

The Reality of the Situation, Life and Effects of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in African Societies: Examples from the Novel *Mzamiaji*

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Abstract

This article has examined the reality, life and effects of alcoholism and drug abuse in African societies by referring to Kiswahili literature. The basic data presented in this article have been found in the novel *Myuki's novel Mzamiaji* which was written by Myuki, R. In 2021 through a documentary review approach. An extensive library research was employed to get key documents which would help in the attainment of primary data for the study.. The analysis and discussion of the data presented were guided by Sociological theory. The results of the study are presented descriptively. This article discusses the social repercussions of drinking as depicted in the selected novel.

It highlights the actual scenario of the repercussions of alcoholism, such as a drop in labor force participation and wealth generation as a result of increased neglect, laziness, and the collapse of individuals involved's health. Young individuals are thought to be the most vulnerable to drug and alcohol abuse.. This article highlights awareness of the need of positive thinking in rejecting, criticizing, and taking action to prevent the effects of alcoholism, which has grown in society. It instructs the community to abstain from narcotics and alcoholic beverages. To manage the negative consequences that users face, strict ethical and legal procedures should be implemented for all individuals who are proven to be involved in drugs and excessive alcoholism.

Keywords: Alcoholism, Drugs, Alcohol, Sociological Theory and Kiswahili Novel.

1.0 Introduction

This article examines the state and effects of alcoholism and drug abuse in African societies with reference to the novel *Mzamiaji* by Myuki, R. . In many African societies, the issue of alcoholism is seen as one of the sources of moral erosion in society. Drunkenness results from the use of alcohol and drugs that flourished in parts of the cities and outside it. The effects of alcoholism and drug abuse are many and they manifest themselves clearly in society. Some of them include a decrease in the labour force and wealth production due to the strengthening of the consequences of alcoholism such as the increase in negligence, laziness and the collapse of the health of those involved (Joy, 1999). It is dangerous for the well-being of society and the nation because young people are said to be the biggest victims of drugs and alcohol. Alcoholism can cause a loss of labour power due to deaths caused by its use. Drugs are one of the scourges that plague many young people, including those who live in big cities in this country.

The effects of alcoholism and drug abuse are great in society. There is medical evidence that alcohol and drug addiction can cause insanity and mental illness. It can cause a brain accident due to a disease called *Wernicke Korsakov Syndrome* which affects the brain and the nerves of consciousness, and destroys memory and the ability to organize things is disturbed (Manyilizu, 2014). Alcoholism and drug abuse can cause throat cancer in men and women, breast cancer in women, colon cancer in both sexes, as well as an incurable liver disease called Liver Cirrhosis. Manyilizu continues to explain that alcoholism causes stroke, high blood pressure, heart muscle diseases, inflammation of the pancreas and directly causes death.

This information broadly shows the effects of alcoholism and drug abuse in society. One of their effects is to destroy the natural system of how the body works. In addition, the entry of alcohol and the use of drugs in this country is done using high-level secret methods, but their effects are seen very quickly in society. For example, when students use them they can no longer continue their studies (Kibona, 2018). If this situation continues, it is dangerous and a disaster for society and the nation. Strict ethical and legal measures must be taken for the benefit of the sustainability of the present and future generations. The use of natural alcohol has a wide role in the environment of Tanzania and Africa in general. These uses have contributed to the existence of serious consequences, especially those resulting from excessive alcoholism. This situation causes a decline in the level of wealth production and economy at all levels of the family, community and nation.

Alcoholism and drug misuse lead to family collapse and possibly divorce. It exacerbates wealth creation activities and the economy, as well as family fragmentation. This article recommends the community consume alcohol in proportion in order to avoid its negative consequences. The community's role is to use their efforts, knowledge, and strength to economically arm themselves for the benefit of their families, communities, and nation. (Eugene, 2004). Society should operate under the constraints of its economic and geographical surroundings. Also, refrain from engaging in unlawful crimes such as theft, rape, or adultery. All persons proven to be involved in these situations should face severe moral and legal consequences. As a result, this paper explored the situation and impacts of drinking and drug misuse in society through the novel *Mzamiaji*.

2.0 Theory and Research Methods

This article examines the state and effects of alcoholism in society by referring to Myuki's novel *Mzamiaji*. The primary data for this study were collected through documentary review of the selected text (*Mzamiaji*). The analysis and discussion of the data presented were guided by Sociological theory. Historically, this theory began to appear in the middle of the nineteenth century and flourished in the twentieth century in Europe. The sociological theory began as a cultural science that looked at literary works as a copy of behaviour and a real representative of a certain society (Wamitila, 2002). One of its foundations is to look at the natural environment of

society as the one that determines the way a literary work should be. The sociological theory was used to confront literature in examining how it relates to the social environment.

