The Influence Of Telenovelas On Romantic Relationship Behaviour: A Case Of Kenya Institute Of Mass Communication (KIMC) Female Students

by

Grace Kinya Mbogori

A thesis presented to the School of Communication

of

Daystar University
Nairobi, Kenya

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in Communication

August 2018
APPROVAL

THE INFLUENCE OF TELENOVelas ON ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP BEHAVIOUR: A CASE OF KENYA INSTITUTE OF MASS COMMUNICATION (KIMC) FEMALE STUDENTS

by

Grace Kinya Mbogori

In accordance with Daystar University policies, this thesis is accepted in partial fulfilment of requirements for the Master of Arts degree.

Date:

24/9/2018

Clayton Peel, PhD, 1st Supervisor

Michael Bowen, PhD, 2nd Supervisor

Wambui Wamunyu, PhD, HoD, Media and Film Studies Department

Levi Obonyo, PhD, Dean, School of Communication
DECLARATION

THE INFLUENCE OF TELENOVELAS ON ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP BEHAVIOUR: A CASE OF KENYA INSTITUTE OF MASS COMMUNICATION (KIMC) FEMALE STUDENTS

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit.

Signed: ___________________     Date: _______________
             Grace Kinya Mbogori
              09-1113
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisors, Dr. Clayton Peel and Prof. Michael Bowen, for their support and feedback during this journey. I would also like to thank all the lecturers who equipped me with knowledge and skill during the course work. Many thanks to my family for providing the resources and encouragement towards the completion of this study. I am also grateful to God for enabling me complete this study. Thanks be to God.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL .......................................................................................................................... ii  
DECLARATION ......................................................................................................................... iv  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .......................................................................................................... v  
TABLE OF CONTENTS .......................................................................................................... vi  
LIST OF TABLES ................................................................................................................... viii  
LIST OF FIGURES .................................................................................................................. ix  
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ................................................................. x  
ABSTRACT .............................................................................................................................. xi  
DEDICATION .......................................................................................................................... xii  
CHAPTER ONE ...................................................................................................................... 1  
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY ...................................................... 1  
Introduction ............................................................................................................................ 1  
Background to the Study ....................................................................................................... 1  
Statement of the Problem ..................................................................................................... 4  
Purpose of the Study ............................................................................................................. 5  
Objectives of the Study ........................................................................................................ 5  
Research Questions ............................................................................................................. 5  
Justification of the Study ...................................................................................................... 6  
Significance of the Study ...................................................................................................... 6  
Assumptions of the Study ..................................................................................................... 7  
Scope of the Study .............................................................................................................. 7  
Limitations and Delimitations of the Study ........................................................................ 7  
Definition of Terms ............................................................................................................. 8  
Summary ............................................................................................................................... 10  
CHAPTER TWO .................................................................................................................... 11  
LITERATURE REVIEW ........................................................................................................ 11  
Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 11  
Theoretical Framework ....................................................................................................... 11  
General Literature Review ................................................................................................. 16  
Empirical Literature Review ............................................................................................... 29  
Conceptual Framework ...................................................................................................... 38  
Discussion ............................................................................................................................ 38  
Summary ............................................................................................................................... 39  
CHAPTER THREE ................................................................................................................. 40  
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ............................................................................................. 40  
Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 40  
Research Design .................................................................................................................. 40  
Population ............................................................................................................................ 40  
Target Population ................................................................................................................ 40  
Sample Size .......................................................................................................................... 41  
Sampling Technique .......................................................................................................... 41  
Data Collection Instruments ............................................................................................... 42  
Types of Data ....................................................................................................................... 42  
Data Collection Procedures ............................................................................................... 42  
Pretesting .............................................................................................................................. 42  
Data Analysis Plan .............................................................................................................. 43  
Ethical Considerations ....................................................................................................... 43  
Summary ............................................................................................................................... 44
LIST OF TABLES

Table 2. 1: Telenovelas Aired in Kenya as from January 2014 to May 2014. ............ 21
Table 4. 1: Most Watched Telenovelas in the First, Second and Third Positions...... 47
Table 4. 2: Reasons for Watching Telenovelas............................................................ 52
Table 4. 3: Favourite Character in a Telenovela ...................................................... 53
Table 4. 4 Reasons for Wanting to be Like Telenovela Characters............................. 55
Table 4. 5: Whether Telenovelas Affected Respondents ......................................... 68
Table 4. 6: Effects of Watching Telenovelas............................................................. 68
Table 4. 7 Telenovela Influence Correlations............................................................ 70
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework .......................................................... 38
Figure 4.1 Watching Telenovelas ................................................................. 45
Figure 4.2: Age of Respondents ................................................................. 46
Figure 4.3: Last Time a Telenovela was Watched .................................. 48
Figure 4.4: Hours Spent Watching Telenovelas on College Weekdays ........ 49
Figure 4.5: Hours Spent Watching Telenovelas on College Weekends .... 50
Figure 4.6: Hours Spent Watching Telenovelas on Holiday Weekdays ...... 51
Figure 4.7: Wish to be Like Character ....................................................... 54
Figure 4.8: Influence of Telenovelas in Telling Lies ............................... 56
Figure 4.9: Influence of Telenovelas in Having Sex .................................. 57
Figure 4.10: Influence of Telenovelas in Avoiding Conflict ..................... 58
Figure 4.11: Influence of Telenovelas in Kissing ....................................... 59
Figure 4.12: Influence of Telenovelas in Cheating on Boyfriend ............... 60
Figure 4.13: Influence of Telenovelas in Chasing After a Man ................. 61
Figure 4.14: Influence of Telenovelas in Spying ...................................... 62
Figure 4.15: Influence of Telenovelas in Faking Pregnancy ..................... 63
Figure 4.16: Influence of Telenovelas on Students to Use Their Body Gainfully .... 64
Figure 4.17: Influence of Telenovelas in Accepting Violence .................. 65
Figure 4.18: Influence of Telenovelas in Expecting Flowers and Chocolates .... 66
Figure 4.19: Influence of Telenovelas in Eloping with Boyfriend ............ 67
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KFCB</td>
<td>Kenya Film and Classification Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNBS</td>
<td>Kenya National Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIMC</td>
<td>Kenya Institute of Mass Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KBC</td>
<td>Kenya Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KTN</td>
<td>Kenya Television Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACOSTI</td>
<td>The National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTV</td>
<td>Nation Television</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAGA</td>
<td>Semi-Autonomous Government Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOK</td>
<td>Voice of Kenya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

This research examined the influence of telenovelas on romantic relationship behaviour among female college students in Nairobi by focusing on particular romantic relationship behaviours found in telenovelas. The objectives of the study were to; establish the number of hours devoted to watching telenovelas, determine the motivations of watching telenovelas, find out whether students identified with telenovela characters and determine if the watching of telenovelas influenced students’ behaviour in romantic relationships. Descriptive research design was used and the target population was female students enrolled at Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (KIMC). A total of 132 questionnaires were used in data collection, which was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The study found that the students watched telenovelas to learn about romantic relationships at 93.4%, to relax at 92.5% and to learn about people and the world at 88.7%. A majority (67%) wished to be like their favourite telenovela characters. Furthermore, a large number of the respondents agreed that telenovelas influenced them in avoiding conflict with their partner at 77.5%, kissing their boyfriends at 62.3%, and expecting flowers and chocolates from their boyfriends at 54.7%. The study concluded that college students identified with both the male and female models presented and watched primarily to learn about romantic relationships. The study recommended that media literacy courses should be compulsory for students so that they can better understand media and local producers to create local stories that share African values.
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the late Beatrice Mbogori, my mother, cheerleader and friend.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

This study examined the behaviour of female college students towards romantic relationships, and whether their behaviour is determined by the media they consume, as proposed by Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory. In a research on media programmes, Nguru (2013) observed that television programmes introduced new ways of communicating in relationships such as kissing. Wambua (2014) also found out that Latin-American telenovelas influenced girls’ ways of dressing and taught girls risky sexual behaviour. Influence is defined as the ‘power to affect somebody’s actions’ (Crowther, n.d, p. 611) and in this study it was measured through a self-administered questionnaire. This chapter focuses on the background to the study, identifies the research problem, and lays out the research objectives, research questions, justifications, the significance of the study, assumptions of the study, scope of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study and defines the terms used.

Background to the Study

Media is a powerful influence on society. Television has been known to have positive and negative effects on school children by making them more knowledgeable and creative but also causing poor grades (Mwangi, 2010). Wambua (2014) also found out that television affects the social life of teenage girls by influencing their dressing code, made them more inclined to abuse drugs and made them take part in irresponsible sexual behaviour. However, media is not always an undesirable source as it can help pre-adolescence girls create love stories in their minds. This is
preferable to girls entering a relationship at an early age (Day, Epstein, & Ward, 2006), and the television script therefore acts as a substitute for preliminary exposure.

Telenovelas refer to Latin American soap operas produced mainly by Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia (Rego & La Pastina, 2007). Telenovelas are immensely popular among Kenyan television audiences (Lavi, 2011). Telenovelas, unlike soap operas, have a distinct beginning, middle, and end, last for a limited period of time such as six months or one year, and operate in real time (Sivaldo, 2011). Telenovela production in Latin American countries began by modifying Cuban radio dramas (Venegas, 1998).

Lavi (2011) stated that the first telenovelas to be broadcast in Kenya were Mexican soap operas such as The rich also cry, The wild rose and No one but you. Currently, Citizen Television, a Kenyan television station, airs telenovelas at the 6.00 pm, 8.00 pm and 10.00 pm timeslot, between Monday and Friday. They also feature on other Kenyan television stations such as KBC at 8.00 pm, NTV at 6:00 pm, and KTN at 6.00 pm and 10.00 pm (Nyakangi, 2015). And this is excluding the repeats at 11.00 am and 3.00 pm on KBC and K24 respectively (Nyakangi, 2015).

The main theory in the study is Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory. Bandura believed that people learnt not only through direct experience but through observations or modelling (Miller, 2005). In experiments of imitation of film related aggressive models, children were exposed to real life models, filmed models, as well as aggressive cartoon characters (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1963). It was found that aggressive characters on film were the most influential. In a Kenyan study, Njoroge (2007) found that 36.2% of children confessed that they copied what they saw on television while 29.2% copied the fighting on television during their playtime and 57.8% were tempted to try what they watched on television. Barsulai (2010) found
out that 47% of the female respondents admitted to taking measures to look like the women in western programs such as dieting, skipping meals, exercising and even surgery.

Modelling is an important way of learning behaviour and people are influenced in their behaviour by filmed models (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1963). This research looked deeper into modelling as it seeks to find out if female college students identify with the characters found in televised soap operas. This theory was also used to determine if the watching of televised soap operas influences their actions in romantic relationships.

Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (KIMC) was founded in 1961 as a Voice of Kenya (VOK) technician training school (Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (KIMC), 2011). It has five training departments: information, film production, radio and television production, engineering and postgraduate training and research – and offers both regular and evening programmes (Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (KIMC), 2011). It offers diplomas in Journalism, Broadcast Journalism, Advertising and Public Relations, Film and Video production, Animation and Graphic Design, Television production, Radio production, Electronics Engineering, Telecommunication Engineering, and Media Technology (Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (KIMC), 2011). In addition, KIMC offers a postgraduate diploma in Mass Communication. The institute in collaboration with University of Nairobi offers a Bachelors degree in Broadcast Production where students can specialise in Film production, Radio production or Television production (Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (KIMC), 2011).

KIMC became a Semi-Autonomous Government Agency (SAGA) through a Legal Notice number 197 of December 20, 2011 which detached the institution from
the Ministry of Information and Communication, making it in charge of its own affairs (Katiambo, 2013). The institution has three televisions for students for recreational viewing: one at the female hostels, another one at the male hostel, and the last one in the student mess. The research will be done in the Information, Film and Radio and Television departments of the college because they contain the largest number of female students.

Statement of the Problem

Wright (2009) pointed out that relationships in soap operas tend to be adulterous and promiscuous. They are also characterized by “upheaval, disorder and pandemonium” (Augustine, 2005, p. 61). If the powerful media effects arguments of scholars such as McCombs and Reynolds (2009) and Tewksbury and Scheufele (2009) are credible, then there remains a chance that the telenovelas that female college students watch may have a negative impact through character modelling on the behaviour in the romantic relationships that the film characters establish, given the often tumultuous nature of the relationships depicted. The question posed in this research, is, is the behaviour of female college students in romantic relationships influenced by watching telenovelas? The research population were female students at KIMC, because it is a media college and students have access to television facilities and are interested in media because they are studying various aspects of it. This research is unique because it looks at particular behaviours found in relationships such as kissing, avoiding conflict, eloping, faking pregnancy, accepting male violence, expecting flowers and chocolates, telling lies, spying, having sex, cheating on one’s boyfriend and seducing someone else’s boyfriend.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the influence that telenovelas have on female college students’ behaviour in romantic relationships.

