new religion without converting certain detrimental elements of their culture. It has simply appropriated parts of that culture and attempted to blot out other parts without understanding how the total culture functions as an integrated world view and system of human organization (Oduyoye, 2004:92-93). Consequently, patriarchy has been accepted into the church system. Elizabeth Johnson argues that, sometimes religious patriarchy is understood to be divinely established. As a result, the power of the ruling men is said by them to be delegated by God and exercised by divine mandate (Johnson, 1992:23). In this way, within the society women are oppressed in the name of culture, and in the church in the name of obeying scriptures.

In her critical analysis of culture, religion and economy, Oduyoye (2004) argued that in Africa, Christianity and African culture are partners in oppressing women. She called attention to different groups and systems in religion and culture which construct gender. Her book plays an important role in supporting a constructive search for solutions for enabling women to have an effective voice in society. Oduyoye calls the church to open up its structures, to unmask the thinking that sets up patriarchy hierarchies, and to enable the divine plan of the full human relationship between women and men to develop (Oduyoye, 2004:97-98). Likewise, she urged the church to be involved in solving the problems of her members. It is in sharing people's pains that is when the church will feel the inequality and injustice which are practiced in society, and then be willing to challenge these structures. An urged for a theology that will not be separated from the lives of people, but will be part of people's lives. According to Kanyoro, the witness of the church in Africa will not be credible unless the church takes into consideration the traumatic situation of the millions of women and the perilous conditions of the outcast in the society (Kanyoro, 2002:80). Like Kanyoro, Elisabeth Fiorenza, argued that feminist theological reflection must begin with an analysis of the social structures of domesticity that determines women's work and economic exploitation (Fiorenza and Carr, 1987:xxii). Although Fiorenza is not an African feminist scholar, her arguments pose a challenge to male dominance in African societies, including Chalinze. The church should restructure power relation within it institution so that it can reflect justice to the society. If the church would take her role of improving unjust structures in the society, it is likely that even prostitution problem would be solved. So far, I have engaged feminist scholars on prostitution and African feminist scholars on gender inequality. In

the following section, I examine what have been done in Tanzania. I shall look at women's organizations in Tanzania to see what they have done concerning women's rights.

### **5.2.3 TANZANIAN WOMEN ORGANISATIONS' PLEA TO AMBIGUOUS TRADITIONS**

In chapter one I have noted that in fighting for women's rights in Tanzania, various organisations have been formed under the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP). These organisations have been working in the civil sector. Their mission has been to improve the lives of all people, especially those who are socially disadvantaged and impoverished. Hence, these organisations aim at empowering marginalised groups in the society to self-organize and become part of a social movement for change. According to one of the officials of TGNP, the organisations under TGNP include national organisations, such as Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA), *Haki Elimu*, and *Haki Ardhi*. Others are located in certain regions, such as *Kivulini* located in Mwanza and Women's Dignity based in Dar es Salaam.

TAMWA, one of the women's National organisations, which seem to be the most active in Tanzania, has been strongly opposing the way media negatively portray women. Also TAMWA, as a human rights and gender activist organization, seeks to educate, raise awareness and facilitate both women and men to understand their rights and the rights of women and children and promote them. TAMWA works closely in partnership with journalists and media houses committed to promote peace, gender equality, democratic principles and development. In an innovative and strategic way, TAMWA uses radio, televisions, newspapers, its magazine *Suti ya Siti*, seminars, workshops and outreach activities to advocate issues which affect the lives of women and children; such as FGM, HIV/AIDS, rape, wife battering, killing of elderly women due to misguided witchcraft beliefs and discrimination against women in decision making. Through its work, TAMWA has managed to create awareness, provoke public debate and action on various forms of gender based violence (interview with one of TAMWA's leaders).

On education, *Haki Elimu* has been active, focusing on provision of equal opportunity in education for boys and girls especially elementary school education. With most schools in the country, when female students get pregnant they usually dismissed from school, while their male student partners are allowed to continue with studies. But through *Sarah*, which is one of the *Haki Elimu*'s programs, women have been advocating that when a girl becomes pregnant, she should be allowed to return and continue with her studies after delivery. This would ensure a good future for the girl and her baby (*Jarida la Sarah*, 2008:11-15).

