

Examining Radio as a Tool for Facilitating Marital Reconciliation: Case of Patanisho Segment on Radio Jambo Kenya

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Abstract—Examining Radio as a tool for Facilitating Marital reconciliation: Case of 'Patanisho' segment on Radio Jambo, Kenya, is a study which examines the effectiveness of radio as a tool for facilitating marital reconciliation. The study adopted a qualitative research design, anchored in the Uses and Gratifications Theory and Media Ecology Theory. It was guided by four primary objectives: to analyse the program's format, assess listener perceptions and experience, evaluate its effectiveness in facilitating reconciliation, and explore the broader potential of radio as a tool for marital conflict resolution. Data was collected through content analysis of twelve Patanisho episodes focused on marital conflict, which aired between April and December 2024, and through in-depth interviews with the producer and nine listeners. The study's findings reveal that Patanisho utilizes a spontaneous yet structured talk show format, which features a case introduction, direct contacting of the couple, presenter-led mediation, and listener commentary. The presenters' use of humour, empathy, and relatable Swahili language makes the program engaging, attracting a significant listenership from lower and middle-income groups. However, the program's success in achieving reconciliation is limited. Out of the twelve analysed episodes, only one resulted in full reconciliation, two in partial reconciliation, and nine were unsuccessful. This suggests that while radio can initiate the reconciliation process, it is often insufficient to fully resolve deep-seated marital conflicts without professional follow-up. The study concludes that radio has a powerful role in facilitating initial dialogue and promoting public engagement with complex marital issues but is not a substitute for professional conflict resolution. The research recommends that Patanisho and similar programs consider integrating professional marriage experts to provide live advice and support, thereby enhancing the quality of the mediation. Additionally, it suggests extending airtime to feature more cases and strengthening ethical standards to protect participants' privacy. This research contributes to media and communication studies by highlighting the unique role of culturally relevant radio programs in addressing social challenges and offering a platform for community-based social healing.

Keywords— Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), Marital Conflict, Marital Reconciliation, Patanisho Segment, Radio Talk Show.

I. INTRODUCTION

Radio is a powerful auditory medium that continues to play multifaceted roles in the society by providing entertainment, delivering educational content, disseminating information, and addressing pressing social issues (Journalism University, 2023). Despite the dominance of digital and visual media, radio has maintained its relevance through its emotional resonance with audiences and its remarkable technological adaptability (Azoulay, 2024). Today, listeners can access radio through a

variety of platforms; mobile phones, car stereos, traditional radio sets, online streams, and digital platforms such as YouTube and Spotify (Broadcast and Online Journalism, 2023). This expansive accessibility, combined with radio's affordability and cultural integration, has made it one of the most widely consumed media form both globally and across Africa. Furthermore, radio has transformed from a one-way communication channel into an interactive and participatory platform. Through call-ins, SMS, and social media interactions, audiences are not only passive recipients but active contributors to discussions.

This evolution has strengthened radio's role as a community-driven medium capable of facilitating dialogue, empowering marginalized voices, and addressing both communal and personal challenges. In conflict-affected societies, radio has emerged as a vital instrument for peacebuilding and reconciliation. International organizations, including the United Nations, have embraced radio's potential in this regard. For example, UNESCO has supported community radio initiatives in regions prone to conflict, providing platforms for civic education, dialogue, and the promotion of social cohesion (UNESCO, n.d.). Through fictional stories that represented forgiveness and ethnic harmony, the radio drama *Musekeweya* was instrumental in promoting national healing in Rwanda following the 1994 genocide (BBC News, 2019). Similarly, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, radio has been used to mediate tribal tensions and promote peace by broadcasting targeted reconciliation messages to communities affected by violence (Armand et al., 2020).

Internationally, there are numerous examples of radio being used as a platform for addressing family issues and marital conflict. In the United States, historical programs such as *America's Town Meeting of the Air* provided opportunities for listeners to engage in national conversations, while more contemporary shows like *The Dr. Laura Program* and *Delilah* illustrate radio's evolving role in personal and family matters. *The Dr. Laura Program*, hosted by psychologist Laura Schlessinger, adopts a direct, advice-driven format in which callers seek guidance on family, marital, and moral dilemmas, often receiving tough-love responses that emphasize accountability and traditional values. In contrast, *Delilah*, hosted by Delilah Rene, blends listener call-ins with music dedications, creating a warm and empathetic space for sharing stories of love, loss, and reconciliation. Similarly, in Nigeria, the *Family LIFE* radio show has provided marital guidance

grounded in cultural and religious values, helping couples navigate challenges through storytelling and expert interviews (Family LIFE, n.d.). Collectively, these programs demonstrate how radio can blur the lines between public dialogue and private therapy, offering audiences both entertainment and meaningful emotional support (Jenkins, 2023; Halper, 2017).

