PERSPECTIVES OF FEMALE JOURNALISTS ABOUT FRAMING OF WOMEN ISSUES IN WOMEN MAGAZINES IN KENYA'S DAILY NEWSPAPERS

BY

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DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been presented for an award of a degree in any other university.

Signature... Date......16\11\2021..........

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This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

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Dr. Samuel Siringi

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my family, thank you for your support and constant encouragement.

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the perspectives of female journalists about the framing of women issues in women magazines in Kenya's daily newspapers. The study objectives were: to find out how female journalists view the portrayal of women in women magazines; to analyse the reasons behind female journalists' views on portrayal of women in women newspapers; and to examine determinants of the content published in women magazines. Guided by the framing theory and supported by the feminist theory as the theoretical frameworks, the research approach was qualitative in nature. A case study of Daily Nation and The Standard newspaper was carried out. Purposive sampling was used to select nine women journalists with various specialties including reporters, editors and sub-editors. The study collected data using interviews and focus group discussions. The instrument used was an interview guide. Data analysis involved segmenting the information into coded chunks and thereafter establishing various themes. The results were presented in narrations. From the findings, current women magazines are profoundly narrow in terms of content and coverage mainly due to stereotypes, lack of qualified journalists, marketing demands, patriarchy at decision making levels, and lack of gender specific policies to address how to frame content for magazines targeting specific gender and gender bias and sexism. The study findings indicate that even the women journalists are not impressed by the content offered in these magazines.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter looks into the background of women and media starting with the women's movements and studies that have been done over time. It also discusses the problem statement, the research objectives and questions. It further contains the justification and scope of the study.

1.2 Background of the study

Social and political struggles always seek favourable coverage by the media. This is because media as a public sphere plays a big role in shaping public opinions and social belief systems about certain issues (Mcluhan, 1964). Additionally, some theories have established a correlation between the media and how we perceive the world around us, gender roles included. The social learning theory advances that knowledge is acquired through interaction in society, observation and by coaching (Bandura, 977). Additionally, media's presentation of a social phenomenon has been found to have an influence on an individual's interpretation of meanings. (Goffman, 1974). Through subtle or direct signs, images, selection, exclusion and elaboration, certain preferred views are continually spread to the rest of the community.

With the feminist movements in the 1960s and 1970s, media received a lot of criticism for reinforcing and legitimizing the dominant culture and values of male domination over women (Watkins and Emerson 2000). Studies in the 1970s unearthed some trends in women representation (Dominick and Rauch 1972; McNeil 1974). It was revealed that women received little coverage and were often presented in subordinate roles and in private spaces like those of

housewives and secretaries. Men on the other hand were assumed to be breadwinners and were given authority. In advertising, women were targeted only for their purchasing power as house-hold caretakers or as objects of sexuality and therefore needed to be enhanced to be more attractive to men. Important issues affecting women like unemployment, domestic abuse, wage discrimination often received little to no attention. It also emerged that the little coverage that made it to the media was often placed on the women's section as opposed to the news section.

With the pressure arising from the feminist movements, media tended to play down these issues (Gans 1979; Gitlin 1980; Douglas 1994). For example, certain terms were used by the media to refer to the women's liberation movement including "antics of a handful of disgruntled, unattractive bra burners", hostile, aggressive man-haters (Kahn and Goldberg 1991: 106). This trend can still be witnessed in Kenya as revealed by several studies (Kibui and Mwaniki 2014, Oyaro, 2007, Omari 2003, Thuo 2012).

Societal development has seen women rise to occupy different positions such as leadership and political roles and this has presented a tricky situation to the media which has for a long time portrayed women mostly in private spaces. While this phenomenon has impacted media production and packaging in an effort to cater for the multiple identities as can be seen in the programming, and sectioning that range from soap operas, beauty and fashion magazines to women in business and politics; to a large extent media content is still informed by gender assumptions (Watkins and Emerson, 2000). In what he termed as a "sex/gender system", Gayle Rubin defined the phenomenon as a "set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity, and in which these transformed sexual needs are met" (Rubin cited in Thuo 1975: 159). There is a notable difference for instance when covering politics. While emphasize is placed on gender and family situation when covering

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female politicians, experience and political record is given priority when covering men. Often times, the media has resorted to the use of gender frames for example Hon. Martha Karua was referred to as the only man in President Kibaki's regime due to her firm stand during the power sharing talks after Kenya's post-election violence. (Oyaro, 2007)

According to Rosalind Gill, media in the present era has grown a certain kind of sensibility pertaining to what constitute femininity. For example, whereas earlier projections painted women as sexual objects, media in the post feminism era paints women as sexual subjects (Gill, 2007). In this era, women are assumed to be empowered enough to make choices and therefore they are responsible for their actions. Femininity is basically defined by the kind of body in question whereby a sexy body is a sense of identity and therefore needs constant monitoring and checks. This is illustrated by the many lifestyle material and products targeting women such as body enhancement products, diet and services such as cosmetic surgery. This picture of a modern woman as painted by media fails to take into account the pressures that might leave no choice for women but to conform. For example, with programmes that seem to glorify cosmetic surgery, it is easy for a teenage girl with self-esteem problems to start seeing themselves in a certain way.

A global media monitoring exercise carried out in 71 countries found out that only 7 percent of the world news subjects were women (Media Watch 1995) This exercise was repeated 5 years later in the year 2000 covering 70 countries and the results were almost similar, only 18 percent of news subjects were made of women (Gallagher, 2003). This situation is not different in Kenya. The patriarchal nature of the Kenyan society has been transferred into the media industry and this is reflected in coverage, placement and the nature of what constitutes news.

Mazrui and Njogu (2005:2) note that through socialization, learning institutions and other social spaces like the media, boys and girls are conditioned on how to behave and what roles to play in society. This stereotyping and the language used against women ultimately impacts on the perception that women have about themselves and that of the society at large about their abilities to undertake certain tasks like politics and development. With constant repetitions, these representations are normalized and accepted by the society. For instance, in an effort to boost gender equality, the government of Kenya through the 2010 Constitution put in place a framework to ensure women participation in governance. Article 81 (b) stipulates that not more than two-thirds of the members of elective public bodies shall be of the same gender. Article 27 further mandates the government to develop and pass policies and laws to ensure adherence to this. However, this is yet to be realized many years later. There are opposing views not only from the society but also the unwillingness of the women fraternity to actively seek elective posts instead, they are settling for lesser positions that are created through affirmative action.

To actively engage women in leadership, political involvement, education, sexual relations, health and reproductive rights, education and career choices, the media should play a key role in the representation of women as part of a holistic approach towards women empowerment.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Media has become part of our daily lives that is like a window through which we see and engage with the rest of the world. Therefore, not only does the media inform the public about what is happening around them but it also influences opinions, attitudes and beliefs (Mcluhan 1964). To attain gender equality media should positively portray women through quality and quantity coverage but this has not been the case as revealed by many studies.

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Achira (2015) found out that in the advertising industry in Kenya, women are often portrayed in stereotypical roles that mostly focus on them being the nurturing mother or the alluring seductress; their main role being to physically decorate. This was supported by Kimuna (2003) findings which revealed that television commercials are often dominated by stereotypical gender images and roles. A content analysis by Thuo (2012) found out that there is a disparity in the way the media has covered women and men politicians. There are fewer stories covering women in politics and these stories are given less prominence (2012:93). Concerns of women rarely feature in what can be termed as news i.e "make the news" (Omari 2003). When it comes to governance and matters to do with development, women rarely give any contribution. Mostly they are used as props to highlight social happenings in society. Women photos are used to showcase culture, art and media but even then men's photos. The Global Media Monitoring project (2015) further revealed that whereas women are shown as victims of calamities, poverty, domestic violence and discrimination, men on the other hand are portrayed as victims of war, terrorism and state-sponsored violence. The findings also show that women rarely feature in stories to do with political participation, peace and security.

While the issue of women and the media has attracted many researchers both locally and internationally, most of them have concentrated on content analysis to prove that gender stereotypes do exist in the media. There is hardly any research that has engaged those in the media and especially the women who work on the female magazines. This is the newspaper section that has the most stories that touch on women.

In an effort to attain equal representation of gender and coverage, the media allocated women special sections in newspapers packaged as women magazines. These sections are handled by female journalists and this makes them important as far as gender equality in media is concerned.

Have these magazines breached the gender gap, is separating content boosting a genderless society, have women received greater visibility through the women magazines and if not, what are the reasons?

This study aims to source for the opinions of those handling these magazines and views about findings that have shown that women are not well represented by the media. Do they agree with the findings, what could be the reason behind it and possible solutions?

