MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

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DEPARTMENT OF FILM AND THEATRE ARTS STUDIES

RETHINKING FILM AND RACE: THE REPRESENTATION OF BLACK WOMAN IN TWO WESTERN FILMS 'DJANGO UNCHAINED' (2012) AND 'THE HELP' (2011)

By

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DECLARATION

I Bridget Karidza hereby declare that this is my own original work that has never been submitted to any other university. In writing this dissertation I duly complied with the laws and ethical issues concerning intellectual property.

APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have supervised the student Karidza Bridget, dissertation entitled Rethinking Film and Race: The Representation of Black Woman in two Western films - 'Django unchained' (2012) and 'the help' (2011) submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts in Film and Theatre Arts Studies Degree at Midlands State University.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God for giving me the opportunity to further my studies and not forgetting my dearest and loving family, the Karidza family. I hope I have made you proud.

Abstract

The aim of the study was to explore the frames used in the representation of black women in two western films namely 'The Help' (2011) and 'Django Unchained' (2012). A qualitative research approach was used and data was collected through Questionnaires, Archival research and personal Observations methods. The study was also informed by Framing and Audience Reception theories. The study found out that black women are depicted as slaves and domestic workers working under white man in western films as exemplified by the two cited films. The study recommends that the film producers, writers, directors and actors should be gender sensitive when representing either men or women in films

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0   Background of the Study

Film is a construction of reality that manipulates ideologies of the masses. Film is a potent tool that magnifies the worlds and manifests itself as a true reflection of the world. For decades film has been a tool to discuss issues of race, power, resistance and politics. Race and gender have been embedded in this form of art. Film have become a vital story teller which have a tendency to safeguard the welfares of specific privileged individuals while in the meantime adjusting to current power affairs of the people. Issues of race cannot be discussed without inclusion of women's involvement in films. The research explains frames that are used to manifests race in two selected films. This enquiry will focus on the representation of black women in two selected western films, *The Help and Django Unchained,* mainly focusing on how film frame the female counterpart. Adam (2002) has it that words and images mediate the world and in so doing they create a transformed world in a very elaborate way. The research acknowledges the inclusion of women in films, however through a deep analysis on the representations of black women in western films the inquiry will go beyond their appearance on screen rather what they represent as black women in films.

Film is pregnant with ideologies that mirrors and assign women with 'dominant' ideologies. Tate Taylor, Quentin Tarantino and many others somewhere somehow use cinema as a cultural practice representing myths about women. Zentner (1973) depicts ideologies as an arrangement of thoughts and convictions that can manifest and influence openly the introduction and activities of others. Females globally covers almost three quarters of the

populace and their image is continuously to be negatively represented as a result of the patriarchal structures stationed in the global world. From the origination of film up to this day females have dependably stayed as the focal point in film productions yet have dependably been praised not for their capacity to perform but rather for their presences where they involve just sex title role. Black ladies submissively played dumb for roles as nannies and servants, they were perceived as people who have no voice or story to tell and were portrayed second class citizens who have no place in the administration of the economy of the society rather they are domesticated hence have no say in anything unlike other female races. Black women started to take an interest in film as an approach to discover their sovereignty but they were just constrained to household parts.

Khotimah (2013) argue that film reiterates male chauvinism and female subservience of women being restricted to sex role stereotypes. The portrayal of women in films continues to have an important impact on their stipulated roles, behavior and style. Many black feminist critics has it that film is pivotal in the creation and spreading of gender ideologies. In contrary to this background this inquiry aims at clarifying on how framing is employed in the depiction of black female counterparts in western films. The study therefore reinforces itself on exploring how women are represented in films especially on two selected western films. The selection and salience that is involved in framing of the film will be scrutinized in an attempt to expose the representation of women in *The Help* (2011) and *Django Unchained* (2012). Entman (1993) has the view that film frames are organized over the presence or absence of, expressions, stereotypes, images, sources of material and judgments, all aid to be the backbone of any given belief or conclusion. Entman (1993) has the view that film frames are sorted out over the existence or nonappearance of, stereotypes, pictures and judgments which aids to go down a given conviction and assumption. Upon that assumption this research will strive to zoom on how these contribute to the representation of women. Against

this background, this research will also explain and explore the frames used in western films to degrade the women of color.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Depiction of black women in western films remains an alarming area as woman continue to be negatively portrayed. There is not much literature from Zimbabwe written to unveil the representation of black women in western cinema hence this study seeks to increase the body of knowledge in Zimbabwe as well as close the gap.

1.2 Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to explore the ways in which black women are represented in the films - The Help (2011) and Django Unchained (2012)

1.2.1 Research objectives

The objectives of the study are:

1) To explain the frames used in portraying black women in films.

2) To explore the factors that influence the ways black women are represented in Hollywood films.

3) To investigate how black women are depicted in two Hollywood films, *The Help* (2011) and *Django Unchained* (2012).

4) To suggest ways of enhancing the depiction of black women in films.

1.2.2 Research questions

1) Which frames are used in portraying black women in films?

2) What are the contributing factors leading to the way black women are depicted in films?

3) How are black women represented in the films, *The Help* (2011) and *Django Unchained* (2012)?

4) What can be done to improve the ways black women are portrayed in films?

1.3   Justification of the study

In a bid to justify the representation of black women in western films, a number of scholars contributed Isaachs (1992) carries out a study on the representation of blacks as second class citizens. Black feminists and cultural critics focused on how black women are portrayed in film. Most scholarly review of this sought is emanating in the west. Holloway (2011) is of the view that film tends to take matters of racism in a more euphemistic manner. However this study oblige to seek create a vivid picture on the frames that are meant to represent black women in western films.

The board of Zimbabwean scholars have however come up with very limited studies on women issues, Rudo Gaidzanwa (1985) and Zinyemba (2003) have conducted a researches on gender relations, forgetting to focus on the representation of black women in films rather they mainly focus on patriarchy and women's role in social development. Profound filmmakers like Tsitsi Dangarembga have produced films like 'Neria' (1991) as voice of the voiceless of women in a Zimbabwean community. Her efforts failed to notice the problem under research hence this research will re-think issues of film, race and the representation of black women in western film. An investigation of this sought hasn't been completed in Zimbabwe subsequently, the study goes for investigating the depiction of black female counterparts in a general public with a blended race.

This is an important area of study as it unravels the causes and offer possible solutions to the misrepresentation and presentation of black women in western films. The study will also offer some suggestions on how depictions or images of black women in films can be enhanced.

1.4   Limitations of the study

Limitations can be viewed as barriers, hindrances or drawbacks beyond the researcher's capacity to control that may however lead to incomplete conclusions.

- Research study requires more time to gather basic information, moving to and from asking for permission and to make appointments in booking for interview appointments. Therefore the researcher did not accumulate much information due to the fact that she did most of her research during mid-semester were most class work take place.

- Due to financial constraints in which the research is to be carried out, the research will be limited and this will also affect the outcome of the conclusions.

1.5   Delimitations of the study

This study is limited on the representation of black women in western films. The researcher's main thrust is to explore the frames used in depicting women in Hollywood/Western cinema. The study made use of two western films *The Help* and *Django Unchained*. The study encompasses audience reception and Framing theories. The two theories are relevant to the study as they vividly helped the researcher in the interpretation of film text as well as to explore the ways black women are framed and represented in Western cinema, however other theories like representation, feminism and Marxism theories could have been employed but they are not of much value to the study.

1.6   Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework maintains research to stay within the theme and structures the sections of the study that need to be covered. Theoretical framework guides research determining what things to measure and what statistical relationship to look for. In this study, audience analysis and Framing theory are employed.

1.6.1   Audience reception theory

Reception analysis theory is associated with Birmingham University headed by Stuart Hall. Phillis (1997) posits that this theory that explains the reader's reception and response to a text. As cited in Hall (2007) encoding and decoding model of communication mainly points out that meaning is implanted within a text by the disseminator (sender) and then interpreted by the receiver to mean a different connotation. Phillis (1997) asserts that the meaning encoded within the massage may me be understood in a different way by the recipient. She goes on to elaborate that the sender create meanings in the massages they send as per their ideas and views in the recipient do likewise by decoding the meaning according to their ideas and opinions which however lead to miscommunication to the receiver who understand the message differently to what the sender intended. Phillis (1997) asserts that its main aim is to identify the attribution and construction of meaning derived from the media by receiver.

Abercrombie (1996) has it that audiences are not empty buckets which need to be filled, audiences have principles and attitudes that influence how they decode and understand media messages. Hanes (2000) cited Fiske as he asserts that the television viewers do not just watch and absorb television images but are active watchers who participate along with the presentation negatively with the producer's anticipation. Phillis (1997) has it that this approach of textual analysis concentrates on bases of negotiation however goes against an audience's anticipations. It is in this view that Phillis (1997) argues that a meaning of a text is created within the connection of text and the audience in this case the relationship is between the films and the viewers. According to Hall (1993) audiences can take different positions

when reading within cultural texts particularly media discourses. Hall (2003) has it that there is the dominant position, arranged position and the oppositional position.

