REPRESENTATION OF THE DISABLED IN THE MEDIA: A STUDY OF *BEYOND THE LIMIT* TV PROGRAMME
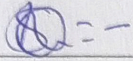
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A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES IN THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

2022

DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY THE STUDENT

I declare that this is my original work and has not been presented for a degree award in any other university or academic purposes.
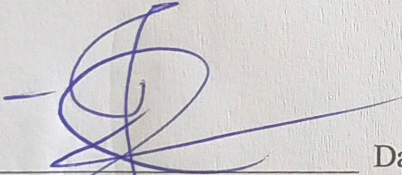
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DECLARATION BY THE PROJECT SUPERVISOR

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my father, Gideon Mburu, the pillar of our family and my late mother Elizabeth Mburu. Also, to my brothers Johana, Anthony and Paul.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

This study seeks to examine how *Beyond The Limit* weekly TV magazine reports on disability-related issues and Persons Living With Disability (PLWDs) in Kenya. Agenda setting and framing theories suggest that TV viewers are affected by the content they consume and this could lead to creation of stereotypes, beliefs, perceptions and attitudes on various issues. This study uses qualitative research method with the population being *Beyond The Limit* TV program. Non-probability purposive sampling was adopted as the sampling technique and a sample size of 6 months ranging from July 2021 to December 2021. These months account when most disability activities are marked both at national and international level. Narrative analysis was conducted on the data and presented in words. Findings showed that the program employs use of code-switching, that is, use of multiple languages that include English, Kiswahili, Kenyan Sign Language and even part of sheng. This is due to the youthful audience the TV47 has. However, much needs to be done to include a PLWDs as a host to show inclusivity. Conclusions drawn from this study show that *Beyond The Limit* TV program revolved around PLWDs and gave them a chance to air their plights and concerns. This has contributed towards having positive experiences in the society where PLWDs are treated equally through change of negative perception and attitude. This study recommends that *Beyond The Limit* TV program should make its content more accessible. Sign language interpreters and subtitles should be used exhaustively to reach a wider audience. This study is purposed to add to existing literature on media representation on PLWDs and disability issues in their effort to strike balance in their journalistic practice.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter provides an overview and background of the study. It introduces the key aspect of what this study is all about – how the media represent People Living With Disability (PLWDs) and more specifically through TV47's *Beyond The Limit* TV programme. This chapter elucidates how the media plays a crucial role in setting agendas as well as shaping the public opinions of consumers. It then extends to include background of the study, problem statement, research objectives and research questions.

1.2 Background

Disability representation in the mass media has significantly impacted community attitudes on persons living with disability towards positivity or negativity depending on focus given to this news beat. Stories aired on television (Campbell & Hoem, 2001; Cumberland & Negrine, 1992; Haller, 2006), articles published on newspapers (newspapers (Keller, Hallahan, McShane, Crowley, & Blandford, 1990; Wehbi, 2012) and films that have feature length (Norden, 1994) have all contributed to this effect.

Persons Living With Disability (PLWD) over the years have faced countless challenges ranging from the societal lens to unemployment to access of information as well as their accessibility to places and information (Teng & Joo, 2020). The media has on the other hand been held accountable for cultivating some of the existing beliefs, attitudes and perceptions by the abled-bodied people towards the abled-differently people.

(Niederdeppe et al., 2013) explains that when journalists are covering disability stories, they are mostly torn in between "institutional constraint or personal perception" about the health concern in regard to editorial decisions to be made. Journalists majorly reported about the major activities that higher social impact and isolated the disability ones (Anuar, 1994).

Scholars like Norazit (2010) have postulated that there has been change in the media coverage of disability from PLWDs being portrayed as objects of pity and concern to highlighting about their rights and capabilities. The significant change is evident since earlier on, PLWDs were compared to ordinary people. This led to their discrimination in the society (Ogundola, 2013). Modernity

pressures the disabled to have standard bodies, an achievement that can met due to technological advancements. This is because the society refutes contingency, mortality and vulnerability (Garland-Thomson, 2005). Thus, the society expects that through medical interventions, persons with disability can also achieve the standardized bodies.

Sociologist Nancy Eiesland (1994) argues that it is through "resymbolization" of the existing disability culture that the PLWDs will exist in an equal space. In this 'new' space they will be represented in a rather fair and normal way and will not be compared to the abled-bodied individuals. Her argument lies on the need to change how we imagine disability and persons with disability for the real social change to take place. Thus, media has a role to play in ensuring proper and equal coverage of the People living with Disability.

Media constructions contribute towards the opinions held by the consumers of the information due to the exposure to the information (Haller, 1999; Hunt, 1966; Morris, 2001; Shakespeare, 1999). According to (Bendukurthi & Raman, 2016) these construction under the disability section play two crucial roles of; shaping viewpoints of consumers, that is the society, and secondly, creating an environment where "sense of participation" by this minority group is appreciated.

Language used by the media impacts/ contributes towards the opinion, belief or attitude the society has towards disability and the persons involved since communication takes place through the use of a language (Longmore 2003). The image of disability is dependent on the language used in as much as the coverage it is given. Thus, a journalist's choice of words that do not show comparison to abled-bodied individuals has a great contribution towards creating a self-image for Persons Living With Disabilities.

Morris (1991) postulates that there has been dominance of prejudice towards the topic of disability and PLWDs. This has further affected how the society views this group of people and has been extended to simplifying the topic and making it one-dimensional (Shakespeare, 1994, 1999). Morris' reverberates Mulvey's 1975 'male gaze' that the disability representation takes place from the able-bodied persons and not the abled-differently individuals. Majority of the newsroom journalists being abled-bodied individuals contribute towards having this concept put into practice. This theoretical premise provides basis of this study on how the media portrays disability since these able-bodied journalists are responsible for coming up with the stories (Shakespeare, 1994).

Electronic media's representation of concepts looks like the reality due to its touch and appealing nature than in any other form of media; and the audience are drawn to what reflects the reality (Corner, 1999). This extends the understanding why the television impacts the society more through its appealing images and sound. Other scholars have however, navigated media representation from the ideological point of view and see the media as a platform of transmitting the disguised truth (Bendukurthi & Raman, 2016). Journalists use the ideology and turn it to reality (Fiske, 1991). Thus, the media reports or stories are a product of what the journalists understood or constructed in their minds before disseminating the information to the anonymous audience. Grossberg, Wartella and Whitney (1998) also note that society preserve their existence by shaping how people think and conceptualize a specific issue to enhance continuity of the same.

The predominant stereotype depiction of disability has been existing over the years since it has been seen as a symbol of psychological insight hooked in the literary characters (Byrd & Elliott, 1988). Byrd and Elliot posits that despite the fact that TV lobbies for increase of disability funds through their presentations, they do not present the correct information. They argue that it leads to strengthening the existing stereotypes. Television and movie portrayal of disability can contribute towards widening the communication gap or narrowing it down between the abled-bodied and abled-differently individuals (Byrd & Elliott, 1988). Whether positive or negative effects will be accrued, positive and neutral representation of the abled-differently extends to the societal level and their societal treatment.

Kenya is a signatory of national and international treaties on disability and thus, representation of PLWDs is a vital aspect towards realizing an equal space for this minority group. Persons with Disabilities Act (No. 14 of 2003) section 39 instructs all television stations to provide a sign language interpreter or insert sub-titles in all news, educational and national-significant programmes. This is reflecting the accommodative measures that PLWDS, specifically the deaf, have been subjected to. PLWDs are also subject to freedom of not being degraded or treated inhumanly as per the Article 15 of Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

1.3 Problem Statement

In Kenya, Persons Living With Disability (PLWDs) are mostly viewed from a lens of sympathy rather than that of equality and respect. Despite the fact that Kenya has over the years been applauded globally over upholding democracy and rule of law (AfroBarometer, 2017), it's still

worrying that people with disability in the country are not fully embraced despite having a progressive constitution that stipulates how they are supposed to be treated (Constitution of Kenya, 2010).

The Kenya's Disability Act (2006) defines disability as a "physical, sensory, mental or other impairment, including any visual, hearing, learning or physical incapability, which impacts adversely on social, economic or environmental participation."

Even though such tremendous steps have been made towards realizing an equal platform for both the abled-bodied and abled-differently individuals, most PLWDs are not aware of the information due to ignorance of the Act and have less exposure to such information. It is in light with this that this study seeks to explore ways in which the media portrays or frames the disability concept as well as highlight possible ways in which television stations can help in having an inclusive society.

This study seeks to examine how journalists report in the *Beyond The Limit* weekly TV magazine on mainstream TV when covering disability-related issues and Persons Living With Disability (PLWDs) in Kenya. The focus was extended on TV47- a commercial and national broadcaster on its program *Beyond The Limit*. The program is televised every Saturday at 7:30pm for an average of 25 minutes. The show seeks to highlight plights that PLWDs go through in Kenya. This program focuses on discussions with PLWDs, activists, abled-bodied individuals and their caregivers as the host interviews them on disability issues. The target audience is both abled-differently and able-bodied people. It is among the programs aired by commercial TV stations highlighting disability issues in Kenya; KBC airs 'Abled Differently' that is originally produced and aired by the state-owned media. This program focuses on informing the audience on disability rights from UN Convention (Lidubwi & Gathigi, 2021).