Objectives of the Study

In this study the objectives were:

1. To establish the number of hours devoted to watching telenovelas by female college students at KIMC.
2. To determine the motivations of watching telenovelas by female students at KIMC.
3. To find out whether female college students identified with telenovela characters.
4. To determine if the watching of telenovelas influenced the behaviour of female college students in romantic relationships.

Research Questions

1. What was the number of hours devoted to watching of telenovelas by female students at KIMC?
2. What motivated female students at KIMC to watch telenovelas?
3. Did female college students identify with the models presented by the telenovela characters?
4. What influence, if any, did telenovelas have on female students’ behaviour in romantic relationships?
Justification of the Study

This research studies telenovelas, one of the most common and most popular television genres found on Kenyan television. To the communication scholar, such a study could help in understanding the link between consumption of media and current behaviour as well as add more data on Social Cognitive Theory. The researcher is interested in romantic relationship behaviours college women learn from the consumption of this popular genre of television. Women are chosen as the respondents because they are the primary target of telenovelas thus forming a significant viewership for the study (Mumford, 2010).

Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it looks at the influence soap operas have on the behaviour of college students. The findings will expand the knowledge area by linking soap opera watching with specific romantic relationship behaviours based on the social cognitive theory. The findings could be important to governmental bodies such as the Kenya Film and Classification Board (KFCB) as well as to programme creators and media practitioners in illuminating the social impact of films and television programming. They will help in creating better policies for television content regulation and classification.

The findings are also useful to parents and guardians in evaluating the influence soap operas have on relationships, as well as helping educators and counsellors to better understand college students’ behaviour, and be able to counsel students accordingly. For college students, this research could serve as a source of reflection that will help them become critical viewers of television programming. Colleges and universities, through this study, can also be encouraged to provide media literacy classes to encourage critical thinking and understanding of media.
Assumptions of the Study

This study made the following assumptions:

1. That female college students watch telenovelas.
2. That female college students gave honest responses when interviewed for the research.
3. That female college students were able to state the influence of telenovelas on romantic relationships.
4. Most students in college were between the ages of 20 to 24.

Scope of the Study

The respondents of this research were female students drawn from KIMC between the ages of 20 years to 24 years. Students in this age group were chosen because they were in the early stages of adulthood, still forming their ideas on relationships, had some experience in relationships and were newly enrolled in the college therefore their feedback would not be affected by learning. KIMC was chosen because it is a middle level college and students have access to television screens in hostels. All female students in their first year of study were surveyed regardless of their status of being in the regular day or evening parallel programme. The following departments were chosen: Information, Film and Radio and Television departments because they contain the largest number of female students.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Honesty of respondents is critical in the gathering of data since it is crucial in making correct conclusions. The researcher persuaded respondents of the fact that the study would be done with the highest confidentiality, due to the nature and implications of the questions. The study was limited to female students at KIMC in
Nairobi, a college in South B, an urban area, since access to mass media is highest among residents of Nairobi (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) & Inner City Fund (ICF) Macro, 2010). The focus is only on female students, the study does not avail information on how young males interact with telenovelas. Additionally, the study was not focussed on the levels of media literacy of the subjects. Furthermore, only first year students in their first semester were surveyed to avoid pre-conditioned responses based on media study.

Definition of Terms

Behaviour is defined as a manner of acting in a specific environment (Crowther, n.d). In this research, behaviour refers to the actions that take place in a romantic relationship.

Identification occurs with a model. This "involves taking on (or adopting) observed behaviours, values, beliefs and attitudes of the person with whom you are identifying" (McLeod S., 2011, p. 1). In this study, identification is perceived as a desire to be like a television model and adopting the model’s behaviour in romantic relationships.

Influence refers to "the power to affect somebody’s actions, character or beliefs” (Crowther, n.d, p. 611). In this study, influence is perceived as the power a model has to change the respondent’s behaviour.

A model is a person who demonstrates behaviour and the modelling process may also involve receiving rewards and punishments (Miller, 2005). In this study, a model is perceived as someone the respondents look up to, admire and want to be like and modelling is an attentive process whereby the model is demonstrating a romantic relationship behaviour and the recipient of this behaviour is copying the exact behaviour or an advanced form of that behaviour.
Motivate refers to the reasons for a specific behaviour (Crowther, n.d). In this study, motivate refers to reasons that make respondents watch telenovelas.

Romantic relationships are committed voluntary interactions between two people. In this research, romantic relationships refer specifically to heterosexual relationships only.

Self-regulation is the influence and control one has on their own behaviour, emotions and cognitive process (Bronson, 2000). In this study, self-regulation refers to the respondent’s standards and control on their behaviour, emotions and cognitive process in regards to the romantic relationship process.

Telenovelas refer specifically to Latin American soap operas that run for a shorter time of six months to one year (Sivaldo, 2011). They are fictional, focus on relationships between characters (Mumford, 2010) and have a clear beginning, middle and end (Sivaldo, 2011).

Social cognitive theory is based on the idea that learning takes place in a social setting and is influenced by the constantly changing and corresponding action of three main elements of person, behaviour and environment (Bandura, 2001; Grusec, 1992; Miller, 2005).

Watching telenovelas refers to taking the time to look or listen to telenovelas with attention and having a reason or motivation to do so.
Summary

This chapter has introduced a study that deals with the influence of telenovelas on behaviour in romantic relationships among female college students in Nairobi. The background of the study has been discussed highlighting the earliest telenovelas, the effects of media, the main theory of the research and the study site. Four main objectives have been highlighted as well as the statement of the problem, purpose, research questions, justification, significance, assumptions, scope, limitations and delimitations and key terms. The next chapter offers a review of literature related to the study.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter reviews literature related to the influence of telenovelas on female college students’ behaviour in romantic relationships by describing studies that have been done as well as reviewing the historical context of telenovelas. It also gives the theoretical framework upon which this study is anchored as well as the conceptual framework guiding this research.

Theoretical Framework

Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory as espoused by Albert Bandura is the main theory of this research. It was previously known as social learning theory in its initial stages of development (Miller, 2005). It proposes that individuals learn through observation or modelling (Bandura, 2001; Grusec, 1992; Miller, 2005). Bandura (2001) built the case for learning by watching others by saying that survival of culture can be attributed to modelling as language, values, social practices are passed on in this way. Furthermore, he believes that symbolic modelling in media is powerful because one model can influence a large number of people even in the remotest of locations. Also because of people’s limited experiences, people depend on a reality created not through direct experience but through what is seen and heard in the media (Bandura 2001).

Bandura (2001) gave four components of modelling – attention, retention, motor reproduction and motivational variables. One must pay attention to the behaviour in order to learn. An attractive and powerful model will be very inticing
and thus demand attention (Grusec, 1992). Furthermore, the importance and usefulness of the modelled behaviour plays an important part on whether the activity is modelled as well as the intellectual abilities and assumptions of the student of the behaviour.

Retention refers to the maintenance of the observed behaviour in memory in symbolic visual or verbal codes (Grusec, 1992). For this to happen, data needs to be converted to rules and ideas (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 2001). This information is then repeated and recreated in the mind of the observer. The assumptions and emotional state of the observer play an important role at this stage (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 2001).

Motor reproduction is the ability of the observer to conduct the actions observed (Grusec, 1992). For this to take place, symbols are translated into actions and ideas are matched with behaviour (Bandura, 2001). Bandura says that the observer tries to come close as possible to the desired behaviour and will eventually master the activity after a few attempts. He also says that it is important for the model to give feedback as well as closely monitor the behaviour. The greater the skill set the learner has the easier it will be for the learner to pick up this behaviour.

Finally, motivational variables refer to the incentives put in place to motivate the modelled actions (Grusec, 1992). Bandura (2001) believed that three types of incentives influence the observer. First of all, direct incentives are from experiencing the behaviour itself. These are the rewards the student receives from initiating the behaviour. Secondly, vicarious incentives refer to the rewards experienced by others. If the model is rewarded for the action the learner is more motivated to learn so as to experience the same. Thirdly, self-produced incentives come from the individual themselves as they censure or approve a course of action. The observers apply a
standard of behaviour that is satisfying to them. Bandura stated that behaviour is established if it is both socially approved and in alignment with one’s own self sanctions. He added that outside influences can affect an individual if they do not have their own self sanctions.

Bandura (1989) believed that human behaviour is shaped by an interaction between the environment, individual and behaviour. These three factors interact and influence each other bi-directionally. An individual’s beliefs and goals motivate his behaviour and the results of his behaviour have an impact on the individual (Grusec, 1992). An individual also affects his environment (such as the people around him) likewise the people in his environment through modelling, instruction and persuasion affect the individual (Bandura, 1989; Grusec, 1992). The environment affects his behaviour for example a teenager can start smoking because of his friends. He gives an example of reciprocal determinism of people who constantly form troublesome relationships because of their behaviour and therefore always receive negative results.

Self-regulation is the influence and control one has on their own behaviour, emotions and cognitive process (Bronson, 2000). It is made up of self-monitoring of performance, judgement of conduct based on standards, and self-reaction (Bandura, 1991). Self-regulation is made possible through modelling and direct experience for example children learn what is good and bad from parent’s reaction to a particular behaviour. They also learn from the standards parents set for themselves and this informs their own standards (Grusec, 1992). Self-monitoring takes place when one reflects on the causes and effects of one’s conduct while judgement of conduct is based on current performance, personal standards as well as how others have performed. Self-reaction refers to how the individual keeps themselves motivated to
perform the action and this could be from personal incentives such as free time and recreation activities (Bandura, 1991).

Self-efficacy refers to the confidence one has. “Efficacy beliefs influence whether people think optimistically or pessimistically, the courses of action they choose to pursue; the goals they set for themselves, and their commitment to them (Bandura, 2003, p. 171). Self-efficacy can determine if behaviour is acquired. If a person believes that a certain goal is achievable, because of their positive belief they will willingly pursue this goal. Self-efficacy is determined by previous achievements, observation of others, persuasion by people and one’s psychological state. Bandura created a theory of self-efficacy to explain self-efficacy further (Grusec, 1992).

In Bandura’s (1983) study of the influence of social reinforcement and the behaviour of models in shaping children’s moral judgement, it was found that modelling altered the moral judgement of children especially if the outcome of a particular action is rewarded. Additionally, the values of the children changed despite the children themselves criticizing the model for that particular behaviour (Bandura, 1983). Furthermore, in experiments of imitation of film-related aggressive models, children interacted with physical models, filmed models as well as aggressive cartoon characters. It was found that filmed models and aggressive character models were very influential.

Indeed, the available data suggest that, of the three experimental conditions, exposure to humans on film portraying aggression was the most influential in eliciting and shaping aggressive behaviour. Subjects in this condition, in relation to the control subjects, exhibited more total aggression, more imitative aggression, more partially imitative behaviour, such as sitting on the Bobo doll and mallet aggression, and they engaged in significantly more aggressive gun play. In addition, they performed
significantly more aggressive gun play than did subjects who were exposed to the real
life aggressive models. (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1963, p. 7)

Observational learning does not necessarily mean that the observer will
directly imitate the behaviour; Rather, new behaviours “that go beyond what they
have seen, read or heard” (Bandura, 2003, p. 169) are created. Observed behaviour
can not only be encouraged but discouraged, and a supressed behaviour may occur
despite the observer having not engaged in it or be punished for it (Grusec, 1992).
These supressed behaviours can come up again when an unpunished model is
observed.

Dittmann (2004) gave an example of Bandura’s social cognitive theory in
practice in the Mexican soap opera Ven Conmigo (Come with me) which was created
to encourage enrolment in a national literacy study program. The soap opera
influenced over 1 million people to enrol. The author adds that modelling, watching
the experience of others, and the emotional involvement in the programs influenced
this behaviour. In the telenovelas, viewers watched characters of varying ages
attempting to become literate. The author gives examples of different varieties of role
models provided such as positive, negative and transitional models. He mentions that
positive role models were literate while negative role models rejected literacy and
transitional models took on the modelled behaviour and were gradually benefiting
from this change. Just from airing one episode, 25,000 people lined up at the national
distribution centre to receive a free literacy booklet (Smith, 2002). The social
cognitive theory is thus relevant in this research because the research found out that
female college students identified with telenovela characters. College students saw
these characters as models and are influenced in their behaviour.
Weaknesses of Theory

The social cognitive theory is based on the interaction of person, behaviour and environment and it is not clear the magnitude of influence each one of these factors play on actual behaviour (Boston University School of Public Health, 2016). The theory also takes for granted that a change in behaviour leads to a change in the person, something that may not be true all the time.

