

Intersecting Narratives: Victim Blaming, Patriarchy, and the Escalation of Femicide in Kenya

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Abstract:- Femicide, the gendered killing of women, is a pressing issue in Kenya, exacerbated by cultural, institutional, and systemic factors that normalize gender-based violence. This paper examines the interplay between victim blaming and femicide, emphasizing the role of social and legacy media in shaping narratives that justify violence against women. Employing feminist theory and intersectionality, the study explores how patriarchal systems, institutional failures, and intersecting vulnerabilities based on class, sexuality, and disability contribute to the rise of femicide. Through a qualitative analysis of media representations, public discourse, and case studies, this research identifies the structural and cultural dynamics perpetuating victim blaming. It argues for a multi-faceted approach to disrupt these narratives and create pathways toward gender justice. The paper's findings reveal how societal attitudes, amplified by media, reinforce harmful stereotypes and justify violence, underscoring the urgency of systemic change in Kenya's response to femicide.

I. INTRODUCTION

Femicide, defined as the intentional killing of women because of their gender, has reached alarming levels in Kenya. Reports of women being brutally murdered—often by intimate partners or individuals within their social circles—dominate headlines with troubling frequency. Yet, rather than addressing these crimes as systemic manifestations of gender inequality and violence, societal discourse often shifts blame to the victims. Women are scrutinized for their choices, lifestyles, and behaviors, obscuring the structural and cultural roots of femicide. Victim blaming is a pervasive narrative in Kenya, deeply embedded within patriarchal norms and amplified by media platforms. Social media users frequently attribute blame to women for "choosing dangerous partners," "seeking flashy lifestyles," or "failing to act modestly." Legacy media, through sensational headlines and biased reporting, reinforces these narratives, painting women as complicit in their own deaths. Such portrayals justify femicide, reduce societal outrage, and perpetuate a culture of impunity.

Recent statistics from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2022) reveal an upward trend in gender-based violence, with femicide cases increasingly reported. High-profile cases, such as the murders of Sharon Otieno and Ivy Wangeci, have brought femicide into the national spotlight. In both cases, public discourse quickly devolved into victim blaming, with social media users and commentators attributing the murders to the victims' "flashy lifestyles" or perceived immorality.

This paper critically examines the interplay between victim blaming and femicide in Kenya, focusing on the following research questions:

- How do social and legacy media contribute to victim blaming in femicide cases?
- What role do societal norms and institutional failures play in perpetuating femicide?
- How do intersectional factors—such as class, race, sexuality, and disability—shape women's vulnerabilities to femicide and the victim-blaming narratives that follow?

By engaging feminist and intersectional frameworks, this paper seeks to unpack the cultural and institutional dimensions of femicide in Kenya and propose strategies for intervention.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is grounded in two theoretical perspectives: feminist theory and intersectionality.

➤ *Feminist Theory:*

Feminist theory provides a critical lens for understanding how patriarchal systems normalize and perpetuate gender-based violence. Patriarchy devalues women's lives, framing them as subordinate and expendable in maintaining male dominance. Feminist theory critiques the patriarchal systems that normalize violence against women. Scholars such as Judith Butler (1990) emphasize how gender norms are socially constructed and maintained through cultural and institutional practices. In this paper, feminist theory underscores how patriarchal narratives devalue women's lives, framing their victimization as inevitable or deserved. Through this lens, femicide is viewed not as an isolated crime but as a systemic issue rooted in deeply entrenched gender hierarchies. Feminist theory also critiques societal norms, media representations, and institutional practices that perpetuate victim blaming,

emphasizing the need for structural reform to achieve gender justice.

➤ *Intersectionality:*

Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), intersectionality highlights how overlapping systems of oppression—such as race, class, sexuality, and disability—compound women's vulnerabilities to violence and discrimination. In Kenya, these intersecting identities shape the experiences of women in unique ways. For instance, poor women, queer women, and women with disabilities face heightened risks of femicide due to systemic marginalization and societal stigma. Intersectionality allows for a nuanced analysis of how victim blaming and femicide disproportionately impact marginalized women, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of gender-based violence.

➤ *Media Studies:*

Drawing on theories of media representation (Hall, 1997), the paper examines how social and legacy media construct narratives that reinforce patriarchal control. Media framing theory (Entman, 1993) is used to analyze how victim blaming in femicide cases shifts public focus from systemic issues to individual behaviors.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Clearly outline the research design, methods, and ethical considerations to ensure scholarly rigor.

A. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design, focusing on thematic content analysis to explore victim blaming in media narratives and societal discourse.

B. Data Collection

- **Case Studies:** Analyze high-profile femicide cases in Kenya, such as Sharon Otieno and Ivy Wangeci, using news reports, social media posts, and public statements.
- **Media Analysis:** Examine headlines, articles, and commentaries from Kenyan legacy media outlets such as *The Standard* and *Nation Media Group* to identify patterns of victim blaming.
- **Social Media Analysis:** Use digital ethnography to collect and analyze public reactions to femicide cases on platforms like Twitter (X) and Facebook.

C. Data Analysis

Data will be coded thematically to identify recurring narratives, with particular attention to how media frames victims and perpetrators, and how these narratives align with patriarchal ideologies.

D. Ethical Considerations

- Ensure anonymity for individuals whose social media content is analyzed.
- Maintain sensitivity when discussing cases involving violence and loss of life, acknowledging the trauma associated with such incidents.

E. Global Perspectives on Femicide and Victim Blaming

Globally, femicide manifests most visibly in regions with high levels of gender inequality and weak legal systems. Latin America has the highest reported rates of femicide, with countries like Mexico and Brazil recording alarming cases annually. In Mexico, *feminicidio* has become a legal and cultural term to describe the intersection of misogyny, impunity, and systemic violence against women. The term gained traction following high-profile cases such as the murders in Ciudad Juárez, where over 400 women were killed between 1993 and 2005, many in gruesome circumstances. Scholars argue that this violence is both a symptom and a consequence of patriarchal systems that devalue women's lives (Russell & Radford, 1992; Wright, 2011).

Similarly, in South Africa, femicide rates are five times the global average. Studies attribute this to entrenched patriarchal norms, the normalization of intimate partner violence, and a lack of effective legal recourse (Abrahams et al., 2013). Notably, in many cases, the killings are preceded by a history of abuse, reflecting societal acceptance of male dominance and control over women's lives.

In Europe, femicide often occurs in domestic settings, with intimate partners being the primary perpetrators. The European Institute for Gender Equality (2020) reports that more than half of femicide cases involve intimate partners. Despite significant progress in gender equality, cultural narratives and media coverage in several European countries continue to blame victims, particularly when their behavior deviates from traditional gender roles.

F. Victim Blaming as a Cultural Phenomenon

Victim blaming is deeply rooted in patriarchal societies, where women's value is often tied to their conformity to prescribed gender roles. Studies on gender-based violence reveal that women who are perceived as deviating from these roles—through their attire, behavior, or relationships—are more likely to face blame for their victimization (Durán & Moya, 2020). In Kenya, this is evident in media coverage that often portrays femicide victims as "immoral" or "reckless," reinforcing societal biases.

G. Media's Role in Shaping Narratives

Research on media representation of gender-based violence shows that both legacy and social media play a significant role in shaping public discourse. In Kenya, legacy media often sensationalizes femicide cases, emphasizing salacious details about victims' lifestyles while downplaying systemic factors. Social media amplifies these narratives, with users frequently blaming women for their own murders under the guise of moral policing. Studies by Macharia (2016) and Kimani (2021) underscore the media's complicity in perpetuating harmful stereotypes that normalize gendered violence.

While significant scholarship exists on femicide and victim blaming globally, there is limited research focusing specifically on Kenya. Few studies examine the intersection of victim blaming with media representations and the role of intersecting oppressions in shaping women's experiences of femicide. This paper seeks to address these gaps by providing a comprehensive analysis of femicide in Kenya through a feminist and intersectional lens.

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper is grounded in two complementary frameworks:

Feminist Theory: Feminist critiques illuminate how patriarchal systems devalue women's lives and perpetuate gender-based violence. Patriarchy not only normalizes violence against women but also silences their voices, allowing narratives of victim blaming to thrive.

Intersectionality: Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), intersectionality examines how overlapping systems of oppression—such as race, class, sexuality, and disability—compound women's vulnerabilities. In the Kenyan context, poor women, queer women, and women with disabilities are particularly marginalized, making them more susceptible to both femicide and victim-blaming narratives.

V. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Culture of Victim Blaming

Victim blaming in Kenya is deeply entrenched in cultural and societal norms. Women who are perceived as violating traditional gender roles—whether through their choice of partners, lifestyles, or clothing—are often labeled as responsible for their own deaths. Media coverage frequently perpetuates these narratives, with headlines such as “Woman Found Dead After Night Out with Lover” or “Murdered Woman Lived Lavish Lifestyle.” Such framing shifts focus from the perpetrators and structural factors to the victims' perceived transgressions.

Patriarchy, as a deeply entrenched system of male dominance, is a fundamental driver of femicide in Kenya. It establishes a societal framework where men's control over women is normalized, violence is justified as a means of maintaining this control, and women's lives are devalued. This

systemic factor operates through cultural norms, familial structures, religious doctrines, and institutional practices that perpetuate gender inequality and render violence against women acceptable or inevitable.

In Kenyan society, as in many patriarchal cultures, women are expected to conform to traditional roles that prioritize obedience, modesty, and submission. Deviation from these roles often results in social sanction, stigma, or violence. For example, women who assert independence—whether through their careers, relationships, or lifestyles—are perceived as threatening the established social order. In such cases, violence, including femicide, becomes a tool for reasserting control.

Cultural narratives around masculinity exacerbate this dynamic. Men are often socialized to view dominance and aggression as inherent aspects of masculinity, while vulnerability or compromise is seen as weakness. This creates a toxic environment where men perceive violence as a legitimate way to address perceived challenges to their authority or ego, especially in intimate relationships. Studies on intimate partner violence in Kenya reveal that a significant proportion of femicide cases stem from disputes over women's autonomy, such as leaving abusive relationships or declining marriage proposals (Kamweru, 2020).

Family units in Kenya often reinforce patriarchal norms that subordinate women and uphold male authority. Women are socialized from a young age to prioritize familial and spousal needs over their own safety and well-being. In cases of domestic violence, societal and familial pressures frequently discourage women from seeking help or leaving abusive relationships. The notion of “keeping the family together” is prioritized over addressing abuse, effectively trapping women in violent situations that can escalate to femicide.

Bride price practices, while culturally significant, can also reinforce patriarchal control. In some communities, the payment of bride price is viewed as a transactional exchange that entitles men to control over their wives. This perception diminishes women's agency and autonomy, framing them as property rather than partners. When women resist or challenge this control, violence, including femicide, is often used to reassert male dominance.

Religion, as a powerful social institution, often reinforces patriarchal control by promoting male leadership and female submission. In many Kenyan religious contexts, teachings emphasize the sanctity of marriage and the importance of women's obedience to their husbands. Such doctrines are sometimes misinterpreted or weaponized to justify violence against women. For instance, men may use religious texts to validate their control over women or to rationalize punitive actions against those who defy prescribed gender roles.

Religious leaders and institutions, though positioned to challenge gender-based violence, sometimes perpetuate harmful narratives by encouraging women to endure abuse “for the sake of their families” or by framing violence as a private, domestic issue rather than a systemic problem. This complicity reinforces the patriarchal structures that enable femicide.

Kenya’s institutions, from law enforcement to the judiciary, often reflect and perpetuate patriarchal values, further enabling femicide. Police responses to domestic violence and femicide cases frequently reveal a bias against women. Victims are often met with skepticism, blame, or apathy when reporting abuse, discouraging them from seeking justice. Investigations into femicide cases are often inadequate, with many perpetrators escaping accountability due to weak evidence collection, corruption, or outright dismissal of cases.

For example, in cases involving intimate partner violence that escalates to femicide, police officers have been known to trivialize the incidents as “family matters” or blame victims for provoking the violence. Such attitudes are rooted in patriarchal notions that prioritize male authority and minimize the seriousness of violence against women (Nyabola, 2018).

The judicial system also exhibits gender biases that reinforce patriarchal control. Court rulings in femicide cases often focus on mitigating factors for the perpetrator, such as claims of provocation or emotional distress, rather than the systemic nature of gender-based violence. This sends a message that women’s lives are less valuable and that perpetrators of femicide can act with relative impunity.

Economic structures in Kenya further entrench patriarchal control by creating power imbalances between men and women. Women’s limited access to economic resources and opportunities often places them in dependent relationships with male partners, reducing their ability to leave abusive situations. Perpetrators of femicide frequently exploit this economic dependency to exert control over their victims, using financial support as a means of coercion or punishment.

