

PORTRAYAL OF FEMALE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATURE IN THE 2013 GENERAL  
ELECTIONS IN TELEVISIONS NEWS: A CASE STUDY OF CITIZEN TELEVISION  
AND KENYA TELEVISION NETWORK (KTN) STATIONS

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DECLARATION

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

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## ABSTRACT

There is a constant battle between media and politics. Factors such as gender of contenders and their previous exposure to the media sometimes come in to the battle to act as precipitates to either side of the divide. Yet media and politics cannot be exclusive of each other – in fact, they feed and grow only because of each other. Media plays a central role in elections in Kenya. Often time, the candidature of an aspirant gets its framing from various media outlets. This study sought to explore how television stations portrayed the female presidential candidature during the 2013 general elections in Kenya. Drawing its data from television news clips and interviews, the study realized a dramatic difference in the findings of the video clips and the survey conducted. The surveys which were done amongst media practitioners – news anchors and news editors, to a great deal emphasized the non-existence of bias in the portrayal of the female candidacy while the video clips analyzed indicated a great deal of inconsistency with the portrayal of other political news of similar magnitude. Televisions show an open bias towards the female candidacy based on former stereotypes held of her. Also, the television news framed the female presidential candidature with a lesser magnitude as deems a presidential candidature’s news framing. It would be fit for the media to consider its position as the fourth estate and a cistern to many a citizens’ thirst, and thereby strive to be objective as opposed to basing their presentations on subjective ideas. Female presidential aspirants should also play an active role in the way they are framed by the media – instead of letting the media depict their candidacy in whichever way it pleases.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter introduces the study. It relays the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the research questions, the significance of the study and, scope and limitations.

### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Kenya has had five democratic general elections since the inauguration of multiparty-ism in 1992. All the winners in these general elections have been male presidential candidates. Unlike other African countries such as Liberia and Zambia which have had female presidents through an election process, Kenya has never had a woman elected as a national leader by her people as much as the names of some women have appeared on the ballot papers. This paper seeks to investigate the portrayal of female presidential candidature in television news by shedding some light on the patterns and factors that influence the different ways in which the portrayals are done.

The androcentric attitudes that fondly associate presidency with masculinity is a key factor that has found its way into the televisions, as suggested by an analysis of Hilary Clinton's media representation in the run for the US presidency (Lawrence & Rose, 2010). And so, regardless of the persistence of female aspirants in Kenyan politics, the media to a large extent seems to have taken a sexist approach in portrayal of their campaigns; an approach which is quite different from that of their male counterparts. Dianne, et al argues

that the coverage of women in the media is more on the basis of appearance, personality and family as opposed to what men receive (Banwart, C., Bystrom,G., Kaid, L., Robertson, T., 2005).

In comparing the audience reception of political data from electronic media, the American Journal of political science confirms that mass media are the primary source of political information to most citizens (Craig, L. B., & Wattenberg, M. P. 1996). This sets the stage for correctly suggesting that the greater public is influenced if not directly fed by the mass media. And thus a naturally patriarchal media will seem to emphasize the femininity of a female aspirant as it emphasizes the masculinity of the male aspirant. Candidates so represented to the public will naturally fall in the figures of “mother” or “father”. And in the political realms it is not easy to hear the term “mother of a nation” as much as one would hear of the “father of a nation”. In fact, “mother of a nation” has been a title bestowed on a handful of female leaders, globally, often times in a shocked stance at the thought that a woman can confidently lead a nation.

Therefore, the androcentric nature of Kenyan presidency leaves little room to set an agenda for questioning the portrayal of the female presidential candidature in the media. It also sets an almost automatic stage for exclusivity of two of the key political opponents; a notion that rubbishes the other contestants as they are not regarded in the same level as the key opponents. More often than not, the female aspirants are never in the “two horse race”, a common allegory describing the two most popular contenders in Kenya. The female candidates in effect, receive less airtime and exposure from the media.

In some instances, open prejudices against female aspirants and other female politicians can be spotted in televisions long before electioneering periods. These sexist portrayals, as argued by Craig, L. B., & Wattenberg, M. P. (1996), serve to confirm the stereotypes already existent in the minds of the audience such that by the time a general

election is imminently on, the citizens are made to recollect the former instances of bias and prejudice and are eventually led to make decisions based on these factors.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The mainstream media in Kenya is considered assertive and a great tool of domestic democracy propagation. It has taken important lead in the civic roles and has conjoined the government in promotion of the development agenda (Strategic Public Relations and Research Limited, 2011).

The cistern from which citizens drink their political knowledge, the media has fed thousands of people with information and the citizens have swallowed down every gulp as the gospel truth. Most people have not stopped to question the media, and only a handful have dared criticize the angle and time allotted to the various elements of a news story or of a feature in televisions.

Therefore, the question of the television's androcentric nature should be subject to criticism so as to address the discrepancy in the portrayal of the female presidency. To this effect, this proposal sets a ground for keen observation of the portrayal of the female presidential candidature in the 2013 general elections in Kenyan televisions.

Taking as its field of research Citizen and Kenya Television Network (KTN) television stations, the study explored how the two television stations in Kenya depicted the idea of female presidential candidature in the hotly contested for seat.

The purpose of this study was to examine the portrayal of female presidential candidature in the 2013 general elections in Kenya in two television stations.

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

#### 1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study was to explore the light in which the female presidential candidature was portrayed in television news.

#### 1.3.2 Specific objectives

- i. To investigate the patterns of portrayal of female presidential candidate in televisions.
- ii. To establish the factors which explain the portrayal of the female presidential aspirant in television news during the general elections.
- iii. To investigate the influence of the female presidential candidate on their own portrayal in televisions news.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions.

- i. What are the patterns of the portrayal of female presidential candidate in televisions news?
- ii. What factors explain the portrayal of the female aspirant in television news during general elections?
- iii. How does a female presidential aspirant influence their own portrayal by the televisions news?

### **1.5 significance of the Study**

“In Eastern Africa, few women journalists are in the decision-making mechanisms in the local media since local broadcast media managers and newspaper owners are reluctant to include women in the higher decision making levels. Women’s issues are underreported in

the Eastern Africa media. Male journalists are not interested in covering gender issues, and do not take gender issues seriously. Women journalists do not have as many good connections as male journalists. It is difficult for women journalists to exercise investigative work as they are vulnerable to all violations and abuses. Gender equality is hardly considered newsworthy. Men's voices dominate in all the hard news" (Tom, Gahungu, Joof, & Daher, 2008).

With such statements as the quote above, the purported 'prejudice' of the media against women determines to a great extent how women presidential candidates are portrayed in the media. The number of women editors and producers does not determine the manner in which women in politics are portrayed in the media. Media house policies are mostly the determining factor in the portrayal, but especially, the authority of the males in positions of power and of decision making. This study therefore sought to understand the underlying factors that contribute to the portrayal of the female presidential candidature as they are done in the television news.

The study will be useful to the media in that it will give them an alternative route to exonerating themselves from the allegations that they are male centred. Additionally, it will serve as a tool for solving biases in political coverage.

Also, future female presidential candidates, and all other female politicians can benefit from the study as it highlights the manner of their portrayal in televisions. This in turn helps them sharpen their media skills and form formidable media skills for future elections, general or otherwise.

The study also contributes to other studies that have been done by gender champions in communication. It specifically further affirms some of the claims that have been published while creating a platform for as many new studies as may be grafted from it.

Finally, decision makers in the arena of gender, media and academia can find the study useful as it informs some of their decision choices for a better Kenya and world in general.

### **1.6 Scope and Limitation**

The study covered the most recent general election in Kenya, the 2013 general elections. The time chosen has been based on the intensity of the events that exposed the subject of study. This was however not limiting of the previous general elections as they will also be mentioned in the study from time to time.

The study was restricted to the portrayal of women in two television stations: citizen television and Kenya Television Network (KTN) television. Citizen and KTN were chosen because the two stations were very biased in the 2007 general election and were openly supporting the two major parties in opposition with each other at that time. Citizen TV was further proven to be the most popular television station in Kenya while KTN being among the top three television stations was also considered a stiff competitor for Citizen TV (Audience Scapes, 2010, Africa News Post 2013, Nairobi Wire 2013).

There were two major limitations of the study. First, female presidential candidates in Kenyan politics have never been many, in fact, in the 2013 general election; there was only one candidate whose name appeared in the ballot papers. This unavailability of candidates limits the extent of the study especially in drawing of and comparing samples of study.

The second limitation was that the electronic sources to be studied were not at all so easily available. In fact, most of the tapes that were used for previous recordings in most of the by gone general elections have been recorded over by the media houses. This therefore limited the study to more recent sources.

## **1.7 Summary**

This study aimed to look at the portrayal of female presidential candidature in electronic media. The research questions being asked served to affirm the objectives of the study and in effect create a relevance of the study. The subsequent chapters will capture in detail how objectives and research questions were captured in the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

Since the days of political feminist evolutions and the strong call for women to take active role in politics to date, there still is a great need of recognition among the women actively or otherwise engaging in political activities in Kenya. These candidates have sought for and used a number of avenues to ensure that their sympathizers and supporters are up to date with their political campaigns. Importantly, the media has taken center stage in dissemination of such political information to diverse places.

This literature review therefore examined previous studies and other material relevant to the study. It also presents a theoretical review on a proper theory most suitable for this study.

#### **2.1 Politics and the Media**

Modern politics is often described as mediatized politics in which the logic of the mass media has become central to political agency and agenda setting (Mancini, P. and D.L. Swanson, 1994; Mazzoleni, G and W. Schulz, 1999).

The two bodies seem to be at war with each other, and as such, it appears as though there isn't any consensus between politics and the media; especially as each entity is in the business of using the other for gain as observed by Dixon (1997): the media and politics feed from each other. The press provides room for political debates and the media provides content for the press; the two cannot survive without each other.