Additionally, biological, hormonal predispositions, genetic conditions and emotion are not considered as an influence in the creation of behaviour (Boston University School of Public Health, 2016; Burdick, 2014). Furthermore, Bandura’s focal point in this theory is modelling yet not much theoretical and empirical research has been done on the other aspects causing behaviour change such as reinforcement, punishment and reasoning (Grusec, 1992). These weaknesses were delimited through choosing a statement of the problem that deals specifically with modelling behaviour rather than other aspects in social cognitive theory that may not be clear.

General Literature Review

History of Telenovelas

Telenovelas refer to Latin American soap operas produced mainly by Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela and Colombia. The first two countries are their main exporters (Rego & La Pastina, 2007). Soap operas are fictional television programmes that run several times in a week that focus on relationships between characters (Mumford, 2010). Telenovelas unlike American or European soap operas have a clear beginning, middle, and end (Sivaldo, 2011; Public Broadcasting Service, 2012), last for a limited period of time such as six months or one year and operate in real time for example they have episodes that contain significant holidays aired during the particular days the holidays run (Sivaldo, 2011).
Telenovelas are also family programmes unlike American soap operas that target women (Public Broadcasting Service, 2012). American soaps are also considered daytime entertainment and many of them are still sponsored by soap companies (Lopez, 1995). Furthermore, acting in an American soap opera is considered second to film or theatre work. Telenovelas are considered prime time entertainment and are funded by television networks or independent producers. Additionally, acting in a telenovela makes an actor an automatic star (Lopez, 1995).

Latin American telenovelas are written quite differently from their European counterparts. For Latin American telenovelas, one writer is in charge of writing the entire telenovela. Producers and directors then adjust it accordingly. For European soap operas, plot lines are set by a team overseen by a story editor. Writers are hired to write the episodes (Slade, 2010).

Telenovela production in Latin American countries began by modifying Cuban radio dramas. Cuban radio dramas began in the 1930s and were sponsored by American soap companies. Later on American companies stopped sponsoring programs in Cuba, leaving a large number of unemployed but talented personnel who started combining Latin American stories with American soap opera features (Public Broadcasting Service, 2012).

According to Slade (2010), even before the modification of radio dramas, Mexico had a rich history of cultural story telling. Stories were told with cheap comics and graphic novels known locally as folletines (Slade, 2010). These were soon followed by radionovelas and then telenovelas that contained stories that came from the comics. The telenovelas that originated from folletines are called telenovelas de folletin (Slade, 2010).
Currently, Mexico, one of the biggest exporters of telenovelas, produces its telenovelas through Televisa and Azteca network with Televisa being the top producer (Venegas, 1998). In Brazil, Globo TV leads while in Venezuela, Venevision is the top producer (Martinez, 2010). Televisa was initially a conglomeration of Grupo Alfa de Monterrey of the Garza Sada family who owned Channel 8 and Telesistema Mexicana owned by Emilio Azcarraga Milimo who owned Channel 2, 4 and 5. Emilio Azcarraga later bought out Grupo Alfa (Slade, 2010). Televisa by mid-1960 had 17 studios and 250 actors on its staff (Slade, 2010) and was able to produce five telenovelas in a day. Later on, seven to eight telenovelas could be shot in a day employing 6500 workers (Beard, 2010). It has four local channels and two hundred regional channels. Just in Latin America it co-produces 50% of the telenovelas and in the United States it produces 70% of the Hispanic content. Its growth can be contributed to a warm relationship with the government of Mexico that it has maintained over the years (Beard, 2010).

Slade (2010) believed that Televisa’s owner Emilio Azcarraga Milimo is largely responsible for the direction telenovelas took. Emilio’s view of telenovelas was that telenovelas should primarily be for entertainment and escapism of the poor in society; this view led to Televisa’s telenovelas having no realism. Emilio also had a very high moral code, something that he inherited from his father during the radio age. His ethics revolved around family integration, personal improvement and national unity. Many scenes usually found on North American television were prohibited such as smoking, poverty, abortion, politicians, and Indians were only allowed as maids (Slade, 2010). Televisa’s telenovelas put on a pedestal love and marriage and deviant behaviour was only common with the evil characters (Perez, 2005). Another formula Televisa used in its telenovelas was the reverse fairy tale.
Made popular by Fernanda Villeli, it involves a situation where a mistress from the rural area is rejected as the rich man goes back to his wife (Slade, 2010). Televisa through channel 2 airs telenovelas in the early afternoon for children and young adults, late afternoon for housewives and late evening for adults. Televisa viewers are often older and less educated (Clifford, 2010).

TV Azteca was later formed when the Mexican government sold part of its media enterprise to Ricardo Salinas Pliego (Perez, 2005). The author continued to state that in order to catch up and compete in the Mexican television market, TV Azteca needed to produce telenovelas as well. TV Azteca is important in the history of telenovelas because it changed the direction of the stories produced. Telenovelas changed from being the well-known love triangle between a poor beautiful humble girl and a wealthy handsome man to comprising of real, flawed people and dealing with subjects of revenge, betrayal, domestic violence and political corruption (Perez, 2005).

The telenovelas fictionalised political events soon after they occurred (Slade, 2010). This new perspective is often referred to as realism (Clifford, 2010) and is vastly different from Televisa’s classic Cinderella style. This change in direction in the nature of the stories can be contributed to the film producer Epigmenio Ibarra of Argos productions who was hired to produce a number of these telenovelas (Perez, 2005). Because of his film background, he also changed the locations of the stories to the streets. TV Azteca primary viewers are young and educated. Beard (2010) summarized the difference between these two companies:

While family comes first on the list of TV Azteca values, as it did for Televisa, TV Azteca does seem to expand its values beyond family and true love. TV
Azteca also puts thinking before feeling and dreaming in its list of inspirational effects of its stories, while Televisa is, quite simply, a factory of dreams (Beard, 2010).

**Telenovelas in Latin America**

Telenovelas are as diverse as the countries that produce them. Each country focuses on different aspects. Venezuelan telenovelas have “steamy love scenes (Wambua, 2014), slanted characterisations and overemphasis on dialogue, while Brazilian and Colombian telenovelas revolve around social and political themes such as drugs, biotechnology, sex and ethnic relations (Martinez, 2010; Lopez, 1995). Colombian telenovelas have an ironic or comic tone while Brazilian have ‘ambiguous and divided characters’ (Venegas, 1998, p. 59). The Colombian telenovela *Maria Bonita* is one example of the ironic and comic telenovelas. It is a dark comedy about an obsessive president’s lust for a popular Mexican singer called Maria. It covers themes such as the exploitation of the poor, class divisions and corruption.

Mexican telenovelas are known for their melodramatic aspects (Martinez, 2010; Lopez, 1995), focus on families, and punishment of the villain through death, jail or revelation of his or her evil nature (Wambua, 2014). They have characters that are either good or evil, lack historical references, and have lavish costumes and make up (Venegas, 1998). They often end with a lavish church wedding between the two main characters that is witnessed by the whole community (Wambua, 2014).

**Telenovelas in Kenya**

Telenovelas are the staple on Kenyan television with several running throughout the day and repetitions during the morning and afternoon time slots for example Citizen TV runs *Tangled Hearts* and *Waking Up with You*, while KTN runs
The Better Half, K24 runs Taste Of Love and KBC runs Elena’s Ghost (Daily Nation, 2018). Telenovelas are also immensely popular among Kenyan television audiences. According to Google (2015), the most searched television show is the telenovela La Gata (Wild Cat). Moreover, two other soap operas form the top ten list – La Malquerida and Mentir Para Vivir (Google, 2015).

Lavi (2011) stated that the first telenovela to be broadcast in Kenya was a Mexican soap opera called Los Ricos Tambien Lloran, also known as The Rich also Cry, a rag to riches story of a character called Mariana. It ran on KBC and proved successful (Lavi, 2011). It was followed by another Mexican Telenovela, The Wild Rose which was followed by the Venezuelan The Lady of the Rose, the Mexican No one but you and the Brazilian Escrava Isaura which was rerun five times (Lavi, 2011). Table 2.1 shows telenovelas on five local channels in Kenya.

Table 2.1: Telenovelas Aired in Kenya as from January 2014 to May 2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITIZEN</th>
<th>NTV</th>
<th>KTN</th>
<th>K24</th>
<th>KBC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Un Refugio</td>
<td>La Patrona</td>
<td>Los Roy</td>
<td>It seems so beautiful</td>
<td>Emerald necklace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild at Heart</td>
<td>Dyesebel</td>
<td>Her neighbours daughter Corazon apasionado Beautiful ceci</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corona Delagrimas</td>
<td>One True Love</td>
<td>Mariana and Scarletta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wambua (2014)

Soap Opera Categorisation

Soap opera serials can be classified based on narrative closure. Two types exist: open ended serials and closed ended serials (Bielby & Harrington, 2010). Open ended serials have no definite end and are common in the United Kingdom, America, and Australia. Closed serials run for a limited period of time and are common in Latin America, India, China, South Africa and Japan (Bielby & Harrington, 2010). Open
serials also have numerous reversible events such as characters resurrecting, drawn out plots, and revolve around talk and professions involving talk (Allen, 1995). Open serials allow different interpretations of the text because of its unending nature but closed serials provide the audience with opportunities for reflection.

Another way of categorising soap operas is according to themes. Some soap operas are concerned with melodrama and emotions such as those from Mexico, America and Venezuela while others revolve around politics and societal problems such as those from Columbia and Brazil (Bielby & Harrington, 2010). Yet another way is to categorise them according to their structure. Dynastic soaps revolve around a wealthy and powerful family while community soaps are based on families living around a specific area and dyadic soaps revolve around romantic relationships.

As has been pointed out soap operas tend to be serials. Hegedorn (1997) pointed out that serials are primarily episodic. To make their episodic nature possible, the serial is composed of multiple plots, a community of characters and complex relationships while a non-serial usually involves one main character, a smaller group of characters and closure (Allen, 1995). Serials have a history as far back as the printing press and were first used to commercially develop and expand the printing press. Overtime serials were used to arouse interest in the medium’s product such as serial fiction stories and comic strips in newspapers (Hagedorn, 1995).

Development of the Genre of Telenovela

Tufte (2015) provided three major telenovela genres that can be traced from the start of telenovelas in the 1950s to present day. These are romanticism, realism and the post realist telenovela genres. The 1950s and early 1960s was the period of romanticism which was characterised by stories that revolved around love, and based on the ideal rather than reality. This was followed by realism from late 1960s to 1980s
that discussed current issues and used informal and everyday language. Tufte further stated that by mid-1980s the post realist phase had begun which created telenovelas that allowed uncensored expression of opinion. This freedom of expression encouraged the criticism of the political class as well as commenting on social issues for example telenovelas revolved around corruption, Catholic priests marrying, agrarian reform, nepotism and street children.

Telenovelas and Female Characters

Wambua (2014) pointed out four stereotypes of female characters portrayed in telenovelas. The first of these stereotypes is of the poor girl or the victim. The author further noted that this is a traditional female role and such a character is portrayed as good, submissive and moral. She holds the family together and is discriminated against, often with violence enacted by other characters towards her. Female viewers who have low incomes and are religious easily identify with this underdog position (Adriaens, 2010). Unfortunately this character has been accused of making women accept male violence (Wambua, 2014).

The second stereotype is at the opposite spectrum of the poor, submissive girl, the angry and aggressive female character known as the “hothead”. She often pretends to be pregnant or avoids pregnancy because she is concerned about her figure. She often has a very sad ending that involves going to prison, death or a mental hospital. Wambua (2014) gave the seductress as the third stereotype. This woman is very threatening, manipulative, exotic, hyper feminine, and voluptuous. She purposely tried to attract the male characters with her provocative dressing and behaviour. The last stereotyped character is the maid. She is often found cooking and cleaning. She may be either devious or virtuous. Over the years, the roles of women in these soap operas has changed and even grown. Women started working outside the home and
the portrayal of the macho men in the telenovelas has decreased (Perez, 2005). Telenovelas also started to address topics that women face such as domestic violence and male domination.
Telenovelas and the Male Characters

Medina-Rivera (2002) identified three types of male characters found in Latin American soap operas. These are the macho man, the reformed man and the weakened man. The macho man usually takes the role of an antagonist to the reformed man. An antagonist is a character who opposes the objectives of a main character or protagonist. The author says that such a man is cruel, brutal and tyrannical. He also says that the reformed man does not take part in violence but is assertive, competitive and secure. Furthermore, he is young, masculine, loving, faithful, and a gentleman (Medina-Rivera, 2002). The weakened man on the other hand yields to women, and is very passive as well as oversensitive, excessively good and is usually unsuccessful in winning the female protagonists hand in marriage.

