THE REPRESENTATION OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE: AN ANALYSIS OF MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS IN KENYA (2016-2020)

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Communication Studies of the Department of Communication, Journalism and Media Studies, Rongo University.

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents (Pr. Joshua Wagunda and Mrs. Elseba Wagunda), spouse (Marren), and lovely daughters Yvette and Laura.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

Mainstream newspapers have been criticized for routinely failing to represent intimate partner violence (IPV) in constructive ways. That means the problem of IPV is often presented shallowly as a series of isolated crime incidents without any social connections. Some previous studies- primarily focusing on broadcast media-have shown that the media can perpetuate inaccurate ideas about IPV, while others show improvements in coverage. There is, however, little research on how mainstream Kenyan newspapers represent the reality of IPV. As a result, this study purposed to analyse the representation of IPV by *The Daily Nation, The Standard,* and *The Star* from 2016 to 2020. The study's objectives were to: analyse ways in which IPV was represented, explore the factors that accounted for the representation, and understand wider emerging meanings. Relatedly, the research questions inquired how the three newspapers represented IPV, the factors that accounted for such representation and emerging wider meanings. Philosophically, the research was informed by pragmatism employing a convergent parallel mixed methods design. Overall, the study was based on framing theory but augmented by critical feminist theory. The inquiry did not, however, look at the effects of framing on audiences, but the potency of the implications of framing through IPV message presentation. Whether or not the audiences are aware and the effects of framing on audiences was beyond the scope of this study. The content analysis results were presented in percentages, figures, and tables, followed by semi-structured interviews that were thematically analysed. From a target population of 5,475 newspaper editions, a search in the mainstream newspaper websites yielded 1,080 editions from which 70 editions containing IPV reports were selected for analysis through constructed week sampling. Nine journalists and three editors comprised the 12 participants who were purposively selected for interviews. Findings indicate that mainstream Kenyan newspapers often report IPV using episodic and murder-centric frames with catchy phrases and metaphors which tend to present IPV as discrete, isolated victim-blaming incidents. Second, despite newspaper reporters' and editors' best efforts to report IPV constructively, they are mainly constrained by market demands to sell copy, internal and external legal imperatives coupled with a lack of specific IPV reporting guidelines. Third, the findings also show that in subtle ways, newspaper reports not only excuse perpetrators but also perpetuate myths and stereotypes about IPV thus potentially inhibiting potent and constructive IPV messaging. IPV representation does not only excuse perpetrators but also perpetuates myths and stereotypes surrounding the issue. Such a representation inhibits the potency of IPV messaging. The study, therefore recommends that besides 'featurising' IPV reports, and incorporating more experts as sources, specific IPV reporting guidelines should be developed to facilitate potent and constructive IPV representation.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CMDPS-RU	Centre for Media, Democracy, Peace and Security-Rongo University
DN ed 1	*Daily Nation* editor one
DN rep1	*Daily Nation* reporter one
DN rep2	*Daily Nation* reporter two
DN rep3	*Daily Nation* reporter three
DV	Domestic Violence
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
KARF	Kenya Audience Research Foundation
MCK	Media Council of Kenya
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NCAJ	National Council on Administration of Justice
NCRC	National Crime Research Centre
NPS	National Police Service
SD ed1	*The Standard* newspaper editor one
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SD rep1	*The Standard* newspaper reporter one
SD rep2	*The Standard* newspaper reporter two
SD rep3	*The Standard* newspaper reporter three
SGBV	Sexual Gender-Based Violence
SRed1	*The Star* editor one
SR rep1	*The Star* newspaper reporter one
SR rep2	*The Star* newspaper reporter two
SR rep3	*The Star* newspaper reporter three
TV	Television
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States

VAC	Violence Against Children
VAW	Violence Against Women
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 An Overview

This thesis has five chapters. The three specific objectives and related questions are presented in chapter one after the background. The literature is critically reviewed in chapter two. It not only reveals limited local research on newspaper representation of IPV but also places this study within the field of communication studies using the synergy of framing and critical feminist theories. The research methodology is provided in chapter three where a convergent parallel mixed methods design incorporates quantitative and qualitative methods to quantify IPV frames through descriptive statistics and analyse interview content thematically to explain the quantitative results respectively. The findings in chapter four show that the representation of IPV was de-contextualised, commercially driven and superficial, meaning that victim blaming and undertones of patriarchy remained uncontested. Chapter five provides the summary, discussions conclusions, ultimately recommending 'constructive IPV representation' as a mitigation for superficiality.

1.1 Background of the Study

1.1.1 Newspaper Representation of intimate partner violence

This study adopted the stance that media representation, rather than being a mirror replica of reality, serves as a re-presentation of reality through a selection process. Following concerns over superficial media representation of IPV It was crucial to conduct a critical analysis of the variables that influenced how IPV was represented mainstream newspapers in Kenya. As authoritative forums for discussion, newspapers

have the power to inform IPV conversations by powerfully representing its reality and highlighting its wider contexts. For this reason, they are faulted when they fail to represent important social issues such as IPV in useful ways. As such, efforts by newspapers, alongside other media, to represent IPV have drawn both praise and criticism around the world (Sutherland, 2015). According to Sutherland's research, while coverage of IPV has improved in some developed countries, it is still frequently framed (shallowly) as a personal problem. Although there is a sizeable amount of research on media coverage of IPV in western countries, there are few comparable studies in Kenya, particularly regarding how newspapers frame the issue (King'ori et al., 2017). Additional in-depth research has been recommended by other studies to understand how local media represent the issue (Wamathu, 2018; Muchemi, 2015; Karicho, 2014). Therefore, this study adds to the few local studies on IPV representation by examining how local mainstream newspapers represent IPV. How then is representation envisioned in this study?

"To represent something is to describe or depict it, to call it up in the mind by description, portrayal or imagination. To represent also means to symbolize, to stand for, to be a specimen of or to substitute for" (Long & Wall, 2012). Newspapers, just like other media, represent reality. However, any form of representation can never provide a full picture of the reality being re-presented. Media forms, however factual or however much invested in 'truth' or 'authenticity', can never be fully faithful to the subject matter if only due to the nature of the selections made in news production process (Slakoff, 2020). Newspapers and other media forms represent the image of reality to us and ideas about the world. However, all representations, in media or elsewhere, contain only a fraction of what could have been represented. Thus, we can claim that representations are selective in their portrayals (factual or otherwise) and

are, therefore, 'abstractions' in the way in which they work at extricating, emphasizing, or inflecting limited elements or characteristics of what is known. Daily News, for instance, makes selections of 'what matters in the world' and then gives us a very limited view of things through the viewpoints of reporters, other commentators, and witnesses. In the study of texts, media scholars ask questions of the very creations and creators of those texts, asking creators to account for the material they put out to their audiences, who is being spoken about or for, and in what manner? Also considered is the question of who speaks? Against such contexts, it was important for this study to interrogate the representation of IPV by mainstream newspapers in Kenya.

Following concerns about media representation of IPV and being among the few known studies in this area, it analysed ways in which IPV was represented by mainstream newspapers in Kenya through content analysis in addition to interviewing reporters and editors to find out factors accounting for such representation and emerging wider meanings. While this study drew from past research on gender-specific concerns connected to IPV, it connected such concerns to journalistic reporting practices. Ultimately, it is hoped that this study contributes to Knowledge as it proposes 'constructive representation of IPV by newspapers in Kenya' as a mitigation for superficial IPV reporting.

1.1.2 The intimate partner violence reality in Kenya

In Kenya, four out of ten women report having been physically or sexually abused by a spouse or other intimate partner, which is frequently tolerated and normalized (National Crime Research Centre [NCRC], 2020). The Department of Children's Services at Kenya's Ministry of Labour and Social Protection estimates that 62.6

percent of girls between the ages of 13 and 24 experience several acts of sexual violence throughout their formative years.

Following a presidential directive in 2020, the NCRC reviewed its findings and discovered that, as compared to cases reported between January and December 2019, the number of Gender-based violence (GBV) cases between January and June 2020 jumped by 92.2 percent. According to the review, physical assault, rape/attempted rape, murder, sexual offences, defilement, and other sexual offenses were the most prevalent types of GBV between January and June 2020 as handled or recorded by various state and non-state authorities.

1,716 cases, or 71.0 percent, of the 2,416 GBV cases reported between January and June 2020 had female victims, with 10 cases per day on average (NCRC, 2020). Young males between the ages of 18 and 33 who are in a family or intimate partner relationship are the leading offenders of gender-based violence. Those who are most impacted by GBV include women, mothers, and children. Kenya has led international efforts to eradicate all forms of gender-based violence, especially following the country's 2010 adoption of the Kenyan Constitution and the ratification of other international treaties or conventions, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To prevent gender-based violence, including IPV, the government has ratified international and regional legal and policy frameworks for domestic violence (DV) regulations (Aura, 2017).

Everyone has the right to personal freedom and security, which includes the freedom from all forms of violence, both in public and privately, as well as the freedom from all forms of torture, whether physical or psychological, and from cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment (Kenyan Constitution, 2010). Women's constitutional protections

against sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) are ensured by the right to security. Another piece of legislation with derived protections is the Female Genital Mutilation Act of 2011, which forbids the practice of female genital mutilation and guards against abuses of a person's mental or physical integrity. The Matrimonial Property Act of 2013 focuses on issues relating to couples' rights and advantages linked to marital assets, whereas the Land Act of 2012 safeguards women's rights to matrimonial property. The Marriage Act of 2014 also outlines the types of marriages that are permitted as well as the minimum age for getting married. Equal rights for spouses are ensured by the Act before, during, and after a marriage is dissolved. The Protection Against Domestic Violence Act (2015), on the other hand, shields and frees family members from domestic violence.

The act of trying to control another person is known as domestic violence, sometimes referred to as family violence or intimate partner violence (Breen et al., 2017; Hawley, 2018; Kennedy, 2011; Klein, 2013; Little, 2018). Even though some researchers have chosen alternative terminologies, this study opted for intimate partner violence. This is so because the study investigates how Kenya's major media represent news regarding violent situations involving family members and intimate partners. According to academics, violence against women, a more general, gendered phenomenon, includes intimate partner violence (Our Watch, 2015). For decades, many have believed that intimate partner violence is a private matter rather than a public one (Fineman, 2013).

The media have a responsibility to represent societal shifts in attitudes about IPV (Sutherland, 2015). International literature attests to the truth regarding media coverage of IPV, however, there is a dearth of literature to ground IPV reality in the Kenyan context. According to Simons and Morgan (2018), information about violence

against women is primarily found in the mainstream media. Sutherland et al (2016) noted that "Research continues to suggest faults" in media coverage of IPV, therefore it was crucial to look at how IPV was represented in Kenya's major newspapers.

The media, notably newspapers, have come under fire for stressing sensationalized elements of IPV, which are typical of crime reporting (Chermak 1995; Wright, 2015). Yet, media outlets cover crime to satisfy public demand (Simons & Morgan, 2018). Violence-filled reporting, however, is more concerned with the "surface facts of the episodes, missing the necessary depth and context to understand crime" (Drache & Velagic, 2014). Additionally, prior representational research demonstrates that sensationalism associated with reporting on IPV shifts the focus of guilt from the perpetrator to the victim, resulting in victim blaming and obstructing women's attempts to flee violence (Easteal et al., 2019; Rao, 2014). Understanding how newspapers portray IPV was crucial since, arguably, individuals get a lot of knowledge about social issues and the world in general from the media. Therefore, the media are effective change agents (Campbell et al., 2003). Given this strength, it was reasonable to question how IPV is portrayed in the major Kenyan publications. According to this study, such an analysis was required since IPV representation involves a selection process and is consequently influenced by several elements that will be discussed later in this thesis.

However, this study acknowledges that past studies have made suggestions for how media could portray IPV (Cullen et al., 2019; Dragiewicz et al., 2018; Easteal et al., 2019; Hill & Fuller, 2018; Our watch, 2015; Simons & Khan, 2018; Sutherland et al., 2015). But as the media have received both praise and criticism for their coverage of IPV, it was necessary to examine IPV representation critically. Political actors, for

instance, may respond to social violence through a legislative agenda as a result of such scrutiny (Carratala, 2016; Fairbain & Dawson, 2013). Therefore, to remain competitive, reporters and editors must constantly weigh the benefits and drawbacks of providing fascinating news that satisfies the public's needs while also addressing the root causes of the issue.

According to the current study, managing this problem may benefit from guidance for reporters and editors who produce IPV stories for publications. According to earlier research, guidelines that take into account the news agenda and the limitations of journalistic practice will be beneficial for the media rather than standards that by themselves would improve reporting skills (Sutherland et al., 2019). Journalists were questioned about whether they would find guidelines on IPV reporting helpful and what such a guideline should contain during the in-depth interview part to provide recommendations to improve the IPV news agenda and the issues associated with IPV portrayal. Such guidelines, for instance, could lessen victim-blaming narratives, which claim that abuse victims are partially to blame (Easteal et al., 2019; Sutherland et al., 2016). The victim-blaming paradigms downplay the suffering of those who have experienced abuse firsthand and focus instead on the behaviour of the abusers (Dragiewicz et al., 2018; Easteal et al., 2019). Despite widespread criticism, Easteal et al. (2019) suggest that victim-blaming narratives continue to be used in media representations of IPV. The current study examines how major Kenyan newspapers represent IPV and offers suggestions for future representations of the issue that might be more potent.

Although some previous studies have explored how IPV is represented in the print media, they mainly focus on transnational jurisdictions, condensed periods, or specific

incidents (Hawley et al., 2018; Simon & Khan, 2018; Sutherland et al., 2016; Niblock, 2018). While the current study uses earlier research on IPV as a starting point, it also adds to the body of knowledge by analyzing how IPV has been represented in mainstream Kenyan newspapers for five years. It aims to respond to three research queries. To address the more general query of how IPV is represented in mainstream newspapers in Kenya, each question focuses on a distinct aspect of IPV representation. Chapter three discusses the theoretical frameworks that underpin the resolution of the issues.

1.1.3 Mainstream newspapers in Kenya

There are about 20 regularly published newspapers (see appendix X) in Kenya's media landscape, including daily newspapers, one business daily, and regional weekly newspapers (Schmidt & Deselaers, 2015). The *Daily Nation*'s brand mission is, "You Deserve the Truth," The paper, which has the highest readership, prides itself as a truth-teller. On its part, *The Standard* (owned by the Standard Group) positions itself as "Bold in giving reliable fresh information. *The Star* fronts its news as "Fresh, Independent, Different". From their mission statements, it is apparent that mainstream newspapers see themselves as bearers of objective truth, packaged as fresh news. Newspapers may not the most popular source of news for Kenyans when compared to television and radio, but it is believed that thanks to Kenya's library system, 10 to 14 individuals generally read each newspaper in Kenya, significantly expanding the reach of this media genre (Schmidt & Deselaers, 2015). As the most trusted news source in Kenya daily newspapers commanded 23% of media audiences (MCK, 2020). Even though the selected newspapers are privately owned and have bureaus dispersed over the nation, they are not directly under the editorial authority of the government and are

instead primarily influenced by commercial and market forces. According to Wasserman and Maweu (2014) political and economic liberalization in the early 1990s brought about financialisation of the media—a system of media production, distribution, ownership, and financing that is dominated by the capitalist imperatives of maximizing profits for investors, stockholders, and advertisers—has had a significant impact on the media in Kenya.

Therefore, it was unlikely that newspapers would portray IPV in a manner that was directly influenced by the Kenyan government. However, because the chosen publications are commercially driven the commodification of news presumptively influenced IPV representation (Lohner, Banjac & Neverla, 2016).

Newspapers play a crucial role in influencing public opinion and policy responses to issues like IPV. As noted by previous studies such as Savage et al (2017), Smith, Bond and Jeffries (2019), Sutherland, Easteal, Holland, and Vaughan (2019), Estes and Webber (2021), and Breen, Easteal, Holland, Sutherland and Vaughan (2017), newspapers define public discourse by framing events in a coherent narrative.

The aforementioned criticisms mean that some actors are given significant roles while relegating or ignoring others. In addition, it appears that there is a rising recognition throughout the world that, wherever it occurs, IPV is primarily caused by women's subordinate position in society (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005). It might be argued that mainstream newspaper coverage of IPV presents a possible site for the reproduction of gender stereotypes, thus a problematic representation by encouraging the toleration of IPV, given the media's capacity to generate a dominant reality that maintains dominant power relations (Lloyd & Ramon, 2017).

Although newspapers were the chosen media for this study, it is crucial to note that there has been some discussion in the academic community regarding how much developments in digital technology have in some cases led to a drop in readership. According to Pattabhiramaiah, Sriram, and Sridhar (2018), rival internet news sources are seen as eroding the dominance of major newspapers. Blogs, social networking, and free internet information are some examples of these sources. While this may be somewhat true, it does not negate the continued influence of major newspapers in shaping public opinion. Indeed, you can read the stories that were printed in newspapers online as well (albeit recognizing that electronic reports are published quicker and with far more flexibility in terms of editing). There is evidence that readers in Kenya view mainstream newspaper journalism as more trustworthy and credible than other sources (Media Council of Kenya [MCK], 2020).

Newspapers are crucial players in establishing IPV agenda since they provide context for such events as media products. This suggests that the topics selected as the main focus in the news, as well as how they are ultimately reported, may have a considerable impact on the effectiveness of the message (Morgan & Simons, 2018). Given this setting, this study considered content of the top three newspapers as ontological truth that could be investigated to see how they represented IPV.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Intimate partner violence is an issue that has captured national attention in Kenya. This is evidenced by mainstream newspaper reports which have documented a number of cases during the period under review (2016-2020). Amid the outbreak of Covid-19, reports of escalating cases of gender-based violence (an increase of 92.2 percent with cases known to police escalating to 5,063) led President Uhuru Kenyatta to call for a

probe to inform responses to the problem. Earlier reports had indicated that four out of 10 women in Kenya experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of a spouse or intimate partner (National Crime Research Centre [NCRC], 2020).

The media, however, have continued to represent IPV superficially as argued by Wasuna (2015). Such representations do not demystify stereotypes and buttress institutions and practices that can assuage IPV. Either on account of conscious decisions or distinct lack of willingness, the media in Kenya could be exacerbating existing gender-based tensions by continuously reinforcing gender biases through their daily coverage of IPV.

In Kenya, little research has been conducted on the media's unintended role in the tolerance of IPV. The positive role of the media such as informing, persuading, entertaining and bringing about cultural transformation are more pervasive than the more negative roles such as reinforcing gender stereotypes. This research analyses whether the ways in which IPV is represented addresses the wider underpinnings of the violence as a result of the newspaper articles published in the period between 2016 and 2020. The commercial aims and underpinnings of the mass newspaper have exerted considerable influence on content (Curran & Seaton,1988). The recognition of newspapers as media with a highly developed sense of social and ethical responsibility and the rise of a journalistic profession dedicated to the objective reporting of events provide the basis for criticisms of newspapers which deviate from the ideal by being either too partisan or too 'sensational' (McQuail, 1994). If the problem of superficial representation is not addressed, the likely consequence would be the perpetuation of victim-blaming ideas and stereotypes that reinforce the inequality between the genders.

Therefore, an analysis of the representation of IPV by mainstream newspaper in Kenya will form an important contribution to Knowledge.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Main Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to analyse the representation of intimate partner violence by Kenya's mainstream newspapers from 2016 to 2020.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives were:

1. To analyse ways in which the mainstream newspapers represented IPV in Kenya.

2. To explore factors that account for the ways in which IPV was represented.

3. To determine the wider emerging meanings from the ways in which IPV was represented.

1.4 Research Questions

Given the objectives, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. In what ways did the mainstream newspapers represent IPV in Kenya?

2. What factors account for the ways in which the mainstream newspapers represented IPV?

3. Which wider meanings emerged from the ways in which IPV was represented?

1.5 Scope of the Study

Amidst a vast media landscape, the content of this study was limited to the representation of intimate partner violence by Kenyan mainstream newspapers which remain authoritative and trusted sources of news (MCK, 2020). Geographically, the selected newspapers are national in nature, covering IPV news countrywide and circulated nationally. The national dominance of the selected newspapers is captured in a survey carried out by the Media Council of Kenya (2020) where the *Daily Nation* was the most read (47 per cent) followed by *The Standard* (27 per cent), *Taifa Leo* (8 per cent) and *The Star* (4 per cent). This study therefore picked the first two and the fourth, on account of their popularity and wide readership while *Taifa Leo,* was left out because it is written in Kiswahili and its inclusion would have required translation which was constrained by limited resources.

Theoretically, this study did not to look at effects of framing on audiences, as in cases of media effects, but the potency of framing through IPV message presentation. Whether or not the audiences were aware of such potency and the effects of such framing of IPV to audiences was therefore beyond the scope of this study. In terms of time, this study covered five years from 2016 to 2020. These dates were selected based on their coincidence with critical legislative discourses on crucial laws to address the IPV in Kenya (2015-2016) culminating in the enactment of the Protection against Domestic Violence Act, (2015). Additionally, the year 2016 marked the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG number five on the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. Authority to collect data lapsed in 2020, the year that saw reports of escalating cases of intimate partner violence in the wake of Covid-19 outbreak (NCRC, 2020).

1.6 Limitations of the Study

Quantitative research is limited in terms of providing explanations for numerical data, hence semi-structured interviews were used to give nuanced explanations of quantitative data. Alternatively, quantitative researchers have criticized the use of qualitative research, claiming that qualitative studies are "made up" and do not provide useful information (Braun and Clarke, 2013). However, qualitative data analysis "tells one of many possible stories about the data" (Braun & Clarke 2013). In this study, 12 interviews were used to put the quantitative research findings in context. Interviews were conducted until no new information was discovered. However, declaring that data saturation was reached could be seen as a subjective call that limits the scope of this study. Journalists and editors were asked to describe the patterns that emerged from the content analysis and to provide insight into the decision-making processes that led to their reporting of intimate partner violence issues. As a result, interviewing and content analysis were complementary to each other, allowing the study to thoroughly assess the representation of intimate partner violence and make recommendations for improvement.

1.7 Justification of the Study

Because mainstream newspapers are a major source of information about social issues, it was critical to look into how mainstream Kenyan newspapers represent IPV which is arguably one of the major social issues affecting the fabric of the Kenyan society. While evidence suggests that media coverage is improving in some western jurisdictions, "much space for improvement" remains (Breen et al., 2017). However, understanding on how to improve media coverage of IPV is limited and "frequently impeded by the complicated web within which the media operates" (Breen et al.,

2017). This study is among the few known studies that looks into how mainstream newspapers to represent in Kenya.

While limited research suggests that guidelines can enhance reporting quality and change practice (Simons & Khan, (2018); Sutherland et al., 2015). Guidelines alone are insufficient to improve coverage without active engagement (Sutherland et al., 2016). Besides making recommendations to guide future coverage of IPV, this study addresses the question of "engagements" by not only conducting interviews with journalists and editors but also interrogating past scholarly work on IPV representation. The recommendations recognize and respond to the reality of pressures that come with reporting IPV by the mainstream newspapers. As a result, this study has both theoretical and practical consequences for how mainstream Kenyan newspapers represent this critical societal issue that has bearing on the achievement of the fifth SDG agenda on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

1.8 Significance of the Study

This study investigated the representation of IPV by mainstream newspapers published in Kenya between 2016 and 2020. This investigation was deemed useful to media policy makers, because they are responsible for formulating media approaches and laws that guide the practice of journalism in the country.

The study is also relevant because it advances understanding of the media's function in a diversified society that struggles with gender issues. In a democracy like Kenya, where male power predominates, the media must engage in communication that educates readers about diverse gender issues and fosters discussion (Zoonen, 2012).

This study significantly contributes to knowledge on factors responsible for the gap between intended roles of newspapers in a diverse society dominated by men, and analyses the role played by newspapers in normalizing gender biases in media content. The research determines the linkage between media content and the context in which journalists operate in the hope that this knowledge will assist in re-framing media content on IPV in a manner that promotes gender equality.

1.9 Chapter Summary

In summary, this chapter, not only highlights the problematic representation of IPV by mainstream Kenyan newspapers over five years but also hints at what needs to be done to achieve potent IPV messaging that effectively reflects the intricacies of intimate partner violence. It was crucial to take into account that newspapers are socializing agents that help to define the IPV agenda as information sources. This was particularly so because newspapers shape perceptions of IPV reality through discourses. The extent of IPV coverage and how it is framed by the press can have an impact on who is held accountable for IPV incidents and who is in charge of addressing IPV; these attributions can then have an impact on the severity of the legal penalties for offenders and the protections afforded to victims, among other things. However, given the conflicting viewpoints held by researchers on how IPV is generally represented in the media, it was crucial to lay the background for comprehending the processes mainstream Kenyan newspapers use, the environment in which they exert their influence, and the implications of the IPV representation. The chapter highlights for instance that the representation of IPV by mainstream Kenyan newspapers is profit-driven. It, therefore, means that IPV representation is not an entirely faithful presentation since editorial decisions have to be balanced between

human interest and profit motives among other factors in the IPV news selection

process.

1.10 Operational Definition of Terms

Constructive IPV representation   Framing of IPV stories to focus on enhanced social contexts of IPV and refer to helpful resources.

Framing   Selecting aspects of reality and making them more salient in the media.

Intimate partner violence (IPV)   Any form of abuse that closely acquainted individuals use against each other such as physical, sexual, verbal threats and economic deprivations.

Mainstream newspapers in Kenya   Leading newspapers (by number of daily copies sold), published in English (The *Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The Star*).

Representation   A depiction of reality by the media.

Sustainable Development Goals   17 global goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 2015 to ensure that all people enjoy peace, and prosperity by 2030. As a gender issue, IPV is linked to the fifth SDG which aims at achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

Emerging wider meanings   The broader socio-cultural underpinnings of the ways in which IPV is represented by mainstream newspapers in Kenya.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This chapter reviews literature related to the representation of IPV. It was crucial to consider how previous researchers have tackled the issue and how the current research can offer suggestions for how the mainstream press should more potently represent IPV. As a result, this chapter analyzes the results of earlier research by examining victim representations and how well newspapers convey constructive messaging (broader meanings) about intimate partner violence. To demonstrate how IPV reporting has changed over time and what needs to be done to make reporting more beneficial, the chapter examines relevant research on the subject. It also offers insights into the causes of intimate partner violence in society. It also examines certain drawbacks of reporting, like victim blaming. In general, it presents the state of reporting on intimate partner violence and identifies information gaps. The thesis discusses the framing of IPV, victim depictions, journalistic gatekeeping tactics, and the positive coverage of IPV by mainstream Kenyan newspapers using the findings of previous studies.

2.1 Representation of intimate partner violence

The representation of intimate partner violence in the print and broadcast media has been the subject of some previous investigations (Nettleton, 2011: Lloyd and Ramon, 2017; Richards et al., 2014). However, the broader context, which takes into account the institutional, cultural, and practical aspects of media activity as factors influencing coverage, is frequently given less emphasis (Morgan & Simons, 2017; Simons & Morgan, 2018). There is minimal research in Kenya on how journalists themselves

view their professionally socialized IPV reporting style. By examining journalistic perceptions of and comments on intimate partner violence stories as represented by mainstream newspapers in Kenya, this study aimed to address that gap.

According to Cullen, O'Brien, and Corcoran (2019), there may be specific legacies that uphold traditional gender norms in a historically restrictive gender regime [like Kenya's]. Nevertheless, economic and social changes place media industries within global trends, indicating that this scenario can be replicated in other contexts where there are high concentrations of media ownership, including global media interests; low levels of female representation in senior decision-making roles across the media industries; and significant tensions between professional socialization, such as commitments to objectivity, legal restrictions surrounding crime reporting, and commercial interests. According to Cullen, O'Brien, and Corcoran (2019), media outlets around the world pay attention to gendered social issues, but in ways that frequently sensationalize, restrict, or incorrectly frame gender imbalance.

Even though crime is the most common news topic, not all types of crime are covered equally. Scholars have previously noted a difference in journalistic methods of covering crimes; the most frequently covered crimes in the media, such as murder and rape, are statistically the most uncommon, whereas ordinary crime, like property theft, receives less press attention (Jewkes, 2019). Concerns have been raised about how intimate partner violence is covered in the media, including whether it is adequately covered, fairly balanced, or exaggerated. In the media, IPV has a long history of being underrepresented. The earliest media coverage of intimate partner violence occurred in the 1970s, a time when the women's liberation movement gathered momentum and public outcry against male abuse rose (Carratala, 2016; James, 2006). It took another

20 years for the media to start covering intimate partner violence, even though the fact that criticizing the patriarchal model did not lead to a decrease in this type of violence. In many jurisdictions in the past, intimate partner violence was downplayed as a serious problem (Bullock, 2010). Bullock (2010) further points out that not all instances of IPV were classified as such. Simons and Morgan (2018) claim that journalists remember a time not so long ago when the subject was regarded as strictly private and didn't require reporting.

As indicated in chapter one of this study, some recent investigations have revealed a change in journalistic practice. Yes, IPV has entered the news agenda (Hawley et al., 2018; Simons & Morgan, 2018). But now, academics are concentrating on how the subject is portrayed in the media. Lindsay-Brisbin et al. (2014) claim that IPV fatalities receive the majority of media attention. They argue that because most IPV instances don't result in death, the media presents a distorted representation of reality by emphasizing murder frames (Lindsay-Brisbin et al., 2014). Research also reveals that the media frequently fails to emphasize the social aspect of intimate partner abuse and fails to provide information on where one can go for help, for example, existing human rights instruments.

In this regard, it was vital to determine how frequently intimate partner violence is covered by the main dailies in Kenya. Murder-focused reporting may contain extraneous information that exaggerates the crime's brutality to draw readers (Grundlingh, 2017; Sutherland et al., 2016). The current study examines how popular Kenyan newspapers report on killings involving intimate partners and recommends constructive IPV reporting devoid of sensationalism. This type of reporting is most

effective in addressing the issue as a society by previous researchers (Lindasy-Brisbin et al., 2014).