According to this theory, art is not created in vacuum but is the work of an artist in a specific environment and time being responsible for the society that concerns him/her. An artist cannot avoid the issues of the community in his/her composition because his/her literature is a specific product of his/her community. Literature is a perfect portrayal that does not depict life in detail and examines it from a broad perspective (Wafula&Njogu, 2007). For a person to understand certain literature, it is necessary to know the area concerned with its culture, traditions, language and environment. From that point of view, the selected novel was examined as a specific product of the community considering their history, their philosophy, their traditions and customs, their economy and their politics. In this article, this theory has been used to examine the existing relationship between literature and society by referring to the selected novel that is *Mzamiaji*. During the data analysis process, the picked novelist was placed in his context to learn about his writing because his work is a reflection of the society in which he lives.. The written community was placed in the real world to conduct an in-depth analysis.

3.0 Status and Consequences of Alcoholism in Society in Selected Novels

This article examines the state and effects of alcoholism in society by referring to the novel *Mzamiaji* by Myuki, R. This article shows various situations and results resulting from the effects of alcoholism in African societies. The selected novel has been studied as one of the detours of Kiswahili literature that refers to various norms that prevail in society. By referring to selected novels by *Mzamiaji*, the next section presents the reflection, conditions and effects of alcoholism in society.

3.1 The Rise of Infectious Diseases

Kiswahili literature is inextricably linked with cultural issues since it is one of the tools used to examine society in all of its facets, including those relating to diseases. AIDS is one of the contagious diseases that continue to have a negative impact on society in all sectors (Prime Minister's Office, 2007). Kiswahili literature is responsible for analyzing and critically reviewing the causes of illness and its transmission, as well as providing advice and explaining its repercussions. It also demonstrates the government's attempts to combat numerous diseases that arise in this country. AIDS is a topic that health professionals are concerned about in terms of prevention and treatment. People are afraid because there is no remedy.

The bottom line is that AIDS infections can be avoided because sexual transmission accounts for more than 80% of all illnesses (Loshilaa, 2023). AIDS has a greater impact on people of reproductive age, wealth production, and the economy. If this condition persists, the community and the nation's well-being and sustainability are jeopardized. According to World Health Organization statistics, more than 30% of fatalities from these diseases occur in adults under the

age of 60 who are employed in the country (Public Service Management, 2014). AIDS-related deaths occur among personnel aged 25 to 49, and men are disproportionately impacted in government ministries, departments, and agencies due to their gender.. In terms of the Offices of the Heads of Regions and Local Governments, the most affected are women, especially teachers, nurses and extension officers because there are more women in these groups than men. If the disease is not controlled by putting in place strong strategies, it will continue to affect the welfare of society and the nation.

The subject of AIDS infection is vividly expressed in Kiswahili literature. Literature is employed as a distinctive tool to educate, criticize, and warn the community about the presence of infectious diseases such as AIDS (Mutembei, 2009). It explains the presence of some behaviors utilized as infectious agents.. Alcoholism is described as one of the sources that can cause the rapid spread of virus infection that causes a lack of immunity in the body. For example, *Myuki's novel Mzamiaji* has shown how careless sex causes the rapid spread of the AIDS virus due to the flourishing of alcoholism and drug abuse in society. The author has used Willy Mwaipopo who contracted the disease from having sex with *Warda* in guest houses while in the Congo. The author explains:

‘Ina maanatangu tuondoke hukuhujawahikuji shughulishanampenzi kabisa?
‘Mpenzi! Ndiyompenzi! Nini ambacho hujaelewahapo?’ ‘Niliwahi’.
‘Uliji shughulishana okamawapenzi wangapi?’
‘Wawili mama’
‘Ulipimahao?’
‘Hapana’.
‘Unaona eeh!’
‘Chochotekatiyahivyo ulivyovitajakinawe zaku ambukizavirusi vya UKIMWI
ilangono zembendizo zinazoongozaku wakusambazavirusi hivyo’.
‘Yawe zakuwahivyo mama’ (Uk. 43).

‘Does it mean that since we left here, you have never been busy with a lover at all?’
‘Honey! Yes, dear! What do you not understand there? ‘I used to’.
‘How many lovers did you deal with them?’
‘Two, mama’.
‘Did you take a medical examination with them?’
‘No’.
‘You see!’
‘Any of the things you mentioned can infect the AIDS virus, but careless sex is what leads to spreading the virus’.
‘It could be so, mama’ (Pg. 43).