Popularity of Telenovelas

A number of elements make telenovelas popular. The story is important as well as other aspects that make the story look good on screen such as excellent lighting, wardrobe, scenery and attractive characters (Rego & La Pastina, 2007; Chong, Duryea, & La Ferrara, 2012). Telenovelas have often been looked down upon. But the themes that they discuss are often at the centre of society’s thoughts for example *El Clon* discusses cloning, cultural differences and drug addiction; another telenovela, *Lazos de Familia*, deals with leukemia and organ donation.

Adriaens (2000) pointed out love and social mobility as the main attractions to telenovelas. Since a good number of the viewers are from the working class, they hope to ascend to the more prosperous lifestyles of the characters portrayed. Furthermore, Jiwaji (2010) believes that it is the city lifestyle that makes telenovelas so appealing to women, because it resembles their current lifestyles:
The incorporation of a city lifestyle in the narrative, aside from its glamour, appeals to these women because it is similar to the urban environment of Nairobi which they are struggling to understand and adapt to, and because it does not take them back to a rural environment which they feel they have outgrown and developed away from (Jiwaji, 2010).

Finally, the melodramatic aspect of telenovelas makes it attractive to global audiences because the oral structure is familiar and shared by cultures (La Pastina & Straubhaar, 2005). According to Barbero (1993), Melodrama is a highly emotional and exciting play often with exaggerated characters. Characters in melodrama often fall in four categories of the hero, victim, traitor and the fool. Soap opera viewers may be able to recognise some of melodrama’s common storylines. For example, in classical melodrama the victim discovers her identity and finds out that she is a princess. Also common in melodrama is the unveiling of family relationships such as blood brotherhood and identical twins as well as the excess of emotions, staging and acting (Barbero, 1993).

Early Studies of Telenovelas and Soap Operas

Early studies of telenovelas in the 1970s gave the impression that they had an alienating effect on the audience. They were seen as harmful because they promoted capitalism and consumerism and were influenced by the United States. Later on in the 1980s, reverse media imperialism was considered because of the large number of exports from Latin American countries (Lopez, 1995). The author further stated that Telenovelas are now considered by scholars as a welcomed guest helping in the growth of Latin American nations specifically in its modernization and nation building.
Similarly, American soap operas have been criticised. One critic who influenced the direction of research is Louis Berg who claimed that radio soap operas caused emotional and physical problems (Allen, 1995). Because of this, television companies fearing a government inquiry on radio’s influence in politics and social action decided to refocus the issue from negative effects to audience needs. “The more generous of the studies concluded that soap operas were a source of advice regarding family and domestic problems and a temporary escape from the tedium of household responsibilities” (Allen, 1995, p. 5). Furthermore, in the 1940 soap opera research, women were looked at having special needs not found in the male audience. It was only in the 1980s that soap operas were taken seriously in scholarship:

Whether conclusions were drawn on the basis of an effects or functionalist model of media engagement, early soap opera audience research in the US constructed the “average” serial fan as a woman suffering from some deficiency—whether emotional, psychological, social, relational, or some combination of them all. This image of the soap opera viewer persisted in both “serious” and popular discourse for decades after the research that produced it was conducted, in part because of the dearth of subsequent studies in the 1950s and 1960s (Allen, 1995).

**Romantic Relationship Behaviours**

According to the Thomas-Kilman conflict mode instrument, five conflict styles exist. These are competing, compromising, collaborating, avoiding and accommodating. Avoiding conflict was one of the behaviours that was studied with the question ‘Telenovelas have influenced me to avoid conflict in a romantic relationship’. Avoiding conflict is both an unassertive and uncooperative way of coping with conflict. It involves side stepping challenges, delaying talking about problems and leaving a dangerous situation (Thomas & Kilmann, 2009). Avoiding
conflict is thus necessary in relationships depending on the circumstance and situation but it does not lead to a better relationship because conflict remains unresolved ‘it put parties in a lose/lose relationship where a choice is made not to address the feelings, views, or goals of either party’ (Eilerman, 2006, p. 1).

Eilerman (2006) believed a person results to avoiding conflict as a result of past experience especially violence and uncontrollable anger from childhood. Also if the person was not encouraged to air their grievances but punished when they did so learning this behaviour is possible. People who avoid conflict see conflict as something evil and threatening.

Wambua (2014) found out that Latin-American telenovelas taught girls risky sexual behaviour (20.8%). Grube and Gruber (2000) also observed that mature girls also use sexual content in the media for learning about romance and relationships and how to behave in sexual situations. Soap operas and mainstream movies contain sexually non-explicit content. Such content shows sexual content discreetly through implication or discreet depiction and nudity is avoided (Peter & Valkenburg, 2007). Nguru (2013) also found that teenagers learnt kissing from foreign television shows:

In this modern way of life, you find that when you see on TV that the father has gone to pick the child from school with his car, when you get back home you find him kissing the mother to show love. In the traditional way you could not see something like that kissing. Now when you see it in [sic] TV the small children all start kissing their mothers to show love. Long ago when you see your mother coming you just ran to her instead to carry what she had and go. These days when the child gets to her mother, she jumps and kisses her (Nguru, 2013).

Considering the research above and that media can create romantic scripts in one’s mind, two questions in this research specifically cover this area. The
respondents were asked if they were influenced to kiss their boyfriend. Furthermore, the respondents were asked if telenovelas have influenced them to have sex to enjoy a romantic relationship (Day, Epstein, & Ward, 2006). Since both kissing and sexual activity are involved with the romantic aspect of the relationships two other questions closely linked were asked. These are whether soap operas influenced the respondents to expect flowers and chocolates from their boyfriend and whether the respondents would elope with their boyfriend if their parents dislike their relationship.

Violence in soap operas is very common and rape is often seen as entertainment. It takes many faces apart from rape such as murder, domestic violence, sexual harassment and incest (Boyle, 2005). The author further stated that American soaps sometimes turn a rapist into a hero and this is also true about soaps from Latin American countries. For British soaps, the rapist in most cases dies a very sad death. In this research, violence is studied by asking if the respondents would accept their boyfriend beating them up.

Chong and La Ferrara (2009) found evidence showing that telenovelas in Brazil increased the separation and divorce rates. The researchers compared multiple census data with the availability of Rede Globo network in the area. Rede Globo is a leading soap opera channel in Brazil (Chong & La Ferrara, 2009). The researchers also did a content analysis of the telenovelas and found out that between mid-1960s to 1980s, 30% of the leading female characters in the soap operas were unfaithful. In this research, questions on cheating, telling lies, spying, faking a pregnancy to win a partner, chasing after a man that is not the respondents as well as using one’s body to have their own way and gain what they desire were asked.
The Uses of Soap Operas

Telenovelas provide gratifications to their audiences. Hillard (2008) sought to make us understand this by mentioning fulfilment in the needs of education, information and emotional relief:

Some hospitals’ group therapy sessions use soap operas as models, where patients relate the characters’ problems to their own. Some viewers identify so strongly that they can write in to the network or station as if the soap characters were really sympathizing with them, and asking for the names and addresses of the psychotherapist, abortion clinic or drug rehabilitation centre used in the show so that they can seek the same help. (Hillard, 2008, p. 430). Additionally, Nguru (2013) concurred with this view based on research on a popular telenovela on Kenyan television *Wild Rose*. It was found to be popular because it was educative, suspenseful, based on love and family.

Empirical Literature Review

Effects of Watching Soap Operas

Greenberg, Neuendorf, Rothfuss, and Henderson’s (1982) study failed to find a significant relationship between exposure and social attitudes. The researchers conducted both a content analysis of soap operas as well as a viewer survey. Participants were randomly selected from the telephone directory and the researchers interviewed 405 of the 500 participants contacted (81%). Only female viewers participated in this study. The hypothesis of the study focused on whether viewers after watching the soap opera could advise someone on a similar problem as well as finding out if viewers believed if problems of health, marriage or romance are more in real life. The relationships were small on both counts:
Some exposure is necessary for social learning to occur, but one ought not assume that the more exposure, the more impact. One can argue that effects, if they are to occur, may as well occur from a moderate amount of exposure which serves to establish a perceptual set toward a particular program and set of characters. Perhaps after watching a soap long enough to decide to continue to watch it, but not necessarily on a daily basis the viewer has been fully impacted on in terms of perceived realism, involvement etc. Further watching may serve only to maintain the perceptions, not intensify them, and magnitude of exposure then becomes a poor measure of outcome. This argues that the impact of exposure may be time-bound to early experiences with a television series, after which the judgements of characters, plot etc are more important (Greenberg, Neuendorf, Rothfuss, & Henderson, 1982, p. 533).

Alexander and Carveth (1985) studied 265 university students. Of these students, 224 students watched a mean of 5.56 episodes per week and 1.78 hours of television per day. Most of the students had watched soap operas for an average of 4.36 years and at the time of the study had a mean age of 18.95 years. The researchers found that the more soap operas that the students viewed the greater the overestimation of certain occupational professions such as doctors and lawyers and the higher frequency of the belief in the rates of divorce and serious crimes in the real world. Furthermore, if the respondents watched for enjoyment then they were more inclined to believe that there were more female doctors and policemen while those who watched because they were bored believed more in the frequency of male and female doctors and lawyers, male and females with illegitimate children and marriages ending in divorce. Because of this finding, the researchers believed that soap opera viewers are more influenced if they watch for ritualistic purposes such as
enjoyment and boredom rather than instrumental reasons such as reality exploration and character identification.

Alexander (1985) however found little correlation (r=.17) between soap opera viewing and the belief that relationships are fragile “perception of relationships as fragile was not predicted by the soap opera exposure or motivation variables” (p.304). She researched 230 male and female teen viewers in rural and suburban West Virginia.

Moran (2003) conducted a reception analysis of telenovelas by conducting three focus group discussions and eight interviews. Two of the focus group discussions took place in the Academy of Our Lady of Peace High School in San Diego and one in the University of San Diego High school between October and November 1999. The focus groups contained 7 and 8 teenagers respectively and took between 50 to 60 minutes. The teenagers were between 14 and 18 years old. From both the focus group discussions and interviews, it is clear that the telenovelas reinforce the perception of romantic relationships rather than influence them. The teenagers mostly from a Catholic background had high moral values and felt that this enabled them to avoid being influenced by the telenovelas (Moran, 2003). They used watching of these telenovelas as an opportunity to express their views. The modelling provided a very different use for these girls. A very similar finding to Day et al. (2006) who believed that television stories provide mental scripts:

In this sense, television provides models of certain behaviors and situations that teenagers anticipate to happen in their own lives or as wrong and something they will avoid (Moran, 2003, p. 10). Njoroge (2007) studied children between the ages of 9 and 13 years and found that television was the most popular source of information on sex matters at 33.17%, followed by friends at 21.11%, parents at 20.10% and older
siblings at 7.54%. The 15.58% that indicated other sources of information on sex matters identified magazines, radio, relatives, teachers and neighbours.

Russello (2009) observed that women seem to be more influenced by media especially when it comes to self-esteem and body satisfaction. In his study, women reported higher levels of body dissatisfaction. More women than men also reported a higher level of sociocultural internalization of ideals. Such ideals include the thin ideal and this could explain the high level of body dissatisfaction.

Mwangi (2010) asked children in Nairobi aged between 7 and 14 from upper middle class families whether they would opt to dress like MTV musicians. Approximately 35% said they would and 25% chose sometimes. On behaviour change, 87% of parents had noticed positive and negative changes from watching television. The positive changes include improved listening skills, creativity, fashionable dressing, responsibility and increase in knowledge. The negative behaviour noticed includes poor academic performance, aggressive behaviour, neglect of household chores and inappropriate dressing styles.