According to Hall (1993), the dominant hegemonic position negotiated in the oppositional position. Hall (1993) explains the dominant hegemonic position as when the viewer or audience member is positioned within the central position of visual. The encoded message proposes that inside this position there is small misinterpretation and miscommunication, as the encoder and beneficiary will be operational beneath the same control set, presumption and social inclinations suppositions and social predispositions. As indicated by Hall (1993), the position authorizes the communication of views to be best understood , in spite of specific contacts that may happen because of issues of class structure and power, particularly between the elites who can direct the administer set and the non-elites who must receive the world class' tenets as predominant

According to Hall (1993) as cited in Martin (2007), the negotiated is position is whereby the audience decodes within the context of the dominant cultural and social views. Hall (2003) forwards it that the messages are understood but in different sense than the dominant hegemonic position. The receivers in the negotiated position are not necessarily working within the hegemonic viewpoint, but are familiar enough with dominant society to be able to adequately decode cultural texts in an abstract sense. Hall (1993) However, it is entirely possible for the audience member to decipher the message as a more personal message, which is when their own biases and viewpoints muddy the decoding process. According to Hall (1993), this "near view" of the message usually occurs in certain situations that are close to the audience member, as opposed to the general "long view" they take of cultural texts in the abstract

Third position according to Hall (1993) is the oppositional view. Hall (1993) posits that this is when the audience decodes the message as intended by the sender but influenced by their social beliefs to see another unintended meaning in the text. Hall (1993) further explains that the audience however opposes the text meaning basing on their ideas and beliefs. Thus the audience consumes the ideal meaning however disagrees with the message meaning due to their set of ideas and beliefs.

Audience reception theory will assess the researcher by giving a guideline on how the producers of western films encodes their text to an audience and how the viewers decode the messages on the portrayal of black women in the two films *Django Unchained* and *The Help.*

1.6.2   Framing theory

According to Entman (1993), framing a text or message is a process of promoting certain parts of a perceived reality making them more outstanding and clear in a way that approves an exact problem meaning, unintentional clarification, moral assessment and treatment recommendation. Entman (2004) furthermore posits that this process of framing is a method of creating or modelling something whether material or immaterial. According to Entman (2004), framing derived from the term *frame* which can have different meanings. The crucial one is that of modeling, leading someone's opinions, activities or powers to a certain purpose. Entman (2004) explains framing in communication as a trick or strategy of picking up some parts of events or issues and connecting them to promote a particular reading, assessment and results. Framing influences the choice made by people, their perspectives towards something or an issue. Framing according to Entman (2004) manipulates the choices made by the viewers or recipients of a massage, their views about something or an issue. This explains how the viewer's perspectives about some things or issues of life is manipulated and influenced by the frames created by media about them. In this case it is how black women are

framed in films that influences how they are viewed and treated by the world. Framing theory is going to be used in this research to study the different frames employed in western films in when discussing or narrating on black women.

1.7 Chapter Organization

The dissertation is divided into 5 chapters. Chapter 1 is the Introduction and it provided the background of study, objectives and statement of problem. On the same chapter research questions, limitations and delimitations of study as well as theoretical framework are also included. Chapter 2 is the Literature Review and it focuses on reviewing literature on the questions raised in Chapter 1 regarding the way black women are represented in films. Chapter 3 is Research Methodology. It provides, method of data presentation, methods of data analysis and data gathering tools. It also provides sampling techniques, research designs, and research population. Chapter 4 is Data Presentation and Analysis. It presents and analyses data on how black women are represented in the film *The Help* (2011) and *Django Unchained* (2012). Chapter five is the Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations.

1.8 Definitions of terms

- **Framing**

According to Entman (1993), framing a text or message is a process of promoting certain parts of a perceived reality making them more outstanding and clear in a way that approves an exact problem meaning, unintentional clarification, moral assessment and treatment recommendation. Framing alludes to how pictures are encoded with importance so they can be capably found in association with present convictions or thoughts.

- **Representation**

Representation can be inexactly characterized as utilizing language to mean something, about, or exemplify, the universe emphatically to other individuals. Adam and Cobley (2002) has it that representation is a procedure in which the world is intervened as well as effectively made up, collected in depictions and in words which do not simply mirror that world however change it unmistakably.

- **Ideologies**

Ideologies is a system of thoughts attempting to clarify authenticity or the body of doctrine, myths, beliefs that guides an individual or group. Nicholls (2009) has it that in general terms, an ideology is an outline of concepts and ideas for understanding one's place in the social world.

1.9   Conclusion

The chapter is the introductory part of the study. It provided the introduction, the background of study and introducing the reader to the topic and area of study locating these in appropriate background and logical argument of the chapter, statement of problem, research objectives, aim of the research, research questions/hypothesis, justification of study, limitations and delimitations of study, theoretical framework, and organization of the study and definition of terms. The next chapter provides a review of literature aiming at answering the research objectives. It reviews the literature on the representation of black women in film.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Introduction

The preceding chapter was the Introduction of the study and it contained, background of study, statement of problem, objectives of the research, research questions, justification of study, limitation of study, delimitations of study, theoretical framework, chapter organization, definition of terms and the conclusion. This chapter is the Literature Review. Centers on reviewing literature to do with the ways black women are depicted in films in general and western films in particular.

2.1   The ways black women are portrayed in film

Scholarly reviews have been made with respect to the portrayal of women of colour (black women) in films were various researchers has thought of essential conclusions. Collins (2000), noticed that depictions of Black women as workers and house-keepers has globalise, especially in film and Television. Collins(2000) goes on to contend that in light of the fact that the ability to portray societal equalities is a significant tool of drive, world class or the exclusive class in practicing power control ideas regarding the womanhood of the women of colour and they do accordingly by misusing effectively existing images, or making new pictures. Collins (2000) contends that pictures of black women become predominant portrayals that forms the all-inclusive community circles that white race anticipates from women of colour. Patricia's perception is much centred on how black women are depicted visually while neglecting to highlight the way that black women are quite being framed as a weaker race over others.

Fijoioka (1999) has it that the negative depictions may influence the impression of group individuals about themselves and how they see different individuals from their group.

Maddox and Gray (2002) talks of the racial differences of blacks and whites as he says that both races take part in oppressive conduct taking into account on differences on being someone of mixed colour. Media has a tendency to reproduce a fabricated and imperfect depiction of beauty. Gender has created a boundary between the blacks particularly amongst female counterparts, colourism and how film frame them which has resulted in the thought that has included towards the way in which the female counterparts are viewed as far as abilities, amiability and appeal among other qualities.

Keenan (1996) contends that blacks especially black women that are used in advertising have lighter skin and also has to have Eurocentric elements hence separating that television partakes in the formation of societal setups within general public. In this one can note that film contrarily depicts black women as well as focuses on the male counterpart. . Subsequently the inquiry concentrate on black women and women have been separated and this empowered the study in recognizing that film makers need to imagine a positive depiction in the black community hence amplifying fabricated parodies that leads to the impression of otherness. This therefore encouraged the researcher to study on the frames that are employed against the black community by western films. Blacks have been and always been treated as second-class citizens as far as film is concerned. Vieytes (2016) contends that women have been what he calls it "double colonised" as they fall victims of racial oppression as well as gender oppression emanating from the socially constructed norms and values. Vieytes (2016) has it that powerfully blacks are portrayed as slaves to the white masters, hence treated as completely unfit in the white men's community. Brown (1993) contends that blacks are stereotypically portrayed in films submissive, reckless, childlike, vicious and in-human are extensive in society of these days. The demeaning stereotypes have been strengthened and boosted by the false depictions of man of colour in films. In commencement

of western film making, white actors used to play black characters, hence unpleasant typecasts were being created leading to the representation of black characters in an unpleasant way. In addition, blacks were willingly depicted in an unfavourable manner that concrete white superiority.

Francois (2012) asserts that women have had a prolonged suffering regarding their portrayal in the western societies. Women are pictured as subservient and simultaneously as insubordinate and pushy. According to Francois (2012), these controversial wrong misrepresentations are extremely imposed on women of colour. Francois (2012) argues that the knowledge that people hold about African women in slavery times gives two portrayals, a sexual tool for the white master's enjoyment or the mammy figure that commits her time to the master's household. Francois (2012) posits that the gruesome treatment of black slaves, mentally or physically up to this day affects black people's humanity. As Francois (2012) puts it, these problems continue to be concocted within black female's lives. Hence this research is going to focus on the frames that are associated with black women in films.

Francois (2012) argues that the negative images created about women of colour across history has influenced how black community as well as the whole world beliefs, classifies black females overally. Harrison and Cantor (1997) acknowledges the potency of media in affecting morals, customs and filmic principles encompassed by American audiences. According to Harrison and Cantor (1997), *the mammy* depiction began in the Southern United States and is a standout amongst the most unavoidable representations of female African American. Chen et al. (2012) says alongside positive characteristics of mammy sometimes depicted as guardians of white man's young ones, the mammy depiction have dependably presented apparently false attributions of African American female counterparts, representing them as unfit for the female standards of slenderness. As indicated by Chen et al. (2012) this is particularly an issue on women of African American status in film who are ordinarily

delineated as heavier in contrast with other racial clusters. On the same note, the stereotype is usually depicted as a bulky, huge breasted, maternal figure who are supposed to gain weight in order to be big enough to suit the role. This will however encouraged the research to focus on the frames and how black women are represented by the whites in films.