1.4 Objectives of the study

1.4. 1 Main objective

This study aimed to get the views of female journalist's on the framing of women issues by women magazines in Kenya's daily newspapers; do they find it to be satisfactory?

1.4.2 Specific objectives

1. To find out how female journalists view the portrayal of women in women magazines.

2. To analyse the reasons behind female journalists' views on portrayal of women in women newspapers.

3. To examine determinants of the content published in women magazines

1.4.2 Research questions

1. What are your views on the portrayal of women in women magazines in terms of quality and quantity of coverage?

2. Why are women portrayed in the magazines the way they do?

3. What determines the content published in women magazines?

1.5 Justification of the study

Attainment of gender equity is recognized by the government as a milestone towards the realization of Vision 2030, a plan that will enable Kenya achieve middle-income status by 2030. This will ensure that women will achieve and enjoy same treatment as men against societal norms that have seen women being discriminated against. This came with the realization that women make up a big percentage of the Kenyan population and therefore their active participation in all arrears of development is required if Vision 2030 is to be achieved.

While the government has come up with various initiatives to ensure gender representation, there are various historical hindrances such as cultural and religious resistance, poverty, population growth and lack of adequate representation in key decision making levels. (Kibui & Mwaniki 2014). While communication cannot solve all the problems, without it, most initiatives will not take off. Media has the ability to influence perceptions, the cultural beliefs and this is why it is imperative that media portray women in an appropriate way.

While several studies have established that to a large extent gender disparity exist in media coverage, the situation has not improved over time. Therefore, this paper is a step further in trying to find out not only if gender roles are defined by the media but also if the media is aware of this and what might be contributing to this situation.

1.6 Rationale of the study

The research will contribute to the scholarly work on gender and the media by adding a new dimension and hopefully unearth some key information that can be useful to media houses and other bodies concerned.

The media will benefit from this study as it will inform them about their position in bridge the gender gap through women's magazines. They will also learn about the hindrances and if need be it will assist in developing a better framework that will help achieve this.

The findings will also help the government and private stakeholders keen on achieving gender equality especially in tailoring their communication

1.7 Scope of the study

The study focused on getting the view of women journalists working in the two main newspaper companies in Kenya; The Standard and Nation newspapers. The two media houses were chosen to represent the different media in Kenya. This is because they are the only media houses that have daily newspapers with women magazines as pullouts. The two media houses also command the largest audience in Kenya. Nation newspaper has a daily circulation of over 100,000 copies followed by Standard newspaper with a daily circulation of over 50,000 copies. These media house not only have newspapers but they also have television stations, radio and online platforms. Nation media has different newspapers that target different audiences. This includes The Nation newspaper, Business Daily, Taifa Leo and The East African. Standard Group has two main newspapers, The Standard newspaper and The Nairobian. The research targeted women working in these two companies and specifically they must be assigned to work on the women magazines.

1.8 Operational definition

This study made use of following key terms: Women, women magazines, Female journalist, Daily Newspapers, portrayal, media, gender, stereotype, perspectives, Gender representation. These words as used the study are defined as follows:

Woman: Female human being, as used in this study a woman is a female aged 15-49

Women magazine: Magazines targeting women readers

Daily newspaper: A newspaper that is printed every day. As used in this research it includes Standard newspaper and Nation newspaper

Female journalist: A woman journalist. In this study, they are the women journalists assigned to work on Eve magazine or Saturday magazine either as writers, sub-editors, Editors or Managing Editors

Representation: To show something in a particular way; it's an important part in construction of meaning during communication. Language, signs and images are used to stand for/represent a certain meaning (Hall, 1997).

Gender: Set and accepted differences between men and women in a community

Stereotypes: Constructed notions that are commonly shared about a certain group of people or thing that may not necessarily be true.

Framing: To arrange a communication in a manner that is likely to draw focus on certain aspects that are likely to elicit a desired reaction through excluding, putting emphasis or repetition, and elaboration

Portrayal: To depict something or someone in a particular way, to represent something

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This section explores various works that have been done on the subject of women and media. It looks at how women journalists are faring in the industry and if having more women in the media improves coverage of women issues. It also looks at how media has contributed to creation of various stereotypes and what could be contributing to women's invisibility in media coverage. Finally, it also highlights the various policies that have been put in place to promote gender equality.

2.2 State of women journalists in the media industry

Antonio Gramsci in his theory of cultural hegemony explains the relationship between power ownership and control. He posits that those who control and have access to the means of production use various institutions like the media to reinforce certain ideologies that work in their favour in an effort to maintain and retain power. Without the need to use violence the ruling class gain consent from the ruled and certain ideas are adopted by all and made to be the norm. While these ideas are seen to benefit everyone, they only serve the interests of a few in societies. In this regard, media as an important institution in society can be used to manipulate people's way of life. For this reason, media scholars like Lisbert van Zoonen, Deborah Chambers, Linda Steiner, Coleen Morna, Margaret Gallagher, have all pointed out the importance of having more women journalists in the media. (Solomon, 2006).

How women feature in different levels of media organisations will have an influence on how issues affecting women are covered. If there are more women in the upper level of management, they are likely to be involved in decision making in relation to gender, investment and employment while those in mid-level management will have an impact on media content including representation and coverage of women (Martin 2002). The argument is that if women had the authority to decide what constitute news and how news should be packaged by being involved in the process of gathering news, editing, gate keeping and eventually presentation and selling, then there would be more news on women and positive representation. This however is yet to be realized as reports indicate.

A regional study by Eastern Africa Journalists Association (2008) on improving gender equality found out that only 3 percent of the total number of women journalists who are employed in media companies occupy managerial positions. This is the level at which decisions are made. It was noted that even though all the interviewees had university education, there was a difference when it came to securing job promotions and also the general conditions under which they worked. Seventy one percent of the interviewees said that gender did not play a role when it came to remuneration for work done but the other twenty nine percent (29%) thought that being a woman or man determined the salary you would be paid for the same amount of work done. On the issue of paid maternity leave the interviewees were divided into half, one section agreeing that their workplace provided paid maternity and the other section saying no.

The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) 2015 report indicate that since 2005 to 2015, there was no improvement in the amount of news reported by female journalists. Overall only 37% of newspaper bylines and newscast reports were of female journalists. Radio has the highest number of women journalists at 41% while print news has the lowest at only

35%. It was also revealed that age plays a factor on Television and anchoring. Women presenters and reporters dominate the market when they're young however the numbers go down with age and at 50, men start to take over. The report indicates that there are no women television presenters at the age of 65 years and above meaning that women totally give up on this profession at this age.

An analysis by the Media Council of Kenya focusing on a vernacular radio station and their reporting of Kenya's International Criminal Court case shows that the situation is not different locally. Out of 2782 news stories analyzed 74% of the stories published were written by male journalists. In another study by the media council in March 2012, 276 articles about pre-election were analysed in four newspapers; Daily Nation, Standard, Star and The People. The trend was the same, only 7% of the stories were of female reporters/journalists. (Media Council of Kenya, 2015)

2.3 Women journalists and women visibility

Some studies indicate that indeed having more women in the media will lead to more coverage of women issues. A 15 years study by WACC (2015) revealed that 14% of stories written by female journalists were on women, compared to 9% that were done by male reporters. (WACC report (2015). Further, findings from a content analysis done by Omari (2008), on the Portrayal of Women in Kenya's Print media indicate that most stories written about women are normally written by fellow women. A big percentage, 76% of stories that touched on matters affecting women during his period of study were written by women journalist. Male journalists wrote the other 24% of stories but when analysed, it showed that these stories written by men about women showcased them as victims of rape, violence or their involvement in crime. Women

journalist on the other hand painted a different picture of a woman. In their stories women were strong, they were in politics, they gave opinions on important matters both at home and the country, they were in business and they were leaders. Although women writers positively portrayed women, they were not exempted from the general biases of the larger community. They were also unfair when reporting rape, gender based violence, early marriage just like male reporters. (Omari, 2008)

2.4 Depiction of women and gender stereotyping in the media

Over the years, the topic of gender stereotypes in media has attracted significant attention from researchers across the world. They have concluded that women are negatively portrayed by the media. According to Alexander & Hanson (2001), mass media tend to instil some notion of incompleteness or lacking on women by telling them what they need or how to be in order to push merchandise through advertising. This creates an obsession with beauty and physical appearance at the expense of other abilities. They argued that in most cases, if women are not portrayed as sex objects, they are most often shown as victims of violence or homemakers. This agrees to the findings of a content analysis by Mcmillin (1980) on Indian television programs which revealed that women who appeared on television during news hour were motly in home setups or featured in beauty setups that aimed to satisfy mens sexual wants.

