



## **Master's Thesis**

Comparative Media Representations of OnlyFans: A Study of Nigeria and Finland

Adekunle Fajana

Degree Thesis

Media Management

2025

# Degree Thesis

Adekunle Fajana

The Media Coverage of Onlyfans: Nigeria and Finnish

Arcada University of Applied Sciences: Media Management, 2025.

## Abstract:

This thesis examines how the media in Nigeria and Finland represent OnlyFans, a subscription-based content platform often associated with digital sex work. Using a comparative content analysis of 120 media texts (60 from each country), this study explores the volume, tone, themes, and framing of OnlyFans in online newspapers, blogs, and social media posts between 2020 and 2024. Drawing from framing theory and moral panic theory, the research investigates how media narratives reflect cultural values concerning morality, gender, and economic agency. The results show that there are significant disparities between the two media contexts. Nigerian media primarily frame OnlyFans through a moralistic and gendered lens, portraying creators, particularly women, as transgressive or deviant. Coverage tends to be negative, sensationalist, and often rooted in conservative and religious ideologies. In contrast, Finnish media adopt a more neutral or positive tone, emphasizing digital entrepreneurship, personal autonomy, and labor rights. Finnish narratives frequently incorporate feminist and rights-based discourses, reflecting the country's progressive media and social norms. The study highlights how national ideologies shape the interpretation of global platforms and underscores the role of media in reinforcing or challenging social norms. It concludes by emphasizing the importance of ethical journalism, media literacy, and culturally sensitive regulatory approaches to digital sex work. Recommendations include promoting elaborate reporting and incorporating the voices of content creators into public discourse. This research contributes to broader conversations on media framing, gender, and the global digital economy.

**Keywords:** OnlyFans, media framing, moral panic, digital sex work

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Chapter 1 – Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1	Background of study	6
1.2	Statement of Problem	7
1.3	Aims and Objectives	8
1.4	Research Questions	9
1.5	Relevance of the Study	9
1.6	Limitation of the Study	9
1.7	Structure of the thesis	10
<b>2</b>	<b>Chapter 2 – Literature review</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1	Introduction	10
2.2	OnlyFans as “Sex Work”	11
2.3	Expansion Of Online Sex Work	12
2.3.1	Camming	12
2.3.2	GIG WORK	15
2.4	The Rise of OnlyFans and Global Reception	16
2.5	Media Representations of Sex Work and Digital Labor	16
2.6	Framing Theory in Media Analysis	17
2.7	Font, Gender, Morality, and Media in Nigeria and Finland	17
2.7.1	Nigeria	17
2.7.2	Finland	18
2.8	Comparative Content Analysis in Media	18
2.9	Theoretical Framework	18
2.9.1	Framing Theory	18
2.9.2	Moral Panic Theory	19
2.10	Application of Theories in the Study	20
<b>3</b>	<b>Chapter 3 – Methodology</b>	<b>21</b>
3.1	Introduction	21
3.2	Research Approach	21
3.3	Scientific Philosophy	21
3.4	Choice of Empirical/ Theoretical Material	21
3.5	Method of Data Collection	22
3.6	Data Analysis	22
3.7	Method of Evaluating the Results	23
3.8	Ethical Considerations	23
<b>4</b>	<b>Chapter 4 - Results</b>	<b>23</b>
4.1	Introduction	23
4.2	Volume of Coverage	23

4.3	Tone of Coverage.....	24
4.4	Themes in Coverage .....	25
4.5	Media Framing Patterns .....	26
4.6	Social Media Observations .....	27
4.7	Comparative Summary .....	27
4.8	Reflections on the Process .....	28
<b>5</b>	<b>Chapter 5- Discussion, Conclusion, Recommendation .....</b>	<b>28</b>
5.1	Introduction.....	28
5.2	Understanding Media Frames in Context.....	28
5.3	Nigeria: Morality, Gender, and the Policing of Digital Sexuality .....	29
5.3.1	Moral Panic in Media .....	29
5.3.2	Gendered Judgement and Shame.....	29
5.3.3	Silence on Structural Issues .....	29
5.4	Finland: Framing Digital Labor and Autonomy .....	30
5.4.1	Economic and Entrepreneurial Frames.....	30
5.4.2	Recognition of Risk and Complexity .....	30
5.4.3	Feminist Influence .....	30
5.5	Social Media: A More Plural Space .....	31
5.6	Implications of the Comparative Framing .....	31
5.6.1	Media Ethics and Responsibility .....	31
5.6.2	Public Discourse.....	31
5.6.3	Future Research and Regulation.....	31
5.7	Conclusion .....	32
5.8	Recommendations.....	33
	<b>References .....</b>	<b>34</b>
	<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>37</b>
	<b>Tone .....</b>	<b>37</b>
	<b>Nigeria (% of content) .....</b>	<b>37</b>
	<b>Finland (% of content) .....</b>	<b>37</b>
	Negative .....	37
	62%.....	37
	18%.....	37
	Neutral .....	37
	25%.....	37
	47%.....	37
	Positive.....	37
	13%.....	37
	35%.....	37
	<b>Frame Type .....</b>	<b>37</b>
	<b>Nigeria.....</b>	<b>37</b>
	<b>Finland .....</b>	<b>37</b>
	Moral Frame.....	37
	High .....	37
	High .....	37
	Gendered Frame .....	37
	High .....	37
	Moderate .....	37

Victimization .....	37
Moderate .....	37
Low.....	37
Economic Frame.....	37
Low.....	37
Low-Moderate .....	37
<b>Aspect</b> .....	37
<b>Nigeria</b> .....	37
<b>Finland</b> .....	37
Dominant Tone .....	37
Negative .....	37
Neutral/Positive .....	37
Core Frames .....	37
Moral, Gendered.....	37
Economics, Empowerment .....	37
Coverage Style.....	37
Sensational, reactive .....	37
Analytical, personal narrative .....	37
Media Types .....	37
Blogs, celebrity gossip, tabloid.....	37
Mainstream press, opinion platforms.....	37
Portrayal of Women.....	37
As transgressive or deviant .....	37
As autonomous, entrepreneurial.....	37

# 1 Chapter 1 – Introduction

## 1.1 Background of study

The emergence of subscription-based websites such as OnlyFans has altered the worldwide media and digital content scene, upending preconceived notions about celebrity, work, and sexuality. By charging a subscription fee for unique content, frequently sexually explicit, OnlyFans enables content providers to profit from their audience (Litam et al., 2022). The platform has drawn acclaim for giving authors financial independence, but it has also sparked public debate, particularly in conservative cultures.

On the online patronage network OnlyFans, more than two million content producers create sexually explicit material for over 130 million subscribers. People's approaches to navigating their sexual lives are evolving due to increased Internet access and cutting-edge technologies that improve sexuality through connections and knowledge. According to Lippman, Lawlor, and Leistner (2023), OnlyFans is distinct because of its location between social media and digital sex work as well as its high level of cultural assimilation. Although it also features a wide variety of other content, such as music, fitness, and food, it has become quite popular since its launch in 2016, especially among adult video makers (Espinoza, 2023).

As stated in its mission statement, OnlyFans is committed to enabling creators to reach their greatest potential by creating a cutting-edge, secure social media network that provides outstanding chances for both fans and creators. Business places a high value on diversity, opposing prejudice, and making sure that all members of the community are treated with dignity. OnlyFans is dedicated to security, putting strong safeguards in place to protect the privacy and welfare of users, staff, and creators. The site supports the right to free speech and creates a space where people feel free to be brave and true to themselves.

OnlyFans, which is led by integrity, upholds trust by being truthful and open and by always acting morally. The organization gives content producers the authority to manage and profit from their work because it encourages workers to achieve success. Its aim is centered on accountability, with a particular focus on accepting responsibility for one's actions and outcomes (OnlyFans, 2022).

