

Stereotypical humour in the sitcom *Will and Grace*

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ABSTRACT

Stereotypes have often been associated with negative outcomes such as discrimination, prejudice, and bias. Nonetheless, this study investigates the potential for humour within stereotypical discourse in a sitcom. Through an analysis of humorous language used in sitcom, this research aims to uncover ways in which stereotypical utterances might bring about laughter as an outcome. Using the data from seven U.S. sitcom *Will and Grace* episodes throughout the eighth season, I generated the data from the show's transcript. I analysed how two characters, a white American woman and her maid, communicate with each other with a content analysis approach to categorize the different themes of humour presented in the seven chosen episodes. To determine of what is considered to be humorous utterances, I used the audience's laughter as the marker (Messerli 2016). The research demonstrated that the use of stereotypical humor involves exploiting the preconceived notions about another party's country of origin, physical appearance, and cognitive capacity. Further, my findings showed that an individual with higher power often performed stereotypical humour towards that with less power, while Holmes et al. (2003) saw humour as a linguistic technique for people who lacked power to establish a favourable image of themselves by challenging authority. Ultimately, this research promises to advance our understanding of the complex relationship between humour, stereotyping, and societal attitudes.

Keywords: intercultural-communication, prejudice, sitcom, stereotype, *Will and Grace*

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INTRODUCTION

Stereotyping is a widespread phenomenon characterized by generalizing particular attributes or characteristics to an entire group of people based on limited experience or observations (Marx & Ko, 2012; Neuberg et al., 2020; Carr et al., 2012). Stereotyping can lead to discrimination, prejudice, and inequality by creating negative attitudes and misconceptions about certain groups. It can perpetuate existing biases and contribute to stigmatising and marginalising individuals who do not fit the stereotype. Furthermore, it can impede social progress and hinder diversity and inclusion efforts (Casad & Bryant, 2016).

Respectively, there has been an observed prevalence of stereotypical attributes in a range of fields, which is primarily associated with the domain of work and gender (Bougen, 1994; Bogart et al., 2004; Heilman, 2012; Sikdar, 2015; Abdou et al., 2016; Coffman et al., 2021). Then, from the linguistic perspective, according to the literature on intercultural communication, stereotyping is frequently characterized as a potential hindrance to successful intergroup communication, consequently implying that it should be avoided if feasible (Scollon and Scollon, 1995). However, not only do stereotypes frequently affect people's judgments and behaviours (Banaji et al., 1993; Locksley et al., 1982; Lai et al., 2016), but also includes how such prejudice may cause humorous impact (Soucy-Humphreys et al., 2022; Pauwels, 2021; Haider & Al-Abbas, 2023; for a review, see Little, 2023).

To the best of my understanding, little scholarly attention has been given to examining the process of generating stereotypical representations through comedic discourse. For example, while previous studies have explored the potential of mass culture texts (Tsami, 2019), using media references to construct individual and group identities (Sierra, 2018), to generally discuss race in popular culture (Green & Linders, 2016), and the ideological implications of racial stereotypes in comedy (Park et al.,

2006), limited attention has been given to the analysis of stereotypes in American sitcoms and how it is constructed, used, and perceived between characters of different racial backgrounds.

Hence, the present study aims to address these inquiries through an analysis of the stereotype employed in the comedic portrayal of characters from diverse ethnic backgrounds in the television series *Will and Grace*. More specifically, the focus will be on the dynamic between Karen Walker and Rosario Salazar. I deliberately selected this pair for analysis as they offer a prime example of how humour relies on stereotypes for comedic effect. Karen, a wealthy and white privileged woman, and Rosario, a Latina working-class maid, embody the common stereotypes associated with their backgrounds. By examining the discourse and analysing how the audience perceives the representation of stylistic choices, this study aims to reveal the complexities surrounding the use of racial stereotypes in the production and reception of comedic content. It is interesting to know how one can presumably state stereotypical utterances, yet somehow, other people might find it hilarious. In addition, the present study aims to gain further understanding of the phenomenon that stereotypes are commonly perceived as a form of inequality, yet some individuals, which in this case are represented by the audience, may regard them as humorous.