To some extent, the efforts from these organisations have changed the situation of women, especially in towns, that at least women have started to be aware of their rights. Some men also are now recognising women's rights. However, those men face lot of challenges from their extended families. A common saying in Tanzania has it that if a husband take up domestic duty that is supposed to be the prerogative of women then "he is under the control of his wife" – (in Swahili '*amekaliwa na mkewe*' literary '*his wife seats on him*' or '*amewekwa mkononi na mkewe!*' literary '*he is in the hand of his wife*'). This sometimes discourages men from helping in cooking and in providing some basic services to their wives.

After I have reflected on the efforts from the women's organisations in Tanzania, the following section shows what exactly is done in my research community. The section also tries to apply feminist concepts to Chalinze context.

### **5.3 CONTEXTUAL FEMINIST APPROACH ON HANDLING AND DEALING WITH PROSTITUTION**

Many of the feminist concepts discussed in this thesis agree that male dominance has a great contribution to women's oppression in many African societies. From the above data, it can be deduced that Tanzanian women's organisations under TGNP bring great contributions to solving the problem of prostitution in the country and the research community. One could say that feminist understanding of prostitution as a form of social injustice against women is in the right order since this view could help erase negative mentality about women. Nevertheless, there are some feminist arguments that seem problematic if applied to the situation in Chalinze. For instance, feminist ethical arguments that tend to condemn prostitutes (Fayemi, 2009:208) do not seem to be appropriate for the observed problem in Chalinze. This seems the case since the evidence from the field data prove that most of the prostitutes get into prostitution due to socio-economic and religio-cultural problems. As noted earlier, most of them did not opt to be prostitutes. Subjecting them to morality and condemning them would appear as giving them double bondage: first, situational condemnation which led them into prostitution, and second, condemnation from society and church. In the same way, the idea that prostitution is a job just like any other job and that prostitutes should be given their rights to be prostitutes (Bell, 1987:81-87; 100-102; Raymond, 1998:1-9) seems not to be applicable to Chalinze context. In Chalinze, the main issue is not recognition of prostitution as a job, but finding a way for the eradication of prostitution. Many of the prostitutes suggested this during my field research.

Concerning TGNP's organisations, the field data noted that with all the efforts they make to women's situation in Tanzania, there are still important areas which are unreached. The field data observed that more efforts have been put in reaching urban areas. In the rural areas, where the traditional beliefs are still highly observed have been left unreached. In addition to that, strategies mostly used have been radio, televisions and news papers which are not much accessible to the rural areas. As a result, only few rural communities have been reached with their good teachings. The focus of the women's organisations has also been on the eradication of FGM, naked dances during initiation rites, and violence against women. But an effective eradication and correction in the social system would not only focus on the effects of negative tradition but also on why people engage in tradition. Arguably, knowing why people participate in a certain tradition is a step forward in such endeavour. Attempt to stop negative cultures without knowing why people practice them is akin to dealing with a problem without paying attention to the root causes. In Chalinze, the root causes to prostitution observably include gender inequalities.

### **5.3.1 EMPOWERING RITUALS**

The field data have noted three major things in Chalinze society which seem to support women oppression, subordination, and prostitution. These are girls initiation rites, traditional doctors, and the church. And I would suggest these become the focal point when dealing with prostitution and gender inequality in Chalinze. My chapter two explored the teachings during the girls' initiation rites and their consequences to the initiands in Chalinze village. It noted that there are some of the initiation teachings which may be good for the village, such as teachings about living a communal life. Communal living has been expressed actively in celebrating together during festivals and on different occasions. Villagers also mourn together when people die. I argue that the principle of communal living should be strengthened up so that people would be concerned about abuse, mistreatment, discrimination and all that have capacity to impede communal living. Communal living would importantly not preclude attempts by all to problematise gender inequality and prostitution.