Moreover, economic inequality often intersects with victim blaming in femicide cases. Women who enter relationships with wealthier men are frequently stigmatized as “gold diggers” or morally compromised, and their murders are framed as the natural consequences of their “greed.” This narrative not only justifies femicide but also reinforces patriarchal control by delegitimizing women’s pursuit of financial independence or upward mobility.

At its core, patriarchy devalues women’s lives, treating them as expendable in service of maintaining male dominance. This devaluation is evident in the cultural and institutional responses to femicide in Kenya, where victims are often blamed for their own murders, and perpetrators are rarely held

accountable. The normalization of violence against women within patriarchal systems creates an environment where femicide is not only possible but predictable.

By addressing the systemic roots of patriarchal control, Kenya can begin to disrupt the cycle of femicide and create a society that values and protects women’s lives.

B. The Role of Social Media

Social media has transformed communication in the 21st century, offering platforms for advocacy, education, and activism. However, it has also become a space where harmful gendered narratives thrive, reinforcing victim blaming and perpetuating systemic issues like femicide. In Kenya, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter (X), and Instagram have amplified patriarchal attitudes, providing fertile ground for the normalization of victim blaming, which indirectly contributes to the rise of femicide.

Victim blaming on social media manifests through public shaming, moral policing, and the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes about women. These narratives shift focus from perpetrators of violence to victims’ actions, clothing, or perceived lifestyles, which can lead to societal acceptance or justification of femicide.

Social media platforms enable the rapid dissemination of narratives that frame victims as responsible for their own murders. This is evident in high-profile femicide cases in Kenya, such as the deaths of Sharon Otieno and Ivy Wangeci. Sharon Otieno, a university student who was brutally murdered in 2018, was vilified on social media for her relationship with a married politician. Users labeled her as a “slay queen” and accused her of greed and immorality, effectively shifting blame from the perpetrators to her lifestyle choices (Mutua, 2020).

Similarly, Ivy Wangeci, a medical student killed by a rejected admirer in 2019, faced posthumous scrutiny online. Social media users suggested that her rejection of the perpetrator’s advances and alleged material demands provoked her murder. These narratives not only dehumanized her but also diverted attention from the act of violence to her perceived faults (Macharia, 2020).

Social media platforms in Kenya are rife with misogynistic language and content that trivializes violence against women. Terms like “slay queen” and “sponsor relationships” are often used derogatorily to label women who pursue financial stability or upward mobility. These terms are weaponized to portray women as immoral or unworthy of empathy, creating a social environment that implicitly justifies femicide.

Scholars have noted that such misogynistic content is not limited to Kenya. In their study of online misogyny, Jane and Jane (2017) argue that social media enables the persistence of

patriarchal ideologies by anonymizing users and fostering toxic communities. In Kenya, this manifests in forums and comment sections where users collectively blame victims for their fate, reinforcing societal norms that tolerate violence against women.

Kenyan social media reflects and amplifies existing patriarchal norms, often reinforcing cultural attitudes that position women as subordinate to men. For instance, narratives that blame women for dressing provocatively or for being in certain spaces at particular times dominate online discussions about femicide. This digital moral policing echoes offline cultural practices that restrict women's autonomy and perpetuate victim blaming.

One pervasive narrative on Kenyan social media is the demonization of women labeled as "slay queens." This term, originally used to describe fashionable women, has evolved into a pejorative label for women perceived as materialistic or dependent on wealthy men. Social media users frequently weaponize this term to justify violence against women involved in relationships with wealthier men, portraying them as deserving of harm.

For example, Sharon Otieno's murder prompted widespread online discourse framing her as complicit in her death due to her relationship with a married man. This narrative ignored the systemic power imbalances and gendered vulnerabilities that often push young women into such relationships. Mutua (2020) argues that this victim blaming reflects a broader societal discomfort with women's agency and aspirations, particularly when they challenge traditional gender roles.

By shifting blame from perpetrators to victims, social media contributes to a culture of impunity around femicide. Perpetrators are often absolved of responsibility in public discourse, reducing pressure on law enforcement and judicial systems to pursue justice. The public outrage necessary to hold perpetrators accountable is diluted when narratives focus on victims' alleged shortcomings rather than systemic failures.

This phenomenon is not unique to Kenya. Scholars like Salter (2013) have observed similar patterns globally, noting that online spaces often replicate offline power structures, marginalizing women and normalizing violence. In Kenya, the rapid spread of victim-blaming narratives on social media undermines efforts to address the root causes of femicide and perpetuates a cycle of violence.