In Kenya, *Patanisho* segment on Radio Jambo exemplifies the local adaptation of this trend. Hosted by the charismatic presenters’ Gidi and Ghost, *Patanisho* invites listeners to send messages about estranged spouses or lovers, after which the presenters attempt to contact both parties and facilitate live reconciliation on air. The show blends humour, empathy, and cultural fluency, often using conversational Swahili to connect with its predominantly urban and rural audience. Having aired for over a decade, *Patanisho* has become a cultural fixture, drawing wide listenership and sparking social media conversations that extend the show's influence beyond the airwaves. This study contributes to the relatively limited discourse on radio-based marital reconciliation in Kenya.

1. Problem Statement

Marital conflict is a common challenge affecting couples across the world, and Kenya is no exception. Many couples face difficulties in their relationships, with reports indicating that marital disputes are on the rise. According to Kutura (2015), half of Kenyan women have experienced marital conflict, a figure projected to grow to 70% by 2022 (Njer, Ileri, & Menecha, 2021). Traditional ways of resolving these conflicts, such as consulting elders or religious leaders, are becoming less accessible or less appealing, especially among younger, urban populations (Chagema, 2016). This shift has created a gap in support systems for couples seeking reconciliation. As a result, there is growing interest in

alternative platforms that can help address marital issues. One such platform is radio, which remains widely accessible and influential in Kenya. While previous studies have looked at radio’s role in resolving communal conflicts, little is known about its potential in promoting marital reconciliation. This study focuses on *Patanisho* segment on Radio Jambo, a popular program where couples share their experiences and seek reconciliation. The research aims to examine how this segment is structured, how listeners perceive it and experience, and whether it effectively helps resolve marital conflicts. By exploring *Patanisho*, the study seeks to understand the broader role radio can play in supporting marriages in Kenya.

II. STUDY OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study was to examine radio as a tool for facilitating marital reconciliation, with a specific focus on *Patanisho* segment aired on Radio Jambo, Kenya. The study sought to understand how radio programming can be used to address marital conflict and promote reconciliation among couples through participatory broadcasting.

- a) To analyse the format of *Patanisho* segment on Radio Jambo.
- b) To assess listeners' perceptions and experiences of *Patanisho* segment on Radio Jambo.
- c) To evaluate the effectiveness of *Patanisho* segment in addressing marital conflict.
- d) To explore the opportunities radio offers as a platform for promoting marital reconciliation in Kenya.

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The figure below represents a conceptual framework that guided the study.