Nevertheless, there are some aspects of the initiation teachings that need to be renewed if it is meant to help solve community problems like prostitution. As earlier noted, some of the teachings seem to promote women's subordination and passiveness while others have potency to gear women to prostitution. Such teachings could be deconstructed or improved to be of importance in constructing a society in which there is justice, respect, and love among men and women. Instead of teaching women philosophies, (such as '*mafiga matatu*', three stones) which might tempt a woman to have lovers outside her wedlock, the

teachings should suggest ways for dealing with social and economic problems that confronts women. Instead of entertaining negative cultural practices, the initiation rites could be a good venue where equality between genders is promoted. The society has to look again on the socialisation system that treats women as passive objects, since this seems to have negative implications for women. Another approach could be that the fact that women are as equal human beings as men will be taught in the initiation rites. This will help not only in providing equal access to quality education. It may help correct the mentality that having female children is less helpful and consequently help in controlling birth rate in the community. My field data revealed that many families end up in having a large number of children when the couple bears only girls. The couple keeps on getting more and more children, hoping that they will get a boy. As a result, the family becomes big, and in many instances parental responsibility become difficult. But if it was taught that all children are equal so that peoples' preference for male child is changed, it might be a good way of controlling birth, and a step forward in liberating the whole society. After all it is said that a changed mind set inspire a changed character.

Judith Butler (1990) in her work, "Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity" contends that being female is not natural and that it appears natural only through repeated performances of gender. If that is the case, then, constructed rituals, traditional biblical interpretations, and patriarchy can all be given new meaning to foster justice for both men and women. This can mean re-doing and re-constructing gender relations. Since gender is a human and social construct it can be de-constructed and transformed. It has been observed that we are born with the physical equipment for procreation, but becoming masculine or feminine relates to the context in which we are socialized. Gender has no origin in nature neither is it a divine image.

Another major thing which appears to support oppression against women and prostitution in Chalinze community is the local traditional doctors. As was indicated earlier, men and women, regardless of their religious affiliations, visit the traditional doctors for different problems. They have many questions needing answers. Some of them are psychological, religious, social and economical. Some of them need spiritual support. They believe that the divinities are able to resolve whatever problem they might have. Tradition doctors in Chalinze play serve as intermediary between people and the divinities. Nevertheless, it has been noted that many questionable conditions are given to the people during healing rituals by the traditional doctors. Some are required to have sex with people who are not their lawful partners and sometime with

their own child or relative. This healing requirement from the traditional doctors can be said to be a contributor of not only women's oppression, but also prostitution in Chalinze.

The role played by traditional doctors was supposed to be played by the church. However, the church has shirked this function and the traditional doctors have taken it up. The church would have to examine herself and see where she has not fulfilled her role in the society as an mediator intermediary between God and people. The church needs to understand what makes people seek help from traditional doctors. Not only that, but also the church should investigate what is missing that makes people continue with the traditional ritual teachings and practices. This might help change peoples' worldview.

The church in Chalinze also seems to support and empower structures which favour women's subordination in the society. It has been shown how interpretations of some biblical texts have lead to more oppression to women. The church has succeeded in preaching for women to be passive, hence, opening the door for more oppression to them. However, passiveness seems not what obedience means. Thus, in chapter four I have argued that the church should give a new interpretation to 'women's obedience' to a God. In that new interpretation, the church will be an agent in fostering women's rights. This is supported by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) which made a call upon all people to raise their voices against violence. The report of LWF (LWF, 2002:5) states:

The "Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women," 1988–1998, firmly emphasized the elimination of all violence in various forms (sexual, religious, psychological, structural, physical, spiritual, military), and the culture of violence, especially as they affect the life and dignity of women. And we declare our readiness, to confront any attempts to excuse, cover up, or justify violence. We declare...that its presence in the church is an offence against God, humanity and the earth..

So, the church in Chalinze should observe these efforts from the LWF of maintaining equality in the church and in the society at large.