The association between stereotypes and language use is often considered to be a two-way process. On one hand, prejudices are echoed in the language utilized by individuals, and on the other hand, language use has the ability to reinforce social-group stereotypes in the receivers of a message. Recent studies have demonstrated that stereotypes and language use are interdependent, and the manner in which we communicate with one another can either promote or impede the proliferation of dangerous preconceptions regarding specific social categories (Burgers & Beukeboom, 2020; Beukeboom & Burgers, 2019; Collins & Clément, 2012).

Stereotypes and language use are believed to be linked in both directions. This implies that speakers tend to reflect stereotypes in their language use, while the use of language by message recipients fuels social-category stereotypes (Burgers & Beukeboom, 2020). Beukeboom and Burgers (2019) propose the concept of naming language as the primary category, which refers to the terms used to distinguish individuals belonging to specific groups. The practice of labelling social groups in communication often leads to stereotyping (Bigler & Liben, 2006).

Furthermore, Reynolds et al. (2006) found that in communication, one can find an utterance to be considered as stereotypical by categorizing it into generic labels such as subgroups, categories, or individual members. The interrelationship of larger units, such as discourse and conversation, and their use in literary works result in a shift of interests, which inevitably affects stereotypes when one says something presumably a prejudice toward the speech partner. This study, therefore, draws upon this theory since most of the dialogues that occurred by Karen are probably categorized as stereotypical utterances due to Rosario's status as an immigrant.

Ethnicity and stereotypes have long been correlated, with individuals of certain ethnic groups being stereotyped based on their perceived traits or actions (Priest et al., 2018). Stereotypes can be harmful as they often contain negative connotations, leading to discrimination and prejudice against targeted groups. Ethnic humour perpetuates these stereotypes and reinforces negative attitudes towards certain groups, often leading to further marginalization and stereotyping.

Ethnic humour is a form of humour that pokes fun at stereotypes by exploiting the actions, traditions, persona, or other characteristics of a group or its individuals (Esholdt, 2019). Lowe (1986) suggests that ethnic humour is generally examined regarding its negative aspects through the conflict approach. This approach views humour as a way of expressing conflict, struggle, and antagonism and its role can either be offensive or defensive (Thomas et al., 2020; Du, 2022; Kuipers, 2008).

Kuipers and van der Ent (2016) highlight the contentious nature of stereotypical humour in contemporary Western societies, a subject that has received significant scholarly and societal attention. To elaborate on this point, their research provides a valuable perspective to understand the subjectivity involved in the interpretation of this form of humour and its potential impact on social relationships and societal norms. Drawing upon the author's findings on stereotypical humorous discourse, I examine a fictional character from America who consistently views herself as superior compared to the immigrant.

Kuipers (2008) argues that possessing a higher social status, or the mere perception of it, does not necessarily influence the desire to inflict harm - a fundamental driver of instances of hostility and aggression. The interpretation of humour can sometimes be overly literal, causing one to overlook its non-serious nature (Esholdt, 2019). Humour inherently involves ambiguity (Attardo, 1994; Bekinschtein et al., 2011; Yus, 2017), meaning that ethnic jokes have the potential to be appreciated for a variety of

reasons. This notion is emphasized by Kuiper (2008), who highlights the multiple layers of meaning that humour can possess.

Will & Grace is an American sitcom that follows the friendship between gay lawyer Will Truman and his best friend, interior designer Grace Adler. Premiered in 1998, the show also features the comedic antics of their eccentric friends, Karen Walker and Jack McFarland. *Will and Grace* has been on air for 11 seasons from 1998 to 2020¹. It was aired weekly on NBC. The show is available on TV and streaming platforms such as Hulu and YouTube. The show has received positive reviews for its clever writing, sharp humour, and excellent performances by the main cast (IMDB, n.d.). Although the four main characters receive significant attention, Karen's assistant, an immigrant maid named Rosario Salazar, is also the audience's favourite. Known for delivering humorous lines, the audience pays particular attention to Rosario's presence throughout the show. It is possible that the audience's admiration for her arises from.

METHOD

To illustrate how humorous discourse is delivered by the characters, the focus of this study is on the portrayal of Karen, a rude and wealthy white American woman and her immigrant maid, Rosario, who differ in terms of race. Both characters are commonly depicted in a manner that highlights their differences and the resulting humour that ensues. Through thorough analysis, I also try to explain how the speech partner – Rosario – deals with the insult Karen delivered to her. The episodes were purposefully searched and contained scenes where Karen and Rosario appeared on the show throughout the season. Specifically, episodes featuring Karen and Rosario were purposefully sought from throughout the show's eight seasons. Seven episodes, each averaging 20 minutes, were ultimately selected.

