

Stereotypically Multidimensional: How Love Island Represents Black Women

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ABSTRACT

Reality television is a television genre that is rapidly growing on streaming services for its low production costs and rapid international distribution. In the contemporary media landscape media content frequently make topics such as diversity and inclusion an important point to make. Love Island a British reality program casts ordinary people to take a chance at winning fifty thousand pounds and love. By claiming diversity, shows such as Love Island are responsible for accurately representing diverse perspectives that exist in society to their audiences.

Although historically, minorities, especially black women, have persistently been misrepresented in the media. The negative representation of black women dates back to the 19th century with the rise of three stereotypes that are still common today. This study aims to determine how reality television programs such as Love Island represent diversity, most specifically, in black women.

Specifically, this research addresses representation theory, stereotypical characterization of black women in the media, construction of authenticity in a hyperreality environment, and the creation of narrative in order to fully convey the representation of black women on the show. In this context, the representation of black women contained media texts of Love Island that displayed language or images surrounding black women.

The data for this research was extracted from seasons 3 to 7 from Love Island through the streaming platform Videoland. Within these seasons, meaningful representation of black women takes place that met the analysis requirements set for this research. The analysis process of the data was conducted utilizing a combination of Qualitative Content Analysis, Thematic Analysis, and Narrative Analysis.

The results of this study show how aspects of traditional and contemporary stereotypes of

black women persist in Love Island and are transformed to fit the format of the show. Additionally, themes of authenticity were found in the data through honest language, playing the game, and loyalty. Furthermore, the findings of the narrative analysis established the stories of various black women represented their multi-dimensionality by focusing on romantic connection plot points and illustrating different types of protagonists in the show.

The findings of this study establish that through the transformation of the Mammy, Jezebel, and Sapphire stereotypes, along with the construction of authenticity and the analysis of the way black women's narratives are presented within the program, a multidimensional representation still incorporates negative racial stereotypes in their representation.

KEYWORDS: *Representation, reality tv, media, race, diversity*

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1 Introduction

The television media landscape has changed significantly in recent years. Contemporary television allows people to watch shows and movies through streaming services. Mainstream streaming services such as Netflix, HBO, and Disney+ develop countless reality television programs to gain new subscribing viewers and meet the need for new content (Shevenock, 2022). Additionally, the Covid-19 pandemic has halted the production of scripted shows while reality television programs continued production. According to Murray & Ouellette (2009), reality television is an appealing type of programming because of its low production costs, ease of international distribution, and lack of professional actors and writers. Such factors allow for these streaming services to stay competitively relevant.

One reality program, in particular, gathers viewers for its return each summer. ITV's Love Island is a British reality television series that debuted in 2015. The show is a revival of a previous celebrity-based Love Island that aired for two seasons in 2005 and 2006 (ITV, 2021). The current version of the show takes place every summer and casts non-famous, ordinary, contestants to spend eight to ten weeks in a villa in Spain in an attempt to find love. During the course of the show, an episode is aired every day and shows the Islanders going on dates, participating in challenges, and socializing with one another in the villa, all while being filmed by eighty cameras (ITV, 2021)

The genre of reality television represents a hyperreal environment to viewers (Chin-Yi, 2007) while claiming to provide a wide range of entertainment about real people (Hill, 2005). Murray & Ouellette (2009) argue that the manner in which reality television has contributed to the diversity represented on television is one of the most intriguing aspects of the genre.

Representation is how media illustrates diverse backgrounds, such as race, ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation (Griffen-Foley, 2004). Additionally, the success of television productions depends on the company's ability to reflect opinions and knowledge about people within society (Gray, 2004). Thus, diversity in reality television is important because it represents various perspectives of different people.

1.1 The Focus of This Study

Similar to reality television shows such as Big Brother, Love Island follows the surveillance method, where the contestants are filmed 24 hours a day and monitored constantly with personal microphones (L'Hoiry, 2019). Additionally, this format invites the viewers to feel connected to the journey of the contestants by participating in the show through votes (L'Hoiry, 2019).

Currently, the show completed its seventh season and with each season the show attracts

more returning viewers (Yossman, 2021). The acquired attention surrounding Love Island has led to research in Sociology surrounding the negative mental health effects of the contestants (Nichols, 2019) and the perpetuation of sexist attitudes towards women in hyperreality environments such as Love Island (Denby, 2021). While these previous analyses focus on various social issues and the representation of gender, this research will focus on the racial diversity that is represented in Love Island.

Adekaiyero (2021) criticizes Love Island for claiming to represent inclusiveness and transparency while the majority of the contestants and winners of the show have Eurocentric features. By claiming to be diverse, producers of reality television programs, such as Love Island, have the responsibility to accurately represent a diverse perspective to their audience. Representing Eurocentric, white, stories and perspectives convey the notion that one story is everyone's story. An accurate representation that reflects the reality of minorities' experiences, such as black women, is part of inclusion and transparency. This leads to the following main research question and three sub-questions for this thesis:

How are black women represented on Love Island UK?

Sub-question 1: How are stereotypes of black women represented in Love Island UK?

Sub-question 2: How is authenticity constructed in black women on Love Island UK?

Sub-question 3: In what way are narratives of black women created in Love Island UK?

This research focuses on different aspects of representation in order to fully convey the representation of black women on Love Island. First, theories surrounding representation and representation of black women in the media through stereotypes will serve as the groundwork for the concept of representation. Various studies on the stereotypical characterization of black women suggest that negative stereotypes are reinforced in the traditional as well as contemporary media landscape. These stereotypes have evolved into current misrepresentations of black women (Adams-Bass et al., 2014). During this research, traditional and contemporary stereotypes of black women in media will guide the data analysis process of the representation of black women on Love Island UK.

Furthermore, theories surrounding authenticity will clarify how Love Island UK constructs the authenticity of black women in the show. Literature on the genre discusses the importance of authenticity among contestants as reality television shows should occupy a more privileged position concerning the representation of the 'real' than fictional forms of television (Van Bauwel & Carpentier, 2010).

Finally, literary discussions surrounding narrative arcs in reality television programs ties into the representation of black women on Love Island. Riessman (2008) approaches narrativity by claiming that narratives are produced by the sequence and consequence of various media texts,

which is how events are chosen, arranged, related, and judged as relevant to an audience. The author distinguishes various forms of narrative analysis including thematic, interactional, and performative. However, this study will apply the structural approach in the data analysis process which emphasizes the way a story is told (Riessman, 2008).

1.3 This Research in Light of Academic Relevance

The scientific relevance of this study stems from previously done research on the representation of gender, race, sexuality, and disabilities which have become more relevant in the academic field in the last few decades (Brooks & Hébert, 2006; Stamps, 2020). The increasing research on this topic is because of the role media play within society regarding political, social, and economic issues (Brooks, & Hébert, 2006).

Furthermore, while there is research on the representation of black women in reality television shows from the early 2000s, such as The Real Housewives and Flava of Love (Gammage, 2017), there is limited research on current reality television shows and how representation changes as a result of industry developments. Thus, this research focuses on the representation of black women in contemporary reality television programs by analyzing Love Island UK.

1.4 This Research in Light of Societal Relevance

From a social perspective, reality television programs are relevant to research due to the increase in investments in reality TV by different television networks. Due to production delays caused by the pandemic, television networks have focused more on reality programs to keep customers engaged till scripted original programs return to the network according to their usual planning (Shevenock, 2022). With the contemporary emphasis on accurate representation of minorities within television (Murray & Ouellette, 2009), this study is relevant for media companies that create reality television programs with respect to the representation of black women.

Additionally, the findings of this study can provide insight to black women who potentially want to participate in Love Island UK. Media representation is important to consider when addressing the opinions present within society regarding issues such as gender, race, sexuality, and ethnicity (Griffen-Foley, 2004). Therefore, this research will provide deep and meaningful insights into the representation of stereotypes of black women through reality television by investigating Love Island UK. These insights can be provided useful for future cast members of the program or casting producers when it comes to acquiring participants for the show.

1.5 Organization of this Study

This section of the research provides an outline of the study. Chapter 2 consists of the Theoretical Framework, which provides an extensive literature review of the existing relevant literature and theory related to the representation of black women in media. This section goes in-depth about representation theory by Stuart Hall as well as how black women were historically portrayed in the media. This section will also cover theories surrounding hyperreality and how this relates to reality television. Moreover, this chapter discusses the construction of authenticity in reality television as well as narrativity in media texts.

Chapter 3 focuses on the research design of this thesis. The chapter will discuss the methodology through a description of the research design and the operationalization behind the research choices. The sampling choices are also explained along with the data collection. The chapter also outlines how the researcher will go about using qualitative content analysis, thematic analysis, and narrative analysis as combined methods for data analysis. Additionally, the chapter contains sections on ethical considerations and the overall credibility and reflexivity of the project.

The following chapter, Chapter 4, reflects on the results of the conducted analyses by describing and relating extracted codes into relevant segments of the theoretical framework. The main categories found during the data analysis process, namely Black Best Friend, Ice Queen, Bombshell, Playing the Game, Honest Language, Loyalty Exposure, Loveless Journey, and Journey to Find Love. Each category contributed to answering the overarching research question.

Lastly, Chapter 5 focuses on a discussion of the gained insights and answers to the posed research question and belonging sub-questions. Additionally, it provides the reached overall conclusion of this study along with its limitations and possibilities for future research in the context of the representation of black women in reality television.

2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter elaborates on the theoretical framework that will be utilized for this research. The theoretical framework aims to clarify the most relevant concepts of this study by discussing theories surrounding representation (Hall et al., 2013) and the representation of black women in the media (West, 1995). Furthermore, concepts surrounding hyperreality in reality television (Chin-Yi, 2007), the construction of authenticity in reality television (Hill, 2002; Biressi & Nunn, 2005), and narrativity (Riessman, 2008) in media texts will be discussed.

2.1 What it Means to Represent

Within media literature, Hall et al. (2013) developed representation theory which describes that representation is the construction of meaning through language. A language is defined as any object that works as a sign, such as a sound or a picture, that is structured with other signs in order to convey and express meaning. Within the theory, meaning is defined by the construction of what signs are present, absent, or different in a media text (Hall et al., 2013). Thus, a media text contains meaning based on the construction of the various symbols and signs depicted, as well as how they juxtapose with each other. In this way, the meaning can be challenged and disputed and the meaning of media texts changes over time.

This model recognizes three approaches. Firstly, the reflexive approach states that language reflects the literal meaning in the media. Secondly, the intentional approach expresses solely what the speaker means through language. Lastly, the constructionist approach clarifies that through representation, people construct meaning through concepts and signs, which contribute to the production of reality (Hall et al., 2013). Within this approach, representation theory argues that through certain juxtapositions of various signs, certain meanings are created. This approach clarifies that representation does not convey meaning through the material quality of the sign, but rather through its symbolic function. Thus, representations are not fixed in time and can evolve and change.

Furthermore, Hall et al. (2013) claim that society will become familiar with the representational process as a result of the regular repetition of such representations. Representation theory emphasizes that contemporary media channels are powerful means of representing and creating meaning in modern society. Particularly, Gillespie (1995) connects representation to television by arguing that television as a medium symbolizes variations of socially constructed speech. Thus, television connects language and the social world by representing models of speech, portraying patterns of sociable interaction, and providing shared resources for speaking (Gillespie, 1995). This research will focus on the constructionist approach outlined by Stuart Hall

(Hall et al., 2013), as this approach acknowledges that society constructs meaning by using representational systems, concepts, and signs.

Along with the observations made by Gillespie (1995) on television, Brooks & Hébert (2006) connect representation to media by claiming that representation is how media depicts different backgrounds, such as race, ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation. By examining different media constructions of gender and racial identity, the authors claim that the media has the ability to spread opinions of these represented notions on a massive scale.

While Hall et al. (2013), Gillespie (1995), and Brooks & Hébert (2006) discuss the meaning of representation and how this establishes in media texts, Gray (2004) connects media's representation to diversity by examining television's role in the relationship between race and society. The author argues that the success of television productions relies on the network's capability to represent opinions and knowledge about different people within society (Gray, 2004). Gammage (2017) further argues that the continuation of society's attitudes towards this opinion-based information constitutes successful television, not its accuracy.

This study will utilize the representation theory by Stuart Hall (Hall et al., 2013) as a base for this study. The constructionist definition of representation theory clarifies that media texts are able to represent certain ideas through concepts and signs, which contribute to the production of reality (Hall et al., 2013). This theory connects to findings from Brooks & Hébert (2006) who claim that representation is how media portrays various backgrounds, including race. Similarly, Gillespie (1995) specifically tied representation to the medium television by arguing that television symbolizes language used in the social world. The theories by these authors are important for this research, as these findings can be applied to the representation of black women in Love Island. Additionally, Gray (2004) and Gammage (2017) argue that the succession of television shows relies on the ability of the network to represent different people within a society according to its attitudes and not its accuracy.

2.2 Representation of Black Women in the Media

Moreover, understanding how black women are represented in the media is also relevant to the topic of this study. Existing research state that racial and ethnic groups are often confronted with negative stereotypes in the media (Mastro, 2008). Black women are no exception to this and are consequently judged more heavily than men and white women on matters such as promiscuity, attractiveness, and even skin tone (Walker, 1982; Esmail & Sullivan, 2006; Henry et al., 2010).