As it has been noted, the three aspects explained above appear to support subordination to women and open the door for prostitution. One common thing from these aspects is that they all touch people's faith and beliefs. People have strong beliefs that in these three aspects there is a direct connection to the divinities. Hence, they observe and keep whatever they are taught and told from these aspects compared to when the same thing was told or taught by the governmental officials. Perhaps this might be one of the reasons why many efforts of ending violence against women and girls have not been successful. People's faith and belief is deep and has to do with their attitudes and worldview. Thus, if one wants to change the situation in a

society might need to change people's worldview. It is from this base that eradicating inequalities in the society cannot be by stopping the acts of violence, rather, by changing the whole system, from 'why' people do that. In the same way, eradicating prostitution cannot be done by frustrating prostitutes or traumatising them. It has to go deeper to where the causes are rooted. What is needed, I believe, is to find out why and how things are done in that way. It is important to analyse and distinguish between helpful and destructive rituals. From there, we can see what need to be taken, and what can be improved. Then, move forward in finding substitution of the teachings and practices we believe can contribute to gender inequality in the society.

Nevertheless, in all these three aspects, the church has a bigger role. In initiation rite, the church should show the right way of doing things, even in gender relations. This might be done by the church giving the society new knowledge of gender relations, where justice is practiced. In chapter four, it was argued that true justice is rooted in love and respects to all human kind, regardless of their gender. In this way, the church should show that God loves male and female equally. Oduyoye argues, "God being male does not make the male God (Oduyoye, 2004:95)."

The discussion above and in the previous chapters confirms that prostitution is the product of gender inequality in the society. In this way, dealing with prostitution in the church and in the society is not just by condemning prostitutes, putting them under church discipline, giving them some *juju*, make them passive, traumatising them, or taking them to jail. It is more than that. It is about transformation in both; the religious institution and the society in general. Commenting on transformation, Ndulanzi says that, to obtain a transformed society, men have to play a credible role of confessing and repenting for their sin of either consciously or innocently benefiting from gender oppression. It is only after confession and repentance that a new beginning can spring out and then a change of mind and attitude can start to manifest itself (Ndulazi, 2004:6).

However, to attain that situation, it is likely that there is still much to do. This is because what is needed is redemption and transformation of the whole society and its structure. It is about having and putting into practice the new knowledge of redemption, justice and freedom of male and female. Mary Grey argues that, freedom struggles is only part of what redemption means. She says that redemption is deeply concerned with human liberation; it is about human integrity and wholeness (Grey, 1990:5). Oduyoye suggests that to let this happens, every form of social and cultural discrimination in women's basic personal rights on the

ground of gender must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design. She makes it explicit that it is not so big thing that women claim for. What they need is centre on goodness, salvation, liberation and the acts that redeem, transform or reconstruct. It is not to make revolution which elevate women in very high position and put men down. It is about living rightly and putting things right, hence bringing hope in their constructions (Oduyoye, 2001:32-33).

I believe if the church in Chalinze could help the society to re-structure the unjust existing social structures that can help not only in bringing true justice, peace and harmony in the society, but also solving the problem of prostitution in Chalinze. This will be responding to the Lutheran World Federation recommendation of finding and addressing the root causes, such as poverty and some cultural practices which contribute to the vulnerability of children to sale, prostitution, pornography and sex tourism (LWF, 2008:1-4), which have in one way resulted from injustice structures in the society. It is also responding to God's command; *Love your neighbour as yourself* (Matthew 22:39).

From the above analysis of data, it appears to me that a solution to the problem of prostitution in Chalinze will involve the church helping to restructure the existing unjust social structures. This corresponds the Lutheran World Federation recommendation quoted earlier. It is also about responding to God's command: *Love your neighbour as yourself* (Matthew 22:39).

### **5.3.2 ARGUMENTS FROM PROSTITUTES IN CHALINZE**

According to the interviews with the prostitutes in Chalinze, they believe that they have liberating ideas to what should be done to change their situation. These women say that systems which oppress poor people, especially women should be challenged and corrected. Mwajuma told me that it is very difficult for her to leave prostitution, for at least with prostitution she has a reliable income. She stated:

... all other business that we could do can be taken by the people who have power in the society. The government should hear our cries. It should correct the structures in the society which open the door for injustice and oppression to women. Otherwise this will never change; rather, it will become worse.