Bretl & Cantor (1988) did a content analysis of USA television commercials over a period of 15 years and revealed some trends. The results showed that whereas earlier on media preferred female characters for commercials, there was some improvement in use of both men and female characters during the period. However, there was a difference in how these characters were cast. Women were continually cast in domestic settings and in advertising products used in the home

such as cleaning agents and decor. It also emerged that compared to men, women were cast in professional roles and often the voice overs were done by men. This difference in representation was also captured by the Global Media Monitoring Project (1995). The report said that in news, women were featured in a limited number of ways, as helpless individuals caught up in negative sexual situations, their bodies and looks were given prominence over abilities

which reported that women appear in news media in narrow and a mostly negative range of roles as victims of circumstances such as rape and various forms of domestic violence. Kafiris (2005) further agreed that women are generally portrayed in a limited number of roles. Sexualized images of women are common, and women tend to be defined in terms of their physical appearance and not on their abilities.

In a study conducted by Tenglerová (2013) to examine representations of women and men in popular Czech newspapers, the findings revealed that in the Czech media, women are presented significantly less often than men. The mentions of women were found to be concentrated in the back pages of newspapers. Men were found to be presented in positions of authority significantly more often than women. This agrees to earlier findings by Lind & Salo (2002) whereby in a content analysis of 35,000 hours of ABC, CNN, PBS and NPR news and public affair content, they found out that there are no changes in the way women movements were featured in the 60's and 70's compared to the present. Women deemed as feminists rarely received any mention by the media and when they did, they were often demonized and were shown in a personalized and trivialised manner.

Shartiely (2005) carried out a study in Tanzania on how television commercials portray women. The study found out that advertisers employ linguistic and non-linguistic ways that promote gender stereotyping. The study concluded that the advertisements showed men and women

differently in that they allotted women petty and family roles as compared to their male counterparts. Female advertisers were also presented as beautiful, soft, sensual, passive, and submissive and lacked any purchasing power.

Higiro (2002) conducted a content analysis on pictorial portrayal of women in print media between January and June 2002. The research the images printed by the Daily Nation and The Standard newspapers. It was noted that the front page photos were mostly those of men and on rare occasions when women made it to the front page, the stories were mostly to do with their physical looks or gossip. An earlier research by Guido et al. (1979) had also pointed out this phenomenon. The study which focused on advertisements and use of photography in radio, television, and films concluded that physical traits of women act as the main attraction. For women to appear in adverts they have to look in certain way, this is also true in entertainment and other television programmes. This predetermined view fails to also highlight the presence of women in other arrears in society like leadership and Nation building. At the end of it all, this depiction becomes inaccurate.

2.5 Factors contributing to the gender stereotyping

According to Gallagher (1981), the media perceives women as not suitable to hold high job ranks because they are busy occupied with domestic duties and maternal roles and in cases where they are employed, they can only assume service occupations and not the authoritative posts. Gallagher also voiced this concern at the 1995 International Women's Conference that took place in Beijing. She said that internationally, newspapers and television lacked fair coverage of women, they failed to show the other more important side of women where they contribute in

improving livelihoods of communities and thus emphasized on the need for a balanced system that incorporates women and girls in their different functions.

Tuchman (1978), blames this phenomenon on the lack of equity in general. If women are not visible in politics or in economic advancements, then they will definitely lack in media. They have limited access to media and therefore have no way of narrating their experiences in a way that can prove useful. This would explain the lack of women in news.

African Women Media Centre (AWMC, 1999), attributed the disparity in male and female portrayal to male dominance in most media stations. According to AWMC, the picture that has been painted about women especially in Africa is distorted. The organisation argued that culture is a major hindrance to women who are striving to advance their careers in the media industry. It was noted that in Africa and particularly in Kenya, traditionally women were likened to children when it came to what they are able to do. This sets a base upon which women candidates are judged, their capabilities are diminished upon this judgement especially in leadership roles. Because this stereotype is planted at a young age, women grow up hesistant to seek positions of responsibility and men grow up not trusting to let women lead.

Kameri-Mbote (2013) blames the gender discrepancy on failure by the Kenyan government to make sure that the laws of the country match international laws on human rights. This omission echoes the cultural norms that put women at a disadvantaged position. Men continue to be superior whereas women are relegated to the background. This was evidenced by representation of women in the then electorate whereby according to Inter-Parliamentary Union (2008), even though women made up 52% of the electorate, only 8% out of 222 members of parliament (Mps) were women. This proportion was low compared to other countries for instance in Rwanda 48%

of MPs were women, 41% in Nordic countries, 21% in North America, 19% in Europe, 18% in Asia, and 13% in South America.

A Kenya government policy document (2006) agrees that media plays a critical role in educating people and changing mindset. Besides entertaining, it can also amplify the areas that need interventions like health, the importance of human rights, the rule of law, and development. As per this document, media in Kenya has been trapped into cultural beliefs of undermining women. A study by Rose (2010) concluded that the media constantly plays a legitimizing role by reinforcing the dominant culture and norms. This is echoed by Nesbit (1996) who says that journalists use frames and stereotypes to ensure the story attracts the audience

In yet another research by Mbugua, Mubuu, Karuru and Owiti (2001), they argued that since women make up about half the population, excluding their input in development is ultimately a disadvantage to the country. It means that half the population does not take part in formulating policies or that they do not fully participate in development. Their view was that only when society recognises women, appreciate and reward their effort will they fully realise their potential.

Narasimhan (2007) note that women are sexually harassed at workplaces and intimidated in their lines of duty. The findings further revealed that when covering war and conflict, media will often focus on the political aspects ignoring the gender based social and psychological implications. Finally a study by Gerbner (1978) concluded that women receive harsh treatments in all spheres of life be it political economic or cultural. The report observes that in instances where women struggle to rise above this oppression they often receive backlash and disregard in an effort to maintain the status quo that men are superior to women.

2.6 Gender policies and frameworks

2.6.1 The constitution of Kenya 2010

The constitution of Kenya 2010 recognises gender equity as an important aspect in society. Article 27 (3) states that both genders have the right to unbiased treatment and should not be discriminated upon when seeking opportunities in political, economic, cultural and social spheres. Article 81 (b) further explains that in elective positions neither gender should hold more than two-thirds of the positions. Article 177 (b) and 197 futher state 'that gender principles must apply in County Assemblies. However, adoption of the constitution has been slow. (Omari B, 2008). Noted that during his study there were only 18 (8%) women out of the 222 members of parliament, out of the 32 cabinet ministers only 2 (6%) were women.

2.6.2 National Gender Equality Commission

Created in 2011, the commission is tasked with promoting gender equality and freedom from discrimination as per the constitution articles 10, 27, 43, 59 and Chapter Fifteen among others. The functions include facilitating gender mainstreaming, to investigate and act of complaints in relation to discrimination and gender issues, research on matters to do with gender, advice and promote on programmes aiming to promote gender sensitive culture and many more.

2.7 Philosophical Paradigm

According to Rehman (2016), paradigm is a basic belief system. It is assumed that a researcher holds prior knowledge and opinions about the arear under study. These beliefs will ultimately guide a researcher on the kind of study they will undertake be it qualitative, quantitative or mixed method, (Creswell, 2009). A paradigm means the belief system held, the knowledge we have about a subject and how this knowledge was acquired such as faith, intuition, books; what

is referred to as (epistemology). It also looks at the ontology, the mediation that happens between the researcher and the phenomenon that's presented before conclusions are made, i.e what can be deemed as the absolute truth or false can be influenced by the views held. The other tenant of a paradigm is methodology; this looks at the steps to be taken for the researcher to get the data or knowledge desired. According to (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006), a paradigm can be described as a worldview, a perspective, or line of thought. Guba and Lincoln (1994) define a paradigm as a shared set of beliefs that guide an inquiry. And finally Denzin and Lincoln (2000), define paradigms as common held notions that give a preview as to how a researcher reached their conclusions

Paradigms in research are important because they provide an explanation as to why or how the researcher went about collecting and interpreting data. What knowledge did they possess before the study, what perspective do they hold and under what context did they carry the study. So a paradigm tells us how meaning was mediated from the data collected. In this regard, creswell (2009) identified the following paradigms:

The Post Positivist Worldview

This worldview came about after critics levelled towards the positivist worldview. The views were that knowledge is absolute and cannot be mediated. The belief is that human beings exist independently from the truth and therefore there is no negotiation about what is true, false or context. Many scholars felt that while this worldview was effective in research of science and objects, it was not ideal when studying human behaviour.