1.4 Research Objectives

Generally, this study seeks to investigate how TV47 portrays the topic of disability and PLWDs in the country.

1. To investigate how **Beyond The Limit** TV program uses language to counter negative attitudes around PLWDS and disability issues.
2. To examine how PLWDs are portrayed in the weekly program *Beyond The Limit* program.

3. To establish how far *Beyond The Limit* challenges and changes the stereotypes and perceptions about PLWDs and disability.

1.5 Research Questions

1. How does *Beyond The Limit* TV program use language to counter negative attitude around PLWDS and disability issues?
2. How are PLWDs portrayed in the weekly program *Beyond the Limit* program?
3. How is *Beyond The Limit* challenging and changing stereotypes and perceptions roped around PLWDs and disability?

1.6 Justification/Need of the Study

There are national and international treaties enacted to protect PLWDs in the world and this shows how this marginalized group is important in the society. With the amendment of the Persons with Disability Act (2019), both the national and county governments are tasked to include them in the running of government affairs through special slots. Magnitude of concern channeled towards this group drives this study towards understanding how the media portrays them. Grey (2008) postulates that TV has been seen as bringing forth interaction between imitation and innovation, and industry and art. Since the media is known to create perceptions, stereotypes and attitudes through the content aired, this study seeks to understand how the media portrays PLWDs. Despite the Communication of Kenya, in 2015, issuing a need for media outlets in the country to air content that mainstreams 60% of PLWDs, much has not been done.

This research aims to find answers to how the TV in Kenya represent PLWD. The study further focuses on a show dubbed '*Beyond The Limits'* aired by private owned TV station - TV47.

1.7 Scope

This study is limited to broadcast media- television, specifically the *Beyond The Limit* TV program that airs on TV47. This broadcaster was chosen among the existing commercial broadcasters because it is the only commercial broadcaster that airs weekly episodes yet majority of the locals watch commercial TV stations. The study was conducted in Kenya and in the year 2022.

1.8 Limitation

This study has a number of research gaps. First, the study focused on one TV station to examine how the PLWDs and disability topics were portrayed. Further research can be done by examining the top TV stations in the country. A larger study with additional years and more media outlets will provide in-depth analysis towards understanding this concept. Secondly, the research focused on one form of mainstream media- TV. Further research can be done by comparing the three mainstream media that is, radio, print and TV. Lastly, the introduction of new media alias 'internet' could provide an interesting platform to conduct the same research on.

1.9 Operational Terms

This study is limited to the following explanation towards achieving its goal:

Persons Living with Disability- This is an individual of any gender that lives with either physical, sensory, mental or other impairment and affects how he or she goes about their usual daily activities.

Abled-bodied- This refers to an individual whose body does not have any impairment and thus is not affected to move, see, hear or any other issue that relates to the body.

Minority group- Refers to a group of people that are fewer in number than the majority. They tend to be different- in this case, they are impaired.

Abled-differently- This is another term to refer to Persons Living With Disability.

Portrayal- Refers to media construct that is extracted from an idea or concept and passed to the audience for consumption.

Broadcaster- Refers to the TV or radio station that is responsible for coming up with content and disseminating it by use of technology.

1.10   Conceptual Framework

This study is founded on the theories of agenda setting and framing theories by exploring how the Kenyan media can frame their stories inclusively of the Persons Living With Disabilities. Gamson & Mogdigliani (1987) view a 'frame' as a theme or central idea which people build their mental framework on issues happening around the world. While Entman (1993) defines the term 'frame' from a perspective of perceived reality, it is important to note that early scholars uphold the fact that 'coming up with frames' is an important role that journalists are tasked to conduct. This task is expected to be incorporated in their routine and quickly because of the aspect of meeting deadlines (Gitlin, 1980).

McCombs &Shaw (1972) argue that agenda setting theory is evident when the mass media gives more emphasis on a certain issue over the other issues. Both framing and agenda-setting join forces to show that when a story is aired giving a certain stand, based on the adopted frame, and yet given the top priority, it impacts the audience by showing its significance.

Journalists are sometimes affected by their biases commonly identified as selected bias and description (Smith,McCarthy, McPhail, & Augustyn 2001; McCarthy, McPhail & Smith, 1996). Under the selection bias, it is evident on how the editor decides the event to be covered and which not to. The description bias is revealed on which frame to use on a certain story or how events are to be portrayed.

Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter provides a critical review of the past literature materials on media and disability. It also examines the language used in the *Beyond The Limit* program and the attitude it creates to the consumers. It further studies how PLWDs are portrayed in the television by the journalists. Scholarly review is further made to expound on how stereotypes and perceptions affect how the society views PLWDs and disability and the contribution of TV towards realizing an inclusive society.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

2.2.1   Media in Kenya

The first broadcast was aimed at white settlers following news from their home country and other parts of the world. The first radio broadcast for Africans was launched in 1953; it was called African Broadcasting services. It carried programs in Kiswahili, Dholuo, Kikuyu, Nandi, Kamba and Arabic. The Kenya Broadcasting Services were established in 1954 and the regional stations were established in Mombasa [Sauti ya Mvita] and Kisumu [Sea Station] in 1961. There are more than 63 licensed FM stations in Kenya. Most commercial radio stations broadcast entertainment, telephone programs, talk shows and interviews.

Television was introduced in Kenya in 1962 and the first broadcasting station was in Limuru and only broadcasted over a 15 mile radius. On July 1, 1964, the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation was nationalized by an Act of Parliament and renamed the Voice of Kenya (V.O.K). In 1970, V.O.K opened a new TV station in Mombasa to broadcast programs and produce local drama, music, culture and other programs. In 1989, the Kenyan Parliament granted autonomy to the V.O.K and changed the name to K.B.C. K.B.C is known as Channel 1, Pay TV Channel 2 and Metro TV Channel 31, which is usually an entertainment TV. K.T.N, {Kenya Television Network] became the first commercial television station in Kenya. It started airing in 1989 and is owned by a group of businessmen.

There is freedom of speech, which is enshrined in Article 33 of the Kenyan Constitution; It states that every person has the right to seek, receive or impart any information or idea, freedom of artistic creativity and academic freedom and freedom of scientific research. Media censorship is mainly for controlling vulgarity, violence and racism. Media censorship ensures that the media is not used as a tool to attack, discriminate against and humiliate people. However, media is not static, it is dynamic. With the introduction of new technologies, media has really improved. The Kenyan constitution allows media practitioners to do their job without restrictions so that they can gather their information well without revealing their sources. The launch of many FM stations is helping the media industry to move forward and reach many people, especially in rural areas. Media audience will continue to reach the mass media content through radio, television, the Internet and cable networks. The Communications Authority of Kenya [CAK] is the independent regulatory body that awards license and regulates television, radio, telecommunications and postal services. CAK is overseen by the Ministry of Information, so its independence is limited. There are non-governmental media regulators like the Media Council of Kenya, which was established in 2004 and is one of the main campaigners for a self-regulatory system. The Kenya Union of Journalists, the Editors Guild and the Kenya Correspondents Association have set up a media industry steering committee.

Kenya has a vibrant media that is dominated by six major media groups namely; the Standard Media Group, Nation Media Group, Royal Media Services, Radio Africa Group, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation and Mediamax (Media Innovation Centre, 2021). These groups have different media products ranging from print, radio, television and digital platforms. Except for Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, that is a national broadcaster and funded by both the advertisers and public exchequer, the rest run on commercial basis- for profits. KBC's main role is to inform the nation and pass the national values. Royal Media Services holds the largest share with 3 television and 13 radio stations (Ogolla, 2011). Inooro TV and Ramogi TV are in local dialects while the other one, Citizen TV, uses national languages- Kiswahili and English.

In 2015, Kenya transitioned from analogue to the digital television broadcasting platforms. Its result was felt by the low-profits made by these commercial TV stations in the subsequent year (Reelforge & TIFA, 2019). The digital migration made it simpler for the audience to access many TV stations through their set boxes based on the package they had paid for (Reelforge & TIFA,

2019). This led to an increase in the number of Kenyans subscribed to the digital TV services to a figure of 5,878,520 million by March 2019 (CA, 2019). This shows how much the audience still relies on the legacy media despite the introduction of the digital media.

While this remains the case, these major media stations have also headed to the online platforms to reach a wider audience. An example is Royal Media Service that owns the Viusasa which is meant to provide content for the online audience all the time through a relative low subscription fee daily (Media Innovation Centre, 2021). With content aired and/or published on social media platforms by these media's official accounts, the traditional media has had to tap into the new media's its unique traits. The new media traits includes being accessible, fidelity, voluminous, easily searchable, multi-mediality and interactive (Alejandro, 2010). Tonui (2020) postulates that despite print having declining status in circulation and revenue collected from adverts, through survival strategies and credibility it will still stand.

