

**COMMUNICATIVE AND RELATIONAL DETERMINANTS OF MOTHER IN-
LAW/DAUGHTER IN- LAW RELATIONSHIP IN FAMILY DRAMA: A CONTENT
ANALYSIS OF *MOTHER-IN-LAW* CITIZEN TV PROGRAMME, KENYA**

BY

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

I, the undersigned declare that this Thesis is my original work and that it has not been presented in any other university or institution for academic credit. No part of this thesis may be reproduced without prior permission of the author and / or Moi University.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this Thesis to my husband Mr. Yonah Orawo Auma and children Silas, Grace, Olave, Getty and Noel, who gave me a peaceful and ample time to pursue my dream of reaching -higher levels of academics.

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ABSTRACT

Previous studies of Television programming have shown familial relationships portrayed in stereotypical ways, but none of them has narrowed down on determinants of mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law relationships. The purpose of this study was therefore to examine the communicative and relational determinants of the relationship between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law as portrayed in TV Family drama. The study aimed at: a) identifying the different families depicted in the Programme and analyse the communicative factors revealed in the drama. b) analyzing the relational factors revealed in the *Mother-in-Law* program. c) determining the communicated and relational factors which influence mother in-law/daughter in-law relationship as portrayed in the programme. The study was guided by the following theories: Triangular Theory of in-law relationships, Relational dialectics, Communications Accommodation Theory, The Multiple Goals Framework theory, and Cultivation Theory. The study analysed eight Episodes of the drama, aired on Citizen TV Channel between August and September 2012. Critical content analysis was employed to analyse data, which was mainly qualitative. Quantitative data was generated by two coders who independently used a prepared code sheet to examine the descriptive aspects of each character and the qualitative aspects defined by pre-determined categories. Reliability of the code sheet was established by piloting to determine inter-coder agreement. The study established that the relationship between MILs and DILs is a dialectical process, in which conflicts could potentially arise as a tussle between the needs for association and dissociation, certainty and uncertainty and openness and closedness and that the key locus of this dialectic process is the verbal interaction between the parties. In addition, independence in family set up, familial identity, supportive communication, and sense of belonging, accommodation, and cultural orientation were found to be the main relational themes communicated in the drama. With respect to the characters relationships, the mother-in-law was found to exhibit negative behaviour and negative personality traits towards her daughters-in-law whereas she displayed positive behaviours towards her sons, hence, supporting the Triangular Theory of in-law relationships. The study found that personality traits of the MIL and DIL, MIL's support of marriage, spouse loyalty and support, and cultural orientation were significant communicative and relational determinants of the relationship between MIL and DILs. These findings are considered significant. The study recommends that TV programs should avoid invariably casting MIL-DIL relationships in negative stereotypes; instead, they should occasionally come up with Episodes on how such relationships might be improved, using factors established in this study.

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LIST OF STUDY ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

MIL	Mother(s)-in-law
DIL	Daughter(s)-in-law
TV	Television
SHOSH	Short form of Kikuyu Word 'Shosho' - meaning Grandmother

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Daughter-in-law: in this study refers to the wife of one's son

Mother-in law: in this study refers to the mother of one's husband

Drama series: A series intended to depict real life invested with a dramatic unity and interest.

Drama: A composition, in prose or poetry, accommodated to action, and intended to exhibit a picture of human life, or to depict a series of grave or humorous actions of more than ordinary interest, tending toward some striking result.

Positive behavior: included showing warmth; behaviour such as sharing and calling each other with respect e.g MIL calling DIL “daughter”

Negative behaviour: Making sure others feel unwanted, patronizing, giving unwanted advice

Accommodation: refers to acceptance

Communicative Determinants: refers to what precipitates the manner of communication one exhibited in a context.

Conflicted but affectionate: often feel conflict with their in-laws but also feel affection for them (both in equal measures)

Convergent values/cultural orientation: Fundamental values that are mutually respected and embraced.

Cordial: feel a low level of conflict but also have little or no' affection for their in-laws (relationship is okay but not close).

Distant but positive: low conflict and high affection (however rare interactions)

Divergent values/cultural orientation: Fundamental differences that are not mutually respected or embraced but instead cause a rift.

Estranged: with worst relationships. The presence of conflict is so high that there is little interaction.

Familial Dyad: refers to link within family members

Family Identification: refers to being part of or feeling to belong

(Father -in-law and other in-laws treat the DIL, DIL's spouse or grand children well)

Obligatory: Interact frequently but feel high conflict and no affection for their in-laws (get together with in-laws for the sake of their spouse and children)

Relational Determinants: refers to what determines the relationship

Relationship Categories: refers to different forms of relationship

Supporting Communication: refers to communication reinforcement

Tight-knit: frequent interactions, feel little conflict but feel affection for the other person.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 An Overview

This chapter highlights the following areas: background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, justification of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study. The background to the study introduces the fundamental problem of the study: the deleterious conflicts between mothers in law and daughters in law, presents evidence to show why these relationships should work and argues that better communication between the parties might lessen the conflict. It also argues that since television drama is rooted in reality and has enormous potential to influence individual behaviour, it is valid to study the Mother- in- Law (MIL) TV program in an attempt to analyse mother- in- law daughter- in- law relationships. This gives rise to the main research question in the study: what communicative and relational factors portrayed in the MIL program determine the relationship between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law? The importance of carrying out this study, particularly on the need to identify factors that might reduce conflicts between the in-laws, is presented, followed by the scope and limitations of the study.

1.2 Background Information

Conflicts in marriages have been typical family problems for a long time. Marriage as noted by Carter and Mc Goldrick (2005) is a normative transition which often leads to experiences of turbulence since it tends to change longstanding relationships and identities. Aspects of family relationships and interaction patterns usually have to be renegotiated. This act of renegotiation as observed by Turner, Young & Black

(2006), calls for the need to balance multiple (and sometimes conflicting) communication goals that are inherent in interpersonal communication. For families to maintain successful relationships therefore there is a need to understand how they experience and negotiate periods of change.

One context in which this is especially true is the mother in-law/daughter in-law relationships, which may be a source of great difficulty in many marriages (Duvall, 1954). The topic of relationship with mother-in-law remains common in everyday conversation, jokes and electronic media, yet, it remains largely unexplored. Epic battles between wives and their mothers-in-law are constant themes in literature from around the world. From Chaucer's *The Lawyer's Tale* (Chaucer, 1387 cited in Rosalyn, 2006) to Tennessee's (2004)' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* are venomous power struggles between MIL and the women their sons married. Studies conducted on the in-law relationships are mainly found in Western countries. In one such study, Rawlins (1992) found that daughters-in-law perceive greater interpersonal distance and have more negative attitude towards mother's-in-law. Apter (2009) found that two-thirds of married British women complained of long-term unhappiness and stress because of friction with their mothers-in-law. Other studies from the West (Stalk, 1974) focused mainly on the nature of support between in-laws and their sons or daughters and found mothers-in-law to be supportive of sons than daughters-in-law. In a study among the Yorubas of Southwest Nigeria, Olutola (2012), found that MILs were often violent against their DILs, with most unmarried girls in the community preferring to marry men whose mothers were dead.

Although in-law relationships in non-western contexts such as Kenya may have varied meanings in respective contexts, exploring the dynamics of daughter-in-law/mother-in-law relationships could help identify factors that may determine the relationship from among several categories which include tight-knit, distant, obligatory, estranged, cordial, and conflicted but affectionate.

Studies suggest that the nature of communication is a crucial factor in predicting MIL/DIL relationships. Markman (1979) suggested that couples with communication-based risk factors (e.g., poor conflict management) and lower protective factors (low levels of positive communication) would be more vulnerable to the development of relationship problems. Karney and Bradbury (1979) in a study of 60 newly married couples found that more initial negative communication predicted steeper declines in satisfaction. Markman et al. (1993) reports that effective communication is pertinent in reducing marital distress in a 4 – 5 year study conducted to evaluate the effects of a marital distress prevention program. A corpus of research indicates that relationships in a marriage triad –between MIL, her sons and their wives – could be fraught with opposing tensions, for instance, the simultaneous need to be both connected/separate, more open/less open, and being certain/uncertain (Baxter, 2006; Montgomery & Baxter, 1998; Rawlins, 1992; Hoppe-Nagao & Ting-Toomey, 2002). Studies suggest that proper communication between the parties concerned could help manage these tensions and enable a successful marriage (Baxter, 1990; Baxter, 2006; Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008). However, a paucity of studies, situated in the Kenyan milieu, have looked at the in-law relationship from a communication perspective.

The mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship is fundamental to the success of marriages in the African context (Rittenour & Soliz, 2009). This is because these women co-exist so closely in the domestic circles. The relationship is also essential in kin keeping (Santos & Levitt, 2007; Turner, Young & Black, 2006) and is critical in the cross-generational family and it is expected to be even more important as people live longer. Historically, when a woman gets married, she joins the husband's family as an outsider and comes under authority mostly exercised by the mother-in-law in daily domestic chores. Research however shows that this authority has often been the cause of strained relationships between the two. In a study carried out in Arizona Ramona and Cowan (1987) established that the mother-in-law, through the information she relayed to her son was responsible for the type of relationship that existed between the son and the daughter-in-law. According to these authors, the frequent conflicts between the two women were due to the fact that they tended to pursue different goals and values. Both claimed to have rights to the son/husband.

For a long time, the relationship between mother in-law (MIL) and daughter in-law (DIL) has been characterized by tension and lack of openness. This relationship has further been complicated by the fact that children are drawn into these conflicts by their virtue of being part of the family. These emerging trends have generated interest among researchers on the quality of relationship that exists among family members. Consequently, this interest has marked a paradigm shift in how mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law are perceived and interact among themselves.

In a study carried out in Egypt, Al-Islaah (2011) established that the mother in-law tended to exert authority through the control of social activities, use of resources and acceptable behaviour. In this respect, the mother-in-law became the advisor on

marital issues and also tended to be at the centre of financial resources for the family. Al-Islaah (2011) however observed that a good mother-in-law ought to play the role of guiding the daughter-in-law through love, peace and comfort. By so doing, the mother-in-law should protect the daughter-in-law by providing physical and emotional well being, and stand by the daughter-in-law in times of difficulties. This then calls for closer ties between the two coupled with intra and inter communication among the two parties.

The friction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law was also highlighted in excerpts of an interview conducted by Dr. Terri Apter (<http://www.TerriApter.com>, retrieved on 6th Jan, 2012). According to this interview, the major area of friction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law centers on the mother-in-law's failure to recognize aspects of a daughter-in-law she herself values highly. Another common theme highlighted in this interview was intrusion – either on the ground that the mother-in-law seemed to “baby” the husband, or on the grounds that the mother in-law presented herself as weak so as to be “mothered” by the son. The interview also identified status within the family as a significant contributor to the negative mother-in-law /daughter in-law relationship.

Cultural activities are currently inundated with depictions of problematic in-law relationships, more so in the case of mothers-in-law. Situational comedy (e.g. *Everybody Loves Raymond*) and television shows (e.g. those depicting mother-in-law) are now over amplifying these problematic relationships. Considering that television is the main source of entertainment and information in the contemporary society (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorielli, 1980, 1986; 2002), exposure to its

messages has the potential to reiterate, confirm and cultivate beliefs, values and perspectives that it portrays (Gerbner, 1998). Consequently, continued exposure to negative images about mothers-in-law by the television cultivates a mainstream view of how mothers-in-law are (cruel, dominant and intrusive). Besides, commodities of the television industry are derived from the interaction of social, cultural, and content standards. This implies that depictions of the mother-in-law are rooted in the belief that it is the norm.

The media is believed to play a crucial role in shaping the perceptions and opinions about political and social issues (Maeroff, 1998; Spitzer, 1993; Wilson & Wilson, 2001; Wimmer and Dominick, 1991). In light of the numerous social issues confronting families, the media has therefore been considered a critical tool that will be exploited to influence the behavior and perceptions of the viewer towards the specific social and political issues.

The negative images about Mothers in-law have permeated the Kenyan society. This has led to several local TV programmes whose themes centre on mother in-law daughter in-law conflicts. One such programme, *Mother-In-Law* has hit the airwaves since the year 2006 and this attests to the fact that much has thematically been dramatized. *Mother-In-Law* is a weekly drama series that has been aired since 2006 on Kenya's Citizen TV every Sunday at 7.35 p.m. and also repeated every Sunday in the afternoon at 4.15 p.m. This Family drama is demarcated into Episodes with each seemingly attempting to address a bundle of the unique familial issues differently. The episodic nature of the programme may have been precipitated by the nature of primary audience it addresses itself to; Mothers- in-law, sons and daughters-in-law.

This sort of audience naturally desires to have their needs addressed hence the episodic nature of the programme. Secondly, as Wesonga (2012) notes, it is possible to maintain an attentive and loyal audience because the viewers are treated to interesting performances whose conflicts seem to address the issues at hand. This structural formation of *Mother-in-law* allows the audience to distinguish it from the numerous soap operas on the Kenyan screens going by their difference in length and approach at addressing familial issues. The brevity of the Episodes resonates with the limited time the producer adopts in creating conflicts.

According to Burton (2000), television drama series utilizes the conventions of both realism and melodrama. In this regard, realism focuses on the set conventions by which drama appears to be representative of the real world with motivated characters, recognizable locations and believable social problems. Using this perspective, it would appear that the “mother-in-law” drama series aired on Citizen Television and which is played in a recognizable location (typical Kenyan home) represents the real Kenyan context and believable social problems. In this programme, Charity is the character who acts the role of a mother-in-law. She plays so powerful a role that asserts authority and wants all other actors in the society to live an ideal life suitable to the extended African family life (Kaiga, 2012).

Mother-In-Law is a TV programme created and produced by professional script writers-who happen to be some of the characters in the drama, together with Catherine Wamuyu Kamau (a producer and director at Royal Media Services). The series is set in a typical familial setting in one of the modern homes in Nairobi’s kahawa Sukari estate which demonstrates the existence of middle class Kenyan family. The story

depicts the actions of Mother-in-law towards the husband, sons, daughters-in-law and the grandchildren. More importantly, the focus of the series has its eyes trained on the relationship between Mother-in-law and daughters-in-law through the drama's plot. The other characters like the domestic workers, other in-laws, police inspector and politicians, have been used by the producer to enhance the portrayal of the conflicting issues and the advancement of the drama's central themes. The story has a complex plot with a storyline fraught with conflicts and counter conflicts as is evidenced in the analyzed Episodes.

The setting of the drama in Nairobi's Kahawa Sukari Estate (which doubles as a high, middle level or slum setting, depending on the context of the drama) and the choice of props (both modern and ancient clothes) are in themselves similar with the audience. The Mother-in-law and daughters-in-law are given prominence to emphasize their role in the mother-in-law-daughter-in-law relationship. The choice of characters reflects a familial set up to allow the programme cater for Kenya's ethnically diverse audience and consequently gain acceptability. The setting keeps shifting to offer the producer a window to reveal the issues in situation and specific Scenes that are identical with the Kenyan families. This allows for comfortable viewing by all the family members without further prejudice as was the intention of the producer.

Episodes in *Mother-In-Law* programme seek to portray the actors, their attitudes, behaviour patterns and perceptions, and how these elements can possibly impact on those watching the programme. The programme serves identity functions through a deliberately corroborated complex plot woven in a storyline to generate conflicts in the family set up, especially that between mother-in-law and daughters-in law.

So far, the production and showing of *Mother-in-law* can be described as successful in the recent years. In addition, findings from a survey by the East Africa's Independent Media Review (2009) quoted in Wesonga (2012) indicated that *Mother-in-law* enjoys a massive following and the biggest viewership among adult audience in Kenya. The programme, which has witnessed a steady growth of viewership, has had its popularity attributed to the characters, especially Charity (mother-in-law), the choice of costumes, identical family setting and the set of actors displayed. The producer has always strived to be 'real' by introducing a new cast to capture unique and emerging issues, and to allow those whose season in the programme has matured to exit such as Alison and Jack, (husband and wife), Salome, Sandra, Inspector Wasike, Beatrice and Alpha.

1.3 Television Drama and Entertainment in Kenya: Revisiting Local Screens

The presence of TV drama on Kenyan screens did not mark the global genesis of this genre but rather highlighted the extent to which importation of media products has permeated the African market. The Kenyan media houses since their inception in the early 20th century have majorly aired western TV dramas and soap operas pioneered by the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC). KBC began by airing *The Bold and the Beautiful* among other Mexican and Filipino soap operas. This trend was picked up by the other local Television stations such as Citizen TV, Nation TV (NTV), Kiss TV, K24, Kenyan Television Network (KTN) among other stations that have continued to sprout across the country. Up to as late as the 90s, these foreign soaps and TV dramas were considered as the main form of entertainment and attraction for the Kenyan audience.

As we speak now, there has been a paradigm shift marked by the introduction of local soap operas, TV dramas and even comedies. These local productions have gained a lot of prominence to the extent that almost all the local Television stations are virtually competing to have significant air space spared for the local entertainment programmes. KBC also set the pace in this by the production and screening of such TV dramas as *vitimbi*, *Tushauriane* and *Vioja Mahakamani*. This was followed by the English versions of *Heart and Soul* (2002) and *Reflections* (2003). NTV came with the screening of *Tausi*, *Beba*, *Wash and Set*, *Tetemo*, *Cobra Squad* and *Wingu La Moto* while KTN also introduced *Better Days*. Citizen TV precipitated the rush for local productions with the steady and continuous airing of Nigeria dramas, local programmes like *Mother-in-Law*, *Tahidi High*, *Papa Shirandula*, *Inspekta Mwala*, *Machachari*, *Siri*, *Tabasamu*, *Waridi* and *Mashtaka*. The Kenyan Television has continued to reinvent itself with the steady and continuous production of local dramas as has been witnessed in this discussion.

Mother-In-Law first hit the airwaves in 2006 and instantly captured the mind of the Kenyan audience: in fact its entry into the local Television market has variously been described as a success as noted by the producer- Catherine Wamuyu. Media researchers have attributed the rise in the popularity of Citizen TV on the success of most of its local programmes. Wesonga (2012), attributes the success of local TV dramas over the western versions to the following reasons: first, local audiences encounter characters speaking their day to day languages of interaction such as Kiswahili and sheng and secondly, the characters in the local TV dramas are confronted by experiences and tensions/conflicts that are well familiar with them and hence easy to identify with.

The East Africa's Independent Media Review (2009) quoted in Wesonga (2012) argues that local content is gaining prominence over content in foreign productions especially,

TV dramas and soap operas and that these local genres will continue to gain popularity among the local audience. The findings of the review go further to reveal that in not too long a time from now, local content will soon account for 80% with foreign content capped at a paltry 20%. These findings further reveal that most producers in Kenya's television industry are keen on promoting local producers and local content and hence motivate creativity in the local market.

The reflection on local TV drama has shown that the local programmes have attracted the attention of a majority of the audience and a study on this was crucial. These observations are therefore what inspired the need to study one of the local TV Dramas- Mother-In-Law.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Constrained relationships between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law remain a challenge in today's society. Apter (2009) found that two-thirds of married British women complained of long-term unhappiness and stress because of friction with their mothers-in-law. Rawlins (1992) found that daughters-in-law perceive greater interpersonal distance and have more negative attitude towards mother's-in-law. In a study among the Yorubas of Southwest Nigeria, Olutola (2012), found that MILs were often violent against their DILs, with most unmarried girls in the community preferring to marry men whose mothers were dead. Several studies particularly in Western countries have focused on the in-law relationships from a broad perspective (Duvall, 1954; Rawlins, 1992).

Certainly, some MIL-DIL relationships are good, as exemplified by the relationship between the biblical Ruth and Naomi, her MIL (Holy Bible). However, for those less

than stellar relationships, it is germane to understand the underlying causes of friction for the relationship is an eminently important one in the cross-generational family and one that will become more important as people live longer and possibly require more and deeper care into our golden years. It is also essential in kin keeping (Santos & Levitt, 2007; Turner, Young & Black, 2006) and helps predict the success of the marriage (Rittenour & Soliz, 2009).

The quantity and quality of communication could be a crucial factor in predicting the nature of MIL/DIL relationships. A corpus of research indicates that relationships in a marriage triad –between MIL, her sons and their wives – are immanent with opposing tensions, for instance, the simultaneous need to be both connected/separate, more open/less open, and being certain/uncertain (Baxter, 2006; Montgomery & Baxter, 1998; Rawlins, 1992; Hoppe-Nagao & Ting-Toomey, 2002). Studies suggest that proper communication between the parties concerned could help manage these tensions and enable a successful marriage (Baxter, 1990; Baxter, 2006; Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008). However, a paucity of studies, situated in the Kenyan milieu, have looked at the in-law relationship from a communication perspective. Moreover, most studies the Kenyan TV drama have mainly focused on their popularity and ranking (Wesonga, 2012). This study was therefore a hermeneutic phenomenological investigation of a MIL – DIL drama on a Kenyan television network. The purpose of this study was therefore, to examine the communicative and relational determinants of the type of mother-in-law/daughter –in-law relationships as portrayed in the TV family drama (Mother-In-Law).

1.5 Specific Objectives

To achieve this purpose, the following specific objectives were used:

- i. To identify the families depicted in Mother-In-Law family drama and analyze the communicative factors revealed in the TV programme.
- ii. To analyse the relational factors revealed in the Mother-In-Law TV programme drama.
- iii. To find out the communicative and relational factors that determines the nature of MIL-DIL relationship in the Family Drama.

1.6 Research Question

In order to explore the stated objectives, the study set out to answer the following questions:

- i. Which families are depicted in Mother-In-Law family drama and which relational factors are revealed in the drama?
- ii. Which communicative factors are revealed in the Mother-In-Law TV programme?
- iii. Which communicative and relational factors determine the nature of MIL-DIL relationships in the Family Drama?

1.7 Justification of the Study

The media has been found to lead to expectations of the problematic in-laws. Most shows on TV ranging from Western soap operas, West African drama series and Kenyan drama series, captures the attention that Mothers-in-law are figures to be looked at as meddlers who treat their sons as little tots that should not be interfered

with. From the African cultural perspective, Mothers-in-law played the role of caretakers to their daughters-in-law. This is not what is captured in the media today. Besides, as a culture icon, the Television drama series and its representations express a dynamic of power in the society. Despite the fact that the MIL programme has been running on Citizen TV since 2006, no study has explored the communicative and relational themes characteristic of the drama.

Weiz (2003) observes that the content of television drama series has always pushed the limits of what is culturally accepted and what is not. Various studies that have been done on the in-laws relationships tend to focus more on the MIL and DIL-dyad (Fischer 1993: Niaroz-Baden & Cowan, 1987: Vera-Sanso 1999). This shows that the MIL/DIL relationship has been perceived to be the most problematic.

According to Pfeifer (1989) several relational outcome are drawn in in-laws relationship owing to the new-in-laws being forced into relationships that have no clear-cut roles of expectation. With these views in mind, this study sought to analyse the communicative and relational determinants of MIL/ DIL relationship in the programme. The study therefore observes more specifically the relationship between MIL and DIL in the Family Drama Mother-In-Law of Royal Media (Citizen TV), Kenya.

While other studies focused, on interviews with DILS, this study analysed contents of a TV programme focusing on MIL/DIL relationship. The study also brings a new perspective for understanding MIL/DIL relationships, furthermore, content analysis offers an insightful way of examining interrelationship(s) by exactly observing verbal

and non-verbal communications, in addition, content analysis is low on control of the research context; hence there is little chance of affecting the outcome. Another key justification is that the study does not only focus on the relationship between MIL and DIL but also brings onboard other family(s). Therefore, the results provide insight into the roles other family(s) plays in the relationship between MILs & DILs. More crucially, the study not only looks at the communicative and relational factors portrayed in the drama, but it investigates the factors that predict whether the relationship between the MIL and DIL will be either negative or positive.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study has the potential to widen understanding of in-law relationships by examining contents of a script. The study contributes to the body of knowledge in communication by examining how messages of TV media can be explored and interpreted in real life phenomena. Besides, the study has the potential to explain the in-law dynamics and provide possible causes of categories of relationships. Although the current study does not provide solutions to perceived negative mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationships, it however identifies several themes and relational outcomes communicated in the 'mother-in-law' programme, and their influence on category of relationship. Such themes if explored could lead to positive mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationships.

Knowledge that independence is a key theme in the in-law relationship is crucial for daughters- in-law and mothers-in-law who may need to improve the category of their relationship. By establishing and maintaining boundaries, they will be able to avoid intrusive and negative behaviour that could possibly lead to estranged relationships.

Communication is portrayed in the study as key to inter-relations. Armed with appropriate communication strategies that may be available, mothers-in-law could be able to monitor their own behaviour and those of their daughters-in-law and apply different strategies of communication. This may reduce conflicts regarding marriage acceptance, spouse loyalty, and cultural orientation which in-turn could lead to bridging differences between them.

Simply blaming the negative mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship on the mother-in-law might not be enough. An appreciation of the role other family members play towards the relationship within the in-law dyad, could go a long way towards mending the perceived differences between the two.

The programme while depicting expectations in the society also plays its core role of entertainment. Prospective daughters-in-law may therefore identify that some of the messages communicated are founded in existing stereotypes and perpetuated through the media.