Mukhongo (2010) suggests that the media in Kenya not only sets the agenda for the public but also influences the audience with regard to elections and other political processes: a factor which further strengthens the rivalry between the two estates. As a result of the media power, Mukhongo (2010) further observes that the government has over time wielded its authority over the media by setting rules and regulations in regard to broadcast and publication of certain material for whose breach often times, there has arisen prosecutions and direct attack on the media houses. In spite of the somewhat 'unstable' relationship between the media and several governments, the media has been able to call several governments and political movements to accountability. Ogenga (2010) observes that "The media environment has been volatile, one that gives room for the bullying and gagging of the media whenever the media strives to function as a watchdog in exposing government scandals and other issues of public interest." Yet it is the unique relationship between each media house and the various political entities that define the angle from which the editorial policy of a particular media house is based, regardless of the coercion that ooze from the government to the media.

Ogolla (2011) notes that As much as the media and politics have previously been closely bonded, the media's economic gains are now more important to them as opposed to the initial political alignments and that the media is seeking for ways of making more money, even if it means dancing to political tunes for given durations. So far, this perception has led a number of people to think of the media as compromised while another lot has thought it vibrantly independent.

A contrasting observation to the focus of modern day politics states that: Newer forms of political journalism focus less on the political message and instead give a lot of attention to the candidates' motives and tactics (Aalberg, Strömbäck, & Vreese 2011).

## 2.2 Women and Televisions

One of the greatest advantages of modern day television is the discursive environment it has set out to the public as argued by Frederiksen (2000). He supposes that the open opportunities that the media have set up for both women and men have given room for both opinions to be heard by the public which in turn have led to the eventual contribution to the national growth. Yet Gallagher as quoted in Maggie Allison's *Women and the media*, seems to think otherwise, to her: 'the mass media's role is primarily to reinforce definitions and identities set in a framework constructed for and by men' (Allison, 2000). The study she conducted indicates that one out of every thirteen females appearing on the media are mentioned by both names as opposed to one out of every five men appearing on the media; a fact which draws the attention to the difference in the introduction of men and women in the media; thereby promoting the allegation that the media creates an avenue for enhancing the visibility of men as opposed to that of women.

Yet even after the biased introduction that the media gives women to the audiences, televisions further go ahead in stamping their authority and propagating their beliefs.

"In Eastern Africa, few women journalists are in the decision-making mechanisms in the local media since local broadcast media managers and newspaper owners are reluctant to include women in the higher decision making levels. Women's issues are underreported in the Eastern Africa media. Male journalists are not interested in covering gender issues, and do not take gender issues seriously. Women journalists do not have as many good connections as male journalists. It is difficult for women journalists to exercise investigative work as they are vulnerable to all violations and abuses. Gender equality is hardly considered newsworthy. Men's voices dominate in all the hard news." (Tom, Gahungu, Joof, & Daher, 2008 p.11)

This has further strengthened other views as expressed by Esther Kamweru that televisions must strive to portray women in a balanced manner (Kamweru, 2000). Kamweru has argued that the repetitive messages that appear in televisions are of women belonging in the home, especially the kitchen; and that of women being seekers of beauty in order to please men is one that trivialises their general outlook, especially if emphasis is placed heavily on their body parts such as hands, feet and shoulders. She strongly suggests that televisions needs to integrate women and issues central to them in the daily bulletins.

The existing portrayals of women in the televisions leave much to be desired on matters concerning the contribution of both parties in the development of millennium goals. Kamweru points a critical issue under section 234 of the fourth world conference on women held in Beijing:

“The continued projection of negative and degrading images of women in media communications, electronic, print, visual and audio, must be changed. Print and electronic media in many countries do not provide a balanced picture of women’s diverse lives and contributions to society in changing the world.”

In fact in a study conducted by Mwangi (1996) indicates that in the making of advertisements, both man and women were portrayed in their traditional roles but women were made to appear more as sex objects which attracted the attention of buyers to commercials which they appeared in.

Women in the televisions have not had a wide platform from which to criticize their relationship with the patriarchal world. In as much as the world has opened up to feminist praxis and there is an up rise of political awareness among the Kenyan womenfolk, only a handful have dared stand against the odds and push themselves in the light of the media to be counted worthy of any public political action.

Quite a considerable number of the Kenyan women are still under what Karl Marx termed “false consciousness”: a state of unconsciousness about their abilities as to the point of not knowing the platform that they can receive from the televisions to propagate their agenda. This has been argued as the state of women before and during the early wake of feminism by Ross & Byerly (2004). One only wonders then how far the Kenyan woman has to go before she can see and use the television as a tool that will aid her in achieving her maximum portion in any political action.

Ross & Byerly (2004) further states that in as much as there have been several studies conducted to determine the manner in which women have been routinely portrayed by the mainstream media, the media has maintained a most unequal position; maintaining a rather uncomfortable reporting model based on a sexist approach and a lot of sexualised content which more often than not has undermined the contributions that women have a foretime made, and still make.

Antonio Gramsci as quoted in Ross & Byerly (2004) roots his concept of hegemony and states that the dominant group (in this case considered males) seeks the opinions of the members in a society to maintain a status quo so that they (the dominant males) may maintain their power over all social institutions.

Dafna Lemish also as quoted in Ross & Byerly (2004) argues in a chapter about news and media that the media only portrays women in stereotypic roles. More often than not, they are caregivers and home keepers who tend to be lacking in ambition, logic, heroism and who are completely dependent on the men.

In the same book edited by Ross & Byerly , Karen Ross argues in her chapter on women, politics and media that the patriarchal structures that exist have been wrongfully used under a masquerade of neutral journalism to vilify women politicians. As a result, women

politicians have suffered under the mercies of men who have set structures and used these structures to pose women.

It is clear from these analyses that there is quite a disparity between the women and the media; a somewhat unspoken contention between the two parties which needs to be urgently addressed.

### **2.3 Female Presidents and Female Presidential Candidates in Televisions**

Globally, there have only been a handful of women heading states and monarchies. England perhaps has had the largest number of women leaders. Lawrence & Rose (2010) analysing Hillary Clinton's campaign for presidency say that there was a perverse nature of sexism in the media as regarded the campaign of Hilary Clinton to presidency: "however you feel about her politics, I think that Senator Clinton received some of the most unfair, hostile coverage I've ever seen."

Arguing that TV stations termed women as a joke, Lawrence and Rose (2010) also indicate that televisions deliberately used gendered language to insult and criticize such that the voice of women as represented by Hillary Clinton in the race for white house was not heard as it should have been. Other analysts and journalists during the same campaign argued that the sexism portrayed by the televisions helped Clinton garner more votes instead of hurting her race for the office. This is because - according to those who supported the sexist portrayal of Hillary Clinton by the American media - she gained sympathetic votes from those who pitied her gendered portrayal. Actually, one of the vice presidents of NBC media house in the United States, Phil Griffin, said that women movements specifically brought up some of the Hillary controversies with the media so as to rally the demographics of women and their sympathisers to vote for Hillary Clinton.

Lawrence & Rose (2010) point out that there are three major facts that any woman running for a presidential office must face: 1) the role of gender in presidential politics, 2) contemporary media norms and routines, and 3) the individual candidate and her particular political context. These factors are not just applicable to women running for presidential office in western countries. They are practically applicable even to women in Africa, to women in Kenya.

In Kenya, women have taken an active role in Kenyan politics since the days of pre-independent Kenya. Their achievements are however not as acclaimed and celebrated as the achievements of their male counterparts (Masinjila, 1997), not especially by the media.

Karuru(1997) states that women were early involved in politics and a large number of them combined their domestic chores with political activities such as leadership, marshaling other women. Some women as Nyanjiru and Mekatilili rose to positions of acclamation as political heroines. Yet because women are part of organs that make decisions, they lack the power to be portrayed in the media as they otherwise should.

Masinjila(1997) further argues that “Patriarchal ideology operates on the premise that men are biologically superior to women and that as a result women are weak and have to depend on men for their survival.” This notion has to a great degree been transferred not only to the political situation in Kenya but also to the media realms within the country. Patriarchy has therefore been a dominant force in almost every other section of existence in the country. In return, there have been demarcations of spheres where men and women ought to operate. Masinjila argues that this demarcation has made it difficult for women agenda to penetrate in the political public sphere; a position which out-richtly disadvantages the woman as she sets in from an onset of a “natural” weakness. In effect, this system tends to concentrate power in the hands of men and leave the women in political fields with little on their hands.

A majority of women in Kenya have been politically disadvantaged because of factors such as lack of serious party commitment to women in politics, presentation of untruthful statements about the women, refusal by forces in power to recognize the ability inherent in women, lack of adequate elected number of women to positions of power and a lack of enough appointments of women to decision making roles (Maina & Kabira, 1997). These factors impact directly on the general societal opinion of these women and in many regards translate to how the media portrays them.

Maina and Kabira (1997) further state that structures and political institutions are designed in a way that produces results favorable to men. They also argue that politics has been given entirely male clothing to such an extent that it is regarded as a game of liars, a sport for the brave, an arena of abuse, a field for slinging mud at each other, and a place unfit for all women; and with such stereotypes in place, women who involve themselves in politics are as results are looked at with disdain, naturally.

Muiruri (1997) Notes that women rarely votes for their fellow women during elections and that the “general public expects them to be followers rather than leaders in political spheres. A notion highly cultivated by Kamaara as quoted by Muiruri (1997) “in this world of greed and competition, it has further been noted that women are their worst enemies when it comes to trusting and supporting one another.” This he talks of as a case that influences even the role that female media personalities lay in enhancing or subsuming other female politicians in the male dominated field. He further argues that if the media portrays favorably women affairs then they will over time be well received by the public.

In spite of the struggles of women to be publicly seen in the media, most of the times they have been considered as voters and entertainers (Karuru, 1997). In spite of the challenges the women politicians have faced, a number of women have been actively

involved in politics. Many of them have run for seats on male dominated political parties and have been elected to represent certain regions (Mwaura, 1997).

