

***Jichi* Dance Structure, Gender and Sexuality**

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ABSTRACT Sociological studies have always focused on gender inequality in which men play dominating roles over their women counterparts. Likewise, musicological scholarships have generally discussed that females are deemed to be submissive to males during dance performances. Besides, there are various dance styles practised by different ethnic groups in Zimbabwe and some of them are *isitshikitsha, mbakumba, mbende, mhande, muchongowoyo, shangara* and *xinyambela*. This paper explored the feminist theory and how *jichi* gendered dance performances in the context of *mukwerera* rainmaking ceremony of the *Shangwe* people at *Nevana* and *Kufahazvinei* villages in Gokwe North and Gokwe South districts in the Midlands Province in Zimbabwe created a certain form of gender equality. *Jichi* ritual symbolisms are active in the *Shangwe* community yet these symbols have not been documented as a way to preserve them. The study adopted an ethnographic paradigm in which empirical data was collected using face - to - face to interviews. The researcher established that gender inequality which existed in the *Shangwe* community naturally transformed into cultural - conditional gender equality during the dance and that relationship is only alive during the ceremony. The *Shangwe* people make use of symbolism during their ritual practices such as *ndiro yetanda* and *chitanda*. The two symbols are replica of female and male beings which is a pointer to the conception of the dance as a gendered performance.