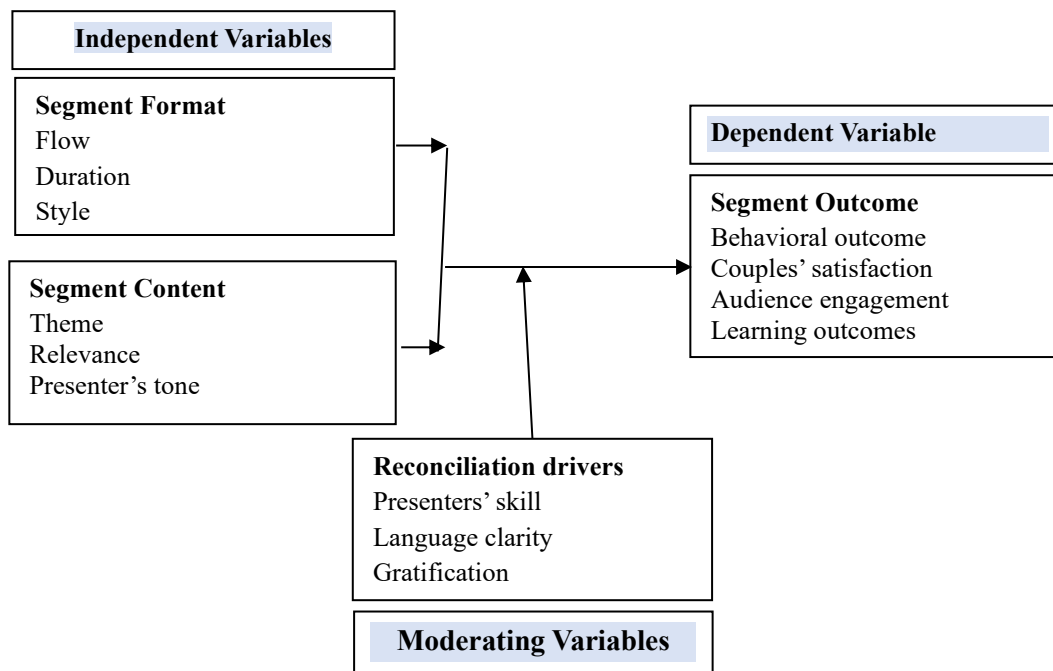


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

A radio program format refers to the structured design and stylistic presentation that guides how content is delivered to the audience. According to Robbins (2023), a format acts as a blueprint, aligning content with the interests of the target audience to ensure relevance and consistency. It typically includes features such as signature tunes, presentation styles, language use, and the sequence of engagement. Halbrooks (2020) notes that these elements are deliberately chosen to resonate with particular demographic groups. Thell (2018) further highlights that therapeutic radio formats are inherently interactive, encouraging organic social dialogue between callers and hosts. In the case of *Patanisho*, the format follows a predictable structure: opening with a familiar tune, light-hearted banter between presenters, introduction of the marital conflict, engagement with the aggrieved party, contact with the accused, and a reflective wrap-up. Humor, empathy, and simplicity was observed in the presenter's tone, used to ease tension and fosters emotional connection and audience interaction.

According to Journalism University (2023), radio program content is a carefully constructed blend of spoken words, sound effects, music, and moments of silence that, when combined effectively, enhance the listening experience. Journalism University (2023) emphasizes that effective radio content relies on narrative, relatability, and emotion to capture and retain attention. Phi (2024) adds that listener engagement increases when the content mirrors lived experiences. In *Patanisho*, the subject matter spans sensitive and relatable issues such as infidelity, neglect, financial disputes, and unmet emotional expectations in marriage. This content analysed was found to resonate deeply with the listeners, who connected with the stories, reflected on their relationships, and appreciated reconciliation strategies applied by the host. The dialogue also appeared therapeutic and entertaining, offering emotional gratification to participants.

The effectiveness of reconciliation efforts on radio depends significantly on the communicative competence of the presenters. Presenters must be emotionally intelligent, capable of active listening, and skilful in guiding conflict-ridden conversations. Pollack (2024) stresses that such interpersonal skills are essential in building rapport and creating a sense of psychological safety. In *Patanisho*, presenters Gidi and Ghost employ relatable language, culturally relevant humor, and empathetic framing to establish trust and neutrality. Their ability to diffuse tension, ask probing yet respectful questions, and affirm both parties' emotions positions them as informal mediators. Real-time interaction from the audience through SMS and call-ins further amplifies this dynamic, transforming passive listening into participatory healing.

Outcomes in *Patanisho* are typically categorized into three: full reconciliation, partial reconciliation, or unresolved conflict. This classification captures not only the immediate on-air resolution but also the emotional and narrative closure each episode provides. Vilendrer (2024) argues that even when agreement is not reached, radio still fosters understanding, humanizes conflict, and opens the door for future

conversations. Among the twelve sampled episodes in this study, one ended in full reconciliation, two in partial agreement, and nine remained unresolved. Yet, even those unresolved cases had therapeutic value, offering emotional release for participants and reflection for listeners. This demonstrates that *Patanisho* functions not necessarily as a definitive conflict resolver, but as a media-based intervention that encourages public dialogue and emotional release.

Reconciliation drivers in *Patanisho* include the presenters' communication skills, use of relatable language, and the fulfillment of audience gratifications. According to Pollack (2024), active listening fosters emotional clarity and trust by promoting shared understanding. Presenters reinforce this through empathetic feedback, paraphrasing, and validating emotions. The Radio Centre Academy (2023) highlights that clarity, warmth, and humor in delivery enhance listener engagement. The use of conversational Kiswahili, rich in everyday expressions, strengthens emotional resonance. Gratification, as a key driver, motivates continued listenership by addressing psychological and social needs such as entertainment, emotional release, advice-seeking, and companionship (Rubin, Perse & Powell, 1985). These combined elements encourage participation, foster reconciliation, and build loyalty among the audience.

