Analysis of the Use of Frames in Kenyan Television Programming Content to Break Negative Female Gender Stereotypes

Katanu Munyao[1*], Wilson Ugangu[2], Idah Gatwiri Muchunku[3]

[1]Postgraduate Student, Faculty of Media and Communication, Multimedia University of Kenya, Nairobi, Kenya
[2,3]Associate Professor, Faculty of Media and Communication, Multimedia University of Kenya, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract: Gender stereotypes have long permeated society, shaping perceptions and expectations of individuals based on their gender. Despite societal progress towards gender equality, media content often continues to perpetuate stereotypical representations of men and women. Women have been subjected to a myriad of stereotypes that limit their roles and opportunities across the globe, our country Kenya included. Television, as a pervasive and accessible medium, plays a significant role in shaping public opinion and attitudes, through framing. Thus, conducting research on the use of frames in Kenyan programming content in breaking negative female gender stereotypes was crucial. The scope of this study was limited to three Kenyan programs which are Woman Without Limits by Citizen Television hosted by Rev. Kathy Kiuna, Her Standards by KTN Home hosted by Madam Quinter Mbori and Her Say by TV 47 hosted by Madam Grace Kuria Kanja. The study's objective was to analyse the use of frames in Kenyan Television content to break negative female gender stereotypes. Framing theory guided this study. A qualitative content analysis of the three selected programs on how they are breaking negative female gender stereotypes was used as the research design. For data collection, nine stories from the three selected television programs (three stories from each program) were purposively chosen, transcribed and qualitatively analysed using a content analysis code drafted from the critical attributes of the study objective. Research findings revealed that Kenyan television programming highlights a deliberate avoidance of negative framing when discussing women's roles, which traditionally perpetuates stereotypes of women as dependent, passive, or unfit for leadership. The study also reveals that social cultural framing is integral to these programs, with hosts addressing existing cultural norms and expectations. By acknowledging and deconstructing these norms, the shows offer alternative narratives that empower women. The study recommended that media stations expand training for media professionals on gender-sensitive reporting, television programs to collaborate with educational institutions and organizations to broaden the reach and impact of gender-sensitive content and television programs promote audience engagement and feedback mechanisms.

Keywords: media frames, television programming content, gender stereotypes, media and women, social cultural framing, empowering women.

1. Study Background

The media is a part of society, and it plays a key role in maintaining society. The media entertain us, socialize with us, educate us, sell things to us and indoctrinate us among other things. The media help shape our identities, our attitude towards racial and ethnic minorities, and our attitudes towards sexuality (Berger, 2012). As the fourth pillar of democracy along with judiciary, executive and legislature, media has an all-embracing role to act against the injustice, oppression, misdeeds and partiality of our society.

As agents of socialization in the modern world, the media shape our culture and have become a critical debating ground for our beliefs and values. Even more important is the fact that the media, as Pearson, et.al, (2005) observe, perpetuate stereotypes especially of people who are not from the dominant culture. In most African countries, men are depicted as highly educated, having good jobs or own businesses and they seem to have a lot of money (Macharia, 2016). The media can cultivate perceptions about gender among the viewers and play critical roles in constructing gender roles. They shape the way people perceive gender reality (Macharia, 2016). How media frame issues tend to take a certain set of reality among the audience and scholars see media playing a key role in defining gender relationships that define how men and women define themselves (Nwaoklipe, 2014; Wood, 2011; Omari, 2008)

Television influences culture by shaping societal norms, values, and behaviors through the portrayal of characters, lifestyles, and narratives. Television programming often reflects and reinforces cultural trends, while also playing a role in shaping public discourse and social movements. Since its inception as an integral part of American life in the 1950s, television has both reflected and nurtured cultural mores and values. (University of Minnesota Libraries, 2016a). The increasing integration of media products into the global market, and the rapid deregulation of public cultures have promoted worldwide processes of Americanization. This has been achieved thorough the direct promotion of American products, and the local copying of American television styles and formats (Gauntlett & Hill, 2002).

---
*Corresponding author: munyaokatanu@gmail.com

Language and behaviour learned from television can often translate into everyday life routines through a process of imitation and normalization. Viewers tend to adopt mannerisms, speech patterns, and social norms modelled by characters on TV, incorporating them into their own behaviour and interactions (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2013). Some of the language used in Television reflects the way in which anti-sexist and feminist ideas have become part of everyday discourse. Exposure to stereotyping representations appears to strengthen beliefs in gender stereotypes and endorsement of gender role norms, as well as fostering sexism, harassment and violence (Santoniccolo, et.al, 2023).

Stereotypes are also prevalent in everyday media. Women are often portrayed solely as homemakers and carers of the family, dependent on men, or as objects of male attention. Stories by female reporters are more likely to challenge stereotypes than those filed by male reporters (Gallagher et al., 2010). As such, there is a link between the participation of women in the media and improvements in the representation of women (Gsdrc_Admin, 2015). Women have the potential to promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media and to challenge the status quo. In Fiji, women who took part in a participatory video project presented themselves as active citizens who made significant contributions to their families and communities. These recorded images improved the status of women in the minds of government bureaucrats (Gsdrc_Admin, 2015).

