

**AN INTERROGATION OF THE RISE OF VIDEO VIXENS IN KENYA AND  
THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE YOUNG WOMEN: A CASE OF NAIROBI  
COUNTY**

**SURE VICTORIA ADHIAMBO**

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## DECLARATION

This proposal is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University

**Signature** .....

**Date** .....

**VICTORIA SURE: M10/88696/2016**

This proposal has been submitted for examination with approval as University Supervisor(s)

**Signature**.....

**Date**.....13/12/2018.....

Dr. Lanoi Maloiy

**Signature** .....

**Date** .....

Thiong'o Joseph

**Signature** .....

**Date** .....

Dr. Mary Goretti Akinyi

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicated the entire project to the Almighty God for the gift of life and good health. I also dedicate the work to my family members who stood by me during the entire work and friends who offered their pieces of advice and time to be with me throughout. Without them, the work would not have been easy to accomplish. I owe this great achievement to you all. Thanks for the support, be it spiritual, emotional, or financial.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	ii
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	iii
<b>DEDICATION</b> .....	iv
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	v
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	viii
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.2 Problem Statement.....	4
1.3 General Objectives of the Study .....	4
1.4 Specific Objectives .....	5
1.5 Research Questions.....	5
1.6 Justification of the Study .....	5
1.7 Scope.....	5
1.8 Limitation.....	6
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	7
2.0 Introduction.....	7
2.1 The Rise of Video Vixens.....	8
2.2 Influence of Video Vixens on Social Values.....	8
2.3 Influence of Vixens on Young Women .....	9
2.4 The View on “Decency” in Public.....	12
2.5 Theoretical Framework.....	15
2.5.1 Black Feminism .....	15
2.5.2 Radical Feminism .....	16
2.5.3 Objectification Theory .....	18
2.6 Definition of Terms.....	20
<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b> .....	21
3.0 Introduction.....	21

3.1 Study Area .....	21
3.2 Research Design.....	21
3.3 Study Population.....	22
3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques .....	23
3.5 Unit of Analysis .....	23
3.6 Data Collection .....	24
3.6.1 Primary Data .....	24
3.6.2 Secondary Data .....	24
3.7 Validity .....	25
3.8 Reliability.....	25
3.8.1 Data Processing and Analysis .....	25
3.9 Ethical Considerations .....	26
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>27</b>
4.0 Introduction.....	27
4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents .....	27
4.2 Factors Contributing to the Rise of Video Vixens.....	28
4.2.1 Source of Employment .....	28
4.2.2 Poor Family Background .....	29
4.2.3 City Life in Nairobi.....	29
4.3 Influence of Vixens on Young Women .....	30
4.3.1 Dress Code.....	31
4.3.2 Lifestyle .....	33
4.3.3 Impact on Social Values on Young Women.....	33
4.4 Attitude and Perceptions of Young Women on the Video Vixens .....	34
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>41</b>
5.0 Introduction.....	41
5.1 Summary.....	41
5.2 Conclusions.....	42
5.3 Recommendations.....	42
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>43</b>

<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	48
Appendix I: Questionnaire for Video Vixens .....	48
Appendix II: Producers Interview Questions.....	49
Appendix III: Interview Questions the Famous Vixen.....	50
Appendix IV: Letter from the University .....	51

## **ABSTRACT**

Over the decades, there has been a rise in the sexual imagery of women in popular music and commercial videos with an aim of appealing to the general populace hence increase in viewership and ratings. This emerging obsession with the sexual presentation of young women has given rise to what has been addressed as “video vixens.” During the course of this study, it was apparent that renowned video vixen agencies are also on the rise, trying to nurture and model professionals to boost the industry, which proves to be an employment earner among youth. However, the main concerns are on the social influence in terms of the sexualized dressing, dancing styles and habits on the youths who view the videos or follow them on the social media channels. The issue of social values has also been on the rise because of the nudity aspects and female objectification prevalent in the entertainment videos. This research work seeks to address the positive and negative influences of video vixens on the social values by special focus on the Kenyan entertainment industry. It further seeks to interrogate the historical development of the video vixen phenomenal and highlight emerging trends. The research will utilize a mixed-method in pursuing both qualitative and quantitative data from a collection of studies. The mixed research method is an appropriate technique because it focuses on data collection, analysis or empirical data and presentation using interviews and issuance of questionnaires as well as focus groups. The findings of the research included the high rate of unemployment has been among the factors that drive young girls to be video vixens, but not limited to some doing it as a talent, career or for fun and fame. It was also found out that video vixens have a great influence on the young women and social media offers a platform for them to advertise their services and interest, hence this shapes the behaviors in society.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The research focuses on the video vixens and their influence on the young women. It is apparent that the entertainment industry has been embracing creativity and uniqueness by artists and their management teams coming up with videos that attract viewership. Video vixens are reaping good returns by featuring in high profile videos of mainstream artists. Renowned video vixen agencies are also on the rise, trying to nurture and model professionals to boost the industry. Behavioral changes in people are some of the major contributions to the increase of video vixens with the majority of the youth opting to follow their personal preferences as far as career selection. Social values have also been an issue because of the nudity aspects and female objectification prevalent in the entertainment videos. The research shall tackle the positive and negative influences of video vixens pertaining to their influence on the youth by focusing on the Kenyan entertainment industry.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

The emergence of video vixens gained prominence with the hip-hop music and videography in which females were part of the background extras (Price 2006). The women objectification and sexual appeal enhanced the use of females in spicing the videos for youthful and artistic appeals. Initially, the artist management agencies would hire professional models to act in the videos with the aim of dramatizing the lyrics and convey the intended messages. However, it proved expensive to hire separate actors, back-up singers, models and professional dancers because they participated in different aspects of the videos. The video vixens were a fusion of all the required elements in the videos because they mastered the artistry of dancing, singing and acting. The element of video vixens spread to other genres and regions, enhancing the high penetration of the women across the world (Price 2006).

There are different Kenyan cultural norms and values and they react differently concerning the prevalence of video vixens in music and film productions. This is because of the portrayals of the vixens as fragile, controlling, fetishistic or passive in society and within the videos (Collins 2000, 81). In Kenya, the art started in early 2000s with the introduction of the secular music in which the budding artists would use women in their videos (Ghafla Kenya, 2014). The common music genres in the country as *Genge* and *Kapuka* popularized the video vixen idea, especially artists like Redsan, P-Unit group, Nonini and Prezzo among others as perceived by a section of media houses. For instance, in 2013, Citizen TV Kenya banned P-Unit's music video "You Guy" from being shown on TV stating that it was too vulgar for GE shows (Omondi, 2013). The main issues concerning the video vixen culture were that they were bad influences to the youths because of their vulgar dancing styles and dressing modes that exposed nudity and social erosion. This led to the banning of some videos from being played on mainstream TV stations because they were exposing nudity and bad habits. The authorities also had issues with the vulgar lyrics, video directions, skimpy dressing and other aspects deemed done against the social norms. The notion had been to promote western fashion and styles, which do not resonate well with the local audience.

Kenyan cultural values appreciate decency in art and songs with the musicians dressing "appropriately" to attract the old generation (Isaacson, Lynne, 1998). Famous video vixens like Vera Sidika have been on the limelight as among the leading video vixens and socialites in the country. The expression of femininity in hip-hop songs and other genres has taken a new dimension because of the emergence of the video vixens in the music industry.

The influence of the video vixens on social values is that they attract interest among the young viewers and fans, who think they can emulate the vixens. Although the vixens are earning from featuring in the videos, they are partially employed and pay some of their bills off the industry. As a result, the young people want to be like the vixens who happen to be their role models, despite elderly perceptions that they are indecent and vulgar. In this regard, this research project seeks to address the main issues pertaining to the emergence of video vixens and their influence of social values on the youth.

Social values in Kenya are an issue of concern based on the conservative nature of most citizens and this has raised question to the behavioral patterns of the female members of the society. It has become an issue because in the recent past, people have addressed the issue of dressing among Kenyan women. An example is a woman was assaulted and stripped in 2014 by a mob who believed that she had dressed indecently (Daily Nation, November 2017, n. p ).

The part 2 of the Constitution of Kenya Rights and Fundamental Freedoms Chapter states that, “(4) *The State shall not discriminate directly or indirectly against any person on any ground, including race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, health status, ethnic or social origin, color, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, dress, language or birth* (Kenya Law Reform Commission).” A considerable number of the video vixens replied that they had to be cautious with what they wear for fear of being harassed by the mob especially the touts (Daily Nation, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2017, n. p). A fraction of the Kenyan society still defends traditional value systems that inform woman's dressing code (Isaacson, Lynne, 1998). For instance, some touts and “boda-boda<sup>1</sup>” riders stripped a woman for apparently wearing a revealing dress within the capital’s CBD.

The allure of young women is experiencing a tremendous transformation and they tend to develop hobbies of using social media. Wandiba (n.d.) states that as the need to achieve social approval increases, social media usage has become rampant with many male and female youth pursuing as many followers as they can amidst globalization. This aspect triggers engagement in various habitual behavior, such as posting explicit images exposing nudity to solicit more likes and social approval. The trend is more severe among the video vixens that always compete for fame because the most popular attracts more ‘business opportunities.’ For example, Vera Sidika is a famous Kenyan video vixen who has transformed it to a business. As such, they strive to be as controversial as possible even if it means losing their dignity in the eyes of the public by posing nude photos and solicit sexual favors from popular artists (Staffens, 2015, p. 56).

Notwithstanding the stigmatization and the hatred attracted from some of their followers, they have always come in the mainstream media to defend their choices and social values. Popular vixens have also been used to motivate young women because some people perceive them as successful considering the lavish lifestyles that they live. After getting the popularity and social approval among their spectators, some usually try to venture in beauty products and even fashion industry to match the likes and followers they have in their social media platforms with their bank balances (Wandiba, n.d.). This project will categorically focus on the influence video vixens have on the social values, especially for the young females because of the societal perceptions, values and respect for the girl child.