Empirical Review

Existing literature affirms the transformative potential of talk radio in nurturing self-awareness and emotional processing. A study by Nine (2020) on Australian talk radio revealed that 68% of listeners tuned in not just for information but for emotional connection and personal insight. While rooted in a different sociocultural context, these findings underscore radio's broader function as a platform for relational reflection. Kenyan programs like *Patanisho* parallel these insights, using emotionally charged conversations to engage audiences around intimate concerns on marriage and conflict.

Katriel (2004), in her exploration of late-night talk radio in Israel, found that broadcasts centred on personal issues often prompted listeners to reflect on their own challenges. Motivations such as curiosity, psychological self-insight, and emotional relief emerged as common themes among respondents. These motivations mirror those of *Patanisho*'s audience, who engage both as spectators and participants in mediated emotional journeys. Though Katriel's work reflects Israeli cultural norms, the psychological and emotional functions of such programs appear to transcend geographic boundaries.

In the digital media landscape, platforms like social media have also been studied as tools for conflict mediation. Oluchukwu (2021) found that in Nigeria, couples sometimes used social media forums to navigate and resolve marital disagreements. While her study focused on digital platforms, the findings offer parallels to *Patanisho*'s model of participatory media. Both platforms facilitate dialogue, amplify voices, and offer public spaces for relational introspection. However, this study uniquely emphasizes the role of radio, a more accessible and culturally embedded medium in Kenya, as a forum for structured, listener-involved conflict resolution.

Studies on the prevalence and complexity of marital conflict offer valuable context to *Patanisho*'s interventionist role. Tasew and Getahun (2021), examining Ethiopia's Amhara region, reported an increase in marital strife attributed to psychological, sexual, cultural, and economic factors. In a similar vein, Njer, Ireri, and Menecha (2021) performed a regression analysis of Christian couples in Nairobi's Embakasi neighborhood, establishing a correlation between marital discord and anxiety, financial strain, and emotional estrangement. While these studies are essential for understanding root causes, they fall short of addressing how such conflicts might be constructively managed. *Patanisho*, in contrast, is explored in this research not as a diagnostic tool, but as a therapeutic medium offering real-time emotional engagement and conflict navigation.

Emotions, according to Wamathu (2023), are central to marital strife. Her research highlights how unexpressed or unresolved emotions often amplify minor disagreements into deeper ruptures. This insight aligns closely with the present study's focus on *Patanisho*, where emotional expression is not only encouraged but becomes the medium through which conflict is explored. By granting couples the space to vocalize grievances publicly, the show taps into communal empathy and fosters a collective sense of support, thus advancing emotional reconciliation.

Taken together, the reviewed studies demonstrate that marital conflict is a multifaceted phenomenon shaped by psychological, social, and economic factors. While traditional conflict resolution mechanisms remain important, modern participatory platforms like radio are increasingly being recognized for their ability to foster dialogue, emotional clarity, and potential healing. Unlike prior research that emphasizes identifying causes, this study shifts the focus to how radio can serve as a marital reconciliation platform. Through a structure that encourages shared storytelling, emotional release, and guided conversation, *Patanisho* exemplifies how participatory radio can play a significant role in promoting relational health and marital reconciliation in contemporary Kenya.

V. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a qualitative research design rooted in the interpretivist paradigm to explore how *Patanisho* functions as a tool for marital reconciliation. The interpretivist paradigm emphasizes understanding human experiences from participants' perspectives, recognizing that reality is socially constructed and shaped by context (Pham, 2018). This approach allowed the researcher to capture subjective meanings and interpretations of marital conflict and media engagement. Data was collected through content analysis of 12 purposively selected episodes from Radio Jambo's YouTube archive and in-depth interviews with the segment's producer and nine active listeners. A structured code sheet and semi-structured interview guides were used, refined through a pilot test conducted on *Msamaha*, a similar show on Radio Maisha. The 12 episodes were selected from a pool of 60 aired between April and December 2024, specifically dealing with marital reconciliation. Snowball sampling was used to recruit listener participants. Ethical principles such as information consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were strictly

followed. Thematic and content analysis guided interpretation, with findings presented using narrative summaries, direct quotes, and episode excerpts.