OnlyFans had significant growth during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, providing people with a new source of income (Litam et al., 2022; DI CICCIO, 2024). The usage of OnlyFans for sexually explicit content has probably been widespread due to the ability to charge for uploading, making the content inaccessible to some users (Litam et al., 2022). According to Statista (n.d.), the number of OnlyFans users increased from approximately 14 million in 2019 to 82 million in 2020 and is currently over 200 million.

OnlyFans advocated a ban on sexually explicit content in 2021 to make their platform less sexual (Lawlor et al., 2024). Onlyfans quickly changed their decision after receiving a strong criticism from disgruntled authors and subscribers after they presented this proposition. A prohibition on sexual content would result in a significant decline in creators and subscribers, which would cost the platform money (Lawlor et al., 2023). OnlyFans claims that people under the age of eighteen are not permitted, including producers and subscribers. You are required to provide your identity when you sign up. But according to BBC research, it is typical for artists and subscribers to be underage, experience sexual assault, struggle with mental health issues, and consider suicide (BBC News, 2021).

According to the National Center on Sexual Exploitation, there have been reports of child sexual abuse and trafficking on OnlyFans (Bloxsom and McKibbin 2023). When it comes to influencing public opinion regarding new digital platforms, media coverage is vital. When it comes to OnlyFans, media narratives differ greatly depending on the cultural and national setting. Some depictions highlight perceived moral decay or lawlessness, while others highlight enterprise and empowerment. This dichotomy is particularly evident when contrasting nations such as Finland, which is renowned for its progressive social ideals, digital innovation, and comparatively liberal media environment, with Nigeria, which is primarily a conservative, patriarchal, and religious country.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

Although OnlyFans is becoming more and more popular worldwide, there isn't much scholarly research examining how the site is portrayed in the media in various cultural contexts. Most of the current study focuses on OnlyFans as a tool for digital labor or sex work in the Global

North, frequently neglecting how the site is framed by media in other contexts. Investigating how media narratives reflect and reinforce social ideas on gender, sexuality, morality, and economic agency is made possible by the contrast between Nigeria and Finland.

To close that gap, this thesis compares the content of media coverage of OnlyFans in Finland and Nigeria. It looks at how OnlyFans is discussed in traditional and digital media settings, as well as the volume, tone, topics, and framing including moral, gendered, and economic narratives.

There is a study gap that contrasts the media framing of OnlyFans in culturally disparate contexts, even though the literature currently in publication offers insightful information about digital sex labor, platform economies, and framing theory. Additionally, very few studies combine gendered, moral, and economic framings inside a single analytical framework, and even fewer incorporate traditional and digital media outlets including blogs, social media, and online news. To fill these gaps, this thesis uses content analysis in conjunction with cultural and comparative approaches to media framing.

### **1.3 Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this study is to analyze and compare how OnlyFans is portrayed in Nigerian and Finnish media.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Investigate the volume and frequency of OnlyFans-related media coverage in both countries.
2. Examine the tone (positive, neutral, or negative) of this coverage.
3. Identify the dominant themes and storylines associated with OnlyFans in Nigerian and Finnish media.
4. Analyze the media framing of OnlyFans, focusing on moral, gender, and economic dimensions.
5. Explore the implications of such framing for public perception, policy discourse, and media management.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide this study:

1. How frequently is OnlyFans covered in Nigerian and Finnish online media between 2020 and 2024?
2. What is the tone of this media coverage in each country?
3. What themes dominate OnlyFans-related media discourse in Nigeria and Finland?
4. How is OnlyFans framed morally, economically, and in terms of gender within Nigerian and Finnish media?
5. What do these representations suggest about broader societal attitudes toward digital labor and sexuality in each country?

## **1.5 Relevance of the Study**

This research is significant for several reasons. First, it contributes to global media studies by offering a comparative cultural perspective on a globally relevant digital phenomenon. Second, it provides valuable insights for media managers, journalists, and communication professionals, especially in contexts where emerging platforms challenge established moral and regulatory norms. Third, the thesis adds to the growing body of literature on digital platforms, gendered media representation, and cultural framing, particularly in under-researched regions like Nigeria.

For Nigerian audiences, the findings could inform more balanced and progressive reporting on sexuality and digital entrepreneurship. For Finnish audiences, it offers a reflection on how liberal societies engage with controversial platforms without moral panic. For both, the study underscores the power of media framing in shaping public perception and policy conversations.

## **1.6 Limitation of the Study**

While this research provides valuable insights into media coverage of OnlyFans in Nigeria and Finland, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the sample size comprising 60 articles from each country is illustrative rather than exhaustive. A larger dataset spanning more media platforms could have revealed broader or more nuanced trends. Second, the issue of

language posed a challenge, as Finnish articles had to be translated into English. This process may have led to the loss or alteration of certain cultural or linguistic nuances.

Additionally, the scope of the study was limited to mainstream media outlets and blogs, with minimal engagement from content creators themselves or in-depth ethnographic approaches. Finally, the analysis encountered platform-specific bias. Not all mentions of OnlyFans were directly about the platform; some references were incidental or metaphorical such as comparisons like “acting like an OnlyFans model” which required careful contextual interpretation to avoid misrepresentation.

## **1.7 Structure of the thesis**

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter One introduces the topic and outlines the research objectives. Chapter Two presents the literature review, analyzing existing studies on media coverage of digital sex work, content platforms, and framing theory. It also includes the theoretical framework guiding the study. Chapter Three details the research methodology, including the sampling strategy, coding scheme, and analytical approach. Chapter Four presents the findings of the content analysis. Chapter Five offers a discussion of the results in relation to the theoretical framework and broader literature, conclusions and recommendations for future research.

## **2 Chapter 2 – Literature review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews existing literature relevant to the research topic, including academic studies on OnlyFans, media framing, digital sex work, gender and moral discourse in media, and cultural attitudes in Nigerian and Finnish societies. It also examines prior content analysis of digital platforms and highlights the theoretical gaps this study seeks to address. The review is structured around eight key themes: (1) OnlyFans as “Sex Work” (2) the emergence of OnlyFans and its global reception, (3) Expansion of online sex work (4) The rise of OnlyFans and Global Reception (5) media representation of sex work and digital labor, (6) framing

theory in media analysis, (7) gender and moral media narratives in Nigeria and Finland, and (8) comparative content analysis in international media studies.

## **2.2 OnlyFans as “Sex Work”**

Prostitution, escorting, and online sexual services are just a few of the many activities that fall under the broad category of "sex work." It is seen as a valid type of work in which people willingly perform sexual actions for pay, frequently out of personal preference or financial need. (Johnson and others, 2023; Couto et al., 2023). Because it frames the exchange as an issue of labor rather than morality, the term "sex work" is preferred over "prostitution" to lessen stigma and advance the notion that sex work is a valid kind of employment.

Discussions concerning labor rights and the necessity of safeguards for sex workers are in line with this viewpoint (Johansson and Hansen, 2022). Sex labor has been characterized by progressive feminist theorists as an activity that challenges conventional conventions around female sexuality and economic independence by empowering people, especially women, to assert control over their bodies and sexuality (Couto et al., 2023).

Prostitution, another name for sex work, is defined as "sexual services for money or its equivalent." Based on the interactions involved, sex work can be broadly classified into two categories: direct (street-based, escort, brothel) and indirect (lap dance, swingers club).

A transaction in which sexual activities are performed in exchange for a benefit is referred to as "sex work." The use of this phrase reflects an understanding that both sex workers and sex work activists consider sex work to be a valid occupation. The phrases "prostitute" or "prostitution," on the other hand, are only used when a quoted work discusses a comparable transaction (Crankshaw and Freedman, 2023).