While social media contributes to victim blaming, it also holds potential as a tool for advocacy and change. Kenyan activists and organizations have increasingly used social media to counter victim-blaming narratives and demand justice for femicide victims. Hashtags like #JusticeForSharon and #EndFemicide have mobilized public support and highlighted systemic issues such as police inaction and

judicial delays. For example, following the murder of Ivy Wangeci, the hashtag #HerLifeMatters trended on Twitter, drawing attention to the prevalence of femicide and the societal attitudes that enable it. Activists used the platform to challenge narratives that blamed Ivy for her murder and to demand stronger legal protections for women.

C. Legacy Media's Complicity

Legacy media—traditional platforms such as newspapers, television, and radio—plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and societal attitudes. However, in the context of femicide and victim blaming, Kenyan legacy media has often perpetuated harmful gender stereotypes and narratives. By sensationalizing violence against women, misrepresenting victims, and framing cases in ways that excuse or obscure the role of perpetrators, legacy media contributes to a culture that normalizes femicide and blames victims for their own deaths.

Legacy media outlets often prioritize sensationalism over sensitive and nuanced reporting when covering cases of femicide. Headlines and stories frequently emphasize salacious details about victims' lifestyles or relationships, diverting attention from the systemic issues that lead to femicide. For instance, in the widely publicized case of Sharon Otieno, a Kenyan university student murdered in 2018, several media outlets focused on her relationship with a prominent politician rather than the violence she endured. This framing reinforced stereotypes about young women seeking financial benefits from older, wealthier men, subtly suggesting complicity in her fate (Nyabola, 2018).

Scholars argue that this focus on the victim's perceived morality or behavior undermines the gravity of the crime and shifts attention away from the perpetrator's culpability. As Gathara (2020) observes, "The media's focus on the personal lives of femicide victims creates a narrative that justifies violence and absolves perpetrators, reducing systemic violence to individual misfortune."

Legacy media in Kenya often presents femicide cases as isolated events, ignoring the broader systemic and structural factors that contribute to gender-based violence. This framing prevents the public from understanding femicide as a societal issue rooted in patriarchy, inequality, and institutional failures.

For example, the murder of Ivy Wangeci in 2019 was widely reported as a crime of passion, with media narratives emphasizing the alleged rejection of the perpetrator's romantic advances. This framing individualized the violence and ignored the pervasive cultural attitudes that condone male entitlement to women's attention and bodies. Scholars like Macharia (2020) highlight that such reporting reinforces the idea that men's violence against women is a natural or inevitable response to emotional distress, perpetuating harmful stereotypes about male dominance and female submission.

Kenyan legacy media has often employed language and narrative structures that implicitly or explicitly blame victims for their own deaths. This is evident in the use of phrases like “she was in the wrong place at the wrong time” or “she got involved with the wrong people,” which deflect responsibility from perpetrators and reinforce societal norms that restrict women’s autonomy.

A study by Ongalo and Wambui (2019) found that in many Kenyan news articles about femicide, the focus on victims’ clothing, lifestyle choices, or social relationships perpetuated harmful stereotypes about women being responsible for the violence they experience. For example, reporting on femicide cases involving young women often highlights their participation in nightlife or relationships with older men, framing their deaths as cautionary tales rather than crimes.

D. Intersectional Vulnerabilities

Intersectioning vulnerabilities, which arise from the overlap of factors such as gender, class, age, race, and sexuality, play a critical role in perpetuating victim blaming and femicide. In Kenya, these vulnerabilities often shape societal attitudes, media narratives, and institutional responses to violence against women, exacerbating the prevalence of femicide and reinforcing a culture of impunity.

Crenshaw's (1991) theory of intersectionality highlights how overlapping systems of oppression—such as patriarchy, racism, and economic inequality—compound vulnerabilities for marginalized groups. In the Kenyan context, young women from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are disproportionately vulnerable to gender-based violence. These women are often forced into exploitative relationships with wealthier men, colloquially referred to as “sponsor relationships,” due to financial instability. When violence occurs, society often blames these women for their perceived materialism or immorality, rather than addressing the systemic inequalities that push them into such precarious situations (Mutua, 2020).

