

A Comparative Analysis of Virtue- Based Content for Youth in Two Epics in Swahili: Siraji and Adili

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Abstract

This paper analyses morals to the boychild that are espoused in the *Siraji* and *Adili* epics. In this paper, we were guided by the moral theory that aims at using literary works in solving societal problems and generating a cohesive society. This paper aimed at discussing how the composers of these epics - Kijumwa and Robert – in *Siraji* and *Adili* respectively addressed the morality issue in young men. We have also compared and contrasted how the two poets, Kijumwa and Robert, addressed the morality issue in their epics and we have thus finally established their points of agreement and departures. After research that entailed reading and analyzing the two epics – *Siraji* and *Adili*- we have noted that we were right in our claim that both Kijumwa and Robert have discussed issues of morality among the young men and that they have agreed and differed in one way or the other. Finally, it was noted that these two epics are closely thematically related as the two composers, Kijumwa and Robert, have linked the morality issues with the Islamic religious teachings. It is for the reason that we have analysed our data by providing further evidence from *Siraji* and *Adili* as well as the Holy Quran. Furthermore, the paper notes that the points of departure in articulation of the morality issues between these two poets are borne of their own opinions and experiences in life dependent on the environments they interacted with.

Keywords: Swahili, Epics, Virtues, Morality, Youth, Advice

1.1 Introduction

The *Siraji* epic was composed by Mohammad Kijumwa in 1927. This epic has 209 stanzas and its subject matter is a fatherly advice by Kijumwa to his son coupled with the religious teachings and social moral guidance. It was composed for his son, Helewa, so that it serves as a guide to him towards better living and so that he can share the same with the other people on earth. Kijumwa has given his son some piece of advice on how to coexist well with the people around him so as to maintain a good relationship with God and the society at large considering that in the absence of God there is nothing that man can attempt to fruition. He advises him to take serious the advice and apply into his entire life from childhood, through marriage and finally as a parent. Furthermore, he has advised him on how cultivate good relationship with his relatives, neighbours, friends, the rich, the poor as well as the (physically challenged).

The *Adili* epic on the other hand was composed by the seasoned poet, Shaaban Robert, and kept in the book *Pambo la Lugha* (1966). This epic has 100 stanzas. In the epic, Robert advises his son, Adili. He has guided him to live a moral life. He advises him to respect God, be respectful and obedient, respect parents, avoid laziness, avoid backbites, the importance of education, taking care of himself, managing time, perseverance and true love in marriage among others. The issues articulated by these two poets are of immense relevance to the society as they warn and guide them as youth in their lives. We chose the two epics – *Siraji* and *Adili* – owing to their close similarities and have not been referred to by earlier researchers. The advices given by both Kijumwa and Robert to their sons are drawn from Islamic religious teachings with main aim of having the advices as guides to their moral living and so that they can equally morally guide the society.

1.2 Problem Statement

Since morality is an important social component in life, it is cardinal that every parent responsibly imparts that in their child from childhood to adulthood. Youths are an integral part of the society owing to the fact that they represent the future of that particular society. In a UN report cited by *Taifa Leo* publication of October 10, 2015, it is noted that most of the university youths are joining terrorist groupings owing to a promise a big monetary reward. Furthermore, in Kenya, youths face a myriad of challenges ranging from drug abuse, cigarette smoking, alcoholism, unemployment among others. This is enough evidence that there is moral decay among the youth.

Therefore, the paper assesses and critically establishes how morality among the youth is portrayed in the two epics – *Siraji* and *Adili*. This paper has investigated the contributions by Kijumwa and Robert on warning and guidance to the youths towards moral living. This research aimed at comparing and contrasting how both Mohammad Kijumwa and Shaaban Robert addressed the issues of morality among young men considering their points of agreement and those of departure. This research was guided by moral theory that emphasizes the role of literature as a guide towards moral uprightness in the society. Furthermore, the theory discusses the desirable and non-desirable actions in the society.

2.1 Literature review on poetry

Abou Egl (1983) has written Kijumwa's biography detailing his works. In his PhD dissertation that was presented to the University of London, he has detailed the poetic works by Kijumwa as well as his other artistic contributions. He has also discussed songs and epics composed by Kijumwa from which the *Siraji* epic is drawn. The contribution by this researcher has been of immense significance to our research here in as it has guided us in understanding Kijumwa as a person and his philosophy. Furthermore, it has enabled us understand the *Siraji* epic that we have discussed in our research as well as other epic poems from the same composer such as *Fumo Liongo*, *Alika kama Harusi*, *Wanawake wa Kiamu*, *Utenzi wa Mkunumbi*, *Utendi wa Safari* among others.

Maina (2005) has discussed the position of women in the two epic compositions by Shaaban Robert – the *Hati* and *Adili* epics. In his work, he used a branch of the feminist theory that emphasizes that creation of a new society espousing gender equity. He also addressed himself to Shaaban Robert's philosophy on life. Our research differs with his research in that while he discusses the position of a woman in the *Hati* and *Adili* epics, we discuss the moral guidance to a boychild as espoused by Kijumwa and Robert. Maina (ibid) has used two compositions from the same poet – Shaaban. That is *Hati* an advice to a girlchild and *Adili* an advice to a boychild. His work has however been of great significance to our research especially on the *Adili* epic.

Gudrun and Vierke (2010) in *Texts from the Dammann Papers and Other Collections* have discussed Kijumwa works including letters he wrote to Dammann, chronicles, love songs and various epics including the *Siraji* epic. Our research differs from their research in that we have only picked one of Kijumwa's works – *Siraji* epic. However, their research has been of immense benefit to our research as it has guided us towards further understanding of this epic and by reading their contributions we have exposed ourselves to other works by the same author to further our understanding of his philosophy.

Watuha (2011) investigated the theme of advice in the *Adili* epic by Shaaban Robert. Unlike his research, we have discussed the issue of morality in two epics *Siraji* by Kijumwa and *Adili* by Robert. Furthermore, he generally discussed Shaaban Robert's philosophy on life and his general view of life. His work has been of immense contribution to our research as it he similarly used moral theory that we have used in our research herein.

Ngunjiri (2012) has discussed the use of imagery as a tool achieving thematic journey in the *Siraji* epic. Ngunjiri just investigated imagery and its significance in strengthening the thematic explication. His work has supported our research in that he used one of the epics that is relevant to our study – *Siraji*. Therefore, we oftenly referred to his in shedding more light into our research. Nyamemba (2015) has compared youth related issues in the poems presented in *Tunu ya Ushairi* anthology that was edited by Timothy Arege. The anthology has poems from four different poets. He discussed various youth related issues part of which is morality. Even though he addresses youth related issues across the gender divide, our research focused male youth only.