Post positivist therefore embraced a broader but limited way of collecting data in that it's often guided by a set of ideas or hypotheses or that data is collected to either support or refute a theory.

The Social Constructivist Worldview

Social constructivists assume that individuals hold different views influenced by their surroundings, experiences and those around them. Meanings change from person to person and so the researcher should try as much as possible to capture these views. The questions should not be leading but rather elicit a discussion.

In trying to understand constructivism, Crotty (1998) identified various assumptions:

1. In constructivism meanings are constantly mediated by human being interacting with each other. This can change depending on the parties involved and the different environments they're exposed to and for this reason studies adopting this worldview often use open ended question.

2. That knowledge is passed down from one human being to another from the time they're born and sometimes it changes from one culture to another. Therefore, a researcher needs to understand why people hold certain view and this necessitates the researcher to personally interact with the subjects for them to make informed interpretations.

The Pragmatic Worldview

Pragmatic paradigms hold that people are exposed to knowledge by going through situations, living experiences rather than knowledge simply existing. And for this reason pragmatists are not concerned about the processes that must be followed but rather what solves the problem at hand. It does not have a blueprint of what needs to be done instead each problem needs a unique way of solving it and sometimes these problems need multiple solutions hence the use of mixed method approach design (Maseh, 2015). Each researcher will have a chance to decide what works from qualitative and quantitative approaches. They will embrace different techniques, method and procedures that would give them best results.

Pragmatists do not subscribe to having an absolute truth but rather acquiring knowledge in multiple ways that can be acceptable to many. The mixed method hence allows the pragmatist researcher to not only use different methods to collect data but also different tools like questionnaires, interviews guides and even observation schedules (Maseh, 2015).

After analysing the three worldviews, it felt suitable for the researcher to be guided by the Social Constructivist Worldview. The aim is to explore the opinions and various world views of those in the media concerning the gender issue. The constructivists worldview notes that reality is constructed by an individual based on lived and observed experiences and therefore can differ from one individual to the next. It also allowed the researcher to participate in the research through conducting the interviews and moderating the focus group discussions.

According to Creswell (2012), research of this nature relies on the views of the participants under study. The questions need not be leading but rather be open-ended to enable the respondent to reach individual interpretation of the situation. Meanings are reached at by the researcher looking into the varied opinions socially and historically. The researcher will aim to inquire, generate information and have a final opinion of the phenomenon

2.8 Theoretical Framework

2.8.1 Gender theory of liberal feminism

This theory is concerned with men and women and how they are treated in society in regard to fairness in seeking opportunities and freedom. This theory is traced back to Wollstonecrafts

(1792) in her work *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* but it was later supported by early feminists.

Wollstonecrafts urged women not to just accept the earlier stereotypes about their existence but instead to give their input in matters affecting them. She refuted the notion of women being merely objects of desire and giving pleasure. This she said is an impediment to women empowerment. She likened the situation to being caged by societal myths, beliefs, unfair treatment and skewed messaging. This situation she said is not unique to women only but can also affect men were they to be exposed to same conditions. It might be leading to faults in character. She was against the beliefs held in most communities that women are naturally inferior intellectually and physically as compared to men.

To get above the social injustices and inequality, the theory encourages women to get positions of leadership in the society because this way, their voices can be heard. Wollstonecrafts gave some solutions to ending gender inequality some of them being empowerment through education of both genders and that government need to put in place measures and laws that encourage and enhance equality. Lastly the theory encourages change of mindset in society where gender does not play a role when seeking for opportunities but rather it's based on abilities

2.8.2 The Framing theory

This theory argues that the media can evoke favourable responses from the audience by manipulating or emphasizing on selected attributes of an issue. As defined by Chong & Drukman (2007:104), framing refers to how individuals take in information and what goes on before they gain an understanding about the matter. A frame is that which provides meaning to a series of events, information by organizing the daily reality in a manner that can foster a particular

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reaction or understanding for instance in matters to do with politics. This is done through selection, exclusion, elaboration and emphasis.

Entman (1993, 52) "To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described". Fortunado (2005) said that to frame is to present information in a manner that chooses what to accentuate.

While Chong and Drukman acknowledge that audiences are not mere spectators but rather have the power to analyse issues before making decisions, they also explain how framing can influence the decisions we make in what they term as framing effect. They argue that the opinion one holds about an issue is informed by prior information that one has and what their needs are. This prior information is normally stored in the subconscious mind and is retrieved when weighing facts about the problem at hand. This information or perception is referred to as frames in thought, Drukman (2007). The information that is received from a source or media is referred to as frames in communication. A decision about an issue is reached at by analyzing individual thoughts, the prior information that we hold and the communication that we receive. Therefore, frames in communication can influence frames in thought.

The media affect our thinking by making sure that certain information is stored in our minds by constantly exposing us to and emphasizing on a particular aspect that is likely to evoke the desired reaction or response. Framing works either by planting new beliefs in our thoughts, making us retrieve prior beliefs that are stored in our subconscious or making beliefs strong

enough for our consideration during the process of evaluation. Therefore, media plays a role in influencing our thoughts by feeding us with what they want us to know and therefore influencing our thoughts (Druckman 2001). This affects our attitudes by changing the views held about an issue.

Frames in communication can be in form of symbols, endorsements or ideology. Sometimes they can be easy to spot in that its direct information or sometimes they can be hidden. It can be challenging to spot frames in communication but it includes studying trends, comparing coverage by different media and examining the different treatments across different media. (Semetko & Valkenburg 2000). Chong and Druckam give additional guidelines in identifying frames in communication. It starts with identifying an issue meaning that frames are constructed when there are issues. The second step is to isolate a specific attitude for example human rights, or economy; the next step is then to come up with a coding scheme, the final step is to select sources for analysis within the context of the frame.

This will include a content analysis that will focus on presentation, selection of stories and attributes, choice of words and the tone. For example, Thuo (2012) found out that the media used stereotyping frames when referring to Hon Karua as "the only man in" President Kibaki's regime. This was interpreted mean or emphasize on her toughness. The success of Framing depends on the strength and repetition of the frame, audience and their underlying needs and also how competitive the environment is, Chong & Druckman (2007)

Framing can be beneficial or destructive depending on where and how it is used. Some frames can be appealing to an extent that they are taken to be the ultimate truth. They can also control and paint a false picture exposing citizens to manipulation by the elite. Druckman (2001) but on the other hand it can bring unity in people with shared beliefs for instance in social movements. Lack of varied and independent opinions can however be a negative factor where certain groups of people are only interested in benefiting themselves. Chong & Druckman are of the opinion that when people are more informed, they are less likely to be swayed; they will be firm and rarely be affected by frames in communication. To have a strong opinion entails being informed, having discussions and deliberation.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This section presents explanations and sequence of events employed by the researcher in obtaining and presenting data for this particular study. According to Richard (2004) and Ambira (2016), the section should justify why the researcher picked particular measures or techniques in finding, choosing and breaking down data in relation to the research area. This offers an explanation to the reader enabling them to critically gauge to what extent the research can be trusted. Ngulube (2005) further emphasizes on the need for any research, whether educational or otherwise to explain how they went about the study and what lead them to the presented conclusions.

This section therefore explains the various deliberations and arguments that took place before this study settled for the selected research methodology, research design, population and sampling, data collection instruments and methods, validity and reliability; data analysis and presentation and ethical considerations of the study.

3.2 Study site

The interviews were done in four places; the two focus group discussions were conducted in restaurants in Nairobi. Key informant interviews were done at Nation Centre and Standard Group offices at I&M building. Though the media houses have offices in major towns, the study only picked respondents based in Nairobi.

3.3 Research Design

Yin (2009) describes research design as "the logical sequence that connects empirical data to a study's initial research questions" this then will lead to findings and finally attempt to answer the researcher's main objective. Creswell (2014) refers to research design as "types of inquiries" included within the broader research methods such as qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods, Research design provide a plan of action and therefore give guidance.

Qualitative research scholars have agreed on some workable designs (Ambira, 2016). Some of the most preferred methods according to Creswell (2013) include ethnography; a strategy that calls for a researcher to immerse oneself in the world of their subjects to get a better understanding of a situation. This might include beliefs, values and social lives. Others include narrative, case study, grounded theory and phenomenology designs. This research settled on case study as the most appropriate design.

3.3.1 Case Study Research Design

Stake (1995) and Creswell (2009), refer to case study as a technique or plan that focuses on deeply exploring an action, situation or a course. This can target an individual as a subject or a group. A case will be restricted by time and so data is collected in a variety of ways over a specified period of time.