In supporting this, Sijaona said that big businessmen have hold every business, even the business of selling drinkable water<sup>33</sup>, According to Sijaona, it is due to the pressure of these big businessmen that police

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<sup>33</sup> Selling water business is referred as the smallest business in Chalinze, where drinking water are sold (per cup) to the people in the streets. This can be done for a very small capital as a beginning. It is this business that women in Chalinze are complaining that even this has been taken by the big business men, who own big businesses, especially in Dar es Salaam. The control all business, even in Chalinze.

always make sure that there are no other small businesses that will come up. Sijaona then argued, “If the government could handle this situation and gives opportunities for us to do small businesses and give us protection in our business, the situation could be changed.”

Apart from that, prostitutes in Chalinze also suggested that policies in favour for the betterment of women in rural communities should be implemented. Commenting on this, Sitakiwi said:

It is surprising that the police can be faithful to make a follow up of arresting prostitutes even in the rural areas, and destroy women’s small business as the implementation of the government policy of making the streets clean. But when it comes to implementing policies on liberation of women, it becomes difficult to implement them.

These views from the prostitutes if worked on, they are likely to help liberate the prostitutes. Their views therefore can be taken as a resource for their liberation. Their views can be summarised as, “You cannot oust prostitution by chasing, condemning, judging, traumatising, and frustrating the prostitutes. Change the environments which breed prostitution and the problem will be solved.” The big problem, however, seems to be that the voices of these poor women are not heard. Since they are marginalised and seen as the uneducated, sinners who spread STD’s, and since people think that they have opted to be prostitutes willingly, many do not give ear to what the prostitutes utter. As a result, prostitutes usually die with their ideas of liberation. Much strength has been put in helping other groups, like disabled people, but nobody has bothered to listen to the cry of the prostitutes in Chalinze. What the prostitutes get is condemnation and harsh judgement from the church and society. One would suggest that women in Chalinze should be empowered to meet the challenges of the oppressive structures in the church and the whole community at large. The empowerment of women is not just an issue of women. It is also a gender issue, which necessitates a re-examination of gender relations, which ultimately require changes made by men as well as by women. It is also a development issue, in that women who become empowered also become active not only in economic activities, but also active in exerting pressure and influence on political, social, legal issues concerning women and religion. Women have to change from passive to active members of the church and society. This means that women have to be active and not just as passive means of production.

#### **5.4 SUMMARY**

This chapter has shown that prostitution is a gendered practice in which women are constructed as the sexual servants of men. I have discussed prostitution in Chalinze, and how prostitutes are regarded as

commodities in the market, as well as how they are stigmatised in the society and in the church. The analysis also revealed that prostitution seems to symbolise men's dominance. The chapter looked at how perspectives from African feminist theologians help in dealing with the issues of prostitution and gender inequality. Their ideas bring important challenges to the Chalinze situation. Tanzanian women's organisations which advocate for women's rights have also been discussed. Their contributions in challenging the existing male dominance were elaborated. Moreover, I tried to see the gaps that need to be filled in dealing with the problem of prostitution in Chalinze. Three major things were discovered as factors for gender inequalities and prostitution in Chalinze: initiation rites, traditional doctors, and the church. I have argued that prostitutes in Chalinze see themselves as possessing useful suggestions for eradicating the problem of prostitution and that they would prefer doing something else for survival rather than prostitution if their suggestions are received.

## CHAPTER 6

### 6.0 CONCLUSION

Throughout this thesis, I have attempted to understand and interpret the situation of women in Chalinze and the conditions that make them vulnerable to prostitution. The various maltreatments prostitutes suffer from their clients, church and the village formed a background for the study. One major argument that emerged from the analysis of data was that, solution to the problem of prostitution requires something beyond stigmatisation and condemnation. My interpretation of the data from the prostitutes seemed to suggest that prostitutes in the village had hope in the church for helping them out of prostitution. However, the analysis disclosed that the church had rather paid much attention to preaching of obedience and subordination of women. Concerning prostitution, the church was observed to have regarded prostitute as low down sinners, unholy to talk with. Following this, a central argument that runs through the analysis is that, the church could significantly help solve the problem of prostitution by refining its existing relations with the prostitutes in a way that the prostitutes become part of the community and the church.