In 2017, 65 percent of the Kenyans read newspapers while 77 percent watched TV (Okulo & Wangari, 2017). While that was the case in 2017, Communications Authority of Kenya (CA) reported increase in TV viewership while decrease in radio listeners and the two were tying at 74 percent.

TV47 is a commercial TV station that made its entrant into the Kenyan media scene in 2019 using Kiswahili and English for its programs. Owned by Cape Media Limited, it airs the *Beyond The Limit* programme that seeks to bring the positive side of the abled-differently. The program involves professionals that provide insights to members of the society in regard to the dealing with PLWDs and disability (TV47, 2021).

2.2.2   State of PLWDs and Disability in Kenya

There are over 1 billion Persons Living With Disability in the world and this related to about 15% of the total population (Shahrestani, 2017). According to WHO (2021), this number has been on the rise due to population ageing and chronic health issues. PLWDs are thus, subjected to inhumanity that range from stigma to discrimination. In Kenya, 2.2% of the population are disabled. This translates to 0.9 million Kenyans as recorded in the 2019 census (KNBS, 2020).

Despite the fact that Kenya is a signatory of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities (CRPD) that champions for the rights of PLWDs, more needs to be done to change the

societal perspective of this minority group and the concept of disability. Change of negative perceptions and attitudes while clearing the stereotypes in the society goes a long way in creating an inclusive society (CRPD, 2020).

Persons With Disability Act of Kenya (2006) defines disability as a "physical, sensory, mental or other impairment, including any visual, hearing, learning or physical incapability, which impacts adversely on social, economic or environmental participation". These people are exposed to vulnerability because of their condition of not being able to stay in the environment 'normally' as this contributes towards the societal prejudice (Elwan, 1999; Yeo & Moore, 2003).

Most of the disability tasks have been left for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in promoting the interests of the disabled and championing for their rights in the society (Nikkhah & Redzuan, 2010).

Kenya has a rapidly growing population, growing at a rate of 2.9 percent per year, which means that the population is expected to increase from around 50 million today to over 77 million by 2030 (KNBS, 2014) . Children and young people make up a large part of the sub-group population of the population from about 50 million to over 77 million by 2030. National Gender and Equality Commission (2014) states that poverty rates are also higher among certain vulnerable groups such as orphans and vulnerable children (54.1 percent), the elderly (53.2 percent) and people with disabilities (57.4 percent) higher percent).

Low- and middle-income countries have higher prevalence rates than high-income countries (WHO, 2008). The 2009 Census and 2015/16 KIHBS found that 3.5 per cent and 2.8 per cent of the population in Kenya, respectively, have some form of disability, while the 2007 National Disability Survey found a higher prevalence rate of 4, 6 percent revealed prevalence rates are equivalent to the current 1.4-2.3 million people with disabilities in the country, which are expected to rise to 2.2-3.5 million by 2030 when the population grows to 77 million as projected (KNBS, 2012).

There is a strong link between poverty and disability. Poverty can be the cause of disability, particularly in developing countries where problems such as food insecurity, malnutrition, water/sanitation and shortages of Health services can increase the likelihood that people will

develop a disability. Similarly, developing a disability can easily push people into poverty due to the negative impact on access to employment and income-generating activities.

The lack of support and care for people with disabilities negatively impacts the individual's quality of life and, in many cases, can lead to further impairments due to a lack of appropriate treatment and care. The household care burden is higher in households caring for people with disabilities who, among other things, are confronted with the costs of clinic visits, medication, treatments and aids. Additional costs pose a further challenge, especially for relatives who provide care, since they are often unable to work full-time due to their care obligations. Limited access to therapy and rehabilitation, education (skills and vocational training), and socio-economic and political empowerment prevents the disabled community from having equal opportunities to fully participate in society. This violation of their rights forces them to depend on the support of others and limits their ability to participate equally in society.

The 2009 Population and Housing Census shows that people with visual (24.9 percent) and physical (25.3 percent) impairments make up the highest proportion of people with disabilities in Kenya. Hearing, speech and functional limitations also affect 10-14 percent of people with disabilities. Not much was recorded about the situation of people with multiple disabilities as it was included in the census questionnaire under the category "Other" (7.5 percent) which includes albinism, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, autism and learning disabilities (KNBS, 2012). This report further indicated that the proportion of people with disabilities with hearing, physical, mental and self-care impairments was higher in rural areas, while visual and speech impairments were more common in urban areas. The proportion of women with visual, hearing, physical, self-care and other impairments is higher than among men, while speech and functional impairments are more common among men.

Stigma and discrimination remain obstacles to the equal participation of people with disabilities in society. In many communities, family members with disabilities are often hidden due to societal stigma and prejudice. Children are particularly affected as they are often abused and abandoned. In addition, evidence from the Kenya National Commission for Human Rights shows that many people with disabilities are unaware of their rights and of applicable laws protecting and promoting their well-being, including the right to access social services such as education, health care and assistance with training and profession (KNCHR, 2014)

2.2.3   Media and Disability in Kenya

The media has over the years been established to have a substantial influence on the opinions held by the public. This is as postulated by Gamson & Modigliani (1989):

"If one is interested in public opinion, then media discourse dominates the larger issue culture, both reflecting it and contributing to its creation... General audience media are not the only forums for public discourse, but, since they constantly make available suggested meanings and are the most accessible in a media-saturated society such as the United States, their content can be used as the most important indicator of the general issue culture."

The above proposition reflects the vital role the media should play towards realizing a suitable and inclusive society for all the minority groups; including the PLWDs. For instance, the abled-differently people in Kenya have been part of the newsroom either as journalists or as sources. Their stand has to step up fighting for their rights and equal representation in the media like the other Kenyans by advocating towards change of attitudes, policies and practices (Njogu, 2009).

Njogu argues that Kenyan media mainly portrays disability as objects of pity and concern yet that shouldn't be the case. Further, their accomplishments are made to look like a surprise. Journalists should select news items based on the news values like oddity and relevance; but portraying the abled-differently individuals' achievements as surprise reduces the narrative to pity. In support of the PLWDs, in 1980, the Kenyan government declared the year to commemorate and support the disability campaigns in the country. Fast forward, major adjustments in the policy like Persons With Disability Act (2006), have been made where the deaf can follow through TV programs through the introduction of sign language interpreters.

In as much as most TV stations have adhered to this directive by the Communications Authority of Kenya of having a sign language interpreter during the news program, some of the public spaces lack them (Masakwe & Ombati, 2020). They explain by this statement in an opinion piece on the *Nation* website:

"Constitutional provisions around public participation have increasingly played a crucial role in ensuring the voices of persons with disabilities are heard in all matters that concern them at the county level. Does every county assembly have a sign language interpreter during their

proceedings? They must ensure the full and meaningful inclusion of all persons with disabilities in their affairs."

Further steps can be undertaken by the media to impact public policies affecting PLWDs by giving attention and using appropriate tone when reporting on disability-related issues; thus, this contributes towards having a disability-related discussion on TVs on several occasions. (Yongjoo & Donald, 2001) Thus, the media can assist in constructing an issue's policy image.

A study held in 2007 titled *Media Coverage of Gender and Disability in Kenya*, showed that Kenyan journalists were not disability-literate and thus, failed to cover the beat in the right manner (Aghan 2007). Aghan Daniel explains that due to lack of proper training on disability, they ended up coming up with stories that are inhuman and stigmatizing the abled-differently people. A clear example is when *Daily Nation*- a leading newspaper in Kenya had 0.003 percent of disability stories and they were allocated the filler sections. Showing how their less significance among the readers interest.

For the media to impact the society and report on pro-disability, much needs to be done including training journalists and editors. This will enhance their understanding of PLWDs and disability issues as well make decisions that include proper language use, frames to take and agendas to set. Language used can result to *affective meaning* that contributes towards different interpretations resulting from words chosen, body language and intonation used (Finegan & Besnier 1989). This will lead to change of attitude, perceptions and public opinions on disability.

The media communicates attitudes, beliefs and values through its vital role of disseminating information to the consumers. Zeleza (2009) argues that:

"Of the media's many roles, four can be singled out for emphasis. To begin with, media serve as a vehicle for the transmission of ideas, images, and information. Moreover, they are a communicative space for public discourse and of the discursive public. The media are also an arena of sign communication and sign communities. Finally, the media constitute a process of performing social identities and identifying social performances."

Perceptions about how to perceive the – that is abled-differently or able-bodied, comes a long way from the community and households. The media is therefore, tasked to not only disseminate

positive leading information but also stories that can create the right attitudes and perceptions in the society. Thus, this can be achieved by use of appropriate language.