The work has also been of great significance to our research in that some of the issues espoused in the research are in tandem with what we have discussed in our research including morality and discipline among others. We have therefore made references to the work for the detailing of our research.

2.2 Literature review in other related works

In other works such as plays and novels, there are researchers who have addressed themselves to youth related issues in various ways. For instance, Wafula (1999) analyses the position of youth characters in three different play books. These are: *Wakati Ukuta*, *Hatia* and *Uasi*. Wafula observes that youths change with a slight change in their beliefs. His research does not however state a level at which the youths have been able to free themselves from their day to day challenges. However, this work is different from ours in that as he discussed the youth issues across the gender, our research was specific to the male youth. The research however exposed us to a myriad of challenges facing the youth.

Manoti (2012) discusses moral decay and its effects on the society in *Upotevu*. Unlike in our work, he assessed the level at which moral decay is exemplified in *Upotevu* while we discussed morality among the male youth in the society. The work is however relevant to our research as he used moral theory that we employed in our research. His work has therefore been of great significance to our research as it has aided our further understanding and application of the moral theory.

Naliaka (2012) analysed the youth involvement in *Vipanya vya Maabara*. In her research, she emphasized the plight of youths in the society. Unlike in her work, our research has concentrated on the male youth in the *Siraji* and *Adili* epics. Our research has been guided by moral theory unlike her work which used realism theory. In her research, she notes that youth face a myriad of challenges that emanate from poor upbringing and economic strains. Her work was of immense significance to our research as she attempted some of the issues that were core to our research such as what befalls the youth as a result of poor upbringing. We therefore regularly made reference to her for further strengthening of our research.

In her view, moral decay among the youth is a result of poor and irresponsible parenting. We agree with Naliaka on this that most parents fail to dedicate some time to sit with their children for moral guidance and advice. They use much of their time in other issues especially resource mobilization. All those researches that we've mentioned in sections 1.6.1 and 1.6.2 have contributed to our research in that we have regularly referred to them in our research.

2.3 Theoretical framework

2.3.1 Moral theory

Moral theory is a very old theory whose foundation was premised in Greek and Rome. It was initiated by Plato, a Greek philosopher and Socrates' student. Plato lived between 427 and 345 BC. He argued that the main aim of literature is to foster moral upbringing and if it failed to do that it should be gotten rid off (Wamitila, 2003). There are later contributors to the theory who included Aristotle, Horace, Hough, Tolstoy among others. This theory suggests the approach to solving societal problems so as to develop a morally upright society that coexists as espoused in literary works and humanity on the morality front.

As Wamitila (2003:266-267) puts it, this theory is used to explain the reading and analysis of literary works by examining its relevance to humanity and especially on morality front. He further states that, in Plato's publication of *The Republic*, (1960) the latter suggests that poems have to be assessed before being adopted so as to sieve the possible impacts their message would have on the society especially the youth.

Plato and his seconders believed that poetry has to be soul nourishing, developmental and morally guiding. Therefore, poetry will guide one into being a morally upright person in the society. From the views of Wamitila (2003) we concluded that the beauty of literature does not only emanate from how to it is presented but in what is presented. Literary critics who use this approach view literature as a tool that examines human life and he should therefore look at the impact of a literary work to its audience.

Kimani and Chimerah (1999) argue that the moral theory is founded on an ideal that human beings and all the other living creatures have behavioural conditions that are ont inherent in them at birth. They classify these behaviours into two: good and bad behaviour. We agree with them since we are aware that problems are to be arrested before they escalate into something bigger.

Youths are thus supposed to be guided while still young by warning them against irresponsible living and guided on how live upright. We consider the composers, Kijumwa and Robert of the epics we picked on *Siraji* and *Adili* carrying out this important exercise in the society.

Gitobu (2014) on the other hand states that Aristotle who was Plato's student and a scientist also believed that art is a reflection of human life. It might be positive or negative. Gitobu further quotes Aristotle as having said that the society needs to consider what is emulatable and what is not emulatable within the social deeds. Gitobu also cites Horace as having furthered proclamation of the moral theory. Seemingly, Horace turned Aristotle's suggestions into policies that would guide upcoming authors. In his article, *The Art of Poetry*, as cited by S.T Dorsh in the book *Classical Literary Criticism*, Horace lists down some of the guidelines in literature among which he mentions morality and entertainment.

Hough (1966) as quoted by Gitobu (2014) states that the moral theory emphasizes that completeness of a literary piece is a reflection of completeness of life. We have also concluded that the role of authors as suggested by the proponents of the moral theory is to educate the society. Therefore, they should compose or author works that make the characters in the society to be better beings. We chose the moral theory to help us map how Kijumwa and Robert succeeded in their responsibility of educating and correcting the ills bedevelling the society.

Moral theory thrives on the following tenets: literature has a duty to ensure moral uprightness of the society. This tenet has enabled us in compiling data from the *Siraji* and *Adili* epic compositions from Kijumwa and Robert respectively. We have done this with an aim of warning and guiding youths in life. Furthermore, the tenet has enabled us collect data on how both Helewa and Adili were guided on how to live in harmony with other people in the society as guided by their parents. Second, it is only human being that is capable of defining the direction of social action in his/her specific society. In this essence, we concluded that what Kijumwa and Robert did to their sons was provide morally accepted direction for a better society. Third, a human being is responsible for making the world a haven of stay by living responsibly and morally. This tenet has enabled us establish the significance of morally acceptable actions where it has emerged that moral actions lead to harmonious and peaceful coexistence in the society. Therefore, every individual in the society is tasked to contribute towards developing a moral society. These tenets have enabled us analyse the data from the two compositions *Siraji* and *Adili*.

3.0 Methodology

In this section, the paper has discussed all the methods used in identifying data as well as those used in analyzing the findings of this research. We have divided the sections into three subsections as below:

3.1 Sampling methods

We have selected our research target sample from the *Siraji* epics by Mohammad Kijumwa and *Adili* epic by Shaaban Robert. We chose the two epics owing to the similarity as the both of them are advice and guidance from male parents to their sons. We have critiqued these epics by reading and analyzing them by considering the aspect of morality in boychild.

