

**A PRAGMATIC INTERPRETATION OF VERBAL SEXIST HUMOUR IN  
KENYAN STAND-UP COMEDY: A CASE OF THE CHURCHILL SHOW**

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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award of  
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics of Masinde Muliro University  
of Science and Technology**

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## DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work prepared with no other than the indicated sources and support and has not been presented elsewhere for the award of a degree or any other award.

Signature ..... Date .....

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## CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned certify that we have read and hereby recommend for acceptance of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology this thesis entitled: “*A Pragmatic Interpretation of Verbal Sexist Humour in Kenyan Stand-Up Comedy: A Case of The Churchill Show.*”

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my brother Dr. Henry Jefferson Ogoi who has always inspired me in this academic journey.

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined verbal sexist humour in live performances on *The Churchill Show* which aired on TV47 in Kenya, focusing on episodes in November 2023. Drawing upon the theories of Conversational Implicature by Paul Grice (1975) and Norman Fairclough's (2001) sociocultural approach to Critical Discourse Analysis, the study investigated a pragmatic interpretation of verbal sexist humour in Kenyan stand-up comedy: *The Churchill Show*. A descriptive research design was used. Utilizing purposive sampling, 25 humorous utterances that met specific inclusion criteria were selected for analysis. The study aimed to achieve three primary objectives: to describe linguistic strategies employed by selected stand-up comedians in their live performances on *The Churchill Show* on TV47 to construct verbal sexist humour; to analyze sexist inferences underlying live comedic performances of selected stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show* on TV47; and to determine the sexist implicatures that manifest in live performances by selected stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show* on TV47 as a result of flouting conversational maxims. To achieve these objectives, primary data gathered from the show was analyzed using content analysis. By employing a pragmatic approach, the study aimed at offering insights into the sociocultural dynamics at play in the interpretation of verbal sexist humour, while also considering the unique cultural and contextual elements specific to Kenyan stand-up comedy. It was observed that comedians use various linguistic strategies to create verbal sexist humour. Such strategies include: juxtaposition, similes, metaphors, hyperbole, ambiguity, wordplay and pun, irony, and satire. Such strategies are not merely for comedic effect but also serve to embed and perpetuate certain sexist stereotypes and ideologies. Findings from data analysis revealed the perpetuation of sexist stereotypes targeting men and women. The analysis of comedic discourses from *The Churchill Show* revealed a pattern of reinforcing sexist stereotypes and ideologies through flouting of the conversational maxims. For instance, comedians frequently violate Grice's maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner to generate humour that has underlying sexist implications. The findings of the study contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities of humour, gender representation, and language within the realm of Kenyan stand-up comedy, with implications for both academic discourse and societal understanding of gender dynamics in comedic discourse. The study provides a nuanced perspective on how humour can simultaneously entertain and perpetuate cultural stereotypes.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>CDA</b>	Critical Discourse Analysis
<b>NTV</b>	Nation Television
<b>TV47</b>	Television Fourty Seven

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Attitude:** The opinions, emotions, and behavioural tendencies *the Churchill Show* audience holds regarding people of a specific gender.

**Episode:** A distinct segment of *The Churchill Show* that features a unique performance by stand-up comedians, encompassing a specific duration of time and including various comedic routines, audience interactions and thematic content.

**Femininity:** A collection of attributes, actions, and traits historically linked with or anticipated from women, frequently shaped by societal standards and cultural views.

**Gender:** It refers not only to biological sex but also to the cultural meanings associated with being male or female.

**Stereotype:** A generalized idea or belief about a group of people, often based on their gender, nationality, ethnicity, or gender.

**Humour:** Characteristic of being entertaining or funny, prompting laughter or amusement.

**Routine:** A specific part of a comedian's performance focused on a particular theme or topic.

**Masculinity:** A collection of attributes, actions, and traits historically linked with or anticipated from men, frequently shaped by societal standards and cultural views.

**Patriarchal Society:** A social system where men predominantly occupy positions of power authority, and influence, while women are frequently relegated to secondary roles, experiencing marginalization or oppression.

**Performance:** The entire act delivered by one stand-up comedian during an episode.

**Sexism:** Unfair treatment or discrimination based on a person's sex or gender.

**Stand-up Comedy:** A comic performance to a live audience in which a comedian addresses the audience directly from the stage.

**Utterance:** A single spoken statement or line delivered by comedians during their act.

**Verbal sexist humour:** The kind of spoken humour based on gender stereotypes, discrimination or degrading attitudes.

## CHAPTER ONE

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the study. It highlights the statement of the problem and states the research objectives and research questions. The chapter also presents the significance and justification of the study, indicates the scope of the study as well as its delimitations.

#### 1.2 Background to the Study

This study examines verbal sexist humour in live performances on *The Churchill Show* which aired on TV47 in Kenya, focusing on episodes in November 2023. Language serves as a cornerstone of human interaction, intricately woven into the fabric of our lives. Through language we are able to express our thoughts, emotions and concepts. Also, through language we are able to navigate social interactions, convey cultural values and engage in different forms of expression. The richness of linguistic diversity can be witnessed in the variations in vocabulary, grammar, syntax and semantics across diverse cultures and societies. Within this linguistic landscape, humour emerges as a pervasive and intricate phenomenon, intricately intertwined with various aspects of human interaction and cultural expression (Attardo, 2020). Humour leverages on linguistic tools, nuances and strategies to create amusement. The intricate interplay between language and humour highlights the importance of exploring how linguistic elements contribute to the creation and interpretation of humour within specific cultural and social contexts. One key

element in this exploration is the concept of pragmatic implicature, introduced by Grice (1975), which refers to the additional meanings implied by the speaker that are not explicitly stated in the utterance. In the context of humour, especially verbal sexist humour, implicatures play a crucial role in how comedians convey meanings that go beyond the literal interpretation of their words. As Grice (2000) notes, conversational implicatures allow speakers to communicate assumptions or propositions indirectly.

Humour has many social functions such as entertainment, commentary on societal values and norms, and social bonding. Ross (1998) states that there are many contexts we can encounter humour: from comedy books, advertisements, and even stand-up comedy on television. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this list has expanded to include social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok; Internet memes; humorous podcasts; YouTube and streaming platforms like Netflix; video games; mobile apps such as Whatsapp and Snapchat; online forums like Reddit and 9GAG; and web series or online sketch shows. This reflects how humour has evolved with technological advancements and digital spaces.

It is not every humour that brings positive energy into our lives. Ford (2017) states that some types of humour are harmful because they attack or disparage individuals or certain groups of people. However, perceptions of offensiveness can vary depending on the context and audience. Sexist humour becomes harmful when it reinforces harmful stereotypes, perpetuates discrimination, or normalizes degrading attitudes towards a particular gender, leading to negative consequences such as marginalization or emotional distress. From a pragmatic perspective, such humour

often relies on conversational implicatures (Davis, 1998; Griffiths, 2006). Pragmatic implicature comes into play when comedians flout conversational maxims—such as relevance, manner, or quality.

Inferences refer to the conclusions drawn by the listener based on the implicit meanings within the utterance. As Thomas (1995) points out, while implicatures are attributed to the speaker, inferences are the responsibility of the hearer. In the case of sexist humour, inferences drawn by the audience may lead to harmful interpretations, especially when the humour normalizes degrading stereotypes. Verbal sexist humour is spoken humour based on discrimination, gender stereotypes, or degrading attitudes (Kotthoff, 2006). Gender, as used in the present study, refers not only to biological sex but also to the cultural meanings associated with being male or female. The objective of a humourist is typically to entertain, provoke thought, or challenge societal norms. However, when sexist humour is used, the goal of the humourist of entertainment may not always be achieved, as such humour can alienate or offend certain audiences, rather than bring positive engagement.

Verbal sexist humour simultaneously degrades men and women while at the same time denying responsibility for the sexism. Many scholars argue that this form of humour is offensive and harmful both to individuals and groups of people in society (Bemiller & Schneider, 2010). Within the realm of humour, verbal sexist humour has attracted huge scholarly attention. This has been occasioned by its reliance on gender stereotypes, prejudices, and gender roles to elicit amusement, often at the expense of marginalized gender groups (Crawford, 1995).

Chacha (2007) opines that we can categorize language into two domains: the serious mode and the humorous mode. The principles under which the two modes operate are different. Chacha (2007) further states that it is in the humorous mode that sexism is perpetuated under the cover of benign amusement. In this mode, sexist humour may rely on subtle or implicit meanings that require the audience to draw inferences about the intended sexist message. From a pragmatic perspective, flouting conversational maxims (Grice, 1975) becomes a tool for comedians to hint at or imply sexist ideas without explicitly stating them. Although verbal sexist humour is a global phenomenon, scholarly studies on it have predominantly focused on Europe, Asia and America with minimal research conducted within an African context, especially in Kenya. The present study conducted a pragmatic interpretation of verbal sexist humour in stand-up comedy shows within the Kenyan context, focusing on *The Churchill Show*.

Mills (2008) states that despite efforts by feminist movements to combat sexism and promote gender equality, verbal sexist humour remains ingrained in our cultural and social practices, often presented under the guise of harmless amusement. Despite its seemingly benign nature, this form of humour has significant negative impact on men and women (Mills, 2008). Previous studies have consistently shown that regular exposure to verbal sexist humour can normalize and perpetuate discriminatory attitudes, providing individuals with a platform to express prejudice based on sex without fear of consequences (Ford & Ferguson, 2004; Ford, Boxer, et al., 2008). Additionally, research indicates that exposure to sexist humour may correlate with increased propensity for rape-supportive beliefs among men (Romero- Sánchez et al., 2009; Thomae & Viki, 2013).

The emergence of multiple media platforms has facilitated the rapid and widespread dissemination of sexist humour to the general public (Hasinoff, 2015). Hasinoff also mentions that sexist humour, when transmitted through media platforms; convey derogation of men and women while appearing to be harmless entertainment. Despite the widespread presence of this humour in the media, little research attention has been paid to its linguistic formation strategies and interpretation, especially in stand-up comedy. The present study explored this phenomenon of verbal sexist humour focusing on *The Churchill Show*. Stand-up comedy provides a platform for comedians where they employ different linguistic strategies to deliver their routines not only to entertain and engage their audiences but also to convey social messages (Billing, 2005).

In Kenyan society, the term sexist humour is not widely recognized or understood (Ochieng, 2021). This is because sexist humour has been normalized and justified as benign amusement. Therefore, it has become the least understood and documented form of gender violence. According to a recent study, exposure to sexist humour can lead to harmful psychological and physical consequences (Glick et. al., 2023). It is sometimes difficult for a person who has perceived sexism in humour to complain because of the fear of being perceived as one who does not have a sense of humour. Consequently, there was need to investigate how, on *The Churchill Show*, this verbal sexist humour can be interpreted from a pragmatic point of view. This study focused on the linguistic strategies that are employed in creating it, the underlying sexist inferences, and the sexist implicatures that manifest through the flouting of the conversation maxims. A pragmatic interpretation of verbal sexist humour in Kenyan stand-up comedy, especially within the context of *The Churchill Show*, has cultural

significance and potential implications for social norms and attitudes. Within comedic performances, verbal sexist humour is able to not only reflect but also influence societal perceptions of power dynamics, social expectations and gender (Mills, 2008).

In the argument of Tannen (2022), society is reflected through language. This is because the ideas and assumptions of the society are normally carried through language. When these ideas and assumptions are constantly re-enacted in discourse, they become so familiar and conventional to the extent that we overlook their importance. Therefore, verbal sexist humour may be seen as part of language to the point that people fail to identify it as sexist. Pragmatically, this phenomenon is known as the conventionalization of implicature where repeated exposure to certain implicatures (such as those in sexist jokes) leads to them being interpreted as benign or non-offensive over time (Davis, 1998). Because sexism is deeply ingrained in social structures, we need to interpret verbal sexist humour from a pragmatic perspective. The interpretation of humour as being sexist or not differs among individuals. This is because sexism is not a homogenous entity. The present study discussed the language aspects that create sexist humour on the comedy show.

According to Tannen (1990), analyzing language can reveal to us a lot of information about interests, prejudices, fears and hope of the creators of the language. The present study focused on understanding how verbal sexist humour is interpreted in the pragmatic context of stand-up comedy shows, particularly within the framework of *The Churchill Show* in Kenya. The study drew insights from Tannen (1990) to explore how language choices in comedic discourse reflect societal biases, interests, fears, and aspirations. The study analyzed linguistic elements and conversational styles to uncover cultural attitudes, power dynamics, and

communication strategies embedded in verbal sexist humour, all within the specific sociolinguistic landscape of *The Churchill Show* in Kenya.

### **1.3 Historical Evolution of Verbal Humour on Kenyan Television**

The popularity of verbal humour on television networks in developing African countries like Kenya is on the rise (Orji, 2018). Local mainstream television channels feature numerous programs centred on verbal humour. This is largely attributed to the liberalization of the airwaves following significant political changes, which reduced state control and censorship, thereby fostering a new generation of humourists (Kihara, 2013; Orji, 2018). This trend has attracted scholarly interest in African humour. In the Kenyan context, social-economic and political changes witnessed over the last two decades have contributed to the growth of verbal humour on television.

According to Norrick and Chiaro (2009), verbal humour in Kenya serves significant communicative functions, addressing both local and global themes. The youth in Kenya have taken advantage of the liberalized media landscape to create platforms such as stand-up comedy where they showcase their talents to their audiences. Prior to multiparty politics in Kenya, the media was tightly controlled by the state, limiting opportunities for comedians to express themselves (Kihara, 2013). However, the transition to multiparty politics resulted in reduced state censorship, which encouraged creativity and the establishment of various audiovisual media platforms (Okwiri, 2014). This evolution has opened doors for emerging humourists to engage with their audiences on critical social topics through comedic content. Moreover, the impact of globalization has exposed Kenyan audiences to foreign

humour, which has created a desire for authentic Kenyan humour rooted in local culture, prompting artists to create content that resonates with their audience.

Kenyan verbal humour is very popular among Kenyans because it reflects their day-to-day lives and shared values between comedians and audiences (Kihara, 2013). The rich ethnic diversity in Kenya contributes to a varied linguistic and cultural environment, on which humourists leverage for their content. The country's diverse speech patterns, cultural norms, and unique identities within different ethnic groups give rise to in-group markers and out-group stereotypes. Kenyan humour has its roots in performances dating back to the early 1980s, featuring iconic figures *Mama Kayai* (Mary Khavere), *Mzee Ojwang Hatari* (Benson Wanjau), *Mutiso* (Kimunyo Mbuthia), *Amka Twende* (Benjamin Otieno) in the popular Swahili program *Vitimbi*. These comedians were beloved by Kenyan audiences because of their relatability and the content they presented. For instance, *Mzee Ojwang*, although Gikuyu by ethnicity, skillfully parodied the Luo community using Dhuluo Accents while speaking Kiswahili. Additionally, contemporary comedians like Daniel Ndambuki (Churchill), Eric Omondi, and Teacher Wanjiku on the Churchill Show continue to engage audiences with humour reflecting current societal issues. There is also a linguistic shift from past comedians to contemporary ones who engage in code-switching between Kiswahili, English, and even Sheng, as seen on shows like *Vioja Mahakamani* on KBC television and performances by Auntie Jemimah and Obinna.

#### **1.4 The Stand-Up Comedy Scene in Kenya**

According to a study by Carter (2001), stand-up comedy is viewed as an art form where performers engage with audiences using minimal props or costumes, relying on direct humorous expressions. Successful stand-up comedians are those who can elicit laughter from their audience, although laughter does not always define humour. While laughter is often considered an indicator of successful humor, it does not always define or measure humour itself. Humorous content can still exist even in the absence of immediate laughter, as audience responses are influenced by factors like cultural context, individual sensibilities, or social constraints. As Schwarz (2010) notes, humor can provoke a range of reactions, including silent amusement, reflection, or even discomfort, without triggering overt laughter. In this sense, the comedic intention behind a joke or routine can remain intact even if the audience does not laugh, as humour can also be understood cognitively or appreciated on a deeper, more nuanced level. Essential components of stand-up comedy include the setup, the execution, the punchline, and even laughter and applause to conclude (Attardo, 2020). Schwarz (2010) highlights humour as a vital aspect of human interaction, innate to individuals.

Stand-up comedians are tasked with delivering rapid succession of humorous stories known as bits, which not only entertain but also address societal issues. Topics covered in stand-up routines include ethnicity, politics, sports, family dynamics, and social classes. Gathatu and Chai (2015) note that these routines often comprise of one-liners, creating a monologue format that elicit audience response like laughter. Stand-up comedy has gained popularity on Kenyan television, with a show like *The Churchill* emerging as the favourite.

The Kenyan entertainment scene witnessed the rise of street comedians in the late twentieth century, with groups like Zangalewa, Redykulass, Public Noise makers, and Red Corner gaining recognition (Kihara, 2013). However, it was not until the early 2000 that stand-up comedy became a prominent feature on television, complementing established comedy programs like Vioja Mahakamani and Vitimbi from the late 1980s. There has been an exponential growth in the popularity of stand-up comedy in Kenya. However, detailed linguistic analysis from a pragmatic lens is lacking (Kebaya, 2012; Gathatu & Chai, 2015).

Stand-up comedy, while entertaining, can also influence attitudes towards social, economic, and political issues, sometimes masking negative aspects like gender discrimination. This study wanted to explore how language, particularly through conversational maxims flouting, causes manifestation of sexist implicatures in the genre of stand-up comedy. Notably, stand-up comedy shows are hosted at designated venues, with *The Churchill Show* transitioning from Carnivore ground to Mwai Kibaki Conventional Centre in Mount Kenya University, Thika since 2021. These shows attract a predominantly middle class audience and are meticulously prepared, scripted, and edited for television broadcast (Ndonye, 2015).

#### **1.4.1 *The Churchill Show***

*The Churchill Show* is the most prominent stand-up comedy show in Kenya (Kenya Business Today, 2022). It was launched in 2007 as *The Churchill Live Show*, airing on NTV until 2020, during which it gained immense popularity due to its engaging format and relatable content. In early 2022, the show moved to TV47 due to high production costs at NTV (Business Today, 2022). However, beginning in January 2024, it left TV47 to transition to digital online platforms, such as the Churchill

Show Television YouTube channel, in response to competition from emerging online comedy shows. This shift represents a significant evolution in the show's distribution and engagement with audiences, reflecting broader trends in the media landscape (Ndonye, 2015). Both NTV and TV47 are private TV channels in Kenya (Ndonye, 2015). Initially known as *The Churchill Live* during its first and second seasons (2008-2009), the show transitioned to *The Churchill Show* starting from season three in January 2013. It was originally hosted at Carnivore grounds in Nairobi on Thursdays. However, it expanded its performances to various major towns in Kenya like Kisumu, Mombasa, Eldoret, Kakamega, Meru, and Nakuru.

Season three introduced two segments, *The Churchill Show* and *The Churchill Raw*, airing twice per week. *The Churchill Raw*, hosted by MC Jesse, aired on Thursdays, while *The Churchill Show*, hosted by Daniel Ndambuki (Churchill), aired on Sundays. Live performances typically ran from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., attracting diverse attendees from different backgrounds. The show also included a segment called "toto's corner" to showcase talents of young kids from Kindergarten to primary schools in Nairobi.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, public gatherings were banned, prompting the show to shift to interviewing prominent public figures like politicians and musicians. Due to high production costs, the partnership with NTV ended, leading to a new partnership with TV47. The show continued with the two distinct segments; on Sundays featuring experienced comedians, the Churchill Raw on Thursdays featuring upcoming comedians.

The popularity of *The Churchill Show* has led to numerous awards and attracted international interest from comedy enthusiasts worldwide. As of January 2021, its

YouTube Channel had garnered 0.5 billion views with 2.2 million subscribers, while its Facebook and Instagram accounts have millions of followers. Its success is attributed to its high quality comedic content addressing current socio-cultural and political issues, providing a platform for both established and emerging talents in the Kenyan entertainment industry.

The show typically began with a distinctive tune followed by the introduction, “Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome... Churchill Show!” Hosted by Daniel Ndambuki, known as Churchill, the show commenced with his lively entrance, often dancing to the DJ’s music. Churchill’s knack for connecting with the audience included humorous remarks on current events, eliciting laughter and applause. Subsequently, he would introduce the first comedian, who would perform a brief dance representing their tribe before starting their comedic routine. The comedians, hailing from various regions and ethnic backgrounds across Kenya, were each allotted at least five minutes on stage. These comedians, aged between 18 and 35, represented both genders.

### **1.5 Statement of the Problem**

Verbal humour is a human social phenomenon integral to everyday life. It is found in various contexts such as movies, advertisements and stand-up comedy. While it often enlightens and brings positive energy, it can also be negative, particularly when it is sexist, disparaging individuals or groups based on gender. This form of humour can simultaneously attack a target and deny any responsibility for the sexism under the guise of benign amusement. Verbal sexist humour has the potential to reinforce and perpetuate gender stereotypes, thereby undermining efforts to promote gender equality.

In Kenya, stand-up comedy has evolved significantly over the last two decades, with the *Churchill Show* serving as a prominent platform for this genre. Comedians on this show use language to disparage men and women under the cover of amusement which audiences have normalized. This normalization has negative effects, such as promoting prejudice and inclinations towards gender violence. The linguistic creation and interpretation of verbal sexist humour depends on cultural context, social setting and conventions.

Despite the growing popularity and cultural significance of stand-up comedy in Kenya, there is insufficient comprehensive research into the pragmatic mechanisms underlying the creation and interpretation of verbal sexist humour. The present study addresses the lack of understanding of the linguistic strategies comedians use to convey sexist humour, the sexist inferences in humorous utterances, and how flouting conversational maxims manifest sexist implicatures on *The Churchill Show* stand-up comedy. This study aims to fill the gap in linguistic knowledge regarding the pragmatic dynamics of sexist humour in Kenyan stand-up comedy thereby contributing to broader discourse on comedy, gender and language in Kenya and beyond.

### **1.6 Research Objectives**

The present study seeks to achieve its general objective of investigating the pragmatic interpretation of verbal sexist humour in Kenyan stand-up comedy shows with a special focus on *The Churchill Show*. The specific objectives of the study were:

- i. To describe the linguistic strategies employed by selected stand-up comedians to construct verbal sexist humour in their live performances on *The Churchill Show* on TV47.
- ii. To analyze the sexist inferences underlying live performances of selected stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show* on TV47.
- iii. To determine the sexist implicatures that manifest from flouting conversational maxims in the live performances of selected stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show* on TV47.

### **1.7 Research Questions**

- i. What linguistic strategies are employed by selected stand-up comedians to construct verbal sexist humour in their live performances on *The Churchill Show* on TV47?
- ii. What are the underlying sexist inferences present in the live performances of selected stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show* on TV47?
- iii. What sexist implicatures manifest during live performances by selected stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show* on TV47 as a result of flouting conversational maxims?

### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

This study is significant both theoretically and practically, contributing to advancements in linguistic theory while also offering practical insights for societal impact and policy formulation. The present study holds theoretical value as it adds to the field of linguistics, particularly in the area of pragmatics. Through an in-depth analysis, the study elucidates how linguistic strategies, sexist inferences and sexist implicatures (due to deviations from the conversational maxims) intertwine to

generate verbal sexist humour within the context of Kenyan stand-up comedy, particularly focusing on *The Churchill Show*.

From a practical standpoint, this study carries considerable implications for society at large and offers insights beneficial for policy formulation and regulatory agencies. By unraveling the underlying mechanisms governing the production of verbal sexist humour, the study fosters a heightened awareness of the important role of language in either perpetuating or challenging gender stereotypes and disparities. Holmes and Schnurr (2022) provide evidence on how language perpetuates gender inequalities, emphasizing the practical importance of addressing these issues through humour. Such insights are crucial for informing initiatives and policies aimed at fostering gender equality and combating discrimination within diverse cultural settings. Regulatory agencies may utilize the findings to create guidelines for media representation that encourage responsible humour that is inclusive and non-discriminatory, ultimately shaping public discourse around gender issues. Furthermore, the study underscores the necessity of adopting culturally sensitive approaches by highlighting the significance of local nuances and sensitivities in discussions pertaining to humour and gender. Bell (2015) and Raskin (2017) argue for the importance of considering cultural specifics in humour, supporting a more globally inclusive approach to addressing issues related to gender and language. By focusing on *The Churchill Show*, the study also examines how stand-up comedy reflects and mediates societal norms (Double, 2020), thereby reinforcing or challenging prevailing gender stereotypes.

## 1.9 Justification of the Study

This study was motivated by the need to address a gap in the current literature concerning the pragmatic mechanisms underlying the creation of verbal sexist humour within the context of Kenyan stand-up comedy. Despite the growing popularity of stand-up comedy in Kenya and its cultural significance as a form of entertainment and social commentary, there has been limited scholarly attention devoted to understanding the linguistic dynamics at play (Ndonye, 2015).

Focusing on *The Churchill Show*, a prominent platform within Kenyan stand-up comedy (Gathatu & Chai, 2015), this study aimed to provide a systematic analysis of how linguistic strategies and deviations from conversational maxims contribute to the construction and perpetuation of verbal sexist humour. This analysis was essential for the following reasons:

Firstly, understanding the pragmatic aspects of verbal sexist humour is crucial for gaining insights into how language is employed to reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes and power dynamics (Kotthoff, 2013). By examining how linguistic features shape comedic discourse, the study sheds light on the broader social implications of humour production, particularly in relation to gender equality and discrimination. Existing studies in the field of pragmatics have explored the role of humour in various cultural contexts (e.g., Attardo, 1994; Hiraga, 2005; Holmes, 2000; Kuipers, 2009), but there remains a significant gap in the specific investigation of sexist humour within Kenyan stand-up comedy. This study addresses this gap, thereby expanding the scope of pragmatic research and contributing to a deeper understanding of how language functions in comedic settings.

Secondly, the focus of the study on a specific cultural context- Kenya stand-up comedy- acknowledges the importance of considering local nuances and sensitivities in discussions of humour and language. By situating the analysis within this context, the study provides culturally relevant insights that are applicable to other linguistic and cultural settings, thus contributing to the broader understanding of humour as a pragmatic phenomenon. Previous studies in the field, such as Duncan (2011), which explored cultural differences in humour perception, and Ndonge (2015), which examined the social implications of humour in Kenyan media, have highlighted the significance of local dynamics. Additionally, Kihara (2013) investigated linguistic and cultural dynamics specifically in Kenyan stand-up comedy. Despite this existing research, many have often overlooked the unique cultural dynamics present in Kenyan comedy, and this research aims to rectify this by offering a detailed examination of local comedic landscape

Furthermore, the findings of the study have practical implications for various stakeholders, including comedians, media producers, policymakers, and advocacy groups. By identifying patterns of sexist humour and examining their impact on social perceptions and behaviours, the study can inform efforts to promote gender-sensitive comedy and challenge harmful stereotypes in the public sphere. This not only adds to the academic discourse but also provides actionable insights that can help shape future comedic practices and policies in Kenya and beyond.

### **1.10 Scope and Delimitations of the Study**

The study primarily focused on analyzing content from *The Churchill Show* on TV47. This included live performances. *The Churchill Show* is one of the most popular and influential stand-up comedy shows in Kenya, with a large viewership

and huge cultural impact (Ndonye, 2015). This is why the study narrowed down to conduct a study on it.

The study employed a pragmatic perspective to analyze linguistic mechanisms underlying the creation of verbal sexist humour within the Kenyan stand-up comedy. This included examining linguistic strategies and flouting of conversational maxims. Pragmatics focuses on how meaning is derived in context, particularly how language users flout conversational maxims to generate humour with implied meanings. While semantics deals with the literal meanings of words, pragmatics looks beyond the surface, interpreting the comedian's intentions and audience reactions. This pragmatic lens was essential for understanding how comedians employ strategies to craft humour that aligns with societal norms, generating laughter and reflection on gender-related stereotypes. The decision to analyze verbal sexist humour from a pragmatic standpoint was motivated by the need to comprehend the role of language in real-world social interactions and contexts. Unlike other language levels like phonetics and phonology, syntax or semantics which focus on sound systems, sentence structures, and the literal meanings of words respectively, the pragmatic approach enabled a thorough examination of how stand-up comedians strategically employ language to create and convey sexist humour within the dynamic environment of stand-up comedy shows. This perspective was crucial for capturing the intricate interplay between language use and societal norms, providing valuable insights into the socio-cultural effects of verbal sexist humour in Kenyan comedy.

The analysis focused on the unique cultural and contextual elements of Kenyan stand-up comedy, emphasizing local norms, values, and sensitivities in the construction and interpretation of humour. It was limited to selected content from *The Churchill Show*.

Humour is a multifaceted phenomenon with various forms, including verbal, visual, and situational humour. The study focused on verbal humour, particularly verbal sexist humour, characterized by linguistic creativity that influences societal perceptions and attitudes (Attardo, 2017). By examining verbal sexist humour, the study aims to explore the linguistic mechanisms and pragmatic dynamics of humour creation, especially concerning sexism. Verbal humour serves as a primary vehicle for comedians to convey social commentary, challenge stereotypes and engage audiences, making it an essential area of research in the field of humour studies.

### **1.11 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has introduced the study, outlined its objectives and research questions. The significance and justification of the study, rationale, scope, and delimitations of the study have been highlighted. The next chapter presents the literature review and the theoretical frameworks underpinning the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, relevant literature is reviewed on linguistic strategies used in the construction of verbal sexist humour, pragmatic implicatures and inferences, humour and its various types, verbal sexist humour, pragmatic interpretation of sexist humour, stand-up comedy, evolution of stand-up comedy, and gender representation in Kenyan stand-up comedy. The chapter also focuses on two theoretical frameworks that were used to guide the study.

#### 2.2 Linguistic Strategies Used to Construct Verbal Sexist Humour

Language and humor are deeply interconnected, as humor uses language to generate amusement. Stand-up comedians, exploit linguistic strategies to craft humour that disparages both men and women. As Grabert (2019) observes, stand-up comedy provides a stage where comedians use linguistic tools to act out exaggerated versions of themselves.

In the context of sexist humour, language becomes more than a neutral representation of reality-it serves as a strategic tool that reflects embedded sexism (Woodzicka, 2015). Comedians frequently flout conversational maxims to communicate sexist implicatures. This study explores how language on *The Churchill Show* is used to covertly depict males and females, with attention to the linguistic strategies that comedians employ in their routines. Tannen (1990) notes

that analyzing language can reveal much about the creators' underlying interests, prejudices, and social commentary.

Devices such as hyperbole, metaphors, similes, ambiguity, juxtaposition, satire, puns, wordplay, and irony are commonly employed in stand-up comedy to construct verbal sexist humour. However, while these devices are also widely used in literary studies, their functions differ across contexts. In literary studies, these devices enhance narrative structure, evoke imagery, and convey symbolic meanings, often serving to develop themes or characters within a fictionalized or poetic text. For example, a metaphor in literature might be used to emphasize the inner struggle of a character or to symbolize broader social themes.

In linguistic humour studies, these devices are primarily pragmatic tools. They are employed to evoke laughter through linguistic manipulation and socio-cultural references. In stand-up comedy, for instance, puns and wordplay may generate humor by exploiting multiple meanings or ambiguous language. Irony and satire challenge societal norms, particularly those surrounding gender, by flouting conversational maxims and highlighting contradictions between appearance and reality. These strategies are critical in creating sexist humour by reinforcing stereotypes through the manipulation of language.

Therefore, while the same rhetorical devices are used in both fields, their applications diverge: in literature, they develop narrative and emotional depth, while in linguistic analysis, they generate humour, often with a focus on societal critique and spontaneous performance

### **2.2.1 Juxtaposition**

Juxtaposition is a powerful tool in comedy, where comedians place two contrasting elements side by side to reveal their absurdities and generate humor. For instance, Palmer (2009) explored how British stand-up comedians utilize juxtaposition by contrasting societal expectations of gender roles with unconventional behaviours. This approach creates humor by highlighting the ridiculousness of these opposing ideas. Lockyer and Pickering (2005) analyzed how juxtaposing masculine and feminine stereotypes often leads to humor that indirectly critiques societal norms. Similarly, Davies (2011) examined how racial and gendered stereotypes are juxtaposed in stand-up comedy, revealing their irrationality and amplifying comedic effect. In all these studies, juxtaposition allows comedians to challenge conventional norms and expectations by emphasizing the differences between societal ideals and reality, often resulting in humour that reflects deeper socio-cultural issues. These studies showcase how juxtaposition not only serves to amuse audiences but also becomes a tool for subtle social critique.

### **2.2.2 Hyperbole**

Hyperbole, derived from the Latin term meaning to heap up, is a rhetorical device that employs exaggeration for emphasis and effect. According to Ross (1998), hyperbole involves overstating a claim beyond the limits of truth, a concept that aligns with Attardo's (2017) assertion that hyperbolic statements extend beyond reality. While hyperbole is typically expressed verbally, it can also appear visually, adding another dimension to its usage in comedy.

In stand-up comedy, hyperbole serves multiple discourse goals, including creating humor, clarifying issues, and emphasizing points. While not every hyperbolic statement is necessarily humorous, the exaggeration can enhance the communicative objectives of the speaker. Chiaro (2010) states that common markers of hyperbole include contrasting terms related to degree, such as size ("huge"), intensity ("absolute"), quantity ("bucketsful"), and time ("eternal"). Hyperbolic expressions are not intended to be taken literally; instead, they amplify the ridiculousness of the situations being ridiculed, thus making humour more accessible and relatable to the audience.

Attardo (2017) notes that hyperbole is a prominent feature in stand-up comedy, as it allows comedians to exaggerate familiar scenarios to facilitate audience engagement and laughter. Context is crucial in interpreting humour; audiences must possess relevant knowledge about the situation to fully appreciate the hyperbole and its implications.

Additionally, several studies have highlighted the significance of hyperbole in humour. For example, in their analysis of comedic performances, Lee and Zinkhan (2010) noted that hyperbole can create a comedic disconnect between reality and the exaggerated portrayal, thereby intensifying the humorous effect. Moreover, Attardo (2017) found that hyperbolic expressions often resonate with audiences when they reflect shared cultural experiences or societal norms, making the humour both relatable and impactful.

### **2.2.3 Wordplay and Puns**

Wordplay is a prevalent technique in humor creation, where humour arises from exploiting the multiple meanings of words in amusing ways. As noted by Ross (1998), these multiple meanings can mislead the audience, resulting in humour. Punning, a specific form of wordplay, involves deliberately using a word in a manner that suggests two or more meanings.

In the context of stand-up comedy, wordplay is often utilized to construct sexist humor. The Audience may find humor in sexist jokes by focusing on the clever use of language while neglecting the implicit sexist undertones. This phenomenon highlights how the allure of wordplay can overshadow the underlying sexism present in the humour. By examining these humorous utterances from a pragmatic perspective, we can uncover the sexist meanings concealed within the wordplay.

Several studies have explored the role of wordplay and puns in humour. For example, Chiaro (2010) discusses the complexity of puns in relation to cultural contexts, suggesting that audience familiarity with language intricacies can enhance comedic impact. Additionally, Ritchie (2004) emphasizes how puns exploit semantic ambiguities, allowing comedians to craft layered meanings that can elicit laughter while simultaneously addressing sensitive topics, such as gender dynamics. Through this lens, it becomes clear that while wordplay can create laughter, it can also perpetuate sexist stereotypes, prompting a critical examination of the language used in comedy.

#### **2.2.4 Irony**

Irony involves scenarios that appear unusual or humorous due to outcomes that contrast with what one might anticipate. An ironic statement conveys a meaning opposite to the intended message of the speaker. Irony functions as an indirect speech act and violates the maxims of manner.

According to Zhao (2011), to understand irony one needs to identify the many incongruities that exist in an ironic utterance. Zhao further states that ironic utterances are identified because incompatibility exists between the information being provided through the contextual elements and what is being explicated by the utterance.

Mills (2008) states that one of the covert ways that has been invented by sexists to marginalize and discriminate against male and female is through the use of irony in humour. How irony is employed as a language strategy in the creation of sexist humour within the Kenyan stand-up comedy scene is an under-researched area. This is what the present study aims at exploring.

#### **2.2.5 Ambiguity**

Ambiguity arises when statements suggest two or more distinct interpretations Woodzicka (2015). The varying relationships among sentence elements can lead to different grammatical functions, which in turn creates ambiguity. This ambiguity manifests when the interpretations of both the surface and deep structures of a sentence diverge, resulting in humour.

Comedians frequently employ ambiguity in their performances to prompt the audience to reconsider their material. This technique has dual effects: it elicits strong reactions from the audience and provides the performers with additional time to prepare for their next delivery. The strategic use of ambiguous language not only enhances comedic timing but also invites the audience to engage more deeply with the content, often uncovering underlying meanings or humour that might otherwise be overlooked.

Studies have shown that ambiguity is a powerful tool in humour creation. For instance, Attardo (1994) notes that ambiguous statements can lead to unexpected interpretations, which often produce laughter. Furthermore, Ritchie (2004) highlights that comedians can leverage ambiguity to challenge audience expectations, thereby reinforcing or subverting societal norms related to gender and other themes.

In essence, ambiguity serves as a versatile device in stand-up comedy, enriching the comedic experience while simultaneously encouraging the audience to reflect on the complexities of language and meaning.

### **2.2.6 Similes**

Similes, as a form of comparison using "like" or "as," provide a flexible framework for comedians to draw unexpected but clever parallels between dissimilar concepts. According to Smith (2020), humorous similes rely on the surprise factor: they present an incongruity between the compared elements, which, when resolved in a comedic context, provokes laughter. This violation of expectations is central to humour theory (Attardo, 2014).

The strength of similes in humour lies not just in their ability to provoke laughter but in their cultural resonance. As Brown and Johnson (2018) suggest, cultural and contextual factors significantly influence how similes land with an audience. A simile that may be hilarious in one cultural setting might fall flat in another, highlighting the importance of shared knowledge and norms in comedic effectiveness. In a Kenyan context, similes often draw from local idioms or cultural references, which allow comedians to connect more deeply with their audience. This is especially relevant when comedians address gender stereotypes or societal norms, where similes provide a mechanism for subtle critique through humour.

Similes, much like metaphors, also contribute to the cognitive engagement of humour. They require the audience to actively process the comparison and find the humor in it. Studies have shown that humor involving similes stimulates creative thinking and enhances cognitive flexibility (Smith, 2020). By making an unlikely connection between two elements, similes challenge the audience to reconcile the comparison in a way that feels both surprising and fitting, a key element in many humorous routines. This engagement fosters a sense of social bonding, as shared laughter often reinforces group identity and social cohesion (Martin, 2007). The present study builds on these ideas by exploring how comedians on *The Churchill Show* employ similes to convey sexist humour.

### **2.2.7 Metaphors**

Metaphors, as linguistic devices, play a crucial role in shaping the perception and interpretation of comedic performances. While McArthur's (1992) definition of metaphor as a tool for seeing something in terms of something else remains relevant,

more recent scholarship emphasizes the cognitive dimensions of metaphors in humour. Lakoff and Johnson (2008) suggest that metaphors are central to our cognitive processes, fundamentally shaping how we conceptualize the world. This is particularly significant in humour, where metaphors often serve to subvert audience expectations by creating surprising or absurd connections between concepts.

In stand-up comedy, metaphors are employed not merely for illustration but as a strategic tool to frame incongruity—the cornerstone of humour theory (Attardo, 2014). Comedians exploit the unexpected relationships between metaphorical elements to generate humour. For example, stand-up comedians frequently use metaphorical expressions to provide exaggerated depictions of everyday situations, making mundane experiences seem more absurd and laughable. On stand-up comedy shows, metaphors are often employed to highlight gender dynamics, subtly reinforcing or challenging societal gender norms.

Recent studies on metaphor in humour have drawn attention to its role in reinforcing cultural and social stereotypes. Burgers et al. (2016) discuss how metaphors can subtly embed societal biases, which may not always be immediately apparent to audiences. For instance, sexist humour often uses metaphors that objectify or diminish women by equating them with objects or animals, a common tactic in male-dominated comedic spaces. As such, the humour crafted through metaphors can perpetuate harmful stereotypes under the guise of lightheartedness. The present study investigates how metaphorical language contributes to sexist humour.