2.3 Theoretical framework

2.3.1   Framing Theory

A frame, Gamson & Mogdigliani (1987), argues that is theme or a central idea which tends to be the mental framework of people in a society towards an issue. Journalists are tasked with the responsibility of collecting, packaging and disseminating framed information to the audience. Scholars have called for journalists to come up with truthful and indeed real frames to avoid proving a misleading "perceived reality" (Entman, 1993). Gamson & Mogdigliani posit that the media contains a series of packages that is reflected by the media frames. Some of these frames can be understood by use of metaphors, media packages, visual imagery and catchphrases (Devotta et al., 2013).

Gamson & Modigliani explain that there are three key determinants that make a media package or frame get over-coverage by the media. The first is cultural resonance- where some frames are strongly intertwined and accepted by the dominant culture. In this case, when stories are packaged and use the frame, the majority agree and have no problem with it. Secondly, sponsor activities lead to prominence of some media packages. When organizations and companies are regularly involved in making a certain narrative accepted and known by the society it leads to acceptance. These sponsors also include disability organizations and activist groups. The sponsors in one way or another dictate the angle the stories will take and its not entirely left for the editorial desk to decide because of the influence they have. Third, media packages are influenced by media practices. How journalists' practices and norm contribute towards the media packages used over time. This involves taking in unpopular voices that are against their norm (Devotta et al., 2013). Thus, the society's acceptance to a certain frame, sponsors influence and journalist's norm are key determinants of the evident media frames. However, it is vital to understand and challenge the onset of these journalist's norms and how best they can be adjusted to lead to an inclusive viewpoint.

Selection bias and description are some of the key issues expressed by journalists as they go about framing stories (Smith,McCarthy, McPhail, & Augustyn 2001; McCarthy, McPhail & Smith,

1996). The first, selection bias involves when the gatekeeper, that is the editor, decides which news events will be covered. In the traditional media, the gatekeeper's role rests on the editor to make decision based on audience and what draws interests much to them. The latter, description, shows how the news events are portrayed; the frames taken by the journalists and its at this point when neutral and balanced reporting is needed.

2.3.1.1 Framing PLWDs stories in the Media

To appreciate how disability media packages or frames are constructed in the society, a look at the media content and policies will shed more light. The content includes representations, presence, absence and stereotypes while the policies involve the language used. Ideally, TV uses moving images and sound to pass the message and thus, the language and images used are pivotal towards understanding the media representation of disability and PLWDs.

The media, through its powerful platform, may unknowingly promote some ideologies like sympathy or victimhood without knowing (Njogu 2009). They do so by concentrating more on the medical and charitable aspects of disability at the expense of the abilities and rights of PLWDs. However, the media, as Njogu argues can change the narrative by using alternative models of covering disability and PLWDs and by making sure new behavior has been learnt in the society.

Media frames and content can be analyzed by three core models policy-driven model, audience-driven model and mirror-image model (Uscinski, 2009). The policy-driven model views the media as a tool of promoting government's policy concerning PLWDs and disability. This can be in regard relying messages to the audience on the available Acts protecting PLWDs. The audience-driven model appreciates the fact that the audience are the consumers of the information and their interests and preferences should be used a guide towards packaging the news content. Lastly, the mirror-image model perceives the media content as a true reflection of the society and journalist play their impartial role of disseminating facts and figures.

Use of disabling language leads to negative experiences for the PLWDs in the society. According to Lynch et al. (1994), disabling language propagates stereotypes and myths, sidelines use of adjectives for nouns to describe Persons With Disability, and uses belittling words when describing PLWDs. Journalists, just like any other speaking individual have the likelihood of using this words yet its impact is felt by all individuals in the disability group (Gouvier & Coon, 2002). Thus,

journalists should adopt the use of media frames that do not show a pattern of disrespect and demeaning Persons With Disability.

The fact that PLWDs do not want to be described by their challenges rather their nature of being people-first, depicts that the media should use proper terminologies and language patterns to propagate change of negative attitude towards a positive one (Gitlin, 2003). Lynch et. al, (1994) explains that creation of People-First language was introduced to make the PLWDs feel respected and dignified by putting them first before their disability. An example is use of "a person who uses a wheelchair" instead of "wheelchair bound person". However, Nelson still argues that despite the use of such words, the stereotypes that PLWDs are evil, pitiable, burden and criminal still exist in the society. Thus, this shows why apart from use of proper and dignity-bound language, other spoken features like tone must be put into account.

With this theory in mind, Nelson makes the assumption that "the portrayals of those with disabilities seen in stereotyped roles on the screen have a lasting impression on the psyche that is carried over into one's daily attitudes."

2.3.2   Agenda Setting Theory

Studies have previously shown that the media plays a vital role in displaying what is socially important and what is not through its coverage (Auslander, 1999). The media does this by providing more press coverage on topics or issues they feel are important to the society.

Agenda setting theory is a theory that discusses how the mass media influences a specific issue as a public agenda. The public agenda is the main focus or issue that members of society or the public care about. The term agenda setting theory was first used by McCombs and Shaw (1972). This theory elaborates the connection in terms of relationships between the emphasis the mass media places on an issue and the media audience or public reaction to such an issue (Littlejohn and Foss: 2009). Under the agenda-setting theory the mass media is believed to lack the ability to set the public agenda, particularly on matters of opinion or attitude (Cohen: 1963). However, the mass media has a special approach by contributing to or influencing audience perceptions, values, focuses and priorities.

With such mass media influence, media audiences tend to form their own opinions or focus on the issues worth adding to their mental agenda (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). The earliest research was

done by Bernard Cohen (1963). He believes that the mainstream media only says what to think and not what to think. Therefore, the mass media is responsible for providing information and not what the audience's opinion is. Unfortunately, contrary to Cohen's opinion, later studies indicate that the mass media can influence audience thinking and directly or indirectly contribute to the formation of audience opinion (Wanta, Golan & Lee: 2004; McCombs & Shaw: 1972; McCombs & Shaw: 1997).

While the framing theory addresses how topics are portrayed, the agenda setting theory postulates that the more press coverage, the important the audience thinks the issue is (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). McCombs (2005) further argues that combining agenda-setting with framing theory sets to provide more insights and successful transfer and retention of text for the media content since the underlying factor is researching on the media agenda.

Huck et al. (2009) propose the use of three models showcasing how the media can set the public agenda. First, awareness-model stipulates that the audience should be cognizant of the issues because they are highlighted in the media. Secondly, a salience model that proposes that different prominence or importance of issues covered by the media shows their importance in the society. Lastly, priorities-model argues that the order given to stories in the media shows how important they are to the public.

Relative prominence of a media story is dependent on the position it's given. For instance, stories on the front page of a newspaper shows they are important while the lead stories on the broadcast media like radio and TV show their relevance too (Iyengar & McGrady, 2005). Thus, the public perception cultivated shows that what comes first is what matters most. Other scholars have also weighed in to support this by showing how the reporting styles and packaging affects the public perception on issues (Brock, 2005; Gamson & Mogdigliani, 1987; Iyengar & McGrady, 2005; Jones & Harwood, 2008). Jones and Harwood further argue that the public mindset is swayed by the mental pictures and emotions created by the media content.

2.3.3   Related Studies on Media and Disability

Research has shown that majority of people depend on popular media for information on disability and PLWDs. Dear et al. (1995) carried out a study in the US and found out that newspapers, radio and television provided 78, 74 and 84 percent of primary source of information to the audience on

mental health illness. This shows the need to have a well framed and well-set agenda on PLWDs and disability to avoid misinforming the public.

According to Barnes (1992) his research on disability representations in the British media, he found out that stereotypes and disabling media representations took the center stage. These contributed towards discrimination and exploitation of the PLWDs in their daily lives. They were further excluded from the main activities of the day because of the exclusion they were facing from the media. The media has on one end extended the discrimination by avoiding to recognize PLWDs as "ordinary" people (Vargo, 1989). Media reporting has entirely been dependent on stereotypes. A study by Barnes (2001) shows that change of stereotypes by the media and balanced coverage will result to PLWDs being portrayed as heroic and normal.

Public attitudes can be shaped by the language used in the media reporting, Scholars have observed assumptions on disability that is contributed by the language and terms used that results to evident differences between the abled-bodied and abled-differently people (Auslander, 1999; Dear et al., 1995; Jones & Harwood, 2008; Krahe´ B, 2006). An example is the use of a language that victimizes, portrays the PLWDs as a burden and shows distinctive difference between them with the non-disabled majority. A study by Jones & Harwood (2008) on how children and adults with autism are portrayed using language showed that stereotypes was evident. They were viewed as aggressive, violent, uncontrollable or unloved and poorly treated. Haller (2010) argues that majority of the disability activists and advocacy groups rarely find their way to the mainstream media reporting despite offering representation at a different level.

A study examining how the media in Ukraine portrayed PLWDs using narrative discourse analysis established that they were being exploited and abused (Philips, 2002). The research comprised of 81 articles drawn from 7 poplar newspapers in the country between 2000 and 2010. The media portrayed PLWDs as dangerous and criminal aggressive. The media further highlighted the challenges the challenges the PLWDs were facing but also showed how the government had failed to take care of this minority group. Part of the study's recommendations was formation of civic and economic organizations to champion for their rights. While Philip's study focused on newspapers, this research will focus on television.