Apologists as referred to in Drake (1987) contended that Negroes were a second rate creature like type of humankind unfit to be dealt with as equivalents by other individuals (Drake xvii). McIntosh (1993) as referred to in Ramushu (2014), talks of white race as the privileged race. A comparative study was held by Brewer (2009) which concentrated on the depiction of stereotypes of the female counterparts in slasher movies and how media influences the insight made of a specific culture in the public arena. Brewer (2009), has it that Stereotypes were considered as causative variables that made false depictions and impersonations about ladies in films as well as in day to day the general public. The researcher along these lines distinguished that emphasis was on female counterparts specifically and how stereotypes adds towards their depiction henceforth concentrate on gave accentuation on black females and them being segregated by whites paying consideration on the casings that were utilized to depict and speak to them.

The researcher consequently recognized that attention was on female counterparts specifically and how representations contribute towards their depiction henceforth consider gave accentuation on women of colour (black women) and them being discriminated by white man considering frames that were employed to represent them.

According to Ramushu (2014) Zimbabwean filmmaker Tsitsi Dangarembga also contributed to the already existing body of knowledge through films in enlighten social matters females experience in day to day life. She further elaborates that "Neria" is the film Dangarembga came up with as a means to speak the "unspeakable" within a Zimbabwean society. Ramushu

(2014) contends that Dangarembga's study like others is limited to the insight of a contextual analysis of a society where there is the recognition of only one race henceforth limiting the inquiry to a social viewpoint. She goes on to say Dangarembga particularly pays attention to societal issues as being secretive hence finds answers to matters of society has difficulty in engage in. Her study goes on to identified with racial issues that were ignored within Tsitsi Dangarembga's study. This however goes hand in glove with the research being undertaken as its main aim is to further research on the way black women are represented the western cinema.

2.2   Frames used in the representation of black women in The Help.

Black women are portrayed as domestic workers in white man's households. According to Moore (2012), "The Help" covered the 1960s era where legal segregation and economic inequality restricted opportunities for black women's employment. He further states that almost three quarters of black females working in western side served as white man household employees. A domestic worker is a person employed for household chores. Collins (2000) has it that black female's depiction as domestic workers still continues, particularly in motion pictures. This is supported by Moore (2011) in the Boston Globe Article, he argues that the film "The Help" is a reappearance of "the mammy" character a black female mythological typecast used for black female working in white's households most probably confined due to oppression and racial discrimination.

Black women in the film are stereotyped as carriers of different diseases. Brewer (2009), has it that Stereotypes worked as additional factors that enabled to the formation of negative images and procreations about women within film and also in everyday society. The help (2011) depicts black women as carriers of different diseases hence viewed as unfit to use the same facilities with their masters. The initiation of *The Home Health Sanitation*, an infection

defensive notice that needed every western household to provide an isolated restroom meant for housemaid however supported the notion that black women are viewed as careers of different diseases hence unfit to use the same facilities with their employers.

The film depicts blacks particularly black women as the poorest race. The black man's job was in white man's households and the white women could occupy whatever job they want. McIntosh (1993), has it that whites are more honour as compared to blacks, this however led to the depictions of black women's positions in western films as white man's domestic workers. The Help (2011) demonstrates issues of power relations through depicting different living conditions in a western society. White women and black women have different living conditions as portrayed by Tate Taylor. All black women in the film are portrayed in white man's homes working for a small amount of money that even fails to sustain all her needs.

Black women are framed negatively as submissive in nature. Francois (2012) notes that black women are portrayed as victims of domestic violence. Black women are portrayed as people who suffer from the brutality and violent nature of their male counterparts. Vieytes (2016) in his article contends that black women suffer what he calls "Double colonization" where black women fall victims of colonialist oppression that is racial oppression and also gender oppression emanating from patriarchal structures and values on which society is based on. Despite their contribution in the rearing of white man's children and providing household services blacks were denied the right to share bathrooms with white their employers, this however shows the fact that blacks were oppressed.

2.3   Frames used in the representation of black women in "Django Unchained"

Black women in Django Unchained fall victims of sexual harassment. Francois (2012) argues that Black women during Slavery were depicted as sexual object for the master's pleasure. Black women are always depicted as an inferior race with no identity, dependent, objects of

manipulation who save the masochistic and voyeuristic pleasure of man. Black women in the film again fall victims of physical oppression. The film vividly depicts scenes of Hildi's whipping. Hildi's body had branding marks and scars resulting from trying to free herself from white man's oppression and brutality. Again in the film, little Jordy receives a whipping punished for breaking eggs. Black women received harsh punishments in exchange of a small wrong deed.

Black women are portrayed as commodities that can be bought or sold as the film that tried to enact the slavery era. According to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 (1850), slaves were property and that can be owned or sold. Commodities are goods or raw materials that can provide a transaction of buying and selling mostly between countries.

In the film, black women are framed a people victims of lost identity. During slavery all black slaves were forced to change their identity and given the ones that suit the slave master's status. This however reveals that black women is a victim of lost identity. In addition to, black women are portrayed as animals and have no identity or name. "Poor devils," "black creatures", derogatory names that encompasses black people as evil and animal like people.

2.4   Factors leading to the representation and construction of black women in film

The gender and race of the director and script writer can influence the representation of black women characters in films. Sturken and Cartwright asserts that those who are in the highest positions can be termed responsible for creating wrong pictures and ideas distributed within communities. Vieytes (2016) has it that black women suffer what he calls "Double colonization" where black women fall victims of colonialist oppression that is racial oppression and also gender oppression emanating from patriarchal structures and values on which society is based on. Mushore (2016), in his article "Domination and exploitation:

Gender identities in Zimbabwean drama," has it that in patriarchal social stratification women are controlled and misused through an all-around made sex framework set up by man just like the socialization process in patriarchal societies. Mushore (2016) further express that the nature of massages conveyed in different patriarchal societies supports men to control, rule and exploit women.

Balkaran (1999) asserts that mass media plays a crucial role in reinforcing domination and play a crucial role in celebrating blacks to be regarded as a weaker race. Marxism model of class stratification has it that society is divided in to two stratifications, the oppressed and the oppressors, in this case one class will dominate. Hence this study seeks to shade light on the frames used in the portrayals of black women within films where black women are represented as the exploited or working class thus domestic labourers in white men homes whilst whites automatically become the employer and exploiters of black women hence considered as the hence making them the owners of the means of production

2.5 Re-thinking film and the representation of black women.

For centuries and decades to this present day, black women have been and are still misrepresented in all spheres of life, their portrayal on screen has been stuck on stereotypes and ideologies that do not reflect reality. On the same sentiments one can note that in order to fight the black women's negative portrayals there is need for the imposition of possible ways that can free black women from them being underrepresented. The ways include granting of total empowerment through education, funding, and providing open doors on opportunities in film terms. In a bid to enhance the representation, a number of film critics came up with ways that can be employed in the film making process that can transform, re-represent and deconstruct the images and representation of black women in western cinema. Film is a powerful and influential tool in the dissemination of unique ideas, valuable for a

developmental change between women and societies, thus influencing women's empowerment. Humraahi (1997) commented on the rights women to equal education and employment. Ahmed (2012) has it that the Beijing Platform of Action (BPFA) summaries two planned goals in respect of women and media the first one mainly pointed at endorsing empowerment of women and expansion of involvement as well as granting the right to expresses themselves in making decisions through the media as well as television. The second one is meant to indorse a balanced representation of women in the media.

Most African film scholars approve to the fact that the representations of black women and women as a whole in both western and African films are problematic to an extant of creating a gap for analysis. The two feminists Mulvey (1998) and Doane (1984) has it that portrayals of female counterparts in film arises in relation to the patriarchal logic of the gaze and secularity of women as an object of visual desire. Marvey (1998) has it that the feminist movement in cinema express the necessity to construct the women as "subjects" rather than an "object".

In addition to, in most cases basically, all streets and avenues of opportunities towards women in most cases are closed, it however call for everybody is in the industry to amend everything, pave way to opportunities and open up all closed corridors in assisting women calling paths. Smith (1997) argues that women should partake in different roles as energetic and not submissive, freed from needing men for their security. As an advocacy for women cinema Smith (1997) goes on to encourage for more film productions that are female owned, produced, directed and also that employ female crew members such as cinematographers, sound mixers, editors and all others. The study seeks to advocate for more black women to be in a position to stand on their own ground in telling their own stories.

Adding on to that, Film making is resource intensive. Black women needs to be empowered through the granting of access to industrial funds and all the industrial necessities. Black women need to be empowered through the granting of an open access to adequate financial resources.

Gwirayi (2010) state that the family, peer groups and mass media are some of the subsidising elements guiding the perception of a persons within individuals. Dorsey (1989) also adds that women's success is crippled as a result of gender socialisation as in all streets and avenues of life view success in terms of maleness. Mushore (2016), in his article "*Domination and exploitation: Gender identities in Zimbabwean drama*," explore that both in patriarchal social stratification and the socialization process in patriarchal societies, women are controlled and misused through an all-around made sex framework set up by man. Mushore (2016) further expresses that the nature of massages conveyed in different patriarchal societies to a greater extent empowers men to control, rule and exploit their female counterpart. Mushore (2016) propose that the main way women can get empowered in such set-up is through development of new ways of relating themselves. He further suggested that women must be well prepared to conflict with the social frames of reference ascribed to them by men and fabricate new sexual orientation pictures which will then see them empowered. Black women need to be empowered through education. Kaziboni (2002) is of the view that the status of women can be transformed through education. Hence this study seeks to advocate for gender equality in film sector.