According to researchers, it is more advantageous to define intimate partner violence as a gender-specific problem. Gender was one of the societal factors that influenced how the media covered IPV, according to Dussuyer (1979). Even though "crime sells," IPV against women has not received as much attention (Rao, 2014). This demonstrates how, despite its pervasiveness, the media has long ignored intimate partner violence as a newsworthy topic since it is a gendered issue. While historically intimate partner violence and crimes against women have received low coverage by the media, attitudes are changing (Hawley et al., 2018).

 Due to discourses on men's violence against women, intimate partner violence has been reframed as a societal issue rather than a personal one (Hawley et al., 2018). Other studies assert that there is a connection between intimate partner violence and gender inequality and that discourses should concentrate on men's behaviors rather than women's efforts to prevent them (Breen et al., 2017; Little, 2018). Little's (2015) investigation on the relationship between gender, mental health, and violence discovered that stories about IPV frequently focused on what women should do to defend themselves from men. According to studies, such frames are harmful because they obscure the suffering of the victim and provoke exaggerated reactions against IPV. The current study looks at whether IPV articles published in Kenya's major newspapers explain or downplay violent behavior. It was crucial to examine how the problem is represented in the country's leading newspapers because IPV is a significant issue in Kenyan society and a lack of in-depth reporting can contribute to

cultural attitudes that encourage gender violence (Cuklanz, 2020; Meyers, 1997; Worthington, 2008).

As this chapter has demonstrated, societal views toward women play a significant role in the media's failure to consider intimate partner violence as a serious topic. Furthermore, journalistic standards and the failure of the law enforcement community to adequately report the issue may be to blame for the media's long-standing underreporting of intimate partner violence (Easteal, 2019). Reporters rely on police spokespeople to educate the public about IPV cases (Hawley et al., 2018). Due to the nature of intimate partner violence, the police occasionally deal with it and, in some circumstances, they could be the first to respond to media inquiries (Breen et al., 2017).

The media are more likely to learn about murders and assaults since police announcements typically follow the most terrible IPV incidents, thereby leading to murder-centric reporting (Breen et al., 2017). An Irish study found that police sources were occasionally reluctant to classify an incidence as intimate partner violence, thus complicating coverage of the subject (Cullen et al., 2019). The study identified editors' hesitation to publish an article due to a lack of official sources. The issue of intimate partner violence was only covered infrequently, with reports focused on facts and missing larger aspects of the problem such as gendered imbalances. This was because intimate partner violence was only reported if there had been a legal conviction (Cullen et al., 2019).

Reporting on intimate partner violence frequently presents cases as isolated killings rather than as a component of a wider socioeconomic issue (Kappeler & Porter 2006). However, news reports that portray IPV as isolated incidents lack context and struggle

to present the issue as a gender-based issue can mislead the general public (Lindsay-Brisbin et al, 2014). The majority of IPV killings have a violent past, which, if it is known, can help to disprove the idea that these murders were one-off, spontaneous cases of male "snapping" (Fairbain & Dawson, 2013). The media are compelled to report on facts, a type of reporting that is not based on thematization but rather on individual episodes that are completely detached, decontextualized, and primarily reliant on police records, rather than reporting on the context of IPV (Jontes & Luhar, 2015). Factism, in the opinion of Jontes and Luhar (2015), impedes comprehension of IPV:

> The effect of factism is that the structural causes of violence are not explored at all, and that journalistic representations do not contribute to understanding the problem of intimate partner violence, although the public is bombarded with information about violent events (p.29).

Contrary to studies that show IPV stories are frequently devoid of context, Simons and Morgan (2018) found that violence against women was recognized as a broader social problem rather than "an endless series of isolated events that reveal no social fact or gendered pattern of violence". More crucially, the same study found that police sources influenced media agendas for the better (Simons & Morgan, 2018). The study claims that the police have changed their view of IPV as a social issue, allowing for a change in coverage by the media (Simons & Morgan, 2018). The same study interviewed reporters about violence against women and discovered that the interviewees held the opinion that recognition of the problem as a larger social issue resulted from the accumulation of isolated incidents over time. It was more crucial than ever to examine whether journalists and editors provide the context in IPV stories

in Kenya, as well as the sources they employ, given the wide range of opposing opinions accessible. While certain instances of intimate partner abuse gain significant public coverage, many more go unreported. Scholars have urged the media to make sure that the few instances that do receive high-level publicity are handled positively because the media has the power to influence opinions (Franiuk et al., 2008). In these situations, where research results seem incongruent, it was crucial to examine how intimate partner violence was represented in Kenyan newspapers.

2.2 Ways in which intimate partner violence is represented

Using methods proposed by Fairhurst and Sarr (1996), this study critically investigated how intimate partner violence was represented in mainstream Kenyan newspapers between 2016 and 2020. Such techniques included metaphors (which frame a mental idea through comparison), catchphrases (catchy words), and tradition (cultural mores that imbue significance in the mundane).

A number of studies have examined how newspapers represent IPV. Results, for example, demonstrate how an isolation-type of framing may serve to highlight the problem but misrepresent the size of the issue and the necessity for solutions:

> Whether and how newspapers cover intimate partner violence fatalities – including the frequency of coverage, labelling, information included (or omitted), and episodic or thematic focus – could make a difference in how readers view such deaths and what should be done about them (Bullock, 2007).

In their study, the authors identify three frames—an impersonal "law enforcement/legal system" frame, another suggesting that those who engage in intimate partner violence are "others" (inherently different from other people), and a

third emphasizing that, in addition to other family members, IPV fatalities have repercussions for the perpetrators' and victims' children, friends, and members of their community (Sutherland et al., 2019). Singh and Bullock (2020) contend that despite the frame's apparent objectivity—law enforcement and the legal system—a strong anti-violence message is being concealed by the language. The coverage remains concentrated on the involvement of patriarchal institutions (the law enforcement and legal systems) in intimate partner abuse by relying on official information sources like police and court papers (Singh & Bullock, 2020). Such portrayals minimize gendered power disparities in society and portray intimate partner violence as an isolated incident (Hopkins, Carline & Easteal, 2018). Yardley (2017) adduces the following claims by citing Bullock (2007):

> Together these journalistic choices create coverage that tends to omit or obscure the ideas of intimate partner violence as a longer-term experience that leads to the victim's death, as stemming from patterns of domination and control, as part of the larger problem of gender inequality that allows men to brutalise women. What remains are isolated intimate partner disputes that can be addressed by the police and courts.

The researchers go on to claim that it is harmful to "other" both perpetrators and victims. Blaming the victim and insinuating that the perpetrator is "weird" are examples of "othering," thereby giving the idea that those involved in IPV are not like the rest of us (Singh & Bullock, 2020). Such frameworks advocate that violence is a corollary of gender inequality present in society institutions and that victims are vulnerable to abuse not just because of something distinctively different about them. Similar trends have been seen in depictions of intimate partner violence in studies like

Nettleton's (2018), which found that IPV is frequently handled in a lighthearted way. Other studies have revealed that women are portrayed in women's magazines as both the cause of violence and its prevention (Nettleton, 2018). This counters theories that assert that IPV is committed by men and results from their dominance (Hearn, 2020).

Once more, reports about the most extreme forms of physical violence receive more media attention than those about the most prevalent types of IPV (Sutherland et al., 2016). While some information may be highlighted or provided, other information is left out (Montejo & Adriano, 2018). The media play a significant role in establishing the agenda on gender-based violence through the use of narrative genres and literary devices including specific headlines, metaphors, pictures, and catchphrases (Breen et al., 2018). When the media approach reporting on IPV by downplaying its prevalence, normalizing it, blaming the victim, and criticizing the criminal justice system, misrepresentation may ensue (Sutherland et al, 2016; Spies, 2020).

In addition, Lloyd and Ramon (2017) point out that in their research of media coverage of IPV incidents, blaming the victim was the most frequently appearing theme. Analyzing how femicide has been covered reveals that victim blaming and discrediting the perpetrators distort the truth about such incidents (Mahesar et al., 2021). IPV victims are frequently considered partially or wholly accountable for the crimes committed against them (Sutherland et al., 2016). Notably, previous research demonstrates that apportioning blame and accepting responsibility are typically done covertly through subliminal gendered cues (Mahesar et al., 2021). Reporting on femicides, in particular, frequently relies on sources like friends, family, and occasionally the police, who have a tendency to accuse the victim of not taking "serious enough action" against her abuser (Chesney-Lind & Chagnon, 2017). Indirect

victim blaming is especially visible when sources refer to drug or alcohol abuse or mental health problems in either the offender or the victim.

The identifying or labeling of perpetrators and how this affects how their actions are seen is one prominent way that IPV is conveyed. According to previous studies, when information about male perpetrators is included, they are typically portrayed in one of two ways: either as "monstrous... deviant sociopaths" who carry out random acts of violence, as Nilsson (2019) demonstrates, or they may be portrayed as regular men who are "suffering," with their actions being justified as the most extreme manifestation of mental illness (Little, 2018). O'Hara, (2012) discovered that in two out of the three incidents, media coverage used the metaphor of the "monstrous rapist" in a research on British and American news reporting of three occurrences of stranger assaults on women.

In addition to using verbs like pounce, prey, and prowl. 30% of articles and 18% of headlines equated the offender to a monster, demon, beast, or fiend (O'Hara, 2012; Robertson, 2019). Male perpetrators are frequently portrayed as "monsters," "pathological obsessions," or "guys, who couldn't stop themselves," (Byerly, 2020; Anderson and Bushman, 2018). Other researchers have produced similar results (DiBennardo, 2018; Nilsson, 2019; Barlow, 2020 & Cuklanz, 2020).

According to several prior research cited by Alagözlü, Koban Koç, Ergül, and Baatur (2019), there are major differences between "stranger-attackers" and "husband-attackers." In contrast to "stranger-attackers," "husband-attackers" are never referred to as fiends or monsters; instead, they are described in terms related to their social status, such as being a husband or father, their occupation, or their appearance, all of

which serve to place them within "terms of social normality" (Robertson, 2019). In addition, the emphasis is on the men's pain rather than the misery these men have brought about, as evidenced by terms like "tormented" and "spurned." They are perceived as having endured such a great deal of anguish that they turned "crazy" or "tormented," according to Risdaneva's (2018) observation. It is frequently established that the wife or female partner is to blame for the pain. Interestingly, O'Hara (2012) discovered that the media used both the monster/sociopath metaphor and the "suffering victim" metaphor to justify violence in one "stranger assault" instance. The result of these naming practices is that the offender is either made into a victim who is suffering, which reduces their culpability, or they are shunned as a sociopathic or monstrous "other" who is distinct from and far from regular men (O'Hara, 2012).

The wife's "affair" was frequently stated as the reason for her death and used as a justification for the violence both in the media and during the trial itself, according to Robertson (2019), who discussed incidents of women who were murdered by their husbands in news reporting. According to the writers, "uncontrollable sexual jealousy" is still portrayed and accepted as a typical response to specific behaviors or activities of their female partners. Similar to this, the notion that male sexual urges are inherent and uncontrolled aims to provide "explanation, mitigation, and reason" in the case of stranger killings (Robertson, 2019). Thus, "sex is presented as the cause of IPV and male responses to that sex are depicted as natural or biological" (Lloyd & Ramon, 2017). The news media, however, "deny the societal origins of IPV and exonerate the greater community of any responsibilities to ameliorate it," as Ali, Youssef, and Qamar (2020) put it by "maintaining this image of individual disease." In addition to the fact that women are overrepresented as victims of violence,

Macharia et al., (2010) demonstrate that there is a greater chance that they will be personified or presented in a sensationalized way, which is consistent with the results of earlier studies (Ray, 2018).

Therefore, IPV is more likely to be portrayed in the media as a problem that only affects one specific person (Karlsson, 2019). On the one hand, victims who are female are characterized as "helpless," "weak," or even held accountable for their mistreatment. A variety of sociological concepts surround the topic of IPV. There is undoubtedly a gendered component to the issue in addition to preconceptions. Men are frequently represented as the perpetrators of sexual violence, while women are frequently seen as the victims (Schwark, 2017). Although crime data supports these assertions NCRC (2020), it is controversial to frame women as inherently more vulnerable to violent crimes. This perception results from generalized stereotypes of women.

Winiewski and Bulska (2019) define stereotypes as mental links between specific traits and the name of a social category. This may be the connection between ladies and vulnerability in the aforementioned scenario. Likely, stereotypes aren't accurate because they are so common in our culture. Numerous studies have shown that social group stereotypes are at least somewhat true (Hentschel, Heilman & Peus, 2019). However, rather than being a result of personal characteristics, this is typically due to the social standing and roles that various groups play (Leiby, Bos & Krain, 2021). Because of their lower social status in our society, women are labeled as "the weaker sex," not because they are weaker than men. This idea of women as weak and defenseless has a significant impact on how our society views female victimization (Arafa, 2021; Persson, & Dhingra, 2020; Stirling, Hills, & Wignall, 2020). These

kinds of findings show how sexist attitudes toward women and sexual violence against them can cause harm in unanticipated ways. This study sought to determine what kinds of IPV myths are spread through newspaper reports

The media's representation of IPV is crucial since it frequently affects how the general public feels about the issue (Sacks, Ackerman, & Shlosberg, 2018). Nilsson, (2019) used linguistic analysis to look into how media narratives "monster" the offender or cast doubt on the mere fact that the particular rape even occurred to conceal patriarchal norms As previously mentioned, numerous studies have shown not only how sexual assault and its victims are misrepresented in the news media, but also how this prejudice may harm readers.

The press has also come under fire for focusing on offenders and auxiliary victims instead of the primary victims, thereby lessening the suffering of the victims. As was already said, the media frequently ignores the contextual factors of IPV O'Hara (2012) and concentrates only on the "why he did it" element (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013). As a result, the media frequently portrays IPV as the outcome of a personal disease. As a result, the use of spectacular typifications is a common motif in media depictions of IPV (Pelvin, 2019) Sensational typifications are notable crimes reported in the media that are either horrifying or very recent. They are frequently utilized as symbols to highlight a certain assertion. Extremely violent, animalistic, predatory criminals who commit heinous crimes that outrage the public and whose deviations are only attributed to personal flaws are usually featured in sensational characterizations of IPV crime (Berns, 2017). These dramatic generalizations are closely tied to how the media portrays crime. Simplicity is used to depict IPV, placing the blame on

individual deviation (Berns, 2017). There are no structural justifications that take into account socioeconomic circumstances like poverty and inequality.

2.3 Factors accounting for the representation of intimate partner violence

To understand how the press represents IPV crime, there is a need to consider claimants in the construction of IPV reality. Law enforcement officers, legislators, activists, and media professionals among others, are claimants in the construction of IPV as a social problem. Bringing concerns to the public's attention is frequently justified by budgetary considerations, political posturing, community interests, the selling of media content, advertising, and other things (Jensen & Gerber, 1998).

IPV news is far from being merely informative, just like other sorts of news. Stories are picked in accordance with journalistic standards based on their news value. Some of these qualities include currency (how recent an incident or story is), novelty (how unusual a story is), and brevity (news material has a finite amount of space). News media cannot accurately and thoroughly depict IPV reality because of news values, particularly novelty and brevity. IPV news is frequently produced in an effort to grab viewers' attention, which leads to sensationalism (Thompson et al., 1998).

Although media conventions and journalistic standards play a crucial role in crime news, news providers' actions, particularly those of law enforcement, cannot be disregarded when examining how crime is represented (Gillespie et al., 2013). The social construction of IPV is significantly influenced by law enforcement officials because they are the primary social problem definers of crime. They frequently serve as the first source of breaking criminal news, and as a result, they have a significant impact on how IPV crime is represented.

One element that significantly influences how law enforcement shapes crime news is image management. The interaction between law enforcement and journalists is complex and can be either tense or productive. Reporters rely on them as sources for crime reporting despite their criticisms of police enforcement. Additionally, even though police officers frequently mistrust the media and withhold some information from them, they depend on the media to inform the public about crime. Law enforcement officers may use the media for purposes other than disseminating criminal information, such as self-promotion, public relations, or image-related purposes (Leishman & Mason, 2003). Law enforcement officials work hard to ensure that crime news presents them favorably and are increasingly adopting sophisticated and specialized techniques to control their public image through spokespersons, while reporters work hard to critically assess stories (Leishman & Mason, 2003). Due to the complex but crucial relationship between law enforcement and the media, as well as police image management initiatives, crime news frequently exaggerates police officers' success rates in apprehending criminals (Leishman & Mason, 2003).

Media professionals are required to cite information's sources in accordance with journalistic ethics. On the other side, journalists are more focused on the veracity of the attribution than the veracity of the facts. As a result, independent verification of material from official sources is infrequent. The alleged proof frequently takes on a life of its own. As a result of numerous sources referencing one another or prior reports that contained facts that they themselves had supplied, inaccuracies are axiomatically supported (Best, 1990). Media professionals frequently rely heavily on official sources for IPV crime representations, which has the repercussions described above (Jensen & Gerber, 1998).

News personnel are compelled to keep crime reports succinct to handle complex explanations due to a lack of space. Gans, (2004) asserts that the need for audience and source power, as well as financial and time efficiency, is a critical factor in determining the kind of news. News values that place an emphasis on novelty and drama help to create this impression. In newsrooms, the phrase "if it bleeds, it leads" or "the dog bites man criterion" are frequently used to convey this (Lawrence & Mueller, 2003).

The front-end loaded (inverted pyramid) structure of newspapers' coverage of crime contributes to how superficially IPV is done (Surette, 2003). In the representations like judicial procedures, there are many accounts of crime and police activity. The context of the crime is constrained in such an instance (Surette, 2003).

In studies of the media's production of IPV stories, the conflicting objectives of news-making and profit-making have come to light as a significant problem. Market-driven media outlets do not object to covering news with social value, according to Ryan et al., (2006). They merely seek financial gain in the process. Decisions about what to include on local broadcasts about sexual assaults were made at the "intersection of established journalistic standards and a necessity to earn revenues in a competitive business," according to Worthington (2013). Worthington examined how IPV reporting might "successfully meet both journalistic and feminist norms" by going beyond conventional news reports. Worthington claims that one of the reasons the producer was permitted to look at the issue from a gendered viewpoint was the fundamental newsworthiness of rape cases, rather than the fact that it was a bad event.

The subject of the confluence of journalistic effort and profit was also raised (Rao, 2014). The researcher went on to say that journalists may be in danger of sacrificing

their ethical goals for "breaking news" in India's fiercely competitive news media environment. The challenges and restrictions that journalists and editors encounter while reporting on IPV are, therefore, underlined by the two investigations into IPV news creation. In response to the scientific evidence, some agencies have published suggestions to encourage appropriate reporting. The guidelines advise journalists to, among other things, provide a social context for intimate partner violence, dispel myths and misconceptions, use proper language and terminology, never minimize or sensationalize intimate partner violence, take into account how source selection affects the story, refrain from making excuses for the behavior of the perpetrator, and humanize the story. Two studies on the production of IPV news examined how journalists have adopted or modified their techniques in response to media guidelines.

One American study examined how closely newspapers' coverage adhered to the standards for reporting suicide (Richards et al., 2014). Richards found that journalists did follow some of the guidelines, but not all of them. There are no precise criteria for reporting IPV in Kenya or studies examining their impact. However, the literature demonstrates that journalists usually face institutional constraints and are torn between moral considerations, newsworthiness, and profit, demonstrating that IPV is commonly framed within competing pressures.

2.4 Wider meanings emerging from the ways intimate partner violence is represented

According to experts, most of the media's portrayal of IPV is skewed against the victims and in favor of the perpetrators, as this chapter has covered in detail. This is because journalism "tends to pursue a reactionary strategy after the incident,"

according to Niblock (2018). On the other side, Niblock (2018) asserts that intimate partner violence is ready for "proactive coverage by way of boosting knowledge of the signs and support available." Sutherland et al., (2015) did research to determine whether IPV media attention is constructive. Sutherland et al., (2015) contend that although media can affect change, the coverage is minimal, simplistic, and full of inaccurate descriptions of the nature of the issue.

While Easteal et al., (2019) claim that some "aspects of mainstream journalism of IPV are improving, for the better," they also claim that change is slow. Although IPV has received better publicity in the media recently, the trend has plateaued (Sutherland et al., 2015). The current study examines whether mainstream Kenyan newspapers have been successful in reporting on the issue in a way that highlights the problem's broader implications by using *Our watch*, (2015) definition of constructive representation. According to Simons and Morgan (2018), individual journalists can significantly influence how IPV is represented and successfully change the news narrative. Looking at how mainstream Kenyan reporters and journalists use IPV reporting to support constructive IPV representation is thus significant.

Like with other news, who or what emerges in the news about IPV concerns and how those issues are reported may have a significant influence on determining the IPV agenda (Breen et al., 2017). Newspapers occasionally assign victims responsibility for the violence when reporting about IPV (Breen et al., 2017; Rao, 2014; Sutherland et al., 2016; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2004). Victim blaming is the word used in media to describe the practice of shifting blame for violence on IPV victims (Rao, 2014). The media sometimes make the issue worse by doing this (Breen et al., 2017). Breen et al., (2017) findings demonstrate that while newspapers permit lengthier stories, which

in principle permits the generation of useful IPV information, in practice, more words provide stories that diminish the perpetrator's responsibility. The current study investigates if and how victims of intimate relationship abuse are held accountable for the incidence of the crime.

The media might attribute blame to the victim in a variety of ways. The use of sensationalistic frames for IPV reporting, the perpetuation of IPV myths, and the promotion of abuse victims as ideal or deserving of violence, according to scholars, are just a few ways that newspapers play a significant part in creating and maintaining perceptions that the victim is to blame for IPV (Sutherland et al., 2016a; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2004). According to Rao (2014), sensationalism and episodic focus in IPV reporting can encourage victim blaming. A negative outcome of this publicity is possible. It may strengthen stereotypes (Carll, 2003; Emmers-Sommer et al., 2006). Additionally, victim blaming can make IPV victims' already severe suffering worse because they are already vulnerable. IPV victims are more prone to be homicidal, sad, and have a lower quality of life (Altheide, 2018; Dragiewicz et al., 2018). It was crucial to examine meanings emerging from how IPV is represented by Kenya's major newspapers.

The media's emphasis on women's vulnerability adds to their already existing fears of victimization (Marsh, 2014; Worthington, 2008). According to Worthington (2008), "the news influences women's decisions about where to go, what to wear, how to act, and how late to stay out" by warning them about unsafe situations and behaviors. The implication in the media is that if a woman has experienced violence, she must have disregarded warnings and committed the crime herself. The current study investigates the prevalence of victim-blaming narratives in Kenya's mainstream media. Previous

studies have found that because newspapers provide reporters and editors more opportunities to write about the topic, they can victims can be made accountable for potent IPV messaging. The current study adds to the body of knowledge by determining if reporters and editors are aware of victim-blaming frames and how they could best avoid them.

By creating false perceptions of violence, the media shift the focus to the victims (Easteal et al., 2019; O'Hara, 2012; Sacks et al., 2018). One of the most pervasive beliefs, that wonderful things tend to happen to good people and awful things happen to evil ones, allows people to make sense of the crime (Franiuk et al., 2008). In particular, misconceptions regarding the causes and circumstances of intimate partner violence (IPV) are perpetuated in the media, claim Sutherland et al., in their 2016 study. While no news outlets specifically said that violence against women was uncommon or rare, falsehoods were commonly put forth in the coverage, according to another study (Easteal et al., 2019). For instance, details on how women behaved were incorporated into frames that suggested the victim shared some of the blame for the violence: if the victim was intoxicated and had not reported earlier violent incidents, or if the victim had stayed with an abusive husband (Easteal et al., 2019).

The current study investigates whether IPV coverage by Kenyan journalists and editors perpetuates myths and stereotypes. As a result of stereotypical and myth-driven reporting, victims may choose not to report the assault while offenders continue to defend their own violent behavior (Franiuk et al., 2008; Sutherland et al., 2016). Wendt (2009) asserts that the proliferation of numerous myths about IPV is the reason why it has turned into a social issue. According to DeKeseredy et al., (2017), "IPV persists because it is supported, tolerated, and sustained by social ideas," which

include the notions that women are men's property, are in charge of upholding the relationship, and should act in a nurturing manner. On the other side, exposure to beliefs about how women should behave can have disastrous effects on victims who do not behave as society expects. It has the power to sway opinions by convincing them to believe victim myths.

According to Sacks et al. (2018), the validation of media falsehoods can result in lower conviction rates for offenders and lighter sentences for prisoners. Because police departments tend to doubt the veracity of women's complaints as a result of exposure to publications that reinforce media stereotypes, criminals can get away with lighter penalties (Franiuk et al., 2008). In many instances, the case will already have been decided by society before it even enters the courtroom (Chancer, 2005). In addition to occasionally excusing criminal behavior and shifting blame to victims, which may persuade courts, media myths about violence also instill victim-blaming attitudes in those who do not already possess them.

More importantly, journalists can easily adopt victim-blaming viewpoints. Uncertainty surrounds the reasons for this, including whether they purposefully sensationalize a story or if they unwittingly accept misconceptions that reflect cultural views on IPV (Franiuk et al., 2008). After all, journalists are "products of the society in which they work" (Simons & Morgan, 2018). If the abusers get away with it, myths and stereotypes propagated through media messaging may hurt the abused—both emotionally and physically (Franiuk et al., 2008). Determining whether mainstream Kenyan newspapers use myths to depict IPV was, therefore, critical.

While the media may place the blame on the victim and support myths and stereotypes that downplay their suffering, they also show sympathy for those victims who go on to

become heroes or celebrities. Indeed, according to Wright (2015), criminal news stories frequently serve as a reminder to the public of who is heroic, who deserves to be shunned from society, and who is deserving of pity. According to Marsh & Melvin (2009), "the concept of the deserving and undeserving victim is a topic regularly seen in media discourse." This holds true when the victim has "a lot of good qualities," such as being "sociable, intellectual, autonomous, athletic, joyful, compassionate, helpful, kind, and liked" (Smolej, 2010).

Media coverage of victims who have one or more of these traits differs from that of other victims. The typical scenario goes like this: the victim's life before the crime is portrayed as either happy or challenging, violence strikes as a shock that upends their plans, and the sufferer strives to recover from trauma while striving to rise to a social level where they are no longer a victim (Krahe, 2016). The victims depicted in this manner are the "perfect victims" of the media: feeble, carrying on as usual when assaulted, and not at fault for being in the wrong place at the wrong time (Clifford & White, 2017). For instance, this is a common representation of child abuse victims (Marsh & Melville, 2009).

The media frequently portray IPV victims as having committed the crime and hence not deserving sympathy (Carratala, 2016; Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013). According to Fairbairn and Dawson (2013), such media frames support the historically ingrained belief that women carry the "responsibility to prevent men's physical and sexual assault" and that the victim should have known better than to interact with the perpetrator. The media often supports victim blaming by attributing the abusers' behavior to envy (Carratala, 2016; Gadd et al., 2014). A study found that depictions of assailants' actions frequently justified their behavior by showing that the violence was

motivated by love, envy, passion, vengeance, or drugs and alcohol (Easteal et al., 2019). Fairbairn and Dawson (2013) have also attacked victim-blaming and criminal-justification narratives in the media. Due to misunderstandings that imply victims can flee, research suggests that IPV victims may be more vulnerable to public criticism than those who have been the victims of crimes committed by strangers (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013).

Newspaper representation of IPV crime may lack information on the problem as a whole, relevant details about the crime, available resources, and women's advocacy (Breen et al., 2017; Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013; Niblock, 2018). Placing abuse in the broader context by showing attitudes towards women that inspire violence is one of the more effective ways to combat IPV stereotypes and myths (*Our Watch*, 2019). The requirements for constructive representation should be as follows: where it is legally possible, name intimate partner abuse for what it is; reporting should not endanger the safety of a victim; attract attention to the offender's conduct and assign responsibility to them; Maintain a courteous tone; use language and imagery that are supported by facts; include assertive remarks and suggestions; and respect any legal restrictions related to a particular IPV instance.

The media continue to highlight isolated incidents while ignoring the root causes of IPV and gender imbalances, despite attempts to contextualize the problem in the context of attitudes that contribute to IPV (Niblock, 2018; Sutherland et al., 2016). Breen et al., (2017) contend that while media guidelines encourage journalists to provide context to IPV stories, doing so could jeopardise legal proceedings:

> While media guidelines universally encourage journalists to situate individual incidents within the social context in which violence against women occurs,

there remain unresolved problems associated with the interaction of sub-judice contempt and various other pieces of legislation that might mitigate journalists being able to present incidents in this way.

Additionally, Our Watch, (2019) warns the media to be mindful of any legal limitations on reporting specific IPV-related information.

Because the dissemination of information addressing IPV as a social problem does not always easily align with expectations around what constitutes news, journalists and editors may avoid providing constructive representation (Sutherland et al., 2016). Additionally, academics have asked the media to consider the impact of their reporting when covering the events. For instance, Rajan (2003) contends that to spread the notion that there is life after crime and that a survivor is a person with agency, the media should inform people about current events while simultaneously providing encouraging pictures to help victims recover from trauma. Despite the value of constructive messages, studies show that such stories are underrepresented in IPV coverage (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013). Research shows that newspapers consistently ignore statistical information and infrequently provide readers with information on shelters or support groups that could direct them to local systems for addressing the psychological and physical repercussions of IPV (Lindsay-Brisbin, 2014).

According to recent studies, the media struggle to effectively communicate preventive messaging (Lindsay-Brisbin et al., 2014; Niblock, 2018) However, Byerly (2020) asserts that by giving criminal victims a voice, the media can support them in some situations. Byerly (2020) suggests that incorporating news clips of survivors recounting attacks may be a useful strategy for prioritizing the accounts of the victims. Evidence suggests that recent reporting has shifted to sensationalized coverage that

downplays the significance of reinforcing framing that might be useful in addressing the situation (Wright, 2015). It is nevertheless critical to evaluate the constructive representation of IPV in the current mainstream newspaper environment as well as the degree to which reporters and editors emphasize sensational reporting over constructive coverage due to efforts to increase readership.