In the United States, a pioneering force in global media, the journey towards more inclusive and diverse gender representations has been both progressive and challenging. Iconic shows such as "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" and "Grey's Anatomy" have been widely praised for dismantling traditional gender norms and fostering a more inclusive narrative (Smith, 2020.) However, persistent challenges such as the underrepresentation of women in leading roles and the perpetuation of stereotypes in various TV programs continue to underscore the need for ongoing scrutiny and reform.

The African continent, comprising diverse cultures and traditions, is experiencing a dynamic shift in media representation, particularly in relation to gender. Organizations like the African Women in Media (AWiM) are actively advocating for nuanced and positive portrayals of women in media (Akinbobola, 2019). South Africa's "Isibaya" stands out for its commitment to presenting strong and empowered female characters. These instances reflect a growing awareness within the African media landscape regarding the importance of reshaping gender narratives (Fombang, 2023).

Zooming into East Africa, a region marked by a rich tapestry of cultures and traditions, television programming is increasingly becoming a space for exploring evolving gender dynamics. The intersection between tradition and modernity is evident, and television plays a crucial role in navigating this delicate balance. As East Africa grapples with the challenges of preserving cultural authenticity while embracing progressive gender portrayals, the study aims to capture the nuanced dynamics shaping the media landscape in this region (Achebe & Robertson, 2019).

Kenya, with its diverse ethnic groups and a blend of urban and rural cultures, presents a captivating context for examining the interplay between media and gender. Several television media outlets in the country have set different programs hosted by women to discuss matters women, in a strive to change the narratives and stereotypes that the society has about women while at the same time guiding, counseling and encouraging women in all their deeds, and they have been doing an amazing job so far. These programs include Her Standards show by KTN Home, Her Say show by TV 47 and Woman Without Limits by Citizen TV. It is imperative to mention that these three shows are hosted by women, namely, Queenter Mbori, Grace Kuria Kanja and Rev. Kathy Kiuna, respectively. The programs serve as noteworthy platforms that amplify the voices of women. The choice of female hosts, predominantly female guests, and the thematic concentration on women-related issues contribute to a dynamic narrative that goes beyond mere representation. These shows not only showcase the diversity of women's experiences but also provide a lens into how television, as a medium, can be harnessed to empower and engage audiences in meaningful dialogues that transcend traditional gender stereotypes. This proves right what Gallagher said, that "stories by female reporters are more likely to challenge stereotypes than those filed by male reporters" (Gallagher et al., 2010). Moreover, according to Global Media Monitoring Project (2020), story quality from a gender perspective tends to be marginally higher in the output of women journalists, in terms of likelihood to clearly challenge gender stereotypes, to raise gender (in) equality issues and to refer to legislation or policy that promotes gender equality or human rights. Media constructions contribute towards the opinions held by the consumers of the information due to the exposure to the information (Couldry & Hepp, 2018).

Framing theory guided this study. Framing theory critically analyzes power structures, gender dynamics, and societal norms, emphasizing language use, representation and intersectionality as key elements in understanding the complex nature of women's experiences within a patriarchal context. A critical element of this theory, frames, was investigated and analyzed in relation to the selected three programs and how they address gender stereotypes in Kenyan television programming.

2. Statement of Problem

Gender stereotypes have long permeated society, shaping perceptions and expectations of individuals based on their gender. Despite societal progress towards gender equality, media content often continues to perpetuate stereotypical representations of men and women. Women have been subjected to a myriad of stereotypes that limit their roles and opportunities. These stereotypes not only reinforce traditional gender roles but also contribute to the perpetuation of harmful biases and inequalities.

Television, as a pervasive and accessible medium, plays a significant role in shaping public opinion and attitudes. In Kenya, some television shows have featured strong female characters that defy gender stereotypes. This type of representation helps to counteract the negative effects of media

on attitudes towards women (Kahlor & Morrison, 2007). Moreover, research shows that story quality from a gender perspective tends to be marginally higher in the output of women journalists, in terms of likelihood to clearly challenge gender stereotypes, to raise gender (in) equality issues and to refer to legislation or policy that promotes gender equality or human rights (Global Media Monitoring Project, 2020). In alignment with this perspective, this study therefore seeks to analyze the use of frames in Kenyan Television programming to break gender stereotypes.

This study aims to investigate how gender stereotypes about women are being addressed in Kenyan television programming, through frames. It focuses specifically on three Kenyan programs: Woman Without Limits on Citizen TV hosted by Rev. Kathy Kiuna, Her Standards on KTN Home hosted by Madam Queenter Mbori and Her Say on TV 47 hosted by Madam Grace Kuria Kanja. These shows seek to highlight challenges that women face, how to overcome them, while at the same time encouraging women to have positive self-esteem, exercise self-love and understand their rights and to keep grinding. According to United Nations Human Rights report (2020), women are mostly affected by gender stereotypes, and media hasn't helped as much despite the power that it has to influence public (Gsdrc_Admin, 2015.) These programs were therefore intentionally picked as they discuss matters women and they are hosted by women, to investigate how they are addressing gender stereotypes. To achieve this, this study used qualitative content analysis approach to analyze frames usage as mentioned in sub-section 1 above. This element has been derived from the theory guiding this study that is the framing theory, and its various attributes will be investigated and analyzed in relation to the three programs and how they address negative female gender stereotypes in Kenyan television programming. These attributes include negative framing, positive framing and social cultural framing.

