

Research Article

# A Linguistic Study of Women's Hairstyle Names

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## Abstract

The main focus of the study was to investigate on women's hairstyle names in Kinondoni Municipal Council, which is found in Dar es Salaam region, Tanzania. This paper focuses on two specific objectives, namely to identify women's hairstyle names and to find out the structural patterns of women's hairstyle names. The study is a qualitative study guided by onomastic theory of naming and morpheme-based theory. The study employed descriptive research designs. Semi-structured interview and observation methods were used to collect data, where 16 respondents who were obtained through snowball and convenience sampling techniques. The findings reveal that, women's hairstyles have meanings which are either denotative or connotative or both. They are derived from different sources such as insects, number, appearance, parts of human body, animal body parts, flora, insecticides, land forms, social events and names of famous people. Therefore, women's hairstyle names in Kinondoni are deliberately created, not accidentally constructed. Moreover, women's hairstyle names in Kinondoni Municipality possess morphological and syntactic patterns. Under morphological structure, women's hairstyle names are in free morphemes, affixation, compounding and reduplication. Syntactically, women's hairstyle names have noun phrases and sentential structures. In relation to the data from the field, the paper concludes that there is no rigidity on women's hairstyle names compared to other kinds of names such as personal names. This is because women's hairstyle names are replaced or used interchangeably with other hairstyle names which mean the same.

## Keywords

Hairstyle, Women's Hairstyles, Name Giver, Rasta, Plaiting Thread, Morphological Patterns, Syntactic Patterns

## 1. Introduction

This paper sets out to investigate the meanings and structural patterns of women's hairstyle names in Kinondoni Municipal Council. The practice of naming things is deeply ingrained in human history and extends to encompass the contemporary cultural systems, such as the intricate world of women's hairstyles which serves as the primary focus of this research. Agyekum expresses that names are not randomly selected but socio-cultural phenomena that have social functions and meanings [1]. Additionally, Jenjekwa says that the study of names provides critical insights into the cultural life of the

name giver [11]. Therefore, names are very crucial in identification of a referent. Since names are useful in every society regardless of cultural differences, different studies [12, 25] have been conducted in names reveal that names have meanings which are derived from various sources like events, landscape or function an entity refers to. For instance, Kabaso expresses that there are some Ng'umbo nick names in Zimbabwe associated with anger like *Mupangabantu* 'short tempered impatient person who chases people' ([12] p.140). Apart from having meanings names also are of different structural forms, others

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Received: 31 January 2024; Accepted: 20 February 2024; Published: 7 March 2024



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undergo some morphological processes and others have syntactic forms. Schlucker and Ackermann say that there is morphosyntax of names [25]. Morpho-syntactically, names may be simple such as Paul, France or complex in different ways, for example Betty Miller, Great Britain, The White House (p.5). This paper indicates the meanings and structural patterns of women's hairstyle names in Kinondoni Municipality.

## 2. Background and Literature Review

A name in its simplest form is a linguistic signifier for a specific entity in the world. Kripke articulates that a name is a word or cluster of words that bestows identity upon a place, person or thing [14]. Similarly, Raper observes that names are indistinct in that they differentiate entities [24]. Names play a fundamental role in our daily interactions, enabling rapid and unambiguous communication while also aiding in the identification of referents.

While the significance of names remains universal, various studies [2, 10, 23, 26] have explored the diverse aspects of naming. They reveal that names have meanings which can be derived from various sources. Helleland indicates that there is a close relationship between places and place names [10]. For instance, place names in Norway link with the past which make them meaningful. Names like *Legene* 'the place where the cattle used to rest', and *Ullensvang* 'the farm on which the Parish church was built' are among the place names that have association with the past. This indicates that, like other names, place names carry a lot of information rather than identity only.

In addition to that, Ramaeba comments that some personal names in Scotland have meanings while others do not have meanings at all [23]. He adds that in Scotland, parents give a name to a new baby with different influences, one of them being occupation. For example, names such as *Alice* 'noble', *Henry* 'powerful ruler', *Gavin* 'hawk' and *Alasdair/Alistair* 'warrior' have meanings which have a relationship with occupation or position an individual have in the society.

Moreover, Alasli reveals that place names in Morocco do not just express identity but also, they hold meanings [2]. Names are influenced by Moroccan socio-cultural context from specific localities. Some Moroccan place names with meanings that associate with socio-cultural context include *Tamara* 'hardship' and *Sala* 'finished/over'. Therefore, in Morocco, names are not the only entities used to identify a particular place, they also express realities that exist within a particular society. Furthermore, Schotsman and Bryceson discovered that place names carry meanings and are influenced by various factors including specific activities or occupations taking place in a given area [26]. For instance, names like *Bucha* 'butcher', *Magengeni* 'vendor stalls', *Gereji* 'garage' and *Samaki Wabichi* 'raw fish' (p.30) were derived from the work or activities taking place in a particular area. Generally, studies on naming practices indicate that names have meanings which are derived from various sources.

On the other hand, names of all kinds contain various forms

as supported by Schlucker and Ackermann who are of the view that both language specific and cross-linguistic names are in different forms which are either simple or complex [25]. Moreover, Batoma adds that to a greater extent, in all languages, the morphology, syntax and semantics inform the meaning of names [4]. Scholars [3, 6, 15, 22, 27] have played a great role in identifying various forms of names. They express how names are formed at morphological and syntactic level.