This information shows that participating in the act of marriage without taking precautions to avoid sexually transmitted diseases causes the spread of the AIDS virus. Drunkenness caused *Mwaipopo* to share love without taking precautions with various women, including Mercy and *Warda*. As a result, he contracted AIDS. Many people find themselves engaging in promiscuous sex due to excessive alcohol consumption. The use of drugs and alcohol increases the body's emotions, including romantic ones to the extent that many cannot control their emotions (Prime Minister's Office, 2001). This situation leads to unsafe sexual interactions. This matter has been made clear to alert society and take appropriate measures to confirm infectious diseases that can be caused by careless sex.

There are scholars in Kiswahili literature who associate the issue of alcoholism and drug abuse with the collapse of traditional values and culture in African societies as having contributed to the rapid spread of AIDS. The weakening of traditional training movements, especially initiation and initiation in some communities has contributed to the spread of AIDS (Rwejuma, 2001). However, a detailed investigation has to be done to confirm this point. The breakdown of indigenous culture has increased the spread of AIDS because it was difficult for young people who were fully trained in *jandonaunyago* 'initiation ceremony' to engage in immorality easily. Even though initiation movements contributed to introducing young people and involving them in marriage issues before their proper time, they helped to build the original moral foundations of their communities.

Rural residents look at cities as morally degraded places, especially regarding the behaviour of young people and their consequences. Erosion of values is caused by the mixed culture that has dominated the urban areas (TACAIDS, 2005). That culture has contributed to immersing society in the infection of the AIDS virus, especially among young people. The movement of young people to flee to the cities is directly linked to the increasing rate of infection in the community. The artists encourage the community to change their behaviour and follow the advice given by experts on the best way to avoid further transmission of AIDS.

3.2 Intensification and Maturation of Poverty

Poverty is a state of lack of property, destitution and poverty. Poverty is one of the problems faced by various communities in the country. Poverty causes people to be unable to support themselves in all social spheres. To control poverty, the issue of hard work and knowledge is emphasized to all members of society. Work is any legal activity that a person does to earn a living (BAKITA, 2017). In many societies here in Tanzania and elsewhere in Africa, work is used as a criterion to be trusted, valued, given family and social responsibilities, to participate in traditional and governmental decisions. Devoting oneself to wealth and economic activities is viewed as a measure of personality and a sufficient contribution to the development of one's society. A person who is properly responsible is given

the status of being called an adult. Diligence in work builds respect and is a weapon to fight and overcome poverty in society.

The flourishing of laziness, carelessness and irresponsibility in some communities will be viewed as property theft. Laziness has the meaning of welcoming hunger, and poverty and weakening the economy of the family, society and nation. Emphasizing this, Shivji (2009) explains that laziness is a theft of time and a very big mistake. The truth and value of those words are great in the life and progressive movements of society and nation. This approach allows society to teach young people how to work hard, be independent, and avoid laziness, indolence and vagrancy. The major consequence resulting from the effects of laziness, inefficiency, dependence and irresponsibility is the widening of the spectrum of poverty in society in this country. Without sincere efforts to be taken and carried out in the best way to fight poverty, the economy of the society and the nation will weaken and collapse completely. This is dangerous for the welfare of the nation and the development of its people.

Kiswahili literature has been reflecting the reality of the source of poverty in society. For example, Myuki's novel *Mzamiaji* explains how the issue of drunkenness and laziness causes an increase in poverty in African societies. Alcoholism causes the poverty gap to get stronger and stronger because a lot of money is spent on the purchase of alcohol which gives limited space to the plans of the development movement (Tehanan, 2003). Drunkenness consumes more time than doing productive and economic work. The author explains how Mwaipopo's situation worsened economically and became poor after he became involved in the use of alcohol. The use of alcohol led him to excessive drunkenness which continued to strengthen his in laziness and affected the efficiency of his wealth production and economic activities. The author explains:

*HaliyamatumiziyapombeilimwingizaMwaipopokatikauleviuliopindukiaulioendeleakumwii
marishakatikauvivuulioathiriufanisikatikashughulizakezauzalishajimalinauchumi.
Hakuwezakufanyakazizakumuingiziakipatokikubwa.
Helaalizozitafutazilikuwanikwaajiliyakujikimutuyeyena mama yakemdogo (Uk. 23).*