By watching the episodes chosen, I also used the dialogue of the episodes' transcript from internet (the transcript can be accessed here: <http://www.durfee.net/will/transcripts.htm>) to generate more dialogue accuracy. The analysis of the data involved several steps. Firstly, the transcripts of the seven episodes featuring Karen and Rosario were analysed to identify the instances where Karen used humour to create a stereotype of Rosario. These instances were identified based on the expressions and tone used by Karen when referring to Rosario. Additionally, instances where Rosario responded to Karen's humour were also marked.

After identifying the instances of humour in the transcripts, a content analysis approach was used to categorize the humour into different themes. Two themes emerged from the data; Karen's stereotype humour towards Rosario and Rosario's resilience in dealing with Karen's stereotype humour. These themes were identified based on the nature of the humour used, the context in which it was used, and the audience's reaction.

To validate the results, I rely on the laughter of the audience as the marker to determine the humour conveyed by Karen and Rosario through their dialogues (Messerli, 2016). By paying attention to the audience's response, I was able to gauge how effective Karen's delivery was in eliciting a stereotype humorous reaction from the crowd. Since not every Karen's utterance were not generally about stereotypical toward Rosario, I drew upon how Karen always brought up the issue of how she thought Rosario was someone who had trouble in her origin country (being a slave, poor, and even could not speak English at all).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the methodological procedures described in the previous section, all dialogues that are presumably stereotypical are, by definition, intended to be humorous, and the categorization of humour that is suggested here solely hinges on the form of stereotypes uttered by Karen toward Rosario. That is to say, the elaboration below will explain the forms of stereotypes toward an immigrant.

Slavery

Excerpt 1 until 3 shows what can be described as stereotypical humour with slavery as the main topic.

Excerpt 1: *Will and Grace*, Season 8, Episode 11

Setting: Karen's (K) massive bathroom in which Rosario (R) was folding napkins

K's VOICE: Rosie?

R: [INTO INTERCOM] This is Rosie. Come back.

K's VOICE: Get out here. I want to introduce you to Diane Sawyer.

R: I'm thrilled. She's, my idol.

K's VOICE: We're thinking of doing a trade and she wants to check your hair for lice.

The initial illustration demonstrates that miscommunication occurred for Rosario, who mistakenly assumed an introduction with Diane Sawyer, a renowned American television journalist, when Karen mentioned her. This assumption arose from Rosario's admiration for Sawyer but did not align with Karen's intention to introduce a different person. However, Karen expressed a desire to trade her domestic worker, Rosario, for the maid of her peer. This statement reveals an underlying commodification of immigrants, wherein they are viewed as interchangeable goods. Furthermore, Diane Sawyer reinforces harmful stereotypes about immigrants in domestic service by assuming that Rosario may not maintain proper hygiene. Sawyer's request for Rosario to check for lice underscores the assumptions and prejudices perpetuating injustice against immigrants.

Excerpt 2: *Will and Grace*, Season 5, Episode 5

Setting: Karen felt sad because she thought that she had lost all her material due to her husband's infidelity

JACK: Kare, during all my struggles, you've constantly been partially there for me. Is there anything I can pretend to do for you now?

KAREN: Well, there is, Jackie. You know, there's, uh, one last box of my personal effects at the mans. It's mostly sentimental stuff-- Old photos, birthday cards. The receipt I got when Rosario's parents sold her to me. That kinda thing.

The second data quote presents Karen's stereotype of Rosario's parents selling their child to her, which implies that she views Rosario as a commodity that can be purchased. Such an observation elucidates her notion of slavery, which is evident in her behaviour towards Rosario. Karen's perception of Rosario as a purchasable object illustrates how deeply ingrained cultural stereotypes and biases can influence one's perceived interactions with others.

Excerpt 3: *Will and Grace*, Season 8, Episode 11

Setting: Rosario expeditiously cleaned up the bathroom

ROSARIO: I'm sorry it took so long. I had to change the bag.

WILL: Wow.