### **1.2 Problem Statement**

While a section of media and social media users appear to harbor a condescending attitude towards the character of video vixens, many questions arise regarding their influence on the young women. Wandiba says the main problem with video vixens is that they seem to objectify women's sexuality by exposing the way they dress, the dance styles. He adds that this results in the indecent portrayal of the women according to most cultural values, norms and generational perception and expectations by the older generations in the country (Wandiba, n.d.). The video vixens influence youth to emulate their habits on videos as dressing, dancing, and portrayal. The recent banning and censoring in 2017 and 2018 of videos considered indecent by the authorities is an indication that society has always judged the video vixens and they always watch out on what they do or display in the videos.

This research needs to be carried out to assist in answering a number of concerns regarding the influence of video vixens on social values of young people.

### **1.3 General Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study entails the determination of the influence of video vixen on the young women.

#### **1.4 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of the study entail the following;

- i. To explore the factors that have contributed to the rise of video vixens in Kenya among the young women in Nairobi. To help in understanding why young women are emulating the video vixens.
- ii. To establish the influence of video vixens on the young women in Nairobi, whether positive or negative.
- iii. To assess the social perceptions of the young women on video vixens and to uphold to the societal values.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

- i. What factors contribute to the rise of video vixens in Kenya among the young women in Nairobi?
- ii. To establish to what extent video vixens can be said to influence the social values of young women in Nairobi?
- iii. What is the knowledge, attitude and perception of young generation on video vixens?

#### **1.6 Justification of the Study**

The research will add to the existing research on women studies since studying video vixens in the Kenyan context opens up new avenues by which studies on women and womanhood in the Kenyan context can be furthered.

In seeking to understand the factors behind the dressing code among women as well as whether video vixens play an integral part in it, this study will be a suitable resource to women empowerment groups, governmental and non-governmental groups in directing the younger generation. Moreover, the society in general, in their uniqueness and cultural indifferences will find the study beneficial and revealing to the video vixens in Kenya.

#### **1.7 Scope**

The study will be conducted in Nairobi City County because of the availability of data. It will be covered in a period of six months, May, June, July, August, September and

October of 2018, utilizing interviews and online reviews. It will also analyze interviews and people's views on the issue of video vixens through television interviews and phone calls. The researcher will use interviews as the interviewee is in a position to give lengthy responses. Additionally, interviews particularly the phone ones, which will be utilized in this research, are convenient for the interviewer, as they do not have travel barriers. Among the video vixens to be interviewed, include Vera Sidika, who featured in a P-unit and Collo song called 'You Guy'. The films and videos classifications board banned the video for the raunchy dances and skimpily dressed video vixens. The public viewers and fans will also give their input on the video and the video vixens concerning their influence on the social values as portrayed in the song. The sampling of the video analysis will comprise of the mode of dressing, dancing styles, lyrics and gestures displayed.

### **1.8 Limitation**

The limitation of this study is that it covers video vixens mainly in Nairobi, Kenya however, this was countered by conducting online analysis and research to get information about video vixens in the other countries.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This section explored and discussed previous scholarly works by experts in this field by revisiting their books and articles. The literature review section will also expose the gaps that the previous researchers failed to notice or cover through the works. This implies the section shall identify the weakness of some sources in regards to the research questions and objectives under investigation. In the recent times, societies have evolved in character, conduct, behavior and progressive changes to the emerging issues (Bailey, 2008). The changes in the globe have encompassed misinformation and divergent thoughts from the traditional views. The changes in thoughts, conduct and choice of life has been under the contributory of external factors mainly music, lifestyle of personalities, growth of income and advancement in technology (Carruth, 2009). I agree with Bailey because the society has taken a new angle concerning the choice of life and lifestyle issues by the current generation. For instance, the talent and entertainment industry has been offering more job opportunities than the blue-collar careers for example singer Bahati has been able to create job opportunities by opening EMB records for music productions. Parents are encouraging their children to explore their talents for revenue generation. This directly further contribute to individual influence and behavioral development because children are joining talent search centers and organizations to improve on their skills and talents.

Collins (2009) posits that behavioral changes in a person are connected to the manner in which the individual conducts his or her activities inclusive of the preferences and desirability. Gender changes in the society are not new in the current modern world (Bailey, 2008). All this require motivational approaches that are necessity for effective leadership. These books help in the exploration of the factors that have contributed to the rise of video vixens in Kenya among the young women in Nairobi.

## **2.1 The Rise of Video Vixens**

Carrine Stephens was a 21-year-old video vixen who appeared in various hip-hop videos those of Sean, 'Puff Diddy' ,Combs. She claimed that she was just looking for fame at the time; her experiences are documented in the book “*Confessions of a Video Vixen*”. In the book she highlighted what the models go through behind the scenes; first, they are told to wear something short and erotic; the main video girls got star treatment and their pay was above the rest, on the set the favorites compete among themselves to get noticed and to get more camera time(Steffans, 2006). The dress code theme is “show as much flesh as possible” and “sex sells”. The girls who are decently dressed are never welcomed and they never get the job (Steffans, 2006). Most of the hip-hop videos degraded women by portraying the rise of video vixen memoirs such as the one by Carrine Stephens is important in understanding the lived experiences of this unique group of female and they should not be underestimated as an agent of socialization within the hip-hop culture.

## **2.2 Influence of Video Vixens on Social Values**

Social values are a pillar to proper leadership and emulation by others to being great leaders. Female motivation is a concern to society and parental guidance and in developing female leaders (Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2000). The social values of people are different because some think being a video vixen is a societal decay, while others hold the view that it is just like any other career since it is a source of employment. I agree with this research because social values issues touching on the nudity and objectification of the female video vixens have been raised in the past (Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2000). For instance, some people think that the videos over expose females show lack of social values and disrespect to the female gender. (Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2000). However, commercial adverts, movies and video songs have always applied the female vixens to attract viewership and appreciate their artistry in passing the messages (Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2000).

Video vixens are becoming the new phase of the entertainment industry as the music video viewership is becoming more sophisticated in matters regarding social values because some parents, especially in Kenya are opposed to their children appearing in

videos semi-nude (Bartlett, 2011). I tend to think video vixen usage is not a new phase in the entertainment industry because it has always been there since time immemorial. The author might have missed the notion that commercial adverts and movies also use video vixens to pass their messages. However, the primary concern goes to the influence they have on social values. However, the society of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has evolved and the conduct and the character of the people continue to exhibit tremendous transformation (Bailey, 2008). These changes are accompanied by information and the concept of discontinuity from the traditional viewpoints and culture. This informs my research because this study will introduce the emerging trends taking place in the entertainment industry and the roles of video vixens in promoting the songs, cultural influence and the commercialization in entertainment.

Michel Foucault indicates that discontinuity reflects the changes in society that pertains to how people perceive certain events, things, occurrences (Marshall, 1996). For instance, initially when a person posed in semi-nude attire or commercial adverts revealed obscene images; it would be rendered as disrespectful to the family, youth and societal values. The trend has changed in Kenya because people do not feel offended with the latest videos on the airwaves (Marshall, 1996). The society has accepted the new norms of video vixens due to the concept of discontinuity that configures knowledge that changes the social practices. Foucault states that, as time goes by, people acquire new knowledge that changes their perceptions on things happening in society (Marshall, 1996).

### **2.3 Influence of Vixens on Young Women**

Video vixens play a pivotal role in enhancing the content and viewership of media materials. Media content and target audience varies in age and societies. Video vixen selection is impactful to the overall contribution they provide to the content they participate in (Froide, 2008). The influence of the video vixens on social values is that the young viewers tend to imitate the dances or portrayals by the vixens. These imitations affect the social values because the young women embrace the indecent dressing and dancing styles. It is also apparent that the young children are exposed to dangers such as rape because of their dressing styles and habits that they copied from the TVs (Froide, 2008). This does not contradict the previous regarding social values and moral decency

in Kenya because the same imitations could still be the sites for formations of new gender identities, social values and ideologies because of the habitual tendencies that the young women pick from the portrayals (Froide, 2008). The other influence is that it can lead to cultural erosion in which the viewer's acquire or adopt behaviors that might not be allowed in their communities. For instance, the half-nude dressing styles are not considered appropriate in most Kenyan communities.

The language used containing curse words are also unwarranted in some cultures. On the positive side, the video vixens contribute to the creation of employment because the models are paid for appearing on the videos or commercials. The other influence is that the video vixens provide platforms where talented people can expose their acting, dancing or singing talents (Rose, 1994; Morgan 1999; Pough 2004). This is because not all videos promote vulgar habits or negative perceptions of the female actors. The majority of the audiences watch the videos for various reasons, such as for entertainment, for education, for moral support and for analysis. On the other hand, the video vixens engage in the videos as a talent exposure, employment purposes, or to support the artists. The source is beneficial to this research because it shall help to achieve the objective of assessing the social perceptions of Kenyans on video vixens since it explores various aspects that shape social opinions (Nyabola, 2015).

In the early to mid-1990s, many hip-hop feminists explored narratives of Black female subjectivity through the lyrics and personae of female rappers. The simultaneously empowering and disengaging place of women who love hip-hop and women who perform in hip-hop is chronicled in several groundbreaking works (Rose, 1994; Morgan 1999; Pough 2004). The female dancer has eclipsed the female lyricist in terms of women's subjectivity in hip-hop. The previous research on the lyrical content and image making of female rappers contributes to my research on video vixens in ways that emphasize Black female subjectivity, voice, and agency within the culture (Rose, 1994; Morgan 1999; Pough 2004). The scholarly works have also been buttressed by more popular references and interest in the early to mid-2000s. Magazines and newspaper columns have been introduced to address misogynistic and denigrating elements within hip-hop culture. These popular sites often focus on hip-hop's impact on younger

consumers of the culture (Price, 2014). The link between hip-hop music cultures on young people is that it influences their dressing styles, habits, societal perception and means to address some societal happenings (Price, 2014).

The gap in the existing knowledge concerning video vixens that needs to be filled is that hip-hop music culture has promoted video vixens' inclusion in music videos. As a result, the inclusion of the vixens in music videos should be brought to the attention of mainstream media and parents who might be against the idea of the vixen's dressings in the video as a negative social value. It should be brought to the attention of the mainstream media that relay the information to a large number of people, some who cannot access the internet.

