Abstract
Studies of power and gender identity form part of the dominant discourses of various scholars such as Judith Butler, Julia Kristeva, Margaret Hall, Michel Foucault, and Gloria Anzaldua who have explored the concepts of power and gender identity at various levels and contexts. This paper, while contending that gender is one of the most important components of social identity and cultural classification across human cultures, investigates how the politics of gender identity intersects with power in the Kenyan society. To do this, we examine two selected Kenyan plays: Francis Imbuga’s Aminata and Dennis Kyallo’s The Hunter is Back. The study perceives gender as a multi-layered structure in which the perpetuation and re-creation of gender concepts, social divisions and individual identities take place and are in a continuum of struggle. In this regard, we explore how the gendered self (re)configures her position in society as portrayed in the selected texts. Anchored within a multiple complementary theoretical framework in interrogating the nexus between power and gender, the paper argues that the gendered self is in a constant struggle for space within her socio-cultural context. Conscious of the inferior position and roles assigned to her by societal structures, the woman, as the gendered self, confronts socio-cultural practices, politics, and agency among others in an attempt to re-create her own space. Ultimately, these actions (re)define and (re)configure the woman in echelons of power and authority and enable her to participate actively in public spaces. This paper proffers new insights in exploring the representation of power and the gendered self in society through creative works of art in Kenya.

Keywords: Power, Gender, Identities, Gendered Self and (Re)configuration