Researchers' opinions on the idea of concentrating on positive crime reporting are varied. Worthington (2008) contends that to encourage new sources and aid in contextualizing IPV, journalists should reorient their efforts toward offering constructive depictions of IPV. Others, however, contend that it is challenging to report on IPV because it typically takes place in private settings. Only when a victim decides to speak up or when the authorities get involved do details about intimate partner violence become public in the media (Simon & Khan, 2018). While many victims might be reluctant to speak up, journalists must be aware that those who do so risk experiencing the pain again (Simon & Morgan, 2018). As a result, numerous journalists now speak with IPV supporters who speak for victims (Dragiewicz et al., 2018; Simons & Morgan, 2018).

According to Drache and Velgic (2014), journalists are growing more dependent on lobbying organizations. They assert that if a criminal story features a violent episode or victim, a follow-up article is only likely if civil groups drive the issue. Because they are hesitant or unable to speak, victims are not sufficiently involved in media coverage of IPV. However, it is crucial to include the perspectives of the victims in positive reporting. This study investigates the mainstream Kenyan newspapers' IPV news sourcing practices.

Overall, additional studies indicate that the media should do more to promote victim assistance by dispelling myths about IPV crime, appropriately portraying victims, providing information on where to seek help, and getting in touch with victims or their advocates for information (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013). The current study examines how IPV is represented, the contributing reasons to that representation, as well as newer, broader meanings, and offers suggestions for helpful representation by the major Kenyan newspapers.

2.5 Gaps in Literature Review

This chapter reviewed the various scholarly works on intimate partner violence reporting. On the one hand the review highlighted that a variety of studies have been undertaken on the topic, it also indicated that more research is needed to understand how intimate partner violence is presented by mainstream newspapers (Fairbairn & Dawson 2013; Lindsay-Brisbin et al., 2014; Wasuna, 2019). This is especially so given the existence of few studies examining media representation of IPV in low-and middle-income country settings like Kenya. Most studies on the IPV problem have largely focused on high-income countries such as the United States of America, Australia, United Kingdom and Canada. On the other hand, substantial research has focused on the content of print and broadcast media (Nettleton, 2011: Lloyd and Ramon, 2017; Richards et al., 2014).

The larger context, however, which includes the institutional and practical components of media representation as variables impacting coverage have received little attention (Morgan & Simons, 2017; Simons & Morgan, 2018). In response to those gaps, this study focused on not only analysing how IPV is represented by the mainstream newspapers in Kenya, a lower-middle income country but also engaged

journalists and editors to understand the factors that account for the representation. This was done amidst the recognition that when reporting on intimate partner violence, journalists and editors in the twenty-first century encounter a variety of journalistic pressures. Reporters and editors must satisfy market demand while remaining competitive, in addition to juggling how to best cover the subject in potent and informative ways that depict the issue as a social problem.

2.7 Theoretical Framework: Theories of Media Representation

2.7.1 Framing theory

For many years, academics have maintained that how a situation or issue is framed can influence how it is perceived. Years of research in sociology, psychology, political science, and later media studies gave rise to the concept of framing (Druckman, 2001; Holt & Major, 2010). The terms "frame" and "framing," however, "elude explicit and consistent definition" due to their widespread use (Druckman, 2001). In the discipline of sociology, the word "framing" was first used.

According to Bateson (1972), we "create the world that we experience, not because we select and edit the reality we see to suit our notions about what kind of world we live in." Later, Goffman (1974) advises that people need to reflect on the situation by asking, "What is going on here?" — A question that provides "a framework that may be applied to determine the answer." Even though the terms "frames" and "framing" are often used in the social and cognitive sciences, media researchers use them to describe communication (Druckman, 2001).

 Entman (1993) asserts that framing makes some issues more salient in readers' minds. "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 specific problem

definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described," he writes. He contends that frames can be used for four different purposes: problem identification, cause analysis, moral evaluation, and remedy advocacy (Entman, 1993).

Additionally, he argues that frames are groups of stand-alone literary elements that, when put together, create a narrative (Entman, 1993). Therefore, framing is a discursive procedure that modifies the meaning of an event (Jontes & Luthar, 2015). Entman's theory is supported by Berns (2004), who asserts that the purpose of framing is to ascertain a cause and offer a remedy. The current study uses framing theory to examine the messages conveyed in articles about intimate partner violence. It then applies the four pillars to look at how the use of murder themes, constructive messages, and aspects of victim and perpetrator representation in mainstream Kenyan newspapers.

To do so, Entman's four functions are used to identify the variables in the study where the problem is identified as "ways of representation", causal analysis is related to the second objective "factors accounting for the representation", and moral judgement is linked to "emerging wider meanings". The remedy and advocacy is connected to the dependent variable, "constructive IPV messaging." (See conceptual framework). That means the study analyses the potency of framing through IPV messaging in Kenya's mainstream newspapers. It also provides recommendations for constructive representation of IPV. Additionally, and following Fairhurst and Sarr, (1996), this study identified techniques such as metaphors (framing a conceptual idea through comparison), slogans/jargon/catchphrases (catchy words/phrases), spin (conveying a value judgement (positive or negative) that might not be immediately apparent; to

create an inherent bias) and tradition (cultural mores that imbue significance in the mundane) to analyse the ways in which IPV is represented.

Framing was deemed more appropriate for anchoring the analysis of the representation of intimate partner violence by mainstream newspapers since it focuses on what is stated in text rather than what the audience is thinking. Capella and Jamieson (1997) correlate framing with journalism, defining it as "the process of writing a story" (Capella & Jamieson 1997). As a result, journalists are promoters of frames since they select the viewpoint for their narrative on purpose (Gamson, 1989; Gitlin, 1980). The media frame issues by choosing specific views and setting them inside a realm of meaning (McCombs & Shaw, 2020). To put it another way, media professionals package information for public consumption (Blood & Holland, 2004).

Framing is a process in the newsroom where "certain features of an issue are selected" (Hernandez 2020). The media "take up socially significant problems and create an arena for public dialogue" (Teutsch & Niemann 2015), with particular frames being highlighted more than others and therefore being more accessible to the general public. As a result, framing theory acknowledges the media's ability to describe a situation, define topics, create debate parameters, and successfully form opinions (Reese et al., 2001; Teutsch & Niemann, 2015). According to Gillespie et al., (2013), media frames can also aid in understanding a social phenomenon.

As a result, the current study uses framing theory to underpin the analysis of the mainstream Kenyan newspapers representation of IPV in order to better understand the potency of such framing. The competitive aspect of mainstream newspaper news emphasizes the necessity of audience attention. According to Knüpfer and Entman (2018), this has resulted in a variety of incentives for structuring information in order

to engage or establish those audiences. Because reporters and editors work in an increasingly competitive media environment, it's critical to look into how competitiveness influences their decisions to frame intimate partner violence stories one way or another.

Framing works by highlighting some parts of a problem while disregarding or downplaying others (Holt & Major 2010). What is suppressed or unrecognized is just as essential as what is in focus: who is given a voice versus who is silenced; which topics are elevated and which are pushed to the margins (Fairclough, 2013). By marginalizing and eliminating certain information in order to promote alternative perspectives, a frame provides context for the social issue (Jontes & Luthar 2015; McDonald & Charlesworth 2013; Worthington, 2008). Alternative opinions are marginalized as journalists select specific materials (Carragee & Roefs, 2004). By emphasizing a particular angle, frames make some aspects of a problem more reachable, making them more likely to be used in people's decision-making process (Cacciatore et al. 2016; Entman, 1993; Holt & Major, 2010). Thus, frames trigger schemas that compel target audiences to think, feel, and act in a particular way (Gross & D'ambrosio, 2004).

Mainstream publications tend to place more emphasis on economic and human-interest perspectives (Jakopovic, 2017). To determine which aspects of intimate partner violence are more pervasive, the current study examines which frames in mainstream Kenyan newspapers' reporting of intimate partner violence have higher strength. This is crucial because the way a problem is framed activates certain ideas that are then utilized to understand the issue (Price et al., 1997).

Additionally, views are shaped by highlighting distinct aspects of a problem through various ways of representation (Cacciatore et al., 2016). For instance, Berger (2013) found that incident-based reporting can change guilt from being mostly institutional to being jointly individual. Discussions regarding the larger social roots of and solutions to a particular type of problem are likely to be prevented by the application of frameworks that concentrate on individual instances (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013). Media critics have therefore been adamant in demanding that news organizations select the most effective framing for resolving issues and enacting positive social change (Franiuk et al., 2008).

The goal of the current study was to analyse if experiences of IPV are represented in a way that encourages rather than inhibits wider discussion and places the onus of taking action on institutions and social systems (Thematic frames) rather than on individuals (episodic frames). The former deal more broadly with trends, groups of people, and the context of events, whereas the latter illustrate public issues using discrete instances or events (Lyengar & Simon 1993). To put it another way, thematic coverage goes against stereotypes whereas episodic coverage doesn't (Holt & Major 2010). Studies on IPV show that the media frequently present abuse as isolated incidents (Hernandez 2018; Maydell 2018; McDonald & Charlesworth 2013).

The majority of publications use episodic framing. McDonald and Charlesworth's (2013). Only a quarter of the frames utilize thematic frames to present the issue in a thematic, social problem fashion (Gillespie et al., (2013; Simons & Morgan 2018). There are mixed results when it comes to whether the media frames IPV in an episodic or thematic manner.

Media outlets have come under fire from academics for their stereotyped reporting and failure to delve further into the subject (McDonald & Charlesworth 2013). Some have refuted this idea by highlighting the practicality with which news is produced. Episode-based stories have engrossing visual appeal and present on-the-scene reporting (Iyengar & Simon, 1993). However, audience preference does not always translate into the greatest solutions (Berns, 2004). When topics are presented in the context of specific episodes, or episodic framing, a lot of information is covered in a short period (Iyengar, 1991). It results in the marginalization of the issue's background and the individualization of a particular facet of a problem (Jontes & Luthar, 2015). The main issue with episodic framing in news, however, is that it stops individual voices from interacting and works against the creation of a social phenomenon around a crisis (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013; Jontes & Luthar, 2015).

When news slants, those who benefit from the slant gain power, while those who lose the framing contest lose power and freedom to express themselves (Entman 2007). And perhaps more importantly, episodic framing frequently shields government officials and organizations from responsibility, leaving questions unanswered (Maydell, 2018). While episodic coverage, or the framing of particular events and people, predominates in the media (Holt & Major, 2010), thematic framing puts subjects in a wider context and promotes societal discussion (Iyengar & Simon, 1993). It assigns communal accountability to society rather than individual responsibility (Maydell, 2018). However, such reporting necessitates ongoing monitoring of a subject as well as interpretive interpretation (Iyengar & Simon, 1993). In this context, the current study looked at the consistency of intimate partner violence reporting by mainstream Kenyan newspapers. The study identifies the most common

and often featured frames in mainstream newspapers' reporting of IPV. The analysis of the most common frames allowed the researcher to predict the potency of IPV representation.

On the other hand, this study is not blind to the complexity and time commitment of theme reporting. According to Iyengar and Simon (1993) thematic reporting simply crowds out other news items. Gamson (1989) asserts that interpretive discussion surrounding news items is more important than the informational material itself. Contrarily, readers are more inclined to concentrate on particular details that are pertinent to them than historical, social, or political contexts (Iyengar & Simon, 1993). When thematic framing is utilized, readers are more inclined to blame general social factors, such as cultural norms, economic conditions, and public officials' actions or inactions, for national problems (Iyengar & Simon, 1993). By facilitating reasoning by analogy, episodic framing helps choose the causes and treatments that seem to be most relevant to the issue (Iyengar & Simon, 1993). Despite these reservations, many scholars agree that thematic framing is the best method for addressing societal concerns, however as earlier mentioned, the most beneficial frames aren't always the most popular ones.

As was previously said, framing is the result of complex processes. Holt and Major (2010) assert that it is typically not a planned process. It is more likely the result of unconscious motivations, editorial policy, deadlines, and demands of news organizations. Thus, framing is a macro and micro construct (Scheufele, 1999). While the micro-construct describes how an audience employs information and problem-presenting elements as they generate impressions, the macro-construct is used by

journalists to present material in a way that relates to the existing routines (Cacciatore et al., 2016).

A macro-level assessment was dominant in this study because it investigates how editors and reporters of major Kenyan newspapers cover intimate partner abuse while under the time constraints of daily news production. The current study suggests that the representation of IPV by mainstream Kenyan newspapers is problematic as shown by the findings. The current study, therefore, explored the strategies used by mainstream Kenyan newspaper reporters and editors to report IPV and the reasons behind journalists and editors' preference for particular frames over others, and how much of it has to do with the pressures imposed by daily news production, such as deadlines, as well as organizational norms.

This study investigated whether mainstream Kenyan newspapers exhibit the same propensity as other media organizations, which have been shown to prefer episodic framing over theme framing in previous studies. In such studies, the frames that are seen to be the most newsworthy are typically chosen by editors and journalists over those that represent depth, objectivity, and veracity (Blood & Holland, 2004). However, it has been noted that the episodic trajectory does not promote productive social discourse or aid in the easing of societal problems. The current study explores which frames are most frequently used in mainstream Kenyan newspapers' depictions of intimate partner violence and speaks with editors and reporters about the reasons behind their framing decisions. This study is significant because it demonstrates how IPV is portrayed in popular Kenyan newspapers and the factors that affect the processes. By relying on framing theory, the study investigates whether such

representation facilitates or impedes wider meanings for social debate and suggests alternatives for better representation.

2.7.2 Feminist critiques of media

IPV is commonly committed against women and girls and is a serious violation of human rights not just in Kenya but all throughout the world (WHO, 2012; NGEC, 2017). From the WHO report, it is evident that women are disproportionately harmed by IPV, which is demonstrated by the fact that the amount of violence committed by wives is far less than that committed by husbands. The report also states that the overall rate of violence against men is low, at just 3%. (KNBS, 2014). In spite of the fact that men and boys do experience violence, women are disproportionately impacted by the problem. Given that feminist perspectives view as problematic women's diverse situations (such as IPV) and the institutions that frame those situations, feminist theory (media critiques) were deemed appropriate to determine the wider emerging meanings.

The feminist theory covers a wide range of communication-related themes, with a particular emphasis on the examination and justification of gender and gendered power in written communication (Cuklanz, 2016). The theory explains the ways in which power is manifested, shows how discourse patterns relate to power relations in general, or describes potential strategies for eliminating gendered power. Discovering gendered patterns of representation and elucidating the power relations that underlie them is typically the aim of feminist theory which concentrates on gendered content in news coverage and other mainstream media products.

The societal undervaluation of women has been implicated in gender disparities (Tuchman, 1978; Leiss et al., 2018). Theorists of feminist communication hold that prevailing gender ideology is a key factor in the unique patterns of representation of women that do exist. For instance, the persistent bias against positive connotations of women's leadership and our societal belief that women belong at home more than in the office or public arena both contribute to unbalanced representations of women's and men's successes across a range of fields and genres (Modie-Moroka, 2018). The rich gendered, feminist perspectives were considered suitable to augment the nuanced analysis of IPV frames.

In addition to analyses of mainstream news reporting that concentrate on gendered mediation, many feminist critiques center on the exposition of hegemonic ideologies' reinforcement through the mass media. The inclusion of dominant ideology is often defined as the contrast between remarks that minimize, disparage, or dismiss the strength of women and displays of male supremacy (Van Zoonen, 2012). In popular mass media literature, women are frequently depicted in positions of weakness, such as part-time or service occupations, segregation from the outside world, and victimization in the home. Even if their inclusion does not in and of itself constitute something unpleasant or problematic, the fact that they predominate over alternative representations is seen as evidence of gendered power disparities.

Images of violent attacks may be the one context in which the display of power in communication texts, especially mainstream mass media. Some blatantly gendered patterns have persisted in these depictions. First, in cases of criminal violence, including sexual assault, female characters are virtually usually portrayed as victims (Sutherland, 2016). When women play violent roles, they are typically characterized

as malicious or unfeminine (Maleficent), and sexualized (Tranchese & Zolo, 2013). The sensational representation of female perpetrators (Sutherland et al., 2016), the use of sensational language (Jackson, 2013, rape myths Tranchese & Zolo, 2013), Otherness (Saroca, 2013), mutuality of blame (Saroca, 2013), and overrepresentation of female perpetrators despite the relative rarity of female perpetrated IPV are other issues that have been raised in recent literature (Sutherland, 2016).

The use of mixed methods and data triangulation, as well as a critical, but not dismissive, wariness of positivistic research that mainly relies on quantitative data, were both emphasized by feminist theory, which also served as an epistemological underpinning for this study (Van Zoonen, 2012). This study sought a balance between quantifying positivism and qualitative 'thick description' (Geertz, 1997). In doing so, it relied on the synergy between framing and feminist theories to analyse the representation of IPV by mainstream Kenyan newspapers. In the analysis, dominant frames and salient gender-based themes were identified.

2.7.3 Theoretical synergy

Critical feminist theory and framing go hand in hand. In the current study, these theories have been employed in an effort to explain how newspapers packaged IPV stories from 2016 to 2020 and how these theories are used in an IPV news context. Feminist theories and framing can improve the potency of IPV message dissemination. The potency of the implications of framing through message presentation is thus examined in this study.

According to the two theories outlined above, the media have the power to make issues more salient. Reporters have to select which characteristics to highlight in stories. Therefore, framing is not a choice as suggested by McCombs (1997), "The

media may not only tell us what to think about, they may also tell us how and what to think about it, and perhaps even what to do about it". Framing is based on restrained wording and sentence structure that is likely to have unintended consequences (Cacciatore, Scheufele & Iyengar, 2016). The critical feminist theory, which focuses on the output of media 'texts' like newspapers, aims to decode the dominant and alternative gender meanings that are encoded in these texts as well as how they are articulated with other discourses like masculinity (Zoonen, 2012).

In essence, this study provides evidence that framing models connect media content, which serves as the observational unit, with implications of framing that result from the way IPV messages are presented.

2.8 The Conceptual Framework

The Conceptual framework illustrates the relationships between the key concepts and processes that exist between the independent, intervening and dependent variables. Whereas ways of framing IPV, factors influencing representation and emerging wider meanings comprised the independent variables, government policies and media codes of ethics were the intervening variables, the conceptual framework postulates that constructive IPV messaging is dependent on the independent variables as shown in figure 1. As mentioned earlier in the theoretical framework section, Entman's (1993) four functions of framing were used to identify the variables in this study. The "problem" is linked to the first objective, "ways of representation" "while causal analysis" is subsumed in the second objective "factors accounting for the representation". The moral judgement is connected to the third objective "emerging wider meanings" while the remedy and advocacy is attached to the dependent variable, "constructive IPV messaging."

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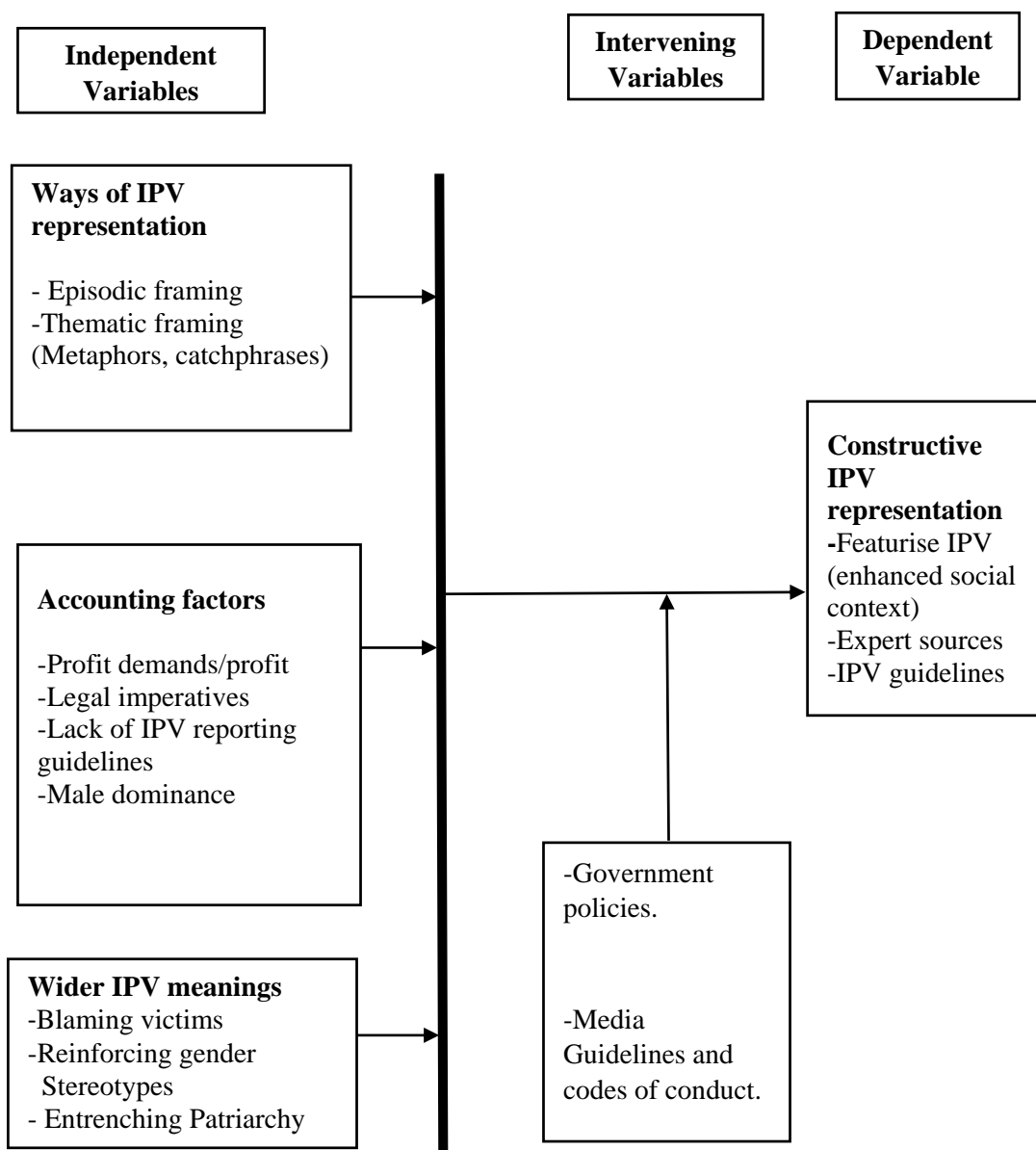
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for the study (Source: Researcher, 2020)

In the conceptual framework, constructive IPV representation is dependent on ways of framing IPV news, whether episodic (reporting based on individual cases of IPV) or thematic (reporting that focus on the wider social contexts within which IPV occurs) using metaphors, catchphrases. Widely contextualized news reports of IPV acknowledge underlying societal and gender-based factors while episodic reporting are events based and focus on discrete incidents in specific places and times (Lindsay,

DePrince &Welton-Mitchell, 2014). Such forensic reporting of IPV generates only individualistic rather than societal attributions of responsibility thereby obfuscating the notion that IPV is a systematic social problem (Hawley, Clifford & Konkes, 2018). Constructive IPV reporting is also influenced by factors existing in the media environment and the presence of helpful messaging that bring out wider meanings. The media environment is however influenced by the intervening variables comprising existing government media policies, legislation and internal self-regulation mechanisms like media codes of ethics. The ways of representation, combined with accounting factors and wider meanings determine whether IPV representation is constructive or not. This study argues that constructive representation means packaging potent IPV in ways that present IPV as a societal problem that impedes the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as an SDG agenda.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter outlines how the research was carried out, including the methods used and why each method was best suited for investigating the representation of intimate partner violence in mainstream Kenyan newspapers. It explains how the most appropriate research tools for exploring the research problem were chosen. According to Mytton et al., (2016), combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies can lead to better study outputs because the methods complement each other. The mixed methods approach was employed to provide the best results in this study.

3.1 Philosophical Paradigm

This study adopted the pragmatic philosophical worldview to research. This paradigm is concerned with "what works" and solutions to problems. Here, researchers emphasize the research problem and use all approaches available to understand the problem (Creswell & Clark, 2017). With IPV being a complex issue, the pragmatic worldview was preferred because it accorded the researcher an avenue to understand its representation by Kenya's mainstream newspapers from multiple perspectives. As such, pluralistic data types were deemed suitable in facilitating a holistic understanding of IPV representation than either quantitative or qualitative data independently (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2012). The study considered newspapers as authoritative sources of information that provided fertile grounds for analysis but again viewed newspaper editors as critical players in IPV news content creation. In line with pragmatism therefore, the researcher employed the mixed methods approach which involved triangulated data (collection of both quantitative and qualitative data).

The mixed methods approach was closely aligned to epistemological perspectives which argue that any one method or form of data collection is necessarily subjective and can only germinate 'truths' specific to a particular perspective (Kumar, 2018). This argument envisages that certain elements of a quantitative study may be better analysed qualitatively. The import of this position is that the use of multiple methods and data typologies would produce more holistic results. The researcher thus endeavoured to augment content quantifications and qualitative thick descriptions. This undertaking was made possible by quantifying the aspects of the objects of inquiry that were suited for such an undertaking for example, by counting the main themes used by mainstream newspapers to represent IPV.

On the other hand, the study explored the findings from the content analysis through interviews, in which case, a qualitative thematic analysis was better suited to give a nuanced explanation of the content analysis results. Multiple sources of data (content analysis and interviews) were used to enhance the validity of the study's findings. To perform content analysis IPV articles drawn from *The Standard, Daily Nation* and *The Star* newspapers, the researcher first conducted a broad analysis to analyse descriptive information that captured ways in which IPV was represented followed by interviews with journalists and editors to explore factors that could account for the representation and eventually evaluating emerging wider meanings of the ways of representation.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopted a convergent parallel mixed methods design. The design used both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. Amongst the different types of mixed methods research, it is the most familiar (Creswell, 2014). Using this design, the researcher collected both quantitative and qualitative data,

analysed them separately, and then compared the results to see if the findings confirmed or disconfirmed each other. The key assumption was that qualitative and quantitative data provided different types of information detailed as views of participants qualitatively and scores on instruments quantitatively. This was to provide a breadth and depth of understanding of the representation of IPV by mainstream newspapers which could not be achieved using either method separately (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). From a practical standpoint, it was valuable because it allowed for the examination of complexities linked to the construction of IPV in the news. The motivation for doing mixed methods in this study was, therefore, to mitigate superficiality.

According to Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2012), using both qualitative and quantitative, or mixed methods results in a synergistic study, in which the methodologies complement each other and provide for a thorough grasp of the research subject, similar to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) who posit that qualitative and quantitative methodologies have different strengths and weaknesses.

This study looked at how Kenya's mainstream newspapers represented IPV using quantitative content analysis and qualitative semi-structured interviews. This method allowed for an empirical assessment of the scope and rationale of IPV representation, bearing in mind that when researchers employ only a qualitative technique, the ability to generalize the results to many is lost, and that the comprehension of any one individual is weakened when only a quantitative technique is used (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The research used a coding sheet to collect data from selected newspaper editions. The ways in which IPV was represented were counted and then analysed on excel broadsheet. The outcome of this analysis provided results on a quantitative basis in the form of descriptive statistics, which was presented in percentages using tables and figures. In addition, qualitative data was collected and analysed thematically so as to confirm what had been obtained through quantitative data obtained through content analysis that focused on the ways in which IPV was represented. The use of mixed methods research in this study was deemed beneficial since it allowed for the unique advantages of different methods of investigating various types of data in the study. These methods made triangulation possible. Because the perceptions of editors and journalists and the newspaper content analysis were gathered at the same time, the data was collected concurrently.

3.3 Units of Analysis

A unit of analysis is a measurable variable within a population of research. The units of analysis were either editors or journalists who were producers of IPV content in the newspapers. On the other hand, the three newspapers editions (*Daily Nation, The Standard and The Star)* formed a different unit of analysis based on the code sheet.

The newspaper contents were analysed in terms of sections of the newspaper where IPV themes appeared, the type and context of IPV mentioned, the presence of victim blaming and perpetrator excusal themes and IPV news sources. These themes have been identified as contentious in the literature. The analysis focused on the themes above in The *Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The Star* in the period beginning January, 2016 and ending in December 2020. These were definitive years in the

enactment of key IPV legislative agenda and calls for mitigation of rising IPV cases in the country.

3.4 The Target Population

The target population refers to the aggregate of all cases that conform to some designated set of specifications to which the researcher wishes to generalize results of the research study (Robson & McCartan, 2016). In this study, the targeted newspaper population was drawn from the *Daily Nation, The Standard* and *The Star* daily newspaper editions published between 2016 and 2020. Combined, the total number of newspapers targeted was 5,475considering 365 newspapers per year for the three newspapers in five years. The search online however yielded 1,080 relevant editions. These formed the frame for the constructed weeks sampling. For the interview segment, the target population was 2 purposively selected editors and three journalists each from *The Standard, Daily Nation* and *The Star* making a total of 15 targeted interviewees. However, due to unavailability, one editor and three journalists were interviewed from each of the three newspapers making a total of 12 participants.

3.5 Sample size and selection

Under ideal circumstances, data should have been collected from the entire population of daily newspapers, but for the sheer size. For representation, a purposive sample was drawn from the identified newspapers and participants. The researcher was careful to ensure that the sampling method used was intentional and planned as explained in the proceeding section. As already pointed out, the sampled newspapers cumulatively had the highest circulation and presumably contain more IPV stories in the period under review.