Compounding is a word formation process where words or stems are combined [9]. Two or more lexical items are combined to form a new word. This is rightly explained by Sockčevićová who reveals that plant names come in various compound structures [27]. Some plant names are made up of adverb + adjective 'evergreen', noun + adjectives 'one-flowered' or verb + adjective 'livelong'. These diverse structural forms give plant names a rich semantics.

Apart from that, other names are formed through affixation, a morphological process where bound morphemes are attached to word base to form new words [28]. Here, affixes are attached to the root which carries the core meaning of the word to form a new word. Anindo expresses that Lulogooli place names are formed by both inflection and derivation processes [3]. One of the place names which undergoes derivation process is *Kivagala* (N) which is derived from *vagala* (V) 'to spread out' and prefix 'ki-'. The name *Kivagala* refers to the process of spreading out of things in the sun to dry. So, the word is changed from *vagala* (V) to *Kivagala* (N). *Chavakali* (N) is formed through inflection process. It is formed from inflection of *mukali* (N) 'wife' which changes into plural *vakali* (N) 'wives' and attaches to the possessive maker *cha-*, which changes the word form but the meaning and word class remain the same, *mukali* (N) is singular and *vakali* (N) is plural.

Reduplication is a word formation process where the root, stem of a word or part of it is repeated [21]. Therefore, reduplication is a repetition of a word or part of it which results into formation of a new word. Some names are formed through total reduplication where a whole word is repeated or partial reduplication where part of the word is repeated. This is proved in Vidunda, a Bantu language spoken in Tanzania through plant names as indicated by Legère who expresses that some plant names are made up of reduplication [15]. For instance, plant names *Chihakahaka* from *-haka* 'cause' and *Chisakasaka* from *-saka* 'search' are the result of total reduplication of the stems whereas *Imemena* from *-memena* 'swallow' and *Igagawi* from *-gagawa* 'move around in an arrogant way' are the results of partial reduplication. To complement that, Owu-ewie et al. argue that some Akan personal names are formed through total reduplication [22]. For example, *bu* 'break' becomes *Bubu* 'break several times', *nsu* 'water' becomes *Nsunsu* 'watery' and *abo* 'rocky' becomes *Aboabo* 'very rocky'.

Names also undergo syntactic processes where some are in phrasal and sentential structure. Caesar says that syntactically, Dangme allusive names have phrasal structure because they have specified word class elements incorporated in them such

as verbs, adjectives, adverbs, postpositions and conjunctions [6]. Names such as *Ahuno*, and *Sikayo* functions as noun phrase as seen in examples 1.

Phrasal Allusive Names

1 a) *A huno*→*Ahuno*

3PL.POSS NP

Their husband'

b) *Sika yo*→*Sikayo*

NP NP

Money female

'A rich woman'

Source: ([6], p. 69)

At sentence level, Owu-ewie et al. argue that some Akan personal names are sentences that function as declaratives, imperatives or interrogatives as in examples 2 which express Akan sentential personal names which function as declarative sentences [22].

2 a) *Menyindawodo* Me enyi nnda wo do

(Me enyi nnda wo do) my eye (NEG) lie you on (I do not depend on you)

PRO N(subj) V PRO (OBJ) post

b) *Kafodzidzi* kafo dzi dzi

(Kafo dzi dzi) debtor eat eat (Debtor eats)

Source: ([22], p. 39)

Apart from that, women's hairstyles are among the things that are given names which are the main target of this study. Hairstyles are things that are available in reality and we expect them to have names. Developed from African point of view, hairstyle is a type of hair arrangement taken as mode of African art since ancient times [17]. This indicates and proves that the issue of hairstyle naming is not new to Africa as it started since ancient times, even before the contact between African continent and the outsiders. Matshego explains that up to 15<sup>th</sup> century, different tribes in Africa had the chances to socialise while styling each other's hair and this is verified from Himba tribe which is found in the North-Western region of Namibia where hairstyle indicates individual's age, life stage and marital status, and women use a combination of ground ochre, hair of goats, and butter to create their dreadlocks [20]. This makes hairstyles different from one person to another based on the status of an individual in the society.

Therefore, names do not only identify a person, thing or place but also give varieties of information including events, beliefs and memory which make them to have meanings. Also, names are characterised by varieties of structural patterns, some undergo morphological processes such as affixation, compounding and reduplication while others carry syntactic structure as they are in phrase and sentence structure.

### 3. Methodology

The study is qualitative because the study is socio-cultural hence it required peoples' illustrations based on their knowledge and experience in identifying and providing the names and the meanings of women's hairstyle names in Ki-

nondoni Municipality. The study employed descriptive research design which enabled the study get the primary data which were obtained direct from the respondents in describing women's hairstyles. Semi-structured interview and observation methods were used in data collection so as to collect the data in its natural environment together with the appearance of a particular hairstyle. The study involved 16 respondents (hair plaiters) who were obtained through snowball and convenience sampling techniques, as they were the ones familiar with different hairstyle names and their meanings. The data were analysed thematically based on the study objectives. Pictures used in the study were taken directly from the respondents and others were obtained from different links which were provided by the respondents during interview as hair plaiters had their blogs where they kept the pictures for their business.

## 4. Findings and Discussion

From the field, different women's hairstyle names were found to be used in Kinondoni Municipality, categorised in hair braiding/plaiting, haircuts and hair clasping. The names have either denotative meaning only or both denotative and connotative meanings derived from different sources. Additionally, women's hairstyles also are of various structural patterns, particularly morphologically and syntactically.

### 4.1. Denotative Meanings of Women's Hairstyle Names

According to Lyons denotative meaning is the relationship that holds between lexeme and place, thing, person, properties, processes and activities external to the language system [18]. In other words, denotative meaning refers to the literal meaning of an entity. Denotative meanings of women's hairstyle names were derived from different sources.