The state of alcohol consumption led *Mwaipopo* into excessive drunkenness which continued to strengthen him in laziness which affected the efficiency of his wealth production and economic activities. He could not do jobs that would bring him a lot of income. The money he was looking for was just to support himself and his young mother
(My own translation of the extract from the novel)

This information shows the effects of alcoholism in society. The state of drunkenness affected *Mwaipopo* to the extent that he ended up looking for money just to support himself. The ability to choose and plan productive activities is disrupted because alcoholism affects the brain and nerves. Alcoholism hinders development, and brings hunger and disaster to society (Manyilizu,

2014). In any society, alcoholism is viewed as a weakness and no one can turn a blind eye to it. Drunkards should be taken strict practical measures by making them responsible traditionally and legally to avoid its effects. Society should take deliberate measures to prevent and avoid the unproductive consequences of alcoholism for the well-being of society and the nation.

The struggle against poverty requires society to work with unity, diligence and knowledge. Responsibility is a basic weapon in dealing with the difficult conditions of life in society. Cooperation is one of the methods of joining forces in various movements to face poverty (Simtowe, 2023). Also, it is a strong pillar that helps to achieve the movement of community and national development. Unity brings productivity and efficiency to all social activities. This issue has been given a big place by the artists of Kiswahili literature by emphasizing the issue of working in cooperation to achieve success in every field of development. Unity is the stick of the weak in the movement to deal with the increasing poverty in the community. In addition, they have to establish solid economic foundations that will help them in their present and future lives. Young people should not immerse themselves in alcoholic activities because they are the workforce of their families, their communities and their nation.

3.3 Rise and Flourishing of Same-Sex Love

The speed of development and interaction of the world's societies is fully connected with the existence of major cultural changes. Globalization is one of the factors that contribute to these changes, especially in third-world countries (Amatubi, 2002). Since globalization has no boundaries, there is no doubt that Kiswahili literature has a strong relationship with the changes occurring in society as it occurs in other social fields. Development experts claim that the globalization system makes the world a single village, and it is a way to welcome and facilitate technological and economic systems to continue to improve in developing countries. Globalization can be explored through literary works, including Kiswahili novels.

The new culture that began to spread from the industrial nations to the young nations was accompanied by the opening of doors in everything (Wamitila, 2003). Even the honour and dignity of his person or the honour of his position should no longer have a place. This is the culture that prevailed in our country, the use of things that are not the result of its production. Africa has turned into a dumping ground for foreign products. This system aims to remove geographical, economic and political barriers to allow the free flow of labour between nations (Bhalla, 2002). This approach enables developed nations to easily obtain raw materials, markets, investment sites and flexible production labour. Kiswahili literature is one of the important instruments in the dissemination of culture and in measuring progress and changes emerging in society (Mwakajinga, 2009). In this article, all the ongoing issues in society have been used as a basis for measuring the power of globalization and the effects of its movement as reflected in the selected novel.

The rise and spread of homosexuality in African societies is the result of the interaction of the world's societies geographically and culturally (Mligo, 2015). Same-sex love is the state of people of the same sex engaging in marriage. For example, same-sex marriage can be between a woman and a woman or between a man and a man. Some of the reasons that lead to the existence of same-sex relationships are due to some people wanting an easy life, alcoholism and drug smoking, including marijuana. Alcoholism and drug addiction affect the level of rationality and the ability to think critically and plan things fades. As a result, drunkenness allows some things to be done without taking adequate precautions. For example, in the novel *Mzamiaji*, the author explains some of the reasons that lead to same-sex marriage and love:

Mle ndani kama vile uvutaji wa bangi na ulawiti, wapo wanaume waliokubali kuolewa na wanaume wenzao wengine walilazimika kukubali kuolewa kutokana na kutaka urahisi wa maisha ya gerezani (Uk. 24).

Inside, such as smoking marijuana and forceful same-sex, some men agreed to marry other men; they had to agree to marry because they wanted the ease of life in prison
(My own translation of the extract from the novel).

This information shows the factors that lead to engaging in same-sex love due to the flourishing of marijuana smoking and wanting the ease of life in prison. A man agrees to marry his fellow man just to get ease of life. In terms of prison, some agree to indulge in homosexuality to avoid torture. That culture is not productive because it is part of African traditions and customs. Culture is the main identity of any nation; and it is an example of the will and vitality of its people (Sengo, 1991). Traditions and customs justify the values, actions and civilization of society. Every nation has to strengthen its culture because it is the basis of its values and the civilization of its citizens. Culture is the basis of values that distinguish one society from another. Every community has the responsibility to protect, develop, preserve and respect its culture. The culture is passed down from one generation to the next through various genres of oral literature of its community.