Crenshaw (1989) developed the term intersectionality, which describes the racially minimizing and gender marginalization issues black women face such as colorism and hypersexualization. Walker (1982) defines colorism as the prejudicial or preferential treatment of

individuals belonging to the same racial or ethnic minority group based upon physical features, most notably skin tone. Based on this definition, Wilder (2015) refers to the term colorism as the unequal treatment and discrimination of individuals belonging to the same racial or ethnic minority group based upon differences in physical features. This most notably entails skin complexion, but also facial features, and hair texture. Colorism is a form of prejudice that targets people with a dark complexion. Colorism arose as a result of the convergence of “needs, beliefs, justifications, and practices had the effect of placing white skin at a premium and dehumanizing black skin” (Norwood, 2015, p. 592). Thus, colorism describes the beneficial treatment of individuals with lighter skin tones while degrading people with darker skin tones.

Furthermore, for black women, skin tone was especially important, as studies suggest that the darker their complexion, the less likely they were to be sought out as love partners (Esmail & Sullivan, 2006; Glenn, 2008). Glenn (2008) discovered that lighter complexions, especially in women, were considered more attractive and symbolized prosperity and status, while women with darker complexions were seen as unintelligent, unattractive, and dishonest.

Steele (2016), connects intersectionality and colorism to the media by observing how lighter-skinned actors star in major roles in order to appeal to a larger audience. The author states that a possible solution for the effect of colorism in the media is to adjust the selection process to ensure equal representation of actors and actresses in stories that promote their equal status as humans of equal value.

While this is a good possible solution, often media representations of matters such as race, gender, and sexuality still appear through stereotypes. Appiah (2008) establishes a direct link between stereotypes and the media by arguing that the media is a powerful force due to its ability to develop, reinforce, and validate stereotypical beliefs concerning groups of people. Most essentially, Appiah (2008) argues that media representations should contain accurate and diversified depictions.

However, the media misrepresentation of black women can be traced back to the 19th century as negative stereotypes of black women arose from foreign interpretations of black women. These negative stereotypical depictions evolved into stereotyped characterizations of black women as the Mammy, the Jezebel, and the Sapphire (West, 1995). Adams-Bass et al. (2014) build on this theory by arguing that the characterizations of black women have also evolved into contemporary versions in the media.

The Mammy stereotype, which originated in the South of the United States after slavery, depicts black women as asexual, maternal, subservient, and puts the needs of others ahead of her own. With the portrayal of this stereotype through Margaret Mitchell from *Gone with the Wind* or Viola Davis as Aibileen Clark in *The Help*, the media attempts to recreate the image of the loyal,

happy Mammy and away from its connotation with slavery (West, 2008).

The Sapphire, on the other hand, is portrayed as a black woman who emasculates black males as well as being angry and loud. This stereotype is based on the character Sapphire from the 1943 Amos 'n' Andy Show, who portrayed these characteristics (West, 2008). Lastly, the Jezebel stereotype arose in order to justify the sexual abuse and hyper-sexualization of enslaved black women (West, 2008). The Jezebel is seen as a beautiful, hypersexual, and manipulative black woman such as Sugar Hill and Simone in the film *Mona Lisa* (West, 1995).

Various studies on the subject suggest that negative stereotypes are reinforced in the contemporary media landscape and have evolved into current misrepresentations of black women (Adams-Bass et al., 2014). In contemporary media, the Sapphire has been separated into two types: powerful black women and angry black women. These two representations portray black women as sassy, capable of handling anything, and stern (Adams-Bass et al., 2014). Boylorn (2008) further argues that the representation of Sapphire is prevalent in reality television through his autoethnographic research. His research highlights that Coral from *The Real World* and New York from *I Love New York* and *The Flavor of Love* depict these black women with various traits of the Sapphire stereotype. Boylorn (2008) further argues that this stereotypical depiction allows for reality television participants to gain temporary celebrity for being disrespectful, ignorant, confrontational, and promiscuous. In this case, the incentive of fame allows producers to continue to depict black women in this way.

Additionally, the Mammy also has a contemporary role where black women in media are still seen as caretakers, taking care of others before their needs. Anyiwo (2016) categorizes the modern-day Mammy as the Black Best Friend, who is an updated stereotypical depiction of black women that transforms aspects of the Mammy stereotype into a one-dimensional depiction of a black woman who solely exists to offer emotional support, give advice or serve the white protagonist in their needs. The author analyzes this trope through the character of Tara Thornton in *True Blood*. In their findings, the Black Best Friend is loyal, honest, wise, confident, and most importantly does not have a life outside of the white protagonist's narrative.

The modern-day Jezebel is shown as 'gold diggers,' women who exploit men for financial gain, 'video vixens,' sexualized women who feature in music videos, and 'welfare queens,' women who neglect their children while collecting welfare checks (Adams-Bass et al., 2014).

The contemporary tropes of black women persist in their negative nature, as they characterize the black women into one dimension, such as angry or stern, and diminish the multifaceted experience as a black woman. Gammage (2017) builds on this by arguing that the evolution of these stereotypes in the media continues an inaccurate representation of black women.

Contrary to generally unscripted television, such as reality television, in scripted television there has been more representation of black women in leading roles in programs such as *Scandal*, *Insecure*, and *How to Get Away with Murder* (Cox & Ward, 2019). Although black women in these shows are portrayed with high status in their occupation and environment, exhibiting the multi-dimensionality of black women, the characters nevertheless incorporate components of traditional negative stereotypes such as being angry, sassy, and sexual which devalues their representation (Cox & Ward, 2019).

Various media studies on the representation of black women in the media clearly identify three reoccurring patterns of how media productions represent black women. West (2008), Adams-Bass et al. (2014), Boylorn (2008), and Anyiwo (2016) define the traditional and contemporary stereotypical depictions of the Mammy, the Jezebel, and the Sapphire and clarify how these stereotypes misrepresent black women in the media. Moreover, Gammage (2017) and Cox & Ward (2019) acknowledge that despite the diverse representation of black women in the media, negative stereotypes persist. For this research, the representation of black women in the media is relevant to clarify and more specifically how this group is represented in the sub-genre of reality television.

2.3 Hyperreality on a Screen

This study focuses on the genre of reality television. Orbe (2008) labels reality television as a genre that covers a wide range of formats, including talk, competition, and court shows. Dowd (2006) specifically refers to the genre as a form of programming, whether scripted or not, that offers its viewers an apparent real depiction of individuals as well as issues. Furthermore, Dowd (2006) claims that the key characteristic of this genre is that it asks the audience to view the contestants on the program as real individuals and not actors.

While reality television is assumed to be real or reality-based, Orbe (2008) argues that the reality depicted in reality television programs implicitly speaks to its unreal nature. A reality-based concept that takes place in an unreal environment was coined as hyperreality by Baudrillard et al. (1988). The authors identified hyperreality by analyzing how an audience makes a distinction between reality and the simulation of reality depicted on a screen. Chin-Yi (2007) ties reality TV to findings by Baudrillard et al. (1988) by claiming that the genre blurs the distinctions between hyperreality and reality itself and eventually represents a manufactured image. Derrida et al. (2008), previously classified this distinction as artifactuality, where a television production is constructed rather than a presentation of recorded events.

Additionally, Derrida et al. (2008), claim that reality television is appealing to an audience because even though it is scripted, the genre offers the illusion of spontaneity and is undirected by capturing the authentic, as well as character flaws onscreen. The appeal of reality TV, according to

Chin-Yi (2007) and Derrida et al. (2008), is also attributed to its live aspects, telepresence, and the space it creates for the coming of an event whose expectation is based on a nonexpectation. As a result, reality television provides a level of variety, diversity, and spontaneity that we do not witness in scripted television shows

Additionally, Chin-Yi (2007) states that reality television distinguishes itself from other forms of televised media because of its banality. Many academics consider the first season of The Real World, which aired in 1992, to represent the start of modern reality television (Wayne, 2015; Graham, 2017; Kühne & Opree, 2020). Chin-Yi (2007) argues that programs such as The Real World and Big Brother differentiated from media coverage surrounding serious events such as news, by rediscovering daily life. Big Brother and The Real World are programs that popularized the subgenres of 'documentary soap' and 'competition shows'. Within these subgenres, contestants live together for the duration of the show and build relationships with one another while completing different challenges (Obre, 2008).

Corner (2002) clarifies that these programs fall into the realm of 'post-documentary', where reality television participants perform the real for the judgment of the audience. Love Island, like Big Brother, records its contestants 24 hours a day in order to generate an episode daily in real-time, offering viewers an almost live experience. (L'Hoiry, 2019). In this format, the contestants are constantly surveilled, making mundane activities plotlines of the show, such as having conversations and working out. Chin-Yi (2007) argues that these mundane events are able to become plotlines because of creating a spectacle of banality. Within these reality television shows, ordinary actions such as socializing, gossiping, and domestic disputes that occur in people's daily lives are elevated to elevate people as media objects rather than events.

However, Love Island differentiates itself from other forms of hyperreality television by enabling the audience by allowing them to steer the show by voting. Thereby the show co-produces with the audience. This surveillance format of reality television further affirms to the audience that what is seen on the show are real representations of the contestants, despite the existing factors of editing and scripted scenes (L'Hoiry, 2019).

2.4 Authentically Playing the Game

Authenticity comes into question when according to observations, the knowledge that one is constantly being watched to entertain others might influence how contestants present themselves during casting and filming (Biressi & Nunn, 2005). The authors researched this by examining the contestants from the UK's Big Brother 4 where different participants of the show discuss strategies to appeal to the public through the performance of authenticity. The awareness

and outspokenness of various authenticity strategies of other contestants caused John, a contestant on Big Brother UK 4, to be eliminated but later re-introduced in the show to revive the dynamics of the remaining contestants.

Strategies of authenticity are used according to Hill (2002) because audiences observe for moments of authenticity from the contestants where they are 'really' themselves in an unreal environment by referring to their previous knowledge of the contestants as well as self-knowledge, and how they would act in a similar situation. In this sense, authenticity is constructed based on what a media text represents as their 'real' personality.

However, strategies to appeal to the public through the performance of authenticity can also be categorized as 'playing the game.' Although reality television programs frequently take the form of competitions with a prize as the incentive, acting manipulatively in public to win the game is frowned upon (Jones, 2003). This is because while filming the shows, the events that participants go through become the real lives of the contestants, and therefore the game becomes their reality (Jones, 2003). When a contestant is outwardly playing the game, they ruin the illusion of the actor as a real person. Despite the fact that the image presented on screen is constructed, as long as there are few discrepancies between public image and private life, the illusion is successfully maintained (Horton & Wohl, 1956: 226). Thus, authenticity is constructed in contestants when they are not outwardly 'playing the game', but come across as genuine and their 'real' selves.

Biressi & Nunn (2005) build on this by claiming that despite the artificial filming conditions of reality television programs, audiences expect cameras to capture 'real' interactions with genuine or contrived provocations and circumstances. Thus, authenticity is an important aspect of the representation and perception of contestants.

Additionally, authenticity within reality television contestants can be influenced by the public vote (Bignell, 2014). While Biressi & Nunn (2005) argue that the knowledge that one is being filmed might influence how they present themselves, Bignell (2014) claims that the public vote also challenges the 'real' persona of a contestant rather than what is represented because participants are required to perform a persona that suits their situation and endears them to the audience and their votes. While the contestant creates a persona, the reality television program constructs their emotional realism and personal revelation as truthful, therefore authentic (Biressi & Nunn, 2005).

Biressi & Nunn (2005) further specify that the genre of reality TV produces authenticity through tropes of 'revelation', truth-telling, and exposure. The authors define the revelation trope as emotional performance. This entails the capturing of 'real' emotional revelations within reality television. Next to that, truth-telling is described as the truthful language reality TV contestants use. The truthfulness is determined by contrasting scenes that contradict or affirm their language. The last trope, exposure, is when reality TV constructs authenticity through the exhibition of emotions

such as personal pain, suffering, joy, and individual success.

The construction of authenticity through tropes and strategies is important to reality television programs because public interaction through voting or social media functions as drivers to increase audience investment in the live element as it builds momentum through the season (Hill, 2014). Thus, while the contestant performs a persona, it is important for the show to construct this as authentic as the incorporation of interactive components, such as public voting, are steps toward the central staging of live media experiences that is fundamental to the success of reality shows (Hill, 2014).

2.5 Narrativity Within Reality TV

Finally, theories surrounding narrativity in television programs are relevant to the representation of black women in this study. Media texts represent people through the stories, or narratives, that are presented. Within the frame of this study, narrativity is tied to the representation of black women by determining whether the show represents diversified narratives of black women or portrays this minority group through one lens.