#### 4.1.1. Hairstyle Names Referring to Insects

*Vinzi* 'collection of small flies' and *majongoo* 'millipedes' are women's hair braiding style names which were derived from insects to which they are assimilated. These hairstyles look like the insects (flies and millipedes) which also were found to Kinondoni Municipality and other parts of Tanzania especially during rainy season (see Figure 1).





Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 1. Vinzi and majongoo.

#### 4.1.2. Hairstyle Names Derived from Parts of Human Body

In this study, there was only one hairstyle whose meaning is derived from part of human body *jicho* ‘eye’, that is, *jicho la mkemwenza* ‘co-wife’s eye’. *Jicho la mkemwenza* refers to the way co-wives look at one another; the look that carries a misunderstanding or hatred between themselves. This happened mostly when they either meet or live together in the same environment, plaited using one’s natural hair without extension (see Figure 2).



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 2. Jicho la mke mwenza.

#### 4.1.3. Hairstyle Name Derived from an Animal’s Body Parts



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 3. Mkia wa farasi.

*Mkia wa farasi* ‘horse’s tail’ is hair clasping style that re-

semble a horse’s tail in shape. It was bestowed by name givers just because the style is somehow long and soft just like the tail of the horse. This is supported by Buberwa who states that some Kiswahili personal names have meanings that were derived from animals which were found in a particular society [5]. The style is clasped by adding rasta to hair so that it can be seen as long as a horse’s tail (see Figure 3) as most of African women’s natural hair are not long enough to make the look of the horse’s tail on their own.

#### 4.1.4. Hairstyle Names Derived from Flora

Four hairstyle names were referring to flora such as vegetable, fruits and onions. The hairstyle names included *mchicha*, *nanasi*, *vitunguu vya rasta* and *vitunguu vya uzi*. *Mchicha* ‘amaranth’ is among the vegetables which are cultivated by individuals and used as food by people of Kinondoni and in other places out of Kinondoni Municipality. The name and meaning of that hairstyle is derived from that kind of vegetable as the hairstyle itself takes a shape of a bunch of amaranths. This hairstyle is done to someone with long hair enough to make a look of amaranth bunch as there is no extension that is added to one’s natural hair (see Figure 4).



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 4. Mchicha.

The hair braiding style *nanasi* ‘pineapple’ is also among the women’s hairstyle names referring to flora. The hairstyle’s looks like a pineapple, the resemblance of this hairstyle with the fruit called *nanasi* ‘pineapple’ influences the name givers to bestow this name to that hairstyle hence its meaning (see Figure 5).



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 5. Nanasi.

Furthermore, the hairstyle name *vitunguu vya rasta* ‘rasta’s onion’s stalk’ is derived from flora. The hairstyle names bestowed by name givers took into consideration of the flora which, in this case, are onions’ stalks (see [Figure 6](#)). The hairstyle is plaited by combining hair and rasta. The look of this hairstyle, with that of onions’ stalk from its bulb to leaves, influenced name givers to bestow that hairstyle name. On the other hand, the hairstyle *vitunguu vya uzi* ‘rasta’s onions stalk’ resembles with the look of onion’s stalks (see [Figure 6](#)), plaited by combining hair and thread. The main difference between *vitunguu vya rasta* and *vitunguu vya uzi* is influenced by the materials used to plait a particular hairstyle. *Vitunguu vya rasta* is plaited by combining hair and rasta while *vitunguu vya uzi* is plaited by combining hair and thread.



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 6.** *Vitunguu vya uzi* and *vitunguu vya rasta*.

#### 4.1.5. Hairstyle Names Associated with Birds

*Mdomo wa bata* ‘duck’s beak’ is hair braiding style name which is derived from the bird ‘duck’ domesticated by people in the society with regard to the shape of the mouth of that particular bird (see [Figure 7](#)) hence its meaning. It is plaited using someone’s hair without an extension. The views are supported by Elias et al. on village names with the notion that some village names were derived from birds which were found in the area [8].



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 7.** *Mdomo wa bata*.

#### 4.1.6. Hairstyle Names Relating to Natural Features

*Kilimanjaro* ‘Mount Kilimanjaro’ is hair braiding style in which its meaning is connected to land form, namely Mount Kilimanjaro. As seen on [Figure 8](#), it is plaited from the forehead upward to the centre of the head like a mountain raises from the bottom to the peak hence its meaning. It is plaited without any extension. Though this tallest mountain is not found in Kinondoni district, the name givers bestowed the hairstyle in that way so as to reserve and honour the name of this unique and highest mountain in Africa which is found in Tanzania. This is in line with Schotsman and Bryceson who express that, some place names in Dar es Salaam relate to the topography found in an area [26].



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 8.** *Kilimanjaro*.

#### 4.1.7. Hairstyle Names Referring to Insecticide

The hair braiding style *dawa ya mbu* ‘mosquito coil’ is derived from the insecticide used by people in the society to kill mosquitoes which cause malaria. *Dawa ya mbu* ‘mosquito coil’ was used to kill insects particularly mosquitoes which cause malaria. So, the resemblance of that hairstyle with that insecticide influenced name givers to bestow that name hence its meaning (see [Figure 9](#)).



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 9.** *Dawa ya mbu*.

#### 4.1.8. Hairstyle Names Referring to Social Events

The hair braiding style *twende kilioni* ‘let us go to the mourning place’ is derived from an event which take place in

the society. This is a simple braid with cornrows of braids lying from the forehead to the back. They range from five to seven rows depending on the length of the hair (see Figure 10). It was applied to women especially when a member of the society passed away, not in joyful events. This is in line with Letsoela who argues that some Sesotho place names are awarded in relation to events which happen within a society [16].