VI. FINDINGS

Based on the qualitative data collected, this study offers a comprehensive analysis of how audience engagement with *Patanisho* segment on Radio Jambo facilitates marital reconciliation among Kenyan couples. Guided by four objectives: analysing the segment's format, assessing listener perceptions, evaluating its effectiveness, and exploring radio's role in resolving marital conflict, the study drew data from 12 purposively sampled episodes and interviews with nine listeners and the producer. Methodological triangulation enhanced validity by combining content and thematic analysis (Bhandari, 2023). Three key reconciliation drivers emerged: presenter-led mediation techniques, audience gratifications, and the program's emotional-linguistic tone. Reconciliation outcomes were assessed through three indicators: degree of resolution (full or partial), listener influence and feedback, and emotional closure for couples. Swahili excerpts and English translations were included to preserve contextual authenticity.

A. Analysing the Format of PTS

This study found that *Patanisho* follows a consistent, structured, yet flexible format. One of its most striking elements is how each episode begins: the main presenter, Gidi, introduce the segment by announcing *Patanisho* and reading a Short Message Service (SMS), from a listener seeking reconciliation. Due to the high volume of messages, the presenter contacts only one couple per episode due to time limitation. The predictable opening act as an auditory cue, drawing in the audience and setting the emotional tone for the segment. For instance, in PTS Episode 75, Gidi opened with:

"Haya Patanisho, yule ambayetunampatanishanihuyushabikiambayanasema: 'Jambo Gidina Ghost, mimini David... ningependakupatanishwanamchumbawangu...'" ("Alright, Patanisho, the person we are reconciling today is this listener who says: 'Hello Gidi and Ghost, I'm David... I would like to be reconciled with my fiancée...'")

This consistent opening marked a transition, prepared the audience for the unfolding narrative, and set a clear expectation for the segment's purpose. Following this was the verification phase, where Gidi called the sender to confirm the situation and gather background context about the conflict. For example, in Episode 45, he said:

"Haya, wachatumpigie Evans tusikieanasemaje... tuone vile tunawezamsaidia."

("Alright, let's call Evans and hear what he says... let's see how we can help him.")

Another feature was the signature tune, used at the beginning and end of episodes. In Episodes 21, 32, and 97, the phrase "*Radio Jambo, Patanisho!*" played during transitions, creating anticipation. Halbrooks (2020) observed that such tunes are strategic tools to retain audience attention and strengthen program identity.

The core segment involved real-time mediation. Once the other party was reached, both individuals spoke candidly while the presenters, mainly Gidi. Gidi's tone shifted between empathetic and firm, reflecting conflict resolution best practices.

If the other party did not answer, Gidi was observed to invited the sender to deliver a live message, assuming the intended recipient might be listening. For example, in Episode 97, he said:

"Labda anakuskiza, hebu ongea naye, mwambie ni hivi na hivi Njoki."

("Maybe she's listening—go ahead and speak to her, tell her what you want, Njoki.")

The final phase involved audience participation, where listeners shared opinions via SMS or calls. This reinforced reconciliation as a shared societal value. Listener interviews confirmed appreciation for the process. One explained:

"Kama mtu ameleta kesi... kitu ya kwanza anandika SMS... Gidi anasoma alafu anapigia huyo mtu simu."

("If someone brought a case... the first thing is they sent an SMS... Gidi read it and then called that person.")

Beyond radio, *Patanisho* was observed to attract strong YouTube engagement, with comments reflecting national reach and loyalty. Importantly, the producer confirmed that while the show followed a pattern, it allowed flexibility:

"Basically, there is no template... if they don't agree, we take it to the listeners."

These findings supported Robbins' (2023) assertion that structured radio programming provided a framework for consistent delivery while allowing space for spontaneous audience interaction. Furthermore, the show's capacity to evolve by integrating live calls, digital engagement, and potential follow-ups, illustrated its responsiveness to shifting media consumption patterns inclined on MET. Within the broader context of media studies, *Patanisho* exemplified how its format design, when combined with authenticity and community participation, could transform a radio segment into a trusted social mediation tool, reinforcing the role of broadcast media in fostering dialogue and reconciliation.