Polkinghorne (1988) defines a narrative as a story about a set of connected events that organizes time, memory, and events. Fisher (1984) further argues that narratives function rhetorically to convey a meaning that extends beyond the context of the story. Thus, narratives aid in the communication of a message of the text. In addition to these definitions, Riessman (2008) argues that diverse media texts are established as narratives by their sequence and consequence, which is how events are selected, organized, connected, and evaluated as meaningful for an audience. Keating (2013) connects this to reality television by stating that even though reality TV is considered to be unscripted, most programs acquire writers to craft wording for the host and occasionally for other participants, while producers and editors guide the formation of the narrative within a certain format. Furthermore, Mittell (2010) examined how shows use footage from previous episodes at the start of a new episode, voiceovers, and flashbacks to help viewers make sense of the complex television narratives.

Additionally, Riessman (2008) points out that narratives do not speak for themselves but require interpretation when used in research. Polkinghorne (1988) distinguishes an analysis of narratives from narrative analysis. While narrative analysis uses literary concepts like plots and motifs to make sense of data that may not initially read like stories, data in which events may appear discontinuous or isolated, but which can be interpreted with storytelling in mind, is different from an analysis of narratives in that it collects stories and organizes them thematically (Polkinghorne, 1988). For this research, the former is more relevant, as narrative analysis explores plots and motives that make up a story.

Mihas & Odum Institute (2019) further specify that plot leads to motivations, conflicts, resolutions, and transformations within a narrative. Polkinghorne (1988) claims that linking these four elements together and identifying the effect one event has on the other provides a complete picture of a narrative. Furthermore, Polkinghorne (1988) highlights two basic plot types: the 'tragic' plot type and the 'comedy' plot type. Within the tragic plot type, the protagonist of the narrative achieves their goal, whereas in the comedy plot type the protagonist does not achieve the narrative goal. The author further explains that there are several variations within these two basic plot types that deal with various moves inside the narrative toward the goal, satisfaction, and away from it, disappointment, before the final result.

In order to interpret various narratives, Riessman (2008) developed various methods that focus on different areas of narrative analysis. Within thematic narrative analysis, Riessman (2008) emphasizes the content of a text. The interest in this method lies in the content of speech to interpret what is said by focusing on the meaning that can be found in a story.

Secondly, Riessman (2008) states that structural narrative analysis shifts the emphasis to the way a story is told. Riessman (2008) organizes structural narrative in six parts: abstract, which describes the summary of the story. The orientation stage describes the situation, time, and place of the story while the complication stage describes the turning point in a plot. Furthermore, the evaluation describes where the narrator steps back from the action to communicate their feelings. This is followed by the resolution, which describes the outcome of the plot and ends with coda, which ends the story and brings it back to the present. These six elements are based upon William Labov's (1972) priori codes he utilized during his approach to narrative analysis. Riessman (2008) further connects structural narrativity to Labov's (1972) findings that this approach focuses on the function of the overall narrative. However, Riessman (2008) highlights that not all stories contain all six elements and that they can occur in varying sequences.

Moreover, interactional analysis is another distinction. This approach emphasizes the dialogic process between the teller and listener. While attention to thematic content and narrative structure are not abandoned in this approach, interest shifts to storytelling as a process of co-construction, where the storyteller and listener create meaning collaboratively (Riessman, 2008).

The last approach by Riessman (2008) is performative analysis. Extending the interactional paradigm, storytelling is regarded as a performance by a person with a past who involves, persuades, and moves an audience through language and gesture, doing rather than talking alone. As the stage metaphor indicates, interest goes beyond the spoken word. The performative method can take several forms, from dramaturgy to narrative as praxis, or social action (Riessman, 2008).

With these different approaches, Riessman (2008) points out that narratives are useful in research because storytellers interpret the past rather than reproduce it exactly as it occurred. The

'truths' of narrative stories lie less in their accurate depictions of the past but rather in the shifting connections they create between past, present, and future.

Since this research focuses on how black women are represented in Love Island, the structural approach to narrativity by Riessman (2008) is especially important as it focuses on the way a story is told. Additionally, the fact that this approach structurally outlines various stages is useful for the data analysis process of this research.

3 Methodology

The following chapter describes the methodology used within this thesis, as well as why it was chosen as the best method to address the research question at hand. Throughout this chapter, section 3.1 describes the overall research design that will be implemented within this study. Secondly, section 3.2 thoroughly describes the sampling process and the units of analysis utilized for this research. Next, section 3.3 consists of operationalizing the most important concepts that are relevant to this study. Section 3.4 addresses the combination used of Qualitative Content Analysis and Thematic Analysis to analyze the collected data for this research. Lastly, section 3.5 describes the reliability and validity of this research along with possible limitations of the research.

3.1 Research Design

This research outlines a research question regarding the representation of black women in Love Island UK. Additionally, three sub-questions were developed along with the main question. During the course of this research, a combination of qualitative research methods of Qualitative Content Analysis (herein: QCA), Thematic Analysis, and Narrative Analysis is used in the analysis process of this research.

Qualitative research is an appropriate method for this study since it emphasizes a wide range of meanings and truths, as well as the researcher's active participation in the process (Brennen, 2017). Furthermore, qualitative research, according to Kvale (1996), does not lead to objective and scientific knowledge, but rather meaningful subjective relations to be interpreted. The author further argues that qualitative research does not yield generalizable results, but rests on subjective impressions that are intersubjective; different interpreters find different meanings.

Brennen (2017) states that qualitative research uses language to comprehend various concepts based on the experience of people and strives to make sense of interpersonal interactions. This applies to this study, due to the interest surrounding the representation of black women in the media and theories surrounding authenticity, stereotypes, and narrative in reality television. Boeije (2009) further argues that qualitative research aims to comprehend how meanings and opinions are ascribed to the core topic of a study.

In order to come to an answer for this research, the most important concepts will be operationalized in the frame of this research. The operationalization defines the concepts within the frame of this research and serves as a guide for the data analysis.

The data analysis uses a combination of a deductive and an inductive approach. This deductive approach is complemented by an inductive approach in regards to patterns found in the data during the thematic analysis. QCA and thematic analysis utilize coding in order to analyze the collected data. For the initial stage of coding, QCA will be utilized due to its data-reducing nature

while remaining a flexible analysis method (Schreier, 2012). Thus, open coding will be utilized with QCA to analyze the texts and images regarding the representation of black women in Love Island UK. The flexible aspect of QCA allows for Thematic Analysis to be utilized in the axial and selective stages of coding where the codes will be organized into themes that are based on the theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, Narrative Analysis will be applied to this research to analyze how Love Island UK represents black women through the narratives that are being told based on the structural analysis stages described by Riessman (2008). This will further be expanded upon in the data analysis section.

3.2 Data Collection

Since Love Island UK is a reality television program, the data collection will be drawn from existing data. The episodes will be collected from Videoland, an online streaming platform, and this study will obtain the episode count and numbering as described on this platform. Each season of the show contains 30 to 60 episodes of forty minutes to an hour. Given the extensive amount of data, Love Island episodes can be categorized into the following categories: recoupling episodes, weekly recap episodes, introduction episodes, finale episodes, and regular episodes (Rihter, 2022). Within the category of regular episodes, the sub-categories: Casa Amor episodes, final date episodes, and family visit episodes are also differentiated from each other.

Given the nature of this research, the sampling selection for the unit of analysis is purposive. Purposive sampling is described as an approach that is often used in content analysis studies and relies on the judgment of the researcher (Kyngäs et al., 2011).

Additionally, Maxwell (2013) argues that it is important to choose a unit of analysis that is critical to the research question. Thus, only episodes that are relevant to the representation of black women on Love Island will be analyzed in this study. Within Love Island, solely season 3 through 7 consists of relevant participation of black women. While previous seasons have featured black women, they did not have a meaningful role in the season, meaning that they did not have a storyline within the season, such as Casey from season 2 who was introduced to the men along with other women but was not chosen to enter the villa.

Furthermore, Babbie (2020) establishes purposive sampling as a form of non-probability sampling where units of analysis are selected based on the researcher's judgment. Because the focus is on the portrayal of black women, and not every episode of Love Island represents the unit of study, purposive sampling was chosen as the most appropriate sample strategy. By utilizing this strategy, the researcher will concentrate on data population features that are pertinent to answering the research question (Bryman, 2012).

After the initial viewing of the episodes, an episode had to meet certain criteria to be

selected for the data analysis. First, the chosen episodes have to contain meaningful participation from black women. This includes having an introduction, having a confessional scene where they express their thoughts, interacting with other islanders, and having a storyline throughout the show. Meaningful participation is important in order to determine how black women are represented in Love Island.

Another selective choice made in this research is that the recap episodes will not be included in the sampling procedure, as they do not contain new relevant information to the show and are considered bloopers of the show. Thus, these episodes will be excluded from the research. With these criteria, various episodes will be analyzed using QCA and thematic analysis. These same sampling criteria will be obtained when selecting which narratives of which black women will be analyzed.

Based upon these criteria, 166 episodes are analyzed across season 3 to season 7 (See Appendix A). Additionally, the narratives from the following eleven Love Island UK contestants are analyzed, namely: Montana from season 3, Samira from season 4, Amber, Yewande, and Jourdan from season 5, Sophie, Leanne, and Clarisse from season 6, and Kaz, Rachel, and Clarisse from season 7 (See Appendix C).

3.3 This Study's Important Concepts

In order to answer the central question of this research, three sub-questions were established that touch upon different areas of representation of black women, namely: 'How are stereotypes of black women represented in Love Island UK?', 'How is authenticity constructed in black women on Love Island UK?' and 'In what way are narratives of black women created in Love Island UK?'.

This study uses an inductive approach, where the relevant concepts are defined by previous academic research established in the theoretical framework in order to give the data analysis process a direction (Boeije, 2009). During the further stages of the coding process, such as the axial and selective coding stages of thematic analysis, the concepts are further established as overarching themes for the thematic analysis. Thus, balancing previously conducted research on the topic of representation of black women and applying it to the insights from this study forms a theoretical thematic analysis (Boeije, 2009).

This research centers around the representation of black women and it is essential to operationalize the definition of this group in the frame of this research. Previous academic literature state that black women, in particular, have distinctive experiences compared to other marginalized groups because of intersectionality and colorism (Crenshaw, 1989; Wilder, 2015). This most notably entails skin complexion, but also facial features, and hair texture. Steele (2016) argues

that by casting individuals with a lighter complexion, colorism manifests in the media. Within this research, the various complexions of black women will be taken into consideration when it comes to their representation on Love Island UK. During the analysis process, the researcher will assess whether a contestant is a black woman by looking at their complexion, as well as observe for descriptions surrounding ethnicity or ethnic backgrounds.

Moreover, the concepts of the sub-questions are also important to operationalize. The first sub-question 'How are stereotypes of black women represented in Love Island UK?' is derived from literature that discusses the characterization of black women through stereotypes (West, 2008; Adams-Bass et al., 2014). These theories identify three main stereotypes that exist about black women in the media: Mammy, Jezebel, and Sapphire. Literature also discusses the modern depictions of these stereotypes and how they have evolved to fit modern television. During the data analysis stage of this research, the traditional and contemporary stereotypes will be considered in the representation of black women of Love Island UK. According to West (2008), these three different stereotypes decipher women according to the following attributes (See table 1). These aspects and definitions will be utilized for the thematic analysis. During the analysis process, the researcher will analyze the media texts and images for these stereotypical attributes of black women in Love Island UK.

Table 1

Operationalization of stereotypes of Black Women according to West (2008).

Stereotype	Attribute	Definition
Mammy	Asexual	Depicts black women as unable to be sexual
	Caregiver	Depicts black women as maternal, caring for others
	Self-sacrificing	Depicts black women as putting others' needs above her own
Jezebel	Beautiful	Depicts black women as worthy of attention due to their external beauty
	Hypersexual	Depicts black women as sexually promiscuous with sexually explicit behavior and words

	Manipulative	Depicts black women as manipulating men for (sexual) self-gain
	Angry	Depicts black women as expressing anger
	Loud	Depicts black women as expressing themselves louder than others
Sapphire		
	Strong	Depicts black women as being emotionally strong
	Emasculates	Depicts black women as obtaining dominant masculine traits that emasculates men

Secondly, the sub-question 'How is authenticity constructed in black women on Love Island UK?' is supported by literary discourse about authenticity in reality television programs. Hill (2002) states that audiences observe moments of authenticity from reality TV contestants where they appear to be their authentic selves in an unreal environment. Biressi & Nunn (2005) further specify that authenticity is constructed within reality television contestants through tropes of 'revelation', truth-telling, and exposure. These tropes reveal that authenticity is constructed within reality TV contestants through various elements. Biressi & Nunn (2005) define revelation as emotional performance. Scenes where black women are depicted as having a breakdown, confessional scenes, or personal revelations will be analyzed.

The second trope 'truth-telling' reveals the truthfulness of the emotions of black women. This research includes an analysis of scenes that challenge the truthfulness of a black woman, a black woman speaking to a fellow contestant contrasted with a confessional scene where they retract their statement.

Lastly, exposure is exhibitions of emotions such as personal pain, suffering, joy, and individual success. Thus, scenes where the emotions are exposed such as joy and staying faithful to the romantic connection through depictions of loyalty in recouplings. Within this research, these three tropes will be utilized in the coding stages of the data analysis. During the thematic analysis process, media texts regarding these tropes will be used to analyze how authenticity is constructed in black women on Love Island UK.