3.2 Data collection

Reading and analysis are the methods we used for data collection in this research. We have read through various works in the library and have thus enlisted and used those found relevant to this research. Furthermore, we have read through the theses, books and other relevant articles authored by researchers we found relevant to our line of study. We have as well read other works on the internet on issues related youths with specific focus on morality issues among the youth coupled with readership of content related to the moral theory that we adopted for our research. We did this by comparing and contrasting with the content in the *Siraji* and *Adili* epics.

4.0 Data analysis and presentation

After reading keenly the *Siraji* and *Adili* epics that we have addressed in this research in relation to the morality issues covered therein, we analysed and presented the data we accessed through explanation and description with reference to the material fetched from the epics. We have thus finally presented our findings through explanation and description.

4.1 Religion and belief in God

Guided by the moral theory, aesthetics in literary and artistic works is dependent on morality that is inherent in the society. Proponents of this theory more specifically Plato supported by Tolstoy, as we alluded earlier on hinged art to religion. Therefore, it has been evident in the Kijumwa work that he banked on religious teaching to provide moral guidance to his son, Helewa. He for instance advised him to respect God and do that he wills as well as depending on him for everything.

In the Siraji epic, the Islamic faith is emphasized as there are various references from Quran in emphasizing the counsel and advice. Religion and belief in God is the first advice that Kijumwa puts forward to his son.

Here is the fifth stanza:

“Kwanda baba mcha mungu, *“First, son, respect God*
 Utaokoka mwanangu, *You’ll never be troubled*
 Huku huko kwa utungu *Wherever there’s trouble*
 Kukosa cha kutimia.” ub.5. *There’s no way you’ll lack.” Stanza 5*

Kijumwa demonstrates here that the foundation of his advice to Helewa is respect and regard to God as well as seeking for forgiveness regularly from him for God receives those who seek him. He further persuades Helewa to read the holy Quran which states that God forgives sinners and since human beings are weak creatures and therefore sin is almost part of their daily lives. Furthermore, the Quran states that it is only God who knows all that surround human beings even if they did it in secrecy. It is therefore cardinal that we confess our sins to God and he will forgive us.

Kijumwa ends the *Siraji* epic in stanzas 205-207 by pleading with Helewa to put into serious consideration the advice he had given him for God’s blessings. He also prays to God to shield them from embarrassments so that they can luminate the world. All these are evidence that the poet is a God fearing person and that he put God first before everything without which human being cannot succeed in anything. Furthermore, he asks God to bless the entire Islamic fraternity providing further evidence that he hinged everything to God.

4.2 Respect, obedience and discipline

Kijumwa emphasizes obedience to the parents, bosses at work and other colleagues at work. The tenet of our guiding moral theory had put it clear that ‘a human being is responsible for making the world a haven for living’. Therefore, it is incumbent upon any child to respect his/her parents for a harmonious and peaceful living. Kijumwa has really emphasized these aspects of discipline and obedience in stanzas 43, 84 and 85. He advises his son not to look down upon or disrespect people or laugh them off but respect them for he is not so sure of what will befall him the next day lest he be a host to whatever that he was laughing off. Furthermore, Kijumwa asks his son to respect all people irrespective of the positions at work, rich or poor for it is in such respect that harmony and peaceful coexistence are registered. It is evident that Kijumwa hinged his advice and teachings on the holy Quran as shown below:

“.....and be good to both parents. If one or both of them ages, and they are under your care do not dismiss them. Talk to them with respect.” Chapter 15: 23

4.3 Education

One of the tenets of the moral theory we used had hinted that ‘a human being is responsible for making a morally acceptable society and generating the appropriate mechanisms for solving problems’. Mohammad Kijumwa thus advises Helewa to get education as it has lots of benefits. It is a right for every child to access education as it the key to a better life. He notes that his own parents did succeed in their responsibility by educating him on religious teachings that have guided him well in life. The history of Mohammad Kijumwa reveals to us that he accessed school education to be to understand the holy Quran. Furthermore, he translated a number of works that had been written in Arabic. This is according to Abou (1983). Therefore, we can observe that Kijumwa’s background suggests having gone to school. In the Siraji epic he has cited several Quranic chapters. This is another evidence of value for education. Furthermore, Kijumwa was responsible enough to take Helewa to school and that’s why he was equally advising him to replicate the same to his children for moral guidance.

4.4 Humaneness

A morally upright person is said to be humane. Good deeds paint an individual with a good name as they make him/her become much more acceptable. In application of the moral theory, we realized that these good deeds vary from community to community and that’s why Kijumwa enlisted morally acceptable deeds that he demanded that his son considers.

Therefore, Kijumwa advises Helewa (his son) to be as pure and of good deeds as was Helewa’s grandmother (Kamari) who attended to the sick to the extremes of those who had stinking wounds without chasing them away or isolating them in any way.

Some of the good deeds mentioned by the poet are: helping the sick even those with stinking wounds without looking down upon them, helping the needy in the society such as the poor the physically challenged, accepting to sent and rushing where he is sent and bringing back timely feedback, and not extorting much money from a work done. These are part of what Helewa was advised to practice.

“Na uchenenda ndiani, *“And while walking on the way*
 Ukiona masikini, *And come across a poor man*
 Ulo nacho mfukoni, *whatever you have in the pocket*
 Mpe naye ngaa moyaa.” ub.71. *Give them even if just one.” Stanza 71*

4.5 Lust

Kijumwa advises his son, Helewa, to avoid lust and gluttony especially on food; asking for a bigger portion of food and licking fingers after eating. Lust and gluttony are immoral behaviours and therefore a child should be guided against them earlier enough. In reference to the moral theory that guided our research, it is evident that literature should warn the society against social ills that’s why in stanza 88 Kijumwa warns Helewa earlier enough against asking for a bigger pay in a piece of work done as that is evidence gluttony and lust for money which are immoral deeds. Therefore, it is wise that if somebody is employed or working, he/she should attend to the piece of work well without paying much regard to the pay. It is God who rewards human beings for the work done. It is normal nowadays that when somebody looks for an employment with a bigger pay reward so as to accumulate much riches. Therefore, the tenets of moral theory have guided us that we should be midful of others than we put the monetary successes way beyond other important issues.

“Na lingine nimekupa, *“And the other one I give you*
 Uziwite na pupa, *Cast lust away from you*
 Na katiti tena nipa, *The pay you’ve given isn’t worth*
 Usinene vumilia.” ub.60. *Do not say that, just persevere.” Stanza 60*

This counsel by Kijumwa to Helewa against lust and glutton can be applied to any society as most of the people are egocentric and self seeking. There are those who amass much wealth and possess everything as other languish in poverty in the same society. This bad habit is what Kijumwa is vehemently opposed to.