B. Assessing the Listeners' Perceptions and Experiences

The second objective of this study was to explore listeners' perceptions and experiences of *Patanisho*. In this context, perception referred to how audiences interpreted and responded to the program, while experience captured the nature and depth of their engagement. In the context of interactive radio in Africa, as Komodromos (2020) pointed out, audience perception was influenced by the relevance of the topics covered, the trust placed in the presenters, the interactivity, and the content and structure. Listeners tended to evaluate programs based on how well they satisfied personal, emotional, and social needs. Interactive features such as live call-ins and SMS participation further fostered a sense of inclusion, co-ownership, and connection with the broadcast experience. To investigate these dimensions, the study gathered insights from selected regular listeners and the show's producer.

The findings revealed that listeners perceived *Patanisho* as more than entertainment; it is a credible platform for resolving

real-life marital challenges. Many described it as an informal yet effective form of mediation, particularly for couples who had exhausted traditional avenues such as family elders or religious leaders. One respondent (R7) remarked, *"Percentage kubwanapatanishwani couples"* (*"A large percentage of those reconciled are couples"*), affirming the segment's perceived success. Another participant (R6) praised the presenters' approach: *"I love the way they do it. Gidi will call you in a friendly manner that makes it lively."* Similarly, listener R8 shared, *"I used to think they are just running a show for the sake of doing it... over time I came to realize these are real-life issues,"* indicating a shift from initial skepticism to trust.

Beyond conflict resolution, listeners valued *Patanisho* for its educational role, emotional support, and opportunities for self-reflection. Respondent R2 explained, *"Kitu kilinifanya nisikize Patanisho nimafunzo... ndoa huwa na changamoto mingi sana"* (*"What made me listen to Patanisho were the lessons... marriage has many challenges"*). Similarly, R5 stated, *"Unasikiashida za wengine na unaona zak osio mabaya sana, unajifunza pia kuvumilia"* (*"You hear other people's problems and realize yours aren't that bad, and you also learn to be patient"*), highlighting the program's role in normalizing marital difficulties and fostering empathy.

While the program satisfied multiple needs, entertainment consistently emerged as the dominant gratification. Humor, particularly Ghost's laughter, was a recurring highlight. Listener R2 noted, *"Kicheko ya Ghost hunimaliza"* (*"Ghost's laughter really excites me"*), showing how humor increased engagement and sustained listenership.

Audience investment extend beyond humour. Many listeners expressed genuine joy when couples reconciled and disappointment when resolutions failed. R8 stated, *"I feel happy when a couple is reconciled... but I also understand that someone cannot say yes just to make the Kenyan audience happy."* Similarly, R6 added, *"My hope as a listener is that the two people reconcile, but there are times you feel sad when one side takes a strong stand."* R3 emphasized, *"Wakikosa kuelewana mimi huhisi vibaya kwa roho"* (*"When they fail to reconcile, I feel bad in my heart"*).

These reflections underscored the emotional depth of audience connection with the show and its real-life narratives. They also aligned with the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which holds that audiences actively seek media content to meet needs such as entertainment, emotional support, social connection, and education (Gordon, 2023; Lai, 2023). Listeners tuned into *Patanisho* not only for leisure but also for companionship, insight into relationship challenges, and opportunities for personal reflection.

C. Evaluating Patanisho Segment Effectiveness

The third objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness of *Patanisho* in facilitating marital reconciliation. In this study, effectiveness was defined as the program's ability to mediate conflicts, promote constructive dialogue, trigger emotional engagement, foster unity, and provide gratification through an engaging listening experience. This reflected Awiti and Ong'ong'a's (2024) view that media effectiveness is

measured not only by audience size but also by its capacity to influence behavior and promote social change.

Analysis of 12 *Patanisho* episodes showed varied outcomes: one couple achieved full reconciliation, two achieved partial reconciliation, and nine did not reconcile. In Episode 103, the hosts mediated a disagreement after the wife complained her husband left without informing her. Gidi guided the discussion towards mutual understanding, leading both parties to exchange forgiveness and commit to restoring their union.