In a research of university students between the ages of 18 and 26 years, Barsulai (2010) found out that 85% of respondents compared their bodies with their favourite musicians but 76% did not believe that the western body image was the ideal body image for Kenyan women. Nguru (2013) followed this issue up in a research targeting 320 students in Nairobi between the ages of 13 to 22 that used focus group interviews and questionnaires, 72.8% agreed that foreign programming was influential in changing culture and 49.8% believed that most foreign programmes affected what they thought of themselves. Forty five point nine per cent (45.9%) admired the behaviour in foreign programs. Young people in the focus group discussion noted the changes television had made in their behaviour and dress. For a
woman who watches TV, she will dress with things like lipstick, mascara, maybe 
hairstyles like perm, curly kit. But a woman who doesn’t watch TV will put on 
kitambaa, a head scarf, on her head.

Kiunga (2014) also researched on the beauty standards of female pupils aged 
between 9 to 12 years old in private schools: In the discussion, a girl who possessed 
long blonde hair, slim figure eight, light skinned, wearing make-up and fashionably 
dressed; hippy and having nice cheek bones as well as tall and having flawless cute 
face was considered beautiful. It is very worrying that their ideal beautiful girl is one 
specific type of girl, moreover close to what they watch on television. Furthermore, 
50% of the private school pupils wanted a body like those on television, 57% wanted 
to have slim bodies like those on cartoon programmes, 60% desired to look like 
actresses they saw on television, and 29% compared their body looks with the slim 
girls on television (Kiunga, 2014). Notably, as with Barsulai’s (2010) study of 
university students, the private school pupils also tried to change their looks by 
exercising, dressing fashionably, wearing make-up and jewellery, drinking water, 
avoiding junk food and dieting.

Chong, Duryea, and La Ferrara (2012) observed that Brazilian telenovelas 
reduced the fertility of women especially women in lower socio economic groups and 
those in the middle and end of childbearing. Fertility decreased by eight percent of the 
mean for 25 to 34 year olds and a much higher 11 percent of the mean between the 35 
to 44 age groups. The researchers say that the women were influenced by the female 
leading characters who aged between 50 years and lower had no children (72%) or 
only one child (21%). Moreover the families portrayed are often healthy, urban and of 
middle and higher class status (Chong et al., 2012).
A reality show on sixteen year old pregnant girls in America reduced teen births by 4.3% during the first eighteen months of airing (Kearney & Levine, 2015). Discussion on Twitter and research on the internet on contraceptives and abortions increased during this time. The researchers used vital statistics birth data and Nielson television ratings to determine their findings.

Motivations for Watching Soap Operas

Compesi (1980) found that entertainment was the primary reason respondents watched the soap opera All My children. Other reasons included watching out of habit, on at a convenient time, social utility, relaxation, escape from boredom, and reality exploration or advice. The researcher gave out 259 questionnaires to volunteers who had signed up after seeing advertisements in media on the research. The average age was 28 years old. The respondents ranged from 14 to 79 years. The research findings are different from earlier research because of the low level of importance respondents took to the reality exploration or advice gratification. The researchers believed this was because the respondents were highly educated since when the results were stratified reality exploration motivation rose one step to sixth for women who were lowly educated, widowed, separated and divorced.

Barrow (1987) asked 301 undergraduate students in a large mid-western university to give reasons for watching soap operas. More reasons were given for the students to watch soap operas than to avoid them. The responses were recorded on index cards by two coders producing 16 categories among these are to fill up time (16.8%), learning of behaviour (6%), romance and sex (2.6%), identity needs (2.1%), surveillance (0.8%) and emotional release (0.3%). Three categories distinct to soap operas were found. These include the serial format – watching it because it is never ending and unpredictable, watching soap operas for sex and romance and because of
the good and complex character evolvement. Barrow (1987) believed that these categories are multifaceted for example para-social interactions can be viewed in the intimacy and friendship soap operas provide as well as the indirect experience from viewing.

Livingstone (1988) set out to find out why soap operas were popular. He received texts from 52 respondents (37 female and 15 male) between the ages of 13 and 62 and performed a quantitative content analysis on them. The respondents were primarily white collar workers. In total eight main categories were created and these were escapism, realism, to have a relationship with the characters, to criticize the programme, to solve own problems, as a daily routine, for the emotional experience and entertainment. Both British and American soap operas provide escapism as a viewing motive with British soap operas providing a more down to earth world than their American counterparts. Realistic situations and problems such as unemployment, racism and teenage pregnancy also appealed to respondents and made the soap operas popular (Livingstone, 1988). Furthermore, the respondents took the characters as real people and tried to understand them and even had conversations with them; they had a para-social interaction with the characters.

The researcher believed that soap operas served an educational function in that the respondents learnt about other people, their living situations and coping mechanisms. Furthermore, soap operas enabled them to deliberate problems that happened in the past or are currently taking place or could happen in the distant future. This viewing of soap operas was important in putting the respondent’s problems in perspective as the respondent’s problems seemed smaller than the ones portrayed in the soap opera.
On the learning aspect of soap operas, the researcher believed that this was one of the benefits of the use of soap operas since they provide social understanding to be able to thrive in the world. This is because soap operas offer unique situations that may never be experienced in real life; therefore, people who watch are able to learn as well as experience something that everyday life cannot give them. This educational use of soap operas was mentioned mainly for respondents who watched the British soap operas rather than the American soap operas. The study further found that British soap operas were more realistic and featured working class people while American soap operas were more glamorised and had wealthy families who ran multimillion dollar businesses. The respondents in this study viewed both British and American soap operas such as Eastenders (British), Coronation Street (British), Brookside (British), Dallas (American), Dynasty (American) and Falcon Crest (American).

In a Ghanaian research that used snowball sampling involving 20 informal interviews of mostly women between the ages of 20 to 30, respondents watched soap operas because they desired love as well as to find themselves in the telenovelas “they gain pleasure in finding their own sense of personal identity, - who they are and what place they have in the world, together with a sense of belonging” (Adia, 2014, p. 99). They also watched the telenovelas because of their suspense. Telenovelas also increased learning as well as created idealistic expectations (Adia, 2014).

Wambua (2014) gave questionnaires to 64 teenage girls from Athi River Mixed day secondary school. At 97%, the teenage girls indicated that they watched telenovelas. Of these, 62% watched very often, 25% watched often, 10% rarely and 3% very rarely. The girls also stated that they watched telenovelas for motivation (44.3%), entertainment (27.9%), education/information (23.3%), and to escape from
realities (4.7%). After watching these telenovelas, the teenage girls discussed the character’s behaviour (37.5%), what may happen in the next episode (18.8%), dressing and fashion (17.1%), how character’s handle issues (12.5%), and physical features of the character (7.8%). When the girls were asked how the telenovelas affected them, they mentioned several effects such as their effect on dressing (39.6%), drug addiction (25%), irresponsible or risky behaviour (20.8%), conflict with parents (9.4%) and promoted unrealistic perception of reality (6.7%).

Finally, Keshishian and Mirakyan (2017) found that Armenia university students were motivated to watch soap operas in order to pass time, for pleasure and stimulation. The research was a survey of 292 college students from Yerevan and other provinces of Armenia. Respondents were both ritualized viewers as well as instrumental viewers who viewed serials for seeking information.
Discussion

Telenovelas are the independent variable in this research. They influence female college students directly through exposure (the watching of telenovelas by students). This influence is effected in the modelling of the students’ behaviour, in the realm of romantic relationships with boys, on the behavioural roles played and witnessed on the television telenovelas. Religious, peer and parental influences, as well as the age of the student, can moderate or exacerbate the effects of such modelling, and therefore are reflected as intervening variables. The specific romantic behaviours under study are kissing, eloping, spying, cheating, telling lies, avoiding
conflict, chasing after a man, faking a pregnancy, using body, expecting flowers, and accepting violence.

The social cognitive theory is a suitable backdrop for this research as it provides insights into the process of behaviour modelling. As the reviewed literature has indicated, modelling is an important part of observational learning which becomes even more powerful with an audio visual medium such as television (Bandura, 2003). Furthermore, filmed models are known to influence and shape aggression more than their non-filmed counterparts. Although modelling can be powerful, each human being has the capacity for self-regulation that provides them with their own self-evaluative standards.

Telenovelas are a unique genre that provides captivating storylines, themes, setting, and characters. It has enough repetition to ensure that irregular viewers are not excluded and it mirrors reality with its continuous complications (Hillard, 2008). Telenovelas contain a lot of relationship content that may cause viewers to have dysfunctional beliefs about relationships (Ward, 2002). Romantic relationships are important in students' lives as they fulfil their needs for companionship, status, support, self-disclosure, social competence, and self-esteem (Brown, Feiring, & Furman, 1999).

Summary

This chapter has reviewed literature on telenovelas. Sub-topics such as history of telenovelas, telenovelas in Kenya, effects of soap operas and early studies of telenovelas and soap operas have been discussed. The chapter has also looked at the social cognitive theory as the theoretical framework for the study. The next chapter lays out the methods and procedures used for data collection and analysis.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed the relevant literature related to the conceptual framework, description of telenovelas and studies done on their influence. This chapter outlines the steps of the research process. The methodology of the research looks at the research design, population, sample strategy, data collection process, instruments for data collection, data analysis and reporting.

Research Design

The descriptive research design was used because of the capability of the design to describe the influence of television soap operas on the behaviour of college students. This research design enables us to describe the situation at the present time which is a major purpose of descriptive research (Kothari, 2004). Descriptive research includes surveys as well as census research (Peter, 2005).

Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999, p. 41) defined population as a “complete set of individuals, cases or objects with some common observable characteristics”. The population for this research was female college students at KIMC. The total number of female college students at KIMC was 510 (Kenya Institute of Mass Communication, (KIMC), 2016)

Target Population

The target population was female students at KIMC. They were in their first year of study, between the ages of 20 to 24, and were taking a certificate or diploma course in the Film, Information and Television and Radio departments. First year
students were chosen because they were least influenced through college level media learning since they were new to the college. The students were enrolled in the day and evening programmes. The college women were chosen from these three departments because the departments had a large number of female students.

The population of first year female students in the Information, Radio and Television and Film departments was 132 (KIMC, 2016). These students were enrolled in the following programmes: diploma in television programmes production (regular and evening), radio and television upgrading programmes production (evening), diploma in radio programmes production (regular and evening), certificate in radio and television programmes production (evening), diploma in journalism (regular and evening), diploma in broadcast journalism (regular and evening), diploma in advertising and public relations (regular), certificate in film and video programmes production (evening) and diploma in film and video programmes production (regular and evening).

Sample Size

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999, p.41) defined a sample as a “subset of population”. The sample in this study was the entire target population of 132 students.

Sampling Technique

A census of the target population was done, hence the sample size was all the 132 students. This comprised of 42 students from the Information department, 50 students from the Film department and 40 students from the Radio and Television department.
Data Collection Instruments

A questionnaire that contained both open and closed ended questions was distributed to respondents. The aim was to use the data for quantitative analysis. The questionnaire was important in finding out whether college female students identify with telenovela characters, the hours spent watching and the influence telenovelas have on female college students’ behaviour in romantic relationships.

Types of Data

The type of data that was collected from the questionnaires was quantitative data. The quantitative data included how many hours were spent watching telenovelas, the motivations of watching these telenovelas, what they liked about their favourite character, and how telenovelas have affected the student’s behaviour.

Data Collection Procedures

The questionnaires were distributed and collected during the regular classes and student’s free time by two research assistants who were trained beforehand by the researcher. One research assistant covered the TV and Radio department and part of the Information department students while the other researcher covered the Film department students and the remaining Information department students. The process was completed in two weeks.

Pretesting

Pretesting helps to clarify research questions and improve the questionnaire (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Pretesting was done with five female students from the Engineering department of KIMC. They were informed of the purpose of the study and were asked if the questionnaires were fully understandable and if the length of the questionnaire was acceptable. After the pre-test, the table for question five was
adjusted so that the headings of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree could be on all the pages that the table appeared. This was done so that students could comfortably fill in the questionnaire without referring to the previous page.

Data Analysis Plan

The data was entered in research based software, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Analysis of quantitative data was done and presented through percentages, in prose, on pie charts, graphs and tables.

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted with the cooperation of Kenya Institute of Mass Communication. The researcher sought written permission from the college administration. It is important that all participants are voluntarily involved in research and their right to decline to participate is accepted. The respondents were promised anonymity and were not asked to include their names on the questionnaires. They were also informed that the findings of the research will be available at Daystar University library as well as possibly being published locally and worldwide. This research is independent and impartial and has not been sponsored by any organisation. Research assistants were used to distribute the questionnaires since the researcher is a lecturer in the college. This was to enable the students to give honest answers to the questions asked and avoid any form of interference from the researcher. The research assistants were also trained beforehand on how to conduct and distribute the questionnaires.