Lastly, the sub-question 'Which narratives of black women are created on Love Island UK?' is applied to this research through literature and analysis methods surrounding narrativity in media.

Within academic literature, a narrative is the sequence and consequence of media texts, which is how events are chosen, arranged related, and judged as relevant to an audience (Riessman, 2008).

While Riessman (2008) has different approaches to narrative analysis, this research will utilize the structural approach as this approach focuses on the way a story is told, which can be applied to the way Love Island represents black women. The structural narrative approach is divided into six parts: an abstract, orientation, complication, evaluation, resolution, and coda. These elements according to Riessman's (2008) theory on how to conduct narrative analysis, will be utilized in this research as it focuses on the function of the overall narrative. The following table clarifies the definition of each stage along with how it will be applied in this study (see table 2).

Table 2

Operationalization of the six stages of structural narrative analysis according to Riessman (2008)

Stages	Definition	Applied in research
Abstract	Summary of the narrative.	Summary of plot of the black woman is given.
Orientation	The time, place, characters, and situation of the narrative.	The season, the episode span, the year it takes place, the country the islanders stay in, and the central actors of the plot (protagonist, antagonist) is given.
Complication	The plot sequence with a crisis point in the plot.	This stage describes the crisis or turning point in plot, which is expanded on from the 'abstract' stage.
Evaluation	This describes when the narrator steps back from the action of the events to comment on meaning and communicate emotions felt.	How black woman feels about the situation. This will be derived from confessional scenes or when black woman is having conversation with other islander about how they feel in the situation.
Resolution	The outcome of the plot is described.	The solution to the crisis turning point of plot, which will be expanded on from the 'abstract' stage.

Coda	This phase ends the story and brings it back to the present time.	Ending of the plot of the black woman. This describes how the black woman ends her time in the villa and for what reason.
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3.4 Analyzing Love Island

The data for this study will be analyzed utilizing a combination of QCA, Thematic Analysis, and Narrative Analysis. After the initial viewing of the episodes where the episodes were chosen, the episodes are watched again where a relevant description of events and details are noted, namely: the verbal, non-verbal, and behavioral communication of the Islanders.

According to Boeije (2009), the coding process of qualitative data consists of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The open codes will be created using QCA, where the data will be categorized (Schreier, 2012). After this, the axial and selective codes will be defined using thematic analysis whereby themes related to the representation of black women will be linked.

QCA is an analysis method that is characterized by three factors, namely: data reduction, a systematic approach, and flexibility. Due to the extensive amount of data, data reduction within QCA limits the data analysis to relevant aspects of the literature. (Groeben & Rustemeyer, 2011). This is contrary to the majority of qualitative data analysis approaches that focus on opening up data, acquiring new knowledge, and combining this in new ways.

Additionally, the systematic nature of QCA makes the method distinctive (Schreier, 2012). This method always follows the same stages in each research, namely that all relevant material is taken into consideration, a sequence of steps is followed during the analysis regardless of the material, and the coding must be checked for consistency and reliability.

This systematic nature will provide structure when navigating through different seasons of Love Island UK. Schreier (2012) argues that the consistency in QCA is also referred to as reliability. Reliability has its roots in quantitative research, where it is used to examine the quality of instruments (Schreier, 2014). However, reliability in a QCA coding frame can be accomplished by looking for consistency amongst codes or a timespan. After completing the analysis of each season, the researcher will review whether consistency resides among the codes.

Furthermore, QCA is a versatile approach in that the researcher must always adapt the coding frame to the content to achieve dependability and legitimacy (Boyatzis, 1998; Rustemeyer, 1992). Due to the flexible nature of QCA, it is possible to combine this method with thematic analysis for the refinement of the coding frame and allow for themes to emerge from the data that is tied to the literature used in this research. Within this research, each season of Love Island will be analyzed by creating a table that consists of the episodes, time of event, description and direct

quote that supports this quote, and keywords that describe this event. These steps will be repeated for each season.

In the second step of coding, axial coding, the researcher focuses on reducing the initial number of codes. This is done by connecting similarities between different open codes and combining similar codes under corresponding themes (Boeije, 2009). Regarding the research question, this provides a better sense of how black women are represented in Love Island by taking into account representation theory, stereotypes of black women in media, authenticity theory, and narrative theory. The axial and selective coding stages are supported with the tool Atlas.ti

This research incorporates thematic analysis for the axial and selective stages of coding. This method is popular for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within data (Boyatzis, 1998). Thematic analysis minimally organizes and describes the data set in rich detail and interprets various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998).

Additionally, Braun & Clarke (2006) argue that thematic analysis emphasizes the interpretations by examining and transforming research data to identify and report essential patterns, or themes, within the data. Thus, a theme represents meaning within the data set that is captured by the researcher with respect to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Furthermore, Braun & Clarke (2006) state that thematic analysis follows different phases: familiarizing with the data, data coding, categorizing codes into themes, reviewing and improving themes, and producing results with a report. However, Kuckartz (2014) suggests using different phases that differentiate from Braun and Clarke's (2006) phases when it comes to developing codes. While Braun and Clarke (2006) focus on creating codes that are then aggregated into themes, Kuckartz (2014) focuses on developing topical themes and applying them to the data to create initial codes. In this approach, the themes are created in an earlier stage of the analysis process and during the reviewing stage of the codes, sub-themes are created.

The axial and selective coding stages in this research will follow the stages according to Braun & Clarke (2006), while also applying sub-categories as described by Kuckartz (2014). In both approaches, Braun & Clarke (2006) mention that coding will be influenced by whether the themes are more inductive, data-driven, or deductive, theory-driven. This research allows for a combination of an inductive and a deductive approach, by allowing initial open codes to emerge from the research while applying overarching themes that correspond with the theories described in the theoretical framework.

Strauss (1998) argues that axial coding identifies the relationship between open codes to developing core codes. Core codes emerge as aggregates of the most closely interrelated or overlapping open codes for which supporting evidence is strong. The researcher needs to engage in continuous analysis, cross-referencing, and refinement of theme categorization to achieve this

(Williams & Moser, 2019). This leads to the last step in the coding process to take place, namely selective coding. During this step, the core codes that emerge from axial coding are refined into relevant wider themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Boeije, 2009). These selective codes provide overarching themes within this research that will aid in answering the research question at hand, which will be discussed thoroughly in the next chapter. The main coding tree for this research can be localized in Appendix B.

Finally, narrative analysis will be applied along with QCA and thematic analysis in this research to analyze the collected data. Braun & Clarke (2006) state that thematic approaches are especially useful for examining cases and showing parallels and contrasts across a dataset, whereas narrative analysis, according to Riessman (1993) takes the story that is presented as the object of investigation. Thus, narrative analysis does not analyze what the events or phenomena mean across the data set but rather analyzes the story itself. In this case, the stories, or narratives, are viewed as events themselves that are worthy of investigation (Mihas & Odum Institute, 2019). Fenton & Langley (2011) further argue that narrative analysis enables the focus on narrative elements in qualitative data material and develops sensitivity for understanding themes within a context.

For this research, narrative analysis is an appropriate method that will be applied separately from thematic analysis, as it will focus on the representation of black women in the context of the stories that are presented of black women in Love Island UK. Within academic literature, narrative points to the referential meaning, which is the content of the story, as well as the evaluative meaning, which is the inflection of the narrator (Labov & Waletzky, 1997).

Literature surrounding narrative analysis discusses various manners to approach this method. The way narrative analysis can be organized depends on the research question and the form of data, such as interviews, scripted text, or focus groups (Daiute, 2013). Riessman (2008) discusses various approaches, such as a functional approach, which analyzes the plots, events solutions, and settings of a narrative whereas a performative approach analyzes who narrates, when, and why.

With such distinctive approaches, it is important to apply a suited approach to this research. Thus, the researcher will apply the structural approach of narrative (Riessman, 2008). This approach will focus on the way a story is told (Riessman, 2008) as well as what function the narrative serves (Pavlenko, 2009). In order to perform structural narrative analysis, this research will categorize the narrative of each black woman and code it according to the six stages presented in table 2. These stages help analyze the way black women's narratives are presented in Love Island.

3.5 Reliability & Validity

It is important for research to be evaluated for its quality. Although quantitative research has a logical structure on validity and reliability by referring to the exact replicability of the process and results, qualitative research also possesses elements to ensure the quality of the research. A limitation of qualitative research is that it is more prone to be influenced by researcher bias, therefore interpreting the data is more subjective. However, to ensure reliability, it is important to be detailed and transparent with the description of the research design and analysis method (Silverman, 2011). This allows for replicability of research, which entails the notion of a researcher conducting the same research under the same circumstances should also result in the same findings, interpretations, and claims (Silverman, 2011).

Furthermore, the quotes utilized in the data analysis process were transcribed by the researcher by listing the season, episode, and time stamp of which the scene takes place along with the corresponding quote. This allowed the researcher to have dialogue pieces of the show in a written format. Moreover, with the extensive coding process of qualitative content and thematic analysis, the researcher was reflexive with the codes and the codes were refined and reflected upon to ensure accurate results of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For this research, it was also important to have a coding scheme that is repeated for each season.

Finally, to achieve validity the unit of analysis was chosen to fulfill the needs of the research question. During the sampling procedure, certain criteria had to be met for the scene to be analyzed. This also helped with the accuracy of results to ensure that there would be no irrelevant data in the research to include in the analysis.

4 Results

In this chapter, the findings of the research will be explored by addressing the results from QCA, Thematic Analysis, and Narrative Analysis. This chapter structures the findings based on the three sub-questions of this study. First, the results of QCA and Thematic Analysis give insight into how stereotypes surrounding are represented in black women on Love Island as well as how the show transforms various elements of stereotypes within the program

The second section will cover the construction of authenticity within black women on the show through the authenticity tropes 'revelation', 'truth-telling', and 'exposure'. Lastly, the third section will elaborate on how black women are represented in Love Island through their various narratives by addressing the evaluative tone of black women. In each section, the findings are illustrated with quotes and scene descriptions used during the data analysis process.

4.1 Transforming Stereotypes

Throughout the thematic analysis, different attributes of traditional, as well as contemporary versions of stereotypes of black women in the media, were found in the media texts that the researcher tied to overarching themes of the three stereotypical depictions as described by West (2008). Through this analysis, the researcher establishes that within Love Island, the three stereotypical tropes of black women in the media transform within the program.

4.1.1 Black Best Friend

During the data analysis process, various aspects of the Mammy stereotypes were found in the black female contestants of Love Island. West (2008) describes the Mammy as asexual, caregiving, and self-sacrificing. The asexual aspect surfaced for example in friendship couples black women were a part of throughout the show. Friendship couples exist when contestants have yet to find a romantic connection with someone. In order to stay in the villa, they couple up with a friend of the opposite sex.

Whereas other islanders find a romantic connection straight away, it was a reoccurring theme for black women to be in a friendship couple before potentially finding a romantic connection in the villa. When black women in Love Island are in friendship couples, such as Montana, Samira, Amber, Yewande, Sophie, and Kaz, it represents them as unable to have a romantic and sexual connection, thus an aspect of the Mammy trope.

Samira from season 4 is seen through this lens this as for the majority of her time in the villa she was represented as being in a friendship couple with Alex, until recoupling with Sam in episode 24 and later Frankie in episode 29. As for most of the season, Samira is not in a romantic couple, the show depicts other islanders trying to teach Samira to flirt because she describes that

she is bad at this. This is tied to the aspect of Mammy that depicts black women as unable to be sexual.

Notably, when Samira finds a romantic connection with Frankie, the show does not shift her representation from the asexual trope to her romantic connection but rather minimizes the scenes shown of Samira and Frankie until he gets eliminated from the show. As most of Samira's representation in the show focused on her inability to find a romantic connection, the data shows that Love Island focused on representing Samira through attributes of negative stereotypes, rather than the multi-dimensionality of her persona. This finding is supported by theories surrounding black women in the contemporary media landscape, where the incorporation of negative stereotypes misrepresents black women (Adams-Bass et al., 2014; Cox & Ward, 2019).

Another aspect of the Mammy stereotype is the caregiver and someone who is self-sacrificing and puts other people's needs above her own. Within the show, this element is present when the black woman gives advice to others, especially when she herself is not in a romantic connection. Additionally, research by Anyiwo (2016) shows that in the contemporary media landscape, black women are written as the trope of the Black Best Friend. In this stereotype, the Mammy stereotype is transformed into a stereotypical depiction of black women where she solely exists to offer emotional support, give advice, or serve the white protagonist.

This trope is visible in Love Island, as the black woman is seen as the advice-giver of the villa that listens to and takes care of other people's problems. When Samira decides to leave the villa in episode 39 after Frankie gets dumped a few episodes before, Dani says in the confessional: "Sam looks after me when I feel like shit. I'm glad she's gonna go out and find happiness but Sam was a part of my happiness in here." In this scene, Samira is portrayed as offering emotional support and advice to other islanders and even putting their needs above her own, as she expresses feeling lost in the villa without a romantic connection numerous times.