### 2.2.8 Satire

Satire is a sophisticated form of humour that critiques societal norms through irony, exaggeration, and parody. As Shwarz (2010) notes, satire not only mocks but also serves as a mechanism for social critique, aiming to provoke thought and inspire change. However, in contemporary comedic performances, satire often operates within the boundaries of what is socially acceptable, which can sometimes dilute its critical edge (Simpson, 2003).

In Kenyan stand-up comedy, satire plays a dual role: it entertains while also providing a lens through which societal issues, including gender relations, are examined. Comedians often satirize societal expectations of both men and women, but the line between critique and reinforcement of gender stereotypes can be thin. As Hutcheson and Hutcheson (2015) argue, the effectiveness of satire hinges on the ability of the audience to interpret the deeper social critique embedded in the humour. On *The Churchill Show*, satirical humor may simultaneously challenge and reinforce sexist ideologies, depending on how the audience perceives the material.

Moreover, satire often employs irony to critique social norms. However, as Milner (2019) points out, irony can be a double-edged sword in humor—especially when addressing sensitive topics like sexism. While some audience members may grasp the ironic critique of gender roles, others may take the humour at face value, thereby reinforcing the very stereotypes the satire aims to challenge. The present study examines how comedians on *The Churchill Show* navigate this delicate balance, and whether their satirical critiques of gender roles are effective in provoking critical reflection or merely perpetuating sexist attitudes.

### **2.3 Pragmatic Implicatures and Inferences**

The concepts of implicature and inference are central to understanding how conversational meaning is generated beyond the literal interpretation of utterances. Grice (as cited in Davis, 1998) introduced the term implicature to explain how speakers convey additional meaning by suggesting or implying something beyond what is explicitly stated. Implicatures allow for connections between what is said and what is meant, where the two may not always align. This distinction is essential when analyzing humour, as much of what is considered funny often relies on the ability of the audience to infer meaning that is not overtly expressed.

Grice distinguishes between two types of implicatures: conventional implicatures, which are tied to specific expressions or words and remain constant across different contexts, and conversational implicatures, which are more context-dependent and vary based on the interaction. As Thomas (1995) notes, conversational implicatures rely on shared knowledge and expectations between the speaker and listener, and they depend heavily on the context in which the conversation takes place. This is particularly relevant in comedic performances, where the audience must navigate multiple layers of meaning to grasp the humour behind the jokes.

Cruse (2000) highlights that conversational implicatures are often unstated assumptions or propositions that are not explicitly encoded in what is said. In the context of sexist humour, conversational implicatures play a significant role in generating inferences about gender roles and stereotypes. For instance, comedians may use humour to imply certain characteristics about men and women without explicitly stating them. These implicatures allow the comedian to convey

controversial or stereotypical views while relying on the ability of the audience to read between the lines and arrive at sexist inferences.

An essential aspect of conversational implicature is the ability of the speaker to manage and control meaning. As Cruse (2000) suggests, the speaker must carefully navigate the context of the conversation, the expectations of the audience, and the specific language used to ensure the intended meaning is understood. This becomes particularly challenging in comedic performances, where multiple layers of meaning often intersect. For instance, implicatures about men being hypersexual or women being irrational can be generated through the flouting of conversational norms, leading to sexist implications that reinforce gender stereotypes. While much of the existing literature has focused on general discourse, the present research fills a gap by specifically examining how these implicatures function within the context of Kenyan stand-up comedy, where humor is often used to navigate complex societal issues related to gender, power, and identity.

One approach to understanding how implicatures are generated is Grice's Cooperative Principle, which suggests that speakers and listeners cooperate to maintain effective communication by following conversational maxims (Grice, 1975). These maxims include the principles of quantity, quality, relation, and manner. When these maxims are flouted—intentionally violated for rhetorical or humorous effect—the audience is prompted to search for an implied meaning, leading to conversational implicatures. In comedy, flouting these maxims often results in sexist implicatures, which can reinforce gender stereotypes. For example, when a comedian flouts the maxim of relevance by making an unexpected or illogical statement about gender roles, this may be interpreted as a humorous critique

or reinforcement of societal norms. This leads to the manifestation of sexist implicatures. The humour relies on the ability of the audience to infer these deeper meanings from the violation of conversational norms.

Inferences, on the other hand, refer to the process by which the listener interprets and derives meaning from what is said. As Thomas (1995) explains, implicatures are generally associated with the speaker, while inferences are attributed to the listener. In the context of *The Churchill Show*, the audience plays an active role in drawing inferences from the performance of the comedian, interpreting the humour based on their understanding of societal norms and gender expectations.

Archer et al. (2012) elaborate on the role of the listener in meaning-making by applying relevance theory, which posits that the listener plays a crucial role in interpreting conversational implicatures. According to relevance theory, listeners strive to make sense of the utterances of the speaker by identifying the most relevant and accessible interpretation based on the context and their knowledge of the world. This theoretical framework highlights the cognitive processes involved in humour interpretation, as audience members must draw on shared cultural and societal knowledge to arrive at sexist inferences.

Recent studies have expanded on the work of Grice to examine how implicatures and inferences function in various types of discourse, including humour. Mills (2008) and Schmidt & Kuperman (2019) have emphasized the importance of implicature in shaping audience perceptions of gender and power dynamics. Their research indicates that conversational implicatures in humorous discourse often perpetuate sexist ideologies by subtly reinforcing traditional gender roles. These studies

highlight the significance of examining how conversational norms are flouted in comedic settings to better understand how implicit sexist messages are conveyed.

## **2.4 Humour**

Humour is a tool used to elicit laughter, encompassing both verbal and non-verbal forms. This study delved into verbal humour, which has been described as a complex phenomenon due to its contradictory nature. Humour carries both positive and negative aspects, emphasizing its multifaceted nature (Kanyemba & Naidu, 2019). In the argument of McGraw and Warren (2010), humour emerges when societal norms are violated in a non-offensive manner. This violation or flouting of norms in humorous discourse challenges conventional perceptions of how things should be. Humour plays a crucial role in social interactions, as highlighted by Gradinaru (2015), serving various functions including amusement and social bonding. However, it is crucial to recognize that humour is not always benign. It can potentially harm social relations and interactions if it crosses certain boundaries. The present study focuses on describing the linguistic strategies used in its creation, analyzing the underlying sexist inferences, and examining the flouted conversational maxims and the sexist implicatures that manifest through such flouting.

Verbal humour broadly refers to humour created through the use of spoken language. The creation of verbal humour depends on certain linguistic properties or tools such as puns, riddles, exaggeration, ambiguity among others. A piece of verbal humour can vary widely in length, from a brief one-liner to an extended work like a humorous novel.

Jodlowieck (1991) states that a verbal humorous piece contains clear demarcation in terms of the point where the humour begins and where it stops. Jodlowieck further states that there are always two segments to any humorous piece: setting (refers to the text of the humorous piece excluding the punch line) and the punch line. Each of these two components plays a particular role in creating humorous texts (Hanks, 2000). These ideas by the two scholars above were crucial to the present study by shedding light on how to identify humorous utterances by stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show*.

Humour is interpreted in context in so far as humorous pieces are context bound (Davies, 2011). In order to get the punchline of the humour, there is need for mind reading by both the audience and the humourist. It is upon the humourist to make prediction of what stimulus is relevant and the assumptions that the audience can make in the process of understanding of humour. The suggestion is that interpretation of humour is relative, in the sense that what one person finds funny may not be funny to another. Knowledge of one's culture is critical in the creation and comprehension of humour. Ptaszynski (2004) states that culture is a set of assumptions and beliefs that help in deciding the right context for the interpretation of an utterance. Culture makes use of language to determine the way of life of people. In this regard, cultural context is one of the ways stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show* draw upon to generate humour.

Schröder and Kihara (2012) conducted a study on the pragmatic interpretation of *Mchongoano*. They used the relevance theory to argue that a listener can only achieve the humorous effects of *Mchongoano* when one is able to recognize the

intended insult of the joke generated through the incongruity of events and situations. Schröder and Kihara (2012) further state that incongruity that is prevalent in *Mchongoano* humorous pieces is created by violating the encyclopedic knowledge of both the speaker and listener. The two scholars conducted a critical analysis of *Mchongoano* jokes based on incongruity shown through implicatures, explicatures and also stereotypes. Their study informed the present study especially in achieving objective three of exploring how conversational maxims flouting bring about the manifestations of sexist implicatures.

Attenborough (2014) has defined sexist humour as humour that is demeaning, insulting, stereotyping, victimizing and/or objectifying a person on the basis of his or her gender. Ndonge (2015) states that there are utterances made by stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show* that stereotypes based on gender, ethnicity, political affiliation, and social class. In his argument, Ndonge (2015) further states that besides comedy shows in Kenya providing a stage for socialization, they have become platforms for expression of discrimination based on sex, tribe, and social class. Many of the stereotypes in the utterances are reinforced under the cover of benign amusement. The study by Ndonge focused on ethnic stereotyping on *The Churchill Show*. Using Relevancy theory by Wilson and Sperber in the analysis of his data, Ndonge's study revealed that comedians use language on the show to categorize people according to ethnic stereotypes. Whereas his study was focused on ethnic stereotyping on *The Churchill Show* using relevancy theory, the present study is a pragmatic interpretation of verbal sexist humour on the same show but using Fairclough's (2001) sociocultural approach to Critical Discourse Analysis and Grice's (1975) theory of Conversational Implicature to find out if there are sexist

ideologies underlying humorous utterances. The study by Ndonge provided an important foundation for the present study.

Verbal misogyny through sexist humour can function to express behaviours socially sanctioned such as sexism. Studies have revealed how sexism is not a static entity but evolves from being overt and blatant to being covertly hidden in humorous verbal cues which are more subtle but equally harmful (Ayres, Friedman & Leaper, 2009; Samantroy, 2010; Barretto & Ellemers, 2013). Expression of direct linguistic sexism has been banned in most if not all modern societies. This has resulted in a new form of sexism (sexist humour) which is subtly expressed under the cover of benign amusement. It is not easy to confront it because the perpetrator will always say 'I was just joking.' This puts the complainant in a bad position because he or she will be seen as somebody who does not have a sense of humour. Because of this non-confrontational attitude towards sexist humour, it can persist and have far reaching negative repercussions. This implies that there is need for an investigation on how this subtle form of sexism is linguistically constituted. The present study set out to investigate this phenomenon from a pragmatic perspective.

The subject of sexist humour has mostly been approached from fields such as social psychology and anthropology where findings have shown that this form of humour just like overt forms of sexism is used as a tool to cause harassment (Viki et al., 2007; Thomae & Pina, 2015). Scholars in the above fields have focused on the impact of sexist humour. In other words, they have examined how interactions with sexist humour affect the behaviour of a person or groups. They have neglected to explore sexist humour from the angle of linguistic, especially from a pragmatic point of view to try and understand not only the social aspects of sexist humour but also its linguistic nature (Nyakundi, Barasa, & Mudogo, 2024). Furthermore, majority of

these studies have focused more on the contexts of Europe and America and neglected other contexts like Kenya. The present study came in to fill this gap.

The role of humour in perpetuating sexist ideologies in Kenyan stand-up comedy remains largely under-studied, especially in the field of linguistics thus making it a fruitful target of investigation (Gathatu & Chai, 2015). The present study explores how stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show* flout Cooperative Principle maxims to make utterances that not only cause amusement but also have sexist implicatures. Despite the fact that stand-up comedy shows are meant to be platforms for socialization, they have proven to be channels through which discrimination of men and women is perpetuated.

Humour is a mirror that reflects deep socio-cultural perceptions (Mills, 2008). It enables understanding of cultural ways of thought and feeling. The present study argues that sexist humour is not simply a form of benign amusement but a mechanism of expressing sexism. There was need for a study on how sexist humour is linguistically constituted.

Nurshanti (2010) argues that sexism is apparent in stand-up comedy. One would think that stand-up comedy shows are platforms where norms of appropriate forms of communications are followed for effective communication. The audience may not be able to interpret the discourse on stand-up comedy as sexist unless the sexism is overt. This is because the audience has an activated non-serious mindset towards the humour and they interpret it as benign amusement. Below are the various types of humour

### 2.4.1 Slapstick

Slapstick humour primarily relies on physical actions, exaggerated movements, and situations to provoke laughter. The effectiveness of slapstick is tied to timing, visual absurdity, and often, the lack of verbal sophistication. Historically, slapstick has its roots in early theater and silent film comedy, with physical gestures and exaggerated reactions compensating for the absence of spoken language (King, 2001). Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton are renowned pioneers who mastered the use of slapstick to highlight the human condition through absurdity, making complex social critiques through simple visual gags.

Slapstick, though often dismissed as lowbrow humour, can reveal deeper sociocultural themes. According to Larkin (2014), slapstick humour taps into universal human fears and mishaps, making it accessible across cultural boundaries. Its reliance on physicality allows it to transcend language barriers, which is why it maintains relevance even in contemporary settings, like children's cartoons (for example, Tom & Jerry). However, some scholars critique slapstick for lacking intellectual depth, arguing that its reliance on physical exaggeration overshadows narrative complexity (Ross, 1998).

In a critical review of its role in humour theory, slapstick can be understood as operating within Freud's (1927) concept of "release theory," providing audiences with a safe space to laugh at physical discomforts of others. However, the repetition of exaggerated violence in slapstick is sometimes seen as reinforcing desensitization toward violence (King, 2001). Overall, the effectiveness of slapstick lies in its ability to blend simplicity with complex emotions, allowing audiences to connect physically and emotionally with the comedic action.

### **2.4.2. Satire**

Satire operates on multiple levels, blending humor with critique to highlight societal flaws, hypocrisies, or political corruption. Unlike slapstick, satire typically requires a higher level of cognitive engagement from the audience, as it often employs irony, sarcasm, and exaggeration to expose the contradictions within social systems (Simpson, 2003). The primary goal of satire is to provoke thought rather than to entertain purely. Its effectiveness, therefore, hinges on the ability of the audience to grasp the underlying critique. Historically, satire has been used to challenge political and religious institutions (Griffin, 1994). Simpson (2003) notes that, the effectiveness of satire lies in its ability to blend humour with harsh reality, creating a space where audiences can laugh at uncomfortable truths.

However, the risk with satire is that its humour can sometimes obscure its critical message. According to Harries (2000), satire is often misinterpreted by audiences who focus on the comedic surface rather than the deeper social critique. Additionally, satire can alienate audiences who do not possess the cultural knowledge required to understand its references, making it an exclusionary form of humour.

### **2.4.3. Parody**

Parody, as a form of humour, imitates the style of a particular genre, work, or individual in an exaggerated way to produce a comedic effect. It relies on the familiarity of the audience with the original subject being mocked. According to Hutcheon (1985), parody is inherently intertextual, requiring the audience to recognize both the original work and the deviations presented in the parody. This

form of humor invites the audience to laugh at both the original content and the exaggerated version.

Ross (1998) highlights that parody is effective because it offers a dual layer of humour-on one hand, it mimics the form of the source material, while on the other, it exaggerates or distorts certain elements to make them absurd. For example, a parody of a superhero film might amplify the exaggerated heroism or improbable scenarios, making the original genre seem trivial or ridiculous in comparison.

In terms of its critical function, parody, like satire, can serve as a vehicle for social commentary. However, Hutcheon (1985) argues that parody is often less direct than satire in its critique, as it tends to focus more on the artistic form than on societal structures. Its impact is also closely tied to the audience's familiarity with the original work; without that recognition, much of the humour is lost.

#### **2.4.4 Dark Humour**

Dark humour, also referred to as black humor or gallows humour, tackles subjects that are typically seen as off-limits for humour, such as death, illness, or suffering. It juxtaposes the seriousness of these topics with a lighthearted or flippant tone, often creating discomfort alongside amusement. Davies (2011) postulated that dark humour serves as a defense mechanism, allowing individuals to confront uncomfortable realities in a less threatening way.

Dark humour is often used in situations where laughter provides relief from tragedy. Comedians can use dark humour to tackle subjects like mortality, religion, and societal decay. McGraw and Warren (2010) suggest that dark humour operates under

the “benign violation theory,” which posits that humour arises when something seems wrong (a violation) but is simultaneously seen as non-threatening (benign). Dark humour, by this logic, allows audiences to laugh at serious issues because they are framed in a non-threatening, humorous context.

However, the use of dark humour is not without controversy. It can easily offend audiences, particularly those with personal connections to the subject matter being joked about. According to Ruch and Heintz (2016), dark humour has a polarizing effect—it can be cathartic for some, offering a way to cope with difficult realities, while being deeply offensive to others. This makes it a risky form of humour, particularly in public or diverse audiences.

#### **2.4.5 Self-Deprecating Humour**

Self-deprecating humour involves individuals making themselves the target of their jokes, often exaggerating their own flaws, mistakes, or insecurities to elicit laughter. In the argument of McGraw and Warren (2010), self-deprecation allows individuals to display humility and approachability, often endearing them to the audience. This type of humour serves a dual purpose: it diffuses potential criticism by preemptively highlighting one's weaknesses and fosters relatability by presenting the speaker as flawed but likable. Comedians can use self-deprecating humour effectively to build rapport with audiences.

However, self-deprecating humour can also have negative psychological effects. Self-deprecation may serve as a defense mechanism, masking deeper insecurities. Some studies indicate that excessive use of self-deprecating humour, especially in individuals with low self-esteem, may reinforce negative self-perceptions (Martin et

al., 2003). Thus, while self-deprecating humour can create a positive connection with audiences, it can also perpetuate harmful self-concepts when overused.

Self-deprecation works best when it maintains a balance, allowing the individual to laugh at themselves without appearing overly self-critical. Martin et al. (2003) note that the key to successful self-deprecating humour lies in the audience's perception of the speaker's confidence—if the humour is seen as coming from a place of security, it can increase likability; if it appears rooted in genuine insecurity, it may elicit pity rather than laughter.

#### **2.4.6 Surreal Humour**

Surreal humour relies on absurdity and illogical scenarios to provoke laughter, often by presenting events or dialogues that defy conventional logic or reasoning. This type of humour is characterized by bizarre, dream-like sequences, non sequiturs, and unexpected juxtapositions. Surreal humour operates on the incongruity theory of humour, which posits that humour arises when there is a mismatch between what is expected and what is experienced (Attardo 2017). In the case of surreal humour, the comedic impact lies in the complete defiance of normal logic or social conventions. This form of humour often appeals to niche audiences who appreciate the unexpected and unconventional nature of surrealism.

However, surreal humour can also alienate audiences who prefer more traditional, logical forms of comedy. As Weitz (2016) points out, the effectiveness of surreal humour often depends on the willingness of the audience to suspend disbelief and engage with the absurd. For some, the lack of narrative coherence or rationality can be frustrating rather than funny, limiting its mainstream appeal. Nonetheless, surreal

humor continues to thrive in more experimental forms of comedy, particularly in television and film.

#### **2.4.7 Observational Humour**

Observational humour focuses on the mundane aspects of everyday life, drawing attention to common experiences or situations and presenting them in a humorous light. It is a form of humour that resonates with audiences because it highlights the absurdity or irony in things people often overlook. Comedians, who are masters of observational humour, use their ability to turn everyday situations into comedic material (Double, 2011).

What makes observational humour effective is its relatability; it draws on shared experiences and invites the audience to laugh at the familiar. In the argument of Double (2011), observational humour relies heavily on the ability of the comedian to take ordinary situations and find the comedic elements within them, often by pointing out the contradictions or absurdities that are usually ignored. The humour often arises from the recognition of the truth behind the joke, making it both funny and insightful.

The accessibility of observational humour is both its strength and its limitation. While it can appeal to a broad audience due to its relatability, it can also become predictable if the observations lack originality or depth. According to Rutter (1997), the challenge with observational humour lies in maintaining freshness and avoiding clichés. Over-reliance on well-known topics can make the humor seem trite or repetitive, which is why the most successful observational comedians are those who can continually find new angles on familiar subjects.

## **2.5 Verbal Sexist humour**

Sexist humour thrives on exaggerating gender differences, sexualizing individuals, or demeaning gender roles through language (Nyakundi, Mudogo, & Barasa, 2024). In contemporary stand-up comedy and other forms of humour, sexist humour is typically used for entertainment, yet it can have deeper social and psychological implications. Understanding sexist humour requires a multidisciplinary approach, drawing on theories from linguistics, psychology, sociology, and feminist studies.

According to Ford et al. (2008), sexist humour serves to trivialize or make light of gender-based discrimination. It frequently operates by using hyperbolic generalizations, wordplay, or ambiguities that create double meanings in which the humour hides sexism beneath an ostensibly innocuous layer. Humour is complex because, while it can be used to subvert power dynamics, in many cases, it also reinforces them.

Social psychologists such as Woodzicka (2015) argue that sexist humour perpetuates gender inequality by normalizing harmful stereotypes. By using language to belittle, sexualize, or diminish individuals based on their gender, comedians may inadvertently (or purposefully) promote gender-based hierarchies. This kind of humour, though often defended as “just a joke,” fosters environments where sexism is normalized and accepted.

Benevolent sexist humour, as conceptualized by Glick and Fiske (2001), revolves around positive yet limiting stereotypes about women, such as depicting them as nurturing or delicate. While this may appear to be complimentary, it subtly reinforces traditional gender roles by positioning women as weaker and dependent

on men. Such humour, often disguised as protective or flattering, ultimately perpetuates the notion that women are less capable in comparison to men.

In contrast, hostile sexist humour is more overtly aggressive and derogatory, frequently portraying women as inferior or sexual objects. It often targets women by emphasizing stereotypes related to incompetence, emotional instability, or physical appearance. Additionally, this form of humour can also be directed toward men, typically by mocking their perceived failures to meet traditional masculine expectations. This could involve ridiculing men for showing vulnerability or questioning their authority in professional or familial settings.

Another aspect of sexist humour involves sexual objectification, where the focus is reduced to the physical appearance or sexual appeal of women. As discussed by Erhardt and Felts (2018), this kind of humour dehumanizes women by reducing them to mere sexual objects, reinforcing harmful power imbalances in society. Comedians, for example, often rely on jokes that emphasize the sexuality of women while ignoring their personal or intellectual qualities. Such humour is particularly insidious because it normalizes the view of women as existing primarily for male pleasure, further entrenching sexist attitudes in social discourse.

In stand-up comedy, sexist humour often functions as a reflection of cultural anxieties about gender roles. Comedians often use sexist humour to navigate contentious gender issues. While some comedians use humor to critique or subvert gender stereotypes, many others reinforce these norms by making fun of women's physicality, emotions, or intelligence. By critically analyzing how sexist humour functions in stand-up, we gain insight into how language is used to perpetuate or challenge gender-based discrimination in public discourse (Double, 2011).

Sexist humour in comedy can blur the line between criticism and complicity. As some scholars have pointed out, the use of irony or satire in comedy can mask underlying sexist intentions, making it difficult for audiences to discern whether a joke is endorsing or critiquing gender inequality (Lockyer & Pickering, 2008). Thus, comedians wielding sexist humour must walk a fine line between reinforcing harmful stereotypes and exposing them for critique.

Psychologically, sexist humour has significant effects on individuals and society at large. Ford et al. (2008) suggest that exposure to sexist jokes can desensitize audiences to the harm of gender stereotypes and discrimination. When sexist humour is normalized, it fosters an environment where real gender inequalities are downplayed or dismissed as trivial. This effect is more potent in male-dominated spaces such as workplaces or media platforms like stand-up comedy, where comedians, often male, use sexist jokes to maintain social dominance.

Ford and Ferguson (2004) argue that sexist humour does not merely reflect societal gender dynamics; it actively reinforces them by creating shared laughter at the expense of women or marginalized genders. This humor provides social cohesion among those who share the sexist ideology, while alienating those who challenge it.

The role of sexist humour is closely linked to theories of gender. The Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) helps explain how individuals use humour to establish group identity and reinforce in-group norms, particularly around gender. Comedians may draw on shared experiences or perceptions of gender roles to bond with their audience, often at the expense of women or other marginalized groups.

Sexist humour can also be understood through the lens of hegemonic masculinity, a concept developed by Connell (1995). It refers to the dominance of certain masculine ideals over both women and subordinate forms of masculinity. Sexist jokes, especially those that denigrate men for failing to conform to traditional masculine ideals, are a key part of this social dynamic.

### **2.5.1 Pragmatic Interpretation of Sexist Humour**

Holmes (2018) defines pragmatics as the study of the use of language in context. Society refers to groups of people who are united in terms of political, professional, religious, or other identities. Languages enable us to see the norms of societies. This is due to the fact that language is both a carrier and mirror of norms. Holmes (2018) further states that there are social variables that influence linguistic choices by the speakers in social interactions. Therefore, there is an element of social dimension to language use. According to Allan and Jaszczolt (2012), language can be used to attest or contest certain forms of interactional behaviour within and across social groups. The arguments by Holmes (2018) and Allan and Jaszczolt (2012) were significant for the present study.

According to Mills (2008), our lives are regulated by set patterns for appropriate behaviour and networks of meanings that are set by societies we live in. The knowledge we acquire depends on the social environment we inhabit. This knowledge is verbalized during the communication process. The present study agrees with the views of Mills (2008). The language used on stand-up comedic routines reflects the socio-cultural environment. Analysis of language use in its social context is important in the interpretation of sexist humour. A number of studies have been conducted on analysis of sexist humour (Woodzicka & Ford,

2015; Mills, 2008) but less attention has been given to the interpretation of sexist humour from a pragmatic perspective. The present study fills this gap.

In the process of analyzing sexism, there is always conflict over interpretation which arises out of the fact that sexism is not a homogenous entity. Therefore, there is interpretative ambiguity on sexism. An utterance can be ambiguous as to whether it is sexist or not. Mills (2008) states that not all people will interpret an utterance which seems to be sexist in the same way. Utterances may mean different things to different individuals depending on their socio-cultural context. Therefore, individuals are likely to disagree on what constitutes sexism. There will also be diverse responses that individuals will consider appropriate. According to Mudogo (2018), context is a critical element in proper interpretation of a text, a view which is shared by the present study. Doing an interpretation of sexist humour from a pragmatic perspective seems to be the right approach to correctly analyzing and revealing the inherent sexism in discourses. This is precisely what the present study aimed to do.

Humour is an important human social phenomenon that is employed during interactions. Social knowledge of a society shapes humorous utterances. Humour occurs within a given time and place setting. The social and moral order of society provides topics for humorous utterances. It also provides social norms to be followed by communicants during interactions so that effective and meaningful communication can happen. Despite this social nature of humour, scanty research has been done on it from a pragmatic perspective. The present study wanted to fill this gap by interpreting verbal sexist humour in live performances on *The Churchill*

*Show* in Kenya, aired on TV47, from a pragmatic perspective, examining how flouting of conversational maxims shape humorous utterances

Benevolent sexism is a form of sexism which portrays women as pure, ideal caregivers, and beings to be protected and well taken care of by their male counterparts. These beliefs about women promote power differences between men and women. This form of sexism appears to be positive at first sight but is a form of subtle sexism that Becker and Swim (2011) mention as highly patronizing because it projects women as beings who are inferior, dependent on men and fragile. The argument of the present study is that there are benevolent sexist implicatures communicated in the utterances by stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show* brought about by flouting cooperative principle maxims. These sexist implicatures can only be uncovered if we pay attention to the flouting of the conversation maxims. The present study, from a pragmatic perspective, wanted to establish what and how the conversational maxims are flouted and the kind of sexist implicatures that manifest. The study also wanted to analyze sexist inferences that can be derived out of the humorous utterances.

According to Wijana (1995), linguistics is one of the ways we can analyze humour. This is due to the fact that humour involves conflict and incongruity. Through pragmatic norms, we are able to understand elements of conflict and congruity both at personal and textual level. Incongruity at the level of text occurs when the cooperative principle is violated while at the personal level, incongruity occurs when politeness principle is violated. The present study argues that sexism is present in the comedic utterances on *The Churchill Show* from a Critical Discourse Analysis

perspective and also Grice's theory of Conversational Implicature. A number of linguistic scholars have attempted to provide a general pragmatic explanation on humour from the perspective of Grice's theory of conversational implicature. Among them are Raskin and Attardo (1991) who argue that humor involves both some degree of violation of the Cooperative Principle and also a cooperative act because it can convey information.

## **2.6 Stand- Up Comedy**

It is not easy to explain stand- up comedy because every stand-up act is unique depending on the personality and uniqueness of a performer. There are several basic rules that define stand-up comedy. According to Malmberg (in Crispin & Danielsson, 1992), the comedian must be funny, perform alone, and address the audience directly while standing. They avoid costumes, interpreting a character, and using props. Additionally, the comedian's performance is independent of context, and they typically avoid a written script. These principles maintain the essence of stand-up comedy and help distinguish it from other forms of comedic performance.

Some scholars argue that the established norms for stand-up comedy are not entirely conclusive. For instance, Malmberg (as cited in Crispin & Danielsson, 1992) highlights that comedians may perform their acts seated or use props, challenging the conventional view of stand-up comedy as a purely standing and minimalist art. Malmberg suggests that characterization and additional elements can play a role in comedic routines.

Jerry Seinfeld, a well-known American comedian, asserts that stand-up comedy should be considered a dialogue rather than a monologue (Crispin & Danielsson,

1992). The argument by Seinfeld opens up a perspective that interaction with the audience—whether through laughter or verbal engagement—can make the performance more dynamic. However, this is debatable since stand-up performances can often lack direct dialogue between the comedian and the audience, with audience members primarily responding through laughter.

Heckling, a form of audience disruption provides one of the few instances where direct verbal interaction occurs during stand-up routines. Hecklers challenge the comedian's ability to engage the crowd, often testing their quick wit and humour in real time (Rutter, 1997). Some comedians, in contrast, address specific audience members, making them part of the act.

Mintz (1985) further supports the view that stand-up comedy is primarily about the performer's comic behavior and verbal delivery, without heavy reliance on costumes, props, or dramatic settings. Despite this minimalism, the individuality of each comedian's material is essential to the art form. Originality, even when comedians share similar topics or perspectives, remains a crucial component of successful performances.

Stand-up comedians have various tools they can use to generate humour. These include one-liners, which are quick and witty remarks, and insult comedy, where the comedian humorously mocks someone. Double entendres add humour through phrases with dual meanings, while parodies mimic familiar subjects for comic effect. Comedians also critique popular culture and engage in social or political commentary. Wordplay, such as puns, malapropisms (misusing words humorously), and breaking language taboos, are also effective comedic strategies (Mintz, 1985).

These techniques allow comedians to creatively engage audiences through diverse verbal means.

In the argument of Mintz (1985), comedians are not only spokespersons but also mediators, social commentators, contemporary anthropologists, and articulators of culture. The stand-up comedian has been perceived by many critics as a cultural critic and/or outsider. It is from current events and social issues affecting us that stand-up comedians draw their materials. Stand-up comedians adopt a persona that assumes a political position and utilize their time on stage to address certain cultural and social issues (Gillota, 2015).

Comedians bring personal sentiments on stage (Olson, 1988). They use the humour response from their audience as a sort of self therapy to deal with not only their insecurities but also channel their anger at society's injustices and win acceptance from their audience. According to Grabert (2019), scholars of stand-up comedy from across the disciplines perceive the stage as a place where comedians are granted an opportunity to use linguistic strategies and rhetorical devices and experiment with the versions of 'themselves' to act out.

### **2.6.1 Evolution of Stand-Up Comedy**

Stand-up comedy traces its origins to the minstrel shows in America during the early 1800s, where comic acts were integrated with musical performances. These acts were structured with the comic taking the center stage, delivering jokes, and building up to punchlines (Lott, 1993). However, with the emergence of Vaudeville in the late

19th century, which brought a more structured form of theatrical entertainment, the popularity of minstrel-type stand-up performances waned (Mahar, 1999).

In the 1970s, stand-up comedy saw resurgence in the United States due to the rise of a new generation of comedians and the establishment of comedy clubs (Nachman, 2003). During this era, stand-up became a mainstream form of entertainment, spreading across different platforms such as television and radio. By the 1980s, the form had spread globally, featuring in diverse platforms, including TV shows and clubs, and cementing its status in popular culture (Krefting, 2014).

In Kenya, stand-up comedy evolved alongside major socio-political shifts. The liberalization of the airwaves in the 1990s, which came about after the advent of multiparty democracy in 1992, significantly transformed media practices (Ogola, 2011). With the introduction of private radio and television stations, including KTN and Citizen TV, comedians found more platforms to perform. Shows like *Redykyulass* capitalized on newfound freedoms to critique politicians and social issues, providing comic relief during a tense political era marked by growing demands for transparency and democracy (Ogola, 2011).

The 1990s in Kenya also saw the government easing restrictions on media content, fostering an environment conducive to creative expression and satire. As Kenya transitioned into a multiparty democracy, comedians began using their platforms to navigate the thin line between humor and political criticism. The liberalization of airwaves further enabled the growth of comedic performances, which allowed for more diverse and creative voices to emerge.

By the 2000s, stand-up comedy had taken on a new life, with the rise of popular shows such as *The Churchill Show*, which debuted in 2007. The show leveraged Kenya's growing media landscape and digital platforms, giving comedians an expansive reach across the country and the diaspora. The popularity of the show signaled the re-establishment of stand-up comedy as a critical cultural form, reflecting the social, political, and economic realities of the time (Marete, 2015). In this era, the role of comedians expanded from simply entertaining audiences to subtly critiquing political figures and societal norms, an evolution spurred by the relatively liberal media environment post-2002, following the end of President Moi's regime (Mbugua, 2018).

The liberalization of airwaves and the increasing political openness allowed comedians in Kenya to broach formerly taboo subjects, such as corruption, governance, and ethnicity. As stand-up comedy continued to evolve, comedians such as Churchill (Daniel Ndambuki) utilized the growing influence of media and the internet to create a platform that reflected the cultural and social diversity of Kenya, thereby, contributing to its continuous popularity and success.

In contemporary times, stand-up comedy is a regular feature in Kenyan entertainment. With the growth of platforms such as social media, YouTube, and live performances in clubs and theaters, comedians have even greater access to audiences. They blend humor with sharp social commentary, critiquing issues such as gender relations, politics, and economic disparities, further illustrating the enduring significance of stand-up comedy in shaping public discourse (Obonyo, 2011).

### **2.6.2 Gender Representation in Kenyan Stand-Up Comedy**

The way that gender is negotiated and represented in Kenyan stand-up comedy is a reflection of societal stereotypes and attitudes about women and men. Gatua (2017) conducted a study on gender representations in Kenyan stand-up comedy. He did a critical analysis on the way male and female comedians in Kenya address issues to do with gender in their comedic routines. He observed that male comedians frequently employ sexist humour that perpetuates stereotypes and traditional gender roles. Humour centered on the physical appearance, behaviour, or intelligence of women is commonly used by male comedians to assert not only their masculinity but also their power over women. For instance, those comedic routines that belittle the intellectual capacity, abilities, or physical appearance of women are meant to perpetuate stereotypes that project or place women in an inferior position compared to men. Humour of this nature not only reflect but also reinforce patriarchal attitudes which are deeply embedded in Kenyan society. Gatua goes on to say that female comedians in Kenya use their comedic routines to challenge societal expectations and subvert gender norms (Gatua, 2017).

In their comedic routines, female comedians tackle issues such as gender inequality, patriarchy, and sexual harassment. By tackling these issues, they provide a platform for critiquing the status quo and advocating for gender equality. They actively challenge the notion of the traditional role of women where they (women) are perceived as objects of humour (Gatua, 2017). This study by Gatua was relevant to the present study in the sense that it served as a foundation for exploring how Kenyan comedians in their routines use language to perpetuate, reinforce, and challenge prevailing power dynamics and gender norms. The present study wanted to establish whether the findings by Gatua could be replicated. By analyzing how

Kenyan stand-up comedians deal with gender issues in their performances, we can gain insights into the broader social and cultural dynamics that shape how men and women relate.

Similarly, Kariuki et al. (2018) investigated how gender is performed and subverted in Kenyan stand-up comedy. One of their findings was that female comedians are fond of using humour as a mechanism of resisting against gender discrimination and violence. This points to the importance of comedy as a tool for empowerment and social change.

Mwangi and Njoroge (2020) conducted a study on the role humour plays in challenging gender norms and stereotypes in the context of Kenyan comedy. Their data analysis revealed that female comedians are fond of using satire and wit to challenge traditional gender roles and advocate for gender equality. On the other hand, male comedians often employ sexist humour to perpetuate and reinforce patriarchal power dynamics and attitudes. One of the objectives of the present study was to describe some of the linguistic strategies that are employed by Kenyan stand-up comedians to create verbal sexist humour. Thus, Mwangi and Njoroge's study provided a useful foundation for this study.

Similarly, Nyabuti and Mutiso (2019) did a study on how gender is represented in Kenyan stand-up comedy. After analyzing their data, they found out that male comedians use humour mostly to assert their dominance and control over women. On the other hand, female comedians use their comedic routines to challenge gender stereotypes and also to advocate for gender equality. The present study examined comedic utterances on *The Churchill Show* to establish whether they are sexist or not and the stereotypes and ideologies underpinning them.

## **2.7 Theoretical Framework**

The present study was guided by two theoretical frameworks: Fairclough's (2001) sociocultural approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and the Conversation Implicature by Paul Grice (1975).

The emergence of CDA as a multidisciplinary approach can be traced way back to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Its emergence was motivated by the limitations of traditional linguistic approaches in analyzing social structures and power relations within discourse. CDA is concerned with analyzing language use in social contexts with the aim of revealing ideologies underpinning language use and how discourse reflects and shape social practices (Fairclough, 1992). CDA draws on from a variety of disciplines such as linguistics, sociology, and semiotics to analyze the way language is deployed to construct and maintain power in society.

CDA is concerned with analyzing the way language is used beyond the surface or sentence level. Discourse encompasses written, spoken, and multimodal texts as well as the social practices and institutions in which they are embedded. It (CDA) explores the way individuals make linguistic choices in order to construct meanings and positions within social hierarchies. Since this study was confined to the context of verbal humour in Kenyan stand-up comedy, CDA was chosen as a theoretical framework to help deconstruct comedic discourse and uncover ideologies and power dynamics underlying language use. According to Van Dijk (1993), humour can be used to resist or reinforce power structures in society. Using CDA to analyze humour in stand-up comedy helped to uncover the way comedic discourse either perpetuate the already existing power relations or challenge dominant ideologies.

Ideology comprises the set of values, norms and belief that serve to and sustain social inequalities (Van Dijk, 1993). CDA looks at how language is used to encode and reproduce ideologies thereby influencing the behaviours and perceptions of people. Power is a concept that is at the center of CDA. It denotes the capacity of individuals or groups to shape the beliefs, behaviours, and identities of others. According to Foucault (1977), power is not only productive but also relational. Foucault further states that power operates in many ways through discourse to shape hierarchies and social relations.

In Critical Discourse Analysis, The sociocultural context where discourse occurs is very important. These include institutions, cultural norms, and power structures. In the context of Kenyan stand-up comedy, CDA was used to investigate the way verbal sexist humour is shaped by and reflects values, power dynamics, and cultural norms. Discourse is not only shaped by societal dynamics but also shapes it. According to Fairclough (2001), humour can serve as a reflection of societal attitudes towards aspects like ethnicity, gender, and even politics.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) promotes researchers' critical examination of their own biases, assumptions, and positions of power. In the analysis of verbal humour in Kenyan stand-up comedy, this critical self- awareness is crucial to grasp how researchers' perspectives may shape their interpretation of comedic discourse. According to Fairclough (2001), it is important for researchers to take into account their own social, political, and cultural positions whenever they do humour analysis.

### **2.7.1 Fairclough's Approach to CDA**

In the present study, Fairclough's (2001) sociocultural approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) serves as the theoretical framework. This approach views

language as a social practice intertwined with society and shaped by social structures (Fairclough, 2001). Language, within this framework, is not only a social practice but also a social process, encompassing the production and interpretation of discourse. Interpretation is influenced by internalized meanings or ideologies, termed Members' Resources' (MR) by Fairclough (2001), acquired through social interactions and utilized in social practices including discourse. The social conditions of production and interpretation, including the immediate environment, social institutions, and broader societal factors, contribute to the contextual shaping of MR, influencing how texts are produced and interpreted.