The fourth Beijing conference recorded that “without economic empowerment, it is unlikely that women will be able to participate effectively in most of the processes of the society” I dare say that the statement extends beyond just economic empowerment to the inclusion of material possession that these women have. For instance, a large number of media owners in Kenya are males, and so it is easy for them to push forward their agenda and portray that which they desire. More often than not, the media presents women’s agenda from the males’ perspective (Muiruri, 1997). A study conducted by Bullo (2005) found out that the media gives different coverage for men and for women. “Female candidates are likely to be described in terms of their personality traits or attire, than their issue stand” and also that stories about male politicians were likely to get front cover as opposed to those of female politicians.

The open bias by the media towards female presidential candidates as suggested by the literature here in reviewed, therefore calls for a keen analysis into the Kenyan context. Given that Kenya has had a handful of women running for the highest office in the republic; one may wonder as to what these women have encountered in the media so as to keep them from consistently running for the office or from encouraging other women to run for the same office in their stead.

Yet in spite of the challenges that the women seeking for presidency have encountered, several among them have sought the office of presidency internationally since Victoria Claflin Woodhull first did so in the United States. There has been Hillary Clinton, in 2008 USA, Ruth Dreifuss of Switzerland who was elected president in 1998, Agatha Barbara of Malta, Corazon Aquino of the Philippines and Asia’s first female President, Atifete Jahjaga who at 37 became President of Kosovo clinching the office in 2011, Dilma Rousseff



of Brazil since 2010, and Cristina Fernandez who became the first elected female president of Argentina in 2007 and the first one to be re-elected, among others.

In Africa, Rose Rugendo of Tanzania's party Chama Cha Mapinduzi in Tanzania and Sarah Jibril of Nigeria ran for office in earlier years setting the ground for many African women who would later seek the office of presidency.

In the 1990s, Charity Ngilu and Wangari Maathai ran in the 1997 Kenyan presidential elections. They both lost. Charity Ngilu vied again in 2002 and lost again to a coalition that had just formed to expunge Daniel Arap Moi from the Kenyan presidential seat. In 2013, Martha Karua and Kingwa Kamenchu sought to run for office. For unknown reasons Kamenchu dropped out of the race and Martha Karua remained as the only female contender for the seat among other male candidates. Needless to say, she lost the elections with a great margin even though her policies were fool proof and her person was not tainted with corrupt allegations as were some of the presidential candidates. So far, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Joyce Banda stand as some of African women who have been heads of state. The secret behind the success of some of the women presidents in Africa and the manner in which the media in their countries portray them remains a mystery. Lawrence & Rose (2010) say that studies are just beginning to study women presidential candidates and the strategies that can best work for them with the media.

#### **2.4 Theoretical Framework: Framing**

The study was guided by one theory: framing theory. Framing theory is one of the strongest theories that can be used to illustrate that the media has absolute authority in shaping the way it portrays the different presidential candidates. This theory has been selected based on its relevance to the study.

A number of researchers and scholars have offered several definitions of framing. However, for the sake of this study, we will make use of the definitions given by Entman, Chong and Dennis Druckman, and Gitlin because their definitions have a close relation to each other and will be more useful to this study.

Chong and Druckman (2007) define framing as “the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue.”

Entman (1993: 52) says the following as regards framing: “Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation of the item described.”

Gitlin (1980) defines framing as the “persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse.”

Chong and Druckman (2007) further argue that one’s frame in thought can have an impact on one’s opinion. It could be therefore concluded that if the media were taken as a thinking entity, then the opinions inherent in each house, and the house styles and rules therein to a great extent dictates how they frame perspectives and all the news that they disseminate.

Entman (2007) argues that frames are specifically set in place so as to encourage audiences to think, feel and act in a particular way. Thus by coming up with political discussions, selecting specific discussants, being particular on the clips to be aired, and scripting the language to be used in all political broadcasts, televisions already place their content in specific bags in which the audience is expected to think. A frame is set from the onset so that the audience will not be allowed to think outside the set frame. More often than

not, if there is content that does not fit the editor's context, the content will be set aside and the content that is most suitable to the context be used.

Chong and Druckman (2007) in giving a deeper understanding of a frame state that a frame is that which provides meaning to strips of events by organising the daily reality in such a way as to promote particular definitions and interpretations of political issues. This means that television stations use their position to select that which they think the audience should consume, attach a meaning to it and organise it in a manner that is likely to elicit a certain expected response. In other words, without an issue at hand, a frame cannot be in existence. There has to be an issue around which the frame will be formed. Yet, this is not to disregard the understanding that the same issue can invoke different frames (Entman, 2004). No wonder, different television stations present the same political news from extremely different angles. Chong and Druckman call additional attention to other steps involved in framing. Apart from identifying an issue at hand, they point to the second step; isolating a specific attitude; a third which is the identification of a coding scheme for the frame; and a fourth and final step which is to select sources for analysis within the context of the frame.

The media has not failed itself in fulfilling the four steps, especially in the political realms. Television in particular has found a way of setting apart political issues, angling their analysis in certain manner and being very particular on the methods and persons involved in the political analysis.

“In order for a framing effect to occur, a given consideration needs to be stored in memory to be available for retrieval and use, and it must be accessible for retrieval when needed for use.” (Chong and Druckman, 2007) and so television will keep playing and re playing certain clips just around political times.

Chong and Druckman (2007) point to the possibility of a frame being so appealing to the audience that it might be confused for a superior moral or intellectual argument. This has

a great chance of occurrence in situations where exaggerations and lies are used to play on the fears and prejudices of the public. They further suggest that: “Strong frames often rest on symbols, endorsements, and links to partisanship and ideology, and may be effective in shaping opinions through heuristics rather than direct information about the substance of a policy.” Entaman (2007) agrees with this thought and supports the idea by saying that politicians have learnt this trick and they devote great resources by imposing certain patterns on mediated media presentation if only to create an inclination towards them in the audiences’ minds. This is because “framing works to shape and alter audience members’ interpretations and preferences through *priming*” (emphasis in original).

Sniderman & Theriault (2004) have argued that when people are exposed to competing frames as in most political situations, they will side with the frame that is “consistent with their values or principles” because “frames are contestable”. It is therefore paramount for the television stations to ensure that they frame different political news in ways that will draw a viewership to them; sometimes deliberately creating different frames within the same news content, or taking a single opinion and competing with a frame presented by another television network.

Chong and Druckman (2007) say that politics are naturally competitive and that political issues are normally framed in opposing light from each other. To gain an advantage over another frame, the winning frame will have to have be strategically favoured and portrayed to the audience; as states: The media explores political frames as a strategic game rather than issue based discussions as this allows them to produce stories quickly against a deadline schedule, use fewer resources and provides ‘newsworthy’ content. This kind of game framing as discussed by Capela and Jamieson in Aalberg, Strömbäck, & Vreese (2011) may “have negative consequences to democracy” as it pronounces the interest of the politicians more than it elaborates the issues to be discussed by these politicians.

The political frames thus formed are normally formed by strategically setting questions related to the winner and loser, performance of political parties and the individual politicians, and the strategies of the various political entities (Aalberg, Strömbäck, & Vreese (2011). More often than not, the more a frame is repeated to the audience, the more the audience will understand the issues in the frame and begin identifying with the frame.

## **2.5 Summary**

This chapter sought to analyze the position of female presidential candidature in news as framed by the political coverage in televisions. The general conclusion was that the media plays a central role in politics and that politics plays a central role in the media: the two are dependent on each other. Media frames politics and politics provides the subject for the media.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the research methodology that was used in the study. It contains the research design, research approach, research methodology, data collection, data analysis, target population, data presentation and a validity procedure for the research.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Research design is the conceptual structure within which the research is be conducted. This study aimed to employ non-experimental research design to achieve the set objectives of the proposal. It used the correlational design in expressing the relation of female presidential candidacy to the television. While at it, the design sought to affirm the relationship between the two variables while pointing out to the challenges in this relationship. The study had no intents whatsoever of manipulating the variables involved.

#### **3.2 Research Approach**

The research took on a pragmatic approach; otherwise called the mixed method of research. It used both quantitative and qualitative methods to achieve the most out of the study. This approach was suggested as it allowed for data and methodological triangulation - factors which served to further support the study.

### **3.3 Research Methodology**

The researcher carried out a content analysis of two television stations' news just about election period which zeroed in on the candidature of the female presidential aspirant. The researcher also used surveys. The surveys were conducted among news editors, news casters in the two television stations selected and in the secretariat team of the presidential candidate. The surveys were structured so as to ensure that the responses collected from the surveys are without bias or prejudice from the researcher.

### **3.4 Data Collection**

The researcher carried out a pre collection activity where she obtained permission from the relevant authorities and made contacts that were relevant for the study, the actual data collection and presentation of the findings of the data collection in a format that deemed fit for the study. The researcher administered questionnaires, performed interviews and developed a code sheet to aid the collection of the required electronic data. The research used and treated all data used in the study as primary data.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

After the data has been collected, it was classified into various categories as the first stage of its analysis. The findings were then translated to charts; this allowed both quantitative and qualitative description of the analysis reached.

### **3.6 Target Population**

The target populations hereby described were the parties that were to be interviewed and the number of television stations to be under study. The television stations under study were Citizen and Kenya Television Network (KTN). The sample was a non-probability

sample. The respondents from the interviews were: News editors, news anchors and the communication secretariat of the female presidential aspirant.

### **3.7 Data Presentation**

Once the data had been collected and completely analyzed, the researcher presented the data through in a report which details a description of the data. The data was also presented in form of charts.

### **3.8 Reliability and Validity**

To determine the reliability of the data, the test and the re test technique can be used to confirm the consistency of the results achieved.

To determine the validity of the study, content validity of the study can be conducted to determine the consistency of the results reached and the accuracy of the findings obtained. Sampling validity can be carried out. In this case, a representative sample will be picked and to represent the whole sample under study and confirm the results of the study. Two groups of experts in gender communication will be presented with the instrument. One set of experts will be asked to ascertain the concept being measured by the instrument while the other team of experts will be presented with a check list and they will be requested to determine if the items in the list have been clearly captured in the study.