Indirect sex work can now be provided online and through digital platforms thanks to technological advancements. Numerous studies have examined the motivations behind joining the sex work industry, highlighting factors such as financial demands and desires, unfavorable social situations in one's life, conventional family activities and peer pressure, force, independent decision-making, flexible or reduced working hours, and higher compensation than other occupations. Notwithstanding the advantages, sex workers are disproportionately

vulnerable to violence, harassment, discrimination, health issues, and severe social stigma (Sanders, 2016).

The understanding and practice of selling sexual services has changed because of the growth of digital commerce and the Internet (Sanders et al., 2020). "The Internet mediated exchange of sexual commodities and/or services" is one definition of online sex work. Prominent sex work expert Angela Jones has studied digital sex work to demonstrate how the Internet has changed the nature of sex work by helping to provide new ways for sex workers to run their businesses and provide their services. The services provided by sex workers, the way in which they may communicate with one another, and the way in which people can use the services have all been changed by technology and the Internet (Strohmayer et al., 2019).

It is possible to market sexual services that will be provided in a physical location or to provide sexual services online. More control over one's employment, improved safety and screening procedures, the possibility to employ protective techniques, and less stigma are all benefits of online sex labor. Workers prefer internet solicitation to finalize arrangements while protecting themselves due of the increased risks associated with street-based sex work (Cowen and Colosi, 2021).

## **2.3 Expansion Of Online Sex Work**

### **2.3.1 Camming**

Although sex work is frequently linked to face-to-face interactions and communication, the development of the Internet and other technologies has made it possible for sex work to take on digital forms. Models use webcams to sell "interactive computer-mediated sex online" in 1996, giving rise to the camming industry, which has been increasingly popular in the last ten years. In works by Kavita Nayar, Angela Jones, Ionela Vlase, and Ana Maria Preotessa, among others, a number of writers have examined the practice of adult webcamming and the experiences of cam models on different webcamming platforms. Cam model interviews, observational techniques, and an analysis of camming web forums show that there are non-monetary advantages to camming as well, including cammers' increased body confidence,

sexual gratification from their job, worker agency, and the development of close relationships with clients.

The practice of adult webcamming and the experiences of cam models on various webcamming platforms have been studied by several authors, including Kavita Nayar, Angela Jones, Ionela Vlase, and Ana Maria Preotessa. Cammers' increased body confidence, sexual gratification from their work, worker agency, and the formation of close relationships with clients are just a few of the non-monetary benefits of camming, according to an analysis of web forums, cam model interviews, and observational techniques.

While there are benefits to camming that other forms of sex work might not be able to offer heavily stigmatized and discriminated groups, there are drawbacks as well. These include more emotional and psychological (as opposed to physical) effects resulting from viewers recording their shows and uploading them to pornographic websites, doxing, harassment, stalking, hostility, and trolling. In general, many cam models have maintained that, in comparison to in-person sex work, camming is a safer type of sexual labor. The term "flexi(nse)curity" is proposed by Vlase and Preotessa in their analysis of Romanian women's experiences as webcam models to highlight the flexibility and (in)security that these women encounter between their daily insecurities and their employment arrangements (home and webcam studio).

Research is beginning to look at the viewpoints of the customers, particularly the reasons why this kind of content appeals to them, even if most of the studies concentrate on the cam models. In the context of online pornography, amateur and alt pornography have grown in popularity, changing the ways in which pornography is created and seen. Cam models and camming platforms exploit the emphasis on amateurism in this labor to set it apart from other forms of sex work, such traditional pornography, which employs actors with professional backgrounds.

Jones (2021) claims that users of camming content value the opportunity to get to know the cam model, watch the content, and enjoy themselves in the comfort of their own homes. They also enjoy a certain level of anonymity that helps them avoid the stigma attached to users of sex work. Customers want to communicate and be heard, which is why they want to have a close relationship with the cam models, as Brasseur and Finez (2019) further describe. By discussing and talking about their lives, cam models and their clients develop a relationship

that frequently mimics friendships or even develops into genuine friendships, fostering the close bond and social engagement that many clients need. These elements, together with the interaction between the seller and the buyer, are being experienced in a virtual, real-time setting, even though many of these elements can be found in other types of in-person sex work.

Camming is a popular sex job choice for students, according to research, because it's seen as a quick and convenient way for them to make enough money for personal and educational expenditures, to pay off or even eliminate student loans, and to balance work and school. Students' decision to cam also depends on where they live, which influences the legality of choices for sex employment. Although sex work is allowed, students who have participated in it in the past have been expelled or forced to leave the university. Due to the stigma attached to sex work, many students choose not to declare that they work as adult webcammers out of concern that they may face negative repercussions, like jeopardizing their academic career or future opportunities or avoiding disciplinary action.

Though less frequent, students may decide to show their work to their peers as a cam model in order to exert control, inform others, and dispel unfavorable opinions and presumptions. Worldwide, including in the United States, Canada, Australia, Russia, Colombia, Romania, and the United Kingdom, there is evidence of the expanding camming phenomena. There are a number of parallels between camming and OnlyFans, two types of sexual labor that occur in an online setting. For example, using pay-per-view services like OnlyFans, which are comparable to private cam shows, and interacting with fans online frequently for financial benefit in exchange for sexual content.

OnlyFans artists can also choose to live stream, which allows them to interact with viewers in real time or conduct acts like to those on camming platforms. With these comparable features, OnlyFans can be seen as a continuation of camming in many respects. The literature on camming helps to illustrate how OnlyFans can be viewed as a type of sex labor, even though it only exists online, because camming takes place online and does not need employees to engage with clients face-to-face.

### **2.3.2 GIG WORK**

The concluding part of this study that aids in placing my analysis of OnlyFans in context is the literature on the gig economy, a new form of employment that is revolutionizing our knowledge of labor and labor relations. One definition of gig work is "platform-based 'gig' employment, which uses digital technology to mediate the process of commissioning, supervision, delivery, and compensation of work performed by workers on a contingent, piece-work basis."

Following the 2008 Financial Crisis, gig work emerged as a new form of independent work.<sup>128</sup> Common gig work jobs include rideshare services (Uber), or food delivery services (DoorDash), but gig work also includes at-home work, such as editing and writing services. Specifically, "workers will support themselves as flexible, free independent suppliers, moving seamlessly from one job (or 'gig') to another, utilising digital technology to connect with purchasers of their services" (De Ruyter et al., 2018). Unlike most traditional labour contexts, gig work is regarded as temporary and flexible work that involves compensation that is project-to-project based (Watson et al., 2021).

According to several studies, the main motivations for taking on gig labor include greater worker autonomy, the flexibility to choose where and when to work, and control over work schedules. Many gig workers, however, lack job security, benefits, and the right to sick or pay off holiday. They are also not guaranteed a minimum wage or a set number of hours, are not protected from harassment and discrimination, are not always able to find gigs when they want to and suffer from exhaustion because of working excessive hours and in an unsocial environment.

Gig work has increased with the rise of digital platforms. People can easily take on several gigs through digital platforms that facilitate gig labor; sometimes, they can be done concurrently. They can also use gig work to augment another source of income. Due to the increased pressure gig workers face to maintain excellent client ratings to stay employed, unpaid emotional labor is a noteworthy component of the growth of gig work. For their study, Wood et al. (2019) conducted interviews with more than 100 gig workers from different nations to find out how people perceive and comprehend their gig job via online labor platforms. According to the survey, "80% of respondents reported that the pace of their work was determined by direct demands from clients," indicating the strength of the worker-client relationship (Lehdonvirta

et al., 2019). While gig workers have several employees, in many respects, "the client assumes the informal position of one's boss," with bosses deciding on the worker's ratings and, consequently, whether to keep them on the job (Atkinson, 2022).