3. Study Objective

This study sought to analyze the use of frames in Kenyan Television content to break negative female gender stereotypes.

4. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in Framing Theory, a vital concept in communication studies that examines how media and other communicators strategically present information to shape public perceptions. As part of media effects theories, Framing Theory explores the influence of media on audiences' attitudes and impressions (Lee & McLeod, 2020). The theory suggests that media emphasizes certain events and situates them within a broader context, guiding public interpretation (De Vreese, 2005). Originating from Goffman, Framing Theory posits that people interpret their world through dominant frames that naturally influence their understanding. Goffman distinguishes between nature and society as primary frameworks that individuals use to interpret data within a social context (De Vreese, 2005; Kitzinger, 2007). This theory is particularly relevant to this study's examination of how Kenyan television

programming can challenge negative female gender stereotypes through strategic narrative framing. The theory highlights various framing approaches—positive, negative, and social-cultural—that are crucial to this analysis. Positive framing, as described by Niemiec (2020), presents information in a way that emphasizes positive aspects, potentially reshaping attitudes and contributing to social change (Sher & McKenzie, 2008). Conversely, negative framing emphasizes risks and problems to influence audience perceptions, commonly seen in news and political communication (Brantner & Lobinger, 2012). Social-cultural framing explores how media shapes societal understandings and values by encoding and decoding cultural signals (Hall, 2007).

Applying Framing Theory to Kenyan television programming, this study seeks to reveal the complex interplay between media representation and societal perceptions of women. Scholars like Goffman and Entman argue that media frames not only reflect reality but actively shape it by emphasizing certain elements while downplaying others (Carter, 2013). Through analyzing specific television programs, this study examines how these shows use framing to portray multifaceted female characters, challenging traditional gender stereotypes. Goffman's concept of "keying" is especially relevant, as it shows how television can emphasize traits that counter stereotypical expectations, reshaping societal views. Additionally, the study considers how visual and linguistic elements in framing narratives contribute to this process. Linguist Lakoff's work highlights the power of language in shaping cognitive structures, suggesting that the language used in television to describe female characters plays a significant role in altering ingrained gender norms (Lakoff, 2008). Overall, Framing Theory provides a critical lens for understanding how media can challenge and potentially transform societal perceptions of women's roles, supporting the study's goal of fostering more equitable and empowering representations in Kenyan television programming.

5. Literature Review

Framing in TV programming plays a pivotal role in shaping the narratives and perceptions presented to audiences. It involves the deliberate selection and presentation of visual and auditory elements to convey a particular message or perspective. Within this dynamic landscape, the influence of gender stereotypes becomes a crucial aspect, as it significantly impacts the portrayal of individuals based on their gender. Television, being a powerful medium of mass communication, can reinforce or challenge societal norms and expectations related to gender roles. Several studies have been done that showcase frames usage in television programming and how this reinforces or challenges gender stereotypes (Merma-Molina, et.al, 2022).

A study of Saturday morning cartoons by Witt (2000) revealed that females were pictured less often than males, were less active than males, played fewer roles than males, played fewer lead roles than males, and worked primarily in the home (Singh, 2015). Although these findings were obtained more than 25 years ago, no significant improvement is evident.

Recent studies of children's Saturday morning programs feature males in dominant roles, while showing females in peripheral roles (Singh, 2015; Kaul & Sahni, 2015) Children's programs on the Public Broadcasting System consistently show fewer females than males. Furthermore, television programs evidence a greater range of occupations for males than females (Kaul & Sahni, 2015). This discrepancy in occupations between males and females also appears in music videos, where more than nine out of 10 occupational roles that were classified as stereotypically male (e.g., physician, mechanic, firefighter) were played by male actors (Dill & Thill, 2007). It has been suggested the preferences of boys are given precedence over those of girls because boys represent 53 percent of the Saturday viewing audience (Ellemers, 2018).

Analyses done by Ward & Grower (2020) indicate that men are more often placed in the world of work and women in the home; when women are shown in the workplace, their occupations tend to align with gender stereotypes (Gilpatric 2010, Lauzen et al. 2008, Smith et al. 2010). At the same time, men are shown as incompetent in the domestic arena. In one study of prime-time television commercials that featured domestic chores, most often child care and cooking, men were depicted as less successful at domestic chores than women, as indicated by their receiving more negative responses from others, less success, and more unsatisfactory outcomes (Scharrer et al. 2006). These role distinctions extend to representations of children's daily activities. For example, analyses indicate that toy commercials are highly stereotypical, with 58% of doll commercials and 83% of commercials for animal toys featuring only girls, and 87% of ads for transportation/construction toys and 63% of sports toy ads featuring only boys (e.g., Kahlenberg& Hein 2010).