1.9 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study was carried out on Royal Media Citizen TV drama series programmes portraying familial communicative and relational factors. The programme portrays the intra and interfamily relationship(s). The study specifically employed a content analysis on the communicative and relational determinants (motivational drives) among the family members. This study was carried on one popular Kenyan Citizen TV programme: - “Mother-In-Law”. More specifically, Episodes of the ‘Mother-In-Law programme aired on Citizen TV Channel between August and September 2012

were used for the study. Reason being that this programme took a break when the researcher had just been cleared to generate data and the few Episodes watched earlier could not give extensive engagement with the study. The study covered the content scope of eight Episodes of Mother-In-Law TV drama series on themes, relationships, and communicative and relational impacts of MIL/ DIL relationship. This study therefore investigated the familial relationships in the three dyads.

It used content analysis, and the study chose the plots describing the relationship between MIL and DIL for the analysis. The plots chosen were important, current and had great popularity. This study was not free from limitations as a result of the perception of relational factors as portrayed by TV drama series in Kenya. Mothers-in-law relational aspects are qualitative in nature and were not possible to measure them without using their indicators (the behaviours exhibited by the characters in the programme). It is also expected that the coding was limited to the programmes aired by the TV drama series channels. The study was also limited to the months of August-September 2012.

Major limitations to the study findings exist because of sampling. First, sampling only one TV programme was limiting in a sense that it was rather homogeneous in some aspects. The script of the programme was mainly the same for the Episodes analyzed.

The second limitation was that the eight Episodes selected were purposively and conveniently sampled. Since the programme is a continuing series, it was possible that

the eight Episodes selected depicted the same character of the mother-in-law/daughter in-law.

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that the eight episodes used in the study reflected the themes of the other episodes not used in the study. The second assumption was that the MIL-DIL relationships and themes communicated in the TV series reflect real life, because the TV series is used to make conclusions about the MIL-DIL relationships in real life.

1.11 Chapter Summary

Chapter one has given an overview to the study by looking at background of the study, statement of the problem, specific objectives, and the research question, justification of the study, significance of the study and finally scope and limitations. The next chapter is review of literature from related studies and the theoretical rationale. The fulfillment of the objectives set in this study was facilitated by observing the various Episodes of the TV drama, library research and use of the Internet was an important component of the study. The internet provided insights into what scholars have said about the study of TV family drama as a form of entertainment. Library research provided access to any critical works published on Mother-in-law programme.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 An Overview

This chapter presents a view of relevant literature and theoretical rationale that guided the study. Literature was reviewed from two perspectives. First, literature related to communication themes was reviewed by assessing among others, human communication perspectives, drama as communication, TV drama, and character choice and management with a view to connecting TV drama to the Mother-in-law relationships, which were the principal forms of the current study.

Second, extant literature was drawn from studies by several authors (for instance, Ruttenoir & Soliz, 2009; Prentice, 2005; Cods, 2011). Such literature centred on Mother-in-law and Daughter-in-law themes that included among others, communicative and relational dimensions of shared family identity and relational intentions in Mother-in-law/Daughter-in-law relationships; the assimilation of in-laws (the impact of newcomers on the structuration of families) and relational dialectics in inter-cultural couples's relationships. The purpose of reviewing extant literature on mother-in-law/Daughter-in-law themes was to develop broad ideas of what is already known within the Mother-in-law/Daughter-in-law context and expose gaps that would enable the current study to narrow the problem of investigation to the desired natural outcomes. Besides, this review was expected to highlight any theories that would support the research question.

The following sub-topics have been used for the organization of the chapter: Human Communication Perspective, Communication Strategies, Drama as Communication, TV Drama Series: Character choice and management, Triangular Theory, Relational dialectics Theory, Communication Accommodation Theory, and A multiple Goals framework theory. Others are Mother-in-law & Daughter in-law relationship(s), Communicative Determinants of MIL/DIL relationship(s), Relational outcomes, Communication and Category of Relationship(s), Media Influence on Negative Stereotypes of MILs, Conceptual framework and finally the chapter's summary. The above topics help to bring a clear picture of how studies and theories depict familiarity in in-laws dyad.

The purpose of the literature review is to: examine what has been done in the area being studied, avoid unnecessary and unintentional duplication of work, form a framework from which research findings are interpreted and demonstrate the writer's familiarity with existing body of knowledge. It also reveals strategies, procedures and instruments that have been found useful in investigating the problem in question, hence avoiding mistakes from previous researchers, and to establish the existing gaps in research that needs to be filled (Kothari, 2004).

2.2 Background Information

This section provides information on how the communication process occurs.

2.2.1 Human Communication Perspectives

Review of literature on communication perspectives was informed by the centrality of communication in creating, representing and experiencing reality. Through this review, the researcher hoped to establish the link of communication in modeling how mother-in-law/daughter-in-law feel, think and relate to each other. Analysis of communicative and relational determinants of the type of mother-in-law /daughter-in-law relationships falls in the realm of interpersonal communication. As observed by Beebe *et al.* (2002), interpersonal communication involves interactions or exchanges that are of a neutral nature. This essence implies that interpersonal communication involves an exchange of messages between people. Considering the multitude of approaches that are given to communication as a field, the study advanced five perspectives of human communication as being pertinent to communications between Mothers-in-law and Daughters-in-law. These were intra and interpersonal communications, mechanistic, psychological, closed and open systems perspectives to communication.

2.2.2 Intra and Interpersonal Communications Perspective

Intra and interpersonal communication both posit that communication is the transmission of messages. Intrapersonal communication takes place in the mind. Any element of communication has an element of encoding thus constituting or packaging information in the mind, before changing it into words to be passed on to the target audience/recipient. In their book, *Human Communication*, Pearson *et al.* (2003) defines intrapersonal communication as the process of understanding and sharing meaning within the self. The communication occurs within the mind. According to Pearson *et al.* (2003), this form of communication occurs before and during other

forms of communication as well. Intrapersonal communication also includes such activities as solving problems internally, resolving internal conflicts, planning and evaluating yourself and your relationship with others. Intrapersonal communication is the basis for all other communications.

Indeed, not all communication experts believe intrapersonal communication should be examined within communication studies. Nevertheless, intrapersonal communication is recognized by most scholars within the discipline as a context of communication.

Pearson *et al.* (2003) says:

When you move from intra to, interpersonal communication, you move from communication that occurs within your own self to communication that involves one or more other persons. Interpersonal communication is thus the personal process of coordinating meaning between two people in a situation that allows mutual opportunities for both speaking and listening.

Interpersonal communication occurs for variety of reasons as in the case of intrapersonal communication: to solve problems, to resolve conflicts, to share information, to improve your perception of yourself, or to fulfill social needs such as the need to belong or to be loved as experienced in the family drama, *Mother-In-Law*. Through interpersonal communication, people are able to establish relationships with others that include friendships and romantic relationships. Dyadic and small group communication or two-person communication according to Pearson *et al.* (2003) includes interviews. Small group communication is the interaction of a small group of people to achieve an interdependent goal. Such communication occurs in families, work groups, religious groups and study groups. Within this perspective, enduring approval exists among parties. Relationships sustain themselves owing to the fact that each person understands that the other person desires both togetherness and

autonomy. In this regard, pressures from outside the family, opinions of others and societal trends do not modify the relationship between the two parties.

In summary, communication originates and is received in the human mind, meanings are exchanged through transmission and reception of stimuli; messages are encoded and decoded through filters (mental Sets), mental sets are based in experience, attitudes of sender and receiver, noise that interferes with the transmission of the message. Intra and interpersonal communication are germane to the study of MIL drama because the characters therein must first process mental images into messages, which are then verbalized to others. The latter, upon receiving the message must reprocess it into their own mental categories in order to derive meaning from it.

2.2.3 The Mechanistic Approach to Communication

This perspective of human communication has its genesis from the typical “Sender-Receiver Model” by Shanon and Weaver (1949). This perspective conceptualizes relationships as information which is transmitted through a channel and which therefore can be distorted by “noise” within the channel. This perspective was found relevant in the present study since social interactions between mothers-in-law and Daughter-in-law centre on producing and interpreting messages. This is more so since as noted by Tracey (2002), the recipient must interpret actions performed through a source and directed to a receiver and each represents a potential source of misunderstanding. In this regard, it can be argued that the observed friction between mothers-in-law and daughters-law may result from the mis-interpretation of the intended message.

Besides, this mechanistic perspective posits that the goal of interpersonal communication is to achieve a shared understanding of messages. In essence, messages are used to accomplish particular social goals, which may require participation of others. According to Burleson (2000), sources may promise a variety of instrumental objectives through the messages they produce, while the recipients pursue a variety of objectives with regard to these messages and which may not necessarily be what the source pursued. The argument posed in this is that while negative feelings may exist between mothers-in-law and Daughters-in-law, this may basically be due to pursuant of contrary objectives in the messages produced. Ability to process messages or decode would then require that the two parties interpret the communicative behaviors of each other.

2.2.4 The Psychological Perspective of communication

The psychological perspective of human communication has its basis on the “A-B-X Model” by Newcomb (1961). This perspective postulates that the persons within the communications’ systems are central to the communication. In this case, both the source and receiver are not passive receivers of the message, but rather get actively involved in processing information with specific mechanisms and geared towards their own personal goals and objectives.

This perspective is quite relevant with regard to mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law as source of recipients. The two parties pursue individual goals and objectives with the communications’ systems. The researcher then argues that tensions observed in mother-in-law program are attributable to both the two parties (mothers-in-law and Daughters-in-law) pursuing individual goals with regard to relationships pertaining to

sons and spouses respectively. This promise gains support from assertions by Ployd and Morr (2003) which suggested that adults were more passionate with siblings than siblings' in-law. This is in essence is derived from the fact that the mother-in-law has known the son's relatives (read biological relatives) than the daughter-in-law and would obviously feel emotionally closer to the son's. Entry of the in-laws would then naturally lead to the observed tensions between the two parties.

2.2.5 The Closed Systems Perspective of communication

This perspective of human communication is based on convergence model of communication (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981). According to this perspective, communication leads to convergence of opinions, attitudes, and to common symbols and shared meanings.

Because of this perspective, the relationship between mother-in-law and Daughter-in-law could be expected to be close and depict features such as behavior-facilitating disclosure, relationship enhancing attributions acceptance/respect, reciprocity and process (Omarzu, 2006). By adhering to a shared understanding of meanings of messages, both the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law produce and interpret messages to accomplish particular social goals, which in some way forms on, include, or require participation by both parties.

2.2.6 The open Systems Perspective of communication

In the open systems perspective, communication is a means of creating and maintaining continuous interaction processes. Open communication systems allow for interaction with their environments, by continually taking in new information,

transforming it and giving the information back to the environment (Shockley-Zalabak, 1999). Since, “closed” systems are characterized by a lack of input communication (Shockley-Zalabak, 1999), it is expected that if interlocutors in the TV drama were to adopt open systems communication, the messages communicated could be more sensitive to environmental demands (like other people near the speakers) and reduce the chances of offending the sensibilities of the parties. These could improve relationships, for instance, between those of the MIL and DILs. Open systems perspective, also allows for analysis of communication patterns between two or more people of a certain period. In addition, it also describes communication parameters (for instance, norms) with reference to different or changing conditions.

2.3 Media power & influence

Greene (2008) asserts that many of the main arguments for studying the media come down to this: everyone believes that they do not have same power, though it is surprisingly difficult to establish exactly what kind of power this is. The main power of the media lies in the fact that they can shape what we know about the world and can be a main source of ideas and opinions. They may also influence the way we think and act. Some people argue about how much power the media really have (Ibid). But the continuous and public arguments suggest that it must be worth while studying the media in order to see whether or not they really do have this power and influence. In access to the audience it is notorious that, radio and TV are special in the sense that they get into the living room. They have access to almost every house hold in the Land (Greene, 2008).

The best way of looking at media materials is to regard it all as a text of one sort which this study adopted. A text can be read, interpreted and analysed. It can be organised or structured in a particular way. The idea is that if you can work out what the organising principle is, if you can analyse the way things are said; then you have good chance of working out what the material means and what effect it might have on you with regard to the meanings. Greene states that when looking at media material, it is difficult to avoid talking about aspects of society, family not withheld. The next topic therefore identifies family representation in the Family drama Mother-In-Law.

2.4 Understanding Drama as communication

Greene (2008) notes:

“Do not accept the roles that the society foists on you. Re-create yourself by forging a new identity, one that commands attention and never bores the audience. Be the master of your own image rather than letting others define it for you. Incorporate dramatic devices into your public gestures and actions. Your power character will seem larger than life.”

Good actors control themselves better. They can play sincere and heartfelt, can effect a tear and a compassionate look at will, but they don't have to feel it. The character you seem to have been born with is not necessarily who you are; beyond the characteristics, you have inherited your parents, your friends, and your peers have helped to shape your personality. Good drama, however, needs more than an interesting appearance or a single stand-out moment: Drama takes place over time- it is an unfolding event. Rhythm and timing are critical Greene (2008).

About image(s), Greene (2008) talks of the Greek Sea-God Proteus. His power came from his ability to change shape at will, to be whatever the moment require. When

Menelaus, brother of Agamemnon, tried to seize him, Proteus transformed himself into a lion, then a serpent, a partner, a boar, running water, and finally a leafy tree. Why should one try to understand the above Greek mythology? Drama is a reflection of life's situation. The society is mirrored through the drama series brought about by the media. One such character that possesses ability to change 'shape' at will is Charity of Mother-In-Law family drama in Kenyan Citizen TV programme.

An interview with Charity (stage name) - The Mother-in-law figure in the programme revealed a lot more of her background which confirms that in drama the character you seem to have been born with is not necessarily who you are, as Greene (2008) put it. It turns out that Charity is well educated with Postgraduate Diploma in Education. She went to Alliance High School where she started her acting career. She loved acting and she also organised a number of dramas for students. To her the mother-in-law character is not Elizabeth Wanjiru (her real name). She is a teacher by profession. After retirement, her passion has been farming. At 71 years of age she attributes her strength to good nutrition and "Jembe" (working in the farm) which she articulates with a lot of humour as being her gymnastic/exercise.

Charity asserts that she has had challenges with people outside on why she is so hard on Celina. But she confirmed that they are good friends with Celina out of stage. She attests to it that mother-in-law plays a meddler- taking peoples roles of which she is not in real life. Her role in real life situation is that of mentoring young children between the ages of 0-7 years. She believes this is the best and most important age bracket because it is the period when the character of a child is moulded.

When asked what message she could have for those interested in nurturing their talents in the same industry, this is what Charity had to say: “Mother-In-Law programme is a family set up series and cannot accommodate a number of people. The advice is that, those interested in joining the drama should consult and be guided on how to start their own plays/drama. There are also a number of sections in drama; for instance, production, that is, camera, lighting, editing and others that one can engage in, other than the play/drama.

2.5 The Family Set-ups

The family is the most important agent of socialization because it represents the centre of children’s lives (Macionis, 1997). Every social experience we have affects us in at least some small way. In modern industrial societies, however, several familial settings have special significance in the socialization process. Macionis (1997) posits that at least until the onset of schooling, the family also shoulders the task of teaching children cultural values, attitudes and prejudices about themselves and others. Family-based socialization is not at all intentional. Children learn continuously from the kind of environment that adults create.

Whether children learn to think of themselves as strong, weak, smart or stupid, loved or simply tolerated, and whether they believe the world to be trustworthy or dangerous, largely stem from this early environment (Macionis, 1997). The family also confers on its members a social position; that is, parents not only bring children into the physical world, they also place them in society in terms of race, ethnicity, religion and class. With time, all these elements become part of a child’s self-concept

of cause, some aspects of social position may change later on, but social standing at birth affects us throughout our lives.

When we look at the different family set-ups in mother-in-law programme, these social standing is evident in each set of family represented there in. There seem to be conflicts created by the generation gap though. Macionis (1997) believes that the conflict between parents and peers may be more apparent than real. However, even during adolescence, children remain strongly influenced by their families. Peers may guide short-term concerns such as style of dress and musical taste but parents retain greater sway over the long-term goals of their children. One study, for example, found that parents had more influence than even best friends on young people's educational aspirations (Davies & Kandel, 1981).

In this study the characters in the show exhibit fair influence depending on the kind of background they were nurtured. There are a number of family set-ups in the mother-in-law programme aired by Royal media on citizen TV. The first family which acts as the umbrella to other families is, The Mwamba Family. This is constituted by Mwamba as the father, Charity (mother-in-law) as his wife, and their children; Jack, Robert, Chalie and Beaty. The second family is constituted by Jack as the father, Alison the wife and their children Tina, Mike and Angie. The third set of family is constituted by Robert and Lisa as the wife. The fourth family is that of Charlie and Selina with the adopted child- Olive. Another family is represented by mother Alison and Swapo the son. The next is a social family constituted by all the workers such as Mustafa, Maria, Wanade, Ninja and Alpha.

With the above family set-ups, the study drew a familial dyad to show clearly the relationship among the family members and what ties them together, and the analysis of the communicative relational determinants of their relationships. Once it is clear what type of families are represented in the family drama- Mother-in-law, then the viewer will be able to automatically interpret the communication aspects that is displayed within the context of these family set-ups.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

This section articulates the theoretical rationale that guides inter-group communication to examine how communicative and relational factors affect the mother-in-law (MIL)/ daughter-in-law (DIL) relationship.

2.6.1 Triangular Theory

According to the triangular theory of in-laws relationships (Serewicz, 2008), in-law relationships are simply defined by a triangle linking the lynch pin, the lynch pin's relative (parent-in-law), and the lynch pin's spouse (child-in-law). Consequently, the present study was situated within the triangular theoretical framework since the study hinged around these three variables where the lynch pin was the son, lynch pin's relative was the mother-in-law, and the lynch pin's spouse was the daughter-in-law. From the triangle (Figure 2.1), the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law were seen not to have any genuine interest to begin an independent relationship with one another, but were rather brought together through their link with the son (Duck, Foley and Kirk Patrick, 2006). In support of this notion, Serewicz (2006) noted that a truly dyadic relationship between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law was inhibited by the triadic nature of the in-law relationship. From this point of view, it becomes

apparent that the competing interest for linking with the son affects how the daughter-in-law adjusts and is accepted by the mother-in-law.

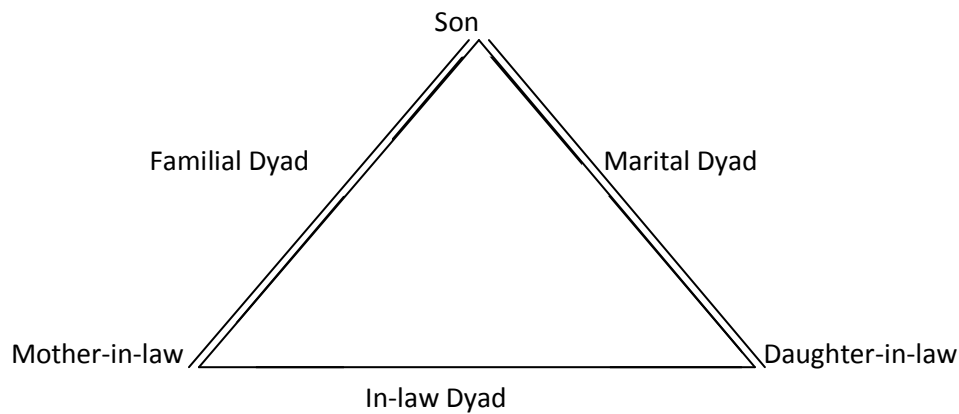


Figure 2.1: The In-Law Triad (Serewicz, 2006)

As shown in figure 2.1, it is clear that the in-law triad consists of three dyads; the marital dyad links the daughter-in-law to the son, the familial dyad links mother-in-law to the son, while the in-law dyad links the mother-in-law to the daughter-in-law. As observed by Serewicz (2008), both the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law are deeply committed to the familial and marital relationships (shown by the double lines for the marital and familial dyads). They are however only committed to the in-law relationship by default (Single line). Despite the lukewarm relationship with the mother-in-law, the daughter-in-law cannot afford to dissolve her relationship with the mother-in-law, since this may effectively damage her marital relationship. Thus, this triadic nature of in-law relationships forces the daughter-in-law to maintain a relationship with the mother-in-law due to her commitment to her spouse (the son) and to maintain intergenerational relationships (Serewicz, 2006).

Inexplicably, the triadic nature of the in-law relationship leads to a structural complexity in the in-law relationship, which presents challenges to the mother-in-law, and daughter-in-law relationship and communication. First, as observed by Serewicz (2008), communication within the in-law dyad has repercussions for the entire in-law trio. According to Bryant Couger and Meehan (2001), conflict within the in-law dyad for example, is negatively linked to marital success. Secondly, relational uncertainty within the in-law dyad leads to avoidant communication within the familial dyad (Mikucki, 2009).

Although this theoretical framework highlights the strengths of the marital dyad and the familial dyad with regards to in-law relations and communications, it does not point out the relational characters that influence the in-law relationships.

2.6.2 Relational dialectics theory

The term dialectics (from Latin *dialectica* meaning logic) has a plethora of meanings. According to American Heritage Dictionary (2011), dialectics refers to "... (2) The process especially associated with Hegel of arriving at the truth by stating a thesis, developing a contradictory antithesis, and combining and resolving them into a coherent synthesis; ... (5) The contradiction between two conflicting forces viewed as the determining factor in their continuing interaction". Dialectics therefore refers two interacting but opposing forces. Relationships between people, including those in marital dyads, are frequently defined by the nature of discourse between parties, which often, may be adversarial. Hence, the concept of dialectics may be applied to analyse these relationships.

Relational dialectics theory contends that all discourse, whether in external conversations or internally within ourselves, has competing properties, that is, “dialogue is simultaneously unity and difference” (Baxter and Montgomery, 1996). During discourse, meanings are created within ourselves and also we try to create meanings in others. These meanings, packaged within conversation are interpreted, sometimes correctly or wrongly, creating strains in the communicative process, termed as ‘dialectical tensions’ (Anderson *et al.*, 2004).

Several contradictions can be identified in the dialectically oriented research. The most common, labeled variously, is separation-integration, association-dissociation, autonomy-connection, or independent-interdependent (Baxter, 2009). When parties negotiate close relationships, they construct a meaning of closeness that has two opposing tensions – the centripetal force that tends to bring them closer and the centrifugal force that inclines to maintain their independence (Baxter, 2009). Another contradiction in literature is referred to as openness-closedness or expression-non-expression (Anderson *et al.*, 2004). This tension arises from the need to disclose more in a conversation against the tendency to keep some information private. The third contradiction is variously called certainty-uncertainty, past-present, or predictability-novelty (Anderson *et al.*, 2004). Individuals desire a sense of assurance and predictability in relationships, which often clashes with their desire for spontaneity and mystery.

Relational dialectics has been applied to analyse various relationships, which are inherently contradictory, for instance, dating relationships, divorced pairs, employee relationships, marital couples, marital couples in which one partner has been

diagnosed with dementia, marital couples transitioning to parenthood, members of abusive relationships, mother-daughter relationships, older dating partners, parent-child relationships, platonic friendships, retirement-home relationships, romantic pairs, and stepfamily relationships (Baxter and Montgomery, 1996). Baxter (2009) has argued that relational partners jointly act in ways that negotiate the interplay of contradictory oppositions, sometimes opting for one system of meaning, thereby marginalizing or silencing competing systems of meaning. Satisfaction in a relation is achieved by how the partners navigate the continuous dialectical tensions in the relationship.

Relational dialectics researchers accept that tensions may range in a continuum from those unique to a particular relationship, referred to as 'indigenous tensions' (Conville, 1998) to tensions operating at the level of a group, graphically called as a 'knot of contradiction' (Baxter and Montgomery, 1996). This thesis contends that the relationship between MILs and DILs is a dialectical process, in which conflicts could potentially arise as a tussle between the needs for association and dissociation, certainty and uncertainty and openness and closedness. Further, it suggests that the key locus of this dialectic process is the verbal interaction between the parties.

Baxter and Montgomery (1996) identified six functional strategies and two dysfunctional strategies, which could be used to cope with dialectical tensions. In spiralling inversion, the dominance of one pole may change, either with time or history of the relationship; similarly in segmentation, the dominance of a particular pole changes with the activity of the moment. Some people strive for a midway point between the poles by favoring neither one. Integration—the simultaneous recognition

of both poles—is sometimes reached through rituals or ambiguous language. In recalibration, people can temporarily reframe or recalibrate the tensions so that they do not seem oppositional whereas in reaffirmation, people accept the reality of the tensions and celebrate them. The dysfunctional strategies involve either denying their existence (denial) or tolerating them as inevitable unpleasantness (disorientation) (Prentice, 2005). Another strategy identified by Kramer (2004) was venting to other people, which does not resolve the problem, but provides an outlet for releasing tension.

2.6.3 Communication Accommodation Theory

Communications Accommodation Theory (Shepard *et al.*, 2001) is outlined to highlight the relationship between intergroup communication and relational categorization. According to this theory, psychological distance between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law who are relational and conversational partners is negotiated. In particular, behavior such as sharing personal thoughts and feelings, discussing topics of interest, and taking into account partners conversational needs, all of which are accommodative in nature are more personalized and positively perceived. On the contrary, non-accommodative behaviour such as patronizing communication, showing disrespect, and not accounting for partners conversational needs are perceived in a more negative manner (Harwood & Wilhams, 1998; Williams & Giles, 1996).