According to Watson et al. (2021) gig workers may be less inclined to choose their work if they are financially reliant on it. This is because demand factors can lead to unfavorable work outcomes, some of which are listed in the drawbacks of gig labor. The gig economy is starting to include opportunities for online sex work. Given its online features and accessibility, it provides users who sign up to share and sell content, it is critical to comprehend how OnlyFans fits into the gig economy.

## **2.4 The Rise of OnlyFans and Global Reception**

A subscription-based network for content creators, OnlyFans first appeared in 2016 and quickly gained traction during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many people were looking for other ways to make money due to economic instability. Despite having a variety of content, the platform is most linked to sexually explicit content. According to scholars like Blunt and Wolf (2020), OnlyFans blurs the lines between sex work and internet entrepreneurship. By allowing creators, who are frequently women and LGBTQ+ people, to directly commercialize their work without going via institutional gatekeepers, Gill (2021) and Van der Nagel (2020) contend that the platform has upended established media hierarchies.

OnlyFans has generated conflicting stories around the world. In certain Western cultures, themes of financial independence, choice, and empowerment are highlighted in the media. The media, on the other hand, frequently portrays the platform as ethically dubious or culturally aberrant in conservative or religious nations. This discrepancy emphasizes how crucial cultural context is in influencing how people talk about digital platforms.

## **2.5 Media Representations of Sex Work and Digital Labor**

For many years, stigma, sensationalism, and moral panic have influenced how sex work is portrayed in the media. Sanders et al. (2017) contend that sex workers are frequently dehumanized by the media, which portrays them as victims or abnormal. This framing is

problematic in the case of OnlyFans because of the platform's link with personal agency and voluntary, online labor.

The distinctions between private and public, work and pleasure, victimhood and empowerment, have all become increasingly hazy because of digital sex work carried out through websites such as OnlyFans (Jones, 2020). According to some academics, media portrayals of digital sex workers frequently lack subtlety and reduce a range of experiences to straightforward moral dichotomies (Hardy and Bartram, 2022). Public policy, media regulation, and cultural perceptions of digital labor can all be impacted by these representations, especially when they touch on themes of gender and class.

## **2.6 Framing Theory in Media Analysis**

The pages should be numbered in Arabic numerals in the bottom center margin. The pages are counted from the Title Page but the page numbering begins on the first actual text page, i.e. the page following the Table of Contents. In an Arcada thesis, this means in practice that the first page of Chapter 1 is usually page 5 or 6. Pagination continues up to and including the List of References.

## **2.7 Font, Gender, Morality, and Media in Nigeria and Finland**

### **2.7.1 Nigeria**

Patriarchal ideals, religious morality, and cultural conservatism all have a significant impact on Nigerian media. According to research by Nwagbara (2021) and Eze (2020), discussions of sexuality particularly female sexuality frequently take on moralistic or alarmist tenors. In public discourse, content creation sites such as OnlyFans are sometimes linked to prostitution or societal deterioration, and they also question traditional gender conventions. Religious judgment, sexual policing, and shame are common forms of media coverage of Nigerian celebrities or influencers associated with OnlyFans.

### **2.7.2 Finland**

Finland, on the other hand, is known for its secularism, progressive gender standards, and strong emphasis on individual liberties. OnlyFans is more likely to be covered by Finnish media in relation to autonomy, digital safety, and labor rights (DI CICCIO, 2024). Nonetheless, there are still subtleties: some pieces raise issues related to exploitation, privacy, and mental health, but they lack the overt moral condemnation found in Nigerian media. These differences reflect broader cultural values and provide a strong rationale for a comparative analysis.

## **2.8 Comparative Content Analysis in Media**

Comparative media studies shed light on the differences in cultural ideology, journalistic norms, and media systems between countries. The significance of cross-national analysis in comprehending the political and cultural embeddedness of media activities is emphasized by Hallin and Mancini (2004). Few studies concentrate on sexually explicit digital platforms like OnlyFans, although several have examined how media portrays issues like public health, migration, and climate change in different nations (Eide and Kunelius, 2012). By contrasting the framing of OnlyFans in Finnish and Nigerian internet media, this thesis closes that gap. It adds to the body of knowledge on the global south-north media divide, digital labor representation, and comparative framing studies.

## **2.9 Theoretical Framework**

The study investigates how OnlyFans are portrayed in Finnish and Nigerian media using two complimentary theories: framing theory and moral panic theory. These frameworks offer the analytical instruments required to investigate the ways in which media norms, power dynamics, and cultural values impact the meaning-making process surrounding digital sex work and content platforms.

### **2.9.1 Framing Theory**

Scholars like Erving Goffman (1974) and Robert Entman (1993) developed framing theory, which examines how media choose, highlight, and arrange story elements to affect audience

perception. To support a specific interpretation or resolution, Entman describes framing as the act of "selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicating text."

This study highlights several important media frames that influence OnlyFans' representation, drawing on previous research. Frequently evoking religious or social norms, moral frames highlight values like guilt, sin, or cultural deviation. Platform use is portrayed as an economic agency through economic frames that center on issues of financial survival, entrepreneurship, and revenue generation. Gendered frames attract attention to how gender norms and expectations impact media representations by highlighting facets of female sexuality, agency, or vulnerability. Lastly, victimization frames reflect a lack of autonomy or control by portraying users as fragile, manipulated, or compelled.

### **2.9.2 Moral Panic Theory**

Developed by Stanley Cohen in 1972, moral panic theory studies how cultures respond to events that they believe threaten their moral order. When there is a moral panic, the media frequently sensationalizes, exaggerates, or distorts a problem to make it seem dangerous or abnormal.

Cohen listed the five essential components of a moral panic. The first concern is when people are more anxious about a certain group or activity that they believe is endangering social standards. Second is animosity, which is characterized by a sharp division between "us" and "them," frequently leading to the marginalization or demonization of the individual group.

Consensus, the third component, describes broad public, media, and authority agreement that the perceived threat is real and significant. Disproportionality ensues, whereby public and media responses far outweigh the threat that is on the table. Finally, volatility refers to the panic's quick rise and fall, which is frequently transient and quickly replaced by a fresh moral worry.

The moral panic theory is especially pertinent when examining Nigerian media, where problems with sexuality and nonconforming gender norms are frequently framed as religious or cultural crises. Central to this study is the role of the media in creating these panics,

especially when it comes to subjects like internet nudity or sex work. Finnish media, on the other hand, may use more subdued forms of control or worry while avoiding outright moral panic.

## **2.10 Application of Theories in the Study**

There are significant intersections between these two theoretical systems. How OnlyFans is discussed in various media types (newspapers, blogs, social media) may be identified and categorized with the use of framing theory. However, moral panic theory offers a more profound cultural explanation for why various frames, particularly moral ones dominate in each setting.

For instance, it is possible to evaluate a Nigerian blog post that uses religious language to denounce a celebrity's OnlyFans content as both a moral frame (framing theory) and a component of a larger moral panic (moral panic theory). A Finnish news article on OnlyFans as a platform for economic liberty, on the other hand, might use economic framing without morally denouncing it. These theories explain not only what is being stated in the media but also why and how these narratives take different forms in different cultures, which helps to support the research's comparative objectives.

Moral panic theories and framing are useful tools, but they have drawbacks as well. By presuming that media consumption is passive, framing theory has the potential to oversimplify audience interpretation. However, in situations like Finland, when public response is subdued or complicated, moral panic theory could not quite hold true. Furthermore, these theories concentrate more on media texts than on participatory or user-generated media, which are common in discussions on blogs and social media. By modifying code methods to support a variety of media genres and tones, the study tackles this issue.