Another study held in Luthania exposed stereotypes on PLWDs and disability. Zalkauskaite (2012) used content analysis to review two newspapers from the years 1995, 2003 and 2010. The result

was that PLWDs were portrayed as a societal threat while other articles brought out the societal burden brought about by the PLWDs. In this study, PLWDs were seen as people who cannot join the work force and thus, cannot take care of themselves. While Zalkauskaite focused on stereotypes, this study will focus on how the media is challenging the stereotypes and perceptions about PLWDs and disability in the society.

A study held in Kenya recognized that *Daily Nation* had less than 1 percent covered with stories on PLWDs and disability (Daniel, 2007). Kenyan journalists were also realized to need more training on this beat.

2.4 Research Gaps

Majority of the previous research conducted on this topic was centered on print media. This study seeks to understand how the PLWDs and disability issues are represented in the Kenya's media scene, especially for the new TV stations stationing up after promulgation of the new constitution of 2010 that promotes the rights of this minority group. While this study did not focus on general reports in the news and other programs aired by TV47, the weekly magazine under study provided substantive information to assist in coming up with conclusions. With limited knowledge on TV frames, this study seeks to provide insights on how proper journalistic reports on TV magazines can impact the society towards a certain perception of an issue.

2.5 Summary

The media is key in disseminating information, creating awareness as well as creating behaviours and changing them. This literature review has showed that through balanced reporting, PLWDs and disability topics could get fair media attention. This study pursued to examine how TV, a mainstream media, can be used to change the perceptions as well as correct the stereotypes in the society.

Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter entails how the study will be conducted. It includes the philosophical paradigm, research site, research design, sample population, sampling procedure, data collection methods, data processing, analysis and presentation and also ethical considerations.

3.2 Study Approach

The researcher used qualitative research in this study. This research uses interpretivist research philosophy. It explains the need to understand the social world stands because of the meanings that create and are also created by the interaction of human beings. It further seeks to understand the meaning of day-to-day phenomena. It relates to the research conducted by Chenitz and Swanson (1986) on how people define events or reality and how they act in relation to their beliefs. TV being an important medium used to disseminate information increases the need to know how the PLWDs are represented since TV reflects the 'reality' in the society.

Constructivist philosophical paradigm was also adopted. It weighs in on in-depth description of events in as much as taking into perspective the different perspectives created (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

3.3 Research site

The study site was TV47 which is located in Pangani in Nairobi City, Kenya. TV47 is a commercial TV stations that made its entrant into the Kenyan media scene in 2019. It uses both Kiswahili and English for its programs. It is owned by Cape Media Limited has a considerably higher reach to many youths in the region due to its contemporary programs.

3.4 Sample Population

The study population is *Beyond The Limit* TV programme aired on TV47. The program is aired on Saturday from 7:30pm and has an air play of averagely 25 minutes. The show focuses on issues PLWDs face and also profile individuals making positive change despite being abled-differently. The unit of analysis were individual TV shows of the *Beyond The Limit* program.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

3.5.1 Sampling technique

Non-probability purposive sampling was adopted as the sampling technique and a sample size of 6 months ranging from July 2021 to December 2021. These months account when most disability activities are marked both at national and international level. These events include: World Vitiligo Day, World Sight Day, World Mental Health Day, International Week of the Deaf, International Albinism Awareness Day and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The researcher settled on the year 2021 because the World was facing the Covid-19 pandemic and it provided a better understanding to see how the media reported during such a moment. Furthermore, to investigate the recent progress made in the fight for PLWDs rights.

3.5.2 Sample Size

A total of 20 TV episodes aired from July 2021 to December 2021 were obtained from TV47 for use in this study (see table 3.1). The researcher purposively picked 10 TV shows; 5 coming from the third quarter and the other 5 from the fourth quarter. The ten would be put under study.

Month	Number of Episodes Aired	Episode selected from each month
July	5	2
August	4	2
September	3	1
October	2	2
November	4	2
December	2	1
Total	**20**	**10**

Table 3. 1: Schedules of the total programs aired

3.5.3   Data Collection Method

3.5.3.1 Narrative Analysis

Beyond The Limit TV program episodes will be put under study to determine common and emerging themes. Through manifest level of analysis, it was conducted by watching the selected TV programs on air. Watching the transmitted (Tx) TV program, then evaluating the TV production discourse and going through the feedback from the audience after the TV program was uploaded on TV47's official YouTube account.

The coders watched the shows several times as guided by the codes and categories established as they recorded observations made. These codes and categories were made while appreciating key parameters like tone, language used, framing, images and stereotypes.

3.6 Data Processing, Analysis and Presentation

Narrative analysis was used to analyze data drawn from this study. Further, analysis of the text was used to identify the main themes in the TV programs important to the study. Proper monitoring and review of the TV episodes was done to clearly obtain these main themes and ideas. They were then presented in narrative forms.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Before data collection, relevant authorities were briefed and consent sorted. The researcher introduced himself through an introductory letter from the University of Nairobi and a copy of certificate of fieldwork from the same institution. The authorities were informed of the purpose of the study- which is for academic purpose.

This study further avoided bias and fabrication of data and plagiarism to avoid interfering with the results drawn from the study.

The final copy of this research will be handed to both libraries of the University of Nairobi and TV47.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

4.1 Overview

This chapter shapes the findings of this study. The findings are drawn from the objectives of this study- which was to examine how the media portrays disability and PLWDs issues with a view to understand the language used in *Beyond The Limit* TV program towards countering negative attitude on disability, and how the program is challenging and changing stereotypes and perceptions roped around this minority group.

4.2 Beyond The Limit TV Program

Beyond The Limit TV show is a weekly magazine which targets the general public (GE) in the society. It incorporates use of English, Kiswahili and Kenyan Sign Language. The TV Show is objectively prepared and aired to inform and educate the society on disability and PLWDs issues. *Beyond The Limit* TV program is aired on Saturdays starting from 7:30pm on TV47.

As the term connotes '*Beyond The Limit'* the program highlights issues and advocates for human rights of the PLWDs. The program features PLWDs, activists and caregivers with an aim of including different voices on disability issues. The program targets the PLWDs and the abled-bodied ones.

Beyond The Limit TV show has an average airtime of 25 minutes. It begins with a montage that runs for 10 seconds which shows that it is suitable for general viewing. The montage is plain with graphically designed names and lacks extra videos showcasing any activity apart from the title of the program. The host is from one gender- female, who introduces the show and lets the guest introduce themselves as they also state their disability condition. The production crew may follow the guest to where they live or host them at the studio. At the end, the host signs off then the closing montage runs as the credits roll thereafter.

4.2.1   Production of the shows

Beyond The Limit TV show was analyzed by the examiner in terms of the organization which produced the TV show. The coders processing categorized the shows as either: (i) an own production by the broadcaster, based on an original concept, (ii) a production that is domestic but

done by a third party, based on a concept that is original, (iii) a production of the broadcaster's which is based on a license, (iv) a production that is domestic but done by a third party on license.

The researcher found out that *Beyond The Limit* TV program was fully produced in-house by the broadcaster based on her original concept (100%) as seen on the credit roll. Most TV shows in Kenya are produced internally by the same journalists who are seen to perform other tasks in the media (Gober & Nastasia, 2015). Internally originated and produced shows are not only cheaper for the media houses, but also provides brand recognition for a specific show. This also makes the program prone to internal adjustments without giving major explanations in order to achieve the media's core goal and maintain its culture. Another major advantage is internal production makes the media house easy to follow the code of ethics as well as guidelines offered by the Communications Authority of Kenya (CAK) without bending the law. As discussed in sections below, the findings are that TV47 conforms to the guidelines by CAK about inclusion of sign language for the deaf consumers and use of subtitles to aid the audience with low proficiency issues.

4.3 Language used in the *Beyond The Limit* TV Program

Beyond the Limit TV program uses language diversely to initiate and disseminate the message to the audience.

4.3.1 Type of Language used in the program

Analyzing language stands to be a very vital step in understanding how the media represents the PLWDs and disability issues. The researcher analyzed how the program used languages to convey the message. An analysis of whether English, Kiswahili, Kenyan Sign Language, or multiple languages was used in a program was conducted.

The findings show that most of the programs adopted use of mixed language to disseminate information. The use of a singular language was minimal due to the fact that the show targets the general public (GE) and most of the people in Kenya use Kiswahili for their day-to-day activities. Some of the interviewees in the *Beyond The Limit* program said this:

"*My relationship with my son is amazing. He is 4 years old and he has already learnt how I do my house chores. For example, I do not use my hands most of the times instead I use my legs and he*

is okay with that. When he wants to assist me with something, he asks 'mum, nikusaidie kuchukua hii? Kisha ananipa kwa mguu (Mother, should I help you with this item. Then he gives me directly to my legs.)" (S1 July 31 2021).