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 10. Twende kilioni.

#### 4.1.9. Hairstyle Name Depending on Number of Cornrows

The hair braiding style *tatu kichwa* ‘three per head’ named so because only three cornrows were plaited to a customer with long hair enough to produce three cornrows without of an extension, (see Figure 11). This means that the number of cornrows in this case ‘three’ influence the name givers to bestow that name on the hairstyle hence its meaning. This is supported by Buberwa expresses that some Kiswahili personal names reflect the order in which the children were born such as one, second or three [5].



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 11. Tatu kichwa.

#### 4.1.10. Hairstyle Names Derived from Other Sources

This section focuses on hair style names derived from their appearance, from the names of people, and those from other languages apart from Kiswahili.

Firstly, there are hairstyle names derived from the appearance. *Utumbo wa rasta* ‘rasta’s intestine’ is bestowed because of its appearance as the style looks like the intestines where

hair and rasta are twisted together to produce the look of an intestine (see Figure 12). The material used and the outlook of that particular hairstyle after being plaited influence name givers to bestow this name hence its meaning. Additionally, *Utumbo wa uzi* ‘thread’s intestine’ is hair braiding style which is plaited by twisting together hair and plaiting thread which produce the shape of an intestine hence its meaning. Though they seem alike (see Figure 12), the two hairstyles *utumbo wa rasta* and *utumbo wa uzi* differ in the materials used to plait them, *utumbo wa rasta* is plaited by hair and rasta while *utumbo wa uzi* combines hair and thread.



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 12. Utumbo wa rasta and utumbo wa uzi.

Moreover, *Ngata/nzinga* ‘bun’ is hair clasping style where by the braided hairs with rasta or thread were grouped and tightened together into a round shape like that of bun at the middle or back of the head (see Figure 13). The name was derived from the piece of cloth called *ngata/ Nzinga* which was tighten in round shape put on head by women when carrying a bucket of water, luggage or firewood on their head. The appearance of this piece of cloth influenced name givers to give the name and meaning of this hairstyle.



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 13. Ngata/nzinga.

*Kidoti* is another hair clasping style which refers to a small bun. The hair in this style is grouped together and tied at the middle of the head like a small bun. In this hairstyle only one's hair is tied up and grouped together, not a plaited one (see [Figure 14](#)). The appearance of that hairstyle is like that of a small bun directly influences its name and meaning.



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 14.** *Kidoti*.

The hairstyle *shombeshombe* 'half cast' is named so because of its resemblance of half cast's hair (see [Figure 17](#)). The name of this hairstyle was taken from the idea that, when two different races come together, they produce what is called half cast or mulatto. Just like half cast's hair, the hairstyle combines two different hairstyles one of which must have a look of half cast's hair, hence that name and its meaning.



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 17.** *Shombeshombe*.



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 15.** *Zigizaga*.

*Zigizaga* 'zigzag' is hair braiding where the cornrows are not straight lined up but plaited on alternating row turns to the left and right in attractive way using hair only or sometimes plaited with extension. The appearance of this hairstyle is zigzag, hence influence the name givers to bestow that kind of hairstyle name and the meaning as well.

Additionally, the hairstyle *zipu* which means zipper is bestowed in relation to zipper simply because the hairstyle resembles with zipper. Back to this hairstyle, it is plaited to look like a zipper (see [Figure 16](#)) which directly influenced name givers to bestow that name on the same, hence, its meaning.

*Yebo kilimanjaro* 'high like a mountain' is hair braiding style plaited by combining two styles which are yebo 'from thin to thick' and Kilimanjaro 'Mount Kilimanjaro' by combining both hair and rasta. The appearance of this hairstyle as it is plaited from the forehead upward to the middle of the head resemble with the way Mount Kilimanjaro is climbed from the bottom to the peak (see [Figure 18](#)), which influences the name givers to bestow that name with its meaning. A thing to note here is that though *yebo kilimanjaro* (refer [Figure 18](#)) and *kilimanjaro* (refer [Figure 8](#)) looks alike, as they appear high like a mountain, the difference is in plaiting materials, *yebo kilimanjaro* is plaited by combining hair and rasta while *kilimanjaro* is plaited without extension.



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 18.** *Yebo kilimanjaro*.



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 16.** *Zipu*.

Furthermore, *Mkeka* 'mat' resembles with a woven mat, plaited with extension (see [Figure 19](#)). A woven mat is a domestic tool that is created by weaving, decorated with different colours and used for gathering, sleeping, plaiting activities preparing food, and storing. The name givers bestow *mkeka* towards that hairstyle as its appearance looks like that of a mat, hence, its meaning.



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 19. Mkeka.



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 20. Yebo mkasi.

*Yebo mkasi* ‘yeboyebo of scissor’s sign’ is hair braiding style which is plaited by combining two braiding types which are *yebo* ‘from thin to thick’ and *mkasi* ‘scissor’. The hair plaiters combine hair and rasta creatively to plait *yeboyebo*, then adding some braids having an appearance of scissors’ sign (see Figure 20) in such a way that it attracts the name givers to bestow that particular hairstyle name by relating it with a scissor directly.

*Yebo eksi* refers to *yeboyebo* of X’s sign. The hair braiding style is plaited by combining two braiding types, one is *yeboyebo* ‘from thin to thick’ and the other is X braiding shape. The Signs of X which are creatively plaited and arranged between the cornrows in a way that they are easily noticed and attractive, influenced the name givers to bestow that name, hence, its meaning as in Figure 21.



