

PORTRAYAL OF POVERTY IN SELECTED NAMIBIAN PLAYS BY HANGULA,

MOLAPONG, THANISEB AND PHILANDER

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## Abstract

This research study analysed poverty as portrayed in 'King of the dump' by Frederick Philander, 'The show isn't over until' by Vickson Hangula, 'To live a better life' by Axaro Thaniseb and 'The horizon is calling' by Keamogetse Joseph Molapong. The four plays were selected because of the theme of poverty which is emphasised throughout the plays. The researcher employed the post-colonial and realism theories in this research study. This research study aimed at portraying and unearthing poverty according to the plays as represented by the selected playwrights. The study was a desktop qualitative research and employed content analysis in interpretation and analysis of the chosen texts. The study revealed that unemployment is a major cause of poverty as portrayed by the four plays under scrutiny. Furthermore, this study revealed that unemployment not only leads exclusively to poverty, but it is also a major cause of criminal activities and suffering. Equally, the study revealed that poverty leads to malnourishment causing those affected to turn to ill activities such as eating from the dump and using their bodies in exchange for favours to alleviate themselves from the yoke of poverty. The study recommends future researchers to also consider studying other Namibian literature which portray poverty and how it is portrayed. Further, the study recommends studies on ways and means on how poverty can be eradicated from our societies. Lastly, the researcher recommends a study on how poverty affects people from a gender perspective.

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## Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Japhet Hindundu Kazavanga, for restoring my self-confidence, supporting me and re-assuring me that I can do it.

## Declaration

I, Erica Kazavanga, hereby declare that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any institution of higher education.

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Erica Kazavanga

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

The chapter serves as an introduction to this study on poverty as portrayed by the selected playwrights. First, the chapter presents the background of the study, then the statement of the problem, followed by the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the limitations of the study, delimitations of the study, the outline of the study and the conclusion.

### 1.2 Background of the study

Poverty is immensely prevalent in Namibia as it is in other African countries and all over the world. That is despite the fact that Namibia has an abundance of natural resources from which it can sustain its people. Arguing in the same fashion concerning Africa, Asadu (2015) notes that: “In spite of all the rich resources that Africa is blessed with, the continent is wallowing in poverty and extreme socio-economic and political deprivations” (p. 138). Thus it is out of these concerns that literary artists, who are the voices of the society’s voiceless like Hangula, Molapong, Thaniseb and Philander, penned down critically perceptive plays to explore the multiple dimensions of poverty in Africa and Namibia in particular.

Therefore, poverty in Namibia is depicted in the writings of poets, novelists, authors, playwrights, and other creative artists. Arguing in support of this line of thinking is Ogundokun (2015) who notes:

African literary works across the three major literary genres; drama (plays), poetry (poems) and prose (novels), have seen poverty as a must discussed societal issue. Whether the text is written by an Anglophone writer or his Francophone counterpart,

writers have set their lens on this common enemy which has eroded the much needed development in Africa. (p. 84)

Supporting Ogundokun (2015) is Ngozi (2017) who argues that:

Literature is an integral part of culture. It is a reputable tool for the assertion and retrieval of rights and entitlements in lived human communities, including the nations of Africa. In Africa, literary scholarship, particularly the novel has continued to serve as the voice of the dispossessed, oppressed, hungry and neglected individuals in various nations of the continent from colonization till date. (p. 19)

This study focuses on poverty as portrayed in the plays of the selected Namibian playwrights. The incumbent president of Namibia, Dr Hage Geingob, introduced the Ministry of Poverty Eradication as a result of the prevailing poverty in Namibia.

Given the comments above which are not necessarily from literary studies, the study sought to critically explore the portrayal of poverty in selected Namibian plays, namely Hangula's 'The show isn't over until...' (2000), Molapong's 'The horizon is calling' (2000), Thaniseb's 'To live a better life' (2002) and Philander's 'King of the dump' (2005). The study endeavoured to examine what the playwrights project as the causes and effects of poverty. Furthermore, the study aimed at exploring the manner in which various characters and themes are employed by the playwrights to represent poverty. The study further explored the effects of poverty as portrayed by the playwrights and the imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty.

The playwrights under study express their concern in society through literature as is corroborated by Yakubu (2015) that "in Africa, literature is a medium employed by writers to reform their societies" (p. 77).

This way of expressing their concern through literature is a way of reflecting to the wider world what takes place on the ground, in this case, what takes place in Namibia. Supporting this kind of argument, is Asadu (2015) who argues that: “It is evident that literature mirrors society and can as well x-ray the problems inherent in the society with a view to offering solutions to these problems” (p. 138).

In the case of the playwrights under discussion, they (the playwrights) write about a problem vexing their society and they use literature as a means to make their voices heard. This kind of writing is noted by Ngugi (1981, as cited in Ogundokun, 2015) that: “Through the selected literary works; plays, novels and poems, we see the sorry state of human living conditions in African society. Writers are surgeons of the heart and souls of a community” (p. 88).

This act of writing about issues vexing society is not unique to Namibia as one can see from Vassani (2016) who remarked concerning the Indian artist Bhattacharya that: “Bhattacharya exposed the social evils which make the poor suffer miserably” (p. 51). Vassani (2016) goes further and notes that, “Bhabani Bhattacharya has depicted the Indian social scene in the context of historical events with major themes like: hunger, poverty, disease, addiction, modernity and major social evils of the society” (p. 49). In the Namibian context, the selected playwrights write about many issues but the major theme is that of poverty which is an evil bothering the Namibian society.

Vassani (2016) further asserts that, “Literature is an expression of self and society. Many creative writers have used literature as a medium to express the feelings and emotions, from confusion to happiness, from loneliness to self-attainment, and many more” (p. 49). The playwrights under discussion are no exception to the assertion of Vassani (2016) as they express themselves within the society in which they live.

This same sentiment is noted by Butale (2015) who expresses that: “In this way, Achebe reminds us that if we want to understand poverty in relation to African people, we need to listen to their narratives and similarly if governments want to understand poverty fully, they have to listen to the voices of the poor themselves” (p. 7). Therefore in this study, the concern has been to amplify the voices of the poor as they are projected by the selected playwrights, Hangula, Molapong, Thaniseb and Philander.

Writing about those writing literature, as writers of real stories with real people in mind and not just made up facts, Sunder (2015) notes in the preface to the novel *Two leaves and a bud* (Anand, 1937), “All these characters and other men and women were the reflection of the real people I had known during my childhood and youth. They were the flesh of my flesh and blood of my blood” (p. 62). Therefore it is important to note that although the works of many authors might be fictional and not using real names, nevertheless they are referring imaginatively to real people who underwent the situations and circumstances the authors wrote about. Applying this viewpoint to the plays under discussion one can conclude that they write about imaginatively real issues and real circumstances which take place in the society they are residing in.

Corroborating the above idea is Sudhakar (2016) who writes concerning the same author, (Anand) that, his personal experiences and the reform of India's political, social, and cultural institutions are major elements in Anand's writings. Such early fictional works as “*Untouchable*” (1935), “*The Coolie*” (1936), and “*Two leaves and a bud*” (1937) dramatize the cruelties inherent in the caste system and the suffering induced by poverty (p. 48). Taking the plays under discussion as a point of reference, the question therefore is, why are they writing about issues of poverty? Is that not aimed at reforming the society under which they resort where they observed all these issues?

Furthermore, Sudhakar (2016, p. 52) notes of the internationality of fictional writings in Anand's writings as alluding to the fact that his novels universalize issues, which concern every man, every community and every country. While noting what Yakubu (2015) wrote about African authors and the assertions from Sudhakar (2016), one can conclude that fictional writings bring forth some literary universals and poverty is one of them.

The views above are also supported by Rambhau and Patil (2016) as they note when writing about Bhattacharya and say: "All these novels of Bhattacharya present a true picture of India and its people surging with life and substance" (p. 39). It should be noted that these are not only about India, as noted earlier, but this is a universal phenomenon. Even the plays under discussion are as a matter of fact included in the above categorisations. The chosen plays are illustrative of this argument as the playwrights write about issues that haunt present day Namibia and to whose attention this study would like to bring to the surface.

Since what the authors of literature portray comes from the society in which they live (Yakubu, 2015), it is the same what Adedaja (2010) says that the social relevance of African literature cannot be controverted, because literature cannot be divorced from social values (p. 34). It is more or less about social values and how such values are being projected by the various writers in their various generations. This leads us to conclude that Namibian literature is included in this argument and hence the plays under study.

Writing about the Indian society Shende and Deshmukh (2016) remark concerning Anand's writings that: "Anand voiced those dregs of the society who were deprived of socio-economic opportunities for their sustenance and became victims of social, cultural, economic and political exclusion. He enacts the tragic life of the oppressed through novels" (p. 34). One can draw from other continents' authors and still find the same sentiment being voiced in Africa.

So, as Anand and many other authors and scholars have noted, this is a universal rather than a regional issue.

Talking of Africa, Okon (2013) remarks that: “As Anyidoho (1979, p. 51), quoting Atukwei Okai, once declared: ...In Africa, the poet cannot afford to just play around with words. It is natural that he should handle some of the realities of his society” (p. 95). The same argument holds on what takes place with the plays under discussion. The playwrights are not playing with words but expressing their concerns through literature and of significance to this study has been how poverty is portrayed by the playwrights.

When Africans started using literature to air their concerns in the postcolonial period, they wrote about what was taking place in their societies at that time. This is the view of Okon (2013) who argues that: “pioneer African poets have been shown to have used the prevailing colonial situation at the time as subject-matter of poetry” (p. 97). During the colonial era, there existed two cultures, the European one and the Native African one. When Achebe saw this, the birth of his novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) saw light as alluded to by Kenalemang (2013).

Illustrating the fact that African literature is about their societies is Cherrat (2012, p. 11) who notes that: “Because Achebe really lived in the Ibo society, he tried his best to bring all the beauty of his society by using storytelling, proverbs, and idioms which imply the positive spirit of the Ibo society. Thus, Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* (1958) shows the real life of the African people before the arrival of the White Man” (p. 11).

This concern of writers using literature to present issues facing their societies is not unique to Namibia. Karn (2016) narrates the same concern concerning the Indian society, by stating that the Indian writers present burning issues in their society through the selection of characters, plots, themes, situations and the Indian ethos to reveal their sensibility to the Indian people and the world at large (p. 9). The revelation of burning issues to the wider public by the writers of

literature seems to be a global phenomenon rather than an issue to be restricted to one nation or society.

Expressing the same sentiment, Joshi (2013) notes that fiction, of all literary forms, is closely connected with social aspects and values, and at this time, society, “galvanized into a new social and political awareness, was bound to seek creative expression for its new consciousness and the novel has, in all ages, been a handy instrument for this purpose” (p. 1).

A number of scholars have defined poverty but according to the researcher’s view the stance of Murphy (2014) that there is no single definition of poverty; it is measured differently by country, region, time period, and organisation (p. 3) seems to be the acceptable way of looking at poverty. What one sees is not what another sees. The lenses through which we see and categorise poverty seems to be different because of the factors working out on us to cause us to see through that certain lens.

In this study, poverty is defined in accordance with the United Nations (2001) definition (as cited by Korte, 2011, p. 293) which states that poverty is “a human condition characterised by sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights”.

Westover (2008, as cited by Korankye 2014, p. 147) defines poverty as follows: “The word ‘poverty’ and/or ‘poor’ originated from the Latin word pauper, meaning poor, which has its roots in the words pau- and pario that is “giving birth to nothing”; referring to unproductive livestock and farmland.” Lawrence (as cited by Butale, 2015, p. 4) in his poem “Poverty”, declares “[that] poverty is a hard old hag/ and a monster, when you’re pinched for actual necessities” (lines 5-6). Lawrence illuminatingly demonstrates that poverty is a relative phenomenon that can mean lack of basic needs or absolute lack of necessities. Brauchli (2011,

p. 7) asserts that “presently worldwide over one billion people live on less than \$1.25 a day. Living in such extreme poverty means to lack the fulfilment of basic human needs such as clean water, nutrition, health care, education, clothing and shelter, food and clothing.” However, poverty seems to be a lack of multiple resources which can lead to deprivation. It is in the best interest of this study to focus on how poverty is presented in the selected Namibian plays by focusing on how literature contributes to the exploration of issues and concerns in a postcolonial context.

Namibia, like many developing countries suffers from high poverty rates. This is supported by Tobias (2007) who notes that empirical evidence indicates that the level of poverty in Namibia continues to escalate (p. 5). Tobias (2007) further notes that Namibians won freedom of political emancipation and national liberation but the bulk of the poor remains in the absence of transformation of economic ownership and control (p. 3). It is thus no wonder that literature is being written about issues haunting the Namibian society and one of them is poverty.

Jauch (2012) asserts that “the interlinked issues of poverty, unemployment and inequality (PUI) can be traced back to Namibia’s colonial apartheid legacies and continue to haunt the country since its independence in 1990” (p. 1). The same sentiment is repeated by Schmidt (2009) who also argues that ever since Namibia came into being, the interlinked issues of poverty, unemployment and inequality (PUI) can be traced back to Namibia’s colonial apartheid legacies and continue to haunt the country since its independence in 1990 (p. 2). The plays under discussion were written in a postcolonial era and they thus represent the Namibian society after independence.

The study endeavoured to shed light on the remarkable relationship which exists between the portrayal of poverty as presented in the Namibian selected plays and the reality on the ground in the Namibian society as argued in the works of Jauch (2012) and Schmidt (2009). This

relationship, also called realism, is a perspective that conceptualises what goes on in real life by the use of literature. This notion is supported by Mlambo and Kandemiri (2015) as they state that “Literature is a reflection of reality and authors use realism...” (p. 61). The reality in the Namibian society will as a matter of fact be found in what is written in literature. Therefore, what the plays under discussion present are to be taken as representing what takes place in the Namibian society.

Authors use their literary works to express their concern in society as supported by Yakubu (2015) that “in Africa, literature is a medium employed by writers to reform their societies” (p. 77). The same sentiment has been expressed about Dickens in England where he seemed to convey his personal experience and his feelings by using the autobiographical element (Moussaoui, 2014, p. 4). This inequality is noted in the chosen plays as they are used as a medium to conscientise the Namibian society from the evil of poverty as they write about issues that take place in the Namibian society and then once made aware it will be left on the Namibian people to affirm or reject that which is occurring in their society as reflected in the literary works.

When things happen around people and they see it and experience it, then what they will write about will constitute the truth as they observe it. This view is supported by Nabutanyi (2013) who argues that if a country is going through a crisis, and people are writing around the time, they will be drawn to writing stories that would deal with those crises (p. 1). Taking what Nabutanyi (2013) alleges as true and applying that to the selected plays of this study then, it can be argued that the playwrights observed what goes on around them in the country and they penned something about life as the poverty around them was an everyday phenomenon.

Other scholars are of the opinion that literature is a medium of education. For example, Todorov (2007) argues that “literature teaches us how to live” (p. 26). The idea is further

expanded by Duhan (2015) who argues that: “A literary man is as much a product of his society as his art is product of his own reaction to life” (p. 192). Without overemphasising these truths, what the chosen playwrights penned down was how they reacted to life around them and this can be a lesson to readers.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

In the recent Namibian literary criticism context, there has been little or no concentration on the theme of poverty. For example Masule (2014) depicted the role of women in *God of Women* by Nyathi and *Othello* by Shakespeare, highlighting the literary techniques the authors used in their portrayal of the female characters in the plays. Andima and Tjiramanga (2014) concentrated on the oppression of women in African narratives. Rhode (2003) critically evaluated the silencing of the subaltern woman and related that to the novel *The Purple Violet of Oshaantu* by Neshani Andreas. Therefore, there is little or no research done by scholars on the issue of poverty as presented in the selected Namibian plays and this creates a research gap for this study.

The study sought to explore how literary works express social concerns by exploring the portrayal of poverty in the selected works. The researcher investigated how playwrights of the selected plays use fiction to give voice to the voiceless in the Namibian society concerning poverty. This seems to be a largely un-investigated research area in English literary studies within the Namibian context, yet the presence of poverty discourses abounds in the media as well as in sociological and historical researches. However, despite the dearth of literary criticism on the portrayal of poverty in fiction; authors, playwrights and poets have given attention to this challenge in their works as a way of giving voice to this very critical and ever-present concern in Namibian life. The study therefore probes this troubling but seemingly un-

investigated area in literary studies so as to fill the gap in knowledge on the criticism of the portrayal of poverty in Namibian creative works.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were to:

- explore the state and causes of poverty as presented in the selected plays;
- discuss the effects of poverty as presented by the selected playwrights; and
- explore the imaginative strategies that the characters devise to alleviate poverty.

#### **1.5 Significance of study**

Since the study of poverty in Namibian plays seems not to be much researched, this study to a great extent is a pioneer study and thus it adds knowledge to the growing body of existing literature on poverty especially in Namibia. The study can sensitise scholars, civic society leaders, researchers, students and activists on issues related to poverty and how fiction is an avenue to explore issues that concern society. This study shows in a unique way how literature may contribute to the better understanding of poverty.

This identification of poverty as represented in the literature, particularly of the selected Namibian plays, signifies the contribution the study has on the socio-economic and cultural progress, not only in Namibia, but in Southern Africa and any part of the world where the research may reach.

#### **1.6 Limitations of the study**

This study focused only on four Namibian plays and the portrayal of poverty as presented by the playwrights of 'The show is not over until', 'The horizon is calling', 'To live a better life' and 'King of the dump'. Furthermore, the study focused only on the four plays written in

English, despite the fact that there might be other plays on poverty written in local languages. This is because plays written in local languages fall beyond the scope of the study. The study is also restricted theoretically to post-colonial and realism theoretical lenses which inform this study. Lastly, the research only used materials available and accessible to the researcher and that which was not accessible remained unconsidered. Moreover, the study is limited to four plays hence the results cannot be generalised to the authors' collective works.

### **1.7 Delimitation of the study**

The scope of the study was limited to four Namibian plays. This is so as to cater for research manageability and also due to the limited scope of the study. The study was restricted theoretically to the post-colonial theoretical lens and realism which informed this study.

### **1.8 Outline of the chapters**

The study is organised into five chapters outlined as follows: chapter one was the introduction, chapter two is the literature review, chapter three is the research methodology, chapter four is the data analysis and presentation, and chapter five is the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

### **1.9 Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the study, gave the background to the study, followed by the statement of the problem, then listed the objectives of the study, highlighted the significance of the study as well as the limitations of the study, delimitation of the study and outline of the chapters. The next chapter is chapter two and it is on the theoretical framework and literature review.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

This part of the study focuses primarily on the theoretical framework and the literature review of the study. In discussing the theoretical framework, a connection was highlighted why the mentioned theories best inform the study. The literature review was discussed with the view of examining the existing knowledge base and instituting the justification of carrying out this research. The literature review further assisted in establishing the gap in literary studies on poverty, therefore providing a justification for the study.

#### 2.2 Theoretical framework

Concerning theoretical framework, Grant and Osanloo (2014) note that the theoretical framework is the “blueprint” for the entire dissertation inquiry (p. 13). Grant and Osanloo (2014) further argue that it serves as the guide on which to build and support your study, and also provides the structure to define how you will philosophically, epistemologically, methodologically, and analytically approach the dissertation as a whole (p. 13). What is noted by Grant and Osanloo (2014) is applicable to many theses and hence this particular thesis. This implies that what was discussed in this entire thesis hinged on the theoretical framework as discussed in this thesis.

This study employed two theories to inform the study, the post-colonial theory and realism, which both informed the study as well as served as the foundation upon which the study was laid.

### **2.2.1 Postcolonial theory**

As a way of informing the study and establishing the gap as well as justification of the study, it is of utmost importance to review what scholars said concerning postcolonial theory. Olatunji (2010) argues that “postcolonialism represents the period from the inception of colonialism to the present” (p. 127). From that period (colonialism), what is expressed after that period is regarded as the postcolonial. The theory dealing with issues expressed during that period is also called postcolonial theory.

The aim of literature in a postcolonial period is well captured by Olatunji (2010) who explains the duty of postcolonial literature as follows: “Postcolonial African literature starts engaging in the description and interrogation of post-independence problems in Africa” (p. 131). That is the view held by the researcher that Namibian plays written in a postcolonial era describe and interrogate problems inherent in the Namibian society. In fact, it is not only the plays, but all literature express the concerns and ask questions about what take place in the Namibian society. Therefore, postcolonial theory best fits this study as it interrogates and concerns issues that pertain to post independent Namibia, a period in which the selected plays were written.

Writing about postcolonial theory, Al-Saidi (2014) notes that originally postcolonial theory was formulated to deal with the reading and writing of literatures written in previously or currently colonized countries. Postcolonial novels are written to present the "unequal relations of power based on binary opposition” (p. 96). Taking a closer look at the concern of this study, Al-Saidi (2014) is not off the track. This study scrutinised poverty from a postcolonial lens and what the playwrights, looking from a postcolonial angle, have to say in their portrayal of poverty or rather the prevailing situation in postcolonial Namibia. Power relations were brought about by colonialism, according to Al-Saidi (2014), bringing into the picture, poverty, brought by colonialism as power relations meant unequal wealth distribution.