4.6 Generosity

The *Kamusi ya Kiswahili Sanifu* (2004) defines generosity as the act of being openly ready to help those who are needy. That’s having a helping heart. Kijumwa emphasizes to his son that he ought to be generous to friends, neighbours, the sick and all those needy people in the society without isolation or sidelining them. He persuades his son to be helpful to the needy and condole with the bereaved and lend out money to the needy. Offering or ‘zakat’ is one the Islamic pillars. It is the fourth pillar in Islamic religion; and every Muslim at some level of rices is required to give ‘zakat’ to help the needy. As the Holy Quran puts it: “*You should know that everything on earth and in heaven all belong to him*” chapter 45:14. And the Lord further says, “*And if they confess, abide by Prayer and give Offerings then they are your brothers in faith/religion.*” Chapter 9:11

4.7 True Love

The poet advises his son Helewa to love his wife dearly if he marries, to love his children and provide for them. It is a responsibility for every Muslim man to love his wife and brothers and even if the latter insults him he should not hold grudges but rather just forgive them and live the rest to god. Furthermore, he advises Helewa to love every person even it is an animal like a cat as well as to show love to his brothers both young and old; he should smile to them whenever he meets them and that will attract people to him. We have translated this to reflect the tenet espoused by the theory we used, which is ‘every human being has a duty to make the world a better place or haven to stay’. Therefore, the poet emphasizes true love since he understands that it will contribute towards a better relationship among members of the society.

4.8 Patience

Kijumwa advises his son to be patient and persevering as patience pays. He emphasizes that it is important to persevere and that he should not be accustomed to complaining even when life becomes a little bit tougher. He advises him to persevere whatever the situation even if it meant serving a jail term, disease or even death as his blessing will be guaranteed by God.

This advice on patience is presented in the Holy Quran in chapter 2:153-157 which states that it is prudent for every human being to be patient and pray to God whenever he is faced by challenges for God is merciful and he does not abandon his child and the patient are blessed. Here are the stanzas:

“Subiri subira njema, *“Be patient, patience is good*
 Sidumu na kulalama, *Never rest in complains*
 Mwishowe huya malama, *Finally relief comes*
 Ukilalama si dawa.” ub. 58. *Complaining is not the solution”Stanza 58*

4.9 Guarding tongue

Kijumwa advises his son Helewa to be selective on the words he uses and think before uttering them lest he utter words that would ravage people’s situation and steer trouble. He warns him against an abusive tongue for once a word is released it cannot be restanzad. A cut from a panga can heal but an abusive word will always be lingering in the mind of the recipient. It is therefore prudent that one choses words wisely before using them.

“Unenapo mkarami, *“Whenever you utter a word*
 Yateue ya usemi, *Select well your words*
 Majaraha ya ulimi, *If your tongue slips*
 Hupoi yakikuingia.” ub.67. *You’ll regret forever.” Stanza 67.*

4.10 Hardwork

Hardwork means putting more effort in what one does. In reference to the tenet of the theory guiding us in this research that, ‘every human being has a duty to make the world a haven for human stay,’ we note that as a result of hardwork, human beings get happy as hardwork pays. Therefore, the poet finds it significant to work hard in life and avoid overdependence on others as those who depend on others die poor. Kijumwa believes that whoever works hard creates a better name for himself. He seriously warns Helewa against laziness as he will definitely regret his laziness in future. He should attend to his duties efficiently and not hike pay for the work done as in so doing, he will be symbolizing gluttony which instead will deny him God’s blessings. It is therefore important for one to work hard and that will give a shining name.

“Na kazi fanya nadhifu, *“And do your work efficiently*
 Utakuwa maarufu, *That will harness you praises*
 Na ujira wa raufu, *And never ask for much pay*
 Na ukali kutotia.” ub.88. *And never feel bad about it.” Stanza 88*

4.11 Marriage

Marriage is the official union between a man and a woman to stay together with an aim of constructing a family. In stanzas 169-171 Kijumwa advises his son Helewa that when time comes for him to marry, he should a cousin for a mate as that cousin will be morally upright and that he should go for a partner of his status to maintain a higher standard in his name. Furthermore, he reminds his son that it is his duty to make his wife happy in case he marries and to tend to her by taking care of all her basic needs as that is what is expected of any Muslim man.

Therefore, this is sufficient evidence that morality suggested in Kijumwa’s composition is to a higher level hinged on the teachings from Islamic religion. The cardinal message in that advice is that men should chose their marriage partners so us to cultivate further morality in the society and that they ought to take good care of their wives and children for their marriages to happily last. Furthermore, Kijumwa tells his son Helewa that if his wife walks out on him and he decides to go for her, if she insists on staying there or tells him to wait, let him do a honourable thing to wait and should not insist on going back there. We do not however agree with him on this as in such situations people need time to rethink their future before making decisions.

“Kipendi akikimbia, *“If your dear one runs away*
 Uchenda kumwandamia, *And you go for her*
 Akajibu nitakuja, *If she tells you I will come*
 Hayi wata kurejea tena.” Ub.186. *Do not go back there again.” Stanza 186*

5.1 Moral issues in the Adili epic

Adili epic was composed by the reknowned poet Shaaban Robert and it is found in the *Pambo la Lugha* (1966). The epic has 100 stanzas. The *Adili* epic on the other hand was composed by the seasoned poet, Shaaban Robert, and kept in the book *Pambo la Lugha* (1966).

This epic has 100 stanzas. In the epic, Robert advises his son, Adili. He has guided him to live a moral life. He advises him to respect God, be respectful and obedient, respect parents, avoid laziness, avoid backbites, the importance of education, taking care of himself, managing time, perseverance and true love in marriage among others. The issues articulated here are of immense relevance to the society as they warn and guide them as youths in their lives.