Another PLWD who is also a source said: *"I have been living with this condition since birth. When I was in my lower primary school, it was hard to cope-up with it because most of my lifetime nimegrow up na watu normal (I have spent with able-bodied people.)"* (S2 August 7 2021).

Even the host adopts Kiswahili and sheng' during the interviews. For instance:

"*Kuna point unafeel like society bado haijakukubali*? Do you feel like the society has sidelined you)?" (H1, August 7 2021).

These above stated findings leads to a conclusion that the population in Kenya is highly multi-lingual and for a program of such magnitude to use a single language, kicks-out a better part of the audience. Further, use of the national languages, that is English, Kiswahili and Kenyan Sign Language, leads to a higher audience reach as compared to maintaining adoption of one or two languages. TV47 has a higher following from the youthful audience, and this is dictated by the kind of language that is used in the program. For example, some of the sources in the stories are youths in town areas who tell their plights as People Living With Disabilities (PLWDs).

According to Kioko (2015), the conscious use of language for different purposes, situations, and people, along with other sociocultural aspects, is characterized primarily by avoidance, creativity, and identity formation.

Scholars interested in Sheng (Abdulaziz & Osinde (1997), Momanyi (2009), Rudd (2008) Githiora (2002) agree that Sheng hails from a less affluent slum area in Nairobi's Eastland. However, Eastland is a vast region encompassing 25 different areas. In terms of distribution, Sheng is infinite, but still has many followers in Nairobi and other major cities in Kenya. Its prevalence in rural areas is severe and the threat to native languages and its impact on socialization processes and formal education is increasing day by day (Kioko, 2015).

If one characterizes Sheng as the product of code-switching, as many scholars have done, it will be realized that most Kenyans are speakers of sheng. This is due to the nature of mixing English, Kiswahili and other languages like their mother tongue.

Bosire (2006) notices that some electronic and print media regularly adopt use of sheng. There are now some radio and TV programs that only air on Sheng. Most television programs also feature Sheng's entertainment, and local musicians are credited with spreading the Sheng gospel.

The program adopts sign language, as seen in the next sub section, for the deaf audience. Despite the fact that language proficiency varies, especially the PLWDs being the most affected due to lack of access to better education, the use of multiple language still helps rely the messages. The type of language adopted also shows that the production crew is also keen to involve the youthful consumers residing in the urban areas due to the use of the mixture language.

4.3.2 Use of sign language and subtitles in the program

Sign Language Interpreting (SLI) appeared on television around 1950 (Ladd 2007) and, along with subtitling and audio description, is considered one of the three mature and accessible television services (European Commission 2010; European Parliament 2010; European Parliament 2015; Loom 2009). Invented new formats allow customization of content and open up new possibilities, especially for providing personalized synchronized access services, which are essential to ensure the accessibility of information transfer (Martín et. al, 2015).

There are several ways to incorporate sign language into a television program. This can be through signed programs or programs featuring deaf signers as presenters, contributors, or characters. Adoption of broadcast with sign language interpretation or sign language translation are two methods of making the speech or other audio content of a program available to sign language users (National Disability Authority, 2014). Traditionally, media sign language interpreters have been native and non-native listening experts, but deaf translators/interpreters have also been provided to ensure better cultural fit with the target audience. (Allshop & Kyle 2008; De Meulder & Heyerick 2013; Duncan 1997; Stone 2007; Stone & West 2012). Most broadcasters offer access via an on-screen sign language interpreting service (CNLSE 2015; NDCS, 2005). Although SLI first appeared on television almost 70 years ago, it is an access service that has not yet been further developed or researched.

The Kenyan Sign Language is an official language in Kenya and the television stations are obliged to not only use it but make sure that they have sign language interpreters in most of the shows to assist the deaf consumers (CA, 2019).

The researcher analyzed the programs whether they used sign language, subtitles, both sign language and subtitles as well as neither used sign language nor subtitles. It was found out that most programs used subtitles, more so to name the individuals speaking and the role the position they hold, while few of them incorporated both sign language and subtitles.

Kenyan Sign Language is a vital language that is used by the Deaf community in Kenya to convey information and for communication purposes. The researcher found out that through the inclusion of Kenyan Sign Language and Sign Language, TV47 follows Communication of Kenya guidelines and the Constitution of Kenya that champions for equal access of information by all members of the society. The Deaf also use subtitles to improve their comprehension of the message being relied on the TV (Kyle, 2007). Able-bodied individuals who cannot comprehend the language on TV program also depend on subtitles to follow through (Vaidyanathan, 2017). The researcher further noted that much needs to be done in ensuring that all programs have subtitles especially for Kiswahili and non-national language used to provide enough information for the wider target audience.

4.3.3 Spoken features

The researcher studied how spoken features like tone, pausing, and fluency were used in the different episodes.

The researcher analyzed the tone used in the *Beyond The Limit* TV program. To understand the tone used in the different programs, the following categories were created: optimistic, pessimistic, neutral or advocacy.

All languages are inherently melodic with variations in prosody. Nilsenová & Swerts (2012) postulates that "there is no language in which the utterance is straight and monotonous with a constant tempo, without variations in volume and voice quality."

Intonation is of course not the only available means of expressing attitude, but other prosodic and paralinguistic features, as well as kinematics and vocabulary or grammatical choices, provide important cues to an actor's attitude intentions (Monroy, 2005). He further notes that among all ways of expressing attitudes, it is "from a purely linguistic point of view, intonation appears to be the fundamental means of conveying the meaning of attitudes."

While using an advocacy tone, the host opened a program by saying this:

"*A united front. Showing together they stand tall was a rallying call by PLWDs during a walk at Mount Kenya University which marked the first disability awareness day incorporating diversity and inclusion.*" (H1, July 19 2021).

While one of the interviewee, who is also an activist, uses the opportunistic tone to show that the current disability state in the country could not be appealing but some years later it could be:

"*The activists should work together with learning institutions in the grey area of social inclusion, research and resolving key disability issues to increase the PLWDs learners transiting to the next level of education.*" (A1, July 19 2021).

The researcher found out that the program uses the advocacy tone appropriately especially on episodes that highlight national and international events that are majored on advocating for the PLWDs rights. Further, the optimistic tone is used majorly by activist trying to show that the fight is still on and looking forward to a better inclusive society that it stands.

Finding on the pausing was found out that, the host uses pause when trying to make it know that the audience should think through the fore mentioned words. This a tactic used by speakers to attract attention and pass the message when the attention is high as seen above when the host is opening the disability awareness week campaign program.

The speakers in the program have a mastery of the language of their use except for the sources who have disability challenges. This finding can be supported by Fillmore (1979) who argues that fluency can be judged by checking on these four key factors;

a) the ability to speak at length with minimal pauses;

b) the ability to easily pack messages into "semantically dense" sentences without resorting to a lot of filler (e.g. "as you know", "that's it", etc.);

c) the ability to speak appropriately in a wide variety of social contexts and situations and meet the specific communication needs that everyone may have;

d) the ability to use language creatively and imaginatively, expressing ideas in new ways and using humor, puns, metaphors, etc.

Thus, through this fluency the perception and attitude the individual holds on PLWD and disability topic is evident and conveyed.

4.3.4 Form of Narration

The program adopts a dialogue form of narration where the host introduces the show then proceeds to ask questions and the interviewee will answer. This makes the program have a smooth flow and avoid deviating from the main concept of the story since there is a guide. Follow-up questions are asked to provide insightful information that leads to disclosure of what the source is feeling about the issue in discussion. According to Linde (1993), people use narration to make coherence of their world. Further, the narrator uses the narration to recap the past experiences (Labov, 1987 & Bastos, 2005).

A journalist's job performance is often measured by their ability to contact and interact with news sources during the news gathering stage (Cozma et. al, 2012). Journalists' interactions with sources influence their ability to create credible and persuasive news products. Journalists capture people's moods, attitudes, and opinions through interviews, an essential way of gathering information (Köhnken, 1995), as there are many facts that journalists cannot directly observe.

Interview knowledge has been called "the difference between mediocre and excellent reporting". This is because questioning techniques, listening habits, and nonverbal behavior influence the quality of information obtained from interviewed sources (Vir Bala Aggarwal, 2006).

This is an example of a dialogue that depicts the interviews between the host and a source:

"How are you able to initiate and maintain relationships?"

"I have learnt that people have different personalities. I have thus, learnt to live with people the way they are…and I have to fake it sometimes to avoid raising eyebrows since some see me as a lesser being due to my condition. On dating, it is still a tough task to find someone who is not judgmental."

"Did you feel like you were not appreciate enough in the previous relationship?"

"I have had lovers who treated me well while others mistreated me due to my condition."

(H1 & S2 August 7 2021).

Thus, this program involves dialogue form of narration to pass its message. The host is in charge/ control and thus, leads the conversation to the desired path.

4.3.5 Type and Purpose of Narration

The researcher found out that the program adopts several types of narration including survivor, coming-out and persistence. These different types of narration are based on the main frame adopted in the episode. Thus, the frame or central idea and agenda decided upon by the production team leads to the narration to be used in the episode.