2.6 Conclusion

The above literature review provided a greater understanding into researches that have been carried that goes along with the representation of women. Some of the researches highlighted gaps that the research intended to fill with regards to the representation of women in western films. The next chapter is on Research Methodology. It focuses on methods of data presentation, methods of data analysis and data gathering tools. Focus will also be on sampling techniques, research designs, and research population.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter unveils the research methods and methodology that are going to be employed to conduct an analysis of the representation of black women in film. This includes method of data presentation, methods of data analysis and data gathering tools. Focus will also be on sampling techniques, research designs, and research population. The study d qualitative research.

3.1 Research Design

Research design refers to the structure of an inquiry. It endeavors to give answers to research questions, research problem as well as it is a way of attaining the research objectives. Patton (1980) is of the view that research design saves as the researcher's entire plan that is put in place to obtain answers to the research questions and also a way of attaining objectives. Burns and Groove (2013) contends that a research design as a blue print for steering a study with extreme control over issues that may inhibit with the validity of the findings. Parahoo (1997) is of the view that it is a design that describes how, when and where data are to be composed and examined. Hence, research design aims at exploring how data will be collected, how an inquiry will be performed, tools employed as well as showing the anticipated means used for examining the composed data to answer the question of the representation of black women in "The Help(2011) and "Django Unchained".

3.2 Research population

Parahoo (1997) defines population as the number of units from which data can be collected, such as individuals, artifacts, events or organization. Burns and Groove (2003) describe

population as all the elements that can be included in a study. On this note, "Django Unchained" (2012) and "The Help" (2011) are part of the population under study. Deacon et al (2007) has it that population comprises every issues that will be lay open to data analysis, whilst Best and Khan (2006) views population as different individuals that posse same qualities and characteristics. Hence the term population refers to a group of people that this research will consult in order to get information on black women's representation in "The Help" and "Django Unchained. The researcher is going to distribute a total number of ten questionnaires among the participants.

3.3 Research sampling techniques

According to Kumar (2005) sampling is the process of taking a unit of the total number of people which the small group will however represent the total sum of the whole population. Malvika and Rashmi has it that sampling is the method of picking a small quantity of individuals out of the rest for a study such that the selected characters will symbolize the large group from which they were selected. Field (2005) defined a sample as a small group of elements from a population used to conclude actualities within the whole population. However sampling can be viewed as a process of coming up with general the conclusions of a research from getting a smaller amount from a total populace in the study therefore the attained results will generalize the whole population. The researcher is going to make use of a probability sampling technique to obtain different thoughts and feelings from a variety of representatives with different perspectives.

3.3.1   Probability sampling

Henry (1990) views probability sampling as having the distinguishing characteristic that each unit in population has a known, nonzero probability of being included in the sample. Frink (1995) vividly points out that in probability sampling a certain unit has an equal opportunity

of being selected from the population. Ormrod (2014) has the view that in probability sampling, every part of the population has equal probability to be represented in the sample. Ormrod (2014) in Practical Research Planning and Design (2014) goes on to say that when conducting a random sampling, the researcher can approximately assume the features of the total number of people. Frey et al (2000) is of the view that biasness may lead to the generalization of the results from the sample because the sample will be a represents the population. This approach will assist the researcher in obtaining a diversity capacity of thinking from different candidates with different opinions.

3.3.2 Systematic Sampling

Frey et al (2000) and Henry (1990) has the same view that systematic sampling also known "ordinary" or "pseudo" simple random sampling encompasses choosing of individuals, selecting a random sample from the whole population in a systematic way. Kish (1965) has it that systematic sampling includes selection of sampling elements in structures separated on list by the rest of selection. A sample is going to be selected from Film and Theatre arts department consisting of students and lecturers from the Midlands State University and outsider are also going to be systematically sampled. The population will be consisting of members with similar characteristics. The population will be used to explore the portrayal of black women in the selected films.

3.3.3   Case Study

The inquiry is going to make use of a case study as an information gathering technique. Zainal (2007) has it that this strategy empowers the researcher to deeply analyze the information inside a particular framework, it usually chooses a restricted number of people as the themes of the study. As indicated by Zainal (2007), in their genuine assents contextual analyses investigate and inquire about present genuine life through definite logical study. Yin

(1984) characterizes the contextual analysis look (case study) into technique as an experimental request that researches a current phenomenon inside its genuine life; when the limits amongst phenomenon and context are not plainly clear; and in which numerous wellsprings of confirmation are implied. Case studies portrays the topic and in the meantime noteworthy to members what the program is about and what it tries to accomplish. The researcher is going to make use of the two western movies "The Help" (2011) and "Django Unchained" (2012) as contextual case studies. The two films will be examined as an approach to cross-examine the delineation of black women in western movies.

3.4   Data gathering

Andre (2004) postulates that data collection is a process that involves gathering data for an analysis from chosen subjects. Data gathering is a systematic approach employed when collecting information from different sources in order to come up with an accurate data for one to answer research questions and come up with a possible evaluation on the area under study.

3.4.1   Methods of data gathering

These are the ways in which information was gathered. The study employ Archival research, observations and questionnaires.

3.4.2   Archival Research

Beck et al (2004) has it that archival research is the finding, assessing and systematic way of interpreting and analyzing data obtained from archives such as internet, reports and books. Ventresca and Moh (2001) says that, archival research methods are used by researchers that deals with no-historical surveys of texts created often as implements to the enhancement of other research strategies, thus this method is applicable to the analysis of numerical texts including electronic database, emails and web pages. Rutman (1984) has it that original texts

may be accessed and examined for purpose other than those for which they were formerly collected from. Thus questions of old data can be asked and provide a comparison over time. Rutman (1984) goes on to say that the same data can verify or challenge existing findings and bring out new evidence and new meanings. Some information has been collected and archived for The Help and Django Unchained films. The research is going to revisit the archived information in order to explore a fresh angle on the portrayal of black women in western films. Hence a new picture will be added to the existing data therefore creating a room for comparing the existing data with new findings.

3.4.3   Observations

Observations are a way of collecting data by perceiving the participants behaviour and not interaction with them. The researcher observed individuals as an outsider. Observations were employed as a way of assembling information in addressing the representation of black women as well as explain the frames employed in their portrayal in the western films. Observations is a way of getting information very carefully by means of observing behaviour, events or perceiving physical characteristics in their natural setting. Observations provides descriptive information about what happens within a program event, including the environment or context, activities, processes and discussions. The research is going to make use observations as a way gathering data.

3.4.4   Questionnaires

Questionnaire is a list of questions meant to be answered by a number of people as a logic way of collecting information from people's answers. The questionnaire helps to get the thoughts, beliefs, feelings, experience and opinions of individuals through a sample. Preplanned set of questions were set to yield specific information. According to Gibson (2009) in the business dictionary.com, a questionnaire is a, "List of a research or survey

questions asked to respondents, and designed to extract specific information. It serves four basic purposes, the first one is to collect the appropriate data, the second is to make data comparable and amenable to analysis, followed by minimizing biasness in formulating and asking question, and the last one is to make questions engaging and varied. The oxford student dictionary (2007) is of the same view with the business dictionary (2010), it says that, "a questionnaire is a list of questions that are answered by many people. A questionnaire is used to collect data about a particular subject." The designation of Questionnaires is going to be done in a manner that respondents would leave their comments on the space that was provided. The researcher is going to use questionnaires which will be answered by students and lecturers from film and theatre arts department at Midlands State University on what they think about the representation of black women in western films. Some questions are going to be designed in such a way that necessary information is only going to be collected and avoid a diversion of the research questions. The questionnaires are going to also be answered by people from the community as they gave their understanding and their feelings towards the representation of black women in western films.

3.5   Methods of data analysis

3.5.1   Semiotic analysis

The researcher is going to employ semiotic analysis in order to study signs and understand their literal meaning in the selected films in r the representation of black women if film. Semiotics can be traced back to the works of Charles Sanders Piece (1914, 56) and Ferdinand Saussure (1913) as they define semiotics as the study of signs and symbols. Sullivan et al (1993) quoted Fourie (1998) who contends that semiotic is an intellect initiative seeking to explore and analyze the extent to which signs and symbols are created and the extent they appear to depict. In support of this Umbeto (1976) has it that semiotics is an area that focuses

at things that can be manipulated to lie. This shows how meaning can be extracted through signs and symbols in film. Metz (1979) has the view that semiotics of the motion pictures can be perceived either as semiotics of connotation or as semiotics of denotation. Film has a language of its own, hence the research treated it as such in order to get different interpretations of the film with regards to the representation of black women in film. Since film can be viewed as a "text" that rely on visual imagery it however promotes specific ideologies and entail a specific stories. In this note semiotic analysis assist in conveying different frames and pinpoint different ideas.

The semiotic analysis is going to be employed to the research in order to try and interpret messages as well as understand various massages in text, color, images, setting, characters, themes and other aspects looking at how they convey massages that may have contributed to representation of black women in Django Unchained and The Help.