In essence, this theory implies that a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law who acquire accommodative behaviour are more likely to cultivate a common family identity that tends to be more personalized in nature. However, acquisition of non-accommodative behaviour is negatively associated with shared family identity (Harwood, Raman & Hewstone, 2006; Soliz & Harwood, 2006). Besides, as noted by Burlison, Albrecht

and Sarason (1994), self-disclosure and supportive communication are essential aspects in the development of interpersonal relationships. Other scholars, concur that supportive communication is related to perceptions of relational quality (Rook & Huarle, 1999; Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004; Weber, Johnson & Corrigan, 2004). Considering that supportive communication represent specific accommodative behaviour, Soliz & Harwood (2006) observed that when assessing the degree to which family members feel connected to each other within the family unit, it is prudent to consider communicative themes inherent in such connections. These discussions then lead to the question: “What are the main themes communicated in the mother-in-law TV programme?”

2.6.4 A Multiple Goals Framework Theory

The Multiple Goals Framework (Caughlin, 2010) was articulated in order to examine the role that goals play in communication. As noted by Turner, Young & Black (2006), goals are often the end states, which individuals strive for. Such goals can often be many and conflicting. Consequently, there is need for individuals to manage these goals concurrently (Berger, 2005; Dillard, 2008). As seen from the in-law triad (Fig 2.1) both mother-in-law and daughter-in-law tend to prioritize the familial and marital dyads. This is supported by Samp and Monahan (2011) when noting that individuals ought to attend to instrumental, identity and rational goals simultaneously which forces them in certain cases, to prioritize certain goals over others.

According to Dillard (2008), goals provide impetus for action since they trigger behaviour geared goal attainment. This in consequence implies that goals activate strategies useful for communication (Wilson, 2002). A multiple goals approach has

provided avenues for examining the role of goals across interactions and how they influence communication and relational outcomes (Caughlin, 2010; Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010). According to Caughlin (2010), since both the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law pursue goals over interaction across familial and marital dyads, they tend to employ different strategies to achieve their different aims. Their communicational behaviour is therefore likely to elicit several categories of relationship outcomes. In essence, therefore, assessment of in-laws communicative behaviour is likely to help explain relational outcomes and behavioural intentions in the mother-in-law/ daughter-in-law context (Rittenour & Soliz, 2009).

While research on intra-and inter-family communication has tended to illuminate on how communication behaviour relate to in-laws satisfaction, marital satisfaction and care-giving intentions (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Serewicz & Canary, 2008; Rittenour & Soliz, 2009), they fail to provide insight into which particular communicative and relational outcomes predict the category of the in-laws relationship. These arguments then evoke the question: “Which communicative and relational factors determine the nature of mothers-in-law/ daughters-in-law relationship?”

2.6.5 Cultivation Theory

The final theory within which the current study was situated is the cultivation theory (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signomelli, 1994; 2002). According to this theory, television tends to cultivate acceptance of the beliefs, values and perspectives it portrays, at a broad cultural level. This theoretical framework was necessitated by the fact that the study was conducted by analyzing contents of a television programme,

results of which were used to draw assertions of the mother-in-law/ daughter-in-law relationship.

The study posited that due to the influence of television as a source of broadly shared images and messages about the world and its people, it ended up having an influence on the mother-in-law/ daughter-in-law relationship in real world context. As observed by Gerbner et al. (1994), television is the dominant source of children's entertainment and information. Continued exposure to its messages is ultimately likely to cultivate beliefs and values it portrays. This clearly fits the bill with regard to the mother-in-law programme. Through continuous portrayal of the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship in the negative, children especially girls acquire beliefs and values that demonize the mother-in-law.

It has, however, been pointed out in other studies (Comstock & Park, 1991; Potter, 1993; Wilson, 1995) that by not considering mediating factors that could influence cultivation, the theory is in essence simplistic. While supporting these sentiments, Gunter (1994) averred that cultivation effect could be program-specific and may be depended on selective attention to programmes that reinforce one's view of the world. The arguments in support and against cultivation theory then evoke the question: “would an analysis of the content of the mother-in-law programme elicit the real mother-in-law/ daughter-in-law relational outcomes?”

While triangular theory was central to establishing the triangular nature of the relationship depicting the mother in-law, daughter in-law, and the son; the communication accommodation theory sought to explain communication and

relational categorization between the three. This was based on the goals each of them strived for, thereby justifying review of the multiple goals framework theory. On the other hand, cultivation theory was deemed relevant in assessing the influence the analyzed TV programmes has on its audience in relation to mother in-law/daughter in-law relationships. A review of the four theories contributed significantly towards narrowing down the research problem to the desired character selection.

2.7 Empirical Review of Mother-in-law/Daughter-in-law relationships

Literature

This section reviews existing studies on communicative factors, relational factors and communicative and relational factors, which could determine the nature of MIL/DIL relationships. The section concludes by looking at media influence on negative stereotypes of mothers-in-law.

2.7.1 Communicative factors in MIL/DIL Relationships

This thesis proposes that the verbal discourse amongst partners belonging to a marriage triad exhibits the dialectical tensions of association/dissociation, certainty/uncertainty and openness/closedness. Several studies support this view. Mikucki (2007) in an interpretive analysis of five transcribed interviews of MILs and DILs, found that mothers-in-law struggled with remaining close to their sons, while at the same time attempting to afford them independence to start their own nuclear family. In addition, mothers-in-law appeared to have difficulty allowing their daughters-in-law to integrate fully into the family unit, which pointed to the existence of dialectical tensions.

Prentice (2009) looked at how entry of a newcomer into a family group created tensions that were managed as the newcomer advanced through the stages of socialization into the group, in an interpretive study of 42 participants who had recently acquired in-laws. Relational dialectics analysis indicated that in-laws experienced the external dialectical tensions of inclusion/seclusion, conventionality/uniqueness, and revelation/concealment. However, the tensions manifested in unique ways and were managed with a variety of strategies, some of them unique to the in-law relationship. New strategies for managing these tensions included mediating the communication between some in-laws, while seeking closer direct communication among adult siblings (-in-law). In a study of how relationships developed among in-laws in arranged marriages in Beirut, Lebanon, Nasser et al. (2013) found that gender, socio-cultural, individual and religious differences were important sources of dialectical tensions that could lead to success or failure of the marriage.

2.8 Relational factors in Mother-in-law/Daughter-in-law Relationships

Several themes have been linked with the in-law relationship in existing literature. Burleson, Albrecht and Sarason (1994) identified self-disclosure and supportive communication as essential components within the formation and development of interpersonal relationships. Other scholars (Rook and Huarte, 1999; Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004) further found out that self-disclosure and supportive communication are related to perceptions of relational quality. In a later study, Soliz and Harwood (2006) established that self-disclosure and supportive communication represent

specific accommodative behaviours and, are consequently relevant when assessing the degree to which family members feel connected to each other with the family unit.

Boundary management (independence) is cited in literature as a salient goal for children-in-law (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007; Mikucki – Enyart, 2011). According to these authors, within the in-law context, boundaries establish and maintain relationship by creating rules for interaction as well as showing bonafide family members. In essence, daughters-in-law seek independence to establish autonomous family units (Merill, 2007). Although daughters-in-law desire to remain independent, Merrill (2007) noted that they also desire to be part of the overall family unit.

Contributing to these findings, Enyart and Rittenour (2007) observed that daughters-in-law do not appreciate when mothers-in-law make unannounced visits. In addition, Cotterill (1994) found out that daughters-in-law sought independence from mothers-in-law who often came into the marital home and began rearranging decorations, cleaning, and taking over in a manner that conveyed disregard for their own physical boundaries. Petromo (2002) further found out that daughters-in-law may wish to manage privacy boundaries by attempting to regulate the dissemination of private information.

Another theme given prominence in existing literature is that of establishing and maintaining a desired identity. According to Cotterill (1994) and Merrill (2007), daughters in-law cultivate ideas of positive in-law identity from a variety of sources which include popular culture or the way their own parents relate with their in-laws. Adding to these views, Enyart and Rittenour (2012) found out that daughters-in-law,

especially in the early years of marriage aim to establish an identity as suitable spouses and extended family members. Merrill (2007) further observed that children-in-law may also wish to establish an identity as a married couple and family. Consequently, Merrill (2007) avers that the ability of the mother-in-law to support the development of the marital dyad's new family identity has significant positive relational implications for the in-law triad.

Besides the desire for shared family identity, maintenance of family relations features prominently in literature as an interaction goal of children –in-law dyad significantly determines how the daughter-in-law maintains intergenerational relationships (relationships between the triad members and extended family, including grandchildren and grandparents). Several studies (Bryant, Conger and Mehan, 2001); Timmer and Veroff, 2000) show that negative in-law relationships are linked to an increased risk of divorce and reduced marital success. According to Goetting (1990), mothers –in-law can be a tremendous source of emotional, financial and instrumental support for daughters-in-law and grandchildren. Several other studies further show that daughters-in-law have positive relationships with their mothers-in-law and feel an obligation to help them maintain relationships with their husbands and grandchildren (Merrill, 2007; Pfeifer, 1989).

2.8.1 In-Laws relationships

The crucial in-laws relationships are those which are represented by the triad (Section 2.6.1), consisting of MIL-DIL, MIL-Son, and Son-Wife relationships. Since, the son usually marries a wife whom he loves; this type of relationship is predictable. Thus,

the ensuing sections describe extant literature on MIL-DIL and MIL-Son relationships.

2.8.2 Mother-in-law and Daughter-in-law Relationships

Research on the in-laws relationship has tended to focus more on the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law dyad (Fischer, 1993; Marotz-Baden & Cowan, 1987; Vera-Sanso, 1999). This shows that the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship has been perceived to be the most problematic. Empirical evidence however distinguishes two schools of thought, one in support of the perceived turbulent mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship while the other refutes. In a study, Pans (1998) indicated that problematic relationships with in-laws affect both sons- and daughters-in-law in equal measures. This view was further shared by Enler, Hoier and Rohde (2001) who observed that both sons- and daughters-in-law felt closer to parents who raised them as opposed to their parents-in-law. Taylor, Chatters and Mays (1988) from their study noted that wives are not as close with their parents-in-law as were their husbands. Hung (2005) and Kurdek (1999) found that many mothers- and daughters-in-law exchanged high levels of social support. These views supported those by Wallin (1954) that mothers- and daughters-in-law were often highly satisfied with their relationship. These arguments indicate that while parents-in-law, especially the mother-in-law are portrayed as meddling and intrusive, evidence shows that the mothers-in-law can have positive relationships with the daughters-in-law.

Goetting (1990) found out that in-laws can help facilitate aspirations and ventures for the children-in-law by providing mutual and support. In a later study, Solomon and

Knobloch (2001) observed that through daily facilitation the daughter and mother-in-law provided one another with a variety of assistance aimed at being able to accomplish everyday tasks and goals which according to Cotterill (1994) could include household maintenance/chores or child care. In the study, Cotterill (1994), found several daughters-in-law who described receiving assistance from their mothers-in-law after childbirth, which included help with cooking, laundry and childcare. According to these daughters-in-law, the assistance allowed them to adjust to motherhood without having to worry about daily tasks of household maintenance. On the contrary, Globerman (1996) found out that daughters-in-law provide direct care giving support to aging parents-in-law, which enabled parents-in-law to accomplish the daily goals and tasks.

In addition, other studies (Cotterill, 1994; Prentice, 2008; Turner, Young and Black, 2006) show that children-in-law often play a key role in facilitating and maintaining familial bonds. According to Cotterill (1994), daughters-in-law often serve as kin keepers between husbands and mothers (in-law) and help repair relational damage. Prentice (2008) on the other hand found out that daughters-in-law often facilitate the in-law-relationship by mediating conflict or difficult discussions and encouraging relation development.

2.8.3 Mothers-In-Laws and Their Adult Sons

Saturday Nation Feb 4th2012 reported: “Heidi Withers paid a visit to her future mother-in-law in the company of her fiancée. Her mother-in-law, Mrs. Bourne, took exception to Heidi’s “staggering uncouthness and lack of grace”. She voiced her

outrage at Heidi's behaviour in a nasty email that went viral on the internet. Heidi did finally wed her man, but her parents in law were conspicuously absent, to no one's surprise". This Heidi drama is a rather extreme example of one of the most complex and drama-filled relationships ever-that between women and their mothers-in-law. In all fairness, most mothers-in-law are poster children for good behavior and treat their daughters-in-law with respect and support while maintaining healthy boundaries. However, there are notorious and more famous bunch that are personified in Mrs. Burne's mail and closer home, in the caustic tongued Charity of the local Royal Media (Citizen TV) programme "Mother-In Law."

2.8.4 Stuck in The Past syndrome

Most of the frictions between mothers-in law and their new daughters invariably start an ends with the man who brings them together. Most MILs (as they are commonly referred to) misguidedly believe that the sun rises and sets around their sons. To MILs, their sons are deity-perfect beings who commit no crime and who should be fussed over, doted upon and if possible, even worshipped. In some cases, MILs like to remain stuck in time and place where their sons were children who only did what was innocent and adorable. In fact, no matter how many years have passed by since then, these mothers-in-law still baby their sons, some going as far as calling them papa and daddy or whatever childhood name they gave them while they were young (Apter, 2009).

Such mums may not know that their "baby" can make decisions and can play adult games and make adult mistakes. No one, not even their daughters-in-law and mother of their grandchildren, is allowed to distort this perfect illusion. Any attempts to point

out any failures or shortcomings in this adult “baby”, are met with serious hostility and downright war by the MIL. This means that such MILs cannot be asked to arbitrate in any family dispute because they are totally biased in favour of their sons no matter how errant they may be. Many have been known to become completely hostile against daughters-in-law who tell them or others about their sons, these wives are declared enemies of the family (Turner, Young & Black, 2006).

We all know that fathers and mothers wish for only the best for their children. They want them to have the perfect jobs, the spouses and the perfect children. In a bid to exert their ambitions and wishes, many parents-in-law (with mothers-in-law taking the lead) go into full meddle mode when dealing with their son’s wives and their grandchildren. Some MILs see marriages as something akin to corporate mergers where their son selects a bride from a blue chip family, thus improving the overall family share price (Rittenour & Soliz, 2009). These MILs go ballistic if their sons choose wives outside their preferred stock bracket and they never lose any opportunity to bemoan the tragedy that has afflicted their son.

In Chama meetings, they seek consolation and support as they sign and whine about that “woman who my son married.” Some MILs, Fast, Tithe and make special offerings to the almighty in the hope that something will rend the marriage a sunder, all because their sons’ brides do not make the cut as far as they are concerned. Prospective brides who make it past their prospective mothers-in-law’s barbs and hate campaigns, have to develop a thick skin to shield them from the never-ending barbs and catty comments that come their way (Saturday Nation Feb 4th 2012).

2.9 Factors that Predict the Nature of MIL/DIL Relationships

This study contended that relational and communicative factors (discussed in the following sections) could determine the nature of MIL/DIL relationships.

2.9 Relational factors in MIL/DIL Relationships

According to Pfeifer (1989) several relational factors or outcomes are drawn from in-laws relationships owing to the new-in-laws being forced into relationships that have no clear-cut roles or expectations. In support of these views, Durall (1954) and Horsley (1997) noted that the process of fully integrating married children in families is complicated by the fact that married children want to be seen by their parents and parents-in-law as adults. A variety of outcomes can therefore result from such in-laws relationships.

Baxter (1993) proposed that external contractions which occur between the in-law dyad and the social network leads to inclusion/exclusion tensions which relate to how much involvement the dyads needs or desires relates with other dyads. Gallois, Ogay and Giles (2005) in their study negative and positive behaviour are accommodative in nature and are typically perceived as more personalized and are subsequently evaluated positively. In essence, therefore, these behaviours are more likely to be perceived positively in the familial dyad than in the in-laws dyad.

Sprecher and Hendrick (2004) on the other hand noted that self-disclosure as a personality trait was an indicator of close relationship as well as an important aspect

of quality inter-group contact. These is in support of the findings by Chaikin and Derlega (1974) that because individuals vary on the extent to which certain levels of self-disclosure are considered appropriate, possibly the perception and role of personality trait could be either positive or negative depending on the depth of disclosure.

Another key relational outcome that is noted in literature as emanating from the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship is opposition to marriage which often leads to lack of the mother-in-laws' support of the marital dyad. Several studies (Orbuch, Veroff and Holmberg, 1993; Surra, 1990, Surra, Batchelder and Hughes, 1995) show that parents tended to attempt to break up courting of children as a show of displeasure for planned marriage. In so doing, tension is created between them and their sons or daughters-in-law. Research further shows that such opposition to a potential marriage may be founded on the perception that the daughters-in-law are different from the family and cannot possibly produce an enduring marriage.

According to FitzPatrick (1988), couples fall into three types – traditional, separates and independents based on perceptions of closeness, interaction and roles for spouses. Gottman (1994) on his part proposed three types of couples based on conflict styles from among volatile, accommodating, and avoiding. Literature also identifies relationship with other family members as a key outcome of depicted of mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationships.

According to Duvall (1954), besides the mother-in-law, the sister-in-law was often considered as the other difficult in-law, characterized as meddling, jealous and

gossiping. According to Duvall, a daughter-in-law may sometimes feel accepted by the mother-in-law but rejected by the sister-in-law who views her as a rival for family recognition.

Besides family, researchers (Baxter and Montgomery, 1998; Brown, Whether and Altman, 1998) have identified outcomes related to loyalty, closeness and autonomy as depicted from in-law relations. In approving this, Horsley (1997) noted that many spouses experienced specific tensions in having to balance loyalty between their families of origin and their in-laws' families. Adding to these views, Fischer (1983), and Rosenthal (1985) reported that the daughters-in-law preferred to mention kin with her own family rather than her husband's family. Supporting previous research, Ritternour (2006) found out that perception of spouse's loyalty was a positive factor in the relationship between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. Consequently, a husband may alleviate or hasten conflict within the in-law dyad.

Another key relational outcome reported about the mothers-in-law/daughters-in-law relationships is jealousy. According to Silverstein (1990), the mother-in-law may be jealous of the closeness of the daughter-in-law with her son. The reverse could also be true with the daughter-in-law feeling jealous depending on the spouse/mother-in-law relationship. However, both Cotterill (1994) and Limary (2002) suggest that the daughters-in-law holds the position of power in the in-laws dyad since they mediates the contact between her husband and his mother.

2.9.1 Communicative factors in MIL/DIL Relationships

Research shows that the study of interpersonal communication is in many ways linked to the study of the development of close, interpersonal relationships (Berger, 2005). According to Fitzpatrick (1988), communication is central to modern social relationships. Contributing to the relevance of interpersonal communication, Braithwater and Baxter (2008) noted that key to interpersonal communications are messages within relationships that influence and determine the category of those relationships.

The communicative factors that have studied in TV drama include the language used, body language, dress code and tonal variation. Bubl (2006) analysed scripted talk in an American TV drama, "Sex and the City", in order to show how the audience in front of the screen deciphers the kind of relationship characters on the screen have from overhearing their talk. She concluded that interpersonal relationships are processes rather than states, which are established and maintained, mainly, by verbal interaction between the characters. Thus, analysis of dialogue can communicate salient themes, for instance, the type of relationships between characters in a drama.

Prentice (2005) interviewed 42 participants (including newlyweds, parents of newlyweds, and siblings of newlyweds) on their relationships with their in-laws. Although most of the participants reported that they liked their in-laws and wanted to maintain good relationships with them, they also reported differing levels of discomfort with their in-laws when their routines differed. The study involved conducting interviews, transcribing them, and then analyzing them, which showed that the structure of language used could be used to indicate the type of communication occurring. However, the study did not look at a TV drama.

Conversation has been considered as the most important tool in the construction of relationships in both real-life and scripted dialogue in TV drama (Bubel, 2006). Authors such as Burton (1982), Tannen and Lakoff (1994) and Spitz (2005) have investigated how constructed dialogue could evoke interpersonal relationships. Burton (1982) in an investigation of Harold Pinter's *Dumb Waiter*, uses the tools of discourse analysis to demonstrate that large segments of the audience respond similarly to specific effects in plays. Tannen and Lakoff (1994) showed specific patterns in conversations of a married couple whereas Spitz (2005), analysing plays by women writers, shows how mothers and daughters negotiate relationships using verbal conflict.

However, communication does not only occur via the verbal assemblage of rhetorical tropes, metaphors, similes, paradeigmata, syntax, word choice or verbal music. Non-verbal communication by way of physique, clothing, and personal artifacts; gestures, posture, and bodily movements (kinesics); facial expression, including gaze and eye behaviour; and bodily contact, territoriality and spatial behaviour are also important communication factors (Poyatos, 1992).

Devito (2009), in support of these views observes that communication impacts and defines the category of relationships since actions of one person have consequences for the other person. Consequently, the nature of in-laws relationships could be considered as the interaction between two or more individuals within the context of wider societal and cultural forces.

Scholars identify various types of relationships (Hervey and Obarin, 2006; Miller et al, 2007; Perlman, 2007). According to Harvey and Omarzn (2006), close relationships (such as tight-knit, cordial and affectionate) are typically characterized by behaviour facilitating disclosure (for instance, questioning the other about feelings/ behaviours), relationship enhancing attributes (positive attributions for other behaviours), acceptance/respect, pride in the others abilities, expressed feelings of trust and commitment, and reciprocity (recognition of others support and effort). On the other hand, Merrill (2007), observed that relationships such as obligatory and distant but positive are designed to keep daughters in-law as part of the overall –in-laws family while also isolating and protecting the nuclear family. Other studies (Fischer, 1986; Merrill, 2007, Pfeifer, 1989) further show that in-laws often develop relationships that are associated with a friend or family. According to Pfeifer (1989) an associate relationship is mainly obligatory in nature. In this relationship, the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law believe that they are only connected through the son/husband in which case, they rely on the son/husband to play a significant role in their relationship. Consequently, they do not make independent efforts to contact one another or cultivate relationship.

Besides, studies show that in-laws can view each other as friends and share mutual interests as well as engage in activities that do not require mediation by the son/husband and communicate openly (Fischer, 1986; Merrill, 2007, Pfeifer, 1989). Additionally, Serewitz, (2006) observed that the in-laws could establish a family relationship by being intimate and close. Serewitz (2006) and Pfeifer (1989) however, noted that whereas a daughter in-law may desire a friendship relationship

with the mother-in-law, the mother-in-law might prefer a more familial tie. This may cause conflict and hence lead to an estranged relationship.

2.9.3 Media influence on negative stereotypes of mothers-in-law

The media has also empirically been found to lead to expectations of the problematic in-laws. According to Pfeiffer (1989), negative stereotypes of mothers-in-law in the media tend to influence young wives expectations of their mother-in-law. In support of these views, Couchis and McMullin (2002) observed that contradictions between norms and expectations of both society and family, which result from stereotypes and expectations for in-law interference, created by society, creates social ambivalence and tensions which results in individuals struggling to find a comfortable balance.

According to Milkie (2002), the television industry uses such stereotypes as canned representations of social groups in its content. These representations are highly recognized commodities in both the genre and society. Consequently, all representations, whether they are an advertisement, television programme, or movie, coexist with one another and within a society. The representation of individual groups and classes changes when the society changes. When societal status increases, the types of representations depicted by the media of certain ethnic, religious, gender, and sexuality groups also changes. Besides, as a culture icon the television drama series and its representations express a dynamic of power in society. Portrayals of mothers-in-law by the media have shaped the way they are viewed in the society. As observed by Weitz (2003), the content of television drama series has always pushed the limits of what is culturally acceptable and what is not.

2.10 Conceptual Framework of the Study

From the review of extant literature, this study conceptualised the following model as its guiding framework (Figure 2.2).