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 21. Yebo eksi.

Additionally, *Yebo kopa* means *yeboyebo* of love sign in shape. The hairstyle plaited in *yeboyebo* style ‘from thin to thick’ with *kopa* ‘love sign’ in it by combining hair and rasta

in *yeboyebo* style and the hair plaiter finds a space among the cornrows to plait a love sign called *kopa* using rasta and hair in a creative way in such a way that it is easily seen and identified by anyone who sees that hairstyle, hence, its name and meaning (see Figure 22).



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 22. Yebo kopa.

*Mbenjuo* ‘pulled-up’ hair braiding style in which hair is pulled up on one side of the row towards the head when plaited without an extension (see Figure 23). The act of pulling up hair in either side of the head is called *benjua* ‘pull up’ hence the name and meaning of that hairstyle is derived from it.



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 23. Mbenjuo.

The name *vipipi* ‘small sweets’ is hair braiding style which is named that way as the appearance of this hairstyle resemble small sweets in shape, plaited with extension. The way this hairstyle resembles with small sweets which are covered in their own papers influences its name and meaning (see Figure 24).



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 24. Vipipi.



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 25.** *Mwiba wa samaki*.

Moreover, *Mwiba wa samaki* ‘fish’s spine’ is hair braiding style which resemble with fish’s spine, and this influences the individuals to bestow this hairstyle name (see [Figure 25](#)). In addition to that, this hair braiding style is plaited by starting with small and short cornrows in two sides which are in fish’s rib like appearance, and then these small cornrows are joined using rasta to produce a vertebra spine like appearance.

Furthermore, *yebo achia* ‘yeboyebo of leaving some hair’ is plaited in *yeboyebo* style ‘from thin to thick’ leaving some rasta aside when plaiting as a way of decorating that hairstyle (see [Figure 26](#)), combining hair and rasta. It was the act of leaving some rasta when plaiting is going on that influenced the name givers to bestow that name hence its meaning also.



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 26.** *Yebo achia*.

In Kinondoni Municipality, some women’s hairstyle names were bestowed because of their appearance which resembled with things that surround the individuals. This is supported by Charwi who expresses that the meanings of some Datooga personal names are derived from the physical appearance of a child [7].

Secondly, hairstyle names are given from the names of people. *Zuchu* and *bobu* (see [Figure 27](#)) are among the hair braiding styles where their names and meanings referring to names of people, the famous ones especially their nick names. The hair braiding style ‘*zuchu*’s hairstyle’ is named after the nick name of the famous musician found in Tanzania whose real name is Zuhura Othman who prefers that particular hairstyle. Her hairstyle is very long in such a way that the braids pass the knees and it is plaited with hair and rasta. The frequent long hairstyle she puts on especially

during her performances in different events made the name givers to bestow the name *zuchu*, the nickname of that music artist to the hair style. On the other hand, the hairstyle *bobu* ‘Bob’s hairstyle’ came from the nickname of the famous musician ‘Bob’ whose real name is Robert Marley who was the Jamaican music artist. He made his own style of long braids which later made the name givers to name that hairstyle after his nick name, Bob. Later on, those who made their hairstyle related to that of the musician artist used his nick name ‘Bob’ as the name of that particular hairstyle, which is pronounced by Swahili speakers as *bobu*.



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 27.** *Bobu and zuchu*.

Thirdly, there are some hairstyle names given from independent sources. Four hairstyle names have meaning on their own as they were not associated from other sources rather; they were independent and have meaning on their own.

The hairstyle *bwenzi* ‘hair bundle’ where hair is tied together to produce hair bundle by adding rasta to the hair at the back side of the head (see [Figure 28](#)).



Source: Field data (2023)

**Figure 28.** *Bwenzi*.

*Kiduku* is a haircut style which refers to shaving of hair by keeping long hair in the middle part of a person’s head. It is mostly used by young women where by the hair at the sides of the head is shaved leaving other at the middle part of the head long. The long hair at middle part left can be left as it is or sometimes can be added with pieces of wigs, decorated with different colours to make it look attractive (see [Figure 29](#)).



Source: (<http://www.youtube.com/@stylecabin>)

Figure 29. Kiduku.

Yeboyebo ‘from thin to thick’ is another hair braiding style that its lines appear thin where they start and increase in thickness towards the middle and backside of the head (see Figure 30) plaited by combining hair and rasta.



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 30. Yeboyebo.

Kipara ‘bald’ or with no hair is a hairstyle where hair is shaved, leaving the woman’s head bald. It is used mostly by old women and few young women especially those who are involving in beauty matters (see Figure 31).



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 31. Kipara.

Therefore, there are some women’s hairstyle names which have meanings on their own without associating them with other sources as seen in *bwenzi*, *kiduku*, *yeboyebo* and *kipara*. This supported by Anindo argues that, there are some Lu-logooli place names whose source is unknown [3].

Lastly, there are some hairstyle names given from other languages apart from Kiswahili. Six hair braiding styles were from English by origin including rough locks butterfly, stitch, selfie, knotless, bob spring passion twist and trapezium curl braid, were used by individuals who are Kiswahili native speakers at Kinondoni Municipality. The individuals use such names though they do not know their meanings. A thing to note in these English hairstyle names is that, these hairstyle names have meanings to English speakers, but the meanings are unknown to Swahili native speakers (see Figure 32).



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure 32. English Hairstyle Names.