3.5.2   Critical discourse analysis

The researcher is going to employ a critical discourse analysis method which is useful in giving an analysis of life that is reproduced in texts. According to Dijk (2006) critical discourse analysis concentrate more and is motivated by means of recognizing social issues. Wodak and Mayer (2009) argues that critical discourse analysis points out the importance of inter disciplinary work in order to come up with an understanding of how language works in creating and transmission information that shapes social institutions. Potter (2003) has it that it is the study of analyzing how language and texts are used to complete actions. Dijk (1993) says that it is a type of discourse analytical research that mainly focuses on the representation of societal power abuse, domination and differences in a societal and political setting. It is

introduced to gain a better understanding of social texts through examining social life and social interactions.

Critical discourse analysis mainly aims at accepting societal problems that are facilitated by the ideologies and power relations that are mainly caused by written texts in day to day living. Mc Gregor (2010) argues that discourse analysis prepares characters or individuals to move from seeing words as having meaning and not as abstracts. Fairclough (1993) defines critical discourse analysis as a study that aims at often explore difficulties in relationships of connectedness between broad practices, occasions and text emanating from and are ideologically molded by relationships of power and struggles over power. This approach allowed the researcher to unravel the ideological biases in the portrayal of central concerns in the selected films and to unveil the ideological assumptions hidden in the words of written text and oral speech. Critical Discourse Analysis will assist in exploring the filmmaker's hidden agenda in the selected films.

3.5.3   Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative research is a sort of logical research. By and large terms, qualitative research comprises of an examination that looks for answers to a question, methodically utilizes a predefined sets of strategies to answer the problem, gathers evidence, yields findings that were not decided ahead of time, produces discoveries that are material past the quick limits of the inquiry .Qualitative research distributes these attributes. Furthermore, it looks to comprehend research problem or point from the viewpoints of the native populace it includes. Quantitative research is particularly successful in acquiring socially particular data about the qualities, suppositions, practices, and social settings of specific populaces. The researcher is going to make use of qualitative analysis for the reason that information will be gathered

using qualitative methods. This technique will be utilized in the next chapter were assembled information will be exhibited and broke down

3.6   Methods of Data Presentation

3.6.1   Thematic Approach

As a way of identifying, analyze and present themes within data, data can be obtained thematically. Teddie and Tashakkori (2009) views themes a set of concepts, ideas and dominant features in a research. Boyatzis (1998) define this method as a way of 'encoding qualitative information. Thematic approach can be viewed as a classifying approach for qualitative research and it is also a data analytic approach for developing themes. Hence the research is going to categorize the data into themes for an easy interpretation as the data is going to be coming from different angles, there was a need to present the findings under different themes.

3.7   Conclusion

This chapter presented research methodology, research design, research population, and methods of data analysis, methods of data collection and methods of data presentation. The next chapter will focus on data presentation and analysis of findings.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0   Introduction

The previous chapter was on Research Methodology. This chapter aims at the presentation and analysis of data gathered through questionnaires, archival research and personal observations on the portrayal of black women in western films. Focus will be on the representation of black women in "Django Unchained" and "The Help"

4.1 Synopsis of the film Django Unchained (2012)

Django Unchained as story written and directed by Quentin Tarantino, set in South Mississippi two years before the Civil War, staring Academy Victor Award Jamie Foxx as Django, a slave whose merciless history with his previous proprietors lands him eye to eye with German-conceived affluence searcher Dr. Schultz. Schultz is on track of the unhearted and dangerous Brittle siblings, and no one but Django can lead him to his bonus. The strange Schultz obtains Django with a guarantee to free him upon the catch of the Brittles in any condition.

Schultz succeed in his goal hence this drives him to free Django, however the two men did not go separate ways to the end. Rather, Schultz searches out the South's most needed crooks alongside Django. With the key hunting abilities, Django stays concentrated on his main dream of saving his beloved wife Broomhilda, whom he lost way back to slave trade.

Django and Schultz's hunt eventually drives them to Calvin Candie, the landowner of Candy land, a disreputable ranch where slaves are prepared via coach Ace Woody to fight each other

for game. Investigating the compound under falsifications, Django and Schultz stir the suspicion of Stephen, Candie's trusted house slave. Their moves are checked, and a slippery association surrounds them. On the off chance that Django and Schultz are to escape with Broomhilda, they should best choice amongst freedom and unity endurances, and amongst giving up and endurance.

4.2 Synopsis of the film The Help (2011)

THE HELP, a 2011 film extracted from a novel by Kathryn Stockett and directed by Tate Tylor stars Emma Stone as Skeeter, academy award nominee Viola Davis as Aibileen and Octavia Spencer as Minny. The film is set in Jackson Mississippi representing the 1960s era, a story about a white woman who stand as a voice of the suffering of black domestic help from the maid's perspective and publish them in a book form. Skeeter, Aibileen and Minny joined forces in the fight against the long existing habits of black women saving as house servants for the rich white women's families. A youthful college girl Skeeter returns home with a vision of being a writer. She chooses to interview the black house-keepers she knows spent their lives taking care of rich white families. Aibileen and her best friend agree to reveal their tales of daily humiliation, of hard work and very low wages, of fear for themselves and their children in a community were racial discrimination still prevails. However it is time for a revolution and a time when hope is natured by courageous acts. As the two maids continue the collaboration, more black maids join hands as they have vital stories to tell and valid voices that must be listened. The Help is a film about strengthening of people and additionally about social equity for a gathering. It is a moving story delineating dehumanization in a bigot culture however additionally the capacity to move past the crooked structures of society and to announce the estimation of each individual. The issues of social injustices are revealed through life experiences of local individuals. The film reveals features

of racism and the individuals that reinforces them. The film again enlightened on dignity of domestic workers who are marginalized up to this day.

4.3   Data Presentation from Questionnaires

Response rate of participants

25%

75%

Female
Men

Female   Men
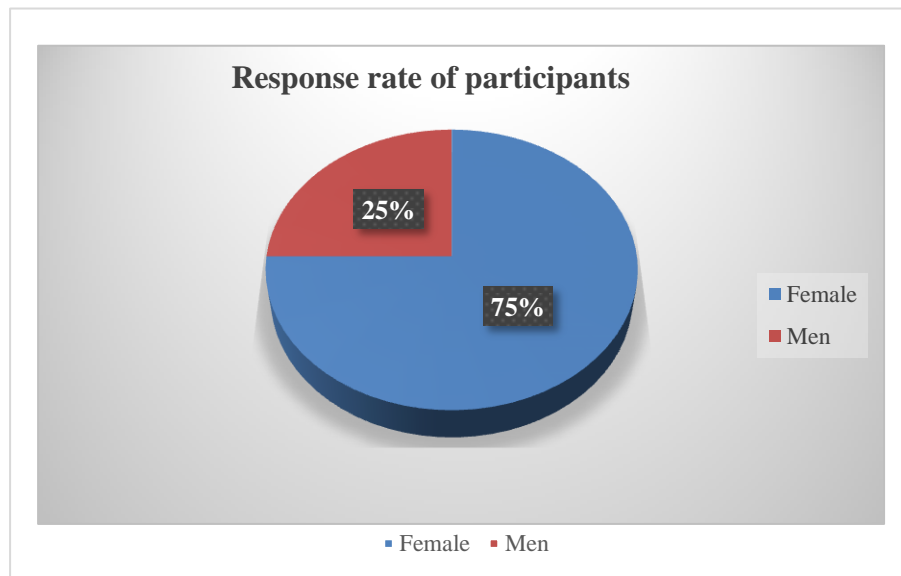
The researcher distributed a total number of fourteen questionnaires among the participants. Seven questionnaires were returned, three of the remaining seven were spoiled and the remaining four went missing. The questionnaires that did not return are the ones that had been given to members of the community. May be it is because they failed to get the essence of the questionnaire questions though the questions were that simplified in a way that anyone could come up with general answers. Five among the returned ones were from female participants and the other two were from male counterparts. The above pie chart represents the response rate of the participants to the questionnaires. The total percentage of female counted up to 75% and 25% represented men all in all rounding up to 100%. The response reflected that women participated more as compared to their male counterparts.

4.1.2 Gender of respondents

Gender of respondents

Male
25%

Female
75%

■ Female ■ Male
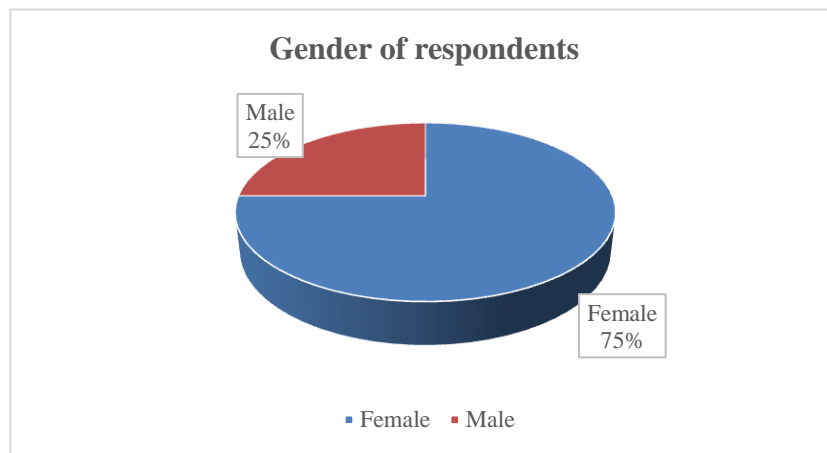
The pie chart represents the gender of respondents. The questionnaires shows that women constitutes 75% of the total amount of questionnaires that were distributed and 25% were males. This may be because women are the ones being misrepresented in western films so they however feel that there must be a positive change in the way they being portrayed. The response however reveals that females cooperated more than their male counterparts in the process of finding the answers to the study. This is most probably because women as women are mostly interested in the participation of freeing themselves from all obstacles that block their streets and avenues of life