Fairclough (2001) presents a three dimensional framework for analyzing discourse, aiming to integrate analysis of language texts, discourse practices, and socio-cultural practices. Fairclough (2001) delineates three stages of analysis: description (identifying text properties), interpretation (examining text-interaction relationships), and explanation (relating interaction to social context). Figure 2.1 provides an overview of Fairclough's (2001) CDA approach

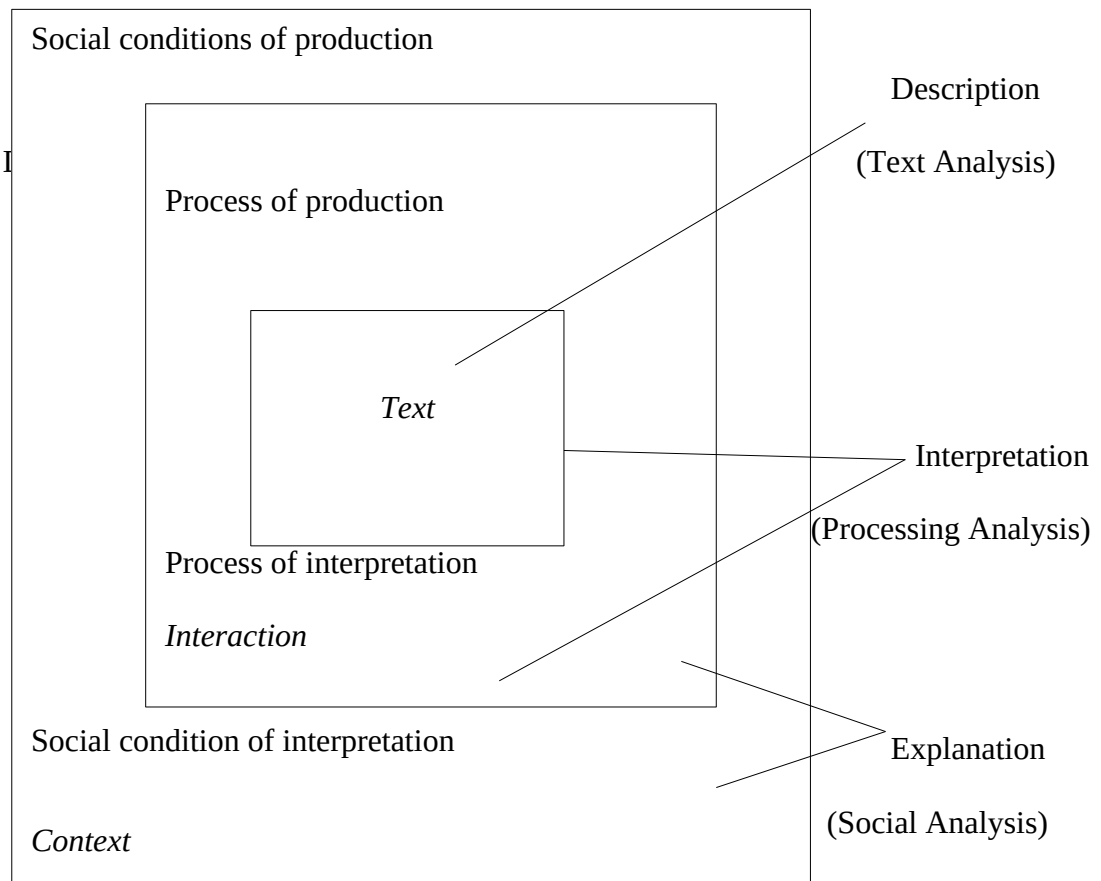


Figure 2.1: Fairclough's (2001) Three-Dimensional Model of CDA

As per figure 2.1 above, the present study first did a description of the linguistic features and strategies employed in comedic performances to construct sexist humour. On interpretation, it was shown how the production, distribution and consumption of verbal sexist humour within comedic performances contribute to reinforcing societal norms, power relations related to gender roles and stereotypes. On explanation, the study explored the broader socio-cultural context in which the humour is situated including societal structures, power dynamics, and ideological implications, to understand how humour reflects and shapes attitudes, beliefs and behaviours regarding gender within society.

Sandford (2015) states that CDA is committed to achieving the aim of looking out for ways to solve social problems by interrogating traditional perspectives in order to achieve positive change in society. Because CDA has drawn on research on discourse, it is therefore very useful in analyzing sexist humour. The present study therefore used it to guide the study.

Scholars have suggested that this theoretical framework can give information to members of the society to facilitate understanding of their systems, cultures, processes, structures, and policies. This can bring about inclusion or exclusion, causing some groups to be privileged than others (Gedro & Mizzi, 2014).

### **2.7.2 Conversational Implicature**

Pragmatics is mainly concerned with what a speaker implies and a listener infers based on factors like the situational context, the mental state of the individual, the preceding dialogue, and other elements. Human interaction is built on efficient communication. Communication is significant when it comes to exchanging information and building good social relationships. Therefore, it is important for people to follow logical conversation patterns to avoid misinterpretation. Among the key concepts in pragmatics is the Cooperative Principle. Herbert Paul Grice is the proponent of this principle. The position of Grice on this principle is that, communication requires interlocutors to be cooperative with one other (Grice, 1975). This principle guides speakers so that they can contribute to conversations in an appropriate manner. Stand-up comedians can defy this principle by flouting certain maxims thereby causing sexist implicatures to manifest.

Grice (1975) argues that all conversations are governed by a set of assumptions which are formulated to guide interlocutors to use language effectively and efficiently. The guidelines comprise of four basic maxims of human conversation. The maxims together express a general Cooperative Principle. The principle according to Grice is: make your contribution as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or directions of the talk exchange in which people are engaged (Grice, 1975). The table below shows the list of the maxims of the cooperative principle.

**Table 2.1: Maxims of the Cooperative Principle**

<b>Maxim</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Description</b>
Quantity	Do not say too much. Do not say too little.	1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange). 2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
Quality	Be sincere.	1. Do not say what you believe to be false. 2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
Relation	Stay on topic/ do not digress.	Be relevant.
Manner	Make sure you say what is clear and unambiguous.	1. Avoid obscurity of expression. 2. Avoid ambiguity. 3. Be brief. 4. Be orderly.

*Source: H.P. Grice (1989)*

The four maxims of the Cooperative Principle have been explained by Cutting (2002) as follows:

### **2.7.2.1 Maxim of Quantity**

The maxim of quantity emphasizes that speakers should be as informative as they are required. In other words, they should give neither too little information nor too much. According to Finegan (2008), a speaker is under constraint by the maxim of quantity to give information in the right proportion. Therefore, he or she ought to know the quantity of information a listener needs in the communication process. On a similar note, Cutting (2002) states that speakers who give too little information can make their listeners unable to comprehend their subject matter due to lack of clarity in their communication. For those speakers who give more information than the hearer needs can make hearers bored. The present study argued that stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show* often flout, for instance, the quantity maxim by exaggerating some situations therefore creating absurd moments that elicit amusements or laughter. Through this maxim flouting, sexist implicatures manifest. The present study wanted to determine if maxim of quantity is flouted on the show.

### **2.7.2.2 Maxim of Quality**

Speakers in a conversation are required to be truthful. In other words, they should not say what they believe to be false neither should they say what they lack adequate evidence. In conversations, speakers may draw the attention of their hearer to the fact that they are only saying what they believe to be true, and that they lack adequate evidence.

### **2.7.2.3 Maxim of Relation**

The contribution of a speaker should be related to the previous contribution and the context of conversation. The maxim of relation can only be fulfilled when the contribution of the speaker is relevant to the topic of the conversation.

#### **2.7.2.4 Maxim of Manner**

This maxim is met when the utterance by the speaker is not ambiguous, disorderly or obscure (Yule, 1996). That is, when a speaker is making an utterance to a listener, he should be direct.

Despite the fact that we get the right information when we observe the above maxims, participants in a conversation do not observe them all the time. There are four forms of non-observance: infringing, violating, flouting, and opting out. The present study focused on maxim flouting. Whenever any of the maxims is flouted, the language of the speaker will become indirect and in some cases humorous.

#### **2.7.3 Maxim Flouting**

The four maxims are not always followed during communication process. A speaker may decide to flout a maxim during communication due to his own reason or purpose (Black, 2006). It is up to the speaker to decide if he is going to follow the Cooperative Principle or not. If one chooses not to, he has two options: to violate or to flout the maxims. Violating maxim involves some elements of communication failure whereas flouting is readily understood rather than real violation (Finch, 2000). A speaker unintentionally violates a maxim. Flouting a maxim is an intentional act by the speaker with the aim of making hearers get the implied meaning behind the floated maxim. A speaker believes that the hearer is going to comprehend the implicature of the flouting. Grice (1975) argues that when a speaker flouts or violates maxims, his or her utterance(s) will have deeper meaning. This will make listeners to draw implicatures. The present study attempts to show that

linguistic sexism is present on *The Churchill Show* humorous discourse by using Grice's (1975) theory of Conversational Implicature.

According to Cutting (2002), a speaker flouts maxim of quantity by giving too little or too much information. Maxim of quality can be flouted in a number of ways. One, when a speaker communicates something to a listener that does not represent what he thinks. Two, when a speaker exaggerates. Three, when a speaker uses a metaphor. Maxim of quality can also be flouted through irony and banter. Irony means saying the opposite of what you mean. Banter is when a speaker expresses negative sentiment and implies a positive one.

Maxim of relation is flouted when a speaker expects the hearer to imagine what he does not say and to make the connection between the speakers' utterance and the preceding ones. A speaker who flouts the maxim of relation gives irrelevant information. Maxim of manner is flouted when a speaker decides to give ambiguous response. This is when there is more than one meaning in an utterance. According to Cutting (2002), speakers who flout the maxim of manner do so with the purpose of excluding a third party.

#### **2.7.4 Justification for Using the Two Theoretical Frameworks**

Grice's theory of Conversational Implicature is an appropriate theoretical framework for conducting a linguistic analysis of humorous texts to identify the conversational maxims that have been flouted and the implicatures that manifest. Since one of the objectives of this study was to explore the maxims that are flouted and the resultant sexist implicatures, it was appropriate to use it to guide the study. On *The Churchill*

*Show*, comedians often use the pragmatic concept of implicature to subtly communicate sexist meanings. They play with Grice's conversational maxims by flouting them to create sexist humour. Therefore, this framework was crucial in analyzing this nuanced form of communication.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a vital framework for interpreting verbal sexist humour on *The Churchill Show* stand-up comedy. Through the language employed by comedians in their routines, gender power imbalances are often reinforced. CDA helps uncover these imbalances. This study sought to understand how gender power disparities are reinforced on *The Churchill Show* through the indirect discourse mode of sexist humour. CDA was instrumental in analyzing the linguistic strategies used by comedians to reveal the negative gender stereotypes underlying sexist humor. Comedians use strategies such as irony, exaggeration, and puns in their performances, and CDA allowed for a broader understanding of how these strategies perpetuate gender stereotypes. Furthermore, CDA considers the broader discourse context, allowing an exploration of social, cultural, and historical factors shaping comedic routines and audience responses. Since language and humor intersect, CDA promoted a deeper understanding of the sociocultural effects of comedic acts.

However, while CDA excels in analyzing how language sustains power relations and ideologies, it does not sufficiently address the specific linguistic mechanisms comedians employ to flout conversational norms, especially through indirect speech acts like humour. CDA focuses on macro-level processes on power dynamics leaving gaps in analyzing the micro-level processes that generate humour. This is where Grice's theory of Conversational Implicature complements CDA by systematically explaining how comedians violate conversational maxims to produce

sexist humour. Grice's theory bridges this gap by revealing how flouting conversational maxims communicates sexist meanings subtly, filling a crucial deficiency in CDA's framework.

Thus, the convergence of the two theories is significant. While CDA highlights the broader societal implications of language use, Grice's theory helps dissect the intricate mechanisms behind sexist humour. By employing both frameworks, the study achieves a comprehensive analysis of the linguistic and sociocultural dimensions of humour on *The Churchill Show*

## **2.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has reviewed literature on linguistic strategies used to construct verbal sexist humour, pragmatic implicatures and inferences, pragmatic interpretation of sexist humour, and types of humour. It has been observed that very little scholarly attention has been paid to verbal sexist humour in Kenyan stand-up comedy. Literature review has also been conducted on verbal sexist humour, sexist humour in stand-up comedy, stand-up comedy, and evolution of stand-up comedy. Moreover, the study has conducted literature review on gender representation in Kenyan stand-up comedy. The chapter has highlighted the theoretical frameworks that underpinned the study (That is, Fairclough's (2001) sociocultural approach to CDA, and Grice's (1975) conversational implicature).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents details on the research design, study area, study population, sampling techniques and sample size. It also describes methods of data collection, research instruments, data collection procedures, validity and reliability, data analysis and presentation, and finally ethical considerations that guided this study.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive research design with the qualitative paradigm (Creswell, 2013). The aim of a descriptive research design is to provide a comprehensive description of a phenomenon as it naturally occurs. It focuses on the contextual meaning and complexities of a particular issue, enabling the capture of the richness and depth of the subject under study (Creswell, 2013). The design was appropriate because it allowed for an in-depth exploration of linguistic strategies, underlying sexist inferences, and sexist implicatures within a naturalistic comedic context. This design helped to interpret how humour reflects and perpetuates societal attitudes. The nature of descriptive research is to depict phenomena using words rather than numbers (Wiseman, 2015). Because the present study heavily relied on utterances, a descriptive approach was the best for the study.

The aim of qualitative research as a social inquiry is to focus on how people interpret their experiences and the world they inhabit with the goal of comprehending the social reality of groups, individuals, and cultures (Holloway, 1997). Qualitative

research paradigm was applied in the present study because it allowed for a deep and nuanced exploration of the features, themes, and linguistic strategies of verbal sexist humour within comedic performances. It enabled to delve into the underlying meanings, social contexts, and cultural nuances of the humour content. Moreover, qualitative paradigm facilitated a contextual analysis of verbal sexist humour within the specific settings of *The Churchill Show*. It allowed for the consideration of the socio-cultural factors and performance dynamics that influence the creation and interpretation of humour.

### **3.3 Study Area**

The study area for this research was *The Churchill Show* in Kenya. Relevant routines of specific stand-up comedians (8 stand-up comedians) were selected during the month of November, 2023 while the show was still broadcast on TV47 and used as data. The month of November was the period when the researcher received the necessary approvals to collect data from the field.

### **3.4 Study Population**

The study population comprised of all stand-up comedians featuring on *The Churchill Show* on TV47. From this population, a sample of 8 stand-up comedians was selected.

### **3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

Purposive sampling method was adopted to collect sexist humorous utterances from the *the Churchill Show*. The overall Churchill comedy show was purposively selected because of its popularity and unique content that resonates well with the

audience. Approximately seven million Kenyans watch *The Churchill Show* (Ndonye, 2015).

Eight stand-up comedians were purposively sampled from among all the comedians featuring on the show. The 8 were purposively sampled because of their prominence on the show. They are household names among the audience of the *Churchill Show*. Twenty five utterances were purposively sampled from performances of eight stand-up comedians. The researcher continued to collect data until saturation point was reached, that is, until no new information was emerging from the data. The rationale for selecting twenty five utterances was that focusing on twenty five utterances allowed for an in-depth and detailed analysis within a manageable scope. It enabled for a thorough exploration and interpretation of the nuances and subtleties of each utterance without being overwhelmed by an excessively large dataset. Data was derived from a total of nine episodes on TV47. Live performances were targeted because they provide an authentic and natural context for humour, capturing spontaneous reactions that contribute to the richness and authenticity of the data (Ross, 1998). Data collected in live performances capture real-time interactions and cultural nuances within the comedic environment. Utterances selected met the inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria for collecting utterances that were sexist in nature included:

1. Relevance to Sexist Humour- utterances were included if they contained content that could be classified as sexist humour. This included jokes, remarks, or expressions that denigrate, objectify, stereotype, or belittle individuals based on their sex.
2. Clear Gendered Bias- utterances were included if they clearly exhibited or reflected unequal power dynamics, societal stereotypes, or discriminatory attitudes

based on gender. The specific criteria used to identify such biases included language choice, tone, context, and the portrayal of gender roles or stereotypes within the utterances.

3. Consistency with study objectives- the selected utterances aligned with the objectives of the study of examining and understanding the linguistic strategies, sexist inferences, and sexist implicatures arising from conversational maxim flouting. They were also supposed to meet the elements that make up comedic content: the set up, the execution, the punch line, and even laughter and applause.

The exclusion criteria included: utterances where the gender bias was unclear, utterances that overlapped significantly with others in terms of content or theme were excluded to avoid redundancy, and utterances that were unclear or inaudible to be contextualized and analyzed were excluded. The figure below summarizes the information on the sample size.

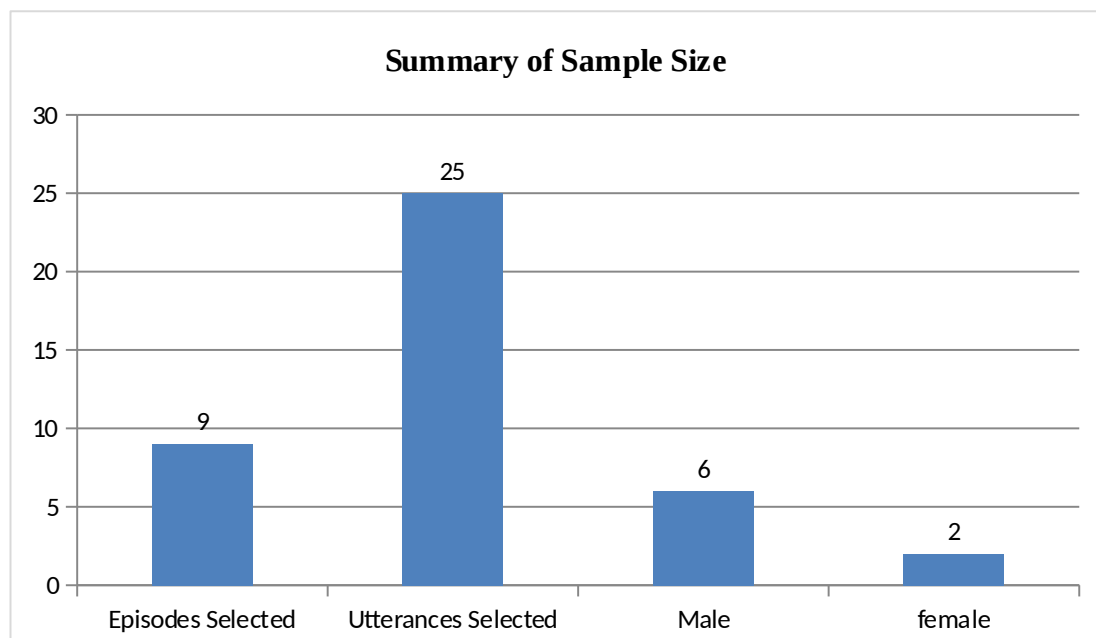


Figure 3.1: Summary of Sample Size

### **3.6 Data Collection Methods and Research Instruments**

The data collection for this study was conducted using multiple methods to ensure a comprehensive capture of sexist humorous utterances from live performances on *The Churchill Show*. Data was collected in the month of November 2023, a period when the researcher received the necessary approvals to proceed to the field to collect data. The data was in the form of utterances, which served as the linguistic units of analysis. The boundaries of the utterances were marked at a point where a comedian changed his or her speech subject. The study employed observation, and audio-video recording methods in collecting data. These methods enabled the recording of relevant data aimed at addressing the research questions. The following steps were taken in the process of collecting data:

- i. The researcher watched the stand-up comedy routines as the primary source of data.
- ii. The appropriateness of the routines to the objectives of the study was checked.
- iii. The researcher watched and re-watched the recorded audio-videos and noted down the utterances of the comedians in a note book.
- iv. He translated (loose translation) the transcribed data from Kiswahili or Sheng to English for ease of analysis. Although English is the dominant language used on *The Churchill Show* routines, sometimes Kiswahili and Sheng are also used. Translating them into English made analysis easier. The next subsection discusses each of the instruments.

### **3.6.1 Observation**

Observational as a qualitative data collection method was adopted to gather real-time insights into live comedic performances and contextual factors influencing comedic interpretations. During live performance, the researcher observed and recorded on an observation sheet (see appendix 3) comedic techniques of verbal sexist humour, performance type, performance duration and any audience reaction that was visible during the broadcast.

### **3.6.2 Audio-Video Recording**

A camcorder that was capable of recording video and audio simultaneously was used. A camcorder served as a research instrument to record episodes on the shows. The camcorder chosen had high-definition (HD) video recording capabilities and a built-in microphone input for capturing clear audio. This ensured that the camera's settings allowed for continuous recording without interruptions. The camcorder was positioned in a stable position that provided a clear view of the stage, comedians and audience. In recording, the researcher captured full performances including pre-show moments, introductions and initial audience reactions.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedures**

The data collection began with the recording of nine live episodes on TV47. The recorded episodes were carefully listened to and relevant segments containing humour-characterised by effective setups, execution, punchlines, and audience laughter - were transcribed verbatim. This transcription process ensured that every utterance was accurately captured for subsequent analysis. The transcribed segments were meticulously examined to identify utterances containing sexist humour by following the inclusion criteria mentioned in section 3.5.

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability**

In order to achieve qualitative validity, a researcher is expected to check whether the findings reached are correct by following given steps (Gibbs, 2007). According to Tavakoli (2012), how valid qualitative data is depends on the honesty of a researcher, the richness, depth and scope of the data and also the level of triangulation.

Data triangulation was employed by collecting sexist humorous utterances from nine different episodes of the Churchill Show and analyzing multiple performances of multiple comedians. This ensured that the findings were not limited to specific episodes or comedians.

Thick descriptions were used in the analysis to provide a detailed and context- rich interpretation of each sexist humourous utterance, including performance and cultural context, which helped enhance the validity of the interpretations.

Another way we achieve reliability is through maintaining an audit trail. This refers to the process of documenting the steps we follow in conducting our studies (Yin, 2009). Among the steps is how we collect and analyze our data. We need to make sure that our data collection is done in an orderly and systematic way. In the present study, an audit trail was maintained throughout the research process, documenting each step from data collection to analysis, ensuring that the research procedures were transparent and could be verified by others.

To ensure that the translation of the Kiswahili data was correct, the researcher sought the help of a Swahili editor who was competent in both English and Kiswahili languages to have a look at the translation made by the researcher to establish

whether it was correct or not. This enhanced content validity. This process contributed to ensuring linguistic accuracy and reducing the risk of translation errors. The process ensured that the translations are faithful to the original meaning, thus strengthening the overall validity of data interpretation.

The study also utilized established frameworks and methodologies for interpreting verbal sexist humour, allowing other researchers to follow its analytical steps. Additionally, the researcher provided a clear rationale for his findings, linking them back to the research objectives, which fosters credibility and enables reproducibility of the study.

### **3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation**

Content analysis was applied for data analysis. Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (White & Mars, 2006). The purpose of content analysis is to explore the meanings and interpretations of communication, such as the underlying values, beliefs, and assumptions that shape the content. The present study employed content analysis to analyze utterances in the recorded audio-video clips and written text (translated versions) of the audio-video clips to uncover the linguistic strategies employed to create verbal sexist humour, the sexist inferences underlying the utterances, and the sexist implicatures arrived at by flouting the maxims of the Cooperative Principle.

The present study followed the suggestion by Wimmer and Dominick (2010) that data analysis in qualitative research should start at the same time that data collection begins. This means that data collection and analysis go hand-in-hand. Data analysis

for this study involved several steps. The first step was the transcription of comedic utterances on *The Churchill Show* recorded on the Camcorder. The data obtained from *The Churchill Show* utterances that were in Kiswahili or Sheng were transcribed and an English gloss provided.

The data was carefully reviewed to identify instances of sexist humour, including jokes, remarks, or interactions containing gender stereotypes, objectification or discrimination.

The translation procedure involved a systematic approach to ensuring accuracy and reliability. Initially, the original comedic utterances in Swahili were transcribed verbatim. The researcher then loosely translated these utterances into English, focusing on maintaining the contextual meaning and humour. To enhance trustworthiness, a back-translation method was employed, where the English version was translated back into Swahili to compare it with the original. This process helped identify any discrepancies or loss of meaning. Furthermore, the researcher consulted bilingual colleagues familiar with both languages and cultural contexts to review the translations, ensuring they accurately captured the nuances of the original. Their feedback was incorporated to refine the translations, thus enhancing validity. By combining these methods, the translation process ensured that the humour, tone, and intent of the original performances were preserved, providing a solid foundation for analysis.

To achieve the first objective, the researcher gathered recordings and transcripts of live performances by selected stand-up comedians. CDA was used to analyze linguistic strategies by looking for language patterns used to construct sexist

humour. Linguistic features such as derogatory terms, stereotypes and objectification were identified in the humorous utterances. The linguistic strategies were coded and categorized to create a descriptive analysis of how verbal sexist humour is constructed in the utterances.

For the second objective, nine transcripts and recordings of comedic utterances from *The Churchill Show* featuring various comedians were examined. Thematic coding was then applied to identify themes related to gender stereotypes and sexist humour evident in the performances. These initial codes were grouped into broader themes, highlighting patterns of sexist inferences and implicit messages. Prevalent thematic patterns within the identified utterances included gendered relationships and sexuality, intellectual and emotional stereotypes, behavioural stereotypes, physical appearance and beauty standards, and gender stereotypes and roles. Through the use of CDA, further analysis delved into the contextual understanding of these themes and how they contribute to reinforcing societal norms regarding gender roles. This included considering the cultural and social context surrounding the performances, audience reaction and comedian delivery style. A discussion was done on how these themes and sexist inferences shape societal attitudes and perceptions about gender within comedic contexts. Specific examples and excerpts from the data were used to illustrate the identified themes and their connection to sexist humour, ensuring a comprehensive and nuanced analysis.

For objective three which aimed to determine sexist implicatures that manifest out of flouting of conversational maxims, a rigorous analytical approach was adopted. The analysis primarily employed the theoretical framework of Grice's conversational

implicature. Transcripts and recordings of utterances from *The Churchill Show* featuring selected stand-up comedians were meticulously examined. Open coding was initially used to identify instances where comedians flout conversational maxims. Subsequently, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was applied to delve deeper into the underlying sexist implicature embedded in these flouted maxims.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

This study received approval from the Directorate of PostGraduate Studies at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (see Appendix 2) and a research permit from National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) (see Appendix 3). These approvals ensured compliance with research protocols.

The researcher ensured the integrity and accuracy of the collected data by recording the performances in their entirety without manipulation or alteration. Any editing or selection of specific segments for analysis was done transparently and in alignment with the research objectives. Any personal data or identifiable information related to individuals associated with the televised comedy performances was handled with strict confidentiality and anonymized during analysis. The names of the selected stand-up comedians were replaced with generic labels.

According to Barasa (2024), ethical sourcing is achieved when a researcher observes proper citation practices. Proper citations and acknowledgements were included for all relevant works, including the TV47 broadcasts and any other material used in the study. This practice ensured academic integrity and avoided plagiarism.

### **3.11 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented details on the research design. This study made use of descriptive research design. Purposive sampling technique was employed to get data for the study. Audio-video recording and observation methods were used as the research instruments in collecting data for the study. Data was analyzed using content analysis. The chapter has also shown the ethical considerations that guided the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyzes, and discusses data in line with the objectives of the study outlined in section 1.5. It is organized into three sections. The first section examines the linguistic strategies employed by comedians on *The Churchill Show* to construct verbal sexist humour, focusing on language use to evoke laughter and engage the audience. The second section analyzes sexist inferences drawn from selected utterances, exploring how humour can be interpreted through contextual and shared background knowledge. The third section applies Fairclough's sociocultural approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to data analysis. This is followed by conversational implicature theory to examine deviations from Grice's maxims and how these create sexist implicatures. This section also considers the sociocultural aspects of Kenyan comedy. Finally, conclusions from each objective are presented.

It is important to note here that the data to be alluded to in the discussion is the 25 utterances collected for the study that were presented and numbered as datum 1, 2, and so on. The same data is used for the three objectives of the study hence the numbering of data as datum 1 up to datum 76. On objective three, one utterance had flouted two maxims simultaneously. Only data that was in Kiswahili was translated into English.

## **4.2 Linguistic Strategies used on The Churchill Show**

Understanding the linguistic strategies utilized by stand-up comedians to create verbal sexist humour is essential for dissecting the complexities of humour formation and its societal effects (Tannen, 2022). Humour serves as a significant channel for reflecting and reinforcing societal norms, values, and power dynamics. Through a meticulous analysis of linguistic strategies employed in humour creation, we gain insights into how stereotypes, biases, and discriminatory attitudes are either perpetuated or challenged within comedic performances, thereby deepening our understanding of social discourse and cultural representations.

In analyzing the linguistic strategies employed in verbal sexist humour, Fairclough's (2001) sociocultural approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was utilized as a guiding theoretical framework. CDA can be applied to uncover specific strategies used in constructing sexist humour. Sexist humour is not just about the words themselves but also about the ideological content those words carry. Sexist humour is a discursive act that conveys underlying social norms about gender, which is exactly what CDA is designed to investigate. This approach facilitated the identification and examination of linguistic elements such as juxtaposition, hyperbole, simile, metaphor, wordplay and punning, ambiguity, irony, and satire. Fairclough's framework emphasizes the interconnectedness of language, power dynamics, and social contexts, enabling a nuanced exploration of how linguistic choices in humour contribute to the construction of meanings and social ideologies.

Verbal sexist humour encompasses comedic content that relies on gender stereotypes, discriminatory language or derogatory remarks to elicit amusement. It encompasses linguistic strategies that reinforce gender biases, objectify individuals based on gender, or perpetuate harmful narratives about gender roles and relationships.

Common linguistic strategies associated with constructing sexist humour include juxtaposition, hyperbole, simile, metaphor, wordplay and punning, ambiguity, irony, and satire. These strategies reinforce gender-based power dynamics. The present study focused on analyzing these strategies.

Data were sourced from utterances featuring verbal sexist humour from *The Churchill Show*. Inclusion criteria involved identifying utterances that rely on gender stereotypes, discriminatory language or derogatory remarks to elicit amusement. This approach facilitated the selection of data pertinent to the objective of the study.

The data coding process was designed to systematically identify and analyze the linguistic strategies used by selected comedians on *The Churchill Show* to construct verbal sexist humor. First, the transcription of stand-up comedy performances was broken down into distinct utterances, which were the basic units of analysis. Each utterance was scrutinized for its relevance to the focus of the study on sexist humor. Criteria for coding included the identification of explicit language patterns, such as the use of metaphor, simile, and hyperbole, which are commonly linked to humor creation. Additionally, each utterance was assessed in terms of contextual relevance, examining how the language of the comedian reflects broader societal gender norms and stereotypes. Once coded, the data were organized into categories based on the identified linguistic strategies allowing for a systematic analysis. This process aligned with Fairclough's sociocultural approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which provided a framework for interpreting how these linguistic strategies reflect sociocultural norms regarding gender. The table below shows the data coding and categorization.

**Table 4.1: Coding Scheme for Linguistic Strategies in Verbal Sexist Humour**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Linguistic Strategy</b>	<b>Description</b>
JUX	Juxtaposition	Contrasting elements (for example, traditional vs. modern gender roles) for comedic effect.
HYP	Hyperbole	Over-exaggeration of gender characteristics to create humor.
SIM/MET	Similes And Metaphors	Using comparisons or metaphorical references to highlight gender stereotypes.
WOR/PN	Wordplay And Punning	Playful manipulation of language involving puns or multiple meanings tied to gender.
AMB	Ambiguity	Expressions with multiple interpretations, often playing on gender differences.
IRN	Irony	Using verbal irony to critique gender norms.
SAT	Satire	Exaggeration or parody to critique or make fun of societal gender expectations.

Each of the data is examined under the linguistic strategy used in its construction.

#### **4.2.1 Juxtaposition**

According to Woodzicka (1998), juxtaposition is created when two persons or events are artistically placed side by side in order to reveal their contrasting features or qualities. As a linguistic strategy, juxtaposition is used for the purpose of revealing differences that exist between two things, persons, subjects, places, or even ideas. There are two classes of juxtaposition. There is point-by-point juxtaposition where two subjects are dealt with and then their contrast is shown by successively discussing all the points. Then there is subject-by-subject juxtaposition where one

thoroughly discusses one subject, person or thing before shifting to the next person, thing or subject. Stand-up comedians employ juxtaposition in their routines to bring out the differences between people, families, places, etc. According to Attardo (1994), juxtaposition creates shock among the audience therefore increasing the dramatic effects.

The creation of humour in juxtaposition happens when two incongruous elements are placed side by side in order to make an amusing comparison. Juxtaposition in most cases conveys a sense of irony by giving contradictory associations to create humorous effect.

There were two sets of data from stand up comedians on *The Churchill Show* where juxtaposition was used. The following datum demonstrates the use of juxtaposition.

**Datum 1.** *Chenye mwanamke anahitaji ni mwanaume mmoja mwenye atamtimizia mahitaji yake yote lakini mwanaume anahitaji kila mwanamke ili wamtimizie hitaji lake moja. (laughter) ( Comedian O,2023, November, The Churchill Show).*

(What a woman need is one man who can meet all her needs but a man needs every woman so that they meet his one need. (Laughter))

In the above text, the needs of a woman and a man in relationships are put side by side to create a contrast. The comedian suggests that the ideal scenario of a woman is to have one man who can fulfill all her needs, whereas a man tends to seek multiple women to fulfill his singular need. This statement is delivered in a playful manner, evoking laughter from the audience. Juxtaposition is created when two individuals, groups or events are artistically placed side by side in order to reveal their features by contrast (Gathatu & Chai, 2015). By placing contrasting ideas side by side (the

idea of a woman needing one man to meet all her needs versus a man needing every woman to meet his one need), the utterance highlights the absurdity and humour in the utterance. On one hand the utterance suggests that the needs of a woman are complex and can be satisfied by one man fulfilling all of them. This plays on the stereotype of women being emotionally intricate and desiring a deep, intimate connection with their partner (Gathatu & Chai, 2015). On the other hand, it portrays men as having a singular, simple need (implied to be physical or sexual) that requires multiple women to fulfill. The underlying stereotype in this utterance is that men are primarily driven by physical desires and needing multiple partners to satisfy them.

The humour results from the absurdity of these exaggerated stereotypes. Moreover, the juxtaposition of these contrasting ideas emphasizes the humour and prompts the audience to reconsider or question societal norms regarding gender and relationships. Moreover, some members of the audience may have laughed because they were able to relate to the stereotypes presented in the utterance because they perceive elements of truth in them. The following datum also employed juxtaposition to create an absurd contrast that elicits amusement.

**Datum 2.** *Kenyan women respond very well to compliments... In my village, Ombokoro in Uganda, if you tell a girl that she is beautiful she will ask you who told you (Laughter). They are the kind of girls you tell I love your hair and they ask which one. (Laughter) (Comedian S, 2023, November, The Churchill Show)*

The comedian humorously contrasts the reactions of Kenyan and Ugandan women to compliments. He suggests that Kenyan women respond positively to compliments, while in his village in Uganda, women tend to react with skepticism or confusion

when complimented. The comedian employs juxtaposition by contrasting the expected behaviour of Kenyan women with the exaggerated responses of the women in the village of Ombokoro. One of the elements in the anatomy of humour is the setup (Attardo, 1994). The comedian starts by setting up the expectation where he states that Kenyan women respond very well to compliments. This sets up the expectation of the audience that the women in the anecdote of the comedian will also react positively to compliments, as one might generally expect. The comedian then introduces the village of Ombokoro as an example where the women's responses to compliments differ significantly from the expected norm. By contrasting the behaviour of Kenyan women in general with the exaggerated responses of the women in Ombokoro, the comedian creates a sharp contrast that catches the attention of the audience.

According to Attardo (1994), juxtaposition creates shock among the audience therefore increasing the dramatic effects. The humour arises from the specific examples given on the absurdity of the responses of the women in Ombokoro, which defy the expectations of the audience based on the initial setup. When told they are beautiful, instead of accepting compliments graciously, they respond with suspicion, asking who told the speaker. Similarly, when complimented on their hair, they respond by asking which hair the comedian is referring to. The exaggerated reactions are unexpected and surprising, leading to laughter from the audience. It can also be said that, in the above utterance, humour may have been enhanced by the cultural specificity of the village of Ombokoro, which adds an element of novelty and uniqueness to the utterance. The audience may find humour in imagining the idiosyncrasies of the fictional village and its inhabitants.

The next linguistic strategy identified in the stand-up comedy routines was simile as discussed below.

#### 4.2.2 Similes

A Simile uses a form of comparison in which one thing is compared to another dissimilar thing by using specific words of comparison (like or as) in order to explain the word clearly.

Humorous descriptions are often couched in the form of a simile, whose flexible frame allows a stand-up comedian to link a subject to a perspective that is at once both incongruously different yet appropriately similar. Humorous similes exhibit all the commonly accepted hallmarks of verbal humour, from linguistic ambiguity to expectation violation and appropriate incongruity.

From the data collected, two similes were identified. The first one is analyzed below.

**Datum 3.** *Wasichana wakalenjin ni warembo na hakuna kitu kitamu kama kuoa msichana Mkale. (laughter). In fact, msichana Mkale mrembo akikupenda huwa hawezi ngoja umtafute yeye atakutafuta na **akukwamilie kama glue.** (laughter).Unaona Chelagat amesimama kwa centre (puts hands akimbo to demonstrate how she stands) anangoja mzee yake. (Laughter) (Comedian W, 2023, November, The Churchill Show).*

(Kalenjin girls are beautiful and there is nothing sweet like marrying a Kalenjin girl. (Laughter). In fact, when a beautiful Kalenjin girl loves you she cannot wait for you to seduce her. She is the one who will seduce and **stick to you like glue.** (Laughter). You will see Chelagat standing in a center (puts hands akimbo to demonstrate how she stands) waiting for her husband. (Laughter)).

The comedian begins by complimenting the beauty of Kalenjin girls and humorously emphasizes the joy of marrying one. He then adds a humorous twist by suggesting that when a beautiful Kalenjin girl loves someone, she takes the initiative in the relationship. The phrase **“stick to you like glue”** uses the imagery of glue to convey the idea of strong attachment and persistence. It suggests that once the Kalenjin girl has successfully seduced the man, she will cling to him steadfastly, much like how glue adheres firmly to a surface. The humour in this part of the simile stems from the exaggerated portrayal of the woman’s commitment. Comparing her attachment to glue implies an almost unbreakable bond, which is humorous in its intensity. In the argument of Chunqi (2014), a simile serves to enhance analogical statements in stand-up comedy, making them more engaging for a live audience. The use of an everyday object like glue in a romantic context adds an element of absurdity, contributing to the comedic effect.

The part of the simile **“she is the one who will seduce...”** sets up the expectation that the Kalenjin girl will take an assertive role in initiating the romantic relationship. It suggests that she will actively pursue the man that she is interested in. This contrast with traditional gender norms where men are often expected to take the lead in courtship. The above utterance appears to be reinforcing the belief that women yearn for marriage and are always on the lookout for husbands.

The humour arises from the reversal of expected gender roles. By portraying the Kalenjin girl as the initiator of romantic advances, the simile subverts traditional stereotypes, leading to a comedic effect. The unexpectedness of this assertion adds an element of surprise and amusement for the audience. The following datum from comedian A illustrates how humour is constructed by likening changes in a romantic relationship to the actions of a political figure

**Datum 4.** ...*tangu niingie box ya Kinuthia, siku hizi sioni pesa yake. Heri kitambo. Siku hizi pesa ya Kinuthia imekua kama mbunge.* ( *Laughter*) (Comedian A, 2023, November, *The Churchill Show*).