#### 4.2. Connotative Meanings of Women’s Hairstyle Names

Connotative meaning is the associative/evaluative loading of names [19]. In other words, it is kind of meaning that is obtained from real world’s experience. From the field, *kipara*, *twende kilioni* and *yeboyebo* have connotative meanings.

The hair cutting style *kipara* connotatively refers to mourning. It was applied to close relatives of the deceased one who cut their hair immediately after the funeral of their beloved one to indicate that they are mourning/grieving for their deceased one.

Additionally, the associative meaning of the hairstyle *twende kilioni* is simple and of not time-consuming. This is because only few cornrows 5-7 are plaited to women. Therefore, the one who do not want to use a long period of time in plaiting select *twende kilioni* as the style is simple and of not time consuming compared to other hairstyles when plaited.

Furthermore, the hairstyle name *yeboyebo* has connotative meaning which is affordable or cheap. The hairstyle means affordable or cheap because it is not expensive when someone need to plait it though it needs some extensions.

#### 4.3. Structural Patterns of Women’s Hairstyle Names

The structural patterns of women’s hairstyle names in Ki-

nondoni Municipality are discussed under the morpheme-based theory. The findings break down the structural pattern of women’s hairstyle names in morphological structure and the syntactic structure. Under morphological structure, women’s hairstyle names undergo processes such as free morphemes, affixation, compounding and reduplication. In syntactic structure, women’s hairstyle names in Kinondoni Municipality are in noun phrase and sentential structure.

The morphological patterns of women’s hairstyle names are dealing with the internal structures (morphemes) that make a particular name. Most of women’s hairstyle names used in Kinondoni Municipality are in Kiswahili, as the language which is used as a means of communication there is Kiswahili. Kiswahili is a Bantu language which is characterised with agglutination as how other Bantu languages are agglutinative

in nature. This means that agglutination of affixes such as prefixes, suffixes to word stems or roots in relation to noun class system are very useful in building words including names which establish their morphological structure. This is verified by Legère who expresses that word formation process in Bantu languages basically depend much on noun classes [15]. The attachment of affixes to word root or stem depends much on noun class system to form words as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1 indicates some women’s hairstyle names which belong to noun classes. All these hairstyle names in relation to their noun class system undergo affixation, some fall under inflection and others in derivation as they are going to be explained deeply under affixation, a morphological process.

**Table 1.** Hairstyle Names According to Noun Class Prefixes.

Cl noun	Prefix	Hairstyle name	Gloss
3	m-	<i>m-keka</i>	mat
	m-	<i>m-benjuo</i>	pulling up
6	ma-	<i>ma-jongoo</i>	millipedes
7	ki-	<i>ki-doti</i>	small bun
		<i>ki-duku</i>	removing hair at the head’s side
		<i>kipara</i>	bald
8	vi-	<i>vi-pipi</i>	collection of small sweets
		<i>vi-nzi</i>	group of small flies

Source: Field data (2023)

### 4.3.1. Free Morpheme Hairstyle Names

There are six women’s hairstyle names which have free morpheme structure as seen Table 2.

**Table 2.** Free Morpheme Hairstyle Names.

Hairstyle	Meaning
Kilimanjaro	mount kilimanjaro
<i>Nanasi</i>	Pineapple
<i>Zipu</i>	Zipper
<i>Zuchu</i>	zuchu’s hairstyle
<i>Bwenzi</i>	hair bundle
Bobu	bob’s hairstyle

Source: Field data (2023)

Table 2 shows free morpheme hairstyle names that are root words and each of them has its own meaning, to mean that they cannot be broken further into meaningful elements.

### 4.3.2. Hairstyle Names Formed Through Affixation

Affixation is the morphological process whereby morphemes (affixes) are attached to a word root/base to form a word. Once the affixes are attached to word root or base and change either the meaning of a base or word category, this is called derivation. On the other hand, when the affixes attached to a word root does not change the meaning of the word/word category, but only plays grammatical function such as plural, tense or possessive maker, it is called inflection. Some of Kinondoni women’s hairstyle names are formed by inflection and others through derivation.

#### *Hairstyle names formed through inflection*

The hairstyle name *majongoo* ‘millipedes’ is formed through inflection where by the prefix *ma-* fall under noun class six, which mark plural is attached to word root *-jongoo*

‘millipede’ to form *majongoo* ‘millipedes’. So, the word root – *jongoo* which is in singular form is changed to plural form *majongoo* after the prefix *ma-* attached to it. Moreover, *kiduku* ‘removing hair at the head’s side’ is formed by attaching singular prefix *ki-* which is noun class seven to word root –*duku* to form *kiduku* as a hairstyle name which is in singular form. So, the prefix *ki-* marks the number (singular). *Kipara* ‘bald’ is another hairstyle which is formed by attaching the

singular prefix *ki-* which is noun class seven to a word root – *para* to form a hairstyle name *kipara* which is in singular form. Additionally, *mkeka* ‘mat’ is formed through inflection by attaching the singular prefix –*m* which belongs to noun class three to a word root –*keka* so as to form *mkeka*. The prefix – *m* attached to the word root –*keka* marks number (singular). All of the four women’s hairstyles which formed through inflection are elaborated briefly in [Table 3](#).