3.5.1 Selection of newspaper editions

Three mainstream newspapers were selected for this study. Purposive sampling was used to select the *Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The Star* from which stories on intimate partner violence were acquired. Purposive sampling is a technique for locating specific types of publications or times of interest for research (Riffe et al., 2014). "Sample elements thought to be typical, or representative, are picked from the population" in purposive, or judgement sampling (Ary et al., 2010). Purposive sampling has limitations and should be utilized with caution, even if it is still commonly used among media scholars. According to Ary et al., (2010) researchers should be skeptical of "the extent to which judgment can be relied on to arrive at a typical sample" and that "there is no reason to assume that the units judged to be typical of the population will remain typical over time," which could lead to misleading results.

Despite these constraints, the current study used purposive sampling to include newspapers with the largest readerships in the study. This method was chosen because it could be claimed that the three of the most widely read newspapers in Kenya have a huge audience and, as a result, have the capacity to impact a higher number of readers to think about intimate partner violence concerns than publications with smaller audiences. The three newspapers were chosen based on a survey by Kenya Audience Research Foundation (KARF) in 2019. *The Daily Nation* and *The Standard* were two of the top three most read newspapers. Although *The Star* was the seventh, it was selected because *Taifa Leo*, *Saturday Nation* and *Sunday Nation* are productions of the same media house while the content of *Mwanaspoti* is sports oriented. (See appendix

X). As a result, the sample included newspaper editions from a broad selection of media houses.

As mentioned earlier, this study did not look at the effects of framing on audiences but the potency of the implications of framing through message presentation and the factors that may account for such representation. This type of investigation was critical because, unlike stories that appear on television or radio for a single day, newspaper stories have the potential to be elaborate and remain in a printed form indefinitely.

To choose acceptable IPV content for study, the study used sampling. In content analysis, sampling is a multistage process in which a researcher picks a specific set of texts, then finds subjects of interest within that material (Drisko & Maschi, 2015). For interrogation, all of the articles, a population, or a subset of all of the articles — a sample — can be chosen (Drisko & Maschi, 2015). A representative sample of newspaper editions was coded "considering the vast quantity of articles generated by the computerized searches" (Morgan & Politoff, 2012).

Intimate partner violence reporting that focused on abuse between family members and intimate partners was explored in this study by focusing on publications that could be used to show that an IPV incident had occurred. Fewer search words could be seen as a limitation of this study; however, as Morgan and Politoff (2012) note, employing a larger range of search terms results in a significant number of articles, and they were only able to code one-fourth of them. Similarly, in the current study, the researcher found it helpful to find as many intimate partner violence articles as could be found over the course of five years but only code a representative sample. The articles were found using search engines on the news websites of each of the organizations, as well

as the Google search engine. Furthermore, as a subscriber, the researcher had access to the three newspapers' internal online and e-news database. Even then, it's worth noting that the study didn't compare the contents of the three newspapers.

The sampling technique used to select newspaper editions was, therefore, constructed weeks. The question of whether to use simple random sampling or stratified sampling was informed by efficiency and the fact that media content produced by commercial enterprises follows cycles. Whereas this study relied on Riffe, Lacy, Fico and Watson (2019) in using constructed week sampling method, other studies that support this approach include Santaemilia and Maruenda (2014); Braber (2015); Khoso (2015) also Chang and Ren (2017) among others. Additional studies that have concentrated on efficiency of sampling for inference by using the constructed week, which is created by randomly selecting an issue for each day of the week include, Evayani and Rido (2019) Gilbertson and Pandit (2019) as well as Smith, Bond and Jeffries (2019) whose findings showed that IPV reporting is episodic, sensationalistic, prone to perpetrator sympathizing, and fails to contextualize IPV as an ongoing pattern of intentionally abusive behavior.

Table 1: Sampling of newspapers

TYPE OF CONTENT	NATURE OF SAMPLE
Year of daily newspapers	Two constructed weeks from year (randomly selecting two Mondays, two Tuesdays, etc.)
Year of weekly newspapers	Randomly select one issue from each month in the year
Year of evening television network news	Randomly select two days from each month's newscasts during the year
Year of news magazines	Randomly select one issue from each month in a year
5 years of consumer magazines	One constructed year (randomly select one issue from each month)
5 years of daily newspapers	Nine constructed weeks (randomly selecting each day of the week.

Source: Luke, Caburnay & Cohen, (2011); Riffe, Lacy, Fico, & Watson, (2019).

According to the constructed week sampling method, each day of the week was identified for the selected time frame (all Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays were identified). The researcher then randomly selected one Monday, one Tuesday, one Wednesday, one Thursday, one Friday, one Saturday, and one Sunday to form a week that contained seven inconsecutive days. The method of constructed week sampling has been found to sufficiently capture any variation in news content across each day of the week, effectively reducing the day -of- the -week effect (Luke, Caburnay & Cohen, 2011). It is widely accepted that one constructed week represents a six-month period for a daily newspaper (Riffe et al., 1993; Lacy et al., 2001; Riffe et al., 2006).

Between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2020, this study collected all intimate partner violence articles from the websites of the three newspapers. Search phrases relating to intimate partner violence, such as intimate partner violence, family violence, intimate partner abuse, intimate partner violence, intimate partner abuse, and estranged partner, were used to find the articles. By extension, 10 constructed weeks

represented news content for the five-year period from 2016-2020. The search generated 1,080 newspaper editions. From a sampling frame of 1,080, the researcher used constructed weeks to obtain 70 newspaper editions for analysis.

3.5.2 Selection of editors and journalists

Because editors and journalists were the people of interest in the study due to their status as crucial gatekeepers hence knowledgeable in the areas the research focused on, the purposive sampling methodology that this study utilized was the most appropriate. Purposive sampling is based on non-probability and it is often criticized as prone to prejudice since it does not use random selection methods that enhance generalizability. Although a random selection of targets (probability sampling) is the optimum method of sampling, it was not used in selecting participants to be interviewed in this study since the goal was to find out factors that could influence the manner in which the gatekeepers of selected Kenyan newspapers packaged IPV news.

Purposive sampling (a non-probability sampling method) involved a random selection of editors and journalists who were considered knowledgeable on IPV representation bearing in mind their gate-keeping role. Although nonprobability sampling has limitations due to the subjective nature in choosing the sample and thus not a good representative of the population, it was useful in this study considering that the researcher had limited resources, time and workforce. Even then, this study did not aim at generalizeable results.

Specifically, homogeneous sampling was done by focusing on participants who shared similar traits in terms of job descriptions or life experiences (editors and journalists who had produced IPV stories). In doing so, this study selected 3 editors and nine

journalists following relied on Creswell (2014) who suggests between 5 and 25 participants for phenomenological studies exploring other people's experiences or their experience of phenomena.

3.6 Methods of data collection

To collect data, content analysis of newspaper articles in addition to in-depth interviews with newspaper editors was done. To facilitate the data collection, semi-structured interview schedules were used to conduct interviews with journalists while coding was applied to conduct quantitative and qualitative content analysis of newspapers texts.

3.6.1 Content Analysis

The current study used coding to understand data on intimate partner violence. What the researcher sees, reads, or discovers and how they express their findings in formal terms of an analysis is referred to as coding (Krippendorff, 2004). Each article was coded in categories to analyse victim characterization, murder coverage, and the usage of constructive messaging. The researcher created a coding book (Appendix II) with discrete categories that did not overlap. (Lynch & Peer, 2002). Headline, publication date, byline, article kind, theme, mention of intimate partner violence, victim blaming, excusing the offender, constructive messages, injuries, attempting to flee, location, source, word count, month, and year were the coding categories.

 The header at the top of the piece was called a headline. The date on which an article was published was the date on which the story was first published. The name of the article's author was referred to as a byline. A gender byline was the author's gender — male, female, or not relevant for stories that didn't mention who wrote them. The

style in which the narrative was written was described by an article type. A news piece, for example, was coded for a report on hard news that was principally informative (Ricketson, 2004). An article with "emotion and analysis as well as information" Ricketson, (2004) was categorized as a feature article. An article was coded for a story if it had visual elements, such as images. For a piece that drew on individuals' views that were either backed up by evidence or recounted their personal experience with IPV, it was coded as opinion. A fact check was regarded as a report that tried to verify allegations of intimate partner violence. A Q&A was an article in which the author researched and discovered answers to frequently asked questions. Articles that did not meet any of the above criteria were placed in the 'other' category. The principal topic mentioned in the article, frequently one that appeared in the first line of the report, was a theme of the piece. The following categories were used to organize the themes:

3.6.1.1 Intimate partner violence theme categories

Theme of article	Description of the theme
Intimate partner violence murder	Focuses on the IPV victim being killed as a result of the abuse.
Victim blaming	Infers that the victim is to blame for violence (Rao, 2014).
Legal matters or court cases	Reporting intimate partner violence court cases
Reference to assistance	Giving messages of how and where to get help for IPV or reinforcing that IPV victims should seek assistance (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013).
Rise in intimate partner violence	Indicating that IPV incidents have been on the rise
No proven IPV link	Implies IPV has taken place but cannot verify it. Use of phrases like 'estranged partner' or implying that the perpetrator and victim knew each other.
Under-reported	Claims that IPV remains a hidden issue or that victims are reluctant to report abuse.

Excusing the perpetrator	A piece that excuses the violence (Carratala, 2016).
Funding cuts	Claiming that IPV programmes have not been adequately funded.
Vigils and tributes	A vigil in honour of a victim of IPV.
Law changes	Discusses a change in law that addresses IPV.
Victim's account	Focuses on a victim's account of abuse and gives them a voice (Worthington, 2008).
Government funding	About extra funding to services that address IPV.
Police and authorities failing to help	Addressing police response to IPV.
Nowhere to go	Focusing on lack of safe houses or other places for victims to seek help.
Fall in IPV rates	Describes how IPV incidents have been declining.
Other	Does not fit any other category above

IPV was also coded in articles based on how it was mentioned, either overtly or implicitly. An overt statement in the paper said that an incident occurred as a result of IPV. The IPV incident was implicit if a statement mentioned the occurrence, but claimed it couldn't be confirmed. Such statements, for example, stated that the victim and the perpetrator were acquainted. The stories were also coded for victim-blaming frames, such as pieces that suggested the victim's behavior led to the abuse occurring, either overtly or implicitly. Similarly, overt and implicit frames that exonerated the perpetrator were identified. They either indicated that the perpetrator did not feel they had committed the offence or implied that the perpetrator's actions were somehow justified.

The study also looked at the emergence of constructive IPV messages, such as pieces that stated that domestic abuse should be tackled or that looked into how the

present state of IPV affairs could be improved. Another criterion was if the story described the injuries that the victims had experienced. The study looked at not only what month and year each piece was written, but also how long it was. Following that, based on word count, article length was split into six categories: 1-150 words, 151-250 words, 251-350 words, 351-450 words, 451-550 words, and 550 and more words. Finally, here are source descriptions which were utilized in IPV stories:

Source	Source description
Victim	A person who experiences IPV directly.
Secondary victim	Person close to the victim such as family or friend.
Victim's advocate	Person who advocates for literacy around IPV.
Police	Law enforcer.
Lawyer	Law practitioner.
Perpetrator	The person who committed the crime.
Academic or researcher	Member of academia/ specialist in the field.
Government official	Government functionary.
Witness	A person who saw the crime incident.
Other	A person not fitting any category.
N/A	No sources mentioned

Sub-themes should also be included in the code book (Mao & Richter, (2014). As a result, the research includes sub-categories for article theme and source categories in addition to the primary categories. In articles, the sub-theme categories looked at secondary themes and sources. They were coded in the same way as the major sources and the main theme.

Human coding was employed in this study to ensure that text nuances were comprehended (Mao & Richter, 2014). While computer-coded data gives "perfect coder dependability in the application of coding rules to text," the problem of "too much information in texts" remains a challenge (Weber, 1990). The study employed a set-out code book to "put down the rules regulating the study" as well as record the "study's operations and definitions," as previously said (Riffe et al., 2019). The coding book was created to ensure the research's consistency, reliability, and validity. The correct data collection in this study was handled by a single coder, the researcher. While the study agrees that several coders are more likely to discover "dimensions of a concept being neglected," having more than one coder has the downside of making concept agreements more difficult (Riffe et al., 2005).

The study stated that in order for it to be credible, it had to be dependable and valid. In content analysis, reliability issues "typically arise from uncertainty in word meanings, category definitions, or other coding rules" (Weber, 1990). As a result, the study avoided using "conceptually complicated categories and subcategories," which could have hampered efforts to obtain adequate dependability (Riffe et al., 2005). Even if "the most manifest content is not usually the most engaging or significant," "reliability is simplest to acquire when the content is more manifest" (Riffe et al., 2005). Stability, repeatability, and accuracy are the three types of reliability listed by Krippendorff (2004). To meet all three criteria, the current study effort depended on a code book that was established before coding began, and results were regularly compared to the coding book to ensure that the research study was measuring what it was supposed to analyse (Neuendorf, 2016; Weber, 1990).

The IPV frames found in the three mainstream newspapers were quantified by counting their frequency of occurrence and using excel spreadsheets to analyse and present them in percentages, tables and graphs.

3.6.2 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with journalists and news editors were undertaken to put the content analysis results in perspective and evaluate the emergent themes. Seale, (2004) used the qualitative research method to evaluate the data and capture a real-life experience. The study attempted to "consider reality to be subjective, problematic, holistic, and a social construct rather than absolute "truth" by generating oral rather than numerical data (Weerakkody, 2009). The data was gathered through primary sources, which in this case were the responses of journalists and news editors obtained through interviews. "A face-to-face verbal encounter, in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to extract information or expressions of opinion or belief from another person or persons," (Denzin, 2017).

The interview, according to Remenyi (2012), is a "formal procedure in which a researcher solicits verbal evidence or data from a knowledgeable informant." Interviews were chosen as a suitable research approach to learn about ideas, beliefs, and attitudes that could not be statistically measured Stokes (2021), such as how mainstream newspaper journalists and editors made IPV reporting decisions in Kenya. Furthermore, qualitative research interviews, according to Weerakkody (2009) are best suited "to explore controversial, sensitive, or confidential matters." She believes that qualitative research methodologies are superior for investigating problems like rape and incest than quantitative methods. IPV, according to this study, also matches

the characteristics of a sensitive topic involving victims of severe trauma and violence. As a result, interviews were utilized to examine factors accounting for the representation of intimate partner violence and to generate recommendations for how to improve the IPV news representation by Kenya's mainstream newspapers. Appendix III contains specific interview questions.

Purposive sampling was employed to identify interviewees, just as it was during the content analysis phase. Purposive sampling is when a researcher outlines the characteristics of a target group and then seeks out individuals who share those qualities (Johnson & Christensen, 2010). The research set out to investigate the content of three specific newspapers, as well as how their reporters and editors covered intimate partner violence. Purposive sampling was the most appropriate technique to locate interview participants. The purposively selected participants provided important exemplars in practical contexts based on what scholars refer to as refer to as, 'their proximity to studied realities' as gatekeepers (Simons & Morgan, 2018).

Interviewees were selected with care in order to obtain comprehensive information regarding intimate partner violence reporting from journalists and editors with experience in the field. By selecting a sample, the researcher was able to ensure that participants with prior experience and knowledge of IPV reporting contributed to the study. The participants in this study were journalists and editors from the *Daily Nation*, *The Standard*, and *The Star* newspapers. The sample consisted of a group of journalists and news editors who met the interview criteria: they were working for one of the three newspapers at the time of the interviews and had experience reporting on

IPV. Initially, the gatekeepers of the three newspaper outlets were contacted by phone and email and asked to recommend interviewees (Babbie & Rubin, 2015).

To avoid any negative consequences from participation in the study, all interviewees remained anonymous throughout the investigation. Three mainstream newspaper reporters and one mainstream newspaper editor from each newspaper were chosen as interviewees for the study. In a research on violence against women, 21 journalists from five different organizations were interviewed (Simons & Morgan, 2018). However, Remenyi (2012) contends that setting numerical parameters for how many interviews should be undertaken is unrealistic, stating that sometimes a modest number will be sufficient, while other studies require higher sample sizes. Stokes (2012), for example, mentions a case study in which 254 producers were interviewed, but asserts that this is impossible to achieve and that outstanding studies have only had 11 participants. If the population targeted is tiny, 11 "comprise a high percentage of the total," (Stokes, 2012).

Twelve interviews were deemed to be sufficient in the current study to establish how mainstream newspaper editors and reporters reported intimate partner violence. The interviews were conducted in order to "discover new concerns or dimensions that throw light on research questions and possible answers," (Remenyi, 2012). During the interviews, saturation was deemed to have been achieved at the point when data appeared repetitive and hence no new information would emerge. This study does concede, however, that claiming that no new data could be discovered was the researcher's subjective judgment of the responses to questions posed during the interview.

This study examined how Kenya's mainstream newspaper reporters and editors made decisions about IPV reporting using semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews were built around basic questions, but space was provided to follow up on questions and delve deeper into a response (Mitchell & Jolley, 2012). This method allowed for the addition of questions whenever situations demanded it, as well as increased participant involvement (Weerakkody, 2009). While it is difficult to eliminate structure in interviews, according to Brinkmann, (2013), it is likely to offer flexible structure that allows questions and concerns to be presented in the respondent's own words. The purpose of the current study was to uncover answers to particular questions while allowing interviewees to challenge what was being posed. It encouraged members to participate actively and prompted them to debate particular topics (Brinkmann, 2013). This allowed for a more in-depth understanding of the respondents' perspectives on the subject (Weerakkody, 2009).

Indirect questions were utilized in the study because they were likely to yield thorough responses and, as a result, superior research results (Remenyi, 2012). Furthermore, it is recommended that a one-hour interview agenda contain no more than six topics (Remenyi, 2012). The present study's interviews took place between January and December 2020 and lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. The questions were divided into four categories: how often intimate partner violence was covered, how victims were portrayed, how constructive messages were used, and how decision-making methods were used (Appendix III). Furthermore, the interviews were taped on a voice recorder to allow for accurate transcriptions and revisiting of dialogues.

According to researchers, there are numerous techniques to interview participants. Face-to-face interviews are the most common because they permit for

rapid participant engagement (Brinkmann, 2013). One face-to-face interviews and eleven phone interviews were conducted as in the current study. Due to geographical and availability concerns, all of the interviews were performed over the phone except one. All interviews were conducted in private contexts with only the interviewee and researcher engaged to address the delicate issue of intimate partner violence (Brinkmann, 2013). Furthermore, interviews were transcribed. It is better for the interviewer to transcribe all interviews, according to Brinkmann because they will be able to recollect any nonverbal indicators that appeared. As a result, the researcher exclusively transcribed all of the interviews in order to have a better understanding of the nuances in the replies.

The "life experiences" Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2011) of mainstream Kenyan newspaper reporters and editors when covering intimate partner violence were explored using qualitative semi-structured interviews. It looked into how they had handled the topic in the past and how coverage had changed over time. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the content of the qualitative interviews. Thematic analysis allows for the identification of themes within data by removing extraneous material, and it aids in the definition of conceptual categories by grouping themes and reorganizing the findings (Ezzy, 2002; Roulston, 2010). While it has been stated that thematic analysis reduces data (this might be seen as a limitation in this study), the benefits of utilizing thematic analysis to understand data outweighed the disadvantage in this case. Thematic analysis enabled the grouping of concepts that demonstrated how mainstream Kenyan newspaper reporters and editors perceived their journalistic practices reporting on IPV.

Three levels of thematic analysis were carried out (Braun & Clarke, 2013; King & Horrocks, 2010). Before selecting participants' accounts that were important to answering the three study questions, the entire transcripts were studied in order to grasp the context (King and Horrocks, 2010) of what journalists and editors stated. To define descriptive codes, anything that helped explain journalists' and editors' perspectives was emphasized. Codes that went "beyond describing relevant characteristics of participants' accounts" were defined in the second stage of the theme analysis (King & Horrocks, 2010). Descriptive codes having a common meaning were grouped together, and an interpretative code was produced to capture the meaning. The data analysis procedure is summarized in table 2.

Table 2: Data Analysis Procedure

Objective	Data type	Data analysis procedure
i. Ways of IPV representation	Quantitative/	Frequencies and percentages/ Tables
ii. Factors Accounting for IPV representation	Qualitative	Thematic analysis/ideological
iii. Wider emerging meanings	Qualitative	Thematic analysis/ideological

Table 2 summarises the data analysis procedures that were followed. The first objective was explored by quantifying IPV themes in percentages while the second and third objectives were subjected to qualitative thematic analysis.

3.7 Trustworthiness in the study

Trustworthiness is the degree of certainty that the research process is truthful, careful and rigorous enough to qualify it to make the claims that it does (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Lichtman, 2013). Traditionally, the terms internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity have been used to demonstrate the trustworthiness of research projects. However, some qualitative researchers advocate the use of different terms such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability instead. The argument for the different terminology is that in qualitative research generally, the way trustworthiness is evaluated is rather different from the realist-positivist paradigm and the quantitative approach where the former terms are predominantly used (Linneberg & Korsgaard; Denzin &Lincoln, 2018).

Nevertheless, the researchers cited above acknowledge that the general concerns postulated by the concepts of validity and reliability as criteria for assessing the quality of any research are important even in qualitative research, even though the terminology used and the ways of ensuring the rigour may differ. In agreement with these views, the researcher used the terms credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, respectively based on the fact that the larger proportion of the study was qualitative. The consistency of the meanings of these terms is shown in table 3 based on the research literature such as, Creswell & Miller, 2000; Mason, 2008; Kekeya, 2021).

Table 3: Terminology for Trustworthiness in Research

In qualitative research	In quantitative research	Meaning
Credibility	Internal validity	Extent to which the study investigates and reports what occurred in the field.
Transferability	External validity	Extent to which the research findings may be transferable to other contexts.
Dependability	Reliability	Extent to which the research procedure is clear enough to readers and other researchers to carry out similar studies.

3.7.1. Credibility

The researcher addressed the questions of credibility in a number of ways. First, by involving peers in reviewing the key concepts, methodology and analysis and to help check the credibility of the study rationale, research process and report. This kind of consultation went on throughout all the stages of the study and was very useful in ensuring that the researcher focused on the stated aims of the study.

Secondly, the researcher used a convergence of data sources; a means for seeking convergence across qualitative and quantitative data. In relation to this, the study data were generated from two sources (newspaper articles on IPV and practicing editors/journalists). Through this, the study was able to bring out different perspectives of the key participants to account for the representation of IPV by newspapers. At a different level of synergy, the researcher used two techniques of data generation (content analysis of newspaper articles on IPV and interviews), which made it possible to explore the complex nature of the phenomenon -representation of IPV - thereby generating rich data. Creswell (2017) emphasizes that a researcher "should look for different kinds of evidence: what people say…what documents and records show."

3.7.2. Transferability

Transferability is generally defined as the extent to which the findings of a study may be relevant or generalizable to other contexts (Richards, 2013). Transferability can be argued to have been achieved in this study by the fact that the data analysis revealed fairly similar patterns from the content analysis and amongst the participants in the study concerning dominant themes and media production environments. Ultimately however, it was not the objective of the researcher to generalize patterns of representation but to gain in-depth understanding of IPV representation by mainstream Kenyan newspapers. Creswell (2014) observes that "as a general rule, qualitative researchers are reluctant to generalize because the contexts of the cases differ."

3.7.3. Dependability

Creswell (2014) suggests that one way of enhancing dependability is to make clear and detailed descriptions of the steps followed in the study. He says "the general way of approaching the reliability problem is to make as many steps operational as possible and to conduct research as if someone were always looking over our shoulder." To ensure dependability in this study, care was taken to make a description of the entire research process in a manner that would make it possible to carry out a similar study in another context, if necessary. Accordingly, in this study, the researcher explained different stages in reasonable detail to ensure a thorough understanding of the context, the rationale based on literature review, the data generation and analysis. The findings have also been elaborately supported with actual excerpts and quotations from the participants.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Once the final proposal was presented and defended at the school level where the researcher was registered, the School of Graduate Studies recommended the issuance of a research permit (See appendices IV and V). The permit was sought and subsequently granted by the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI); see appendix VI. Further, the researcher observed other ethical considerations such as confidentiality, consulting with supervisors and explaining to the participants the purpose and details of the study before sending them consent letters. Overall, all the results were honestly captured by adhering to thesis writing guidelines of Rongo University.

3.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology used in the study and explained why certain research approaches were chosen. It was necessary to use both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to acquire a thorough grasp of how mainstream Kenyan newspapers represent domestic abuse. It is suggested that employing a multi-method study technique allows for a better understanding of intimate partner violence reports. As a result, a quantitative content analysis was utilized to assess not only the number of articles about intimate partner violence in Kenyan newspapers, but also the number of messages about murders, victim-blaming viewpoints, and wider meanings emerging from the representation. As a result, content analysis provided the most accurate picture of how Kenyan newspaper editors and reporters depict intimate partner violence.

A qualitative research method was utilized to understand why journalists and editors choose to cover the subject in a particular way. The chapter described how semi-structured interviews with editors and reporters can reveal the phenomenon "behind" the numbers. One of the study's benefits is that it not only shows how mainstream newspapers represent intimate partner violence, but it also explains why it is reported that way, allowing researcher to make recommendations treatments for better representation. The current study hopes to give recommendations for enhancing IPV reporting by understanding the pressures of ecosystem in which mainstream Kenyan newspaper editors and reporters operate, as well as the decisions linked to reporting on a sensitive problem like intimate partner violence in a high-demand terrain of daily news markets. Despite the fact that each method has flaws, the flaws of one method were addressed by using the alternative. The mixed methods study's findings are detailed in the following two chapters, which include the content analysis and interviewing methodologies.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Overview

The findings of content analysis and interviews are presented in this chapter. As stated in chapter 3, the study gathered intimate partner violence articles from three Kenyan newspapers published between 2016 and 2020. The pieces were retrieved from the internet editions of *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The Star*. The contents of the articles are discussed in this chapter with a focus on messaging regarding intimate partner violence, victim and perpetrator depictions and positive messages. To begin however, the chapter considers the total number of articles published in the three newspapers over the course of five years as well as how the scope of reporting has evolved. The chapter then goes on to look at the frames articles used to represent IPV, such as those that detailed victims' injuries; whether victims were blamed; and the frames that were deemed as helpful in representing IPV as a social issue, such as those that included helpline numbers.

4.1 Ways in which intimate partner violence was represented

4.1.1 Scale of intimate partner violence representation

The contents of 70 intimate partner violence articles published by the three newspapers between 2016 and 2020 were analysed. Articles about IPV were selected for content analysis if they discussed IPV either openly or implicitly. Explicit mentions of IPV were exemplified in words such as 'domestic violence' family violence', 'intimate partner violence' or domestic abuse. As stated in chapter 3, a phrase like 'estranged partner' was considered non-explicit. Further, this chapter

describes the kind of articles used to represent IPV over the course of 5 years, as well as who reported, which sources were given a voice in the reporting, where the articles were located, and the key themes employed by newspaper reporters and editors. A more nuanced strategy was employed to find answers to the three specific questions. When examining how the mainstream newspapers reported IPV, the study looked into the number of murder frames as well as pieces that highlighted victims' injuries. Furthermore, the content analysis gathered data on how many stories blamed the victim and how they justified the offenders' actions. In like manner, the ability of newspapers to convey constructive messages about IPV as well as the frequency of stories that emphasized the victim's version of the events were measured.

The data show that *Daily Nation* published 32 of the 70 articles, *The standard*, 23 and *The Star*15. (See Table 4). This chapter does not delve into comparing the representation by the three publications because it was not the aim of the study to do so. However, where there are significant disparities in how the newspapers reported IPV, the trends are provided as percentages to provide a vivid picture. This method was utilised to give more context to the representation and thus a better understanding of the research findings.

Despite the drop in coverage of IPV in 2017 and 2018, the highest newspaper attention was recorded in 2020. That year, nearly half of the articles (32) were published. As a result, coverage of IPV nearly tripled between 2019 and 2020 (see table 4).

Table 4: The types of stories covered in the three newspapers

Year	Publication	News	Feature	Opinion	Other	Total
2016	*Daily Nation*	3	1	1	0	5
	%	60	20	20	0	100
	The Standard	2	1	0	0	3
	%	66.7	33.3	0	0	100
	The Star	2	0	0	0	2
	%	100	0	0	0	100
	Total	**7**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**10**
	Total %	70	20	10	0	100
2017	*Daily Nation*	2	0	0	1	3
	%	66.7	0	0	33.3	100
	The Standard	3	1	0	0	4
	%	75	25	0	0	100
	The Star	1	1	0	0	2
	%	50	50	0	0	100
	Total	**6**	**2**	**0**	**1**	**9**
	Total %	66.7	22.2	0	11.1	100
2018	*Daily Nation*	2	0	0	0	2
	%	100	0	0	0	100
	The Standard	1	0	0	0	1
	%	100	0	0	0	100
	The Star	0	1	0	0	1
	%	0	100	0	0	100
	Total	**3**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**4**
	Total %	75	25	0	0	100
2019	*Daily Nation*	4	2	1	0	7
	%	57.1	28.6	14.3	0	100
	The Standard	3	1	1	0	5
	%	60	20	20	0	100
	The Star	2	1	0	0	3
	%	66.7	33.3	0	0	100
	Total	**9**	**4**	**2**	**0**	**15**
	Total %	60	26.7	13.3	0	100
2020	*Daily Nation*	8	3	3	1	15
	%	53.3	20	20	6.7	100
	The Standard	7	2	1	0	10
	%	70	20	10	0	100
	The Star	4	2	1	0	7
	%	57.1	28.6	14.3	0	100
	Total	**19**	**7**	**5**	**1**	**32**
	Total %	59.4	21.9	15.6	3.1	100
2016-2020	**Total**	**44**	**16**	**8**	**2**	**70**
	%	62.86	22.86	11.42	2.86	100

The types of articles were investigated to acquire a better understanding of how IPV is represented by mainstream newspapers. The pieces were categorized into four: news, opinion, feature and other. Intimate partner violence was mostly covered in news items. According to the findings, well over half of the 70 coded items (62.86%, n=44) were news pieces. While news articles that primarily provide information and provide a window on the world (Harcup 2009; Ricketson, 2004), were the most commonly employed genre among mainstream media journalists, the second most prevalent story category was feature articles, which included emotion, analysis, and information (Ricketson,2004). The features accounted for 22.86%, n=16. IPV had a nearly equal attention in the three newspapers with *Daily Nation* contributing 37.5%, n=6 *The Standard* and *The Star* accounting for 31.25%, n=5 in each case. Opinions were the third major story genre. Between 2016 and 2020, Opinion articles analysed were eight. Opinions were mostly published in *The Daily Nation* accounting for 52.5%, n=5. *The Standard* published 25%, n=2 while *The Star* published 12.5%, n=1. Letters to the editor and readers' corner were among stories in the 'other' category where only the *Daily Nation* had two items.