### **3.9 Summary**

The research methodology was based on two types of data collection instruments; surveys and content analysis. The content analysis was done of Citizen TV and KTN stations. The surveys were done of news editors and news anchors, and also of presidential candidate secretariat.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected from the news clips and administered questionnaires. The research targeted to obtain 42 news clips from both KTN and Citizen TV but managed to obtain 31 clips which represented a response rate of 73.8%. The study administered intended to administer 10 questionnaires to news editors and anchors from the two TV stations but responses were only obtained from 8 of them; which represented a response rate of 80%.

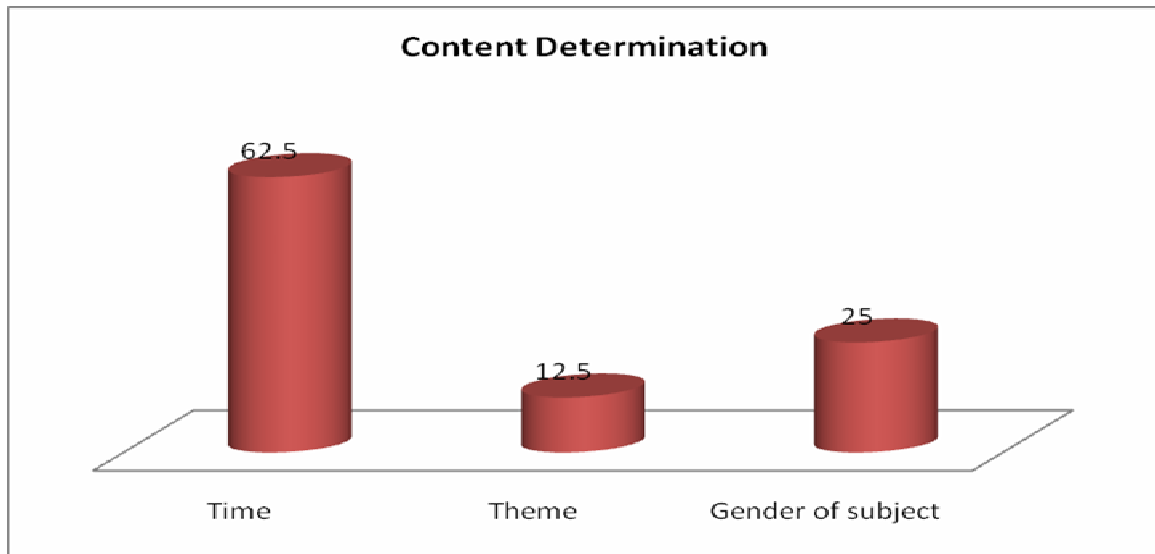
The collected questionnaires were edited for completeness in preparation for coding. Once the questionnaires were coded, they were entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17 computer package for analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used.

#### **4.1 Survey Data Analysis**

##### **4.1.1 What Determined Content that Went to Air**

This survey was conducted on news editors. Respondents were required to indicate what determined the news content that went to air. The research findings revealed that majority, 62.5%, of the respondents were of the opinion that time taken by a news item was the major aspect which determined the content that went to air. 25% of them indicated gender of the presidential candidate and the remaining 12.5% indicated the theme of the news item. The findings are as presented in Figure 4.1.

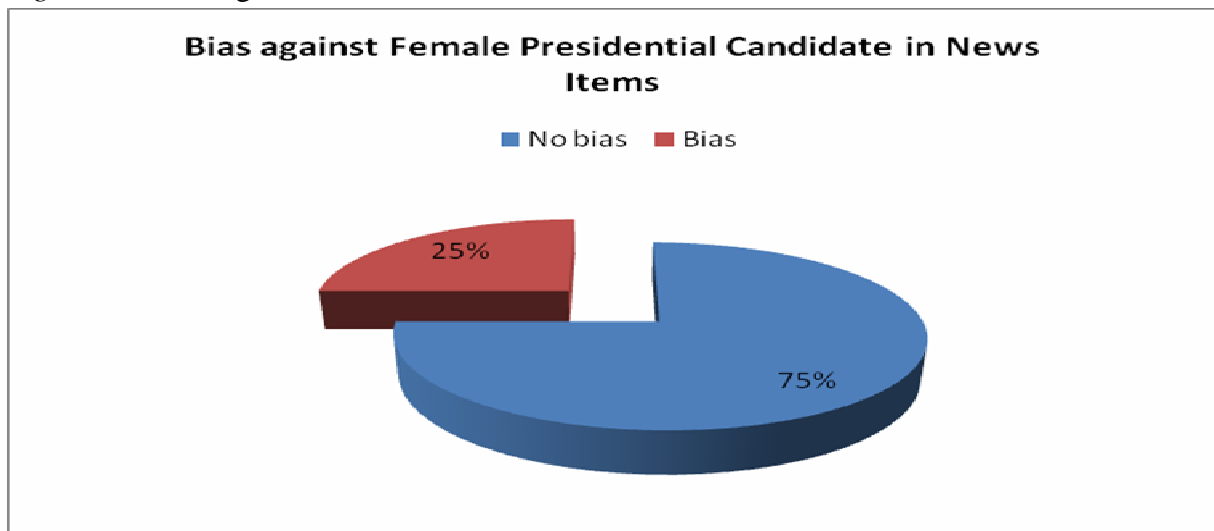
Figure 4.1. Content Determination



#### 4.1.2 Bias Against Female Presidential Candidate in News Items

Respondents were further required to indicate whether there was bias against female presidential candidate in news cast as owing to their gender by their stations. 75% of the respondents indicated that there was no bias in their news and the remaining 25% of them indicated otherwise. The findings are as shown in Figure 4.2.

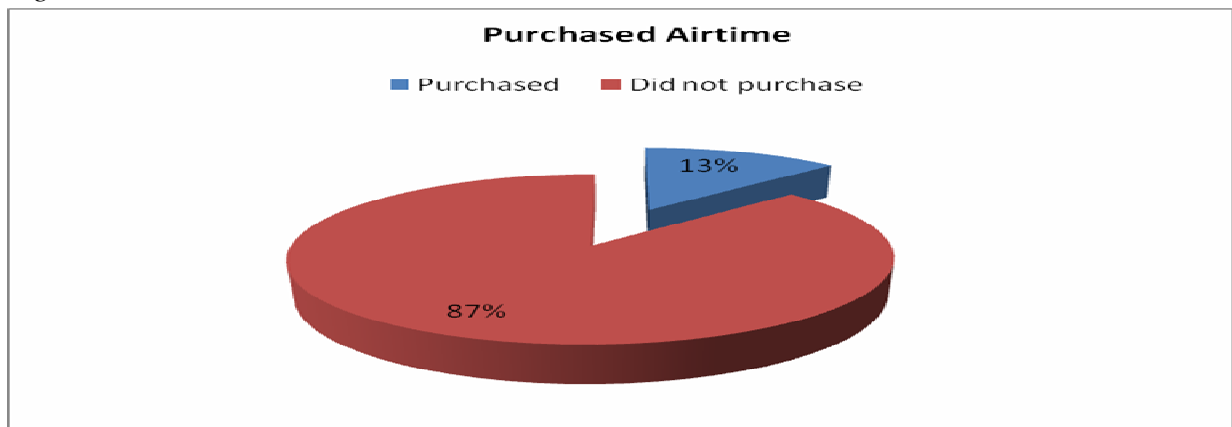
Figure 4.2. Bias against Female Presidential Candidate in News Items



### 4.2.3 Female Presidential Campaign Teams Purchased Airtime for their Candidates

The research further sought to establish whether the campaign teams of presidential candidates purchased airtime for their candidates. 87% of the respondents categorically indicated that the campaign teams of female presidential candidates did not purchase airtime for their candidates. Only 13% respondent indicated that the campaign teams of female presidential candidates did purchase airtime for their candidates. The findings are as shown in Figure 4.3.

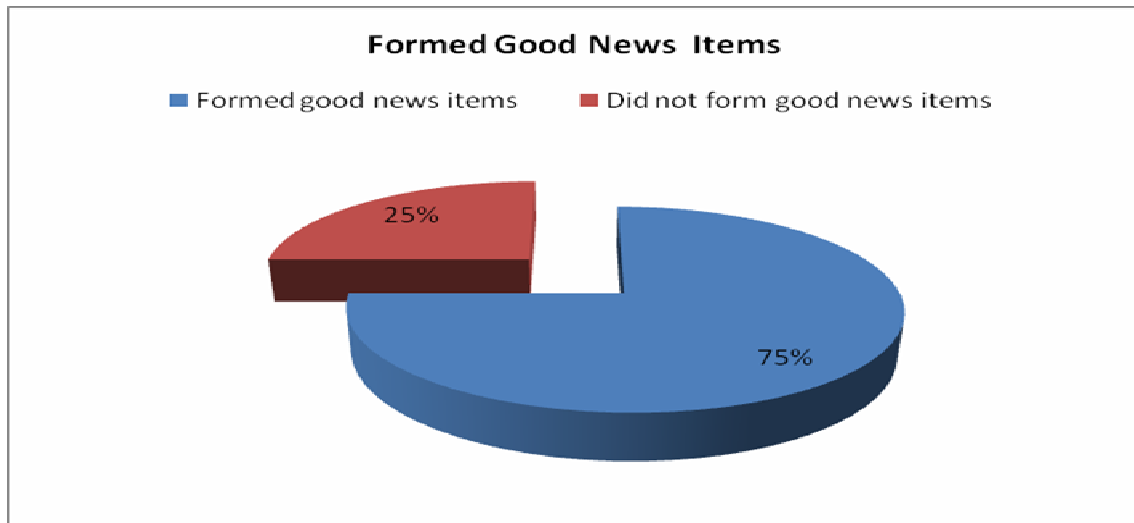
Figure 4.3. Purchased Airtime



### 4.1.4 Female Presidential Candidates Formed Good News Items

Majority (75%) of the respondents indicated that female presidential candidates formed good news items for their TV stations and the remaining 25% of them indicated otherwise. The findings are as shown in Figure 4.4.