**Table 3.** *Hairstyle Names through Inflection.*

Hairstyle name	Prefix	Root
<i>Majongoo</i> (N) ‘millipedes’	<i>ma-</i>	<i>-jongoo</i> (N) ‘millipede’
<i>Mkeka</i> (N) ‘mat’	<i>m-</i>	<i>-keka</i> (N) ‘mat’
<i>Kipara</i> (N) ‘bald’	<i>ki-</i>	<i>-para</i> (N) ‘bald’
<i>Kiduku</i> (N) ‘of leaving some hair’	<i>ki-</i>	<i>-duku</i> (N) ‘of leaving some hair’

Source: Field data (2023)

Therefore, women’s hair style names in Kinondoni Municipal Council as presented in [Table 3](#) are formed through inflection where by some prefixes are attached to word root to mark singular and plural form of the names.

*Hairstyle Names formed through Derivation*

The name *mbenjuo* ‘of pulling up’ undergo derivation under the process so called nominalization. Nominalization is the process whereby affixes are attached to word classes such as verb, adjective and others to form nouns. Prefix *m-* which belongs to noun class three is attached to verb root –*benju-* to nominalise it. This is verified by Kahigi states in Kiswahili most of the nouns are produced from verbs [13]. Back to our hairstyle name *mbenjuo*, suffix –*o* is also attached to verb root –*benju-* ‘pull up’ and derive it to *mbenjuo* (N). This is also supported by Kahigi says that most of the nouns which are formed from verbs are produced by adding derivational nominal markers such as –*i*, –*aji* and –*o* [13]. Therefore, the name *mbejuo* ‘of pulling up’ is

formed by attaching both the nominalized prefix *m-* and suffix –*o* to a verb root –*benju-*.

*Kidoti* is another hairstyle name which is formed by derivation whereby the diminutive prefix *ki-* which is noun class seven is attached to word root –*doti* ‘bun’ to form *kidoti* ‘small bun’ which change the meaning from –*doti* ‘bun’ to *kidoti* ‘small bun’. Furthermore, the hairstyle *vipipi* ‘small sweets’ is formed through derivation whereby the diminutive prefix *vi-* in noun class eight is attached to a word root –*pipi* ‘sweet’, to form *vipipi* ‘small sweets’, prefix *vi-* change the meaning of the word from –*pipi* ‘sweet’ to *vipipi* ‘small sweets’. Lastly, is *vinzi*, which is formed through derivation by attaching the diminutive prefix *vi-* which fall under noun class eight to word root –*nzi* ‘fly’ to form *vinzi* ‘small flies’ hence the meaning is changing from –*nzi* ‘fly’ to *vinzi* ‘small flies’ as elaborated briefly in [Table 4](#).

**Table 4.** *Hairstyle Names through Derivation.*

Hairstyle Name	Prefix	Root	Suffix
<i>Mbenjuo</i> (N) ‘pulling up’	<i>m-</i>	<i>-benju</i> (V) ‘pulling up’	<i>-o</i>
<i>Kidoti</i> (N) ‘small bun’	<i>ki-</i>	<i>-doti</i> (N) ‘bun’	
<i>Vipipi</i> (N) ‘small sweets’	<i>vi-</i>	<i>-pipi</i> (N) ‘sweets’	
<i>Vinzi</i> (N) ‘small flies’	<i>vi-</i>	<i>-nzi</i> (N) ‘fly’	

Source: Field data (2023)

### 4.3.3. Hairstyle Names Formed Through Reduplication

Reduplication is a morphological process whereby the root of a word or part of it is repeated to form a new word [21]. It is concerned with copying part of the base or the whole base and attaching it as an affix, and this may lead to partial or complete reduplication. Furthermore, in reduplication, an affix is realised by phonological material borrowed from the base. Women’s hairstyle names in Kinondoni are formed through complete and partial reduplication.

#### Hairstyle name formed through complete reduplication

Complete or total reduplication is a morphological process whereby a whole base or word is repeated to form a new word. From the data collected from the field, two women’s hairstyle names were found to be formed through complete reduplication as indicated in Table 5.

Table 5. Complete Reduplication Hairstyle Names.

Hairstyle names	Morphological process
<i>Shombeshombe</i> ‘half cast’	<i>Shombe + shombe</i>
<i>Yeboyebo</i> ‘from thin to thick’	<i>Yebo + yebo</i>

Source: Field data (2023)

Hairstyle names presented in Table 5 are the result of total

reduplication, whereby the hairstyle *shombeshombe* ‘half cast’ is derived from word root *shombe*. The same applied to the name *yeboyebo* ‘from thin to thick’ which is derived from word root *yebo*.

#### Hairstyle Name Formed Through Partial Reduplication

Partial reduplication is a morphological process whereby part of a word base is repeated to form a new word. The hairstyle *zigizaga* ‘zigzag’ is derived from an onomatopoeic expression *zigzag*. Therefore, some women’s hairstyles names in Kinondoni Municipality are formed by complete reduplication and others by partial reduplication as explained by Legère who argues that some Vidunda plant names are formed through complete reduplication or partial reduplication [15].

#### Hairstyle names formed through compounding

Compounding is a word formation process in which two or more words or stems are combined together to form a new word. Five women’s hairstyle names are formed through compounding as indicated in Table 6.

Compound words on Table 6 reveal that, there are hairstyle names which are formed by combining similar or different word classes such as noun + noun like the name *tatu* (N) ‘three’ and *kichwa* (N) ‘head’ which lead to *tatu kichwa* ‘three per head’. *Yebo* (N) ‘from thin to thick’ + *kopa* (N) ‘love sign’ which form *yebo kopa* ‘with love sign’. Hairstyle name *yebo ekisi* ‘with X sign’ is made up of *yebo* (N) ‘from thin to thick’ + *ekisi*(N) ‘X sign’ and the hairstyle *yebo achia* ‘of leaving some hair’ is made up of *yebo* (N) ‘from thin to thick’+ *achia* (V). Lastly, *yebo kilimanjaro* ‘high like Mount Kilimanjaro’ is made up of *yebo* (N) ‘from thin to thick’ and *Kilimanjaro* (N) ‘Mount Kilimanjaro’.