KAREN: I know. Isn't she fantastic? Honey, when I free you, you're getting forty-two acres and a mule. Nope, a pony. No, a cat. Nah, I'm keeping the land. You'll get a trick cat that can ride a pony and make a fortune. Get out.

Datum (3) shows Rosario's status as an enslaved person (the lexical 'free' refers to the freedom Rosario will get after she finishes working for Karen) by Karen. Moreover, she shows her greed by saying that when it comes time for Rosario to retire, she will not be given anything as severance pay. Instead, Karen has decided to assign Rosario with an additional job, which appears to lack logical reasoning. The stereotype of slavery towards immigrants is a prevalent issue that can lead to the exertion of power by individuals who feel superior. Such individuals can use the stereotype as justification for imposing their will on immigrants without regard for the principles of justice. In doing so, they deny the minority group the fundamental human right of equality and respect. This was also in line with this study's finding when Karen made a conscious decision to reverse her prior intention of providing Rosario with the monetary compensation that she rightly deserved.

Poor environment

In addition to stereotypical humorous discourse, Karen also employs metaphors to convey derogatory descriptions of Rosario's hometown. Using such metaphors serves create a negative image of the place, characterizing it as dirty or messy.

Excerpt 4: *Will and Grace*, Season 1, Episode 22

Setting: Karen threatens Rosario to be deported if she does not fulfil her command to wear a wedding custom.

ROSARIO: This is so stupid. I look like a piñata.

KAREN: Yeah, and if I beat you with a stick, I could watch all my money fall out. Now, how about a little appreciation for all of this?

ROSARIO: All I want is my green card, not a party I have to clean up after.

KAREN: **If it wasn't for this, you'd be flying back to Cucaracha on Air Guacamole with live chickens running up and down the aisle!**

In the excerpt (4) above, Karen threatens to send Rosario back to her home country if she does not obey Karen's orders. However, bolded speech can be considered as stereotypical when Karen's comment alluded to Rosario's home country as a place that has yet to experience the advancements and progress of modernization. Karen believed that Rosario's residence is home to a plethora of farm animals, a notion that lends credence to the idea that she has a self-sufficient lifestyle. Perhaps Karen's such assumption lies in that Rosario resides in a rural area where farming is prevalent.

In addition to her derogatory treatment of Rosario, Karen further perpetuates her discrimination by disrespecting Rosario's home. She replaces the home's name with the derisive term "Cucaracha", which means cockroach in Spanish. This not only shows Karen's lack of cultural sensitivity, but also her blatant disregard for the dignity and value of Rosario's home. By reducing it to a lowly insect, Karen reinforces the idea that anything associated with Hispanic culture is inferior and unimportant.

Excerpt 5: *Will and Grace*, Season 8, Episode 11

Setting: Rosario accidentally invited Karen's unwanted guests to her birthday party.

KAREN: What the hell are they doing here?! I specifically told you not to invite them!

ROSARIO: I'm sorry lady, I sent them invitations by mistake.

KAREN: **Oh yeah? I think the real mistake was when your father spotted your mother across a crowded swamp, dragged her back to his hut and made you.**

Karen negatively perceives of Rosario's home country, El Salvador, believing it to be a shabby destination. Despite its rich cultural history and natural beauty, she views the country with disdain and disinterest. Karen's opinion may stem from a lack of exposure to diverse cultures or a bias towards countries that do not match her personal standards. It's crucial to recognize the harm in making sweeping generalizations about entire nations, as every country has its unique strengths and challenges.

Karen not only believes that Rosario's mother was a teenage parent, but she also assumes that Rosario was the product of an unplanned pregnancy. This assumption may have coloured Karen's perception of Rosario's family and her own interactions with her. Karen's stereotype of Rosario's squalid state is certainly not true, but purely due to Karen's lack of knowledge of the country.

Language

Americans assumed that immigrants could not speak English properly (Flores & Schachter, 2019). This finding is also similar to what I found below regarding of how Karen viewed Rosario as someone who could not speak English due to her nationality.

Excerpt 6: *Will and Grace*, Season 1, Episode 22

Setting:

KAREN: Will, this is Rosario.

WILL: It's nice to meet you.

KAREN: Come on, honey... Sit-o down-o. Try not to talk-o.

ROSARIO: You hear how she talks to me? I speak English, ok?

KAREN: Oh, yeah, except when it's time to work. Then it's all, "No hablo inglés."