4.1.2 Representation through episodic (natural) and thematic (social) contexts

To find out whether mainstream newspaper articles were episodic or thematic, the study followed Goffman (1974) as earlier explained in the literature review. Episodic framing is what Sutherland, (2016) calls "problematic depiction of IPV" since it presents a problem as a series of disconnected, random events. Findings showed that episodic articles dominated IPV representation (see figure 2).
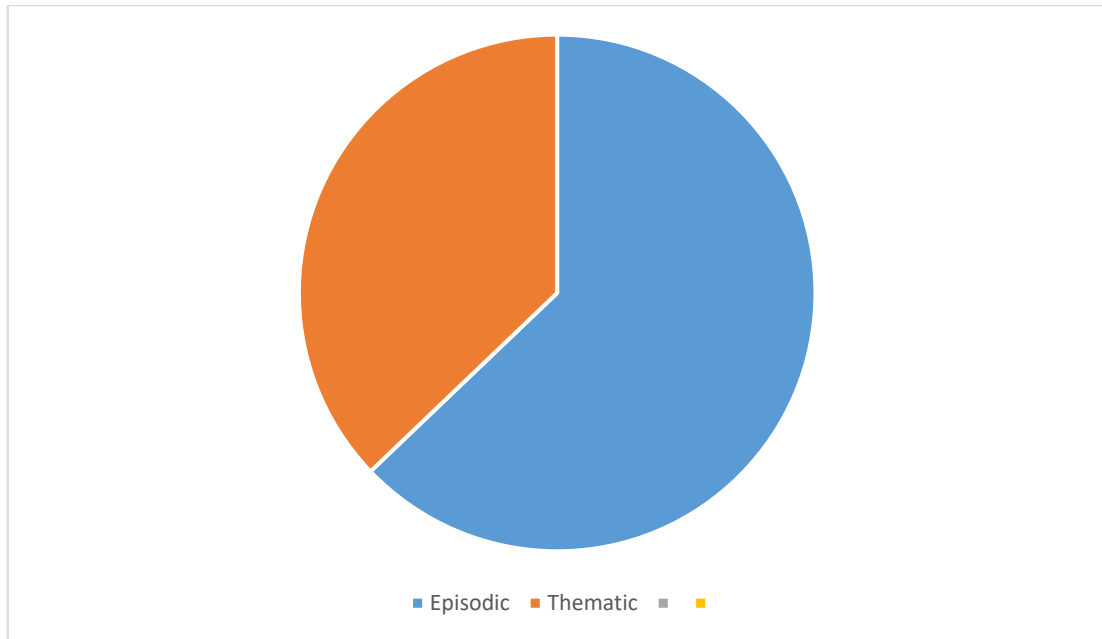
Figure 2: Episodic and thematic representation of intimate partner violence

Such episodic representation accounted for 62.86% (n=44) of the total articles while thematic articles were only 37.14% (n=26) thus showing that the context of most IPV articles is presented as discrete incidents without wider social contexts.

The episodic frames were evident through headlines which encapsulated first-degree IPV information- what Goffman (1974) refers to as "the natural frameworks". Such frames were often used to represent IPV as "isolated" such as *Daily Nation's*: "Three die after man kills wife, child and himself" Maundu, (2016); "Man kills wife, self in domestic dispute" Njuguna, (2016); "Nyeri man kills wife in domestic row, sets body on fire, then flees" Munyiri, (2019); "Man hacks wife to death over tomato sales proceeds" Bwisa, (2019); "Man in Baringo kills wife after she 'pesters' him to buy his children Christmas gifts" Koech, 2016); "Man kills wife and three children in cold blood" Kahongeh, (2018); "Two women killed in separate incidents in Kisii County" Obebo, (2016); "Man allegedly kills wife, baby, buries bodies in farm" Wanyoro, (2017); "Man allegedly kills pregnant wife" Mwangi, (2017); "Man kidnaps, kills

wife in domestic row" Kimanthi, (2016); Kitengela man stabs wife to death before killing himself" Ngotho, (2020); "Kakamega man stabs and kills his wife then commits suicide" Amadala (2019); Man kills his wife by stabbing her 21 times" Ocharo and Mkanyika, (2017). These headlines described how IPV incidents occurred and who committed them but rarely delved into the broader socially contextaualised 'why' questions except on a superficial level. In most cases, these news articles characterised the incidents as just another violent act.

4.1.3 Representation techniques

In examining ways in which IPV was represented, this study relied on Fairhurst and Sarr, (1996) who identify framing techniques such as metaphors (framing a conceptual idea through comparison), slogans/jargon/catchphrases (catchy words/phrases), and tradition (cultural mores that imbue significance in the mundane. Table 5 shows the frequencies of techniques in the 70 newspaper editions.

Table 5: Frequency of occurrence of framing techniques

Techniques	Daily Nation	The Standard	The Star	Total	%
Catchphrases	15	12	10	37	
%	*41*	*32*	*27*		*100*
Metaphor	11	9	4	24	
%	45.8	37.5	16.7		100
Tradition	5	2	7	14	
%	*35.7*	*14.3*	*50*		*100*
Myth	4	3	4	11	
%	*36.4*	*27.2*	*36.4*		*100*
Total	**35**	**26**	**25**	**86**	
%	**40.7**	**30.2**	**29.1**		**100**

Table 5 shows that catchphrases were the most commonly occurring techniques and were mostly found in *The Daily Nation* (41%, n=15) followed by metaphors which were again dominantly used in *The Daily Nation* (45.8%, n=11). However, *The Star*

dominated in the representation of traditions (50%, n=7). The usage of the techniques was nearly equally distributed in *The Standard* and *The Star* where in total, *The Daily Nation* accounted for 40.7 per cent (n=35) *The Standard*, 30.2 per cent (n=26) while *The Star* contained 29.1 per cent (n=25). The most common catchwords used to represent individual IPV acts included "killed" "murdered" "slaughtered" "butchered", "hack(ed)", "beaten". "Stabbed" such as, The *Daily Nation's* "Man *hacks* lover to death over infidelity (Munene, 2017; Wafula, 2020). On the converse, perpetrators were sometimes presented as "innocent attackers" such as, "When the *Nation* visited the village, neighbours were huddled in groups, discussing the incident in low tones. They described the attacker as *a humble* man who always keeps to himself" (Koech, 2016). In many of the stories where friends and family are quoted, there was a tendency to humanize the perpetrators and portray them as calm rational people who were provoked into unexpected fits of rage for example: "…the mother revealed her son as was always calm…" (Kejitan, 2019). In the article, where a medical student was killed by her lover, the newspapers ran several articles depicting the attacker as a polite and harmless person thus potentially serving to lessen the attacker's culpability. Other instances of perpetrator exoneration will be focused on in the "representation of the perpetrator" section.

Metaphors were largely used in two ways: to depict IPV as a problem and to characterize perpetrators. In the former case, IPV was potently likened to an "ugly epidemic". Headlines such as "The **ugly** face of domestic violence" Omboki, (2016) metaphorically represented the costly nature of treating an IPV victim at the average of Sh56, 000 for a single case of gender-based violence whilst also revealing that some victims got P3 Forms, not with the intention of pressing charges against the

aggressors, but instead use them to blackmail the offenders to compensate them, usually in the form of a few animals or cash. In the same article, IPV was metaphorically referred to as "*epidemic of violence*" and in one instance, an anti-IPV activist was quoted saying, the vice had reached "*epidemic levels*" to mean it had become pervasive in the society. Also, in reporting IPV, perpetrators were variously referred to as 'monsters' and 'beasts'. An article titled, "Sexual Offences Act shouldn't be applied selectively" Muthuri, (2019) published by the *Daily Nation* on June 14, 2019 for instance asks, "there are also reports of an increasing number of men ending up in prison for sexual offences in comparison to other crimes. When did Kenyan men turn to such *beasts*?" the 'beast/ monster' metaphors were replicated in other stories for example in "Assaulted woman in viral video to get aid" (Ondieki and Maundu, 2018). In the story published by the *Daily Nation* on August 2, 2018, the victim is said to have received a "beastly beating' from her husband. A similar reference is seen in a story in *The Standard* whose headline read, "Battered woman quits marriage, seeks solace" (Aineah, 2019). The victim recounts her ordeal by noting, "He has turned into a *monster* that beats me senseless…" Similarly, another article, "Domestic violence: Tale of beauty and the beast she got married to" Pala, (2016) uses the image of a *beast* to describe the victim's husband.

Depictions of tradition on the other hand included "failures to perform certain duties" as a reason for the occurrence of IPV. Examples: "Man kills self 'for b*eing served little ugali*' Odhiambo, (2016) "Man kills wife *for returning home late* after Christmas party" (*Daily Monitor*, 2017). Many of such articles stereotyped women as confined to certain "wifely" or home-making duties such as *giving birth*, *cooking* and generally taking care of the husband at home. Failure to perform these duties arguably led to some husbands resorting to violence. An article in *The Standard* on July 17, 2018

"Woman loses hand over being barren (Omoro, 2018)" had the lead reading, "a 22-year-old woman lost her hand after her husband, said to have accused her of infidelity and barrenness, attacked her." The same scenario is depicted in, "It's a boy! Jackeline Mwende, woman butchered for barrenness, welcomes baby at Machakos Level 5 Hospital" (Muia, 2017).

A total of 15 pieces were published without a byline. Male journalists were more likely than female journalists to cover intimate partner violence. Male journalists published more than twice as much IPV-related content as females in the ratio of 35 to 15 articles respectively. This showed that the coverage of IPV is dominated by male reporters.

4.1.4 Representation of intimate partner violence murders

The scope of intimate partner violence murder frames as well as the content of stories that were murder-centric were analysed to show how mainstream Kenyan newspapers represent IPV. This was done by looking at how many newspaper articles covered legal issues and court cases as well as how many mentioned IPV homicides and victims' injuries. It should, however, be noted that not all stories describing the victims' injuries reported that they were fatal. As a result, it is implausible to assume that all publications about victims' injuries were murder-centric frames. According to Vives-Cases et al., (2009), describing how perpetrators inflict suffering on victims may encourage others to do the same. As a result, it was critical to determine how much information about IPV-related injuries was publicized by the newspapers, as these depictions could lead to future fatal intimate partner violence actions. Similarly, the coverage of legal problems related to IPV homicides was analysed.

Results show that mainstream newspaper coverage of IPV in Kenya primarily focused on legal issues and court cases surrounding IPV murder (see Table 6).

Table 6: Main themes in the three newspapers

Main theme	Daily Nation	The Standard	The Star	Total
Legal matters/court murder cases	8	9	4	21
%	38	43	19	100
Reference to assistance	7	4	3	14
%	50	29	21	100
Other	3	2	3	8
%	37.5	25	37.5	100
Law changes	3	1	1	5
%	60	20	20	100
Victim's account	2	1	1	4
%	50	25	25	100
Rise in IPV	2	1	1	4
%	50	25	25	100
IPV homicide	1	1	1	3
%	33.3	33.3	33.3	100
Police responding to IPV	1	1	1	3
%	33.3	33.3	33.3	100
Government funding	2	0	0	2
%	100	0	0	100
Insufficient funding	1	1	0	2
%	50	50	0	100
Authorities failing to help	1	1	0	2
%	50	50	0	100
Nowhere to go	1	1	0	2
%	50	50	0	100
Total	**32**	**23**	**15**	**70**
Total %	**46**	**33**	**21**	**100**

Almost a third of the articles (n=21) dealt with legal concerns related to IPV murder. When looking at how the three newspapers covered the theme individually, this is mirrored. 38 per cent of *Daily Nation* 43 per cent of *The Standard*, and 14 per cent of items in *The Star* were about murder matters. It's also worth noting that assistance was the second most frequently mentioned topic in IPV stories. It was mentioned in one-fifth of the articles (n=14).

In the sub- theme category, 10 articles focused mainly on murders, they accounted for 21 per cent of all the IPV stories making it the most covered sub-theme across all the three publications (see table 7). Such articles depended on quotes and referenced information from law officials 19 times, secondary victims 13, victims 0 and police 6. More than a half of the stories or 28 articles, where intimate partner violence murder was a sub-theme implied that the victim was at fault. Further, even more articles where murder was a sub-theme non-explicitly excused the perpetrator 21. On 11 occasions, murder-centric articles conveyed messages about the victim trying to leave. These messages either implied that the victim had attempted to leave, should have left or suggested that others in a similar situation would be better off leaving.

Table 7: The sub-themes emerging in the three newspapers

Sub-theme	Daily Nation	The Standard	The Star	Total
IPV murder	7	2	1	10
%	70	20	20	100
Legal/Court cases	6	2	1	9
%	66.7	22.2	11.1	100
Reference to assistance	2	0	0	2
%	100	0	0	100
Government funding	3	1	1	5
%	60	20	20	100
Rise in IPV	2	1	1	4
%	50	25	25	100
Authorities failing to help	3	1	0	4
%	75	25	0	100
Police responding to IPV	1	1	0	2
%	50	50	0	100
Nowhere to go	2	1	0	3
%	66.7	33.3	0	100
No proven IPV link	2	0	0	2
%	100	0	0	100
Insufficient funding	1	0	0	1
%	100	0	0	100
Victim's account	0	1	0	1
%	0	100	0	100
Other	3	1	0	4
%	75	25	0	100
Total	32	11	4	47
%	68	23	9	100

Table 7 shows the most frequent sub-themes in the coverage of IPV. Less represented themes such as enactment of IPV laws, vigils and victim blaming were grouped into the 'other' category. From the evidence, IPV murders got the most attention followed by the legal/court frames.

While it is vital to look into which IPV subjects got the most attention, it was also necessary to look into whose voice got to be heard in the stories. This allowed for the determination of who spoke to the audience and whose experiences were hushed. If a quote from a source appeared in an article, or if the article said that someone "said" or

"told" anything to the newspapers, the source was coded. IPV articles regarding legal issues were most likely to offer material from at least one source, with 10 law-related articles quoting at least one source. As shown in table 4, the most common sources in publications regarding legal issues were law enforcement authorities (n=10), victims (n=4), police (n=6) and perpetrators (n=2). It is worth noting that in publications regarding legal issues and court cases, only once were victims heard. If the piece relied heavily on quotes from victims, which were frequently read out in court, victims' appearance in intimate partner violence stories was documented. Law officials, the police, victims' advocates and government officials were on average, more represented as key sources.

Table 8: The primary sources featuring in articles

Theme	Law official/ lawyer	Victim	Police	Perpetrator	Secondary victim	Victim's Advocate	Other	Researcher	Government official	Witness	Total
Court cases	4	1	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	**12**
Assistance	0	1	0	0	0	3	1	1	1	0	**7**
Other	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	1	0	0	**7**
Law changes	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	**3**
Victim's account	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**3**
Rise in IPV	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	1	**6**
IPV murder	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	3	**9**
Government funding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	**5**
Insufficient funding	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	**1**
Police response	2	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	**7**
Total	**10**	**4**	**6**	**2**	**4**	**12**	**5**	**3**	**9**	**5**	**60**

Journalists rely on official sources for information, according to the overall study of sources in all intimate partner violence articles. Although victims' advocates were the

most often cited source, (n=12), the content analysis revealed that Kenyan newspaper reporters and editors also sought information from government officials (n=9), law enforcement officials (n=10), and police (n=6). In contrast to previous studies, victims' advocates were more represented in IPV publications covered in this study. Victims as sources were under-represented, with only four appearances. The discussion chapter will explain this depiction further. However, the results demonstrate that mainstream Kenyan newspaper journalists and editors cover intimate partner violence from legal perspectives. Intimate partner violence murder frames come second in the coverage but even then, many of the court cases were also about spousal deaths.

Secondary victims were sources on 4 instances. Perpetrators and victims featured twice in each case. Surprisingly, the study showed that publications about murders involving IPV carried signals that exonerated perpetrators. According to the content analysis, 21 pieces carried messages that implicitly justified offenders through explanations. Such explanations would for instance rationalize why a criminal was 'gentle'. An example is, 'neighbours were huddled in groups discussing the incident in low tones. They described the attacker as a humble man who always keeps to himself" (Koech, 2016). The narrative where the perpetrator's reliance on drugs and alcohol was used to lessen the perpetrator's responsibility for the violence was another example of perpetrator excusal in IPV murders. This was reflected in statements such as, 'her husband, who was reportedly drunk, used a piece of wood to beat her', 'most of those interviewed blamed substance abuse for the rising cases of intimate partner violence in the country' '…men are engaging in drugs that lead to such kind of violence.' or "The neighbour said that the husband spends the whole day with his

boys…and drink cheap liquor and chew miraa or muguka. Then when he gets home, he would argue with his wife which later results to the domestic abuse."

Similarly, intimate partner violence articles tended to blame the victim for the abuse, with 8 of them doing so. Victim-blaming narratives were either attributed to the article, when lines implied that a victim had done or not done something to provoke the attack or when people quoted in the article insinuated that the victim could have been to blame due to 'failures'. They included depictions such as, "Man kills self 'for b*eing served little ugali*' Odhiambo, (2015) "Man kills wife *for returning home late* after Christmas party" (*Monitor*, 2017). A number of articles also attributed the violence to failure to perform certain "wifely" duties such as *giving birth*, *cooking* and generally taking care of the husband at home. Failure to perform these duties arguably led to some husbands resorting to violence. An article in *The Standard* on July 17, 2018 read, "Woman loses hand over being barren" (Omoro, 2018). It had the lead reading, "a 22-year-old woman lost her hand after her husband, said to have accused her of infidelity and barrenness, attacked her". Based on these, one would have concluded, 'the victim might probably have averted being assaulted'. Perhaps, it was possible that what was categorized as a victim-blaming narrative was dependent on the researcher's biased opinion of what comprised victim blaming. This might be construed as a research limitation. But when classifying such narratives, the researcher was keen to use good judgement in following the criteria outlined in the codebook.

4.1.5 Representation of victims' injuries

This section looks into how intimate partner violence-related injuries were represented by the mainstream newspapers. Since physical traumas from IPV occurrences can be deadly, the description of the most heinous aspects of IPV offences can sensationalise

the reports (Vives-Cases et al., 2009). As a result, it was important to examine whether mainstream newspapers used frames that depicted victim's injuries and how they were sustained (see table 9).

Table 9: Mentions of victims' injuries and victim-blaming in the three newspapers

Publication	Victim's injuries	%	Non-explicit victim-blaming	%	Total
Daily Nation	6	19	9	28	32
Standard	4	27	7	39	23
The Star	4	17	6	40	15
Total	**14**	**20**	**22**	**31.4**	**70**

In the analysis, 14 stories, or 20% of all articles, detailed a victim's injuries. By percentage, the injuries of a victim were covered by *The Standard* were more than the other two newspapers. 27% (n=4) articles in *The Standard* mentioned victim injuries. The same was true in 19% of *Daily Nation* news (n=6) and 17% in The *Star* (n=4). Further, more than any other type, news pieces focused on victims' injuries (n=51). In contrast, only five times were injuries mentioned in feature articles. The newspapers frequently included exact details of victims' injuries, including where and how many times they occurred. According to these accounts, a victim was "stabbed in the stomach," suffered "gushing wounds" from "blunt force injuries," and had been "slashed severally." One headline read, "Man kills wife by stabbing her 20 times after domestic dispute," (Hajir, 2019). Victim statements were the second most popular form of representing victims' injuries. The victims' accounts in the stories detailed horrifying details about how they "were beaten with a club until it broke," "how objects had been inserted in her private parts" or "beaten with a gas cylinder to a point

that she lost consciousness." Victims' recollections of how they were mistreated and the damages they sustained were also represented in some articles.

4.1.6 Representation of intimate partner violence victims

The content analysis also examined how IPV victims were represented. In chapter two where the review discusses the impact of blaming the victims of IPV, advocates explain that blaming the victim and excusing the perpetrator hinders efforts to address violence in relationships (Berns, 2004; Carratala, 2016; Gadd et al., 2014; McGee, 2005). Therefore, it was crucial to analyse how mainstream newspaper reporters and editors portrayed victims of abuse to assess the newspapers' ability to set the tone for constructive IPV reporting that would be helpful to victims instead of hampering their efforts to seek help. This study therefore, investigated whether or not mainstream Kenyan newspapers engage in narratives that place the blame for the crime on the victim or excuse the perpetrator. The results are presented in table 10.

Table 10: Non-explicit victim blaming and perpetrator excusal

Victim blaming				
	Daily Nation	*The Standard*	*The Star*	Total
Non-explicit	9	6	7	22
%	*41*	*27*	*32*	*100*
Total	**9**	**6**	**7**	**22**
%	*41*	*27*	*32*	*100*
Excusing perpetrator				
Non-explicit	13	7	9	29
%	*45*	*24*	*31*	*100*
Explicit	0	2	0	2
%	*0*	*100*	*0*	*100*
Acting in self-defense	2	1	2	4
%	*25*	*25*	*50*	*100*
Total	**15**	**8**	**11**	**34**
%	*44*	*24*	*32*	*100*

Non-explicit victim blaming was more prevalent with 22 articles implying the violence was somehow warranted. Those frames showed that the victims had either initiated contact with the perpetrator, had an affair or had severed the relationship thereby angering the abuser. Non-explicit victim-blaming frames were also coded when the victim's behavior was under scrutiny. An example of such a frame was a claim that the victim was psychologically abusive. Non-explicit victim blaming frames either occurred in quotes from sources, such as this one from a perpetrator: "" she always hurt me emotionally…" However, the narratives were also encapsulated in journalists' reporting. An example of such reporting was, "Migori woman's hand chopped off for overstaying at a funeral" (Kingwara, 2018). Non- explicit victim blaming was more common in *The Daily Nation* where 41 percent (n=9) articles non-explicitly insinuated that the victims were to blame for the violence while 27 per cent (n=6) articles of *The Standard* articles did the same. Articles from *The Star* accounted for 32 per cent of the blame-leaning articles. Most non-explicit victim blaming narratives were evident in news articles, representing 86 per cent (n=19). In comparison, non-explicit victim blaming was identified in nine per cent (n=2) feature articles, and five per cent (n=1) opinion pieces. The sources in victim-blaming and excusal of perpetrators was also tabulated (table11).

Table 11: The sources in victim-blaming and perpetrator excusing articles

	Perpetrator excusing				Victim blaming
Source	Explicit	Non-Explicit	Perpetrator acted in self-defence	Total	Non-explicit
Law official	0	7	2	9	6
%	*0*	*78*	*22*	*100*	*100*
Victim	0	4	1	5	5
%	*0*	*80*	*20*	*100*	*100*
Perpetrator	1	4	2	7	4
%	*14*	*57*	*29*	*100*	*100*
Secondary victim	0	3	0	3	2
%	*0*	*100*	*0*	*100*	*100*
Police	0	2	0	2	1
%	*0*	*100*	*0*	*100*	*100*
Other	0	4	0	4	1
%	*0*	*100*	*0*	*100*	*100*
Victim's advocate	0	1	1	2	1
%	*0*	*50*	*50*	*100*	*100*
Researchers	0	1	0	1	1
%	*0*	*100*	*0*	*100*	*100*
Govt. official	0	2	0	2	1
%	*0*	*100*	*0*	*100*	*100*
Witness	0	1	0	1	1
%	0	100	0	100	100
Total	**1**	**29**	**6**	**36**	**23**
Total %	*2.78*	*80.56*	*16.66*	*100*	*100*

Table 11 presents the sources that were represented in articles that blamed the victim. Law officials 9 featured the most in such articles followed by victims 5, perpetrators 7 and secondary victims 3 and others 4. The content analysis also reveals that longer articles carried more explicit victim-blaming frames. Over half of the articles 16, that

entailed victim-blaming messages had 500 or more words. Therefore, longer articles were more likely to blame the victim.

In the previous section, mainstream Kenyan newspapers were seen as inadvertently blaming IPV victims. In this context, it was also crucial to look at how perpetrators were treated by the newspapers. While according to the content analysis no publications directly condemned the victim, one piece from *The Standard* openly exonerated the perpetrator. The headline reads, "Naftali is a calm person- mother of man who hacked Ivy Wangechi with an axe speaks out" (Kejitan, 2019). The article continues,

> …the mother to…the man accused of killing Moi University student…, has revealed her son was always calm and she is surprised that he was behind the heinous act.

In the case quoted above, the newspaper ran a narrative with interview excerpts where the perpetrator's parents depicted him as a "polite" and "harmless" person. The newspaper depiction, therefore, attempted to rationalize the action of the perpetrator. This study indicates that abused people might sometimes become abusers. As a result, the study categorised cases where a victim of abuse retaliated by abusing the perpetrator as an 'acting in self-defense' frame. The culprit was only categorized as acting in self-defense if the court had concluded that this was the case. For example, such frames asserted that the perpetrator had been a long-term victim of intimate partner violence or that the victim had wished to murder the offender. In six of the stories, the perpetrator acted in self-defense. While one article hinted that a perpetrator's violent activities were justified, the other 29 contained subtle, non-explicit implications that the offender was being excused.

The perpetrator excusing frame, like victim-blaming frames, featured most frequently in reporting based on legal and court cases (7), as seen in Table 12. It's worth noting that the most common theme in intimate partner violence articles, legal cases, and court proceedings were also the most likely to include frames like victim blaming and perpetrator excuses, that are unhelpful to constructive coverage of IPV. Furthermore, perpetrator excusing frames appeared more frequently in longer stories, similar to victim blaming. Half of the articles (18) that exonerated the offender had 350 words or more. A comparison of the perpetrator excusing frames to victim-blaming narratives found a similar pattern. Excusing the perpetrator is, therefore, evident in the coverage of IPV by mainstream newspapers in Kenya.

Table 12: The main themes that excuse the perpetrator in the three newspapers

Perpetrator excusing themes	Daily Nation	The Standard	The Star	Total
Legal matters/court cases	3	3	1	7
%	43	43	14	100
Reference to assistance	2	1	1	4
%	50	25	25	0
Other	1	1	1	3
%	33.3	33.3	33.3	100
Law changes	1	0	0	1
%	100	0	0	100
Victim's account	1	0	0	1
%	100	0	0	100
Rise in IPV	2	1	1	4
%	50	25	25	100
IPV murder	3	2	1	6
%	50	33.3	16.7	100
Police responding to IPV	2	1	1	4
%	50	25	25	100
Government funding	1	1	0	2
%	50	50	0	100
Insufficient funding	1	0	0	1
%	100	0	0	100
Authorities failing to help	1	1	0	2
%	50	50	0	100
Nowhere to go	1	0	0	1
%	100	0	0	100
Total	**19**	**11**	**6**	**36**
Total %	**52.8**	**30.6**	**16.6**	**100**

This section of the chapter shows that blaming victims and perpetrator excusal are both evident in over half of the articles published by mainstream newspapers in Kenya, much of it happening in court reports albeit not necessarily explicitly. The section tabled some of the narratives and language used in newspaper reports to imply that the perpetrator's actions were somehow justified or that the victim was complicit in the abuse. Following such revelations, it was critical then to look at how constructive messages were conveyed in newspaper representation of IPV.

4.1.7 Representation through constructive messaging

The content analysis also looked at the range of messages that could be regarded to have the constructive potential to represent wider meanings of intimate partner violence as a social issue. This was done in order to address the third study question, 'Which wider meanings emerge from the ways in which IPV is represented?" see table 13.

Table 13: The types and themes of articles having constructive messages

Theme	News	Feature	Opinion	Other	Total
Reference to assistance	9	3	1	0	13
%	69	23	8	0	100
Legal matters/court cases	3	1	0	0	4
%	75	25	0	0	100
Other	2	1	0	0	3
%	67	33	0	0	100
Victim's account	2	1	0	0	3
%	67	33	0	0	100
Law changes	2	0	0	0	2
%	100	0	0	0	100
IPV murder	1	0	0	0	1
%	100	0	0	0	100
Rise in IPV	1	0	0	0	1
%	100	0	0	0	100
Government funding	1	0	0	0	1
%	100	0	0	0	100
Vigil/tribute	1	0	0	0	1
%	100	0	0	0	100
Total	**22**	**6**	**1**	**0**	**29**
Total %	**76**	**20.6**	**3.4**	**0**	**100**

According to the findings, 29 articles communicated constructive IPV messages, making it the second most covered theme in total reporting IPV by mainstream newspapers in Kenya. Phone numbers and information on counseling programs were among the articles with positive messages, as were statements praising a victim's bravery or quotes from victims urging other survivors to seek treatment. Victims

"need to know they're not alone," "need to walk away" or "reach out to someone," according to such framing. News items contained more constructive messages than features, accounting for 22 and 6 constructive frames, respectively, according to the findings. As shown in Table 13, articles about assistance had the largest number of constructive messages (13) as expected. However, helpful sentiments were also found in publications focusing on legal issues and court proceedings (4), as well as victim narratives (3).