Discourses concerning performativity and Black female sexuality are gaining more attraction in feminist and womanism circles for a number of reasons. This is because these two discourses converge in the realm of hip-hop production and consumption (Tate, 2013). Indeed, the historical relationships between Sarah Baartman and the countless, nameless Black women who perform in music videos are a point of study (Story, 2007). In addition, the calling out of rap artists, record executives, magazine editors and the like is also a part of broadening the scholarship (Leon, 2007; Wilson, 2007). Conversations, deliberations, and ethnographic studies with female viewership of rap and hip-hop are necessary to understanding how young women's identities are (mis)informed by their consumption (Muhammad, 2007). In addition, the proliferation of the "ethnically ambiguous" video vixen is worth researching in relation to colorism within the Black community as well as a Western desire for the "exotic" (Sharpley-Whiting, 2008). Additionally, there are works that situate fame inducing video vixens, namely Karrine Steffans, as mantle bearers for a revolutionary Black feminist agenda that embraces sexual agency and rejects the politics of respectability (Lee, 2010).

Butler (1990) discusses as significant perspective on subject of feminism. According to Judith Butler, both politics and representation are controversial terms when discussing depiction of female characters. On one hand, the term representation serves as the operative term and on the other political process seeks to extend the visibility of

legitimacy to women as political subjects. Butler (1990) also posits that if gender is the cultural meanings that the sexed body assumes, then a gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in one way or the other. In another documentary by K24 Television that reviewed the diaries of the popular video vixens and the primary issues that makes them popular indicated that most Kenyan video vixens are not self-made. According to Maurice Matheka, the contemporary vixens work for social gratification as opposed to bettering the lives of the larger society (K24 TV, 2015). Some of the most popular video vixens such as *Corazon Kwamboka*, *Vera Sidika*, *Huddah Monroe*, have been in the limelight for many reasons.

The main reasons are posting nude pictures, plastic surgery of the face to lighten their skin, surgery to increase their butt size and breast including skin lightening procedures and portraying them in the social media platforms. Maurice Matheka also posits that the information the Kenyan vixens are sending to the younger generation appears to influence their social values negatively. Matheka in the interview said, “We are telling young women that you don’t have to actually go and study, that you can just be a video vixen, as long as you have a good body, as long as you bleach yourself.” (K24, 2015). K24 further sought the opinions of the youth regarding vixens and it appeared the youth in Kenya have various viewpoints regarding the vixens. The programs are important in establishing the influence of video vixens among the youths in Nairobi.

#### **2.4 The View on “Decency” in Public**

One of the Kenyan blogger and a political writer based in Antananarivo, Nanjala Nyabola, expressed her view on the origin of “decency” in public following the controversial women stripping on streets issue that sparks significant deliberation. According to Nyabola (2015), some Kenyan citizens have offered their opinions that source of views of decent dressing revolve on religion.

The Muslim community has not escaped this predicament, as they possess similar originalists’ movements. On the contrary, the country’s high levels of divorce rates and escalating menace of religious immoralities do not respond accurately to the issue of private choices. For instance, the recent exposes on the profiteering in the context of the

religious groups and the political adventures and the religious figures reveal that Kenya is a highly malleable construct (Nyabola, 2015). The primary purpose of their ideas is adapted and deployed to achieve specific outcomes in the context of social and political goals overlooking the idea that it is a broad social consensus and the commitments to specific conservative interpretations of the social positions that underscores the preoccupation with “decency,” (Nyabola, 2015). Her argument is a lucid illustration that Kenyan feminists are bravely speaking out and they have a lot of catching up to do on matters of decency in the eyes of their male counterparts.

In Kenya, the social cultural issue among females also demonstrates national change and the indeterminacy regarding traditional values, which can be traced to resistance to the increased rights for minority ethnic groups (Reichert & Lambiase, 2012). For instance, under colonialism, most Kenyans were forced to conform to puritanical dress codes and limited gender interactions for them to gain access to education and, somehow, monetary income. However, after the independence in 1963, the use of miniskirts was considered trendy and perhaps a symbol of newly matched independent Kenyan’s aspirations to assert their modernity and self-determination (Nyabola, 2015). However, the collapse of the Structural Adjustment era and the renewed view of the social values in the 90’s became another aspect of conservatism. It was spearheaded by the missionary-school-educated people who were in a bid to counteract the sense of powerlessness in the verge of devastating the externally enforced economic policies.

The behemoth and the most revered ruling party KANU also subsumed significant social institutions and empowered them to organs for perpetuation of the rigid ideas of the African traditions (Wandibba, n.d). The more this organization became connected and embedded to the ruling party, the more mass and social control and women introduced more issues like the preservation of the social mores. Perhaps one of the most suitable illustrations is the Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Movement, a rural development organization with close affiliations to the ruling party that advocated for reforms in the traditional roles for women (Wandibba, n.d).

Another influence of the political repression on the Kenyan perception of social values is perhaps the one experienced in 1980's. The many years of the state-controlled cultural production created a generation that embraced the overt sexuality and dressed in formless charcoal polyester suits notwithstanding the hot days. The feminine form was practically couched in a discourse of shame. By then, the environmental conservation efforts offered a highly booming target for activists attacking the pioneers like Wangari Maathai, who deliberately broke the taboos as a form of symbolic protest.

For instance, one of the tactics that she used together with her allies was stripping when the police came to arrest them. She called the police their sons and quoted the Kikuyu traditions that it is curse for the police to see their mother naked. Her actions had a significant repercussion in protection of Karura forest. However, many perceived that kind of feminism as a dirty word and associated in with acts of public indignity (Maathai 2007b, 6).

The same views are extended to the Kenyan video vixens that are in skimpy dresses whenever they are doing their jobs. Additionally, the recent wave of female stripping triggered radical elements in the feminist movements, culminating in the social media hash tag *#MyDressMyChoice* campaign. Nonetheless, there is still massive resistance from the ordinary women (Nyabola, 2015). They still do not fancy the idea of seeing the young adults in skimpy dresses exposing their flamboyant lifestyle on social media in the name of *slay queens*.

The gaps that exist as seen in the "previous social value systems" pertain to the change in dressing code for women in the pre-colonial era and the cultural meanings associated within. Tumwebaze (2009, pg. 1) states that "in the pre-colonial and colonial eras, women used to wear clothes that cover all their body parts and did not apply make-up. They were always decent and did not wear tight-fitting attires". However, recently, most women put on tight-fitting clothes, mini dresses and revealing attires. The introduction of Christianity and modernity also influenced the change in dressing code in the post-colonial era. The Kenyan women started imitating the dressing styles of the Christian missionaries and Westerners who have come to spread their lifestyles in the country

(Tumwebaze 2009, pg. 1). The books, videos, magazines and other paraphernalia changed the mindset of the Kenyans.

The Catholics and their emissaries introduced a new style of dressing, especially the nuns that consisted of covering all their parts. The effect that the pre-colonial and colonial dressing code had on the social values was that Kenyans maintained traditional dressing codes synonymous with the cultural appreciations (Tumwebaze 2009, pg. 1). The other effect was that the society members embraced modernity to a certain level in that they still preserved their traditional forms of dressing with little adoption of modern dressing. On the negative part, the social value effect is that the young females started donning mini-dresses and copying the dressing styles, they saw in written materials and movies from the western countries (Tumwebaze 2009, pg. 1).

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

Black Feminism, Radical Feminism and Objectification Theories will be used in this study to explain the ways Black families value education and recognize the role of women in enhancing societal development because they relate to the issues, such as sexual objectification affecting African women as well as the social perspectives on women. The choice of the theories were justified depending on the happenings in the country concerning the video vixens and socialites and the interpretations of the theories to show the linkages.

### **2.5.1 Black Feminism**

Black feminism was popularized in the early 1960s as a response to the hegemonic white middle class feminism that did not put into consideration the concerns of working class women, as well as women of color. Thus, Black feminism was described as a political ideology and movement that theorizes and brings the lived experiences of Black women to the forefront. Black feminism argues that since class often functions as a substitution for race, an intersectional approach is necessary when considering how various mitigating factors affect the material and psychological conditions of Black women (Collins, (2013). The objectification of the body types of African women, with particular attention to their backsides, has often been overlooked in history and in hip-hop culture. Sarah Baartman's

legacy as a sexual captive is one of the ways to problematize this objectification (Gordon-Chipembere, 2011). During a three-day examination in 1815 in which Bartmaan covered her private areas with a handkerchief while a team of naturalists, anatomists, and zoologists attempted to study her genitalia, bribing her with candy and alcohol (Gordon-Chipembere, 2011). The overall appeal of Sarah Baartman is ahistorical representation of the rampant objectification of Black female sexuality.

The rise of video vixens necessitated the growth of a school of feminist idea that advocated for the inclusion of experience and challenged this unique group of women into the feminist discourse. Joan Morgan authored *When Chicken heads Come Home to Roost: A Hip Hop Feminist Breaks it down*, in which she argues the need for a new set of Black feminism for the hip-hop generation. Consequently, hip-hop feminism was fronted as a branch of feminism that serves as a race conscious space where men and women can simultaneously appreciate hip-hop music and culture, as well as to critique it and use it as an agent for social change and inclusion Morgan (2000). Black feminism will help in defining and designing to oppose a system of racial, gendered, sexual, and class oppression and to resist the negative images of the video vixens existing in patriarchy and discriminatory social practices.

### **2.5.2 Radical Feminism**

Robyn Rowland and Renate Klein in, *Radical Feminism: History, Politics, Action*, have highlighted that women form part of a social group that is oppressed by men and this oppression is visible in the level of control that men have in the lives of women in both their private and public spaces. Radical feminism argue that this only strand of feminism that centers on women and believes that women's oppression is the most fundamental form of oppression and the male domination and female subordination stems from the control of women's bodies and sexuality(Rowland, & Klein, (1996).

Radical feminists problematize the sexual exploitation of women's bodies in mainstream media and using the same bodies as a means of international currency. This ideology is evident in the success that hip-hop artists have had since the introduction of video girls in their music sets.

According to Sharpley the girls have to be dressed in very revealing outfits to please the men, the men are in total control of their bodies and sometimes they demand for sex to give one the opportunity to appear on the videos. In the videos, the women who reveal more flesh get more camera time. Some of the men use the girls on their videos and they are not paid, they are told it is a way of exposure into getting better deals. In these videos, also, the men are fully covered but the women show as much flesh as possible (Sharpley-Whiting, (2008). Radical feminism helps to allow women to dress the way they want and not to please anyone or to be able to get favors.