Moreover, most females on prime-time television are young, attractive, thin, and have an ornamental quality (Matty, 2012). Most of these characters are either under 35 or over 50--middle-aged women are rare Females consistently are placed in situations where looks count more than brains, and helpless and incompetent behaviors are expected of them. Men are twice as likely as women to be shown as competent and able to solve problems (Ellemers, 2018). Gender stereotypes abound on television, with women being depicted as sex objects more frequently than men, and men portrayed as inept when handling children's needs (Witt, 2000). On music television, a popular program choice among young viewers, females often are shown in degrading positions. Music videos frequently show women as sex objects, and as trying to gain the attention of a male who ignores them. Rap music videos, for example, frequently portray women as objects of lust (Ellemers, 2018). Women are four times more likely than men to be provocatively dressed in these videos (Atkin et.al, 1991), while men are almost always fully clothed (Matty, 2012; Witt 2000).

6. Research Design

This research employed a qualitative design to analyze the use of frames in Kenyan television programming content to break negative gender stereotypes. The researcher also used interpretivist philosophy as it explains the understanding the social world through the lens of human interaction and the meanings it creates (Mburu, 2022). The research focused on content analysis of non-numerical data, like videos, from YouTube channels of three prominent Kenyan TV stations: Citizen TV, KTN Home, and TV 47. The study area narrowed down to specific programs - Woman Without Limits, Her Standards, and Her Say. Nine stories, three from each program, were chosen for analysis. This sample size prioritized in-depth exploration of the content overachieving statistical generalizability (Sim, et.al, 2018). Researchers opted for purposive sampling, a non-probability technique. Stories with high viewership during significant women's events (March-October) were selected. These months encompass International Women's Day, Mother's Day, and National Girlfriends Day. The rationale behind this selection was to understand topics garnering audience interest and gather valuable feedback from audience comments on the program's YouTube channels. Purposive sampling allowed researchers to extract rich data facilitating discussions on themes aligned with the study's objectives.

To analyze the content, a content analysis code was developed (see Appendix 1), focusing on the concept of gender stereotypes in Kenya. This code aimed to identify the presence of these stereotypes within the chosen stories. The primary goal was to provide a comprehensive analysis of how Kenyan television programming addresses gender stereotypes, particularly those concerning women. Keywords, both explicit and implicit, were extracted from the stories based on a conceptual framework informed by the study's objectives and guiding theories.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Following the qualitative data collected from the nine selected stories of the three programs under study, below is a comprehensive content analysis of the role of Kenyan television programming content in breaking negative female gender stereotypes, according to the study objective. In this section, the researcher referred to the selected nine stories using the respective numbers allocated to them, as shown in Appendix 2.

A. Positive Framing and Female Gender Stereotypes

This study found out that the hosts frequently invited successful women to their shows and these guests weren't just limited to celebrities or socialites. The programs actively sought out female entrepreneurs, CEOs, community leaders, and experts in various fields. For instance, in Story 7 Madam Grace Kuria describes her guest as following:

"Our guest tonight is none other than her Excellency Madam Monica Geingos. She is the first lady of the republic of Namibia and a qualified lawyer as well…she was a co-shareholder and managing director of Namibia's largest private equity fund, she served on the boards of larger public and private sector companies as either chairperson or deputy chairperson and deeply a meaningful role in the private sector development."

In Story 4, Madam Queenter Mbori has the C.E.O of M.P Shah Hospital Madam. Dr. Toseef Din on the show. In Story 2, Rev Kathy Kiuna also hosts one of the senior managers in the

Coca Cola Company and describes her as follows:

"Our guest today is Norah Odweso- Senior director of the Social Impact at the Coca Cola Company – leads the company's women economic empowerment efforts around the world and leads a team of 100 countries around the world….she has served on various non-commercial and commercial boards in Kenya as non-executive director strengthening her ability to lead business strategy and lead initiatives that protect and enhance business reputation -----as a woman she is very passionate about impacting lives"

By platforming their achievements, the programs went beyond traditional portrayals of women and framed them as capable of leading and making impactful decisions across various sectors. This challenged the stereotype of women being relegated to domestic or subservient roles, instead showcasing their agency and influence in shaping society (Merma-Molina, 2022).

This study found out that discussions often focused on women overcoming challenges, not shying away from the realities they face. Guests might have shared stories of navigating professional hurdles like gender bias or discrimination, balancing demanding work schedules with family life, or persevering through personal struggles. In Story 5, the guest Ruth Mayaka- Ground Operations Manager JamboJet states the following:

"Aviation industry is a male dominated industry but in JamboJet female gender is at 54%….women who are passionate, skilled and self-driven are absorbed in the company. The management has really done a lot in sensitizing the whole staff about stereotyping so that makes it so easy for women to come out with their skills and they are able to grow within the company"

By openly discussing these experiences, with the hosts offering support and fostering a safe space for sharing, the programs framed women as strong, resilient individuals who can overcome obstacles and achieve their goals. This approach countered the stereotype of women as being weak or overly emotional, instead highlighting their resourcefulness and determination (Merma-Molina, 2022).