The study also discovered that initiation rites, poverty and domestic violence constitute part of the major factors accounting for the huge number of women and girls engaged in prostitution. It also appeared that when the church stigmatised and become unwilling to approach prostitutes, the church in that sense could be seen as encouraging prostitution. Someone could also argue that the very prevalence of prostitution in the area represent a starting point for a critique of the role of the church. The empirical data also proved that gender inequality breeds prostitution in Chalinze community. Thus, the study treated prostitution as a gender issue.

The preceding analysis of the field data did not only suggest that women in the studied area are worse hit by poverty, but also that poverty has potentiality to be connected with prostitution in the locality. Evidence from the ethnographic fieldwork appears to argue that the challenge of poverty is complicated by injustice in the traditional structures and the imbalance of sexual power relations.

In the thesis, I have explored how the structures which result to inequality in gender relations seem to be constructed in Chalinze community. Also, the arguments have been raised which bring an assumption that people do not become 'men and women' in the sterile environment of the womb, rather, they are made to be 'men and women' or re-born to be 'men and women' in specific social and cultural contexts. It has been

noted that one of the important areas where gender relations are made is in the initiation rite. Analysis showed that this is where people are constructed or re-born in terms of gender relations. It is in rituals where strong ideas of how the society should be are presented and implanted, and so, it is through rituals that a society gets its framework (Oduyoye and Kanyoro, 1992:26).

The construction of a woman in the girls' initiation rite seems to be empowered by the ritual teachings and practices. The teachings in the said rite have been noted to have two main effects in gender relations; first is encouraging subordination and passiveness of women in the society. The support was observed to be true especially on how women in Chalinze are made to be as how men would like them to be; denying their rights and recognition. This has led women to be in an extreme poverty. Poverty can restrict women's opportunities to make choices about their lives. The analysis confirms that this is exacerbated by cultural practices and religion which often combine to deny women's access to decision-making processes and even crucial choices over their lives and their own bodies. Second effect of these teachings is the teachings which tantalising sexual desires. It has been shown how some teachings in the girls' initiation rite can gear women to prostitution. Philosophies like "*mafiga matatu*" (three stones) have been argued to gear women into prostitution.

Beliefs in the traditional doctors has also described as contributing to prostitution in Chalinze. It has been noted in the thesis how these doctors are believed to have ability of communicating with the divinities, hence give spiritual solutions for empirical problems. Being compelled by poverty, search for marriage, search for children (sometimes specific male children), love and peace in marriage, and desire of having many customers in business (including prostitution as a business), many people; men and women, regardless of their religious affiliations, keep on going to seek help to the traditional doctors. However, the treatments in these doctors come with conditions, which some of them seem to motivate sex acts.

In the thesis, it has noted that prostitution in the society has been perceived in different ways. Traditionally, it has perceived as a punishment from the ancestors for misbehaving in the society, including too much freedom to women. So, handling of prostitution has been done by trying to reduce women's freedom, which means increasing their subordination and passiveness in the society. In turn, violence against women has increased, which also means women's vulnerability to prostitution is increased. Traditional doctors, on the other hand, are once again consulted to handle prostitution in Chalinze community. Nevertheless, their treatment for this has been seen as more traumatising and threatening the victims, associating *juju* with the oracles. Treatments make prostitutes to become frightened and traumatised. They try to live according to

the conditions from the traditional doctors. However, the real life situation, poverty, makes them not bear it. They decide to continue with prostitution as their last alternative of survival.

I have also viewed the church and her role into the society. The observation I have made was that apart from other good things the church does into the society, she seems to concur with the unjust structures in the society. It has been shown how the interpretations of some biblical texts in Chalinze local church have been used to legitimise women's subordination to men, and hence violence against them. These biblical texts appear to be interpreted in a way which empowers the oppressive cultural structures. As a result, women's rights have been more and more violated.