The second wave of feminism also encouraged women to understand aspects of their personal lives as deeply politicized and as reflecting sexist power structures. I disagree that the video vixens have no voice and they use their sexuality to get to the levels where they are. Men take advantage of this to exploit them (Ibid 10).

Women become video vixens due to economic difficulties as many women are facing debts in need of repayment. Another leading economic motive given by video vixens is the wish to support their dependent children. The destitute economic background of the average vixen is exacerbated by the trend that vixens are most often preceded as victimization (Beran, 2012). On the same note, today, women have ventured into the entertainment industry to earn a living.

I think the perfect portrayal of women as objects of appeal is that women are constantly exposed and in most cases half-naked. It is unfortunate that, sometimes, in music videos, the woman's face are not shown, but instead, her body becomes a showpiece put on display. It depicts her as not having an identity or a sense of individualism thus, reinforcing her role as a sex symbol. Consequently, it erodes the social values as many women particularly adolescents and young adults try to adopt what they watch on these videos. Radical feminism aims to do away with such behavior that obviously led to glass ceiling and disrespect towards women in the society. Giving the women the right weapons, such as proper education would be the ultimate solution to such problems as they would be engaged in better activities such as their career and would therefore have no time for these vices ( Jaggar 1984).

### **2.5.3 Objectification Theory**

Fissel (2000) states that the objectification theory is the socio-cultural context that equates a woman's physical features and sexual roles to her body and worth with less regard to personality traits or dignity. This implies that society views women's worth based on their bodily appearances and sexual desires instead of their contribution to various sectors or intelligence values (Fiissel, 2000). People judge women as mere objects of appeal that receive favors through their physical features. In this regard, the objectification theory tends to correct the negative perception against women being perceived as sex objects since it can affect their self-esteem, leading to behavioral body monitoring that can expose them to admiration, shame, anxiety and reduce awareness of internal bodily conditions.

In relation to female vixens in Kenya, the objectification theory fits into the culture and lifestyle of the mainstream video vixens judged based on their physical appearances and sexual desires. For instance, society sees Vera Sidika or Huddah Monroe as curvaceous women, who draw the attention of the men through their body shape, lightened skin tones and extravagant lifestyles funded by other wealthy men. In reality, Vera is a University graduate who possesses a Degree in Fine Arts and a businessperson who does her stuff just like the other women. The application of the objectification is how people perceive and judge Sidika based on her physical features and not educational qualifications that can fund her lifestyle and pay her bills.

The objectification theory takes concepts from the sexual objectification of women, which might treat women as sexual objects of desire. According to Hill (2002), the sexual objectification can also be a behavior that might demean the women's body as a tool of sexual desire that might not contribute positively to society. The notion of branding video vixens as mere sexual objects instead of professionals juggling their affairs to earn money off the artists as stakeholders in the entertainment industry may demean their talents and professions. Taking part in music videos by dancing and/or acting spices up the videos to generate high viewership and good reviews, but society does not see it in that positive

way, instead brands them as people out to lure the public with their sexy physical appearances (Wang, 2016).

This theory shall assist in the research by helping us to draw the line between sexual objectification and video vixen activities in line with the research objective of assessing the social perceptions of young women in Kenya on the video vixens.

Black feminism is a political ideology and movement that theorizes and brings the lived experiences of Black women to the forefront. The impact of this theory in the influence of video vixens on social values is that the Black women, Kenyan women included is that they get their own identity (Gordon-Chipembere, 2011). Black feminism has also enhanced social values by advocating for women's right to undertake their ventures without interference from other sectors. In this regard, the women have been engaging in various social activities of their wishes like being video vixens in which they dress and dance (Gordon-Chipembere, 2011). The Black feminism has influenced social values by empowering women to explore opportunities in different sectors of the economy like entertainment industry.

Radical feminism has been opposing the sexual objectification of females by creating attention on issues like domestic violence and gender roles. Radical feminism has influenced the social values by redefining the gender roles and challenging the sexual objectification women in which the females are perceived as mere objects of sexual desires. Video vixens experience sexual objectifications on numerous occasions in their careers. Spectators may think that the video vixens are out to trade their bodies, an aspect that might encourages social evils like prostitution in society. The proposed influence of radical feminism on the social values is that the vixens can stand up for their rights and avoid men who are out to exploit them.

The objectification theory states that society views women's worth based on their bodily appearances and sexual desires instead of their contribution to various sectors or intelligence values (Fiissel, 2000). According to Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) the objectification theory in relation to social values has made the young women internalize

this outsider view and begin to self-objectify by treating themselves as an object to be looked at and evaluated on the basis of appearance. Self-objectification manifests in a greater emphasis placed on one's appearance attributes (rather than competence-based attributes) and in how frequently a woman watches her appearance and experiences her body according to how it looks (McKinley & Hyde, 1996; Noll & Fredrickson, 1998).

## **2.6 Definition of Terms**

In the context of this study, below are the definitions of key terms used;

**Social Values:** These are the day-to-day standards that form part of the general culture and provide the necessary guideline for human interactions (universal definition).

**Video Vixen:** A female appearing in music or commercial video in a sexually explicit manner in this research.

**Young Women:** A young woman is one who is between ages 18 to 35 but in my research, I focused on women between 18 to 26 years-old residing in Kenya. This research also recognizes them as millennial.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research philosophical assumptions highlighting the project and introduces the strategies adopted plus the empirical methods applied. The chapter further identifies the scope and limitations of the research design and position the project in the present research traditions. The sections discussed in the chapter include the area of study, population, sample population, techniques, data gathering instruments, validation of questionnaires and data analysis methods plus the administration of the instruments.

#### 3.1 Study Area

The area of study was mostly on the young female adults appearing on music videos, films and other commercial visuals as video vixens. This comprised of university students and vixens attached to modeling agencies across the city of Nairobi. The area of study also emphasized on the nightclubs and joints that host the shooting of the videos and frequented by the vixens for entertainment purposes. It is apparent that mainstream artists prefer shooting their music videos to a number of nightclubs because of the favorable environment and sites that favor their directors and the vixens. The study focused on 3 main clubs in Nairobi namely the B club, X Millionaires and Kiza where the videos were on constant rotation.

This study defines the young population as the youth between the ages of 18 to 26 representing 20.3% of the general population according to the Population Reference Bureau (Otuki, 2017). The consumption of secular music is also higher among this age group and has been popularized by the famous Citizen T.V. *10 Over 10 Show*. The viewership of the show does not only exhibit the demographic of secular video consumers but also enhances viewership of the secular videos.

#### 3.2 Research Design

A research design is the general strategy employed by a researcher to incorporate the various components of the study in a rational and logical manner to ensure that the

research problems are tackled appropriately. This takes into consideration the roadmap for collecting data, the analysis used, measurement and the presentation. This project will utilize a mixed-method in pursuing both qualitative and quantitative data from a series of studies.

According to Creswell (2010), mixed research methods is a fundamental research method where the primary focus of is on collecting, analyzing the empirical data available in both qualitative and quantitative sources. Creswell (2010) also acknowledges that mixed research methods are important when there is no much research done on a particular field. Therefore, a second method is required to enhance the primary methods of data collection. An explanatory sequential design will then be utilized to support the findings from the qualitative and quantitative approach. The primary limitation that Creswell (2010) pointed out in mixed research methods it that it may contain some bias and generalization of the study findings. However, to address this limitation the researcher will conduct a pilot study to enhance the validity and reliability of the qualitative data.

### **3.3 Study Population**

The population of the research entailed the modeling agencies that employ video vixens, young women aspiring to be vixens and established vixens like Vera Sidika, Bridget Achieng or Huddah Monroe. The general population would give the correct picture of the happenings in the industry and the influence of the video vixens on values in society.

The target population involved the popular video vixens like Vera Sidika and Huddah Monroe who rock airwaves and headlines for the activities in various music videos, reality shows and films. The selection of the population was arrived at because of the two leading video vixens are the talking points in the music and entertainment industries so they were the better placed to give the true depictions of their influences on social values among the youths in Nairobi and across the country. The target populations also demand a massive following in social media circles, especially Twitter where they share their activities, events, updates and other aspects. In this regard, they were instrumental in the facilitation of this project since they command a massive influence on the social values

among the young women. The study population comprised of the renowned video vixens like Vera Sidika and Huddah Monroe and aspiring vixens in universities and the young women aged between 18 and 26 years old.

### **3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques**

Since the target population was small, the recommended sampling technique adopted was the study of about 40 video vixens, 12 artists and 6 producers. Purposive sampling was used to sample the data. For instance, the sample members selected (Vera Sidika and Huddah Monroe) are renowned socialites and vixens that have been in the business for a long time and attract the A-artists across the region and continent. A sample represents a fraction of the entire population under study comprising of the 15 mainstream and 25 aspiring vixens, twelve artists who used video vixens in their work and producers who knows how the entertainment industry works. 58 was the chosen number of respondents because it would give the study the required dimension to achieve the stated objectives.

On the sampling technique, a stratified procedure was chosen for the participants in the study. This was because it ensured that a fairly equal demonstration of the variables for the study (Durdella, 2018). It is apparent that the stratification was on the university students and mainstream vixens in Nairobi in which in every section of the population, a simple random sampling was used for selection. The other appropriate sampling technique was the purposive procedure that belongs to the non-probability category that uses the knowledge, connections and skills reading the video vixens, music and entertainment industry aspects (Durdella, 2018).

### **3.5 Unit of Analysis**

The project adopts various units of analyses that consist of analysis of the entertainment industry, trends in the social values, fashion industry, entertainment heads and other related stories. The analysis is vital for the in-depth understanding of the occurrences in society as influenced by the video vixens. It is apparent that the vixens have shaped various aspects that affect the modern youths in the country that it would be appropriate to consider during the evaluation process.

### **3.6 Data Collection**

The main data collection processes involved questionnaires, which were to be filled by the video vixens from selected Production Companies. The other methods were observation of the social trends on the media platforms and interviewing the industry players like media owners, vixens and artists.