The reason is that the plays under scrutiny were written in a postcolonial era and colonisation influenced what takes place in a postcolonial era. Underwriting this notion is Gregersen (2013), who argues that the objective of post-colonial theory is to scrutinise the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised (p. 163).

It is noteworthy to consider the argument of Al-Saidi (2014), concerning the origin of postcolonial theory, that postcolonial theory, as the name hints, is a theory devised after colonisation of countries. That is why it is noted that “Postcolonial theory, as a term can be traced to 1950s. However, it became part of critical toolbox only in the 1970s, and many practitioners credit Edward Said's book *Orientalism* as being the founding work” (Al-Saidi, 2014, p. 96).

Iser (2006, as cited by Rennie, 2013, p. 8) explains that “theory as an intellectual tool, is an attempt at mapping an activity which strives to discern something”. That is what this study strove to establish. It was an attempt to map out how poverty, what Iser (2006) names as something, can be discerned from carrying out an activity, in this case the research study. The attempt is carried out using the selected theories as frameworks.

Both postcolonial and realism theories informed this study. In order not to leave any doubt in the reader's mind, it is necessary to consider postcolonial theory from a different angle and viewpoint. Considered from a different angle, postcolonialism is a theory that focuses on the colonialism of Europe on regions of the world. This is supported by Hamadi (2014) who states that,

postcolonialism, a literary theory, which traces European colonialism of many regions all over the world, its effects on various aspects of the lives of the colonized people in general, and its manifestations in Western literary and philosophical heritage in particular throughout the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, in addition to the emergence of the literature of opposition and resistance in the ex-colonies. (p. 39)

From the viewpoint of Hamadi (2014), colonialism also affected the way people live and many aspects including wealth creation of the colonised people. According to Hamadi (2014), Africans and whites were segregated into classes, where the whites benefitted from the wealth of the colonies and Africans were made servants and thus denied the right to the distribution of wealth. Hence the relevance and applicability of postcolonial theory to the study in question. The implication of Hamadi's (2014) point is that the Africans were left in poverty while the colonisers had all the resources. The effects of colonisation are still fresh in the minds of the colonised. The colonised are still affected by the state of poverty as induced on them by the colonisers. Wealth creation is a vast aspect as it influences many if not all aspects of the lives of the colonised, hence, the importance of postcolonial theory to this study. The selected plays in this study depict poverty as a concern which was brought about by colonisation.

Hamadi's (2014) concern is supported by Baffoe (2013), who argues that the effects of colonisation still remain in all aspects of the colonised long after independence (p. 3). From the writings of these and many other scholars, it is evident that postcolonial theory is apt for this study as the writings of the playwrights under scrutiny have taken place or rather were written in a postcolonial era.

It is noteworthy to support the idea of Askeland (2008), who explains that postcolonialism emerged as an attempt to understand the consequences of colonialism (p. 1). While it is imperative to know that colonialism affects all aspects of the colonised, it is also true that if one wants to understand the consequences of colonisation, one has to understand postcolonial theory well rather than having a vague understanding of it, hence, the choice of postcolonial theory to inform the study as it serves such an important function.

In the same way Khanal (2012) argues that,

Postcolonialism is a body of academic study that draws on critical theory to understand the loss of power, identity, and culture when a group of people is dominated by a conquering force example, India, Africa, Asia, and Latin America, though it has been broadened to include a more metaphorical bent as well as a diversity of geographical, racial, and cultural contexts and histories. (p. 1)

Arguing from a political angle, Khanal (2012) is of the opinion that postcolonialism, from which postcolonial theory is derived, is a body of academic study which concentrates on the losses of the colonised people. This loss includes the causes and effects of poverty which is the main concern of the study under discussion.

Furthermore, what Khanal (2012) alludes to as power could be understood as including economic power, implying poverty as well, which is the main concern of this study. As hinted to already, the colonised lost their economic power and hence they had to adapt to reach the required state as far as wealth creation is concerned.

Bhoraskar (2012) elucidates that: “Colonial and postcolonial literature is often written in the coloniser’s language, though it is critical of colonisation itself” (p. 3). That is a warning we get that unless the literary piece of work is written by the colonised in their own language, we should be sceptical about the coloniser’s viewpoint. Postcolonial theory fits this research in order to discuss postcolonial fiction, in this case Namibian plays, as it raises issues of representation and the power of language to convey meaning or reflect experience, and particularly noteworthy is how the issues of power, wealth creation and politics are articulated in postcolonial theory. As for poverty in literary studies in Namibia, there seems to be a dearth of literary criticism that uses this theory and hence creating a possible gap for this study.

### **2.2.2 Realism**

The second theory employed by this study is realism. Kavita (2015) proffers that, “In arts and literature, realism may be defined as an attempt to represent life truthfully and also avoiding all such literary techniques which make life seem implausible, exotic, and extraordinary” (p.191). This is further elucidated by Morris (2003, as cited by Rennie, 2013) who argues that: “the terms “realism” and “realist” inhabit both the realm of everyday usage and the more specialist aesthetic realm of literary usage (p. 8). This answers the question of the relationship between reality, that is, everyday usage, and literature. Kavita (2015) and Morris (2003) present that what takes place in reality is carried over in literature and that is what we find in the works of the playwrights under discussion, hence the suitability of this theory to the study in question which seeks to explore poverty in more detail as written about by the playwrights of the selected plays.

Moreover, Taghizadeh (2014) strengthens the above views by noting that, “realism is the relation between literature and reality, between what the word says and what the life is” (p. 1628). Siddiqui and Raza (2012) further argue that “literary realism is a style in literature that presents things and people as they are in real life” (p. 44). Seen from all the above viewpoints, it is important to employ this theory as it speaks directly to what the playwrights of the selected plays did as they wrote the plays deriving their thoughts from what was taking place in the society in which they live.

In contrast, Crous (2011) is at variance with the opinion of the above two scholars and alleges that “realism is not reality itself, nor is it the accurate reproduction of reality or of so-called historical facts. Rather, it is the viewer’s perception, often but not necessarily shared or supported by other viewers” (p. 2).

The debate is stressed further by Hossain and Sarker (2016) who argue that realism in art and literature is an endeavour to portray life as it is. It shows life with reality, omitting nothing that is ugly or painful and idealising nothing. From the viewpoints of these scholars, when literature is written about an issue, it is worth scrutinising since it usually and in most cases is a reflection of reality that is playing itself out in the society concerned.

Moreover, Balan (2013) states that “The term ‘realism’ in art or literature refers to the presentation of things accurately in real life” (p. 430). Balan (2013) also posits that, “Authors use their own style in presenting things that happen accurately in art and add more values to their presentation” (p. 430). The two theories combined, postcolonial theory and realism, together best informed the study in the sense that the selected plays are all from a postcolonial era and they are a reflection of what goes on in the Namibian society.

Furthermore, Ceccagno (2015) argues that “verisimilitude, even though it is clear that, under no circumstances, it substitutes truth” (p. 288) and is supported by D’Onofrio, 2007 (as cited in Ceccagno, 2015, p. 288) who says that “the work of art, since it is not directly related to a referential in the outside world, is not true, but has an equivalence to truth, verisimilitude, which is the indicative characteristic of the possibility of being, and the possibility of happening” (p. 22). Verisimilitude is thus the notion that even though what literature brings forth is not the historical truth, it is however the truth as it plays itself out and is observed by the artists. In the case of the selected plays, what has been written by the playwrights is as accurate as the truth which plays itself out in society. Therefore, the idea of verisimilitude is also applicable to literature and also to this study.

Writing about realism in India, Lodge II (2013) notes that realism allowed Indian writers to illustrate the problems in Indian culture and society under colonialism in order to expose the flaws that needed to be reformed in the new nation-state (p. 13). That is why it is important for a study such as this one to bring to light the flaws and mistakes committed under either the

colonial or postcolonial era, with a view at correcting them and reforming society and making society a better place for all.

### **2.3 Literature review**

The importance of a literature review cannot be overemphasised as Creswell (2012) argues that, “reviewing the literature means locating summaries, books, journals, and indexed publications on a topic; selectively choosing which literature to include in your review; and then summarizing the literature in a written report” (p. 9). It is thus important to review what others have penned down in and around the topic of interest and presenting that in a report. That is what this study embarked upon, in an attempt to come with a literature review containing voices around the selected topic and texts.

According to Creswell (2014), one finds that the utmost necessity of having a literature review cannot be overemphasised but is something which a study will not be well informed if left out. Creswell (2014), drawing from and citing other scholars stresses that, “it shares with the reader the results of other studies that are closely related to the one being undertaken. It relates a study to the larger, ongoing dialogue in the literature, filling in gaps and extending prior studies” (as cited in Cooper, 2010; Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 60). The purpose of this review was to present to the reader the results of other related studies, establishing and filling the gaps of what was not covered by previous related studies and also to extend prior studies.

Creswell (2014, p. 61) further elucidates literature reviews and identifies several forms which might be taken in a literature review activity. Creswell (2014) posits that, “Cooper (2010) discussed four types: literature reviews that (a) integrate what others have done and said, (b) criticize previous scholarly works, (c) build bridges between related topics, and (d) identify the central issues in a field” (p. 61).

In the study under discussion, a literature review was employed to integrate what others have done and said and to draw conclusions after comparing with what this study arrived at.

Although this study is not so much into criticising what others have done, it will nevertheless take a critical stance to other studies rather than just accepting every thought without looking at it in a critical manner. Cooper's (2010) third point of building bridges between related topics is of crucial importance for this study. Since the study is not conducted in isolation, it has to identify common central issues in the undertaken field and build bridges between related topics and as such come to a meaningful conclusion.

There appears to be dearth of literary criticism on the portrayal of poverty in Namibian literature, particularly with regards to the selected plays under study. However, there are limited reviews on the two plays, namely 'King of the dump' and 'The show isn't over until'. Authors like Ashipala and Eita (2010) had the following to say about Pompie and Eva in 'King of the Dump': "In general, unemployment has a significant impact on poverty, homelessness and affects family cohesion. It causes hopelessness and other social evils such as crime, violence, break up of families, alcoholism and prostitution as we can see from the situation of Pompie and Eva in 'King of the Dump' (p. 92). The researcher brought forth such viewpoints which confronted the characters in 'King of the dump'. These viewpoints were pointed forth by Philander to show his readers the consequences of unemployment which in turn cause poverty.

Furthermore, commenting on the Namibian literary scene, particularly Philander's 'King of the dump', Schaffeur (2009) argues that in 'King of the dump', one encounters scathing and relentless criticism of postcolonial Namibia (p. 144). According to Schaffeur (2009), Philander in 'King of the dump' is critical of postcolonial Namibia by depicting poverty which is reflected in the Namibian society. This is equally prevalent in 'The show isn't over until' where the playwright is also critical of the prevailing situation in postcolonial Namibia.

In addition, (Anonymous, 2009) says that in Hangula's 'The show isn't over until', the main concern is a vicious circle where good leaders today turn bad after assuming power; where

liberators turn into dictators years after taking over. The insights above provide critical snapshots of the central messages in Hangula's work and this study therefore sought to provide more depth and breadth with regards to a specific concern, which is poverty. There are no literary criticisms on the selected plays and the only reviews are the two mentioned above which are also just bits and pieces. This therefore indicates that there is a gap in literary criticism concerning the selected plays and this study was an attempt to fill that gap from a poverty point of view.

However, from African literary criticism in English, Doh (2012, p. 4) highlighted the importance of tracing the working lives of the poor behind the literary presentation. Whilst Ticha (2013, p. 1) depicted poverty in fiction as a state that affects the societal, political and economic dimensions of life. Moreover, according to Butale (2015, p. 1), the central focus in fiction is on the local indigence in literary depictions of poverty and the way in which writers attempt in their presentations to give the poor a voice through narrative devices that allow the characters to speak and claim agency over the narrative of poverty, and this is a strand of thought that the present study advanced. From the voices of the above scholars, fiction depicts the lives of the poor and acts as a voice of the deprived. As mentioned above, this study is a voice of the poor as it depicts the ills of poverty as observed in the selected plays.

Butale (2015) refers to Diescho's *Born of the sun* (1988) as depicting life in colonial Namibia rather than concentrating on the debate of the evils of colonialism, and the text presents everyday struggles for basic necessities during the colonial era (pp. 41-42). Furthermore, Butale (2015) again takes a snapshot at postcolonial Namibia and says, "It is clear that Namibian texts such as Diescho's *Born of the sun* (1988) and Kaleni Hiyalwa's *Meekulu's children* (2000) present the argument that the poverty they depict is largely caused by colonial incursions; yet their main focus is on the ordinary; on every day, individual struggles for survival" (p. 44). The texts above point to life in colonial Namibia and the selected plays are

on poverty in postcolonial Namibia. However, there are similarities in that the struggles of the characters are the same. Therefore, the struggles in colonial Namibia are perpetuated in postcolonial Namibia. An example of this is shown by Butale (2015) who sees the author as “highlighting the exploitation of poor people through cheap labour” (p. 48) when referring to the speech of the character Master Kruger in Diescho’s *Born of the sun* (1988). The same situation of cheap labour is depicted by Molapong in ‘The horizon is calling’ when portraying Donovan as working for Queen Pies selling pies and being paid three Namibian dollars for a dozen pies sold.

Poverty causes many misfortunes as exemplified by Ticha (2013) in Mwangi’s *Striving for the wind* (1990), that “Margaret’s death serves as warning to poor teenage girls against sugar daddies” (p. 74) when referring to Margareth, who was a teenage girl, impregnated by a sugar daddy and who died after giving birth. According to Ticha (2013), the sugar daddy uses his powerful economic status to exploit the teenager whose disadvantaged economic condition and naivety render her extremely vulnerable (p. 71). The same situation is revealed in two of the selected plays ‘To live a better life’ and ‘The horizon is calling’ where teenage girls are exploited because of their disadvantaged economic situations.

According to Ticha (2013), “many of the characters in the novel are poor and as mentioned previously, they commit crimes and justify these criminal acts with a rhetoric that stresses their condition of material misfortune” (p. 78) (when referring to Mwangi’s *The cockroach dance*, 1979). Similarly, in the plays under scrutiny, characters are driven to commit crime as a result of poverty as alluded to by Ticha (2013).

Corroborating the above are the arguments by Crassons (2010), who argues that literary texts are essential to the study of poverty because poverty is as much an economic force as it is an epistemological issue that challenges our ability to know and fix the precise nature of material reality (p. 5). The researcher agrees with Crassons (2010) as the plays under scrutiny are literary

texts which portray poverty and they are thus suitable as they enable the reader to fix the precise nature of material reality.

### **2.3.1 Poverty as portrayed by scholars from various fields**

This section is about how scholars from other fields than literary studies in Namibia view and portray poverty. The scholars are derived from other fields apart from literary studies and also from other countries. Scholars from various fields have contributed to the study of poverty since it is a complex phenomenon. This is of importance as it provides the study with an informed portrayal of poverty from other fields and countries. It also provides a focus for the study. These scholars, although not from literary studies, enlightened the study on the perspective of poverty as they elaborated on the dimensions and topics of poverty which are depicted in the selected plays. Studies from literary texts and from other fields complement each other in contributing to a nuanced understanding of poverty.

Aluko (2012) states that poverty is a complex multidimensional problem that casts long shadows over many areas of existence (p. 81). In this study, the researcher found that what Aluko (2012) states is important as poverty is indeed a complex problem.

Okungbowa and Eburajolo (2014), argue that poverty on the other hand, is also a complex and multidimensional phenomenon which results from a combination of economic, cultural, climatic, ecological and environmental factors (p. 128). Okungbowa and Eburajolo (2014) mention complex issues which cause poverty and this study scrutinised them.

Aluko (2012) further elucidates that poverty is a condition that exists when the people lack the means to satisfy their needs (p. 83). Furthermore, poverty affects people in various depths and levels at different times and phases of existence (Aluko, 2012, p. 83). The researcher is in agreement with Aluko (2012) concerning these issues surrounding poverty as the characters in the selected plays are affected by poverty through various circumstances.

This idea is further supported by Abidemi (2013) who is of the opinion that poverty is the condition that limits one's ability to provide for oneself and loved ones (p. 152). Abidemi (2013) further argues that poverty manifests itself in a number of ways that make for clear and unambiguous identification of its causal effects (p. 152). It is a fact that once poor, one will not be able to support oneself and one's loved ones. The mentioned fact that poverty manifests itself in a number of ways is somehow ambiguous as far as the researcher is concerned. In the opinion of the researcher, poverty manifests itself in the lack of means to provide for oneself and loved ones as stated by Abidemi (2013). When the barrier of providing for oneself and loved ones is crossed, then the barrier of being poor is crossed. Therefore, the present researcher agrees with the first mentioned statement of Abidemi (2013) and disagrees with the second statement.

Oduwole (2015, p. 24) elucidates that the measurement of poverty can be drawn to the definition of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) resolution which scrutinises unemployment and joblessness. Oduwole (2015) argues that unemployment or joblessness as defined by the ILO (1982) occurs when people are without jobs and they have sought work within the past five weeks (p. 24). Unemployment and joblessness lead in most cases to poverty and that is why the researcher agrees with the linking of these two concepts (unemployment and joblessness) to poverty. Unemployment and joblessness are also some of the causes of poverty as identified by the study.

Omoyibo (2013, p. 29) is of the opinion that there is a strong relationship between poverty and governance. That is also the opinion of the present researcher as this is found to be true in nearly all the selected plays. Once the governance is of good democratic and pro-people evils like corruption and discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, and acquaintenship are removed from the governing systems, then the prospects of alleviating poverty and putting in place fair

systems of wealth distribution will be prevalent. Scholars like Oduwole (2015) argue in support of this statement.

Looking through another lens is Asadu (2015) who argues that, “our social problems (poverty, diseases, illiteracy, prostitution, crime, etc), are in one way or another related to the sour state of the economic condition which was brought about by bad political leadership” (p. 145). One can argue that if this is the problem which causes poverty, then it can be rectified.

Asadu (2015) explains that, “These leaders spawn up plagues of poverty on a scale never known in earlier times. Despair rots the civil society, the state becomes an enemy and bandits flourish” (p. 144). Thus the role of leaders in promoting or reducing poverty is important and the selected plays are not silent about this.

According to Ogbokor and Ngeendepi (2011), poverty is a global issue and it is on the increase amongst most developing countries, including Namibia. This statement is corroborated by Aluko (2012) who argues that poverty is a global phenomenon which affects continents, nations and people differently. The two scholars mentioned above (Ogbokor and Ngeendepi, 2011) inform us that one should not restrict one’s thoughts to Namibia as a country but that it is a global phenomenon and it is evidenced all over the world.

The fact that poverty is not only a local but global phenomenon is supported by Effiom, Archibong and Ojua (2014), who note that the concept of poverty has assumed not only local but global trends, resulting in many countries administering numerous policies in a bid to curb this menace (p. 25). Effiom et al. (2014) further describe poverty as not only local but global and they describe it as a menace. By calling poverty a menace, it implies that it is an unwanted intruder in our societies. Calling poverty a menace, also implies that one should consider one’s attitude towards poverty, since it is an intruder, and it should be eradicated from the societies. This study, apart from serving as a pioneer study on poverty in Namibian literature, is also an eye-opener on poverty issues in literature in a postcolonial Namibian context.

Commenting on the causes of poverty, Negin, Rashid, and Nikopour (2011) say that “corruption is a cause of poverty and a barrier to successful poverty eradication” (p. 23). That is also what the study found out and stressed.

### **2.3.2 Harambee and government’s plan to eradicate poverty**

The present day government of Namibia is not quiet about poverty as it has instituted a separate ministry to fight poverty. This ministry, called the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare has one purpose in mind and that is to eradicate poverty from the Namibian soil. The ministry, in its report to the presidency, reported that, “Today many people in Namibia live in deplorable conditions due to poverty and inequality. Unless these are addressed and resolved, people will have no hope for a better future” (Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, 2016, p. 12). The ministry realises that the Namibian people are living in poverty stricken and deplorable conditions. It further comments that these situations need to be addressed and resolved for the Namibian people to have a hope for the future. These are positive concerns and one hopes that the ministry will do a lot to rescue the people from these deplorable situations.

The ministry further comments in its report that steps have to be taken to resolve this situation as it reports that, “In a broader sense, the war on poverty means people centered development, thereby placing greater emphasis on social policies and social protection as part of public policy” (Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, 2016, p. 13). From the plays under scrutiny, the characters devise strategies to extricate themselves from poverty; these are imaginative as well as realistic strategies, and if the government can meet them halfway and help them out of poverty, the Namibian nation will be blessed indeed.

Moreover, the ministry reports that;

Since independence, Namibia has reduced poverty by 41 per cent. However, Namibia is among the most unequal countries globally in terms of income distribution, with

poverty affecting 600,000 Namibians. The need to fulfil the human rights of the poor and vulnerable by ensuring that they meet their basic needs and attain prosperity similar to any other citizen in the country is at the center of the rationale for the war on poverty.

(Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, 2016, p. 15)

The fact that the gap between the poor and well-off is still wide calls for the government to intervene to narrow the gap and improve the standard of the poor. That is rightly the fight the government is having and that aspect is at the centre of fight. Yet from the plays under scrutiny, the government is doing little to better the living conditions of the poor and unless this newly created ministry fights poverty as it intends to do, then it is a matter of years until poverty will be eradicated.