While the narration could be different, the purpose of the narration stands to be important to the audience and the source or the speaker. The researcher found out that the speaker would use a survivor type of narrative that serves therapeutic   or personal role.

An interview with a PLWD who was born with the condition said this:

"*To be honest, the society will never accept PLWDs. They will always call us out in the middle of nowhere. Most of the times, someone will say something that will put us down for how we are. However, I have learnt to accept my condition since my disability is not leaving me any day soon.*" (S2 August 7 2021).

Another source in the program said:

"Some of my neighbors belittle me. Worse of it happens when I have for jobs but when I get there, they send me away citing that I cannot manage to work due to being abled-differently. This is usually heartbreaking since there is nothing I can do about my condition." (S3, October 9 2021).

Further, the use of personal narration makes the story realistic and provide further insights on the condition that People Living With Disabilities have to battle with.

4.4 Beyond The Limit and its representation of PLWDs

4.4.1 Character and characterization

Characters participating in the program were given different roles to play. Thus, their characterization was also dependent on their character role.

Collins Gem English Dictionary defines character as "combination of qualities distinguishing an individual; moral strength, reputation or person represented in a play, film or story". Thus character refers to the distinguishing feature of a person or individual. It is character that finds its expression or reveals itself in behavior.

According Cattrysse (2010), when watching a TV program, the viewer audience responds, consciously or unconsciously, to the actions of the narrator, the way the agent acts at the story level, and the way the narrator assigns characteristics to the person telling the story. The scholar further explains that, the narrators can act sympathetic and comfortable, but they can also be sexist, racist, untrustworthy, and otherwise. In other cases, it may or may not stimulate interest in the story. Story-level events and beings can relate to characters who may or may not want things that match the viewer's wishes and fears. Finally, employing a narrator, whether speaking or showing, not only creates a diegetic world, but also "creates" a receiver of the message. The very act of speaking implies the characteristics of the narrator. These traits relate to what the narrator knows or doesn't know, likes or dislikes, feels or thinks, etc.

The viewers may agree or differ with the narrator's emotional intention, due to factors that range from socio-cultural to political positions; this is due to exacts factors like opinions, beliefs, morals and values that the viewer holds (Schneider, 2005). Schneider further illuminates that a viewer's level of empathy depends on their attitude towards the character, which is generally predisposed by their value system.

The researcher found out that the host takes up as the narrating role as the highlighted Person Living With Disability acts as the protagonist in the *Beyond The Limit* TV program. Thus, the episode revolves around the highlighted individual as the plights he or she goes through is further explained before a team of experts explains how the PLWD can connect or can be accepted in the society.

Additionally, PLWDs were highlighted as having different characterization that includes being objects of curiosity, pathetic/ pitiable, weak and hero/ heroine. For instance looking at these two examples, the PLWDs are depicted as having different depictions.

An activist who believes PLWDS are heroes said this:

"Any marginalized group struggles to find employment and sense of belonging. However, I wanted to provide a platform where I could showcase that PLWDs can undertake jobs in customer service-focused space like able-bodied individuals. What happens in this facility can be replicated in any other five-star hotel and in less-formal ones across the country…" (A3, September 11 2021).

Whilst a PLWDs said this:

"Some parents with children with albinism are not treating them right. They neglect them during the better part of their days until aid comes knocking and it is then that you see them publicly rushing for help before they return to their sorry state. This becomes a cycle…" (S4, December 4 2021).

4.4.2 Point of View

Point of view or the view point is the element used to establish the relationship between the viewers and the TV program they are watching as it controls the angle at which the viewers experience the narrative (Diasamidze, 2014). Thus, the choice of point of view can be summarized as "who is going to tell the story." TV's point of view include having a narrator who is outside the story (omniscient view), narrator who is part of the program telling it from a limited omniscient view, a narrator who narrates from a first-person point of view and lastly, not having a narrator (dramatic point of view.)

The researcher found out that *Beyond The Limit* TV program adopts the third-person limited point of view which is objective in nature. It is the most common point of view used in TV programs due its unique trait of presenting the action from the angle of an ideal viewer. The program focuses on the mid-shot video shots of two characters mostly in the set and participating in the dialogue. For instance, when the host is on set with a PLWD and the two are captured while having a conversation. This is the normal way most of the episodes are video shot.

However, on some instances first-person point of view is adopted when the viewer is expected to see the feelings and thoughts of a single character. This is applied mostly, when a subjective shot is needed to capture feelings, an example is when the source is having a gloomy face that depicts him or she is angry.

4.5 Beyond The Limit and stereotypical messages

4.5.1 Analysis of media disability portrayal stereotypes

The researcher found out that electronic media has in the past being a vehicle disseminating information marred with stereotypes and *Beyond The Limit* TV program was challenging these stereotypes. Stereotypes, as defined by Lippman (1922), being pictures in the viewers heads can contribute towards either having positive or negative attitudes, behavior and perceptions about disability. However, Lippman argues that people are ready to drop the stereotypes once they are exposed to new experiences.

Findings showed that *Beyond The Limit* TV program was challenging stereotypes as the episodes portrayed countering of society's stereotypes on PLWDs as being objects of curiosity, pitiable/ pathetic, being unable to participate in daily life activities, and also being a burden.

For instance, the host engaged the PLWDs on set on how the society views them and whether the family and society at large had accepted them for whom they are. One of the guests, who is a Person Living With Disability, said that even though earlier on in her childhood she was being sidelined, the situation was getting better as she was received warmly in most places she went.

Another one said that even though she's abled-differently, she can run her personal errands without anyone by her side as she teaches as well as works as works in a salon during her part time and rarely asked for help from those around her. However, still there are people who would meddle in her personal space to know who she is dating and whether they are both abled-differently.

Nelson (2000) states that the media reporting on Persons Living With Disability and disability issues was affected by the past events. He writes in his work "The Media Role in Building the Disability Community":

"Historically, those who have been most isolated and with the greatest sense of alienation have been people with serious disabilities. The situation for the most invisible, the most pitied, or the despised remained unchanged through the centuries."

Findings show that the media played a vital role in countering negative stereotypes by showcasing the abilities and airing the voice of the PLWDs and their sentiments. Thus, this has led to construction of narratives that support sense of belonging and an inclusive society where the

PLWDs are acceptable. It is clear that PLWDs were well represented in the programs and their voices were heard. Furthermore, media houses need to work on including more PLWDs in their workforce as most of them are left-out due to the nature of the job (Penas, 2007).

The researcher also found out that PLWDs, activists and other concerned parties used public protests and walks to champion for the rights of the abled-differently. This, according to Haller (1994), yielded positive impact as "when they take an active stance and grab the limelight, they are confronting their social construction as passive, disadvantaged people." As an act of activism, the media frame adopted was seen to showcase progress in fighting for the rights of the disabled as well as their inclusion.

Through the inclusion of activists who are PLWDs, *Beyond The Limit* TV program portrays an important frame that challenges the stereotype that PLWDs are pitiable and cannot connect with the daily life (Hunt, 1991). Through this, viewers change their perception and mindset about disability and PLWDs and thus lead to positive experiences in the society.

Further, the media is vital in challenging existing stereotypes while still countering negative attitudes and perception on PLWDs and disability topics among the people in the society as extended stereotypes in people's mind could have a longer impression on the issue and thus incorporated in their daily life's attitude.

These results depict a major change from the previous studies that showed that media carried stories that depicted PLWDs as helpless and objects of pity and compassion (Njogu, 2009). With these kind of objectivity, the stereotypical messages are challenged to do away with notion that PLWDs are seen as a burden, evil, being unable to participate in the daily life, pathetic as well as objects that raise curiosity. Rather they shall be portrayed as bold and courageous people (Barnes, 1992).

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overview

This section encompasses the summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations for further study. Other researchers can find this section resourceful to find the niche available to extend the study on PLWDs and disability especially on electronic media.

5.2 Summary

Representation of the PLWDs and disability in the media is a topic of concern due to the increased urge of having an inclusive community (Ellis, 2015). Previous studies have shown that despite the fact that calls for having PLWDs included in the media, both as sources and staff, the actualization by the media stations, especially TV has been low (Darke, 2004; Gerber, 2012).

This study was established to understand the role mainstream private media is handling and covering disability stories. The researcher sort to examine the role played by the *Beyond The Limit* TV program in countering negative attitude towards PLWD and disability issues, how the PLWDs are portrayed in the media and lastly, how the *Beyond The Limit* TV program is challenging and changing the stereotypes and perceptions pegged on PLWDs.

Through the framing and agenda setting lenses, the researcher analyzed the available data through qualitative research to understand whether there was evident improvement or worsening of the disability media reporting. Results show that the mainstream private media has greatly improved by first, allocating time to highlights plights by PLWDS. Secondly, the media has greatly improved in involving PLWDs are TV guests.