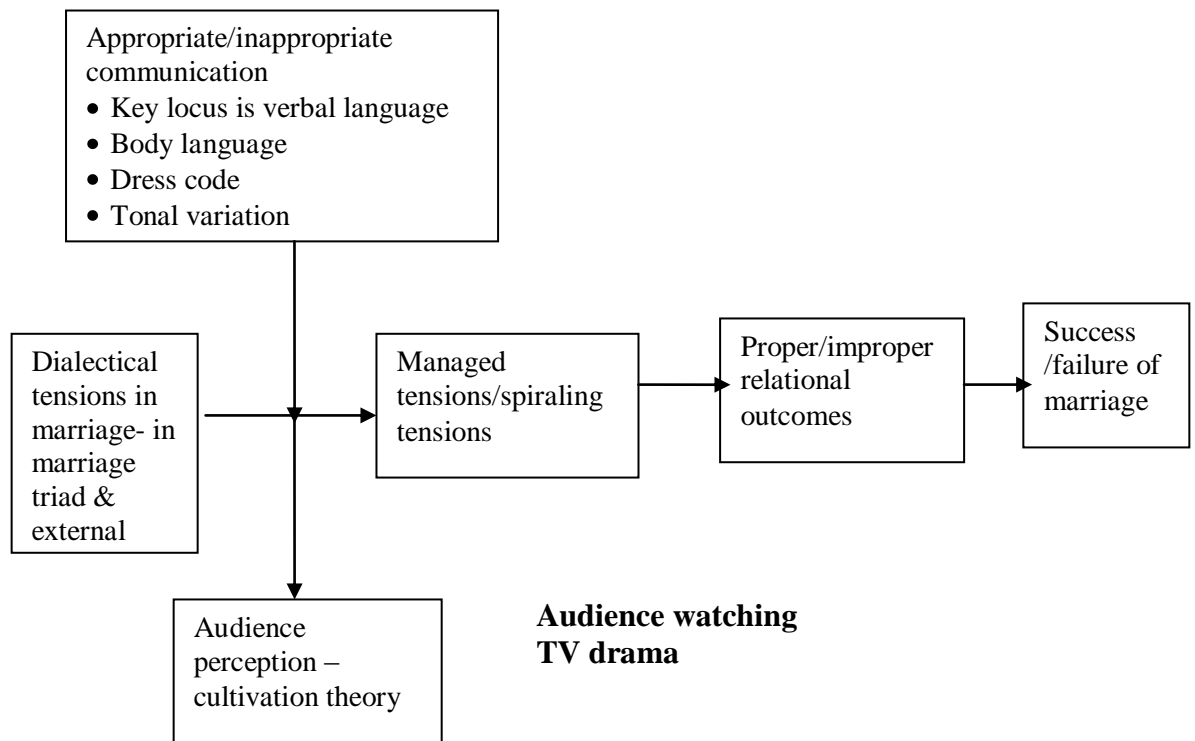


Figure 2.2 Conceptual framework of the study (Source: Author's own conceptualization)

This model theorises that relationships in marriage, both within the marriage triad and external are immanent with dialectical tensions, for instance, the simultaneous need to be both connected/separate, more open/less open, and being certain/uncertain. It proposes that these conflicts could be managed by proper communication, which is mediated mainly through the verbal interaction of the parties. If proper communication fails to ensue, the tensions spiral out of control. With managed tensions, appropriate relational outcomes develop, which lead to success in marriage.

On the other hand, unmanaged tensions result in inappropriate relationships, which lead to breakdown in marriage. These perceptions could be cultivated in an audience watching a TV drama.

2.11 Summary

This chapter has provided theoretical explanation of the impact of media, reviewed literature on contribution of TV drama series on communicating relational factors in families, the incorporation of culture in TV drama series, stereotypes in representation of MIL/DIL relationship and the knowledge gap.

The study uses different theories which underlie communication and relational factors; it uses Triangular Theory of in-laws triad. This theory emphasizes the link between the in-laws using three dyads: the familial dyad, the marital dyad and the in-law dyad. Out of the three, it is only the In-law dyad that uses single strand since they are however only committed to the in-law relationship by default. Despite the lukewarm relationship with the mother-in-law, the daughter-in-law cannot afford to dissolve her relationship with the mother-in-law, since this may effectively damage her marital relationship. Thus this triadic nature of in-laws relationship forces the daughters-in-law to maintain a relationship with the mother-in-law due to her commitment to her spouse (the son) and to maintain intergenerational relationships (Serewicz, 2006).

Communication Accommodation theory view point on the other hand views communication through mechanistic, physiological and symbolic integrationists. This

view considers communication to be a product of integration, sharing and creating meaning. The multiple goals framework theory was articulated in order to examine the role that goals play in communication. As noted by Turner, Young & Black (2006), goals are often the end states which individuals strive for. Such goals can often be many and conflicting.

Cultivation theory was also used as it attempts to give meaning to the influence of TV as a source of broadly shared messages about the contemporary world. Empirical studies on contribution of TV drama series on culture and society as provided by Sabo (2000), Berg (2001), Mikie (2002) and Griffins (2003) showed that cultural and social media spheres has enormous impact on Television content, it was found out that the power of TV drama series influences the viewers perception on the communicative and relational factors as exhibited by mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law relationships in this study.

Studies carried out on culture and TV drama series by Robbin (2002), Thomahs (2008), Kelner (2004), Weitz 2003), Robinson (2000) and Perry (2001) showed that culture has an icon in televisions drama series and its representation expresses a dynamic of power in the society. It also found out that relational manifestation in TV drama series is a reflection of desired society. The study on gender and television by McCombs and Shaw (2002), Tarrow (1992) Winkeby Fortman and Barret (1990) and Kimmel (2000) showed that female character in the television drama series have evolved in the last fifty year, from housewife to powerful women. The study depicting women in TV drama series by Kimmel (2000) shows the stereotypes of women as house wives or sex symbols but did not provide the Mothers-in-law stereotype roles.

The study carried out in Saudi Arabia and Egypt shows that gender roles are shaped by the culture and therefore the roles of mothers-in-law conform to the culture existing in those countries. The study carried out by Kaigai (2012) found out that mothers-in-law encourage their daughters-in-law to persevere and endure in the name of the family. This implies that the mothers-in-law play the role of protecting the family image.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 An Overview

This chapter considers the paradigms, which guided the study, especially, constructivist, and pragmatist paradigms and the research design. It then presents how the sampling of the Episodes of the MIL TV drama for analysis was done and how the validity and reliability of the study was determined. The chapter concludes with the methods of analysis of data.

3.1.1 Philosophical Paradigms

As noted by Creswell (1998), a paradigm can be defined as a 'basic set of beliefs or assumptions that guide research. Consequently, before selecting an appropriate methodology for research, a suitable paradigm needs to be selected/identified. A research paradigm as asserted by other researchers (Deshpande, 1983, Easterby-Smith et al, 1991; Denzin and Lincoln 2000; Mertens, 2005) affects every stage of the research from deciding on the research problem to analyzing and interpreting the data.

Since there are many different paradigms in social sciences which differ in terms of their underlying philosophical assumptions, it is prudent to first understand the assumptions for each paradigm before deciding on the suitable paradigm for the present study. Denzin and Lincoln (1998), Neuman (2003) and Creswell and Clark (2007) identified the basic philosophical assumptions to include:- Ontology which refers to the nature of reality and what can be known about it; Epistemology which refers to the nature of the relationship between the Knower and what can be known,

and methodology which is the techniques that are used to obtain knowledge. Basing on these assumptions, Creswell and Clark (2007), suggest that either of these three major paradigms namely *positivism*, *constructivism* or *pragmatism* could be employed.

3.1.2 Positivist Paradigm

This is sometimes referred to as the scientific method and is linked to the work of Comte and Durkheim (Sarantakos, 1998). According to this paradigm, universal laws and truths drive ones reality. Consequently, experimental and quantitative methods can be used to test and verify given postulations. Since the current study involves generating of postulations, this paradigm was not considered appropriate.

3.1.3 Constructivist Paradigm

According to this paradigm, multiple realities can be constructed within any context. As noted by Guba and Lincoln (2000), constructivists believe that the researcher is not altogether independent from the subject of the study since he/she interacts with the respondents to construct the outcome. This paradigm therefore requires use of qualitative and synthetic methods to inductively and holistically understand human experience in context – specific settings. While this paradigm perfectly fits the present study context, the study however considers some measurable and objective concepts which require that some quantitative techniques be utilized. Hence, this paradigm was partly used in for the current study.

3.1.4 Pragmatist Paradigm

The pragmatist paradigm as posited by Howe (1988), assumes that qualitative and quantitative methods are compatible. Pragmatists believe that both qualitative and quantitative techniques are useful and their choice should be dictated by the research question (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). Basing on compatibility of the qualitative and quantitative techniques, this study was seen to be situated in this paradigm because both quantitative and qualitative methods were be used. Collection of data was therefore accomplished by eclectically using elements from both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. This way a richer and more comprehensive data that could best answer the research questions could be collected. As Knafl *et al.* (1988) put it, “it was time to stop building walls between methods and starting building bridges”.

3.4 Research Design

A research design is the approach the researcher settles for in terms of the context of his/her study. The following designs could apply to any research depending on the context: experimental design, observational design, correlation design, case study design, survey design, mixed approach design and content analysis where this study falls. A mixed approach design is situated in pragmatism paradigm which assumes that quantitative and qualitative methods are compatible (complement each other) in varied contexts (Reinard, 1998).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the contribution of Family TV drama productions in communicating messages that determine the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship. This study employed quantitative and qualitative approaches to

investigate the communicational and relational factors in the “Mothers-In-Law” TV programme, by analyzing content of the TV program. Turner, Young & Black (2006) notes that content analysis is an ideal way to measure media messages. By utilizing a content analysis with set definitions, the researcher could objectively observe and analyze the content of a text. Further, he notes that content analysis is an unobtrusive selection of research where the researcher does not intrude on what is being studied and thus does not affect the outcome of the research.

The quantitative portion of the content analysis measured frequencies and other descriptive statistics of the sampled Mother-In-Law programme Episodes as defined by predetermined categories. The quantitative aspect of the content analysis also helped the researcher to establish determinants of category of relationships by conducting multiple regression analysis. The qualitative content analysis helped to identify common themes and relational outcomes that emerged from the analyzed Episodes.

3.5 Target Population

The target population for this study were all the episodes of the *Mother-in-Law* program aired since inception. Since the program was first aired in 1986 and considering that a single episode is shown every two weeks, the target population was 168 episodes (two episodes aired in a month x 12 months x 7 years).

3.6 Sampling of MIL Drama Episodes for Analysis

The study employed a purposive and convenience sample of one TV drama series (*Mother-In-Law*), and eight Episodes drawn from the drama show. Each episode in

the *Mother-in-Law* program deals with a particular aspect of the MIL-DIL relationship and is usually discontinuous from the next episode. Thus, the episodes, though all dealing with the issues revolving around mothers in law, are not homogenous, and thus, non-probability, rather than probability, sampling was the best approach (VerLinden, 2010; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003; Mulwa, 2002). Consequently, a purposive and convenience sample was used to investigate the communicative and relational determinants of relationship between MIL and DIL (Kothari, 2004). Care was taken to ensure that the sampling method used was deliberate and premeditated as explained below. The content of the Episodes were analyzed to determine communicated themes and relational outcomes of mothers-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship. Each Episode sampled was analyzed for the for the twenty five minutes on Sundays from 7.35 p.m. – 8.00 p.m. Table 3.1 presents a list of the characters sampled.

Table 3.1 List of characters in sample

Name of Character	Sex	Role in show
Charity	Female	Mother-in-law (unit of analysis)
Mwamba	Male	Husband to Charity
Robert	Male	Second born son to Charity
Charlie	Male	Third born son to Charity
Lisa	Female	Second daughter-in-law to Charity
Celina	Female	Third daughter-in-law to Charity
Joyce	Female	Other in-law to Charity
Tina	Female	Granddaughter to Charity
Mike	Male	Grand son
Angie	Female	Grand daughter
Olive	Female	Grand daughter
Mama Alison	Female	Other-in-law
Mustafa	Male	Other relation
Wanande	Female	Other relation
Maria	Female	Other relation
Ninja	Male	Other relation
Insp. Wasike	Male	Other relation
Rasta	Male	Other relation

3.7 Data generation

There was one code sheet for this content analysis (Appendix 1). The code sheet was used to examine the descriptive aspects of each character and the qualitative aspects defined by the pre-determined categories. The first coding category consisted of Episodes (Episodes coded). The second coding category consisted of characters (The name of the character coded). The third coding category consisted of descriptive aspects of the characters (Role of character categorized as major or minor, age, and sex). The final coding consisted of the pre-determined categories of relationship as described below.

3.7.1 Relationship with Charity

This coding category sought to establish the familial relationship between the coded character and Charity (the unit of analysis). The coders therefore used a seven point scale (husband, son, daughter-in-law, daughter, other in-law, grandchild, and other relation) to code this relationship. These categories constituted the most important groups in the MIL TV drama.

3.7.2 Behaviour exhibited by Charity (mother-in-law)

This category investigated the behaviour exhibited by Charity (unit of analysis) towards the characters being coded. The coders coded the behaviour exhibited as positive (treating others with respect, sharing) or negative (making others feel unwanted, patronizing, giving unwanted advice).

3.7.3 Characters Personality traits

The personality traits coding category was measured as either positive (perceiving the character as sweet or warm) or negative (perceiving the character as being insensitive or selfish – not accommodative/welcoming).

3.7.4 Character relating with Charity

This coding category investigated how the coded character relates with Charity (unit of analysis). This relationship was categorized as being positive (kind and healthy) or negative (unkind and unhealthy).

3.7.5 Charity support of marriage with spouse

This coding category mainly targeted the sons and their spouses. It sought to investigate whether Charity (unit of analysis) supports the marriage between her sons and their wives. Charity's support of marriage with spouse was coded on a 3-point scale (1-supports, 2-does not support, 3-not applicable).

3.7.6 Character influence from others

It was conceptualized that a character's relationship particularly with Charity may be as a result of influence from those surrounding the character. This coding category therefore sought to measure the nature of influence from other characters, the influence was also coded on a 3-item scale (1-positive, 2-negative, 3-not applicable).

3.7.7 Spouse Loyalty

This coding category aimed at establishing to whom either of the spouses owed their loyalty. The coders coded loyalty as being exhibited to 1-mother/mother-in-law; 2-spouse; 3- father/father in-law; 4-son/daughter-in-law, and 5-none.

3.7.8 Cultural Orientation

Cultural orientation coding category was measured as either having divergent values (traditional) that is, fundamental differences that are not mutually respected or embraced but instead cause a rift, or having convergent values (modern) that is fundamental values that are mutually respected and embraced. The coding options were therefore 1-convergent; 2-divergent.

3.7.9 Category of Relationship with Charity

The final coding category investigated the category of the relationship that exists between a character and Charity (unit of analysis). The category of relationship was measured on a six-point scale. These included tight-knit relationships, in which there are frequent interactions, little conflict and affectionate to others, distant but positive relationships, characterized by low conflict and high affection with rare interactions and obligatory relationships in which frequent interactions but high conflicts exist with no affection. Others are estranged relationships, characterized by high conflict and little interaction, cordial relationships, where there is low level conflicts but little or no affection, and conflicted but affectionate relationships, in which there is a mixture of conflict and affection in equal measure

3.7.9.1 Coders

To record the relational aspects of the *Mother-in-Law* program using the coding sheet, two coders (the researcher and a classmate) independently watched the episodes, read textual transcripts of the program, and scored according to the coding sheet guidelines. The independent results were then collated together.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Research results are considered valid if they are also reliable. When there is ability for data to maintain the same results from the study no matter how many times or how many researchers analyze the data, then the data may be reliable. As noted by Krippendorff (2004) if data remain constant even through variations in the process of measuring them the data are by definition reliable.

The tools were tested to check their efficacy. The coding sheets were administered on a pilot basis to coders. Their feedback was consolidated to adjust the coding sheets and make them more precise and user friendly. The areas that could cause confusion were edited to make them clearer and the contents were adjusted for directness. The adjustments prevented further confusion. The results were comparable to those of the actual data coding for the main research work. The coders coded at least 5 Episodes to test usability of the coding sheets. After the pre-test, corrections were undertaken, and the reliability and validity index were calculated. Content and force validity were used to make sure that all the major dimensions of the variables under consideration were measured as necessary, based on the communication theories that guided this study. In the process of ensuring that face validity was tested, the study supervisors were the

critical guides in ensuring that there was content validity in this research. All the objectives of the study were covered by the tools of the research and the content was validated by the supervisors of the research and the independent readers who assessed the research tools (coding sheets).

Inter-coder reliability in this study was conducted to ensure reliability throughout the analysis. Two independent coders coded eight Episodes from the mother-in-law drama series. These Episodes were drawn purposively from programme. A week's Episode was given to the coders in order to enable them to code the series effectively and to familiarize themselves with the behavioural characteristics. The coding procedure was done, inter-coder reliability among the coders was then calculated using Scotts's Pi which according to Keyton (2006), should be 0.70 or higher for exploratory studies. In order to calculate Scotts's Pi this study used a modified version of Scotts Pi suggested by Eric Tamphin, Jim Marchwick and Cortney Wanca (1997). Thus;

$$\text{Percentage of agreement} = \frac{\text{Total Correct} - \text{Total Incorrect}}{\text{Total Number observed}}$$

The intercoder reliability was found to be 0.924. Therefore the coding was judged to be adequately reliable for further analysis.

3.8.1 Data Analysis

The principal method of data analysis was a critical content analysis. The content of the sampled Episodes was analysed for communicated themes and relational

outcomes. Descriptive statistics were used to rate, relate, compare, draw distinctions and present the frequency of character relationships with Charity as well as the frequency of behaviour exhibited by Charity to other characters. Multiple regression analysis was used to explore the communicative and relational determinants of category of mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship.

Based on the paradigms (constructivism and pragmatism) which guided this study and the review of literature, the study formulated and tested the following model (Figure 3.1).

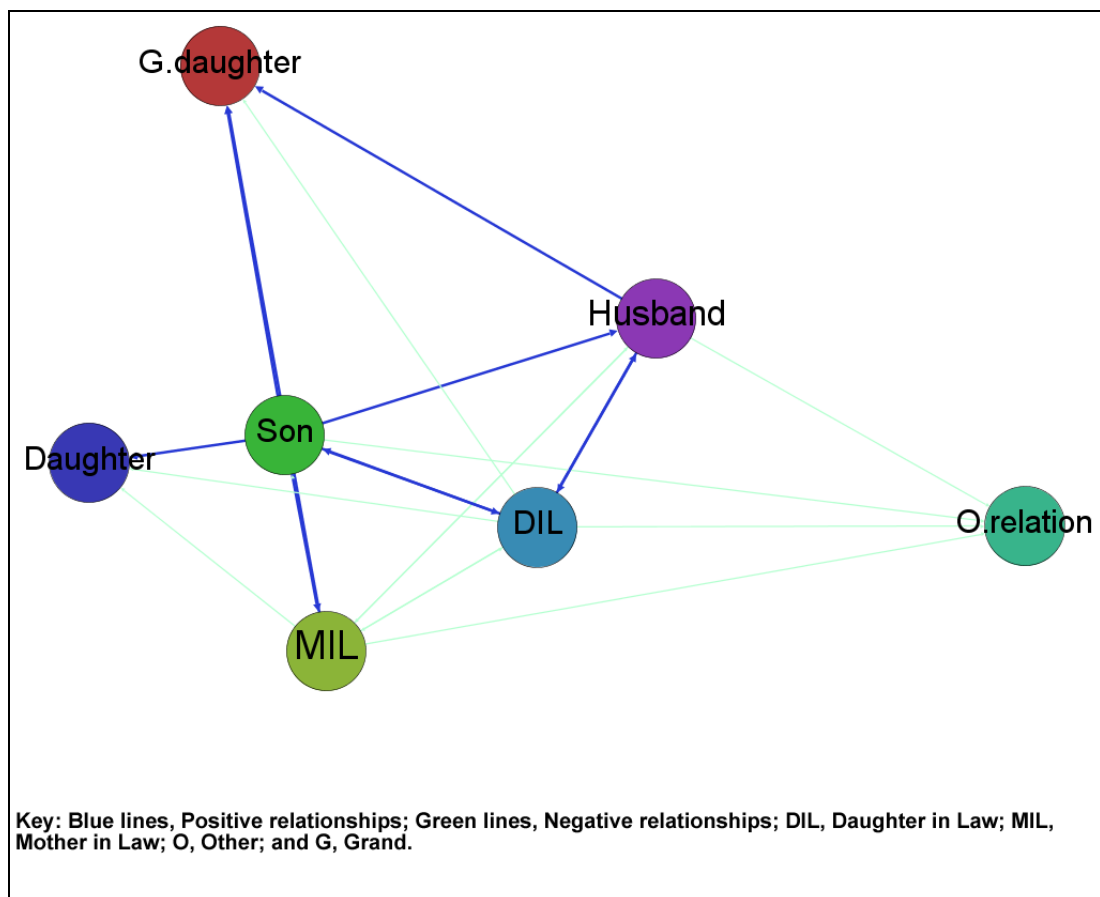


Figure 3.1 Hypothesised relationships amongst the characters

The study hypothesised that the relationship between the MIL and DILs will be negative while it will be positive between the sons and their mother. The study also predicted that whereas the relationship between the MIL and her husband may be both

positive and negative, it expected generally positive relationships between them and their grandchildren.

3.8.2 Ethical Consideration

The following questions guided the researcher to observe ethical considerations:

- i. Is the research trustworthy in order to be used in decision making?
- ii. On truthful and honesty: have I taken the care that is required (followed the required steps?)
- iii. Have I checked that my findings are true to the expectation?

Ethical considerations have to do with the researcher ensuring ethical checks. This involves specific procedures to safeguard the whole study. In their book *Qualitative Research*, Juan and Ong'ondo (2011) define Ethics as: the moral principles that guide research from its inception through to its completion. That is, the communal codes of conduct based upon adherence to a set of principles which may be explicit and codified or implicit and which may be abstract and impersonal or concrete and personal (Zimbardo, 1984). Why is it important to pay attention to ethics? Juan and Ong'ondo (2011) focus on three issues that are most important to ethics in regard to qualitative research, these are: 1) The need for democracy, respect for truth, and respect for persons, 2) Striking a balance between the demands placed on research as professional scientists in pursuit of truth, and their participants' rights and values potentially threatened by the research. 3) Invasion of private space.

In line with Cohens et al. (2000) Cost Benefit Analysis, it is necessary to highlight the general benefits of social research. They argue that in considering the benefits, harm and risks in conducting research, we need to ensure that the expected benefits are

great and the risk of these benefits not being achieved are corresponding low (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011).

Some of the benefits may include: Research as intrinsic good, Contribution to knowledge, Development of theories, Improvement to lives, Training researchers, Enhancing reputation (image), Increasing commercial success, Entertainment and enjoyment, Personal Development and Career development (Dates, 2006: Cohen et al; 2007).

In this light, The Researcher provided the royal media house with the information on: purpose, relevant and usefulness of this study and any benefits of the study to the Media House. The importance of cooperation, the extent of privacy and confidentiality to be observed, were clearly specified by the consent letter and the research permits attached as appendices.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

4.1 An Overview

The following chapter presents the results of data analysis of the eight episodes from the *Mother-in-Law* program. First, a brief synopsis of each of the episodes analysed is made, followed by a presentation of the characters in the drama, and then, results on the three specific objectives of the study are given. The study's specific objectives were: to identify the families depicted in Mother-In-Law family drama and analyze the communicative factors revealed in the TV programme, to analyse the relational factors revealed in the Mother-In-Law TV programme drama, and to find out the communicative and relational factors that determines the nature of MIL-DIL relationship in the Family Drama. The study mainly used qualitative analysis of the content of the TV drama and where appropriate, a quantitative approach was adopted.

4.2 Synopsis of the analysed Episodes

The following is a brief account of the eight episodes analysed in the study:

Season 15, Episode 1 and 2

Lisa is planning Robert's (her husband) birthday party. She sends her step daughters (Angie and Olive) to place an order for a cake for the occasion from Nelly's place. While walking to the place, they are kidnapped by Onyi, Champez and an unnamed driver. The kidnapping is witnessed by Ninja (the watchman), who informs Charity's

family. This sends Charity's family (Charity, Mwamba, Charlie and Robert) into confusion. This provides the context in which Charity launches an emotional attack on Lisa and Celina, accusing them of having engineered the kidnap. The men in the family (Mwamba, Charlie and Robert) are more cool-headed, informing the police and looking for ransom money. Meanwhile, Joyce (Charlie's former boyfriend and mother to Olive) exhibits false outrage, joining Charity in pillorying Lisa and Celina as the "evil witches", responsible for kidnapping her daughter. Mwamba pays the ransom, leading to the release of Angie and Olive. The second episode ends with the revelation that Joyce and Olive, arranged for the kidnapping of the latter, so that they could get part of the ransom money.

Season 15, Episode 3 and 4

Charity is locked up in a police cell for 18 hours for having a knife in her handbag. When she returns home, she's pissed that no one cared. She packs her items and leaves the house for an undisclosed place. Meanwhile, Alpha comes to Charity's house to thank Mike (who has attempted to commit suicide), for saving his life by donating O - negative blood to him. A flirtatious relationship develops between Angie and Alpha.

Season 15, Episode 5

It has been two days since Charity disappeared and Robert, Charlie and Mwamba are getting frantic, with no information about her. They search in hospitals and mortuaries for her. Maria, the house help, overhears a conversation between Lisa and Celina and discovers that it is Lisa who put the knife in Charity's handbag, leading to her arrest. Meanwhile, the relationship between Alpha and Angie continues to blossom.

Season 15, Episode 6

The search for Charity continues, with Charlie coming across as the most affected by her disappearance, compared to Mwamba and Robert. Maria takes advantage of Lisa and Celina's secret, making them massage, fan and wash clothes for her, in order for Maria to keep the secret. Towards the end the episode, Charity reappears with the chief from her hideout, which turned out to be a women organisation camp. She had hoped that her disappearance, could make her family miss her and become close to her but it is apparent that the opposite effect is achieved.

Season 15, Episode 7

Angie and Alpha come back home after spending a night at the latter's home without telling anybody. Robert is forced to call Alpha's mother. Meantime, Charity attempts to make peace with Mwamba after her disappearance. When Alpha's mother arrives at Charity's home, she turns out to be the long lost daughter of Charity and Mwamba called Betty. The scene ends with the happy reunion of the Mwamba's family.