3.4 Psychological Vulnerability and Betrayal in Love

The issue of alcoholism and homosexuality causes its characters to suffer psychologically. Some of the characters have given up on life due to economic failure and are forced to indulge in the use of strong alcohol and drugs (Tehenan, 2003). The use of drugs and alcohol affects the mind and the body weakens. It has been stated that there is medical evidence that alcohol and drug addiction can cause psychological damage, madness and mental illnesses. Also, there is evidence that many victims of drugs are strongly associated with incidents related to crime in society such as robbery, theft, rape, homosexuality, fraud and extortion (Ngadala, 2003). Strong moral and legal measures should be taken for all those who will be found to be involved in these issues.

The author shows how the psychological problem affects many young people in society. For example, the prisoners who were in The Blue prison in Congo, most of them suffered from this problem due to being involved in smoking cannabis while in prison. As was previously explained that advanced methods are used in the importation of painkillers, and the same is the case with the importation of these drugs in prison. The smoking of drugs is considered a part of relaxation or relaxation. The author explains:

Daniel alijiingizakatikauvutajiwabangi, alihisikulewanisehemuyakupunguzamawazo (Uk. 24).

Daniel indulged in smoking marijuana; he felt that getting drunk was part of reducing stress

(My own translation of the extract from the novel)

This detail shows how drug use affects its users psychologically in society. Daniel got into it as a distraction. Society has to abandon the habit of alcoholism because it has negative effects on the majority of users. If this matter is turned a blind eye without taking a specific strategy to fight the problem, it can destroy many, especially young people who are heavy users of strong alcohol and drugs. Drugs are one of the scourges that plague many young people, including those living in big cities in African societies (Ngwale&Kironde, 2000). This situation causes a decrease in the level of wealth production and economy at the household, community and national levels.

The author of the selected novel has shown how the issue of alcoholism leads to the strengthening of betrayal in love and marriage. Also, economic factors contribute to disruption and conflict in marriage. A woman can leave her husband to marry a financially independent man. The issue of betrayal in marriage is strongly criticized in many communities in this country. Society has to solve the problems that befall them by finding the right way instead of breaking the marriage by giving a divorce. Betrayal caused *Mwaipopo* to experience turmoil after abandoning his family due to alcoholism. *Mwaipopo* betrayed his family and joined *Wardaromantically*. The author explains:

Baadayachakula cha jioni, Mwaipopoalibadilikinywajinakuanzakutumiapombe, aliendeleakunywana Wardahadimudawausikusana. Twendezetuchumbani.

Mwaipopoalimwambia Warda. Wewenendantakukuta.

Baadayamudakidogo WardaaliingiachumbanialikoMwaipopo; nahatimayewakafanyamapenzi(Uk. 23).

After dinner, *Mwaipopo* changed his drink and started using alcohol; he continued to drink with *Warda* until late at night. Let's go to our room. *Mwaipopo* told *Warda*. You go, I will find you. After a while, *Warda* entered the room where *Mwaipopo* was; and finally, they made love

(My own translation of the extract from the novel).

These details show how drunkenness causes betrayal. After getting drunk, *Mwaiipopo* took *Warda* and had sex with her. The betrayal situation continued to cause unnecessary crises in the *Mwaiipopofamily*. *Mwaiipopo* ended up abandoning his marriage after getting attached to *Warda* and other girls. The issue of trust in marriage is viewed as an important pillar in developing and maintaining productive traditions and customs in society (Njogu, 2004). Also, it encourages solidarity for couples to build a sustainable marriage for the interest and well-being of their community. Couples have to build themselves and live based on loving each other, cooperating, tolerating each other and taking care of their marriage with great loyalty (Ann, 2013). The basis of the selected novel is to emphasize the importance of maintaining trust in marriage. Honesty is a method that can build the foundations of trust and integrity in matters related to love and marriage.

4.0 Conclusion

This article examines the state and effects of alcoholism and drug abuse in society by referring to *Myuki's novel Mzamiaji*. This article has shown various situations and results resulting from the effects of alcoholism in society. This investigation shows that the novel is a social tool that builds a system to teach it and put society on a basis that matches the truth of things and the real situation in society. Issues related to the state of poverty, betrayal, the flourishing of love and same-sex marriages and the existence of infectious diseases have been presented on a wide scale. This article has shown that the selected novel has been studied as one of the detours of Kiswahili literature that refers to the social norms prevailing in society. This article suggests that effective strategies should be taken to close the loopholes of the drug and alcohol trade to save society from its effects.

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