4.1.3 Age group of respondents
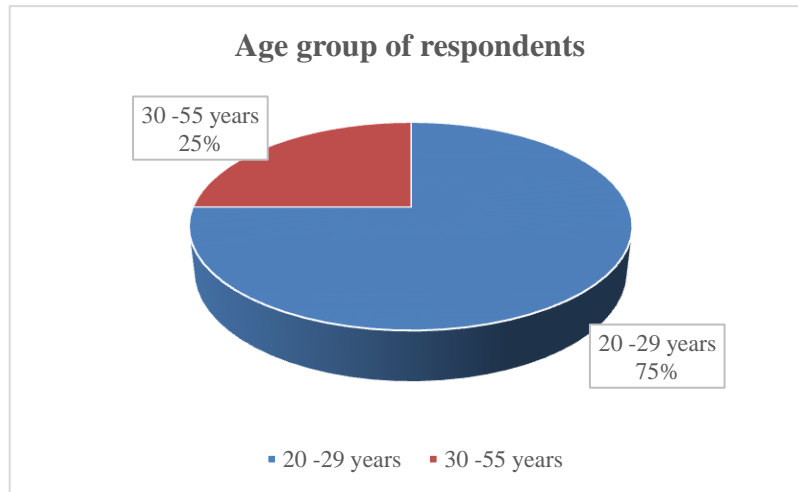
The pie chart shows that the respondent's age groups ranged from twenty to fifty five. Twenty to twenty nine totaled to 75% and the ages between thirty to fifty five years constitutes the remaining 25%. The age group of respondents clearly shows that the youths of today have a mentality of creating a new perception and lances of viewing the world

4.1.4 Occupation of respondents.

The analysis shows that the maximum number of respondents were undergraduate students from Midlands State University. Five of the respondents were students, one lecturer and one outsider. The outsider was a film and theatre arts practitioner and a former Midlands State University student. The lecturer was also from film and theatre arts department. This is highlighted in the pie chart below.
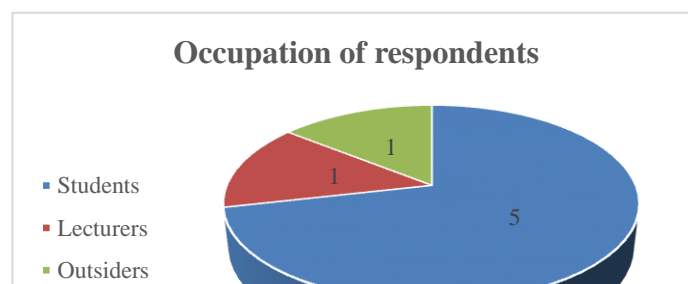
The investigation shows that larger part of respondents were undergraduate students doing film and theater arts studies with 80%, lectures totaled 10% and outsiders totaled 10%. Because of different educational levels and different occupations individuals consumes film messages in different ways.

4.2   Presentation and Analysis of Data gathered through Questionnaires and Personal Observations on the Representation of Black Women in the two Films, The Help (2011) and Django Unchained (2012)

In this section information will be presented and analyzed on each and every question that was asked.

Question 1. Which frames are used in portraying black women in films?

From the information that was gathered through questionnaires and personal observation it was revealed that black women are generally portrayed as domestic workers in western films. That women are portrayed as domestic workers in western films is underscored by Moore (2012) when he says that close to 90 per cent of black women working in the South served as

domestic employees in white homes. Collins (2000), in supporting this he noticed that depictions of Black women as workers and house-keepers has globalise, especially in film and Television. Views that are noted in chapter two. A female respondent clearly highlighted that black women are framed as nannies or home dwellers who are good at cleaning and providing good service to their masters, a response that many male respondents failed to clarify on the exact type of household work they are depicted partaking in. This only depicts that female observes much on other female counterparts and try to stand as a voice somehow advocating for a positive change toward the negative portrayal of other women. Through observations it is quite evident that in films that dates back to 1960s, particularly in slave films, more women are depicted doing house work than men which gives the audience the impression that black women are inferior and weak so they are restricted to house hold chores.

From the data presented above, it can be deduced that the portrayal of black women as "domestic workers" is one of the frames used in portraying black women in western films however, this information also reveals that people only know that black women in white man societies are employed as domestic workers hence they are not aware of the actual treatment black women received from their white masters as domestic workers as well as the impression it give to the audiences. In most cases black women are exploited and ill-treated in white man's households, as supported by Vieytes (2016) as he says that powerfully blacks are portrayed as slaves to the white masters, he goes on to say that blacks have never been treated as completely equal to whites. On the other hand, the audience is made to believe that black women make best house keepers and need to be treated like one, this may be the reason why black women or blacks in general are always treated as second class citizens in white man's face.

Brown (1993) and Francois (2012) underlines that blacks particularly black women are stereotypically and negatively depicted in western community mostly as passive and submissive. The information obtained through questionnaires and observations supports the above notion. 90 percent of the respondents agrees with this notion as they points out that most western film productions places black women in characters that negatively depict them as people who just comply with any kind of oppression.

However, it can be best viewed that people only know that back women are portrayed as submissive in western film productions, on this note it can be noticed that in an African society, women through the socialisation process are groomed to become submissive and passive in nature to the hands that feeds them.

From the data presented above, it is crystal clear that people are aware that black women are portrayed as domestic workers in white man's house hold and they are as well portrayed as submissive in nature. This information also reveals that individuals are not aware of other frames and stereotypes that are imposed in western productions that define black women and the negative impression they give to audiences. Western films portrays black women as victims of lost identity, commodities that pampers money into their business of slave trade, careers of and transmitters of different diseases as well as they are depicted as poverty stricken to an extent of needing a white man's hand for survival. Brewer (2009), has it that Stereotypes works as additional factors that enables to the formation of negative images and procreations about women within film and also in everyday society.

Question 2. Which factors contribute to the way black women are represented in western films?

In this concept almost 85% of the respondents pointed on gender and race issues arguing that the gender and race of the producer, director and script writer can influence the representation

of black women in films. In supporting this, Sturken and Cartwright asserts that those who are in the highest positions or those who own the means production are the ones responsible for the construction of images and ideas that are distributed to the community as information.

Vieytes (2016) has it that black women suffer what he calls "Double colonization" where black women fall victims of colonialist oppression that is racial oppression and also gender oppression emanating from patriarchal structures and values on which society is based on. This goes hand in glove with some respondents to questionnaire respondent as they pin points that, women suffer from a bleeding wound of patriarchy where man dominate in the film industry and in that sense women's voices are dwarfed and misrepresented.

From the data presented above, it can be deduce that people only know that issues of gender and race are the contributing factors leading to the way black women are represented in western films, however it can be noticed that people are not aware of the prominent and crucial factors. The socialisation process can be termed as one crucial factor that contribute to the way black women are portrayed in western cinema. In patriarchal social stratification women are controlled and misused through an all-around made sex framework set up by man just like the socialization process in patriarchal societies. As underscored by Mushore (2016), the nature of massages conveyed in different patriarchal society supports men to control, rule and exploit women. This however reveals that in a patriarchal society, male counterparts are given the power to dominate in all spheres of life and they tend to create negative stereotypes of women to feed what Mulvey (1988) says, their "voyeuristic scopophilia" and maintain their dominance over women. The findings further depict that the social and racial background of the filmmaker can be a contributing factor to the representation of black women in western films. It again has to be considered that most of the directors may be subjects of the normalisation of the misrepresentation of black women through cultivation where he or she since childhood has watched films with such traits.

Taking a closer look at black women's representation in western films it can be noted that black women are perceived as people who have no voice nor story to tell hence someone tells the story in a distorted way through films. In most cases, black women are restricted from acquiring opportunities as equal as other women in all spheres of life.

Question 3. How are black women represented in the films, The Help (2011) and Django Unchained (2012)?

Responses on how black women are represented in The Help

In this concept most respondents were not that much aware of the thematic concerns of both films. 70% failed to identify the topical issues affecting black women within films under study. 20% female respondents managed to air out their views and comments on the question. From the respondents that managed to answer this question it was deduced that black women are represented as domestic employees in white man's households, submissive and slaves.

From the information that was gathered through questionnaires, personal observation and it was revealed that black women are portrayed as domestic workers in white man's households in both films. Most female respondents pin pointed that The Help portray black women as servants and maids. In support this notion, Moore (2012), "*The Help*" covered the 1960s era where legal segregation and economic inequality restricted opportunities for black women's employment. He further states that close to 90 per cent of black women working in the South served as domestic employees in white homes. Collins (2000) has it that the depiction of black women as servants and maids still remains rampant, particularly in film and television production. Contextually, through personal observation, the introductory scene of the Help, the audiences are introduced to an extreme close up of a middle aged black women in a kitchen in an interview with Skeeter and unfolds her life time story as a maid in Jackson

Mississippi in 1963. The black maid "Aibileen Clark", born in Chicksaw plantation, the daughter of a maid and the granddaughter of a slave born on the same plantation. This is evidenced when Aibileen was undertaking an interview by Skeeter, she said "*I was born 1911, Chicksaw plantation ...., my mama was a maid and my grandmother was a house servant in.*" Black women's position here is portrayed as maids or servants, however black women in the film consider their positions as normal as the situation has been from generation to generation.