Victim blaming in such cases is deeply gendered and intersectional. For instance, narratives surrounding the murder of Sharon Otieno in 2018 framed her as complicit in her own death because of her relationship with a married politician. This framing obscured the power imbalances at play and reinforced stereotypes that portray young women as opportunistic and morally corrupt. Studies by Macharia (2020) indicate that such narratives perpetuate patriarchal control, as they discourage women from asserting agency over their lives and relationships out of fear of public scrutiny and violence.

Age and marital status are additional intersecting vulnerabilities that contribute to victim blaming and femicide. Unmarried women or those perceived as deviating from traditional gender roles often face heightened scrutiny. In rural Kenya, for example, widows accused of witchcraft are

disproportionately targeted for femicide, a phenomenon rooted in cultural misogyny and economic motives, as male relatives seek to control land and resources (Adhiambo, 2018).

Moreover, LGBTQ+ women and those with disabilities face intersecting vulnerabilities that exacerbate their risk of femicide. These groups are often excluded from mainstream feminist advocacy and are more likely to experience violence that is underreported or mischaracterized in media and legal systems. Studies show that their marginalization intensifies societal victim blaming, as their existence challenges patriarchal, heteronormative ideals (Nyabola, 2018).

Addressing intersecting vulnerabilities requires a holistic approach that tackles systemic inequalities, challenges victim-blaming narratives, and amplifies the voices of marginalized women. By applying an intersectional lens, policymakers and advocates can better understand and combat the structural forces driving femicide in Kenya.

E. Institutional Failures

Institutional failures significantly contribute to the prevalence of femicide by perpetuating a culture of impunity, inadequate protection, and limited access to justice for victims. In Kenya, law enforcement, judicial systems, and public institutions have been criticized for their inability to prevent gender-based violence or hold perpetrators accountable. These systemic weaknesses not only allow femicide to persist but also reinforce societal norms that devalue women's lives.

Law enforcement agencies in Kenya are often accused of inefficiency and insensitivity in handling cases of violence against women. Research indicates that police frequently dismiss or trivialize reports of domestic violence, stalking, or harassment, labeling them as “private matters” rather than serious crimes (Macharia, 2020). This institutional apathy discourages victims from seeking help and emboldens perpetrators, who are aware of the low likelihood of facing legal consequences. The failure to enforce protective orders and prosecute offenders effectively creates an environment where femicide becomes a foreseeable escalation of unchecked violence.

Judicial shortcomings further exacerbate the issue. Protracted trials, corruption, and gender bias in courtrooms undermine victims’ access to justice. For instance, studies by Mutua (2020) highlight cases where victims or their families abandon legal proceedings due to financial constraints or lack of confidence in the judicial process. Moreover, lenient sentencing for perpetrators reinforces societal perceptions that violence against women is not a severe crime.

Institutional inadequacies also extend to the broader policy framework. While Kenya has enacted progressive legislation, such as the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act (2015), the implementation remains weak due to

insufficient funding and a lack of training for law enforcement and judicial officers.

Addressing these institutional failures requires systemic reforms, including gender-sensitive training for law enforcement, strict enforcement of existing laws, and increased investment in resources to combat femicide effectively. Without such measures, institutional failures will continue to enable the cycle of violence against women.

VI. CONCLUSION

The normalization of victim blaming in Kenya not only perpetuates femicide but also obscures the structural and cultural factors that sustain gender-based violence. Social and legacy media play a significant role in shaping these harmful narratives, while institutional failures further exacerbate the problem. Addressing femicide in Kenya requires a multifaceted approach, including cultural shifts to challenge patriarchal norms, legal reforms to ensure accountability, and media accountability to promote ethical reporting. Tackling femicide in Kenya requires dismantling the patriarchal structures that sustain it. This involves: Cultural Reforms:** Challenging toxic masculinity and promoting alternative, equitable models of gender relations. Economic Empowerment:** Providing women with access to education, employment, and financial independence to reduce dependency on abusive partners. **Institutional Accountability:** Training law enforcement and judicial officers to handle femicide cases with gender sensitivity and ensuring strict enforcement of laws protecting women. Community Engagement:** Involving religious and community leaders in advocating for gender equality and condemning violence against women.

This paper highlights the urgency of adopting feminist and intersectional frameworks to dismantle the systems that enable femicide and victim blaming. Only through collective efforts can Kenya move toward a society that values and protects women's lives.

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