Additionally, the government of Kenya specifically, The National Council for Science and Technology, was asked for clearance, after the research proposal was
approved by the School of Communication, Language and Performing Arts at Daystar University.

Summary

This chapter has looked into the descriptive design used to establish the influence of telenovelas among female college students. In summary, the sampling method, population size, data collection instruments and procedure have been dealt with as well as some of the ethical considerations employed. Chapter four presents, analyses and interprets data.
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

This chapter presents the data and provides an analysis and explanation of the research findings. The purpose of this study was to find out the influence of telenovelas on romantic relationships of college students.

Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Response Rate

From a census of 132 students, 123 questionnaires were returned bringing a response rate of 93%. A response rate of 50% is satisfactory for investigation (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Out of these 123 questionnaires, 19 respondents (15.4%) did not watch telenovelas while 104 (84.6%) did. The analysis excluded the 19 students from the rest of the chapter.

Figure 4.1 Watching Telenovelas

![Pie chart showing response rate]

No, 15.4% (19)
Yes, 84.6% (104)
Demographic Characteristics

The ages of respondents in the study is presented in Figure 4.2.

The highest number of the respondents were between 17 and 20 years old (81.7%) followed by 21 to 24 year olds (13.5%) and 25 to 29 year olds (4.8%). The youngest respondents were 17 years old while the oldest were 29 years old. The range of 12 shows that there is little variability in the data. The mean age is 19.8 years. Despite only surveying first year students, the wide age range can be explained by the presence of evening classes that tend to attract older students, often already professionally engaged, who take advantage of the after-work programme to further their education.
Top Three Telenovelas

The respondents were asked to list the top three telenovelas that they watched. The findings are reported in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Most Watched Telenovelas in the First, Second and Third Positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Most watched</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Second most watched</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Third most watched</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muchacha Italiano</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Muchacha Italiano</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>Storm over paradise</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forevermore</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>Forevermore</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>In the name of love</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triumph of love</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Two wives</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was evident from the study that respondents watched a very wide variety of telenovelas. A total of 50 telenovelas were mentioned, including Muchacha Italiano (Italian bride), Forevermore, Triumph of love, Two wives, Storm over paradise, In the name of love, Mariana and Salvana, Lo imperdonable (Unforgivable), Maid in Manhattan, La Gata (Wild Cat), Wild at Heart, Carmella, The Imposter, Abyss of Passion, Roses and Thorns, and King of Hearts, among others. In the first position, Muchacha Italiano (22%) was mentioned the most followed by Forevermore (11.4%), and Triumph of love (4.1%). In the second position, Muchacha Italiano led with 8.9%, Forevermore followed with 6.5% and Two wives with 5.7% and in the third position Muchacha Italiano led with 7.3%, Storm over paradise with 6.5% and In the name of love with 3.3%. Overall, Muchacha Italiano, a Mexican telenovela, was the most popular as it was mentioned in all three positions.

Muchacha Italiano was at the time of the research on air taking a prime time spot on Citizen TV at 8pm. The telenovela revolves around the romance of a poor girl who has dreams of marrying a young man and escaping poverty for both herself and her sick sister. Forevermore, with a total of 17.9% is the second popular telenovela. It
is a Philippine soap opera that was shown on KTN at 6pm. *Forevermore* is a romantic comedy about a rich spoilt boy who tries to win the heart of a farm girl. The final show was in October 2016 while *Storm over paradise*, another Mexican telenovela, is on overall the third most watched. It is the story of Aymar Lazcano and Nicholas Bravo who try to be together despite Maura Duran’s tricks.

The findings presented in Figure 4.3 capture the responses to the question of the last time telenovelas were watched by the respondents.

![Figure 4.3: Last Time a Telenovela was Watched](image)

The findings show that 83 respondents (67.5%) had last watched a soap opera within the preceding week; 9 respondents (7.3%) within the month of the data gathering; 6 respondents (4.9%) the previous month; 4 respondents (3.3%) two months ago; and 1 respondent (0.8%) had last watched a telenovela as much as six months ago. These findings show that most of the students were still actively watching soap operas.
Hours Spent Watching

The respondents were asked the hours they spent watching telenovelas on television on weekdays when college was in session. Figure 4. 4 gives the graphical results.

Figure 4. 4: Hours Spent Watching Telenovelas on College Weekdays

The first category of viewing preferences for which respondents were asked was during college weekdays. Here, the biggest number subscribed to the least screen time, while the least number were engaged for more than three hours. Nearly half the respondents (49.5%) watched the telenovelas for less than one hour; 41.6% watched for between one and three hours; and 8.9% reported that they watched telenovelas for more than three hours. This viewing preference for the first category was probably
because the respondents were in class when the programmes aired or were completing class assignments given during the day.

Figure 4. 5 gives the graphical results of hours spent watching telenovelas on television on weekends when college was in session.

Weekends during the semester had the highest viewership of telenovelas among female college students. The study found that 53% of the respondents spent between one to three hours watching telenovelas, with 32% spending more than three hours. The remaining 15% spent less than one hour watching telenovelas. This means that one of the major sources of entertainment during the weekends was watching telenovelas.

The respondents were asked the hours they spent watching telenovelas on television on weekdays while on holiday. The results are presented in Figure 4. 6.

Figure 4. 5: Hours Spent Watching Telenovelas on College Weekends
College holidays were also high viewership periods, with the highest percentage of respondents watching for more than three hours (59%), followed by respondents who watched between one and three hours of telenovelas at 24%. Another 17% of students spent less than one hour watching telenovelas. What this means is that more female students watch telenovelas for longer hours during college weekends than they do on holidays.

Motivations for Watching

The respondents were asked the reasons they watch telenovelas. The results are presented in Table 4.2.
Table 4.2: Reasons for Watching Telenovelas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for watching telenovelas</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To relax</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To fill time</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To release emotions</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To learn about people and the world</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To escape from unpleasant life experiences</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To have something to talk about to my friends</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To personally identify myself as a fan</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To find out more about myself</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To learn about romantic relationships</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To find out how to behave in sexual situations</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To occupy my time since I’m not in a relationship</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reasons students were motivated to watch telenovelas was to learn about romantic relationships (93.4%); to relax (92.5%); and to learn about people and the world (88.7%). Other reasons respondents gave were: to release emotions (87.7%); to personally identify myself as a fan (77.1%); to learn how to behave in sexual situations (73.5%); to escape from unpleasant life experiences (72.1%); to find out more about myself (71.8%); to have something to talk about to my friends (64.1%); to pass time (53.6%) and to occupy my time since I’m not in a relationship (52.9%).

Additional motives expressed were to get ideas in film production, for entertainment, fun, to understand the difference between real love and illusions, and to acquire traits of “a real lady”. Despite being media students, the students do not primarily watch telenovelas for academic purposes but to learn about romance as well as to relax.

Favourite Character

The respondents were asked to give their favourite characters and the telenovela they appear in. Table 4.3 below shows the top nine favourite characters of the 42 characters mentioned.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Telenovela</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Max</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>Triumph of love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Muchacha Italiano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maura Duran</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Storm over paradise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria De Jesus</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Don't Mess with an Angel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esmeralda Cruz</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>La Gata/Wild Cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiorella</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Muchacha Italiano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnes Caly</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Forevermore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Miguel</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Don't Mess with an Angel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janine</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Two wives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The characters mentioned often include Max (7.7%), Pedro (5.1%), Maura Duran (5.1%), Maria De Jesus (5.1%), Esmeralda Cruz (5.1%), Fiorella (5.1%), Agnes Caly (5.1%), Juan Miguel (3.8%), and Janine (3.8%). A majority of the characters take on classic telenovela roles, for example Maria de Jesus is a poor beautiful girl who meets and falls in love with a rich man and later finds out that her parents are very wealthy. Agnes Caly is a humble strawberry farmer. Similarly, Esmeralda Cruz and Fiorella Bianchi come from humble backgrounds. Both are poor, beautiful and determined to marry the men that they love. Fiorella is romantic, a daydreamer, responsible and hardworking. The college students seem to relate to the poor girl or the victim character stereotype (Wambua, 2014). The promise of the soap opera is of better things to come as characters find out that they were born to wealth and meet wealthy men who fall in love with them thus becoming rich. The male characters mentioned such as Max, Pedro and Juan Miguel are young, handsome, wealthy and intelligent and belong to the reformed man character model.

Two characters mentioned above are completely opposite in their character traits. Maura Duran is an evil woman who tries to separate the two main characters
Aymar and Nicholas. She acts as an antagonist. Her character follows the seductress stereotype. Janine on the other hand is both a hero and a villain as her roles change from mistress to legal wife. In conclusion, while most of the students identify with characters who are hardworking, humble, poor and brave some of the respondents also identify with evil and ambiguous characters.

Wish to be Like Character

The respondents were asked whether they wish to be like their favourite characters. The results are found in Figure 4.7.

![Figure 4.7: Wish to be Like Character](image)

At 67.01%, respondents wished to be like their favourite character, while 32.99% did not wish to be like their favourite character. A majority of the respondents found the characters admirable and therefore wished to be like them. This implies that they can easily be influenced to behave like the characters they watch since they look up to them as models.
The respondents were asked for reasons for wanting to be like their favourite characters. Table 4.4 gives the results of this question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to fight for their love</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good acting</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good physical appearance</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portrays good values</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romantic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several reasons reoccurred such as portraying good values (46%), ability to fight for their love (20%), good acting (15%), good physical appearance (13%), and romantic (7%). The good values referred to include passionate, trustworthy, straightforward, cooperative, self-respect, hardworking, in control of emotions, kind-hearted, focused, compassionate, emotional, motherly, submissive, value relationships, and respect of women.

Physical appearance is admired for both male and female characters and is described by the respondents as cute, handsome, beautiful, pretty and good looking. The students were influenced more by the character’s good values than the character’s physical appearance or acting. Additionally, one of the most important values that they emphasized is the character’s ability to fight for their partner’s love. This bravery to stand up to their parents and other negative forces forms the main action in telenovelas.

Influence of Telenovelas

The respondents were asked to rate their agreement to statements dealing with the influence of telenovelas to specific behaviours in heterosexual relationships. The
first statement was on the influence telenovelas have in telling lies to one’s boyfriend.

Figure 4.8 gives the results.

Figure 4.8: Influence of Telenovelas in Telling Lies

A majority of the respondents at 68.63% disagreed that telenovelas influenced them in telling lies. On the other hand, respondents at 17% agreed that telenovelas influenced them in telling lies while 14.71% were neutral. Telenovelas revolve around lies and secrecy therefore a 17% agreement is not surprising.

Respondents were asked to state their agreement to the statement ‘telenovelas have influenced me to have sex to enjoy a romantic relationship’
A total of 56.86% disagreed (28.43% strongly disagree and 28.43% disagree) that telenovelas influenced them to have sex. Only 30.4% agreed that telenovelas influenced them in having sex – 15.69% strongly agreeing and 14.71% agreeing. Twelve point seven five percent (12.75%) remained neutral on whether telenovelas affected them. Although telenovelas do not show sexual activity taking place the talk around the subject, as well as kissing and other gestures seen such as touching can explain the 30.4% of female respondents agreeing to this statement.

The respondents were asked to respond to the statement ‘Telenovelas have influenced me to avoid conflict in a romantic relationship’. Figure 4.10 gives the results.
A majority of the respondents at 77.45% agreed that telenovelas influenced them in avoiding conflict. Only 11.76% disagreed and 10.78% were neutral. The respondents were made aware of relationship conflict by watching telenovelas. The students reacted to this by avoiding conflict. Avoiding conflict is a very useful tactic in relationship maintenance since it can bring about harmony if not excessively done (Eilerman, 2006; Thomas & Kilmann, 2009).

Figure 4. 11 shows the reaction to the statement ‘Telenovelas have influenced me to kiss my boyfriend’
At 62.6%, respondents agreed with the statement that telenovelas influenced them to take part in kissing. Only 24.24% disagreed and 13.13% remained neutral about the influence of telenovelas on kissing. The data suggests that telenovelas encourage romantic behaviour in the respondents such as kissing. Kissing can lead to sexual arousal which can then lead to sexual activity.

Figure 4.12 shows the response to the statement ‘Telenovelas have influenced me to cheat on my boyfriend with someone else’
Figure 4.12: Influence of Telenovelas in Cheating on Boyfriend

A large majority at 77.45% disagreed with the statement that telenovelas influenced them to cheat on their boyfriend while only 5.88% agreed and 16.67% remained neutral. Though a small percentage, close to six percent reported being influenced to cheat by the telenovelas. Cheating makes relationships fragile and may eventually break both young and established relationships.