This study also found out that the programs featured women from diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, professions, and socioeconomic classes. We have single mothers – Dr. Susan Gitau from story 3, female entrepreneurs from rural backgrounds – Fardasa Hassan from story 6, corporate women including, Norah Odweso from story 2 and women activists such as, Madam Ruth from story 7 all combating life issues from different arrays of life. In this way, the programs constructed womanhood as varied and full of potential social contributions, which countered the singular idea of womanhood as embodied in the stereotype of a woman. This was important because it signified the diverse roles of women; the work it portrayed did not paint an inaccurate picture of a woman as presented by the media.

Moreover, the study found out that shows often discussed the importance of female networks and mentorship. The shows emphasized the value of sisterhood and collaboration, demonstrating how women supporting women can be a powerful force for collective success.

"We are not less than men, like for example at the M.P Shah Hospital 64% of our workforce are women, 80% of my senior leadership team are women, whom I consult very much, and we continue to hire women. We do have limitations… but if you have the skills, you have the expertise, you have the ability, no one who can stop you from shining fellow woman. You are you own cheerleader, go out there, celebrate yourself and be committed, the world is your playground!"

Guests might share how other women, whether colleagues, friends, or family members, had supported their success. By highlighting these connections and the power of collaboration, the programs framed women as not just competitors in a zero-sum game, but as individuals who can uplift and empower each other. This approach countered the stereotype of women being inherently competitive and pitted against each other (Bernard, 2009).

This study found out that the hosts and guests used empowering language throughout the shows. In Story 4, the guest Dr. Toseef Din said the following:

"Women don't take enough time to say I have been able to achieve this. For example, in corporate set ups when women are given accolades and they are given achievements and honored, they say such and such a person supported me, but I think we should go there and say I supported myself first, I can do it myself! …. You have to believe in yourself first! as women we need to be our own cheerleaders"

In Story 2, the guest Madam Norah Odweso encouraged women through her story as follows:

"Over the last couple of years within the current employment and even the employment I had before I determined for myself because I'm performing a regional role…at some point I was leading 39 countries in the continent… I said to myself that I want to become an expert in all matters Africa so, if there's anything to do with Africa, government relations, communications people call me…I invested in myself!"

Guests might share how other women, whether colleagues, friends, or family members, had supported their success. By highlighting these connections and the power of collaboration, the programs framed women as not just competitors in a zero-sum game, but as individuals who can uplift and empower each other. This approach countered the stereotype of women being inherently competitive and pitted against each other.

In conclusion, talk shows like Her Standards, Her Say, and Woman Without Limits utilize positive framing to dismantle negative female stereotypes. By highlighting women's achievements, strength, diverse experiences, and the importance of supportive networks, these programs promote a more empowering image of women in Kenyan society. They offer a powerful counter-narrative to traditional media portrayals, paving the way for a future where women are seen and celebrated for their multifaceted contributions to society.

B. Negative Framing and Female Gender Stereotypes

This study found out that while these programs predominantly employ positive framing to challenge negative female gender stereotypes, there were instances where negative

framing was subtly used. For example, in Story 1, guest Prophetess Lesley Osei recounted a personal experience where her mother intervened in a marital dispute. While the story initially highlighted the importance of seeking support during challenging times, it inadvertently reinforced the stereotype of women as passive victims requiring external intervention. Additionally, the Prophetess's statement that "fighting in marriage is okay" perpetuated the notion that conflict is an inevitable and acceptable part of marital relationships, potentially undermining the efforts to promote healthy and respectful dynamics.

"I was mad, I was upset, just over the marriage and so I called my mum, again accountability. My mother was like, put that suitcase down and go and help your husband, this moment! I was on the phone clicking but I wouldn't do it in front of her because she would have slapped me over the phone but I was rolling eyes my eyes like 'mum, you didn't even hear my story of story.' But those fights are important because after that we're able to see eyeball to eyeball!" Prophetess Lesley Osei explained.

In Story 5, one of the guests Madam Ruth Mayaka, the Ground Operations Manager at JamboJet, makes a statement that at JamboJet they have 54% women and that the company is being very intentional about absorbing and retaining females, the host of the program Madam Queenter Mbori interjects with the following question which shows that the host is very keen and very strategic in challenging gender stereotypes through avoiding negative framing in her program;

"other than being very strategic about uplifting women, what other initiatives does JamboJet do, because you see this show it's about empowering women, creating connections and also influencing, so maybe there's a organization who is looking up to JamboJet and saying wow, how did they obtain 54%?...other than just being strategic, what are those initiative that have been put in place to uplift men and women because I believe we're all born equal"

By focusing solely on "uplifting women," the question implies that men do not require equal attention or support in achieving equality. This framing can be problematic as it reinforces the notion that women need special treatment or initiatives to achieve equality, rather than focusing on systemic changes that would benefit everyone. Furthermore, the question's emphasis on "uplifting" women suggests a paternalistic approach to gender equality, implying that women need to be rescued or elevated rather than empowered. This framing can perpetuate harmful stereotypes and undermine the agency of women.