Another female respondent with film and theatre arts lecture lecturer are of the same view that in The Help, black women are stereotypically portrayed as second class citizen and as objects of manipulation as far as film is concerned. As underscored by Moore (2011) in the Boston Globe Article, he argues that the film "The Help" is a reappearance of "the mammy" character − a mythical stereotype of black women who were bound either by slavery or segregation to work for white man's families. From the observations of the film, the job of a black women has to deal with all the house hold chores, including cooking, washing, shopping, and groceries and looking after the white family's children. This is evidenced in the film when Aibileen was being interviewed by Skeeter and she says that "*I work for the Leefolts from eight to six. Six days a week. I make ninety five cents an hour that comes to one hundred and eighty two dollars every month. I do all the cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing and grocery, but mostly I take care of baby girl*. She further explained that maids are the only ones capable of stopping babies cry and visit the toilet in the morning.

From a film and theatre arts lecture and a film and theatre arts practitioner's perspective blacks have been and always been forcibly stereotyped as slaves to the white man, they both pin pointed that blacks have never been treated as completely equal to whites. In line with this, Hall (2000) has it that the insistent nature of stereotypes is imbedded in power and demonstrated in representations that encourage the promotion of differences. In *The Help*,

Constantine is one typical character that explore the unfair treatment of black women within the film. She worked for the Phelan's for 29 years and was fired on a short notice without having done anything wrong. Moreover she got fired without payment as a punishment for her daughter's behaviour of interrupting an ongoing party. This is again depicted in the film Django Unchained, At Bennet's plantation the audience are introduced to a scene were one of the three Brittle brothers give a whipping punishment to little Jordy for breaking eggs.

A female respondent has it that black women in both films are framed negatively as submissive and as people who just comply with their oppressors in all forms of violence and fail to report. Francois (2012) supports notion saying that black women are portrayed as victims of domestic violence. This is evidenced in the film as Minny a black character struggles in an abusive relationship, she is regularly beaten by her husband. While in a conversation Aibileen on the telephone, her husband disturbs as he hits her. Minny begs, "*Leeroy! Leeroy! Please, please!*" while Aibileen overhears however cannot help. As the film unfolds, Minny again falls a victim of her husband's abuse which is viewed when she goes to work with a wounded eye. Celia, presently Minny's new employer says to her, "That *looks bad! Let me take a look, I know you didn't fall that tub Minny.*" This however depicts the passivity and submissiveness of black women in the film, Minny lied about her wound saying that she fall in a tub. Celia goes on to say, "*You know what I would do if I were you? I would give it right back at him, I would hit him over the head with a skillet and I would tell him to go straight to hell.*" Minny, a typical black character represents the submissive nature of black women in the film visa vee Celia a white character representing whites as people who cannot stand violence and oppression.

The observations of the film reveals that Tate Taylor (2011) depicts black women as victims of oppression. The Help portrays blacks as the oppressed and whites as the oppressors as well as perpetuators of oppression. Vieytes (2016) in his article contends that black women suffer

what he calls "Double colonization" where black women fall victims of colonialist oppression that is racial oppression and also gender oppression emanating from patriarchal structures and values on which society is based on. Despite their contribution in the rearing of white man's children and providing household services blacks were denied the right to use the same facilities as whites, this however shows the fact that blacks were oppressed. A booklet entitled, *The Laws Governing the Conduct of Non Whites and Other Minorities,* contends laws that prohibited blacks from interfering with white man's facilities.

From the information presented above it can be deduced that people know that black women in The Help were stereotypically framed as domestic workers in white man's households and they are as well portrayed as submissive and victims of all forms of violence, however this information also shows that people are not aware of other frames that were imposed on black women, black women are portrayed as carriers of diseases as well as they are portrayed as economically poor

The observations of the film reveals that black women in the film are stereotyped as carriers of different diseases. Brewer (2009), has it that Stereotypes worked as additional factors that enabled to the formation of negative images and procreations about women within film and also in everyday society. The help (2011) depicts black women as carriers of different diseases hence viewed as unfit to use the same facilities with their masters. Black women were also victims of discrimination, this is depicted through the plan of the Home Health Sanitation Initiative, a disease defensive bill that needed every white household to have an isolated restroom for the housemaid.

 Western films tends to concentrate much on depicting black community as the poorest ever. In supporting this Ramushu (2014) in her dissertation, asserts that media and film's ways of portraying women however have a habit of honouring whites basing on their skin colour.

McIntosh (1993), talks of whites getting more honour as compared to blacks, this however led to the depictions of black women's positions in western films as white man's domestic workers. White women and black women have different living conditions as portrayed by Tate Taylor. Black women could not send her children to school because she is financially crippled. Yule May Davis is one character that symbolises that black women are economically poor as compared to white women. She asked for financial assistance from her employer Hilly and her husband Mr William. She wanted to be granted a loan for her twin boy's tuition fees. In the middle of unfolding her issue the husband just left the table saying that he was late showing that he was not very much interested in the subject. Hilly instead of assisting she goes on to say, "…*as a Christian I am doing you a favour. See God don't give charity to those who are well and able. You need to come up with the money on your own, Ok?*" This only reveal the difference of being black and being white. Hilly felt that she cannot stretch a helping hand to a black women instead she views the help as charity.

Responses on the frames used in the representation of black women in "Django Unchained"

On this question, a male respondent has the notion that Black women are always depicted as an inferior race with no identity, dependent, objects of manipulation who save the masochistic and voyeuristic pleasure of man. This is evidenced by Broomhilda a black female character who represents how black women were physically, mentally and sexually abused in Django Unchained. Dr Shultz is offered Hildi for the night at Candy's plantation. "*When you done with the room, go fetch Hildi, get her cleaned up, smell nice and send her to Dr Shults's room …..Dr Shults is my guest, and Hildi is my nigger, so dem hospitality detects I make her*

available to him…" This is a conversation between Candy and Steven that vividly depicts black women as sexual objects meant for quenching white man's sexual desires.

A female respondent noted that the film vividly depicts scenes of Hildi's whipping, she goes on to say that this depicts that black women were physically abused, Hildi's body had branding marks and scars resulting from trying to free herself from white man's oppression and brutality. The scars according to the respondent signifies the suffering and pain that is imposed to the black bodies by their masters. The respondent pointed out that Hildi is once locked in a hotbox for a day and she was supposed to serve ten more days in there as a punishment for fleeing away. "Hildi in hot box…, she been punished, she ran off gain…"

From the information presented above, it can be deduced that people and females know that black women are portrayed as submissive, victims of all forms of oppression, however this information also shows that people are not aware that in the film black women were portrayed as commodities. As underscored by the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 (1850) as it holds that slaves were property and that can be owned or sold meaning that black women were viewed as *flesh for cash business.* These words were said by Dr Shultz when he was conversing with Django.

It is vividly clear that respondents were not aware that black women were negatively portrayed as victims of lost identity. This is evidenced in the film by a mistaken identification of Django's wife Broomhilda when Dr Schults think she is German by origin. The reality being that she adopted the name from her once German slave master who changed her birth name to a German name Broomhilder. "*….they used to call me Hildi.*" During slavery all black slaves were forced to change their identity and given the ones that suit the slave master's status. This however reveals that black women is a victim of lost identity. In addition to, black women are portrayed as animals and have no identity or name, derogatory

names that encompasses black people as evil and animal like people. A creature is name given to a living thing or a nameless animal. Black women were associated with nameless animal like people.

The findings of the study reveals that the respondents failed to note that black women black women received corporal punishment for slightest mistakes maybe it was because of the colour of their skin. This is evident at Bennet's plantation, the audience are introduced to a scene were one of the three Brittle brothers give a whipping punishment to little Jordy for breaking eggs. The bible can be blamed for placing women in a very disadvantaged position. This is revealed as John Brittle quote the bible as he said "*the lord said the fear of the earth and ..., shall be on every beast of the earth*" the beast is referring to the little Jordy a black woman. This however depicts that black women suffocates the patriarchal structures in everyday life.

The respondents were not aware of the laws that were imposed to close all streets and avenues of black freedom by the white government in the era of the 1960s. Du Bois (1924) in his book "*The Gift of Black Folk; The Negroes in the Making of America,*" has it that there were draconian laws that were meant to guard against slave rebellion. As cited in Jonson (2012), Du Bois said, "Masters were everywhere given peremptory and unquestioned power to kill a slave …the "Virginia law" of 1680 said "if any negro…should absent himself from his master's service and lie, hide and lurk in obscure places, committing injuries to the inhabitants and shall resist any person or persons that shall by lawful for such person to kill the said negro slave so lying out and resisting (Du Bois 147-148). The law was therefore functional to enact against black rebels. However because of the law that severely punished any slave who involved in resistance, slave masters tend to suppress black Negro's rights as human beings. Apologists as cited in Drake (1987) argued that "Negroes were an inferior animal-like breed of mankind unfit to be treated as equals by other people" (Drake xvii).

Drake (1987) says that this argument was used tirelessly throughout the archives of accounts to dishonor and defame African-Americans.