Table 6. Compound Hairstyle Names.

Hairstyle Name	Morphological Analysis
<i>Tatu kichwa</i>	<i>Tatu</i> (N) ‘three’ + <i>kichwa</i> (N) ‘head’
<i>Yebo kopa</i>	<i>yebo</i> (N) ‘from thin to thick’+ <i>kopa</i> (N) ‘love sign’
<i>Yebo ekisi</i>	<i>yebo</i> (N) ‘from thin to thick’ + <i>ekisi</i> (N) ‘X sign’
<i>Yebo achia</i>	<i>yebo</i> (N) ‘from thick to thin’ + <i>achia</i> (V) ‘leaving’
<i>Yebo Kilimanjaro</i>	<i>yebo</i> (N) ‘from thick to thin’+ <i>kilimanjaro</i> (N) ‘Mount kilimanjaro’
<i>Yebo mkasi</i>	<i>Yebo</i> (N)‘from thin to thick’ + <i>mkasi</i> (N)‘scissor’

Source: Field data (2023)

## 4.4. Syntactic Patterns of Women’s Hairstyle Names

A syntactic pattern is concerning with the word class elements that are incorporated to form a phrase, clause or sentence. Phrase is a group of words that cannot stand alone to express a complete thought [6]. On the other hand, a sentence is a group

of words which carry a complete thought. It can be in simple, compound or embedded structure which can function as a declarative, imperative/command or question [22]. Therefore, women’s hairstyle names in Kinondoni Municipality are in phrase and sentential structure (see Section 4.4.1, & 4.4.2).

### 4.4.1. Noun Phrase Hairstyle Names

Some women’s hairstyle names are in noun phrase structure

where by the head is noun as indicated on Table 7.

**Table 7.** Noun Phrase Hairstyle Names.

Hairstyle Name	Syntactic Structure
<i>Vitunguu vya uzi</i> ‘thread’s onions’ stalk’	<i>vitunguu</i> (N) ‘onions’ <i>vya</i> (ASSOC) ‘of’ <i>uzi</i> (N) ‘thread’
<i>Mdomo wa bata</i> ‘duck’s beak’	<i>mdomo</i> (N) ‘beak’ <i>wa</i> (ASSOC) ‘of’ <i>bata</i> (N) ‘duck’
<i>Jicho la mkemwenza</i> ‘co-wife’s eye’	<i>jicho</i> (N) ‘eye’ <i>la</i> (ASSOC) ‘of’ <i>mkemwenza</i> (N) ‘co-wife’
<i>Dawa ya mbu</i> ‘mosquito coil’	<i>dawa</i> (N) ‘medicine’ <i>ya</i> (ASSOC) ‘of’ <i>mbu</i> (N) ‘mosquito’
<i>Mwiba wa samaki</i> ‘spine’s fish’	<i>mwiba</i> (N) ‘spine’ <i>wa</i> (ASSOC) ‘of’ <i>Samaki</i> (N) ‘fish’
<i>Vitunguu vya rasta</i> ‘rasta’s onions’ stalk’	<i>Vitunguu</i> (N) ‘onion’ <i>vya</i> (ASSOC) ‘of’ <i>rasta</i> (N) ‘rasta’
<i>Mkia wa farasi</i> ‘horse’s tail’	<i>mkia</i> (N) ‘tail’ <i>wa</i> (ASSOC) ‘of’ <i>farasi</i> (N) ‘horse’
<i>Utumbo wa rasta</i> ‘rasta’s intestine’	<i>utumbo</i> (N) ‘intestine’ <i>wa</i> (ASSOC) ‘of’ <i>rasta</i> (N) ‘rasta’
<i>Utumbo wa uzi</i> ‘thread’s intestine’	<i>utumbo</i> (N) ‘intestine’ <i>wa</i> (ASSOC) ‘of’ <i>uzi</i> (N) ‘thread’

Source: Field data (2023)

The indicated hairstyle names in Table 7 are defined as noun phrases as they are all made up of nouns as head words coordinated with associative such as *ya*, *wa*, *la*, and *vya*.

#### 4.4.2. Sentential Hairstyle Names

The hairstyle *twende kilioni* ‘let us go to the mourning place’ is in a sentence structure made up of *twende* (v) ‘let us go’ and *kilioni* (adv) ‘mourning place’, it is a simple sentence by structure which function as a declarative as it is a statement. This implies that, there are some circumstances where a hairstyle name can stand as a sentence carrying a complete thought as supported by Caesar who contends that some Dangme allusive names are in sentences that function as imperative, interrogative or declarative sentences [6].

## 5. Conclusion

Women’s hairstyle names in Kinondoni Municipality are deliberately created, not accidentally constructed. There are some circumstances which influence the name givers to bestow those names hence its meanings. Some hairstyle names have denotative meaning and others have both denotative and connotative meanings. The meanings are derived from different sources including insects, land forms, insecticides, flora, and animal body parts appearance number, parts of human body, social events and names of famous people. Additionally, people in Kinondoni Municipality use some hairstyle names which belong to English language as they are without knowing their meanings and from which source they are derived.

On the other hand, Kinondoni women’s hairstyle names are of morphological and syntactic patterns. Morphologically, they

undergo affixation, compounding, reduplication and single stem morphemes. Syntactically, women’s hairstyle names are sentence and phrases, specifically verb and noun phrases.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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