(...Since falling in love with Kinuthia, nowadays I do not get his money. It was better in the past. Nowadays, **Kinuthia's money has become like an MP.** (laughter)).

The comedian discusses a change in financial dynamics within a relationship. She mentions that ever since she fell in love with Kinuthia, she no longer receives his money as she used to. In the phrase **“Kinuthis's money has become like an MP,”** the comedian compares Kinuthis's money to that of a Member of Parliament (MP). The comparison suggests that Kinuthia's money has become scarce or infrequent, similar to the limited visibility of an MP. It implies that the comedian used to receive money from Kinuthia more often in the past, but now it is rare. According to Attardo (1994), humorous descriptions are often couched in the form of simile, whose flexible frame allows a stand-up comedian to link a subject to a perspective that is at once both incongruously different yet appropriately similar. Humour arises from the unexpected and creative comparison between Kinuthia's money and an MP. It is unexpected because one would not typically associate the visibility of an MP with the availability of money. This unexpectedness adds an element of surprise and wit to the utterance, eliciting laughter from the audience. The next linguistic device identified was the use of metaphor.

#### **4.2.3 Metaphors**

A Metaphor is a linguistic tool that describes one thing by relating it to something else. As McArthur (1992) explains, a metaphor directly compares two things by

stating one is the other, allowing a concept, word, or object to stand in for another, highlighting a similarity between them.

Hoffman (1983) estimates that an average English-speaker uses over 3,000 metaphors per week and that we can occasionally use four metaphors per minute in everyday conversation. Human beings often reason, think, and process information in terms of metaphorical examples and concepts. Metaphors are commonly exploited to create humorous routines. Kokemuller (2001) suggests that a metaphor is an effective way to convey a clear statement about a person, place, or thing. By incorporating metaphor, the routine of a comedian becomes more engaging, helping the audience easily grasp the message being conveyed. The data collected generated two metaphors. The first one was:

**Datum 5.** ... *my husband left his phone behind and I tried to check it. I saw the name “**Corona**” and out of curiosity, I decided to call to establish which lady she was. To my surprise, it was my phone that rang! (Laughter) (Comedian A, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

The comedian in the above text shares anecdote related to a phone incident involving her husband. She tells a scenario where her husband leaves his phone behind. Curious, she attempts to check the phone and notices the name Corona saved as a contact. Assuming it to be another woman’s name, she calls the contact only to realize that it was her own phone ringing with the name Corona. In the context of the above utterance, the name “**Corona**” serves as a metaphor for something potentially problematic or causing concern. A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to

suggest a likeness between them (Ross, 1998). The comedian's initial reaction upon seeing this name in the phone of her husband is one of surprise and suspicion, indicating that she perceived it as a potential threat or source of anxiety. The humour arises from the unexpected and exaggerated nature of the metaphor. By associating the name "Corona" with a sense of alarm, the comedian sets up the audience to anticipate a dramatic or concerning revelation. This creates tension and anticipation, which is then humorously deflated by the revelation that "Corona" is actually the comedian who was saved by that name in the phone of her husband. The incongruity between the initial perception of the metaphor and its ultimate resolution adds to the comedic effect, eliciting laughter from the audience.

The humour is further enhanced by the unexpected twist in the resolution of the metaphor. The audience expects the name "Corona" to represent an external threat or unknown entity in the husband's phone, but the revelation that it pertains to the comedian subverts this expectation in a humorous way. The unexpected twist adds an element of surprise and irony to the metaphor, leading to a humorous reversal of initial assumptions of the audience. This creates a moment of realization and amusement as the audience comprehends the true nature of the metaphor and the comedian's misunderstanding.

**Datum 6.** *Imagine if we did not have beauty salons we will be seeing **ghost creatures**. (Laughter) (Comedian M, 2023, November, The Churchill Show).*

The comedian imagines a scenario without beauty salons. He suggests that without beauty salons, people would look like ghost creatures. The metaphor in this utterance is the comparison between the absence of beauty salons and the presence of "ghost creatures." The comedian, thus, metaphorically suggests that without beauty salons,

people's (in this case women) appearances would resemble those of ghost creatures, implying drastic and negative change in their looks. This metaphor reflects societal norms and expectations regarding beauty standards. It implies that maintaining a certain level of appearance is essential for women, to the extent that without the services provided by beauty salons, women would appear ghost-like or unrecognizable. This reflects the hegemonic discourse surrounding beauty and appearance in society, where conformity to certain standards is valued. The humour in this metaphor arises from its exaggeration and subversion of expectations. By comparing the absence of beauty salons to the extreme image of "ghost creatures," the comedian exaggerates the consequences of not having access to beauty services. This exaggeration highlights the absurdity of the idea and subverts the seriousness often associated with beauty standards. The unexpectedness of the comparison adds an element of surprise and amusement for the audience, contributing to the humour.

#### **4.2.4 Hyperbole**

Hyperbole is a Latin term that means "to heap up." Ross (1998) defines hyperbole as a figure of speech containing an exaggeration for emphasis. A hyperbolic statement is one that overstates a claim beyond the limits of truth. Hyperbole is typically verbal in nature, though, it can also be purely visual. People have employed hyperbole to achieve certain discourse goals such as creating humour, clarifying an issue, and even laying emphasis on something. There are cases where, highly hyperbolic statements may not be perceived as more humorous, but they make the speaker's communicative goal clearer.

Words of contrasts of degree are the most common markers of hyperbole (Ross, 1998). Examples include: space (e.g., “huge”), intensity (e.g., “absolute”), quantity (e.g., “bucketsful”), number (e.g., “thousands”), and time (e.g., “eternal”). Hyperboles are not to be taken literally. An individual can use this device for the purpose of increasing the funniness expressed in humorous utterances because the hyperbolic statements completely overstate the situation. Hyperbole is a dominant feature employed in stand- up comedy particularly *Churchill Show*. Its intent is to exaggerate familiar situations, to make the audience appreciate the joke telling, and to enhance its laughter. According to Ross (1998), an utterance is considered to be hyperbolic when its linguistic meaning is extended to varying degrees. To interpret hyperbole effectively, the listener must consider the context of both the speaker and the situation. This involves understanding the social and cultural norms, as well as the conversational background, in which the statement is made. For instance, a statement like 'I've told you a million times' is clearly an exaggeration, but it can only be humorous if the listener understands that it is an overstatement meant to emphasize frustration. The listener's relevant knowledge about the situation, such as the nature of the relationship between the speaker and the audience, the comedic tone of the performance, and the hyperbolic tradition within comedy, allows them to interpret the statement as funny rather than factual. Without this contextual awareness, the intended humor may be lost, and the hyperbole might be misunderstood as literal speech.

According to Attardo (1994), a hyperbolic statement is one that overstates a claim (that is, the statement is stating a claim) beyond the limits of truth. An individual can use this device for the purpose of increasing the intensity of humour expressed in

humorous utterances because hyperbolic statements completely overstate the situation. Based on the collected data, this strategy is applied to produce a dramatic impact within an utterance through deliberate exaggeration as inferred from the following excerpt by comedian O.

**Datum 7.** *Men, have you realized that most of these ugly madams and house girl are very fertile. (Laughter). Date a slay queen for ten years, twenty years, or even thirty years she will never get pregnant but touch your house girl once. In fact, don't even kiss her just shake her hand and she will say I am nine months pregnant. (Laughter) (Comedian O, 2023, November, The Churchill Show).*

The humour in the above text arises from fertility perceptions related to different types of women. The comedian employs hyperbole to contrast the perceived fertility of “ugly women and house girls” with the presumed infertility of “slay queens.” By exaggerating the ease with which a house girl could become pregnant (even from a simple handshake), the comedian creates a stark and humorous contrast between the two groups. The utterance reflects societal beliefs and stereotypes about fertility, and social status. There is an underlying assumption that “ugly women and house girls” are perceived as more fertile while “slay queens” (typically associated with beauty and glamour) are not. This reflects power dynamics related to beauty standards and social hierarchy, where certain groups are validated over others.

The humour in the above utterance arises from the subversion of societal expectations and the critiquing of prevailing stereotypes. By presenting an exaggerated scenario where fertility is attributed to “ugly women and house girls” rather than to “slay queens,” the comedian challenges traditional notions of beauty, desirability, and fertility. This subversion of expectations disrupts the hegemonic

discourse surrounding these concepts and prompts laughter highlighting the absurdity of the comparison.

The following excerpt also highlights the absurdity of a scenarios and adds to the playful and exaggerated tone of the utterance.

**Datum 8.** *Geukia huyo mrembo ako karibu na wewe umpe high five lakini usiguse uso unaweza baki kwa mkono. (Laughter). Pia usivulute nywele, anaweza baki na matuta hapo ndani.(laughter) (Comedian M, 2023, November, The Churchill Show).*

(Turn to the beautiful lady near you and give her hi five but do not touch her face it might remain in your hand. (Laughter). Also, do not pull her hair; she might remain with bumps inside. (laughter)).

The comedian gives advice on interacting with a beautiful woman. He suggests giving a high five but avoiding touching her face to prevent being left with handprints. The audience responds with laughter, indicating comedic nature of the advice. According to Ross (1998), humour arises from exaggeration in everyday situations. The comedian exaggerates the potential consequences of touching the face of the lady by suggesting that her face might remain in their hands or that she might develop bumps inside if her hair is pulled. This exaggeration serves to highlight the absurdity of the scenarios and adds to the playful and exaggerated tone of the utterance. The comedian creates a humorous contrast between the perceived severity of the actions and the actual outcomes.

The utterance reflects societal beliefs about beauty, physical appearance, and social interactions. There is an underlying assumption that the beauty of women is artificial signaled by the makeup and weaves they put on which fade with time. The comedian

employs hyperbole to emphasize the potential consequences of touching the beautiful lady. The above humorous text centers on the physical appearance of women, reflecting societal expectations for women to adhere to certain beauty standards (Weitz, 2004). Departures from these norms can often expose them to ridicule.

**Datum 9.** *Nilisikia stori ingine kua kuna jamaa alipigwa na mke wake na mwiko mpaka akaaga. Familia yake haikutaka watu wajue nini ilimuua (Laughter) (Comedian F, 2023, November, The Churchill Show).*

(I heard a certain story of a man who died after being hit by a cooking stick by his wife. (Laughter). His family did not want people to know what killed him).

The comedian recounts a story of a man who allegedly died after being hit by his wife using a cooking stick. The punchline of the joke involves the man's family concealing the cause of death. The comedian uses hyperbole to create humour by exaggerating the potential harm of a cooking stick by suggesting that it could be lethal when used by the wife against her husband. According to Attardo (1994), incongruity is a fundamental element of humour, where a discrepancy or contradiction between what is expected and what actually occurs creates a humorous effect. There is an incongruity between the expected function of a cooking stick and the exaggerated outcome described by the comedian. Cooking sticks are typically associated with domestic tasks and are not considered dangerous weapons. The comedian exaggerates the potential harm of a cooking stick

Discourse is intricately intertwined with social practices, reflecting and perpetuating prevailing societal norms (Fairclough, 2001). Datum 9 reflects societal norms and

stereotypes surrounding domestic violence and gender roles. Historically, domestic violence perpetrated by women has been downplayed or treated as less serious compared to violence perpetrated by men (Mills, 2008). Additionally, there may be societal expectations regarding the benign nature of household objects like cooking sticks. The phrase “a man who died after being hit with a cooking stick...” is surprising and unexpected. It subverts the expectations of the audience about the benign nature of household objects and the dynamics of domestic violence. The element of surprise adds to the comedic effect by catching the audience off guard and eliciting a reaction of amusement.

The following excerpt by comedian M employs hyperbole in a playful manner. It creates humour by exaggerating the behaviour of women from Ameru community.

**Datum 10.** *Ukioa mwanamke mMeru na ukose kwenda kazi atakuambia, “ Baba Kagwira, nilifikiri wanaume wote wako mahali pao pa kazi. Ni wewe tu umeamua kubaki nyumbani? Karani, nipe ile panga tulinoa jana. (Laughter)” (Comedian M, 2023, November, The Churchill Show).*

(When you marry a Meru woman and you fail to go to work she will tell you, “Father Kagwira, I thought all men are at their places of work. It is only you who has decided to remain at home? Karani, give me that panga which we sharpened yesterday. (Laughter)).

The comedian presents a humorous scenario involving the cultural stereotype of Meru women in marriage dynamics. The joke centres on the expectation that a Meru woman would expect her husband to be industrious and responsible, contrasting with a humorous situation where the husband is portrayed as irresponsible. The statement

exaggerates the behaviour of a Meru woman in a playful manner to create humour. The statement suggests that if a man marries a Meru woman and he refuses to go to work, she will respond in an exaggerated, assertive, and humorous manner. It implies that she will not only question his decision not to work but also take action by asking for a machete (panga) to presumably motivate him to work.

CDA involves examining the broader sociocultural context in which discourse occurs (Fairclough, 2001). In this case, the utterance perpetuates stereotypes or common cultural perceptions (for comedic effect) about Meru women being assertive and proactive. While stereotypes can be sensitive topics, in this context, the assertiveness of Meru women is presented in a light-hearted and humorous way. CDA seeks to uncover power relations embedded within discourse. In this utterance, the power dynamics between genders and cultural groups can be analyzed. The portrayal of the Meru woman as assertive and in control contrasts with the implied passivity of the man who refuses to go to work. This reflects traditional gender roles and power dynamics within the cultural context being represented. From the CDA perspective, this humour may be interpreted as a subversion of male authority by the wife.

The hyperbolic portrayal of the Meru woman's response adds a comedic element to the utterance. By painting an exaggerated picture of how she would react in such a situation, she elicits amusement from the audience. It is important to note that humour often relies on shared cultural understandings and experiences (Ross, 1998). In the case of the above utterance, the humour may resonate more strongly with individuals familiar with the cultural context or stereotypes associated with Meru women.

In the following excerpt, the comedian employs hyperbole to present a humorous commentary on societal perceptions of the appearance and behaviour of women.

**Datum 11.** *For a lady kukaa poa is not a joke... anaingizwa ndani kwa kipipa anachomwa kichwa na hapo ndio unaona mademu wanachomwa utosi. Kwanza wa Kiambu wanakuja salon wakiringa na unajua vile wanakuanga na miguu yao peke yao. Huku wako sawa kidogo (pointing to the front of the legs) imeshikana hapa kwa magoti halafu ikaachana hapo mbele lakini akigeuka huku nyuma (pointing to the butts) huku kuliama.(laughter) (Comedian M, 2023, November, The Churchill Show).*

(For a lady to be smart is not a joke... her head is placed in a tank and the hair curled. That is when you see ladies' foreheads being burned. Kiambu women in particular come to the salon putting on airs and you know how they have their own unique legs. They are a bit okay here (pointing to the front of the legs) with the knees in close contact then there is separation in front but when they turn their behind (pointing to the butt) is deserted. (Laughter)).

The joke above centres on the concept of “being smart” for women, highlighting exaggerated and stereotypical description of their physical attributes and behaviours. Attardo (1994) states that hyperbole involves magnifying certain features, actions, or situations to an extreme degree. This exaggeration often results in absurd or unrealistic scenarios that are inherently humorous due to their implausibility. The exaggerated descriptions of the women’s legs, particularly the emphasis on their small butts, exemplify hyperbolic language. This exaggeration contributes to the comedic effect of the utterance by presenting an extreme or unrealistic portrayal of the physical characteristics being described. The humour in this utterance arises from

the juxtaposition of the exaggerated description with the recognition of the audience of the the stereotype being mocked.

The humour in the above utterance is situated within a specific cultural context where beauty standards and regional stereotypes play a significant role. By drawing on these cultural norms, the comedian creates a humorous commentary on social attitudes and perceptions. The utterance constructs social identities based on gender and regional affiliation. The speaker portrays women from Kiambu, a specific region in central Kenya, in a stereotypical manner, suggesting they are vain and overly concerned with their appearance. This representation reflects power dynamics where certain groups are marginalized or subjected to ridicule based on ethnic stereotypes. The use of satire serves as a form of social critique. By exaggerating and mocking the perceived vanity of women from Kiambu, the comedian critiques societal norms surrounding beauty standards and superficiality. The humorous tone masks the underlying criticism, making it more palatable while still challenging the status quo.

The following excerpt from comedian S illustrates how humour is constructed using hyperbole through portraying racial and gender differences, particularly in the context of appearance.

**Datum 12.** *You black women you make it so hard for us men to be romantic... a white woman can tell her husband, “honey, wrap your hand through my hair” and when he wraps it is all smooth. Black women if you to tell your men that, all they will feel are potholes, and hump. (Laughter). Have you seen some of you put on weaves so badly that when someone calls you and you turn the weave remains in the same direction. (Laughter) (Comedian S, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

In the above utterance, the comedian remarks on perceived challenges of romance with black women compared to white women. The humour revolves around exaggerated stereotypes about black women's hair and appearance contrasting them with idealized perceptions of white women's hair and behaviour. The comedian exaggerates the difference between how it feels to touch the hair of a white woman and a black woman as well as the exaggerated portrayal of the consequences of poorly applied weaves. This absurdity in portrayal is what causes amusement among the audience.

The utterance constructs social identities based on gender and racial affiliations, portraying black women in a stereotypical manner. Fairclough (2001) argues that discourse can reflect power dynamics by marginalizing certain groups through the reinforcement of stereotypes. The use of the hyperbole serves as a form of satirical criticism, exaggerating stereotypes about black women's appearance and behaviour. Satire often involves exaggeration to critique societal norms and expectations (Hutcheon, 2013). Hyperbolic language such as describing black women's hair as having "pothole and humps," exaggerates physical attributes for comedic effect.

**Datum 13.** ...*Nilikutana na msichana anaitwa Fatuma na tukabidilishana namba lakini nilikaa siku tatu sijampigia. Siku moja...akaanza kuniambia "...nikikupa namba yangu nataka unipigie simu uniambie Fatuma nakupenda. Sili wala kunywa nyumbani na nagombanishwa kila mara na wazazi kwa sababu nilishawaambia nimepata mume na hawajamuona. (laughter) (Comedian C, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

(...I met a Swahili girl called Fatuma and we exchanged phone numbers but I stayed for three days without calling her. One day... she began telling me, "...when I give

you my number I want you to call me and tell me Fatuma I love you so much. I do not drink or eat at home and I am always being quarreled by my parents because I had informed them that I have got a husband yet they have not seen him. (Laughter)).

The comedian shares a humorous anecdote about meeting a girl named Fatuma and exchanging phone numbers. The humour shows a comedic misunderstanding and the challenges of navigating romantic relationships. Hyperbole is used in the utterance to create verbal humour by exaggerating the situation and expectations surrounding the romantic interaction between the comedian and Fatuma. Specifically, Fatuma's demand for seduction after only exchanging phone numbers is an exaggerated and improbable scenario. This exaggeration serves to highlight the absurdity of the situation and elicit amusement from the audience (Attardo, 2001). Additionally, the hyperbolic nature of Fatuma's statement amplifies the humour by presenting an extreme and unexpected response to the comedian's delay in contacting her. The contrast between the ordinary expectation of a phone call and the exaggerated demand for seduction adds to the comedic effect of the utterance. The use of hyperbole, particularly in Fatuma's demand for seduction, serves as a discursive strategy to highlight the absurdity of the situation and critique societal expectations surrounding romantic interactions. Ambiguity is another linguistic strategy used by comedians to construct verbal sexist humour as discussed below.

#### **4.2.5 Ambiguity**

Language is considered ambiguous when it can be rationally interpreted in more than one way, it is perceived as ambiguous. Ambiguity exists not only in linguistic unit, including word, phrase, sentence, etc, but also in the practical use of language. Apart

from bringing about misunderstanding in our lives, ambiguity contributes a lot to verbal humour.

Ambiguity is regarded as one of the most important linguistic devices of humour creation. Humour in ambiguity is a mistake or clash of different meanings (Ross, 1998). It may contain double or multiple meanings, sounds, or even gestures, which are understood in a wrong way, or in incongruous ways. Humor is caused by phonological ambiguity, lexical ambiguity, or semantic ambiguity. Semantic ambiguity is created when interpretations of both the surface structure and the deep structure of a sentence are different. This brings about humour. Homonym and polysemy are the basic peculiarities of human language. They are also the main sources of lexical ambiguity. A Homonym is a word or a phrase which has both the same sound and spelling as another, but their meanings are different and unrelated. Polysemies are words with the same pronunciation and form but with different but related meanings. In the real communication, if a pronunciation can be understood in more than one way. This phenomenon is referred to as phonological ambiguity. According to Ross (1998), humor generated by phonological ambiguity primarily includes the following:

- 1) The one created owing to the existence of homophone, and
- 2) The one produced because of the different locations of stress to the same word or sentence.

**Datum 14.** *Ladies wa Kiambu wanajaribungu kuongea Kizungu sana... eti “Hi guys from salon!” na ako ndani ya salon already.( Laughter). In fact wanaita salon, saloon... (Laughter). Halafu wanasema, “actually mi nilikua nataka that hairstyle ya*

*Chebesh. Anaingia kwa drier anachomwa kichwa for three hours...anatoka hapo amejam na ile joto anasikia kwa kichwa anashinda akiuliza watu do I look hot? (Comedian M, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

(Kiambu ladies try to speak English a lot... that, “Hi guys from salon!” (Parodies a mixture of English and Kikuyu accent) and yet she is in the salon already. (Laughter). In fact, they call salon saloon... (Laughter). Then they say, “actually, I wanted that hairstyle of Chebesh (a mispronunciation of the name “Shebesh”). She enters a drier and her hair is dried for three hours... she gets out of the salon so angry. With the heat she is feeling on her head, she keeps on asking people “do I look hot? (Laughter).

The comedian in the text above commented on the speech and behaviour of women from Kiambu, a region in Kenya. The text revolves around Kiambu women’s attempts to speak English and their experiences in salons. Ambiguity in humour involves the use of language or situations that can be interpreted in multiple ways, leading to humorous outcomes (Ross, 1998). Ambiguity allows for various misinterpretations, often creating confusion or surprise, which is key component of humour. The comedian has employed lexical ambiguity in the above datum to generate humour. Lexical ambiguity is whereby a lexical item has two or more interpretations. Ambiguity arises from the phrase “**do I look hot?**” which can be interpreted in a literal or humorous way. In the literal interpretation, the lady is asking if she appears physically attractive or physically warm due to the heat from the hair dryer. In the humorous interpretation, given the context of being in a hair salon and having just emerged from a hair dryer, the person is asking if she appears physically attractive. This ambiguity creates humorous tension as the audience navigates between the literal and intended meanings of the phrase resulting in

amusement and engagement. Another linguistic strategy identified in the use of comedic utterances was wordplay and punning.

#### **4.2.6 Word play and Punning**

According to Ross (1998), a pun is a form of word play in which a word or phrase unexpectedly and simultaneously combines two unrelated meanings. A pun usually carries different meanings. According to Ross (1998), it is this multiple meanings which mislead the audience and therefore causing humour.

There are some ingredients for the realization of pun: quick setup (brevity is important), no proper names (listener might not recognize the name), familiar references, a pointed revelation (you should see the spark in the listeners eyes as they ‘get it’), and finally, maximum wordplay throughout. The following excerpt serves to illustrate the use of wordplay and pun in the Churchill Show stand-up comedic utterances.

**Datum 15.** *Nakumbuka wakati wa COVID-19 tukiwa nyumbani wakati wowote mke wangu alipokuwa anapita mbele yangu alikuwa anasema, “Mungu tuokoe na hili janga.( Laughter). Sikuelewa ni mimi au Korona alikuwa anamaanisha (Comedian S, 2023, November, The Churchill Show).*

(I remember when we were at home during COVID-19 pandemic, any time my wife would pass in front of me, she used to say “God rescue us from this plague. (Laughter). I did not understand whether she meant me or the Covid-19).

The comedian recounts how his wife would pass in front of him at home during the COVID-19 pandemic and repeatedly say, “God rescue us from this plague.” This

statement is delivered in a humorous manner, as indicated by the laughter from the audience. Wordplay is the primary linguistic strategy employed in the utterance. Wordplay involves clever manipulation of words and their meanings to create humour. In this case, the wife's use of the word "plague" is ambiguous, allowing for multiple interpretations: either referring to the Covid-19 pandemic or teasing her husband as being a source of trouble. This ambiguity creates humorous tension and engages the audience in deciphering the intended meaning.

The utterance is situated within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, a period marked by uncertainty, fear, and stress for many individuals. During the widespread lockdowns initiated by COVID-19, families found themselves spending all day together. This unprecedented situation was not typical. A 2021 report on gender-based violence by Human Rights Watch highlighted that the extended time families had to spend together at home caused distress and anxiety among Kenyan wives, who felt their freedom was compromised by their husbands' constant presence. Many women view their homes as their domain, and any threat to their authority within that space is unwelcome. This situation not only reflects the feeling of women towards their husbands but also underscores the distribution of societal roles. Traditionally, men are perceived to hold control over most aspects of public life, while the domestic sphere is predominantly managed by women.

**Datum 16.** *Ladies stop generalizing that all men are the same. Who told you to **taste** all of them? (Laughter). That energy you are focusing on all of them, can you manage one. Have you **tasted** me? (Laughter) (Comedian O, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

The comedian humorously rebukes the idea of generalizing all men as being the same. He playfully questions the basis of such generalizations, humorously suggesting that not all men need to be “tasted” to make such judgements. The phrase “have you tasted me?” is a pun that plays on the literal meaning of “tasting” someone, implying a physical or romantic encounter, while also humorously suggesting that the comedian is somehow superior to the other men being discussed. This double meaning adds a humorous element to the utterance, contributing to its overall playfulness.

On the surface, the phrase “have you tasted me?” can be interpreted literally as a question about whether women have experienced the taste of the comedian, similar to tasting food or drinks. This literal interpretation is unexpected in the context of a discussion about relationships and promiscuity, adding an element of surprise to the utterance. However, the phrase also carries a figurative or metaphorical meaning related to romantic or sexual encounters. In this context, “tasting” someone refers to engaging in intimate or physical interactions with them, such as kissing or being in a relationship. By using the word “tasted” in this figurative sense, the comedian humorously suggests that he is somehow different or superior to the other men being discussed, perhaps implying that women should focus their romantic attention on him instead.

The pun is rooted in ideologies that uphold traditional gender roles and expectations. It reinforces the belief that men are entitled to women’s attention and affection, while women are expected to prioritize men’s desires over their own autonomy. This ideology serves to normalize gendered double standards within relationships and society. The use of wordplay and double entendre in the pun serves to mask and soften the underlying power dynamics and ideologies at play.

**Datum 17.** ... *niko na bwana lakini si Maasai. Nyinyi wanaume wa Maasai vile mnapenda kuruka si mtanipea boli halafu mruke hiyo story? (Laughter) (Comedian A, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

(... I have a husband but he is not a Maasai. You Maasai men the way you love to **jump** will you not impregnate me and jump the story? (Laughter)).

The comedian begins by mentioning her husband, clarifying that he is not Maasai. She then humorously addresses Maasai men, playfully referencing their known enthusiasm for jumping. The comedian utilizes wordplay or punning to generate humour, specifically through the use of the term “jump up.” The term “**jump**” has two meanings (literal meaning and figurative meaning). Attardo (1994) states that wordplay involves cleverly manipulating language to producing amusing effects. According to him, wordplay relies on the ambiguity or multiple meanings of words, phrases, or sentences, leading to incongruity and surprise which are fundamental elements of humour. On the surface, the term “jump” is used to describe the physical action associated with Maasai, suggesting a characteristic behaviour or cultural practice. However, the term “jumping” is also used figuratively to mean “fail to take responsibility.” In this context, “jump up” is employed as a play on words to convey the idea that Maasai men engage in impulsive or reckless behaviour, such as impregnating someone, without assuming responsibility for the consequences.

The humour arises from the unexpected juxtaposition of the literal and figurative meanings of the term “jump up” within the same sentence. By using the term first in its literal sense and then immediately following it with its figurative interpretation, the comedian creates a clever and witty expression that plays on the ambiguity of the

term. This linguistic ambiguity and wordplay result in a humorous effect, engaging the listeners.

Fairclough (2001) emphasizes how discourse plays a role in reproducing and reinforcing ideologies that perpetuate stereotypes and prejudices. Language use, including the choice of words, framing of issues, and portrayal of social groups, can either challenge or uphold existing ideologies and power relations. The utterance above is rooted in ideologies that perpetuate stereotypes and prejudices against marginalized groups, in this case, Maasai men. It reinforces the ideology that certain ethnic groups possess inherent negative traits, such as irresponsibility, while others are portrayed as more virtuous or desirable. This ideology serves to justify and rationalize the comedian's preference for a non-Maasai husband. Another linguistic strategy employed by comedians on *The Churchill Show* to construct verbal sexist humour is irony.

#### **4.2.7 Irony**

Irony describes situations that are strange or funny because things happen in a way that seems to be the opposite of what one expects. An ironic utterance is opposite to the implicit meaning intended by the speaker. Irony is an indirect speech act, a flout of the maxim of manner.

According to Zhao (2011), to understand irony you need to identify the many incongruities that exist in an ironic utterance. Zhao (2011) further states that ironic utterances are identified because incompatibility exists between the information being provided through the contextual elements and what is being explicated by the utterance. Irony is a common strategy used by comedians on stage on *the Churchill Show*. Mills states that one of the covert ways that has been invented by sexists to

marginalize and discriminate against male and female is through the use of irony in humour (Mills, 2008). How irony is employed as a language device in the creation of sexist humour within the Kenyan stand-up comedy context is an area that has not been researched. The following excerpt illustrates the use of irony in humour.

**Datum 18.** *If there is anything good that happened to me is COVID- 19 because my wife used to put on her face mask always to keep her mouth shut. (Laughter). So, let us call it a blessing instead of a virus. (Laughter) (Comedian S, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

The comedian humorously reflects on the COVID-19 pandemic. He highlights the positive aspects of the pandemic by joking about his wife using a face mask to keep her mouth shut. This statement is presented in a playful tone, eliciting laughter from the audience. Irony occurs when there is a contrast between what is expected and what actually happens (Ross, 1998). In the humour above, irony lies in the contrast between the expected purpose of wearing a face mask (preventing the transmission of COVID-19) and the humorous interpretation given by the speaker (keeping his wife's mouth shut). This unexpected interpretation subverts the conventional understanding of face masks, leading to a humorous twist in the utterance. The comedian employs playful language to convey the irony. By referring to the face mask as a tool to "keep her mouth shut," the comedian uses figurative language to humorously suggest that the wife's tendency to talk excessively is being curtailed by wearing the face mask. This metaphorical usage of language adds to the humour by creating a vivid and unexpected image in the audience's mind.

The comedian begins by acknowledging the Covid-19 pandemic, which is typically perceived as a negative event. He states, “If there is anything good that happened to me it is Covid-19,” setting up the expectation that he will discuss an unexpected positive outcome associated with the pandemic. The comedian then reveals the unexpected consequence of the pandemic, stating, “because my wife used to wear her face mask always to keep her mouth shut.” This statement introduces the irony as wearing face masks during the pandemic was typically associated with preventing the spread of the virus, not with controlling speech. The comedian concludes by reframing the pandemic as a blessing rather than a virus, based on the unexpected positive outcome in their marital relationship. This reframing adds to the irony by presenting a humorous and unconventional perspective on the impact of the pandemic. From a CDA perspective, this humour reinforces the stereotype that women are more talkative than men and that their talk is troublesome. In the following excerpt, comedian Y also employed irony to construct humour.

**Datum 19.** *I don't understand women... Man has produced engineers, doctors and we can do and understand many things like physics and chemistry but we cannot understand women. Even women cannot understand themselves. (Laughter)”*  
(Comedian Y, 2023, November, Churchill Show).

The comedian humorously expresses his confusion and inability to understand women, a sentiment often echoed in societal discussions about gender dynamics. The comedian humorously comments on the perceived difficulty of understanding women, employing irony a key linguistic strategy. He begins by asserting that “we can do and understand many things,” setting up the expectation that the people possess a certain level of understanding or knowledge. This statement creates an

initial sense of confidence in the perspective of the comedian. The irony arises when the comedian asserts, “but we cannot understand women.” This statement presents women as an exception to the comedian’s general understanding of things, suggesting that they are particularly difficult to comprehend. This contrast between the purported understanding of many things by the comedian and his admission of inability to understand women creates irony. The irony is further heightened when the comedian asserts, “Even women cannot understand themselves.” This statement suggests a universal struggle with understanding women, including by women themselves. The incongruity of this assertion with the common belief that individuals have insight into their own thoughts and feelings adds to the humour. The humour in the utterance stems from the absurdity of the assertion that women are inherently mysterious or unknowable. By humorously exaggerating the perceived complexity of understanding women, the comedian highlights the common stereotype of men struggling to understand the opposite sex. This exaggeration adds to the comedic effect by playing on societal expectations and perceptions.

The following excerpt also shows how irony is used to generate sexist humour.

**Datum 20.** *If you are a man and you propose a relationship to an African woman and she says “no” she means “yes.” (Laughter). Us men when we tell a girl we love her we mean that. (Comedian S, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

The comedian in the above utterance comments on societal norms and gendered dynamics related to romantic relationships. Specifically, he addresses the expectation surrounding the response of a woman to a relationship proposal. Ross (1998) defines irony as a literary or rhetorical device characterized by incongruity between expectations and reality, often used to create humorous effects. Irony plays a

significant role in comedic performances by subverting expectations and highlighting contradictions. Irony has been used in the above utterance to make a remark about women. The comedian sets up the expectation that when a man proposes to an African woman and she responds with “no,” it typically signifies rejection. This expectation aligns with societal norms and conventions surrounding romantic relationships, where a rejection is commonly understood as a negative response to a proposal. The irony arises when the comedian asserts, “she means yes,” implying that the woman’s rejection actually indicates acceptance. This assertion contradicts the expected interpretation of the woman’s response, presenting an unexpected outcome. The incongruity between the expected rejection and the humorous interpretation of acceptance creates situational irony.

The irony is further amplified by the comedian’s comparison to men’s expression of love, stating, “us men when we tell a girl we love her, we mean that.” This contrast highlights the straight forward nature of men’s communication compared to the perceived complexity or ambiguity of women’s responses. Johnson (2015) explores gendered communication patterns and societal expectations in romantic relationships, highlighting differences in communication styles between men and women. By juxtaposing the perceived directness of men’s expressions of love with the humorous interpretation of women’s rejections, the comedian emphasizes the irony and adds to the humour in the utterance. This humorous utterance is indirectly sexist, since in fact the perspective from which it is constructed is predominantly androcentric, that is, from a masculine perspective. Whereas men are presented in a positive way, women are presented in a negative way. Men are presented as sincere and plain speakers in communication particularly when expressing love while

women are depicted as ambiguous and insincere in their responses to romantic proposals.

#### **4.2.8 Satire**

Satire is a social art that mocks, attacks, and ridicules actions of men and societal ills in order to sanitize society. It is aimed at improving an individual, thing or idea by ridiculing their shortcomings in a levity manner. Every society has established ideals. Members who go contrary to those ideals are satirized. Therefore, satire is a form of social control, a mechanism for checkmating societal, group, or individual excesses.

According to Shwarz (2010), wit, exaggeration and irony are some of the mechanisms employed in satire to attack or expose evil and foolishness. Instead of just laughter, satire makes people think and make improvements. It represents an attitude towards a phenomenon being satirized for purposes of social critique. The following excerpt is a good example of the use of satire in humour to critique behaviours and attitudes of groups of people in the society.

**Datum 21.** *...Mademu wa Nairobi wako na figure nzuri na wanajiita sweet sugar lakini wote ni gold diggers. (Laughter). Wanakuja Churchill Show wamepiga maperfume na macologne that is because hawapendi kuoga. (Laughter) (Comedian F, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

(...ladies in Nairobi have a nice body figure and they call themselves sweet sugar but all of them are gold diggers. (Laughter). They come to Churchill Show having put on perfumes and colognes because they don't love taking shower. (Laughter)).

In the above text, the comedian critiques certain behaviours and attitudes within the specific group of “ladies in Nairobi” through exaggerated stereotypes and social commentary. This approach aligns with the definition of satire which involves using humour, irony, and exaggeration to criticize or mock societal issues or norms (Hutcheon, 2013). Morreall (1983) discusses humour through incongruity where laughter arises from the contrast between expectations and reality. This feature is common in satire, exposing absurdities and critiquing societal norms. The humour in the above utterance arises from the incongruity between the exaggerated stereotypes presented and the audience’s recognition of the absurdity. The juxtaposition of the glamorous self-preservation (“having sprayed themselves with perfumes and colognes”) with the implication of poor hygiene practices (“because they do not love taking shower”) creates a humorous contrast that prompts laughter from the audience.

Audience members may find the satire humorous because they recognize elements of truth or familiarity in the exaggerated stereotypes presented. Whether through personal experiences or cultural perceptions, audience members may identify with or recognize aspects of the portrayed behaviour, leading to laughter as they acknowledge the absurdity or irony of the situation.

Through the exaggeration of stereotypes, the comedian offers social commentary on the perceived behaviour or values of “Ladies in Nairobi.” The characterization of these women as superficial and materialistic serves as a critique of societal attitudes towards femininity, beauty, and wealth. This aligns with the function of satire, which

often involves critiquing societal norms or behaviours through humour and irony (Hutcheon, 2013).

**Datum 22.** *Women are complicated... if you decide to understand women, you will never understand them. God created both man and woman and put eye brows on both of them but only a woman realized she does not need them and she shaved them. (Laughter). Women were walking in the Garden of Eden without eye brows. They realized nobody can notice their faces and the back of their head so, they decided to return the eye brows but now they are not accurate like the way God put them (Comedian O, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

The comedian begins his utterance by stating that women are complicated, emphasizing the common perception that understanding women is a challenging task. The utterance humorously addresses societal perceptions of women being complicated through satire. The comedian employs humour to critique gender stereotypes and societal expectations placed on women, particularly focusing on the notion of women being overly complex or irrational. Schwarz (2010) discusses satire as a literary technique that distorts characteristic features of individuals or society through exaggeration and simplification. Satire often serves as a tool for societal commentary, critiquing societal norms and expectations. Mills (2008) explores gender stereotypes and societal expectations placed on women, including perceptions of women as overly complicated or irrational. These stereotypes are often perpetuated through humour and media representation. The story about women shaving off their eyebrows in the Garden of Eden and then realizing their mistake reflects a satirical commentary on gender stereotypes and societal expectations placed on women. Through this exaggerated narrative, the comedian critiques the

absurdity of gender norms and expectations, highlighting the humour in societal perceptions of women's behaviour. The utterance satirizes the notion that women are inherently more complicated or irrational than men, highlighting the absurdity of such stereotypes. This critique challenges conventional gender norms and expectations, prompting laughter from the audience as they recognize the irony and social commentary embedded in the humour. According to Shwarz (2010), satire distorts characteristic features of an individual or society by exaggeration and simplification.

Moreover, the humour in the utterance arises from the recognition of the absurdity and exaggeration of the scenario presented. Members of the audience may find amusement in the sheer implausibility of the narrative, as well as in the clever use of satire to critique gender stereotypes. The unexpectedness of the narrative and the playful tone contribute to the humour, engaging the audience in laughter as they appreciate the satirical commentary being conveyed.

**Datum 23.** *Ladies wa Nairobi wanapenda gari za Demio na unawaona kwa jam na... hazina tint. (He imitates the way they drive putting on airs while touching their hair and eyes). Wakisukumwa nje ya barabara...wakijaribu kurudi kwa barabara, wanasukumwa tena mpaka nje halafu wanaenda wanaingia kwa mtaro mahali wanashindwa kuzitoa coz zimebalance kwa pavement. (Laughter)... wanaanza kupigia boyfriends wao wawazaidie “hi beb, can you imagine I have had an accident? (Laughter) (Comedian M, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

(Ladies in Nairobi love Demio vehicles and you will see them in jam...and they are untinted (Imitates the way they drive putting on airs while touching on their eyes and hairs). When they are pushed out of the road ... they attempt to come to the road but

they are pushed back again to the outside and they land in a ditch where they fail to get out because they have balanced in a pavement. (Laughter). They begin to call their boyfriends for help, “Hi babe, can you imagine I have had an accident? (Laughter).