The benefits of using the questionnaires entail the respondents having the freedom to offer their opinions, suggestions and preferences by asking the open-ended questions. The only limitation is that it is difficult to determine the moods of the respondents to ascertain whether they are giving genuine responses. Observation is better because the collection of data is first-hand and the researcher can view all the happenings during the selection process of the video vixens (Pawar, 2004). The limiting aspect is that the video vixens under investigation can exaggerate their habits to please the researcher.

The other suitable method that involves squeezing vital information out of the participants is interviewing of the key players in the industry. The participant has the time to answer any questions and the researcher receives immediate response. The problems with interview involve time constraints, language barriers, difficulties in dealing with some individuals and poor methods of responding or avoiding questions (Pawar, 2004).

#### **3.6.1 Primary Data**

The primary instruments that was utilized in the project was questionnaires and interviews with the potential and experienced video vixens. The primary data was recorded using a phone and stored on flash disk for further reference. Survey questions were also used in the collection of vital information from the music producers and directors regarding their reason for using video vixens in secular videos. The recruiting criteria for video vixens are that they should have been chosen to appear on a secular video. Phone interviews was also necessary in the process of collecting the primary data.

#### **3.6.2 Secondary Data**

The main secondary sources that were utilized in data collection for secondary sources were E-books, Entertainment Magazines, YouTube Videos and Peer-Reviewed Articles

available in the University Online Library database, and online analysis. Information from previous research was also necessary in obtaining information regarding the attitude and the influence of video vixens in the society today. The keywords that were used in searching for the secondary sources were 'Video Vixens' 'Influence of Video Vixens on the young generation' 'Lifestyle of video vixens in Nairobi Kenya.

The main instruments to be used will comprise of pens and note pads for taking notes, recorders, and secondary sources like entertainment magazines for references, lapel microphones, cameras and bags among others like TV and radio show contents. The study also utilizes questionnaires that are distributed to the video vixens as indicated in Appendix 1.

### **3.7 Validity**

The questionnaires designed for the project were taken through to a validation procedure for face and content authority. This implies that the face validity is the notion that a test needs to appear outwardly to examine the intended outcome. The content validity is the assumption that a test should always sample the ranges of habits represented by the academic concepts under investigation (Pelissier, 2008, p.12). The validation of this project involved entertainment and music video experts going through the questionnaire questions to confirm if they will yield the desired outcome and conform to the social expectations of the research.

### **3.8 Reliability**

The reliability of the research also entailed assessing the quality of the measurement processes applied in the data gathering. In this research, no measurements were required, the contents was shared with my supervisors.

#### **3.8.1 Data Processing and Analysis**

The data processing and analysis are the inspection, cleansing, modifying and modeling of data in order to identify important information that will arrive at concrete conclusions and supporting evidence. For instance, the content analysis examines the data that gathered from the personal interviews undertaken. The content analysis assists in data

collection being minimized, simplified, and providing results measured through quantitative methods. The other advantage of content analysis is that researchers are able to structure the qualitative data collected in a manner that satisfies the achievement of research objectives. However, the main limitation is that human error is likely to occur when using the content analysis criteria because of misinterpretation of data gathered. Cleaning and processing of data shall be through Excel that will help in detecting and identifies the errors entered, then replaces, modifies and deletes the dirty materials. (McCaig& Dahlberg, 2010).

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

This study was subject to a number of ethical issues, such as the participants were required to submit their written acceptance to take part in the study by issuing signed consent and briefing letters. Similarly, the sample population was to present signed debriefing and withdrawal letters in order to reassure them that their participation in the research is optional and voluntary and that they are free, at any time, to withdraw at their discretions and a letter from the University showing that I am working on this project.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the results from the study and the findings that the researcher devised. The study involved music producers and young women who are involved in the business of video vixens. The data was collected by the use of questionnaires, interviews and observation of the happenings within the entertainment industry. For the data collected to provide conclusive results analysis is required for better understanding of the findings. These findings are then presented following the research questions, the answers provided by the target population and the observations from the general entertainment industry. The sample was composed of 40 video vixens and three producers in order to gain the necessary information required to answer the research questions.

#### **4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

The demographic information that was of interest in the study was gender, age, and education level and employment status. The highest number of participants were from modeling agencies, the number of young girls who do casual work as marketing had a modeling career. The gender of the participants was predetermined by the focus of the study since it focuses on the female video vixens in the Kenyan entertainment industry, male counterparts are not involved so much as video vixens in the industry as opposed to other countries. The sample was therefore based on mainly female as video vixens and production company owners were 3 male. The media owners include people who own production houses.

The female video vixens include 15 who are actively in the business and other 25 who are aspiring to be working as video vixens for popular artists or have been involved in two or three videos. These women are young and range between 18 to 26 years, the younger one is in the industry, the higher the chances of their rise in the industry.

## **4.2 Factors Contributing to the Rise of Video Vixens**

It was shocking to find out how a factor such as unemployment contributed to the rise of video vixens in the entertainment industry. The unemployment rate in Kenya stands at 19.2% in 2017 and according to the same report, 9 out of 10 unemployed young Kenyan's are aged 35 years and below (Omondi, 2018). Among the 40 young vixens who were interviewed most of them discussed how they did not have any alternative for making money for their daily upkeep and decided to take up work in the entertainment industry. However, some of them wanted to pursue a career in modeling but when that did not pay their bills, they decided that being a video vixen was their way out.

The questionnaires provided the reasons why most of these women decided to be video vixens all of which are because they were unemployed or their work was not enough to support them. Some of them who are still in school explains that their studies do not provide them with job securities and the unemployment rate in the country especially among their peers made them get into the video vixen business as a safety net. The industry of video vixens has positively affected the lives of young women who would otherwise be unemployed as one of the video vixen wrote " I no longer ask for money from my parents since I became a video vixen".

As proposed by Collins (2013), the lived experiences of the video vixens have to be looked at holistically as there are various mitigating factors that influence the material and psychosocial conditions of black women. Hence the need to include the experiences of this new breed of women in the feminist discourse. According to the research respondents discussed below are some of the key factors that might lead young women to being video vixens.

### **4.2.1 Source of Employment**

The rise of unemployment rates in Kenya compels many young women to resort to other methods to make their ends meet. Consequently, the opportunities available in the entertainment industry especially as video vixen is becoming an ideal solution for many women. This study established that most young women especially in Universities and Colleges are resorting to becoming video vixens in order to earn pocket money for their

upkeep in campus. For instance, the following is one of the responses given by one vixen from Mainstream Image. *“I find being a Vixen very convenient for me because it has good money and no professional experience is required, as long as you can ‘twerk’ it increases your chances to be in many videos hence more income. Therefore, I am contented with this hustle for now.”* In a question, which asked which factors drove you to become a video vixen, 30 of the respondents, which is 75%, said that lack of employment has made them to join the entertainment industry to make money as video vixens.

#### **4.2.2 Poor Family Background**

It was also established that most young women resort to being video vixen because of the poor family backgrounds that they come from. The demand created by a society that objectifies women and perceives them as valuable for physical attributes is also another factor that encourage young girls to be video vixens. When asked the factors that led them to become video vixens, 25 of the respondents, which is 62.5%, said that it was due to poverty. This aspect compels them to resort to other sources of income to cater for their family needs and for themselves, they say since they became video vixens they have been able to uplift their families from poverty. In a feature by BBC Bridget Achieng explains that she came from the ghettos of Kibera where she worked as a house help (Kadandara, 2018). Being born into poverty instills the mentality of hopelessness and the continuation of the same poverty through generations. In an interview, Bridget says, *“You are a desperate girl looking for money and when a guy offers you \$10000 you do what you have to do”*. Vera and Huddah have the same story of coming from poor background and being socialites and video vixens to escape (Nyota, 2015). In an interview, Vera says that she used to live in bedsitter in Kahawa Wendani for Ksh. 3500 per month (Aswani, 2018).

#### **4.2.3 City Life in Nairobi**

The study conducted reveals that 100% of the people who were interviewed lives within the capital city Nairobi. The young women talk of how they gained their freedom after they left home for their studies in the city. In one of the questions where the respondents

were asked when they knew about the video vixens 20 of them which is 50% said that they knew about the video vixens when they came to Nairobi.

Vera, in one of the interviews at the talk central show (K24), talks about the way she was raised in Mombasa and on how slow life is in Mombasa. However, when she came to Nairobi life was different, that is when she started hustling, and modeling and that is how she was able to appear on P unit's song "You Guy which made her famous (Nyota, 2015). The young women were from different universities in Nairobi. The Nairobi nightlife is also a great influence in the rise of video vixens in the country. The many clubs in the city hosts video productions and parties where some video vixens get their work and make money. Video vixens have also normalized and given class to the act of making appearance in the clubs in exchange for money (Onyango, 2018).

The life in the city is also very expensive and the rise in living standards makes things even worse. Young impressionable girls copy what they see their counterparts doing and get into the business of selling their pictures online for money or to be picked by promoters, artists and video producers as vixens. Life in the city plays a major role encouraging the rise of video vixens because this is where the major production houses are found.

#### **4.3 Influence of Vixens on Young Women**

The study established that Vixens can have an effect on the social life and the decision-making processes of young women. In an interview with one of the producer, it was apparent that young vixens appearing in secular videos are paid between Ksh. 3000 to 4000 per video. However, videos highlighting vixens in revealing dresses exposing a large amount of their skin attracts payments of up to Ksh. 20000 per video. This aspect attracts many young women aspiring to make that much to sustain their lifestyle. Thus, most young women are attracted to the industry to increase their socio-economic status. Another producer also acknowledged that video vixens play a pivotal role in the selling of videos, for example, when Vera Sidika, the famous vixen, appeared on Otile Brown's video, it got so many views in a day. In three months, the video had 4.9 million views compared to the other songs that he released more than a year ago that still has 2 million

views. The more famous the vixen is and they do something explicit the more controversial a video becomes the more it sells which is a plus for their business.

However, when asked the influence it has on young vixens, the producer explained that it has its pros and cons.