Partial reconciliation was evident in Episodes 65 and 75, where communication was re-established but final resolution was deferred. In Episode 75, the caller stated, “*Kama atagrow up, atanitafuta*” (*If he grows up, he can look for me*), showing conditional openness to reconciliation. In Episode 65, reconciliation was postponed until a meeting with elders, demonstrating the integration of cultural mediation practices. These cases showed PTS’s ability to reopen dialogue, even without immediate resolution.

In nine unsuccessful cases, reconciliation failed due to unwillingness, emotional withdrawal, or unavailability of one party. In Episode 21, a caller refused to reunite despite forgiving her partner, citing past abuse that caused a pregnancy loss. In Episode 97, the unresponsive partner prompted Gidi to advise seeking mediation from a local chief, reflecting the use of culturally recognized authority when live reconciliation failed. Episodes 19, 26, 32, 45, 92, and 97 demonstrated similar challenges, where calls went unanswered or parties disengaged mid-conversation.

Listener feedback reinforced the program’s perceived effectiveness. R8 acknowledged it was “*helpful in resolving some issues, even if it is not conclusive.*” R4 noted, “*Kama si hii redio, watu wengine hawangekuwa kitu kimoja*” (*If it were not for this radio, some couples would not have come back together*), highlighting its impact. R7 emphasized that presenters advised without coercion, leaving final decisions to participants. R9 praised the show’s good intentions, reflecting audience trust.

The producer identified unpredictability in participant engagement as a major challenge, with some switching off phones before scheduled calls due to fear or poor network. Success is measured by audience reactions via calls, SMS, and online comments, which is seen as indicators of topical relevance and emotional engagement. Presenters were confirmed by the producer having undergone marital counseling training to handle sensitive cases with empathy. Off-air counselors are also engaged when further intervention is needed.

These findings aligned with McIntyre and Sobel’s (2018) observation that media rarely resolved conflicts alone but could catalyze dialogue. From a Media Ecology Theory (MET) perspective, *Patanisho* reshapes conflict resolution by integrating traditional practices into a mediated format. Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) was also evident, as listeners engaged with the program for learning, entertainment, and emotional release. Even in non-reconciliation cases, PTS was seen to fulfilled audience needs by sparking reflection, offering vicarious learning, and sustaining emotional connection.

D. Opportunities Radio Offers in Marital Reconciliation

The fourth objective of the study was to examine the opportunities that radio presents in facilitating marital reconciliation. In this context, opportunity referred to the potential that radio programs possess in addressing marital conflicts and promoting reconciliation between couples. Through content analysis of selected *Patanisho* episodes, supported by interviews with the producer and listeners, radio emerged as a trusted and effective medium through which estranged couples reconnected. The episodes portrayed radio as a safe space where participants openly shared marital challenges in the hope of receiving help and emotional relief.

In Episode 65, a participant pleaded with his estranged wife, stating, “*Nakuongelesha kwa heshima mbele ya Wakenya wote, tafadhali nakuomba unisamehe*” (*I am respectfully speaking to you before all Kenyans, please forgive me*). This public appeal demonstrated trust in radio as a mediator, following separation caused by alcohol abuse and verbal aggression. The caller’s decision to seek reconciliation on air reflects remorse and belief in the platform’s potential to repair broken relationship.

Similarly, in Episode 45, a distressed caller shared, “*Mimi nilikuwa nataka nipewe ushauri... I’m confused*” (*I just wanted some advice... I’m confused*). His wife had left with their children, and despite repeated attempts, she remained unresponsive. Speaking on-air provided a sense of being heard, validated, and emotionally supported, while also creating a public channel through which his message could reach her. This illustrated reliance on *Patanisho* as a bridge when direct communication failed.

Episode 97 opened with another appeal: “*Naomba kupatanishwa na bibiyangu, Esther Njoki...*” (*I am requesting to be reconciled with my wife, Esther Njoki*). This reflects how participants recognized radio’s capacity to resolve marital conflict, particularly in moments of emotional vulnerability. Thell’s (2018) concept of radio counselling, where radio offers personalized help and shapes public perceptions of private problems, was evident in such cases.

Listeners also expressed confidence in radio’s role in reconciliation. R1 stated, “*Radio plays a huge role in reaching many people,*” emphasizing its accessibility via traditional sets, phone radios, car radios, and online streaming. R8 attributed trust to the presenters: “*People seem to have attached significant trust in the presenters, believing in their ability to mediate fairly.*” This credibility aligned with Radio Centre Academy’s assertion that effective presenters must speak with warmth, emotion, and humor to connect with audiences. Similarly, R5 noted, “*Ukiona mtu anakimbia kwa radio huwa anaona ndoa yake nikama inakatika*” (*When you see someone rushing to radio, it’s because they feel their marriage is about to collapse*), underscoring the urgency that drives participants to seek help.