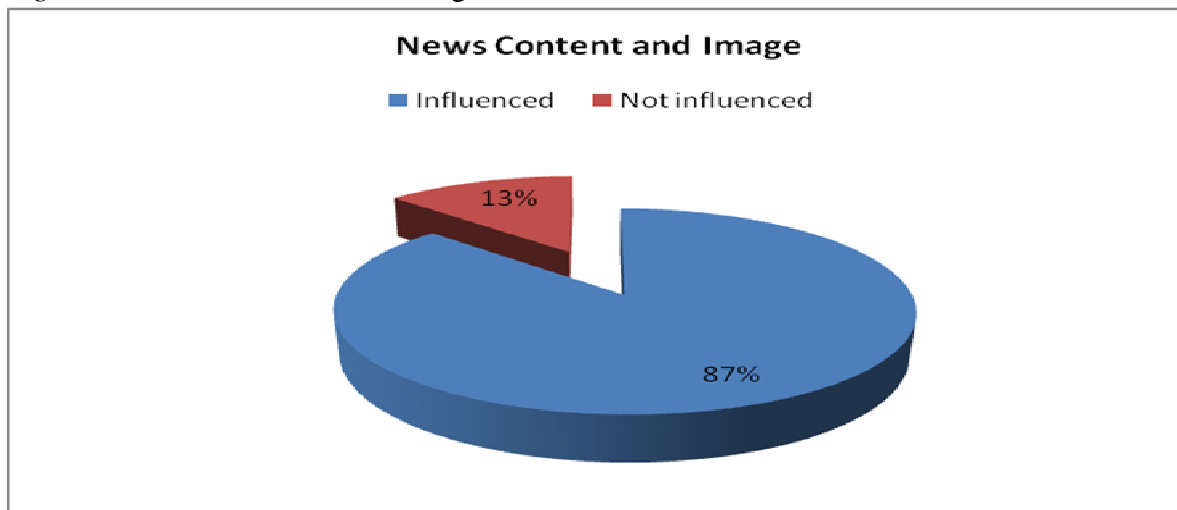
Figure 4.4 Female Presidential Candidates Formed good News Items



#### 4.1.5 News Content of Female Presidential Candidates Influenced by Previous Images of the Candidate

Respondents were further required to indicate whether the news content of female presidential candidates was influenced by their previous image. 87% of them were categorical that the news content of female presidential candidates was influenced by their previous image while the remaining 13% of them indicated otherwise. The findings are as shown in Figure 4.5.

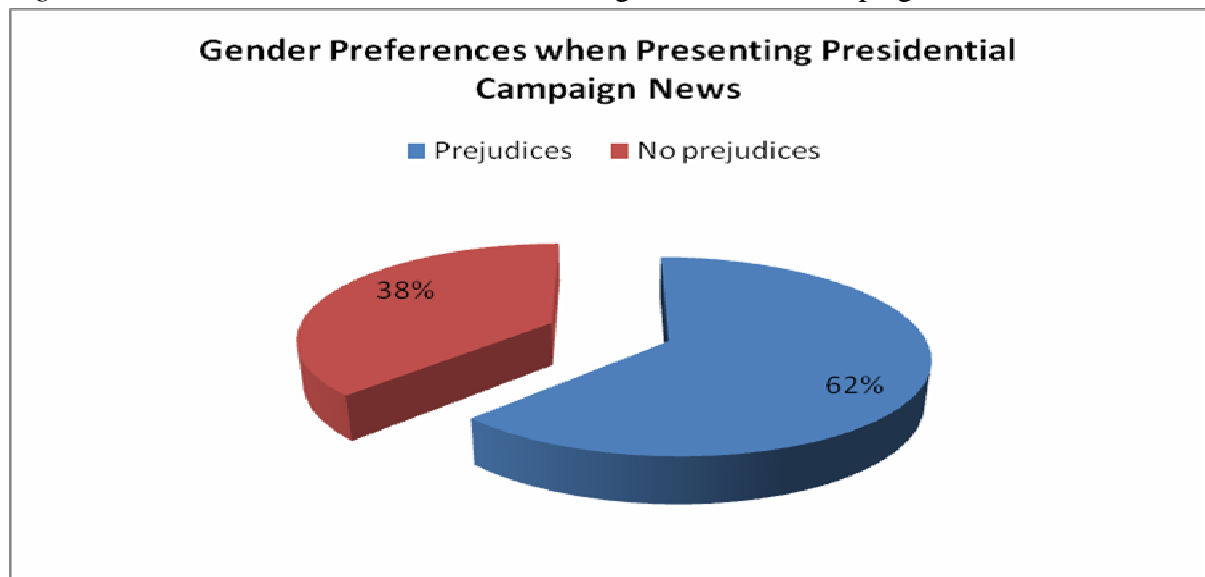
Figure 4.5. News Content and Image



#### 4.1.6 Gender Preferences when Presenting Presidential Campaign News

The respondents were further required to indicate whether there were gender preferences in their TV stations. 62% of them indicated that their TV stations preferred reporting news for male presidential candidates hence gender preferences. The remaining 38% of them were of a different opinion where they indicated that there were no gender preferences when reporting presidential campaign news. The findings are as revealed in Figure 4.6.

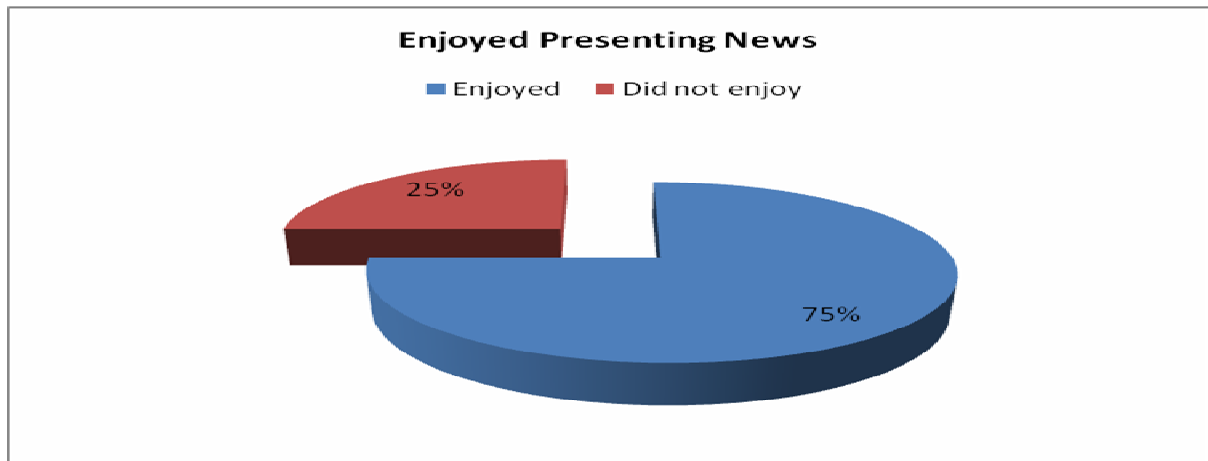
Figure 4.6. Gender Preferences when Presenting Presidential Campaign News



#### 4.1.7 Station Enjoyed Presenting News on Female Presidential Candidates

Respondents were further required to indicate whether their TV stations enjoyed presenting news on female presidential candidates. 75% of them confirmed that their TV stations enjoyed presenting news on female presidential candidates while 25% of them indicated otherwise. The findings are as presented in Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7. Station Enjoyed Presenting News on Female Presidential Candidates



#### 4.1.8 Media Fair When Presenting Female Presidential Candidates

The communication secretariat differed with the editors and the news anchors on opinion with regards to media being fair when presenting female presidential candidates. The respondent categorically indicated that TV stations preferred male presidential candidates and not the female presidential candidates. This was even evident in the more time allocated to the male candidates and not the female candidates. The TV stations felt that male presidential candidates were stronger than female presidential candidates hence had better chances of clinching the positions. They therefore had no much airtime for female presidential candidates. The reporters also had stereotypes where female candidates were considered as iron ladies and high headed women who did not respect cultural orientation which requires women to attend to household chores.

#### 4.1.9 Alter Way Media Portrayed Female Presidential Candidates

Further, the communication secretariat was required to indicate whether it could change the way the media portrayed female presidential candidates. The secretariat positively indicated that given chance they could change the way the media portrayed female presidential candidates. The secretariat further indicated that they could ensure that their candidates got equal airtime and by attention as their male counterparts. The secretariat could

ensure that their candidates are portrayed as strong candidates for the presidential race without any prejudices.

#### **4.1.10 Media was Unfair to Candidate because she was a woman in her previous run for office**

The communication secretariat categorically revealed that the media was real unfair to their presidential candidates because she was a woman in her previous run for office as it portrayed her as a failure. The secretariat further indicated that many TV stations considered their candidate as an iron lady which worked against the candidate. They portrayed the candidate as a grandmother and not as a mother who should be concentrating in addressing her home affairs.

#### **4.1.11 Applied External Influence on the Way Female Presidential Candidates were portrayed in the Media**

The communication secretariat was categorical that it did not apply any external influence to influence the way the female presidential candidates were portrayed by the media. The secretariat further indicated that their candidate concentrated on policy implementation and corruption elimination and as such valued transparency and accountability which could not allow them to do so.