The comedian in the above text comments on the driving habits of women in Nairobi. He observes that Nairobi women prefer Demio cars which they often drive ostentatiously, without tinted windows. He mimics their mannerisms, such as touching their hair and eyes while driving, adding a comedic element to the narrative. The comedian humorously critiques the perceived driving habits of “ladies in Nairobi” through satire and exaggerated portrayals. Schippers (2007) explores the intersection of gender and driving stereotypes, noting how societal perceptions and stereotypes influence perceptions of women’s driving abilities. The comedian in the above utterance humorously portrays women’s behaviour while driving in a way that highlights and criticizes perceived stereotypes or common observations about their driving habits. The exaggerated depiction serves as a form of social commentary. Beyond its humorous effect, the utterance serves as a commentary on societal attitudes and perceptions. It prompts reflection on the unfair stereotypes and assumptions often associated with women. The comedian employs exaggeration and caricature to satirize the behaviour of “ladies in Nairobi” while driving. By exaggerating their actions, such as driving with untinted cars and being unable to maneuver their vehicles effectively, the comedian highlights and critiques perceived stereotypes or common observations about the driving habits of women in Nairobi. The use of humour adds an element of playfulness to the critique, making it more engaging and accessible to the audience.

According to Bamidele (2001), satire is used to poke fun while criticizing members of the society who may have gone contrary to the established ideals of the people. When women moved out of the private sphere and started driving, they were perceived to be intruding into a male domain and as a result their driving ability came under scrutiny. They became the butt of satirical jokes any moment they act at variance with the norms of civilized societies.

The utterance seems to be perpetuating untrue characteristics regarding women drivers. According to Schippers (2007), this representation of women promotes the ascendancy of hegemonic masculinity over femininities therefore serving the interests of the gender order and male domination.

**Datum 24.** *Mademu mi najuanga hampendanangi sana...mwenye mmekaa naye amnatembea naye sana na anashindanga amesmile hivi (he demonstrates the way she smiles), waja nikuambie vitu anasemanga kama humwangelii usitake kujua. Wakati ako na rafiki yake Wamboi anasema, "... Oh, ndio hicho kiSharon sikipendi. (laughter). Aki kinakaanga kijinga (Comedian M, 2023, November, The Churchill Show).*

(Ladies I know you do not love each other much... the one you are seated next to or you walk with a lot and she keeps smiling like this (he demonstrates the way she smiles), let me tell you the things she says when you are not looking at her don't bother to know. When she is with her friend Wamboi she says, "...Oh, that is Sharon, I do not love her. (laughter). She is foolish).

The comedian humorously critiques the perceived lack of genuine friendship among women by highlighting the hypocrisy in their interactions. In this context, the comedian employs satire to shed light on societal perceptions of female friendships.

By satirizing the insincere and superficial nature of the relationships portrayed, the comedian critiques societal expectations about female friendships. Irony is a key literary device used to create humour and highlight contradictions. Attardo (1994) emphasizes the role of irony in comedy, particularly in exposing the discrepancy between appearance and reality. By highlighting the contrast between the outward appearance of friendship and the underlying reality of negative sentiments expressed behind each other's backs, the comedian critiques stereotypes about female relationships. The use of humour adds an element of playfulness to the critique, making it more engaging and accessible to the audience.

**Datum 25.** *Men are confused elements. To know how confused they are, they work hard and get money to marry fine looking girls like these madams over here. The same men will go and cheat on their beautiful girls with ugly madams. (Laughter)* (Comedian O, 2023, November, Churchill Show).

The comedian humorously characterizes men as “confused elements,” highlighting their supposed confusion through contrasting actions. He suggests that men work hard and acquire wealth to marry attractive women, yet they often engage in infidelity with less attractive partners. This statement is delivered in a light-hearted manner, eliciting laughter from the audience. Through satire, he sheds light on the discrepancy between societal expectations and actual conduct. Bamidele (2001) discusses satire as a social art form that critiques societal norms and behaviours through humour. In the utterance, the comedian employs satire to mock and ridicule the actions of men in relationships, highlighting societal ills and contradictions. Through exaggeration, he highlights the absurdity of men's behaviour in relationships. By contrasting the expectations that men marry beautiful wives with

the ironic reality of them cheating with “ugly madams,” the comedian creates humour through the exaggerated discrepancy between societal expectations and actual behaviour. The comedian uses irony in his phrasing to create humour. For example, the statement “get money and marry fine looking girls” sets up an expectation of success and adherence to societal norms. However, the subsequent revelation that men cheat with “ugly madams” subverts this expectation, adding a humorous twist to the narrative.

Semantic play is evident in the choice of words and phrases to describe the situation. The term “confused elements” to describe men adds a humorous and playful tone to the utterance, subtly mocking societal expectations of men’s behaviour in relationships.

The next section is based on objective two of analyzing sexist inferences underlying the routines of selected stand up comedians on *The Churchill Show*.

#### **4.3 Sexist Inferences Underlying Comedic utterances on the Churchill Show**

Objective two focuses on analyzing the underlying sexist inferences within comedic utterances on *The Churchill Show*. This examination is essential for uncovering hidden gender biases and stereotypes embedded in humour and understanding their societal implications. By scrutinizing these inferences, the study contributes to revealing how humour can either reinforce or challenge traditional gender norms and power structures. An inference is defined as information that is not expressed explicitly by the text but can be derived through the listener’s background knowledge combined with text-based information.

Listeners make inferences about what is linguistically expressed in order to arrive at an interpretation of the speaker's intended meaning. When readers or listeners infer, they create a meaning that is not necessarily stated explicitly in the text. The process implies that they actively search for, or are aware of, implicit meaning. According to Levinson (1983), inferences are only indirectly triggered by explicit language structures.

Data collection involved gathering comedic utterances from the Churchill Show that contained sexist inferences. The selection criteria prioritized identifying utterances implying gender stereotypes, biases, or discriminatory attitudes towards both men and women. To minimize research bias, data triangulation was applied by gathering utterances from a diverse range of episodes to ensure a representative sample. The subsequent data coding and categorization process categorized the identified sexist inferences into themes, relating to gender stereotypes, roles, biases, and societal expectations. Each utterance was coded based on the specific sexist inference it conveyed. This coding system facilitated a systematic analysis of the underlying messages within comedic content. Table 4.2 presents the categorization of sexist inferences from selected utterances on the Churchill Show. The table categorizes the sexist inferences into specific themes with corresponding codes assigned to each theme. The code represents the nature of the sexist inference such as gender relations, intellectual abilities, physical appearance, gender roles, and behavioural expectations. Sample utterances (the italicized ones are the original) are provided to illustrate how these inferences manifest in the comedic performances. This coding

system facilitated a systematic analysis of the underlying messages within comedic utterances.

**Table 4.2: Categorization of Sexist Inferences and Assigned Codes**

Theme	Codes	Sample utterances
Gendered relationships and sexuality	Gender relations	<p><i>Men are confused elements. To know how confused they are, they work hard and get money to marry fine looking girls like these madams over here. The same men will go and cheat on their beautiful girls with ugly madams.</i></p> <p><i>(Laughter).(Comedian O, November, 2023, Churchill Show).</i></p>
Intellectual and emotional stereotype	Intellectual abilities	<p><i>I don't understand women... Man has produced engineers, doctors and we can do and understand many things like physics and chemistry but we cannot understand women. Even women cannot understand themselves. (Laughter).</i></p> <p><i>(Comedian Y, November, 2023, Churchill Show).</i></p>
Physical appearance and beauty standards	Physical appearance	<p>1. <i>Geukia huyo mrembo ako karibu na wewe umpe high five lakini usiguse uso unaweza baki kwa mkono. (Laughter). Pia usivulute nywele, anaweza baki na matuta hapo ndani. (laughter)</i></p> <p><i>(Comedian M, 2023, November, Churchill Raw).</i></p> <p><i>(Turn to the beautiful lady near you and give her hi five but do not touch her face it might remain in your hand. (Laughter). Also, do not pull her hair; she might remain with bumps inside.</i></p>

Theme	Codes	Sample utterances
Gender stereotypes and roles	Gender roles	<p><i>Chenye mwanamke anahitaji ni mwanaume mmoja mwenye atamtimizia mahitaji yake yote lakini mwanaume anahitaji kila mwanamke ili wantimizie hataji lake moja. (laughter)</i>  <i>(Comedian O, 2023, November, Churchill Show).</i></p> <p><i>(What a woman needs is one man who can meet all her needs but a man will always need every woman to have his one need met. (Laughter).</i></p>
Behavioural stereotypes	Behavioural expectations	<p><i>Ladies stop generalizing that all men are the same. Who told you to taste all of them? (Laughter). That energy you are focusing on all of them, can you manage one. Have you tasted me? (Laughter).</i>  <i>(Comedian O, November, 2023, Churchill Show).</i></p>

**Source: Fieldwork (2023)**

The analysis phase focused on interpreting the implication of the identified sexist inferences. It aimed at discerning how these inferences contribute to either reinforcing or challenging traditional gender roles, expectations and power dynamics. By separately analyzing examples of sexist inferences related to men and women, the study provided a nuanced understanding of the gender biases and stereotypes perpetuated through comedic performances. The study also looked at the broader societal implications of the identified sexist inferences. Sexist inferences on women are first examined followed by sexist inferences on men. A theme was first highlighted, followed by the sexist inference and then utterance(s) that contain that

given sexist inference was provided. Utterances that contain the same sexist inference are put under the same theme. Themes were identified based on how frequently these categories appeared in the utterances and their alignment with well documented patterns of sexist humour. The coding process followed a systematic identification of sexist inferences, categorizing them according to the prevalent themes.

### **4.3.1 Sexist Inferences on Women**

Most of the sexist inferences drawn from the data were targeted at women. The first theme identified was gender stereotypes and roles.

#### **4.3.1.1 Gender Stereotypes and Roles**

Societal norms and expectations dictate the roles and behaviours considered suitable for men and women. These norms encompass beliefs about the division of labour between genders. It includes beliefs about the division of labour between men and women, such as the idea that women should primarily occupy domestic or caregiving roles, while men should be responsible for providing finance and engaging in public spheres of work or leadership.

##### **4.3.1.1.1 Men as Providers to Women**

Traditional gender stereotypical belief among the Kenyan society is that men are considered responsible for taking care of their families financially. Women are portrayed as dependent on men for financial support, therefore, subordinate to men. Those men who fail to financially provide for their wives and children are perceived as irresponsible, mean and selfish. The following datum collected on *The Churchill Show* performances illustrates this.

**Datum 26.** *...tangu niingie box ya Kinuthia, siku hizi sioni pesa yake. Heri kitambo. Siku hizi pesa ya Kinuthia imekua kama mbunge. ( Laughter) (Comedian A, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

(...Since falling in love with Kinuthia, nowadays I do not get his money. It was better before. Nowadays, Kinuthia’s money has become like an MP. (Laughter)).

In the first sentence of the text above, the comedian tells the audience that before she fell in love with Kinuthia, he used to give her money (possibly as a form of enticement) but that changed the moment he married her. The difficulty in getting his money is likened to the difficulty in accessing a Member of Parliament once he or she has been elected to office. Kenyan parliamentarians are known to be “smooth talkers” and they use various methods to woo voters in their campaigns to vote for them. However, once they are elected, they don’t keep contact with their electorates. They only reappear after five years to ask to be re-elected. Just as it is difficult to access a Member of Parliament, it is equally hard for the wife to get money from her husband. Through the wife’s characterization of her husband as “mean” as far as giving her money is concerned, we can draw an inference that **men are expected to be the providers and women are expected to be dependent on men.**

The above sexist humorous utterance is based on the traditional gender stereotypical belief among the Kenyan society that men should be the financial providers to their families. The role of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is to analyze texts within their sociocultural context in order to reveal the underlying power dynamics, gendered expectations and ideological implications (Fairclough, 2001). This helps us

to understand how discourse contributes to the reproduction of gender inequalities within marital relationship. This humour is sexist because it is rooted in the ideology that the worth or financial well being of a woman should be tied to her partner. It portrays women as dependent on men for financial support; therefore, they are subordinate to men. From a CDA perspective, women's financial dependence on men has the potential of contributing to unequal power relation within the marriage and limiting the financial freedom of women (Kabeer, 1999 &Walby, 2005). Such dynamics perpetuates the patriarchal notion that men should wield economic power in heterosexual relationships, reinforcing existing gender inequalities (Connell, 2005).

Moreover, the comedian promotes traditional gender roles and social structures through this utterance where husbands are obligated to provide finances to women. Women are expected to be depended on men financially. This belief is a reflection of the broader societal norms that prescribe specific roles based on gender, limiting the freedom of women and reinforcing the dominance of men. Presently, majority of women have been empowered socially, economically, and politically and are venturing and competing with men in careers and jobs that were exclusively for men. They can also be financial providers for their families.

#### **4.3.1.1.2 Women as Dependent on Men**

**Datum 27.** *Chenye mwanamke anahitaji ni mwanaume mmoja mwenye atamtimizia mahitaji yake yote lakini mwanaume anahitaji kila mwanamke ili wamtimizie hitaji lake moja. (laughter) ( Comedian O,2023, November, The Churchill Show).*

(What a woman need is one man who can meet all her needs but a man needs every woman so that they meet his one need. (Laughter)).

The phrase “What a woman need is one man who can meet all her needs,’ suggests that a woman’s needs can be fully satisfied by one man, implying that women should rely on a single male partner for all aspects of support and fulfillment. The emphasis on one man meeting all of a woman’s needs suggests dependency on male provision and support, reinforcing traditional gender roles where men are expected to be the primary providers and women are expected to be dependent on male partners for their well-being. Therefore, we can draw the sexist inference that **women should depend on men.**

The comparison between a woman’s need for one man and a man’s need for multiple women reflects asymmetrical expectations placed on men and women in relationships. Women are expected to find all their needs met by one partner, while men are portrayed as having a need that extends beyond one partner.

Women for a long time have been stereotyped as dependent on men to meet their emotional and physical needs (Ivan et al., 2023). From a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) angle, the use of the word “need” in relation to women in the utterance suggests a sense of dependency. Women are presented as beings that need male partners to make them complete and fulfilled. In other words, the comedian covertly suggests that the worth of women is pegged on their relationship with men. This ideology can be interpreted as a form of language coercion that is reinforcing gendered expectations. The utterance ignores different relationship structures and individual independence.

A Critical Discourse Analyst would look at the utterance as a reflection of unequal power relation between men and women whereby men are positioned as providers of the needs of women, therefore, wielding more power than women who are being provided. This reinforces patriarchal structures in which men hold economic and social power over women, shaping their roles and behaviours within relationships.

#### **4.3.1.1.3 Women Belong to the Private Sphere and Men Belong To the Public Sphere**

A common belief that has been held for a long time is that men and women belong to distinct spheres of society, with men particularly fit for the workplace and women being particularly fit for the domestic domain. When men and women violate gender stereotypes by crossing spheres, they face backlash. The concept of distinct spheres for men and women is firmly established in many cultures. For a long time there has been a perception of the kitchen and home in general as a feminine space. Dag (2016) states that social stereotypes that identify women with the private sphere affect and prevent women's participation in public life. These stereotypes stem from the patriarchal program that is within human societies. They assign women the role of being housewives and mothers. This is a form of social control over women. On *The Churchill Show*, some comedians display this negative gender role stereotyping in their routines as shown in the following datum.

**Datum 28.** *Nilisikia stori ingine kua kuna jamaa alipigwa na mke wake na mwiko jikoni mpaka akaaga. Familia yake haikutaka watu wajue nini ilimuua. (Comedian F, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

(I heard a certain story of a man who died after being hit by a cooking stick by his wife. (Laughter). His family did not want people to know what killed him).

The comedian associates the cooking stick (a kitchenware) with the wife. Through this association, the utterance implicitly reinforces the gender role stereotype that the kitchen is a feminine space. This enables us to infer that women belong to the private sphere and more specifically the kitchen. A man who ventures into this space is perceived as an intruder and a woman will feel threatened and cause her to react. The utterance seems to be suggesting that the husband was killed by his wife because she was annoyed by the intruding husband.

Cooking sticks are not typically viewed as dangerous items that could cause fatal harm. In reality, women are often seen as non-threatening beings that lack the capacity to intimidate or injure men, particularly when comparing the physical strength of the genders. Men frequently strive to conceal any fear of potential threats to affirm their masculinity. The comedian amplifies this notion by presenting exaggerated claims about the violence women can wield, reinforcing the stereotype that the roles of women are limited to the home, especially the kitchen. For many years, society has portrayed women as primarily belonging to the domestic sphere, while men have been assigned responsibilities in public life (Crawford, 2000).

CDA examines the way language is employed to construct and reinforce social stereotypes and norms (Fairclough, 2001). The language employed by the comedian perpetuates implicit bias. The fact that the comedian mentions a cooking stick which is a tool we associate with the domestic sphere and traditional feminine roles such as cooking reinforces the negative stereotype that women belong to the private sphere especially in the kitchen. This is a perpetuation of the long held notion that the roles of women should be limited to the domestic responsibilities and care-giving. The use of phrases such as “cooking stick” instead of using a more neutral term like

“object” or “instrument” reinforces the association with the domestic sphere and traditional gender roles. Through these linguistic choices, existing power structures and negative gender stereotypes are shaped and reinforced. On the other hand, men are perceived to belong to the public domain where they are expected to take more authoritative roles.

In the following datum 29, women have been shown as people who are to be homemakers, a private sphere and men are supposed to be out working, a public sphere. The utterance also illustrates the gender role distinction between men and women.

**Datum 29.** *Ukioa mwanamke mMeru na ukose kwenda kazi atakuambia, “ Baba Kagwira, nilifikiri wanaume wote wako mahali pao pa kazi. Ni wewe tu umeamua kubaki nyumbani? Karani, nipe ile panga tulinoa jana. (Laughter) (Comedian M, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

(When you marry a Meru woman and you fail to go to work she will tell you, “Father Kagwira, I thought all men are at their places of work. It is only you who has decided to remain at home? Karani, give me that panga which we sharpened yesterday. (Laughter)).

The comedian states that Meru women threaten their husbands with machete when they do not go to work. The fact that the woman is requesting for a weapon (panga) to exert control over her husband’s behaviour helps us to make an inference that (Meru) women are nagging and controlling. This utterance subtly introduces the element of gender violence in intimate relationships. The utterance gives a reflection on how deeply ingrained gendered roles and expectations are within the Kenyan

society. The Meru woman wants to know why her husband has decided to remain at home instead of going out to work like other men. The wife's utterance reinforces the long held stereotypical belief that men are expected to be the primary breadwinners for their families while women are expected to be in-charge of domestic duties. This is both a reinforcement of the unequal division of labour within homes and also a perpetuation of traditional gender norms.

The utterance above portrays women as people who are controlling and nagging especially to men when they (men) deviate from prescribed traditional roles. Moreover, the comedian through the above utterance suggests that Meru women use violence to maintain their authority within their homes. They are assertive and authoritative while men are depicted as passive. This is one way of entrenching unequal power dynamics and gendered expectations. The joke portrays women as homemakers who should stay at home and manage household duties. This points to the domestication of women. The traditional stereotypical belief in many African societies is that men work, while women stay at home (Ndonye, 2015). Men are the breadwinners and it is their responsibility to provide for their families. This seems to be in line with what Brannon (2011) states that, stereotypically, women have been assigned to the private sphere such as home while the public sphere such as work has been considered to be a domain associated with men. The utterance also seems to portray Meru women as violent partners in their domestic sphere.

#### **4.3.1.2 Physical Appearance and Beauty Standards**

Perceptions and standards of beauty and attractiveness attributed to women are deeply rooted in societal norms and cultural practices. Research indicates that

women are often expected to conform to specific physical ideals which vary across cultures and time periods (Tiggermann, 2003). These ideals emphasize traits such as slimness, youthfulness and specific facial features, leading to the societal belief that the worth of a woman is frequently judged on her appearance (Maliken et al; 2003). Furthermore, the use of makeup is often seen as a necessity for women to enhance their attractiveness, reinforcing the idea that their value is linked to their physical presentation. Such standards contribute to a culture of comparison and self-scrutiny among women which can impact their self-esteem and body image (Cohen & Blaszczynski, 2015).

#### **4.3.1.2.1 Women as Unattractive without Makeup**

There are still many stereotypes about women's appearance in societies (Mills, 2008). People tend to find fault with women's appearance according to a morbid unitary aesthetic. These stereotypes imprison women's bodies and minds. One such stereotype is that women are not attractive without makeup. Some humorous utterances on *The Churchill Show* bring attention to body shaming of women. Negative body talk and shaming of women are ways of imposing patriarchal bodily control over women. The following utterance illustrates the above sexist inference.

**Datum 30.** *Geukia huyo mrembo ako karibu na wewe umpe high five lakini usiguse uso unaweza baki kwa mkono. (Laughter). Pia usivulute nywele, anaweza baki na matuta hapo ndani. (laughter) (Comedian M, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

(Turn to the beautiful lady near you and give her high five but do not touch her face it might remain in your hand. (Laughter). Also, do not pull her hair; she might remain with bumps inside).

The above utterance was spoken by a male stand-up comedian. The comedian says that if the hair of a woman is touched, the woman might remain with humps. He also says that if a woman's face is touched, the face might remain in the hand of the one who touched her. The comedian, through use of language, objectifies and devalues women on the basis of the way they look. He has reduced them to objects of pleasure. The expressions 'if you touch her face it might remain in your hand,' and 'if you pull her hair she might remain with bumps provide us with clues to infer that women are not deemed attractive without artificial enhancement or makeup. It has been suggested in the above utterance that if women do not put on these makeup and weaves, they will look unattractive. This is as a result of societal expectation for women to adhere to prescribed beauty standards and suggesting that their natural look is inferior and not enough. This humour reinforces a patriarchal ideology of perceiving women as objects on the basis of their look.

This utterance has the potential to negatively impact the self-image and self-confidence of women. By suggesting that women are not attractive without makeup, the utterance undermines women's self-esteem in the natural way they look making them feel inferior, insecure and inadequate (Cohen & Blaszczynki, 2015). This can lead to dangerous behaviour by women such as using too much makeup or carrying out cosmetic operations so that they fit society's prescribed beauty standards.

We should analyze discourses for the purposes of highlighting opportunities for resistance and empowerment (Fairclough, 2001). We need to critically examine and challenge certain societal beauty norms and expectations that prevent individuals (in this case, women) from celebrating their diversity. The utterance above promotes

beauty standards that are narrow while leaving out various representations of beauty. The utterance suggests that women must use makeup to make themselves attractive.

The next utterance measures the value of women with their physical attractiveness. The bodies of women are scrutinized. This results in men perceiving the bodies of women as objects of their pleasure.

**Datum 31.** *You black women you make it so hard for us men to be romantic... a white woman can tell her husband, “honey, wrap your hand through my hair” and when he wraps it is all smooth. Black women if you to tell your men that, all they will feel are potholes, and hump. (Laughter). Have you seen some of you put on weaves so badly that when someone calls you and you turn the weave remains in the same direction. (Laughter) (Comedian S, 2023, November, Churchill Show).*

The comedian in the above humour uses words like potholes and bumps to describe the physical appearance of African women. Through his lexical choice of words like ‘potholes,’ and ‘bumps’ to describe the African woman’s hair, we can draw the inference that **African women are sexually unattractive**. Because they put on their weaves so badly, they cannot arouse romantic feelings of men towards them.

According to Lemish (2008), in many societies, women are evaluated on the basis of their appearance and sexual attractiveness. This is precisely what the above utterance is doing. This is what makes it sexist. The phrase “*honey, wrap your hand through my hair*” suggests objectification of women. The utterance focuses on women’s physical appearance that arouses romantic feelings of men towards women. The utterance objectifies women by presenting their body parts (e.g. their hair) as the ones that bring sexual pleasure to men. The comedian blames African women for

their physical unattractiveness that causes African men to be unromantic. This suggests that women's bodies exist for the purpose of pleasing men. According to Bartky (1990), sexual objectification occurs in women when their body parts are detached from them as people and are only perceived as physical objects of men's sexual desire. The comedian makes a generalization concerning the beauty and lack of romantic prowess and abilities of African women. The utterance reduces women to monolithic entities on the basis of their race and gender thereby, overlooking the diverse and complex nature of the experiences of black women. The criticism of African women for the way they wear weaves is sexist. It promotes and prioritizes a shallow ideal of beauty. The autonomy of women to determine for themselves on how they should physically look like is hindered.

**Datum 32.** *Imagine if we did not have beauty salons we will be seeing ghost creatures (Comedian M, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

Ghosts are perceived to be fictional monstrous beings. By likening the appearance of women who don't visit beauty salons to ghost creatures, we can infer that **women without makeup are ugly and harmful**. The above text suggests that women who do not frequent beauty salons risk being perceived as unattractive. In popular discourse, women without makeup are sometimes characterized as menacing beings, despite this being far from the truth. Additionally, the term "ghost creatures" is used to illustrate how significantly women can appear different without makeup, implying they seem less human. This notion underscores the idea that the beauty of women is largely enhanced through cosmetic products.

The comedian uses the conditional phrase “if there were no beauty salons” to suggest that society expects women to visit salons. This utterance highlights differences between those women who have access to salons and those who do not. From a Critical Discourse Analysis angle, there is power dynamic related to beauty at play in the utterance whereby those women who do not seek the service at the salons are perceived as monstrous (“ghost creatures”) while those who do are perceived as desirable. By using the phrase “we will be seeing ghost creatures,” the comedian has reduced women to mere objects (that are undesirable just like ghosts) of appearance. Moreover, the utterance seems to normalize certain beauty standards upheld by salons. The underlying assumption in the utterance is that without women going to the salons, they will deviate from the socially held beauty standards therefore, presenting their appearance as undesirable.

#### **4.3.1.2.2 Women as not Inherently Beautiful**

Despite improvement in the rights of women in Kenya, women’s bodies have continued to be under constant scrutiny whereby a woman’s value is measured by her physical attractiveness. Women whose bodies do not conform to the strict beauty standards of society continue to experience negative stereotypes and this affects their self image and confidence. Some of these negative stereotypes about women’s appearance come through comments in the media. For example, the following datum 33 from *The Churchill Show* illustrates this.

**Datum 33.** *For a lady kukaa poa is not a joke... anaingizwa ndani kwa kipipa anachomwa kichwa na hapo ndio unaona mademu wanachomwa utosi. Kwanza wa Kiambu wanakuja salon wakiringa na unajua vile wanakuanga na miguu yao peke yao. Huku wako sawa kidogo (pointing to the front of the legs) imeshikana hapa kwa*

*magoti halafu ikaachana hapo mbele lakini akigeuka huku nyuma (pointing to the butts) huku kuliamwa. (laughter) (Comedian M, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

(For a lady to be smart is not a joke... her head is placed in a tank and the hair curled. That is when you see ladies' foreheads being burned. Kiambu women in particular come to the salon putting on airs and you know how they have their own unique legs. They are a bit okay here (pointing to the front of the legs) with the knees in close contact then there is separation in front but when they turn their behind (pointing to the butt) is deserted.

The humour extensively focuses on women's physical appearance, particularly their hair and body shape. By emphasizing the process of curling hair and describing it in detail, the humour trivializes women's efforts to enhance their appearance, suggesting that their attempts to be beautiful are futile or comical. **The inference that women are not inherently beautiful** can be drawn from the above utterance humour. The description of women's hair being "curled" by placing their heads in a tank exaggerates and ridicules the beauty process, portraying it as absurd or excessive. This exaggeration undermines the significance of women's beauty routines and contributes to the inference that women's efforts to be beautiful are unnecessary or ineffective. Moreover, the description of women from Kiambu having a particular body shape, with fine legs but no big butts reinforces stereotypical notions of women's physical appearance. By reducing women to these physical attributes and exaggerating them for comedic effect, the humour perpetuates the stereotype that women are not inherently beautiful

The humour in the above utterance reflects and reinforces hegemonic ideologies that prioritize and idealize certain standards of beauty. Women who do not conform to these standards are marginalized and ridiculed, perpetuating a hierarchy of beauty

that reinforces patriarchal power structures. Moreover, the discourse contributes to the social reproduction of gender norms by reinforcing stereotypes about the beauty and intelligence of women. By framing women's efforts to enhance their appearance as ridiculous and ineffective, the discourse reinforces the notion that the value of women lies in their physical attributes rather than their intellect or abilities.

#### **4.3.1.3 Behavioural Stereotypes**

There are beliefs and assumptions about the typical behaviours and characteristics associated with women. This includes perceptions of women as emotionally volatile or jealous, incompetent drivers, careless, talkative, troublesome, materialistic, and promiscuous. These stereotypes often reinforce the notions of women as irrational or lacking in self-control.

##### **4.3.1.3.1 Women as Promiscuous**

In some of the routines of stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show*, women are portrayed as promiscuous. The datum below drawn from selected routines captures the inference.

**Datum 34.** *Ladies stop generalizing that all men are the same. Who told you to taste all of them? (Laughter). That energy you are focusing on all of them, can you manage one. Have you tasted me? (Laughter). (Comedian O, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

The term 'to taste,' within the context of the humorous utterance means to have sex. The phrase 'who told you to taste all of them?' suggests that women have "tasted" multiple men and should instead focus on managing one partner. The humour suggests that women are inherently promiscuous or have a tendency for

engaging in multiple sexual relationships. Therefore, from the utterance we can **infer that women are promiscuous**. This inference is rooted in ideologies that uphold traditional gender roles and expectations. The humour reinforces the stereotypical belief that women are inherently promiscuous for engaging in multiple relationships, while men are excused or even encouraged to pursue multiple partners (Crawford, 1995). This ideology serves to justify and normalize gendered double standards within relationships and society.

The utterance is sexist on the ground that it lumps women together (addressing women collectively as “ladies”) under a single negative classification as being promiscuous suggesting that they all share certain characteristics or attitudes. The statement “who told you to taste all of them?” places blame on women for engaging in multiple relationships or experiences. This implies that women are responsible for their perceived promiscuity and should be judged by their actions. Phrases like “Have you tasted me?” and “can’t you manage one?” objectify women by reducing them to objects of men’s desires and implying that women’s worth is tied to their sexual experiences or relationships with men. In many cultures, women’s promiscuity is condemned since women are expected to be morally upright by being faithful in their marriages. This observation concurs with the argument by Goldman & Waymer (2015) that women have always being represented as pervert human beings in the media.

#### **4.3.1.3.2 Women as Indirect Speakers**

In some of the routines by comedians on *The Churchill Show*, men are portrayed positively as people who mean what they say while women are negatively depicted

as people who mean the opposite of what they say. The excerpt below demonstrates this inference.

**Datum 35.** *If you are a man and you propose a relationship to an African woman and she says “no” she means “yes.” (Laughter). Us men when we tell a girl we love her we mean that. (Comedian S, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

The stand-up comedian in the above utterance has presented women as people who mean the opposite of what they say when men propose romantic relationships to them. We can infer from the utterance that **African women are indirect speakers**. The assertion of the comedian is a false generalization because it perpetuates a stereotype without any factual evidence or acknowledgement of the diversity and individuality among African women. This humorous utterance is indirectly sexist, since the perspective from which it is constructed is predominantly androcentric, that is, from a masculine perspective. Women are represented as saying exactly the opposite of what they mean. Men, on the other hand, are represented in a more positive light as direct, and plain-speaking. This utterance seems to be positioning women as inferior to men. The fact that women means the opposite of what they say in romantic advances suggests that they are trying to play hard to get. The utterance perpetuates the negative stereotype that women’s lack of explicit consent is actually a form of consent.

#### **4.3.1.3.3 Women as Aggressive for Men in Relationships**

In some routines of selected stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show*, women are portrayed as hungry for men and bent on trapping them into relationships as the following datum illustrates.

**Datum 36.** *...Nilikutana na msichana anaitwa Fatuma na tukabidilishana namba lakini nilikaa siku tatu sijampigia. Siku moja...akaanza kuniambia “...nikikupa namba yangu nataka unipigie simu uniambie Fatuma nakupenda. Sili wala kunywa nyumbani na nagombanishwa kila mara na wazazi kwa sababu nilishawaambia nimepata mume na hawajamuona. (laughter) (Comedian C, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

(...I met a Swahili girl called Fatuma and we exchanged phone numbers but I stayed for three days without calling her. One day... she began telling me, “...when I give you my number I want you to call me and tell me Fatuma I love you so much. I do not drink or eat at home and I am always being quarreled by my parents because I had informed them that I have got a husband yet they have not seen him. (Laughter)).

The comedian in the text above says that Fatuma said to him that she had not taken food or drank for three days because she was thinking about her love for him. In Kenyan culture and to a larger extent African culture, it is men who are supposed to initiate and propose romantic feelings to women. The fact that the woman is forcing the man to seduce and marry her, we can make an inference that women are hungry for men for relationships. The fact that the lady gave the man her mobile phone number and expected him to call and tell her how he loves her portrays the woman as ‘husband hungry.’ This sexist joke depicts women as beings who are bent on trapping men into marriages or relationships. The woman (Fatuma) told the comedian that she has been quarelled by her parents because of not bringing home a husband whom she told them that she had found. This assertion reflects society’s expectations on women’s roles and marital status. Society exerts pressure on women

to conform to traditional gender roles and fulfill societal expectations as far as marriage and family are concerned.

By demanding that the man seduce her, the woman (Fatuma) is promoting the patriarchal ideology that present men as aggressors and pursuers and women as passive receivers of men's romantic advances. This kind of discourse perpetuates the long held traditional gender norms and reinforces unequal power dynamics between men and women. Furthermore, by expecting the man to initiate romantic advances, the woman perpetuates the idea that women are dependent on men for validation and fulfillment.

**Datum 37.** *Wasichana wakalenjin ni warembo na hakuna kitu kitamu kama kuoa msichana Mkale. (Laughter). In fact, msichana Mkale mrembo akikupenda huwa hawezi ngoja umtafute yeye atakutafuta na akukwamilie kama glue. (Laughter).Unaona Chelagat amesimama kwa centre (puts hands akimbo to demonstrate how she stands) anangoja mzee yake. (Laughter) (Comedian W, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

(Kalenjin girls are beautiful and there is nothing sweet like marrying a Kalenjin girl. (Laughter). In fact, when a beautiful Kalenjin girl loves you she cannot wait for you to seduce her. She is the one who will seduce and stick to you like a glue. (Laughter). You will see Chelagat standing in a center (puts hands akimbo to demonstrate how she stands) waiting for her husband. (Laughter)).

The above humorous utterance portrays Kalenjin women as the ones who actively pursue men for relationships. In other words, they are the ones who are responsible for initiating romantic interactions and forming relationships. They go to the extent of going to the market to wait for men to seduce them. Therefore, we can infer that

**Kalenjin women hunt men for relationships.** The stereotype of ‘the husband hungry woman’ is reinforced in the above utterance.

Through a CDA lens, we can perceive how the inference reflects and reinforces entrenched power imbalances, and ideologies that contribute to the marginalization of women and the reinforcement of traditional gender roles within relationships and society at large. The fact that Kalenjin women are the one who take the initiative to seduce men suggests a reversal of traditional gender roles. The women have started to play a dominant role in initiating and controlling romantic relationships. The phrase “a beautiful Kalenjin girl ... cannot wait for you to seduce her. She is the one who will seduce and stick to you like a glue” reinforces the negative gender stereotype that it only men who are often expected to initiate romantic relationship, while women are anticipated to respond passively to these advances. This reinforces the idea that women depend on men for their (women) romantic validation and fulfillment.

#### **4.3.1.3.4 Women as Untrustworthy Friends**

The following datum also illustrates the sexist inference of the incapability of women to form genuine and supportive relationship with each other.

**Datum 38.** *Mademu mi najuanga hampendanangi sana...mwenye mmekaa naye ama mnatembea naye sana na anashindanga amesmile hivi (he demonstrates the way she smiles), waja nikuambie vitu anasemanga kama humwangalii usitake kujua. Wakati ako na rafiki yake Wamboi anasema, “... Oh, ndio hicho kiSharon sikipendi.*

(Laughter). *Aki kinakaanga kijinga*. (Comedian M, November, 2023, *Churchill Show*).

(Ladies I know you do not love each other much... the one you are seated next to or you walk with a lot and she keeps smiling like this (he demonstrates the way she smiles), let me tell you the things she says when you are not looking at her don't bother to know. When she is with her friend Wamboi she says, "...Oh, that is Sharon, I do not love her. (Laughter). She is foolish).

In the above text, the comedian says that women do not love each other. They (women) are fond of talking ill of their 'friends' to others when those friends are not with them. From the above sexist humour we can draw the inference that **the friendships that women have with each other are superficial and insincere**. The utterance diminishes the importance of women's bonding and solidarity. The comedian perpetuates sexism by promoting negative and inaccurate negative stereotypes about the way women interact and how they relate amongst themselves.

Furthermore, the comedian suggests that women love backstabbing and are untrustworthy towards each other. This has the potential of undermining the importance of female friendship and solidarity therefore, perpetuating the idea that women are inferior beings who should be accorded less respect than their male counterparts.

#### **4.3.1.3.5 Women as Superficial and Materialistic**

In some routines on *The Churchill Show*, women are negatively portrayed as superficial and materialistic who conceal their evil intentions with deceptive

appearance and talk. Their aim is to exploit others especially men materially. The following datum brings out this inference.

**Datum 39.** ...*Mademu wa Nairobi wako na figure nzuri na wanajiita sweet sugar lakini wote ni gold diggers. (Laughter). Wanakuja Churchill Show wamepiga maperfume na macologne that is because hawapendi kuoga. (Laughter). (Comedian F, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

(...ladies in Nairobi have a nice body figure and they call themselves sweet sugar but all of them are gold diggers. (Laughter). They come to Churchill Show having put on perfumes and colognes because they don't love taking shower. (Laughter)).

The comedian in the above text uses the word 'but' to contrast Nairobi ladies' nice body and how they call themselves sweet sugar with how different their true character is (they are gold diggers). This gives us a clue to infer that **ladies in Nairobi are superficial and materialistic**. Within the context of a heterosexual relationship, 'sweet sugar' means being a positive force in a relationship through actions and words. The comedian says that ladies in Nairobi call themselves sweet sugar but all of them are gold diggers to suggest that they pretend to be what they are not with the aim of exploiting men financially. He also says that they come to *Churchill Show* having put on perfumes and colognes because they do not love taking showers to suggest that they are dirty. The statement of the comedian perpetuates a negative stereotype about women's hygiene by suggesting that they (women) give priority to outside appearances over personal hygiene. The utterance is sexist because it stereotypes women as gold diggers. A gold digger is a woman who explicitly seeks material and economic rewards above all else, and is willing to trade sex for it (Stephens & Phillips, 2014). It portrays women as only interested in money and material things.

The comedian through his utterance reduces women to the level of their physical appearance. The underlying assumption in his utterance is that women are mainly concerned with exploiting men for financial gain. Women are presented as deceitful and shallow beings. Men are presented as victims of women's manipulation and superficiality. Fairclough (2001) discusses hegemonic masculinity and femininity, which are dominant cultural ideals that prescribe norms and expectations for behaviour roles, and attributes associated with men and women. These hegemonic ideals often perpetuate unequal power dynamics, with men typically holding more power and privilege in relationships. The above utterance promotes a gendered power dynamics where the perspectives and experiences of men are given priority.

#### **4.3.1.3.6 Women's Talk as Troublesome**

One of the superficial stereotype recurrent in sexist discourse is that women are excessively talkative compared to men (Woodzicka, 2015). This premise is deemed a stereotype for it is not based on any empirical data. The belief that women talk more than men is a form of social control on women's talk. The speech by women is deemed meaningless and troublesome compared to men's. The following datum illustrates this inference.