The current president of the Republic of Namibia announced his plans to, not only eradicate poverty but also to lead the country to prosperity by instituting the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP). According to the HPP (2016/17 - 2019/20), “The Kiswahili word “Harambee” which means, “Pull together in the same direction” has been deliberately selected to call for unity and encourage Namibians to work towards a common purpose (p. 4). This plan will not only benefit the poor but will involve all Namibians to pull the Namibian wagon across the river of poverty into prosperity. The HPP is a focused and targeted approach to achieve high impact in defined priority areas (p. 6). According to the Office of the President action plan of 2016, the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP) (2016/17 - 2019/20), which is aimed at significantly reducing poverty levels and inequalities as well as uplifting the living standards of all Namibians is now in effect (p. 4). The poverty levels as well as inequality in Namibia is vast and need to be redressed by a powerful agent of the government. These poverty levels are graphically illustrated in the figure below.

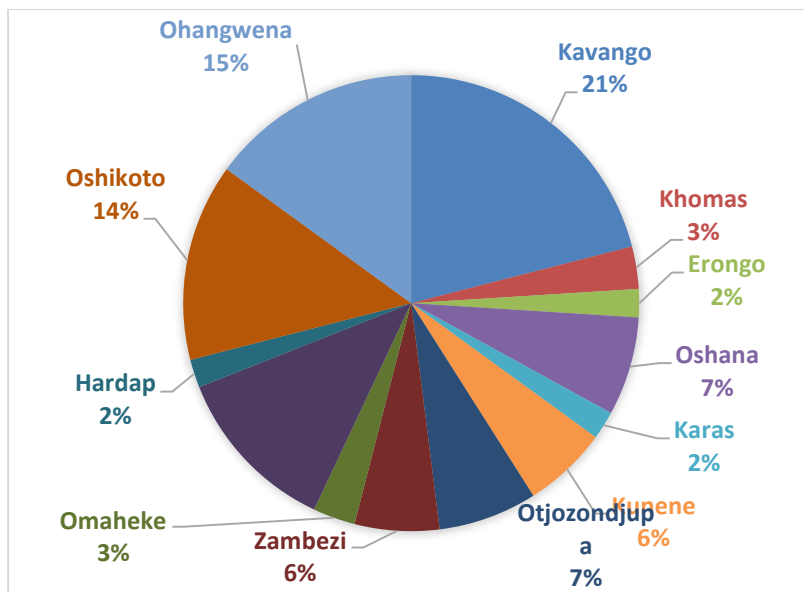


Figure 1: Percentage of population living under the poverty datum line  
 Source: Namibia Regional Headcount Poverty Shares 2011

As can be seen from the graph above, the regions of Kavango, Ohangwena and Oshikoto are severely affected by poverty with 21%, 15% and 14% poverty levels respectively as per the headcount poverty shares.

### 2.3.3 The presentation of poverty in fiction

According to Korte (2011), poverty studies are on the rise, and they have begun to include the analysis of literature (as well as other forms of art), acknowledging, just as studies in human development have recently done, that the literary narrative has a special capacity to present poverty as the multi-faceted experience of individual human beings rather than in the form of anonymous statistics (p. 293). It is the case with this study as well, that it has chosen poverty as portrayed in literary studies, since poverty touches and influences many facets of human life.

Emphasising Korte's (2011) view is Connette (2010), who argues that moving with the pace of modernity, American Indian authors embed personal experience through poetry, fiction and even screenplays (p. 8). That is also applicable to the playwrights under discussion as they are also writing about issues which they experienced and they are now writing about them.

Poverty cannot just be restricted to material things but it also touches the thinking and the perspectives one will have when one is in a state of poverty. This view is supported by Pedersen (2013), who argues that the threshold states of poverty are conjured in relation to power, be that the power of the mind, of the labourer or of the government (p. 30). In the selected plays, poverty stretches not only in the material things but it is also evident in the arguments and thoughts of those in the state of poverty.

Kelley and Darragh (2011) found a dearth of current research regarding depictions of poverty in children's books (p. 264). What Kelley and Darragh (2011) allude to may be true. There are issues presented in literature, like poverty, but with little or no-one doing research about that. The same dearth of research is found in the plays which the researcher selected to study. What bothers Kelley and Darragh (2011) is that literatures have been written, bringing to light certain issues, but scholars seem to be doing no research into such issues.

Gholami and Joodaki (2014) argue that when a phenomenon is present in society, then the authors of literature tend to focus on such issues as they write;

The problem of poverty became a serious social and economic burden of English society of the late 19th century. This is why it is quite natural that Charles Dickens chose this theme as one of the central themes of his selected novels namely *Hard Times* (1854), *Bleak House* (1852) and *Oliver Twist*. (1839) (p. 645)

Once poets, authors, playwrights and other artists write about a certain issue, then such an issue has been observed or imagined to take place in society and it will do no harm to research such issues so as to elucidate the raised concerns. This study on the portrayal of poverty in the selected plays, was prompted by the fact that what is written in literature is a reflection of what is taking place in society, hence the need for research to confirm or reject the claims of literature.

Furthermore, Austin (2014) notes that: “During the era of the Great Depression, poverty emerged as one of the most prevalent themes in society and literary works” (p. 2). From these and other prominent authors it is argued that what takes place in society is reflected in literature. Hence, the selected Namibian plays are no exception to this fundamental truth.

A good example of the above is the writings of Bhabani Bhattacharya as captured by Karn (2016) that Bhabani Bhattacharya’s works are the outcome of the socio-political and cultural influence on him. He grew up in a time when the whole nation was fighting for freedom and safety of human life was threatened at the brutal hands of the British. The property of the common man was quite unsafe and the violation of human rights was prevalent (p. 10). So Bhabani was writing about what was taking place in society and the writings were a representation of societal life. Therefore it is important that researchers scrutinise issues written in literature and that is what this study has done, scrutinising what literature has to say vis-a-vis what takes place in society.

Writing about the African society and literature is Ogundokun (2015). Ogundokun (2015) has the following to say about Africans and their literature in relation to poverty:

Painting poverty in African society in another novel of his titled; *God’s bits of wood*, Ousmane (1962) talks about; “Constantly hungry, naked children, with sunken chests and swollen bellies...” (p. 13). Wole Soyinka x-rays the corruption within the corridors of power in his political satire, *A play of giants* as the cause of poverty in African society. This ugly trend called corruption is demonstrated by the actions of three ridiculous African leaders spearheaded by Kamini, who travels out of his country with the Chairman of Bugara Central Bank. He ignorantly yet proudly says; “When I travel, I take the Bank of Bugara with me, then nobody can steal money behind Kamini’s back...” (*A play of giants*, p. 4). This same Kamini orders the Chairman to mint more

money for him to waste. These irrational leaders squander their countries' treasuries on food and other irrelevant things. They are indeed a pack of gluttons! (p. 85)

Ogundokun (2015) paints a picture of poverty caused by corruption, one of the causes of poverty. Accordingly Ogundokun (2015), here describes how corrupt African leaders can be and that is the cause of poverty in many African countries. In the selected plays, corruption is one of the causes of poverty as indicated by Moseb in 'The horizon is calling' that there is nepotism in the government.

According to Diescho's *Born of the sun* (1988), (as cited by Butale, 2015), the passages show that the poor do not fold their arms and pity themselves, but they explore ways of surviving their life of deprivation and need (p. 57). This same scenario is found in the selected plays where the characters do not fold their hands and wait for bread from heaven but devise strategies to alleviate themselves from poverty. Butale further argues that "even though harsh conditions and poverty impact negatively on those living under them, some African communities and individuals in the texts use various coping mechanisms to survive" (p. 54). As alluded to above, the characters in the selected plays employ coping mechanisms in their situations and do not just pity themselves. This is illustrated by Pompie and Eva in 'King of the dump' as they were surviving from the dump as their livelihood.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

Chapter two discussed the two theories, realism and post-colonialism and how each theory fit in within this study and how they could be employed as the theoretical framework particularly for this study. Related issues such as the use of literature in various countries including the African continent were discussed. Effects of colonialism in Africa and African people's culture and tradition and how such influences modified the African people's literature, were also underlined. The next Chapter 3 looks at the methodology that was utilised for this study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This Chapter focuses on the research design and methodology that was employed in the portrayal of poverty in the four selected Namibian plays. As such it considers aspects of the research design such as qualitative research and desktop research. The chapter further considers the population, sample, procedure, data analysis and research ethics.

#### **3.2 Research design**

The study engaged a qualitative, content analysis method where contemporary fiction set in Namibia was the central focus of the study. It is not easy to give a simple definition of qualitative research and content analysis, therefore, these are discussed separately under their respective headings. They are also linked to how they were used in the study under discussion.

##### **3.2.1 Qualitative research**

The main aim of this section is to explain the term qualitative research and give a rationale for employing the term. Creswell (1998) defines that, “Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem” (p. 54). This study sought to explore poverty as represented by the playwrights of the selected plays and it was therefore a process of inquiry endeavouring to explore a social and human problem. The study, therefore, is in-line to use a qualitative research method to carry out its mandate and come to its conclusions.

Creswell (1998) further explains that the researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analysis words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (p. 15). Based on Creswell’s (1998) definition, this study investigated the words and conducts of characters in the plays, and therefore this inquiry method, namely qualitative research method, as was employed by the study, was apt for the study. The study sought to explore poverty in

the four selected Namibian plays as is described by the playwrights. The study explored the causes and effects of poverty, and imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty.

Denzin and Lincoln (as cited in Hashemnezhad, 2015) state that, “qualitative research is a multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter” (p. 54). This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. The above scholars further argue that “qualitative research involves the studied, use and collection of a variety of empirical materials like case study, personal experience, introspection, life story interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts-that describe routine and problematic moments and meaning in individuals' lives” (p. 192). Taking the selected plays into consideration, what the playwrights observed in their society is what they wrote about, and this study sought to explore poverty as one of the issues which they wrote about.

The qualitative research design depends on the collection of non-numerical data such as words and opinions. Qualitative research design was therefore apt for this study because the data collected was in the form of texts or words. That is in accordance to Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2009) who argue that; “that is to say, it aims to help us to understand the social world in which we live and why things are the way they are” (p. 7). The study aimed to elucidate the theme of poverty as portrayed by the playwrights in the selected Namibian plays and it is therefore in line with what Hancock et al. (2009) note. The study was an attempt to understand the world we live in and why things are done the way they are as alluded to by Hancock et al. (2009).

Yin (2011) describes the benefits of qualitative research as: “The allure of qualitative research is that it enables you to conduct in-depth studies about a broad array of topics” (p. 6). Therefore, this study explored most of its topics, namely, the causes and effects of poverty, how the

characters portray poverty, and the imaginative strategies that have been made possible by the use of qualitative research. This view is supported by Watkins (2012) who notes that, “to get the complete picture, it is important to understand and be able to conduct qualitative research - research that traditionally does not include numbers and statistical figures or “count” data” (p. 153).

### **3.2.2 Content analysis**

Chunga (2015) argues that a qualitative research design is also suitable in the sense that it has flexible methods such as content analysis which can be used to analyse texts and draw interpretations and rich descriptions of people to draw an informed conclusion (p. 47). Content analysis works better together with desktop analysis. As Chunga (2015) argues, content analysis can be used to analyse texts. That is what this study performed and achieved; it analysed texts from the selected plays so that meaningful interpretations can be drawn from the plays. That enabled the researcher to draw an informed conclusion upon which this study and other subsequent studies might be based on. In this study, available materials were studied and used and from those available sources conclusions and recommendations were drawn. There was thus no need for the researcher to conduct interviews or administer questionnaires as they were not needed for this study.

### **3.3 Population**

Bhattacharjee (2012) notes that, “a population can be defined as all people or items (unit of analysis) with the characteristics that one wishes to study” (p. 65). This study supports the definition of population as given by Bhattacharjee (2012) as the plays under discussion have the characteristics the study employed, namely that of poverty.

What Bhattacharjee (2012) states is supported by Alvi (2016), who notes that the “target population refers to all the members who meet the particular criterion specified for a research investigation” (p. 10). One can thus state that a population is the total members which fit into

the category of the problem area of the research investigation. As already mentioned above, the plays under study have the characteristics of poverty as a theme that runs throughout them, hence they were selected as suitable for this study on poverty.

The population of this study was all the Namibian plays written in a post-colonial period. These plays should have been written in English. The population was thus all the plays irrespective of whether they have a common theme of poverty, which is the area of focus for the study, or not.

### **3.4 Sample**

A sample is also another concept that need to be explained. However, Alvi (2016) defines a sample as follows, “A sample can be defined as a group of a relatively smaller number of people selected from a population for investigation purposes” (p. 11). This means that there is a need to be a criterion which should be like or unlike others in order to select a sample depending on the sampling technique used and the focus of the research investigation. The sample of this study was selected because there is a criterion or theme running throughout the selected sample. The theme running throughout the selected sample of this study, is poverty.

Alvi (2016) further elaborates that sampling techniques are broadly categorized into two major types: 1) Probability sampling methods 2) Non-probability sampling methods (p. 12). In probability sampling every member of the population has a known (non-zero) probability of being included in the sample (Alvi, 2016, p. 12). In non-probability sampling every unit of the population does not get an equal chance of participation in the investigation (p. 13).

In purposive sampling the sample is approached having a prior purpose in mind. The criteria of the elements who are to be included in the study is predefined. Therefore, we do not include everyone who is available to us, rather those available are included only if they meet the defined

criteria (Alvi, 2016, p. 30). That is the reason why this study opted for purposive sampling due to the selected area of study.

Purposive sampling was used in this study. The plays ‘The show is not over until’, ‘The horizon is calling’, ‘To live a better life’ and ‘King of the dump’ were purposively selected. The plays were selected because of the theme of poverty running throughout them, they are Namibian plays thus African, and they are set in a postcolonial period. Since these similarities are inherent in the plays, the study was able to meet its proposed research objectives through the use of the purposively selected samples.

### **3.5 Procedure**

The study employed a desktop study method where data was investigated through extensive reading and analysis of the selected plays. The study also considered other relevant secondary sources including but not limited to book reviews, literary critics, journals, scholars’ research papers, academic presentations, reports as well as other sources which were relevant to the study. The study used these sources and the chosen plays to inform the research. The selected Namibian plays were analysed by applying the postcolonial theory as well as realism, which formed the theoretical framework of the study, and they were guided by the literature review, and the researcher used informed judgments for conclusions and recommendations for further studies.

### **3.6 Data analysis**

The study used mainly the content analysis method for data analysis. This was done since content analysis allows for the data to be broken down into themes and then finally the analysis is done in accordance to the broken down themes. Furthermore, the analysis was done following the objectives of the study which are to:

- explore the state and causes of poverty as presented in the selected plays;
- discuss the effects of poverty as presented by the selected playwrights; and

- explore the imaginative strategies that the characters devise to alleviate poverty.

These objectives were used as guiding principles upon which the study was built. Themes emanating from the plays were categorised under each objective and then analysed accordingly.

The researcher used content analysis to interpret and analyse the portrayal of poverty in the selected plays. Data concerning the particular themes were organised into smaller chunks where similarities and differences were exposed and relationships to the selected theories and literature were revealed.

The researcher used the content analysis method by reading the four plays and analysing the different phrases, sentences, words and so on with reference to the portrayal of poverty to come to a conclusion. The phrases, sentences, words and others were analysed by describing them and pointing their importance in context with regard to poverty and the theories employed in the study.

### **3.7 Research ethics**

Bhattacharjee (2012), defines ethics as follows: “ethics is defined as conformance to the standards of conduct of a given profession or group” (p. 137). This statement defines and limits the boundaries of what a researcher should apply and not apply. The researcher of this study complied with the specifications of the institution in complying with the ethical research requirements.

The researcher strove to comply with the ethical requirements of the institution by observing objectivity and the integrity of this study in reporting the findings in full. The study has acknowledged all the resources, works and citations that were used by the researcher.

Moreover, the study was based on plays whose characters are fictional. There were thus no real human participants involved. The researcher endeavoured to be objective and not refer to real people, events, places, establishments and organisations as the characters are fictional, thereby

allowing for the observance of literary research ethics as well as conforming to institutional requirements. Furthermore, the researcher sought for ethical clearance from the University of Namibia's research ethics committee.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This Chapter focused mainly on the procedures and methodology that were undertaken in this research. The research design under the headings, qualitative study and content analysis were discussed. The population and sample for this study were also specified. Also observed were considerations of procedure and data analysis and finally research ethics that included ethical requirements, which compelled the researcher not to ridicule the authors or anyone outside the selected texts (sample) for this study.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher analyses the plays under discussion, namely: ‘King of the dump’ by Frederick Philander, ‘The show isn’t over until’ by Vickson Hangula, ‘The horizon is calling’ by Keamogetse Joseph Molapong and ‘To live a better life’ by Axaro Thaniseb. The plays were analysed in accordance to the objectives of the study.

The objectives of the study were to:

- explore the state and causes of poverty as presented in the selected plays;
- discuss the effects of poverty as presented by the selected playwrights; and
- explore the imaginative strategies that the characters devise to alleviate poverty.

The analysis was done by using the following strategy for each play:

- i) Summary of the play
- ii) An exploration of the state and causes of poverty in the play
- iii) Effects of poverty according to the playwright
- iv) An exploration of the imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty.

#### 4.2 ‘King of the dump’

The first play the researcher analysed is ‘King of the dump’ by Philander (2005). This play was analysed using the above-mentioned strategy.

##### 4.2.1 Summary of ‘King of the Dump’

The play is set in a part of the city’s rubbish dump used for public dumping of rubbish. The play starts off with a truck coming to dump rubbish at the dumpsite. Eva, the female character looks through the rubbish and discovers some items which seem valuable to her. She is content that the rubbish dump is the only place free of apartheid and she goes on to speak to herself,

sometimes politicising issues. She chases off some baboons approaching her. She makes several discoveries which she ascribes to various people in the city. Reminding her of her past with her father and husband and how she came to be at the dump seems to be the hard fact she faces.

Pompie plays the role of a policeman, reminding himself and Eva of the hard times they had to endure from the police. Pompie and Eva had an affectionate moment together after which Eva was instructed to go and look for something good in the dump. Pompie drinks from a pee pot and sings and plays the guitar after which he checks to see whether Eva has found something to eat. They start discussing Pompie's past, working as a janitor and Eva as a waitress and other issues from the newspaper.

A troupe of scavengers approach and start searching through the rubbish and bring them to Pompie who took out what he wants and giving them the rest and then chasing them away. She goes back to the rubbish and makes a discovery of cloth and starts imagining the days with Willy (her former husband). He grabs the cloth from her for he wants to sell it so that he can buy some wine.

Then a truck driver comes with coffee and a lunch box, and convinces Eva to have sex with him. Pompie comes with the news that his friend Mouk has been arrested. They (Pompie and Eva) discuss Eva's past marriage as well as her caring father and Eva's child from her marriage, and Pompie's willingness to find a job and Eva's desire to go back to society away from the dump. Eva reveals her desire to walk away to 'freedom' which leaves Pompie devastated. He begins to sing a song whilst playing his guitar and then Eva reappears, giving him his joy back again.

## **4.2.2 An exploration of the state and causes of poverty in ‘King of the dump’**

### **4.2.2.1 The state of poverty in ‘King of the dump’**

In ‘King of the dump’ the state of poverty is prevalent from the start to the end. With the state of poverty, the researcher implies the condition in which the characters find themselves. The researcher discussed the following points under this section:

- the setting of the play
- physical description of the characters/actors
- the atmosphere that is created in the play
- the exact needs which come out of the play and the
- attitude of the other people.

The setting of the play is in a rubbish dump. The mere fact of setting it in a rubbish dump shows us that the people do not have accommodation, and the worst place, where all the dirt and the rubbish and where there is pollution, that is where they even find their warmth. This therefore indicates that Philander (2005) wants to show his readers the state of abject poverty in which the characters find themselves.

The physical description of the characters shows that they are not well clothed. This shows us that they could not afford decent clothing because of the state of poverty in which they find themselves. Philander (2005) presents Eva as wearing, “a tattered dress, a jersey and one tennis shoe” (Scene, lines 6-7). This description presents Eva as a very poorly dressed person and thus a needy person who is poverty stricken. Furthermore, Philander (2005) demonstrates Eva’s state of poverty when she even inspects a ‘panty’ meaning that Eva not only needed clothing alone but she was in need of underwear as well. Moreover, Philander (2005) illustrates the state of poverty in Pompie who walks around the streets looking for a job with the result that his

shoes got battered as indicated in Scene 11, lines 57-58 when Pompie says, “Look at my shoes, battered from all the walking.” Philander (2005) presents a state of deprivation and poverty in which the characters find themselves, a state which dehumanised them such that Pompie had to walk for miles looking for a job. One can imagine the state in which Pompie was as he walked the streets for months without any success. Philander (2005) wants to show the reader the sufferings the characters endured because of poverty. In contrast, those who are well-off usually wear clean and decent clothing as indicated by Eva that “this panty smells very strong of scent, Channel Number Five? Maybe the panty belongs to the wife of one of our leaders, who knows?” (Scene 2, lines 5-6). From this description one can infer that Eva is of the opinion that only rich people can afford such scented panties. Therefore from the physical description of Eva, Philander (2005) wants to educate the readers that when in poverty people do not clothe themselves so well.