Sturman (1997) defines case study as an inquiry directed at persons, groups or occurrences. It should ultimately give a clear depiction of the situation. It is a wholesome approach that will describe the subject, analyses the case and also give a breakdown of the processes and what was discovered (Mesec 1998). In case studies many factors come into play such as different

variables, the customs and practices that govern the relationship between subjects in order to fully grasp the situation under study.

Simons (2009) stresses on the need for depth when a case study approach is used. It is about assessing and breaking down a situation, mission or programme into many layers. To Moore, Lapan and Quartaroli (2012), a case study offers the subjects a detailed understanding of the matter; it can also shade some light to those interested in the study. It is equated to peeling the mask by dissecting the layers step by step in a manner that those involved can understand and identify with.

Therefore, observing the arguments presented above, this research made use of a case study approach. The subjects under study included Standard Group and Nation Media companies.

Yin (2009) mentioned some of the case studies such as single case studies; multiple case studies; holistic case studies and embedded case studies. For this study embedded case study was utilized. Embedded case study is where there are several units of analysis in one case. Embedded case study provides a chance for the researcher to investigate different items rooted within a larger problem (Maseh, 2015).

3.4 Research Approach

This study was qualitative in nature. (Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011) explain that a study of this nature takes place in a natural setting and that it seeks to gain some meaning through finding a connection in multiple chunks of information. The main reason for undertaking such a study is to gain some knowledge and therefore the researcher is not guided by predetermined variables but rather should have openness when receiving and interacting with respondents. (Ambira, 2016). The opinions and responses from the respondents will guide in drawing conclusions (Creswell

2012). As also as noted by Lincoln and Guba (1985), an attempt of qualitative research is to understand not one, but multiple realities.

The main objective of this research was to get views from female journalists about representation of women in two magazines targeting women, published by Kenya's leading daily newspapers. Creswell (2013) notes that in such studies, the participants need to feel permitted to "share their stories and hear their voices". Thus qualitative methodology was adopted for this study. Mackenzie (2006) says that choice of qualitative method should be informed by a research paradigm. Social Constructivist research paradigm supports this study because the interest is not to find one but multiple realities when interpreting data collected.

3.5 Study Population

Population in research refers to a grouping of individuals or entities to which units of testing can be applied (Maseh, 2015). In both qualitative and quantitative studies, these entities will have a shared knowledge or issue that would be of interest to the researcher. Because sometimes the total number of subjects under study might be broad, it might necessitate picking only a small fraction also termed as the sample. The sample is the actual respondents from which data will originate. (Banarjee & Chaundry 2010; Trochim 2006).

This study focused on two cases, Nation Media and Standard Group Ltd, the population under study is all women journalists. Accurate figures on the number of female journalists assigned in the two publications was not available but an estimate provided by the editors in charge of the magazines places the figure at 10; those working for Saturday Magazine and 11, those working

for Eve Magazine. In total the population is 21 women. The lack of accurate data was attributed the fact that most of these women work on contract basis as correspondents. The issue has been raised by other researchers, for instance Ndũng'ũ (2013) faced similar difficulties. The respondents will be the source of primary data and the other women journalists will give more information to compliment the primary data and also minimise bias.

3.6 Sampling procedure and sample size

Aina and Ajiferuke (2002), propose four factors that one ought to put into consideration when deciding on the number of respondent one of them being the size of population; how big is the area or how many people are affected by the issue; two is the number of units or elements of the study, three is the manner in which data is to be presented and finally the accuracy being sought in findings.

In qualitative studies, Ngulube and Ngulube (2017) say that the "focus is on selecting only those who share the experience of the phenomenon under investigation". (Ngulube & Ngulube 2017) pointed out various ways of selecting respondents including purposive sampling, snowballing, random and sampling stratified.

For this research, purposive sampling was used to select respondents from the study population. This is because the researcher needed to get the views of those in different levels of production hence purposive sampling ensured that only people with the right information were targeted as per the objectives of the study. Tongco (2007) notes that the weaknesses in purposive sampling is actually a strength in that it targets only the individuals who might have the information needed as opposed to random sampling where some respondents might not be familiar with the

issue being investigated. The downside is that it does not give equal opportunity and so there is a chance that information given is not representational or it might be biased.

Purposive sampling gives room for thoughtful selection of informants due to the qualities the informant possesses and for this study twelve women in total made the population comprising of women editors, sub-editors and journalists in different fields.

The table below shows the sample size.

Table 3.1 Categories of respondents

Category	Nation	Respondents	The Standard	Respondents
Managing Editor	1	1	-	-
Editors	1	1	1	1
Sub-editors	-	-	1	1
Other journalists	8			
Total Respondent	**12**			

3.7 Data Collection and instruments

There are a number of ways a researcher can go about sourcing for data but the most used in qualitative inquiries are interviews, observation and analysis of documents (Locke, Silverman & Spirduso 2010). Starks (2007) also agrees that qualitative research frequently relies on interviews.

Saunders et al. (2012:372) describe a research interview "as a purposeful conversation between two or more people requiring the interviewer to establish rapport, to ask concise and clear questions to which the interviewee is willing to respond and to listen attentively".

Pickard (2007) says that interviews are normally conducted when the matter under study is complex to simply or to ask and get straight answers.

For this study, data was collected using two methods, by conducting interviews with key informants and also having focus group discussions. A focus group discussion refers to a group of individuals meeting to deliberate on a particular subject (Herd, 2016). These individual have a shared upbringing, lived experiences or knowledge and are able to contribute to the discussion. Unstructured interviews were used with the help of an interview guide to ensure that the researcher remained within the objectives of the study. The questions were unrestricting to allow the respondent to deeply interact with the issue. Data was stored in recording devices and written notes.

3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

The recorded interviews were transcribed at the end of each discussion. The interpretation included listening and reading through the data and segmenting it into coded chunks. It also involved discarding what was not important. The researcher tried to establish various themes from the information provided. Creswell (2013) advices that to be more impactful, it's better to have fewer themes, about five to seven. The data was presented in narrative format.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

The need for trust of any study is important and thus researchers need to explain the processes and measures they put in place to add trust to their findings. For instance, if a certain measure was to be applied repeatedly to a particular subject it would yield the same reaction over and over, (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

Babbie and Mouton (2001) explain that validity is about making sure that firstly the research is actually investigating what it was intended to investigate. This means that the findings should answer the questions. Two, it can also look at the tools and instruments used to collect data and if they are able to or if they're best suited for the task at hand (Maseh, 2015).

Saunders et al. (2012) say that reliability comes about when the correct measuring tools are used and that when and if the same instruments such as same (questions in a questionnaires) were to be used in a different research of a similar manner, and the same respondents, the results would be similar. A research may also be compared with other similar researches in what can be termed as transferability; also a research design should be clear or transparent enough, just in case other studies wanted to adopt a similar plan to get to the same conclusions in what is referred to as dependability (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011)

Moore, Lapan and Quartaroli (2012) gave suggestions on what can be done to improve validity in qualitative studies. A study can make use of triangulation technique, this means having more than one way of acquiring of measuring same data. It could also mean having multiple sources, or tools and instruments of measuring that can be compared or it can also necessitate to have a second individual, outsider to interpret to eliminate any prior bias that the researcher might have. Sometimes a researcher's own opinions might interfere with the way a study is conducted and

this might necessitate bringing in an outsider. This scenario is referred to as Peer debriefing according to Polit and Beck (2004) and Maseh (2015)

This study made use of triangulation technique. While some respondents were insiders, i.e journalist who worked on the papers including editors and subeditors, another group of respondents was made of outsiders, practising female journalist from other sectors. In addition to conducting focus group discussions, the researcher also used key informant interviews to gain detailed information from the respondents. Triangulation ensures that the two methods complement each other, by countering the limitations of each method as you maximize on the positives. This provided additional information for comparison purposes before conclusions are made.

3.10. Ethical Considerations

The respondents willingly participated in the research and therefore the purpose of the study was explained to them verbally and also in the interview guide before any information was given. Their identities were concealed by use of code names as opposed to their real names and the responses were kept confidential to be used only for the purpose of the study. The right to decline to respond to some questions was respected.