**Datum 40.** *If there is anything good that happened to me is Covid- 19 because my wife used to put on her face mask always to keep her mouth shut. (Laughter). So, let us call it a blessing instead of a virus. (Laughter). (Comedian S, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

The comedian says that Covid-19 is a good thing that happened because through it face masks were introduced which his wife could put on always to hinder her from

talking. During Covid-19 pandemic, the wearing of face masks was introduced to prevent people from contracting or spreading the virus. The face masks were not meant to keep the mouths of people shut so that they could not speak. With or without the masks, people can still speak. Phrases such as ‘my wife used to put on her mask always to keep her mouth shut,’ ‘let us call it a blessing’ provides us with clue to draw the inference that **women’s talk is troublesome**. The comedian seems to be suggesting that the wearing of the face mask is one way to control the behaviour of women and cause them to be silent.

The comedian has employed negative characterization in this utterance. He has used phrases such as “to keep her mouth shut” and “always” to portray a negative image of the behaviour of his wife (to suggest that she is talkative or nagging). Furthermore, the comedian juxtaposes the Covid-19 pandemic as “blessing” with his wife’s behaviour which is described in negative terms to reinforce the notion that the wife’s silence, which is achieved by wearing a face mask, is a positive outcome. This suggests a desire for the husband to control the behaviour of his wife thereby perpetuating the long held traditional gender roles where women are required to play a submissive role and comply with the demands of their husbands.

The utterance reinforces the long held superficial gender stereotype that women are excessively talkative and loquacious compared to men (Parkins, 2012) and wearing a mask is considered a useful way to hinder their ability to talk. This stereotype is not based on any empirical data. The relation between gender and the quantity of talk is amply relative, and is conditioned by a plurality of social parameters which are usually culture specific. Parkins (2012) further states that there is a stereotype in

many societies that, compared to other gender, women tend to be more emotionally expressive. The belief of female talkativeness is deeply ingrained in most cultures, although some studies provide evidence to the contrary (Holmes 2022; Talbot 1998).

#### **4.3.1.3.7 Women as Reckless**

In some routines of stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show*, messages such as women are reckless especially when it comes to relationship with men are subtly conveyed. Women are portrayed as not cautious when they engage in sexual intercourse with men and that is why they quickly conceive. The following datum illustrates this sexist inference.

***Datum 41.** “Men, have you realized that most of these ugly madams and house girl are very fertile. (Laughter). Date a slay queen for ten years, twenty years, or even thirty years she will never get pregnant but touch your house girl once. In fact, don’t even kiss her just shake her hand and she will say I am nine months pregnant. (Laughter)” (Comedian O, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

The comedian equates women’s fertility with perceived attractiveness (“most ugly women and house girls are very fertile”). The language employed by the comedian in the above utterance reveals a stereotype concerning the behaviour of women and their attitudes towards sex. The comedian seems to be suggesting that those women who do not fit the prescribed beauty standards of society are sexually careless or they have no control over their reproductive choices. Therefore, we can draw the sexist inference that the **fertility of women is determined by their perceived attractiveness or social status.**

The language use by the comedian in the above utterance reflects the aspect of power dynamics and control which men have over the bodies of women and their reproductive choices. The comedian compares slay queens to house girls. This comparison reflects societal hierarchy that is based on social status whereby those women who conform to prescribed beauty standards (slay queens) are perceived as responsible and less fertile while those who are ranked lower in the socio-economic ladder (house girls) are more fertile and irresponsible. This comparison promotes inequality and reinforces the notion that the value of women is pegged on their ability to get pregnant, instead of their freedom over their own bodies.

The comedian normalizes misogyny through the derogatory and judgmental manner he frames the reproductivity of women. He suggests that certain groups of women are more likely to become pregnant through casual contact than others. This is a mechanism of reducing the reproductive independence of women. This utterance has the potential to contribute to a culture where the victim is blamed.

When stereotypes about the reproduction by women and their sexuality are promoted through utterances such as the one above, they can create huge global effects in terms of the rights of women and gender relations. Utterances that present women as careless or irresponsible as far as sexual matters are concerned are bound to promote certain behaviours and attitudes that not only foster gender-based violence but also promote reproductive coercion and discrimination against women. Moreover, efforts to promote equality between men and women are undermined therefore limiting certain kind of opportunities and rights to women.

The stand –up comedian has generalized that all ugly madams and house girls are very fertile (that is, easy to conceive because they are not careful) which is not

always the case. Secondly, ugliness is a relative quality. There is a common saying that beauty is in the eyes of the beholder, implying that beauty is subjective. Someone may be ugly to one but beautiful to another. There is no evidence that has proven that a woman can become pregnant by merely being kissed and touched. The comedian employed overstatement to drive home the point that any man who engages in sexual intercourse with these kinds of women, pregnancy can accidentally occur because these women are not cautious during sex. There is a negative stereotypical belief that ugly women do not have demand from men. So, they will be willing to get impregnated quickly in order to trap a man into marriage. Slay queens, on the other hand, know that they are good looking hence in high demand from men. They will not like to get pregnant because they might get rich men who deserve them. House girls and ugly women do not have control over their sexuality due to their insecurities and therefore they are willing to give in to men's sexual demands to win their love.

The utterance is sexist on the basis that it brings attention to body shaming and negative devaluation of women's bodies. By calling women ugly, the comedian has employed negative body talk and shaming of women for how they look and these are ways of imposing patriarchal bodily control over women. The utterance socially stratifies women based on looks. It artificially places women into greater and lesser power strata based on physical appearance. Different women have different body shapes, sizes and appearances. Imposing a standard whose sole purpose is to appeal to men's desire is demeaning and dehumanizing for women. It also makes them (women) feel insecure about their own body. Though jokes about body shapes and appearances are predominantly offensive for women, many people find them funny

because they exhibit their superiority (Woodzicka, 2015). The women in the above humour are identified as ugly thus less powerful at that level than the more beautiful ones. This joke is an instance of how society depicts women who do not fit the social standards of beauty.

#### **4.3.1.3.8 Women as Incompetent Drivers**

Gender stereotypes exist because of social patterns in our societies. They are traits and characteristics associated with either male or female gender within a given culture (Mills, 2008). For decades, women have often been thought of as poor drivers (Chateignier et al., 2011) and have also been described as incompetent, unsure, hesitant, less skillful, and overcautious behind the wheel ( Clarsen, 2008; Lezotte, 2019). This stereotype is reinforced in many discourses in Kenya such as in routines on *The Churchill Show* whereby individuals perpetuate the belief that men are better drivers than women. The stereotype is not only incorrect but is also not based on data. This stereotype was created because of the small percentage of women working with vehicles and to keep women reliant on men. Women drivers have been negatively stereotyped on *The Churchill Show* as the following datum illustrates.

**Datum 42.** *Ladies wa Nairobi wanapenda gari za Demio na unawaona kwa jam na... hazina tint. (He imitates the way they drive putting on airs while touching their hair and eyes). Wakisukumwa nje ya barabara...wakijaribu kurudi kwa barabara, wanasukumwa tena mpaka nje halafu wanaenda wanaingia kwa mtaro mahali wanashindwa kuzitoa coz zimebalance kwa pavement. (Laughter)... wanaanza kupigia boyfriends wao wawazaidie “hi beb, can you imagine I have had an accident? (Laughter). (Comedian M, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

(Ladies of Nairobi love Demio vehicles and you will see them in jam...and they are untinted (Imitates the way they drive putting on airs while touching on their eyes and hairs). When they are pushed out of the road ... they attempt to come to the road but they are pushed back again to the outside and they land in a ditch where they fail to get out because they have balanced in a pavement. (Laughter). They begin to call their boyfriends for help, “Hi babe, can you imagine I have had an accident? (Laughter)).

The above utterance portrays how ladies in Nairobi are professionally incompetent drivers on the roads. The comedian mentions how proud they are when they are driving. Also, he shows how they are not keen and focused when driving because they are always distracted by touching their hair and eyes. This can lead to an accident. The comedian says that the woman driver cannot bring the vehicle out of the ditch to the road and that she has to call her boyfriend for help. All these are clues provided to us to infer that **women are incompetent drivers**. It can be argued that because the above utterance presents women drivers as incompetent, it places them in a subordinate role compared to men. Therefore, traditional gender norms where men are projected as more competent than women are reinforced. Furthermore, unequal power dynamics between men and women plays in the utterance. The traditional gender norm where women are portrayed as depended on men for assistance in male- dominated domains such as driving is reinforced.

The above utterance reinforces traditional gender roles and expectations within relationships because it depicts women drivers as reliant on their boyfriends for assistance whenever their cars get stuck. There is an underlying assumption in the utterance that whenever women find themselves in a problem they should ask men to

help and support them. From Fairclough's CDA framework, this utterance reinforces the notion of the dominance of men societal structures, highlighting how language reflects and perpetuates power relations. Fairclough's (2001) concept of the dialectical relationship between discourse and social practice illustrates that such portrayals contribute to the normalization of gender inequalities, suggesting that women should depend on men, thereby sustaining patriarchal ideologies.

The comedian's utterance of presenting women as incompetent drivers aligns with the broader gendered ideologies where women are stereotyped as less skilled or incapable in particular domains such as driving compared to their male counterparts. This has the potential of reinforcing gender norms where specific roles and behaviours for men and women are prescribed.

In many societies, female drivers are the target of criticism on the way they drive, with men claiming superiority in this domain (Crawford, 2000). The above utterance reflects this belief in male superiority. The comedian in the above utterance describes the woman's driving behaviour as 'deviant' from the 'normal', accepted rules of driving. The experience of female drivers mirrors women's position. In many societies, women who drive are still confined to gender based patriarchal norms that discriminate against women and practices that hinder them from exercising the same right as men in social life (Chappell & Waylen, 2013). When women step into public domains previously dominated by men, stereotypes based on conventional gender role may follow (Muyangi & Zhifan, 2020).

The utterance devalues the professional driving abilities of women. The fact that women are shown to be incompetent drivers means that they are inferior to men. They cannot effectively participate in the public domain. By demeaning women's personal and professional driving abilities, the above sexist humour supports a patriarchal culture that continues to oppress and subordinate women (Wesely, 2002). The utterance is implicitly encouraging the confining of women to the domestic private sphere (for example, home) by mocking their attempts to venture outside the space assigned to them by the society. In Kenyan society, men have stereotypically been believed to belong to the public sphere (Ndonye, 2015).

#### **4.3.1.3.9 Women as Emotionally Jealous**

Jealousy is defined as an emotional state that occurs in response to a perceived threat to a social relationship (Buss & Haselton, 2005). When a perceived or real threat occurs, people respond in a way that counteracts the threat in order to protect the relationship. Emotional Jealousy in intimate relationship occurs in response to emotional involvement with another person. Although both men and women experience emotional jealousy, in the selected *Churchill show* routines, only women were depicted as emotionally jealousy. The following utterance exemplifies this.

**Datum 43.** ... *my husband left his phone behind and I tried to check it. I saw the name "Corona" and out of curiosity, I decided to call to establish which lady she was. To my surprise, it was my phone that rang! (Laughter) (Comedian A, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

In the above text, the wife becomes emotionally alarmed when she discovers a lady's name saved in her husband's phone. She is determined to know her identity. Her

emotional reaction makes us draw the inference that **women are emotionally jealousy**. The use of the possessive pronoun such as “my husband” suggests a possessive attitude towards the husband. This implies a jealous nature, which is often stereotypically associated with women in relationships. Moreover, the phrase “when I checked it” suggests a level of suspicion or distrust, as the wife felt the need to inspect her husband’s phone. This could suggest an underlying assumption of infidelity further reinforcing the stereotype of women being jealous in relationships. Furthermore, the surprise expressed by the wife upon discovering that “Corona” was her own phone ringing indicates a preconceived expectation that the name belonged to another woman. This expectation could stem from societal stereotypes that portray women as more likely to be involved in romantic interactions with married men, thus fueling jealousy or insecurity.

One of the tenets of Fairclough’s approach to CDA is power and ideology. Fairclough posits that language is an important medium for establishing and perpetuating power relations within society. This tenet emphasizes how discourse shapes and reflects societal ideologies, thereby influencing perceptions and behaviours of individuals. From this perspective, the discourse in the utterance illustrates underlying power dynamics and societal ideologies that shape perceptions of gender. The inference of women being emotionally jealous reflects and reinforces beliefs that position women as inherently possessive in relationships. Such representations reflect the broader societal assumption that women are more likely to exhibit jealous and dependence on men for emotional validation.

#### 4.3.1.4 Intellectual and Emotional Stereotypes

There are stereotypes related to women's intellectual capabilities and emotional characteristics. It includes beliefs that women are ignorant or lacking in intelligence and that they are mysterious, incomprehensible, and irrational, perpetuating the idea that women are less rational or logical than men.

##### 4.3.1.4.1 Women as Complicated

According to Benokraitis and Feagin (1999), in many societies, there is an ideological belief that tends to generalize that women are complicated and hard to understand. This is a cultural stereotype that shapes and distorts how we perceive and interpret the behaviour of women. Just like men, women are individuals with unique personalities, and experiences. Attempting to generalize the complexities of an entire gender oversimplifies their rich diversity. The following datum illustrates the above inference.

**Datum 44.** *I don't understand women... Man has produced engineers, doctors and we can do and understand many things like physics and chemistry but we cannot understand women. Even women cannot understand themselves. (Laughter). (Comedian Y, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

In the above text, the comedian uses the phrase "women cannot understand themselves" to reinforce the stereotype that women are absurd. From the utterance, we draw the inference that **women are inherently complicated**. The utterance is sexist because the comedian has generalized to all women as if he has interacted with all women and concluded that they can neither be understood nor understand themselves. By reducing women to simplistic beings, the utterance reinforces gender

stereotypes and reduces the complexity of women.. Women have diverse individual experiences, therefore, we cannot lump them under a single classification. This sweeping universal claim by the comedian (“even women cannot understand themselves”) shows the lack of understanding of women by the comedian. The comedian reinforces and perpetuates the stereotype that the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of women are complicated compared to men. From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, this utterance is meant to portray women as inferior to men. According to Mills (2008), our lives are regulated by set patterns for appropriate behaviour and networks of meanings that are set by societies we live in. The knowledge we acquire depends on the social environment we inhabit. This knowledge is verbalized during the communication process.

Fairclough (2001) advocates for a critical analysis of discourse to uncover hidden ideologies, challenge dominant gender norms, and address power imbalances. One of the tenets of Fairclough’ model of CDA is power and ideology. There are underlying broader power dynamics and ideologies in the above utterance. By portraying women as complicated, the utterance serves to disempower and marginalize women while at the same time promoting male dominance and hegemony. Consequently, this reinforces and perpetuates a patriarchal perspective where men are positioned as straightforward while women are shown to be complicated. This further serves to justify the unequal treatment and discrimination against women. The following datum also portrays women as complicated.

**Datum 45.** *Ladies wa Kiambu wanajaribungu kuongea Kizungu sana... eti “Hi guys from salon!” na ako ndani ya salon already.( Laughter). In fact wanaita salon, saloon... (Laughter). Halafu wanasema, “actually mi nilikua nataka that hairstyle ya Chebesh. Anaingia kwa drier anachomwa kichwa for three hours...anatoka hapo*

*amejam na ile joto anasikia kwa kichwa anashinda akiuliza watu “do I look hot?”*  
(Comedian M, November, 2023, Churchill Show).

(Kiambu ladies try to speak English a lot... that, “Hi guys from salon!” (Parodies a mixture of English and kikuyu accent) and yet she is in the salon already. (Laughter). In fact, they call salon saloon... (Laughter). Then they say, “actually, I wanted that hairstyle of Chebesh (a mispronunciation of the name “Shebesh”). She enters a drier and her hair is dried for three hours... she gets out of the salon so angry. With the heat she is feeling on her head, she keeps on asking people “do I look hot? (Laughter)).

The comedian in the above text has used phrases to parody how Kiambu women behave within the salon setting. He says that Kiambu women say “*Hi guys from salon,*” “*Hi guys of saloon!*” and “*Actually, I wanted that hairstyle that one of Chebesh.*” These expressions are not perfect English. Therefore, through these expressions, we can draw the sexist inference that women (especially those from Kiambu) are irrational in their behaviour. This inference promotes the sexist stereotype that women are irrational. This is a belief that undermines not only the autonomy but also the capability of women.

Critical analysis of a text involves questioning and challenging underlying assumptions and power dynamics embedded within the language used. The analyst must reflect how language can be used to promote gender inequality and discrimination within society. While the comedian criticizes women from Kiambu for their irrational conduct in the salon setting, we do not see similar criticism leveled on men’s behaviour or societal norms that are likely to contribute to the actions of women. From CDA perspective, the utterance seems to be promoting social stereotypes about Kiambu women. The women are presented as irrational by

virtual of the geographical region they come from and their cultural background. The utterance falls under general sexist joke because the speaker has lumped all women from Kiambu under one classification (they are irrational and non-sensical) as if they do not have their own individual identities. The following utterance also presents women as irrational and incomprehensible.

**Datum 46.** *Women are complicated... if you decide to understand women, you will never understand them. God created both man and woman and put eye brows on both of them but only a woman realized she does not need them and she shaved them. (Laughter). Women were walking in the Garden of Eden without eye brows. They realized nobody can notice their faces and the back of their head so, they decided to return the eye brows but now they are not accurate like the way God put them. (Comedian O, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

The comedian says that at one point, women had eyebrows which they later shaved. But when they realized they were not getting attention from people, they returned them. We can therefore infer that **women are complicated**. The label of ‘complicated woman’ is a cultural stereotype that shapes and distorts how we perceive and interpret women’s behaviour. It suggests that women’s thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are unpredictable and inherently confusing, which undermines their independence.

The above humour is a baseless generalization. Women have individuality and diversity just like men (Mills, 2008). They are individuals with unique personalities, experiences, and perspectives. Attempting to generalize the complexities of an entire gender oversimplifies their rich diversity. It is true that women shape their eye brows

to look attractive but the practice did not start in the biblical Garden of Eden. The utterance is constructed from an androcentric perspective (that is, from a male perspective) to demean and portray women as inferior to men. The utterance has employed satire to disparage women by showing how irrational and mysterious they are. The utterance suggests that men have the authority to define and judge women's behaviour thereby, reinforcing patriarchal structures that prioritize male knowledge and understanding over those of women.

Societal norms and expectations place a considerable burden on women, contributing to the perception of complexity. Women often juggle multiple roles and face unrealistic standards of beauty, behaviour, and success. Women often wrestle with conflicting needs, roles, and priorities that men don't face to the same extent. For example, women are expected to balance being nurturing caregivers with being ambitious professionals, among others. What seems like indecisiveness or mixed signals may simply reflect the complexity of navigating these contradictory societal demands.

#### **4.3.1.4.2 Women as Lacking in Intelligence**

There are all kinds of generalized assumptions about women in our societies (Hoffman, 2015). For instance, women have traditionally been described by a common stereotype that they lack intelligence. Since women are still marginalized and treated as inferior in many societies, it is not unusual for them to be stereotyped in humour utterances as ignorant. The media such as *The Churchill Show* have created an environment in which women are bullied and harassed through

reinforcing traditional feminine stereotypes. Some of the language used contains pejorative stereotypes such as women are ignorant as the following datum illustrates.

**Datum 47.** *Kenyan women respond very well to compliments... In my village, Ombokoro in Uganda, if you tell a girl that she is beautiful she will ask you who told you (Laughter). They are the kind of girls you tell I love your hair and they ask which one. (Laughter) (Comedian S, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

The comedian mentions that women from the village of Ombokoro cannot understand a compliment about how they look in a straightforward manner; instead they question who told the speaker or asking about specific details such as which hair is being complimented. This reinforces a stereotype that women are unintelligent. The inference that **women are lacking in intelligence** could be drawn from the above humorous utterance. The comedian portrays women from Ombokoro as people who cannot understand basic social interactions. This portrayal perpetuates the negative stereotype mentioned above of women's intellectual inferiority. Fairclough (2001) emphasizes that language practices, including the choice of words, framing of issues, and representation of social groups, can contribute to marginalization. By presenting women from Ombokoro village as unable to comprehend basic and simple ideas such as compliments, the comedian is positioning them as inferior while the Kenyan women are positioned as superior.

The negative stereotype of women's intellectual inferiority can have adverse effects both on women's self image and their confidence. When we constantly represent women as unintelligent or ignorant, the beliefs about their abilities and potential are likely to be affected. They will begin to doubt themselves; their self-esteem will

begin to decline, and also they will internalize oppression. This will further perpetuate and reinforce the cycle of marginalization and disempowerment.

#### **4.3.2. Sexist Inferences on Men**

Men were also targeted with sexist humour. From the data collected, a number of sexist inferences on men were drawn as illustrated below.

##### **4.3.2.1 Gendered Relationships and Sexuality**

This pertains to stereotypes and attitudes about gendered relationships and sexuality. It includes beliefs about men as hypersexual, as well as perceptions of men as untrustworthy or fearful of committing themselves in relationships. Additionally, it encompasses the notion that men are a source of disturbance or disruption to women, and reinforces traditional gender roles in relationships where men are expected to be dominant or controlling.

###### **4.3.2.1.1 Men as a Source of Disturbance to Women**

Gender roles are modes of behaviours of men and women that are considered appropriate. Traditional gender roles often assign women the responsibility of managing the household and caring for children, while men are viewed as holding authority in most public spheres of life. This brings to light the division of roles within the society. Many women regard their homes as their domain, and any challenge to this perceived authority is typically met with resistance, as the following text demonstrates.

**Datum 48.** *Nakumbuka wakati wa COVID-19 tukiwa nyumbani wakati wowote mke wangu alipokuwa anapita mbele yangu alikuwa anasema, “Mungu tuokoe na hili*

*janga. (Laughter). Sikuelewa ni mimi au Korona alikuwa anamaanisha (Comedian S, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

(I remember when we were at home during COVID-19 pandemic, any time my wife would pass in front of me, she used to say “God rescue us from this plague. (Laughter). I did not understand whether she meant me or the COVID-19).

The comedian says that his wife used to mention the term ‘plague’ every moment she passed in front of her husband. Therefore, we can infer that the metaphorical meaning (men are a source of disturbance) is what she meant. From the utterance, we can draw the inference that **men are a source of disturbance**.

When Kenya implemented lockdown measures during the COVID-19 pandemic, families found themselves spending extended hours together, with the government encouraging remote work wherever possible. This unusual situation led to feelings of frustration and unease among wives, who expressed that their sense of freedom was restricted by the constant presence of their husbands at home. Many women view the home as their domain, and any perceived intrusion into this space is often unwelcome. This highlights the societal roles and expectations, where men are commonly seen as dominant in the public sphere, while domestic responsibilities are traditionally assigned to women. It is men who are the butt of the sexist humour in the text above.

#### **4.3.2.1.2 Men as Lacking Trustworthiness and Commitment in Relationships**

In some routines of stand-up comedians in Churchill show, men are depicted as individuals who are not committed in heterosexual relationships. They are portrayed as only interested in having sexual intercourse with women and once they get

women pregnant they ran away to avoid being held responsible as the following datum illustrates.

**Datum 49.** ... *niko na bwana lakini si Maasai. Nyinyi wanaume waMaasai vile mnapenda kuruka sana si mtanipea boli halafu mruke hiyo story? (Laughter).* (Comedian A, November, 2023, Churchill Show).

(...I have a husband but he is not a Maasai. You Maasai men the way you love jumping up will you not impregnate me and then deny responsibility? (Laughter)).

The comedian uses a Swahili euphemism term 'boli' to refer to pregnancy. She also uses Swahili phrase 'mruke hiyo story' to mean deny responsibility for the pregnancy. She says that she cannot get married to a man from the Maasai ethnic community because he can impregnate her and refuse to take responsibility. Therefore, we can draw the inference that **Maasai men lack trustworthiness and commitment in relationships**. This negative stereotype is a devaluation and stigmatization of Maasai men. She (the comedian) seems to suggest that they (Maasai men) only love to engage in casual sex with women without taking into consideration the consequences of their actions. They are more likely to abandon their partners after they have made them pregnant.

The mention of the husband not being Maasai suggests a comparison between Maasai men and the husband of the comedian, implying that Maasai men possess negative traits such as untrustworthiness and lack of commitment. The comedian has presented Maasai men as a distinct group therefore implying a generalization about the behaviour and characteristics of individuals belonging to this ethnic group.

Discourse is not neutral but rather embedded within power structures. Marginalization occurs when certain groups or individuals are systematically

disadvantaged, excluded, or silenced within discourse due to unequal power relations (Fairclough, 2001). From a CDA perspective, the above utterance is rooted in ideologies that perpetuate stereotypes and prejudices against marginalized groups, in this case, Maasai men. It reinforces the ideology that certain ethnic groups possess negative traits such as untrustworthiness while others are depicted as more desirable and virtuous. This reduction of individuals to a stereotype based on ethnicity perpetuates negative biases. The statement *you may impregnate me and fail to take responsibility* suggests that Maasai men are unwilling to fulfill their obligations, reinforcing negative stereotype about their character and behaviour.

#### **4.3.2.1.3 Men as Hypersexual**

The stereotype that we have in our society, there is a prevalent stereotype that men are constantly in the mood for sex. Men are stereotypically painted as hyper-sexual beings with insatiable sex drives; always ready to initiate and engage in sexual activity. However, multiple studies indicate that the sexual levels of men and women are more similar than different (Mills, 2008). Therefore, the widespread belief that only men possess high sex drive is not only an oversimplified but also a misconception. The following datum collected from *The Churchill Show* illustrates this stereotyping of men.

**Datum 50.** *Men are confused elements. To know how confused they are, they work hard and get money to marry fine looking girls like these madams over here. The same men will go and cheat on their beautiful girls with ugly madams. (Laughter). (Comedian O, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

The comedian in depicting men uses phrases like “men are confused elements” and “they cheat on their beautiful wives.” This serves to portray men as individuals who are driven by impulses and confusion. This humour suggests that men lack control over their actions. The utterance also reinforces the stereotype that men are primarily guided by sexual desires. By suggesting that men’s behaviour is dictated by their sexual desires, we can draw the sexist inference that **men are hypersexual.**

The use of the term “men” in a broad sweeping manner without acknowledgement of individual differences contributes to the stereotyping of all men as sharing these characteristics. This generalization reinforces the perception that hyper sexuality is a universal trait among men rather than a complex and varied aspect of human behaviour. One of the tenets of Fairclough’s approach to CDA is social representation, which examines how particular social groups are portrayed and the implications of such representations. From this perspective, the above utterance reinforces ideologies that perpetuate sexist attitudes and behaviour. It bolsters the patriarchal belief that men are inherently more sexually driven and unfaithful, while women are valued primarily for their physical attractiveness and ability to fulfill the desires of men. This ideology of patriarchy serves to justify the infidelity of men while at the same time objectifying and devaluing women.

The physical description of the women that married men cheat with as ugly is also sexist because it negatively devalues women’s worth by evaluating them on the basis of a given social beauty standard. According to Jeffereys (2005), beauty standards and practices are vehicles for the oppression of women. They signal women’s inferior status and identify their differences from men, shift social awareness from women’s competencies to superficial aspects of their appearance, undermining

women's self-confidence, and reducing them to sex objects. The woman is identified as ugly thus less powerful at that level than the more beautiful women. The comedian refers to women as "beautiful wives" and "ugly women." This kind of discourse reduces women's worth to their physical appearance thereby objectifying women and disregarding other qualities and attributes which they might possess.

The next section is based on objective three of determining sexist implicatures that manifest as a result of flouting conversation maxims on *The Churchill Show* comedic utterances.

#### **4.4 Flouting of Maxims on the Churchill Show**

This section provides a discussion on conversational maxims flouting by selected stand up comedians on *The Churchill Show* on TV47 to generate sexist implicatures. This section sought to achieve objective three of the study. The objective sought to determine how humour can subtly convey gender biases through flouting of conversational maxims. The study utilized Grice's Conversational Implicature theory and Fairclough's (2001) sociocultural approach to CDA to delve into these implicit meanings and their societal consequences.

According to Grice (1975), in any communicative discourse, the intended message of the speaker is divided into two parts: what one says and what is implied by the utterances. One tries to comprehend the intended meaning of the speaker through inferencing guided by the Cooperative Principle that states: 'Make your conversational contribution such as required, at the level at which it appears by the accepted reason or direction of the exchange you are engaged' (Grice, 1989:26). The Cooperative Principle is made up of four maxims: Maxim of quantity, maxim of

quality, maxim of relation, and maxim of manner. Grice further argues that utterances have deeper meanings, especially, when it comes to flouting maxims, forcing interactants to draw implicatures. Flouting occurs when speakers blatantly fail to observe a maxim. Their intention is not to mislead the listeners but to deliver their implicit meaning that is different from the expressed or the surface meaning. This in turn gives rise to the creation of new additional, hidden meanings.

Data collection involved capturing live utterances from *The Churchill Show*, focusing on instances where comedians deviated from conversational norms to convey sexist messages. Conversational Violation Test (CVT) was used to test maxim violation. The selection criteria prioritized identifying segments that intentionally violated the conversational maxims, leading to implicit gender biases. The data was systematic coding and categorization to analyze the instances of flouted conversational maxims and the resultant sexist implicatures. Each segment was coded based on the specific conversational maxim that was breached and the corresponding gender bias implied. Categorizing the data facilitated a structured analysis of how conversational norms contribute to implicit gender bias in humour. The table below provides a comprehensive coding scheme illustrating the various types of flouting conversational maxims observed in comedic performances, as analyzed in relation to objective 3:

**Table 4.3: Coding of Flouting Conversational Maxims in Comedic Utterances**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Code Definition</b>	<b>Example of Utterances</b>
Flouting of quantity	Violating the maxim of quantity by giving excessive or insufficient information	<p>“<i>Chenye mwanamke anahitaji ni mwanaume mmoja mwenye atamtimizia mahitaji yake yote lakini mwanaume anahitaji kila mwanamke ili wamtimizie hataji lake moja. (laughter)</i>” (Comedian O, November, 2023, <i>The Churchill Show</i>).</p> <p>(What a woman need is one man who can meet all her needs but a man needs every woman so that they meet his one need. (Laughter))</p>
Flouting of quality	Providing false or misleading information	<p>“<i>Men, have you realized that most of these ugly madams and house girl are very fertile? (Laughter). Date a slay queen for ten years, twenty years, or even thirty years she will never get pregnant but touch your house girl once. In fact, don’t even kiss her just shake her hand and she will say I am nine months pregnant. (Laughter)</i>” (Comedian O, November, 2023, <i>The Churchill Show</i>).</p>
Flouting of relation	Making unrelated or digressive remarks	<p>“<i>Women are complicated... if you decide to understand women, you will never understand them. God created both man and woman and put eye brows on both of them but only a woman realized she does not need them and she shaved them. (Laughter). Women were walking in the Garden of Eden without eye brows. They realized nobody can notice their faces and the back of their head so, they decided to return the eye brows but now they are not accurate like the way God put them.</i>” (Comedian O, November, 2023, <i>The Churchill Show</i>).</p>
Flouting of manner	Using ambiguous or unclear language	<p>“<i>Nakumbuka wakati wa Covid-19 tukiwa nyumbani wakati wowote mke wangu alipokuwa anapita mbele yangu alikuwa anasema, “Mungu tuokoe na hili janga. ( Laughter). Sikuelewa ni mimi au Korona alikuwa anamaanisha.”</i> (Comedian S, November, 2023, <i>The Churchill Show</i>).</p> <p>(I remember when we were at home during Covid-19 pandemic, any time my wife would pass in front of me, she used</p>

Code	Code Definition	to say “Jesus rescue us from this plague. <b>Example of Utterances</b>
		(Laughter). I did not understand whether she meant me or the Covid-19).

The table above provides three sets of information:

1. **Code:** This represents the name of each code or category related to flouting conversational maxims.
2. **Code Definition:** This provides a brief explanation or definition of each code in the context of flouting conversational maxims.
3. **Examples of Utterances:** This includes examples of utterances or data samples that fall under each code, demonstrating how the code was applied in the analysis.

Data was analyzed by focusing on the consequences of flouting conversational maxims generating sexist implicatures. Through the theoretical frameworks utilized, the study explored how these maxim violations reinforced or challenged gender stereotypes, power dynamics and societal norms. Findings were critically examined by identifying instances where comedians deliberately flouted these maxims. The analysis revealed how such violations can convey implicit meanings related to sexism.

It was observed in the present study that there was flouting of all the four conversational maxims: quantity, quality, relation and manner. Among the 25 utterances analyzed, there was one utterance that had flouted both the maxim of quality (datum number 66) and relation (datum number 74).

#### 4.4.1 Flouting of Quantity Maxim

The maxim of quantity requires us to make our contributions as informative as is required for the current purpose of the exchange and not to make our contributions more informative than is required. According to Cutting (2002), there are two strategies that can be used to flout this maxim: giving too much or less information than what is required.

**Datum 51.** *Chenye mwanamke anahitaji ni mwanaume mmoja mwenye atamtimizia mahitaji yake yote lakini mwanaume anahitaji kila mwanamke ili wamtimizie hitaji lake moja. (laughter) (Comedian O, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

(What a woman need is one man who can meet all her needs but a man needs every woman so that they meet his one need (Laughter)).

The Maxim of quantity requires interlocutors to provide enough amount of information to make an effective contribution to the conversation. In the above humour, the statement concerning a man requiring “every woman to have his one need met” lacks specificity and context. The comedian does not clarify what this “one need” is or provide evidence to support the claim. Without sufficient elaboration or context, the statement appears exaggerated and unfounded hence violating **the maxim of quantity**. The comedian has used the word “need” which implies a sense of dependency, framing women as incomplete without a male partner, which can be seen as a form of linguistic coercion reinforcing gendered expectations. When someone says that a woman needs one man to meet all her needs, the implicature we can draw is that **women are dependent on men for fulfillment and that a woman’s worth is tied to her relationship with a man**. Fairclough (2001) discusses that discourse reflects and reproduces unequal power

relations between men and women. This includes power differentials in decision-making, access to resources, and social status within various contexts, such as relationships, workplaces, and public discourse. Fairclough's (2001) approach to CDA emphasizes that discourse is a means of enacting, reinforcing, and challenging power relations within society. One of the core tenets of his framework is that language both reflects and sustains social structures, ideologies, and inequalities particularly regarding power and dominance. The above excerpt by the comedian does more than entertain. It subtly reflects and reproduces patriarchal norms that position men as dominant and women as subordinate, thereby reinforcing unequal power relations in society.

Women for a long time have been stereotyped as depended on men to meet all their needs (Mills, 2008). Men are obligated to provide for their families (wives and children). The stereotype that men need many women while women need only one man to meet all their needs reflects traditional gender roles and patriarchal norms that prioritizes male sexual prowess and reinforce the idea of male dominance in relationships.

**Datum 52.** *Ladies, stop generalizing that all men are the same. Who told you to taste all of them? (Laughter). That energy you are focusing on all of them, can you manage one? Have you tasted me? (Laughter). (Comedian O, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

The comedian by saying "Who told you to taste all of them?" he is implying that women have tried every man, which is obviously untrue and goes beyond what is necessary for the conversation. This exaggeration violates the **maxim of quantity**. The sexist implicature we can draw from the above utterance is that **women's**

**interactions with men are based on their sexual experiences.** The humour perpetuates the objectification of women because women's experiences with men are reduced to their ability to "taste" individual men. Furthermore, the comedian employs dismissive language "stop generalizing" to invalidate the experiences of women. From a CDA point of view, the above humour reveals underlying power dynamics and ideologies regarding gender relations. It reflects patriarchal attitudes that prioritize men's perspectives and diminish women's experiences.

**Datum 53.** ... my husband left his phone behind and I tried to check it. I saw the name "Corona" and out of curiosity, I decided to call to establish which lady she was. To my surprise, it was my phone that rang! (Laughter) (Comedian A, November, 2023, *The Churchill Show*).

In the above utterance, the wife's decision to call the number saved as "Corona" without providing any explanation or context violates **the maxim of quantity**. By simply saying that she decided to call the number, she leaves room for interpretation and speculation regarding her intentions. Without clarity on why she wanted to make the call, the listeners may resort to making assumptions or filling in the gaps with their own assumptions, leading to potential misunderstandings. Providing additional clarification or context would have helped ensure that her message was understood correctly and prevented potential misunderstandings or misinterpretations. The husband's decision to save his wife's contact under the name 'Corona' suggests that he is using this name as a symbolic representation of his wife. By likening his wife to the Covid-19 causing virus, the husband is making a comparison that carries significant implications. The choice of 'Corona' may imply certain negative characteristics or behaviours that the husband associates with the wife, such as being

burdensome, disruptive, or problematic. Therefore, from this utterance we can draw **the sexist implicature that women are troublesome.**

When Covid-19 pandemic was reported globally, it brought trouble and annoyance in people's lives. People were expected to observe curfew hours and ministry of health protocols in order to fight the pandemic. By associating the wife with Corona, a term that has negative connotations, the comedian implicates that women are a source of trouble.

Language reflects and reinforces societal ideologies and representations (Fairclough, 2001). Ideology refers to the system of beliefs, values, and ideas that shape and influence discourse. Ideology encompasses broader social and cultural frameworks that underpin language use (Moody, 2013). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) aids in examining how language reflects ideology (Haider & Hussein, 2020) and shapes both identities and social relationships (Berger, 2016). The husband's choice of naming his wife after a virus can be analyzed in terms of the ideological implications it carries. It may reflect underlying beliefs or attitudes towards women as troublesome, disruptive, or problematic. The sexist implicature mentioned above is a dominant sexist ideology embedded in the Kenyan society and reflected through language use. This ideology has the potential of influencing how people perceive women.

CDA emphasizes the importance of analyzing discourse within its social, cultural, and historical contexts. In this scenario, the context of the COVID-19 pandemic adds layers of meaning to the husband's choice of name. The global crisis of Covid-19

shapes our perceptions of the virus and influence how we interpret the husband's use of the name "Corona."

The next section looks at utterances that flouted maxim of quality.

#### **4.4.2 Flouting of Quality Maxim**

This maxim is also called truthfulness maxim. It requires us not to say what we believe to be false and what we lack adequate evidence for. Flouting of this maxim is realized by saying things which are not true resulting in irony, satire, hyperbole and metaphor. This forces the audience to engage in the process of inference in order to get to the implicature and thus unravel the intended meaning of the humour. In humour that flout this maxim, the audience encounters a discrepancy between a description of the world that the speaker is apparently putting forward and the way things are.

**Datum 54.** *For a lady kukaa poa is not a joke... anaingizwa ndani kwa kipipa anachomwa kichwa na hapo ndio unaona mademu wanachomwa utosi. Kwanza wa Kiambu wanakuja salon wakiringa na unajua vile wanakuanga na miguu yao peke yao. Huku wako sawa kidogo (pointing to the front of the legs) imeshikana hapa kwa magoti halafu ikaachana hapo mbele lakini akigeuka huku nyuma (pointing to the butts) huku kuliama.(laughter) (Comedian M, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

(For a lady to be smart is not a joke... Her head is placed in a tank and the hair curled. That is when you see ladies' foreheads being burned. Kiambu women in particular come to the salon putting on airs and you know how they have their own unique legs. They are a bit okay here (pointing to the front of the legs) with the

knees in close contact then there is separation in front but when they turn their behind (pointing to the butt) is deserted. (Laughter)).

In the above utterance, the comedian makes unsubstantiated generalizations and stereotypes about ladies from Kiambu, particularly focusing on their physical appearance. By employing the conversational violation test, we can observe deliberate violation of Grice's maxim of quality that contributes to the humour. His statement suggests that ladies from Kiambu are not "smart." Moreover, by describing their physical attributes in a derogatory manner, he is implying that **women are inferior based on their body shape**. The assertions of the comedian lack evidence to back up his statements about Kiambu women. He has violated **the maxim of quality** by presenting unsubstantiated generalizations and stereotypes as if they were real observations. The comedian has also given a detailed and vivid description of how ladies from Kiambu behave and look like. He is too detailed and to maintain the attention of the audience he had to misrepresent some facts. For example, when ladies put their heads on driers in salons, their foreheads are not burned. It is also not true that ladies from Kiambu have unique legs which are not conforming to the standards of ideal looking. Their legs are not different from other women in other regions. Furthermore, he says that ladies from Kiambu do not have big butts, which is a baseless generalization.