Figure 4.13 shows the response to the statement ‘Telenovelas have influenced me to chase a man who is already in a romantic relationship’
Seventy-four point five one percent (74.51%) disagreed (47.06% strongly disagreed and 27.45% disagreed) with the statement that telenovelas influenced them to chase after a man who is already in a romantic relationship. Only 19.6% agreed (10.78% strongly agree and 8.82% agree) and 5.88% were neutral. Again close to twenty percent seemed to have modelled the habit of chasing after men who are already in other relationships a very common incident in telenovelas.

Figure 4.14 shows the response to the statement ‘Telenovelas have influenced me to spy on my boyfriend’
At 63.36%, respondents disagreed with the statement that telenovelas influenced them in spying on their boyfriend, while 22.77% agreed that telenovelas influenced them to spy and 13.86% remained neutral. Although in minority, 23% were influenced to spy because of watching telenovelas. Spying is a very common behaviour with antagonists whose main aim is to separate the protagonists.

Figure 4.15 shows the response to the statement ‘Telenovelas have influenced me to fake a pregnancy in order to trap a man into a relationship with me’
Figure 4. 15: Influence of Telenovelas in Faking Pregnancy

At 80%, respondents disagreed that telenovelas could influence them to fake a pregnancy. Only 11% agreed and 9% were neutral. Faking a pregnancy is a common tactic used by the female antagonist to get a man into marriage. With 11% agreeing, even if in minority we should be concerned that the respondents have thought of this option because it is morally wrong.

Figure 4. 16 shows the response to the statement ‘Telenovelas have influenced me to use my body and gain what I desire’
Eighty eight percent (88%) disagreed (64% strongly disagree and 24% disagree) with the statement that telenovelas could influence them to use their body to have their own way and gain what they desire. Only 4% agreed (2% strongly agree and 2% agree) to this and 8% remained neutral. At 4% this modelling is not very common but can cause harm to many relationships. In telenovelas it is usually the seductress who models this action.

Figure 4. 17 shows the response to the statement ‘Telenovelas have influenced me to accept my boyfriend beating me up/male violence in a relationship’
Figure 4.17: Influence of Telenovelas in Accepting Violence

Ninety one point nine two percent (91.92%) disagreed (68.69% strongly disagree and 23.23% disagree) that telenovelas influenced them in accepting their boyfriend beating them up. Only 3.03% agreed (1.01% strongly agree and 2.02% agree) to this and 4.04% were neutral. The respondents did not think that telenovelas influenced them to accept violence.

Figure 4.18 shows the response to the statement ‘Telenovelas have influenced me to expect flowers and chocolates from my boyfriend’
Sixty nine point four eight percent (69.48%) agreed (54.74% strongly agree and 14.74 agree) that telenovelas influenced them to expect flowers and chocolates from their boyfriend. Only 17.90% disagreed (11.58% disagree and 6.32% strongly disagree) and 12.63% remained neutral. Telenovelas with their romantic content encourage this romantic behaviour of giving flowers and chocolates by modelling of this behaviour.

Figure 4. 19 shows the response to the statement ‘Telenovelas have influenced me to elope with my boyfriend if my parents dislike the relationship’
Thirty seven point seven six percent (37.76%) disagreed (22.45% strongly disagree and 15.31% disagree) that telenovelas influenced them to elope with their boyfriend if their parents dislike the relationship. Thirty two point six six (32.66%) agreed to this – 16.33% both strongly agree and agree while 29.59% were neutral. Thirty three percent of the respondents would elope with their boyfriend if the parents refused them to get married. Eloping and attempting to elope are common in telenovelas. In most telenovelas the protagonists get married and thus the respondents will settle for nothing less.

Respondents were asked if telenovelas had affected them. Table 4.5 gives the results.
Table 4.5: Whether Telenovelas Affected Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect of telenovelas</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On whether telenovelas affected the students in any way, 55 respondents (44.7%) said it did, 40 respondents (32.5%) said it did not, while 27 respondents (22%) gave no response. The implication of this is that most of the students did not believe that they are affected by the telenovelas they watch.

The respondents were asked to explain further on the effects of telenovelas. Table 4.6 gives the results to this question.

Table 4.6: Effects of Watching Telenovelas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effects of watching telenovelas</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To expect surprises, flowers and gifts from boyfriend</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It has improved their relationship with others</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It has made them believe that no true love exists in the</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>real world</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To accept conflicts as part of life</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To change way of dressing and character</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to fight for a genuine relationship</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased romance and desire to be close to boyfriend</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having constant conflicts with boyfriend</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved acting skills</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More knowledge about true love and that it exists</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced to get into a relationship</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addiction to watching telenovelas</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fifty two respondents highlighted various ways in which watching telenovelas had influenced them. This includes improving their relationship with others (26.9%), increasing their knowledge about “true love and its existence” (15.4%), giving them the ability to fight for a genuine relationship (11.5%), influencing respondents into a relationship (7.7%), leading to an addiction to telenovelas (7.7%), increasing romance
and desire to be close to boyfriend (7.7%), making respondents believe that true love
does not exist in the real world (5.8%), accepting conflicts as part of life (5.8%),
expecting surprises, flowers and gifts from boyfriend (3.8%), changing way of
dressing and character (3.8%), having constant conflicts with boyfriend (1.9%) and
improving acting skills (1.9%). Generally, respondents believed that telenovelas
influenced them positively rather than negatively especially in the area of
relationships.
### Table 4. 7: Telenovela Influence Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>expect flowers</th>
<th>tell lies</th>
<th>kiss</th>
<th>Sexual situations</th>
<th>Learn romance</th>
<th>avoid conflicts</th>
<th>Self identification</th>
<th>spy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>pearson</strong> correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.060</td>
<td>.470**</td>
<td>.242</td>
<td>.186</td>
<td>.266**</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>-.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.560</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.105</td>
<td>.122</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.808</td>
<td>.642</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>pearson</strong> correlation</td>
<td>-.060</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.012</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>-.196*</td>
<td>-.264**</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.561</td>
<td>.121</td>
<td>.937</td>
<td>.897</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>.104</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>pearson</strong> correlation</td>
<td>.470**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.363**</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.157</td>
<td>.849</td>
<td>.965</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.223</td>
<td>.404</td>
<td>.587</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>pearson</strong> correlation</td>
<td>.242</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.549</td>
<td>-.177</td>
<td>-.710**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.105</td>
<td>.849</td>
<td>.965</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.223</td>
<td>.606</td>
<td>.625</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>pearson</strong> correlation</td>
<td>.186</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.549**</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td>.598**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.122</td>
<td>.897</td>
<td>.965</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.606</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.625</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>pearson</strong> correlation</td>
<td>.266**</td>
<td>.363</td>
<td>-.177</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.196**</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.729</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.729</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>pearson</strong> correlation</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.264</td>
<td>-.710**</td>
<td>.598**</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.808</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>.404</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.206</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>pearson</strong> correlation</td>
<td>-.049</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>-.174</td>
<td>-.057</td>
<td>-.035</td>
<td>-.206</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.642</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.587</td>
<td>.233</td>
<td>.625</td>
<td>.729</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
From Table 4.7, there is a positive correlation between the desire to kiss and expecting flowers and chocolates from boyfriend (0.470). Students who were influenced to kiss also expected romantic gifts such as flowers and chocolates from their boyfriend. Similarly, a positive relationship was found between telling lies to my boyfriend and spying on boyfriend (0.427). Those who told lies to their boyfriends’ probably also did not trust their boyfriends’ and were influenced to spy on them.

Respondents who were motivated to watch telenovelas to learn about romantic relationships were also interested in finding out how to behave in sexual situations (0.549), finding out more about themselves (0.598) and how to behave in sexual situations (0.710). Avoiding conflict is positively related to expecting flowers (0.266) and kissing (0.363) and negatively related to telling lies (-0.196). Since the respondents are avoiding conflict in a relationship with their boyfriend then there is no need to tell lies. Also avoid conflict is negatively related to watching telenovelas to find out how to behave in sexual situations (-0.177).

Summary of Key Findings

Fifty different telenovelas were watched with the most watched being Muchacha Italiano, Triumph of love, Two wives, Storm over paradise and In the name of love. College students watch telenovelas regularly as shown by the 67.5% who reported having watched the soap opera during the week of the survey. A total of 42 soap opera characters were named. The most popular being Max (7.7%) of Triumph of Love.

During college holiday weekdays, 59% of the respondents watch telenovelas for more than three hours. During the college semester week, 49.5% of the students watch for less than one hour and 53% watch between 1 hour to 3 hours on college semester weekends.
Students watched to learn with 93.4% watching to learn about romantic relationships, 92.5% to relax and 88.7% to learn about people and the world. Forty four point seven percent (44.7%) claimed that telenovelas affected them while 32.5% did not think that they had an effect.

It was found that 67% wished to be like their favourite characters. The characters were liked mostly because they portrayed good values (46%), and fought for their partner despite family disapproval (20%). Surprisingly, physical appearance (13%) and romance (7%) were not top in priority of what the respondents liked.

The respondents reported that watching telenovelas improved their relationships (26.9%), gave them the ability to fight for a genuine relationship (11.5%), and gave them more knowledge about true love and that it exists (15.4%) all positive effects but a few mentioned negative effects such as telenovelas encouraging conflict with boyfriend (1.9%) and making them believe that true love does not exist (5.8%). The respondents are influenced to avoid conflict in relationships (77.5%), expect chocolates and flowers from their boyfriends (69.4%) and kiss (62.6%)

Summary

This chapter has provided an analysis of the data collected in the study. The research shows that female college students watch telenovelas and follow the current telenovelas available on local channels. Furthermore, a majority wished to be like their favourite characters because they portrayed good values and fought for their love despite society disapproval, a common theme found in telenovelas. They also watch to learn about romantic relationships and are influenced in actions such as kissing, expecting chocolates and flowers and avoiding conflicts in relationships.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter, the overall findings on the influence of telenovelas on female students are discussed. An attempt is made to provide answers to the research questions, using the framework of Bandura’s social cognitive theory. The researcher had four objectives including establishing the extent, in hours per semester weekday, semester weekend, and college holiday, that female college students were devoted to watching telenovelas, determining their motivations in watching telenovelas, finding out whether female students identified with telenovela characters and to determining if the watching of telenovelas influenced the behavior of female students in romantic relationships.

Discussions of Key Findings

The Number of Hours Devoted to Watching Telenovelas

Findings indicated that college semester weekends had the highest viewership at 85%, where telenovelas were watched for one to three hours and more than three hours. This is followed by college holidays at 83% and college semester weekdays at 50.5% for the same time period. This finding is consistent with Wambua (2014) who found that telenovelas are a very popular genre.

Adriaens (2000) pointed out love and social mobility as the main attractions to telenovelas. Furthermore, Jiwaji (2010) stated that it is the city lifestyle that makes telenovelas so appealing to women, because it resembles their current lifestyles. The incorporation of a city lifestyle in the narrative, aside from its glamour, appeals to these women because it is similar to the urban environment of Nairobi which they are
struggling to understand and adapt to, and because it does not take them back to a rural environment which they feel they have outgrown and developed away from (Jiwaji, 2010).

Similarly, the melodramatic aspect of telenovelas makes it attractive to global audiences because the oral structure is familiar and shared by cultures (La Pastina & Straubhaar, 2005). Melodrama is a highly emotional and exciting play often with exaggerated characters (Barbero, 1993).

Motivations of Female Students Towards Telenovelas

Findings showed that students were motivated by a number of reasons to watch telenovelas such as to learn about romantic relationships at 93.4%, to relax at 92.5%, to learn about people and the world at 88.7%, to release emotions at 87.7%, to find out how to behave in sexual situations at 73.5% and to escape unpleasant life experiences at 72.1%. This findings concur with Nguru (2013) who found that young people liked a popular telenovela because of it being educative, suspenseful, based on love and taught on family. Njoroge (2007) found out that television was used by children to find out about sex matters.