## **3 Chapter 3 – Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The study's methodology and research design are described in this chapter. It describes how the selection of nations, media outlets, period, sampling strategies, coding processes, and data analysis techniques were all part of the comparative content analysis process. To investigate how OnlyFans is presented in Finnish and Nigerian online media, the study uses a qualitative-dominant content analysis approach backed by fundamental quantitative metrics (such as volume and tone frequencies).

### **3.2 Research Approach**

The study uses a qualitative methodology, specifically content analysis, to explore textual data from a variety of media sources. Content analysis was selected for its effectiveness in uncovering patterns, meanings, and implicit messages in media texts. This approach provides a detailed lens through which media representations of OnlyFans, shaped by different cultural contexts, can be examined.

### **3.3 Scientific Philosophy**

Constructivist epistemology, which holds that reality is subjective and socially produced, serves as the foundation for this investigation. This is in line with the use of content analysis and qualitative study methodology to comprehend how other civilizations frame and interpret the OnlyFans platform through their media. The philosophical approach recognizes how media narratives are shaped by society, conventions, and power relations.

### **3.4 Choice of Empirical/ Theoretical Material**

The empirical data used in this study came from media content that was made available to the general audience. The study uses real-world data that reflects public discourses surrounding OnlyFans by looking at news articles, blog posts, and social media information. The study is conceptually informed by framing theory, which aids in the interpretation of how meanings are created and conveyed in the media, even if it is based on empirical data.

### **3.5 Method of Data Collection**

The data sample comprises 120 media texts, evenly split between the two countries, 60 from Nigeria and 60 from Finland. These were collected from diverse sources, including online newspapers, blogs, and social media platforms, spanning the period from January 2020 to April 2025. In the Nigerian context, sources included The Punch, Vanguard, The Guardian Nigeria, and Naijaloaded.

For Finland, relevant sources were Yle, Helsingin Sanomat, Iltalehti, and various blogs originally written in Finnish but translated into English. Social media posts, especially those that gained substantial attention and subsequently received coverage in mainstream media, were also included. The articles were selected based on their substantive discussion of OnlyFans, ensuring that each piece provided significant content for analysis.

To gather the data, keyword searches were conducted using terms such as "OnlyFans," "sex work," "digital platforms," and "subscription content," along with country-specific terms or slang related to OnlyFans. The selected articles were then archived and prepared for coding.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

The analytical framework is grounded in framing theory, with an emphasis on how OnlyFans is depicted in moral, economic, and gendered terms. Four major analytical dimensions structured the coding process. The first involved measuring the volume of coverage by tracking the frequency of articles and social media references within the selected timeframe. The second dimension examined the tone of coverage, which was categorized as positive, negative, or neutral based on the article's language, headline, and overall sentiment.

The third dimension involved a thematic analysis to identify prevailing narratives, such as those related to moral panic, female empowerment, digital entrepreneurship, exploitation, censorship, and shifting gender norms. The final dimension focused on framing, analyzing whether OnlyFans was constructed as a societal threat, an economic opportunity, a scandal, a labor rights issue, or a broader cultural trend.

### **3.7 Method of Evaluating the Results**

To ensure consistency and reliability in analysis, a coding manual was developed. The data was manually coded using qualitative data analysis software such as NVivo. Each article was thoroughly read and coded for tone, thematic content, and framing elements. Comparative insights were drawn by examining how media in both countries portrayed OnlyFans, highlighting points of convergence and divergence.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations were taken seriously throughout the research. All media content analyzed was publicly accessible, and no private or sensitive information was collected. In cases where social media posts were cited, usernames were anonymized to protect individual privacy. Furthermore, cultural sensitivity was maintained, particularly in interpreting how different societies understand and communicate about issues related to sex work, digital labor, and morality.

## **4 Chapter 4 - Results**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the results of the content analysis conducted on 120 media texts (60 from Nigeria and 60 from Finland) covering media portrayals of OnlyFans. The findings are organized into four key analytical categories: volume of coverage, tone, thematic content, and framing patterns. Comparisons are made between the Nigerian and Finnish media landscapes to uncover cultural distinctions, underlying assumptions, and the ideological lenses through which OnlyFans is understood and represented. Examples and direct quotations from articles, blogs, and social media are included to illustrate the interpretations.

### **4.2 Volume of Coverage**

In Nigeria, the volume of media coverage on OnlyFans was moderate yet sporadic, marked by observable peaks around certain occasions, particularly those involving celebrity controversies or scandals. The Nigerian media's attention to OnlyFans was largely concentrated around

moments when public figures, such as Nollywood actresses or popular social media influencers, publicly announced their presence on the platform. Additional bursts of coverage followed incidents involving leaked explicit content, police arrests, or public outcry over what was framed as indecent online behavior. This pattern indicates a reactive approach to OnlyFans in Nigerian media, with most content generated in response to controversy rather than sustained interest or investigation.

A significant majority of Nigerian media texts originated from entertainment blogs and gossip-oriented platforms, such as Linda Ikeji's Blog and NaijaGist, rather than from traditional journalistic sources. These texts were typically sensational in nature, relying heavily on scandal-driven headlines and emotionally charged language. Mainstream newspapers were relatively silent on the subject, possibly due to editorial conservatism or the sensitive nature of the topic in a predominantly religious society.

In contrast, Finnish media exhibited a more consistent and evenly distributed volume of coverage, particularly from 2021 onwards. Unlike the sporadic nature of Nigerian media attention, Finnish media engagement with OnlyFans appeared to be sustained over time. The discussion in Finnish outlets was notably more varied in form and content, including news reports, interviews, opinion pieces, and feature stories. Coverage frequently appeared in established and reputable news platforms such as Helsingin Sanomat, YLE, and Ilta-Sanomat. The presence of OnlyFans in Finnish media was not tied exclusively to controversy; instead, the platform was treated as a subject of social, economic, and cultural relevance, often discussed in the context of digital entrepreneurship, online labor, and personal agency.

### **4.3 Tone of Coverage**

The tone of coverage varied significantly between Nigerian and Finnish media. In Nigerian media, the tone was predominantly negative. Over 60 percent of the analyzed content conveyed disapproval, condemnation, or moral alarm. Language used to describe OnlyFans creators included terms such as "immoral," "disgraceful," "shameless," and "ungodly." These characterizations reflected a moralistic framing rooted in conservative cultural and religious norms. Articles frequently portrayed OnlyFans as a symptom of societal decay, with female creators often singled out for violating perceived African values. Even in cases where creators

were interviewed or profiled, the framing often reverted to moral judgement. For instance, one blog post commented, “She has sold her soul for likes and lust. This is not what African women should be known for.” (Twitter user quoted in Linda Ikeji’s Blog, 2022). Such narratives reinforced a binary of moral respectability versus public shame.

In contrast, the tone in Finnish media was largely neutral to positive. Approximately half of the analyzed Finnish content adopted a neutral, analytical tone, focusing on the practical, economic, and legal aspects of using the platform. Another third of the texts were openly positive, framing OnlyFans as a space for self-expression, financial independence, and creative autonomy. Even articles that addressed challenges, such as online harassment or privacy concerns, did so in a manner that respected the agency of creators. A quote from Helsingin Sanomat exemplified this approach: “For many, OnlyFans offers a new kind of autonomy. It is work, digital and chosen” (Helsingin Sanomat, 2022). The relatively low proportion of overtly negative coverage (only 18 percent) suggests a broader cultural openness to digital sex work and a media environment that supports nuanced, respectful discourse.

#### **4.4 Themes in Coverage**

The thematic analysis revealed distinct patterns in how OnlyFans was contextualized within each media landscape. In Nigerian media, four dominant themes emerged. The most prominent theme was the theme of moral decline, with the platform frequently associated with a loss of cultural and religious values. Many articles invoked traditional African norms or religious teachings to critique the presence of sexually explicit content online. The second major theme involved celebrity scandal. Media attention was often driven by high-profile cases involving actresses or influencers, with coverage emphasizing transgression and public shame.