4.2 Factors accounting for the representation of intimate partner violence

Constructive representation of intimate partner violence can help shatter myths and prejudices about the crime and pave the way for people who have been abused to get the care they need. In the current study, the participants stated that they try to communicate constructive messages in reporting IPV. Many said to have done so by supplying contact information for helplines and refuge services. Nonetheless, the majority of interviewees admitted the difficulties in explaining the broader concerns surrounding IPV, such as why it occurs, how to identify it, and how to prevent it. Analysis of data showed nevertheless that mainstream newspaper representation of IPV is shaped by a number of factors:

The results of semi-structured interviews with 12 mainstream Kenyan newspaper editors and reporters are presented in this segment. From each of the three newspapers, (*The Daily Nation*, *The Standard*, and *The Star),* one editor and three reporters were interviewed about the factors to which they attributed the ways in which mainstream newspapers represented intimate partner violence, as well as what prompted them to report on the topic in a particular way, as mentioned earlier. The interview section builds on the findings of the content analysis to look into the

decisions that go into covering intimate partner violence murders, victims of abuse, and constructive coverage. The replies of the interviews are then analyzed in order to answer the three research questions.

The research identified the most prominent trends in intimate partner violence representation, as well as the rationale behind newspaper framing, the prevalence of the topic in the newspaper agenda, and the gatekeeping practices of mainstream newspaper reporters and editors, based on semi-structured interviews.

The current study examined ways in which intimate partner violence news has been represented in mainstream Kenyan newspapers from 2016 to 2020. The coverage is expanded, as previously stated and peaked in 2020. During their tenure in the media, the reporters and editors were asked about the amount of intimate partner violence coverage they had seen. The volume had increased in the "past couple of years," according to the editors and journalists interviewed. From the interviews, it was apparent there had been a shift in the way the media represented intimate partner violence as a whole, and the issue was now regarded as seriously as any other crime.

4.2.1 Rise in coverage of intimate partner violence

The current study examined changes in IPV news coverage over a five-year period in the major newspapers. As was previously mentioned, the coverage grew and peaked in 2020. Several Kenyan journalists and editors were interviewed on the volume of IPV reporting they encountered during their careers in the media. A majority of the editors and journalists observed that the volume had risen in the "past few years". The interviewees indicated that there had been a change in how the media as a whole covered IPV and that the problem was now taken as seriously as any other crime.

According to one of the editors (*Daily Nation*), who had been a journalist for 15 years Intimate partner violence had been more prevalent in the media lately:

> *I believe it is being handled much more delicately and differently than it may have been in the past* (DN ed1, personal communication, February 20, 2021).

This idea was shared by several interviewees, with one editor (*The Standard*) remarking that it was "very ubiquitous compared to maybe a few years ago." However, perceptions on when the coverage began to change differed, with another editor (*The Star*) claiming that the transition began roughly five years ago:

> *I believe there has been a significant change in the recognition that intimate partner violence is a major problem during the last five or so years* (SR ed1, personal communication, February 20, 2021).

On the other hand, SD rep1 interviewed on February 20, 2021 said the change was more recent:

> *Intimate partner abuse has gotten a lot of attention recently, especially in the previous 12 to 24 months.*

While most journalists and editors thought that coverage had improved, others pointed out that the mainstream newspapers still had a long way to go in terms of capturing the full scope of the problem. The current coverage, according to the participants, is intermittent at times but "getting better." A number of journalists observed that mainstream newspapers portrayed the crisis as "simply a domestic" issue, and that they might do more to convey the scope and gravity of the problem.

Reporters and editors indicated that the way newspapers represented intimate partner violence had evolved, from rarely covering it to seeing it as a social issue. In fact, two editors recalled a time, early in their career, when serving as a journalist in the same media house, their editors told them not to report intimate partner violence because "it was not that important." The editors had mixed sentiments about such an approach, as seen in the interviews. They recalled being deeply startled by a graphic intimate partner violence episodes and strongly believing that the public should have been informed, but their editors disagreed.

Another reporter said:

> *If you heard that it was a domestic altercation, you might not be interested because it's more shocking when someone who isn't known to the perpetrator is allegedly attacked* (DN rep1, personal communication, February 20, 2021).

Then, intimate partner violence was not commonly given considerable, if any, news coverage, according to respondents. As a result, it was critical to explore why it became a newsworthy topic (see Chapter 5) and what sparked the shift in perceptions. How did intimate partner violence, for instance, get to be a public rather than a personal problem?

Intimate partner violence was not considered as a newsworthy topic for decades, according to the interviews with reporters and editors. However, a closer look reveals that it had likewise been hidden owing to inaccessibility. Intimate partner violence, according to the interviewees, goes unreported because it occurs in a private setting, such as a home, where reporters and editors have little access. They said that there were insufficient reputable sources to alert media of an intimate partner violence

incident. Stranger attacks, on the other hand, were very visible, occurred in public, and were frequently witnessed. Furthermore, due of their visibility, members of the public were more offended by them, afraid that if they were in the wrong place at the wrong moment, they would become a victim of a public crime. As one editor (*The Standard*) put it, the question for reporters and editors was whether the audience would be "outraged":

> *Since intimate partner violence was probably a kind of an unspoken thing for a long time, and it happened in a house, the more outrageous cases are likely to grab public attention* (SD ed 1, personal communication, February 22, 2021).

According to another reporter supporting this view, dramatic crimes tend to get more attention:

> *Intimate partner violence, I believe, has a history of being perceived as a private concern because it occurs within the house... an incident that would generally receive a lot of attention is one that occurs in a public location, which is, I guess, a little more shocking* (SD rep2, personal communication, February 22, 2021).

Interviews revealed that journalists and editors believe intimate partner violence had been under-reported for decades because it was not being perceived as a threat to the wider community in the same way that stranger attacks were. However, every now and then, an intimate partner violence story emerged that shocked the public. When asked what they thought was most important in promoting change in coverage, journalists and editors pointed out that more cases were reported following the outbreak of Covid-19 and the subsequent containment measures:

The media in Kenya typically portrays a situation in which gender-based violence is on the rise. During this Covid-19 period, however, there are more cases than usual that draw our attention. Probably, more research is needed to figure out what's causing the increase (SD rep 3, personal communication, February 22, 2021).

Another participant said:

But even before Covid-19, I think that intimate partner violence happened a lot but following the outbreak, there have been national and international discourses around the issue. Our paper has even dedicated a segment to cover pandemic-related issues including intimate partner violence (DN rep 2, personal communication, February 20, 2021).

4.2.2 Representation of intimate partner violence murders

Intimate partner violence cases involving a murder aspect were considered as the most influential in focusing media attention on the issue by journalists and editors in the previous section. The media, as noted in Chapter 2, is frequently chastised for sensationalized and murder-oriented criminal reportage (Chermak 1995; Wright 2015). Interviews with reporters and editors were performed to explain these choices, based on the content analysis results (see Chapter 5) that show mainstream Kenyan newspapers rely on murder frames to represent intimate partner violence. Journalists and editors claimed they lacked the resources to cover all intimate partner abuse instances, which they claimed were numerous. As a result, a selection had to be made. Reporters and editors, they claim, prefer more extreme, uncommon incidents that would shock the audience and catch their attention, resulting in increased

readership for the newspapers. As shown in the previous section, participants agreed that intimate partner violence coverage had risen in recent years. Many responses, on the other hand, said that what was revealed in the newspapers was only the "tip of the iceberg," and that most cases of abuse were not reported due to time restrictions. As one reporter put it:

> *I don't think people realize how many individuals are killed as a result of intimate partner violence. What is reported is just the tip of the iceberg* (SR rep1, personal communication, February 19, 2021)

Many participants were of the opinion that murder reporting is prioritized because it contains all of the ingredients that create a newsworthy and spectacular narrative, as well as because "violence sells." Reporters and editors claimed that the newspapers chose the most startling murder stories to report more extensively because they had an uncommon element to them:

> *Intimate partner violence murders are likely to receive more attention in the media and promote sales since they are the most severe and extreme incidents* (SR rep2, February 19, 2021).

Participants also stated that while deciding what to publish and what not to present, journalists and editors examine not just what the readership wants to read, but also what is feasible to report. Whatever information is accessible and who is prepared to be quoted as providing that information determines whether or not an event becomes IPV news. As a result, reporters and editors are reliant on who will be involved in the story's creation. Murder stories, according to the interviewees, are chosen because reporters have evidence of a specific occurrence and can, in a timely, manner, report

on it. In the end, journalists and editors stated that they could more easily cover intimate partner violence murders since there was concrete evidence that something had occurred. As one editor (*SR ed 1*) put it:

> *We largely react to situations; when something sensational occurs, it's usually reported.*

Murder cases, according to reporters and editors, are frequently followed by a press conference or a court case, allowing journalists to attend a scheduled event where reputable sources, such as law enforcement and police, would supply accurate information. Many newspaper outlets, according to one editor, found it easier to cover court stories since they had reporters who had specialised in reporting crimes and who often attended court hearings. According to one editor, IPV reporting is ultimately determined by commercial demands and "what is practicable" to cover with the resources available:

> *It's not taxing to report a murder case because you go to court or the cops have a press conference and release a photo. When you have a court reporter on hand to cover landmark court stories, that's how those cases are frequently reported* (SD ed1, February 22,2021).

While the majority of reporters and editors felt that intimate partner violence deaths are frequently covered by the media, one journalist differed. He observed that the media are increasingly covering different aspects of intimate partner violence, not simply murders:

> *Different sorts of intimate partner abuse that occur within relationships, as*
> *well as physical violence, are receiving a lot more coverage currently* (DN
> rep3, personal communication, February 20, 2021).

In sum, the majority of journalists and editors agree that in intimate partner violence reporting, the newspapers focus primarily on extreme cases and murder aspects, both because these articles are expected to shock the audience and help propel their interest in the story and also because such stories are easier to access. Newspaper establishments must work within their financial constraints and often rely on reporters specialised in crime reports cover IPV. While journalists were formerly encouraged to ignore IPV, the interviews with reporters and editors show that they are now reporting on the issue more extensively.

The media's habitual focus on murder stories risks trivializing IPV (see Chapter 2). The interviewees were nearly unanimous that newspapers were frequently sensational in IPV coverage in order to pique reader attention. In the modern news scene, where news consumers have unfettered access to information, the need to win over readers is likely to be even more prevalent. As a result, as one editor (*Daily Nation*) put it, media outlets must pick the most horrendous portions of the narrative in order to differentiate their reporting from that of other publications covering the same topic. The editor stated that in order to stay competitive, it is necessary to capture the attention of readers, and one method to do so is to make the article sensational:

> *IPV news usually appears to be sensationalized, or something upsetting or*
> *startling, because of the captivating language used. Otherwise readers will*
> *probably be less interested. So, in order to get a reader into a story, we must*
> *consider these criteria* (DN ed1, February 20, 2021).

Whereas a number of editors and reporters think that IPV reports are sometimes sensational, they are keen to dissociate their own organizations' coverage from tabloid-style reporting. In such cases, the "other" media organizations, according to those reporters and editors, tended to sensationalize intimate partner violence:

I believe that risk has always existed in certain segments of our media organizations, particularly tabloid-like outlets (DN ed1, February 20,2021)

Another reporter (SD rep 1) said:

I believe some news outlets are guilty of this. That is not something we do.

While interviewees acknowledged that mainstream newspapers tend to be sensational in their coverage of intimate partner violence, they also stated that this trend is driven by competitiveness, the need to be current, and the need to win over readers. However, it was clear that neither reporters nor editors interviewed wanted to be associated with a newspaper outlet that did not report on IPV constructively. As a result, while mainstream newspapers sensationalize IPV incidents, reporters and editors were happy to point out that their publications did not.

Amongst the most common themes that emerged from the interviews was that reporters and editors are most worried about how and where they may get information for articles regarding intimate partner violence. It became clear that IPV coverage was often hampered by a lack of access to trustworthy sources or sources willing to be interviewed. While the importance of the case and the peculiar aspects of it assist interviewers to determine whether or not to cover an incident, the next challenge is persuading them to want to lend their face or comments to the subject. Those who are

used to dealing with media enquiries are usually more willing to be cited. As a result, most editors and reporters stated the police provided the bulk of IPV information:

> *A direct or court report about an incident, the police are usually the major sources of information.* (DN rep 1, February 20,2021).

DN rep 3 said:

> *Firsthand accounts when there are deaths, it is usually often the police who are called first, then the family, and last, when there is a surge of public outrage, politicians.*

Interviewing police sources, on the other hand, had its challenges. According to participants, they rely on police for information, but the police officers appeared to be collaborative because of the media's ability to reach the masses. According to one editor, their reporting was contingent on "how the cops deal with these incidents." They claimed that in the event of a stranger attack, authorities would need to encourage others to disclose information. However, in intimate partner violence instances, the suspect was frequently known to the police. Therefore, it meant that the police didn't have to alert the media of the incident in order to assist the public in identifying any perpetrators or victims:

> *When a crime occurs in a home, it's a contained environment, and they're not concerned about more attacks on individuals, it doesn't become a major topic for them* (SR rep3, personal communication, February 19, 2021).

Whereas the first sources of breaking IPV news are police and other authorities, victims are used as sources for articles that describe the social phenomena of intimate

partner violence and why it occurs. Many writers and editors stated that speaking with an IPV victim was their first choice in order to further humanize story:

> *Wherever practical and suitable, I believe it is always beneficial for victims to tell their personal story* (DN ed 1, February 20, 2021).

The counterpart at The Star observed that:

> *In an article about intimate partner violence, I believe it is critical to provide the victim's perspective. Having a personal storyline in there instead of statistics or laws adds a human touch* (SR ed 1, February 19, 2021).

While most writers and editors wish they could interview victims for every IPV article they write, such sources are difficult to come by. From the interviews, it was apparent that victims were commonly reluctant to participate to a storyline. As one reporter (SR rep2) put it:

> *Frequently, they do not wish to, or may make a statement through their lawyers or something in lieu of an interview, which is perfectly okay.*

Some participants, alternatively, indicated they that the media industry in Kenya is dominated by men hence some of the voices that favour the empowerment of women might be subdued:

> *The media industry is a man's world. Decision making on the representation of issues that affect women such as IPV may suffer on this account since female journalists tend to be excluded from key gatekeeping areas such as sub-editing* (DN ed1, February 20, 2021).

4.2.3 Legal imperatives

Legal imperatives, according to the respondents, constrain IPV crime reporting as "domestic" cases:

> *In a court report, you can only tell so much about what's going on in the courtroom. It is not your job to make a broad statement about intimate partner violence* (SR rep2, February 19, 2021).

Another participant observed:

> *Giving background about the problem of intimate partner violence is like to believing someone is guilty before they've been proved guilty, which could be problematic legally speaking* (SD rep3, February 22, 2021).

According to one reporter, being bound by legal rules means that the public is not always given the complete picture right away:

> *Even if the spouse has been prosecuted, they have yet to be convicted, so we must be cautious about the amount of context we provide in stories* (SR rep3, February 19, 2021).

One of the most basic ways to provide context on the size and type of intimate partner abuse, according to some interviewees, is to include data about the crime in articles. As one editor put it, this could be counterproductive to addressing the issue's complexity and risk trivializing the crime:

> *Stats can be useful, but numbers alone are not enough, and they don't necessarily provide a clear picture of the issue in some cases* (DN ed1, February 20, 2021)

Information about where victims can get assistance, according to journalists and editors, is a crucial instrument in mitigating intimate partner abuse. Although journalists and editors would prefer to provide as much information as possible on the cases, they are bound by legal restrictions. Many reporters and editors are still frustrated that they are unable to fulfill their responsibility of informing the public and producing coverage that is beneficial to the victims. The next section investigates whether mainstream newspaper reporters and editors believe that guidelines on intimate partner violence reporting might benefit them by removing some of the barriers to coverage.

4.2.4 Lack of intimate partner violence reporting guidelines

Participants were asked if they thought standard guidelines on how to report intimate partner violence would help improve coverage. Guidelines, as mentioned throughout the study, can be a helpful tool for enhancing reporting processes, but only if they are used (Sutherland et al., 2017). As a result, interviewees were asked not just if they thought newspaper reporting-specific standards would be beneficial, but also what those guidelines should entail. Some participants explained they already followed the existing procedures for dealing with intimate partner abuse. However, subsequent probing revealed that there was ambiguity about what guidelines were in place inside an organization, particularly among reporters from the same publishing houses. For example, coming from the same publishing house, an editor and a journalist took contradictory positions on whether or not there were internal guidelines for covering intimate partner violence, with one reporter saying:

> *I believe I have it stored in my folders* (SR rep 3, personal communication, February 19, 2021).

However, the editor (SR ed1) of the same organization stated that there was none:

> *There are no tailor-made guidelines for reporting intimate partner violence. Despite the attention given to some feminist issues such as violence against women, the issue occupies only a marginal and sometimes optional place in the curricula. The subtle message being reinforced is, women's issues are not a priority.*

Across the board, there was a sense of apprehension. Many reporters were unsure whether their organizations had guidelines. They, however, indicated they followed other general industry codes, such as those published by the Media Council of Kenya, as well as broader guidelines contained in national laws. When asked whether the media should establish specific guidelines on how to report on intimate partner violence, responses were mixed. Over half of the interviewees (9) said yes, and one said it "wouldn't harm" to have one:

> *Any kind of standards will help; if it's a series of distinct points, that's best practice... I believe that all journalists would be interested* (DN rep 2, February 20, 2021).

Similar sentiments were expressed by another participant:

> *It's likely that we'll require it. I don't believe my organization is doing a horrible job but I believe they would not ignore the guidelines* (SR rep1, February 19, 2021).

When asked what kind of direction reporters and editors required, some stated it would be helpful if the advice came from victims' advocates and practitioners, and that the guidelines could look at wording, language use, and legal guidelines:

It should definitely include some guidance from individuals who work in the industry, such as intimate partner violence victim support groups and journalists, on how to go about doing it in the most practical way (SD ed1, February 22, 2021).

This section demonstrates that reporters and editors are dedicated to provide impactful coverage of intimate partner violence, but are constrained by the challenges of reporting on sensitive topics, such as a lack of credible sources and the need to suppress material owing to legal proceedings.

The current study looked into the factors accounting for the ways in which intimate partner violence was represented with the goal of understanding how to better represent the subject, even under the constraints outlined above. While some reporters were of the view that the media industry already had guidelines on which media workers could rely, the general lack of clarity about what those guidelines were and whether the newspapers investigated in this study had them highlights the need for more education about more constructive reporting and how that knowledge could be accessed.

4.2.5 Intimate partner violence reporting routines

Most reporters and editors replied 'no' when asked if they followed any routine protocols while covering intimate partner violence:

No, we'd do it the same way we'd do it with anything. I believe we publish truthful information that is in the public interest (DN rep1, February 20, 2021).

This was reinforced by another participant who said:

> *There aren't any procedures unique to IPV that come to mind. We treat it like*
>
> *any other news* (SR rep1, February 19, 2021).

The interviewees, on the other hand, were unsure what processes and routines in reporting practices meant. Follow-up inquiries revealed that one of the more typical reporting tactics utilized by reporters and editors was running intimate partner violence copy past the legal desk. As one editor put it:

> *It's an inevitability that every story must pass the legal test. That would be the*
>
> *most important factor* (SR ed1, February 19, 2021).

Overall, interviewees stated that they were attempting to avoid errors in their reporting by claiming they double-checked facts in intimate partner violence stories before publishing them. That, however, could come at the cost of not being able to 'break' stories and, as a result, risking falling behind other news organizations. However, the majority of interviewees stated the scoop didn't matter because "doing it right" was more important than being the first to report an IPV story:

> *A scoop is certainly crucial, but being correct is even more crucial. It's nice to*
>
> *break stories, and it's good to have fresh news, but in situations like this,*
>
> *where there's sensitive news and all, we don't rush things* (DN ed1, February
>
> 20, 2021).

One participant, however, indicated that breaking intimate partner violence news was important. That newspapers excelled at publishing not only daily content but also online as soon as it was accessed. Breaking news, according to this participant was significant, in maintaining a competitive edge especially online:

> *You don't want to publish a story day after everyone else is done with it because it will be useless. It's significant because breaking news is a big part of our business, and it's important to us as a news organization, and I believe it's also important to our audience* (SD ed1, February 22, 2021).

Furthermore, practically every interviewee stated that their organization's news editors made the final decision regarding which IPV news to cover and how to report it. Despite the fact that their thoughts were heard, one reporter stated that their editor had the final decision on whether or not to report on a case:

> *Even if I had the concept, I wouldn't be the one to make the final call on whether or not to go ahead with it* (DN rep3, personal communication, February 20, 2021).

Although another participant observed that the pressure to deliver news dilutes ideal IPV representations:

> *I believe the continual pressure to produce news usually leaves little room for substantive coverage of IPV* (SR rep1, February 19, 2021).

The results of the interviews show that the intricate process of covering IPV presents a constant challenge for mainstream newspaper reporters. In addition to the normal demands that journalists encounter, such as verifying sources, finding information, and persuading interviewees to participate in stories, reporters and editors have a new set of challenges before they can confidently and professionally publish a story about intimate partner violence. Before drafting an article, many interviewees consult victims to ensure that they are comfortable. The journalists and editors interviewed showed that they were familiar with some of the long term impacts of inaccurate

IPV reporting, stating that they take the time to fact-check their stories since they know that once they are published, they remain 'out there forever.' Reporters and editors must manage market desire to be the first to publish the story while ensuring all facts are confirmed and proper actions are taken to safeguard a victim's privacy to mitigate any risks and avoid consequences for victims of intimate partner violence.

4.3 Emerging wider meanings from the ways intimate partner violence presented

4.3.1 Victim blaming

Mainstream media have been chastised for blaming victims by insinuating that they are somewhat to blame for the crime (Dragiewicz et al., 2018; Rao, 2014). In this study, it was a top concern for mainstream Kenyan newspaper reporters and editors to ensure that victims were not blamed for the violence. In the interviews, all participants observed that they actively avoided victim blaming, and the assistance their story could give to the victim was at the core of their journalism. When publishing news on an IPV occurrence, some respondents claimed they would keep in mind that the victim and those close to them would read the narrative. Some participants claimed they often advised survivors about the potential consequences of media exposure before the interview:

> *Part of that dialogue would be about whether or not we should be identifying you, whether or not doing so poses a risk...* (SR ed1 February 19, 2021).

While one reporter acknowledged a risk associated with IPV coverage (see above), another stated that she would contact the victim after the article was posted to ensure that the victim was secure:

I'll make certain they get enough support. And I will make arrangements for whatever they need so that their situation is not worsened (SD rep1, February 22, 2021).

Despite the fact that journalists and reporters were eager to clarify the actions they take to secure the victim's safety after interviews, some participants felt that many media outlets were insensitive while covering victims' suffering. Some journalists and editors even claimed that 'some other' outlets in the industry were sometimes involved in victim blame. In all, participants were quick to dissociate themselves and their organizations from any negative coverage, such as direct victim blaming. They claimed that certain organizations' reporting can convey messages that blamed the victim, but not theirs. More crucially, journalists and editors stressed that if the victim was blamed by mainstream newspapers, it was not on purpose, but rather as a result of "shoddy" reporting.

According to one editor (*Daily Nation*), there was both "subtle victim blaming" and "indirect victim blaming" in IPV news reporting:

I believe there is a lot more subliminal blaming of female victims. This probably stems from cultural expectations of women as wives, mothers and housekeepers for men and depictions of their being punished by violence for failing in these domains insinuate that male perpetrators are not to blame for the violence (DN ed1, February 20, 2021).

The majority of participants, on the other hand, believed the media had moved on from blaming IPV victims and that it was no longer an issue:

If there exists victim blaming on intimate partner violence stories in reputable mainstream media in 2020, I would be quite astonished. To be honest, I don't think anyone could get away with that (SD ed1, February 22, 2021).

As previously stated, while it is probable that mainstream newspapers as a whole sometimes blamed the victim for the murder, several respondents stated that their organization did not. DN ed1 observed:

Some reporting, I believe, could do this. I've tried really hard not to do that in intimate partner violence stories I've worked on.

Mainstream newspaper reporters and editors believe that their news outlets make an attempt to avoid blaming the victim in intimate partner violence coverage. They also point out that such attempts are successful and lead to the collapse of victim-blaming narratives. However, subsequent probing indicated that victim blaming may still occur on occasion on select media platforms, according to journalists and editors. They assert, however, that their organization is not to blame. The reportage would be deemed "shoddy" if it contained implicit undertones of victim blaming. In this context, it was critical to investigate how such poor reporting practices that could lead to victims being held liable could be mitigated through mainstream newspaper representation of IPV in Kenya. The next chapter delves into this.

4.3.2 Perpetuation of myths and stereotypes

While victim-blaming storylines are generally easy to spot in the media, some trends are more difficult to spot. The prevalence of myths and stereotypes is one such phenomenon. There is no simple description for an intimate partner violence myth, therefore determining what defines a myth or stereotype is subjective. Furthermore,

declaring anything to be a myth can be influenced by the researcher's own views on IPV. To prevent bias, the researcher counterbalanced the conclusion that myths stereotypes were existent in IPV stories through interviews, after defining what was thought to be myths during the content analysis phase. The findings suggest that, while journalists and editors believe the mainstream newspapers have avoided intentionally blaming IPV victims for the violence, stereotypes and beliefs linked with reporting are more difficult to dispel. Reporters, according to many interviewees, unconsciously propagate beliefs and stereotypes about intimate partner abuse, which are counterproductive in the fight against it. When asked to suggest any specific myths propagated by the media, a few people highlighted the belief that intimate partner violence exclusively happens in low-income households:

> *There was a perception that only the exceedingly wealthy wouldn't engage in such activities. For some time, people assumed that intimate partner violence primarily occurred in low-income communities, among people who abuse drugs and alcohol, and so on* (SD ed1, February 22, 2021).

Another participant observed:

> *Many IPV victims are portrayed primarily as housewives and stereotyped as weak, vulnerable and dependent. However, I don't believe it is done on purpose* (DN rep2, 2021).

Journalists and editors also claimed that newspapers propagated illusions about intimate partner abuse taking primarily physical forms, making it more visible. One writer claimed that one of the most widespread misconceptions was that intimate partner violence could be readily diagnosed and solved if it was discovered:

> *The fact that it's easily recognized and visible, as well as the fact that it's a straightforward process, are probably the most important* (SD ed1, February 22, 2021).

Others worried about the terminology used by newspaper outlets to describe victims and perpetrators. One reporter claimed it upset her because the perpetrator was occasionally referred to as a "nice guy":

> *That's a bit of a dilemma, because anyone who kills a lady is obviously not a nice guy* (SR rep2, February 19, 2021).

Another fallacy, according to an editor, is that intimate partner violence is only committed by men, albeit this may be changing:

> *There is now so much awareness of the prevalence of intimate partner violence on men that I believe the media fraternity has been sufficiently reined in so that stereotypes of only male perpetrated hardly exist* (DN ed1, February 20, 2021).

Rao, (2014); Dragiewicz et al., (2018); Weitzer and Kubrin, (2004) have all criticized the media for blaming the victims. Many interviewees believed that previous scrutiny had aided in the improvement of today's mainstream newspaper coverage of IPV. However, the results of the content analysis reveal that victim blaming still happens in Kenya's mainstream newspapers, but it is becoming more difficult to detect. Interviews with reporters and editors demonstrate that even those reporting the IPV stories are unaware of the mainstream newspapers' subtle tendency to blame the victim. While most journalists and editors dismiss allegations that the mainstream newspapers blame the victim, a few could cite examples of another type of ineffectual

coverage, which encompasses myths and stereotypes such as IPV being only reported in economically disadvantaged communities and in physical forms. The mainstream newspaper usage of terminology while reporting on intimate partner violence was also seen as a form of perpetuating IPV stereotypes. Most reporters and editors dismissed assertions that the mainstream press engages in victim blaming, but were more open to exploring stereotypes and myths that such media may communicate in intimate partner violence reportage. The researcher argues that there is a misalignment between the journalists' values and perceptions and the facts of the story. This could be due to a misunderstanding of some of the gender-based difficulties surrounding intimate partner violence, as well as a misdiagnosis of the causes.

4.4 Chapter summary

However, according to the journalists, it is the murder stories that pique the public's curiosity. Because the public is fascinated by murder stories, they are covered more thoroughly. More crucially, with media companies vying for the attention of their readers, they are under pressure to produce increasingly dramatic IPV content. While much of the coverage was sensational, reporters and editors believed it had not yet reached the point where it may cause moral panic. In fact, many people believe that the mainstream newspapers should cover the problem more frequently and in more depth. However, media outlets are limited in their ability to obtain sources for these articles. They claim that the majority of their information originates from the police, but that details are only provided when the authorities need to use mainstream newspapers to spread the word or obtain more information to address a murder case. Media organizations frequently lack opinions from people who have personally

experienced abuse due to limited access to victims. They have been criticized for not presenting enough information in intimate partner violence cases, although legal rules frequently prevent them from doing so. Most reporters and editors say that IPV reporting has improved and that mainstream newspapers now rarely blames the victim, but that myths and preconceptions about why and where intimate partner violence occurs still exist. To make IPV reporting more constructive, many journalists and editors indicated they sought to provide information on where to get help.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to analyse the representation of intimate partner violence by Kenya's mainstream press. In doing so, it focused on three main objectives; to analyse the nature of IPV representation, to explore wider meanings of IPV representation and to determine the factors accounting for the representation of IPV. Guided by these objectives, this chapter not only presents an overview of the summary of the major findings of the study but also the discussion, further drawing conclusions and giving recommendations and suggestions for further research.

5.1 Summary of findings

The majority of coverage of IPV focuses on individual instances, with little information about the problem's social context. Findings show that mainstream Kenyan newspapers favour the most horrendous tragic cases and use them as leverage to capture readership. The ways in which mainstream Kenyan newspapers represent IPV is not always appropriate. The reporting is largely sensational and depicts unnecessary details of a victim's injuries, which results in sensationalized coverage. Understandably, reporters and editors who write IPV news largely respond to market demands. However, while the market may be receptive to murder-centric reporting, these frames are not always the ones leading to the best solutions for they lack context around the problem.

This propensity to cover individual incidences of violence against women rather than the systemic aspects of the crime, according to Agbese, (2021) and Sutherland et al., (2019), is problematic because it moves the burden for solving the problem from society to the individual victim and abuser.