The atmosphere that is created in the play is one that shows deprivation and lack. The mere fact that the characters find themselves scavenging within the dumpsite, indicates the deprivation and lack they are experiencing. Philander (2005) draws the reader’s attention to the deprivation and lack of the scavengers when describing Eva who got “worthwhile and not so worthwhile items” (Scene 1, line 15) from the rubbish dump made by the truck. The fact that she finds something worthwhile items from the dumpsite shows her lack and deprivation. Similarly, Philander (2005) demonstrates a tense atmosphere at the dumpsite by making the point that the scavengers are living in an uncertain atmosphere as indicated when Pompie says, “Maybe you don’t realise it. Hard times are on the way for us here on the dump” (Scene 4, lines 90-91). Therefore, by what Pompie says, Philander (2005) illustrates that life at the dumpsite is tense yet still they made the dumpsite their home, a place where they stayed. Equally, Philander (2005) portrays Eva as living under an atmosphere of pressure from Pompie, especially when searching for food to feed herself and Pompie, as indicated when Philander

(2005) shows that Eva is “scared and unsure searching” (Scene 4, line 60). Therefore, Philander (2005) brings out the unfavourable atmosphere at the dumpsite, one that nobody would wish to be in, but the scavengers are forced by circumstances to reside there. Furthermore, Philander (2005) shows that Eva is living under threatening and difficult circumstances because of Pompie. It is illustrated in the play ‘King of the dump’ in Scene 5, lines 124-125, when Pompie asks, “Do you want to be beaten up again?” Philander (2005) illustrates the point that Pompie is occasionally beating up Eva, occasionally creating a threatening atmosphere for Eva. This results in Eva living in fear. Moreover, Philander (2005) demonstrates the unpleasant atmosphere in which Eva finds herself when she exclaimed, “haven’t you hurt and humiliated me enough? You have beaten me up, jumped onto me and forced me to drink spirits” (Scene 11 p. 40, lines 147-148). Equally, Philander (2005) portrays the other scavengers as scavenging not only for themselves but they are forced to give Pompie the best and they take what is left over. This is indicated on page 24, line 1, when Pompie says, “Bring all your stuff here....Now get the hell out of here, all of you” (Scene 5, lines 28-31). Philander (2005), thus shows that all the scavengers are not free, they are either afraid of Pompie or the police, thus creating a pervading atmosphere of fear. Therefore, through the above presentation, Philander (2005) draws one’s attention to the unfavourable atmosphere which prevails at the dumpsite brought about by the scavengers’ state of poverty.

The exact needs that come out of the play as an indication of the state of poverty are lack of food and employment. In order to survive at the dumpsite, the scavengers had to search for food items. Philander (2005) illustrates this by the mere fact that the scavengers are looking for food items at a rubbish dump, drawing the reader’s attention to the lack of food experienced by the scavengers. The scavengers survive from leftover food as Philander (2005) shows through Eva who says, “We, here on the dump, don’t pay taxes, but at least we get something” (Scene 2, lines 24-25). Philander (2005) emphasises the scavengers’ need for food, without

which they could not survive. From Eva's description above, one can infer that their need for food was not a want but a real need. Philander (2005) illustrates that what the scavengers needed most was food as indicated by Pompie who says, "Food, food, food, food, that's what we need, not their endless empty political talks" (Scene 11, lines 119-120). This shows that the scavengers are mostly in need of no other thing than food. Other issues such as reconciliation, peace, freedom and good race relations, which the politicians talked about, did not bother them, all they needed was food, a basic need. Moreover, we can see through Philander's (2005) portrayal that the scavengers do not have a choice but to eat what is available as Eva states that, "We must eat what we find here. Beggars can't be choosers" (Scene 2, line 59). Therefore, Philander depicts the scavengers' lack of food as a need and not a want, and this is the main reason why they are at the dumpsite and as such it is a state of poverty.

Another need portrayed by Philander (2005) is employment. Philander (2005) shows the reader the state of poverty brought by the unemployment of the scavengers. The mere fact that the scavengers are staying and sleeping at the dumpsite shows that they are vulnerable and deprived, and because of unemployment, they have nowhere else to stay or to survive from. The scavengers' state of unemployment reduces them to beggars and to endure dehumanising situations like sleeping and eating at the dump.

The attitude of other people is depicted by Philander (2005) as an indication of the state of poverty. The attitude of the police and others towards the scavengers is illustrated when they go there and harass them and they even want to exploit them. Philander (2005) portrays the attitude of the truck driver towards Eva as teasing or making fun of her when he says, "don't you people get tired of other people's rubbish?" (Scene 6, lines 3-4). From this, one can conclude that since the truck driver has a job and food, he does not care, neither does he sympathise with those who do not have food at their table like him. He is therefore mocking her by saying "You could hardly greet a person when you were with that white man, like a real

madam. Now you sit in the rubbish and you have the nerve to eat my food?" (Scene 6, lines 21-23). Philander (2005) wants to show his readers the attitude that one tends to show when everything goes well, that is not usually the desired one, because when things start going bad with you, the people start referring back to those days and behaviour. Furthermore, by the attitude of the driver, Philander (2005) wants to show that when in poverty, one will be vulnerable. This is indicated when the driver shows the sex gesture to Eva and asks, "what about a doodle?" (Scene 6, line 25). This shows that the driver wants to bribe her with food and money in exchange for sex. Moreover, the police were attempting to arrest them at the dumpsite. This is indicated by Pompie as he narrates what happened on the day when the police came upon them at the dumpsite trying to arrest them when he says, "but I got away, whites right on my heels" (Scene 7, lines 46-47). Philander (2005) shows his readers the hardships and harassment the scavengers were experiencing in a bid to survive. Philander (2005) illustrates that in independent Namibia people are still being arrested for feeding off the rubbish dump, a site familiar with pre-independent Namibia. Philander (2005) also shows his readers that the attitude of the police towards the scavengers was such that it caused the scavengers to risk their lives when they were trying to run away from the police. This is indicated by Eva, when referring to Pompie who "drowned into the dirt; boxes, corrugated iron plates, plastic bags, refuse, the works" (Scene 7, lines 89-90). One wonders why people who are at their own, not stealing from anyone, trying to survive, even from the dump, should be harassed in such a manner, nearly causing them harm and death. This agrees with postcolonial theory which explains that during colonial times people were mistreated by the colonisers who were in power.

Such a state leads to what Hong Ng et al. (2013) describe as follows: "Poverty leads to the poor being exploited as they do not have a voice, are powerless and in dependence. This leads to being humiliated and sometimes inhuman treatment by others with power and status when they

seek help (p. 2472)". That is exactly what takes place in 'King of the dump' as the powerless are being humiliated and mistreated by the powerful.

The fore-mentioned notion is supported by Ngozi (2017) that in Okri's first novel, *Flowers and shadows* (1980) dramatises the various ways in which the privileged class inflicts unnecessary misery, pain and death on their less privileged counterparts in the shared community (p. 22). This scenario is found in 'King of the dump' as one encounters many manipulations all perpetrated due to the state of the characters' economic status. They were poor and thus they were mistreated, humiliated and left with no-one to comfort them. Whether being poor is a curse or not is answered by Ngozi (2017) who notes that "Mr. Jonah Okwe is a successful business man who all his life has been driven by the fear of poverty occasioned by his dying father's last remark that my son, poverty is a curse" (p. 22). According to Okwe, poverty is a curse as taught and remarked by his dying father. That is how some perceive poverty. Whether they are right or not is not the focal point now.

#### **4.2.2.2 The causes of poverty in 'King of the dump'**

The causes of poverty in 'King of the dump' are:

- sexploitation of the women
- gender inequality
- divorce
- denial
- social structures
- discrimination on the basis of health and
- lack of a fair justice system

The researcher found these issues as causes of poverty in 'King of the dump'.

One of the causes of poverty in the play 'King of the dump' is sexploitation of women. With sexploitation, the researcher refers to the advantage taken by men in giving gifts and other favours to women in exchange for sex. In the play, the driver offered a sandwich and money to Eva and demanded sex in exchange for that as indicated in Scene 6, line 25 by the driver when he says, "what about a doodle?" The driver realises that Eva is vulnerable and thinks that by offering her a sandwich Eva will give in to his request for sex. Similarly, the driver is surprised by her refusal and wonders whether she needed money since she had consented the previous day as illustrated by his words when he says, "Yesterday it was alright. Or is it money you want?" (Scene 6, lines 31-32). The driver implies that since Eva gave in the previous day that would be the norm. He took her for granted, thinking that he can just offer her something and that will be a ticket to use her whenever he wanted. Philander (2005) shows his readers that men exploit women sexually when they regard them as vulnerable by offering them all kinds of gifts in exchange for sex. In another instance, Eva was forced to have sex with his former husband, Willie's skinhead friend. This is indicated when Eva says, "One night he forced me to have sex for fun with one of his skinhead friends" (Scene 11, lines 25-26). To Eva, this was a humiliating experience. From this, one can see how some men can take advantage of poor women by regarding women as their properties which they can use the way they want. Equally, from Pompie's words "Remember night time in the ditch? (Shows sexual gesture)" one can infer that Pompie acts as if he can do and say whatever he wants to Eva and just pay her with sex as if Eva is there to be used as a sex object. Therefore, Philander (2005) demonstrates how some men use some women as sex objects when they are vulnerable and in poverty thus demonstrating sexploitation.

Another cause of poverty is gender inequality. By gender inequality is meant a state when access to opportunities and rights are affected by gender or it can also refer to unequal treatment due to gender. Gender inequality is presented through Eva who regrets about the situation in

which she finds herself. Since, Eva is a woman who could not sustain herself, she finds herself in poverty because she followed Pompie who worsened her situation as she narrates, “It’s because of that common bastard that I now live like an outcast” (Scene 2, line 86). Eva bemoans her situation and thinks that it could have been better if she were left at the dump by the hotel where Pompie found her. Through the presentation of gender inequality, Philander (2005) demonstrates the powerlessness of women that forces them into unfavourable situations beyond their control, which leads to poverty. Similarly, Philander depicts Eva as one easily discarded by her husband, Willie, because she was uneducated and vulnerable as a woman. This is indicated by Pompie when he says, “It wasn’t you who walked out on that white man, like you always claim. It was him who walked out on you. He needed a one-way ticket to get rid of you for good after using you for his own ends” (Scene 9, lines 19-21). Philander uses this description to show that because Eva was a woman she was used by her former husband, Willie, who could offer her a roof over her head and money, creating a dependency on him for his own selfish ends and he left her wallowing in poverty. This is in agreement with realism which explains the relation between literature and reality, between what the word says and what life is (Taghizadeh, 2014, p. 1628). What Philander (2005) is writing about is what takes place in real life.

Still another cause of poverty in the play ‘King of the dump’ is divorce. With divorce is meant the termination of a marriage bond or the separation of husband and wife from one another. Philander (2005) presents divorce as something that can bring hardships in some instances as can be witnessed from Eva when she says;

“Whatever you say, that white man brought dignity into my life. For the first time I wasn’t ashamed to be a colored. I could sleep at night without worrying about money and a roof over my head, like here..... my Willie cared for me, unlike you and your

type, my own people” (Scene 9, lines 22-25).

From this presentation by Philander (2005), one can infer that divorce from the white man, brought sufferings and hardships upon Eva. She recalls her good old days with Willie when they were still married and she could have restful nights and no worry about money. Eva is now recounting her hardship which was brought about by divorce. Therefore, Philander (2005), through the character of Eva, shows that divorce brought her into poverty as there is no one to take care of her.

Moreover, denial is a cause of poverty in the play ‘King of the dump’. With denial, the researcher implies the denial of reality and clinging to falsehood. This is illustrated by Philander (2005) through the character of Eva who denies that her former husband is the one who walked out on her and she insists that she is the one who severed the relationship. This is indicated by Pompie when he says, “It wasn’t you who walked out on that white man, like you always claim. It was him who walked out on you” (Scene 9, line 19). Eva wants to believe that she is the one who severed the relationship and not him, so she can’t map the way forward when she is in such a state of denial. Based on this observation, any attempt for Eva to realise that men can walk out on her any time, even Pompie, is disregarded and she depends on men for survival causing her to remain in poverty. Similarly, Philander (2005) demonstrates the state of denial through Pompie who argues that he tried more than enough to find a job and there isn’t any when he says, “Do you know how many times I tried to find a job, but without any success?” (Scene 11, lines 55-56). Pompie is in a state of denial that what he has done, in terms of looking for a job, is enough instead of devising other strategies to find a job for himself. Therefore, Philander (2005) wants to show his readers through Eva and Pompie that denial without facing the reality can cause poverty. This is in agreement with realism theory which explains that literature is a mirror of society as here we witness how Eva and Pompie deny or do not want to face the reality.

Lack of intact social structures is one of the causes of poverty in the play 'King of the dump'. With lack of intact social structures, the researcher means structures from family and extended families which do not give support to the characters. This is indicated by Philander (2005) through the character Eva as she recounted her past that, "I have never known hard times like this. Pa and Willie saw to everything" (Scene 2, lines 81-82). For Eva, everything was provided by Pa and Willie as supporting structures and now she has got no social structures to support her, thus leading her into hardships and poverty. It is important to note that Philander (2005) shows his readers the importance of social structures which can assist someone when in need as illustrated by Eva who once more says, "I will go to my father and tell him....No, I cannot. He is dead" (Scene 2, lines 84-85). From this, one can infer that Eva laments the absence of social structures that could have alleviated her from the suffering she is enduring. This is reminding one of the Bible story of the lost son, who after realising his sorry state decided to go back to his father. However, sadly for Eva, she has no father to go back to.

Discrimination on the basis of health status is yet another cause of poverty as illustrated by Philander (2005) in the play, 'King of the dump'. With discrimination on the basis of health status is meant treating a person unfairly because of his or her health status. Discrimination on the basis of health status is illustrated by Philander (2005) in the play when the boss enquires on whether the prospective employee has AIDS or not. This is indicated in the play through Pompie who recalls how an employer interviews an employee when he says, "The boss wants to know if I have AIDS" (Scene 11, line 78). One can imagine how those whose health status is poor, will sustain themselves if they cannot be offered jobs. Therefore, through the presentation of discrimination on the basis of health status, Philander (2005) shows his readers that when one is discriminated upon on the basis of health status one will not get a job opportunity and thus remain in poverty.

Another cause of poverty in 'King of the dump' is lack of a fair justice system. With lack of a fair justice system, the researcher refers to a fair hearing from both sides of the case before making a judgment. This is indicated when Pompie says, "No one ever wanted to hear my side of the story. That's how I innocently lost my job" (Scene 4, lines 103-104). Philander (2005) presents the reader with a situation where one can lose one's job if not fairly heard or if there is no fair justice system to assist the accused. Such situations lead to people losing their jobs unfairly and they become jobless and poor. In the case of Pompie, he landed at the dumpsite as a result of having no job after being accused, falsely according to him, of attempted rape and then he was kicked out of the job as a janitor. This is in agreement with postcolonial theory which explains that the justice system was not fair and that is continued in post-independent Namibia.

#### **4.2.3 Effects of poverty according to Philander in 'King of the dump'**

The effects of poverty in the play, 'King of the dump' are the following:

- poverty reduces people to beggars
- dehumanisation
- blame game
- risk-taking
- lack of trust and
- humiliation.

The researcher discusses these effects of poverty below.

One of the effects of poverty in the play, 'King of the dump' is that poverty reduces people to beggars. With the notion that poverty reduces people to beggars, the researcher means that once people are poor or poverty stricken, they start begging. In the play 'King of the dump', the

scavengers are poverty stricken and they depend on other people's left overs for survival. Philander (2005) demonstrates the situation of the scavengers as depending on others' crumbs to such an extent that they become angry when there are no left overs. This is indicated when Philander (2005) through the character Eva notes, "We don't get anything from them, not even the crumbs from their tables anymore" (Scene 2, lines 28-29). Philander (2005) demonstrates how Eva bemoans the situation of lack of crumbs to show the scavengers' dependency on begging for leftovers. Equally, Philander (2005) shows us the contentment of those who are in situations where they cannot help themselves and would rather resort to begging as Eva says, "We must eat what we find here. Beggars can't be choosers" (Scene 2, line 68). Therefore, through such a presentation Philander (2005) shows that when in poverty, people turn to begging. This is in agreement with realism where literary authors depict reality in society and write about such.

Moreover, dehumanisation is an effect of poverty in the play 'King of the dump'. Dehumanisation refers to depriving a person of good human qualities or it might also mean taking away the human worth in an individual. Philander (2005) demonstrates the unpleasant manner in which the scavengers had to live with when he portrays them as having to compete with baboons and vultures for survival. This competition with baboons and vultures demonstrates the human worth which has been taken away from the scavengers. When competing for leftovers with baboons it is worse than even begging, thus reducing the scavengers to dehumanised being. This can be seen through Eva who demonstrates her unhappiness in the situation by saying, "Do you call this living? Is this living with the baboons and the vultures? (Scene 11, lines 101-102). From the above, one can infer that the scavengers were living dehumanised and unwanted lives when competing with wild animals as it in a zoo. Therefore, Philander (2005) demonstrates how poverty and suffering can force one to be at unfavourable places or to find oneself at a place where you never wish to be.

Furthermore, the blame game is another effect of poverty that one can observe in the play, 'King of the dump'. Blame game refers to when people blame others for their shortcomings or conditions. In the play, 'King of the dump', Pompie blames the system as the reason why they are at the dumpsite, where they live with baboons and vultures. Pompie gives an impression that his efforts to find a job were fruitless, although he tried his best, so due to the system, he finds himself living with animals and Eva has to accept it that way. Philander (2005) demonstrates through the words of Pompie, "the system" (Scene 11, line 106) that people remain in poverty because of blaming others instead of seeking for better ways on how to alleviate poverty. As stated by Eva, "The system, always the bloody system. What do you and your type do to improve the system?" (Scene 11, lines 107-108). One wonders why Pompie accepted or resorted to make the dumpsite his home rather than seeking for better options. Resultantly, Philander (2005) shows the reader that the blame game can cause people to remain poor because they do not hold themselves accountable for their situation so as try to change the situation themselves.

In the same vein, risk-taking is also an effect of poverty in 'King of the dump'. Risk-taking refers to doing things which might cause harm to you or which might have undesirable results. The play presents the reader with risk-taking situations in which the characters find themselves. Eva recalls a time when the police cornered them with teargas for which they had to run for their lives (Scene 5, line 127). This is an indication that the scavengers were harassed despite the fact that they are in poverty and only trying to survive. Philander (2005) illustrates how the scavengers risk their lives in a bid to survive. In another instance, Eva also recalls how Pompie drowned in the dirt, illustrating the risks in which the scavengers find themselves and out of which they have no other alternative. Therefore, through such presentation, Philander (2005) draws the readers' attention that once in poverty, one will be forced to risk one's life in the struggle to overcome poverty.

Moreover, lack of trust is yet another effect of poverty that comes out in 'King of the dump'. Lack of trust refers to a feeling that someone is not honest and cannot be trusted. Philander (2005) presents that Pompie does not have trust in the many organisations that are formed to assist those in need as indicated thus: "It's a scam, I tell you, a new name for yet another typical rotten and corrupt organization" (Scene 4, lines 131-132). This shows us that those responsible to distribute food cater for themselves and yet come with a new organisation to replace the failed one. Philander (2005) brings out the issue of those entrusted with responsibilities to help the poor, yet they think about themselves and they end up disappointing the masses whom they have to take care of. When people are in poverty, they lose hope in those they have to trust, especially when they do not deliver and fail to remove them from their deprived situations. Similarly, Pompie's lack of trust in the politicians is indicated when he says "Their best song is this one: Peace. Freedom. Reconciliation and good race relations" (Scene 11, line 116). Through the presentation of lack of trust which leads to disillusionment, Philander (2005) educates the reader that those who should alleviate poverty can contribute to it, when they start looking at their own interest or only talking about issues which do not make sense to those who are poor.

Humiliation is another effect of poverty as portrayed by Philander (2005) in 'King of the dump'. With humiliation, the researcher refers to when someone causes embarrassment to another. Philander (2005) shows how Eva was humiliated by Pompie when he asks her whether she is wearing a pantie. Pompie further instructs her that she should lift up her dress for him to check if she wears panties after which he mocks her about her "bloody dirty old bloomer" (Scene 3, line 107). This shows how one can be humiliated when one is in an inferior position or when following another person's instructions and one is thus powerless. From this, Philander (2005) illustrates the humiliation that the powerless, especially women, undergo. Poverty causes one to be humiliated even from one's partner and those in the same situation like

Pompie. In another instance, Eva was also humiliated when she was forced to have sex for fun with one of Willie's skinhead friend. From this, one can see that poverty leads to the humiliation of those who are at the mercy of others for survival. This is in agreement with postcolonial theory which explains that there were unequal power relations between the colonisers and the colonised and this is perpetuated in post independent Namibia even among the previously colonised themselves, where the powerful humiliate the powerless. Similarly, what the playwright portrays is what is reflected from society, agreeing with the theory of realism.