Question 4. What can be done to improve the ways black women are portrayed in films?

From the information gathered through questionnaires and personal observations it is very clear that people generally knows that, black women's portrayal on screen has been stuck on stereotypes and ideologies that do not reflect reality. Ahmed (2012) pinpoints a best way of approach to the improvement of the ways black women are portrayed in films, he asserts that the Beijing Platform of Action (BPFA) plots two key destinations in line with women and media, the first is goes for advancing women's empowerment and development and increase the participation and access of women to expression and basic leadership through the media and new technologies of communication and the second one is intended to advance an adjust the depiction of women in the media

This goes in line with the second respondents and others pertaining the issue of what can be done to curb as well as improve the portrayal black women in western films. They argued that Women must be given voices especially black women.

From the data presented above it can however be safely said that people are aware, that black women must be given voice and stand for themselves in all spheres of life, black women must be the signifier of black women, women must be heard and women must be in a position to tell their own stories and advocate for their rights through films.

This is further underscored by Smith (1997), an advocator of women's rights argues that women should be shown in different roles, sited as active and not passive, freed from the typical bond of needing men for security and women must be spared from punishment when challenging patriarchal norms and values. As an advocacy for women cinema Smith (1997)

however calls for more films written, directed and produced by women that as well employ female crew members.

90 % of the respondents to the questionnaire pointed out that film making is resource intensive, hence black women need to be empowered through the granting of access to industrial funds, a male respondent states that efforts in the form of funding need to be channelled towards productions that have positive images about black women. He goes on to say that these images can be employed to counter the negative stereotypes created by western films on black women.

From the data presented above it can be deduced that people are aware of the ways that can be implemented to improve the representation of black women in films. However from the information it can be noticed that they are not aware that, Workshops amongst film makers mostly African film makers, must be held as a platform of discussing ways that will see women framed in a more positive manner.

Secondly, black women has to fight against the socially constructed gender classification put in place by men. As underscored by Mushore (2016), in his article "Domination and exploitation: Gender identities in Zimbabwean drama," he propose that the main way women can get empowered in such set-up is through development of new casings of relating themselves. He further suggested that women must be well prepared to conflict with the social frames of reference ascribed to them by men and fabricate new sexual orientation pictures which will then see them empowered.

Last but not least, black women need to be empowered through education. This goes along with Humraahi (1997), he advocates for the rights of women to equal education and employment. Kaziboni (2002) is of the view that education can change the state of a women in societies. Black female actors need to be educated on how film affects their images and not

to accept roles that portray them in negative ways, instead they need to make and tell their own stories.

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter data on the representation of black women in western films namely The Help (2011) and Django Unchained (2012) were presented and analyzed. It was generally found out that women in most western films as exemplified by the above mentioned films are depicted as domestic workers in white man's homes, submissive in nature and as victims of oppression. Respondents to questionnaires generally indicated that black women are stereotypically portrayed as less privileged residents in white man's community hence leading them to be portrayed as domestic workers and their observations were also in line with Vieytes (2016) who says that powerfully blacks are portrayed as slaves to the white masters, hence treated as completely unfit in the white men's community. The next chapter presents a Summary of the study and it will also highlight some of the findings and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Summary

The aim of the study was to explore the frames used representations of black women in western films. Django Unchained a (2012), written by John Ridley, directed by Quentin Tarantino and The Help written by Kathryn Stockett and directed by Tate Taylor. The objectives of the study were to explain the frames used in portrayal of black women in western films, explore the factors that influence the ways black women are represented in Hollywood films, to investigate how black women are depicted in two Hollywood films, The Help (2011) and Django Unchained (2012) and to suggest ways of enhancing the depiction of black women in films. The researcher make use of a qualitative research approach. With the use of Questionnaires, Archival research and observations as data gathering methods the study managed to explore hidden agendas of films in issues that has to deal with the representation of black women.Ten questionnaires were sent out to film practitioners and film audiences. The study made use of semiotic analysis, critical discourse analysis and thematic analysis as a way of interpreting data and textual analysis. Theories of the media such as Audience reception theory and framing theories were used in order to understand how black women are represented in western films and how people interact with these films.

5.1 Conclusion / Findings

The researcher find out that on the question regarding the frames used in the representation of black women in western films most respondents to questionnaire as well as the outside film practitioner think that the western representation of black women in the two selected films greatly negatively depicts them, they think that black women are depicted as domestic workers and slaves in white man's households, they are depicted as house slaves as put forth by Moore (2012) when he says that close to 90 per cent of black women working in the South served as domestic employees in white homes. Collins (2000), in supporting this he noticed that depictions of Black women as workers and house-keepers has globalise, especially in film and Television. The study endeavours to explore the relations of the marginalised group of black women and the ones with power over them. It calls on trying to tackle on stereotyping, framing, racial and gender issues pertaining black women as portrayed in western films. As underscored by Brewer (2009), Stereotypes worked as additional factors that enabled to the formation of negative images and procreations about women within film and also in everyday society.

Western films portrays black women as victims of lost identity, commodities that pampers money into their business of slave trade, careers of and transmitters of different diseases as well as they are depicted as poverty stricken to an extent of needing a white man's hand for survival. Brewer (2009), has it that Stereotypes works as additional factors that enables to the formation of negative images and procreations about women within film and also in everyday society.

From the findings of the study it can be noticed that, gender and race of the film producer, script writer and director can contribute to the ways black women are represented in western

films. In addition to, socialisation process can be termed as one crucial factor that contribute to the way black women are portrayed in western cinema. In patriarchal social stratification women are controlled and misused through an all-around made sex framework set up by man just like the socialization process in patriarchal societies. As underscored by Mushore (2016), the nature of massages conveyed in different patriarchal society supports men to control, rule and exploit women.

The findings of the study reveals that as a way of enhancing the depiction of black women, black women must be given voice and stand for themselves in all spheres of life, they must be the signifier of black women, women must be heard and women must be in a position to tell their own stories and advocate for their rights through films.

The inquiry managed to accomplish its study objectives and recognize gaps left out by other researchers pertaining the issues black women. The study unravels the frames that were used in the representation of black women and offer possible solutions to the misrepresentation and presentation of black women in western films. The study also offered some suggestions on how depictions or images of black women in films can be enhanced.

5.2 Recommendations

In view of the above finding, the study recommend the following:

1. Film practitioners as well as audiences should also be aware of the frames and stereotypes that are imposed in western productions that define black women and the negative impression they give to audiences as underscored by Brewer (2009), has it that Stereotypes works as additional factors that enables to the formation of negative images and procreations about women within film and also in everyday society. Films should resort to teaching individuals on how society tends to see certain issues and

come up with achievable arguments that will transform things in a more positive way. People must maybe not consider matters that are portrayed in the films in a positive manner since some perhaps fabricate the manifestations of reality

2. Black women has to fight against the socially constructed gender classification put in place by men. As underscored by Mushore (2016), in his article "Domination and exploitation: Gender identities in Zimbabwean drama," he propose that the main way women can get empowered in such set-up is through development of new casings of relating themselves. He further suggested that women must be well prepared to conflict with the social frames of reference ascribed to them by men and fabricate new sexual orientation pictures which will then see them empowered.

3. Ahmed (2012) pinpoints a best way of approach to the improvement of the ways black women are portrayed in films, he asserts that the Beijing Platform of Action (BPFA) plots two key destinations in line with women and media, the first is goes for advancing women's empowerment and development and increase the participation and access of women to expression and basic leadership through the media and new technologies of communication and the second one is intended to advance an adjust the depiction of women in the media.

4. Workshops amongst filmmakers mostly African film makers, must be held as a platform of discussing ways that will see women framed in a more positive manner. Forthcoming film producers, writers, directors and actors should consider looking at matters that has to do with framing and representation in a more positive manner. They should also be gender sensitive and also focus on creating material that takes a look at sex fairness since men and women should be found in a comparable way.

5. Change is possible when people support each other so as to fight the negative portrayals that are produced about black women in films. Women must be given

voices especially black women and they must be in a position to stand for themselves in all spheres of life hence they must be the signifier of black women, women must be heard and women must be in a position to tell their own stories and advocate for their rights through films.

6. Women should be shown in different roles, sited as active and not passive, freed from the typical bond of needing men for security and women must be spared from punishment when challenging patriarchal norms and values, however the researcher is encouraging more films that encompasses female crew members, written, directed and produced by women.

The researcher seeks this study can be of great value after the readers and different academics in broadening the information of artistic studies.

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7.0 APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE SCHEDULE

My name is Bridget Karidza, studying an Honors Degree in Film and Theater Arts studies with the Midlands State University (MSU).I am working on a topic, **"Rethinking film and race": A study on the representation of black women in two western films Django Unchained (2012) and The Help (2011).** This research has been approved by the film and theatre arts department. Therefore I am kindly asking you to answer the following questions to the best of your views and knowledge. Material from your response shall be used only for the purpose of this research project and will not be used in anything without your consent.

DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Tick and fill where applicable.

1. Gender.

Female		Male	

2. Age.   Occupation.

17 -29 years	Student
30 -55 years	Lecturer

3. Explain the portrayal of black women in western films?

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4. What do you think can be the contributing factors leading to such portrayals?

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5. In relation to your response on question 3, what do you think can be done to improve or reduce the way black women are portrayed in films

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