5.2 Religion and belief in God

The poet tells his son Adili that it is important to live a god-fearing life and counting on God for everything. Robert in his written works he has espoused most of the things required by the Islamic religious teachings. In his *Utubora Mkulima* (1968) novel, he paints the Adili image that by and large premised on the religion. In his writing, he seems much influenced by Islamic teachings and the belief that God is the sole patriarchy and that whoever believes and trusts in him will not be forsaken but will rather receive blessings. Owing to the death of his mother, Shaaban believes that she never died but rather just slept awaiting the judgment day as he says, "...no, she didn't die and there is nothing that dies for sure..." (1968:62, 63). Therefore, this is evident that Robert was a staunch believer in the Godly presence and that life after death would be characterized by judgment in heaven and a peaceful life thereafter for the righteous. There is the belief that on the judgment day, every person will be rewarded for the good deeds and the unrighteous ones equally punished for the bad deeds that they exhibited while on earth. It is therefore staunch fellowship to religion that persuaded him to show the society the importance of morality. It is clear that Robert believes in the existence of God and that whatever he does is God's plan.

In stanzas 10-19 Robert has described the following features of Almighty God: he is the creator of everything on earth and in heaven, created the stars, rivers and deserts, mountains, seas, air, animals, fish in the sea among others. All these are evidence of God's might unlike an ordinary human being and for this he deserves much respect.

Towards the end of *Adili* epic in stanzas 93-96, Robert asks that the faithful pray for him to God, so that God grants him the desires of his heart. This is what he says:

<p>"Mwombe daima Rabi, Akusamehe madhambi, Mwanadamu ni vumbi, Makosa desturiye." Ub.26.</p>	<p><i>"Always pray to God To forgive your sins Human is just but sand Sin is part of his life." Stanza 26</i></p>
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5.3 Respect to parents and teachers

Robert advises Adili in the epic to respect parents, teachers and all those people above his age and he that he should never despise or look down upon them. He emphasizes that parents are supposed to be loved and given all the best. It is crystal clear that Robert just like Kijumwa hinges his advice on the religious teachings. Here is a stanza:

<p>"Tatu baba na mama, Wataka taadhima, Na kila lilo jema, Ukiweza watendee." Ub 36.</p>	<p><i>"Third, your father and mother They deserve respect And all that is the best If you can do it to them." Stanza 36</i></p>
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Robert emphasizes respect for the teachers who bear a bigger responsibility of getting him out of ignorance and empowering him with education that is a key to a better life. He further advises Adili to build and maintain a good relationship with his teachers for a better guide in life. In the same regard, it is incumbent upon Adili to respect his teachers to harvest blessing from them. Here is the stanza:

<p>"Kadhalika mwalimu, Mkuza yako fahamu, Naye ana sehemu, Heshimayo apewe." Ub.54.</p>	<p><i>"The other one is you teacher Who grows your knowledge He equally has a contribution That deserves your respect." Stanza 54.</i></p>
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Robert therefore, feels that it is better for the issue of respect to be emphasized in the society as it is a very important part of human life. This advice is in tandem with the tenet of the moral theory guiding our research which suggests that, 'a human being has a duty to make the world a better place or a haven for living'.

5.4 Importance of education

Robert tells Adili that education is core to every young man as it opens the doors to life and he should therefore seek it. In the *Adili* epic, he tells his son that education luminates the world and life without education is unworth to any human being as life is extremely hard nowadays. He asks his son Adili to take serious his education so that he can assured of a secure future. Furthermore, education will help him distinguish the good from bad. This is what he says:

“Tano lililo adhimu, *“Fifth most significant*
Ni kujifunza elimu, *Education you should seek*
Ina mwanga maalumu, *Has a special ray of light*
Elimu kwa ‘elewaye.” Ub. 48. *For one who understands it.” Stanza 48*

5.5 Hardwork

Robert is a reknowned poet known for his hardwork. He wrote more than twenty popular books and the popularity of his works is evidence of a hardworking person. In his autobiography, *Maisha Yangu na Baada ya Miaka Hamsini* (1967). In the *Adili* epic, he warns his son against laziness citing that it creates poverty and that he should be efficient at work and that will win him a good name. Here are the stanzas:

“Raha ya uvivu mbaya, *“Laziness is an enemy*
Umaskini huzaa, *It creates poverty*
Acha kuikaribia, *Never try to court it*
Usisikie witowe” ub. 89. *Never listen to it.” Stanzas 89.*

“Kazi yako idhibiti, *“Hold dear you work*
Ipe jicho la dhati, *Handle it efficiently*
Ukitoka katikati, *If you are done with it*
Wa’muzi jina wachie.” Ub. 90. *Judges will praise you.” Stanzas 90*

Furthermore, In the *Hati* epic, Robert advises his daughter to work hard so that she can be able yo fend for herself in life.

5.6 Measuring one’s tongue

Robert advises Adili to put his tongue on check and not to lash out unchecked words whose effect might be to the detriment of the entire society. He should not lash out words that will annoy people. It is therefore incumbent upon Adili to sieve the words coming out of him before releasing them to the public as these words cannot be restanzad after release. This advice is also evidently hinged on the moral theory tenet which states that, ‘human beings have a duty to direct the course of action in life’. Therefore, Robert feels that it is better for Adili to wisely select his words to establish if they are constructive or detrimental. The poet therefore cardinally emphasizes the need for moral uprightness.

In summary, morality message in *Siraji* and *Adili* is appropriate for young men in any society. These epics are thematically related as they both address moral issues among young men from their male parents. From these two compositions, it is evident that both Kijumwa and Robert have a fairer understanding of the moral responsibility bestowed on them by the virtue of being parents and therefore whoever that puts into consideration their parental guidance and counsel will live a happy life in the world. They emphasized the need for their sons to follow the advice and stay away from wrong deeds. These ideas are quite fulfilling and in tandem with the tenet of the moral theory which states that, ‘literature has a duty to foster moral uprightness in the society’.

6.0 Comparing the two epics

6.1 Similar themes in Siraji and Adili

In this subsection we have analysed the moral issues that are similar in both *Siraji* and *Adili* epics. Some of these moral issues include: religion and God, education, love and marriage, hardwok, responsibility, efficeince, respect and discipline, temperance, humaneness, confidentiality, upbringing, cooperation, forgiveness as well as humility.

6.1.1 Religion and belief in God

Kijumwa and Robert have been similar in the way they presented the advice and counsel to their sons about respect to God. Both poets have pleaded with their sons to respect God all the time and trust in him for

everything. They share Islamic background and therefore hinged much of their advice on the Islamic teachings. This therefore gives strength to the views of some of the proponents of the moral theory such as Tolstoy who had suggested that morals be religious. In the *Siraji* epic, Kijumwa made regular reference to Quran in emphasizing the moral advice to his son. At the end of the *Adili* epic, Robert prays to God for happiness, long life and good deeds. In the stanza 96 he asks that people pray for him that he can be of good health and that when he dies he lives happily in the eternal life. This is enough evidence that believes in God as the giver of everything that human beings desire and that there is life after death and that's why he is praying for eternal life.