Season 16, Episode 1

Mwamba wants Charlie and Robert to move out of the family house but Charity is opposed, accusing Mwamba of greed. Lisa meets Jacob, her former classmate, in a restaurant to discuss the possibility of him selling a house to Lisa. Unfortunately, Lisa had not told Robert of her plans since she wanted to present the house as a birthday gift to Robert. Robert spies Lisa and Jacob in intimate conversation at the restaurant and thinks Lisa is cheating on him. When Lisa returns home, she finds a furious Robert. It is only Mwamba's intervention that helps to cool down Robert.

4.3 Character Presentation

The characters were categorized according to their relationship with Charity (who was the unit of analysis). Consequently, the characters were categorized as the husband, son, daughter-in-law, other in-law, grandchild, or other relation. As shown in Table 4.1, one character “Mwamba” was coded as Charity’s husband. Coder 1 recorded 19 incidences in which Mwamba appeared while coder 2 recorded 18 incidences. Two characters “Charlie” and “Robert” were identified as Charity’s sons. Both the coders recorded 15 incidences in which the sons appeared. Two characters Selina and Lisa featured as Charity’s daughters-in-law. Both the coders each recorded a total of 16 incidences in which the daughters-in-law appeared. One character “Betty” was identified as the daughter to Charity and appeared once according to the coders. Four grandchildren “Angie”, “Mike”, “Olive” and “Tina” were also identified.

Table 4.1: Characters by relationship with Charity

Relationship with charity			Coder		Total incidences
			Coder 1	Coder 2	
Husband	Mwamba	Number of incidences	19(51.4%)	18(48.6%)	37
Son	Charlie	Number of incidences	11(50.0%)	11(50.0%)	22
	Robert	Number of incidences	4(50.0%)	4(50.0%)	8
Daughter-in-law	Lisa	Number of incidences	9(50.0%)	9(50.0%)	18
	Celina	Number of incidences	7(50.0%)	7(50.0%)	14
Daughter	Betty	Number of incidences	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	2
Other in-law	Joyce	Number of incidences	4(57.1%)	3(42.9%)	7
	Mama Alison	Number of incidences	3(50.0%)	3(50.0%)	6
Grand child	Angie	Number of incidences	3(50.0%)	3(50.0%)	6
	Mike	Number of incidences	4(50.0%)	4(50.0%)	8
	Olive	Number of incidences	2(50.0%)	2(50.0%)	4
	Tina	Number of incidences	4(50.0%)	4(50.0%)	8
	Alpha	Number of incidences	2(66.7%)	1(33.3%)	3
Other relation	Insp. Wasike	Number of incidences	2(50.0%)	2(50.0%)	4
	Maria	Number of incidences	3(60.0%)	2(40.0%)	5
	Mustafa	Number of incidences	2(50.0%)	2(50.0%)	4
	Ninja	Number of incidences	4(57.1%)	3(42.9%)	7
	Ras	Number of incidences	4(57.1%)	3(42.9%)	7
	Wanande	Number of incidences	2(50.0%)	2(50.0%)	4
Total					158

Source: Computed from Episodes data, 2014

The two coders each reported a total of 13 incidences involving the grandchildren.

Two characters “Joyce” and “Mama Alison” also featured as other in-laws to Charity.

Coder 1 recorded a total of 7 incidences involving other in-laws while coder 2 recorded 6 incidences involving other in-law. The last category of characters “Alpha”, “Inspector Wasike”, “Maria”, “Mustafa”, “Ninja”, “Ras”, and “Wanande” were identified as other relations to Charity. Coder 1 recorded 19 incidences in which other relations appeared while coder 2 recorded a total of 15 incidences.

4.4 Communicative factors in *Mother – in – Law*

This thesis has argued in Chapter 2 that the relationship between MILs and DILs is a dialectical process, in which conflicts could potentially arise as a tussle between the needs for association and dissociation, certainty and uncertainty and openness and closedness and that the key locus of this dialectic process is the verbal interaction between the parties. The following section therefore presents the analysis of language in the *Mother-in-Law* program.

4.4.1 Types of language used in the drama

The characters in the drama exhibit different linguistic styles, suggesting non-uniformity of their educational and social backgrounds. For the most part, the main characters (Charity, Mwamba, Robert, Charlie, Lisa, and Celina) and their progeny (Tina, Olive, Mike, and Alpha) converse in a ‘naturalistic’, Standard English language prose, delivered in an informal, conversational idiom.

This suggests that Mwamba and his family are fairly educated, possibly belonging to the bourgeois, with their proclivity for respectability and materialism. This is in contrast to the linguistic style of their workers (Ninja, Mustafa, Wanande, and Maria) who consistently use ‘*sheng*’ when communicating, which pointed to a modest

education and lower class upbringing. This distinctness in language of the Mwamba family and his workers suggest a potential dialectical conflict of autonomy/connection: the need for the workers and Mwambas to be more autonomous or more connected. In the drama, the workers tend to keep them own company, interacting with the Mwamba family only when necessary, for instance, when Charlie is thanking Ras, for his excellent work in Episode 1 of Season 15. However, the analysis of this tension is complicated by the fact that the workers are the employees of Mwamba, and hence, are expected to keep some distance from their employer, anyway.

Occasionally, Charity and Mwamba use Kiswahili when speaking. For instance, in Episode 1, Mwamba asks Charity, '*Nipe Chai*', who in turn responds, '*Bado haijaiva*'. This is in keeping with the fact the couple is old, who might not view the ability to speak English all the times as a badge of honour for the middle class. Their Kiswahili is almost formal, and if mixed with English, the Kiswahili and English words remain distinct, indicating a couple who grew up when '*sheng* was not common. Interestingly, both Lisa and Celina can switch effortlessly from English to '*sheng* for instance, when talking to Maria in Episode 5. However, throughout the Episodes, Charlie and Robert use only English. For example, in Episode 1, Scene 4, although Ninja uses '*sheng* throughout to address his interlocutor, Charlie; the latter responds during the whole course of the discourse in English. This suggested that whereas Charlie and Robert come across as stiff characters who are conscious of their middle class status, Lisa and Celina appear to be more sociable, probably indicating that they could have 'married upwards' into the Mwamba family. The use of '*sheng* by Lisa, Celina and Maria in Episode 5 could be put down to an attempt by Lisa and

Celina to ‘lower themselves’ to the level of Maria, in order to appease her. However, the use by Lisa of ‘Hi’ and ‘Baby’ to address Robert and Charlie in Episode 1 of Season 16, is consistent with the sociability of the DILs in the drama. Tina, Angie, Olive and Alpha never use ‘*sheng*’ throughout the Episodes, even when discoursing amongst themselves, which is unlike other younger people in Kenyan society today. This suggested that they, like their uncles, are conscious of their middle class status.

4.4.2 Turn management in MIL Program

The Episodes analysed contain turns (the enactment of a speaker’s right to speak by taking an opportunity to speak in a speech event or situation) (Sacks *et al.*1978; Levinson 1983) of various lengths, suggesting that the author uses the concept of turn-length to convey different meanings in different contexts. Whenever they interact, Charity’s turns are longer than both Lisa’s and Celina’s turns, suggesting that Charity is the dominant character when juxtaposed with the DILs, who come across as subdued and minimalist respondents. For instance, in Episode 1 of Season 15, Scene 7, the average turn-length for Charity is 18 words compared to Lisa’s 3.3 and Celina’s 10.5 words. This is in accordance with the overbearing character of the MIL in the drama when interacting with the DILs. Turn-length exposes the dialectical tension of expression/non-expression between the MIL and her DILs. The MIL comes across as somebody who bares all her feelings (mostly unfavourable) towards her in-laws. The DILs cope with the MIL’s verbal assault differently. Whereas Celina attempts to match it, Lisa retreats into a ‘cocoon’ of non-expression. Thus, Lisa tries to cope with the tension by tolerating it whereas Celina attempts to get even with the MIL.

On the other hand, when Charity interacts with her husband, their turns are either both long and multi-clause or short, that is, they always match, suggesting equality in the control of incipient conflict between them. Similarly, the discourse between Mwamba, Charlie and Robert is characterized by turns of almost equal length, smooth turn change, and equivalent distribution of turns, showing mutual respect and a comity amongst them.

4.4.3 (Im)Politeness in MIL's dramatic dialogue

In addressing the DILs, Charity uses strong and particularly threatening language, for instance, calling them '*Devils*', '*Criminals*', '*Murderers*', '*these Women*', '*you both burn in hell*', and '*Evil Womb*', showing a strained relationship between the MIL and DILs. The language adopted by Charity is also impolite since it attacks the positive faces (the want to be approved of, such as, the need for one's existence to be acknowledged or one's opinions to be approved) (Brown and Levinson, 1987) of both Lisa and Celina. There are many other instances in the Episodes where Charity uses impolite and rude language towards the DILs, suggesting distaste for the DILs. For example, in Episode 1 of Scene 7, Charity's imperative command, '*Lisa! Celina! Come here*', threatens the negative faces (the want to be unimpeded) (Brown and Levinson, 1987) of both Lisa and Celina. If all she wanted was the DILs to come, she could have used more polite language rather than treating adult women as if they were small children. The exclamation mark at the end of each name emphasizes the peremptory command. In Episode 4, Scene 5, Charity asks the DILs, '*who between you is behind this*', which is rude as it threatens the negative faces of the DILs. Charity impoliteness also extends to Mwamba, for instance, calling him '*Greedy*' in Season 16, Episode 1, which is threatening to his positive face. In Scene 5, Episode

1, Mwamba's imperious command '*Nipe chai*' is particularly threatening to Charity's negative face, who equally curtly responds, '*Bado haijaiva*'. This shows that both Mwamba and Charity can both use impolite language to each other. Again, the impoliteness exposes the dialectical tension of expression/non-expression in the MIL-DIL relationship, in which the MIL has a mouthful to speak whereas the DILs tend to say less.

Conversely, the discourse between Mwamba and the DILs is marked by polite language, which shows respectful and positive relationship between them. For instance, in Scene 3 of Episode 4, Lisa tells Mwamba to '*enjoy your breakfast*', which is a negative face supporting act, because the utterance allows Mwamba to enjoy his breakfast unimpeded. In the same Scene, Mwamba apologizes on behalf of Charity to the DILs, remarking that '*it was not fair*' and adds 'God's blessings will be upon you', which are both statements that support positive faces of the DILs. Mwamba concludes the Scene by saying, '*you are welcome*', which can be construed to mean that Mwamba is willing to support the DILs' positive faces in future (since the utterance is an acknowledgement by Mwamba of the splendid work done by Lisa). There exists a potential dialectical tension between Mwamba and the DILs of association/dissociation, that is, they might chose to be close to each other or far apart. The discourse in the drama suggests that they negotiate this dialectical tension by associating more with each other.

The canonical participant structure in the Episodes is the '*single*' floor, '*one-speaker-speaks-at-a-time*' – with one speaker speaking and the others cast as addressees, in a Speaker – Hearer(s) configuration. However, there are several times when Charity interrupts the speeches of the DILs, stemming the flow of their talk and blocking their

access to the floor. For instance, in Episode 1, Scene 7, when Celina tries to explain the errand on which Lisa had sent Angie and Olive, Charity cuts in saying, *'Oh yes indeed. She sent them to get kidnapped, didn't she?'* This suggested that Charity is rude to the DILs and wants to dominate the conversation with the DILs. This is supported by the fact that in encounters with the DIL, Charity tends to be the focal point of the conversation, launching barbs against the DILs who are forced on their defensive against Charity's frontal attacks. For example, in Scene 7, Episode 1 Charity rages, *'I will not. I will not calm down until these two criminals tell me what they did with my grand daughters'*. In another turn, she says,

'Stop acting like you don't know. Wait till the police get here.'

Moreover, yet in another, she declares,

'...Why did it have to happen this time that you sent them?'

After spending 18 hours in a police cell, Charity storms the house and accuses the DILs, thus *'Who between you is behind this?'* When Celina tries to inquire, *'Behind what'*, Charity launches another attack, *'...Who was it?'* when Lisa tries to respond, another of Charity's accusation ensues,

'How come none of you be bothered to find out where I spent the night?'

Charity, by liberally doling out abuses at her DILs, prevents her from becoming close to them. The DILs cope by either tolerating the rants as inevitable unpleasantness or they also get even by the inversion of the aggression (for instance, when Lisa puts a knife in Charity's handbag). This implies that the dialectical tension of association/dissociation is not successfully managed by the MIL-DIL in the drama.

Consequently, throughout the eight episodes analysed, the tension between the MIL and DILs is unrelenting.

4.4.4 Implicature and Convention in MIL drama language

The strained relationship between Charity and the DILs is also evidenced by implicatures arising from their conversations (inferences drawn from the failure by an interlocutor to observe the rules of conversation called Maxims) (Grice, 1981). When Angie and Olive are kidnapped, Charity violates Grice's Maxim of Quality ('Don't say what you believe to be false' and 'Don't say that for which you lack adequate evidence') a number of times. For example, in Episode 1, Charity claims, '*I know the devils who are behind this*'. In another turn, she asks, '*Where have you taken Angie and Olive?*' She adds in yet another turn, '*She sent them to get kidnapped, didn't she?*' Since Charity makes these accusations without adequate evidence, the implicature to be drawn from this Episode is that she wants the world to believe that her DILs are evil and malevolent people. Charity also offers more explanation than is necessary, and hence, she flouts Grice's Maxim of Quantity ('Don't make your contribution more informative than is required'). For instance, in Scene 12 of Episode 1, when Detective Omar asks Charity why the DILs would want to get rid of Olive, Charity instead of being content to explain that Celina is not comfortable being a second wife, goes on to add, superfluously, about Celina evil womb. The inference to be drawn is that Charity hates her DILs because she is determined to do everything, by adducing irrelevant details, to implicate them in the kidnap of her grand children. Again, these outbursts prevent Charity from successfully negotiating the dialectical tension of association/dissociation with her daughters, who as a result remain distant to her.

Even if Charity's unreasonable outbursts in Episode 1 could be put to the shock of kidnapping her grand children, her continued flouting of the expected rules of conversation in later Episodes suggested a deep-seated dislike for her DILs. For example, in Episode 2 during her conversation with Joyce, Charity refers to Lisa and Celina as the usual suspects without any evidence, again violating Grice's Maxim of Quality. Furthermore, her usage of the term usual implied that she has a history of blaming her DILs, whenever anything goes awry.

The aversion between the MIL and DILs in the drama appears to be mutual. Lisa in Episode 4, Scene 3 professes ignorance when asked by Mwamba where Charity could be. In turn 2, when asked where Charity is, Lisa responds, *'I don't know. I thought you guys were together in Athi River'*, and in turn 4, she adds, *'Well I don't know where she is. You know she doesn't like letting people in on her business'*. This violates Grice's Maxim of Quality because we are told in Episode 5, Scene 3 that it was Lisa who put the knife in Charity's bag and called the police on her. Thus, it would be reasonable to expect that Lisa would know the place where Charity could be or at the very minimum told Mwamba that she could be in problems with the police. The fact that she pretended to know nothing implies that she also dislikes Charity. The DILs again violate Grice's Maxim of Quality in Episode 4, Scene 5 when Charity, asks them who is responsible for her being locked up in a police cell. Lisa responds, *'What are you talking about?'* implicating the fact that they are innocent when in reality they authored Charity's tribulations. This is confirmed when Charity leaves, Celina triumphantly remarks, *'Serves her right'* and Lisa adds, *'Yes. That should teach her a valuable lesson in life'*.

4.4.5 Power relations in MIL drama

The MIL, by virtue of her older age and being the mother of the DIL's husband is invested with social and institutional power arising from master and situational identities (West and Zimmerman, 1985), and is therefore, expected to be a more powerful discursal participant compared to the DIL. This can be seen in some instances in the drama, for example, in Episode 1, Scene 7, Charity commands Lisa and Celina to, '*Come here*', and they obey. However, Charity does not get her way all the times, suggesting that the MIL and the DILs are engaged in combat in the drama, with each party giving as much as they get. For instance, in Episode 1, Scene 1, Charity's attempt to be told the '*top secret*' fails, despite her social and institutional power. This despite the fact that Angie and Olive, who are children, have been entrusted with the secret. This failure by Charity to elicit the secret from the DILs indicates an equality between them with regard to discursive power. Thus, although the MIL comes up with schemes to humiliate the DILs, the latter are not wholly subservient; sometimes coming up with counter-schemes of their own to demean the MIL.

The DILs dislike for Charity is in contrast with their husbands, who consistently are shown to love their mother. For example, both Charlie and Robert, throughout the drama address Charity as either, '*mother*' or '*mom*', which shows that they respect her. Even when Charity is pissed after spending time in a police cell and tells Robert, '*Don't hey mom me*', Robert persists in using the deferential moniker, '*mom*'. Thus, '*Mom I just arrived*' and in another turn, in Episode 5, Scene 2, '*Mom! Mom! What's up with her?*' When Charity disappears, Charlie does not even react to Mama Alison's entreaties to relax and does not want to eat any food prepared by Mama

Alison because he is worried of his mother, which shows that he loves his mother. In Episode 6, Scene 1, Charlie bursts out, '*My mother could be dead and you are standing there telling me to relax*'. Similar feelings can be seen in Robert, and even in Mwamba himself. However, Charlie comes across as being more emotionally distressed by Charity's disappearance compared to Robert, probably because he is the youngest of the two, and therefore, he is more attached to his mother.

The drama also reveals a dialectical tension between the sons of Mwamba and their wives. The most striking can be seen in Episode 1 of Season 16, in which Lisa's attempt to present a birthday gift of house to her husband, is misconstrued as Lisa engaging in an extra-marital relationship, making Robert to be furious. This exposes the dialectic of predictability/novelty, which is aptly captured when Mwamba remarks that, '*men ... are not structured for surprises*'.

4.5.0 Relational factors in *Mother-in-Law* program

The second objective required the determination of the relational factors in the *Mother-in-Law* program. The major characters in the drama were Charity, her husband, Mwamba, their sons (Robert and Charlie) and their wives (Lisa and Selina). In addition, Charity's grandchildren (Tina, Mike, Angie and Olive and their friend Alpha), her in-law (Joyce), her daughter, Beaty, and her workers (Maria, Mustafa, Ninja, Ras, and Wanande) play prominent roles in the play. Thus, relationships between these characters were analysed. First, general descriptive findings of various relationships are presented, followed by a textual analysis of Charity's (the central figure in the drama) relationships with others and the major relational themes revealed in the drama.

4.5.1 Behaviour exhibited by Charity to the characters

The network of Charity's behaviours to other characters in the Episodes is depicted graphically in Figure 4.1.

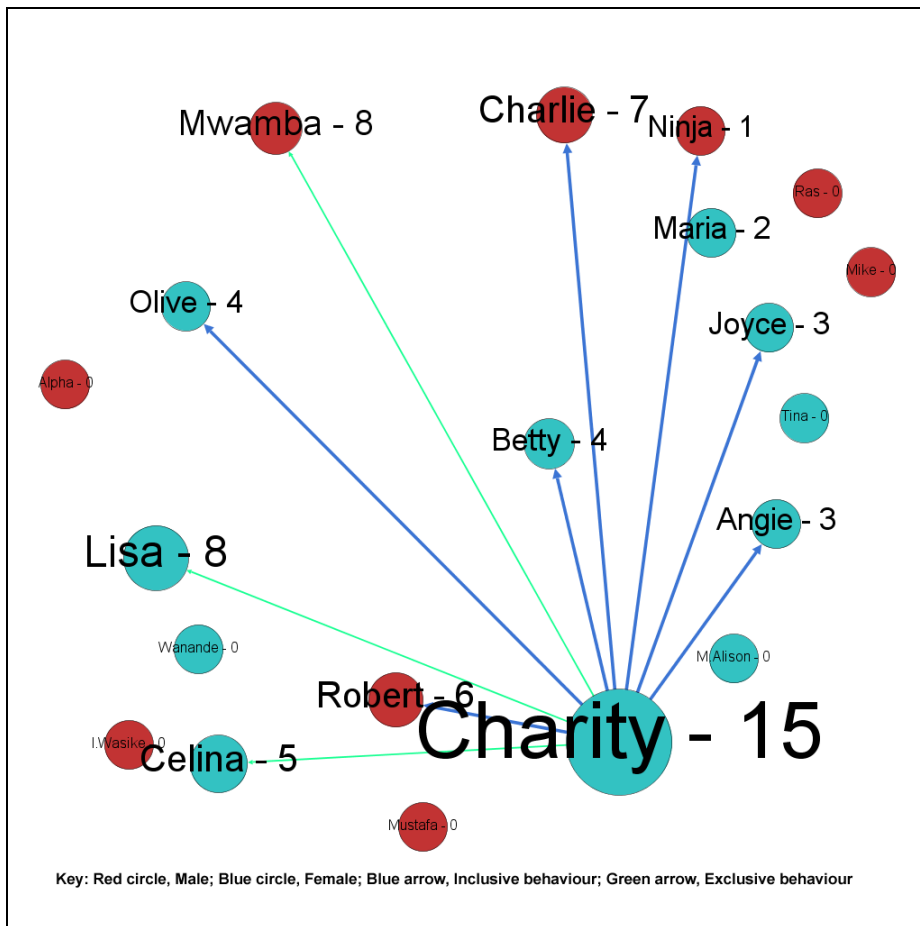


Figure 4.1. Behaviours exhibited by Charity to other characters

Charity had the highest number of degrees (number of connections) in the drama (15), which suggested that she is the central figure in the story. Other equally influential characters in the Episodes were found to be her husband, Mwamba (8), sons, Charlie (7), and Robert (6), and their wives, Celina (5) and Lisa (8), respectively. The drama

appears to be aptly titled, as it revolves around the relationships between Charity, her husband, her two sons and their wives.

The Coders recorded the behavior exhibited by Charity towards the observed characters. The categories of behavior exhibited were: positive behaviour (including behaviour such as treating others with respect and sharing) and negative behaviour (including making sure that others feel unwanted, patronizing and giving unwanted advice). As can be seen from Table 4.2, Charity exhibited negative behavior more on the husband (75.7%), daughter's in-law (100%), and other in-law (61.5%). However, she tended to exhibit positive behavior more on the sons (60%), grandchildren (100%), other relations (58.8%) and her daughter, when she reappears in the drama. This clearly shows that Charity as a mother-in-law had a lot of distaste for her daughters in-law and surprisingly, for her own husband.

Table 4.2: Behaviour exhibited by Charity to the Characters

			Behaviour from charity		Total
			Positive	Negative	
Relationship with Charity	Husband	Frequency	9	28	37
		%	24.3	75.7	100.0
	Son	Frequency	18	12	30
		%	60.0	40.0	100.0
	Daughter- in-law	Frequency	0	32	32
		%	0.0	100.0	100.0
	Daughter	Frequency	2		2
		%	100.0	0.0	100.0
	Other in- law	Frequency	5	8	13
		%	38.5	61.5	100.0
	Grand child	Frequency	26	0	26
		%	100.0	0.0	100.0
	Other relation	Frequency	20	14	34
		%	58.8	41.2	100.0

Source: Computed from Episodes data, 2014

Analysis of Figure 4.1 shows that Charity's behaviours appear not to depend upon a character's gender; as she likes and dislikes both male and female characters. They appear to be contingent only upon their relationship to Charity; whether a DIL or husband.

4.5.2 Characters relationship with Charity

Coders also classified characters according to how they related with Charity. Relationship was measured on a two-point scale, and the categories used included negative (hurtful not close and unhealthy relationship) and positive (close, healthy relationship).

The results (shown in Table 4.3) indicate that the husband (91.9%), daughter's in-law (78.1%), daughter (100%), other in-laws (53.8%) and grandchildren (76.9%) tended to have a negative relationship with Charity. However, the sons (53.3%) and other relations (64.7%) tended to have positive relationship with Charity. The observed negative relationship between Charity and the daughter's in-law could be attributed to the variance in their commitment in the in-law triad. While Charity is deeply committed to the familial dyad, the daughter's in-law is deeply committed to the marital dyad.

Inexplicably, this variance in commitment tends to lead to observed negative behaviour between Charity and the other family members (husband, daughter, other in-laws, and grandchildren). This is consistent with Mikucki (2009) that relational uncertainty within the in-law dyad leads to avoidant communication within the familial dyad. Observed positive relationship between Charity and the sons and other relatives is explained by her deep commitment to the familial dyad.

Table: 4.3: Characters relationship with Charity

Relationship with charity			Relating with Charity		Total
			Positive	Negative	
Husband	Frequency		3	34	37
	%		8.1	91.9	100.0
Son	Frequency		14	16	30
	%		46.7	53.3	100.0
Daughter-in-law	Frequency		7	25	32
	%		21.9	78.1	100.0
Daughter	Frequency		0	2	2
	%		.0	100.0	100.0
Other in-law	Frequency		7	6	13
	%		53.8	46.2	100.0
Grand child	Frequency		6	20	26
	%		23.1	76.9	100.0
Other relation	Frequency		22	12	34
	%		64.7	35.3	100.0

Source: Computed from Episodes data, 2014

Figure 4.2 (below) indicates that the DILs (Lisa and Celina) have negative relationships towards Charity. Remarkably, although Charity has positive behavior towards Joyce (Figure 4.1), the feelings are not mutual, with the latter showing ambivalent relationship to Charity, including kidnapping her own child in order to exhort money from the family. As expected, Charity's children, workers, Tina and Alison project positive relationships towards Charity.

