

Reviewer: 1

There are several repetitions of what the author wants to do throughout the paper, it tends to be counterproductive.

I have deleted repetition of what the paper seeks to do and other recaps on pp.5, 6, 8, 11

Grammatical errors, typos and long sentences need to be broken down for clarity. e.g. "

Following from this exogamous marriage arrangement, women's identities are ambiguous, as they belong fully to neither the natal nor the marital families, and this position, I argue, is central to the making of women's subordinate position in the marriage space and within Dagaaba settlements more generally. There long sentences, reduces the clarity of the paper. The sentence structures are complex so it makes the reading difficult. Attention to structure is needed. Needs to improve on the use of connecting words.

I have amended all of those grammatical errors that I noticed upon careful reading.

I have also broken the sentence stated above and similar long ones into two to make them clearer (see pp. 1, 4, 5, 11).

I have reviewed the article, and unfortunately cannot identify any typographical mistakes.

Avoid repetitive and redundant words like 'Although'.

I have reviewed the usage of the conjunction 'although' in the article and unfortunately cannot identify what the reviewer is referring to as redundant. This is because in all cases, it has been used to link ideas that contrast.

Reviewer: 2

Comments to the Author

There are two specific aspects of the paper that I would like to engage in this review. The first concerns the idea of "cultural translation" of theory. The second is the balance between theoretical debates and empirical evidence. I will discuss this second issue first. In general, I would have liked to learn more about the lives of the women that participated in the study ('get to know them'), the experiences and conversations the researcher had with them, and the ways in which women themselves negotiate and contest patriarchy and oppression in their daily realities. What are women's issues in Dagaaba and how are these issues gendered?

I have included a few more sentences on pp.11 and 12 to address the reviewer's concern with details on the research participants. Specifically, I have fleshed out their educational and religious characteristics in addition to the nature of subsistence economic activities they engage with. Additionally, on pp. 13 and 14 I have discussed the women's experiences and the way in which, as well as the kinds of issues, we had conversations on.

On the second part regarding how the women negotiate and contest patriarchy and oppression, I explore these issues in depth in other articles.

At several points in the paper the author refers implicitly to factors like religion, class and spirituality affecting women's concepts of gender. For example, on page 10 the author refers to "the inherently mystical setting of the Dagaaba", but in the rest of the paper we do not learn what this setting means or how these factors shape gendered identities. What is the historical context of Christianity and ancestral belief systems in this place?

On pp. 3 and 4 I have addressed this issue by examining the place of religion and the dominant influence of supernatural power forms despite the introduction of Christianity in the Dagaaba settlements since 1929 (see also pp. 11 and 12).

Instead of comparing Dagaaba constructions of gender identities with those of elite women in Ghana (p16) or women in other research projects, more emphasis could be placed on understanding the women in their own context.

Thank you for bringing this to my attention. The writer I cite, Andrea Behrends, is the only existing written source on the concept of the *pogminga* and because of this I deem it necessary to draw attention to this concept in her article. The section following this on p. 19 focuses on the way in which women in Serepkere understand and appropriate the concept of the *pogminga*.

Who are the marginalised women mentioned on page 16? How do they perform gender in the village?

I have addressed this on pp. 2 and 3.

And can the author provide examples of women stigmatised as *pog gandao*, what are their experiences? What are the consequences of these markers in daily life? Especially the concept of *pog gandao* is introduced far into the paper (p22) and its meanings seem not fully explored. By delving deeper into the worlds and words of the women themselves, their agency would become more apparent in the context of subordination in the marriage space.

Thank you very much for bringing this to my attention. I have added a few more sentences to the introduction on p.3 to address this. But the *pog gandao* concept and the way in which this stigmatising interpellation serves to marginalise women, as well as the potential to exploit it as a site for empowering women in the Dagaaba context have been explored in another article.

The author's idea to present a "cultural translation" of Butler's gender performativity theory is linked to the claim to decolonise this Western theory. It would be helpful if the author could discuss what decolonising theory is exactly, and how it is different from applying or using a theory in a different context. Does pointing out that things work different in different contexts automatically result in decolonising thinking? I suspect this is not what the article is supposed to do. I think decolonialising academic theory is fundamentally about power dynamics in the academic knowledge generation process and the positionality of researchers (were there any specific assumptions in Western theory about African women for example that prompted the author to choose this field of study?). I feel that the article presents an interesting and clear presentation of Dagaaba notions of gender through the lens of Butler's performativity, and that there is far more explanation needed to convince the reader that this kind of application decolonises Western theory. For example, the point is made repeatedly that Butler focuses in her analysis on physical appearance and bodily gestures and that in Dagaaba women are judged or evaluated more by their performance of tasks. This observation does not decolonise or translate the theory, it can easily be explained by a difference in context and the theory still holds, right?

Thank you for this useful observation. I have thought through this and have decided to omit references to decolonising theory (see pp. 2-3 and 27).

In relation to cultural translation, I have added a few sentences on pp.2-3. Also, as the theories of gender performativity are founded and based on practices and assumptions that are relevant to specific, western, contexts, translation is one way in which they can apply to rural non-western settings such as those of the Dagaaba without 'a colonial and expansionist logic' as Butler (2000:35) notes. Indeed, it is in recognition of these differences in contexts and the fact that they may authorise different performative practices that Butler herself entreats her interlocutors to participate in this translation endeavor (see Preface to *Gender Trouble* 1999. See also Butler, 2000, especially p. 35).