Black Feminism theory explains this finding concerning the influence of vixens on young women to address the high amount of sexually charged content being depicted in what the video vixens wear, how they act within the framework of the music video which is aimed primarily at the male audience(Kellner,1995). As a result, the young women may fall into the trap of men who might want to take advantage of them at the expense of appearing on the music videos. It is apparent that black women are normally perceived beyond their skin color or educational qualification; instead, people look at other factors like their physique.

#### **4.3.1 Dress Code**

A dress code is a set of written and, more often, unwritten rules with regard to clothing (Isaacson, 1998) Clothing, like other aspects of human physical appearance, has a social significance, with different rules and expectations applying depending on circumstance and occasion (Isaacson, 1998) "Within a single day, an individual may need to navigate between two or more dress codes. For example, many navigate between a home dress code and a work dress code; usually this ability is a result of cultural acclimatization" (Isaacson, 1998, p. 117)

The rising influence of video vixens in Nairobi over the decades has brought the question of the corrosion of social values and norms among the city dwellers. The issue of the deterioration of social values cross the boundaries of the public sphere and the private sphere hence the reason why it's an emotive issue. "There is the argument within the general populace that the issue of social values and norms transcends both the public and private thus some private and personal issues such as modesty and nudity have wider social and national relevance" (Bland, 1985, pp. 307-310).

The debate on the long and short of the dressing has arisen mixed reactions from different parts of the society throughout countries. Julienne Uwacu, the Minister for Sports and Culture in Rwanda stated:

*“There is no law on dress code but we have our norms and values as Rwandans that we should maintain, a respectable woman or girl should wear clothes that dignify them but not exposing their inner body parts to the public, Uwacu adds that when you dress with dignity, people will respect you at work and in society, as long as you aren’t at the beach, you ought to cover up”* (Mbabazi & Njwe, 2018, p. np).

According to Mbabazi, there is the unwritten rule that a proper African lady should be dressed in a skirt that is long enough to cover her thighs while seated, be past the knee and she should look smart when she walks, apart from some areas like Northern Kenya where women just cover their private parts. Furthermore, the women need to respect the African culture and should not dress based on what they like or the weather hence women should not wear a dress or skirt that attracts the attraction of the masses whenever they are out in public (Mbabazi & Njwe, 2018).

Moreover, discussing the decadence of social values in the American Society as a result of immodesty and suggestive clothes, Harold Martin, a commentator on the ACBS News (news, p. np) stated:

*“The last step in the degradation of a nation is immodesty. The wearing of suggestive dress leads to the ruin of a people (in the past ten years). The decade when the hemlines went up and the morals went down. Those who expose much of their bodies (both men and women) are debauching the nation, damning manhood, polluting society”* (Harold, 2004).

One of the dominant influence of the video vixens on young women is decision-making on the dress code. It was established that young women get dressing ideas from video vixens and apply it in their daily lives, the vixens also own fashion boutiques where most young women go for shopping in order to look like the video vixens. In an interview, one of the producers responded as follows:

*“I think video vixens inform the wardrobes of many young girls who like night clubs. If I may use an example that we can all relate, take the case of Sauti Sol’s ‘Short and Sweet,’ you can agree with me that the stripped jump-suit that was used by one of the vixens has become a trending fashion among young women in Kenya.”*

The above discussion brings about the question, are social values determined by the dressing of women? The exposure of a woman’s body parts is seen as a bigger social crime as compared to other social deviations. Dressing cannot be the only threshold that is used to determine a woman’s virtue (Waseem, 2012). There is need for the interrogation of how the standards of social values and social respect are set and appreciate every member of the society in the same measure however the society runs a risk of labeling a growing group of young women as being ethically corrupt thus not only disempowering the said women but the generations to follow (Waseem, 2012).

#### **4.3.2 Lifestyle**

It was also established that video vixens post their personal lives on social media. Most of them have the tendency of posting images while in flamboyant restaurants with various indigenous cuisines on their table. Young women replicate the same behavior, which has really contributed to increase in social media usage in Kenya. *“If you can remember one of the bloggers acknowledged that Kenya has the highest number of social media consumers being the leading in using Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Well, personally I attribute this high consumption to vixens who are really promoting the use of social media in Kenya...”* replied one of the famous producer from Fedha Estate. Thus, this aspect indicates that video vixens contribute on the increase on social media consumption in young women.

#### **4.3.3 Impact on Social Values on Young Women**

The results elicited from the interviews and questions with the target population show that the social values of some of these girls might be perceived as unacceptable by the elders and some societal norms. In a question, which asked what, are the advantages of being a video vixen, that is 32 of the vixens said that after being a video vixen you become famous and this makes it easy for them to get favors from rich people and ask for favors in return. The fact that they see some people such as Bridget are doing it openly

and the media gives them the confidence to do it too. In an interview with one of the producers, he says most of the young women who wants to get into the entertainment industry as video vixens do it because they see other people doing it and succeeding.

According to (Flora, 2009) video vixens are using their nude bodies to create fame and make a career out of the same. Cognizant of this, such actions have no value system in terms of what is good or evil, and the fashion trends they follow are generally sexually revealing and sordid with no room for respect.

By taking the example of these three socialites, it is possible to note the difference between their former selves and the video vixens they are now. In her interview, Bridget explains that she got into fame by posting half-naked pictures of herself after which rich men wanted her for money. However, it is important to note that were it not for these careers as video vixens, these girls would still be in poverty. These careers help them get beyond the poverty that some of them have known from birth and help their families too.

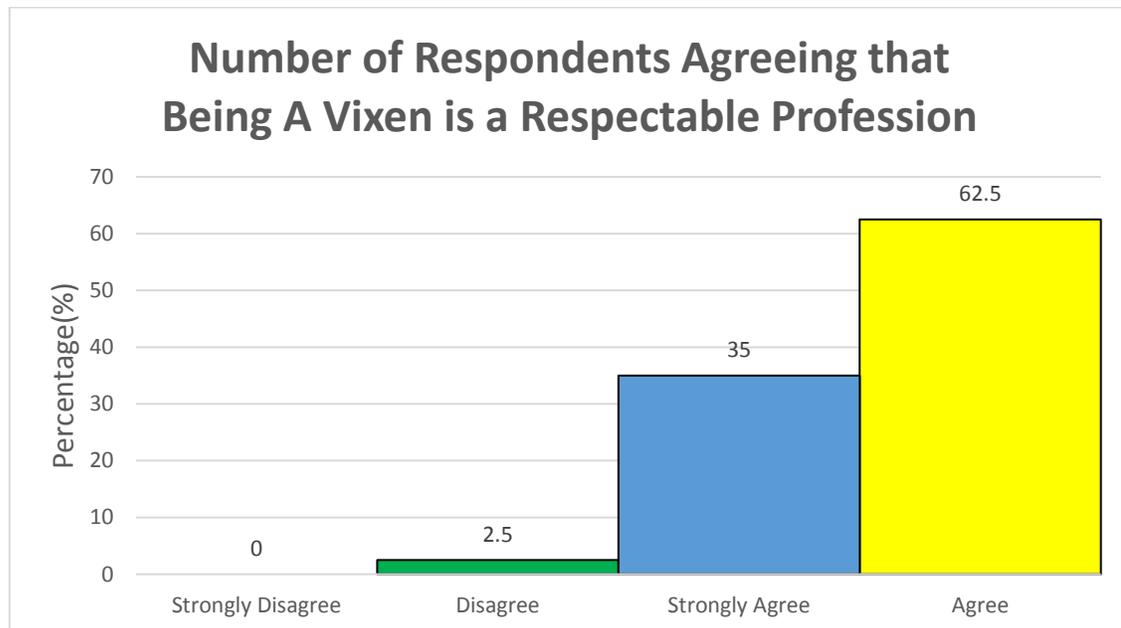
Black feminism theory helps in understanding how the music video format has generated a fair amount of scholarly attention, focusing especially on the harmful imagery of black women found in many music videos and the potential effects of such imagery on youth audiences (wallis, 2010)

#### **4.4 Attitude and Perceptions of Young Women on the Video Vixens**

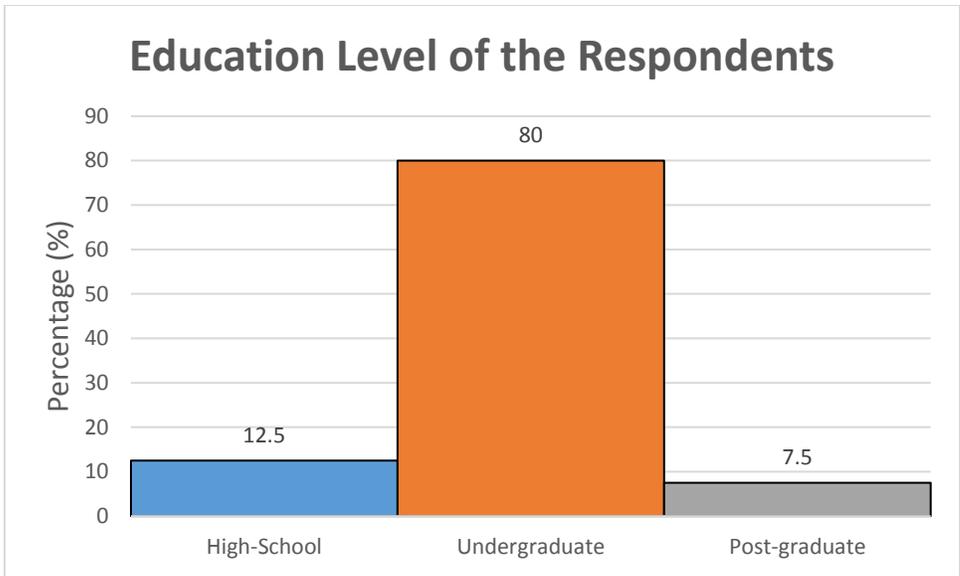
Studies have also shown that thirst for fame might lead to the social degradation in any society as people struggle to get famous (Fiissel, 2000). In a question that asked whether the vixens have ever been condemned by anyone on social media or face- to -face regarding the profession, 15 of the respondents said yes and 25 of them said they have not been condemned, this shows that majority of the young women support the video vixens .