This study also found out that women have been objectified in the past. For instance, in Story 3, the guest at the Woman Without Limits show, Psychologist Dr. Susan Gitau, explains the following in regard to how her mother used to advise her when she joined University.

"it's only your mother who can tell you men are like this this this, but they are also like this this this, watch out!" she starts off, "but look at my mother….she would say, 'Susan, come! Turn around! I used to have bigger ones…bigger hips! And now they are not there!' and that would always mix me up. I always

used to wear long dresses, trousers and if I could wear t-shirts I would to cover my hips because I though my mother must have problems with them."

While the programs generally promote positive messages, these findings highlight the complexities involved in breaking down deeply ingrained negative female gender stereotypes. Even well-meaning individuals can inadvertently perpetuate harmful narratives. It is crucial for content creators and hosts of television programs to be mindful of the potential impact of their words and framing choices to avoid reinforcing harmful stereotypes and promote a more inclusive and equitable society.

C. Social Cultural Framing and Female Gender Stereotypes

This study found that social cultural framing is actively woven into the fabric of these programs. Hosts like Madam Queenter Mbori of Her Standards and Madam Grace Kuria of Her Say consistently acknowledge and discuss the existing cultural norms and expectations placed upon women in Kenyan society. This acknowledgement is not simply passive, but rather serves as a springboard for deconstruction. For example, in Story 5, the guest Ruth Mayaka- Ground Operations Manager JamboJet during a segment on gender balance in aviation says the following:

"Aviation industry is a male dominated industry but in JamboJet female gender is at 54%....women who are passionate, skilled and self-driven are absorbed in the company"

In Story 6, the guest Fardosa Hassan says the following:

"The community believe here believe that educating a girl is not that important, but I knew I had to do it …the community has been promoting the boychild mostly and I'm here to change the narrative and empower girls and women."

In Story 1, the guest Prophetess Lesley Osei said the following:

"Women, there's nothing like full balance. I know the society has set us to strive for perfection….as a mother your kids are in need of you, they need you for homework, they need you to pray over them, they need you to do something and so there's nothing like let me sit in a room by myself….most women also be like 'I can't clean, I can't cook…' and they end up depressed. One thing I always tell them is that girl you're meant to do all of that, you got to learn how to find some balance."

This approach allows viewers to see these limitations – the expectation that women must choose between career and family – as cultural constructs, not inherent truths. By presenting alternative narratives and successful women who defy these stereotypes, the programs offer viewers a more empowering perspective.

Furthermore, this study found that social cultural framing goes beyond simply deconstructing stereotypes. Programs like Woman Without Limits, hosted by Rev. Kathy Kiuna and Her Say hosted by Madam Grace Kuria, actively celebrate and reframe traditional strengths associated with femininity. Discussions on the importance of women nurturing their families are a common theme. These programs take this concept and reframe it to encompass financial responsibility, leadership within the household, and emotional intelligence. This

reframing empowers women and acknowledges the multifaceted nature of their contributions. It moves away from the singular stereotype of the passive caretaker and celebrates the complex web of skills and strength that Kenyan women possess. For instance, in Story 6, Madam Grace Kuria has Madam Monica Geingos who holds the following power, besides being a mother:

"She is the first lady of the republic of Namibia and a qualified lawyer as well…she was a co-shareholder and managing director of Namibia's largest private equity fund, she served on the boards of larger public and private sector companies as either chairperson or deputy chairperson and deeply a meaningful role in the private sector development."

Additionally, this study found that social cultural framing allows the programs to be inclusive and celebrate the diversity of Kenyan womanhood. We saw entrepreneurs from rural areas like Fardasa Hassan in Story 6, corporate executives like Norah Odweso in Story 2, and activists like Madam Ruth in Story 7 – all sharing their unique stories and perspectives. In this way, both programs worked toward constructing numerous versions of womanhood, isolating women as rich individuals requiring respect and valued included in society. By featuring women from various ethnicities, social backgrounds, and professions, the shows actively challenge the idea of a monolithic female identity. This erases stereotype sex roles that are culturally attached to the women of Kenya and embraces the African women's diverse roles and personal identity.

In conclusion, this study found that social cultural framing within these Kenyan television programs plays a crucial role in dismantling negative female stereotypes. It is not just an unused tool but also a process voluntarily adopted by the hosts and the guests. This is because by embracing current cultural practices, repositioning familiar feminine assets and portraying different Kenyan women's experiences, the programs present the audience with a more affirmative way of understanding themselves as women. Such change in attitude may impose a threat to stereotyping and engage women to conquer barriers and achieve their dreams.

8. Summary and Conclusion

Kenyan television programming has shifted away from negative framing of women's roles, instead promoting a positive narrative of female empowerment. Shows like "Her Standards," "Her Say," and "Woman Without Limits" actively highlight women's successes in male-dominated fields, such as aviation and business. This strategic framing challenges traditional stereotypes and presents women as capable leaders making significant contributions to society.

These programs feature a diverse range of successful women, from CEOs to community leaders, showcasing the multifaceted nature of womanhood. By highlighting their achievements and challenges, the shows counter stereotypes that confine women to domestic roles and present them as resilient, determined individuals. Additionally, the programs emphasize the importance of female networks and mentorship, illustrating the strength and power of sisterhood and collaboration.