#### **4.2.4 Exploring the imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty in 'King of the dump'**

The imaginative strategies the characters devise to alleviate poverty in 'King of the dump' are:

- monetary gifts from Eva's former husband Willie
- Pompie giving Elvis Presley a run for his money by his singing
- Eva leaving the dump to find a better life in the city
- being well fed after receiving special food and
- having authority over others

The above are discussed briefly as follows:

One of the imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty in 'King of the dump' is the supply of monetary gifts from Eva's former husband. Eva imagines that her former husband, Willie, gives his father money and valuables. This is a sign that Eva imagines that if she could have someone who is financially stable, life could have been better. Philander (2005) shows the reader that when one is in poverty it is easy to think about the impossible in order to

have satisfaction. To Eva, Willie was a decent person who could supply her needs as well as her father's. Philander (2005) demonstrates how Eva wishes to be out of poverty if she were still married to Willie. He could have supplied all her needs and she wouldn't need anything from somebody else. This situation affirms Balan's (2013) definition of realism who states that "the term 'realism' in art or literature refers to the presentation of things accurately in real life (p. 430). What Eva dreams about is what happens in real life when one cannot achieve what one hopes to achieve. That is Eva's dream to be rescued from a poverty stricken life. Therefore, Philander (2005) shows his readers that through her imagination, Eva devises a strategy to alleviate herself out of poverty.

Another imaginative strategy devised by the characters in 'King of the dump', to alleviate poverty is the one of Pompie giving Elvis Presley, if he were alive, a run for his money. The same imaginative strategy is shown in the play 'The horizon is calling' through the character Donovan who imagines seeing himself dancing alongside Michael Jackson or singing with Shabba Ranks. In contrast, Petrus in the play 'To live a better life' wishes to become a writer and write a book about the struggle. Philander (2005) illustrates this when Pompie says he can sing better than Elvis Presley and he could have given him a hard time by selling his (Pompie) records after the show at the door. From the imaginative strategies in all three plays the playwrights show conditions of material impoverishment of the characters. Pompie imagines himself to be a super star and by selling his long playing record after the show at the door he can make millions for himself. Pompie says that he is not in a position to make money as he is supposed to because his singing talent is not discovered and that is one of the reasons why he is poor. By making millions for himself, he will extricate himself from poverty. Philander (2005) shows his readers that when one is in poverty, one imagines different kinds of things as a way of comforting oneself. Ultimately, Philander (2005) educates his readers that when in poverty, one imagines unreachable goals in an attempt to alleviate oneself out of poverty.

Moreover, another imaginative strategy devised by the characters to alleviate themselves from poverty is for Eva to leave the dump. Eva tells the driver to take her away from the dump to the city. This is one of the strategies Eva devises to alleviate herself from poverty. Eva imagines that it will be better in the city than it is at the dumpsite. One can infer that Eva believes that the city might give her a better opportunity of survival. Eva realises that the dumpsite does not change her situation. This is indicated in Scene 6, lines 54-55 when Eva says “I don’t care where I’m going as long as it is as far as possible from him and this place”. Philander (2005) shows the readers that Eva is desperate, anyway will do as long as it is away from the dump where she might find a better life and treatment. This is illustrated by the way Eva says, “I’ve decided to go, whatever it takes” (Scene 6, line 52). Philander (2005) shows that Eva is determined and desperate to get away from the dumpsite and thus extricate herself from poverty. She doesn’t care what she will find in the city but she is hopeful that she will get a better life than the dump in the city. Eva imagines a life without Pompie and wishes that the driver can assist her. Eva cannot do this herself since she is powerless and Pompie who brought her will not allow her to leave. Therefore, Philander (2005) demonstrates that one of the strategies devised by Eva is to get away from the dump and find a better life which will extricate herself from poverty. Philander (2005) also shows that Eva realises that the dumpsite won’t improve her lifestyle. It is important to note that Philander (2005) alerts the readers that one has to do something or think about ways on how to take one self out of unfavourable situations. It is unfortunate for Eva who cannot walk away as she pleases for her to find greener pastures as she is controlled by Pompie. Through such control, Philander (2005) shows that Eva is powerless, which contributes to her deprived condition.

Equally, another imaginative strategy devised by the characters to extricate themselves from poverty is through food for survival. This is illustrated by Pompie who says “Big truck that brings the meaty rubbish here every Friday; cattle heads, intestines, goat asses, pig ears off

falls, the works” (Scene 7, lines 62-63). To Pompie, that is special, it will feed half of the nation in the location. Philander (2005) shows that even at the dumpsite the scavengers have what they call specials, a meaty rubbish dump which they can enjoy. Even though this special could not rescue the scavengers out of poverty, it contributes a lot towards their diet, at least they can sleep with a full stomach for one day. Therefore, Philander (2005) shows that even at the dumpsite, scavengers dream about things which can satisfy their needs but which they cannot get because of the police that harass them.

Moreover, Pompie imagines that he is a policeman and has the authority to give orders at the dump. This is a way Pompie dreamt about how he will be the one in charge and even get all the best items from the scavengers. Pompie further imagines that he is the king of the dump and he has the authority to shout at the driver who makes noise as indicated in Scene 4, lines 1-3 as he says “Hey, you on that truck. Can’t you see I’m busy? Get done with that noise. A person can hardly hear himself...This is my dump, mine and mine alone”. This is a strategy that Pompie uses that everything on the dump belongs to him and even the workers of the City Council should adhere to him. With this in mind, Philander (2005) demonstrates how Pompie tries to extricate himself from poverty with the idea that he can control the dump and nobody else can chase him away and that is how he will survive at the dump without any disturbances.

### **4.3 ‘The horizon is calling’**

The second play analysed was ‘The horizon is calling’ by Molapong (2000). This play was analysed using the same strategy followed in the first play.

#### **4.3.1 Summary of ‘The horizon is calling’**

The play kicks off with a boy selling donkey meat and women (including Auntie Sofie) start a quarrel over the donkey meat. The boy is robbed of some meat by a passer-by thug and then

aunt Sofie sends Moseb, her son, to ask for some sugar for tea. On his way, Moseb meets Johnny, his friend. Moseb returns to his mother with a bit of sugar. After enjoying tea Moseb goes to his uncle and on his way he meets a man who talks about the state of the rich and poor. He narrates his and the poor people's condition, concluding that as a result of poverty it has become fashionable to make a living by stealing from their neighbours.

Moseb eventually comes to the house of his uncle who is described as a poor man from the arrangement of the furniture. In their discussion the uncle promises Moseb a job at Nampost. On his way home Moseb meets his friend Johnny who has stolen some items and wants the help of Moseb to sell the items. Moseb refuses and that causes a split in their friendship.

By the time Moseb arrives home it is already past bedtime and his mother is hesitant to open the door for him and after opening the door Moseb shares the news that he had found a job. The circumstances surrounding job seeking for Moseb and his other friends and young people in general is described. How they suffer and have to endure the insults from the job providers is described in full detail. On his job seeking journeys, Moseb meets several of his friends from school going years.

The fate of young people who could not further their education nor find a job and the misery they have to endure because of joblessness is described. Moseb then describes his fate. He is chased away from his mother's house and he feels miserable, all because of being jobless.

#### **4.3.2 An exploration of the state and causes of poverty in 'The horizon is calling'**

##### **4.3.2.1 The state of poverty in 'The horizon is calling'**

The state of poverty according to Molapong (2000) are:

- the setting of the play
- the atmosphere in the play and

- the attitude of the characters towards one another.

The play 'The horizon is calling' is set in a location, a black high density residential area. The mere fact that the play is set in a location, usually a place where the poor and those who are not so wealthy stay, shows that the characters are not wealthy but can be classified as living in poverty. This is illustrated by the term 'location' where the play is set.

Further, the play is set where people are fighting for survival. This is indicated by the boy selling donkey meat and the woman who sells rotten matangaras (intestines) and runs a 'dirty' shebeen. Molapong (2000) shows his readers the fact that the woman runs a dirty shebeen and sells rotten matangaras, pointing to the fact that it is acquired and sold for survival without being well taken of and that shows that she is trying to alleviate poverty. The boy is going around selling donkey meat, a scene popular among the inhabitants of the location. If one looks at the way Auntie Sofie is eager to buy the donkey meat, one can infer that it is affordable. Therefore, all these indicate that the characters are fighting for survival.

This state of poverty is best described by Adenike (2014) when he argues that "the poor are those who are unable to obtain an adequate income, find a stable job, lack adequate level of education and cannot satisfy their basic needs" (p. 108). This is the state or fate of those who are jobless and have to wait upon others for the supply of basic necessities needed for daily survival.

Moseb and his friends suffer from poverty in the sense that they are unable to put food on the table. They depend on other people to provide them with food and other necessities. Even Auntie Sofie, Moseb's mother, has to go to her neighbour to ask for sugar to put in her tea, a kind of poverty in which the neighbours request food and other necessities from others and as

such depend on one another for survival and the provision of needed commodities. Molapong (2000) further illustrates that the people at Auntie Sofie's house depend on her alone to bring food to the house as she says, "I'm the only person bringing money into this house" (Act 1, Scene 1, lines 128-129). Similarly, the state of poverty is shown through Johnny who starts stealing as he has nothing to survive from. Johnny not only starts stealing but also tries to convince Moseb, his friend, to be like him and start stealing together with him so that it can be their way of surviving. Therefore, this shows that they are in a state of abject poverty and need a source of income for them to survive.

The atmosphere in the play 'The horizon is calling' is tense. Molapong (2000) shows this tense atmosphere when the woman (character) and Auntie Sofie start quarrelling about the donkey meat which is being sold. One wonders why the selling of donkey should spark a quarrel, showing the disrespectful attitude of the woman. This in itself, the way the two women insult each other in the street is customary of illiterate people and shows that they do not bear one another. The fact that the woman sells matangaras and someone competes with her and sells donkey meat, comes around might have sparked the disrespectful behaviour of the woman as they are all struggling to sell and make a living. Also, Molapong (2000) illustrates the tense atmosphere when the thug (character) grabs the donkey meat and runs away despite the fact that the boy tries to make a living. It shows that the surrounding is not safe and it brings a lot of tension among the people. Furthermore, if one looks at Moseb's situation, searching for a job the whole day and when he comes home his mother accuses him of not being serious. Molapong (2000) shows his readers the tense atmosphere which prevails throughout the play. Therefore, Molapong (2000) illustrates a tense atmosphere as a result of poverty among the characters.

The attitude of characters towards one another is another way Molapong (2000) shows the state of poverty. When Moseb goes to the uncle to inquire about the job he and Moseb's mother

talked about, the uncle is quick to judge that he comes to ask for money. This shows the attitude of the uncle towards Auntie Sofie because she is deprived and in poverty and when she sends her son it will only be to ask for money as indicated in Act 1, Scene 3, line 8 when the uncle says, “ Moseb, tell your mother I don’t have money.” Furthermore, Moseb’s uncle views Moseb as a burden to his mother despite the fact that Moseb is trying hard to find a job. This shows how people can be unappreciative and how they can discourage others instead of encouraging or assisting them without insulting. Such people easily show their opinions without considering the pain they instil in others when they are not in the same situation. In another instance, when Moseb continues his search for a job, the Man (a character) mocks him telling him to go to his leaders and ask for a job. This shows the attitude that people have when they are not of the same political party or tribe. Therefore, the attitude people have towards those in need, in the play ‘The horizon is calling’, is an attitude of mocking and not of sympathising and this contributes towards their state of poverty.

#### **4.3.2.2 The causes of poverty in ‘The horizon is calling’**

There are many causes of poverty in the play ‘The horizon is calling’ such as:

- unemployment
- lies
- labour exploitation
- crime
- school dropout
- lack of education
- experience and
- corruption

These causes of poverty are discussed below.

Unemployment is one of the major causes of poverty in 'The horizon is calling'. Unemployment refers to a situation when a person is able to work but cannot find a job. When one looks at a situation at Auntie Sofie's house, where they have to ask sugar from a neighbour, it is an indication that Moseb's joblessness brings suffering. This concurs with scholars like Ashipala and Eita (2010) who are of the opinion that unemployment has a significant impact on poverty. The fact that Auntie Sofie is only a pensioner, and how she pressurises Moseb to find a job shows that life at home is difficult and they will only be able to cope when Moseb finds a job and supply to the existing needs at home. In addition, Auntie Sophie's anger or frustration is another indication that Moseb's inability to find a job worsens their way of living and she believes that Moseb can't find a job because he is not serious in his search for work. Auntie Sophie illustrates this when she says "And remember, don't you dare come home without a job. I am sick and tired of all your excuses for not finding a job" (Act 1, Scene 5, lines 22-24). This depiction of Auntie Sophie warning Moseb not to come back home if he has not found a job affirms what Kavita (2015) presents on realism, that what takes place in reality is carried out in literature. Equally, Donovan regrets his resignation that causes him to become unemployed and has brought him pressure as he states "Very soon life turned upside down" (Act 2, Scene 1, lines 27-28). This is in agreement with realism which explains that literature portrays what happens in society. Molapong (2000) sketches a situation which corresponds to the actions of the Namibian society.

Lies are a cause of poverty in 'The horizon is calling'. Lies refer to when a person does not tell the truth. In act 2, Scene 4, lines 16-17, Moseb lies to his old friend Frederick, who is a manager, that he is the assistant Managing Director of Trans Namib. Instead of Moseb telling the truth that he is looking for a job, in order for his friend to assist him since he is the manager he rather shows his pride by preferring to lie. Molapong (2000) shows this to educate the society that lying is not profitable and can cause harm and in the case of Moseb, poverty. This

indicates that some people are afraid to show their failure and they pretend as if all is fine and allow themselves to remain poor. In another instance, Moseb misses an opportunity of being offered a job when he lies that he works for Telecom Namibia, as their representative in South Africa. This therefore, shows the reader that when one wants to elevate or place oneself where you are not, it can cause one to remain poor because of lies. One can conclude that lies are a cause of poverty as illustrated by Molapong (2000) in 'The horizon is calling.'

Another cause of poverty according to Molapong (2000) in 'The horizon is calling' is labour exploitation. With labour exploitation the researcher refers to a situation where one is being used unfairly or when one's labour is remunerated in an unfair manner. The remuneration which Donavon gets is in itself inadequate and is a form of gross exploitation. One can imagine how a wage of three dollars per dozen pies sold can take one out of poverty or sustain a household. This shows how the ones who have money exploit the labour of others. Usually when one works for a big company which makes a lot of money, one expects to be uplifted and get a fat salary which redeems one from poverty. However, the big company, Queen pies ends up making a lot of money and the cheap labourer is taking next to nothing home. Molapong (2000) illustrates this point when Donavon was used, he sells a dozen pies and is paid three dollars as he says, "Again, I felt cheated, a cheap labourer for a chain shop like Queen pies" (Act 2, Scene 1, line 30-31). This view is highlighted by Butale (2015) who quotes the character Master Kruger in Diescho's *Born of the sun* (1988) and concludes that Kruger was highlighting the exploitation of poor people through cheap labour. This is in agreement with postcolonial theory which explains that during the colonial era, blacks were used as cheap labourers by their colonial masters and this is perpetuated in post independent Namibia.

Another cause of poverty is crime. With crime as a cause of poverty in Molapong's (2000) 'The horizon is calling' the researcher means the committing of unlawful acts. Molapong (2000) portrays Johnny as someone who feels that it is his lawful right to commit crime. This

is supported by Ticha (2013) who concurs that many of the characters in the novel (he is writing about) are poor and they commit crimes and justify these criminal acts with a rhetoric that stresses their condition of material misfortune when referring to Mwangi's *The cockroach dance* (1979). This is illustrated when Johnny refers to Moseb's refusal to go and commit crime with him, as a sissy. According to Johnny, that (the committing of crime) will bring a lot of money to them. In the same vein, Molapong (2000) shows that it has become a fashion to commit a crime as stated by the character Man 1 as he says, "It is nowadays fashionable to make a living by stealing from your neighbour" (Act 1, Scene 2, lines 34-35). From the above one can see that the understanding of the man on the street is that one can survive by committing crime despite the fact that it is an unacceptable act against the law and towards the neighbour. Molapong (2000) shows his readers that when one is in poverty, one seeks all kinds of ways to alleviate oneself from poverty including committing crime. Therefore, poverty is thus a cause of crime as illustrated by Molapong (2000) above. This again is in line with the theory of realism which emphasises that literature portrays what takes place in society, as the issue of crime is prevalent in newspapers in Namibia.

Moreover, another cause of poverty is school drop-out. With school drop-out, the researcher refers to when young people of school going age drop out of school for various reasons. When young people drop out of school, it means that they lose their time which they could have spent in school carving a future for themselves. To most of them it is as if a life has been cut short, a future gone down the drain, from which just a few recover. In the case of Anna, who fell pregnant at the age of sixteen, one can imagine how a sixteen year old without education can raise a child. Also, one wonders how a jobless sixteen year old will be able to afford what is needed by the baby and raise it by supplying life's necessities for the baby not to mention for herself. Molapong (2000) illustrates this when Anna says, "I was forced to skip school and join the many single mothers, roaming the streets of Katutura" (Act 2, Scene 3, lines 7-8). From

this situation where a sixteen year old is pregnant, drops out of school, is jobless and a single mother depending on others for sustenance, one can expect nothing else than poverty. It is clear that Molapong (2000) educates the reader that having dropped out of school without securing your future and having a baby to care for are the issues that bring about poverty. Therefore, through Anna, Molapong (2000) wants to open the reader's eyes that dropping out of school at a young age, as it seems common in our society, will bring about poverty.

Another cause of poverty according to Molapong (2000) in 'The horizon is calling' is lack of education and experience. With lack of education and experience the researcher refers to the lack of the required education and experience in order to get a job. When one looks at the characters in the play, 'The horizon is calling', they are young and have recently completed their high school career and they are thus inexperienced for the job market. In addition, the young people have just completed their high school and have not had further studies such as diplomas or degrees, reducing them to a state of being uneducated and inexperienced, and thus they do not meet the requirements of the job market. This is proven by Moseb's inability to find a job with only a high school certificate and no experience as illustrated in Act 2, Scene 4, lines 10-13 when he is looking for a job and is asked whether he has any experience of any job to which he answers in the negative, and is told that he is only wasting time. In another instance where Moseb continues looking for a job he is asked whether he has either a degree in accounting or a diploma in accounting or a certificate in accounting or any experience in accounting, to which he again answers in the negative and the man just look at him (Act 2, Scene 4, lines 36-43). One can learn from these incidents that without education and experience one will not easily find a job. Therefore, Molapong (2000) informs his readers that without education and experience the possible employers will not consider you and one will not go further in life but will remain in poverty. Molapong (2000) makes the reader to sympathise with the youth that complete university education but who cannot be incorporated in the labour

force because of lack of experience, a practice that represents some of the harsh realities of life in Namibia.

Furthermore, another cause of poverty in 'The horizon is calling' is corruption. With corruption the researcher means when resources and opportunities are given to some at the expense of others. This is indicated in Act 3, Scene 1, lines 131-135 when Moseb asks:

“What opportunities? You are talking about nepotism in the government. Favouritism in the private sector. You are talking about having the right surname and nationality. You are talking about bribery and fraud. That is not opportunity. That is corruption. Do I have to be corrupt to get a job?”

Moseb illustrates that those who get opportunities are those who are favoured, who have the right surnames and those with the right nationality, and this is not the basis on which he wants to be employed. This means that if all were given equal opportunities then we could live in a corrupt free and poverty free society. One would be employed on the basis of competency rather than favouritism. As it stands, Molapong (2000) elucidates the ugly face of corruption. To Moseb, what his friend is talking about is bribery and fraud and not an opportunity. Judging from the way Moseb is talking, it is clear that corruption causes exclusivity and thus poverty. One may also conclude that corruption brings hopelessness and frustration as the one apt for an opportunity will not get it but rather a non-performing individual. According to Moseb, one can infer that poverty is not only caused by incompetency and laziness but also as a result of corruption. This concur with Ogundokun (2015) who argues that corruption is a cause of poverty. Therefore, Molapong (2000) educates the readers that some people are in poverty as a result of corruption.

### 4.3.3 Effects of poverty in the play ‘The horizon is calling’

In this section the researcher identified various effects of poverty in the play ‘The horizon is calling’ such as:

- frustration
- anger
- suicide
- theft
- hopelessness and
- alcoholism.

The first effect that the researcher looked at is frustration. With frustration the researcher refers to the feeling of being irritated or angry because of the inability to change or achieve something. Molapong (2000) portrays how Moseb is frustrated by the fact that he tries to find a job but without success. Throughout the play, Molapong (2000) portrays Moseb’s frustration that is caused by his mother and other people who think that he is not serious in his attempt to find a job. His mother’s words “And remember, don’t you dare come home without a job” (Act 1, Scene 5, lines 22-23) shows that the mother acts as if it depends on Moseb to be employed. Similarly, Moseb’s frustration can be seen in his reaction when he is asked whether he has a degree, diploma, certificate or even experience in Accounting for which he replies “No degree Sir. No experience Madam...no diploma Miss...No nothing, no! No!...No! Noo!!...Nooo!!!”. One can infer that all these questions frustrate Moseb as he thinks that he only completed school and where do the people expect him to get experience. This portrays how Moseb is frustrated by his state of poverty which no one understood rather than thinking that he is not playing his part and expecting him to have a degree, certificates and experience instead of offering him a job that he desperately needs. Molapong (2000) shows how poverty can cause frustration

especially when no one understands your situation or shows sympathy. Therefore, through the presentation of Moseb, Molapong (2000) demonstrates that when one cannot achieve what one needs it brings frustration especially when one is poor. This situation forces Moseb to opt for volunteer work which is not an answer to his situation but rather causes him to remain poor.