Within Love Island, the stereotype of Mammy, who typically is a woman who is seen as asexual, maternal, and puts the needs of others ahead of her own, is transformed into the Black Best Friend. This black woman is stuck within a friendship couple with a male islander where there is no sexual chemistry between them but where they are close enough that they want to give one another a chance in the villa to find a romantic connection. During the show, the Black Best Friend is seen comforting other islanders and giving advice, and without a romantic connection, they feel that they are lost within the villa.

4.1.2 The Bombshell

Aspects of the Jezebel stereotype were also found while analyzing the data of this study. As opposed to the Mammy stereotype, Jezebel portrays a black woman as beautiful, hypersexual, and manipulative. The hypersexualization of black women is highlighted when a black woman enters

the villa as a Bombshell. The show represents the Bombshells that enter the villa as a test and disruption in the current romantic connections. The concept of the Bombshell is magnified when the show introduces Casa Amor, where the male and female original islanders are separated in different villas and new islanders of the opposite sex get introduced. The data analysis shows that black women that are Bombshells are portrayed as sexual and a threat to withstanding relationships. These findings support the theory that state that the Jezebel trope diminishes the multifaceted experience of a black woman and that the involvement of these stereotypes continues an inaccurate representation of this group (Gammage, 2017).

For example, the representation of Clarisse is sexualized when she enters the show during Casa Amor in season 7 episode 32. In the confessional, Tyler says the following about Clarisse: “Clarisse is a really good-looking girl. [...] The sexual attraction is definitely there. I just wanna rip her clothes off. I just want to (makes rough noises) get them off.” In these scenes, the language Tyler uses to describe Clarisse represents her as a sexual woman.

Additionally, in the same episode, the manipulation aspect is also assigned to the representation of Clarisse. When Teddy talks to Clarisse, he says: “There’s sexual attraction. I’m pretty sure I’m not the only person that realizes that in this conversation right now. And it’s a problem. I don’t trust you.” In this scene Teddy states that he is sexually attracted to her and because of that he cannot trust her. This ties into the aspect of the Jezebel where a black woman is manipulating men for (sexual) self-gain.

However, the findings of this research also clarify that Love Island contrasts the stereotypical representation of the Jezebel with an emotional and vulnerable aspect of black women. The show does this by showing scenes of Clarisse talking about her feelings to Mary or confessional scenes of her doing such. For instance, when Tyler recouples with Clarisse in season 7 and there is a love triangle between them and Kaz, Clarisse is seen talking to Mary about how she feels: “I just feel like my feelings aren’t being considered in any of this. I’m the one that has to keep my head up and act like everything’s fine and have no emotion and not be shouting [...] and act like everything’s normal.” Within this scene, the show represents another aspect of Clarisse’s persona that contrasts the hypersexual, manipulative depiction of her in the previous episodes. These findings are in contrary to theories surrounding stereotypes of black women in the media that clarify how representing black women through stereotypical tropes portrays them as one-dimensional. However, various studies do highlight that the reinforcement of negative stereotypes in the contemporary media landscape continues to inaccurately represent black women (Gammage, 2017; Adams-Bass et al., 2014).

Within the show, various aspects of the traditional Jezebel stereotype were found in the representation of black women. The traditional aspects of the Jezebel stereotypes, which depict

black women as hypersexual, beautiful, and manipulative are transformed in the show as the Bombshell. Black women portrayed as the Bombshell are represented as sexual and manipulative contestants that cannot be trusted and will disrupt the current relationships within the villa. However, the findings also illustrate that Love Island represents a multi-dimensional aspect of the representation of black women when they express their feelings about a situation and showcase vulnerability. Although, the reinforcement of stereotypes continues the misrepresentation of black women in the contemporary media landscape.

4.1.3 The Ice Queen

Next to aspects of Mammy and Jezebel, aspects of Sapphire were also found in the data analysis. In contemporary media, the Sapphire is seen as a strong black woman, who is confident, and strong, or an angry black woman, who is loud, feisty, sassy, and angry. Within Love Island, when black women were represented as strong or angry, they were also portrayed as being cold-hearted.

Within the data, it was found that Love Island reinforces the Sapphire stereotype by representing black women as angry. In season 5 Yewande has difficulty with the fact that her romantic interest, Danny, gets to know Bombshell Islander, Arabella. In episode 21, Arabella says: "She just seems very angry", when talking to Danny about the love triangle situation. The scene is then cut to Yewande talking to Molly-Mae and Amber where she says: "I just feel like the crazy in me is going to start coming out today because I know I am a crazy bitch." In these scenes, Yewande is represented as angry with the language that Arabella uses to describe Yewande as well as the language Yewande utilizes to describe her feelings. The representation of Yewande as angry corresponds with the modern-day version of the Sapphire, where the black woman is depicted as angry (Adams-Bass et al., 2014).

Additionally, the Sapphire trope can be found through aspects of the strong black woman who is capable of handling anything (Adams-Bass et al., 2014). In the show, a strong black woman is seen as having a hard shell and not showing others the vulnerability of emotions because of how strong they are. For example, in season 5 episode 31 Amber is left single after Michael recouples with Joanna after Casa Amor. When asked how she is doing, Amber responds: "Fine. [...] I'm glad it happened to me over anyone else because I am strong." Later on in the episode in the confessional Amber says: "Although it really hurts my heart that this has happened to me. I know I'll handle it and I know I will be fine and I'm not worried about me at all." In these scenes, Amber is represented through the aspect of a strong black woman, as she is reassuring others that she can handle tough situations instead of expressing vulnerability in difficult moments.

However, the show also represents black women as being strong when they do show emotional vulnerability. For example, in season 4 episode 38 Samira opens up to Megan after

Frankie leaves. Megan replies: “Don’t feel like you have to put on a brave face all the time. [...] But you’ve literally been so strong. You’re literally the strongest girl I know.” In this scene, Megan reassures Samira that she has been strong and is allowed to show vulnerability. This is contrary to theories surrounding the Jezebel stereotype that depicts black women as being strong because they are capable of handling any situation (Adams-Bass et al., 2014). As with the Jezebel trope, the show represents black women through aspects of the Sapphire trope while also demonstrating the multi-dimensional experience of black women.

Additionally, coldness is another aspect of the Sapphire trope Love Island utilizes to represent black women, as various media texts included words such as frosty, cold, and ice queen to describe black women. In both seasons 3 and 5, Montana and Amber similarly describe themselves as ‘ice queen’ prior to finding a romantic connection. In season 3 episode 37 Montana has a confessional scene where she recalls how she felt during her final date with Alex: “I was a little single bitch and now I’ve come out with a boyfriend. Like miracles can happen. [...] The ice queen has officially melted.”

With Amber, this happens in episode 57 when it is her turn to deliver her love declaration to Greg. “You picked me up when I was the most vulnerable. [...] You’ve managed to bring out my soft side, which not many realize existed. [...] There must be something in the water because this ice queen is melting.” Additionally, Yewande also describes herself as cold in season 5 episode 18 when Anna asks if she is going to show Danny more affection Yewande says: “Yeah. I’m trying to not be like a cold-hearted bitch.”

With these examples, Love Island translates the Sapphire stereotype into an Ice Queen by representing aspects of the Sapphire trope, such as being strong, angry, and cold-hearted, which melts away when a black woman finds a romantic connection. Thus, illustrating that without a romantic counterpart, the black woman is cold-hearted. Notably, while Love Island represents black women as strong and capable of handling anything, similarly to what theory suggests (Adams-Bass et al., 2014), the show contrasts this as well by showing that black women are also represented as strong when they allow themselves to be vulnerable. Thus, Love Island represents black women through a multi-dimensional lens even though the reinforcement of negative stereotypes persists throughout the show.

4.2 Constructing Authenticity

The second sub-question, ‘How is authenticity constructed in black women in Love Island UK?’, was also analyzed utilizing thematic analysis. The results show that authenticity is constructed when black women use honest language, are not playing the game, and stay loyal to their partners. These findings were based upon previous theories surrounding strategies for public appeal (Jones,

2003), persona development for audience vote (Hill, 2002), and authentic tropes in reality TV (2005).

4.2.1 Playing the Game

Within the research, analyzing the revelation trope (Biressi & Nunn, 2005) reveals that 'playing the game', which is an authenticity strategy, is used to construct authenticity within black women. Playing the game is a authenticity strategy whereby reality television contestants act in a manipulative manner for the purpose of playing the game (Jones, 2003). The show challenges the strategy of 'playing the game' in various ways and in doing so, it constructs the manner in which a black woman is represented as authentic on the show.

For example, the show makes the islanders play a guessing game where the islanders have to guess what viewers have said about them on Twitter. In season 5 episode 24, Amber's authenticity strategy is challenged with the following tweet: "@kayetweeting: I did really like Amber but not so much now. not sure she's genuinely into Michael." In the confessional, Amber defends her authenticity by saying: "It is a bit irritating that people think that me and Michael aren't genuine. I freaking put my feelings on the line all the time, which is something I don't do. But I don't think Michael feels like that so that's the main thing." In this scene, the show challenges Amber's genuineness by representing her through the authenticity strategy of playing the game. This represents Amber as inauthentic, as Jones (2003) relates 'playing the game' to acting in a manipulative manner, which is an authenticity strategy that is frowned upon.

Additionally, this scene where Amber's authenticity is challenged by the audience can be connected to previous literature that argues that the knowledge that the public vote challenges the 'real' persona of a contestant rather than what is represented (Bignell, 2014). This is because contestants are required to perform a persona that suits their situation and endears them to the audience and their votes (Bignell, 2014). Within the described scene, Amber performs and defends her 'real' persona by directly speaking to the audience in the confessional scene, thus, constructing authenticity within Amber's representation.

Furthermore, the findings also reveal how black women challenge the authenticity strategy of 'playing the game' in their fellow contestants. By doing so, the show highlights that playing the game is seen as inauthentic and should be frowned upon. For example, in season 3 episode 36, Montana questions the authenticity of Alex, her couple partner by revealing her fear of him declaring his love for her so early on. "Obviously when he said that last night it scared the absolute crap out of me [...] is he doing this for the game?" With this, Montana confirms that playing the game is something negative and constructs inauthenticity in her couple partner Alex. This can be connected to previous authenticity research that states that during filming, the events that the participants go through become their reality. In this case, playing the game is seen as manipulative

and therefore inauthentic behavior (Jones, 2003).

Within this research, the trope of authenticity 'revelation' is constructed through scenes where the authenticity strategy 'playing the game' is challenged. The findings are connected to previous conducted academic research that establishes playing the game as manipulative behavior and thus constructs the contestant as inauthentic (Jones, 2003).

4.2.2 Honest Language

The data analysis reveals various aspects of the trope 'truth-telling' authenticity trope (Biressi & Nunn, 2005). Within the scope of this research, authenticity was analyzed in scenes where participants reflect through moments such as having a discussion parallel to their private confessional sections when they directly communicate to the public about a topic. If there is a discrepancy between what is said to another islander versus what a black woman says in a confessional scene, they are not using honest language and are represented as inauthentic.

For example, in season 6 episode 10 Connagh and Sophie have a conversation about their connection. Connagh asks Sophie if she kissed Connor and she lies by saying that it was only during the challenge. When Connagh confronts her with the truth, she admits to it. "It's a little bit confusing because you just said when I asked, it was just in the challenge. But all of a sudden it's like another one." "I know I'm such an awkward person, I can't lie just shit comes out of my mouth." In the confessional scene that follows, Connagh says: "It's a blessing in disguise if she's telling small lies like that." Before it cuts back to their conversation and he says: "I would rather you have straight up with me. [...] You don't have to lie about it."

In this scene, Sophie was not honest to Connagh and even though she immediately regretted doing so, she was seen using dishonest language which constructs her as being inauthentic. These findings are supported by literature as Biressi & Nunn (2005) argue that reality TV genres produce information through tropes of truth-telling to locate sincerity in a certain style of emotional performance understood that is constructed as indexical of authenticity, such as personal revelations in Sophie's scene.

Additionally, Biressi & Nunn (2005) state the importance of honest language in the construction of a contestant as authentic by highlighting that while contestants create a persona, the program constructs their emotional realism and revelations as truthful, thus authentic. A clear example of this is when the narrator, Ian Sterling, constructs Montana as inauthentic in episode 47 by saying: "Montana is having a post-challenge nap. Being sneaky and dishonest is exhausting if you don't have a conscience." In this scene, the show explicitly constructs Montana as inauthentic as her emotional realism is challenged when she is labeled as dishonest by the show's narrator.

Thus, the findings of the truth-telling trope reveal that honest language is important in the construction of authenticity among black women. Additionally, the results of the data analysis

reveal that the show directly constructs the authenticity of black women through their emotional realism and revelations as truthful (Biressi & Nunn, 2005).

4.2.3 Loyalty Exposure

Moreover, the analysis of the exposure authenticity trope reveals that authenticity is constructed in black women in Love Island through depictions of exhibitions of emotions. The clearest display of emotion during Love Island is during the recoupling ceremonies, where Islanders have to stay loyal to their feelings towards someone and expose whom they want to couple up with in order to remain in the villa. In the show, this construction of loyalty is connected to authenticity as exposure to raw emotions is authentic (Biressi & Nunn, 2005).