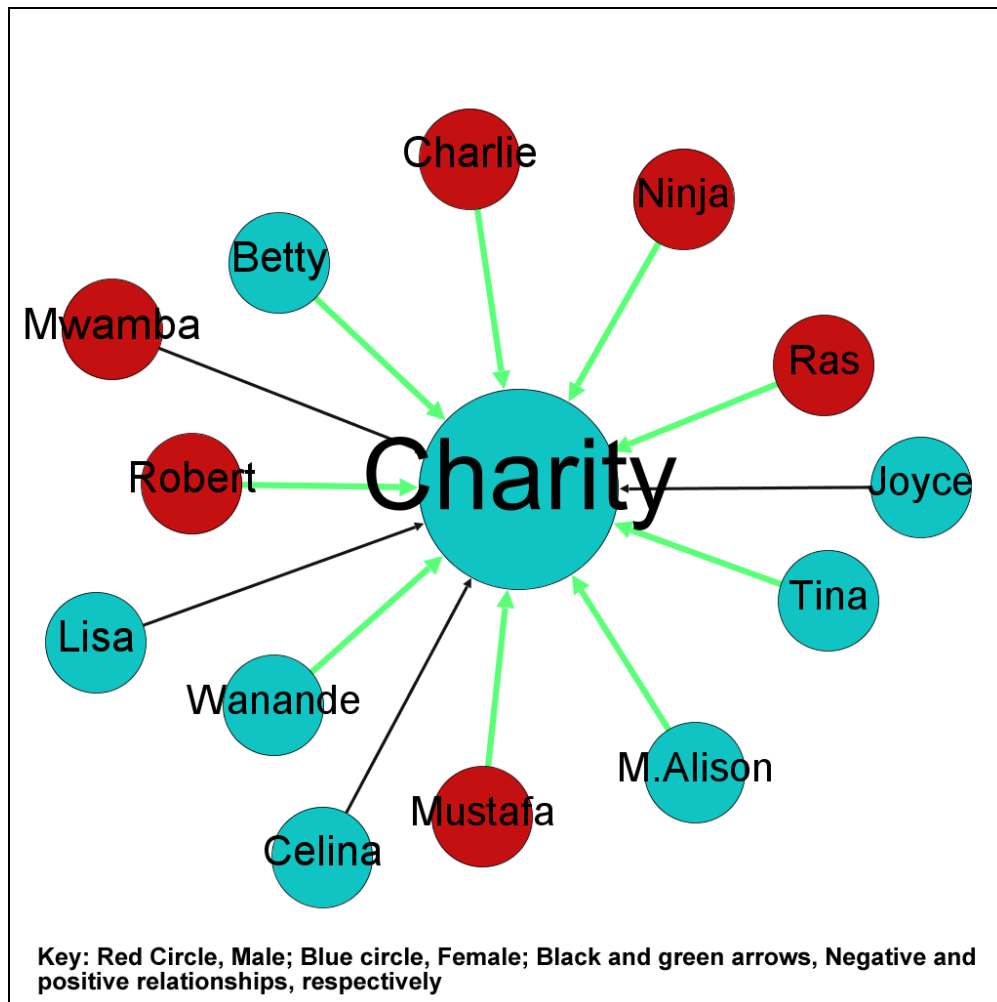


Figure 4.2 Characters relationship with Charity

4.5.3 Charity's Support of Son/Daughter in-law marriage

The coders recorded whether Charity (mother in-law) supported the marriage relationship between the sons and daughters in laws. This coding item was mainly directed to the sons and the daughter's in-law. The categories used included: supports, does not support and not applicable. The results shown in Table 4.5 show that in all the 30 incidences where the sons appeared, Charity appeared not to support their marriage to their wives. Similarly, the daughter's in-laws also indicated that Charity did not support their marriage to her sons.

This lack of marital support could be pointed to the observed negative relationship between Charity and the daughter's in-law. This constitutes a conflict, which according to Bryant et al. (2001), is negatively linked with marital success.

Table 4.4: Charity's Support of Son/Daughter in-law Marriage

			Charity support of marriage with spouse		Total
			No support	Not applicable	
Relationship with Charity	Son	Frequency	30	0	30
		%	100.0	.0	100.0
Charity	Daughter	Frequency	32	0	32
	-in-law	%	100.0	.0	100.0

Source: Computed from Episodes data, 2014

The results indicated that the relationships of both Robert and Charlie and their mother was very positive, indicating that the familial dyad in the drama is very strong. The relationship between Robert and Lisa and between Charlie and Celina was also found to be positive, indicating that the marital dyad in the drama is also clear-cut. However, the relationships between Charity and Lisa and Celina were found to be both generally negative, implying that Charity does not support their marriage to her sons.

4.5.4 Character Loyalty

Coders also classified each character according to whom they owed their loyalty. Loyalty was consequently measured on a 5-point scale, and the categories were: loyalty to Charity (mother in-law), to spouse, to father/father in-law, to daughter in-

law, and to none. As depicted in Table 4.6, in 43.2% of the incidences, Mwamba owed no one loyalty, while in 56.8% of the incidences he showed more loyalty to the daughter's in-law. Sons were torn between the parents and their spouses. In 40% of the incidences, sons showed loyalty to Charity (mother) and their spouses and on 20% of the incidences, they showed loyalty to their father. Daughter's in-law showed loyalty in more incidences (68.8%) to their father in-law and some (31.3%) of the incidences to their spouses. More tellingly, they showed no loyalty to Charity (mother in-law).

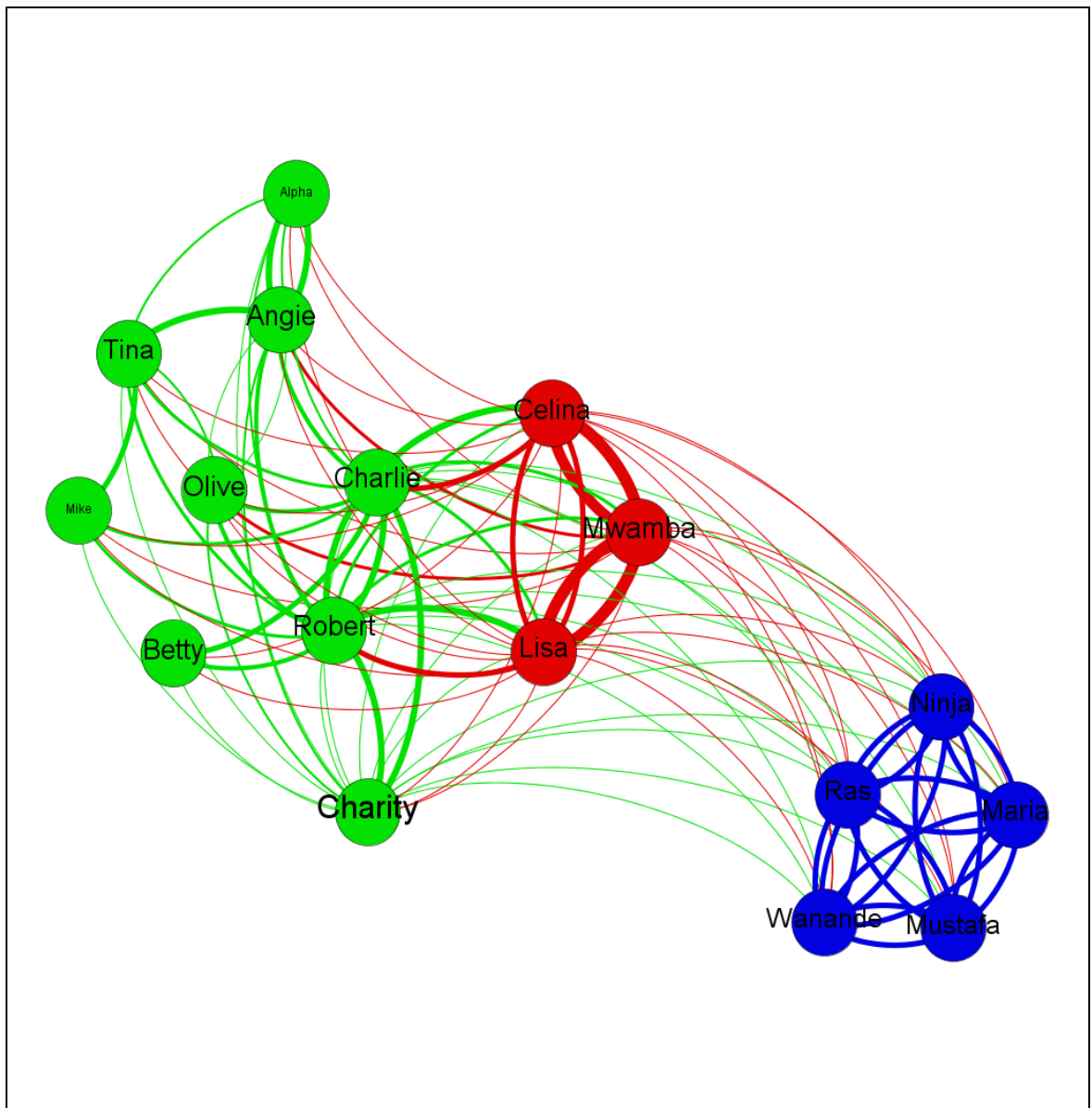
The observed trends in loyalty could be attributed to competing interest for linking with son. Whereas the sons show high incidences of loyalty to Charity, the daughter in-laws show more incidences of loyalty to their spouses. This implies that personal goals greatly determine the loyalty trend between Charity and daughter's in-law.

Table 4.5 Character Loyalty

		Spouse Loyalty					Total
		Charity	spouse	Father/father-in-law	none	Daughter-in-law	
Relationship with charity	Husband	0	0	0	16	21	37
		.0%	.0%	.0%	43.2%	56.8%	100.0%
	Son	12	12	6	0	0	30
		40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Daughter-in-law	0	10	22	0	0	32
		.0%	31.3%	68.8%	.0%	.0%	100.0%

Source: Computed from Episodes data, 2014

Figure 4.3 shows the network of loyalty relationships in the drama.



Source: Drawn from Episodes Data, 2014

Figure 4.3 Network of loyalty relationships among characters in the play

Key: Thinnest lines, Non-loyal relationships; Thicker lines, Loyal relationships

The major characters in the drama fall in three distinct groups or communities with regard to loyalty relationships. The community of Charity, her sons and grandchildren (coloured green in the Figure) tend to be more loyal to each other. The second community (coloured red) is formed between Mwamba and his daughter-in-

laws, Celina and Lisa who tend to pledge allegiance to each other. The last community (coloured blue) consists of the workers who are loyal to each other.

Although the communities are clearly distinct, they are not discrete units, since they are connected by edges (lines), showing that they interact together. Thick edges connect Lisa and Celina with Robert and Charlie, respectively, showing both men to be committed to their wives and the converse was also true. Whereas thick edges link Charity and her sons, showing strong loyalty between them, Charity is connected to her DILs by thin edges, which indicated a lack of loyalty amongst them. Figure 4.5 also indicated strong loyalties to be extant amongst the grandchildren, except between Angie and Olive, who are linked by thin edges. The workers, Ninja, Ras, Maria, Wanande and Mustafa are also joined by thick edges, which suggested that they tended to be loyal to each other. The community of workers is more distant from the other two communities, suggesting that less interaction occur between workers and the other major characters.

4.5.5 Nature of Character relationship with Charity

The characters nature of relationship with Charity was measured using a 6 point category coding scheme. The categories were used: tight-knit (Frequent interactions, little conflicts and a lot of affection), distant but positive (low conflict and high affection but rare interactions), obligatory (interact frequently but feel high conflict and no affection), estranged (with worse relationships, high presence of conflict and little interaction), cordial (low level of conflict but also have little or no affection) and conflicted but affectionate (often feel conflict but also feel affection). The result presented in Table 4.6 indicates the following: In 37.8% of the incidences, Charity's

relationship with Mwamba (husband) was estranged. It was cordial in 21.6% of the incidences and conflicted but affectionate in 40.5% of the incidences. Charity's relationship with the sons was tight-knit in 66.7% of the incidences and conflicted but affectionate in 33.3%. The relationship between Charity and the daughter's in-law was distant but positive on 18.8% of the incidences, obligatory on 56.3%, estranged on 6.3%, and conflicted but affectionate on 18.8% of the incidences.

Table 4.6 Results of cross-tabulating category of character relationship with main character

		Category of Relationship with main Character						Total
		Tight -knit	but positive	obligatory	Estranged	Cordial	Conflicted but affectionate	
Relationship with Charity	Husband	0	0	0	14	8	15	37
		.0%	.0%	.0%	37.8%	21.6%	40.5%	100.0%
	Son	10	0	0	0	10	10	30
		33.3%	.0%	.0%	.0%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%
	Daughter-in-law	0	6	18	2	0	6	32
		.0%	18.8%	56.3%	6.3%	.0%	18.8%	100.0%
	Daughter	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
		.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
other in-law	0	0	0	4	7	2	13	
	.0%	.0%	.0%	30.8%	53.8%	15.4%	100.0%	
grand child	0	4	8	0	14	0	26	
	.0%	15.4%	30.8%	.0%	53.8%	.0%	100.0%	
other relation	0	20	7	0	7	0	34	
	.0%	58.8%	20.6%	.0%	20.6%	.0%	100.0%	
Total		10	30	33	20	48	33	174
		5.7%	17.2%	19.0%	11.5%	27.6%	19.0%	100.0%

Source: Computed from Episodes data, 2014

The relationship with other in-laws was estranged on 30.8% of the incidences, cordial on 53.3% of the incidences and conflicted but affectionate on 15.4% of the incidences. Regarding the grandchildren, the relationship was distant but positive on 15.4% of the incidences, obligatory on 30.8%, and cordial on 53.8% of the incidences. Charity's relationship with other relations was mainly distant but positive (58.8%). However, on some occasions it was obligatory (20.6%) and cordial (20.6%).

This shows that while Charity tended to have a tight-knit relationship with the sons, the same was not true with regards to the daughter's in-law, other in-laws and her husband. The relationship with Mwamba the husband could be as a result of the close relationship Mwamba has with the daughter's in-law. The other relational categories pitting Charity and other members (son's, daughters-in-law, and grandchildren) could be explained by the triadic nature of the in-law relationship as has already been noted.

The episodes in the *MIL* drama show unrelentless conflicts between the MIL and her DILs. Results in Table 4.6 indicated that when the relationship between the MIL and DIL are obligatory (and to some extent, distant and conflicted), there are more likely to be more conflicts between them. This was in contrast with the MIL's relationship with her sons, which is characterized by less conflict. An analysis of their relationship (Table 4.6) indicated zero incidences of obligatory or estranged relationship and more tight knit, cordial and conflicted relationships.

4.5.6.1 Textual analysis of Charity's relationships with other major characters

The following sections present Charity's relationships with the other major characters in the drama.

4.5.6.2 Behaviour Exhibited by Charity Towards her Husband

In this drama series, Mwamba is depicted as Charity's husband. He is one of Mother-In-Law programme's main characters, and appears in almost every Episode. Analysis of the behaviour exhibited by Charity towards Mwamba indicated a large proportion of incidences (75.7%) of negative behavior (Table 4.2). Their relationship was in most cases negative (91.9%) (Table 4.3). In most Episodes, the two are seen arguing particularly on matters involving their sons and their wives. In Episode 1 of 12th Aug. 2012 for example, Charity is being typical of a wife when she antagonizes Mwamba's views on the two sons leaving the house. While Mwamba is of the view that, the two should leave the parental house, Charity on the contrary does not concur. This antagonism is replayed in Episode 2 (19th Aug. 2012) when the two engage in an argument again centered on the two sons. According to Mwamba, Charity is causing enmity between the two sons by insisting that the unfinished house which Charlie moved into belongs to both the two sons. The lukewarm relationship between the two is further replayed in Episode 8 of September 30th 2012 which shows Charity, bringing juice to Mwamba and even addressing him as "Sweetheart". Mwamba however does not believe her and reacts negatively to the "sweetheart" insinuation. The behaviour exhibited by Charity to Mwamba therefore communicates negative

behaviour in the premise that Mwamba is perceived to be closer to the daughters-in-law.

4.5.6.3 Behaviour exhibited by Charity towards the sons

The eight Episodes analyzed depict Robert and Charlie as the two sons. Robert is portrayed as the more responsible of the two as Charlie is portrayed as an alcoholic. The two son's roles vary from major to minor in different Episodes.

Analysis of the behaviour portrayed by Charity towards the two sons is found to be mainly positive (60%) (Table 4.2). The two sons are also seen to have a more positive relationship with Charity (53.3%) (Table 4.3) and this relationship is clearly tight-knit and cordial (66.7%) (Table 4.6). The positive and tight-knit relationship is evidenced in Episode 2 Scene 1 which shows Robert reluctant to leave the parental house when Lisa (his wife) tries to persuade him that they leave, and also when Charity gets unhappy to learn that Charlie had decided to leave the parental house. Roberts's actions communicate the view that Charity has power over him and dominates him. On the other hand, Charity's displeasure with Charlie's leaving the house portrays the notion that she feels that she wields the authority to decide for him to leave.

The notions of power, dominance and authority are also relayed in Episode 2 Scene 3 August 19th 2012 when Charity disrupts Mwamba and Charlies discussion demanding to know why Charlie had forsaken her by leaving the parental house. Episode 4 Scene 2 (2nd September 2012) shows Robert and Charlie protesting to Charity that they be allowed to go to see Celina and Lisa (their wives) at the police station, which Charity adamantly refuses. This clearly portrays the power and authority, which Charity has

on the two sons. The tight-knit relationship between Charity and the two sons is again replayed in Episode 7 Scene 2 (23rd Sept 2012) which shows the concern on both Charlie and Robert when it is feared that Charity is dead. Charlie storms out to go to the mortuary while Robert frantically tries to reach Mwamba on phone.

From the behaviour and relationship between Charity and the two sons, several relational outcomes are noted. First, Charity exhibits positive and accommodative relationships with the sons and tends to exert authority over them. Second by being always negative to the relationship between the sons and their wives, Charity portrays opposition to marriage. This further shows, that Charity expects that the sons to show loyalty to her than to the daughters-in-law.

These findings regarding opposition to marriage and expectation of loyalty are consistent with other studies (Orbuch, Veroff and Holmberg, 1993; Surra, 1990, Surra, Batchelder and Hughes, 1995). According to these studies, parents tended to attempt to break up courting of children as a show of displeasure for planned marriage. In so doing, tension is created between them and their sons or daughters-in-law. These findings further support the findings by Fitz Patrick (1988), that couples fall into three types – traditional, separates and independents based on perceptions of closeness, interaction and roles for spouses. Besides, Gottman (1994) on his part proposed three types of couples based on conflict styles from among them, volatile, accommodating, and avoiding.

The finding regarding expectations of loyalty supports the views by Rittenour (2006) that perception of spouse's loyalty was a positive factor in the relationship between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. Consequently, a husband may alleviate or hasten conflict within the in-law dyad.

4.5.6.4 Behaviour exhibited by Charity to the daughters in-law

The plot of this drama series revolves mainly around the mother in-law – daughter in-law relationship. Two daughters- in-law Lisa and Celina feature prominently in the eight analyzed Episodes. In all the coded incidences, Charity exhibits negative behaviour towards the two daughters- in-law. The relationship between Charity and the two is mainly negative (78.1%) (Table 4.3) and obligatory (56.3%) (Table 4.6).

In Episode 2 Scene 2 of 19th Aug. 2012, Charity is seen blaming Lisa (Roberts's wife) for the disappearance of Charlie, and in the following Scene Charity is shown unhappy because Celina (Charlie's wife) whom she thought had gone away has come back. She even rejects a gift brought to her by Celina insisting that she cannot accept a gift from a "devil". Scene 3 of Episode 2 (19th Aug. 2012) shows Charity celebrating the news that Celina could have miscarried. Her celebration is because according to her, Celina's pregnancy is not Charlie's. In the following Scene, Charity displays arrogance, and lack of respect for Celina by referring to her as the Biblical "Jezebel" right in front of Charlie (Celina's husband) and Mwamba (Celina's father in-law). In yet another Scene in the same Episode, Charity displays cruelty and hostility when she picks a cooking stick purportedly to hit Celina with it. When caught wanting to hit Celina, she goes on to display her knack for blaming her daughter- in-law by quickly stating that it was Celina who wanted to hit her.

The first Scene of Episode 3 (26th Aug.2012) shows Charity in her typical blameful and critical behaviour towards her daughters-in-law. When Mwamba asks for tea, instead of Charity preparing the tea, she goes ahead to state that tea is not ready and immediately lays the blame on the daughters-in-law whom she claims cannot wake up early to prepare tea. This also portrays the sarcasm Charity has for the two daughters-in-law. In the same Scene, as soon as news of Angie's and Olive's kidnap is received Charity immediately lays the blame on Lisa and Celina. Especially on Celina whom she even refers to as the 'devil' in front of everybody else. Charity insists that the plan to kidnap the two must have been conjured up by Celina and Lisa. This behaviour by Charity towards the two daughters-in-law further typifies the cruelty and lack of respect that a mother-in-law can have towards her daughters-in-law.

The negative relationship between Charity and the two daughters-in-law is further replayed in Scene 3 of Episode 3 (26th Aug. 2012), when Mwamba is seen reporting to the police that the kidnappers are asking for Kshs. 300,000/=. Charity on hearing this immediately condemns Selina and Lisa. She is portrayed as irrational when she insists that Selina is being jealous that she cannot give birth therefore conspires with Lisa to get rid of Olive (Charlie's daughter out of wedlock), thus the kidnap. She gets quite happy when the two are picked by inspector Wasike for interrogation believing that the two have been fixed. Contempt for the daughter- in-law is further replayed in Episode 4 of 2nd Sept 2012, a Scene showing Robert and Charlie protesting that they be allowed to go and visit their wives at the police station. However, Charity insists that Lisa and Celina are rightfully in the police cells because they were behind the two girls kidnapping.

The interaction between Charity and the two daughters-in-law communicates several stereotypical behaviour that mothers-in-law exhibits to the daughters-in-law. These include: criticism in front of the husband, creation of problems between daughters-in-law and the sons, interference, blaming the daughters-in-law always, being sarcastic, and being cruel and hostile to the daughters- in-law. The relationship with Celina (her younger daughter in-law) is so strained which clearly shows the competition between the two (Charity and Celina) for Charlie who incidentally is the last born son in the family.

Consequently, from these behaviours exhibited to daughters-in-law, several relational outcomes or factors can be espoused. Mostly the relationship between the mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law is portrayed as negative and non-accommodative. This is consistent with Gallois, Ogay and Giles (2005), that negative and positive behaviour are accommodative in nature and are perceived differently in the familial, marital and in-law dyads.

The programme also portrays the mother-in-law as mainly opposed to the marriage of the daughters-in-law. This as noted by Fitzpatrick (1988) could be founded on the perception the daughters-in-law are different from the family and cannot possibly endure marriage.

4.5.6.5 Behaviour exhibited by Charity towards other in-laws

In the analyzed Episodes, two characters “Mama Alison”, mother to Charity’s eldest daughter in-law and Joyce (mother to Charlie’s daughter Olive) are depicted as other

in-laws. Both of them are treated as minor characters since they appear sparingly. Analysis of Charity's behaviour towards them indicates positive behaviour mainly towards Joyce. A Scene in Episode 4 (2nd Sept. 2012) shows Charity happily telling Joyce that Lisa and Celina are the two culprits in the disappearance of Joyce's daughter Olive. Joyce in turn promises to deal with the two squarely. This evidently indicates that Charity warms up to Joyce. On the contrary, Charity displays lack of respect for Mama Alison as is evidenced in Episode 7 of 23rd Sept 2012, when Charity aims verbal tirades towards Mama Alison for taking over her role when she- Charity disappeared from home and is feared dead. Even when Mama Alison reassures her that she was only concerned and would not wish to see her dead, Charity still warns Mama Alison to keep off her family. This communicates the stereotypical role of Charity as a typical mother and wife who seems to hate intruders in the name of daughters- in-law and their parents.

4.5.6.6 Behaviour exhibited by Charity towards the grandchildren

Four characters namely Angie, Mike, Olive and Tina featured in the eight analyzed Episodes as Charity's grandchildren. Their roles are coded as minor since they also appear sparingly in the Episodes. The analyzed behaviour of Charity, towards the grandchildren shows positive behavior in all the 26 incidences involving Charity and the grandchildren. The grandchildren however have a more negative relationship (76.9%) (Table 4.3) with Charity owing to what they feel is Charity's traditional orientation.

Charity's positive behavior towards her grandchildren first manifests itself in Episode 2 Scene 2 of 19th Aug. 2012 when Charity picks a quarrel, with Selina for not treating Olive (Charlie's daughter) fairly. Episode 3 Scene 2 of Aug. 26th 2012 further shows Charity agitated on learning that Angie and Olive have been kidnapped. To her, the girls kidnap must be an inside plan since her daughter-in-law (Celina) wants Olive out of the way. Evidence of Charity's positive behaviour towards the grandchildren is further displayed in Episode 3 Scene 1. When Charity finds Ras Cajoling Tina to take him more seriously, she grows mad at Ras and throws verbal tirades towards him.