Moreover, anger is another effect of poverty in 'The horizon is calling'. Anger refers to a feeling of being upset because of something bad or wrong. Molapong (2000) shows the reader how poverty can create anger in those who are in situations of hopelessness. This is illustrated in the way Aunt Sofie tells Moseb that she is sick and tired of his excuses for not finding a job. From Aunt Sofie's reaction, one can infer that she has anger that her son cannot find a job to improve their situation of suffering. In a similar instance, anger "deforms" the character of people as narrated by the character The Man when he says "Have you seen the anger deforming the faces of the youth, who are forced into doom?" (Act 3, Scene 1, lines 14-15). Equally the author indicates that when one is in poverty and not in a situation to improve it, it results in anger. Also, another character who depicts anger because of poverty is Man 2 who is upset when he sees Moseb at his place. Since all of them are hunting for jobs, it angers him that Moseb comes to his place as that might bring luck to himself. Therefore, Molapong (2000) demonstrates how poverty leads to anger in the youth and those who take care of them.

Suicide is an effect of poverty that the researcher observed in 'The horizon is calling'. Suicide is the act of taking one's life voluntarily. Suicide is observed in the play through the character Anna who tries to make sense of her life. Molapong (2000) illustrates that it is difficult for Anna to face life because there is no one to turn to as indicated by her words that,

"That was a moment of embarrassment. I felt like committing suicide. Yes, I wanted to drink as many tablets as I could swallow so that I could die and in the process abort the child. What was I supposed to do? I could not go back to school. Who should I turn to?"

My boyfriend denied the child. My mother is devastated. And me? I have lost my future.  
All my dreams, wishes all gone”. (Act 2, Scene 3, lines 27-33).

Through this, the author shows that when life becomes tough one might think that suicide is the only best option. The mere fact that Anna was forced to skip school because of the pregnancy and the man who is responsible refuses to accept his responsibility, is an indication that Anna does not have the courage to face life as it comes. This attitude of Anna shows that she does not see any reason to live, because she has lost her future and all her dreams and wishes are gone. Therefore, one may conclude that Molapong (2000) demonstrates that when one loses hope and there is no one to turn to, all what comes to mind is to end one’s life. Also, Molapong (2000) wants to show the reader that those who are afraid to remain poor, regard suicide as the best solution.

Theft is another effect of poverty in ‘The horizon is calling’. Theft refers to the removal or taking of someone’s belongings without the owner’s consent. When a person is poor or deprived it sometimes results in stealing as indicated by Man 1 who says “It is nowadays fashionable to make a living by stealing from your neighbour” (Act 1, Scene 2 lines 34-35). Similarly, Johnny tells Moseb about the things he acquired upon which Moseb asks him whether he stole them or acquired them legally, to which he replies that there is no difference and that he was just lucky (Act 1, Scene 4 lines 16-20). Molapong (2000), illustrates that in order to survive some people turn to stealing without regret, thinking that it is their right to take from those who are in a better position than themselves. This can be further observed in what Johnny says “There were so many. I didn’t know which one to take” (Act 1, Scene 4 lines 34-35). From the above one can conclude that Molapong (2000) shows the reader that poverty can lead to theft for survival and those who are in poverty regard it as a normal practice. This situation is not only unique to Namibia but can be observed in other African countries or rather to wherever poverty stands out as noted by Ngutu (2014) that the majority of the youths languish in poverty

in Kenya because they are jobless, and have low levels of education so they gang up to cause crime in homes, stealing to earn a living (p. 115).

Hopelessness is another effect of poverty amongst the youth, as a result of no jobs in ‘The horizon is calling’. Hopelessness refers to a situation of lack of hope. Hopelessness can be observed through Moseb who tried to secure a job and who was insulted by his mother who thinks that he is not serious with his job hunting. Under normal circumstances one will feel hopeless when trying so hard to find employment without success and when no one appreciate your effort. This is indicated from Moseb’s words who says:

There is no hope for me anymore. For the past two years, I have been looking for a job, but was unable to secure one. It is not to say that I am lazy as my mother calls me. I am not useless, I can work hard. I am able to learn very fast. I... I...I... want to work. (Act 3, Scene 1, lines 30-34)

Molapong (2000) demonstrates how hopeless one can be if it seems as if nothing works out. Equally, the author shows that many of the youth are have lost hope that they will ever get employment, because of the many times they try without success. This can be observed through Donovan’s response that he is “tired and bored” (Act 2, Scene 5, line 4), for which his friend Anna responds, “You can say that about tomorrow and the day after tomorrow and the next week, next month, next year, next decade next century, next millennium, you can say that even in my next life” (Act 2, Scene 5, lines 6-9). In other words, what they are going through and what they have experienced do not indicate to them that better days will come. In addition to that, Moseb shows his hopelessness when he says “I don’t have a house I can call home. I rather stay here where nobody is going to call me all sorts of names. There is no reason for me to go home. I know what will happen.” (Act 3, Scene 1, lines 34-36). Therefore, Molapong

demonstrates how poverty can cause hopelessness in those who find themselves in miserable situations. The author also shows that those in poverty suffered from self-pity and a sense of being useless to either their families or relatives and for the society at large.

Alcoholism is also an effect of poverty in the play 'The horizon is calling'. Alcoholism refers to a situation where one drinks alcohol without controlling him/herself. After several attempts of job hunting without success, one might be forced to think of alcoholism as the last resort. This situation is observable through Donovan who feels that life is unfair after managing to get jobs which paid him peanuts. This is illustrated by his words when he says "I overdosed and started drinking heavily" (Act 2, Scene 1, line 38). This in itself demonstrates that poverty leads one to a behaviour of worthlessness as one wonders what change alcohol will bring that Donovan resorted to. It can thus be concluded that Molapong (2000) shows the reader that when in poverty, people lose confidence in themselves and opt for wrong choices, in particular alcohol, thinking that it will lighten their burden, but they end up destroying their own lives.

It is clear from what Moseb is insinuating that he lost his self-confidence as a person and thinks of himself as a 'bum' as he puts it. That is the ugly effect of poverty. It leads to people losing their confidence in themselves and thinking that they are useless, and that drives them deeper into thinking that they are a shame and disgrace for their families and communities.

#### **4.3.4 An exploration of the imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty in 'The horizon is calling'**

In 'The horizon is calling' the characters devise various strategies to alleviate poverty, and one of the imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty is getting a well-paying job. This strategy is devised by Moseb as he is telling his uncle that he "is thinking of one thousand five hundred dollars" (Act 1, Scene 3, lines 26-27). Molapong (2000) shows his readers that Moseb is desperate and to him one thousand five hundred dollars is enough and

such a payment is through a well-paying job. One wonders what a one thousand five hundred dollars will buy to sustain a home of many people. Also, to the standard of the people in the play, such an amount is adequate as they are living in poverty and they can do with little. Moseb believes that he can do much with one thousand five hundred dollars and it is unfortunate that he has no experience and no one wants to offer him a job to fulfil his dream.

Another strategy employed by the characters to alleviate poverty is the wish for enjoying money from stolen items alone. This is illustrated by Johnny, who after stealing items, wants to sell them for 'big' money so as to enjoy the money alone, without Moseb, since Moseb doesn't want to join him in the stealing. Molapong (2000) shows his readers that Johnny threatens Moseb to join him in stealing or otherwise he won't be able to enjoy the money Johnny gets from selling the stolen items. Johnny is stealing because he is poverty stricken and that is the only way he makes money for himself. To share his money with others is, however, a difficult task for Johnny when no one renders him assistance to sell the items. The only way Moseb can enjoy Johnny's money is when Moseb joins Johnny in his stealing actions. Like in the case of Johnny in the play under scrutiny, where he turned to crime, Uddin and Uddin (2013) portray the same result of poverty from their study, when they argue that "Inequality of income, poverty and unemployment has led to increase in violent crimes in Nigeria" (p. 399).

Still another imaginative strategy devised by the characters is through aiming at realising their dreams. This is illustrated by Donavon who says that "I could see myself dancing alongside Michael Jackson" (Act 2, Scene 1, lines 4-5) in his dreams. To him that is an achievement of his life and one that could take him out of poverty. To him something having to do with creativity, like being a musician or poet, professional dancer is welcome. Molapong (2000) shows his readers that even though Donavon is living in poverty he has big dreams for his life and future. This is an imaginative strategy Donavon can use to alleviate poverty. One wonders why Donovan does not start anything without waiting for someone to do it for him. According

to Donovan himself his dream cannot be fulfilled because the country has lazy people. Molapong (2000) argues that when a person waits for other people to do things for you rather than taking initiative, you remain in poverty.

Furthermore, another imaginative strategy devised by Moseb to alleviate poverty is to get employment. Molapong (2000) illustrates this when Moseb looks for a job and reminds himself of the last time he couldn't get the job even on affirmative action grounds, and says, "Windhoek city, here I come. Me. Moseb" (Act 2, Scene 2, lines 9-10). He is now determined and full of hope that he will get the employment as Molapong (2000) says he "prepares himself for the last time" (Act 2, Scene 2, line 9), showing the determination and hope of Moseb to obtain a job. Moseb's dream is to get a job and extricate himself out of the yoke of poverty. There are numerous consequences of poverty as Okungbowa and Eburajolo (2014) argue, "Poverty can reveal itself in various forms which include: high rate of unemployment, high rate of inflation, high level of illiteracy, inadequate infrastructure, poor health system, high debt burden, high rate of food shortage, high rate of maternal/ infant mortality, low life expectancy rate, etc" (p. 128). The researcher is in agreement with the above scholars that poverty is caused by various issues and one needs to be determined to overcome it.

#### **4.4 'The show isn't over until...'**

In this part 'The show isn't over until' was discussed following the same format as the previous two plays.

##### **4.4.1 Summary of 'The show isn't over until...'**

The play is about a number of actors who are acting out a play. The play depicts the post independent situation in Namibia with the SWAPO government ruling and Karin, a white lady, seeing issues from another angle as her fellow actor, the director of a company who is called

Simon. They are disturbed by Steve who comes for the rehearsals in late and drunk. An argument starts off and Judy intervenes to try to bring about peace. They start acting and Simon starts a flirting conversation with Karin in which Karin shows the ridiculous names the PLAN fighters are had. Steve, a former PLAN fighter arrives for an interview and Karin refers him to Simon. They (Simon and Steve) recognise each other from the combating days and how Steve saved Simon's life in a battle in which he (Simon) was wounded.

A quarrel starts again between the Director (of the play) and Steve, and Judy intervenes again. Simon and Steve talks about the good old days in the bushes and Steve wants to be promised to get the job at which Simon hesitates. They are interrupted by Karin who brings the news that another interviewee has arrived.

Judy, dressed as a female combatant steps in and greets Karin the African traditional way which Karin did not like. Simon recognises Judy as she was a nurse in the camps and they talk about the times then. Simon wants to caress Judy but she objects to that and then a quarrel starts with the Director and Steve arguing about how best to do the play or act and Judy, as always, intervenes to stop the argument. They then take a break for a meal and for smoking. Judy distributes food and then Simon suggests that someone tells a joke to break the tension.

Simon tells a joke which amuses Steve and the Director and does not impress Karin and Judy as the joke is gender insensitive. They then start talking about sponsorship and funding for plays which is so scarce and the talk goes over to arts in Namibia.

When they start to rehearse the play again, Simon starts caressing Judy who pushes him away. Judy starts crying because she feels she was being used and Simon comforts her and promises to give her the job and even gives her a date when to start. Another interviewee comes in and Steve takes again the role of the interviewee who introduces himself as Pieter Gawanab who

was a former Koevoet. Steve (Gawanab) starts to be enraged when he realises that he won't get a job after his interview with Simon.

Simon informs Karin that all the people do not fit the supervisor position they have and Karin suggests a niece of hers with a diploma. Simon agrees to let Karin's niece come so that she can get the supervisor job. She (Karin) further elevates the white people and ascribes the downfall of other companies to lack of white leadership. She then speaks about how the SWAPO leaders were living luxurious lives while the combatants were suffering in the bushes. Karin's niece is then employed and they start caressing each other with Simon, and the Director expresses his delight at the acting of out of the play. He (Director) then calls it a day.

#### **4.4.2 An exploration of the state and causes of poverty in 'The show isn't over until...'**

##### **4.4.2.1 The state of poverty in 'The show isn't over until...'**

The following are the manifestations of poverty according to Hangula (2000):

- the atmosphere in the play
- attitude of characters
- physical description

The atmosphere in the play 'The show isn't over until' is tense. The actors are about to perform but they are not ready, everyone is reading his/her lines. The late coming of Steve worsens the situation as he comes drunk. The reason Steve gives for his late coming is lack of taxi fare despite the fact that they got money for transport. This upsets the director who yells at Steve causing a quarrel. The mere fact that Steve arrives late to the rehearsal and uses the money which is meant for transport for something else is an indication of not setting the priorities right. Hangula (2000) brings out the point that if one doesn't set the priorities straight, it can

easily cause failure to achieve one's goal, in this case where one's bread should come from. Similarly, squandering of taxi money on liquor and having no money for transport leaves Steve in a state of deprivation. Hangula (2000) wants to show that acting is a profession from which the actors have to survive and if they don't take it seriously, they will remain in poverty. This is indicated by the director who gets upset and reprimands the actors to get serious. Throughout the play the director commands actors to do this and that showing that he is authoritative. Similarly, one can observe the tense atmosphere that continues in the play from Karin's words who says "Steve, just apologise to the Director and everybody for coming late and let's please get the hell on, for Pete's sake". Hangula (2000) shows the tension that prevails and that hinders the progress of the rehearsals, which can have a negative impact on the performance and which can prevent people from attending the show, which results in them (actors) remaining in poverty.

The attitude of the characters in the play 'The show isn't over until...' shows that they are living in poverty. Hangula (2000) portrays the actors as living in poverty by the way they wish that they should have grabbed all the farms, mines, shops and everything shortly after independence. From this, one can infer that the actors are in material need and they are angry that reconciliation brought them more poverty. Similarly, Hangula (2000) uses Maita (Judy) to demonstrate that they are in poverty by the way she remarks that the educated comrades are lucky and they don't have to suffer like her. According to the characters those comrades who got education and those who have farms, shops and so on are better off. Through this, Hangula (2000) depicts the condition of poverty in which the actors are immersed in to the point that they pity themselves. The way the characters wish that they would be eating caviar and drinking expensive wine in Hollywood goes to show their deprivation. The attitude of those who are rich and only go to the Warehouse, expecting to mix with their own, the attitude of the government not funding the artists, all these contribute to the marginalisation of the artists.

Furthermore, Hangula (2000) stresses that Steve, the PLAN combatant is living poverty-stricken by the way he depicts his dress code. This is illustrated by the way Hangula (2000) describes Steve as coming on stage wearing old clothes. In a similar fashion, Hangula depicts Judy (Maita) as poverty stricken and in a deplorable state by the way the director instructs her to imagine herself as such. Equally, Hangula (2000) illustrates the kind of diet the characters have at which they are not happy. They ascribe their poverty-stricken condition, illustrated by the diet, to the reluctance and discrimination from sponsors. This shows that black artists are marginalised at the expense of European and other foreign artists. Hangula (2000) shows that the result of such marginalisation is poverty to the black Namibian artists.

Moreover, the physical appearance of Judy shows that she is in a sorry state. By portraying the way she is being burned by the scorching sun, her lips which are dry and her heart that is crying inside her flat chest, Hangula (2000) wants to convince the reader that poverty contributes to a negative well-being of a person. This depiction from Hangula (2000) seek to present a comprehensive picture of poverty which those who are not employed suffer from.

#### **4.4.2.2 The causes of poverty in ‘The show isn’t over until...’**

The researcher identified various causes of poverty in the play, ‘The show isn’t over until’.

These are:

- racism and unequal racial differentiation
- alcohol abuse
- use of body in exchange for favour
- jobs for comrades
- discrimination
- education system
- lack of education and

- corruption.

One of the points Hangula (2000) brings forth is of racism and unequal racial differentiation. With unequal racial differentiation is meant when one race is preferred over another. Unequal racial differentiation stems from the days of colonialism especially when the white race was favoured over the blacks, particularly during apartheid in Namibia. This is in agreement with postcolonial theory which explains that there were unequal relations between the colonisers and the colonised and this is perpetuated even in post-independent Namibia. In the play, ‘The show isn’t over until...’, this is illustrated when out of all the interviews it is the white person who gets the job. This is indicated on Act 1, scene 1, line 1007, when Karin says: “take it from me... hire her” and Act 1, scene 1, line 1051 when the director states: “show us what the nature conservation niece can do”. Therefore through the presentation of race relations, Hangula (2000) shows that poverty stems back from apartheid times. Also, since what Hangula (2000) portrays is what is taking place in the Namibian society, according to newspapers’ articles, one can conclude that realism is being illustrated in the play since it depends on what colour you are for one to get a job which is how it was practiced during apartheid times.

Moreover, another point which is a cause of poverty as illustrated by Hangula (2000) is alcohol abuse. Hangula (2000) demonstrates that when alcohol is abused, as in the case of Steve who came drunk to work, one can lose one’s job and can become poor. The point is when one gets accustomed to coming drunk at work, it might cause the employer to terminate the employment contract as a drunk person cannot work properly since that person is not at normal thinking and acting capacity. Steve arrives late at the show and very drunk as illustrated by Hangula (2000) in Act 1, scene 1, lines 63-64 that “The play is interrupted by the arrival of Steve. He is obviously drunk, trying very hard not to show it as he comes to the stage”. In real life situations one finds that some people come to work under the influence of alcohol, which is the point

Hangula (2000) brings across, illustrating that real life situations are well demonstrated in literary writings which is in agreement with realism.

Furthermore, Hangula (2000) explains that in desperate situations women sell their bodies in exchange for favours. Hangula (2000) portrays the ex-combatant lady as promising herself of not being someone's sex object again. That illustrates that she previously used her body in exchange for favours. One wonders why women have to use their bodies in exchange for favours, while they may opt for other options such as standing up for their rights and showing men that that is not the only way in which women can get a job or whatever women might need. In this play, 'The show isn't over until...', Hangula (2000) shows that the ex-combatant lady was used all the time and that she has now decided "never to be somebody's sex object again." (Act 1, scene 1, line 878). It is worth noting that poverty can lead to several strategies in an attempt for someone to extricate him/herself out of it. Therefore, through the presentation of a 'carpet interview' (sex favour) Hangula (2000) has demonstrated that women may become sex objects to alleviate poverty. The brave action taken by the ex-combatant lady to refuse using her body as a sex object is to be commended.

Moreover, another cause of poverty is the practice of jobs for comrades. In the play, 'The show isn't over until...', Hangula (2000) illustrates the practice of jobs for comrades. Jobs for comrades is when comrades are preferred and given jobs at the expense of others, who qualify, even though the comrades are not capable of performing the required tasks. This is illustrated by Steve (who acts as an ex-combatant or comrade back in the days when they were in the bushes) when he asks that "So, when can I start?" (Act 1, scene 1, line 351). It implies that he took it for granted that as a comrade it is obvious that he will get the job. Hangula (2000) further illustrates the notion of jobs for comrades as Simon informs Judy, recognised as comrade Maita from the days of the struggle, that "You can start in two weeks, Monday the third" (Act 1, scene 1, lines 892-893). Again, this shows one that comrade Maita is offered the job without waiting

for all the candidates to be interviewed before choosing the preferred candidate. Giving jobs to comrades in this manner brings to mind the question as to what kind of performance will such a comrade deliver. Jobs for comrades are also presented through comrade Festus, a very well-known good comrade during the war, who was tasked to lead a Bridges and Dams Construction Company. Whether comrade Festus has the skills to lead the company or not is not an issue but just because he is a comrade is all that matters. Therefore, many skilled people will be excluded from getting jobs, as jobs are given to comrades, leading to unproductivity and poverty for those left out without jobs even though they are qualified. This will also lead to the collapse of the company as the one leading it is appointed because of good comradeship and not necessarily because of his skills. The collapse of the company will lead to even those employed to lose their jobs thus leading to poverty. This is in line with realism theory as what is reflected in literature is also what takes place in real life.

Another cause of poverty is discrimination. With discrimination is meant the preference of one culture, class, gender and so on at the expense of another. In the case of 'The show isn't over until...', Hangula (2000) demonstrates the point of discrimination of culture and class. This is illustrated in Act 1, scene 1, lines 783-784, when the director points out that "the rich and powerful only invest their money in those projects that promote their type of culture". When theatre projects are not supported by those with money, they do not yield resources and as such don't bring in income for the actors leading to poverty. Furthermore, this is also illustrated by the fact that when black performers request funding for theatre projects, they are turned down on the excuse 'funding has been depleted' but then one will read in the newspapers that a foreign European based theatre group will perform sponsored by those who turned off the blacks' proposals (Act 1, scene 1, lines 756-760). One wonders when foreign theatre groups are sponsored at the expense of the local black theatre groups, where will the black artist groups survive from? What kind of life will they have? These will result in those artists who are trying

to make a living out of acting to remain poor. This is in line with postcolonial theory which states that the white culture was promoted at the expense of the black culture since the whites had all the resources.