An example of this is season 5 episode 31 when Amber is single after the recoupling. The host asks why she stayed loyal to Michael to which she responds: "I'm a loyal human being, that's just the way that I am and that's what I wanted to do." In this scene, Amber states that she stayed true to herself by remaining loyal to Michael. This way, authenticity is represented in Amber, as she remains her 'true' self, despite being in a hyperreal environment (Hill, 2002). Furthermore, in this scene, Amber's actions are constructed as authentic as in a reality show they should capture 'real' interactions with genuine or contrived provocations and circumstances (Biressi & Nunn, 2005).

Another example of loyalty is in season 5 episode 30 where Curtis expresses his interest in Jourdan, a black woman who entered Love Island through Casa Amor. Curtis tells Jourdan that he has feelings for her despite him being coupled up with Amy from the beginning. Jourdan advises him to stay loyal to his situation because she would have done the same thing: "I think what is best in this situation is I would say to stay loyal to the situation you have now because- I need you as a friend, I think it would be a better thing to do because obviously as well we've spent a lot of time talking about your situation with Amy. And it's gone over my head that there's also a situation with Danny- Like in this conversation I haven't even touched upon the fact that I'm getting to know Danny as well. [...] And I've absolutely been loving getting to know him." In this scene, authenticity is constructed in Jourdan as she exposes her loyalty to her connection to Danny and declares that she wants to continue this. As she stays loyal to her current romantic connection, she exposes her raw emotions which constructs her as authentic within the show.

Within this research, the trope exposure was found in the exposure of raw emotions that are connected to their loyalty to the romantic counterpart of black women. These findings are supported by authenticity theories that state that authenticity is constructed in a reality TV contestant when they remain their 'true' selves in a hyperreal environment and the show captures real interactions between contestants with genuine or contrived circumstances (Hill, 2002; Biressi & Nunn, 2005).

4.3 Narrative Analysis

The last sub-question, 'In what way are narratives of black women created in Love Island UK?', was analyzed with the method of narrative analysis. With this method, the researcher analyzed the way various narratives of black women were represented in Love Island UK using the six stages stated by Riessman (2008). Through the analysis of the eleven narratives, the results reveal that there is a significant arc surrounding romantic connections. All eleven narrators share the evaluative tone of feeling hopeful to find love, despite their different circumstances. The evaluation stage functions to establish the point of the story (Riessman, 2008). The language of evaluation provides insight into the kind of narrators that can be witnessed. They all conclude with a resolution in their romantic arc but do so in different ways that reveal different outcomes.

Within the data, it was found that the stage 'conflict' of narrative analysis was important to determine the evaluation of the plot of a certain narrative. Love Island utilizes various conflicts to produce either a tragic or a comedy plot. These plot types are identified by Polkinghorne (1995) who claims that these are the most basic plot lines. Within the tragic plot point, the narrative turns away from the goal of the narrative and the narrator does not achieve their goal. Within the comedy plot point, the narrator moves towards the goal, causing satisfaction in the final outcome.

4.3.1 Loveless Journey

When analyzing the way narratives of black women are represented in Love Island, the overarching goal of the storyline was to find love. While some black women successfully found romantic connections during the resolution stage, others were left single, which shies away from the original goal. Within this research, the way this narrative arc is told highlights an evaluative tone of unhappiness because of a failed romantic connection.

An example of this is Samira's evaluative unhappiness which results in her self-elimination. In season 4, Samira decides to eliminate herself in episode 39 after her romantic interest, Frankie, got eliminated in episode 36. In the following episodes after his elimination, Samira expresses her unhappiness and feeling out of place in the villa. This leads her to announce to the villa that she will be leaving the villa in episode 39 by saying: "So obviously these past couple of days I haven't been like myself. And I've struggled to like be happy and like have fun. And I've had like a taste of what I wanted with Frankie and it was just gone you know. I've really tried and tossed and turned about what I'm going to do and like I think the best thing for me to get closure on the Frankie situation and for me to be happy is to go today. And like I find it really sad. But it's a good thing, you know."

Within Samira's narrative, the complication causes the evaluative solution of her self-elimination. This evaluative tone can be tied back to the 'tragic' plot point as described by Polkinghorne (1995). The researcher describes that this basic plot point occurs when the

protagonist does not achieve the goal. Within Love Island, the goal is to find love. Samira, the protagonist in this narrative, expresses unhappiness and therefore the narrative turns away from the goal and leads to disappointment, which is her self-elimination.

Another example found in the research is the evaluative tone of Yewande from season 5. Within her narrative, the complication is presented through a love triangle, when her romantic interest, Danny, is interested in Arabella. The outcome of this arc is that Danny chooses Arabella, which leaves Yewande single and causes her elimination. In season 5 episode 21, Yewande evaluates the love triangle by saying: "I just can't understand why someone doesn't want me. I just don't get why this is- I just- I just don't understand." During the evaluation stage, Yewande expresses her insecurities around undesirability, which can be tied to the asexual aspect of the Mammy trope. The traditional Mammy trope represents black women as asexual, self-sacrificing, and a caregiver (West, 2008). By Yewande expressing that she does not understand why someone does not want her, the aspect of asexuality can be found in her representation.

These two narratives illustrate that Love Island represents black women as unable to complete the narrative goal of a romantic connection. The evaluative tone of an unsuccessful romantic connection can be tied to the basic 'tragic' plot point as described by Polkinghorne (1995) as well as aspects of the Mammy trope that depicts black women as asexual (West, 2008).

4.3.2 Journey to Love

Within various narratives of black women in Love Island, it was found that the complication stage of a narrative leads to an evaluative tone of successfully finding love within the villa. The evaluative tone of this outcome is described as a journey. An example of this is Montana from season 3. In episode 29 when she realizes her feelings for Alex she says: "I'm honestly gobsmacked. Like I actually fancy someone, it's a miracle. [...] I've waited 4 solid weeks. Felt like a fucking lifetime." Later on in episode 38 when they make their relationship official, Montana says: "They've [other islanders] seen my long and tragic loveless journey and I think it's nice for them to see me with someone and that they know I'm not asexual." Within this scene, Montana highlights that she has achieved her narrative goal by expressing that she fancies Alex and the positive reactions of other islanders. This evaluative tone can be connected to the basic plot point of 'comedy' as described by Polkinghorne (1995). Within this plot point, the outcome of the narrator achieving the narrative goal is satisfaction. By doing so, Love Island represents Montana's narrative as successfully finding a romantic connection.

Additionally, Montana mentions that by achieving her narrative goal that she is not asexual. By doing so, the narrative representation of Montana turns away from the traditional aspects of the Mammy trope (West, 2008). By turning away from this trope, the representation of her narrative turns away from the disappointing outcome, which is a failed romantic connection. Thus, Love

Island represents black women that have unsuccessful romantic connections through the asexual element of the Mammy trope.

Another aspect of the journey to find love for black women in Love Island is described through the evaluative tone of self-worth in their romantic connection. This can be found in the narratives of Priscilla from season 6 and Kaz from season 7.

In season 6, the complication stage of Priscilla's narrative highlights that Priscilla questions the genuine intentions of her partner, Mike. In the evaluation stage, she sets the tone of self-worth in her journey to love by saying: "Being considered fourth is a bit of a shit show. Because everything was going good, I'm not going to lie. [...] I don't wanna be sold a dream. [...] I'm not nobody's last, nobody's side. I am the shit. [...] I just need to feel special again. [...] I don't wanna be taken for granted, that's all. so if I have to be a badass, so be it." During this evaluation stage, it was found that even though Priscilla successfully established a romantic connection with Mike, she highlights her self-worth and that she will not be taken for granted. The evaluative tone of Priscilla can be connected to the contemporary Sapphire trope (Adams-Bass et al., 2014). Within the evaluative tone of Priscilla's narrative, elements of a strong black woman and confidence in the Sapphire trope can be found through her declaration of self-worth.

The same elements of the Sapphire trope are present in the evaluative tone of Kaz's narrative as well. Love Island represents the resolution of her narrative through the complication of a love triangle. In season 7 episode 36 Kaz evaluates the love triangle between herself, Tyler, and Clarisse by saying. "Prior to Casa Amor I was happy. [...] Had I not seen that picture on that postcard I would have not have recoupled, I would have stayed. [...] What am I, your backup option? [...] What you're saying is I am back with a new girl and I want to get to know her but I want to get to know you too and decide who I like more. [...] I feel like I am not an option. I'm not a second choice. I've been a 100% with you from the beginning and I've stayed true to myself and I'm always going to stay true to myself. You figure out what's going on." While Kaz states that initially, she was happy with her connection with Tyler, she affirms her self-worth after the complication of the love triangle in her narrative. Through this evaluation, Kaz is represented as strong and confident, which are elements that can be found in the contemporary version of the Sapphire stereotype (Adams-Bass et al., 2014).

Within this research, the evaluative tone of black women established the basic plots of 'tragic' and 'comedy' in different ways (Polkinghorne, 1995). The outcome of these plot points distinguishes whether a black woman is represented as achieving the narrative goal of finding love or shying away from it. However, in both plot outcomes, the evaluative stages of the narrative include elements of stereotypical depictions of black women, such as asexuality in the Mammy trope and strength and confidence in the Sapphire (West, 2008; Adams-Bass et al., 2014). These

findings illustrate that although Love Island represents black women through diverse narratives surrounding finding love, elements of negative stereotypes surrounding black women persist in the show.

5 Conclusions

As the topic of diversity, and more specifically, an accurate representation of minorities has been an important topic within media over the last decade, the aim of this study was to investigate how the reality television show Love Island represents minorities, specifically black women. In order to obtain the insights, the main question 'How are black women represented in Love Island UK?' was developed along with three sub-questions: 'How are stereotypes of black women represented in Love Island UK?', 'How is authenticity constructed in black women on Love Island UK?', and 'In what way are narratives of black women created in Love Island UK?'

A theoretical review explained that topics such as diversity and race are able to be represented in the media because media texts can represent certain ideas through concepts and signs, which contribute to the production of reality (Hall et al., 2013). Existing literature explains that black women are often misrepresented in the media through one-dimensional depictions of racial stereotypes (West, 2008; Adams-Bass et al., 2014).

Further literary research revealed that the construction of authenticity is an important aspect of how reality television contestants are represented. Hill (2014) reveals that the construction of authenticity through strategies is important for producers because it generates public interaction through voting or social media functions, which increases audience investment in the live elements and builds momentum through the season. Moreover, theories surrounding narrativity provided insight into how structural narrative analysis (Riessman, 2008) reveals how the telling of a story represents narrators through plot points, which reveal motivations, conflicts, resolutions, and transformations (Mihas & Odum Institute, 2019).

This research utilized literary findings on stereotypes, authenticity, and narrativity to discover how black women are represented in Love Island UK. The insights were obtained by a combination of Qualitative Content Analysis, Thematic Analysis, and Narrative Analysis. QCA and Thematic Analysis revealed themes linked to the concepts of stereotypes of black women in the media and authenticity. Additionally, the narrative analysis provides insights into the telling of black women's narratives and how they are represented through those narratives.

The upcoming sections address the main topics in this research by interpreting the findings, contrasting them with prior research, and discussing the results in terms of answering a gap in existing research. Additionally, the limitations of this study are reviewed, and recommendations for additional research are given. Finally, this study will conclude by summarizing all findings and their implications in a closing summary that provides an answer to the primary research question.

5.1 Transformation of Stereotypes

The results of the thematic analysis clarify that the stereotypical depictions of black women in media are adapted in Love Island UK. It was found that within Love Island UK, the stereotype of Mammy was present through traditional and contemporary elements. Within the show, various black women are represented through elements of asexuality and self-sacrificing (West, 2008). Furthermore, Love Island connects these elements to the contemporary version of the stereotype, the Black Best Friend, which describes a black woman as solely existing in the media texts to offer emotional support, give advice, or serve the white protagonist (Anyiwo, 2016).

Moreover, traditional elements of the Jezebel were also found in the data which represented black women in Love Island as beautiful, hypersexual, and manipulative. Within Love Island, the Jezebel trope is most apparent when black women enter the villa as Bombshells, whereby a black woman is represented as sexual and manipulative in order to disrupt withholding relationships in the villa. Interestingly, while representing black women through this stereotype, the show contrasts this portrayal by showcasing vulnerable moments black women have throughout the show.

Lastly, findings illustrate how the show transforms the Sapphire stereotype into an Ice Queen. Through this lens, a black woman is represented as cold-hearted, angry, and strong (Adams-Bass et al., 2014) until a romantic connection is established where these negative elements melt away. Through these elements, black women are misrepresented and illustrated as cold-hearted without a romantic counterpart. However, another finding contradicts the strong black women element described in academic literature, as the show also represents black women as strong when they allow themselves to be vulnerable and not only when they are capable of handling anything (Adams-Bass et al., 2014).

By contrasting existing elements of stereotypes of black women with elements of vulnerability as seen in the Jezebel and Sapphire findings, Love Island UK showcases the multi-dimensionality of black women in the media texts. However, the reinforcement of the stereotypes continues to perpetuate an inaccurate representation of black women in contemporary media texts.