Based on the interpretations of the empirical material in chapter three and chapter four, chapter five was committed to assess the situation of prostitution in Chalinze community. The interpretation based on showing that prostitutes in Chalinze are practicing prostitution not out of their love, nor their free will, rather, it is because of cultural, social and economic reasons. The cruel acts which prostitutes experience from their customers, but they are still doing it prove that they are doing it not for pleasures, but for survival.

Nevertheless, gender inequality in the society was seen to be the core source for prostitution. Therefore, it was suggested that solving the challenge of prostitution needs to confront the unjust social structures in Chalinze. In challenging these structures, I have suggested that the initiation rites have can be the area to start with, since that is where gender relations seem to be constructed.

The overall examination of people continuing with traditional ritual teachings and practices and seeking spiritual and physical help from the traditional doctors was viewed as a result of some weaknesses in the church. This was argued that people are Christians by formalities. It is likely that they are going to churches as fulfilling one of the requirements of their religion, but their innermost trust is on the traditional ritual teachings and practices and on traditional doctors. Therefore, the church was urged to investigate herself to see what is missing that make people continue with the traditional ritual teachings, which some of them appear to motivate sexual intercourse and prostitution. In the same way, the church also was urged to examine herself and see where she has not fit in the society as an intermediate between people and God that makes people find a help from the traditional doctors.

In the same way, legitimating subordination and violence against women through the lenses of obedience to men and obeying the biblical scriptures have been challenged in the thesis. It was suggested that instead of

church complies with the unjust traditional social structures and empowers them, she should challenge the unjust structures, not complies with them (Mugambi, 1989:100; Bevans, 1992:17).

From the overall analysis on the findings of this study, I argued that combating prostitution in the society requires challenging gender construction which leads to gender inequality in the society. It is about people changing their attitude and mentality towards women. However, this is not 'is and was' process. It will take a time. Nevertheless, raising awareness of the issue of gender inequality and its negative effects to the whole society is a way forward transforming the society. Men should view women as valuable partners in life, in the development of a society and in the attainment of peace and just community.

The study have argued that dealing with prostitution in the church and in the society is not just condemning prostitutes, disciplining them according to the church traditions, giving them some medicine to make them 'passive', traumatising them, or arresting them. It is more than that. It is about transformation of both religious institutions and society (Oduyoye, 2004:98).

The data and analysis in this thesis suggest insightful perspectives about prostitution, culture, and the relation between church and society. I would agree that the overall analysis of the field data articulated arguments, which have tendency to destabilise existing views about prostitution. However, it would require further empirical research for one to say boldly that the absence of gender inequality will end prostitution in the studied community.

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## LIST OF INFORMANTS:

Anna	A divorced wife	(24 years old)
Maria	Secondary school teacher	(30 years old)
Sikitu	A prostitute	(28 years old)
Sitakiwi	A prostitute	(15 years old)
Wandema	Mother (of a prostitute)	(about 40 years old)
Sijaona	A prostitute (Wandema's daughter)	(17 years old)
Zainabu	A prostitute	(22 years old)
Mwajuma	A prostitute	(24 years old)
Mariam	Mother's to two prostitute	(about 35 years old)
Upendo	Nurse in Chalinze dispensary	(25 years old)
Mwenda	Evangelist-Lutheran church in Chalinze	(45 years old)
Mahimbo	Pastor-Lutheran church in Chalinze	(60 years old)
Mwambashi	Pastor.Lutheran church (invited to preach in Chalinze Lutheran church)	(about 65 years old)
Kusaka	Church elder-Lutheran church in Chalinze	(45 years old)
Mama Mmari	Parish worker-Lutheran church in Chalinze	(30 years old)
Gumbo	Pastor-FPCT church in Chalinze	(28 years old)
Divyele	A leader in one of the Ng'hwele clans	(about 50 years old)
Mtenda	A leader in one of the Ng'hwele clans	(about 50 years old)
Rulenga	An administrator in the local government	(42 years old)

Toboatobo	A traditional doctor	(about 60 years old)
Mrs Kumbuka	A married woman	(about 35 years old)
Girls' initiation rite's teacher		(about 50 years old)
TAMWA's official		(43 years old)
TGNP's official		(38 years old)
Other informants		(ages between 15-30 years)