In Episode 92, a caller named Brian explained, “*Nimejaribu kwa kila njia simpati, so nikaona niheri nilete kwa radio nipate kusaidika*” (*I’ve tried every possible way but couldn’t reach her, so I thought it’s better to bring it on radio and get some help*), demonstrating belief in the platform’s credibility.

The producer emphasized radio's potential to reconcile couples due to its reach, accessibility, and interactivity, noting, "The reason we came up with this segment is that we were receiving messages from people saying they had been hurt in their marriage... we came up with this segment to help them instead of just putting it like a topic." This confirmed that PTS was developed in response to direct audience needs, offering personalized engagement rather than generalized discussions.

These findings aligned with Thell (2018) and Paluck and Green (2009), who asserted that radio fosters empathy, normalizes constructive dialogue, and influences public attitudes. From a Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) perspective, audiences engaged with *Patanisho* to fulfill needs for information, emotional support, social connection, and problem-solving strategies. This underlined radio's potential to transcend entertainment, functioning as a powerful tool for social transformation, attitudinal change, and conflict resolution.

VII. DISCUSSION

The four objectives highlight *Patanisho* as a dynamic and culturally embedded program in marital reconciliation. The program's predictable structure, comprising case introduction, presenter mediation, and audience feedback, was found to foster emotional openness and trust (Halper, 2011). Viewed through the lens of Uses and Gratifications Theory, listeners engaged not only for entertainment but also to obtain emotional support, relational insight, and a sense of communal affirmation (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). Respondents consistently value the accessibility of radio and the credibility of its presenters, factors which enhanced the program's cultural relevance and emotional resonance (Awiti & Ong'ong'a, 2024). The structure thus functioned as a cultural script that allowed audiences to participate in the reconciliation process both cognitively and emotionally.

In terms of effectiveness, *Patanisho* offers an accessible and trusted alternative to conventional conflict resolution channels, serving as a free outlet for couples navigating marital disputes. Media Ecology Theory further explains how the radio environment transformed private struggles into shared narratives, thereby fostering social accountability and collective reflection (Scolari, 2012). This public mediation dynamic creates a unique space where listeners could witness, learn from, and relate to real-life conflicts and resolutions. Overall, *Patanisho* emerged as a culturally significant tool in Kenya for facilitating marital reconciliation, shaping public attitudes, and encouraging dialogue, even though it does not always achieve complete resolution (Paluck & Green, 2009; Thell, 2018; Radio Centre Academy, 2020).

VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusion

Patanisho stands out as a culturally rooted, emotionally engaging, and widely accessible radio program that effectively fosters marital reconciliation in Kenya. Its structured format, empathetic presenters, and high listenership have built trust and loyalty, making it a valued alternative to formal conflict resolution channels. The program's strength lies in its cultural

resonance, relatability, and ability to create a safe space for dialogue between conflicting partners. Through its authentic and interactive approach, it not only facilitates the resolution of disputes but also promotes forgiveness, mutual understanding, and social cohesion. The morning drive slot and afternoon repeats have ensured wide audience reach and message reinforcement. By maintaining its core values and responsiveness to community realities, *Patanisho* continues to shape public perceptions of reconciliation and strengthen interpersonal relationships. Ultimately, its model affirms radio's enduring role as a vital platform for promoting harmony and reflecting the lived experiences of its audience.

B. Recommendations

While this study demonstrated radio's transformative role in marital reconciliation, it identified areas for improvement to enhance impact. Extending the program's airtime would allow for deeper conversations and more thorough mediation, while the inclusion of a marriage expert could provide professional guidance and enrich discussions. The current host needs to maintain a neutral stance in all episodes to ensure fairness in addressing issues. Introducing a female co-host would further promote gender balance and foster inclusivity, while also contributing valuable perspectives and making female participants feel more represented. Additionally, strengthening ethical safeguards, such as using pseudonyms, anonymizing voices, and avoiding the disclosure of personal details, would protect participants' privacy and minimize the risk of stigma or social harm.

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