Permission was given by the National Commission for Science and Technology and Innovation to conduct the research. A certificate of fieldwork and a certificate of correction was acquired from the University of Nairobi before data was collected. Further the final paper was tested against plagiarism. This was done by running the document through an anti-plagiarism

application to ensure that all the work that was referred to is acknowledged as per the APA guidelines for the work that has been adopted

Finally, the raw data and other materials used during the research was kept safely even after submitting the final copy. The APA recommends 5 years, Sieber, 1998 recommends 5 to 10 years, (Creswell 2013). Thereafter, it will be discard the data appropriately

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This research aimed to investigate the perspectives of female journalists about framing of issues in women magazines in Kenya's daily newspapers. Focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews were used to collect qualitative data which was presented in narrative format. Two focus groups discussions were held, each with four respondents. The focus group discussions allowed the respondents to interact in a conversation that answered the research questions openly and freely and also explored their opinion on the subject. The aim was to gain more insight into what other journalists from various sectors think and how they respond to the framing of issues in women magazines. These respondents gave information that was used to compare with the data that was collected from the key informants as a form of triangulation and ultimately minimise researcher bias. Four in person interviews were conducted, with three respondents selected from both media houses and one email interview. Two editors, one sub-editor and a Managing editor responded to the questions.

The major findings are presented in this chapter in sub-sections in a manner in which the research objectives and research questions were stated. These are: to find out how female journalists view the portrayal of women in women magazines, to investigate the reasons behind the views about women's portrayal in the women magazines and to investigate the determinants of content in women magazines. Narrative analysis was done and emerging themes from the interviews and the focus group discussions are represented as sub topics within the broader research questions.

4.2 The portrayal of women in women magazines?

The first objective and research question of the study sought to find out the views and thoughts of women journalists on the portrayal of women in women magazines. The findings are discussed below.

4.2.1 The role of women magazines

From the analysis of the feedback of the FGDs and the interviews, the role of the women magazines kept being raised. The role and the impact of these magazines was discussed as the first reason on why these magazines were started and their current role.

All respondents except three agreed there was a need to have women magazines. While the conception and reason behind the start of women-specific magazines in Kenya was clear to the editors of the magazines, the key informants, most respondents felt that the magazines were not serving their purpose. Many believed that the magazines were based on stereotypes and this reason continues to inform the framing of stories in women magazines. A respondent for example asked "you find this story about raising children; will you find the same story in the men's magazine?" One of the key informants who did not support separation of gender issues had this to say

> *"I don't think women should be separated, winnowed or given special media treatment. My personal belief is that we need to mainstream women, their actions and their utterances so that we can get the same treatment as men. All human issues are women's issues too - we live in the same economic, political and social environment as men, so why are we not participating and being vocal about the macro issues that affect our lives?"* (Interviewee 12)

Another respondent, opined that the problem could be due to male dominance in decision making in the newsrooms. She argued that women magazines may have come about because some readers might have complained that their newspaper did not cover women and they thought in order to solve this problem it was best to have women magazines as pull-outs.

"Maybe they were told their publications don't cover women enough so in their head they decided to do a magazine for women as a way of fixing the problem."(Interviewee 1)

When asked if there is a need for women magazine in the second FGD, respondent 2 argued there was no need as these magazines contributed to the segmentation of the world. The respondent preferred instead general magazines. Her reason for general magazines over women or gender-specific magazines was to promote equality and eliminate stereotypes.

The problem is that we have segmented life into a woman's world and a man's world, men might be interested in how to raise children but the way we're writing about raising children is from a woman's window because it's been decided that raising children is a woman's world. (Respondent 2)

 Respondent 2, further suggested that in writing stories for these general magazines "*let's be so subtle that whoever is reading will not realize that there is segmentation, the same way we integrate for example disabled children with other children without them feeling different.*"

Respondent 3 in FGD 1 who did not see need for women magazines argued that women magazines was a form of self-imposed exclusion. She said "*we have fought so hard to be included in everything yet we go ahead and exclude ourselves in magazines and create*

something for women." This was agreed on by respondent 4 who opined that "*We are telling girls you can be doctors, you can be engineers and everything about men then we go ahead and generate content about women only, for me I've always thought it's a double standard.*" She further suggested for creation of content that even men can benefit from. She gave an example of Saturday Magazine pull-out which she stated was not read by men because they know there is nothing targeting them. Instead she offered advice that women need the support of men to realise gender balance,

> "*…as women we should not be deceived that we are going to change the world about ourselves by ourselves, we are going to need this other gender to help us change the issues that need change.*"

Following up on the same respondent 3 in FGD 1 gave an example of an article that was featured in a women Saturday pull-out magazine which she felt should have been part of the newspaper for all (men and women) to read.

> "*Saturday Magazine has tried to take up gender activism, they're trying to address real issues like when they did an article about women sitting on boards, that was an empowering article, I wish that story was not in Saturday Magazine, I wish it was placed where even men read because its only women who read that story, we celebrated ourselves but what impact did it have in to the world in general, did it impact on men who are bosses somewhere to up the representation of women in their boards for example? Yet majority of those who make decisions are men.*"
> (Respondent 3, FGD 1)

Other respondents believed it was good these magazines were in place and should not be done away with but the content and framing is what needs to be changed. In one of the FGDs, a participant agreed it was good that these magazines were there as there must always be a starting point but she proposed it was time these magazines stopped the gender-specific approach. This was further echoed by another respondent who also saw the need for women magazines but argued that "*women magazines need to move to the next level and grow their content*." Interviewee 2 was an editor and she protested that the magazines were not serving the purpose they are supposed to. Instead she alluded to the idea that the content of the magazines should be totally overhauled.

From both the FGDs and the interviews conducted, it was established that current women magazines were all lifestyle magazines that were based on stereotypes around women and therefore only focused on cooking, shopping, relationships, gossip, girlfriends, fashion, taking care of family, raising children among others. Basically content is formed around stereotypes and as one respondent observed "*instead of breaking them (stereotypes), they are propagating them.*" However, one key informant had a different opinion and she had this to say,

> "*These are specialist pullouts - like Seeds of Gold or Pulse - and have nothing to do with media representation. They are products that appeal to a niche market - in this case, women who are interested in lifestyle issues.*"

4.2.2 Framing of issues in women magazines

The other theme that emerged in relation to the first research question was on how issues are framed in women magazines. Many respondents agreed that women magazine were subjected to

some form of editing and presentation of content and the general outlook that was different from other magazines or the main newspaper.

Some respondents argued that women magazines were products of stereotypes from their very conceptualization and this continued to date. In an interview with the sub-editor of one the magazines, she noted that these magazines were weekly pull-outs because the decision makers in newsrooms thought women do not have stories to tell and that women do not buy newspapers. She also argued that it did not stop there as even the choice of colours in these magazines are specifically feminine which she said is not necessarily a good thing as this tends to emphasize the stereotypes.

It was also noted that the women magazines in Kenya only focused on lifestyle of women and even when stories of prominent Kenyan women were pitched the writers and journalists were required to focus on the lifestyle of these women including family, home and leisure but little was offered on their success. This is compared to covering men.

"How about we get serious magazines discussing serious issues, women and leadership, not soft issues, changing curtains, I stopped reading them." (Respondent 4, FGD 2)

The general view by many respondents on how issues were framed in women magazines was that they were based on biases, stereotypes and sexist views thus these magazines as noted by Respondent 3, FGD 2 were *"shallow in terms of content compared to other international media houses such as New York Times and Huffington Post women sections."* The respondents claimed to be a subscriber and avid reader of the two aforementioned international newspapers also, observed that the difference between Kenyan women magazines and the international ones is that the international ones are "*empowering and they write about breaking the glass ceiling."*

When asked about this, two key informants agreed to these sentiments by conquering that Eve and Saturday magazine were lifestyle magazines serving a particular niche. One of the editors said,

> *"we're supposed to do a lifestyle story so you find that the corporate woman cannot fit and when we try to fit her in that lifestyle magazine format, we get into issues that are not professional, we have to cover her as a mother as a patient, maybe she has a hobby so we are not covering her as a professional…. we have to ask her lifestyle based questions like what do you do when you're not in the office, are you a cook, how do you juggle career and family? We try to soften the story to force it to be a lifestyle story yet it could be a career story*

Therefore, the common feeling among the respondents was that the women magazines have not changed over time and that they continue to apply stereotypes and biases in framing their stories, whereas men magazines such as Adam, cover serious stories, as noted by respondent 4 in FGD 2, who bemoaned that *"in women magazines the nude the better, the younger the better... it is sexist."*

4.3 Reasons behind the views of women journalists on women's portrayal on women magazines

The second objective of the study was to investigate the reasons behind the views on women's portrayal in the women magazines. To help achieve this objective and answer the research question on the same, collected data was analysed and presented under the following themes; patriarchal influence, stereotypes, limiting editorial policies, hiring of unqualified personnel as writers and contributors, lack of funding, and media shyness among women.