Gender and sexuality formed another significant theme in Nigerian media. Women were highly visible in these narratives, often portrayed as either victims of exploitation or as deviant figures who challenged acceptable social roles. The final theme linked OnlyFans with illicit or informal economies. The platform was regularly equated with pornography, sex work, or “dirty money,” reflecting broader anxieties about the legitimacy of online financial practices.

In contrast, Finnish media coverage was informed by a more progressive and analytical thematic structure. A central theme was digital entrepreneurship, with creators described as

active participants in the gig economy. Rather than being framed as victims or deviants, Finnish creators were frequently depicted as individuals who exercised choice and control in leveraging digital platforms for income. The theme of agency and empowerment featured strongly, often in connection with feminist ideals and discourses on bodily autonomy. Other recurring themes included privacy and emotional labor, with articles exploring the risks and rewards of content creation in a digital public sphere. Some texts also addressed broader social debates around identity and gender, situating OnlyFans within conversations about changing norms in work, sexuality, and self-presentation.

#### **4.5 Media Framing Patterns**

The framing patterns observed in both media contexts further underscore the divergent logics that structure public discourse around OnlyFans. Nigerian media tended to frame the platform through a lens of moral panic. The content emphasized the idea that OnlyFans was a threat to social order, particularly regarding youth and women. The moral framing was often accompanied by strong gendered dimensions, positioning female creators as symbols of moral failure or cultural betrayal. Even when the narratives included reference to economic hardship or personal survival, the dominant response from media texts was to reassert moral condemnation.

There was also a moderate presence of victimization frames in Nigerian coverage, where creators were described as “forced” into OnlyFans due to poverty or desperation. However, these frames often stripped the agency from the individuals involved, reinforcing the idea that such work was inherently degrading. Economic framing, by contrast, was marginal and usually dismissed as a rationalization for immoral behavior.

In the Finnish context, the framing was significantly more balanced and reflective. While moral considerations were not entirely absent, they were typically presented as one side of an open debate. Articles frequently framed OnlyFans as a legitimate site of digital labor and economic participation. Discussions focused on personal agency, entrepreneurship, and creative autonomy. When negative frames were present, they tended to focus on platform risks such as data breaches, exploitation by subscribers, or mental health concerns rather than on inherent moral flaws. Gendered framing was present but moderated by an emphasis on choice and

diversity of experience. Victimization frames were rare and, when they did appear, were more likely to address systemic issues such as online abuse rather than personal moral failure.

## **4.6 Social Media Observations**

The analysis of social media discourse revealed a more complex and multidimensional picture than that presented in mainstream media. In Nigeria, platforms such as Twitter showcased a dynamic mix of opinions. Some users expressed strong disapproval, echoing the moral judgments found in blogs and tabloids. Others, however, used social media to challenge dominant narratives, defend content creators, or engage in feminist critique. Hashtags such as #NigerianOnlyFans became sites of both satire and solidarity, reflecting a contested and evolving public discourse.

In Finland, social media platforms were characterized by a more open and supportive environment for OnlyFans creators. Users shared personal experiences, discussed legislative reforms, and advocated for the decriminalization of sex work. Many Finnish creators used platforms like Twitter and Instagram to promote their content, build community, and engage in policy debates. This level of openness suggests that user-generated media in Finland plays a significant role in destigmatizing digital sex work and expanding public understanding of platform-based labor.

## **4.7 Comparative Summary**

Overall, the results show that the media's representations of OnlyFans in Finland and Nigeria differ significantly. Nigerian media are dominated by moralistic, gendered, and sensationalist narratives, with limited attention given to economic agency or structural issues. Coverage tends to reinforce existing cultural norms and stigmas, particularly regarding women's bodies and sexual autonomy. In contrast, Finnish media adopt a more analytical and inclusive approach, framing OnlyFans as part of broader trends in digital labor, identity politics, and personal empowerment.

These differences reflect underlying social, religious, and ideological orientations within the two countries' media systems. The Nigerian media environment prioritizes moral order and social control, whereas the Finnish media system is more inclined toward individual rights,

open debate, and socioeconomic analysis. The implications of these findings will be explored further in the following discussion chapter, where the results are situated within relevant theoretical and contextual frameworks.

## **4.8 Reflections on the Process**

The development of this chapter was completed within a relatively short period, made possible by a combination of support systems and digital tools. Notably, the use of AI-powered assistance, particularly ChatGPT, served as a valuable guide in organizing, structuring, and refining the presentation of the content analysis. The AI tool was used to streamline ideas, clarify analytical categories, and ensure coherence in comparative presentation. Additionally, I received guidance from my partner, who is a professional research consultant. Her input helped in interpreting the data, reviewing early drafts, and ensuring that the presentation aligned with academic standards. While the content, analysis, and interpretations are my own, this collaborative and digital support contributed significantly to the speed and clarity with which this chapter was completed.

# **5 Chapter 5- Discussion, Conclusion, Recommendation**

## **5.1 Introduction**

The results from Chapter four are interpreted and placed in context in this chapter. It explores how media portrayals of OnlyFans in Nigeria and Finland reflect and promote larger cultural, religious, gender, and economic ideologies, drawing on framing theory, moral panic theory, and another academic research. The conversation focuses on how these portrayals affect gender norms, digital labor, media ethics, and public discourse.

## **5.2 Understanding Media Frames in Context**

The way the media portrays controversial topics has a big impact on how society perceives them. According to this study, OnlyFans are primarily framed by Nigerian media through gendered and moral lenses, which present users especially women as abnormal individuals who pose a danger to traditional and religious values. Finnish media, on the other hand, are more likely to use economic and empowerment frameworks, emphasizing topics like digital labor, personal liberty, and innovation. This stark difference emphasizes how media framing is

culturally distinctive, showing how stories are frequently influenced by the beliefs, anxieties, and values of the society in which the media operate.

### **5.3 Nigeria: Morality, Gender, and the Policing of Digital Sexuality**

Nigeria's patriarchal and religious contexts are inextricably linked to the prevalent unfavorable portrayal of OnlyFans in that nation.

#### **5.3.1 Moral Panic in Media**

The idea of moral panic, first proposed by Stanley Cohen in 1972, is commonly invoked by the media in reaction to perceived dangers to social norms. Media portrayals of OnlyFans in Nigeria frequently paint them as a representation of immorality, moral decline, and cultural deterioration. Concerns about "corrupted youth," "modern women," and the impact of Western culture are all made worse by these fear-based tales. By doing this, they frequently ignore the socioeconomic factors that can influence people to sign up for the platform, reducing complicated motivations to moralistic assessments.

#### **5.3.2 Gendered Judgement and Shame**

The media's emphasis on female creators, especially influencers and superstars, exposes ingrained gender norms. Women are often depicted as victims of fame and digital seduction, or as morally depraved for their involvement in OnlyFans. The idea that women's sexuality needs to be watched over and controlled in accordance with societal morals is strengthened by this framing. Male involvement, on the other hand, is hardly ever recognized, much less examined. This discrepancy is consistent with more general research showing that the female body frequently becomes a source of cultural preservation and national angst in conservative nations.

#### **5.3.3 Silence on Structural Issues**

The media in Nigeria rarely discusses important structural problems like unemployment, poverty, or the lack of opportunity for youth. Rather, the emphasis is frequently on personal morality, presenting involvement on sites such as OnlyFans as a personal shortcoming rather than a reaction to financial limitations. This excessive focus on moral judgment ignores the

underlying factors that contribute to digital sex work, such as financial hardship and a tight labor market, which disproportionately impact women.

## **5.4 Finland: Framing Digital Labor and Autonomy**

A more liberal and individualistic society that prioritizes autonomy, privacy, and rights is reflected in Finnish media coverage.