One of the causes of poverty is the education system itself. The education which people have is in itself inadequate. And at the best it can be described as mediocre. Hangula (2000) illustrates this in Act 1, scene 1, lines 422-424, with Steve who only had Sub B certificate and went on to study for a certificate in mechanical engineering. Therefore, one wonders what kind of Engineer will Steve be who does not have the best skills of what is expected from a mechanical engineer that is completed by someone having a Sub B certificate. Moreover, education is also presented through Karin's niece who has done a Diploma in Nature Conservation yet she becomes a supervisor at a company which deals with bridges and dams without any skills whatsoever to manage. Therefore, resultantly the company which she is supposed to manage will not be able to produce any profit and consequentially it will result in it being bankrupt, since there is no produce and no profit and people who are supposed to be employed end up getting poor.

Another cause of poverty is lack of education. When one is not educated then no one wants to employ that person. This is demonstrated in 'The show isn't over until...' by Judy, as Maita, who has only done elementary nursing and no one wants her near their clinics and hospitals since she does not have the necessary nursing skills. This is indicated in Act 1, scene 1, line 491-492, when it says "I did not really qualify as a nurse. I only did an elementary nursing course in Luanda." That illustrates that when one is ill qualified then it is difficult if not impossible to get employment. Therefore, that leads to one being entangled by poverty.

Corruption is yet another cause of poverty. Corruption is when people are favoured because of either bribery or in a dishonest and illegal manner by those in power. When people do not get

employment in a proper manner, that is, when they do not qualify for it, they turn to corrupt ways of getting it. That is illustrated by Steve when he says “or he knows the right people in the right places. I mean, the guy has been getting continued funding to first do one play for two years and then he gets other funds to do another for another two years”. (Act 1, scene 1, lines 777-710). If funding is given to the same person all the time, then the others do not benefit from their performances. Then there will be no equal distribution of opportunities and resources. That is the result of corruption that one will be favoured or benefit while others don't. That is what happens when one knows the right people in the right places especially those in authority. Consequently, those who do not know the right people are left at the mercy of no-one, leaving them in poverty as supported by Negin, Rashid and Nikopour (2011) that “corruption is one of the major determinants of poverty” (p. 23).

The circumstances of the characters in the ‘The Show isn't over until’ is well captured by Ngozi (2017) when alluding to Okri's *Flowers and shadows* that,

“Within the context of independent African nations, precisely the Nigerian nation which Okri portrays in *Flowers and shadows*, it is obvious that while some citizens experience their nation from positions of power, wealth, privilege, interest and abundance, others experience the same nation from positions of hunger, abject lack, deprivation, unjust incarceration, oppression, repression, disposition and marginalization.” (p. 21)

That is exactly the same situation experienced by the characters in ‘The Show isn't over until.’

#### **4.4.3 Effects of poverty in the play ‘The show isn't over until’**

The effects of poverty in ‘The show isn't over until’ are:

- disillusionment

- lack of education
- anger
- reconciliation
- blame game
- hatred and
- regret.

These effects are discussed below.

Poverty has the effect of disillusionment in the characters of 'The show isn't over until'. With disillusionment, the researcher means the feeling of disappointment brought about by the way things happen turn out than one thought. This is illustrated in the play when Karin feels that the job opportunities are only given to the 'illiterate' memes (women) who do not know a thing. She exclaimed "Bloody SWAPO Government! They'd rather employ your people, even if they happen to be illiterate memes who cannot tell the difference between the letter d and the letter b!" (Act 1, scene 1, lines 41-46). Hangula (2000) shows the reader Karin's disappointment and frustration in the SWAPO government that they just consider their people irrespective of their education. Her frustration is further made clear when she narrates about her niece who could not get a job despite the fact that she completed a diploma. She exclaimed that, "I happen to have a niece who has finished her diploma in nature conservation eight months ago. She could not get a job up to now." (Act 1, scene 1, lines 17-19). From this one can infer that Karin is disappointed in the government that excludes the whites at the expense of illiterate blacks. Therefore, one can deduce that what the whites used to do during colonial times is now being done to them. This agrees with postcolonial theory which articulates the power relations between the ruling and the ruled. Similarly, Hangula (2000) shows the reader that what takes place in society is what he writes about, underlining the theory of realism.

Another effect of poverty is lack of education. Lack of education is when one does not get a proper education to enable one to get a job and be able to express oneself in the official language of the country. The ex-combatant in the play is expressing himself poorly in English due to lack of proper education. By portraying Steve (the ex-combatant) as expressing himself poorly in English when he says, “Goodu moning, medem. My name Johannes Paulus. I come jobbing to looking here.” (Act 1, scene 1, lines 235-236), Hangula (2000) wants to convince the reader that Johannes Paulus cannot express himself good in English and thus it is difficult for him to get employment. Similarly, by Steve (into character) expressing himself in correct English, Hangula (2000) wants to show the importance of English in accessing higher offices. This is evidenced when Steve narrates that “those of you who have education and speak perfect English, please tell the President that our patience is running low” (Act 1, scene 1, lines 416-418). From the above statement by Steve one can conclude that he sees himself outside the job market because of not being educated and that those who are educated can remind the President about their existence before they do something undesirable. This situation reflects what is commonly experienced by the masses in the actual society on a daily basis which is in agreement with realism that mirrors real life. Hangula (2000) demonstrates how ordinary people struggle to live normal lives and how they try to let the President hear about their suffering. Here, the author shows that those who lack education feel that the educated ones are in a better position than themselves and they can remind the President to do something about their situation in order to take them out of poverty. Therefore, Hangula (2000) demonstrates that lack of education is a hindrance to accessing jobs and thus leaving people in poverty.

Furthermore, anger is an effect of poverty. With anger as an effect of poverty is meant that people become angry because what they expected to happen did not and they are left poor as a result. To illustrate this point Simon in ‘The show isn’t over until’ argues that, “Here we are after twenty-three years of a bitter struggle. But I understand the comrades’ anger. The

comrades think that we have sold out.” (Act 1, scene 1, lines 366-370). Hangula (2000) shows the reader that when people are in position of power they forget about the masses who elected them. The reader is made to sympathise with the plan fighters who fought for independence but who struggle to survive after their effort to liberate the country. Hangula (2000) highlights the unfair treatment of those who sacrificed their lives for the liberation of the country but who are left to their own mercy and are condemned to a life of poverty. In this instance, the author demonstrates that when people do not get what they fought for, they feel betrayed. Hangula (2000) also shows that people fought for independence but they cannot enjoy the fruits of what they fought for. The same sentiment is expressed by Thaniseb in the play ‘To live a better life’ through the character Petrus who says that they fought for freedom but now they have to plan for their own future. Therefore, poverty leads to anger. Diescho in his novel, *Born of the sun* (1988, as cited by Butale, 2015) also tells the story of unfair labour practices which lead to anger referring to Ndango’s brother who got TB from working in the mines and is left without payment while his white colleague who also got sick got has a lot of money. In the above statement Ndango’s brother was not paid, a situation which left him without money meaning that he was in poverty and that causes him to be angry.

Another effect of poverty is reconciliation. Reconciliation becomes an effect of poverty when people are reconciled for the sake of peace at the expense of losing possessions. Hangula (2000) presents the reader with a situation of between a rock and a hard place scenario. Hangula (2000) argues that while it is a good thing to be reconciled, yet it is bad in the sense that the wealth is still in the hands of the whites or the colonisers. This is illustrated in the play, ‘The show isn’t over until’ when Steve says that the whites still own everything because of reconciliation while they had all the resources and still continue to leave the blacks without any resources. Hangula (2000) shows the reader that blacks have political independence without economic emancipation. Because of reconciliation, the blacks remain poor while the whites enjoy all the

luxuries which they enjoyed before independence as indicated in Act 1, scene 1, lines 358-361 when Simon says, “the problem is that the means of production are still in these whites’ hands. They own the mines, supermarkets, the houses, and everything.” Simon’s words allow one to argue that they experience poverty because of reconciliation since there is nothing that changed and those who previously benefited are the ones who still enjoy the wealth of the country. By portraying reconciliation as an effect of poverty, Hangula (2000) wants to convince the reader that the whites are still influenced by colonial mentality. This agrees with postcolonial theory which explains that the whites regard themselves as superior to blacks as was evidenced under apartheid. Similarly, Hangula (2000) reminds the reader of realism theory which argues that literature is a mirror of what takes place in society.

Moreover, the blame game is another effect of poverty. Blame game here refers to the tendencies of blaming others for one’s shortcomings or situation. The feeling of the ex-combatants is that they should be considered first when it comes to employment since they fought for the country. Hangula (2000) points this out when Simon argues that, “But the top leadership has really betrayed us. Did you see my secretary? She is not what I want. There are many secretaries, our own secretaries, trained in Cuba, Yugoslavia and the GDR that I could have.” (Act 1, scene 1, lines 387-390) Hangula (2000) demonstrates the frustration of the ex-combatants and the blame they put on the top leadership. The reader is made to understand that the former plan fighters are in poverty as a result of the difficulties brought about by impositions of the secretaries they did not want because preference is given to the people who are not supposed to benefit and who benefit at their people’s expense. On the other hand, though the country is liberated, one wonders that if it is only the ex-combatants who are employed, because of special preference, what will happen to other qualified people in the country. Instead of attempting to ways to extricate themselves from their situations, people blame leaders and others for their situations. Therefore, through the presentation of the blame game, Hangula

(2000) shows that because the leaders do not take care of their own people, the ex-combatants will remain in poverty and the whites who previously benefited will continue to benefit.

Furthermore, hatred is one of the effects of poverty. Hatred refers to the dislike of others. Through Simon's words which are indicated in Act 1, scene 1, lines 394-396, that "That is the reason they let us have white secretaries, white deputy ministers, white under-secretaries and white directors everywhere." Hangula (2000) shows that opportunities are not given to the oppressed but rather they perpetuate the economic inequalities that were a feature of colonial oppression and thus leave the ex-combatants in poverty. This is in agreement with postcolonial theory which explains that there were unequal relations between the coloniser and the colonised and this is perpetuated in post-independence Namibia. Hangula (2000) shows the hatred the ex-combatants have towards the whites who are allegedly everywhere preventing them to get jobs and positions. Here, the playwright appeals to the reader's sympathy and to draw his or her awareness of the white domination in the job market. Equally, the reader is made to see the unfair treatment in the labour system that condemned the ex-combatants to a life of poverty since there is no room created for them. Resultantly the ex-combatants are in poverty because of the white presence in the country and they have nowhere to go in order to get jobs.

The last effect of poverty in 'The show isn't over until' is regret. Regret refers to a feeling of disappointment or sadness about a mistake one has made and one's wish that it could have been different. This is illustrated in the play when Judy (as ex-combatant) regrets about her uneducated situation, which brought about suffering to her, in the name of sacrificing for the struggle when she says, "Well, they say the struggle was for sacrificing. You educated comrades are lucky, at least you don't have to suffer like us." In the case of Judy, one can see that she regrets in sacrificing for the struggle instead of concentrating on her education like the other comrades. One can conclude that even though independence is achieved, the struggle for better living conditions continues. Subsequently, Hangula (2000) wants to show the reader that

it is only through education that one can obtain better living. Judy bemoans her situation and regrets that she suffers unlike her comrades who got the opportunity to study, meaning that she is in poverty. Here, Hangula (2000) depicts the difference between the educated war veterans and those who don't have education, resulting in the latter being in poverty. Therefore, Hangula (2000) portrays through Judy's situation that regret is an effect of poverty.

#### **4.4.4 An exploration of the imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty in 'The show isn't over until'**

Hangula (2000) shows the readers that the characters devise the following imaginative strategies to alleviate poverty: becoming like well-known actors of Hollywood, the way they would like to be accepted and seen, the dream of earning millions like other actors, reaching the top of their acting profession, attracting many people to their performances and so earn millions and to get funded and tour the country, SADC and the world. These are briefly discussed below:

The imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty in 'The show isn't over until...' are varied. The director has a dream of becoming a Wesley Snipes. The same view is shared by Donavon in the play 'The horizon is calling', (Act 2, Scene 1, lines 4-6) when he says, "In my dreams I could see myself dancing alongside Michael Jackson, or singing with Shabba Ranks and be part of the entertainment world". In both incidences one concludes that these characters bemoan their condition in which they find themselves. In the case of the director, in 'The show isn't over until' his dream of acting to the best of his ability is prohibited by a lack of money, while Donovan in 'The horizon is calling' cannot fulfil his dream because of lack of opportunities. Hangula (2000) shows that the characters do not just want to remain at their current level of acting but wish to develop further to big names in their careers. They want to elevate themselves to Hollywood standards. Hangula (2000) depicts that acting in

Namibia is not taken seriously and those who are talented are not encouraged or developed to make acting as a career that gives one a proper living. Coupled with this kind of elevation is money. The reader is made to understand that the characters do not act at the best of their ability because they don't get enough money. This is illustrated by the director when he suggests that Steve should pay him a million dollars if he doubts his acting abilities and he will do that a million times better. Hangula (2000) concurs with the theory of realism that says "literary realism is a style in literature that presents things and people as they are in real life" (Siddiqui and Raza, 2012). Therefore, Hangula (2000) shows that if actors get enough money as they ought to, they will be at the same standard as those in Hollywood and thus extricate themselves from poverty.

The other strategy the characters devise to alleviate poverty is the way they would like to be accepted and seen. Hangula (2000) illustrates this point when Steve says that they are supposed to be respected and glorified as actors and not to be seen and regarded as ordinary people. Here, the characters feel that if they are glorified and respected, the theatre will be full whenever they perform and they will make money and eat the same diet eaten by those actors who are respected. Hangula (2000) stresses the point that just as actors in Hollywood are respected and glorified, so should they (Namibian actors) also be respected and glorified in order for them to make money which can alleviate poverty. Once that happens, they will not eat the same food again and they will be better off as sponsors will be hunting for their services and thus they will be freed from poverty.

Another imaginative strategy the characters devise to alleviate poverty is the dream of earning millions. Hangula (2000) shows his readers that the characters can earn millions and the government will benefit from them through tax payments once the arts industry starts making a lot of money. All they have to do now is sensitise the government and foreign missions that they can act and so attract sponsors. Also, they encourage one another that they should go on

eating brown bread and chips and act, maybe one day they will be spotted by a casting agent and lend themselves a place in Hollywood. The reader is made to sympathise with the characters who are talented but who are not recognised, neither are they supported to make a better living out of their God-given talents. Hangula (2000) shows through this that the characters have big dreams of earning millions and reaching the top in their acting profession and thus free themselves from poverty, but at the moment they cannot fulfil their dreams because of lack of support and recognition.

Moreover, the characters devise strategies to alleviate poverty by attracting many people to their performances and thus earn a lot of money and extricate themselves out of poverty. Hangula (2000) shows this through the director who is confident that they will knock the audience out of their seats with their performance. If they are able to knock the audience out of their seats with their performance, then they will attract many people to their performance and thus a lot of money, meaning that they will have much to earn as actors. One will be confident that once they attract many people to their performances, they will earn millions and their dreams of freeing themselves from poverty will become real.

Lastly, the imaginative strategies the characters devise to alleviate poverty is to get funded to tour SADC and the world. They will appeal by their acting to get the required funding from the foreign missions. Hangula (2000) illustrates that once they act well they will be attractive to tour the whole country and SADC and maybe the whole world. If they can get the required funding to do that, they will thus earn millions and alleviate poverty. That's their dream and that's their mission.

#### **4.5 'To live a better life'**

The summary of 'To live a better life' by Thaniseb (2002) follows. This is the last of the four plays under scrutiny in this study.

#### **4.5.1 Summary of 'To live a better life'**

The play starts off with Auntie Lulu in the morning looking for someone to send to the market place with her father Ou Pyp puffing his pipe and Petrus next to her. Petrus describes his job hunting experience and they start talking about politics. Then comes John and he and Ausie, Aunt Lulu's daughter are sent to the market place to buy some offal and salt. When they are gone, Auntie Lulu remembers of her husband who died in the liberation war and she is comforted by Ou Pyp.

Ausie goes to Ou Pyp and together they have memories of Ou Pyp's wife and he describes what kind of person she was. Ausie meets his brother, Money, Auntie Lulu's son smoking and she confronts him. Money in return talks about her love affair after which Money leaves to watch TV. On a Sunday morning after church Habakuk, Ou Pyp and Petrus start drinking local beer they buy from Auntie Lulu and is brought by Ausie. They start talking about the situation in the country where a mine, where Habakuk was employed, was supposedly to close its doors and the consequences of joblessness which would follow. Then comes Size Lovemore, a well to do man on a visit to Freedomland where the rest were staying. A conversation starts about several issues. Tobias, a man looking for job, who has been chased away from a farm where he was employed arrives. Petrus promises to help Tobias to look for a job.

Auntie Lulu comes in with letters from the post and brings Ausie a letter from the Ministry of Health where she is being informed that she is pregnant. She then calls Size and informs him about the pregnancy. He rejects responsibility for the pregnancy and leaves Ausie sobbing with no recourse. After some time, when Ausie is three months pregnant, Auntie Lulu starts talking about the miserable situation she finds herself in, with Ausie being pregnant and her son in prison and her husband dead. Ausie too felt miserable and her mother comforted her. John brought a letter for Ausie which informed her that she was accepted to study law at the

University of Cambridge. John then informs Ausie that he is homosexual and that Size, the father of the baby Ausie is carrying, slept with him. This angers Ausie that she chases John away who is broken by that and commits suicide. Ausie then picks up a knife and wants to stab the unborn baby but Ou Pyp sees her and takes the knife away from her and comforts her.

Petrus and Tobias come in drunk. Petrus hands over a letter to Ou Pyp in which it is stated that Petrus has got a job in the Special Field force. Then comes in Habakuk with the news that John hung himself up in a tree in the river bed. Money is out of prison and Ausie decides to write her exams and then goes to London to pursue a degree.

#### **4.5.2 An exploration of the state and causes of poverty in ‘To live a better life’**

##### **4.5.2.1 The state of poverty in ‘To live a better life’**

The state of poverty in the play is discussed under the following headings:

- The setting of the play
- The physical description of the characters
- The atmosphere in the play
- The attitudes of the characters towards their situation

The play ‘To live a better life’ is set in a township around a shebeen. The setting being around a shebeen shows that most people are not working and they are gathering there to keep themselves busy or to hear what others experience. This setting also shows that the people give each other a sense of belonging and some go there to find something to learn and even to feel that at least they have a place where all are welcome. This therefore indicates that when in poverty a person looks for people who are in the same boat as oneself and that gives comfort. The gathering of the characters at a shebeen shows their idleness and a feeling of anxiety as it is difficult for some to face their family while they cannot put bread on the table. Thaniseb

(2002) shows the state of poverty in the characters through their speeches of job seeking but without success. This can be observed through the character Petrus who bemoans his experience of trying to secure a job without success as he says “It is bad. It has been eight months now...Perhaps, I am too old” (Act 1, scene 1, lines 27-28). With such a depiction Thaniseb (2002) shows the condition in which a person who searches for a job for eight months will be. One wonders how he will be able to take care of his family and himself. Therefore, Thaniseb (2002) demonstrates that without a job one will be vulnerable.

The state of poverty in this play can also be observed through the physical description of the characters. When one looks at Ou Pyp, he wears an old worn German military general’s tunic. Another character, Petrus, wears patched, wrinkled overalls, an old felt hat and a small jacket that he wears over his overalls. Tobias is another character portrayed who wears a worn jacket with only one button remaining. From this one can conclude that they wear the same clothes every day. The clothes worn by these characters show that they were bought or obtained a long time ago. One can also infer that these characters wear these old clothes because is all what they have. Therefore through such a presentation, Thaniseb (2002) shows the state of deprivation in which all these characters find themselves and the lack of means to obtain better clothes. Thaniseb (2002) further shows that when in poverty even your physical appearance can show it.

The atmosphere in the play ‘To live a better life’ shows that people accept each other as they are all affected by the same deprivation. The people in the play come together at the shebeen to learn from one another. They thus also experience, share and fight the good fight together. When there are debates at the shebeen, all take part and they find a sense of comfort among one another. Thaniseb (2002) shows that the talks of the day are about issues of the future, finance, politics and even religion. Thaniseb (2002) further illustrates that these people are deprived and despite their poverty they socialise and look forward to the future. The

atmosphere created in the play 'To live a better life' shows how the characters strive to survive through difficult conditions of poverty by sharing their experiences.

The attitude of the characters towards their condition in which they find themselves differ from individual to individual. First Auntie Lulu is portrayed as running a shebeen to make ends meet. With that she sustains her children, Ausie and Money as well as her father Ou Pyp. Auntie Lulu is still not happy with the fact that she has to rear her two children all by herself. Auntie Lulu's attitude shows that she is struggling to raise her children as indicated by her words that she is struggling to live a better life (Act 1, scene 1, line 93). Petrus on the other hand shows a negative attitude towards his condition as he feels empty and useless. Similarly, Thaniseb (2002) shows the negative attitude displayed by Habakuk who doubt the existence of God by saying "if there is a God, he must only be for Koekemoer and Shilongo" (Scene 4, lines 90-91). The attitude shown by Habakuk is in agreement with realism which endeavours to portray life as it is (Hossain & Sarker, 2016). Ou Pyp shows almost the same attitude although he pity himself that "I lived with giants and we did some giant things. But now I am living in the backyard..." (Act 1, scene 1, lines 57-58). Therefore, Thaniseb (2002) demonstrates the negative attitude displayed by all these characters towards their state of poverty.