4.3.1 Patriarchal influence and women visibility

Higgins (2018) defines patriarchy as a situation in society where men are given power over women and this puts women at a disadvantaged position economically and socially. From the study findings Kenyan media houses and newsrooms are not spared from patriarchy and its undoing which is mainly influencing decisions that affect not just the general running of the newsrooms but also the women magazines.

Many respondents noted patriarchy and male domination in newsrooms and boards had a direct impact on the status women magazines in Kenya. Interviewee 3 lamented that "*despite some progress that have been made by women in the media industry, there are still very few women who seat in the editorial meetings.*" Interviewee 4, who is an editor also, opined that *"media houses should seek opinion of other women in the media houses without looking at the rank and not just the editors as majority were men, that way they can get views of more women"*. Interviewee 4 still did not think that was a solution that could solve the problem and therefore insisted on inclusivity in the editorial and board positions.

> *I used to think women were underrepresented in the media. Now I realise women are underrepresented in all aspects of life, from business to sports, and that makes including women in the regular news cycle difficult. For example, we have 47 governors in this country; how many are women? If we were to cover a governors' conference, what are the chances women's voices would be heard?* (Key informant 4)

The impact of male domination in the board meetings is that decisions were made and passed that slowed the growth of women magazine in terms of readership and content. For example, lack of women in the meetings meant lack of champions for the issues raised about the magazines and their readership.

This study also found out that even the few women in editorial and other leadership positions in media houses experienced challenges due to sexism, patriarchy, sexual harassment which made their work more difficult. For example, respondent 1 in FGD 1, noted that "management priorities on women leadership tend to only focus on the weaknesses and hardly on the strengths and achievements of women." Women contribution in leadership were not always acknowledged and their opinions were always ignored as women were stereotyped of being emotional to make any substantive decisions.

4.3.2 Hiring of unqualified journalists as writers and contributors

This study also found out that some of the women magazines suffered the stereotype and gender roles approach because of the people hired to write and collect stories for women magazines. Views of the majority of the respondents was that there was lack of quality recruitment of journalists for women magazines. According to one participant in the FGDs the magazines do not hire journalists instead *"they are like morning radio shows which are presented by comedians, talkers, influencers and not by people aware of media ethics for example."*

Another issue that emerged with regard to qualification was lack of specialisation among journalists who write or contribute for women magazine. All editors and sub editors interviewed agreed that the journalists working in their respective magazines were recycled and used in different roles with disregard on their areas of specialization or journalistic strength and weaknesses. One of the interviewee admitted that there are no specialized journalists in Kenya *"so we end up recycling the same writes for so long, their strengths might be different from that you assign then. For lack of options, you keep using them for different roles"* (Interviewee 4). That again denies the magazines consistency, which is an important factor in journalism and

"*that is another reason why we give our readers content that does not make a difference in their lives.*" (Interviewee 1).

When presented with the question on what can be done to change the issues raised, among the suggestion they offered included hiring qualified journalists whose interest is not fame and money but addressing issues that women face in the women magazines.

4.3.3 Lack of interest in limelight and the media

The findings also indicated that majority of women; even the most successful ones hated or feared the limelight and the media. Most respondents argued that most women were shy when cameras or microphones were put in front of them compared to most men who saw that as opportunity and seized the chances.

According to one of the respondents "*mostly you will find women who have stories worth telling but you really have to convince them, coerce and beg for them to accept to give you this stories and mostly when they hear it's the paper they tend to shy off, they have this feeling like the newspapers are for the politicians, the big boys, the men in business.*" (Respondent 3, FDG 2). According to Respondent 2, FGD 1 "*sometimes they are (women) so cautious you cannot compare a woman getting that chance with a man, men will always grab these chances.*" "*They will always talk whether they are telling lies or truth, women are cautious*" continued the respondent.

These findings agree with Wollstonecrafts (1792) sentiments that exposure to negative stereotypes can lead to women developing some flaws on how they view themselves. This is because of the culture in African society where a woman is supposed to carry herself in a certain

way and therefore women still tend to conform to these values set by society which hinders them from talking or sharing information about themselves but instead diverted conversations to their families, homes and other lifestyle issues.

The study also established that most women were media shy and turned down offers to be interviewed or share their stories with the magazines. As noted by Respondent 1, FGD 1 *"Women are shy to the media, they don't normally come out."*

4.4 Determinants of Content in Women Magazines

The last objective of the study was to investigate the determinants of content in women magazines. This research question aimed to find out how content for women magazines is decided upon. From the study findings it was found out there were three main ways on how content in these magazines was arrived at. These three ways are editorial and media policies which dictated what the magazines should cover, current trends and the readers' interests which translated to financial reasons as to why certain content was preferred for publication.

4.4.1 Editorial and Media Policies

From the interviews, the study found out that most of the time, ideas on the content of the magazines came from the editors who then assigned reporters and writers to the stories. Sometimes the writers and reporters pitched stories to the editors and if the idea suited the magazines profile the writer was given a go ahead to write and have the story published. Therefore, the editor has an upper hand in what goes into the magazines.

The study also found out writers and reporters most of the time did not have the freedom to explore other stories beyond the magazine's norm especially in magazines where editors were

close minded. This can be a hindrance and it helps sustain status quo which is to publish the same lifestyle stories that are filled with bias and stereotypes.

This study also established that the editors were also subjected to editorial policies and media policies which shaped the women magazines profiles. These policies were mostly not flexible as pointed out by all the interviewees. These media policies dictate what is going into the paper.

The study also enquired on whether there were policies on gendered coverage in the two media houses. All the respondents said they were not aware of such policies. Respondent 1, FGD 2 noted that *"there maybe one or two lines in their main policy but there was no specific policy on gender coverage."*

The other impact of media policies is that they have contributed in reducing women and women stories to weekly pull-outs instead of main papers. Interviewee 4, bemoaned that *"you will find that a woman's story totally deserves space in other pages, but the notion is that this is a woman story and there is a product for women and therefore, they will pitch the stories to us yet some of this stories are huge and do not need to be hidden in the women magazines."* This is hindrance and it deliberately waters down big stories because when pitched and published in women magazines with their editorial and media policies, only the lifestyles bits are left for publishing.

4.4.2 Current trends

Current trends were also a determinant on the content of the women magazine. Respondents in both the FGDs and interviews noted that sometimes what was trending in social media or society had a direct impact on what was to be published

Respondent 2, FGD 1, lamented that *"sometimes serious women issues or serious women who need to be profiled, their stories will not be published but gossip stories and scandalous stories*

will find their way into the paper while development stories are left out." Social media has helped accelerate spread of gossip and trends and the magazines prefer to pick on those trends and gossip compared to little known, scandal-free, success stories which continue to be tossed aside.

4.4.3 Readers Interests.

The study findings showed that a lot of what also went to the women magazines was influenced by the readers' interests or at least what was thought to be of readers' interest. According to respondent 4, FGD 1 *"women magazines do not concern themselves with growing their content because the media has transferred the gatekeeping role to the marketing people."* The respondent further argued that "*the marketing departments are dictating what goes into newspapers, the more the money the better."* From the study findings, it emerged that this does not only have an impact on the content but also on hiring of journalists to cover and write stories for women magazines. Since media owners are interested in maximizing their profits, they prefer to hire bloggers and influencers whose main focus and interest is digging up dirt about people and writing sensational topics.

The respondent was asked on whether the magazines will sell if the content was improved to address the issues they had pointed out and all the respondents agreed. *"Money and substance can go hand in hand because advertisers fight for space when content is good. Media sets the tone and in Kenya coz you don't have to be a qualified journalist anybody can write in Kenya, there is no way money and substance can go hand in hand, one has to give way but if we hand good content you'll still get advertisers." Respondent 2, FGD 2.* All the respondents believed magazines will not lose market for publishing uplifting, empowering and glass ceiling breaking

stories. For example one respondent wondered how *"Parents Magazine for example still in the market many years later without resorting to publishing of gossip?"*

4.5 Summary

Chapter Four outlined the arguments presented by respondents. The information was critically evaluated in line with the main objectives and questioned that the study was to investigate. The key points that came up during interviews and Focus group discussions were outlined. The information was presented in narrative format after identifying common themes.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of research findings of the study, conclusions and recommendations. It starts by giving an overview of findings and therefore gives answers to the research questions and objectives of the study.

5.1 Summary of Research Findings

This section provides a summary of the research findings based on the research questions that were formulated by the study. It was established many of the respondents were not satisfied with the content in the magazines that cover women, they blamed this on long held stereotypes, the patriarchal nature of Kenyan society, the balance between profits and content, hiring of unqualified personnel and lack of gender policies governing the media.