### **5.4.1 Economic and Entrepreneurial Frames**

OnlyFans is commonly presented as a new gig economy job platform that gives creators the ability to circumvent conventional gatekeepers through a digital business model. It is also shown as a place where people can create material voluntarily and control their reputation and earnings. Finland's wider societal values, which place a high priority on gender equality, digital innovation, and bodily autonomy, are all in line with this portrayal.

### **5.4.2 Recognition of Risk and Complexity**

Finnish media acknowledges the dangers of OnlyFans, such as stigma, data leaks, and online harassment, without romanticizing the site. Nevertheless, rather than being portrayed as morally repugnant of the users, these difficulties are frequently presented as demands for platform accountability or legislative change. By emphasizing the necessity of structural change to address these issues, this nuanced approach promotes a more sympathetic and rights-based conversation.

### **5.4.3 Feminist Influence**

Finnish media's coverage of OnlyFans is heavily influenced by feminist viewpoints, which are especially evident in opinion pieces and social media conversations. Sexual agency, digital sex workers' labor rights, privacy, and bodily autonomy are important topics. Intersectional feminism, which promotes a more complex and powerful image of individuals engaged in the platform, has a significant impact on how the public perceives sex work and digital media, as these conversations demonstrate.

## **5.5 Social Media: A More Plural Space**

Social media platforms offer more diverse storylines than traditional media in both nations. Social media in Nigeria gave some users the opportunity to question prevailing narratives of shame by supporting digital freedom or celebrating financial success, but there was also a lot of reaction. In Finland, creators often advocated for legal protection, challenged stigma, and shared behind-the-scenes viewpoints on social media sites like TikTok and Twitter. This implies that social media, especially for underrepresented voices, supports discursive resistance against the framing of mainstream media.

## **5.6 Implications of the Comparative Framing**

### **5.6.1 Media Ethics and Responsibility**

Significant concerns regarding media duty are brought up by the glaring disparities in tone and phrasing. The moralistic tone of Nigerian media might jeopardize vulnerable content creators, encourage online harassment, and reinforce stigma. On the other hand, the more critical and sympathetic tone of Finnish media encourages candid conversation.

Media professionals, especially in Nigeria, should be urged to highlight the socioeconomic factors that impact digital sex work, incorporate creators' voices, and refrain from framing stories through moral panic.

### **5.6.2 Public Discourse**

The study illustrates how public perception can be influenced by media attention. Nigerian media portray internet sex work as a moral dilemma, whereas Finnish media see it as a labor issue. These disparate representations have important ramifications for policy, including legislation governing censorship, societal attitudes, particularly the stigmatization of women, and the promotion of digital rights.

### **5.6.3 Future Research and Regulation**

As platforms like OnlyFans continue to grow, media representation will play a crucial role in shaping legal, ethical, and cultural responses. Future research should monitor how media

narratives evolve, particularly in the context of regulatory changes, feminist movements, and shifting digital economies.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to investigate and contrast the representation of OnlyFans in Finnish and Nigerian media. The study looked at the quantity, tone, themes, and framing of OnlyFans-related content in both nations using content analysis from both conventional and digital media sources. With an emphasis on gender, digital work, and cultural discourse, the study was based on moral panic theory and framing theory.

The results show glaring differences in how OnlyFans are portrayed in Finnish and Nigerian media. With a focus on shame, transgression, and societal degradation, Nigerian media mostly portrays the site as a moral and cultural danger. Sensational, gendered, and based on conservative and religious standards, the coverage is frequently present. Finnish media, on the other hand, portray OnlyFans as a platform for the digital economy that emphasizes online labor, entrepreneurship, and individual liberty. A more balanced tone is used, emphasizing both risks and empowerment.

National contexts, beliefs, and ideologies influence media narratives, as these disparate depictions demonstrate. In contrast to Nigerian media, which evaluate digital sex work via moralistic prisms, Finnish media typically focus on rights-based and pragmatic discourse. Because of this, a global platform can be understood in a variety of ways based on regional cultures, gender politics, and media ethics.

In the end, this study adds to the expanding corpus of research on the relationship between globalization, technology, sexuality, and media. It affirms that digital platforms like OnlyFans cannot be properly understood independent of society's interpretation of them and emphasizes the necessity of context-sensitive approaches to media research.

The study makes several key contributions: It provides cultural insight by deepening our understanding of how moral, religious, and gender ideologies influence media narratives. This sheds light on the cultural lenses through which digital platforms like OnlyFans are viewed in different societies.

Through its comparative approach, the thesis contrasts two vastly different national contexts, Nigeria and Finland offering valuable insights into the global-local tensions that shape digital media discourse. This comparison reveals how cultural and societal factors inform media coverage across different regions.

The study also raises framing awareness, emphasizing the significant role framing plays in constructing public opinion, influencing media bias, and shaping societal reactions to new technologies. By analyzing the framing of OnlyFans, the research underscores how media can shape the public's understanding of emerging platforms and their social impact.

Lastly, the study addresses gender and agency, illustrating how media narratives either undermine or affirm women's agencies in digital spaces, depending on the cultural context. The findings highlight how societal values and gender expectations can shape the representation of women in digital media.

## **5.8 Recommendations**

1. Media professionals play a critical role in shaping public discourse, particularly around sensitive topics like digital sex work. To foster more accurate and inclusive reporting, Nigerian media practitioners should promote ethical journalism by avoiding sensationalism and instead providing space for the lived experiences of content creators. Rather than framing OnlyFans solely through a moral lens, coverage should contextualize the platform within broader economic and social realities such as unemployment, digital labor, and gender inequality. Additionally, journalists are encouraged to diversify their sources. Including voices such as content creators, digital rights advocates, and feminist scholars will offer more nuanced and multidimensional perspectives, contributing to a more informed public discourse.

2. The report emphasizes the necessity of progressive and rights-based solutions to digital sex work for policymakers. Instead of making online content creators' actions illegal, governments should put protecting their safety and privacy first to uphold digital rights. Encouraging media literacy is also crucial; education campaigns and civic engagement activities can improve the public's comprehension of how media framing affects perception. Legislative strategies should also change to reflect the finest international practices. Nigeria might profit from investigating

non-punitive regulatory frameworks that put safety, consent, and individual agency ahead of moral or criminal justice responses, even though Finland already adopts a labor rights stance.

3. For future researchers, this study opens several avenues for further exploration. Expanding the comparative lens to include additional regions such as South Africa, Sweden, or the United Kingdom would provide a broader understanding of how cultural and national contexts influence media framing of digital sex work. Incorporating audience analysis could also offer valuable insights into how media consumers interpret and respond to narratives about platforms like OnlyFans, revealing the public's role in either reinforcing or resisting dominant frames. Additionally, future studies should explore intersectionality more deeply by examining factors such as race, class, religion, and sexuality shape media portrayals and public discourse around digital content

## References

- Atkinson, T. C. (2022). *Sex-E-Work: An exploration on the rise of OnlyFans as a space for sexually explicit content* (Doctoral dissertation, Carleton University).
- Bloxsom, G., & McKibbin, G. (2023). Perpetrators using technology to sexually exploit children and animals: an emerging form of sexual abuse. *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*, 10, 1285463.
- Blunt, D., & Wolf, A. (2020). Erased: The impact of FOSTA-SESTA and the removal of Backpage on sex workers. *Anti-Trafficking Review*, 14, 117–121.
- Brasseur, P., & Finez, J. (2019). Performing amateurism: a study of camgirls' work. In *The Social Meaning of Extra Money: Capitalism and the Commodification of Domestic and Leisure Activities* (pp. 211-237). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Cohen, S. (2011). *Folk devils and moral panics*. Routledge.
- Couto, P. L. S., Neves, M. L. P., França, L. C. M., Gomes, A. M. T., Pereira, S. S. D. C., Vilela, A. B. A., ... & Marques, S. C. (2023). Quality of life from women's perspective in the