The attitudes and perceptions of young women and society in general affirms the objectification theory as proposed by Fiissel (2000). In his work he stated that that society views women's worth based on their bodily appearances and sexual desires instead of their contribution to various sectors or intelligence (Fiissel, 2000); this was

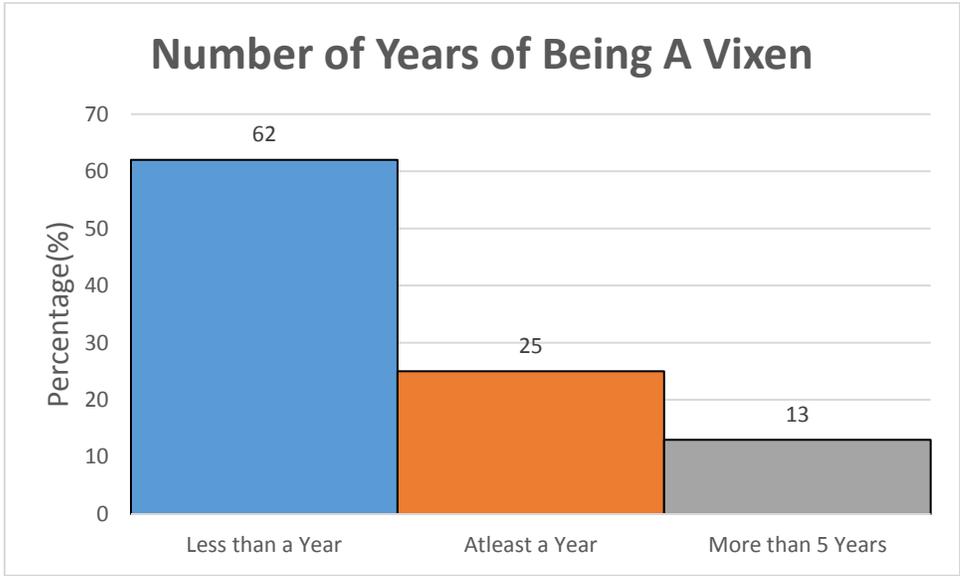
illustrated when I asked the famous vixen about the feedback that she gets from her fans, she said most people support her apart from a few haters who always say negative things about her, she says " *I hate it when people tell me that I am not a role model to the young women*". *The above statement by the famous video vixen illustrates how society might view the vixens as contributing to rise in social degradation thus cannot contribute something positive to society.*



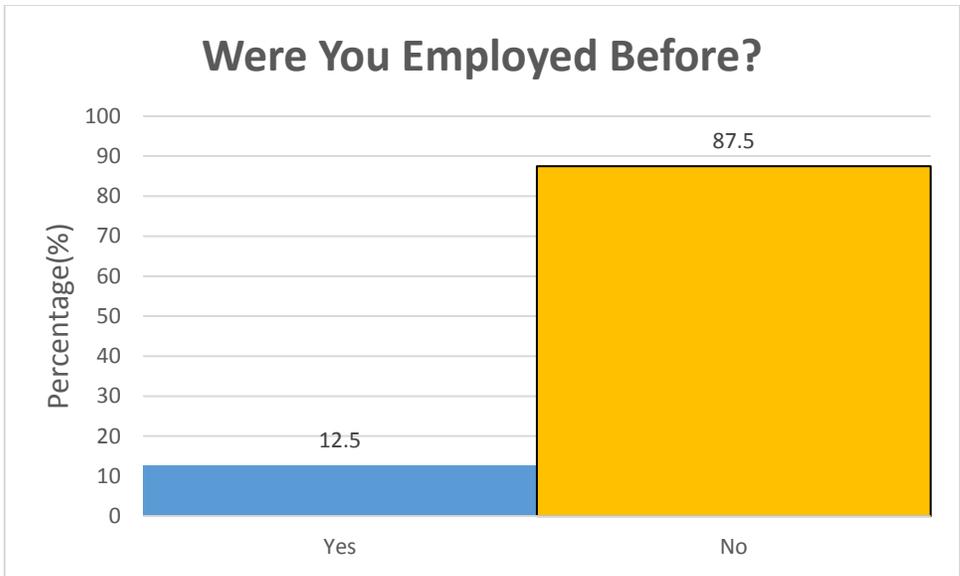
Basing on the data provided the number of respondents who agree that being a video vixen is a respectable profession was 25, which attributes to 62.5% of total responses. They agreed because the women are earning their money like other people without breaking the law. The video vixen profession is not an illegal venture in the country and no one engaging in it commits a criminal offense. It is also not that all video vixens engage in sexual encounters with the industry players before appearing on the videos as others tend to believe. They present themselves and engage with others professionally by performing their designated video roles according to the script and rules of engagement. The number of respondents who marked strongly Agree were 14 representing 35% of the total response given on that question. The respondents who marked Disagree was 1 representing 2.5% of the total responses. Finally, none marked strongly disagree representing 0 % of the total responses.



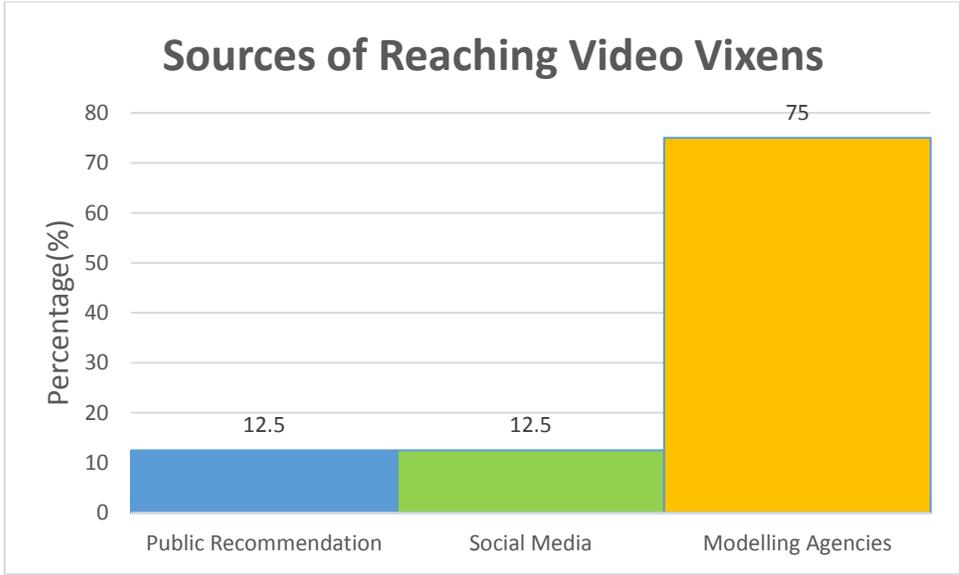
The inclusion criteria for answering the questionnaires was that the respondents should be between 18-26 years. Out of 40 questionnaires that were turned for analysis, 32 respondents were undergraduates representing 80% of the total responses. 3 were post graduate attributing 7.5% and 5 were high school students representing 12.5%.



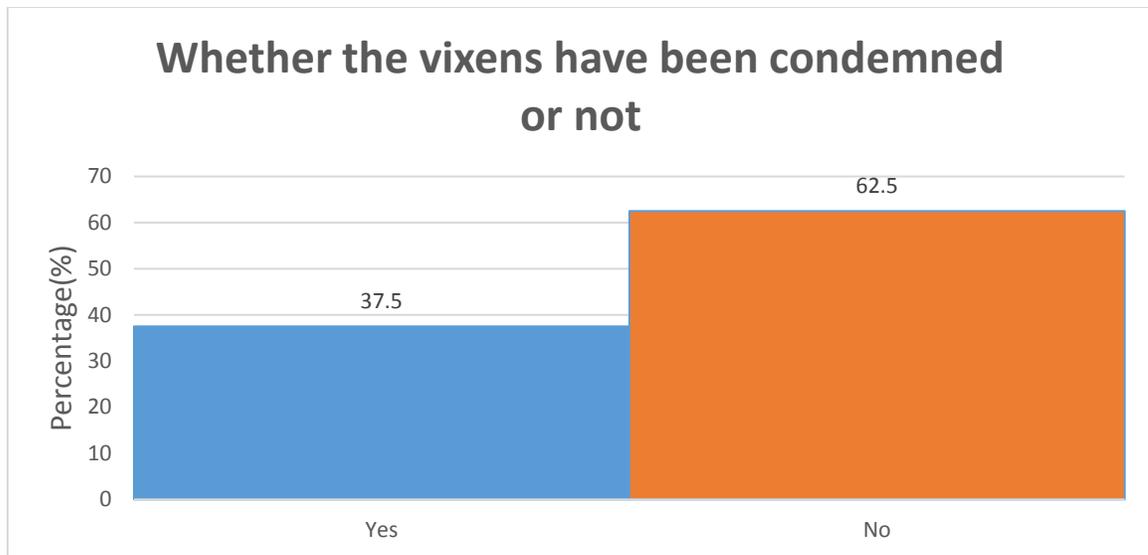
Basing on the above data, 62% of the respondents acknowledged that they had been video vixens for less than a year, 13% had been in the industry for more than 5 years while 25 percent had experience of at least one year.



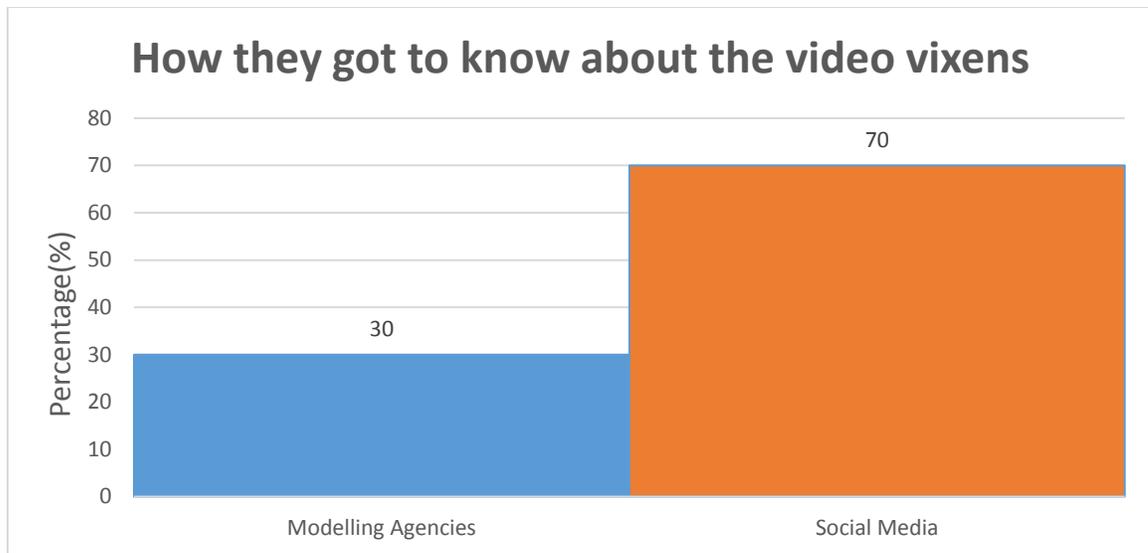
Five respondents had left their place of work before to be full time video vixens representing 12.5% of the total respondents while 35 were not employed before representing 87.5%.