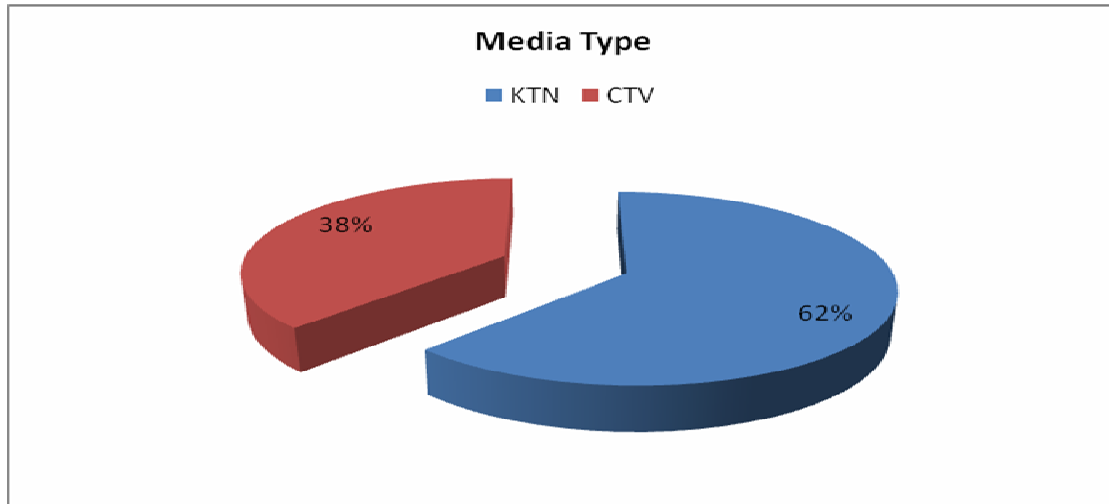
### **4.2 Content Analysis**

#### **4.2.1 Media Type**

Content analysis was also done where the researcher managed to obtain 19 (62%) clips from KTN and 12 (38%) clips from (citizen TV) CTV which featured female

presidential candidates. The clips were obtained for a period of three months before the general elections. The findings are as presented in Figure 4.8.

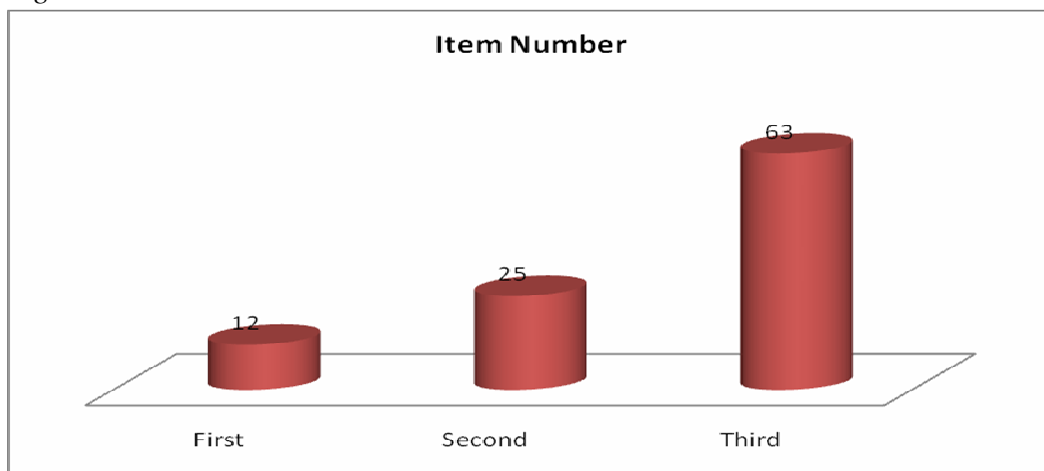
Figure 4.8 Media Type



#### 4.2.2 Item Number

The research findings revealed that majority (63%) of female presidential candidates news was aired as a third item in the news. This was followed by 25% which was aired as a second item and 12% as a first item. The therefore reveals that majority of the TV stations did not give much attention to female presidential candidates as shown in Figure 4.9.

Figure 4.9 Item number

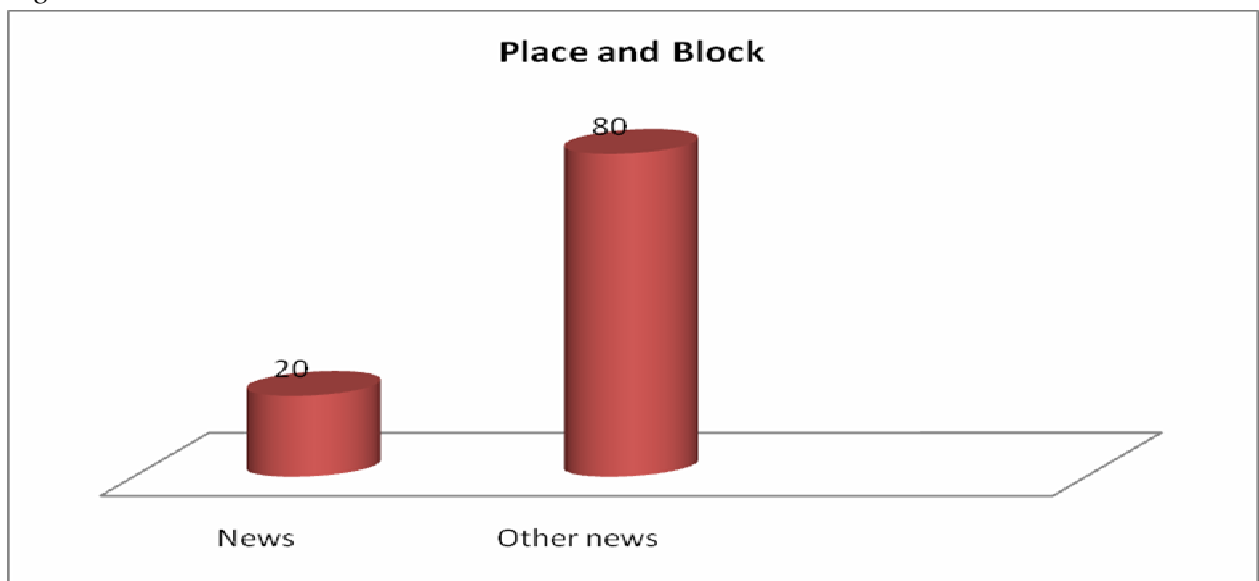




### 4.2.3 Place and Block

The research further sought to establish the place and block of the news items on female presidential candidates. The research findings revealed that 80% of the news items on female presidential were classified as other news items whereas 20% of them were classified in the main news bulletin items. The findings therefore reveal that media did not give prominence to female presidential candidates as shown in Figure 4.10.

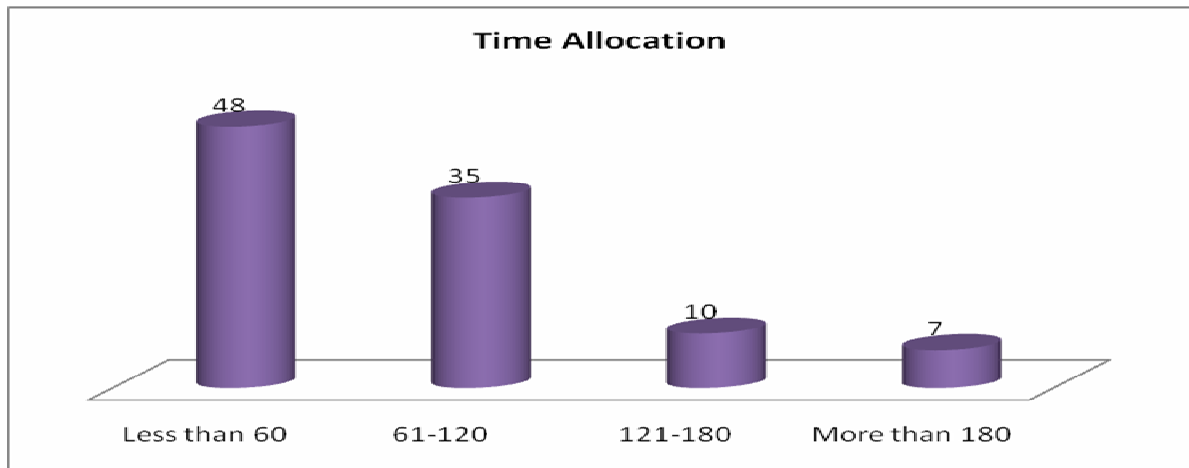
Figure 4.10. Place and Block



### 4.2.4 Time Allocation

The research further sought to establish the time allocated for female presidential candidates during news anchoring in seconds. The findings revealed that 48% of the female presidential candidates were allocated less than 60 seconds of news airtime, 35% of them between 61-120 seconds, 10% between 121-180 seconds and the remaining 7% were allocated more than 180 seconds. This therefore implies that the media did not allocate much news airtime to female presidential candidates as presented in Figure 4.11.

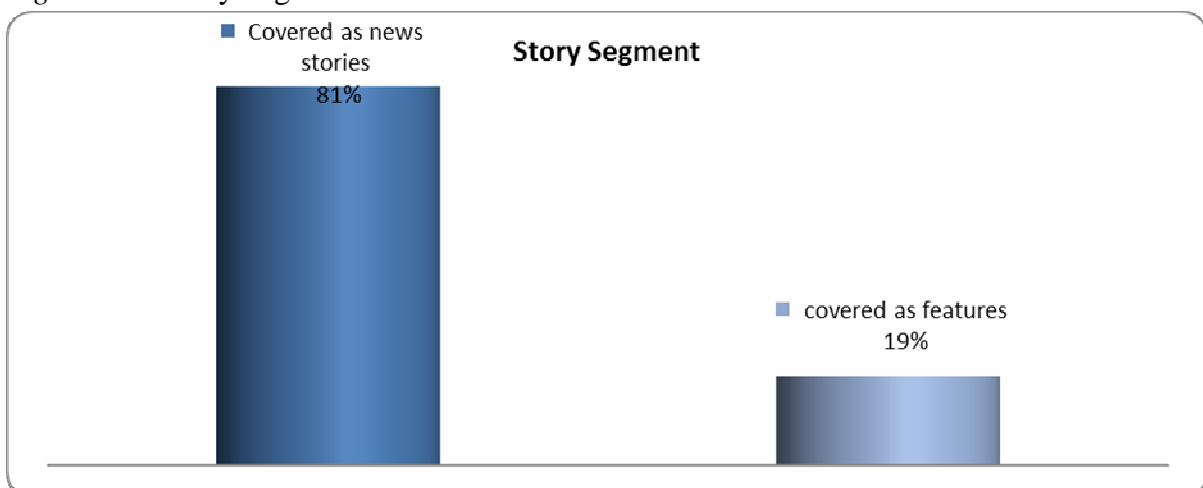
Figure 4.11 Time Allocation



#### 4.2.5 Story Segment

The research further sought to establish the story segment of media coverage of female presidential candidates. The findings revealed that 81% of female presidential candidate’s news was covered as news stories and the remaining 19% as features. This implies female presidential candidates in Kenya are not given in-depth media coverage as shown in Figure 4.12.