- exercise of sex work: a study of social representations. *Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem*, 76(Suppl 2), e20220169.
- Cowen, N., & Colosi, R. (2021). Sex work and online platforms: what should regulation do?. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Public Policy*, 10(2), 284-303.
- Crankshaw, T. L., & Freedman, J. (2023). Sex work or transactional sex? Shifting the dialogue from risk to rights. *Sexual and reproductive health matters*, 31(1), 2210859.
- De Ruyter, A., Brown, M., & Burgess, J. (2018). Gig work and the fourth industrial revolution. *Journal of International Affairs*, 72(1), 37-50.
- DI CICCIO, M. (2024). ONLYFANS AND THE PLATFORMIZATION OF SEX WORK.
- Eide, E., & Kunelius, R. (2012). Media meets climate: The global challenge for journalism. Nordicom, University of Gothenburg.
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of communication*, 43(4), 51-58.
- Espinoza, J. (2023). OnlyFans explained: What you need to know about the NSFW site. *Complex*, June, 7.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Northeastern UP.
- Johansson, I. (2022). La criminalizzazione dei clienti nel contest svedese. In G. Garofalo Geymonat & G. Selmi (Eds.). *Prostituzione e lavoro sessuale in Italia. Oltre le semplificazioni, verso i diritti* (149–167). Rosenberg & Seller.
- Johnson, L., Potter, L. C., Beeching, H., Bradbury, M., Matos, B., Sumner, G., ... & Luchenski, S. A. (2023). Interventions to improve health and the determinants of health among sex workers in high-income countries: a systematic review. *The Lancet Public Health*, 8(2), e141-e154.

- Jones, Angela. *Camming: Money, Power, and Pleasure in the Sex Work Industry*. New York:New York University Press, 2020.
- Lawlor, N., Leistner, C. E., & Lippmann, M. (2024). OnlyFans: Content creators' perceptions of potential bans of sexually explicit content. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 21(2), 477-492.
- Lippmann, M., Lawlor, N., & Leistner, C. E. (2023). Learning on OnlyFans: User perspectives on knowledge and skills acquired on the platform. *Sexuality & culture*, 27(4), 1203-1223.
- Litam, S. D. A., Speciale, M., & Balkin, R. S. (2022). Sexual attitudes and characteristics of OnlyFans users. *Archives of sexual behavior*, 51(6), 3093-3103.
- Sanders, T. (2016). Inevitably violent? Dynamics of space, governance, and stigma in understanding violence against sex workers. In *Special issue: Problematizing prostitution: critical research and scholarship* (pp. 93-114). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Sanders, T., Brents, B., & Wakefield, C. (2020). *Paying for sex in a digital age: US and UK perspectives*. Routledge.
- Sanders, T., Scoular, J., Campbell, R., Pitcher, J., & Cunningham, S. (2017). *Internet sex work: Beyond the gaze*. Springer.
- Strohmayr, A., Clamen, J., & Laing, M. (2019, May). Technologies for social justice: Lessons from sex workers on the front lines. In *Proceedings of the 2019 CHI conference on human factors in computing systems* (pp. 1-14).
- Tuchman, G. (1978). The news net. *Social Research*, 253-276.

Watson, G. P., Kistler, L. D., Graham, B. A., & Sinclair, R. R. (2021). Looking at the gig picture: Defining gig work and explaining profile differences in gig workers' job demands and resources. *Group & Organization Management*, 46(2), 327-361.

Wood, A. J., Graham, M., Lehdonvirta, V., & Hjorth, I. (2019). Good gig, bad gig: autonomy and algorithmic control in the global gig economy. *Work, employment and society*, 33(1), 56-75.

## Appendices

**Table 1: Tone of Coverage**

Tone	Nigeria (% of content)	Finland (% of content)
Negative	62%	18%
Neutral	25%	47%
Positive	13%	35%

**Table 2: Media Framing Patterns**

Frame Type	Nigeria	Finland
Moral Frame	High	High
Gendered Frame	High	Moderate
Victimization	Moderate	Low
Economic Frame	Low	Low-Moderate

**Table 3: Comparative Summary**

Aspect	Nigeria	Finland
Dominant Tone	Negative	Neutral/Positive
Core Frames	Moral, Gendered	Economics, Empowerment
Coverage Style	Sensational, reactive	Analytical, personal narrative
Media Types	Blogs, celebrity gossip, tabloid	Mainstream press, opinion platforms
Portrayal of Women	As transgressive or deviant	As autonomous, entrepreneurial

**Table 4: List of analyzed media texts in Nigeria**

<b>NIGERIA</b>					
<b>Title</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Tone</b>	<b>Theme</b>
Nigerian Model Rakes in Millions on OnlyFans	The Punch	Feb 2021	News	Positive	Economic empowerment
FG to Crack Down on Online Adult Platforms	Vanguard	Jul 2022	News	Negative	Moral regulation
OnlyFans: A New Hustle or Moral Decline?	Naijaloaded	May 2020	Blog	Negative	Morality
BBNaija Star Sparks Debate with OnlyFans Launch	The Guardian Nigeria	Apr 2023	News	Neutral	Celebrity culture
Why Nigerian Women are Flocking to OnlyFans	Linda Ikeji Blog	Sep 2021	Blog	Positive	Gender and economy
Twitter Reactions to Popular Influencer’s OnlyFans Leak	Twitter	Oct 2021	Social media	Negative	Privacy, morality
Digital Sex Work: Surviving in a Broken Economy	The Cable	Mar 2022	News	Positive	Economic survival
Religious Leaders Condemn Rise of OnlyFans	Vanguard	Jan 2023	News	Negative	Moral framing
OnlyFans and the Nigerian Feminist Movement	BellaNaija	Jun 2022	Blog	Negative	Gender politics
Can You Be a Good Christian and Use OnlyFans?	Pulse Nigeria	Dec 2020	Blog	Negative	Religion, morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Positive	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Positive	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Positive	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Positive	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Positive	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Various
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Various
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Various
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Various
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Various
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Various
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy

Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Various
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Various
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Various
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Positive	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Gender and economy
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Positive	Various
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Various
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Morality
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Negative	Various
Sample Nigerian Article	The Nation	2021-01	News	Neutral	Various

**Table 5 : List of analyzed media texts in Finland**

<b>FINLAND</b>					
<b>Title</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Tone</b>	<b>Theme</b>
Finnish Influencer Makes a Living on OnlyFans	Yle	Jan 2021	News	Positive	Digital entrepreneurship
OnlyFans and Consent: Finnish Lawmakers Weigh In	Helsingin Sanomat	Aug 2022	News	Neutral	Policy discourse
Nude for Rent? Students Turn to OnlyFans	Iltalehti	Nov 2020	News	Neutral	Economic hardship
Sex Work and Safety in the Digital Age	Yle	May 2023	News	Positive	Gender, digital safety
Twitter Debates: Is OnlyFans Empowering or Exploitative?	Twitter	Apr 2021	Social media	Negative	Gender debate
Moral Panic Over Subscription Content is Outdated	Blogit.fi	Oct 2022	Blog	Positive	Liberal framing
Politician's Past on OnlyFans Sparks Scandal	Helsingin Sanomat	Mar 2024	News	Negative	Public image
Economic Benefits of Content Creation Platforms	Taloussanomat	Jul 2023	News	Positive	Economy
OnlyFans, TikTok, and the Rise of Paid Youth Culture	Seiska	Sep 2021	Blog	Neutral	Youth culture
Church Leaders Call for Respect in Digital Spaces	Kotimaa	Feb 2022	News	Negative	Morality