In a similar fashion to Robert, Mohammad Kijumwa ends the *Siraji* epic by emphasizing to the youth to do all that are Godly desires and that he will bless them if they did that. In stanza 206, he also tells Helewa and others to shine by following the advice he had given him as that is what God will use to reward them. It is thus evident that Kijumwa believes in God rewarding the righteous.

Both Kijumwa and Robert are seemingly similar in the emphasis on the respect and fear of God. Their first pieces of advice to their sons is that respect and fear of God. This is evident in stanza 5 of the *Siraji* epic:

“Kwanda baba mcha mungu, *“First, son, respect God*
 Utaokoka mwanangu, *You’ll never be troubled*
 Huku huko kwa utungu *Wherever there’s trouble*
 Kukosa cha kutimia.” ub.5. *There’s no way you’ll lack.” Stanza 5*
 Similarly, in the *Adili* epic, Robert gives a similar advice to his son, Adili.
 “Kwanza mche Mungu, *“First, respect God*
 Mtengeza ulimwengu, *The creator of earth*
 Juu akaweka mbingu, *Who put heaven up there*
 Nyota zituangazie.” ub. 10. *For stars to shine us.” Stanza 10*

6.1.2 Education

Education is a study system obtained in schools, colleges or provided by the social actors. In regard to the moral theory tenet which states that, ‘a human being has a duty to make the world a better place,’ we have noted that human beings cannot be happy without education as it is an important tool that enables human beings separate the good from bad. Robert advises his son Adili that education is quite important as it it luminates the youth and that life without education is difficult for any being. He therefore pleads with Adili to seek education as that will help him in life.

6.1.3 Love and marriage

Marriage is a union between a man and a woman to live together so as to generate their family while love is that stronger feeling of affection and value for a person beyond what you feel for others. Love is the glue that binds a people who are not related together to live in a consummate union as husband and wife. Both Kijumwa and Robert agree on marriage aspect. Marriage is a very important institution to them and they thus advice their sons to love their wives and children dearly and fend for their basic needs. In the *Siraji* epic this what Kijumwa says:

“Mke wako mpumbaze, *“Make your wife happy*
 Kwa uwezalo mweneze, *Whatever you can give her*
 Na wewe simteleze, *Never you abandon her*
 Nde ukalimatia” ub. 177. *By staying out upto late.” Stanza 177*

As it is for Kijumwa, Robert in stanza 59, 62 and 63 of the *Adili* epic does not hesitate to advise his son to love his wife and children dearly. He advises him to respect his wife like he respects his mother and that he should not scold her unless his wife stirs trouble herself for that wife is a very important person, she has given him children.

6.1.4 Hardwork

Hardwork is the acting of putting much effort in an aspect. To Kijumwa and Robert, hardwork is a very important aspect of life. Both of them addressed themselves to the issue and castigated laziness to a very higher degree.

In the *Siraji* epic, Kijumwa advises Helewa to commit to efficiency at work and work hard to fetch praise and a good name from the people around him. Kijumwa further warns his son against hiking pay or extorting a higher amount of money on the work done. And also advises him to keep his tools safely to avoid losing them through theft. This is what he say in stanza 88:

“Na kazi fanya nadhifu, *“And son work efficiently*
 Utakuwa maarufu, *It will give you prominence*
 Na ujira wa raufu, *And never hike the pay*
 Na ukali kutotia.” *Or quarrel people on it.”*

6.1.5 Responsibility

Responsibility is one of the important moral issues that Kijumwa and Robert emphasized in the *Siraji* and *Adili* epics. In this research we have defined responsibility as the art of being committed to role and duty that is expected of you. For anybody to be responsible they have to attend to their duties efficiently and be a model in the society. The poet’s advice is hinged on the tenet of our moral theory which states that, ‘a human being has a duty to make the world a better place to live’

Kijumwa and Robert are in agreement on the issue of responsibility. They both advise their sons to heed their advices so that they do not regret in future. *Siraji* and *Adili* epics are advice from male parents to the male children – Helewa and Adili. Furthermore, in the *Siraji* epic, Kijumwa reminds Helewa that it is his duty to seek advice from a good friend and follow it. This is what he says:

“Rafiki wako wa kheri, *“And your true friend*
 Akupendao mkiri, *Who likes you accept him*
 Hoyo mtake shauri, *Seek advice from him*
 Uyandame yenye ndia.” ub. 65. *And follow the relevant.” Stanza 65*

The other message to Helewa on wife and children is obtained in stanzas 84 and 118 where he pleads with Helewa to obey the parents’ advice and not to respond badly to them for any reason or annoying them. In the *Adili* epic, Robert similarly advises his son that when he marries, he should love his wife dearly and never fight them unless they start it. This is what he tells Adili in relation to his wife:

“Sita ukioa mke, *“Sixth, if you marry*
 Kwa mapenzi mshike, *Hold her with love*
 Simfanyie makeke, *Never quarrel her*
 Ila akuanze yeye.” ub. 59 *Unless she quarrels you.” Stanza 59*

6.1.6 Keeness

In our opinion, keeness is the art of doing whatever you do in a relaxed mood and efficiently. We are aware that whatever a human being does or says can be good or bad. This keeness advice has been hinged on tenet of moral theory which states that, ‘a human being has a duty to make the world a better place or a haven of stay’. Therefore, a keen being in his activities will avoid ills and annoying others and thus craft a good relationship devoid of wrangles. In so doing, it will bring harmony among the people thus contribute to a happy life. In the *Siraji* and *Adili* epics, the pleaded with their sons to be keen in every thing they attend to.

First, Kijumwa advises his son to keep his tongue on check and wisely chose his words to stay void of wrangles or squabbles; he also advises him to be keen in everything that he does. Furthermore, Kijumwa advises Helewa not to rush in responding to what he is told before thinking about it. He should always take his time to think of it and respond with keeness to stay void of responding to them in unexpected manner to the extent that he loses his respect to people.