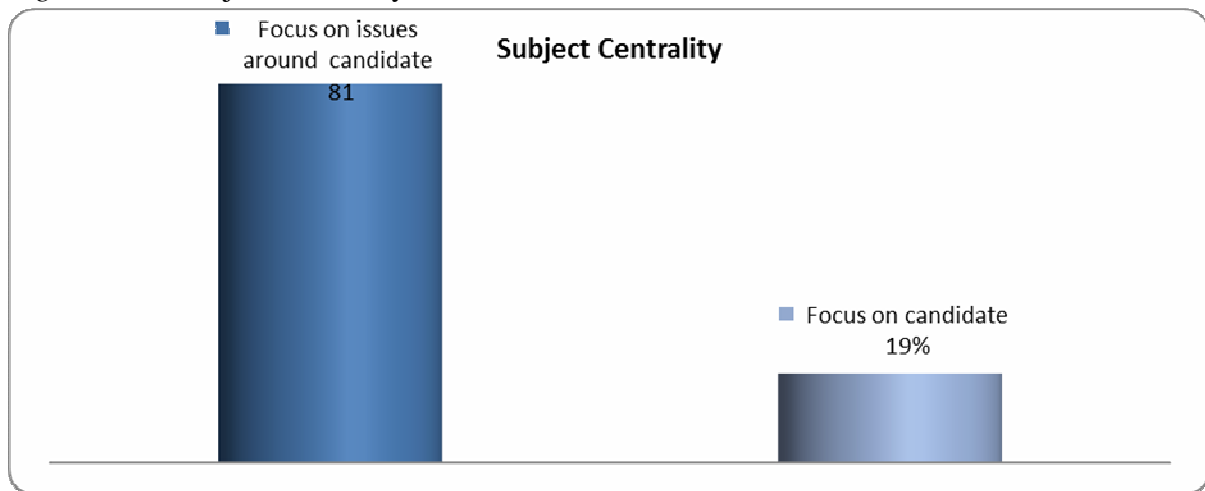
Figure 4.12 Story Segment



#### 4.2.6 Subject Centrality

The research findings revealed that 81% of media coverage on female presidential candidates focused on other issues surrounding the candidate while 19% focused on the candidate as an individual. This therefore implies media does not pay much attention to female presidential candidates in Kenya. The results are displayed in figure 4.13.

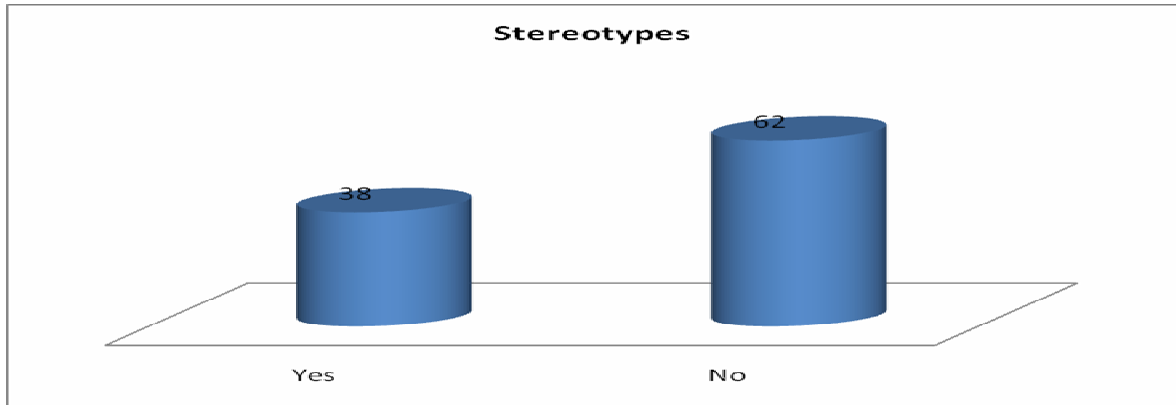
Figure 4.13. Subject Centrality



#### 4.2.7 Presence of Stereotypes

This research further sought to establish whether there existed stereotypes in the way media portrayed female presidential candidates in Kenya. The research finding established that 38% of the news reporters had a tone suggested that female presidential candidates were not as competent as politicians should be. It depicted them as weak vessels have no part in presidential campaigns. However, a significant 62% of the news reporters did not manifest gender stereotypes while reporting the political news as shown in Figure 4.14.

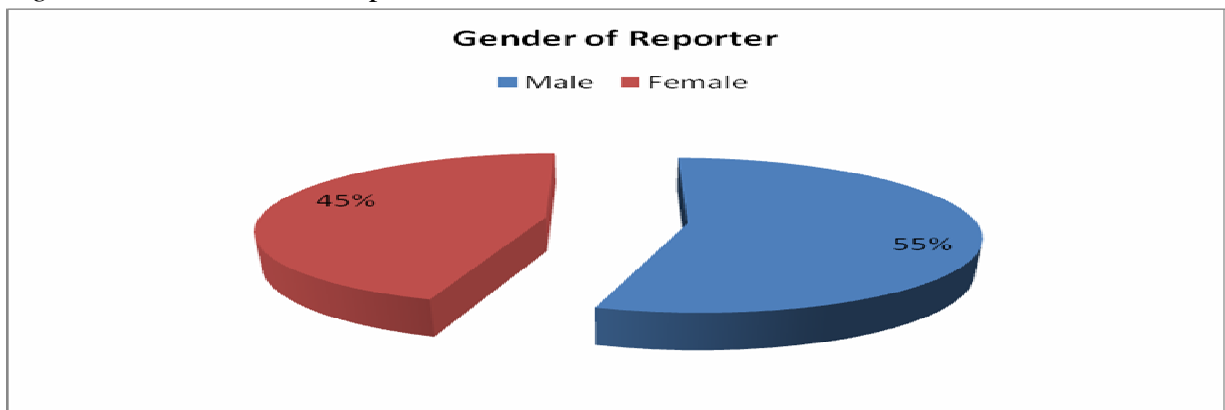
Figure 4.14 Stereotypes



#### 4.2.8 Gender of Reporter

This research further sought to establish whether media coverage of female presidential candidates was covered by female reporters or male reporters. 45% of female presidential candidate's media coverage was done by female reporters whereas 55% was done by male presidential coverage. The findings are as shown in Figure 4.15.

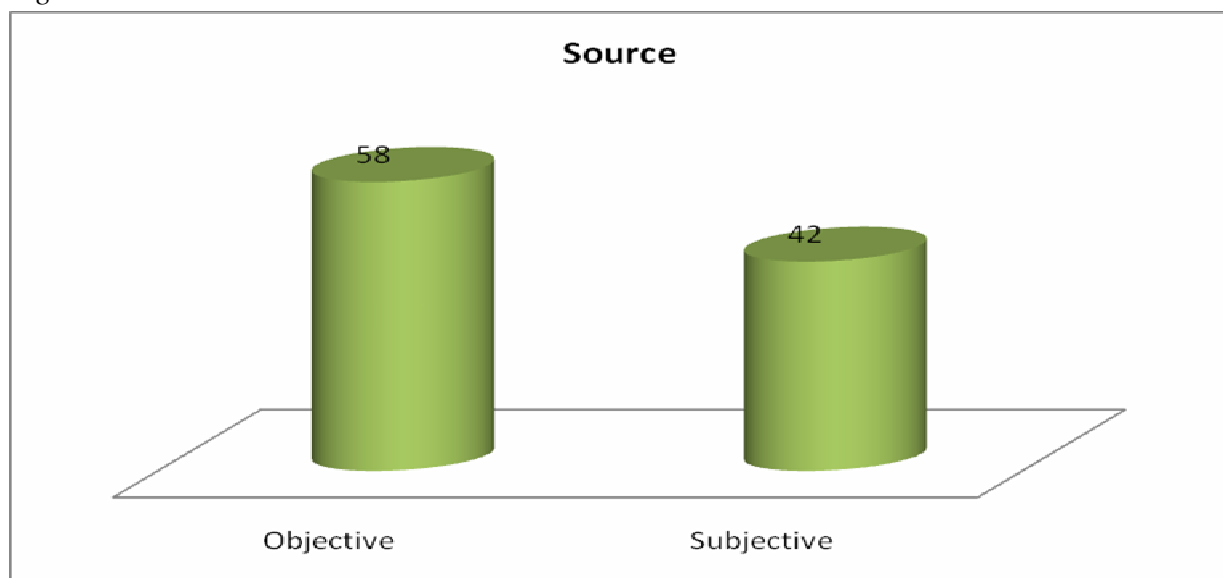
Figure 4.15. Gender of Reporter



#### 4.2.9 Source

This research further sought to establish the objectivity and subjectivity of the media coverage of female presidential candidates in Kenya. The research findings revealed that 58% of female presidential candidate's media coverage was objective in the sense that the reporters reported the facts on the ground without adding their own opinions to the news content. On the other hand 42% of the media coverage on female presidential candidates was subjective as shown in Figure 4.16

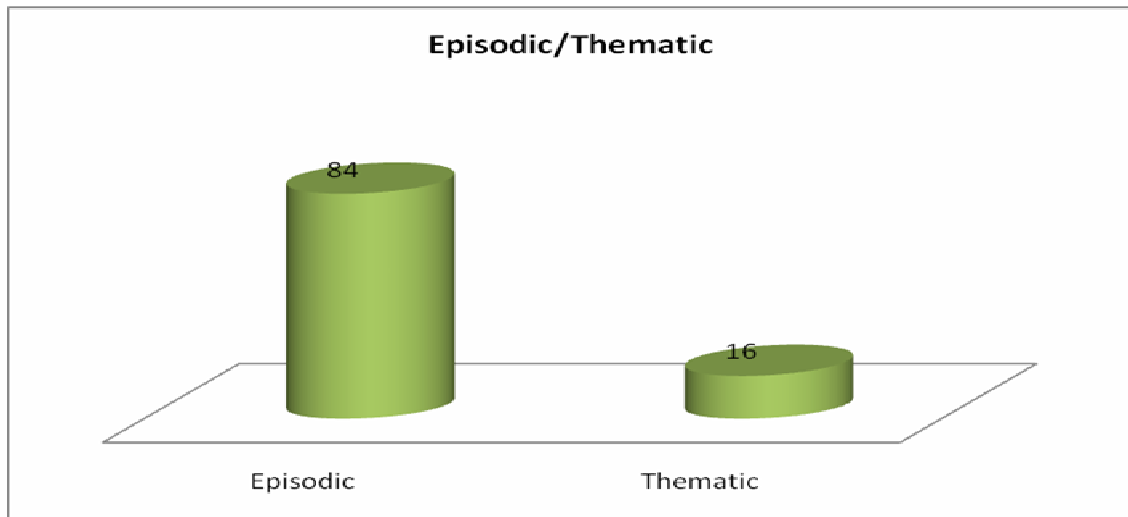
Figure 4.16.Source



#### 4.2.10 Episodic/Thematic

This research further sought to establish whether media coverage for female presidential candidates in Kenya was episodic or thematic. The findings revealed that it was mainly episodic because it normally appeared once as represented by 84%. However, 16% of the coverage was thematic and there was a build up on the news content on different occasions and segments. The findings are as presented in Figure 4.17.