5.3 Conclusion

The study pursued to examine the representation of PLWDs in *Beyond The Limit* show. The following conclusions were made drawn from the findings:

5.3.1 Countering negative attitude on PLWDs and disability issues via *Beyond The Limit* TV Program

The study concludes that through use of code-switching the program reaches a wider audience due to the different level of language proficiency of the viewers. Further, this study concludes that

there is multiple use of languages that include English, Kiswahili, Kenyan Sign Language and also sheng that is meant for the deaf viewers. The use of a singular language was minimal due to the fact that the show targets the general public (GE) and most of the people in Kenya use Kiswahili for their day-to-day activities.

Further, the researcher concluded that the program that uses dialogue narration used spoken features like tone, that is optimistic, proper pausing and being fluent made the program appealing and real. This lead to having a well-packed program that was objective and aimed at achieving its goal.

Therefore, to have positive experiences in the society where PLWDs are treated equally can be as a result of the frames and positive attitude stories highlighted in the media.

5.3.2   Representation of PLWDs in the Beyond The Limit TV program

The study concluded that the host takes the narrating role while the Persons Living With Disability act as the protagonist. This is because the program revolves around them. Further, PLWDs were seen to have characterization that includes being objects of curiosity, pathetic/ pitiable, weak and hero/ heroine.

Beyond The Limit TV program was concluded to be using the third-person limited point of view which is objective in nature when shooting videos. This is the normal way most of the episodes are shot.

The study further concluded that the production team did not settle on a single disability type rather they settled on several as seen in the different episodes put under the study.

5.3.3   Challenging stereotypes and perceptions in the Beyond The Limit TV Program

The study concluded that *Beyond The Limit* TV program was challenging the existing stereotypes in the society through highlighting the plights that PLWDs go through. Furthermore, the program also goes ahead to provide a platform where Persons Living With Disability can air their concerns directly.

Thus, they challenge that PLWDS are objects of curiosity, pitiable/ pathetic, being unable to participate in daily life activities, and also being a burden. This is evident by how the production team highlights these sources talking of their personal lives and how they are connected to the society. They also talk about their day-to-day life activities.

Furthermore, media houses need to work on including more PLWDs in their workforce as most of them are left-out due to the nature of the job (Penas, 2007).

The study indicated that the episodes were aired to majorly bring forth advocacy of change and optimistic narratives.

Perceptions are well countered when information is packaged in a convincing and truth manner for public consumption. On the contrary, when media stories are framed in a negative manner, the society tends to react by giving PLWDs negative experiences.

5.4 Recommendations

The researcher makes the following recommendations:

1. For *Beyond The Limit* TV program to impact the society more and report on pro-disability, much needs to be done including training journalists and editors. This will enhance their understanding of PLWDs and disability issues as well make decisions that include proper language use, frames to take and agendas to set.
    Further, ensure there is equal representation of having both abled-bodied and abled-differently as the hosts. This will further the conversation of including the members of the society by having balanced voices. To achieve its core purpose of highlighting the plight of PLWDs, the production team should also include a PLWDs as a host to make the program more inclusive and resonate with the public and strive to fight the stereotype that PLWDs cannot fit in the daily life activities.

2. *Beyond The Limit* TV program should make its content more accessible. Sign language interpreters and subtitles should be used exhaustively to purpose the message reaching to a wider audience. The audience that has less proficiency of the language being used will

use the subtitles to follow through whilst the Deaf will depend on the sign language to follow through the show.

3. More content showcasing achievements of PLWDs will be important in creating a new perception that the PLWDs are also superheroes without having to showcase their "strong will power". However, these content should be prepared in a neutral tone to generate positive perception that PLWDs are equal like the larger population. Thus, the production team should reduce its focus on the disability and major more on the achievements of the PLWDs.

5.5 Suggestions for further study

The researcher suggests the following:

1. This research focused on the last six month of the year 2021 when most disability events are held. A separate research could be conduct at the first six months and examine the representation at such times.
2. The study concentrated on a single TV program, more research could be carried out on other forms of content like news reports, features and documentaries aired by TVs.
3. This study was based on TV. A separate study could be carried out on radio to ascertain the level of representation of disability and PLWDs.
4. Different research methodology like mixed method research could be used to carry out this research. This will bring forth different trends and important insights depicted.

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APPENDIX

NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

CODING MANUAL

This codebook was meant to guide and help the team of coders as they go about the process of extracting data from the *Beyond the Limit* TV program. Apart from been a point of reference for team, it also provided a guide for them to enter necessary information needed for this research. Every episode used a separate manual codebook.

PART 1 – BASIC INFORMATION

1. CODER

Designate the coder's individual code

2. NAME OF PROGRAM

Specify the full title of the program

3. DATE CODE

Write the code of the monitoring day.
1. 19th July 2021
2. 31st July 2021
3. 7th August 2021
4. 28th August 2021
5. 11th September 2021
6. 9th October 2021
7. 30th October 2021
8. 6th November 2021
9. 20th November 2021
10. 4th December 2021

4. PROGRAM AIRTIME ON TV

Indicate the time the program begun and when it ended. Use the 24-hour clock.

PART 2 - INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM

1. PRODUCER

Choose ONE code number (1-4), identifying by whom the show is produced (as highlighted in the video credits):

1. Broadcaster's own production – original concept

2. Broadcaster's own production – license

3. Domestic production by a third party – original concept

4. Domestic production by a third party – license

2. LANGUAGE

Choose ONE code number (1-4), recognizing the language used during the program.

1. English

2. Kiswahili

3. Sign Language

4. More than one language

3. SUBTITLES OR SIGN LANGUAGE

Choose ONE code number (1-4), categorizing subtitles or sign language utilized in the TV program.

1. Sign language

2. Subtitles

3. Both sign language and subtitles

4. Neither sign language nor subtitles

4. GENRE CONTENT

Decide which content the program segments fall into. In case you are not sure, mention the genre at the given option at the end. You will have to choose ONE code number (1-12) for the content of the program.

1. Health/wellbeing/ medicine

2. Arts/ culture

3. Political/social satire/current affairs

4. Education/learning

5. Business/ marketplace

6. Variety show feature

7. History/society /music/ sports

8. Justice/law

9. Family/relationship

10.   Personal finance/ money/ consumer affairs

5. JOURNALISM PRACTICE

This section provides a better avenue to understand how disability and PLWDs are represented in the media. It therefore goes beyond looking into the stories and checks whether "good journalism" or "bad journalism" was practiced.

 The coder highlights whether "good journalism" was evident and if so, then he or she goes ahead to highlight an example of how it was evident. An example is when he or she mentions that

The coder should use these guidelines to decide:

a) The program clearly highlights issues concerning equality or inequality of Persons with Disability

b) The program mostly presents Persons with Disability in very stereotypical roles

c) The program mostly challenges stereotypes about Persons with Disability

6. TYPE OF NARRATIVE

Choose one code number (1-3), recognizing the type of narrative adopted in the episode.

1. Survivor narrative

2. Coming-out tale

3. Persistence tale

7. PURPOSE OF THE NARRATION

Choose one of the code number, that best describes the purpose of the narration.

1. Personal/historical

2. Moral

3. Emancipatory

4. Therapeutic

8. SPOKEN FEATURES

Choose the most appropriate feature used in the narration

1. Tone

2. Pause

3. Emphasis/stress

4. Fluency

5. Alliteration

6. Dialect

9. POINT OF VIEW

Choose the standpoint adopted in the narration

1. First-person

2. Third-person

3. Witness

4. Omniscient

10. FORM OF NARRATION

Choose the code number representing the form of narration used.

1. Monologue

2. Soliloquy

3. Dialogue

4. Adjacency pair

11. CHARACTER

Choose the role played by the character in the episode.

1. Narrator

2. Protagonist

3. Antagonist

PART 3: MEDIA PORTRAYAL OF PLWDS and DISABILITY

Below are the media stereotypical portray/ characterization of people living with disabilities (PLWDs)

1. **An object of curiosity.**

    The media raises curiosity by creating an atmosphere which depicts menace, mystery or deprivation. This, in one way or another, dilutes the humanity of the disabled people by viewing them by the curiosity lens.

2. **Disabled persons as pitiable or pathetic**.

    PLWDs are depicted as people in dire need of getting help. Use of pictures, images and derogatory language that tones them down to people who need to be felt "normal" in the media makes the society view them as pitiable and pathetic.

3. **Sinister or evil.**

    When the media portrays the PLWDs are confused, unpredictable and violently aggressive, this makes the consumer of the information get disturbed by those imageries. Therefore, end up relying information that the PLWDs are evil or sinister motives to some extent.

4. **As a burden.**

   This stereotype dictates that the PLWDs are helpless and have no ability to support themselves and thus, need help from people around them. This is fails to appreciate the fact that they have some level of autonomy and can be to some extent 'self-independent' when the environment is conducive.

5. **Being unable to participate in daily life.**

   PLWDs are portrayed as disconnected from the community. This makes them look inferior and thus cultivating the notion that they should be segregated from the normal society for being abled-differently.