“Mtu kikwambia neno, *“If somebody tells you something*
 Sijibu upesi mno, *Never rush in responding*
 Ingawa dakika tano, *Even if it is five minutes*
 Kheri kwanda kusikia.” ub.112. *Take your time to listen.” Stanza 112*

Furthermore, Robert warns Adili to be keen not to get into immoral deeds but rather follow the moral path so as to succeed in life and to live in peace and harmony. This is what he says:

“Njia isiyo adili, *“And the immoral path*
 Iliyo na ukatili, *One that is inhumane*
 Hawendi makubeli, *Is not treaded by the best*
 Nawe usisafiririe.” ub. 83. *And so do not follow it.” Stanza 83.*

6.1.7 Respect and discipline

Both Kijumwa and Robert emphasized the issue of discipline to their children. They ask them to respect God, parents, elderly, and their bosses at work, teachers, the poor and a people in their calibre. This advice is very important as its observance will stay him void of wrangles and conflicts in the society. The advice is a qualification of the tenet of moral theory which suggests that, ‘a human being has a duty to make world a better living place or a haven of stay’. This is what Kijumwa says in the *Siraji* epic:

“Na mkuu mtukuze, *And respect your seniors*
Na mtoto simtweze, *And never despise your juniors*
Kwa maneno wapumbaze, *Give them the best words*
Usifu na kuwetea.” ub. 40. *Praise and defend them.*” Stanza 40.

Kijumwa advises Helewa to be respectful to those who have been demoted at work and should not laugh at them but rather respect them as he did before. Most of the times people lose respect for such people and even laugh them off. Furthermore, he warns his son against despising the physically challenged in a way or the other. It is bad behaviour and that’s why Kijumwa castigates it. This is what he says:

“Ukimwona terema *When you see him bow*
Fanya za kwanza hishima, *Show the first respect*
Wala siteke kiyema, *Never laugh at the disabled*
Mara mungu hukukwetea.” ub.43. *God can give you disability.*” stanza 43

On the other hand, Robert advises Adili to respect God who knows everything that happens and who is able to reward his children. Robert’s advice on God are hinged on religious *Quranic* teachings in chapter 31:11 which states that, “*God has created all these...*” and should thus be respected.

In stanza 46 of the *Adili* epic, Robert advises Adili that he should maintain respect and discipline. We have therefore noted that Robert gives priority to the issue of discipline. This is what he says:

“Ambatana na adabu, *Follow respect and discipline*
Uwe nayo karibu, *Always hold onto it*
Ina mazao ajabu, *It is fruitful, I tell you*
Shika usiache.” ub.46. *Hold onto it, never leave it.*” Stanza 46

6.1.8 Humaneness and its reward

The tenet of moral theory that guided us through analysis of this aspect is that which states that ‘literature has a duty of crafting a morally upright society’. Both Kijumwa and Robert in *Siraji* and *Adili* epics address this aspect of humaneness in a similar manner. They argue that owing to their morally upright living, the entire society will benefit by living in peace and progressing in life as a result of harmonious coexistence.

Kijumwa advises Helewa to be humane as was his grandmother, Kamari, while she was still alive. He described the good deeds such as helping the sick with stinking wounds without isolating them and looking down upon them, the physically challenged, condole with the bereaved, accepting to be sent by others, helping those who are subjected to torture, loaning to those in need, solving problems between bruising people among other good deeds that Kijumwa had mentioned in the epics. Kijumwa advises Helewa that if a poor person approached him for support; it is will honourable for him to try as much as he can to help as that will attract blessings for him. He also advises Helewa to sympathize with the bereaved than visiting those who are in merry. These good deeds are highlighted in the following stanzas 15, 19, 20, 23, 29, 31, 39, 52, 71.

6.1.9 Confidentiality

Both Kijumwa and Robert have touched on the aspect of confidentiality. It is canonical that a person does not reveal much about himself such openly but rather do it to a few people who are supposed to be in the know that’s why Kijumwa warns Helewa against revealing his secrets to people lest an enemy get it. He cannot do that to a trusted person. This is what he says:

“Sifunuwe siri yako, *Never your secret*
Khasa kwa adui yako, *Epecially to your enemy*
Na kwa yeyote ni miko, *And it is taboo to everyone*
Ila mezokusafia” ub. 203 *But rather just to the trusted.*” Stanza 203

Similarly, Robert warns Adili against revealing his secrets openly to the people he does not trust. This is what he says:

“Hadhari usiache, *“Beware not to reveal*
 Siri yako ifiche, *Your secret keep it*
 Ila watu wachache, *But only to a few people*
 Wapasao wajue.” ub. 77 *Who are supposed to know it.” Stanza 77*

6.1.10 Moral upbringing

Upbringing is the manner in which one raises up a child in accordance to the morally set guidelines. It is a way of raising up children in the morally desired manners. Moral upbringing is a responsibility of the family first before the child is taken to school. Every parent has an important duty of growing up their children in a moral way. Both Kijumwa and Robert are model parents on this front as we see them guiding their on how to be morally upright. The advices they give to their sons is in tandem with the tenet of our guiding moral theory which states that, ‘lirature has duty to craft a morally upright society’. It is clearly evident that, both Kijumwa and Robert through their compositions have given a better counsel to their children, despite their sons being raised in the absence of their mothers. Adili had lost his mother through death while Helewa’s mother had separated with Kijumwa.

It is therefore evident that it is a parental responsibility to raise up children in a morally acceptable way whether it is a single parent or both. Both Kijumwa and Robert advised Helewa and Adili how to bring up their children. A part from pleading with Helewa in stanza 47, not to let his school going children to beg in houses, he has also warned him against using abusive language before his children and he should not allow them to abuse each other and fight or beat others as they might get used to doing that in life.

6.1.11 Cooperation and good relationship

Cooperation is the art of joining and helping each other in life. For people to coordinate and cooperate there has to be good relationship and harmony. Both Kijumwa and Robert have emphasized the importance of good relationship and cooperation. In stanza 18 Kijumwa advises Helewa to be friendly to others and seek advice from them. In stanza 19 he further advises him to separate and unite the diasagreeing and fighting individuals in the society.

Kijumwa further advises Helewa to cooperate with others and seek guidance from them even if he gets to a strange place. This therefore shows that he cannot succeed alone in life but cooperate with others. This is what he says:

“Ukiwako ugenini, *“While somewhere strange*
 Ukamuona mwendani, *And come across a person*
 Wa ishifaki amini, *Trust the trustworth*
 Shauri na liwe moya.” ub. 117. *Agree with him.”*

Similarly, Robert advises Adili to build friendly relationships with a people closer to him and love them in order to build a good relationship hence a good name. Good friends will help him drive out the dangerous laziness. Furthermore, he advises Adili to love all the people even those far away from him and foster to listen to those closer to him to the extent that he pulls others to get attracted to him as well. All these are evidence that Shaaban Robert regarded good human relationship and cooperation as very important aspects of life.