Figure 4.17. Episodic/Thematic



#### 4.2.11 Presidential Themes

This research further sought to establish the campaign themes which female presidential candidates used: The major themes established ranged from economic empowerment, political justice, corruption fighting, marginal groups representation, education, health and security.

### 4.3 Summary

One of the definitions of the framing theory as explained by Entman (1993: 52), emphasized selection and salience. Based on the news clips that were analysed, television stations selected certain aspects of the female presidential aspirant and gave them prominence over other features. For instance, the news content of female presidential candidates was influenced by their previous images as captured by the media. This meant that the television stations used a pre formed opinion to frame the female presidential candidate.

According to majority of the news editors and anchors, there was no bias in their news. This is however is not what the analyzed video clips indicated. The news clips showed that the time allocated to the female presidential candidates was some seconds less as opposed to what would normally construct political news coverage. The female presidential candidate did not purchase as much air time for advertisements and special features within the news duration. This reduced her visibility to the public and gave her no chance, albeit through the television, to redeem herself. Some editors and news casters took to being subjective in the news content that pertained to the female presidential candidate and thereby alluding to an air of political weakness on the part of the female presidential candidate.

The analyses from the news clips also showed that television stations did not enjoy presenting news from the female presidential candidate. This indicates that televisions are conscious of the gender of the subject and will glory in the gender that gives them as much drama as they wish to have for their news content. This finding concurs with the findings of Lawrence & Rose (2010) who established that media view women as jokers in politics hence no need for much attention as they are rarely as dramatic as should be a television news item. And so based on the framing theory, televisions in this case as stated by Gitlin (1980) were “persistent [in their] patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion...”

The differing opinion of the female presidential candidate’s communication secretariat to that of the news casters and editors indicate that there grounds of contention between the two parties. For instance, the communication secretariat indicated that the television stations expressed open prejudice while presenting the female presidential candidate. The secretariat indicated that had there been no prejudice, then their candidate would have been given more prominence in the media and allotted more time. On the other

hand, the television editors and the news casters showed that their media houses did not openly display their prejudices against the female presidential candidate. The argument would be solved by inviting the 'silent' party in the research, the video clips, which indicated that the levels of prejudice and of non-prejudice were almost on the equal.

The fact that news on the female presidential candidate was not given prominence in the news casting is an indication that there are times that the female presidential candidate did not have what was needed to make the headlines. Majority of the news on the female presidential candidate was aired as the third news item in case the news appeared in the first block of news, but it was mostly dealt with in the third block of news.

The results further showed that news about female presidential candidates was covered as news bulletins. There were low percentages of feature stories and absolutely no documentary story during the prime time. My conclusion on this matter is that television stations did not consider the female presidential candidate a force to reckon with and so they did not bother to do a follow up on her story so as to build up their content on her presentations around thematic frames.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

The researcher targeted to obtain 42 news clips from both KTN and CTV but managed to obtain 31 clips which represented a response rate of 73.8%. A total of 10 questionnaires were administered to news editors and anchors from the two TV stations but the researcher managed to obtain responses from 8 of them which represented a response rate of 80%.

#### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

The research sought to evaluate the portrayal of female presidential candidature in television news in 2013 general election. From the surveys conducted, 62.5% of the respondents indicated that time taken by a news item was the major aspect which determined the content that went to air. 75% of the news editors and news anchors indicated that there was no bias in their news and the remaining 25% of them indicated otherwise. 87% of the respondents categorically indicated that the campaign teams of female presidential candidates did not purchase airtime for their candidate.

75% of the responses received indicated that female presidential candidates formed good news items for the TV stations under study. 87.5% of the respondents were categorical that the news content of female presidential candidates was influenced by their previous image in the media while the remaining 12.5% of them indicated otherwise. Further, 62.5% of the

respondents indicated that their TV stations preferred reporting news for male presidential candidates as opposed to that on female candidates.

On the other hand the communication secretariat of a female presidential candidate differed on opinion in regard to the media's fairness when presenting female presidential candidates. The secretariat indicated that many TV station preferred male presidential candidates and not the female presidential candidates. This was even evident in the more time allocated to the male candidates and not the female candidates. Given chance the secretariat indicated that it could change the way the media portrayed female presidential candidates in Kenya. The communication secretariat was categorical that it did not apply any external influence to influence the way the female presidential candidates were portrayed by the media.

The research findings revealed that majority (63%) of female presidential candidates news was aired as a third item in the news. 80% of the news items on female presidential were classified as other news items whereas 20% of them were classified as news items. The findings further revealed that 48% of the female presidential candidates were allocated less than 60 seconds of news airtime, 35% of them between 61-120 seconds, 10% between 121-180 seconds and the remaining 7% were allocated more than 180 seconds. This therefore implies that the media did not allocate much news airtime to female presidential candidates.

81% of the female presidential candidate's media coverage was covered as news stories and the remaining 19% as features. This coverage focused on other things surrounding them while 19% focused on the individuality of the candidate. It was further established that 38% of the news reporters viewed female presidential candidates as weak vessels who should be at home and stop competing with their men colleagues. This in turn affected the rate of objectivity of the presentations of news items involving the female presidential aspirant.

Further, 45% of the female presidential candidate's media coverage was done by female presidential candidates whereas 55% was done by male presidential coverage. The research findings revealed that 58% of the female presidential candidate's media coverage was objective in the sense that the reporters reported the facts on the ground without adding their own opinions to the news content. On the other hand 42% of the media coverage on female presidential candidates was subjective. The major themes focused on by female presidential candidates ranged from economic empowerment, political justice, corruption fighting, marginal groups' representation, education, health and security.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

From the study findings it can be concluded that there is a conflicting set of information on how the televisions portray the female presidential candidate in Kenya. The results from the news clips that were viewed were in sharp contrast with what the news casters and the news editors said. The clips showed a bias in the presentation of the female presidential candidates while the media personnel indicated that there was no bias.

Regardless, stereotyping of female presidential candidates comes out as a strong factor in the televisions. The levels of subjectivity almost equal that of objectivity among the media personnel. Television clips indicated that presentations were made with regard to previous portrayal of the female presidential candidates.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

There are apparent conflicting opinions on the portrayal of female presidential candidates in television stations. Media houses should develop non biased policies of coverage so that the female presidential candidates are not in a position that will make them think that they are ostracized by the media. The media should also encourage neutrality of the

news casters when presenting the news. Journalists should also be encouraged to be objective when collecting political news. Additionally, the communication secretariat of female presidential candidates should engage the media in dialogue to see ways in which they can better the portrayal of their candidates. Female presidential candidates should also at least bear in mind that ‘action and reaction are equal and opposite forces’ and therefore the good they do will be interred with their character while the evil will come back to haunt them. In this regard, they should do all they can to stay away from public images that will encourage stereotyping and negative connotations of their activities in the media.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Future Research**

The study was based on the KTN and Citizen TV only. A future research might consider researching all the television stations in Kenya.

A research might also consider figuring out why there is a discrepancy between what media personnel say about gender bias and what the clips viewed indicate.

It would be interesting to execute a qualitative research in order to answer how each of the factors studied would influence the portrayal of female presidential candidates in Kenya.

## APPENDIX

### QUESTIONNAIRE ON PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

#### Questionnaire administered by Beryl Awuor

To..... TV station..... On .....

1. What determined the content that went on air?  
Time  
Theme  
Gender of subject  
Other (specify)
2. Was there a bias against female presidential candidate in the news items?  
Yes  
No
3. Did female presidential campaign teams purchase campaign airtime for their candidates?  
Yes  
No
4. Did women presidential candidates form good sources of news?  
Yes  
No
5. Was the news content of the female presidential candidates influenced by previous images of the candidate in the media?  
Yes  
No
6. Did your station have any gender preferences when presenting the presidential campaign news?  
Yes  
No
7. If yes above, clarify
8. Did your station enjoy presenting news on female presidential candidates?

## **QUESTIONNAIRE ON PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES**

**Questionnaire administered by Beryl Awuor**

**To female presidential communication secretariat**

1. Do you think the media was fair in representing your presidential candidate?  
Yes  
  
No
2. Kindly clarify your response above
3. Are there specific gender prejudices that you noticed in the media during the elections?  
Yes  
  
No
4. Kindly clarify your responses above
5. If you had the option to could you alter the way the media portrayed female presidential candidates in Kenya?  
Yes  
  
No
6. Kindly clarify
7. Do you feel that the media was unfair to your candidate, because she was a woman, in her previous run for office?  
Yes  
  
No
8. Kindly clarify
9. Did you apply any external influences on the way your candidate was portrayed in the media?  
Yes  
  
No
10. Kindly clarify

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