Charity's affection and inclusion for the grand children is strongly evident in Episode 4 Scene 1 of September 2nd 2012. Ninja (the gate keeper) finds clothes (purportedly belonging to Angie and Olive) stained with fresh blood and rushes to show Charity. On seeing this Charity is overwhelmed and collapses. In the following Scene of the same Episode, Mwamba is shown arriving home with both Angie and Olive. On seeing them, Charity is overjoyed and sheds tears of joy. This clearly indicates the positiveness she has for the two girls.

Although Charity is depicted as being accommodative to her grandchildren, the reverse is true on the part of the grandchildren. They are depicted as having a negative relationship with Charity in most incidences. This basically arises from their feelings that 'shosh' (Charity) has a traditional orientation. In Episode 7 (23rd Sept. 2012) Scene 3, Tina is shown entertaining her friends with loud music and provocative dancing. Charity storms in, switches off the music and starts ordering everybody to go away. This of course infuriates Tina so much. The positive portrayal of Charity for

her grandchildren communicates the stereotypical role of the mother-in-law as a grandparent, caregiver, guide and a stickler to traditional norms.

4.5.6.7 Behaviour exhibited by Charity towards other relations

The characters depicted as other relations in this TV drama are mainly the employees. In this category, seven characters, Alpha, Insp. Wasike, Maria, Mustafa, Ninja, Ras and Wanade prominently feature. Their roles are however minor: Behaviour exhibited by Charity, towards other relations was found to be mainly positive (58.8%) (Table 4.2). Other relations have a more positive relationship with Charity (64.7%) (Table 4.3), and this relationship is mainly distant but positive (58.8%) (Table 4.6). Evidence of this relationship is seen in Episode 2 (19th Aug. 2012) when Charity warms up to Maria hoping that she can be enticed to marry Charlie to replace the ‘devil’ Celina. Positive and positive relationship with other relations is further played out in Episode 3 (26th Aug. 2012), when after news of the kidnap of Angie and Olive filters in, Charity is seen receiving sympathetic gestures from Maria, Wanade and Mustafa.

Episode 7 of September 23rd 2012 also provides evidence of the positive relationship between other relations and ‘shosh’ (Charity). In Scene 1, Wanade is seen behaving like a possessed woman on learning that Charity is dead. In the same Scene, Mustafa also shows a lot of concern on hearing the sad news. When Mustafa relays this news to Maria, she in turn goes screaming and heaping blame to Celina and Lisa for the purported death of ‘shosh’ (Charity). These Scenes portray the stereotyped roles of mother -in-law as caregiver, mother, supportive and accommodating.

4.5.7.1 Relational themes in the drama

The following sections discuss the relational themes revealed in the drama.

4.5.7.2 Independence in Family Set up

Episode 1 of 12th August 2012 begins with an exchange between Charity (mother in-law) and Mwamba (husband) regarding the need for Charlie and Robert, the two sons to leave their parental house and be on their own. Mwamba strongly feels that the two sons ought to be independent. In pushing this case, Mwamba even uses the analogy of the butterfly who thought that hanging on the young ones was a means of protection only to realize later that the young ones could not fly. The need for independence is further manifested in Episode 2 of 19th August 2012 when one Scene shows Robert and Lisa, his wife, also arguing about gaining their independence. Lisa feels that it is high time they vacated the parental house while Robert is hesitant. Although Robert appears hesitant to leave, he however realizes the need to be independent. This clearly comes out when in the next Scene in Episode 2, both the two brothers Charlie and Robert are seen vowing to finish their house and move into it.

The finding regarding the desire for independence communicated in the mother-in-law programme supports the findings by others (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007; Mikucki – Enyart, 2011) According to these authors; daughters-in-law seek independence for autonomous family units. In so doing they establish boundaries which help them to maintain relationship by creating rules for interaction as well as showing bonafide family members. The notion of independence is also supported by the findings by Enyart and Ritternont (2007) that daughters-in-law do not appreciate when mothers-in-law make unannounced visits. Furthermore, these findings also

support the finding by Coterill (1994) that daughters-in-law sought independence from mothers-in-law who often meddled in their affairs. Independence was also highlighted by Petromo (2002) when observing that daughters-in-law may wish to manage privacy boundaries by attempting to regulate the dissemination of private information.

4.5.7.3 Familial identity

On the basis of identity theory (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995), familial identity was conceived to relate to characters role related behaviours leaning towards responsibility. In this regard, familial identity was clearly manifested in several Scenes. In Episode 2 (19th August 2012), Scene 1 shows Charlie apologizing to his father Mwamba for leaving the parental home and accepting to take responsibility for Olive, his daughter born out of wedlock. Furthermore, another Scene in the same Episode shows Charlie taking responsibility to try and bring unity to both Selina his wife and Olive.

He makes it clear that there is need for the two to respect each other as mother and daughter. Family identification is further shown by Mwamba when he takes control of negotiating with Kidnapers in a Scene shown in Episode 3 of 26th August 2012 in relation to the Kidnapping of Angie and Olive. This is again evident in Episode 4 of 2nd September 2012, which shows Mwamba pursuing the Kidnapped girls from the plantation described to him by the kidnappers and finally, brings the two girls Angie and Olive back home. This clearly portrays Mwamba as having an intrinsic sense of identification with family members. Family identification is also manifested in Episode 7 of 23rd September 2012, when Mwamba goes to the mortuary in search of

Charity (his wife) who is feared dead; and when Alison's mother in the same Episode decides to take over Charity's role with a view to making the family comfortable. In Episode 8 of 30th September 2012, Angie and Alpha (Angie's boyfriend) are found by Charlie kissing at the gate and are taken into the house for interrogation, both Charlie and Robert exhibit family identification when they talk to them against engaging in romance at such a tender age (they are both still under 18 years of age).

The finding in this study regarding the emerging theme of familial identity, points to the need for acceptable and accommodative behavior within the in-law dyad. This is consistent with the findings by Cotterill (1994) and Merrill (2007), that daughters-in-law cultivates ideas of positive in-law identity from a variety of sources which include the way parents relate with their in-laws. The urge for Family identity found in the present study also supports findings of Enyart and Ritternour (2012) which indicated that daughters-in-law, especially in the early years of marriage aim to establish an identity as suitable spouses and extended family members. Furthermore the finding in respect with family identity also supports the observations by Merrill (2007) that children-in-law may also wish to establish an identity as a married couple and family, and that the ability of the mother-in-law to support the development of the marital dyad's new family identity has significant positive relational implications for the in-law triad.

4.5.7. 3 Supportive Communication

Supportive communication stands out as the main theme being communicated by the drama series. Supportive communication in the current study was deemed to be communication that encourages dialogue among the characters, and that was positive

in approach. Consequently, the key participants (mother-in-law and daughters-in-law) would listen to each other with equal respect. All the Episodes analyzed show Scenes portraying unhappiness and misunderstandings that require supportive communication. In some Scenes, small issues are seen to grow into larger ones and eventually boil to the surface rendering them unlikely to be solved calmly. Interestingly enough these Scenes usually involve extended family relationships particularly between Charity (mother in-law) and the daughters in-law or the other in-laws mainly from the daughter in-laws nuclear families.

In Episode 2 Scene 1 of 19th Aug. 2012 for example, an argument ensues between Mwamba and Charity simply because of lack of communication regarding the need for Charlie and Robert to move out of the parental house and be on their own. Charity completely refuses to see Mwamba's sense in this issue which albeit small, leads to a strained relationship. Lack of understanding as a result of poor or lack of communication is depicted in Episode 2 (19th Aug.2012) Scene 3 when it forces Mwamba to intonate that for the 40 years he has been married to Charity, he has but only known stress. This boiling up is simply caused by the storming out of the house by Charlie, an act which does not please Charity. Indeed, this could easily be avoided in the event that communication exists between the two. Besides, Charity's body language and gestures only help to exasperate Mwamba more. By so doing, Charity does not realize that in addition to spoken words, communication also extends to tone, volume, expression, eye contact, body language and effective listening.

The importance of communication is further shown in the same Scene 3 of Episode 2, when Charity refuses a gift from Celina (Charlie wife) on the premise that Celina is a

“Devil” out to finish her. This outburst leads to an ugly Scene which could have been avoided with better communication. Charity aggravates the situation further when she refers to Celina as “Jezebel” which leads to an argument that sees Mwamba drag in the element of creation of enmity between Charlie and Robert by Charity. When in the same Scene, Charity picks a cooking stick to hit Celina, the action alone amounts to communication of ill feelings to others. Episode 3 of 26th Aug.2012 clearly shows the effects of poor communication in families. Even though Angie and Olive have been kidnapped, Charity, for lack of communication and understanding adamantly insists that it is a plan between Celina and Lisa (her daughters- in-law) who purportedly hate Olive (Celina’s step daughter) and would love to visit agony on her. At this juncture, Mwamba shows the power of communication by stepping into the row and calming everyone down by explaining the severity of the matter at hand. The power of communication is also brought out in Episode 5 of September 9th 2012, when Mwamba listens and communicates with the Kidnappers thereby leading to the release of Angie and Olive unharmed.

The likely cause of communication breakdown between Charity and the daughter’s in-law is the fact that both parties put more emphasis on defining themselves rather than on the problems at hand (kidnap of Angie and Olive) and its likely solutions. Mwamba therefore chose to focus more on the issue of the kidnap than on the kidnappers and hence sought productive dialogue.

Episode 6 and 7 of 16th and 23rd respectively portray a lot of gloom with the news that Charity (mother in-law) could be dead. Once again it turns out that all this is in fact due to lack of proper communication. Because the information is not well

communicated, everyone has their own version of what has happened to Charity. Wanade in Episode 7 (23rd Sept.) breaks the news of Charity's death to Mustafa without even verifying the facts. Mustafa then breaks the news to Maria who lays blame to Celina and Lisa without any sense of verification. This again depicts clearly the essence of communication.

The depiction of communication in the mother-in-law programme as essential in interpersonal communication lends support to the findings by Burleson, Albrecht and Sarason (1994) that supportive communication is an essential components within the formation and development of interpersonal relationships. Besides, these findings are consistent with others (Rook and Huarte, 1999; Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004). Such findings show that supportive communication is related to perceptions of relational quality. The findings further concur with findings by Soliz and Harwood (2006), indicating that supportive communication represents specific accommodative behaviours and, is consequently relevant when assessing the degree to which family members feel connected to each other in the family unit.

4.5.7. 4 Sense of belonging

Another key theme communicated by the drama series is the sense to belong portrayed by most characters. Most characters sought to be loved to belong and to matter. This was however not to be. Mostly, the family was portrayed as not being cohesive, since not everyone was allowed the space and freedom to explore the activities they wanted to. In Scene 1 of Episode 2 of 19th Aug 2012, Lisa strongly feels that she and her husband Robert should leave the parental house. In essence, Lisa yearns to share family identity through Robert. However, in being hesitant to

leave Robert is denying Lisa her wish. In the same Episode 2, but Scene 2, Selina (Charlie's wife) gives Charity a gift (simply to be loved and to matter). By blatantly refusing this gift, Charity is simply shattering Selina's desire of 'belonging'. This sense of belonging is further exposed in Episode 7 (23rd Sept.) Scene 1 when Alison's mother decides to take the role of Charity when the latter is feared dead. To Mama Alison, this is the only way she can offer her support and endear herself to the Mwamba family. This is however not received well, by Charity on her return. She interprets Mama Alison's gesture as assumption of superiority which then reduces Charity's value. Despite Charity's behaviour towards Alison's mother, it however remains clear that Mama Alison was trying to show a sense of belonging by being part of the Mwamba family and taking charge.

The sense to belong depicted in the programme supports findings by Merrill, (2007) and Pfeifer (1989) which indicate that daughters-in-law have positive relationships with their mothers-in-law, and feel an obligation to help them maintain relationships with their husbands and grandchildren. The findings further support others (Bryant, Conger and Mehan, 2001); Timmer and Veroff, 2000) which suggest that maintaining positive in-law relationships can significantly lead to a reduced risk of divorce and increased marital success.

4.5.7. 5 Accommodation

This is yet another key theme that was found to be communicated by the drama series. Accommodation in the family context was considered in the current study as acceptance into the Mwamba family set up by allowing extended and nuclear family members to share living facilities under the same roof. In the drama series, Mwamba

appears to accommodate his daughters-in-law. This is depicted when Mwamba takes into account feelings, thoughts, needs, and preferences when making decisions. This is however, the contrary regarding the relationship between Charity and her daughters- in-law. Most Scenes show Charity being hateful towards the daughters- in-law. This means that the daughters-in-law feel non-accommodated by Charity.

Episode 2 of August 19th 2012 displays a Scene showing an exchange of verbal tirade between Charity and Selina pertaining to the whereabouts of Charlie. This clearly shows lack of accommodation between the two. Indeed, portrayal of non-accommodation is clearly brought to the fore when Charity threatens to use a cooking stick (Episode 2) on Selina, despite Charlies presence. This even prompts Charlie in no uncertain terms and without due respect to also tell off Charity (his mother) in front of Selina (his wife). Non-accommodation further plays out in Scene 2 of Episode 3 (August 26th), when Charity refuses to give Mwamba (her husband) the tea he had requested and goes on to blame it on her daughters-in-law. Charity's non-accommodation for her daughters- in-law is further evident by Charity when she calls Celina the 'devil' in front of the police inspector, a Mr. Wasike.

Contrary to the lack of accommodative behaviour shown by Charity (mother in-law) to her daughters-in-law, Mwamba (father in-law) shows a lot of accommodative behaviour for the daughters-in-law. A Scene in mind is when Charity refers to Selina as 'Jezebel' (Episode 3). Mwamba quickly intervenes and picks an argument with Charity, reminding her of creating enmity between the sons and their wives. Mwamba's accommodative behaviour for her daughters-in-law is further evident in Episode 3 Scene 2 of 26th Aug. 2012, when Mwamba tells Charity off for blaming

the kidnapping of both Angie and Olive on the two daughters-in-law (Celina and Lisa).

4.5.7. 6 Cultural Orientation

The final theme that manifested from the study is the role of culture in the in-law dyad. Several Scenes depicted cultural orientation to traditional stereotypes and expectations of what roles wives should play. In Episode 2 Scene 2 (19th Aug.2012), Charity is seen quarreling with Lisa simply because Lisa is using Mustafa to cook instead of cooking herself. At the same time, Episode 3 (26th Aug.) Scene1 shows Charity taking on Selina on her mode of dressing. In so doing, charity is exerting pressure on Selina to live upto traditional stereotypes. In Episode 5 Scene 3 of 9th Sept. 2012, Charity storms a party being thrown by Tina to her teenage friends, and orders everyone out. While this seems to infuriate Tina, it emerges that Charity is just leaning towards her traditional orientation which defines how children should grow up.

The findings regarding the cultural orientation theme are consistent with several other studies. According to Christensen and Johnson (1971), the new wife is often compared to the mother-in-law in terms of how she fulfills traditional roles of a wife, such as cooking, housekeeping, taking care of the husband etc. Finger man (2001) on the other hand pointed out that sometimes, the misunderstanding between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law was as a result of these expectations.

4.5.8 Summary of Relationships communicated in MIL drama

Analysis of the behaviour exhibited by Charity (mother-in-law) to the other characters revealed that Charity's *negative behavior* and her *negative personality traits* were the most frequent relational outcomes. Negative behaviour such as depicted by Charity in Episode 2 (19th Aug. 2012) when Celina comes back after being thought to have gone, represent actions in which the mother-in-law communicatively creates distance from the daughter-in-law (by making clear distinctions between the mother-in-law's family and the daughter in-laws position in it). Besides, such behaviour communicates patronizing tendencies which amounts to non-accommodative behaviour which tend to have negative impact on the relationship.

Negative personality traits such as those displayed in Episode 2 Scenes 3 when Charity (mother-in-law) gets excited to learn that Selina (daughter in-law) has miscarried, amount to a mother-in-law's negative personal characteristic such as insensitivity and selfishness. Throughout the analyzed Episodes, negative personality traits on the part of Charity (mother-in-law) tend to have a negative impact on the daughter- in-law/ mother-in-law relationship. This is quite evident in Episode 4 of 2nd Sept 2012, which shows Charity (mother-in-law) becoming insensitive to the news that Angie and Olive have been kidnapped and instead choosing to apportion blame on Lisa and Celina (daughters-in-law). This tends to impact negatively on the relationship between the two parties. Charity's (mother-in-law's) involvement in the Lisa's and Celina's (daughters-in-law) relationships with their spouses was also found to be commonly leading to negative *mother-in-law interference*. In Episodes 5 Scene 3 of 9th Sept. 2012, Charlie and Celina are seen discussing over some matter. Charity (mother-in-law) storms in and immediately interferes by asking Charlie not to talk to

the 'devil'. This, once again impacts negatively on the relationship between Charity (mother-in-law) and Celina (daughter in-law).

A part from outcomes relating to Charity's behaviour, *the role of other family members* was observed to have an impact on the relationship between Charity (mother in-law) and Lisa and Celina (daughters-in-law). The most notable family member in this case was the spouse.

In Episode 2, Lisa is seen to be unhappy when she fails to persuade Robert to move out of the parental house. The positive, relationship between Robert and Charity has a negative impact on the relationship between Lisa (daughter's in-law) and Charity (mother in-law) and this significantly contributes to the negative relationship. Likewise, other in-law relationships (e.g. in Episode 7 when Charity throws verbal tirades at Mama Alison for stepping in to assist) also emerge as negative factors in the relationship.

The other relationship communicated in the drama is that of loyalty. When Lisa and Celina consistently quarrel, it is simply because they are competing for expected loyalty of the husbands on one side and the sons on the other.

The final relational outcome relevant emanating from the relationship between daughter's in-law and mother's in-law was identified as *divergent value /cultural orientation*. Episode 8 of September 30th 2012 shows Charity (mother in-law) ridiculing Lisa (daughter in-law) on account of Lisa's manner of dressing. While Celina is putting on a long trouser, Charity insists that as a respectable wife she

should be in a skirt. This again ends in a negative relationship depicting the diverse cultures both Celina (Charlie's wife) and 'Shosh' (Charlie's mother) are oriented to.

4.6 Communicative and Relational factors that predicts the nature of mothers inlaw and daughters in-law relationship

Research objective 3 sought to identify communicative and relational factors that determine the relationship between daughters- in-law (DIL) and mothers-in-law (MIL). To establish these factors, a multiple regression model was used to determine the estimates of the factors that best predict the category of the relationship. Table 4.7 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 4.7: Communicative and relational factors which determine the nature of MIL-DIL relationships

		Estimate	t	p-value
1	(Constant)	-1.613	-1.299	.196
	Personality traits	.280	3.935	.000*
	Mother in-laws support of Marriage	.392	2.665	.008*
	Spouse loyalty	.480	4.390	.000*
	Spouse support of relationship with mother-in-law	-.376	-2.333	.021*
	Influence from other in-laws	-.008	-.119	.905
	Cultural orientation	-.215	-2.538	.012*
	R ²	54.9%		

Dependent Variable: category of relationship with main character

*Statistical significance at the 0.05 level

From the table, it can be concluded that personality traits, mother in-laws support of marriage with spouse, spouse loyalty, spouse support of the relationship with mother in-law, and cultural orientation contributed significantly to the category of

relationship between daughter's in-law and mother's in-law. The R^2 value of 54.9 per cent shows that the model given describes only 54.9 per cent of variability in category of Relationship. It means that there are some other variables for variation in the extent of category of Relationship between daughter's in-law and mother's in-law that were not captured in the current study.

The model suggests that with unit increase in personality traits, mother in-laws support of marriage to spouse, spouse support, there will be increase in category of Relationship between daughter in-law and mother in-law, while with increase in spouse support of the relationship with mother in-law and cultural orientation, the category of Relationship will decline. This means that if daughter's in-law receives more support from their husbands, the category of Relationship will decline. Similarly, the category of relationship will decline depending on either party's cultural orientation.

The finding that personality traits and support from mother in-law predict the category of relationship between daughter in-law and her mother in-law, are consistent with other findings. According to Burleson, Albrecht, and Sarason (1994), self-disclosure and supportive communication, are essential components within the formation and development of interpersonal relationships. They were further found to be related to perceptions of relational quality (C. Rittenour and J. Soliz (Rook & Ituarte, 1999; Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004; Weber & Patterson, 1996) and solidarity (Weber, Johnson, & Corrigan, 2004; Wheelless, 1978). According to Goetting (1990), many parents-in-law provide a great deal of financial and instrumental support to their children and children-in-law, particularly during the first 10 years of marriage. In

addition, in their study Brown and Hewstone (2005) showed that self-disclosure was an important factor in positive contact. Adding to these views, Soliz and Harwood (2006) noted that self-disclosure and supportive communication represent specific accommodative behaviors and, therefore, were important to consider when assessing the degree to which family members feel connected to each other within the family unit.

Findings regarding spouse loyalty as impacting on the category of in-law relationship found in this study supports several other studies (e.g. Jorgenson, 1994; Datta, Poortinga, & Marcoen, 2003; Fischer, 1983). According to these studies, difficulties associated with in-law relationships may arise from the daughter in-laws loyalty to her mother rather than to her mother in-law. Jorgenson (1994) found that many married couples were hesitant to call their parents-in-law “mom” and “dad” out of loyalty to their own parents, claiming that parents have particular “rights” that parents-in-law can never have. Datta, Poortinga, and Marcoen (2003) and Fischer (1983) in their findings indicated that a majority of daughters felt closer to or had a stronger affinity for their mothers compared to their mothers-in-law. Moreover, Rittenour (2006) observed that some women perceived closeness with their mother-in-law as a potential act of betrayal against the mothers who raised them. These findings tend to suggest that daughter-in-law’s relationship with her mother-in-law may depend on the extent to which the daughter-in-law identifies with her own family. Consequently, stronger ties with own family may be a barrier to identifying with the in-law family. Besides, loyalty toward a mother versus closeness to a mother-in-law means that the relationship between daughters with their mothers is crucial to harmonious relationships with their mother in-laws.

4.7 Results of the Interview with the Producer of *Mother-in-Law*

Catherine Wamuyu, a film and theatre master of Philosophy student at Kenyatta University is the producer of the *Mother-in-law* program. According to her, each episode produced is shown for two days. The viewership of MIL is widespread all over the country, in both urban and rural areas. According to IPSOS Media Communication and Technology Research (agencies that carry out rating of various TV programs) MIL consistently ranks amongst the top Citizen TV programs. This suggested that, according to the cultivation theory, the MIL could be influencing wide segments of the population. Considering that the target audience for the program is all ages (that is, everybody in a family), the program has potential for reinforcing and entrenching stereotypes about MIL-DIL relationships.

The objectives of the drama are bring meaning to relationships, entertainment, conflict exposition and conflict management. Characters play different roles, just as in real life. For instance, the MIL exposes conflicts (what this thesis has called as dialectical tensions) that are managed appropriately by Mwamba. According to her, the drama promotes state, culture and beliefs. She believes that many DILs have run-ins with their MIL, which is part of cultural stereotypes. By having a reasonably popular program airing on National TV, it helps to promote state values by showing a local, rather than, a foreign film.

According to her, drama is meant to change the society since it acts a mirror of what occurs in real life. Story lines developed in the drama are attributed to real life experiences and what has been gleaned from other scholars. People are likely to ask themselves how best to behave after watching characters on TV. This suggests that

cultivation theory could operate in society. However, it is germane to carry out studies in the country that can provide evidence for this phenomenon. According to her Charity is a typical MIL, similar to both African and Western settings. To increase creativity, characters are paid to script additional lines or invent more emotions in the drama.

4.8 Mother – in – Law’s Plot in relation to other studies

The plot of MIL drama casts the MIL – DIL relationship in the traditional, stereotypical mould, in which they have an inherent, almost congenital dislike for each other. This mutual distaste is not precipitated by any contextual factors but rather each Scene is enacted to reinforce this view of a sundered relationship. Otherwise, there could have been instances in the drama where there is some degree of understanding between the MILs and the DILs. Consider for example, the kidnapping of Angie and Olive in Episode 1 and 2. The question is whether Charity’s behavior to the DILs in the Episodes was occasioned by the kidnap or a symptom of a lingering feud between them. The reference to the DILs by Charity when asked by Joyce in Episode 2, Scene 2, “who else if not the usual suspects”, suggested that it was not just the act of kidnapping that triggered Charity’s foul behavior but it could be another act in a long-running row. It is also highly unlikely that it is the kidnapping that caused Charity’s behavior because she accuses the DILs falsely without sufficient evidence, violating Grice’s (1981) Maxim of Quality. In Episode 4, Lisa remarks that ‘we (the plural indicated that Celina was included) are sick of you bullying as around like little children’, indicated that Charity’s unpleasant behavior has been going on for long, as it is highly unlikely to make somebody sick by just a ‘one-off’ act of bullying. Further, in Episode 5, Scene 3, Celina responds to Lisa’s feelings of guilt

by saying, ‘these two days have been the most wonderful since I came into this house’. This suggested that the feelings of dislike between Celina and her MIL has lasted for the entire period she has been married to Charlie, or at least since Charlie brought her to the house.