In conclusion, the use of positive framing and social cultural

analysis in Kenyan television programs is crucial in countering negative female stereotypes. By showcasing women's achievements, strength, and diverse experiences, these shows offer a nuanced and empowering perspective on Kenyan womanhood. This approach not only challenges stereotypes but also inspires and empowers women to pursue their goals and defy societal limitations.

9. Study Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the use of frames in Kenyan television programming content to break negative female gender stereotypes, the following recommendations were suggested to address the identified concerns:

The media should use positive framing by emphasizing the positive qualities and achievements of female characters, avoiding harmful stereotypes and portraying them as capable and independent individuals.

Kenyan television programming should promote diverse female characters who are not limited to traditional stereotypes but are portrayed in a wide range of professions and situations, avoiding objectification and focusing on their personalities, skills, and contributions to the story.

Media should increase female representation behind the scenes by involving more women in the creation of content, from writing and directing to producing and editing, and providing mentorship programs and training opportunities for aspiring female filmmakers to help them develop their skills and break into the industry

References

[1] Akinbobola, Y. (2019). Neoliberal feminism in Africa. Soundings, 71(71), 50-61.
[2] Atkin, D. J., Moorman, J., & Lin, C. A. (1991). Ready for prime time: Network series devoted to working women in the 1980s. Sex Roles, 25, 677-685.
[3] Berger, A. A. (2012). Media and society: A critical perspective. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
[4] Bernard, J. (2009). Women, wives, mothers: Values and options. Aldine Transaction.
[5] Brantner, C., Geise, S., & Lobinger, K. (2012, June). Fractured Paradigm? Theories, concepts and methodology of visual framing research: a systematic review. In Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA)–visual communication studies division, pp. 1-40.
[6] Carter, M. J. (2013). The hermeneutics of frames and framing: An examination of the media's construction of reality. Sage Open, 3(2), 2158244013487915.
[7] Chong, D., & Druckman, J. N. (2007). Framing theory. Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci., 10, 103-126.
[8] Couldry, N., & Hepp, A. (2018). The mediated construction of reality. John Wiley & Sons.
[9] De Vreese, C. H. (2005). News framing: Theory and typology. Information design journal+ document design, 13(1), 51-62.
[10] Dill, K. E., & Thill, K. P. (2007). Video game characters and the socialization of gender roles: Young people's perceptions mirror sexist media depictions. Sex roles, 57, 851-864.
[11] Ellemers, N. (2018). Gender stereotypes. Annual review of psychology, 69(1), 275-298.
[12] Fombang, T. N. (2023). The analysis of gender representations in selected South African Television Soap Operas (Doctoral dissertation).
[13] Gallagher, M. et al., 2010, 'Who Makes the News? Global Media Monitoring Project 2010,' World Association for Christian Communication, London and Toronto.
[14] Gauntlett, D., & Hill, A. (2002). TV living: Television, culture and everyday life. Routledge.