#### **4.5.2.2 The causes of poverty in 'To live a better life'**

The causes of poverty in the play 'To live a better life' are:

- unemployment
- liberation struggle
- drought
- self-enrichment

- land issue and
- political system.

Unemployment causes poverty in this play as indicated by Petrus who walks every day to have a piece of bread but goes home with nothing (Act 1, scene 1, lines 47-50). If the head of the family comes home with nothing one wonders how such a family will survive. The same situation is alluded to by Butale (2015) when referring to *Meekulu's children* (2000) that “the family experiences poverty because its head cannot take part in the migrant labour system due to a medical condition which is common among miners” (p. 66). Thaniseb (2002) shares the same view that when the head of the family is unemployed, it is difficult for the rest of the family to survive. Petrus not only walks for days but for years, a situation that shows that the family has lived in poverty for a long time. Even though Thaniseb (2002) does not describe what he eats to survive, one can infer that they survive from Auntie Lulu as he most of the time is at her house and drinking local home-made beer. Nwagwu (2014) notes that poverty derives from lack of income producing employment (p. 20). Equally, another character who is in poverty because of unemployment is Tobias. The fact that Tobias walks all the way from the farm and he is willing to wash even dishes shows that in order to survive one needs an income. Thaniseb (2002) educates the readers that without an income it won't be possible to provide for the family or for oneself and he thus depicts unemployment as a cause of poverty. Furthermore, another situation which shows that unemployment is a cause of poverty in the play ‘To live a better life’ is the one of Habakuk. Habakuk, an employed man, with a wife and children to take care of, is afraid that he might lose his job when the rumours of the closure of the mine where he is working are imminent. Habakuk worries where he will get an income to feed his family. Thaniseb (2002) shows that Habakuk worries that without employment he will become poor. This fear is well supported by Nwagwu (2014) who notes that “a man who cannot fend for his family due to lack of income-producing employment is suffering from deprivative

poverty caused by imbalance in the distribution of social benefits” (p. 21). Therefore, through such a presentation Thaniseb (2002) demonstrates that unemployment is a cause of poverty.

The liberation struggle led to poverty in the play ‘To live a better life’. With the liberation struggle the researcher refers to the struggle for the independence of a country. The liberation struggle causes people to miss out on education as Petrus states that “the only thing I learned in the bush was to make war (Scene 1, lines 32-33). From the above statement, it is clear that Petrus does not get a job because he has no experience or anything else except the war he fought. Petrus did not get an opportunity to study or gain experience as some others did. Thaniseb (2002) shows that the liberation struggle can sometimes affect those who fought the war negatively. In a similar fashion, Auntie Lulu mourns her husband who died in the liberation struggle and at the same time regrets about the suffering his death brought them. Thaniseb (2002) illustrates a situation where those who fought for the liberation of the country are now suffering, and have no jobs or education to alleviate poverty. The same sentiment is shown by Maita in the play ‘The show isn’t over until’ when she says that the educated comrades are lucky and they don’t have to suffer like them. This is affirmed by Butale (2015) who argues that “Even though independence is ultimately achieved, the struggle for better living conditions continues” (p. 68). Therefore, the liberation struggle brought freedom and if those in power do not recognise the plight of the veterans they will remain in poverty.

Moreover drought is also a cause of poverty in ‘To live a better life’. Drought is the persistent absence of rain. Tobias comes into the circle of poverty after being dismissed from the farm he was working at. He is now poverty stricken as he has no income to keep him surviving. Thaniseb (2002) presents the reader with a scenario where the drought causes hardships to both the farmers and the workers as the latter are left without jobs. This demonstrates that when the mighty arm of nature strikes, it touches many. The circumstances brought by drought cause the farmer to be driven into the poverty circle since he lost his source of income. This is illustrated

by Tobias affirming the words of the boss that “Tobias, times are hard. . . no more rain, no more work” (Scene 4, lines 127-128). Thaniseb (2002) draws the readers’ attention to the hardships which drought can bring about and cause poverty. The situation of Tobias can be likened to the description rendered by Liswaniso (2016) who says, “She cried about the food shortages and the market, reliable source of income, had been closed leaving her without a source of income” (p. 62). In order to prevent poverty that may be brought by drought, one has to take precautions to prevent situations which might cause hardships. One can learn from this incident that Thaniseb (2002) brings to the forth, that drought can be a cause of poverty. This agrees with realism theory which maintains that literature is a mirror of society.

Self-enrichment is also a cause of poverty in this play. Self-enrichment refers to the act of enriching oneself at the expense of others. The views of the characters in the play are that those who are rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer. This stems from the apartheid era when whites became rich because they were in power and this is perpetuated in independent Namibia where the blacks who are in power are also getting richer because they get all the resources for themselves. Habakuk reasons that if the government is for the people then it should take care of its own people. What takes place on the ground is the contrary, the whites and the comrades are getting richer while the masses are getting poorer and poorer. Thaniseb (2002) brings forth the point that even if drought aid is given to the farmers, those in power used it to their own advantage. This means that if those in power do not share resources with those affected then the latter will remain in poverty. This is noted by the way Thaniseb (2002) portrays the situation in post-independent Namibia where the whites and the comrades are enriching themselves. Therefore, the circumstances painted by Thaniseb (2002) are such that self-enrichment is portrayed as a cause of poverty. In the same fashion, when those in power fail to uplift the man on the street and just think about themselves, poverty will be perpetuated.

The land issue is another cause of poverty in 'To live a better life'. Thaniseb (2002) uses Habakuk to show that the land was initially taken by the whites. In other words, through Habakuk, Thaniseb (2002) wants to show the readers that the land question is still an issue. Another character that Thaniseb (2002) uses is Tobias who brings the issue that "Whose land was taken in the first place? The Hereros, the Damaras or the Khoesan? ... and who is fighting for the return of the land? (Scene 4, lines 138-140). Ticha (2013, p. 52) argues that "the literary narrative complements the socio-economic reality where, as in the fiction, the most important resource land is held by a select few, creating a condition of material impoverishment for many". Similarly, Thaniseb (2002) brings forth the same view that the land is held by those in power. One assumes that according to Thaniseb (2002), the whites won't give the land and the blacks will remain in poverty. Also, according to Habakuk, the leaders who are supposed to take care of the land issue are on the gravy train, meaning that they have all they need so they care little. Therefore, through this presentation, Thaniseb (2002) demonstrates that even those who fought for the land are in poverty since the land is still in the hands of the whites and those in power.

The political system is another cause of poverty in the play 'To live a better life'. The political system which is supposed to improve the lives of the previously disadvantaged people is insufficient. This is indicated by Size who says "Black Empowerment and Affirmative Action...created a monster. Every man for himself and God for all..." (Act 1, Scene 4, lines 86-88). Through this, Size shows that Black Empowerment and Affirmative Action are being misused. This concurs with what Hamadi (2014) and Baffoe (2013) proffer, that the effects of colonisation still remain in all aspects of the colonised long after independence. Thaniseb (2002) shows the readers that the scramble for wealth is growing in such a manner that everyone wants to get it and those who are weak and poor won't succeed. One wonders why those in power act as if they are toothless in rectifying this political system in order to assist

the powerless. Therefore, through the political system, Thaniseb (2002) demonstrates how Black Empowerment and Affirmative Action worsen the gap between the rich and the poor instead of narrowing it. In other words, the masses who are supposed to benefit from this system are left to their own mercy.

#### **4.5.3 Effects of poverty according to the playwright of 'To live a better life'**

There are many effects of poverty which stands out in the play 'To live a better life' such as:

- lack of accommodation
- apathy and resignation to fate
- love of money
- bills and
- crime

Lack of accommodation is one of the effects of poverty in the play 'To live a better life'. Unlike in 'King of the dump' where the scavengers do not have a place to stay, Ou Pyp, lives in the backyard. From what Ou Pyp says, "I lived with giants and we did some giant things. But now I am living in the backyard..." (Scene 1, lines 56-57) it is clear that Ou Pyp is not happy with the situation in which he finds himself. The backyard shelter where Ou Pyp resides is a sign of deprivation and this is noted by Sathishkumar and Anita (2017) by referring to *The Famished Road* (1991) by Okri that "the present situation of the poor ghetto dwellers is highly miserable with hunger and deprivation of basic needs such as food, shelter, and proper clothing" (p. 2). One can learn from this situation that Ou Pyp is reduced to poverty and he remembers the old better days where he had proper accommodation. Thaniseb (2002) shows the point that when a person who used to work for himself ends up staying in someone else's backyard it is a sign of poverty. Thaniseb (2002) shows that poverty can cause someone to lose even a proper place to stay and it can take one away from one comfort.

Moreover, apathy is an effect of poverty the researcher observed in this play. This is illustrated in Scene 4, lines 90-91, where Habakuk believes that if there is a God, he must only be for those who are well off. When someone comes to a point of such apathy and resignation to fate, it means that his situation is so hopeless. Thaniseb (2002) shows that poverty forces people to think that God only favours those who are not suffering or if He exists then He exists for the well-off only. The reader is made to sympathise with those who are in a deprived situation that causes them to think that God chooses some and neglects others. Thaniseb (2002) further shows through the characters that their situation is such of a nature that they do not care anymore whether God exists or not. Through the depiction of these characters the reader is made to understand that only those who are rich or who are not suffering will still believe in a God.

Love/search for money is an effect in 'To live a better life'. Thaniseb (2002) uses Ausie to demonstrate that poverty can lead young girls to date older men to uplift them from deprived situations. One wonders why a young girl will date an older married man if it is not for the love of money. It is also clear from Ausie's brother, Money, that his sister is aware of their suffering, that's why she opts to date an older man. Thaniseb (2002) creates a situation where those who are deprived become irresponsible and in search of money to do things that they regret at a later stage. When one looks at the situation of Auntie Lulu, being the only breadwinner and Size whom Ausie is dating, being a married man, one is left with no option than believing that it is because of money. Through this presentation, Thaniseb (2002) educates the readers that young girls waste their opportunities of paying attention to their school career by dating older men. These older men use the young girls as their sex objects and drop them whenever it pleases them, a situation that brings more suffering and poverty especially when the girl falls pregnant like in the case of Ausie. Therefore, Thaniseb (2002) educates the readers through such a presentation that dating older men in search of money brings more misery to the family.

Furthermore, debts is an effect of poverty. Poverty causes people to make bills because they do not have enough income to cater for all their necessities. When one is not capable to cater for all the necessities one is forced to ignore or neglect some. This situation is stated by Auntie Lulu when she says “Bills here...bills there...where do I get the money to pay all these accounts? With the electricity cut and all, and the rent...” (Act 1, Scene 5, lines 5-7). This situation shows that Auntie Lulu finds it difficult to cope with her expenses. The fact that Auntie Lulu survives from her shebeen and many of those who are around it try to find jobs is an indication that she does not make enough money to cover all her expenses. Similarly, Thaniseb (2002) shows through the Maria whose water has been closed because of the outstanding bill that when one is poor it is difficult to even pay bills for such basic need as water.

Crime is also an effect of poverty in the play ‘To live a better life’. As a way of bemoaning her situation, Auntie Lulu talks about her son who is in jail as a result of the crime he committed. Like in the play ‘The horizon is calling’, crime is evident as Thaniseb (2002) illustrates that if there are no jobs, people turn to crime as a way of survival. Similarly, in the words of Habakuk, no jobs lead to crime. The reader is therefore made aware that poverty can lead to crime as a last resort.

#### **4.5.4 An exploration of the imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty in ‘To live a better life’**

One of the imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty is the one portrayed by Thaniseb (2002) through the character Ausie. Ausie has a longing to become a human rights lawyer, a dream she thinks one day will be realised. This dream has been inspired by the late Ou Pyp’s wife. One can imagine a human rights lawyer out of Freedomland, who knows the plight of the poor. Such a lawyer would sympathise with those in poverty. Thaniseb

(2002) emphasises that such a lawyer will be one whom everyone will be proud of. Through such a presentation, Thaniseb (2002) wants to drive home the point that even though the people in Freedomland find themselves in poverty, there is still hope for them.

Moreover, another imaginative strategy devised by the playwright to alleviate poverty is one of looking for jobs. The people fight each other and everyone wants to make him better than the others by portraying themselves as being able to do all kinds of things. Thaniseb (2002) draws the reader's attention to this when he writes through Habakuk that, "Madam! I can do all things" (Act 1, Scene 4, line 165). Everyone, of the job seekers is portraying himself as better than the others. They do this in order to stand a better chance to obtain employment and thus alleviate poverty.

Another imaginative strategy is their dreams. This is illustrated by Petrus who wants to become a writer to write about the liberation struggle. Thaniseb (2002) shows this when he writes through Petrus who says, "Maybe I should become a writer and write a book about the struggle" (Act 1, Scene 4, lines 171-172). This shows that Petrus was eager to do something to make a living and get himself out of poverty. This is similar to the dream of Donavon in 'The horizon is calling' by Molapong where he dreams of becoming a poet, musician and a professional dancer where he dances with Michael Jackson. The dreams are similar as they want to do something creative to get themselves out of poverty. They are also different in that one wants to become a writer while the other wants to be creative in music, poetry and dancing. All these poverty stricken characters have one vision in mind and that is to get out of poverty.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

This chapter was an analysis of 'King of the dump' by Philander (2005), 'The show isn't over until' ... by Hangula (2000), 'The horizon is calling' by Molapong (2000) and 'To live a better life' by Thaniseb (2002). The plays represent a group of people fighting for survival in a

country where few opportunities exist. The characters, attempt to make an innocent living but they are forced by poverty to make ends meet. Some resort to eating from the dumpsite as they have no alternative. The only way to have something for the stomach is to scavenge from the dumpsite. Others seek for jobs as a way of alleviating poverty which has entangled them all over. Others still resort to criminal activities to make a living. Some use their bodies as a way of survival. Others look at education as a means of taking them out of poverty. Their problem is poverty, which has pushed them to the extent that they have nothing at all, while others have the basics but they cannot satisfy what they need on a daily basis. Each community has its own problems but tracing the root cause, almost all, if not all the problems are rooted in colonialism. The next chapter focuses on the conclusion of the study and recommendation made based on this study.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

The main aim of this research was to explore the state and causes of poverty, the effects of poverty and the imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty in the Namibian plays: 'King of the dump', 'The show isn't over until', 'To live a better life' and 'The horizon is calling'. The analysis of these plays through both the postcolonial theory and realism, gave birth to this study. The result was an analysis of and a critical look at poverty.

This study was a desktop study which used the qualitative approach since this approach lends itself easily to interpretive studies. The study employed content analysis in the interpretation and analysis of poverty as portrayed in the selected plays.

#### 5.2 Conclusion

In the plays, 'King of the dump', 'The show isn't over until', 'To live a better life' and 'The horizon is calling' one comes across the interplay of poverty as it was handled by the playwrights. In 'King of the dump', people in abject poverty have no option than to be driven to the dumpsites to search and look for food for survival. The cause of this search for food at the dumpsite is a lack of employment or a means of finding a means to sustain themselves. The characters devise ways of alleviating themselves from these circumstances which in most cases turned out to be unsuccessful.

In 'The show isn't over until', the state of poverty is also evident and can be seen from the desperation of the characters in seeking employment. The causes of this poverty can be ascribed to unemployment. The inability of those under poverty to extricate themselves out of the pit of

poverty without seeking employment seems to be a far-fetched reality. Their only means of finding means to put bread on their table was by means of employment.

In 'To Live a better life' one experiences through reading the play that one can make a means to make ends meet by other means than employment. One of the characters found means of survival through selling local beer. As a result of that she could take care of her family. Other characters turned to seeking jobs as a means of alleviating themselves out of the pit of poverty. Others turned to education as a means of alleviating themselves out of poverty. To become educated and finding a good job was a strategy devised by some characters to alleviate themselves from the yoke of poverty.

Lastly, in 'The horizon is calling' one finds a description of poverty which is not abject poverty but poverty of having little compared to others and not meeting all needs and wants. People are poor because they do not have enough to meet all their needs but they are not so poor that they are driven to for example dumpsites in search of food. They turn to various means to ease themselves out of their misery. Like in other plays in this study, they turn to and devise means of alleviating poverty. Some sought education, others resorted to criminal activities like stealing and still others turned to job seeking as a means of taking them out of poverty.

### **5.3 Findings**

The objectives of the study were to:

- explore the state and causes of poverty as presented in the selected plays;
- discuss the effects of poverty as presented by the selected playwrights; and
- explore the imaginative strategies that the characters devise to alleviate poverty.

The findings are discussed under each objective below:

### **5.3.1 The state and causes of poverty as presented in the selected plays**

The state of poverty in the play 'King of the dump' is shown by the setting of the play. The play is set in a rubbish dump, a fact which shows that the characters do not have accommodation. Further the physical description of the characters shows that they are not well clothed. Also, the atmosphere that is created in the play is one that shows deprivation and lack. Similarly, the exact needs that come out of the play as an indication of the state of poverty are the lack of food and employment. Furthermore, in 'King of the dump', the attitude of other people is depicted as a state of poverty. The causes of poverty in 'King of the dump' are exploitation of women, gender inequality, divorce, denial, lack of social structures, discrimination, and lack of a fair justice system. In 'The horizon is calling', the setting is in a location and the atmosphere is tense. Furthermore, the attitude of characters towards one another shows the state of poverty. The causes of poverty are: unemployment, lies, exploitation, crime, school drop-out, lack of education and corruption. In 'The show isn't over until', the atmosphere is also tense, the attitude of the characters shows that they are living in poverty, the physical appearance of the characters is in a deplorable state. The causes of poverty in 'The show isn't over until' are: racism and unequal racial differentiation, alcohol abuse, women selling their bodies in exchange for favours, practice of the notion of jobs for comrades, discrimination, the education system, lack of education and corruption. In 'To live a better life', the play is set around a shebeen. The physical description of the characters shows that they are living in poverty. The atmosphere is of mutual acceptance. The causes of poverty in 'To live a better life' are: unemployment, participating in the liberation struggle, drought, self-enrichment, land issue and the political system.

### **5.3.2 The effects of poverty as presented by the selected playwrights**

The effects of poverty in 'King of the dump' are: poverty which reduces people to beggars, dehumanisation, blame game, risk-taking, lack of trust and humiliation. In the 'Horizon is calling' the effects of poverty are: frustration, anger, suicide, theft, hopelessness and alcoholism. The effects of poverty in 'The show isn't over until' are: disillusionment, lack of education, anger, reconciliation, blame game, hatred and regret. In 'To live a better life' the effects of poverty are: lack of accommodation, apathy, love/search for money, debts and crime.

### **5.3.3 The imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty**

The imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty in 'King of the dump' are: supply of money from Eva's former husband, Pompie giving Elvis Presley if he were alive, a run for his money, Eva to leaving the dump, to be well-fed and Pompie imagining himself to be a policeman. The imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty in 'The horizon is calling' are: getting well-paying job, wishing to enjoying money from stolen items alone, realising their dreams and to get employment. The imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty in 'The show isn't over until' are: becoming well-known actors of Hollywood, the way they would like to be accepted and recognised, the dream of earning millions, attracting many people at their performances and thus earning a lot of money and to get funded. In 'To live a better life', the imaginative strategies devised by the characters to alleviate poverty are: a longing to become a human rights lawyer, looking for jobs and dreaming to become writers.

## **5. 4 Contribution to knowledge**

Much research has been done and written in Namibia concerning poverty. However, little has been done in the field of poverty in literature in the Namibian context. There seems to be dearth

of studies concerning poverty in literature in the Namibian context. Hence, this study serves as a pioneer in this field.

This study is an eye opener, since no research in literature in the Namibian context has been done. Still much needs to be studied concerning poverty from the Namibian literature. Thus being a pioneer study concerning poverty in literature in Namibia, this study contributed to knowledge on the portrayal of poverty, not only on the selected plays, but the researcher believes, in many other plays and other literature materials in Namibia.

This study pointed to the fact that poverty still exists in the Namibian society and the means of eradicating this evil from the society need to be addressed. Secondly, this study pointed out that as a means of people attempting to extricate themselves from poverty, various means are sought. Some of these means might be acceptable to our society and others are not acceptable and therefore the acceptable means need to be devised to help those affected by this evil.

### **5.5 Recommendations**

This study is a pioneer study on the portrayal of poverty in Namibian literature. Therefore, much still needs to be done in this area. What other literary authors said concerning this evil in our society needs to be researched and brought to light. The researcher therefore recommends that the following need further investigation and thus need to be researched further:

- Other Namibian literature which portrays poverty from a Namibian perspective need to be uncovered and researched. This calls for a need to study more literature which portrays poverty in our society.
- There is thus a need for studies to be carried out concerning how poverty is portrayed in other genres of literature in Namibia.

- There is a need to do a comparative literary analysis of the pre-independence and post-independence representation of poverty in Namibia.
- There is a need for a comparative analysis of literature on poverty from different Southern African countries.
- Lastly, the researcher recommends a study on how poverty affects people from a gender perspective.

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