6.1.12 Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the act of asking for forgiveness while on the wrong. Asking for forgiveness is a symbol of wisdom in problem conflict that might emanate from a disagreeing people. These epics have laid emphasis on the need for forgiveness as a way of solving problems in the society.

In the *Siraji* epic, the aspect of forgiveness comes out in stanzas 70 and 189 as Kijumwa advises Helewa that whenever he is on the wrong he should seek forgiveness from God. In stanza 189, he further advises Helewa that when his wife leaves him and she finally decides to come back he should be in a rush to feel offended but rather forgive her and accept her back for she’d have learnt her lesson.

This advice is also evident in chapter 49:12 of the Quran which states that, “...*definitely Almighty God accepts and confession of sin and thus forgive the sinner.*” Here is the stanza

“Kurani hutwambia,
Nawe soma hiyo aya,
Toba ukitubia,
Toba Mngu hupokea.” ub.70

*“Quran tells us
And you should read the verse
That if you confess
God will accept your confession.” Stanza 70*

In the *Adili* epic, Robert has also addressed the issue of forgiveness in stanzas 60 and 61. He describes the importance of remorsefulness and asking for forgiveness as it brings happiness to whoever receives it. He further states that in asking for forgiveness one gets relieved as solution to the ills is sought hence avoiding bad blood hence peace between the people involved. Here is the stanza:

“Hata hivyo ukiweza,
Samahani kufanyiza,
Faida itafuliza,
Kiwajia yeye na nawe.” ub. 60.

*“And if possible
To ask for forgiveness
It is a healthy move
For both of you.” Stanza 60*

6.1.13 Humility

Both Kijumwa and Robert emphasized the need for youths to be humble and not to be carried by pride. Kijumwa says that there’s no need for anybody to boast of anything for all that he gets is from God and that it is not by his own design. Look at this stanza here:

“Usiiyone mwenyewe,
Kama hakuna kamawe,
Ujuba na upunguwe,
Na kiburi kuitia.” ub. 89.

*“Do not be boasty
That you are mighty
Such should be in you
And pride be in you.”*

In stanza 183, Kijumwa warns Helewa against boasting. He tells Helewa that boasting can stir trouble in his life. He should be humble to God and God will raise him. This is what he says:

“Ukipendwa mtu wewe,
Fahamu siishauwe,
Kuisahau mwishowe,
Maovu hukudhulia.” ub 183.

*“If people like you
Do not boast about it
You might forget yourself
And submerge in the wrong.” Stanza 183*

Similarly, in stanza 87 Robert warns Adili against pride in himself and considering others useless. No one is supposed to praise himself but be praised by others. It is therefore clear that both poets do not see the need for pride and self seeking but instead ask people to be humble and thank God for whatever they have.

“Ukidai kuwa bora,
Jua watiwa fora,
Hajipi sifa bora,
Mtu ila apewe.” ub. 87.

*“If you think you are the best
It might be insincere
You can’t praise yourself
Better be praised.” Stanza 87*

6.1.14 Perseverance

Perserverence is the state of being able to withstand tough life conditions. This state helps a lot and therefore it is important that human beings understand some life conditions really call on perseverance and things will not always make them happy. So they should be equally prepared for tougher conditions such as bereavement and trouble. This advice is in tandem with tenet of moral theory which states that, ‘a human being has a duty to make the world a better place/ haven for stay’. Therefore, inspite of the challenging moments that human beings encounter in life they have an obligation to strategise on how to handle them.

In stanza 97, Kijumwa advises Helewa to persevere if he is faced by challenges or anything that imbalances his emotions. He warns him against temperance as an angry person cannot control his emotions and can thus land himself in trouble and regret later. It is therefore important that he strives to persevere in all the situations he comes across. This is what he says:

“Mambo yakikuzingia,
Nyumbani huna rupia,
Wata hasira kungia,
Na zitunu kuzitia.” ub. 97.

*“And if you are challenged
You are broke at home
Do not be irritated
It is bad to be.” Stanza 97*

Robert in the *Adili* epic advises Adili that when he is angry it is prudent to act dumb for out of anger he might utter words words that might stir trouble among his colleagues there.

In summary, we have noted that much of the moral issues that Kijumwa na Robert discussed in the two epics are similar. The two poets have demonstrated the significance of paying attention to the various moral issues and the ills likely to be accrued such as conflicts that hinder peace.

7.0 Reasons for thematic similarities in Kijumwa and Robert's moral guidance to boychild

One of the reasons for thematic mergers between these two poets – Kijumwa and Robert – is their Islamic religious background. Therefore, the counsel and moral guidance that they gave was hinged on religious teachings drawn from the Quran – a holy book that followers of Islamic religion base onto for moral guidance. The similarities in these two epics – *Siraji* and *Adili* – are borne of the poets' religious backgrounds.

The advices given by Kijumwa and Robert are in tandem with the propositions of both Plato and Tolstoy who said that 'literature has a duty to guide the society morally and the morals must be hinged on religion'. We noted that both *Siraji* and *Adili* epics emphasize positive behaviours and most of their verses have a religious backing.

Kijumwa and Robert begin with emphasis on God first in these compositions. That in itself implies that if God is put first before everything, all that follows will be easy. The moral of religion is to enable one live a morally acceptable life by counting on heavenly blessings after death. Both Kijumwa and Robert believe in life after death that's why they emphasize to their sons to be guided by acceptable morally upright behaviours in the family and the society at the large for mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence when in in contact with others for a better life after death in heaven.

8.1 Conclusion

This paper has enabled us conclude that both Kijumwa and Robert addressed moral issues relating to the boychild in these epics where they have guided them on how live well. Data generated from this paper has revealed that these two epics, *Siraji* and *Adili*, are thematically related as both of them are counsel to male youth and that the moral counsel given is hinged on the Islamic religious teachings. At the same time, the paper has discovered that the poets have a commonality in the sense in which they have addressed the underlying moral issues related to the male youth for they were highly guided by religion in advancing the thoughts. Furthermore, these epics are a counsel by a father to his male child therefore there is thematic commonality. Religious background had a greater contribution into this commonality as much of what they have advanced is based on Quran. On the other hand, we have also established that some of the moral issues addressed by both Kijumwa and Robert have had points of departure. The main reason for these differences is attributable to environmental exposure and varied life experiences depending on the environment in which they grew.

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