[15] Gilpatric, K. (2010). Violent female action characters in contemporary American cinema. Sex Roles, 62(11-12), 734-746.
[16] Gsdrc_Admin. (2015, October 28). Gender and media - GSDRC. GSDRC-Governance, Social Development, Conflict and Humanitarian Knowledge Services.
[17] https://gsdrc.org/topic-guides/gender/gender-and-media/
[18] Hall, S. (2007). Encoding and decoding in the television discourse. In CCCS selected working papers (pp. 402-414). Routledge.
[19] Kahlenberg, S. G., & Hein, M. M. (2010). Progression on Nickelodeon? Gender-role stereotypes in toy commercials. Sex roles, 62, 830-847.
[20] Kahlor, L. A., & Morrison, D. (2007). The impact of a health communication campaign on select mediators of behavior change. Journal of Health Communication, 12(2), 137-157.
[21] Kaul, S., & Sahni, S. (2010). Portrayal of women in television (TV) serials. Studies on home and Community science, 4(1), 15-20.
[22] Kitzinger, J. (2007). Framing and frame analysis. Media studies: Key issues and debates, 134-161.
[23] Kubey, Robert and Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly (1991) Television and the Quality of Life: How Viewing Shapes Everyday Experience, Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
[24] Lauzen, M. M., Dozier, D. M., & Horan, N. (2008). Constructing gender stereotypes through social roles in prime-time television. Journal of broadcasting & electronic media, 52(2), 200-214.
[25] Lee, B., & McLeod, D. M. (2020). Reconceptualizing cognitive media effects theory and research under the judged usability model. Review of Communication Research, 8, 17-50.
[26] Lakoff, G. (2008). Women, fire, and dangerous things: What categories reveal about the mind. University of Chicago press.
[27] Macharia, J. W. (2016). The Portrayal of Men and Women in the Media: The African Landscape. Journal of Communication and Media Research, 8(1).
[28] Matty, S. (2012). The Implications of Female American Ideals Presented in Popular Television and Advertising.
[29] Mburu, S. N. (2022). Representation of the Disabled in the Media: a Study of Beyond the Limit Tv Programme (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).
[30] Merma-Molina, G., Avalos-Ramos, M. A., & Martínez Ruiz, M. Á. (2022). Gender stereotypes: persistence and challenges. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal, 41(7), 1112-1135.
[31] Niemiec, R. M., Sekar, S., Gonzalez, M., & Mertens, A. (2020). The influence of message framing on public beliefs and behaviors related to species reintroduction. Biological Conservation, 248, 108522.
[32] Nwaoklipe, O. N (2014) Representation of Women's Images in Nigerian Newspapers in New Media and Mass Communication, 26, 2014.
[33] Omari, Beatrice P., "Portrayal of Women in Kenya's Print Media: A Study of Daily Nation, the Standard, and Kenya Times, June 2002 to June 2003" (2008).
[34] Pearson, J., West, R and Turner, L.2005 Gender and Communication. The Third Edition. Brown and Benchmark Publishers.
[35] Santoniccolo, F., Trombetta, T., Paradiso, M. N., & Rollè, L. (2023). Gender and Media Representations: A Review of the Literature on Gender Stereotypes, Objectification and Sexualization. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 20(10), 5770.
[36] Scharrer, E., Kim, D. D., Lin, K. M., & Liu, Z. (2006). Working hard or hardly working? Gender, humor, and the performance of domestic chores in television commercials. Mass Communication & Society, 9(2), 215-238.
[37] Sim, J., Saunders, B., Waterfield, J., & Kingstone, T. (2018). Can sample size in qualitative research be determined a priori?. International journal of social research methodology, 21(5), 619-634.
[38] Sher, S., & McKenzie, C. R. (2008). Framing effects and rationality. The probabilistic mind: Prospects for Bayesian cognitive science, 79-96.
[39] Singh, N., Dalal, M. P., & Singh, M. H. (2015). Type of Women's Image Portrayed in TV Serials. Editorial Board, 4(4), 134.
[40] Smith, S. L., Pieper, K. M., Granados, A., &Choueiti, M. (2010). Assessing gender-related portrayals in top-grossing G-rated films. Sex roles, 62, 774-786.
[41] Wood, J. (2011) Communication, Gender and Culture. Belmont: Thompson Wadsworth.
[42] Zhou, Y., & Moy, P. (2007). Parsing framing processes: The interplay between online public opinion and media coverage. Journal of communication, 57(1), 79-98.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Content Analysis Code

Frames usage in Kenyan TV programming and gender stereotypes		
Positive Framing	**Negative Framing**	**Social Cultural Framing**
Are women defined by their societal roles? How are female guests introduced, developed, and resolved within the storyline?	How are women's roles and experiences discussed in the programs? How are gender stereotypes topics carried about?	How are cultural norms and social expectations related to gender addressed and framed within the programs?

Appendix 2: Selected Stories for this Study

No.	Story Title	Name of Program	TV Station aired	Host Name	Date Published	Link to the Story
1	Prophetess Lesley Osei - If My Husband Fails, Blame Me (Woman Without Limits)	Woman Without Limits	Citizen TV	Rev. Kathy Kiuna	Oct 1, 2023	https://youtu.be/UFKqVe_jwXg?si=ucoQvBWWmf9Je0q3
2	Woman Without Limits - Norah Odweso (PART 1)	Woman Without Limits	Citizen TV	Rev. Kathy Kiuna	Sep 27, 2021	https://youtu.be/_RT2A6uJKfQ?si=VGckg6RspqJHzFoH
3	Woman Without Limits - Dr. Susan Gitau (PART 2)	Woman Without Limits	Citizen TV	Rev. Kathy Kiuna	Aug 2, 2020	https://youtu.be/cZEgC2yCmHs?si=PlNb0dqqbj4vsGy7
4	The Power Of Believing In Yourself & What You Can Achieve Through It	Her Standards	KTN Home	Madam Queenter Mbori	June 6, 2022	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZfUrSVXnDrY
5	Gender Balance In Aviation Industry In Kenya	Her Standards	KTN Home	Madam Queenter Mbori	July 5, 2022	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_IMDGME4pU
6	Inspiring The Girl Child In Pastoralist Communities~ Fardosa Hassan|| Her Standards	Her Standards	KTN Home	Madam Queenter Mbori	May 14, 2022	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3jPmC8RTz9g
7	LIVE|| "Her Say"- A candid conservation with Namibia's first Lady H.E Monica Geingos	Her Say	TV 47	Madam Grace Kuria	Nov 25, 2023	https://www.youtube.com/live/p0HsF-Hoj84?si=Ah4yv9WKAM_6CC52
8	Kenya tops the list on cases of harassment in newsrooms	Her Say	TV 47	Madam Grace Kuria	Sep 2, 2023	https://youtu.be/I0PH05xvfv0?si=NBqzCOIzFqixCRWU
9	Live: Exclusive With US Ambassador to Kenya Meg Whitman	Her Say	TV 47	Madam Grace Kuria	Oct 13, 2023	https://www.youtube.com/live/0544R7VlD1M?si=1bbGAwwM7Mpbsr06