Second, journalists' and editors' reporting practices are determined on individual, routines and organisational levels. They aim to adhere to legal requirements to covey the best possible intimate partner violence representation that is sensitive to the victims and minimizes the risk of penalization. However, the tendency to focus on the unusual to attract readership in the absence of specific guidelines results in coverage that is sensational in nature and implicitly blames victims of IPV.

Third, mainstream Kenyan newspapers both blame the victim and excuse the perpetrator, even if in subtle ways. It is, however, worrisome that reporters and editors are largely unaware of this phenomenon, thinking it belongs in the past or some other media. If reporters and editors think victim blaming does not exist within their organisation, much of the phenomenon could occur at the individual gatekeeping level, where reporters and editors unintentionally convey victim- blaming frames.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 Overview of the discussion

Globally, intimate partner violence has been identified as one of the problems societies are grappling with (Ayre et al., 2016). Kenya is similarly affected. To inform better coverage, the current study investigated how mainstream Kenyan newspapers, being key in informing the public about social issues, represent IPV. In the past, research on crime has been carried out. However, fewer studies have examined how mainstream Kenyan newspapers represent the issue. Previous research suggests that

newspaper coverage of IPV in particular should be further researched in different jurisdictions. This is because of varied challenges facing reportage of IPV (Friend & Singer, 2007; Sutherland et al., 2016).

The current research attempts to find evidence about the factors influencing the representation of IPV in order to recommend how the problem can be represented in a more potent manner that addresses the issue as a social problem. Drawing from the results of content analysis and interviews with journalists and editors, this chapter discusses the implications of the representation of IPV by mainstream Kenyan newspapers. To broadly contextualize the results, previous literature is used to assess how the results in the current study compare with previous scholarly works. For instance, what this current study was able to confirm, challenge or reveal. This chapter will also apply feminist and framing theoretical frameworks to discuss why and how phenomena behind IPV representation occur. Specifically, it will examine how Kenyan journalists and editors frame IPV murders; how their gatekeeping practices impact on how victims are represented; and how they set the agenda for constructive, wider meaningful IPV messages. The analysis of interviewing and content of newspapers woven with previous literature and theoretical frameworks enables this chapter to examine how mainstream Kenyan newspapers frame IPV murders without causing moral panic. It explores the newspapers' ability to report IPV in a way that informs the public about the problem without harming victims already affected by the crime. This research also empirically examines how effective mainstream Kenyan newspapers are in representing IPV in a manner that initiates discussion in the society about how to mitigate the problem while empowering victims. Similar to previous chapters, this section responds to the three research questions:

1. In what ways do mainstream Kenyan newspapers represent IPV

2. What factors account for the representation

3. Which wider meanings emerge?

The questions will be answered using results from the interviews and content analysis, while drawing on the theoretical frameworks to place the current body of research in the context of previous studies in the field. The discussion will later act as a platform for recommendations for improved practice for reporters and editors reporting on IPV.

5.2.2 Ways in which intimate partner violence is represented

Before presenting a detailed exploration of how IPV is framed by mainstream Kenyan newspapers, one very vital observation needs to be addressed-that of higher IPV reporting by the three newspapers in the last two years of the current study. By examining the mainstream newspaper representation of IPV, this study also found evidence to suggest that the volume of reporting was significantly higher in 2019, but especially in 2020. This trend reflects the general upward trajectory assumed by forms of Gender based violence. Records from the National Police Service show that in 2018, reported GBV cases were 1,974, falling to 1,057 in 2019 while in 2020, they rose to 2,032(NCRC, 2020). In addition, the majority of journalists and editors who participated in this study observed that the content analysis reflected what they thought was mainstream media's changing attitude towards IPV news reporting. Many interviewees took the position that the topic of IPV had become more prevalent in the newspaper agenda. As one editor noted, the media has finally acknowledged that "intimate partner violence is a big issue". Drawing on both the content analysis and interview results, it could be concluded that, while years ago IPV was downplayed as an issue of importance Bullock, (2010), the mainstream Kenyan newspapers currently

acknowledge IPV crime as newsworthy topic. Presently, it is crucial to point out that the current research findings augment previous media researchers' findings shoeing that the media have been increasingly focusing on intimate partner violence (Hawley et al., 2018; Simons & Morgan, 2018). Many reporters and editors interviewed in this study reaffirmed their satisfaction with the scale of IPV reporting, particularly because they could recall a time when the media scarcely reported on the problem. The participants said in the early days of their practice, and the gatekeeping decisions by news editors resulted in a professional culture where crimes such as robbery and accidents were accorded preference over IPV, as it was perceived as 'just domestic'.

Simons and Morgan (2018) note a similar trend, observing that journalists who they interviewed had worked in newsrooms where the problem was brushed off. Findings in the current study therefore, reinforce previous studies (Hawley et al., 2018; Simons & Morgan, 2018) that show IPV reporting has increased. This is a significant finding because whereas it is known that crime is the preferred news genre of reporters and editors, IPV has not historically been a key topic in the news. IPV has remained largely underrepresented in the media (Bullock, 2007; Simons & Morgan, 2018). This perception is now changing. Media scholars have argued that the change has been ignited by society's growing readiness to embrace IPV discourses in all its complexities (Breen et al., 2017; Hawley et al., 2018). It was not possible to point out the exact moment when the mainstream newspapers began to see IPV as a big problem but this study suggests the change is only recent. Consequently, it was necessary to study what happened between 209 and 2020 that resulted in drastic change in coverage.

As pointed out, mainstream Kenyan newspapers recorded a rise in IPV reporting between 2019 and 2020, when reporting almost doubled. Every once in a while, an event or phenomenon takes place that arouses the media's interest and hooks the audience. It was evident from the interviews that for many reporters and editors, the outbreak of Covid-19. The participants in the current study said that the media had always reported IPV cases but that Covid-19 was that phenomenon which catalyzed more media reporting of IPV. One interviewee even said that the epidemic led to "discussions on how media handled IPV in general." Although this study did not investigate how many articles mentioned Covid-9, it could be argued that the unanimous response by interviewees indicates the influence the pandemic had on IPV reporting. This study therefore, argues that conversations of increased IPV occasioned by a Covid -19 was a reality supported by data from NCRC, (2020) suggesting that between January 2018 and June, 2020, there was a 92.2% increase of GBV where cases of GBV (known to police) escalated to 5,063 excluding unreported cases. The evidence here suggests that certain social conditions may exacerbate the occurrence of IPV just like much of the media reports of IPV seems to be in tandem with police reports of increased incidents of IPV crime.

For a while, the news media have been blamed for being murder-centric (Sutherland et al., 2016). Researchers have argued that murder is the most visible frame in crime stories, and IPV is not exempt. (Brossoie et al 20; Cullen et al., 2019). Such framing however has been criticized by Lindsay-Brisbin et al., (2014), who aver that the media portray skewed representations of reality by focusing on murders when in fact, most IPV incidents are non-fatal. The aim of this study was to investigate how mainstream

Kenyan newspapers represented IPV to understand whether the representation was sensationalized.

As previously stated, findings in this study suggests all of the IPV cases that journalists saw as influential in changing how mainstream newspapers represented the issue included murder or near fatal cases with grievous bodily harm. The study also indicates the representation of IPV by mainstream newspapers was generally murder-centric. Nevertheless, data from the Police Service show that murder is not the most common form of GBV. When compared to other forms such as assault, rape and indecent assault, murder comes a distant third. In 2020 for example, there were 1,615 assault cases, 223 rape/attempted rape cases, 131 murder cases and 63 indecent assault cases. The same trend is replicated in 2018 and 2019 (See appendix XII). It is crucial to point out that legal matters and court cases received the most coverage (21). However, since IPV murders were the most covered sub-theme (10), it could be concluded that many of the court cases were murder or attempted murder cases and hence carried murder frames.

As previously expounded, content analysis indicates that articles that were themed as legal matters were most likely to have at least one source to attribute information to. These articles relied on law officials (10) to provide information. The analysis of articles further showed that journalists also gathered IPV reports from government officers (9), and police (6). Collectively, official sources therefore, accounted for nearly 42 per cent (n=25). Fairclough (2013) argues that whoever is given a voice versus who is silenced is essential to examine media coverage because it indicates the points of view that are prioritized and which ones are suppressed. As a result, if official sources are more prominently represented in the mainstream newspaper

reportage of IPV, they are minimizing other viewpoints that could project different explanations about why IPV crime is committed (Carragee & Roefs, 2004). By highlighting certain viewpoints, certain frames become more accessible and therefore, are more likely to be used by individuals when judging issues (Cacciatore et al., 2016; Entman, 1993; Holt & Major, 2010). Mainstream Kenyan newspapers murder-centric representation of IPV means mainly official sources are used as primary voices in IPV stories. Therefore, readers are routinely exposed to murder frames featuring authorities. As a result, it can be argued that mainstream Kenyan newspapers' dependence on murder frames could be counterproductive in mitigating harm caused by IPV since scholars have noted that the frame that has become the most popular among readers does not necessarily lead to the best solutions and neither does it reflect IPV reality (Berns, 2004; Franiuk et al., 2008). Curiously though, and contrary to previous findings, IPV advocates topped the list of sources when considered individually. They seem to have been relatively well represented, accounting for 20 per cent (n=12) of the sources quoted. Going by recommendations from previous studies, this finding means some progress has been made in the way mainstream Kenyan newspapers include expert voices in IPV stories.

In answering the research question, how do mainstream Kenyan newspapers represent IPV, it can be argued that mainstream Kenyan newspapers favour the most horrendous tragic cases and use them as leverage to capture readership. The ways in which mainstream Kenyan newspapers represent IPV are therefore largely sensational, depicting unnecessary details of a victim's injuries, which results in sensationalized coverage. Understandably, reporters and editors who write IPV news largely respond to market demands. However, while the market may be receptive to murder-centric

reporting, these frames are not always the ones leading to the best solutions (Sutherland et al., 2016). They lack context around the problem and do not give wider contexts of the problem. By answering the next question, it also becomes evident that murder frames give way to representation that blames the victim.

5. 2. 3 Factors accounting for the ways in which intimate partner violence is represented

The previous section outlined that mainstream Kenyan newspapers concentrate on murder frames in IPV representation since these stories are accessible to reporters and they captivate the audience. However, with journalists preferring certain frames in their reporting, they diminish alternative ones (Carragee & Roefs, 2004). The current research investigated how the reliance on murder frames impacted on the representation of IPV. It examined whether reporters and editors focusing on murder stories results in other frames such as those depicting victims in sympathetic light not receiving equal representation. For decades, the media have been criticized for blaming victims, known as victim blaming (Breen et al., 2017; Rao, 2014; Sutherland et al., 2016a; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2004). In fact, it has been argued that sensational and episodic reporting of crime is perpetuated with victim blaming (Rao, 2014). As examined above, the present study found that mainstream Kenyan newspapers framed IPV episodically and sensationally. In this context, it was important to examine how such coverage translated into how victims of IPV were represented. The content analysis results indicated that mainstream Kenan newspapers did not openly blame the victims. However, the research found that the newspapers used frames that non-explicitly blamed the victim and excused the perpetrator. Articles that subtly blamed the victim or excused the perpetrator featured messages about how the victim had

been unfaithful, which had aggravated the perpetrator, or quoted the perpetrator's friends and family members describing their rage as out of character.

Easteal et al., (2019) also found the media justified by conveying that violence was motivated by love, jealousy, passion or revenge or the substances". The current study indicates a similar trend. The content analysis results show articles that focused on murder frames were most likely to blame the victim or excuse the perpetrator. Intimate partner violence victims are already in a vulnerable position and likely to experience higher levels of depression (Dragiewicz et al., 2018). In this context, it is important to note the need for the mainstream Kenyan newspapers to reconsider how it frames IPV because the representation can distort the reality and affect the way crime victims are perceived Skogan & Maxfield, (1981), which calls for newspaper reporters and editors to review their reporting practices as detrimental reporting can jeopardize the victim's wellbeing.

The current study looked into factors that influence a victim-blaming and perpetrator-excusing culture. The study used framing theory to investigate which reporting practices and decisions allow for victim blaming attitudes to thrive in IPV representation. The theory focuses on determining who makes the decisions about which messages pass the gate and reach the audience, and how these decisions are made. (Reader, 2021; Vos & Thomas, 2019). That individual may significantly shape an audience's social reality (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). This study found that Kenya's mainstream newspapers' editors and journalists act as gatekeepers in a traditional way. The interviewees said that while reporters could pitch story ideas and flag issues worthy of coverage, the final decision about what passed through the gates was made by the editor relying on the individual level of gatekeeping Shoemaker & Vos, (2009),

evidence pointed at the fact that IPV news by mainstream newspapers in Kenya was influenced by the individual's subjective decision –making (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). The study found that ultimately, IPV coverage within for individual newspapers was determined by a news editor's decisions. Although Kim, (2012) argues that most reporters rate their own judgements as important factors in their organization's gatekeeping, the current research indicates that final decisions rests with the editor. As such, it was important to examine how individual decisions to report on intimate partner violence can lead to victims being blamed for IPV. In addition to gatekeeping at the individual level, the study also drew on news routines and organisational levels. It has been argued that journalists rely on routines that exist in their organisations to produce news that appeal to the audience (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). Such practices become repeated patterns, or routines, that journalists aim to follow. (Cassidy, 2018). While the research shows that on an individual level news editors make coverage decisions, organizational policies also influence decisions. More specifically, how do news routines and organisations' policies used by reporters and editors enable victim blaming attitudes? The study found that most reporters and editors followed important and relevant routines in relation to IPV. These routines are characteristic to the organisations they work for (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009).

One of the routines highlighted in the current research was to check a story with the legal team in a bid to reduce the risk of publishing legally sensitive information that could affect court proceedings. This study found that Kenya's mainstream newspaper reporters and editors reporting practices were set on individual, news routines and organizational levels. While some individuals in the organization such as news editors can make decisions on which IPV news to cover, it is less likely reporters will

determine the news output. Much of the reporting, however, is established on news routines and organisational levels. News editors and editors know which reporting routines within their organisation are encouraged and which ones are not.

The study observes that the *Daily Nation, The Standard* and *The Star* journalists use another practice that may diminish victim's suffering- relying on secondary victims. Interviewees in the current study said that it was easier to cover IPV if the victim's family spoke about the crime. Many said they would resort to using a victim's family as the main source in their reporting. In the content analysis, it also emerged that mainstream Kenyan newspapers used secondary victims, and mainly in murder reporting. They were the primary source in articles in which the main focus was murder and as a secondary source in articles where murder was a sub-theme. Lundstrom (2016) suggests that shifting the focus from a victim to a secondary victim- those in close proximity to victims such as friends and family members- is just another way to jeopardize IPV reporting.

Reporters may rely on secondary victims due to lack of access to other sources (Lundstrom, 2016). However, the current study suggests that mainstream Kenyan newspapers should refrain from relying on secondary victims as it limits the space for victims themselves to speak out. Similar suggestions have been made by previous studies which have called on the media to give victims the platform to speak (Lundstrom, 2016). A study by Hawley et al., (2018) found that giving victims a platform to speak may even result in demands for action in the society. The current study has demonstrated the need for mainstream Kenyan newspapers to reconsider some of their gatekeeping practices to improve how they represent victims and perpetrators of IPV. It advises that reporters and editors receive further training on

how to avoid "sloppy" reporting that results into myths, stereotypes and victim-blaming narratives; and suggests that effort should be made to see to it that victims themselves are given a voice.

Since murder reporting stood out, it was important to explore how these crimes were framed by relying on Entman's (1993) work. The reporters and editors in this study noted it was likely the mainstream newspapers heavily relied on murder frames. They explained that such cases were of the most extreme and violent nature. They were exceptional in that "they were the worst case scenarios". They proceeded to point out that being news oriented, newspapers tend to focus on the unusual, severe cases, and murders fit the bill. That notwithstanding, some participants observed that IPV occurred often and that if all cases were to be reported, it would not be unusual anymore. Further, it would be illusory for newspapers to cover every case and, as such, a selection had to be made.

This study shows that mainstream Kenyan newspapers like other continental or even global newspapers rely on the most horrendous IPV cases to satisfy readers' demands. In this circumstance, it was vital to examine how the reporters and editors reported IPV murders because journalists create frames to the extent that they choose angles for the stories they cover (Gitlin, 1980). Such exploration was vital because the way reporters and editors "choose to frame intimate partner violence can have important ramifications, influencing how the society perceives the dynamics of such violence as well as solutions and public responsibility" (Gillespie et al., 2013). The current study indicates that mainstream Kenyan newspapers representation of IPV was largely murder-centric. Previous studies note a similar trend (Grundlingh, 2017); Sutherland

et al., 2016). Nevertheless, the current study adds to the existing knowledge by investigating what motivates reporters and editors to focus more on IPV murders.

Evidence from interviews with reporters and editors in this study indicates the representation of IPV is reliant on what is possible to cover, considering access to information and availability of sources in IPV reporting. One interviewee said murder cases tended to get covered more because of budget issues. Crime stories can be gathered at a little cost, which makes it easier for mainstream newspapers to produce them (Surette, 2014). On the other hand, the public wants to consume crime news, which effectively creates demand (Chermak, 1995). Therefore, results of this study suggest mainstream Kenyan editors and reporters rely on murder frames in reporting intimate partner violence because of the public's demand (Surette, 2014), but also due to access to sources. Because of the criminal nature of intimate partner violence, law enforcement officers (police) are mostly the foremost officials to respond to the incidents, and will necessarily also be the first to communicate the crime to the media (Breen et al., 2017). This elevates reporters' dependence on police and other official sources who are in a position to give information that can be trusted (Easteal et al., 2019; Hawley et al., 2018). But, one study in Ireland found that police sources were reluctant to define events as IPV, which could complicate how the issue is represented in the media (Cullen et al., 2019). The current study found that Kenyan reporters and editors rely on official sources when reporting on intimate partner violence. However, participants also observed the police are likely to talk to the media if they need the media to help resolve a crime. This necessity is however diminished in the case of IPV. That is because IPV incidents often happen in private spaces, where the perpetrators and victims are easily identifiable and as such, reliance on media to

identify suspects is minimized. Further, the current research found that reporters covered fatal cases because the most catastrophic events were often followed by press briefings, press releases or court cases from which journalists could obtain reliable official information. Further, Kenyan reporters and editors focused on murder coverage in IPV reporting because in such "reactionary" cases there would be "concrete evidence" to attest that something had taken place followed by a chain of other information rich events.

While the current study did not examine how many IPV articles offered context around the issue, interviews with editors and reporters indicate that mainstream newspapers in Kenya are inclined not to provide broader understanding around the issue. They do so to avoid changing the course of the trial and facing legal consequences that may follow. This segment explains why mainstream Kenyan newspapers' framing of IPV is predominantly episodic. It is important to outline that IPV reporting that lacks acknowledgement of broader issues can risk becoming superficial and sensational. This study instigated whether IPV representation was balanced or sensational. The current study drew on framing theory to examine the way IPV stories are written and identified and which aspects of IPV are most salient (Capella & Jamieson, 1997; Entman, 1993). Scholars note that IPV reporting presents unnecessary details that describe the brutality of the crime and manipulate readers (Grundlingh, 2017; Sutherland et al., 2016). A closer look at how IPV cases are framed indicates that the reporting relies on frames that focus on horrendous violence. Such frames for instance, outline specific details about a victim's injuries.

Interviews with journalists and editors confirmed that reporters felt compelled to use gruesome details of IPV in their stories for various reasons. Some said that unless

articles used "sensationalized language" that was "traumatic or shocking', the audience would not read the stories. The current research concluded that Kenyan reporters and editors deliberately used gory details of the crime to grab readers' attention in the relentless cycle of daily news. However, while they reported details about how abuse was perpetrated added to the coverage, most interviewees were quick to distance themselves and their media houses from being too sensational. They said "some sections of the media" or "certain parts of our media organizations" were guilty of sensationalizing IPV reporting, but not theirs. Previously, scholars have also accused the media of focusing on sensational aspects of the abuse (Chermak, 1995; Wright, 2015). Such reporting can be counterproductive as it shifts the focus of blame from perpetrator to the victim McGee, (2018); Rao, (2014) and undermines the victim's suffering (O'Hara, 2012). Therefore, although mainstream Kenyan newspapers may be inclined to include graphic details in their IPV reporting, they risk becoming sensational and could become counterproductive in changing the society's attitudes towards the problem. Because reporters and editors face pressures characteristic to daily news routines, it was vital to investigate how operating in the print media space influenced the reporters' news output of IPV.

Another factor that featured in the interviews was the "online first" policy of mainstream newspapers. The current study examined whether mainstream Kenyan newspaper journalists and editors prioritized publishing accurate information over the need to be the first with the story in the competitive cycle of news. The research showed that almost all journalists and editors said "getting it right" was more important than being the first with IPV story. Only a few said breaking news was more important to them. They said there was no point in doing stories "hours after

everyone else had got that" and their readers valued quick access to information. This study found that mainstream Kenyan newspaper reporters and journalists recognized that the speed of online news enabled them to increase their audience and break stories, but nonetheless remained vigilant about securing accuracy of information in the rapid cycle of news to avoid sacrificing their credibility. Previous scholars have raised concerns that in a bid to beat their competitors in the speedy media cycle, reporters might sacrifice accuracy (Karlsson, 2011; Sutherland et al., 2015). Researchers have warned against misinformation travelling fast and its serious consequences, such as shame to the quoted sources (Hess & Waller, 2013; Karlsson, 2011; Van Canneyt et al., 2018). There was no evidence in the current study to suggest that mainstream Kenyan newspaper editors and reporters sacrifice accuracy to speed when reporting on IPV. From the interviews, it emerged that reporters and editors valued accuracy in reporting.

As indicated in this section, journalists' and editors' reporting practices are determined on individual, routines and organisational levels. They aim to adhere to the organisations' rules and covey the best possible intimate partner violence representation that is sensitive to the victims and minimizes the risk of penalization. However, the lack of guidelines may result in coverage that relies on murder frames and blames the victim. Mainstream Kenyan newspapers can benefit from reviewing their reporting practices to minimise the risk of holding victims accountable for the violence that they suffer.

5. 2. 4 Emerging wider meanings of intimate partner violence representation

As indicated above, the mainstream newspaper reporters and editors in this study focus on IPV murders because of the audience's demand and also because of what is possible to cover within the confines dictated by accessibility and budget. Murder-centric coverage, however, can be counter- productive because murders are more likely to be covered as singular and perhaps "anomalous' cases rather than part of a more complex social problem (Kappeler & Potter, 2006; Sutherland, 2016). The reports that frame IPV as isolated incidents diminish the importance of complex, systemic forces concerning gender and therefore, potentially misinforming the public (Lindsay- Brisbin et al., 2014). IPV is largely associated with gender inequality Breen et al., (2016); Little, (2018) but episodic framing obscures the reality. That is to say IPV incidents that are represented as isolated stories fail to acknowledge the pattern of abuse and potentially contribute to attitudes that fuel rather than address gender violence (Cuklanz, 1996; Worthington, 2008; Meyers, 1997). Fact based reporting that does not incorporate broader context of crime has been linked to police and court reports (Drache & Velagic, 2014; Jontes & Luthar, 2015). However, Simons and Morgan, (2018) found that police sources had, in fact, changed media reporting in a more positive direction by stressing IPV cases were part of a broader social problem. In this context, it was important to understand whether or not mainstream Kenyan newspapers' framing of IPV was thematic or episodic (Holt & Major, 2010; Iyengar & Simon, 1993).

The current study relied on framing theory to examine whether IPV is represented in a context that depicts patterns of abuse (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013). This was essential to an understanding of how successful the mainstream newspapers are in creating an

intimate partner violence narrative that recognizes it as a broad social problem as opposed to an individual one. While the content analysis examined whether or not articles presented constructive messages about victim assistance, it was more complex to determine what constituted 'context' and whether articles provided it. Therefore, it was more appropriate to rely on journalists' and editors' responses whether and how the decided to provide context to intimate partner violence stories, and what that context would look like in articles. They said majority of IPV reporting was linked to court cases, which restricted how much background media could provide. As one interviewee explained, giving context to IPV often means breaking the law. Interviewees said IPV reporting was usually straightforward and determined by how much they were able to reveal without prejudicing a fair trial, which implied they were not in a position to "make wider statements about the extent of intimate partner violence". To improve IPV coverage, researchers have urged the media to place the crime in a social context (Worthington, 2008). However, whether reporters can act on that suggestion is debatable. A study conducted by Cullen et al., (2019) found that reporters were inclined to cover IPV stories if there had been a legal conviction. That study cautioned that such coverage would result into stories that lacked an elaborate understanding of the multiplicity of IPV causes, comprising gender and power, because court reporting is often straightforward and fact-based (Cullen et al., 2019). The reporting that lacks broader context risks misinforming the public about the issue (Lindsay-Brisbin et al., 2014). It also contributes to a narrative that intimate partner violence incidents are 'one-off' instances of a 'good person snapping' rather than part of a social problem (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013; Kappeler & Potter, 2006). Further, incident-based representation reinforces beliefs that blame lies with the individual

only and omits discourses about broader issues that result in violence against women (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013).

Although interviews with editors and reporters indicate they are aware of which practices are scrutinized, content analysis results show that unfavourable reporting practices, such as blaming the victim, still exist in the mainstream Kenyan newspaper news landscape. In this context, it was important to examine how the phenomenon had occurred because representation that perpetuates frames that accuse the victim can lead to shortsighted actions to mitigate IPV (Carll, 2003).

All the editors and journalists in this study said they were cautious and avoided victim-blaming narratives in IPV coverage, which could be viewed as a news routine adhered to in order to avoid penalties. Many said that blaming victims for the violence was not common, and that contemporary mainstream media houses would not be able to "get away with it". However, upon further examination, it emerged that mainstream Kenyan newspaper editors and journalists said it was possible subtle hints that implied a victim had done something to not protect herself or himself could constitute victim blaming. They said such coverage would be considered "sloppy" reporting rather than intentional victim blaming. Previous studies have warned against blaming by either blatantly saying it was a victim's fault or subtly offering advice on what to wear for instance to remain safe (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013). Such representation lacks in-depth understanding of IPV and contributes to cultural beliefs that promote intimate partner violence (Cuklanz 1996; Worthington, 2008).

The media have also been cautioned against excusing a perpetrator's behavior as an act of jealousy or crime of passion as it fails to convey the seriousness of the crime

and is another form of victim blaming through trivialization. (Carratala, 2016, Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013; Gadd et al., 2014; O'Hara, 2012). Victim blaming takes away from the victim suffering, and risks being sympathetic towards the perpetrator and results in disproportionate action being taken against IPV (Cosmas d'Argemir, 2015). This can be detrimental to the victim (Hill & Fuller, 2018).

While journalists and editors said that mainstream newspapers did not deliberately blame the victims or excuse perpetrators, most interviewees note that mainstream newspapers did convey myths and stereotypes about IPV that could be counterproductive in mitigating IPV. This confirms Easteal et al., (2019) finding that myths are often implied in news coverage. Interviewees in the current study said the most common stereotypes are that IPV only happens to people from low socio-economic backgrounds, it is easy to detect and happens solely to women. Researchers have stated that journalists could be continuously using myths to sensationalise a story or using them in reporting because they reflect how the society at large perceives IPV. Journalists, like other individuals are, after all, merely products of their culture (Simon & Morgan, 2018). Scholars have cautioned against relying on stereotypes in IPV representation as it effectively shifts the blame to the victim and constitutes victim blame (O'Hara, 2012). Exposure to myths around IPV could have consequences with law enforcement doubting the legitimacy of a victim's claims (Franiuk et al, 2008). Therefore, it could be argued that more education is needed for the gatekeepers of news organisations about harmful effects of myths and stereotypical representation.

As indicated above, mainstream Kenyan newspapers both blame the victim and excuse the perpetrator, even if in subtle ways. It is, however, worrisome that reporters and editors are largely unaware of this phenomenon, thinking it belongs in the past or

some other media. If reporters and editors think victim blaming does not exist within their organisation, much of the phenomenon could occur at the individual gatekeeping level, where reporters and editors unintentionally convey victim- blaming frames. To minimise this tendency, and achieve improved representation, it is suggested that victims themselves are given greater platform in the media to reinforce messages about intimate partner violence. This will be explored further in the next objective.

5.3 Conclusion

5.3.1 Ways in which intimate partner violence is represented

This study provided a detailed analysis of the framing used by Kenya's three top newspapers. The findings are consistent with widespread patterns that have been mostly documented by western studies which have demonstrated that crime is the most prevalent genre in the news (Altheide, 2009; Marsh & Melville, 2009; Reiner, 2012; Surette, 2014). Crime reporting began in the 1830s and has been popular for generations due to the low cost of gathering information and the availability of credible sources such as police (Surette, 2014). Violence against women has traditionally been underreported, despite the fact that crime news is the most popular among journalists, editors, and audiences (Chermak, 1995; Surette, 2014; Rao, 2014). Nonetheless, this study supports what other recent studies have found: intimate partner violence is becoming increasingly prominent in the news (Hawley et al., 2018; Simons & Morgan, 2018).

This study shows that, with coverage more than doubling between 2019 and 2020, from 15 to 32, the issue is no longer merely intimate partner since it takes place in private. Notably, Kenya's mainstream newspaper reporters and editors recognise the

change in reporting and changes in attitudes toward intimate partner violence as a newsworthy subject, according to this study. More significantly, this study reveals that journalists actually believe they have an obligation to keep the tempo and deliver news that accurately portrays the problem's scope and seriousness.

Mainstream newspapers have a proclivity for focusing on crime stories. But, reporting is selective, and not every crime receives the same level of attention (Jewkes, 2004). Intimate partner violence and crimes against women do not typically receive the same level of coverage as murders committed by strangers (Perlmutter, 2000; Rao, 2014). Men's violence against women causes intimate partner violence, which is a gender-based issue (Hawley et al., 2018). It may be argued that since crimes against women haven't been historically given much media attention, and because intimate partner violence is a gender-based issue, the problem has been underreported for years.