Identifying with the Models Presented by the Televised Telenovela Characters

A large number of respondents (67.01%) identified with the models and wished to be like them while 32.99% did not want to be like them. This dominant identification with the models is similar to Mwangi’s (2010) findings where 50% of respondents dressed like their favorite musicians. The students in this research identified with the models in two main areas, namely the good values of the character at 46% and ability to fight for their love at 20%. Good values were also noted in
Nguru’s (2013) research findings. Wambua (2014) found out that the most talked about issue after watching a telenovela was the character’s behavior. Three males and seven females formed the top nine favorite characters. In total 42 characters were mentioned in the study. Bandura (1989) believed that children learn from both sexes but choose what to express behaviorally from what they think is appropriate or inappropriate for their gender. They are also more inclined to the same gender model. The students preferred models such as Max of *Triumph of Love*, Pedro of *Muchacha Italiano*, Maura Duran of *Storm over Paradise*, Esmeralda Cruz of *La Gata*, Fiorella of *Muchacha Italiano*, Agnes Caly of *Forevermore*, Juan Miguel of *Don’t Mess with an Angel* and Janine of *Two wives*. Characters in telenovelas are rarely ambiguous but are rather good or evil although there are opportunities for a person to transition from good to bad. Female characters mentioned mostly fell in the victim stereotype while for the male characters they fell in the reformed man stereotype.

The Influence of Televised Telenovelas on Female Students’ Behavior in Romantic Relationships

The respondents majorly agreed that soap operas influenced them to avoid conflict at 77.5%, expect flowers and chocolates at 69.4% and to kiss at 62.3%. It is not surprising that telenovelas lead to expecting flowers and chocolates since the primary content of soap operas is love and relationships. The characters often give flowers, usually the male for example Osvaldo gave flowers to Alina in *Muchacha Italiano* (*Italian Bride*). As with most telenovelas, the ending is a lavish wedding filled with flowers. In one particular scene in the Italian Bride, Fiorella’s older lover, Vittorio, takes her to church and tells her that it will be filled with flowers on their wedding day. Furthermore, telenovelas glamourize love and relationships with their lavish sets, good looking characters and expansive environments (Venegas, 1998;
Kissing scenes are also quite common in telenovelas although in Kenya, broadcasters cut out such scenes as much as possible so as to keep in line with the media laws and ethics. Similar to Nguru (2013) research, the respondents learnt kissing from watching television.

At 77.5%, respondents avoided conflict because of telenovelas. The respondents viewed the consequences of conflict in such stories that led to further arguments and fighting and thus learnt this behaviour of avoidance. They observed punishing outcomes of conflict which became disincentives to them (Bandura, 2009). In most telenovelas, evil will be punished in the end. The evil person is often jailed or dies. Apart from that telenovelas are melodramatic and thus are full of over reactions from characters and most of these reactions have severe consequences. Avoiding conflict is part of the five conflict styles and can be harmful if over used (Eilerman, 2006; Thomas & Kilmann, 2009).

The process of modelling has four main components: attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motivational variables (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 2001; Grusac, 1992). Attention is influenced by the motivation and interest of the observer in that behaviour, as well as the personality characteristics of the model. One of the main reasons the participants watched telenovelas was to learn about romantic relationships. The findings also suggest that the respondents identified with the models and wished to be like them. The models identified were mostly women but a few men appeared on the list. Furthermore, it seems that they admired the characters because they portrayed good values and this was more important than the physical appearance of the characters.
The respondents retained the information as it was symbolically presented through models. The models gave flowers, kissed and were involved in immense conflict. Motor reproduction may come about depending on the self-efficacy of the observer. Through this modelling, the self-efficacy of the respondents is raised but some actions will be regulated through a person’s self-regulation mechanisms such as religious influences. Their religion for example may discourage the respondents to take part in one of the learned behaviour such as kissing. According to Bandura (2009) vicarious motivators are formed from the rewarding and punishment of the models actions for example when a character is kissed and happiness is seen on the face of the partner, motivation of the action may occur. Other motivators that may also encourage the behaviour are direct motivation from doing the action and self-produced incentives from internal approval (Bandura, 2001).

Conclusions

The study concluded that;

The female students at KIMC watched telenovelas primarily to learn about romantic relationships and relax. They found great benefit in watching telenovelas as they self-reported several effects of watching telenovelas that they experienced such as improving relationship with others, gaining knowledge of love, increasing their ability to fight for genuine relationship, and increasing romance and desire.

The respondents identified with both female and male models. They wished to be like their favourite character and admired their moral behaviour and ability to fight for true love despite parental disapproval.
By watching telenovelas, the respondents were influenced in three ways including avoiding conflicts, expecting flowers and chocolates from their boyfriends and kissing their boyfriends.

Recommendations

Since students found watching soap operas a learning experience, there is a need to tap the potential of the educational aspect of soap operas because of the captive audience it holds and large following. Issues that affect young people can be dealt with such as sexual transmitted diseases and love relationships. Christian organisations can use this story telling avenue to model Christian behaviour such as chastity.

The government should use telenovelas as a public policy tool to tackle crime, health and social service problems. Scriptwriters and content creators need to wake up to the responsibility that they have. They not only entertain but also teach behaviour since young people are learning from watching fictional stories. There needs to be discussions between content creators so that they can be aware of this and so that they can decrease the negative behaviour learnt through modelling.

All colleges and universities should have media literacy courses so that young people can reflect on the media they watch and make appropriate choices suitable to their life goals. Furthermore, parents and counsellors should provide guidance and create opportunities for discussion on effects of television programmes. Although a 60% threshold for local programming content has been set, the government should make it a priority to further encourage television companies by funding and providing subsidies for Kenyan television programmes both on KBC and privately owned
stations to counter foreign telenovelas that are cheaper to buy. These programmes must be of high quality and have interesting storylines to capture the attention of the audience as well as reflect African values.

Areas for Further Research

Although there was a slight difference between watching telenovelas on college holidays and college semester weekends it would be interesting to find out if the group setting is an influence to them watching soap operas more on college weekends than on college holidays. It would also be interesting to investigate exactly how soap operas improved their relationship with others. This can be done in a qualitative study that employs interviews and focus groups.

A content analysis of common romantic relationship behaviors in telenovelas would be an important study to determine the intensity and frequency of the behaviours. Furthermore, a comparative study on the influence of telenovelas on male student’s conduct in romantic relationships should be considered as well as a large scale survey involving a number of universities and colleges to examine the magnitude of the effects of telenovelas on student’s romantic life.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Dear respondent,

My name is Grace Kinya; I am a final year student at Daystar University taking a master degree in Media Communication. I am currently writing a thesis on the influence of televised telenovelas on romantic relationships: The case of Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (K.I.M.C.) female college students.

Please take some time to fill in the questions honestly and feel free to express your own ideas and opinions. All the information will be treated with confidentiality and the findings will be used for academic purposes. Thank you for your willingness to respond to this questionnaire. Please sign below indicating that you willingly participate in the research. Please do not include your name.

I have read and understood the aims of this research and I willingly participate.

____________________________________________
(Signature)

Section One

1. Do you watch telenovelas (Latin American soap operas)?
   Yes [ ]
   No [ ]
If No, please do not continue answering.

2. What is your age in years? ______________

3. List the top three telenovelas you watch
   i. ________________________________
   ii. ________________________________
   iii. ________________________________

4. When was the last time you watched a telenovela?
   This week [ ]
   This month [ ]
   One month ago [ ]
   Two months ago [ ]
   Six months ago [ ]
Section Two

5. Rate your agreement with the following statements using the scale below:

If you have never been in a relationship, answer in terms of what you think your responses would most likely be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Telenovelas have influenced me to tell lies in my relationship with my boyfriend.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Telenovelas have influenced me to have sex to enjoy a romantic relationship.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Telenovelas have influenced me to avoid conflict in a romantic relationship.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Telenovelas have influenced me to kiss my boyfriend.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Telenovelas have influenced me to cheat on my boyfriend with someone else.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Telenovelas have influenced me to chase a man who is already in a romantic relationship.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Telenovelas have influenced me to spy on my boyfriend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Telenovelas have influenced me to enjoy conflict in love relationships.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Telenovelas have influenced me to want to fake a pregnancy in order to trap a man into a relationship with me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Telenovelas have influenced me to use my body to have my way and gain what I desire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Please write down your favourite character in a telenovela?

___________________________________________________________________

8. What telenovela do they appear in? ___________________________________

9. Do you ever wish to be like this character?
   Yes [    ]
   No [    ]

   If yes, why do you want to be like him or her?
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

10. How many hours do you spend watching telenovelas on television on week days
    when college is in session (Monday to Friday)?
    Less than 1 hour [    ]
    Between 1 hour to 3 hours [    ]
    More than 3 hours [    ]

11. How many hours do you spend watching telenovelas on television on weekends?
    Less than 1 hour [    ]
    Between 1 hour to 3 hours [    ]
    More than 3 hours [    ]

12. How many hours do you spend watching telenovelas on television on week days
    (Monday to Friday) during the college holidays?
    Less than 1 hour [    ]
    Between 1 hour to 3 hours [    ]
    More than 3 hours [    ]

13. Why do you watch telenovelas? (Tick all reasons applicable)
    To relax [    ]
    To fill time [    ]
    To release emotions [    ]
    To learn about people & the world [    ]
    To escape from unpleasant life experiences [    ]
    To have something to talk to my friends [    ]
    To personally identify myself as a fan [    ]
    To find out more about myself [    ]
    To learn about romantic relationships [    ]
    To find out how to behave in sexual situations [    ]
    To occupy my time since I am not in a relationship [    ]
    Any other reason: __________________________________________
14. Has watching Telenovelas affected you in any way?
Yes [    ]  No [    ]
If yes explain
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Thank you for completing this questionnaire
Appendix B: Daystar University Research Authorization Letter

Daystar University Repository Library Archives Copy

National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation
PO Box 30623 – 00100
NAIROBI

10th Oct, 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Grace Kinya Mbugori (Student No.09-1113)

The above-named is a fully registered student in the School of Communication, Language and Performing Arts at Daystar University. She has completed her course work towards a Master’s degree in communication. She is now in the process of working on her thesis. Ms. Mbugori’s thesis title is: ‘The Influence of Televised Soap Operas on Romantic Relationships: The case of Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (K.I.M.C) Female college students.’

The purpose of this letter is to request that you accord Ms. Mbugori any necessary assistance to enable her to complete this important academic exercise. We assure you that any information collected will be used strictly for academic purposes and will remain absolutely confidential. Upon completion of the research, Ms. Mbugori’s thesis will be available at our library and she will submit two copies of her completed work to your department.

We appreciate your support for our student towards the successful completion of her research. Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours Faithfully,

[Signature]

Leah Komen (PhD), Thesis Co-ordinator
School of Communication, Language and Performing Arts
lkomen@daystar.ac.ke

Facilitator: Leah Komen lkomen@daystar.ac.ke Page 1
KENYA INSTITUTE OF MASS COMMUNICATION

Telephone: 6551555/6555907
Mobile: 0708263995
Website: www.kimc.ac.ke
Email: info@kimc.ac.ke

KIMC/G/A/112/(105)

Ms. Grace K. Mbogori
P.O. Box 28233 – 00200
NAIROBI

14th October 2016

RE: PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH AT KIMC

Your request to do research at the Institute for Academic purposes is granted.

[Signature]

Hiram Mucheke
DIRECTOR/CEO
Appendix D: NACOSTI Research Authorization Letter

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2313471, 2241349, 3310571, 22139230
Fax: +254-20-3382245, 318249
Email: dp@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
when replying please quote

Ref No: NACOSTI/P/16/26472/14409

7th November, 2016

Grace Kinya Mbogori
Daystar University
P.O Box 44400-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on “The influence of televised soap operas on romantic relationships: The case of Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (K.I.M.C) Female College Students,” I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Nairobi County for the period ending 7th November, 2017.

You are advised to report to the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf of the research report/thesis to our office.

Boniface Wanyama
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

The County Director of Education
Nairobi County.
Appendix E: Research Permit

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MISS. GRACE KINYA MBOGORI
of DAYSTAR UNIVERSITY, 0-200 Nairobi, has been permitted to conduct research in Nairobi County on the topic: THE INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION SOAP OPERAS ON ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS: THE CASE OF KENYA INSTITUTE OF MASS COMMUNICATION (K.I.M.C) FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS for the period ending: 7th November, 2017

National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

Director General

Signature

Applicant's Signature

Permit No : NACOSTIP/16/26472/14409
Date Of Issue : 7th November, 2016
Fee Received : KSh 1000

Library
Archives
Copy

Daystar University Repository
## Appendix F: Anti-Plagiarism Report

### Originality Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarity Index</th>
<th>Internet Sources</th>
<th>Publications</th>
<th>Student Papers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Primary Sources

1. **Submitted to Daystar University**
   - Student Paper
   
2. **digitaledition.nationmedia.com**
   - Internet Source
   
   - Publication
   
4. **www.daystar-cdi.com**
   - Internet Source
   
5. **Submitted to Bowling Green State University**
   - Student Paper