The comedian seems to tie the worth of women to their physical appearance and specifically, their legs and butts. This suggests that women, especially those from Kiambu, are evaluated on the basis of their superficial attributes rather than on traits like intelligence and capabilities. One of the tenets of Fairclough's model of CDA is representation of social practices (Fairclough, 2001). The above text by the comedian reinforces the notion of the objectification of women by constructing their identity

primarily through their physical features. By framing women in this manner, the language of the comedian reflects and perpetuates societal norms that prioritize appearance over other qualities. This representation not only highlights how women are seen as objects of visual appraisal but also illustrates how language contributes to maintaining gendered power relations in society.

**Datum 55.** *Ladies wa Nairobi wanapenda gari za Demio na unawaona kwa jam na... hazina tint. (He imitates the way they drive putting on airs while touching their hair and eyes). Wakisukumwa nje ya barabara...wakijaribu kurudi kwa barabara, wanasukumwa tena mpaka nje halafu wanaenda wanaingia kwa mtaro mahali wanashindwa kuzitoa coz zimebalance kwa pavement. (Laughter)... wanaanza kupigia boyfriends wao wawazaidie “hi beb, can you imagine I have had an accident? (Laughter). (Comedian M, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

(Ladies in Nairobi love Demio vehicles and you will see them in jam...and they are untinted (Imitates the way they drive putting on airs while touching on their eyes and hairs). When they are pushed out of the road ... they attempt to come to the road but they are pushed back again to the outside and they land in a ditch where they fail to get out because they have balanced in a pavement. (Laughter). They begin to call their boyfriends for help, “Hi babe, can you imagine I have had an accident? (Laughter)).

In this datum, the comedian has flouted **the maxim of quality** by making sweeping generalizations and stereotypes about “ladies in Nairobi” and their behaviour while they are driving, which may not accurately represent all women in Nairobi and their driving habits. The fact that the woman driver cannot bring the vehicle out of the

ditch to the road and that she has to call her boyfriend for help implicates that **women are inferior drivers**. The utterance suggests that they have to depend on men for help thereby reinforcing traditional gender roles and perpetuating unequal power dynamics between men and women.

Negative devaluation of women particularly in driving ability is often examined as part of the broader investigation into how language and discourse perpetuate and reinforce gender inequalities. The above utterance from a CDA perspective marginalizes and portrays women negatively as inferior with the aim of maintaining and reinforcing male hegemony in driving. The utterance devalues women's professional driving abilities. The fact that women are shown to be incompetent drivers means that they are inferior to men. They cannot effectively participate in the public domain such as driving. By demeaning women's personal and professional driving abilities, the above sexist humour supports a patriarchal culture that continues to oppress and subordinate women (Wesely, 2002). The utterance is implicitly encouraging the confining of women to the domestic sphere (e.g. home) by mocking their attempts to venture outside the space assigned to them by the society. In Kenyan society, men have stereotypically been believed to belong to the public sphere.

According to Wodak and Mayer (2009), Critical discourse Analysis focuses on inequality and injustice in society, reveals the ideology and power behind language, and strives to improve it. CDA not only focuses on analysis, but also focuses on criticism, by analyzing the language forms in the text to reveal the relationship among implied languages, power and ideologies and how the ruling class uses

language to exercise ideological control and maintain their position of power. In many societies, female drivers are the target of criticism on the way they drive, with men claiming superiority in this domain (Crawford, 2000). The above utterance reflects this belief in male superiority. The comedian describes the woman's driving behaviour as 'deviant' from the 'normal', accepted rules of driving. Female drivers' experience mirrors women's position in many societies where women who drive are still confined to gender based patriarchal norms that discriminate against them and practices that hinder them from exercising the same right as men in social life (Chappell & Waylen, 2013). When women step into public domains previously dominated by men, stereotypes based on conventional gender role may follow (Muyangi & Zhifan, 2020).

**Datum 56.** *Ladies wa Kiambu wanajaribungu kuongea Kizungu sana... eti “Hi guys from salon!” na ako ndani ya salon already. (Laughter). In fact wanaita salon, saloon... (Laughter). Halafu wanasema, “actually mi nilikua nataka that hairstyle ya Chebesh.” Anaingia kwa drier anachomwa kichwa for three hours...anatoka hapo amejam na ile joto anasikia kwa kichwa anashinda akiuliza watu “do I look hot? (Comedian M, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

(Kiambu ladies try to speak English a lot... that, “Hi guys from salon!” (Parodies a mixture of English and kikuyu accent) and yet she is in the salon already. (Laughter). In fact, they call salon saloon... (Laughter). Then they say, “actually, I wanted that hairstyle of Chebesh (a mispronunciation of the name “Shebesh”). She enters a drier and her hair is dried for three hours... she gets out of the salon so angry. With the heat she is feeling on her head, she keeps on asking people “do I look hot? (Laughter)).

In the above humour, the comedian makes derogatory remarks and negative generalizations concerning women from Kiambu without giving evidence or context to back-up the assertions. The utterance presents unfounded stereotypes about the behaviour of women from Kiambu within a salon setting and their language proficiency. The utterance lacks truthfulness and accuracy therefore, a flouting of **the maxim of quality**. Someone who speaks English within the Kenyan context is considered educated and sophisticated compared to the one who speaks a vernacular language. The fact that women from Kiambu cannot speak any other language but English when they come to the salon is an indication that they are trying to show off that they are learned. We can draw the **sexist implicature that women from Kiambu are proud**. The utterance falls under general sexist joke because the speaker has lumped all Kiambu women under one classification (they are proud) as if they are a monolithic entity.

Critical Analysis encourages questioning and challenging underlying assumptions and power dynamics embedded within discourses. It prompts reflection on the ways language can be used to perpetuate inequality and discrimination in society. Whereas the comedian criticizes women from Kiambu for their behaviour in a salon setting, there is no equivalent criticism of men's behaviour or societal norms that may contribute to women's actions.

**Datum 57.** *Wasichana wakalenjin ni warembo na hakuna kitu kitamu kama kuo msichana Mkale. (laughter). In fact, msichana Mkale mrembo akikupenda huwa hawezi ngoja umtafute. Yeye atakutafuta na akukwamilie kama glue. (laughter).Unaona Chelagat amesimama kwa centre (puts hands akimbo to demonstrate how she stands) anangoja mzee yake. (Laughter) (Comedian W, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

(Kalenjin girls are beautiful and there is nothing sweet like marrying a Kalenjin girl. (Laughter). In fact, when a beautiful Kalenjin girl loves you she cannot wait for you to seduce her. She is the one who will seduce and stick to you like a glue. (Laughter). You will see Chelagat standing in a center (puts hands akimbo to demonstrate how she stands) waiting for her husband. (Laughter)).

In the above datum, the comedian makes a sweeping generalization concerning Kalenjin girls by saying that they are all beautiful and share common traits related to honesty and assertiveness in relationships. However, this assertion oversimplifies the complex and diverse nature of human behaviour and relationships. It is not all Kalenjin girls who will fit this description. Individuals within any cultural group have the ability to exhibit a wide range of characteristics, personalities and preferences. Therefore, the utterance above has flouted **the maxim of quality** by presenting information that is untrue, oversimplified and inaccurately portraying Kalenjin girls based on a generalized stereotype. The fact that beautiful Kalenjin girls are the ones who take the initiative to seduce men, the impicature of the comedian is that **Kalenjin women, based on their ethnicity and physical appearance, are expected to take on a submissive or aggressive role in romantic relationships.**

Discourse plays a role in reproducing and reinforcing ideologies that perpetuate stereotypes and prejudices (Fairclough, 2001). The above humour reveals underlying prejudices and reinforces stereotypes about Kalenjin girls in romantic relationships. The utterance has essentialized the behaviour of Kalenjin girls based not only on their ethnicity but also their physical appearance. The comedian has used language that objectifies women by diminishing their worth to the level of their physical

attractiveness and their ability to seduce men. The comedian has used the phrase “She cannot wait for you to seduce her” to suggest a one-sided dynamic where men are the active agents in pursuing and seducing women. This sort of framing can contribute to the objectification of women, reducing them to passive objects of male desire rather than autonomous individuals in romantic interactions.

According to Fiske (1993:30), “stereotyping exerts control or power over people, pressuring them to conform; therefore, stereotyping maintains the status quo.” Kalenjin women (particularly those who are physically attractive) are stereotyped in the above utterance as proactive and assertive in pursuing romantic relationships. The utterance suggests that Kalenjin women have departed from traditional gender roles where men are typically expected to take the lead in romantic seduction. They (Kalenjin women) are now willing to take charge of their own desires and actively engage in romantic pursuits. One of the tenets of CDA is that discourse constitutes society and culture. The stereotype that women are ‘hungry’ for men in relationships is constructed and perpetuated in societies (Mills, 2008). This stereotype often stems from the patriarchal attitudes that portray women as dependent on men for emotional fulfillment and validation. This stereotype is perpetuated through comedy routines on *The Churchill Show* to depict women as constantly seeking romantic partners and that women are incomplete without a male counterpart. This stereotype contributes to the objectification and dehumanization of women, reducing them to passive objects of male desire and reinforcing unequal power dynamics in relationships.

**Datum 58.** *Nilisikia stori ingine kua kuna jamaa alipigwa na mke wake na mwiko jikoni mpaka akaaga. Familia yake haikutaka watu wajue nini ilimuua (Comedian F, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

(I heard a certain story of a man who died after being hit by a cooking stick by his wife. (Laughter). His family did not want people to know what killed him).

In the above utterance, the stand-comedian has flouted **the quality maxim** by giving false information. Cooking sticks are typically seen as harmless household tools rather than potential weapons. Additionally, societal norms often portray women as gentle and non-threatening, particularly in comparison to the physical strength of men. In this context, men may downplay any fear to maintain a sense of masculinity. By using exaggeration, the comedian amplifies stereotypes that limit the roles of women to the domestic sphere, and more precisely, the kitchen. Through his choice of words the comedian **imply that women are violent and especially when their space is threatened.**

For many years, stereotypes have assigned women to the private sphere of the home, while men are seen as responsible for activities in the public domain (Crawford, 2000). The belief that women belong to the private sphere of kitchen is a discourse that reflects and reinforces traditional gender roles and expectations. In the above utterance, this belief is manifested whereby a cooking stick is associated with the woman. By mentioning that the husband was hit with a cooking stick by his wife, the comedian presupposes that the husband was in the wrong place that belongs to women. The utterance relegates women to the private sphere thus perpetuating the belief that kitchen is a place for women. The utterance seems to be suggesting that the husband was killed by his wife because the wife was annoyed by the intruding

husband. Discourse is ‘socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned. It constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997).

The above humour perpetuates the normalization of gender-based violence by suggesting that women may resort to violence when their perceived territory is threatened. This normalization of violence within the domestic sphere obscures the systematic inequalities and power imbalances that underlie such behaviour. It also undermines efforts to address and prevent gender-based violence by framing it as an inherent aspect of gender relations.

**Datum 59.** *Kenyan women respond very well to compliments... In my village, Ombokoro in Uganda, if you tell a girl that she is beautiful she will ask you who told you (Laughter). They are the kind of girls you tell I love your hair and they ask which one. (Laughter) (Comedian S, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

The comedian in the above utterance has made a generalized claim concerning women from Ombokoro village, stating that they respond dismissively and skeptically to compliments. The comedian has presented this claim as if it was a factual observation about the behaviour of women in that village. However, he lacks evidence to back up his claim. The text has flouted **the maxim of quality**. This flouting generates the implicature that **women are conditioned to doubt the authenticity of praise directed towards their appearance**.

The comedian has used the phrase “Kenyan women respond very well to compliments” to show that Kenyan women appreciate and positively acknowledge compliments. This highlights a cultural expectation about the receptiveness of Kenyan women to praise potentially indicating a cultural norm regarding interpersonal communication in Kenya.

The utterance perpetuates gender stereotypes and norms about women’s behaviour and communication patterns. It suggests that women are skeptical positioning them as passive recipients of compliments rather than active agents in social interactions. This has the potential of causing marginalization and disempowerment of women by contrasting their self expressions and self perception.

The following excerpt is also a case of the flouting of the maxim of quality.

***Datum 60.** “Men, have you realized that most of these ugly madams and house girl are very fertile? (Laughter). Date a slay queen for ten years, twenty years, or even thirty years she will never get pregnant but touch your house girl once. In fact, don’t even kiss her just shake her hand and she will say I am nine months pregnant. (Laughter)” (Comedian O, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

The comedian presents a stereotype about the fertility of women. He suggests that women who are perceived as “ugly” or working as house girls are more fertile than others. This claim lacks evidence and is based on unfounded generalizations about the fertility of women based on appearance and occupation. By presenting such unfounded claims as if they were true, the utterance flouts **the maxim of quality**. The objective of CDA is to uncover the ideological assumptions that are hidden in

the worlds of our written text or oral speech in order to resist and that we are exercising power over unbeknownst to us (McGregor, 2010). Discourse is more than just a collection or type of phrases; it also conveys ideological connotations and dominance. Through using negative lexicalization like ‘ugly madams,’ and ‘fertile’ the comedian **implies that these two classes of women do not have control over their sexual lives due to their insecurities**. They are therefore willing to submit to the sexual demands of men to win their love. There is a belief that ugly women do not have a demand from men, therefore, they are willing to get impregnated quickly in order to trap men into marriage. Slay Queens, on the other hand, know that they are good looking hence in high demand from men. They will not like to get pregnant because they might get rich men who deserve them.

The utterance is sexist on the basis that it brings attention to body shaming and negative devaluation of women’s bodies. Any explicit or implied power and control relationship in discourse constitutes the research content of CDA (Mills, 2008). By calling women ugly, the comedian has employed negative body talk and shaming of women for how they look and these are ways of imposing patriarchal bodily control over women. The utterance socially stratifies people based on their appearance. It artificially places people into greater and lesser power strata based on physical appearance. Women have different body shapes, sizes and appearances. Imposing a standard whose sole purpose is to appeal to men’s desire is demeaning and dehumanizing for women. It also makes them (women) feel insecure about their own body. Though jokes about body shapes and appearances are predominantly offensive for women, many people find them funny because they exhibit their superiority (Woodzicka, 2015). The women are identified as ugly thus less powerful at that level

than the more beautiful girls. This joke is an instance of how society depicts women who do not fit the social standards of beauty.

**Datum 61.** *You black women you make it so hard for us men to be romantic... a white woman can tell her husband, “honey, wrap your hand through my hair” and when he wraps it is all smooth. Black women if you to tell your men that, all they will feel are potholes, and bumps. (Laughter). Have you seen some of you put on weaves so badly that when someone calls you and you turn the weave remains in the same direction. (Laughter). (Comedian S, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

The comedian in the above instance of humour has generalized and stereotyped black women. The utterance presents them in a negative light without giving accurate or truthful information about their behaviour or preferences. Additionally, the utterance lacks evidence for the claim made about African women and their supposed difficulties with being romantic or wearing weaves. Therefore, the comedian has flouted **the maxim of quality**. The sexist implicature that we can draw from this humour is that **black women are inherently inferior in their ability to participate in romantic gestures**. The comedian criticizes them for their appearance, therefore, devaluing their worth based on racial and cultural characteristics. The sexism in the implicature intersects with racism, as it specifically targets black women and perpetuates stereotypes and biases that contribute to their marginalization and oppression within society.

In many societies, women are evaluated on the basis of their appearance and sexual attractiveness (Lemish, 2008). This is precisely what the above utterance is doing.

This is what makes it sexist. The phrase “*honey, wrap your hand through my hair*” suggests objectification of women. The utterance focuses on women’s physical appearance that arouses romantic feelings of men towards women. The utterance objectifies women by presenting their body parts (for example, their hair) as the one that bring sexual pleasure to men. The comedian blames African women for their physical unattractiveness that causes African men to be unromantic. This suggests that women’s bodies exist for the purpose of pleasing men. According to Bartky (1990), sexual objectification occurs in women when their body parts are detached from them as people and are only perceived as physical objects of men’s sexual desire.

**Datum 62.** *If there is anything good that happened to me is Covid- 19 because my wife used to put on her face mask always to keep her mouth shut. (Laughter). So, let us call it a blessing instead of a virus. (Laughter). (Comedian S, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

During Corona virus pandemic, the wearing of face masks was introduced to prevent people from contracting or spreading the virus. The face masks were not meant to keep the mouths of people shut so that they could not speak. With or without the masks, people can still speak. Furthermore, the comedian claims that COVID-19 is the best thing that ever happened to him, implying that the pandemic had overwhelmingly positive effects on his life. However, this claim is highly questionable and likely not supported by factual evidence. Therefore, the above utterance has violated **the quality maxim** by supplying false information about face masks. Phrases such as ‘my wife used to put on her face mask always to keep her

mouth shut,' 'let us call it a blessing' provide us with clues to draw the implicature that **women's voices and opinions are perceived as burdensome or annoying, and that measures taken to prevent the spread of Covid-19 such as wearing face masks, are seen as a convenient way to silence them or suppress their independence within the household dynamic.** The implicature perpetuates power imbalance within the household by reinforcing stereotypes that undermine the independence of women. There is implied control in the humour. The implication that the wife's silence is a positive outcome suggests a desire for control over her behaviour reinforcing traditional gender roles where women are expected to be submissive or compliant. The comedian suggests that women's voices are burdensome or unwanted, positioning them as subordinate to men and implying that their opinions should be silenced or disregarded. This reinforces patriarchal structures that prioritize male perspective and experiences over those of women, perpetuating inequalities and limiting opportunities for genuine dialogue and collaboration within relationships.

Discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned (Wodak, 2011). On the one hand, all discourse is shaped by the situations, institutions and social structures which surround it. On the other hand, discourse itself constitutes these situations and institutions, as well as the social identities and relationships between their members or participants. The above utterance reinforces the long held superficial gender stereotype that women are excessively loquacious compared to men (Parkins, 2012; Holmes 1992 & Talbot, 1998). When women put on facemasks, it is perceived to be an important way of preventing them from being talkative. This stereotype is not based on any empirical data. The relation between gender and the

quantity of talk is amply relative, and is conditioned by a plurality of social parameters which are usually culture specific.

**Datum 63.** ...*Mademu wa Nairobi wako na figure nzuri na wanajiita sweet sugar lakini wote ni gold diggers. (Laughter). Wanakuja The Churchill Show wamepiga maperfume na macologne that is because hawapendi kuoga. (Laughter). (Comedian F, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

( ... Nairobi ladies have a nice body figure and they call themselves sweet sugar but all of them are gold diggers. (Laughter). They come to Churchill Show having put on perfumes and colognes because they don't love taking shower. (Laughter)).

The above humour violates **the quality maxim** by making baseless and derogatory generalizations about women in Nairobi. It asserts that all women in Nairobi have a certain body figure, behaviour, and financial motive ("gold diggers"), without providing any evidence. Additionally, the utterance makes an unsubstantiated claim about their hygiene habits, implying that they do not shower, which lacks evidence and is likely to be false. The sexist implicature in the utterance is that **women in Nairobi are solely defined by their physical appearance and perceived materialistic motives**. Women are depicted as superficial and manipulative, prioritizing their attractiveness and financial gain over genuine relationships or personal integrity. This perpetuates negative stereotypes about the character of women and reinforces gendered expectations that limit their value to their ability to conform to narrow societal standards.

Fairclough (2001) discusses hegemony, which refers to the dominance of certain ideologies and discourses that are accepted as natural or common sense within a

society. Hegemonic ideologies often serve to maintain power imbalances by legitimizing and perpetuating existing social structures and inequalities. The utterance above reflects power imbalances within society, where women are objectified and reduced to stereotypes that serve to reinforce patriarchal structures.

Within the context of a heterosexual relationship, 'sweet sugar' means being a positive force in a relationship through actions and words. It means you are making the other person feel good about the relationship (Chapman, 2010). The comedian says that women in Nairobi call themselves sweet sugar but all of them are gold diggers to suggest that they pretend to be what they are not with the aim of exploiting men financially. He also says that they come to *The Churchill Show* having put on perfumes and colognes because they don't love taking showers to suggest that they are dirty. The utterance is sexist because it stereotypes women as gold diggers. It portrays women as only interested in money and material things. A gold digger is a woman who explicitly seeks material and economic rewards above all else, and is willing to trade sex for it (Stephens & Phillips, 2014).

**Datum 64.** *Men are confused elements. To know how confused they are, they work hard and get money to marry fine looking girls like these madams over here. The same men will go and cheat on their beautiful girls with ugly madams. (Laughter). (Comedian O, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

In the above utterance, the comedian makes a generalized claim about the behaviour of men in relationships without offering any evidence or examples to support his assertion. This lack of supporting evidence diminishes the quality of the utterance

because it fails to meet the standard of providing truthful and well-supported information. Furthermore, the use of subjective terms like “fine looking” and “ugly” lacks objective criteria and adds to the deficiency in quality. These terms are based on personal opinions and perceptions rather than objective standards, which further weakens the credibility of the statement. Without objective criteria or evidence to support these subjective judgments, the utterance lacks the quality expected in a meaningful conversation. Therefore, the above utterance has flouted **the maxim of quality**.

Men who have beautiful wives but still go to look for sex from ugly women make us to draw **the sexist implicature that men are inherently unfaithful and superficial in their relationships**. Their focus is only on sex they can get from women and not how they (women) physically look. This is a general sexist joke that lumps men together and portrays them as beings that have an insatiable desire for sex. Despite having their own lovely wives with whom they can get the intimacy they need, they cheat on them with ugly women. The physical description of the women married men cheat with as “ugly” is also sexist because it negatively devalues women’s worth. The utterance contributes to the normalization of sexism by reducing women to objects of desire based on their looks. According to Jeffereys (2005), beauty standards and practices are vehicles for the oppression of women. They signal women’s inferior status and identify their differences from men, shift social awareness from women’s competencies to superficial aspects of their appearance, undermining the self-confidence of women, and reducing them to sex objects. The madam is identified as ugly thus less powerful at that level than the more beautiful women.

**Datum 65.** *Imagine if we did not have beauty salons we will be seeing ghost creatures (Comedian M, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

In the given humorous utterance, the comedian says that without beauty salons, people would appear as “ghost creatures.” This utterance is hyperbolic and devoid of factual accuracy. By making this utterance, the comedian violates **the maxim of quality**. It is mostly women who frequent beauty salons. Therefore, the utterance is targets women in general. The sexist implicature we can draw from the above utterance is that **women’s natural appearance is undesirable or inferior, and their worth is determined by their conformity to societal beauty standards perpetuated by beauty salons**. From a CDA lens, this implicature lies in the normalization of societal beauty standards upheld by beauty salons and women must conform to these standards to be considered acceptable or desirable, reinforcing patriarchal norms that prioritize women’s appearance over their other qualities or abilities. It has the potential of misleading or creating misunderstanding in communication. Furthermore, the utterance may reinforce unrealistic beauty standards or undermine the natural appearance of individuals who do not frequent beauty salons.

In many cultures, there is a prevailing stereotype that women are particularly concerned with enhancing their appearance, often by wearing makeup or visiting beauty salons (Jeffereys, 2005). This emphasis on external beauty can sometimes lead to an obsession, where women may feel unattractive or lack confidence when they are not wearing makeup.

**Datum 66.** *Women are complicated... if you decide to understand women, you will never understand them. God created both man and woman and put eye brows on both of them but only a woman realized she does not need them and she shaved them. (Laughter). Women were walking in the Garden of Eden without eye brows. They realized nobody can notice their faces and the back of their head so, they decided to return the eye brows but now they are not accurate like the way God put them. (Comedian O, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

The maxim of quality stipulates that interlocutors should provide information that is true and accurate. However, the comedian in the above utterance presents a narrative about eyebrows of women that is not true. The comedian, through his utterance, suggests that the reason why women shaved their eyebrows and decided to grow them back is because they came to their realization that they needed them. This narrative is neither true nor accurate because there is no evidence to back up what he is claiming. Because the comedian has given false information as if it were truthful, he has violated **the maxim of quality**. Women have individuality and diversity just like men. They are individuals with unique personalities, experiences, and perspectives. Attempting to generalize the complexities of an entire gender oversimplifies their rich diversity. It is true that women shape their eye brows to look attractive but the practice did not start in the biblical Garden of Eden. According to Barker (2010), eyebrow shaping is a temporary beauty practice influenced by various cultural standards over time, reflecting the evolution of societal perceptions of beauty rather than a singular, historical narrative. The utterance has supplied false information that lacks adequate evidence therefore

flouting the quality maxim. The comedian in the above utterance **implies that women are ridiculous.**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) aims to uncover and bring to light underlying aspects of discourse that may be implicit or not readily apparent, especially in terms of power relations or concealed ideologies. It centers on examining strategies like manipulation, legitimization, and consent-building, as well as other discursive methods that influence the thoughts of people and subsequently their actions-serving the interest of those in power. The utterance is constructed from an androcentric perspective (that is, from a male perspective) to demean and portray women as inferior to men.

The utterance has employed satire to disparage women by showing how unlike men are never satisfied with their natural appearance. Unlike men, they are never satisfied with the way God created them and are always experimenting new things on their bodies to look more attractive and beautiful and get noticed by others. The above humour is sexist in nature because it represents women negatively. The label of 'complicated woman' is a cultural stereotype that shapes and distorts how we perceive and interpret women's behaviour. This sexist stereotype often arises from patriarchal norms and expectations that place undue emphasis on women conforming to certain ideals of behaviour.

Humour serves a social purpose by bringing members of an in-group closer while distinguishing them from those in an out-group (Meyer, 2000). As a form of social communication, humour decreases social distance and plays an important role in

uniting interlocutors. While humour promotes social affiliation and group formation, it can similarly be used to target ‘others’. The kinds of humour that are shared socially and the participants who find it funny define who the ‘others’ are. Hence, jokes also function socially to divide groups, particularly in generating and reinforcing social boundaries, social distance and inequalities (Billig, 2005). Those laughing at an out-group foster greater social affiliation and decreased social distance with their ‘in-group’, while simultaneously creating and/or increasing social distance against their target (Pérez, 2017). Similarly, sexist jokes targeting gender ‘other(s)’ help reinforce and reproduce a masculine world view.

Societal norms and expectations place a considerable burden on women, contributing to the perception of complexity. Women often juggle multiple roles and face unrealistic standards of beauty, behaviour, and success. Women often wrestle with conflicting needs, roles, and priorities that men don’t face to the same extent. For example, women are expected to balance being nurturing caregivers with being ambitious professionals, among others. What seems like indecisiveness or mixed signals may simply reflect the complexity of navigating these contradictory societal demands.

**Datum 67.** *Mademu mi najuanga hampendanangi sana...mwenye mmekaa naye amnatembea naye sana na anashindanga amesmile hivi (he demonstrates the way she smiles), waja nikuambie vitu anasemanga kama humwangalii usitake kujua. Wakati ako na rafiki yake Wamboi anasema, “... Oh, ndio hicho kiSharon sikipendi. (laughter). Aki kinakaanga kijinga. (Comedian M, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

( Ladies I know you do not love each other much... the one you are seated next to or you walk with a lot and she keeps smiling like this (he demonstrates the way she smiles), let me tell you the things she says when you are not looking at her don't bother to know. When she is with her friend Wamboi she says, "...Oh, that is Sharon, I do not love her. (laughter). She is foolish.)

In the humorous utterance above, the comedian makes broad and unsupported generalizations about ladies claiming that "Ladies I know that you do not love each other much." and saying that they engage in negative gossip behind each other's backs. However, the statement lacks evidence to support this assertion. Moreover, the utterance oversimplifies and stereotypes women's relationships, ignoring their diversity and the complexity of friendships. While it is true that gossip can occur in any social group, asserting that women universally do not love each other and engage in negative behaviour without evidence is not only inaccurate but also unfair. Therefore, the comedian has flouted **the maxim of quality**. From the utterance we can draw **the sexist implicature that women are insincere in friendships**. The comedian satirizes the action of women who talk ill of their friends when they are not together but when they appear face to face, they greet and smile at them hypocritically. The joke symbolically stereotype ladies as lovers of gossip.

The comedian implies that women cannot form supportive relationships with each other. This perpetuates a negative stereotype that women are inherently backstabbers and untrustworthy towards each other. The comedian undermines the value of female friendships and solidarity, reinforcing the idea that women are inferior and less deserving of respect than men.

**Datum 68.** ... *niko na bwana lakini si Maasai. Nyinyi wanaume waMaasai vile mnapenda kuruka sana si mtanipea boli halafu mruke hiyo story? (Laughter).* (Comedian A, November, 2023, *The Churchill Show*).

(...I have a husband but he is not a Maasai. You Maasai men the way you love jumping will you not impregnate me and then deny responsibility? (Laughter)).

The maxim of quality has been flouted in the above humour. In the above humour, the comedian makes a sweeping derogatory generalization about Maasai men, **implying that they are inherently untrustworthy and irresponsible** thereby perpetuating a harmful stereotype based on ethnicity. Maasai men are known to be high jumpers or leapers, something they do as part of their culture. Maasai morans are trained to leap high so that they can become effective in protecting their families from marauding wild animals like lions, other enemies and also in hunting game. Therefore, this physical act by Maasai men has no connection with them avoiding taking responsibility when they impregnate women. This utterance is sexist because it is negatively stereotyping men from the Maasai community as irresponsible. The comedian does not provide evidence to prove that once Maasai men impregnate women they abandon them. The joke seems to paint an image that Maasai men are only interested in sex.

The utterance perpetuates the devaluation and stigmatization of Maasai men based on their ethnicity. The comedian uses the phrase “Maasai men” as a distinct group to suggest a generalization about their behaviour. This reduction of individuals to a stereotype based on ethnicity perpetuates negative biases.

**Datum 69.** *If you are a man and you propose a relationship to an African woman and she says “no” she means “yes.” (Laughter). Us men when we tell a girl we love her we mean that. (Comedian S, November, 2023, Churchill Show).*

The comedian in the above humour presents a stereotype about communication between men and women that is not only false but also harmful. He suggests that women mean the opposite of what they say which is a baseless generalization that undermines the significance of consent in relationships. Similarly, it implies that men’s statements are straightforward and always mean exactly what they say, which oversimplifies human communication and ignores the complexities of language and context. Therefore, the comedian by making the above utterance without providing evidence to support his statement has flouted **the maxim of quality**. The utterance has the potential of causing misunderstandings and gender-based discrimination and violence.

Humorous utterances function socially to divide male and female in order to generate and reinforce social boundaries, social distance and inequalities (Billig, 2005). One of the tenets of CDA is that discourse does ideological work (Fairclough, 2001). Much of our discourse, especially when we speak as members of groups, expresses ideologically based opinions. The above utterance is an ideologically based opinion. Sexist humour such as the one contained in the utterance above may affect masculine attitudes about women’s social behaviour and their place in society leading to discriminative practices. The assertion by the comedian in the above utterance is a generalization. It is not all women who mean the opposite of what they say to men who are proposing to have romantic relationships with them. The sexist

implicature we can draw from the above humour is that **women's words are inherently deceptive or ambiguous, while men's assertions are to be unquestionably accepted.**

This humorous utterance is indirectly sexist, since in fact the perspective from which it is constructed is predominantly androcentric, that is, from a masculine perspective. CDA can reveal how language and discourse are used to marginalize and dismiss women's voices, often through the use of stereotypes that reinforce gendered expectations and behaviours. This utterance seems to be positioning women as inferior to men. This discourse reflects gendered stereotypes and power dynamics that undermine women's communication styles.

**Datum70.** *Ukioa mwanamke mMeru na ukose kwenda kazi atakuambia, "Baba Kagwira, nilifikiri wanaume wote wako mahali pao pa kazi. Ni wewe tu umeamua kubaki nyumbani? Karani, nipe ile panga tulinoa jana. (Laughter). (Comedian M, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

(When you marry a Meru woman and you fail to go to work she will tell you, "Father Kagwira, I thought all men are at their places of work. It is only you who has decided to remain at home? Karani, give me that panga which we sharpened yesterday. (Laughter)).

The stand-up comedian states that all Meru women threaten with a machete their husbands if they fail to go to work. This may not be true. By presenting such a stereotype as if it were true, the comedian **violates the maxim of quality**. He (the comedian) fails to provide evidence to support his statement, and instead relies on a

general stereotype about Meru women, which undermines the credibility and accuracy of the communication. Furthermore, the objective reality is that there is no wife who can ask for a panga (machete) to threaten her husband who has remained at home when other men have gone to work. The comedian is simply exaggerating the extent of the violence that can be possessed by Meru women. In Kenya, members of the Meru ethnic community are stereotyped as being high tempered. From the above utterance we can draw **the sexist implicature that Meru women are inherently violent or controlling.**

Fairclough (2001) acknowledges that discourse is embedded within social structures, including institutions, norms, and hierarchies. These structures shape and constrain language use, influencing how power is distributed and exercised within society. From a CDA perspective we can interpret the utterance by examining the underlying social structures, power dynamics and ideologies embedded within it. The humour perpetuates sexist stereotypes about gender roles and expectations within marriage. It suggests that it is the role of a man to work outside the home, while the woman's role is to manage domestic duties. This reinforces traditional gender norms that limit women's independence and define their worth in relation to their husbands' financial contributions. Furthermore, the mention of the Panga (machete) implies a threat of violence or coercion to enforce compliance with these gender roles, further perpetuating harmful power dynamics within marriage.

The traditional stereotypical belief in Kenyan society is that men work outside the confines of home, while women stay at home (Ndonye, 2015). Men are the breadwinners and it is their responsibility to provide for their families. This seems to

be in line with what Brannon (2011) states that, stereotypically, women have been assigned to the private sphere such as home while the public sphere such as work has been considered to be a domain associated with men. This stereotype reflects traditional gender roles and patriarchal norms that assign specific roles and responsibilities based on gender. The above utterance, from a CDA perspective reinforces the idea that men are more suited for the workforce while women are better suited for domestic roles. The utterance also seems to portray Meru women as partners who are violent within their domestic sphere.

#### **4.4.3 Flouting of Relation Maxim**

This maxim requires that whatever we say is supposed to be relevant to the main topic so that the two sides in a conversation can deal with the same subject. The messages provided by the speaker should be relevant and related (Cutting, 2002). The hearer should be able to imagine what the utterance did not say and make the connection between the utterance and the preceding one. The hearer should assume that the next utterance would be related to the previous one. Flouting this maxim means that the speaker's utterance is irrelevant to the context for some reasons. It (flouting) occurs when there is a change of topic and giving irrelevant information or when the speaker does not say anything explicitly related to the topic of conversation but invites the hearer to seek for an interpretation of possible relevance.

On *The Churchill Show*, comedians flout this maxim when they change from one topic of a conversation to the next even before the audience interprets the preceding one. This happens with those comedians who tackle many subjects in one

presentation unlike those who deal with only one subject. This is shown in the following humour.

**Datum 71.** *I don't understand women... Man has produced engineers, doctors and we can do and understand many things like physics and chemistry but we cannot understand women. Even women cannot understand themselves. (Laughter). (Comedian Y, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

The maxim of relation states that contributions to a conversation should be pertinent and related to the current topic or context. In the humour above, the comedian veers off-topic by making a broad generalization about women rather than addressing a specific point or topic in the conversation. Therefore, he flouts **the maxim of relation**. When the comedian makes a statement “I don't understand women...” followed by a generalized remark about women and their perceived inability to understand themselves, it deviates from the current conversation and lacks relevance to the topic at hand. Therefore, the sexist implicature that we can draw from the humour is that **women are inherently unpredictable and illogical**. This implicature reinforces stereotypes that undermine women's intelligence and independence while perpetuating the notion of male superiority in understanding and intellect.

By using the phrase “even women cannot understand themselves” the statement undermines women's intelligence by implying that they lack self-awareness or understanding. It reflects a normalization of self-doubt and internalized misogyny, which is an effect of living within a patriarchal society. This contributes to the internalization of sexist beliefs and undermines women's confidence and self-perception. Furthermore, the utterance devalues women's perspectives and

reinforces a patriarchal worldview where men's experiences and insights are prioritized over women's.

The utterance is sexist because the comedian has deployed a universal claim (generalized to all women as if he has interacted with all women globally and reached a conclusion that they can neither be understood nor understand themselves) followed by a derogatory statement. This utterance is reinforcing and perpetuating the stereotype that women are inherently mysterious or unknowable, which is not accurate. People are diverse and individual experiences vary widely, therefore, we cannot lump women together under a single classification.

The aim of CDA is to raise awareness of the power imbalance reflected in the use of language and patterns of dominance imposed through the use of language (Wodak, & Chilton, 2005). Therefore, from a CDA perspective, this utterance is meant to portray women as inferior to men. According to Mills (2008:10), "our lives are regulated by set patterns for appropriate behaviour and networks of meanings that are set by societies we live in. The knowledge we acquire depends on the social environment we inhabit. This knowledge is verbalized during the communication process." Moreover, words constituting comic routines are neither arbitrary nor randomly chosen. There are social and cultural factors that influence one's choice of words (Matiza & Mutasa, 2020). Our use of language is an elaborate process that is intertwined with the learned values and beliefs that govern a society. Language, as represented here in comedy, indexes the social reality of a society and reflects the images in people's lives as well as the patterns of their social behavior (Thomas et

al., 2004). Gender ideology and power relations are one area in which language plays a crucial role (Shokym et al., 2022).

**Datum 72.** *...tangu niingie box ya Kinuthia, siku hizi sioni pesa yake. Heri kitambo. Siku hizi pesa ya Kinuthia imekua kama mbunge. ( Laughter) (Comedian A, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

(...Since falling in love with Kinuthia, nowadays I do not get his money. It was better before. Nowadays, Kinuthia's money has become like an MP. (Laughter)).

In the utterance above, the comedian discusses Kinuthia's financial behaviour in the context of their relationship. However, the mention of Kinuthia's financial generosity or lack thereof is not directly related to the main topic of the conversation (which is the comedian's love feelings towards Kinuthia). Therefore, the comedian violates **the maxim of relation**. The comedian says that she no longer receives money from her husband. She likens how rare getting his money is to accessing a Member of Parliament. The comedian here has introduced information that veers off –topic into a discussion about financial matters. Therefore, she has flouted the maxim of relation.

**The implicature that husbands should be providers of money within marriage** can be drawn from the above utterance. This sexist humorous is based on the negative traditional gender stereotypical belief among the Kenyan society that men should be the financial providers to their families (i.e., to their children and wives) while women are required to depend on their husbands for financial support. A man who fails to provide for his family is perceived as irresponsible (Ndonye, 2019). This stereotype has the potential of reinforcing unequal power relations within

marriage and contributes to the economic dependency of women on their husbands, which is a manifestation of sexism.

Kenyan parliamentarians are known to be smooth talkers and they use various methods to woo voters in their campaigns to vote for them. However, once they are elected, they don't keep contact with electorates who voted for them. They only re-appear after five years to ask to be re-elected. Just as it is difficult to access a member of parliament, it is equally hard for the wife to access money from her husband. Presently, majority of women have been empowered socially, economically, and politically and are venturing and competing with men in careers that were exclusively for men. They are also financial providers for their families.

**Datum 73.** *...Nilikutana na msichana anaitwa Fatuma na tukabidilishana namba lakini nilikaa siku tatu sijampigia. Siku moja...akaanza kuniambia "...nikikupa namba yangu nataka unipigie simu uniambie Fatuma nakupenda. Sili wala kunywa nyumbani na nagombanishwa kila mara na wazazi kwa sababu nilishawaambia nimepata mume na hawajamuona. (laughter) (Comedian C, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

(...I met a Swahili girl called Fatuma and we exchanged phone numbers but I stayed for three days without calling her. One day... she began telling me, "...when I give you my number I want you to call me and tell me Fatuma I love you so much. I do not drink or eat at home and I am always being quarreled by my parents because I had informed them that I have got a husband yet they have not seen him. (Laughter)).

The maxim of manner requires that contributions should be relevant to the topic of the conversation at hand. Fatuma's statement shifts the conversation abruptly to her personal situation and expectations regarding the exchange of phone numbers which is not directly relevant to the previous interaction between the comedian and Fatuma. Therefore, the conversation maxim that has been flouted in the above sexist humour is **the maxim of relation**. The sexist implicature we can draw from the utterance is that **men should be the one to pursue and validate women and meet their emotional needs**. Fatuma's demand for the speaker to seduce her and express love implies that she expects the man to take the lead in romantic pursuits. This reinforces the negative stereotype and patriarchal ideology that men should be assertive initiators in relationships while women should be passive recipients of romantic advances.

