

ABSTRACT

Where African proverbs have been studied in written literature; attention has been focused in literature that is produced in European languages. Studies of proverbs in indigenous African languages are rare to find. The current study aimed to examine the themes and relevance of proverbs in Gakaara Wanjaũ's *Wa-Nduuta Narratives* written in Gikũyũ. The objectives of the study were to establish the themes of proverbs in Gakaara Wanjaũ's *Wa-Nduuta Narratives*, their relevance as well as to examine the language and style that Gakaara Wanjaũ uses in presenting the proverbs in the *Wa-Nduuta Narratives*. The study was carried out on the premise that Gakaara Wanjaũ uses proverbs in *Wa-Nduuta Narratives* to achieve certain thematic concerns within the use of Poststructuralist and Womanist theories to analyse. The study was library based involving an in-depth reading of the *Wa-Nduuta Narratives*. The current study employed the qualitative research design. A random sample of fifty-seven proverbs from the twenty selected *Wa-Nduuta Narratives* were identified, classified and analysed critically. The results of the study indicate that the proverbs documenting the African experience are best expressed in African Languages. In particular, Gakaara Wanjaũ has succeeded to demonstrate this reality by using the Gikũyũ proverbs in which a variety of experiences are aesthetically woven in colourfully blended age-old Gikũyũ imagery. Further, the results also indicate that proverbs find relevance in the context in which they are produced and applied. Although Wanjaũ wrote the *Wa-Nduuta Narratives* in the twentieth century, the advice in the issues he highlights is still significant to the contemporary society since most of the problems he discusses still plague the society today. Through the translation and analysis of the proverbs in the *Wa-Nduuta Narratives*, this study has availed the wisdom there contained to a larger readership. The findings will contribute in the comprehension and appreciation of the application of proverbs in the indigenous languages and their application in creative writings. The study highlights the significance of Gikũyũ proverbs as a literary genre. The results will also help researchers who may want to carry out similar or related scholarship in this or related discipline.