Since the current study confirms prior findings that the news media have increased coverage of IPV, it was vital to look into the strategies used by mainstream Kenyan newspapers to emphasize the crime's seriousness. This study confirms earlier findings that the news media concentrate on the gorier aspects of crime reporting— murders — and sensationalize the situations when reporting on murders (Drache & Velagic, 2014; Rossland, 2007). This can be explained by the inherent dynamic of newspapers to frequently, if not always, pursue profit and influence. According to Lloyd and Ramon (2017), the news media frequently focus on extreme instances of intimate partner violence in an effort to increase reader appeal and sales, which can conceal the ubiquity of IPV. This study is consistent with the widely held belief that news media are dependent on murder framing as a sales promotion strategy. Niblock (2018) additionally suggests this is because journalism "tends to take a reactive approach

after the event." This study shows that the situation extends to mainstream Kenyan newspapers as well. While efforts were made to focus on intimate partner violence reporting in general, the majority of the coverage remained murder-focused.

This study, on the other hand, builds on existing knowledge in the field of media representation by examining the rationale behind sensationalised murder reporting in order to better understand what drives reporters and editors to choose murder frames over others and to emphasize gruesome details of violence that scholars have deemed counterproductive in conveying constructive and balanced coverage about intimate partner violence (Chermak, 1995; Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013; Weitzer & Kubrin 2004). With nearly one-sixth of all articles outlining the injuries victims received in great detail, it was critical to find out why mainstream newspaper reporters and editors think this framing is required. In the end, interviews with reporters and editors reveal that mainstream newspaper news professionals exploit graphic details of the abuse to stay competitive and to emphasize the crime's severity to the reader. Because several news organizations would be covering the same subject, sensationalizing the subject and finding a new angle — typically a graphic one — were merely ways to sell a story. The reporters and editors said that shocking language was employed on purpose because the public would not read the material otherwise. While several reporters and editors agreed that the media coverage was sensational in general and explained why, the majority of them desire to disassociate themselves and the media houses they work for from it.

This study examined the several challenges that editors and reporters experience when reporting for mainstream newspapers, including the need to stay current, competitive, and timely in order to gain readers' trust. Significantly, the recent data suggest that in

representing intimate partner violence, reporters and editors are prone to using counterproductive framing. Such reporting risks sensationalizing crime, perpetuating myths and prejudices about the problem, and focusing on isolated traumatic occurrences rather than the larger picture (Marsh & Melville, 2009). This study is one of the few that explicitly outlines the motivations of journalists and editors in sensationalizing intimate partner violence in the Kenya's mainstream newspaper landscape, laying the path for future studies that could build on the current findings.

5.3.2 Factors accounting for ways in which intimate partner violence is represented

This study is among the first in Kenya to explain why mainstream newspaper journalists may fail to cover intimate partner violence in a constructive manner. This study shows that mainstream Kenyan newspapers represented intimate partner violence in a murder-oriented manner, with a proclivity to blame the victim. Based on this knowledge, it was vital to analyze whether and how newspapers portray the victims constructively. It was discovered that some articles advocated, at least in part, constructive sentiments. This included information about assistance agencies and helpline numbers, as well as quotations from victims or victims' advocates that could help dispel stereotypes about the abuse. Further analysis found that mainstream newspaper reporters and editors desire to deliver constructive IPV reports but they are constrained by legal restrictions. This is intimately related to the sub judice law, which prohibits the public disclosure of issues under consideration by a court. Given that much of the content in IPV stories was related to active court cases, the interviewees claimed there was only so much they could say in intimate partner violence articles. However, journalists and editors included links to hotline numbers in some

cases and information on safe shelters and assistance organizations wherever they could. Data on intimate partner violence cases, according to some reporters and editors, could assist demonstrate the problem's ubiquity, but it could also trivialize the crime.

Scholars have urged the media to put the violence in perspective by explaining why it occurs and how it is a part of a bigger social problem, not just a one-time occurrence (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013; Lindsay-Brisbin et al., 2014). Many studies indicate that the media's portrayal of intimate partner violence is dominated by 'factism,' which ignores the structural reasons of violence and prevents the issue from being fully understood and treated as a gender-based issue (Drache & Velagic, 2014; Hawley et al., 2018; Jontes and Luthar, 2015). Because context in stories is difficult to define, the current study did not conduct a statistical evaluation of the scope of issue-based reporting in mainstream newspapers. However, as with embedding constructive messages in reporting, the legal guidelines prevented reporters and editors from including broader context about intimate partner violence as a social problem in their reporting because such narratives could be interpreted as reporters making assumptions about court cases. As a result, it might be argued that representation that provides context and background for why intimate partner violence happens in society is ideally suited to investigative and feature articles, which allow for greater discussion of this sensitive topic than daily reactionary news. Increasing the number of such pieces could lead to more constructive reporting that acknowledges the problem's intricacies.

This study sheds light not only on whether reporters and editors push positive messaging in intimate partner violence coverage, but also on why such framing is

complicated and not always effective, even when the case is classified as intimate partner violence. This study also demonstrates how a focus on murder might obstruct the spread of positive messages. The prevalence of constructive coverage is severely limited because much of the intimate partner violence news is murder-oriented. According to this study, Kenya's mainstream newspaper reporters and editors prefer murder frames because they believe it helps to convey the seriousness of the problem, and in their view, it is the style of coverage that the public likes to read because of the focus on human interest values of news. On the other side, while legal coverage is generally clear and does not allow for alternative framing, such as sympathizing with the victim, such coverage does not allow for constructive frames regarding where and how to get aid.

Similar to previous studies such as Ducat et al., (2009); Fairbairn and Dawson (2013), this study encourages mainstream Kenyan newspaper reporters and editors to do more to promote victim support. Giving victims a voice in intimate partner violence stories is one method to address this, as it allows them to refute clichés about violence (Worthington, 2008). Because victims are typically hesitant to speak to journalists, doing interviews with them remains challenging (Worthington, 2008). This study looked into how adept mainstream reporters and editors were at giving victims of intimate partner violence a voice in their stories while protecting their privacy. By doing so, the current study adds to our understanding of the difficulties journalists and editors encounter when locating crime victims for their articles.

While the study supports earlier findings that the media relies on official sources such as the government and law enforcement personnel when reporting on crime (Surette 2014), one of the most frequently used primary sources in the current study were

victims' advocates. This contrasts with prior research that indicate victims and their advocates are underrepresented as sources in intimate partner violence reporting (Morgan et al. 2012; Simons & Morgan 2018). It's possible that the media has progressed in this area and now includes specialists as sources in their reporting. Future research should look at this occurrence more thoroughly, according to this study. Furthermore, this study discovered that the fifth most covered theme was stories where the primary focus was the victims' version of events centered on fear, trauma and despondency. This suggests that articles that focus solutions and how they overcome trauma are still low in representation and should therefore, be brought more to the foreground to provide IPV stories with more lived experiences that enhance advocacy.

Interviews with Kenya's mainstream newspaper editors and reporters revealed a reliance on official sources as well as a struggle to access those who have been directly touched by the abuse. Victims' identities were frequently shielded due to ongoing legal processes, making it difficult to locate them. Even when journalists and editors located the victims, persuading them to participate in a story remained a challenge, according to the journalists and editors. Victims frequently approached reporters and editors to relate their stories, and interacting with willing participants made their work easier, according to some reporters and editors. Reporters and editors, on the other hand, had to anticipate any privacy difficulties that their subjects might have as a result of media exposure.

Intimate partner violence victims' advocates were frequently used as sources by mainstream newspaper reporters and editors, according to this study. This supports earlier findings that victims' advocates are important contacts for journalists who help

them deliver positive coverage (Dragiewicz et al., 2018). Nevertheless, Prior research has indicated that advocates for intimate partner abuse victims are underrepresented in articles (Morgan et al., 2012; Simons & Morgan, 2018). As a result, the current study's finding that mainstream Kenyan newspaper writers rely on victims' advocates for information is significantly contractor to previous studies. While intimate partner violence advocates can be helpful in spreading positive messages, the media are being urged to do more to increase victim advocacy.

5.3.3 Emerging wider meanings

The current study examined how wider meanings emerged from the representation of IPV. For quite some time, the representation of IPV victims has been seen as unfavourable and counterproductive in placing blame on the victim while shifting it away from the perpetrator (Rao, 2014). Previous scholars have found that mainstream newspapers contribute to victim blaming by reporting IPV in ways that spread misogynistic attitudes that minimise the suffering of victims (Dragiewcz et al., 2018; Zaleski et al., 2016). This study found that while blatant victim blaming and perpetrator excusal barely exists in Kenya's mainstream newspapers, some of the reporting conveyed subtle messages that implied a victim was partly to blame for the violence. Most of such stories were mostly on legal matters and court cases. Reporters and editors believe they have learnt from previous criticisms and even said they could not see how media could still get away with blaming the victim. Indeed, they believe victim-blaming attitudes no longer exist in the media coverage of IPV and attribute subtle victim blaming narratives to 'sloppy' but not deliberate reporting.

Newspapers are prone to using myths in their coverage to help the audience members make sense of the world (Franiuk et al., 2008). Such practices, however, can shift the

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blame to the victim (O'Hara, 2012). This study examined the presence of myths and stereotypes and even though only a few were statistically evident, interviews with reporters and editors showed that they could name at least a myth that still exists about IPV. For instance, that it affects only women or individuals from the lower echelons of the society. However, many reporters and editors thought that newspapers are scrutinized enough for myths and stereotypes through editorial processes and therefore distanced their publications from such criticism. The results of this study show that indeed, the perceptions of the interviewees do not reconcile with how newspapers represent the problem of IPV. The fact that some myths were identified showed that perhaps the journalists and editors are too optimistic about the representation of IPV by newspapers. Simons and Morgan (2018) suggest journalists and editors are, after all, product of the societies in which they work and as such may not readily recognize instances of stereotypes in a male dominated society [such as Kenya] (Simons & Morgan, 2018).

5.4 Recommendations

1. Widely contextualise intimate partner violence reporting. The current research effort recognizes the numerous challenges that come with mainstream newspaper coverage of intimate partner violence, including a lack of access to primary sources, such as victims, forcing editors and reporters to rely on information from other sources. However, in order to facilitate a transition toward more productive coverage, this study suggests that journalists reduce their dependence on murder narratives, as murder-centric portrayals of the topic are linked to episodic reporting that individualize the problem as once- off, isolated incidents with no consequences to the wider society. This borders on sensationalism. While intimate partner violence

murders should undoubtedly be reported on, it is recommended that newspapers "featurize" IPV reporting; that have wider (thematic) contexts.

2. Engage IPV experts and victims as sources to mitigate sensational framing. Reporters and editors compete for readership in a competitive newspaper environment. They are subject to selecting frames they believe the public wants to consume due to the need to win over audience members and give content around the clock. According to mainstream newspaper reporters and editors, traumatic frames were frequently used to emphasize the seriousness of the crime and draw the audience's attention. Sensationalizing the subject in this way detracts from constructive narratives. Without being sensational, media attention can have an impact. Instead of horribly graphic narratives, such reporting can be accomplished by giving striking quotes from interviewed sources. It is critical that journalists receive more training on what constitutes victim blaming, as well as stricter editing processes to minimize material that blames victims. It is critical that the mainstream newspapers refrain from broadcasting messages that claim the perpetrator's acts were "out of character" or that the victim's behaviour justified the perpetrator's act.

3. Develop guidelines for constructive IPV reporting. The overwhelming reliance on murder framing leads to factism that ignores the larger context, the causes of intimate partner violence, and how society may respond. This study recommends that Journalists should use constructive coverage wherever feasible to highlight that intimate partner violence is a social issue. It's understood that this is challenging but when reporting is not tied to court cases or other legally sensitive subjects, hotline numbers, quotes from victims and victims' advocates indicating intimate partner violence is a gender-based issue, and other constructive messages should be included.

This study suggests the development of specific IPV reporting guidelines for Kenyan reporters and editors.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Research

The following areas are suggested for further research:

1. Since this study was media-centric, future studies could investigate how audiences respond to the ways in which mainstream newspapers represent IPV.

2. New trends about intimate partner violence representation emerged in the course of this study, such as interviewees saying that online platforms offered considerable competition to mainstream newspapers on coverage of topical issues like IPV. Future research could investigate how online platforms cover IPV for a more comprehensive understanding of media representation of IPV.

3. The study examined how 12 mainstream Kenyan reporters and editors perceived intimate partner violence representation. While the number of participants was sufficient within the five-year time span, future researchers could expand on these findings by reproducing them in a wider range of organizations by incorporating participants from intimate partner violence advocacy groups.

5.6 Contribution to Knowledge

This study has made the following contributions to knowledge:

1. Expansion of theory: This study skillfully combines theories of gender framing within a very problematic area of gender-based violence in Kenya and how it is represented in the media

2. It also offers critical advice on how journalists and editors might deliver more potent and constructive IPV messaging that accurately reflects the scope and gravity of the problem. This is among the first studies to investigate how mainstream newspaper production of IPV news faces challenges, such as lack of IPV reporting guidelines, the desire to sell copy and disseminate news quickly, have influenced journalists' and editors' reporting habits. Constructive coverage representation, on the other hand, can help society mitigate the problem, but it isn't always the most exciting news, at least not in the way that spectacular murder stories are. The study looked into how Kenyan reporters and editors set the agenda for providing constructive coverage despite the challenges that come with it. This is among the first research to look at how mainstream newspaper journalists and editors could set the tone for potent and constructive IPV messaging in Kenya.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Coding terms

The articles were found on the websites of the *Daily Nation*, *The Standard*, and *The Star* using Google search engines. The keywords below were used.

Domestic violence, domestic abuse, family violence, intimate partner, intimate partner abuse, intimate partner violence, estranged partner, estranged wife, estranged husband

After experimenting with several combinations, the search terms above were chosen to exclusively find articles about intimate partner violence. While publications about violence against women do not often employ easily searchable terms, the words above helped identify articles that were largely related to intimate partner violence. The sample was culled of all irrelevant articles. Furthermore, each newspaper's website's search tabs, and the Google search engine were utilised by entering the phrases identifies above.

Appendix II: Coding book

1. Article title

2. Date

3. Newspaper
1- *Daily Nation*
2-*The Standard*
3-*The Star*

4. Article byline
1-Journalist
2-Agency
3-No byline

5. Byline gender
1-male
2-Female
3-Both
4-N/A

6. Article type
1-News
2-Feature
3-Opinion/Comment column
4-Fact check
5-Q&A
6-Other

7. Mention of domestic violence/intimate partner violence
1-Explicit
2-Implicit

.

8. Main theme (First theme mentioned in the article)
1-Victim blaming

2-Intimate partner violence murder

3-Legal matter/ Court case

4-Reference to assistance

5-Rise in intimate partner violence

6-No proven intimate partner violence link

7-Other

8-Intimate partner violence under-reported

9-Excusing the perpetrator

10-Insufficient government funding

11-Vigil or tribute

12-Law changes

13-Victim's account

14-Allocated government funding

15-Police authorities failing to help

16-Police responding to intimate partner violence

17-Nowhere to go

18-Fall in intimate partner violence rate

9. Sub- theme

1-Victim blaming

2-Intimate partner violence murder

3-Legal matter/ Court case

4-Reference to assistance

5-Rise in intimate partner violence

6-No proven intimate partner violence link

7-Other

8-Intimate partner violence under-reported

9-Excusing the perpetrator

10-Insufficient government funding

11-Vigil or tribute

12-Law changes

13-Victim's account

14-Allocated government funding

15-Police authorities failing to help

16-Police responding to intimate partner violence

17-Nowhere to go

18-Fall in intimate partner violence rate

10. Mention of victim blaming
1-Explicit
2-Implicit

11. If the article blames the victim, how? (Quotes)

12. Mention of perpetrator excusing
1-Explicit
2-Implicit

13. **If the article excuses the perpetrator, how (quotes)**

14. Constructive messages
1-Yes
2-No.

15. If yes, what do they say?

16. Are the victim's injuries described?
1-Yes
2-No.

17. If yes, describe how? (Quotes)

18. Does the story mention the victim trying to leave?
1-Yes
2-No

19. If yes, describe how (Quotes)

20. **Is there at least one source in the story?**
1-Yes
2-No

21. Type of sources quoted (same to secondary sources)
1-Victim

2-Secondary victim/family member/friend.

3-Victim's advocate

4-Police

5-Law official

6-Perpetrator

7-Other

8-N/A

9-Academic researcher

10-Government official

11-Witness

22. Word count
1. 1-150
2-151-250
3-251-350
4-351-450
5-451-550
6-550+

23. Month

24. Year

1. Frequency of intimate partner violence reporting

1.1. How would you scribe the media's intimate partner violence reporting?

1.2. Media researchers say up to 30 per cent of violence takes place in the family context, however, intimate partner violence receives less media coverage than statistically less common crimes such as murder. Does the media's IPV coverage reflect reality?

1.3. Has the frequency of reporting on intimate partner violence changed during your career as a journalist? How?

1.4. Can you name any specific events that may have contributed to the change in the frequency of intimate partner violence reporting?

1.5. Critics say the media cover crime in a sensational way. Do you agree or disagree with that statement and why?

1.6. Some researchers also say the media present a skewed representations of reality by focusing on murder frames. Do you agree or disagree? And why?

1.7. How do you decide whether to report on an intimate partner violence incident?

1.8. When do you decide to report on intimate partner violence murder?

2. Portrayal of victims

2.1. When reporting on intimate partner violence who/what are your primary sources?

2.2. How often and on which occasions do you interview victims for the article?

2.3. How do you find the sources for your story?

2.4. When reporting intimate partner violence, do you think about its impact on the victim?

2.5. Can you think of any myths about intimate partner violence that the media uses in IPV reporting?

2.6. Researchers say the media blame the victim for violence by implying she had the choice to leave. Do you think the media blame the victim? If yes, how?

2.7. How often do you follow up on an intimate partner violence story? What stories do you follow up on?

3. Constructive messages

3.1. What do you think accounts for how mainstream newspaper journalists cover IPV?

3.2 Do you provide context around intimate partner violence in general when writing reports on it?

3.3 How do you report on messages about how to tackle IPV?

3.4 What specific messages do you use?

3.5 Do you provide information on where to access help?

4 Decision-making practices

4.1 Please describe your experience in covering IPV

4.2 In your work place, who decides whether to cover an intimate partner violence story?

4.3 In your organization, do you have a guideline on how to report on IPV?

4.4 Do you rely on any other guidelines when covering intimate partner violence?

4.5 Do you think there is need for a universal guideline for reporting IPV? If yes, what should it include?

4.6 How do you protect privacy of interviewees?

4.7 Do you follow standard procedures when reporting IPV?

4.8 How important is being first to "break the story" to you?

4.9 Does it influence your decision-making?

Appendix IV: SCHOOL RESEARCH PERMIT LETTER

RONGO UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES

INTERNAL MEMO

FROM: Ag. Dean, INFOCOMS   **DATE**: 9th December, 2019

TO: Dean, School of Graduate Studies
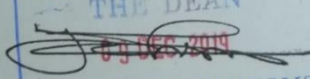
SUBJECT: RESEARCH PERMIT FOR DATA COLLECTION

The above matter refers

We are requesting your office to issue the following students with a research permit for data collection.

1. Charles Okeyo Wagunda - ADM No. DPCS/6301/2017 ✓
2. Josphat Ogweno Okech – ADM No. DPCS/6303/2017
3. Marren Atieno Akong'o – ADM No. DPCS/6302/2017

Your positive response will be highly appreciated.

Dr. John Oluoch
Ag. Dean, INFOCOMS

CC: Charles Okeyo Wagunda
        Josphat Ogweno Okech
        Marren Atieno Akong'o

Appendix V: GRADUATE SCHOOL RESEARCH PERMIT LETTER

RONGO UNIVERSITY
Gridiron of Knowledge and Innovation

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Tel.   0771349741

P.O. Box 103 - 40404
RONGO

Our Ref: **DPCS/6302/2017**   **Date:** Tuesday, December 10, 2019

The Chief Executive Officer,
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation,
off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
P.O Box 30623-00100, **Nairobi-KENYA**.

Dear Sir,

RE: **RESEARCH PERMIT FOR MR. WAGUNDA CHARLES OKEYO-
            DPCS/6301/2017**

We wish to inform you that the above person is a bona fide graduate student of
Rongo University in the School of Information, Communication and Media
Studies pursuing a PhD degree in Communication Studies. He has been
authorized by the University to undertake research titled; *"Representation of
Intimate Partner Violence by Kenyan Newspapers: A Mid Decade Analysis
of Selected Editions, (2015-2019) ."*

This is, therefore, to request the Commission to issue him with a research
permit to enable her proceed for field work.

Your assistance to him shall be highly appreciated.

Thank you.

Dr. Edward Anino
DEAN, SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Copy to: Vice Chancellor
              Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic and Student Affairs)
              Dean, School of Information, Communication and Media Studies
              HoD, Communication, Journalism and Media Studies

**RONGO UNIVERSITY
THE DEAN
1 0 DEC 2019
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
P. O. BOX 103 - 40404, RONGO**

Appendix VI: RESEARCH LICENSE

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NACOSTI

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 322412

Date of Issue: **18/December/2019**

RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Mr.. CHARLES WAGUNDA of Rongo University, has been licensed to conduct research in Migori, Nairobi on the topic: REPRESENTATION OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE BY KENYAN NEWSPAPERS: A MID-DECADE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED EDITIONS (2015-2019) for the period ending : 18/December/2020.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/19/3305**

322412

Applicant Identification Number

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013

The Grant of Research Licenses is Guided by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

CONDITIONS

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2. The License any rights thereunder are non-transferable
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4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearence from relevant Government Agencies
5. The License does not give authority to tranfer research materials
6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project
7. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy and upload a soft copy of their final report (thesis) within one of completion of the research
8. NACOSTI reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice

Appendix VII: Oral Defense Invitation

RONGO UNIVERSITY

DIRECTORATE OF POST-GRADUATE STUDIES

Email address: graduatestudies@rongovarsity.ac.ke

P.O. Box 103- 40404
RONGO

Date: 19/01/2023

Charles Okeyo Wagunga- DPCS/6301/2017
Rongo University

Dear Mr. Wagunda

RE: INVITATION TO ATTEND A PhD THESIS ORAL DEFENSE

This is to inform you that you have been invited for an oral defense in the School of Information Communication and Media Studies.

The defense will take place on **Monday 30th January 2023** at the Lower Board Room, Administration Block, from **9.00am.**

Please attend and be punctual.

Thank you.

Dr. Edward Anino
DIRECTOR, POST- GRADUATE STUDIES.

RONGO UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF INFOCOMS
19 JAN 2023
RECEIVED
P.O. BOX 103-404 RONGO
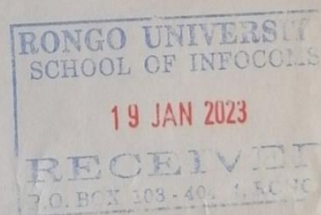
Rongo University… ISO 9001:2015 Certified

Appendix VIII: Informed Consent Form

I wish to confirm that I have read and fully understood the participant information sheet and the nature and purpose of this research study has been fully and clearly explained to me by Mr. Charles Okeyo Wagunda who is a postgraduate student at Rongo University, Kenya. I understand that all the audio recording done of, and with me during this study will specifically be used for the purposes of enabling the researcher to clearly get information that he may have missed during the oral face to face interview.

I understand clearly that all the information that I will provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will also be used for the purposes of the research study only.

During the study, I undertake that I shall be available for all the relevant activities of the

study as well as freely give information to facilitate further actualisation of the study.

I also hereby understand that while the information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified anywhere during or after the study through my real names. I am also fully aware that I can choose to withdraw from the research study at any time or as I may wish, and without any penalty and prejudice whatsoever.

Signature of the participant………………………………………………………

Date………………………………………………………………………………….

For further information, contact: Charles O. Wagunda Tel: 0721296762

Email: charlyokeyo@gmail.com

Rongo University

P.O.Box103-40404

RONGO.

My name is Charles Okeyo Wagunda, a postgraduate student at Rongo University in Kenya. I am enrolled in the Department of Communication and Media Studies, School of Information, Communication and Media Studies. I am studying for a course leading to a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Communication Studies. The proposed study is,

The Representation of Intimate Partner Violence: An Analysis of Mainstream Newspapers in Kenya (2016-2020)

I wish to kindly request you to collaborate with me in undertaking this study by availing yourself for an oral interview session that will last an hour at a place convenient to you. The interview is meant to get a deeper understanding of the issues relevant to my research work. Your kindest participation in this study is vital to me as it will enable me to get a very clear picture of the current and even past issues relating to the subject under study.

To take care of confidentiality, you will not be identified anywhere in the entire study report. This means you will remain anonymous in all the verbal and written records and reports that you participated in during the research. All the information from this study will be treated strictly as private and confidential and will be used for the research purposes only.

For further information, please feel free to contact me either in person or through Phone number 0721296762 or Email: Charlyokeyo@gmail.com

Table Showing Domestic Violence Cases for The Year 2018

Regions	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals	Total %
Nairobi	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	2	2	5	4	1	19	13
Rift Valley	1	4	0	2	1	4	1	2	3	2	3	1	24	16
Coast	2	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	1	9	6
Eastern	0	4	1	0	2	2	3	1	0	2	1	0	16	11
Central	0	4	1	2	2	3	2	2	0	3	0	0	19	13
Nyanza	2	0	1	0	3	2	1	3	5	1	3	0	21	14
Western	2	2	6	8	6	7	0	0	3	4	0	1	39	26
North Eastern	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Totals	8	14	11	15	15	19	9	10	13	18	12	4	148	100

Source: National Police service, 2018

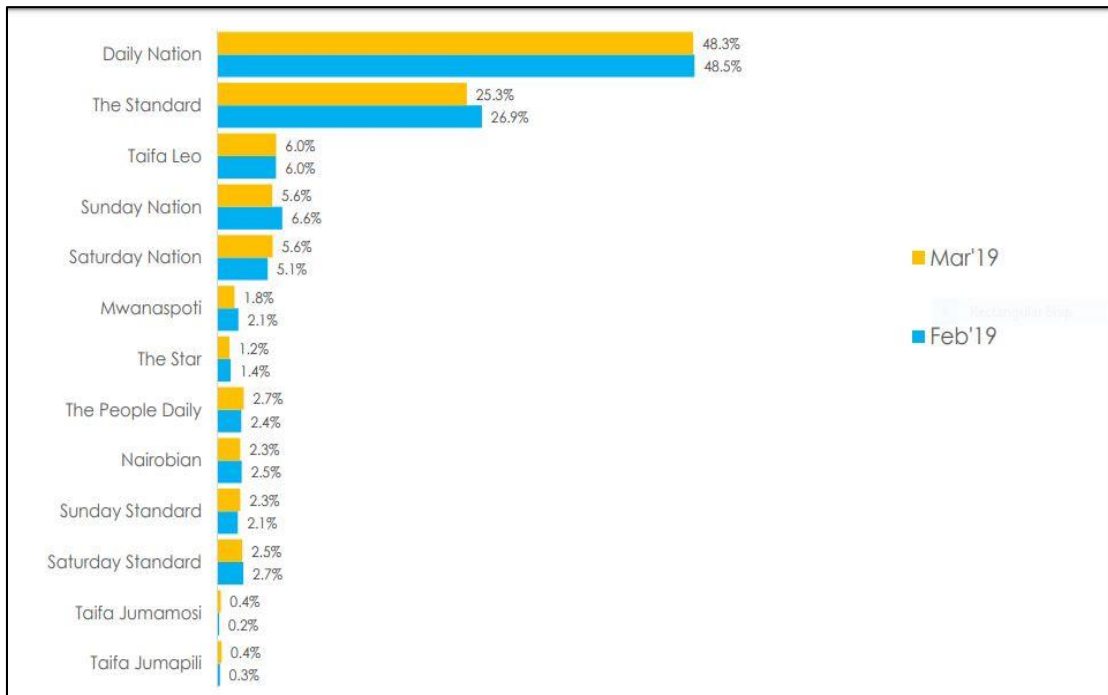**Appendix XI: Average Newspaper Readership in Kenya (2019)**

Figure 1.1: The average newspaper reaches in 2019 (Source: KARF, 2019)

Appendix XII: **Newspaper editions sampled**

Year	Month	*Daily Nation*	*The Standard*	*The Star*
2016	February	2	None	None
„	March	1	1	None
„	February	1	None	1
„	March	None	1	None
„	July	None	1	1
„	August	1	None	None
„	November	None	1	None
„	December	1	None	None
„	August	None	1	None
„	August	1	None	None
2017	April	None	1	None
„	June	1	None	1
„	July	None	1	None
„	September	None	1	None
„	December	1	None	1
„	July	1	1	None
„	August	1	None	None
2018	January	None	None	None
„	July	None	1	None
„	August	None	None	1
2019	November	1	None	None
„	December	None	1	None
„	February	None	None	1
„	May	1	1	None
„	June	1	None	1
„	July	1	None	1
„	August	None	1	None
„	October	1	None	None
„	January	1	1	None
„	October	None	None	1
„	November	1	None	None
„	December	1	1	None
2020	January	None	None	1
„	May	1	None	None
„	July	1	1	1
„	October	1	None	None
„	May	1	1	None
„	July	1	None	None
„	October	1	None	1
„	December	2	1	None
„	March	1	None	1
„	April	1	1	None
„	May	1	None	-
„	June	None	1	1
„	July	1	1	-

„	November	None	1	None
„	December	1	None	1
„	July	None	1	None

Appendix XIII: Forms of GBV reported to the Police between January 2018 and June, 2020.

Forms of GBV	Number of cases reported		
	Number of cases reported between January and December		Number of cases reported between January and June
	2018	2019	2020
Assault	964	174	1615
Rape/Attempted rape	761	698	223
Murder	159	11	131
Indecent assault	90	174	63
Total	**1,974**	**1,057**	**2,032**

Source: National Police Service, 2020