Fatuma's reference to her parents' expectations of her bringing home a husband reinforces societal norms surrounding marriage and women's role within the family. This implies that a woman's worth is tied to her ability to fulfill traditional gender roles, such as being a wife and mother, rather than being valued for her achievements and independence.

**Datum 74.** *Women are complicated... if you decide to understand women, you will never understand them. God created both man and woman and put eye brows on both of them but only a woman realized she does not need them and she shaved them. (Laughter). Women were walking in the Garden of Eden without eye brows. They realized nobody can notice their faces and the back of their head so, they decided to return the eye brows but now they are not accurate like the way God put them. (Comedian O, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

In the above humorous utterance, the discussion seems to be about understanding women. The comedian introduces a fictional anecdote about the origin of eyebrows, a subject which has no relation to the conversational topic. The anecdote does not in any way contribute to the topic. Therefore, by introducing irrelevant content, the comedian has violated **the maxim of relation**. The sexist implicature we can draw from the above humorous utterance is that **women are inherently incomprehensible**. The utterance implies that the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours of women are unpredictable and confusing, which undermines their independence. The comedian suggests through the utterance that men have authority to define and judge women's behaviour. This reinforces patriarchal structures that give priority to male knowledge and understanding over those of women.

The tone of the above utterance can be interpreted as being disrespectful to women. The comedian presents women as complicated which imply that they are predisposed to engage in nonsensical behavioural activities like shaving off their eyebrows without concrete reason. This portrayal can be perceived as demeaning especially taking into consideration how women have been discriminated against and marginalized throughout history. Furthermore, the utterance fails to acknowledge the diversity and complexity of women's experiences instead reducing them to simplistic and negative generalizations.

#### **4.4.4 Flouting of Manner Maxim**

This maxim requires that we do not give obscure and ambiguous information. We should be clear, orderly and avoid being wordy. One is supposed to give proper information, which can make his or her expression clear, concise and easy to

understand. This maxim is flouted by stand up comedians on *The Churchill Show* as shown in the following sexist humour.

**Datum 75.** *Nakumbuka wakati wa COVID-19 tukiwa nyumbani wakati wowote mke wangu alipokuwa anapita mbele yangu alikuwa anasema, “Mungu tuokoe na hili janga.”( Laughter). Sikuelewa ni mimi au Korona alikuwa anamaanisha. (Comedian S, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).*

(I remember when we were at home during COVID-19 pandemic, any time my wife would pass in front of me, she used to say “God rescue us from this plague. (Laughter). I did not understand whether she meant me or the COVID-19).

The word “plague” can refer to two things: It can literally mean the physical epidemic disease that causes high rate of mortality or it can have a metaphorical meaning of a source of disturbance. The reference seems to be unclear since she (the wife) might have meant the husband or the COVID-19. Therefore, the utterance has flouted **the maxim of manner** by being unclear. Because the wife used to mention the term plague every moment she passed in front of her husband, we can infer that the metaphorical meaning is what she meant. From the utterance, we can draw the sexist implicature that **men are burdensome or troublesome**. The above utterance has negatively characterized the husband based on his presence or behaviour during the period of COVID-19 pandemic. This utterance devalues men by reinforcing the idea that men are problematic within domestic settings. By portraying men as ‘plague’ the utterance reinforces a demeaning and dehumanizing attitude towards men and contributes to the normalization of gender-based disrespect within relationships.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) investigates how discourse constructs and reinforces distinctions between the private (domestic) and public (political and economic) spheres. It analyzes how language is used in these spheres to reflect and shape power dynamics, social norms, and hierarchies. The above utterance seems to point to the fact that domestic sphere can be a place where power dynamics and gender roles play out, potentially leading to tension and disruption. When men intrude into women's private spaces, they always disrupt their sense of sanctuary and safety that women seek in their own homes. When Kenya imposed COVID-19 lockdown, families had to stay together all day, an unusual situation for most. Many wives felt uneasy and frustrated, perceiving that their freedom was limited by the continuous presence of their husbands. Many women often view their homes as their domain, so any perceived intrusion on this space tends to be met with resistance. This points to the way gender roles are distributed in society where men are assigned overall control over public sphere activities and women are relegated to the domestic domain activities.

**Datum 76.** *Geukia huyo mrembo ako karibu na wewe umpe high five lakini usiguse uso unaweza baki kwa mkono. (Laughter). Pia usivulute nywele, anaweza baki na matuta hapo ndani.(laughter) (Comedian M, November, 2023, The Churchill Show).* (Turn to the beautiful lady near you and give her high five but do not touch her face it might remain in your hand. (Laughter). Also, do not pull her hair; she might remain with bumps inside).

In the above utterance, the comedian uses metaphorical language (“do not pull her hair, she might remain with humps inside”). This complicates the clarity of the message. The metaphorical expression may not be easily understood by the

audience, leading to confusion or misinterpretation of the intended meaning. Therefore, by employing metaphorical language that may obscure instead of clarifying the message, the utterance violates **the maxim of manner**.

By saying that “do not touch her face it might remain in your hand” and “do not pull her hair she might remain with bumps inside,” the comedian is implying the artificial makeup and weaves that women put on to look attractive which fade with time. By using these expressions, we can draw the sexist implicature that **the beauty of women is artificial**. Language is a social practice (Fairclough &Wodak, 1997). Therefore, language is not just a means of communication, but also a reflection and perpetuator of cultural norms, social structures, and power dynamics. It has been suggested in the above utterance that if women do not put on these makeup and weaves, they will look unattractive which is not so. Some women heavily apply makeup to enhance their appearance, but once it is removed, they can look noticeably different. This contrast often leads to mocking remarks directed at women who wear them. The utterance is sexist because it is negatively devaluing the bodies of women and shaming them for how they look with makeup and weaves and therefore imposing patriarchal bodily control over them.

#### **4.5 Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented, analysed and discussed the findings of the study. The first objective analyzed the 25 set of data that was collected. The 25 set of data each had the comedians employing one of the eight linguistic strategies to create humour: juxtaposition, similes, metaphors, hyperbole, ambiguity, wordplay and pun, irony, and satire. Two utterances used juxtaposition, two employed similes, two metaphors,

seven used hyperbole, one used ambiguity, three employed punning, three used irony, while five made use of satire. From the analysis of the data, hyperbole was the most employed strategy while ambiguity was the least. The researcher applied Fairclough's Sociocultural Approach to CDA in data analysis and discussion.

The second objective set out to systematically analyze selected utterances of *The Churchill Show*, identifying instances of sexist inferences in the comedic utterances. From the data collected, there were more sexist inferences on women (22) than men (3). The selected stand-up comedians on *The Churchill* show have concentrated so much on the negative portrayal of women than men. The data analysis revealed that performances perpetuate sexist stereotypes targeting men and women in society. These stereotypes include portraying women as emotionally jealousy in relationships, trivializing their efforts to enhance their appearance, depicting them as incompetent drivers, among others. Men are depicted as disrupting the household dynamic, challenging women's dominance in the domestic sphere.

The third objective set out to investigate how conversational maxim flouting on *The Churchill Show* live performances result in derivations of sexist implicature. The 25 set of data each had the comedians flouting one of the four of Grice's conversational maxims; maxim of quantity, quality, relation and manner. There was a total of 3 sets of data where the maxim of quantity was flouted, 17 sets flouted the maxim of quality, 2 flouted the maxim of manner while 4 reflected relation maxim flouting. Each of the data was explained in relation to the tenets of Conversational Implicature. Also, CDA (Fairclough's sociocultural approach) principles were employed to show how political and social domination is reproduced in text and talk.

The next chapter focuses on the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the findings and conclusions based on the three objectives. The study sought to describe the linguistic strategies used to construct verbal sexist humour on *The Churchill Show*, to analyze how listeners can draw sexist inferences from the kind of humorous utterances that stand-up comedians make on *The Churchill Show*, and to determine sexist implicatures that manifest as a result of flouting conversation maxims on *The Churchill Show*. The study was guided by Fairclough's (2001) socio-cultural approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Grice's (1975) Conversational Implicature as theoretical frameworks.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Findings of the Study

This study conducted a pragmatic interpretation of verbal sexist humour in Kenyan stand-up comedy: A case of *The Churchill Show*. *The Churchill Show* was used as the object of the study where selected utterances were used as the primary data. Purposive sampling method was used to get the required data. Twenty-five utterances were selected from among nine episodes in the month of November, 2023. This number of utterances was appropriate to achieve the objectives of the study. The study employed observation and audio-video recording techniques in collecting data. These techniques enabled the recording of relevant data that addressed the research questions. The study applied Fairclough's (2001) three dimensional model of CDA and Grice's (1975) Conversational Implicature theory to achieve the objectives of the study.

Fairclough's socio-cultural model of CDA was significant in analyzing data to achieve the three objectives of the study while Conversational Implicature was significant in achieving the third objective which aimed at examining sexist implicatures that manifest as a result of flouting conversation maxims on *The Churchill Show*. The following were the findings as per the objectives of the study.

### **5.2.1 Linguistic Strategies Used to Construct Verbal Sexist Humour on the Churchill Show**

The aim of the first objective was to describe the linguistic strategies used by stand-up comedians to construct verbal sexist humour on the two segments of *The Churchill Show*. Each of the data that was collected from live performances was examined in light of the linguistic strategy that was used in its construction. The findings of the study established that the 25 set of data each had the comedians employing one of the eight linguistic strategies to create sexist humour: juxtaposition, similes, metaphors, hyperbole, ambiguity, wordplay and pun, irony, and satire. There was a total of two sets of data where juxtaposition was used, two employed similes, two metaphors, seven used hyperbole, one used ambiguity, three employed punning, three used irony, while five made use of satire.

It was observed that hyperbole was the most employed strategy while ambiguity was the least used strategy. The frequent use of hyperbole can be attributed to its exaggerated nature, which amplifies stereotypes and heightens the comic effect, making it easier for comedians to draw attention to gender differences in a humorous way. By exaggerating certain traits or situations, comedians create an exaggerated reality that audiences find amusing. For instance, studies by Raskin (1985) and

Attardo (1994) note that hyperbole is a common technique in humour because it distorts reality to an extent where the audience can easily distinguish the absurdity and laugh at it. Hyperbole also serves to reinforce societal gender stereotypes through exaggeration, making it a powerful tool for comedic impact. This aligns with Chacha's (2007) observation that in humorous contexts, exaggeration is often used to create caricatures of gender roles, making the content more relatable and entertaining for audiences.

On the other hand, ambiguity was the least used strategy. This may be because ambiguity requires a higher level of cognitive processing from the audience, as the meaning is often unclear and open to multiple interpretations. Comedians may avoid ambiguity because it can lead to misunderstandings or diminish the immediate comedic impact if the audience struggles to grasp the intended humour. As noted by Attardo (2020), humour that relies on ambiguity may be more challenging to interpret, as it demands the audience's active engagement in deciphering meanings, which could slow down the comedic flow. This observation aligns with Ford and Ferguson's (2004) assertion that comedians tend to avoid ambiguity when aiming for immediate, widespread laughter, as the interpretive burden on the audience can detract from the intended effect of the humour.

Juxtaposition was used by comedians to highlight differences, create humorous contrasts, and challenge societal norms. Comedians juxtapose contrasting ideas or behaviours to emphasize the absurdity and generate laughter among the audience. Similes were used to show subversion of gender norms, for instance, in datum 3 where Kalenjin women are portrayed as assertive initiators in romantic relationships. This finding suggests that the comedian is challenging and humorously commenting

on societal expectations regarding gender behaviour. Metaphor use involved exaggeration and absurdity to highlight societal norms and expectations. For instance, in datum 6, the comparison between the absence of beauty salons and “ghost creatures” exaggerates the consequences of not conforming to beauty standards. It was also observed that the effectiveness of metaphors and similes relies on surprise and irony.

The use of hyperbolic humour reveals its pivotal role in emphasizing absurdities, challenging societal norms, and providing a platform for social commentary. Through exaggeration, comedians subvert audience expectations, critique power dynamics, and highlight cultural stereotypes. Utilizing shared cultural understandings, hyperbole serves as a tool for satire, enabling comedians to engage in social critique while eliciting laughter from the audience. Ambiguity as a linguistic phenomenon was used in creating verbal sexist humour. Through lexical ambiguity, comedians exploit the multiple interpretations of words or phrases to create humorous tension and engage the audience who have to navigate between the two meanings resulting in amusement. Comedians utilize puns to simultaneously combine unrelated meanings, creating humorous tension and engaging the audience in deciphering the intended interpretation. For example, in datum 17, the comedian employs wordplay by using the term “jump up” to describe both the physical action associated with the Maasai community and figuratively implying irresponsibility. By juxtaposing these literal and figurative meanings, the comedian creates a clever expression that plays on the ambiguity of the term, resulting in a humorous effect that resonates with the audience. Wordplay serves as a tool for critiquing societal norms and stereotypes, navigating complex social issues with clever disguises that entertain and challenge audience perceptions simultaneously. It was also observed

that irony was effective in generating humour through unexpected contrasts between expectations and reality. Comedians use it to subvert conventional understanding and challenge societal norms, leading to humorous twists in their utterances. Another finding was that comedians use satire to mock, attack, and ridicule various aspects of society, aiming to provoke thought and inspire positive change. In datum 21, the comedian satirizes the perceived materialism and superficiality of “ladies in Nairobi” by highlighting their contradictory behaviours regarding hygiene and self presentation.

### **5.2.2 Sexist Inferences in the Comedic Utterances on the Churchill Show**

The aim of the second objective was to analyze sexist inferences underlying live comedic performances by selected stand-up comedians on *The Churchill Show* aired on TV47. It was observed that there were more sexist inferences on women (22) than men (3). More performances concentrated on the negative portrayal of women than men. Findings from the analysis of data revealed the perpetuation of sexist stereotypes targeting men and women in Kenyan society. This disparity in the portrayal of women versus men within the context of Kenyan stand-up comedy reflects deeper issues related to language, culture, and gender. In Kenyan society, as in many others, language serves as a vehicle for reinforcing and transmitting cultural norms and gender roles (Tannen, 1990). The predominance of sexist inferences targeting women in the comedic performances suggests that gender inequalities and patriarchal attitudes are deeply embedded in Kenyan culture and manifest through linguistic expressions in humor. The tendency to portray women negatively aligns with traditional gender stereotypes, where women are often depicted as subordinate or the subject of ridicule (Mills, 2008).

This cultural pattern highlights how language is used to perpetuate social hierarchies and maintain gendered power imbalances. Crawford (1995) points out that humor is not just a benign form of entertainment; it can function as a means of exerting control over marginalized groups, in this case, women. In Kenyan culture, these humorous depictions may reflect and reinforce societal norms that position men as dominant and women as subservient. By disproportionately targeting women with sexist humor, comedians contribute to the normalization of these attitudes, thus perpetuating the cultural and linguistic marginalization of women in Kenyan society.

Furthermore, the relatively low occurrence of sexist inferences targeting men suggests that men's roles in society are less scrutinized or ridiculed in the same way, which could reflect cultural attitudes that prioritize male perspectives and experiences. According to Hasinoff (2015), the portrayal of gender in media, including stand-up comedy, can influence audience perceptions and reinforce existing stereotypes, thereby perpetuating gender inequality in both language and cultural expression

The stereotypes women are portrayed include: portraying women as emotionally jealousy in relationships, trivializing their efforts to enhance their physical appearance, and depicting them as incompetent drivers. Additionally, women are also depicted as unintelligent and irrational. It was also observed that some humour ridicule and portray as unfit those women who perform tasks in public spheres. They are depicted as lacking in intelligence and skills in performing those tasks. Humour centered on women as life partners presented a skewed image of reality. Women are depicted as subverting social norms for being controlling of their husbands. Some humour depicted women's talk as troublesome and meaningless. Generally, it was

observed that that many of these stereotypes are promoted by patriarchal discourse. Women laugh at the amusement the humour elicits and by focusing only on the laughter part, they internalize the stereotypes at their own expense unaware of the harm they are causing to themselves.

The present study found out that verbal sexist humour promotes societal devaluation of women. The analysis of comedic data from *The Churchill Show* revealed several sexist inferences targeting men. For instance, men are portrayed as hypersexual and driven by sexual desires, perpetuating the stereotype of men as lacking control over their actions in relationships. They are also depicted as untrustworthy and not committed in relationships, particularly highlighted through ethnic stereotypes. Traditional gender roles are reinforced by portraying men as primary providers and women as financially dependent on them. Moreover, men are depicted as disrupting the household dynamic, challenging women's dominance in the domestic sphere. The findings highlight how humour in media reinforces traditional gender roles, marginalizing both men and women and contributing to the normalization of gender discrimination and inequality. It also underscores the need to challenge these negative stereotypes so as to promote social justice and gender equality.

### **5.2.3 Flouting Maxims on the Churchill Show**

The third objective sought to determine sexist implicatures that manifest due to flouting conversation maxims on *The Churchill Show*. Data analysis revealed that comedians flouted all the four of Grice's conversational maxims of the Cooperative Principle. The 25 set of data each had the comedians flouting one of the four of Grice's conversational maxims: maxim of quantity, quality, relation and manner. 3

utterances flouted the maxim of quantity, 16 flouted the maxim of quality, 2 flouted the maxim of manner while 4 reflected relation maxim flouting. The maxim of quality was the most frequently flouted, likely because comedians use exaggeration and falsehoods to create humor through absurdity, irony, and satire. Flouting the maxim of quantity often engaged the audience by forcing them to fill in gaps or infer unstated information, while ambiguity (manner) and misdirection (relation) generated humor through surprise and cognitive dissonance. This deliberate maxim flouting enabled comedians to challenge societal norms and expectations about gender, aligning with established linguistic humor strategies (Attardo, 2020; Kotthoff, 2006).

It was observed that there was a pattern of reinforcing sexist stereotypes and ideologies through flouting of the quantity maxim. For instance, depicting women as dependent on men for fulfillment, while men are depicted as needing multiple women for satisfaction reinforces traditional gender roles and patriarchal norms. Objectification of women was evident in references to women “tasting” men, reducing their interactions to sexual experiences. Violations of the quantity maxim also led to miscommunication and negative associations.

It was also observed that there was flouting of the quality maxim resulting in the reinforcement of sexist stereotypes and prejudices. Through unsubstantiated generalizations and derogatory remarks, comedians perpetuate negative stereotypes about women and men from specific regions, such as Kiambu, Maasai, and Nairobi, as well as ethnic groups like the Maasai and Kalenjin. These stereotypes often focus on aspects like physical appearance, language proficiency, and behaviour in

relationships. Women were portrayed as inferior or limited in their capabilities. Additionally, the humour often implied women's dependency on men for validation and reinforced traditional gender roles and power dynamics.

Another finding of the present study was the frequent violation of the relation maxim. Comedians frequently veer off-topic or introduce irrelevant content into their routines, disrupting the flow of the conversation and undermining the coherence of their performances. The flouting of the maxim of relation often results in the reinforcement of sexist stereotypes and prejudices. By introducing unrelated anecdotes, comedians perpetuate negative beliefs about women portraying them as unpredictable, irrational, and inferior to men. These sexist implications serve to undermine women's independence and reinforce traditional gender roles and power dynamics within society.

There was consistent violation of the manner maxim where clarity and straightforwardness in expression were compromised. Comedians often use ambiguous language or metaphors that obscure the intended meaning of their jokes, leading to potential confusion or misinterpretation by the audience. The violation of the manner maxim contributes to the reinforcement of sexist stereotypes and prejudices, portraying men as burdensome or troublesome and devaluing women's bodies and appearance.

### **5.3 Thesis Conclusion**

Objective one of the study concluded that comedians use a nuanced linguistic approach in challenging societal norms and stereotypes while eliciting laughter from

the audience. The most used language strategies include hyperbole, irony, and satire, each serving as channel for social critique and commentary. This is because they allow comedians to exaggerate societal issues, expose contradictions, and challenge gender norms in a humorous manner, making complex social issues more accessible and engaging for the audience (Attardo, 2020; Kotthoff, 2006). Juxtaposition, similes, and metaphors are used to highlight absurdities and subvert gender norms, while ambiguity and wordplay contribute to the complexity and engagement to the humour. The comedians were able to use these linguistic strategies to navigate sensitive social issues to provoke thought.

In objective two, the study concluded that there is prevalence of sexist inferences targeting both men and women, with a higher concentration on women. This is likely because traditional gender roles and societal expectations in Kenyan culture tend to position women in more subordinate roles, making them more frequent targets of humor that reinforces stereotypes and gender biases (Glick et al., 2023; Mills, 2008). These inferences perpetuate harmful stereotypes, such as portraying women as emotionally jealous, incompetent, and intellectually inferior, while also trivializing their efforts to enhance their appearance and participate in public spheres. On the other hand, men are depicted as hypersexual, untrustworthy, and disruptive to traditional gender roles. The reinforcement of these stereotypes not only normalizes gender discrimination but also contributes to the marginalization of both genders. It is imperative to challenge these negative portrayals to promote social justices and gender equality, fostering a more inclusive and respectful society. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of media literacy and critical analysis of humour to mitigate the internalization of negative stereotypes of individuals, especially women, who may unknowingly perpetuate these biases to their own detriment.

The study in objective three concluded that there is a systematic reinforcement of sexist stereotypes. Comedians consistently flout Grice's maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner, leading to the perpetuation of negative beliefs about men and women. This is because flouting these maxims creates room for implicit meanings and indirect messaging, allowing comedians to reinforce stereotypes and social biases under the guise of humor. By violating the maxims, especially quality and relation, comedians can present exaggerated, misleading, or contextually inappropriate content, which often relies on existing gender biases to elicit laughter (Attardo, 2020; Mills, 2008). Through violations of the quantity maxims, women are objectified and depicted as dependent on men, while men are portrayed as needing multiple partners for satisfaction, reinforcing traditional gender roles. Violation of the quality maxim involved unsubstantiated generalizations and derogatory remarks, perpetuating negative stereotypes about women and men from specific regions and ethnic groups. Flouting relation maxim disrupts the coherence of performances and introduces unrelated content, often leading to the reinforcement of sexist beliefs about women's unpredictability and inferiority. Consistent violation of the manner maxim through ambiguous language or metaphors contributes to the reinforcement of sexist stereotypes, devaluing women's bodies and appearance while portraying men as burdensome.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the present study recommends the following:

- i) Comedians and producers should undergo training on gender sensitivity to increase awareness of the potential impact of their humour. These trainings can help them understand how their jokes may contribute to reinforcing sexist beliefs and

stereotypes, and empower them to craft comedy that is more respectful and inclusive.

ii) We should foster a culture of critical analysis among audience to encourage them to question and challenge verbal sexist humour. This could involve providing educational materials or discussions alongside comedy shows to help audience members recognize and understand the implications of sexist humour.

iii) There should be establishment of mechanisms for holding comedians accountable for perpetuating harmful stereotypes and prejudices. This could involve feedback mechanisms from audiences, industry guidelines on acceptable content or consequences for comedians who repeatedly engage in sexist humour.

iv) We should encourage the inclusion of different perspectives and voices in comedy to avoid perpetuating harmful stereotypes. This could involve promoting the inclusion of comedians from various backgrounds and genders to provide a more nuanced and inclusive portrayal of society.

### **5.5 Areas for Further Research**

The study proposes further research to be conducted on how various demographic groups perceive and interpret verbal sexist humour in Kenyan stand-up comedy. This could involve conducting surveys or interviews to understand audience attitudes towards gender stereotypes in comedy and how they perceive the impact of such humour on societal norms and beliefs.

Additionally, there is a suggestion to conduct a study comparing the pragmatic interpretation of verbal sexist humour in Kenyan stand-up comedy with comedy scenes in other cultural contexts. This could involve cross-cultural studies to identify

similarities and differences in the use of humour to reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes and norms.

A study could be conducted to explore the effects of exposure to verbal sexist humour on gender attitudes and beliefs. Longitudinal studies could be conducted to examine whether repeated exposure to verbal sexist humour leads to changes in individuals' perceptions of gender roles and stereotypes, both in the short term and long term.

Finally, the study recommends a study to be conducted to investigate the behind-the-scenes practices and decision-making processes involved in the production of stand-up comedy shows like *The Churchill Show*. This could include interviews with producers, writers, and comedians to understand how content is selected, edited and presented to audiences, particularly in relation to gender representation.

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## APPENDIX 1: Raw Data

### **Datum 1: Comedian O (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Chenye mwanamke anahitaji ni mwanaume mmoja mwenye atamtimizia mahitaji yake yote lakini mwanaume anahitaji kila mwanamke ili wamtimize hitaji lake moja. (laughter).*

(What a woman need is one man who can meet all her needs but a man needs every woman so that they meet his one need. (Laughter).

### **Datum 2: Comedian S (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Kenyan women respond very well to compliments... In my village, Ombokoro in Uganda, if you tell a girl that she is beautiful she will ask you who told you (Laughter). They are the kind of girls you tell I love your hair and they ask which one. (Laughter).*

### **Datum 3: Comedian W (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Wasichana wakalenjin ni warembo na hakuna kitu kitamu kama kuo msichana Mkale. (laughter). In fact, msichana Mkale mrembo akikupenda huwa hawezi ngoja umtafute yeye atakutafuta na akukwamilie kama glue. (laughter). Unaona Chelagat amesimama kwa centre (puts hands akimbo to demonstrate how she stands) anangoja mzee yake. (Laughter).*

(Kalenjin girls are beautiful and there is nothing sweet like marrying a Kalenjin girl. (Laughter). In fact, when a beautiful Kalenjin girl loves you she cannot wait for you to seduce her. She is the one who will seduce and stick to you like a glue.

(Laughter). You will see Chelagat standing in a center(*puts hands akimbo to demonstrate how she stands*) waiting for her husband. (Laughter).

**Datum 4: Comedian A (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*...tangu niingie box ya Kinuthia, siku hizi sioni pesa yake. Heri kitambo. Siku hizi pesa ya Kinuthia imekua kama mbunge. ( Laughter).*

(...Since falling in love with Kinuthia, nowadays I do not get his money. It was better before. Nowadays, Kinuthia’s money has become like an MP. (Laughter).

**Datum 5: Comedian A (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*... my husband left his phone behind and I tried to check it. I saw the name “Corona” and out of curiosity, I decided to call to establish which lady she was. To my surprise, it was my phone that rang! (Laughter).*

**Datum 6: Comedian M (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Imagine if we did not have beauty salons we will be seeing ghost creatures.*

**Datum 7: Comedian O (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Men, have you realized that most of these ugly madams and house girl are very fertile. (Laughter). Date a slay queen for ten years, twenty years, or even thirty years she will never get pregnant but touch your house girl once. In fact, don’t even kiss her just shake her hand and she will say I am nine months pregnant. (Laughter).*

**Datum 8: Comedian M (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Geukia huyo mrembo ako karibu na wewe umpe high five lakini usiguse uso unaweza baki kwa mkono. (Laughter). Pia usivulute nywele, anaweza baki na matuta hapo ndani.(laughter).*

(Turn to the beautiful lady near you and give her hi five but do not touch her face it might remain in your hand. (Laughter). Also, do not pull her hair; she might remain with humps inside).

**Datum 9: Comedian F (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Nilisikia stori ingine kua kuna jamaa alipigwa na mke wake na mwiko jikoni mpaka akaaga. Familia yake haikutaka watu wajue nini ilimuua.*

(I heard a certain story of a man who died after being hit by a cooking stick by his wife. (Laughter). His family did not want people to know what killed him)).

**Datum 10: Comedian M (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Ukioa mwanamke mMeru na ukose kwenda kazi atakuambia, “Baba Kagwira, nilifikiri wanaume wote wako mahali pao pa kazi. Ni wewe tu umeamua kubaki nyumbani? Karani, nipe ile panga tulinoa jana. (Laughter).*

(When you marry a Meru woman and you fail to go to work she will tell you, “Father Kagwira, I thought all men are at their places of work. It is only you who has decided to remain at home? Karani, give me that panga which we sharpened yesterday. (Laughter).

**Datum 11: Comedian M (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*For a lady kukaa poa is not a joke... anaingizwa ndani kwa kipipa anachomwa kichwa na hapo ndio unaona mademu wanachomwa utosi. Kwanza wa Kiambu wanakuja salon wakiringa na unajua vile wanakuanga na miguu yao peke yao. Huku wako sawa kidogo (pointing to the front of the legs) imeshikana hapa kwa magoti*

*halafu ikaachana hapo mbele lakini akigeuka huku nyuma (pointing to the butts) huku kuliama.(laughter).*

(For a lady to be smart is not a joke... her head is placed in a tank and the hair curled. That is when you see ladies' foreheads being burned. Kiambu women in particular come to the salon putting on airs and you know how they have their own unique legs. They are a bit okay here (pointing to the front of the legs) with the knees in close contact then there is separation in front but when they turn their behind (pointing to the butt) is deserted. (Laughter).

**Datum 12: Comedian S (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*You black women you make it so hard for us men to be romantic... a white woman can tell her husband, “honey, wrap your hand through my hair” and when he wraps it is all smooth. Black women if you tell your men that, all they will feel are potholes, and bumps. (Laughter). Have you seen some of you put on weaves so badly that when someone calls you and you turn the weave remains in the same direction. (Laughter).*

**Datum 13: Comedian C (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*...Nilikutana na msichana anaitwa Fatuma na tukabidilishana namba lakini nilikaa siku tatu sijampigia. Siku moja...akaanza kuniambia “...nikikupa namba yangu nataka unipigie simu uniambie Fatuma nakupenda. Sili wala kunywa nyumbani na nagombanishwa kila mara na wazazi kwa sababu nilishawaambia nimepata mume na hawajamuona. (laughter).*

(...I met a Swahili girl called Fatuma and we exchanged phone numbers but I stayed for three days without calling her. One day... she began telling me, “...when I give

you my number I want you to call me and tell me Fatuma I love you so much. I do not drink or eat at home and I am always being quarreled by my parents because I had informed them that I have got a husband yet they have not seen him. (Laughter).

**Datum 14: Comedian M (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Ladies wa Kiambu wanajaribungu kuongea Kizungu sana... eti “Hi guys from salon!” na ako ndani ya salon already.( Laughter). In fact wanaita salon, saloon... (Laughter). Halafu wanasema, “actually mi nilikua nataka that hairstyle ya Chebesh. Anaingia kwa drier anachomwa kichwa for three hours...anatoka hapo amejam na ile joto anasikia kwa kichwa anashinda akiuliza watu, “do I look hot?”*

(Kiambu ladies try to speak English a lot... that, “Hi guys from salon!” (Parodies a mixture of English and kikuyu accent) and yet she is in the salon already. (Laughter). In fact, they call salon saloon... (Laughter). Then they say, “actually, I wanted that hairstyle of Chebesh (a mispronunciation of the name “Shebesh”). She enters a drier and her hair is dried for three hours... she gets out of the salon so angry. With the heat she is feeling on her head, she keeps on asking people “do I look hot?”(Laughter).

**Datum 15: Comedian S (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Nakumbuka wakati wa Covid-19 tukiwa nyumbani wakati wowote mke wangu alipokuwa anapita mbele yangu alikuwa anasema, “ Mungu tuokoe na hili janga. ( Laughter). Sikuelewa ni mimi au Korona alikuwa anamaanisha.*

(I remember when we were at home during Covid-19 pandemic, any time my wife would pass in front of me, she used to say “Jesus rescue us from this plague. (Laughter). I did not understand whether she meant me or the Covid-19).

**Datum 16: Comedian O (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Ladies stop generalizing that all men are the same. Who told you to taste all of them? (Laughter). That energy you are focusing on all of them, can you manage one. Have you tasted me? (Laughter).*

**Datum 17: Comedian A (Churchill show, Nov, 2023)**

*... niko na bwana lakini si Maasai. Nyinyi wanaume waMaasai vile mnapenda kuruka sana si mtanipea boli halafu mruke hiyo story? (Laughter).*

(...I have a husband but he is not a Maasai. You Maasai men the way you love jumping will you not impregnate me and then deny responsibility? (Laughter)).

**Datum 18: Comedian S (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*If there is anything good that happened to me is Covid- 19 because my wife used to put on her face mask always to keep her mouth shut. (Laughter). So, let us call it a blessing instead of a virus. (Laughter).*

**Datum 19: Comedian Y (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*I don't understand women... Man has produced engineers, doctors and we can do and understand many things like physics and chemistry but we cannot understand women. Even women cannot understand themselves. (Laughter).*

**Datum 20: Comedian S (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*If you are a man and you propose a relationship to an African woman and she says “no” she means “yes.” (Laughter). Us men when we tell a girl we love her we mean that.*

**Datum 21: Comedian F (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*...Mademu wa Nairobi wako na figure nzuri na wanajiita sweet sugar lakini wote ni gold diggers. (Laughter). Wanakuja Churchill Show wamepiga maperfume na macologne that is because hawapendi kuoga. (Laughter).*

*(...ladies in Nairobi have a nice body figure and they call themselves sweet sugar but all of them are gold diggers. (Laughter). They come to Churchill Show having put on perfumes and colognes because they don't love taking shower. (Laughter)).*

**Datum 22: Comedian O (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Women are complicated... if you decide to understand women, you will never understand them. God created both man and woman and put eye brows on both of them but only a woman realized she does not need them and she shaved them. (Laughter). Women were walking in the Garden of Eden without eye brows. They realized nobody can notice their faces and the back of their head so, they decided to return the eye brows but now they are not accurate like the way God put them.*

**Datum 23: Comedian M (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Ladies wa Nairobi wanapenda gari za Demio na unawaona kwa jam na... hazina tint. (He imitates the way they drive putting on airs while touching their hair and eyes). Wakisukumwa nje ya barabara...wakijaribu kurudi kwa barabara,*

*wanasukumwa tena mpaka nje halafu wanaenda wanaingia kwa mtaro mahali wanashindwa kuzitoa coz zimebalance kwa pavement. (Laughter)... wanaanza kupigia boyfriends wao wawazaidie “hi beb, can you imagine I have had an accident? (Laughter).*

(Ladies of Nairobi love Demio vehicles and you will see them in jam...and they are untinted (Imitates the way they drive putting on airs while touching on their eyes and hairs). When they are pushed out of the road ... they attempt to come to the road but they are pushed back again to the outside and they land in a ditch where they fail to get out because they have balanced in a pavement. (Laughter). They begin to call their boyfriends for help, “Hi babe, can you imagine I have had an accident? (Laughter).

**Datum 24: Comedian M (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Mademu mi najuanga hampendanangi sana...mwenye mmekaa naye ama mnatembea naye sana na anashindanga amesmile hivi (he demonstrates the way she smiles), waja nikuambie vitu anasemanga kama humwangalii usitake kujua. Wakati ako na rafiki yake Wamboi anasema, “... Oh, ndio hicho kiSharon sikipendi. (laughter). Aki kinakaanga kijinga.*

(Ladies I know you do not love each other much... the one you are seated next to or you walk with a lot and she keeps smiling like this (he demonstrates the way she smiles), let me tell you the things she says when you are not looking at her don't bother to know. When she is with her friend Wamboi she says, “...Oh, that is Sharon, I do not love her. (laughter). She is foolish.)

**Datum 25: Comedian O (Churchill Show, Nov, 2023)**

*Men are confused elements. To know how confused they are, they work hard and get money to marry fine looking girls like these madams over here. The same men will go and cheat on their beautiful girls with ugly madams. (Laughter).*

## APPENDIX 2: Categorization of Sexist Inferences and Assigned Codes

Theme	Codes	Sample utterances
Gendered relationships and sexuality	Gender Relations	<i>Men are confused elements. To know how confused they are, they work hard and get money to marry fine looking girls like these madams over here. The same men will go and cheat on their beautiful girls with ugly madams. (Laughter). (Comedian O, November, 2023, Churchill Show).</i>
Intellectual and emotional stereotype	Intellectual abilities	<i>Idon'tunderstand women... Man has produced engineers, doctors and we can do and understand many things like physics and chemistry but we cannot understand women. Even women cannot understand themselves. (Laughter). (Comedian Y, November, 2023, Churchill Show).</i>
Physical appearance and beauty standards	Physical appearance	<p>1. <i>Geukia huyo mrembo ako karibu na wewe umpe hi five lakini usiguse uso unaweza baki kwa mkono. (Laughter). Pia usivulute nywele, anaweza baki na matutahapo ndani. (laughter) (Comedian M, 2023, November, Churchill Show).</i></p> <p><i>(Turn to the beautiful lady near you and give her hi five but do not touch her face it might remain in your hand. (Laughter). Also, do not pull her hair; she might remain with humps inside. (Comedian M, 2023, November, Churchill Show).</i></p>

Gender stereotypes and roles	Gender roles	<p><i>Chenye mwanamke anahitaji ni mwanaume mmoja mwenye atamtimizia mahitaji yake yote lakini mwanaume anahitaji kila mwanamke ili wamtimizie hataji lake moja.(laughter)</i> (Comedian O, 2023, November, Churchill Show).</p> <p>(What a woman need is one man who can meet all her needs but a man needs every woman so that they meet his one need. (Laughter) (Comedian O, 2023, November, Churchill Show).</p>
Behavioural stereotypes	Behavioural expectations	<p><i>Ladies stop generalizing that all men are the same. Who told you to taste all of them? (Laughter). That energy you are focusing on all of them, can you manage one. Have you tasted me? (Laughter).</i> (Comedian O, November, 2023, Churchill Show).</p>

**APPENDIX 3: Observation Sheet for Live Comedic Performances on the  
Churchill Show**

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Comedian's Name</b>	<b>Venue/ Location</b>	<b>Performance Type</b>	<b>Audience Reaction</b>	<b>Comedic Technique</b>	<b>Perfor- mance Quality</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>	<b>Comments/ Notes</b>

## APPENDIX 4: Research Approval from Directorate of Post Graduate Studies



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Kenya

Directorate of Postgraduate Studies

Ref: MMU/COR: 509099

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Naftal Nyakundi  
LAL/H/01-70378/2021  
P.O. Box 190-50100  
KAKAMEGA

Dear Mr. Nyakundi

**RE: APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL**

I am pleased to inform you that the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies has considered and approved your PhD. Proposal entitled: *'A Pragmatic Interpretation of Verbal Sexist Humor in Kenya Stand-Up Comedy: A Study of Churchill Show.'* and appointed the following as supervisors:

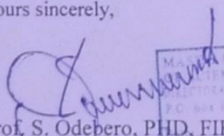
1. Dr. Benard A. Mudogo - MMUST
2. Dr. David Barasa - MMUST

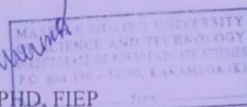
You are required to submit through your supervisor(s) progress reports every three months to the Director of Postgraduate Studies. Such reports should be copied to the following: Chairman, School of Social Arts and Social Sciences Graduate Studies Committee and Chairman, Department of Language and Literature Education. Kindly adhere to research ethics consideration in conducting research.

It is the policy and regulations of the University that you observe a deadline of three years from the date of registration to complete your PhD thesis. Do not hesitate to consult this office in case of any problem encountered in the course of your work.




We wish you the best in your research and hope the study will make original contribution to knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

  
Prof. S. Odebero, PHD, FIEP  
DIRECTOR, DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES



## APPENDIX 5: Research Approval from NACOSTI

 <b>REPUBLIC OF KENYA</b>	 <b>NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &amp; INNOVATION</b>
Ref No: <b>343360</b>	Date of Issue: <b>09/November/2023</b>
<b>RESEARCH LICENSE</b>	
	
<b>This is to Certify that Mr. naftal Nyakundi of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Transzoia on the topic: A PRAGMATIC INTERPRETATION OF VERBAL SEXIST HUMOUR IN KENYA STAND-UP COMEDY: A STUDY OF CHURCHILL SHOW for the period ending : 09/November/2024.</b>	
License No: <b>NACOSTI/P/23/31086</b>	
343360	
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