5.2 Constructing Authenticity

Additionally, QCA and Thematic Analysis provided findings surrounding the construction of authenticity in black women on Love Island UK. The results of this study reveal that authenticity is constructed through tropes of revelation, truth-telling, and exposure (Biressi & Nunn, 2005). Love

Island challenges the construction of authenticity within its contestants by challenging the notion of 'playing the game'. Previous research highlights that when a reality television contestant is represented as playing the game, their persona is constructed as inauthentic because playing the game is seen as manipulative behavior (Jones, 2003). The findings represent black women as inauthentic when they are challenged with the notion of playing the game because this behavior is seen as manipulative, thus inauthentic.

Furthermore, findings reveal that black women are constructed as authentic when they utilize honest language. Throughout the show, black women are constructed as authentic when they reveal truths to other contestants or directly to the audience during confessional scenes. These findings are corroborated by literature as Biressi & Nunn (2005) claim that reality TV genres produce information using tropes of truth-telling to discover sincerity in a certain kind of emotional performance understood that is produced as indexical of authenticity.

Moreover, the findings of this research illustrate that authenticity is constructed within black women on Love Island UK through the exposure of raw emotions that are connected to the loyalty they have to their romantic counterparts. The most apparent depiction of loyalty is during recoupling ceremonies, where Islanders have to declare who they couple up with. When a black woman exposes her raw emotions and shows loyalty to their counterpart, they are constructed as authentic. These results are in line with authenticity theories, which argue that reality TV participants are constructed as authentic when they act in accordance with their 'true' personas in a hyperreal environment that captures their genuine interactions with other contestants in real or contrived circumstances (Hill, 2002; Biressi & Nunn, 2005).

5.3 Evaluating Narratives

Next to QCA and thematic analysis, narrative analysis was conducted and related to the representation of black women in Love Island UK. The researcher utilized the six steps of structural narrative analysis in order to investigate the way black women's stories are told in Love Island UK (Riessman, 2008). The findings of this analysis reveal that the evaluation stage of the structural analysis establishes the tone of the black woman and by doing so, how they are represented through the outcome of the narrative goal, which is to find love. Within this research, plots lead to motivations, conflicts, resolutions, and transformations of a narrative (Mihas & Odum Institute, 2019). The findings reveal that the 'conflict' stage of narrative analysis helps establish the narrator evaluate the plot according to the basic plot types, described as 'tragic' and 'comedy' (Polkinghorne, 1995).

Within this research, black women who did not accomplish their narrative goal of finding

love, are defined by the tragic plot type. Within this plot type, black women are represented through elements of the asexual and self-sacrificing element of the Mammy trope (West, 2008) as they did not accomplish the narrative goal of establishing a romantic relationship. However, the findings show that when the plot goal of a black woman is accomplished, she is represented through elements of the Sapphire stereotype by demonstrating strength and confidence (West, 2008). These findings illustrate that within both plot types, negative stereotypes persist in the representation of black women.

5.4 Limitations & Further Research

While this research addressed various aspects of representation of black women in Love Island UK, including stereotypes, authenticity, and various narratives, this research has limitations. The scope of the study could be extended to include other aspects of representation, such as body image and beauty standards. This research solely addressed representation through racial diversity and individual experience because of racial differences.

Additionally, this study focused on a specific target group, namely black women. Other minorities, including black men, were excluded from this research. This research was designed in this manner, as each minority group faces different challenges when it comes to representation and inclusion of diversity. Thus, further research should be conducted on other marginalized groups to investigate how they are represented in the media.

Furthermore, the current format of Love Island UK represents heterosexual relationships. For this reason, the representation of queer black women was not included in this research. This is a limitation, as the representation of diversity also includes sexual orientation. If Love Island UK includes the diversity of sexual orientation in the show, this research could be extended to this topic.

Additionally, this research focused on the representation of black women on Love Island through the show itself. By looking at the media text, the researcher was able to establish how the show represents this minority group. However, audience participation is a large element of the show and this was not included extensively in the research. Possible further research could analyze how audience engagement ties into the representation of different groups in the show.

Moreover, the nature of this research is qualitative. This research method poses limitations as it is prone to be influenced by researcher bias, therefore the interpretation of data can be more subjective than quantitative analysis. However, due to the transparency provided in the data collection, and analysis sections, reliability is ensured.

5.5 Concluding Summary

During this research, five seasons of Love Island UK that contained a meaningful representation of black women were analyzed in order to answer the core question of how the show represents this minority group. The findings reveal that elements of traditional, as well as contemporary stereotypes of black women, are transformed in these media texts. These stereotypical depictions are negative, as they stem from foreign interpretations of black women (West, 1995). By incorporating the stereotypical depictions of Mammy, Jezebel, and Sapphire, black women are inaccurately represented in Love Island UK. Even though the results show that Love Island represents black women through multi-dimensionality with the construction of authenticity through emotional realism, personal revelations (Biressi & Nunn, 2005), and authenticity strategies that challenge the notion of 'playing the game' (Jones, 2003; Hill, 2014), the incorporation of stereotypical depictions in the narrative arc of black women in Love Island UK continue misrepresentation of black women in the contemporary media landscape.

Based on the results, this research confirms that the contemporary media landscape continues to misrepresent black women. Additionally, the findings show how stereotypical depictions of black women are transformed within reality television by including the construction of authenticity in their represented persona. As Love Island already incorporates the multi-dimensionality of black women in its representation, it is suggested to evolve the representation of black women further in this direction.

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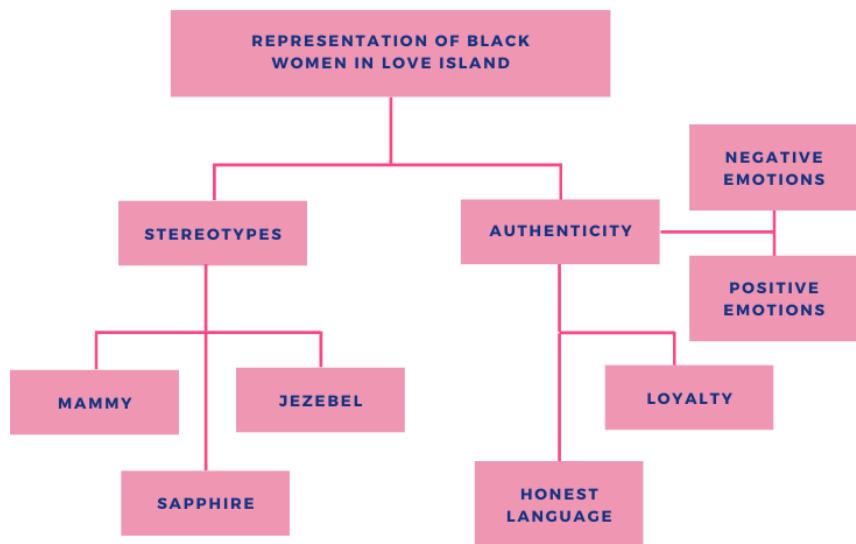
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Appendix A: Overview Analyzed Episodes

Season 3 (26)	1,2,4,9,11,14,15,16,17,19,21,23,24,25,28,29,30,31,36,38,43,44,45,46,47,49
Season 4 (26)	1,3,5,7,8,9,10,11,12,15,17,19,21,22,23,24,25,26,28,29,32,33,35,36,37
Season 5 (45)	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11,12,14,15,16,17,18,19,21,22,23,24,25,26,28,29,30,31,32,33,35,36,37,38,40,42,43,44,45,46,47,49,51,53,54,56,57
Season 6 (32)	1,2,3,4,5,6,8,9,10,11,12,13,15,16,17,18,19,20,22,23,24,25,26,30,32,33,34,36,37,38,39,40
Season 7 (37)	1,2,3,5,7,8,9,11,12,14,15,16,18,19,21,22,23,24,25,26,28,29,30,31,32,33,35,36,37,38,39,42,43,45,46,53,56

Appendix B: Coding Tree Thematic Analysis



Appendix C: Coding Narrative Analysis

	Montana
Abstract	<p>Montana is the only relevant black woman in season 3. She is part of the original islanders that got the season. Montana stays in the show until episode 49 where she and her partner Alex leave right away. Montana and Alex did not get saved by the public and other islanders also voted for them to leave. Montana did not find a romantic connection she was into until episode 28 when she recouples with Dom. Montana had a villa from Casa Amor. The rest of the season Montana opens up more with her romantic connections that she finally found someone after 4 weeks, when it took some people less time and others more. Montana had a tragic loveless story "They know I'm not asexual." During the season, Montana coupled with Dom, Marcel, Sam, Simon, and Alex. Throughout the season, because Montana's love life was not progressing and establish, Montana was seen as a good friend in the villa and someone who deserves to find someone special. Montana gave advice to the islanders.</p>

					Samira
Abstract	In season 4 Samira is the relevant black women to analyze. During the Casa Amor episodes, Samira was the most skinned woman compared to Montana in season 3 and does not have light colored eyes like Montana. Samira was seen as one of the original girls from season 4 and eliminated herself episode 39 because she felt she had no romantic connection with anyone after her only relevant romantic connection, Frankie, got voted off. Samira's Love Island journey was predominantly single, as she gave others advice but did not have a romantic connection with anyone. She had a friendship couple with Alex until episode 19 where she couples up with Sam. Her recoupling with Sam was short-lived and she eventually chooses to recouple with him in episode 29. Episode 36 Frankie is dumped from the island and Samira is very upset about this. During this season, there are more scenes shown to the audience of Samira leaving, rather than her romantic connection with him. Episode 39 Samira is too upset and unable to open up to anyone after Frankie left and there are other couples around her and decides to leave.				
Orientation	Season 4	Episode 1-39	2018	Spain	Protagonist Samira
Complication	During her time in the villa, Samira has primarily been coupled up with Alex in a friendship couple.				

	she tries establishing a romantic connection with him but this fizzles out and she eventually meets expresses to actually have attraction towards. At first, Frankie expresses that he is interested to insecure and unwanted. He then shows interest in her and they recouple after Casa Amor. In episode 39 min 20 Samira leaves the island due to public vote. This is very upsetting to Samira.
Evaluation	Episode 39 min 20: Samira announces to the villa that she has decided to leave the villa. She says couple of days I haven't been like myself. And I've struggled to like be happy and like have fun. And like I wanted with Frankie and it was just gone you know. I've really tried and tossed and turned and like I think the best thing for me to get closure on the Frankie situation and for me to be happy find it really sad. But it's a good thing, you know."
Resolution	The following days after Frankie leaves Samira is visibly upset, crying, looking at pictures of her and during bed time. She tells Dani and Meg a couple of times she wants to go home and that she feels
Coda	Samira eliminates herself in episode 39 as she is too emotional about Frankie's departure and she wants another connection in the villa and must follow her heart and go after Frankie.

	Yewande				
Abstract	Season 5 of Love Island has two black women part of the original islanders. Yewande is a dark-skinned scientist and has never been in love. At the start she says she hopes that Love Island will open her up to new experiences. In episode 8 Yewande goes on a date with new Islander Danny. They are in a romantic connection but Danny expresses that he needs more reassurance and affection. However, things do not work out and he ends up with Arabella and thinks she suits him better. Yewande gets eliminated episode 22 due to this recoupling.				
Orientation	Season 5	Episode 1-22	2019	Spain	Protagonist Yewande
Complication	In episode 8 Yewande goes on a date with Danny and afterwards they get to know each other better. Yewande struggles with the lack of affection he receives from Yewande. Yewande expresses that she is not a reassuring person. When Arabella enters the villa and Danny expresses interest in her, Yewande expresses interest in Danny.				
Evaluation	Episode 21 min 10 Yewande expresses her feelings in the confessional about the love triangle. "I just don't understand why someone doesn't want me. I just don't get why this is- I just- I just don't understand"				
Resolution	Danny chooses Arabella because she is intelligent, and she has a genuine character. This decision causes for her elimination from the island.				
Coda	Yewande is dumped from the island and says that she has no regrets "I have not given up on love"				

	says she has no regrets
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	Jourdan				
Abstract	Jourdan enters the villa in Casa Amor along with 5 other girls in episode 26. The boys are introduced to the women, Jourdan and Lavena. The men take interest in both of these ladies as Curtis expresses that he still has feelings for his previous partner Amy. However, Jourdan does not reciprocate the same feelings towards him and instead knows Danny better instead. Men initially show interest in Lavena but she is not picked to come to the villa. Jourdan gets chosen by Danny to come to the main villa and he expresses that he really wants to get to know Jourdan better. They remain in a couple until they are dumped in episode 36.				
Orientation	Season 5	Episodes 26-36	2019	Spain	Protagonist Jourdan
Complication	The show describes Casa Amor as the ultimate test of love. With new islanders such as Jourdan, Curtis, and Lavena, the men are tested. Curtis expresses that Jourdan has changed his mind about his original couple partner Amy.				
Evaluation	Episode 30 min 10 Jourdan and Curtis have a conversation about his feelings for her and where he stands with Amy. "I think what is best in this situation is I would say to stay loyal to the situation you have now. I think it would be better to be a friend, I think it would be a better thing to do because obviously as well we've spent a lot of time together with Amy, and it's gone over my head there's also a situation with Danny. In this conversation I have to say I think I would be better off staying with him. I think I would be better off staying with him. I think I would be better off staying with him." Jourdan expresses that she is getting to know Danny as well and obviously she's shared a bed with him last night and I would be better off staying with him."				
Resolution	Danny recouples with Jourdan and brings her into the villa. Curtis comes clean to Amy and she is dumped. Jourdan and Amy clear the air. Jourdan continues to get to know Danny and they remain in a couple until they are dumped.				
Coda	people voted for favorite couple. least favorite risked getting dumped. Amber and Jordan are eliminated. Single Jourdan and Danny are at risk and are dumped from the villa. there's sad music playing as they leave. Jourdan "she's helped me out a lot in here"				

	Amber				
Abstract	Amber is the other black girl that is introduced at the start. She is the first and only black girl that is introduced. She has curly hair. She describes herself as fierce and a diva. In the start of the show she couples up with Calum and they remain in a friendship couple. During the season many islanders show interest in Amber, including Shep, Michael, and Curtis. Shep is the first person who she eventually couples up with and is her first romantic connection. However, Michael often expresses that he doesn't like her as she is not very expressive about it. During Casa Amor, the girls get sent to Casa Amor instead of the villa. Amber decides to stay single during Casa Amor as she expresses that she misses Michael a lot. Meanwhile, Michael couples up with Joanna and he expresses his shock as he didn't think Amber liked him that much. She stays strong and continues to be herself.				