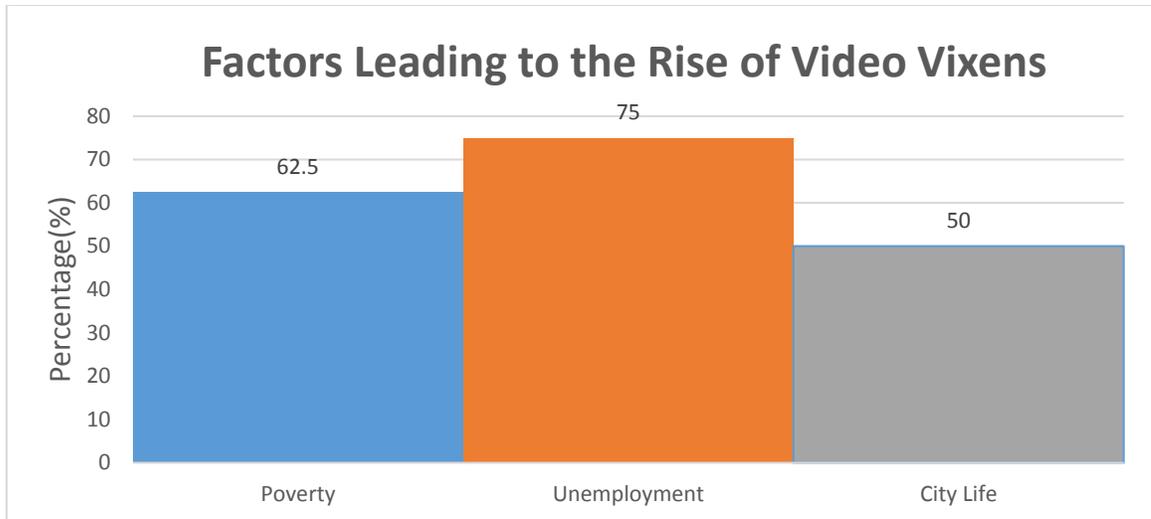
As illustrated above 75% of the respondents were reached through modeling agencies, while 12.5% were reached through public recommendation and social media respectively. The above data shows the growing influence and numbers of video vixens in such a way that for you to reach them you have to go through an organized and functional professional body.



Basing on the above data, 15 vixens representing 37.5% said they had been condemned for being video vixens before and 25 representing 62.5% of them who were new in the industry said they had not been condemned. The objectification and exploitation of the bodies of female in secular videos has led to the rise of critique from various agencies that sought to empower women, and feminist scholars. However, there is the school of thought that the video vixens are using this exploitation and objectification to their advantage, therefore as some people condemn the video vixens, the more they become famous and make money by appearing in more videos. The more controversial a video is, the more viewership it will have and through this the video vixen will become famous which will create more opportunity for her in the upcoming videos.



From the data 70% of the respondents said that they knew about the video vixens through social media and 30% said they knew about them through the modeling agencies. The concept of video vixen was not that popular until the inception of the social media when most people came to the attention of the girls. It started out as young women posting semi-nude pictures on their social media platforms, which then drew the attention of the public towards them. With that, came the numbers and numbers attract marketers. The artists took advantage of the followership of the video vixens to capitalize on the numbers to give their videos more views, which would translate into shows. It is common knowledge that the videos that features the famous vixens like Sidika and Monroe attracted more traffic than those that had ordinary and unknown vixens. The modeling agencies also used the vixens to promote their products like hair weaves and wigs, clothing lines, fragrances and beauty products among others. This also increased the knowledge of the public on the vixens to gain admiration and interest from the young women in Nairobi and other parts of the country.



From the data above 75% of the respondents ended up being video vixens due to unemployment, 62.5% due to poverty and 50% due to the cost of living in the Nairobi city. The data exemplifies the underlying factors that push some girls to being video vixens.

The video vixens have an influence to the young women in different ways such as dress code and the flashy lifestyle that the young women want to imitate. From this chapter it was determined that the major factors that have led to the rise of video vixens are the rate of an employment in the country, the poor backgrounds that some come from and some the fast life in the city on Nairobi.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter is on the findings, conclusions and recommendations that have emerged from the analysis of the data in the previous chapter. The researcher intended to explore various factors that contributed to rise of video vixens among the youths and the influence they have on the young women. In addition, an assessment on the attitude, knowledge and perceptions of the young women on video vixens.

#### **5.1 Summary**

The entertainment industry has a very high influence among the young women and hence video vixens will have a great influence on them. Video vixens create a certain normality to behaviors that may be traditionally frowned upon such as nudity. Social media also provides an amazing platform for the video vixens to advertise their availability to appear in clubs or videos. The highest percentage of young people today use these social media apps and are aware of these types of careers. Most of the Kenyans are indifferent about video vixens, the major view is as long as the video vixens themselves are okay with their careers then nobody else cares.

It is apparent some of the video vixens are paid really well to appear in videos and in clubs. The young women have access to this knowledge through the media and see video vixens every day. Vera Sidika has gained fame and a lot of wealth through her career as a video vixen and now as a very successful businessperson. The same applies to Huddah Monroe who also started as a video vixen in simple videos such as (Vuka border by Jaguar) and now owns a business in cosmetics. She has managed to get her family out of poverty. Bridget on the other hand, lived in the slums of Kibera but being a video vixen has enabled her to escape the ghetto life and make a better life for herself. The perception that these careers enable young women to make it in life lead to more of them aspiring to get into the industry.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The social perception that the young women have towards video vixens make it easy for television to display videos of them to all viewers. The outlet music industry has for their videos is through social media and television, the fact that no one is ever opposed to these videos being aired on television the young women have access to them. The music industry can have an influence on the young people in the nation, which is causing the rise in the number of video vixens in the country. The influence extends to their dressing, dancing habits and the career choices they make. Every time a song is released within the Kenyan industry, the dancing style can be seen, especially the young generation.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

- 1.** The media plays a great role in displaying video vixens to the young women in the country. Some videos contain some explicit content and having regulations will ensure the country and young women are not influenced to join and be part of the videos that might portray them negatively.
- 2.** The government should work tirelessly to ensure that the future generations will have access to employment and pay women highly in order to reduce the rise of video vixens among youths.
- 3.** Parents, guardians and education institutions should educate the young generation and provide them with knowledge and the right perceptions on the modern entertainment industry and the influence it has on young people.
- 4.** Further research should be carried out on the lived experiences of the video vixens and how this fits into the feminist discourse. This research works will be instrumental in filling the gaps that this study has not been able to address.
- 5.** A study should be conducted on what the audience think about the video vixens and their lifestyle; this will also help in determining the influence that the video vixens have on social values from the audience's point of view since this study focused on the video vixens alone since some gave self-serving answers.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Questionnaire for Video Vixens

1. What is your gender?

[Male] [Female]

2. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you ever appeared on any music video?

[Yes, I Have] [Never]

If Yes, how many videos? \_\_\_\_\_

4. For how long have you been a video vixen?

[Less Than a Year] [One Year] [More than 2 Years]

5. Do you think a video vixen can be regarded to be in a respectful profession?

[Agree] [Strongly Agree] [Disagree] [Strongly Disagree]

6. What is your level of education?

[High school] [Under graduate] [Post graduate]

7. Which factors drove you to become video vixen?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Where did the producers find you?

[Social Media] [Modeling agency] [Other, Specify]

9. Have you ever been condemned by anyone on social media or face-to-face regarding your profession as a video vixen?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. When/how did you know about the video vixens?

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix II: Producers Interview Questions**

1. What is the name of your production company?
2. How many years have you been a producer in this company?
3. Where do you get the models/vixens for secular videos?
4. What criteria/criterion do you use in selecting the video vixens?
5. How much do you pay your vixens after making appearances in your videos?
6. Why are video vixens important in the couple of videos your company has produced?
7. What feedback have you received from your audience regarding the impact of video vixens on the young women (between 18 - 26 years)?

### **Appendix III: Interview Questions the Famous Vixen**

1. What inspired you to be a video vixen?
2. What are some of your achievements as a famous video vixen?
3. What are some of the challenges you face as a video vixen?
4. What are some of the feedback you get from your fans?
5. Just like other professions, do famous video vixens like you face competition?

**Appendix IV: Letter from the University**



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**  
**AFRICAN WOMEN STUDIES CENTRE**  
P.O Box 30197-00100  
Tel: (+254-20) 3318262/28075; 725 740 025  
Email: [awsckenya@uonbi.ac.ke](mailto:awsckenya@uonbi.ac.ke)  
Website: <http://awsc.uonbi.ac.ke>  
Nairobi, Kenya

**Date:** May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018

**From:** Director,  
African Women Studies Centre  
University of Nairobi

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

**SUBJECT: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR MS. VICTORIA SURE**

This is to confirm that Ms. Victoria Sure (M10/88696/2016) is a registered MA student at the African Women Studies Centre, University of Nairobi. She is currently working on her research proposal entitled, "*An Interrogation of the Rise of Video Vixens in Kenya and their Influence on the Young Women: A Case Study of Nairobi*".

Any assistance accorded to her during her research period is highly appreciated.

  
**Prof. Wanjiku Mukabi Kabira**  
Director, African Women Studies Centre  
University of Nairobi