5.1.1 How women journalists view the portrayal of women in women magazines

From the women journalists it was evident they did not like the content in the women magazines, which they described as gender specific magazines. The participants wanted the magazines to be improved to address more important issues that are affecting women today. While the study could not clearly find out the history behind the establishment of these magazines, it was revealed that the content, design and framing of the magazines has remained the same over the years. Most participants preferred the magazines to move away from gender specific agenda and widen their scope away from these stereotypes.

Most participants blamed stereotypes for how women were portrayed in these magazines. The study revealed that women journalists viewed the portrayal of women in women magazines as

that of housewives, homemakers and beauty objects. The women journalists found this portrayal as being a distorted reality.

The study also revealed that women journalists blamed patriarchy in the media houses to be another reason for continued distorted portrayal of women in the women magazines. From the FGDs and interviews conducted it was noted that most decisions on the content of these magazines have all along been made by men and this hugely contributed to narrow content found in women magazines. The respondents argued that lack of enough women in ratio to men in editorial and board level in the media houses, only helps confirm and activate the negative stereotypes, bias and sexist content in women magazines.

5.1.2. Why are women portrayed in the magazines the way they do?

The study found out that the Kenyan women magazines define women in narrow roles. From the interviews and the FDGs conducted, it was revealed Kenyan women magazines are products long history of stereotypes about women. The magazines portrayed women as homemakers, whose role is to raise children, take care of their homes, cook and take care of their husbands. The study revealed that the content in women magazines mainly show women tending to their homes and as housewives whose main achievements is to be seen to carer and nature their families and still look physically appealing and submissive, a contrast to the opposite gender.

Patriarchy and male domination in newsrooms and boards has a direct impact on the status of women magazines in Kenya. Women are always allocated the domestic space where are about chores and hygiene. Women are assumed to be the nurturers of their families which is why journalists for women magazines always asked women how they juggle between being a mother

or wife and work/career. Men were rarely asked this question. So bias, stereotypes and sexism were huge contributors in the framing of the women magazines.

The study findings complement Isanovi's (2006) study titled "Stereotyping: representation of women in print media in South East Europe" Just like in Kenya, the research found out that were not visible in media, their contribution to policy making was minimal because very few were in leadership positions. The study also noted when a huge group of people are excluded from adding their voices to matters affecting the community through the media then the rest of society take cue and assume that women have no ideas or capabilities. These findings are also in line with those reported by EAJA, 2010, which noted that few women journalists occupy managerial positions. It showed reluctance by media owners to embrace women leaders in their organisations. Gender bias activates the persistent portrayal of women in women magazines in narrow biased sense.

5.1.3 What determines the content published in women magazines?

In an interview with the sub editor of one the magazines, she noted that these magazines were weekly pull-outs because the decision makers in newsrooms thought women do not have stories to tell and that women do not buy newspapers. The interviewee also argued that this does not stop there as even the choice of colours in this magazines is specifically feminine which she argued it is not necessarily a good thing as this tends to emphasize the stereotypes.

It was noted also that the women magazines in Kenya only focused on lifestyle of women and even when stories of prominent Kenyan women were pitched the writers and journalists were required to focus on the lifestyle of these women including family, home and leisure but little was offered on their success. This is compared to covering men.

These study findings augment a study conducted by Gallagher (1996) which found out that the fraction of women coverage in 10 African countries was only 19%. And when this happened, focus was narrow. When women do appear in the news, they are most often portrayed as victims of violence or as physical objects and rarely as experts, resources or leaders. Most newsworthy women stories end up in women pull-out magazines. As a consequence of having few women leaders in media, the rest of women fraternity have continuously been relegated to the background. Decisions on what women say and what is important to them have been left to men to decide hence the negative stereotypes.

5.2 Conclusion

Current women magazines are profoundly narrow in terms of content and coverage. Framing of issues is stereotypical, biased and sexist. The study findings indicate even the women journalists are not impressed by the content offered in these women magazines. These journalists believed that hte magazines are very capable of offering more than they currently are. The study findings show that the reasons for this shallow content include; stereotypes, lack of qualified journalists, marketing demands, patriarchy at decision making levels, lack of gender specific policies to address how to frame content for magazines targeting specific gender and gender bias and sexism. The study findings also demonstrate that there is a market for issue-led women magazines in Kenya.

Having more women at decision making level is very critical. Lack of more women in the leadership positions only helps maintain the status quo of sexism, stereotypes and gender biased content for the women magazines. Media houses need to hire more women to help influence fair and balanced gender representation.

Lack of gender specific policies to address gender specific topics or news coverage means that content will be driven by commercial interests and popularity. Policies can address not only content but also the hiring of qualified journalists and can help enhance specialization.

5.3 Recommendations

Recommendations made in this section have been derived from the conclusions about the study findings as presented in the previous section and they focus on direct interventions. It is the view of the researcher that the recommended solutions can improve the framing in women magazines and ultimately bring about gender equality in storytelling.

i. End the stereotypes by employing more women in the management and editorial positions. This study revealed the content and framing in women magazines has stagnated since their conceptualization. Most of the participants expressed the need for the women magazines to include serious staff and not the same stereotypical content of raising children, keeping a family, grooming and "changing curtains" as said by one participants to mean decorating homes. The study found out that the content in these magazines was shallow, biased and sexist and the participants preferred that the content improve to include topics such as women in leadership and business, empowering stories and ideas and also that the topics covered as the would be in men magazines or the general newspapers. There is a real appetite for issue-led content. Most international women's magazines, have really moved with the times, and are taking much more of a lead on culturally relevant issues.

ii. Implement policies in the media houses that address gender specific issues. Lack of policies continue to affect the framing in women magazines. This is because the

decision on what goes to women magazines, is up to the editors and sub editors who are also influenced by the boards or management. If implemented, policy will define the framing, the scope and the kind of journalists qualified to make decisions and write for the women magazines. The gender specific policies will help eliminate lack of professionalism in the women magazines. These policies will also help eliminate stereotypes, biasness and sexism that currently affect women magazines.

iii. Hire more qualified journalists for the women magazines. Because of the desire to catch up with what is trending in social media, women magazines have fallen victims of media houses hiring bloggers, comedians and social media influential personalities whose rise to fame mostly through gossip. These personalities lack journalistic background and end up contributing to the poor content in the women magazines. Their preference is gossip and social media trends and not quality journalism. This has immensely watered down the content and framing in women magazines.

5.4 Suggestion for Further Research

The scope and limitations of this study as noted in Chapter One of this study provides several opportunities for further research using other research tools in a wider scope. The researcher highly recommends key areas as follow up to the current study

i. A study on how women are portrayed in Kenya's general print media

ii. A study on stereotypes in Kenya mass media and how it influences portrayal of women in the general public

iii. A comparison study between portrayal of men in men magazines and portrayal of women in women magazines.

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Appendix I: Interview Guide

Background to the research

This research is a follow up on many others that have been done before on the subject of Media and women representation. The aim is to get the views of female journalist on the issue mostly because women magazines like **Eve and Saturday magazine** are handled by female journalist and this is the part of the newspaper where you'll find women issues covered. The research seeks to give the journalist a chance to comment on the findings.

Questions

1. Findings from many researches focusing on representation of women by the media have found out that women are underrepresented, they're missing in what constitute news and often portrayed in stereotypical roles. What are your views on this, do you agree with the findings?

2. To address some of these issues such as the absence of coverage, media introduced special pullouts for women like Eve and Saturday Magazine. Have these magazines managed to break the gender stereotypes?

3. Are you satisfied with the way women are portrayed in these magazines (Eve and Saturday magazine), are women issues addressed to satisfaction?

4. What arears have the magazines succeeded in and what needs to be improved?

5. What would you change if it was entirely upon you?

6. Do you think Women magazines are given enough attention/seriousness as the rest of the magazines/paper?

7. What determines the content that's published in the women magazines?

8. Are there any editorial policies on gender coverage at Nation Media Ltd?

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REF: CERTIFICATE OF FIELDWORK

This is to certify that all corrections proposed at the Committee of Examiners meeting held on **1st November 2021** in respect of M.A. Project Proposal defence have been effected to my satisfaction and the project can be allowed to proceed for fieldwork.

Reg. No: **K50/81693/2015**

Name: **Virginia Nov Borura**

Title: **PERSPECTIVES OF FEMALE JOURNALISTS ABOUT FRAMING OF WOMEN ISSUES IN WOMEN MAGAZINES IN KENYA'S DAILY NEWSPAPERS**

Dr Samuel Siringi

SUPERVISOR   SIGNATURE   DATE 16|11|2021

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