	<p>concern for her. The days after Casa Amor are tense for Amber as this storyline is the main arc of the show. The show navigates how Amber and Michael try to clear the air between them and move on. Michael claims he is not into Amber and does not apologize for hurting her feelings until after Joanna is dumped. He is honest about her feelings towards Michael but also honest about the fact that she does not want to be vulnerable again. Episode 45 Greg enters the villa and expresses his interest in Amber. This is when Amber's interest in Amber again and she appreciates that he is honest with her but she says that she is not interested. Greg and Michael is soon after dumped from the villa. At the finale, Amber and Greg win Love Island and the black women to win this.</p>				
Orientation	Season 5	Episode 1-57	2019	Spain	Protagonist Amber
Complication	<p>During Casa Amor, Amber stays loyal to Michael and expresses that she misses him. However, after Michael recouples with Joanna, because he felt that with Amber he hasn't been himself and Amber and Michael are upset at each other.</p>				
Evaluation	<p>Episode 32 Min 24. Anna and Amber talk after Amber and Joanna went out of the villa to have a drink. Anna says "it hurts, like it really it hurts a lot more than I thought it would. Joanna's had a lot more respect and made more of an effort with me and she shouldn't have to. [...] She's nice, I can tell. [...] It was a bit of a show out by myself in front of everyone. It really hurt. And I was like what have I done to you. [...] We've been through a lot together. It was really nice and you threw that all away for some girl like what's so great about her just to be with her. I'll never be able to be friends with him again like I have because he really hurt me and he's really hurt me. It took him nothing to say sorry to us. [...] I feel like he has no sympathy for me whatsoever."</p>				
Resolution	<p>Michael initially does not apologize to Amber, which further upsets her, and he insists on continuing to date Joanna even though Amber expresses that she cannot just switch off her feelings for him. When Michael is dumped from the villa and Michael stays, he apologizes to Amber but still insists that he wants to get to know Joanna. When the villa and expresses interest in Amber. As they get to know each other, Michael expresses that he wants to be with Amber but Amber chooses to get to know Greg better and couples up with him.</p>				
Coda	<p>Amber is voted the winner of Love Island UK season 5 with her couple partner Greg. They split the villa and express wanting to continue seeing where their connection goes outside of the villa.</p>				

	Sophie				
Abstract	<p>Leanne and Sophie are part of the original line-up of islanders. Sophie is a light skin black woman and Leanne is a dark skin black woman. Sophie and Connor right away have a very attached romantic connection. Sophie and Connor are very steady between them throughout the season. Most of Sophie's storyline during this season is centered around her relationship with Connor, despite her attention swaying to Connagh for a bit. Even when Connagh is dumped from the villa, Sophie does not have a romantic relationship with anyone else before being dumped from the villa as well.</p>				
Orientation	Season 6	Episode 1-22	2020	South-Africa	Protagonist

					Sophie
Complication	Sophie is coupled up with Connor from the start, despite getting to know Connagh for a few episodes. When Connagh is dumped from the island, Sophie is saved by the islanders and in the next recoupling announcement Sophie is paired with Mike. Sophie is confused about how she does not want to leave the villa yet. Shaugna is confused by Sophie's genuine intentions to stay in the villa so bad. Mike recouples with Sophie which means Leanne leaves the villa.				
Evaluation	Episode 19 min 14. Nas comforts Sophie when she is crying after Leanne's dumping "Obviously I feel like people would have rather have Leanne stay than me."				
Resolution	Mike and Sophie are in a friendship couple. Shaugna and Sophie clear the air between them and Sophie stays in the villa.				
Coda	In episode 22 there is another dumping that is transpired after public votes and islander votes and Sophie stays in the villa.				

	Leanne				
Abstract	In season 6 of Love Island Leanne, Sophie, and Priscilla are the black women that are relevant to the story. Sophie and Leanne are part of the original line-up of islanders. Sophie is a light skin black women and Leanne is a dark skin black woman. Sophie steps forward for Connor and couples up with him and Leanne steps forward for Mike. Sophie and Leanne are best friends and together. Leanne's journey is also attached to her romantic connection with Mike. At the start of the season Leanne is very open about her romantic experience as involving a lot of 'relationships' where no relationship ever turns exclusive. She is also very afraid of commitment and expresses her fear of commitment various times throughout the season. From the beginning of the season Leanne is very open about her feelings for Mike and makes it a point to take it slow with him because she doesn't want to get into a commitment. She is very honest with him and makes it clear that she is not interested in him. In episode 17 shows that Leanne has gotten the ick from Mike and wants to call things off. Shortly after Leanne and Sophie have a conversation about their relationship and Sophie suggests that Leanne should recouple with somebody and the person not chosen goes home. Mike chooses Sophie to stay in the villa and Leanne is dumped from the island.				
Orientation	Season 6	Episode 1-19	2020	South-Africa	Protagonist
					Leanne
Complication	During the season, Leanne is coupled up with Mike. She wants to take it slow while Mike moves quickly. Leanne is very afraid of commitment and expresses that she can't constantly reassure him and that she is scared of commitment so she needs to take it slow. She is also very afraid of the ick. Leanne realizes that their relationship hasn't really progressed like others in the villa and she has lost interest in Mike. She is not interested in him anymore.				
Evaluation	Episode 17 Min 23 Leanne talks to Sophie and Jess about her situation with Mike. "I think I just have to end it. I feel like I've tried and tried with that boy [...] It's been two weeks, surely more than this. [...] I wanted to like him, I wanted to catch feelings but I just feel like I've got the ick. [...] I just feel like everything he does annoys me. [...] I don't want to be around him, I don't want him to touch me, I don't want him to be near me, I just don't wanna be around the boy. [...] Genuinely girls I'm unhappy. [...] I'm bored."				

Resolution	<p>Mike and Leanne have a conversation about that their relationship has not been progressing and that he feels that Leanne has led him on. She disagrees with him and says that she has given him appreciation for her being honest and they go their separate ways. During the recoupling in episode between Leanne and Sophie, dumping one of the girls. Mike chooses Sophie and Leanne is upset got rid of her, however Mike defends his actions saying that he had to make a decision.</p>
Coda	<p>Leanne is dumped from the island episode 19 because Mike chose Sophie after Leanne and him before. Leanne leaves the villa upset and did not find love.</p>

Priscilla					
Abstract	Episode 23 Casa Amor starts where Priscilla is introduced. Mike is also interested in her and ends bringing her back to the main villa. Priscilla and Mike's relationship is seen as good, however islander Mike is being, as Priscilla is the fourth girl he feels a special connection with a girl. Mike and Priscilla throughout the show as they go through trials that are connected to Mike's honest intentions. Mike is dumped by his girlfriend and the two are eliminated by not receiving a public vote.				
Orientation	Season 6	Episode 23-40	2020	South-Africa	Protagonist Priscilla
Complication	Mike pursues Priscilla in the Casa Amor villa and brings her back to the main villa. However, other islanders are suspicious of Mike's intentions, since he has expressed interest in multiple girls throughout the show and feel threatened with Priscilla which makes her doubt how real his feelings are for her.				
Evaluation	Episode 30 Min 8 Priscilla and Mike talk about how genuine he is and that she is the fourth girl he has considered fourth is a bit of a shit show. Because everything was going good, I'm not going to lie, I'm not a dream. [...] I'm not nobody's last, nobody's side. I am the shit. [...] I just need to feel special again, that's all. so if I have to be a bad ass, so be it."				
Resolution	In episode 38 Mike and Priscilla go on their final date and she says that she trusts him 100%. During the date, she asks him if he wants her to be his girlfriend and she accepts, making them a couple in an official relationship.				
Coda	In episode 40 Mike and Priscilla are dumped from the island as they are not saved by the public vote. Priscilla describes her Love Island experience as very rewarding.				

	Kaz
Abstract	In season 7 of Love Island Kaz is the primary black women to analyze. However Rachel, Salma, and the show. Kaz is part of the original line-up of islanders. She is a dark skinned black women who her intro she describes that she loves sex. Kaz gets coupled up with Toby by default and they get have a romantic connection until Toby expresses that he wants to get to know Chloe. When Toby about this Kaz is upset about them not being honest about it. However, she does suppress some

Rachel

Abstract	Rachel is the bombshell islander that enters the villa episode 5 and remains in the villa until episode 15. She leaves the villa to go back to the island by not recoupling with anyone. Rachel enters the villa as the bombshell and has to compete with the other women for Brad. After coupling up with Brad and saving his position, he distances himself from her making her upset. She remains strong. Later when Teddy enters the villa and dates with Rachel, Kaz, Faye, and Shannon, she ends up recoupling with Faye dumping Rachel from the villa.				
Orientation	Season 7	Episode 5-15	2021	Spain	Protagonist
					Rachel
Complication	Rachel couples up with Brad in episode 7 and in episode 8 she is seen crying as she talks to Faye. She is upset because Brad told her to get to know other men. Faye tries to comfort her. During the conversation, they hear other people to hear her conversation or to see her upset. Rachel expresses feeling like a lost soul.				
Evaluation	Episode 8 minute 37: Rachel and Faye go inside away from everyone to talk after the breakfast. They just feel a bit weird. Cause obviously- I've given Brad his safe place and I've got nothing to show you. You should really consider cracking on with other people so when you come back you know it's valid to tell someone that. [...] I like him but because everything was going well or whatever and he said I like you with me. [...] But because he said I've tried it with everyone, I know what I want, you're what I want to go with someone else?"				
Resolution	In episode 14, new boy Teddy takes 4 girls on a date, including Shannon, Faye, Kaz, and Rachel. A girl is chosen to go home with him. As at the next recoupling the girl not chosen will go home. Rachel firmly expresses her interest in Teddy.				
Coda	In episode 15 there is another recoupling and Teddy chooses Faye instead of Rachel. Rachel is dumped.				

	Clarissee				
Abstract	They get to know each other and get into a stable connection until Casa Amor episode 30 where they are separated. They are both lighter skin black women and they primarily have a sexual connection. The main villa receives a package with 2 revealing pictures of what the boys are doing in the Casa Amor villa. This rattles the girls to get to know the men. Chloe was getting to know the men. Kaz gets to know Matt and eventually recouples with him as he leaves. Clarisse. Salma is not chosen for the recoupling. When he comes back from Casa Amor with Clarisse, Kaz is shocked and they have a slight argument. The days following there is still attraction between Kaz and Clarisse. They remain with their Casa Amor coupling until Tyler makes up his mind that he wants to be with Kaz because he feels that she's lying to herself. Clarisse feels as though her feelings aren't considered in the situation. Kaz and Tyler get back together and recouple. Clarisse is dumped from the villa episode 39.				
Orientation	Season 7	Episode 29-39	2021	Spain	Protagonist
					Clarissee
Complication	Clarissee has sexual attraction with both Teddy and Tyler in Casa Amor and eventually gets to know both of them. She is torn between them. However, there is history between Tyler and Kaz and Clarisse feels that her feelings aren't considered.				

	in the love triangle.
Evaluation	Episode 37 Minute 2: Clarisse talks to Mary about how she feels about the love triangle. "I just feel being considered in any of this. I'm the one that has to keep my head up and act like everything's normal and not be shouting [...] and act like everything's normal"
Resolution	Tyler chooses to get back together with Kaz leaving Clarisse single. She says that she wishes he never says that he can't turn off his feelings for Kaz and that he chooses Kaz. Clarisse says that she doesn't want to have a conversation. She says that she wishes he didn't bring her back. Tyler asks if she finds anyone else attractive and that she came back with him. She says he should have fun with Kaz and walks off
Coda	In episode 39 there is a public vote based on favorite couples. The vulnerable couples are split up and the public choose who to save and who is dumped. Clarisse is not saved by the public or the islanders and is dumped. She is upset and says that Tyler is fake before she leaves.