The necessity to cast the MIL – DIL relationship in the archetypal mould therefore renders the characters of MIL and DILs to be flat and non-dynamic, so as not to disappoint the popular notions of them. The character strait jackets of the MIL and the DILs thus forces Celina and Lisa to be both antagonistic to their MIL; making the DILs to be undifferentiated with respect of their behavior to the MIL. This strips the drama of diversity and unpredictability. It is interesting that although Charity interacts positively with workers such as Ninja (Episode 7, Scene 3), she has a no single kind word to any of her DIL in all the episodes analysed.

Nevertheless, the plot of the Citizen’s MIL drama is consistent with most world-wide TV dramas, which tend to feature a fuming and scheming MIL and an extremely docile DIL, whether one is analyzing *China’s Mother-in-Law Wars* (CNTVNA, 2014), India’s *Chhanchhan* and *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* (Bandyopadhyay, 2013) or even the American old sitcom, *The Mothers-in-Law*, which aired on NBC from 1967 to 1969 (Lambert, 2010). Although the characters of the MIL and DIL appear to be overdramatized in the TV programs, the consensus is that they generally reflect the opaque and tension-filled relationship between the MIL and DIL. Thus, the conclusions and inferences made in this study are largely valid, when extended to real life.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 An Overview

The purpose of this study was to establish the communicative and relational determinants of the type of mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship. To this end, the study analyzed the contents of the ‘mother-in-law programme’ aired on the Citizen TV channel. The research question sought to examine the communicative and relational factors revealed in the Mother-in-Law TV programme. In this chapter, the results of the study are summarized and conclusions drawn. Next, the practical contributions of the study are discussed. Finally, limitations of the present results are outlined along with the potential avenues for future research.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The summary of the findings aligned to the following thematic areas that formed the research objectives of the study.

1. To identify the families depicted in Mother-In-Law family drama and analyze the communicative factors revealed in the TV programme.
2. To analyze the relational factors revealed in the Mother-In-Law TV programme drama.
3. To find out the communicative and relational factors that determines the nature of MIL-DIL relationship in the Family Drama.

5.3 Communicative factors in Mother-in-Law

This study has demonstrated that relationships between MIL and DIL in Mother-in-Law are immanent with opposing tensions, which could be solved by proper communication between the parties. This communication is mediated mainly by the verbal interaction between them. The distinctness in language of the Mwamba family and his workers suggest a potential dialectical conflict of autonomy/connection: the need for the workers and Mwambas to be more autonomous or more connected. However, by workers being respectful of their bosses, they use the coping technique of integration to manage the tension. The longer turn-length of the MIL relative to those of the DILs exposes the dialectical tension of expression/non-expression between them, with the MIL coming across as somebody who bares all her unfavourable feelings towards her in-laws. The DILs cope with the MIL's verbal assault differently, both of them dysfunctional. Lisa tends to tolerate the tensions, in line with Baxter and Montgomery (1996) suggestion whereas Celina matches MIL verbal assaults with verbal affluence of her own, which could be a new dysfunctional mechanism of coping with the tension.

Impoliteness of MIL to DILs also exposes the dialectical tension of expression/non-expression in the MIL-DIL relationship, in which the MIL has a mouthful to speak whereas the DILs tend to say less. Another coping strategy of the tension, which is dysfunctional, could be labeled inversion of aggression, which is distinct from Baxter and Montgomery (1996) taxonomy of inspiralling inversion. This is demonstrated for instance when Lisa puts a knife in Charity's handbag, landing the latter a night in police cells.

There exists a potential dialectical tension between Mwamba and the DILs of association/dissociation, that is, they might chose to be close to each other or far apart. The discourse in the drama suggests that they negotiate this dialectical tension by associating more with each other.

Lastly, the drama also reveals a dialectical tension between the sons of Mwamba and their wives. The most striking can be seen in Episode 1 of Season 16, in which Lisa's attempt to present a birthday gift of house to her husband, is misconstrued as Lisa engaging in an extra-marital relationship, making Robert to be furious. This exposes the dialectic of predictability/novelty, which is aptly captured when Mwamba remarks that, *'men ... are not structured for surprises'*.

5.4.1 Relational factors in Mother-in-Law

Research objective two focused on identifying relationships communicated through the 'Mother-In-Law' TV programme. From a content analysis of the selected programme episodes, and focusing on the behaviour exhibited by Charity (mother-in-law) to other characters, several relational outcomes were identified. Negative behaviour and negative personality traits such as patronizing tendencies were quite frequent. Mother-in-law interference was also identified as a relational outcome being communicated. Other relational outcomes included loyalty, divergent/cultural orientation, and role of other family members. These findings once again find support in existing literature. According to Burleson, Albrecht and Sarason (1994), personality traits are essential components in forming and developing inter-relationships. The study also looked at various relational themes revealed in the drama, which are presented in the following sections.

5.4.1 Independence in Family set up

The study established that the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationships were characterized by urge for maintaining independence. Both the daughters-in-law (Lisa and Selina) expressed desire to be away from the matrimonial home so that they could establish distance between them and Charity (mother-in-law). This finding supports other studies (Cotterill, 1994, Merrill, 2007; Mikucki – Enyart, 2011) which consistently show that daughters-in-law establish boundaries that help them maintain relationships with their mothers-in-law.

5.4.2 Family Responsibility

The study further identified family identification as another thematic issue communicated through the programme. In many Scenes, the daughters-in-law (Alison, Lisa and Celina) were seen trying to create rapport with other extended family members. The daughters-in-law bonded quite easily with their father-in-law (Mwamba) but received resistance mainly from Charity (Mother-in-law) and Olive (grandchild). These findings were also consistent with the findings of Enyart and Ritternour (2012) which showed that daughters-in-law in their early marriage years aimed to establish an identity as suitable spouses as well as extended family members.

5.4.3 Supportive Communication among Family Members

Lack of supportive communication stood out as a key theme communicated by the programme. Several Scenes in the analyzed Episodes portrayed a lack of communication mainly between Charity (mother-in-law) and Lisa and Celina (daughters-in-law). Some of the issues leading to bad blood between the two groups

were so petty and only required positive communication to alleviate the tensions. The study found out that through gesticulations, both parties (mother-in-law and daughters-in-law) tended to aggravate their negative relationship by sending signals of negativeness to each other.

The study also established that in most situations when the mother-in-law (Charity) and the daughters-in-law tended to disagree, other family members such as Mwamba (father-in-law) and Charlie and Robert (spouses) usually weighed in with their views. This either enhanced communication between the daughters-in-law and Charity (mother-in-law) or acted as barriers to communication.

The findings that lack of communication leads to negative and non-accommodative behaviour support the findings by Soliz and Harwood (2006) which indicated that supportive communication represents specific accommodative behaviour and relational quality.

5.4.4 Sense of Belonging

The study also identified sense of belonging as a key theme portrayed by the TV programme. In most analyzed Episodes, the daughters-in-law (Lisa and Celina) were observed struggling to get approval from the mother-in-law (Charity) by trying to strengthen the in-law dyad. Lisa wished to share familial identity through Robert, while Celina opted to buy the mother-in-law presents which were however rejected.

The study also established that other extended family members also strived to be seen to belong. Alison's mother attempted to endear herself to the family by taking up

Charity's (mother-in-law) role when she was feared dead. The finding in this study of sense of belonging being a key theme communicated in the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationships is not isolated. The finding supports others (e.g. Merrill, 2007; Pfeifer, 1989) who suggest that daughters-in-law have positive relationships with their mothers-in-law, and often feel an obligation to help them maintain relationships with other family members.

5.4.5 Accommodation in Family context

Accommodation is yet another theme that is communicated through the programme. The study shows that while the mother-in-law is always exhibiting non-accommodative behaviour towards the daughters-in-law, on the contrary the father-in-law (Mwamba) exhibits accommodative behaviour towards the daughters-in-law. This of course does not go down well with Charity (Mother-in-law) and becomes an avenue for further negative behaviour towards the daughters-in-law. This finding regarding more accommodative behaviour from the father-in-law is consistent with the findings of Nydegger (1986) which found that usually fathers-in-law liked their daughters-in-law, although at times the daughter-in-law was perceived as alienating the son from the family.

5.4.6 Cultural orientation

Cultural orientation was the final theme identified as being communicated by the programme. The study established that in most cases the mother-in-law clinged on the traditional expectations and stereotypes of a wife. Most grandchildren referred to Charity as 'shosh' and found her traditional in her actions. The study further established that this cultural orientation on the part of Charity (mother-in-law)

happened to be one of the causes of strained relationships between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. This is consistent with findings by Fingerman (2001) that subtle expectations often led to the misunderstanding between a mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law.

5.5 Communicative and relational factors that predict the nature of mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship

The final research objective sought to establish the factors that predict the nature of mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationships. Consequently, the type of relationship (either positive or negative) was regressed with identified communicative and relational factors. The study established that personality traits; mother-in-law's support of marriage; spouse loyalty; spouse support of relationship with mother-in-law and cultural orientation were significant determinants of the nature of relationship between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. However, influence from Other-In-Laws had no significant influence of the type of MIL-DIL relationship. These results indicated that a MIL or a DIL with great personality traits (for instance, being open-minded), the MIL's support of the marriage by his son, and the son's unwavering support of and loyalty to his wife will significantly improve the MIL/DIL relationship. In addition, a progressive MIL, rather than a conservative one, will likely to have a better relationship with her DIL. This finding supports several other findings (Burlison, Albrecht, & Sarason, 1994; Rook & Huarte, 1999; Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004).

5.6 Conclusion

This study analysed the communicative and relational determinants of the type of MIL – DIL as portrayed in the *Mother-in-Law* TV programme. The study concluded that the relationship between MILs and DILs is a dialectical process, in which conflicts could potentially arise as a tussle between the needs for association and dissociation, certainty and uncertainty and openness and closedness and that the key locus of this dialectic process is the verbal interaction between the parties. The study established that independence in the family set up, familial identity, supportive communication, sense of belonging, accommodation, and cultural orientation were the main themes communicated in the drama. The study's findings largely support the communication accommodation theory, in which there is likely to be less conflict among interlocutors if they are more accommodative with respect to their communication.

With respect to the characters relationships, the mother-in-law in the TV drama was found to exhibit negative behaviour and negative personality traits towards her daughters-in-law whereas she displayed positive behaviours towards her sons. The plot of the Citizen's MIL drama was found to be consistent with most world-wide TV dramas, which tend to feature an intransigent MIL and an extremely docile DIL. However, the study concluded that although the characters of the MIL and DIL appear to be overdramatized in the TV program, they generally reflected the opaque and tension-filled relationship between the MIL and DIL. The study's findings therefore supported the triangular theory of the in-laws relationships.

In an attempt to redress the MIL/DIL tensions, the study found that positive personality traits of the MIL and DIL, MIL's support of marriage, spouse loyalty and support, and a progressive, rather than a conservative, MIL were significant communicative and relational determinants that could improve the relationship between MIL and DILs. These findings are considered significant owing to the fact that these themes could be central in addressing constraints in mother-in-law/ daughter-in-law relationships.

5.7 Emerging Knowledge from the Study

A key contribution of this study to the existing literature is that it examines the relationship between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law within the media context. While earlier studies tended to focus attention on interviews with daughters -in-law, this study analyzed contents of a Family Drama of Citizen TV programme focusing on mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship. The results therefore provide a clearer picture of how perceived negative mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship is perpetuated through the media.

Besides, the study also brings a new perspective for understanding mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationships. Content analysis offers an insightful way of examining interrelationships by exactly observing verbal and non-verbal communications. In addition, content analysis is low on control of the research context; hence the researcher has little chance of affecting the outcome.

Another key strength of the study is that it does not only focus on the relationship between mother-in-law and daughters-in-law but also brings on board other family

members. Thus the results also provide insight into the roles other family members play in the relationship between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law.

5.8 Recommendations

5.8.1 Recommendations for practice

In view of the above findings, the following recommendations are made

1. Owing to the power of the media as a communication tool, TV programs should avoid invariably casting MIL – DIL relationships in negative stereotypes; instead, they should occasionally come up with episodes on how such relationships might be improved.
2. Married and people entering into marriage must ensure that there is supportive and honest communication between parties in order to manage the dialectical tensions, which characterize the marriage institution.
3. To improve the relationship between the MIL and DIL, they should both have positive personality traits, the MIL should support the marriage of the son and should not be overly conservative and rigid. In addition, strong spouse loyalty and support is also crucial in improving the MIL/DIL relationship.

5.8.2 Suggestions for further Research

That this study dwelt on only one program in depicting the relational factors of MIL/DIL relationship, since it adopted purely content analysis method. It is therefore recommended that other researchers could carry out similar studies but on different

programs, most probably Kenyan oriented, to create a comparison in the existing school of thought.

Secondly, most communicative and relational factors of MIL/DIL relationship are exhibited in different roles the characters play in these programmes. It is therefore in order if other scholars may research on the real roles of both MIL and DIL in a familial triad.

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APPENDIX II: RESEARCH CONSENT LETTER

Doreen Akech Orawo
P.O. BOX 6767-30100
Eldoret
Kenya

The Production Manager,
Royal Media Services (Citizen Television),
P.O Box 7468- 00300,
Nairobi, Kenya.

Dear Sir\Madam

REF: RESEARCH CONSENT FOR DOREEN AKECH ORAWO
SHRD/D.PHIL/05/10

I am a student of Moi University, currently pursuing my PhD Programme in communication Studies. My research title is: COMMUNICATIVE AND RELATIONAL DETERMINANTS OF MOTHER-IN-LAW/ DAUGHTER-IN-LAW RELATIONSHIP IN FAMILY DRAMA: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF MOTHER-IN-LAW CITIZEN TV PROGRAMME, KENYA

I wish to request for your consent, given that you are the producers of **The Mother-In-Law programme**. I will appreciate if you kindly do a letter to this effect.

Thank you.

Yours Faithfully,

Dorreen Akech Orawo

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

I am a Kenyan Student pursuing my Doctorate Degree in Communication Studies at Moi University Eldoret. I would wish to be granted permission by you to ask a few questions in light of my study area of which you are the director and producer. The information provided will be purely for academic purposes and utmost confidentiality will be observed.

Interviewer: Doreen Akech Orawo (Reseacher)

Interviewee: Catherine Wamuyu (Director & producer of Mother-In-Law-Royal Media Programme)

FAMILY DRAMA:- MOTHER -IN-LAW

1. What was your intention of scripting the Family Drama, Mother-In-Law?. Was it for: entertainment, history telling, or conflict exposition and management?-----

2. Is the drama promoting a state, culture, a belief and others? -----

3. Is the drama intended to “change the society”- i.e connection between drama and reality.-----

4. What is the significance of say, the role of the main characters such as charity and Mwamba.-----

5. Is there an ideology that underlies the drama production e.g. democracy, gender balance or mainstreaming, decision making style, conflict resolution?.-

6. Is it the case of dramatizing social, cultural, economic or societal reality and history?-----

Characters

7. What informed the choice of characters?
- (a) Age
 - (b) Experience
 - (c) Co-authors
 - (d) Income/employment motive.

Intention/purpose

8. What was your intention? Is the programme for:
- (a) guidance
 - (b) entertainment
 - (c) General information
 - (d) warning
 - (e) Any other

The Change Desired

9. What is the desired change? e.g behaviour change in MIL/DIL relationship?.

Evaluation of Change

- 10 (a) How is popularity measured in your programme?
- (b) How is the influence of the drama measured?
- (c) Are there any achievements so far the drama has brought? e.g. Awards, Honorary Degree(s), either for you and/or your Cast.
11. What can a researcher like me do to promote your industry? E.g
- critique the drama
 - disclose similar works I come across
 - Handover a finished work to you or-
 - contribute financially

APPENDIX IV: RESEARCH PERMIT

PAGE 2 **PAGE 3**

Research Permit No. NCST/RCD/14/012/962

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution
Doreen Akech Drawo
of (Address) Moi University
P.O.Box 3900-30100, Eldo.et.
has been permitted to conduct research in


Location
Eldoret West
Rift Valley

District
Province

on the topic: Communication of mothers
in-laws gender roles in television drama
series: A content analysis of selected TV
drama series in Kenya.

Date of issue **11th July, 2012**

Fee received **KSH. 2,000**



Applicant's Signature **Secretary**

National Council for Science & Technology

for a period ending: 31st August 2012.

APPENDIX V: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref: **NCST/RCD/14/012/962**

Date: **11th July 2012**

Doreen Akech Orawo
Moi University
P.O.Box 3900-30100
Eldoret.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Communication of mothers-in-laws gender roles in television drama series: A content analysis of selected TV drama series in Kenya*," I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Eldoret West District** for a period ending **31st August, 2013**.

You are advised to report to **the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer, Eldoret West District** 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.

DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSC.
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY

Copy to:

The District Commissioner
The District Education Officer
Eldoret West District.

APPENDIX VI: RESEARCH REPORT

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Telephone: 254-020-2213471, 2241349
254-020-310571, 2213123, 2219420
Fax: 254-020-318245, 318249
When replying please quote
secretary@ncst.go.ke

P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref:

Date:

NCST/5/017

28th June, 2012

Doreen Akech Orawo
P.O.Box 6767,
Eldoret.

RE: RESEARCH REPORT

This is to acknowledge the receipt of two hard copies of your research report/thesis on "*Electronic media symbolism in communicating moral values to the female students in tertiary institutions in Kenya: Eldoret Region.*"

With thanks


for **Jane L. Chokaa**
For Secretary

APPENDIX VII: CONSENT LETTER



ROYAL MEDIA SERVICES LTD.

Communication Centre, Maalim Juma Road, Off Dennis Pritt Road

P.O. Box 7468 - 00300 Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254 (0)20 2721415/6 • 2718506/7 • (0)20 2993000 • Fax: +254 (0)20 2724211

Cell: +254 719 060000 • 732 169000

Email: citizen@royalmedia.co.ke

18/05/14

Dear M/s Doreen Akech Orawo,

REF: CONSENT LETTER FOR YOUR STUDY ON OUR LOCAL DRAMA

Further to your request on the above, we hereby state we have no objection in you pursuing your research on our local drama, Mother –in-Law for the purpose of your PHD programme.

We would however request for a copy of the same once complete. We wish you all the best.

Yours truly,

Latifan Ngunjiri

Head- Citizen Tv Production.

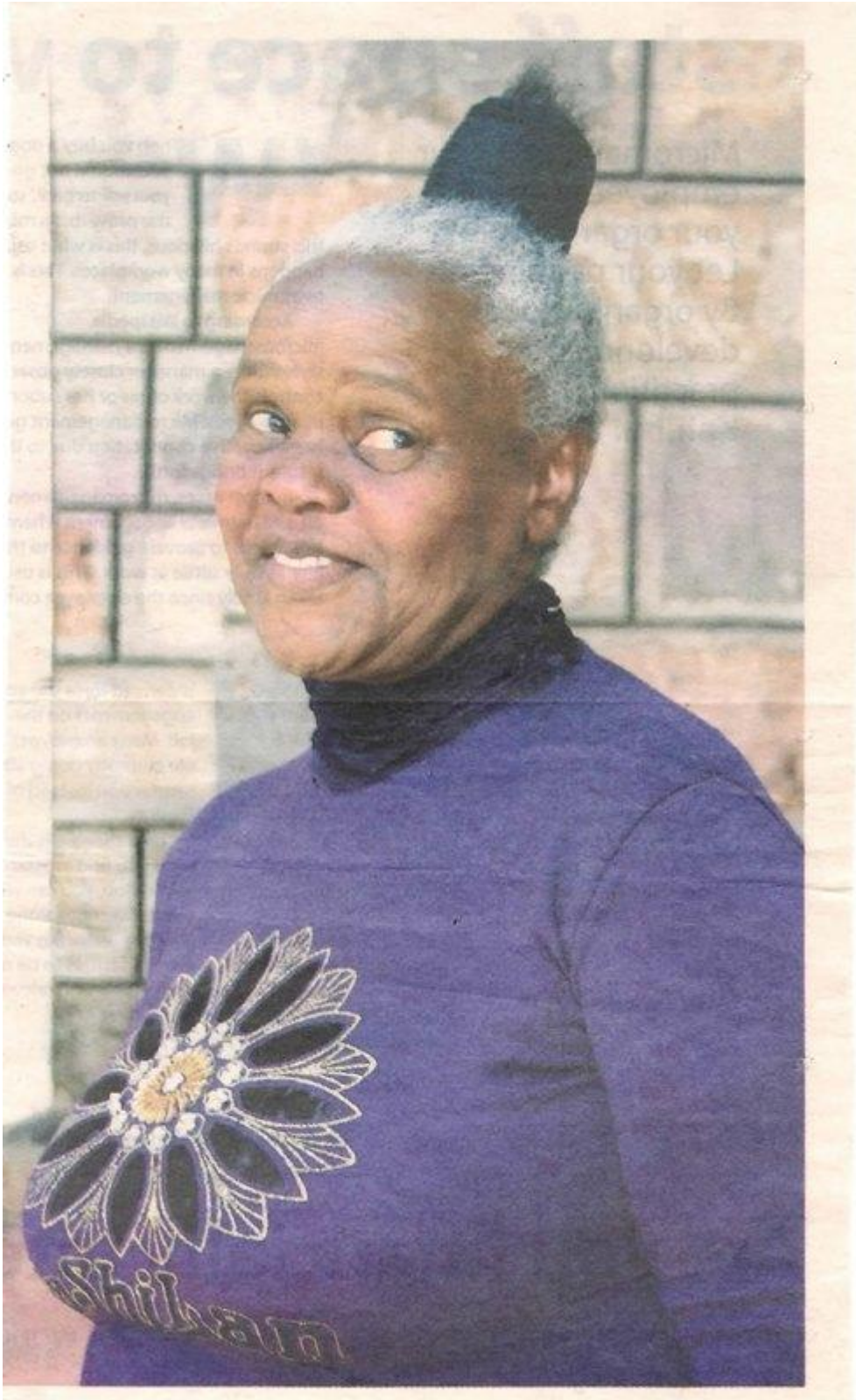


APPENDIX VIII: MOTHER IN LAW PROGRAM CHARACTERS

- Mwamba – Husband to Charity – Father in law
- Charity – Wife to Mwamba – Mother in law
- Jack – First born son – Husband to Alison
- Robert – Second born son – Husband to Lisa
- Charlie – Third born son – Husband to Selina
- Beaty - Last born -Mwamba's only daughter
- Alison – Wife to Jack – First daughter in law
- Lisa – Wife to Robert – Second daughter in law
- Selina – Wife to Charlie – Third daughter in law
- Joyce – Former Charlie's girlfriend --Mother to Olive
- Tina – First born of Jack and Alison – Grand daughter
- Mike – Second born of Jack and Alison – Grand son
- Angie – Third born of Jack and Alison – Grand daughter
- Olive – Charlie's daughter out of wedlock
- Mother to Alison
- Swapo - Alison's brother- drug trafficker
- Mustafa - Cook
- Wanande –Gardener
- Maria – House help
- Ninja – Gate keeper (security man)
- Alpha - Mikes friend (Angie's boyfriend)
- Sandra - Politician's wife
- Wasike - Inspector of Police

APPENDIX IX: PICTURES

CHARITY MWAMBA- MOTHER-IN- LAW



MWAMBA'S FAMILY HOUSE (STUDIO)



CHARITY – MOTHER IN-LAW (ON SET WITH PRESENTATION)



**THE RESEARCHER WITH THE CREW
FROM LEFT: CHALIE, DOREEN, CELINA, MUSTAFA, OLIVE**



THE CREW OVER LUNCH HOUR: LEFT, RAS, MUSTAFA AND NINJA



MARIA AND DOREEN (RESEARCHER)



**FROM LEFT:
OLIVE, CHALI, DOREEN (RESEARCHER), CELINA, MUSTAFA, NINJA**



LIGHT MOMENT WITH NINJA AND DOREEN (RESEARCHER)



A LIGHT MOMENT WITH DOREEN (RESEARCHER) AND CHARITY (MOTHER IN -LAW)



DOREEN (RESEARCHER) AND RAS (CHARLIE'S OFFICE CLERK)



OLIVE SHOWING THE RESEARCHER AND THE PRODUCER (Catherine Wamuyu) SOME PREVIOUS SHOTS




ROYAL MEDIA SERVICES LTD.

Communication Centre, Maslim Juma Road, Off Dennis Pritt Road
 P.O. Box 7468 - 00308 Nairobi, Kenya
 Tel: +254 (0)20 2721415/6 • 2718586/7 • (0)20 2663000 • Fax: +254 (0)20 2724211
 Cell: +254 719 060000 • 732 166808
 Email: citizen@royalmedia.co.ke

 8th Jan. 2015

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN
RE: USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN DURING THE RESEARCHER'S VISIT TO THE STUDIO

This is to confirm that the researcher – Doreen Akech Orawo visited *Mother-In-Law* programme studio in Kahawa sukari Nairobi and took photographs with the cast during the visit.

With my consent as the director and producer of *Mother-In-Law* programme and that of the other members of the cast, do allow her to use the photographs in her thesis as proof of the said visit and as well as to promote the *Mother-In-Law* programme.

Thank you.

Catherine Wamuyu

(Director and Producer *Mother-In-Law*)