Karen assumes that Latinos generally do not speak English when they are immigrants in America. Therefore, Karen deliberately mocks Rosario when she tells her to sit down using English phrases but with Latin intonation and pronunciation. Rosario denied this by saying, "I speak English, ok?". However, Karen continuously showed her prejudice against Rosario by saying she could not understand English.

A widespread misinterpretation concerning Latino individuals and language acquisition is the assumption that their inability to speak English indicates a lack of motivation to learn.

A considerable proportion of immigrants from Mexico and other Latin countries reside in the United States for extended periods whilst lacking a fundamental command of English. This is primarily attributed to the inherent difficulty of acquiring a second language at an advanced age (Fuller, 2012). However, Rosario's denial is a demonstration of her capability and willingness to integrate into American society despite facing discrimination. These actions by Karen perpetuate negative attitudes towards immigrants and underscore the importance of breaking down linguistic and cultural barriers in a diverse society.

Excerpt 7: *Will and Grace*, Season 7, Episode 24

Setting: Karen mistakenly assumed an American fashion brand with a Spanish word

KAREN: Sorry we're late, Jackie. Rosie took me shopping. I've never been to a bodega in Spanish Harlem before.

ROSARIO: That was Macy's.

KAREN: "Macy's." Hear me? I'm speakin' Spanish.

Karen utilises the linguistic feature of homonymy in her stereotypical speech. She thinks that Macy's - an American fashion store - and the Spanish word *meses* 'months' have the same meaning. Then, the statement that Karen deems herself proficient in Spanish based on a single mispronounced word raises a specific concern: her assertion implies that she has the necessary language proficiency to converse in Spanish. However, this claim is undermined by her reliance on a poorly understood pronunciation of a single word.

In this particular instance, it can be deduced that Karen is making a sweeping statement which she believes to be accurate. However, others would likely perceive it as a harmful generalization targeted at individuals of Latin Americans and their language practices. This kind of assertion falls within the realm of a stereotype, a fixed, widely held notion about a particular category of people that may not be accurate and can be misleading (Hinton, 2017). In the context of language stereotypes, Latin American individuals may be subject to assumptions that their speech patterns are inferior or have limited English proficiency.

Labor (physical work)

Excerpt 8: *Will and Grace*, Season 2, Episode 5

Setting: Karen presumably was not aware of Rosario's previous working experience

JACK: Karen, I don't wanna study anymore. Can't I just wing it tomorrow at Immigration?

KAREN: No! You have to convince them that you two are a real married couple or this one's gonna be spooning Cerviche out of a bucket on a dusty soccer field back in Chimichangaville!

ROSARIO: Listen, lady, in my country, I was a schoolteacher.

KAREN: **Yeah? Well, in this country, you wash my bras.**

Karen's assumption of Rosario as an immigrant highlights potential complexities surrounding social and economic hierarchies. Rosario's pride in her previous profession as a schoolteacher can be interpreted as an attempt to assert her intellectual or professional capabilities, in spite of her current position as Karen's maid. Conversely, Karen's dismissive and condescending response may be indicative of deeply ingrained ideas regarding the supposed superiority of certain professions or social classes. Such attitudes are commonly observed in stereotypical societies where social stratification is prevalent or where discrimination is rampant and can serve to reinforce existing power dynamics.

The display of pride and condescension in the above conversation may also be linked to immigration status, as immigrants often face additional barriers to social and economic mobility. Thus, the interaction between Rosario and Karen sheds light on the complexities and tensions that can arise in social interactions, particularly when questions of class, immigration, and discrimination are involved.

Excerpt 9: *Will and Grace*, Season 3, Episode 15

Setting: Karen does not like Rosario to be working using informal clothes

KAREN: Well, well, well. El pollo's come home to roost. How's Beverley?

.....

KAREN: Oh. I see. Well, is he good to you?

ROSARIO: He lets me wear jeans to work.

KAREN: Oh, disgusting! I don't wanna know all the filthy details. What does he feed you?

ROSARIO: Subway. The 12-inch.

KAREN: Oh, how could you? I was your world. Are you really gonna throw all that away for a casual 12-inch sub?

The data above requires further explanation. During the scene, it is established that Rosario had surreptitiously become a freelancer at the residence of Beverly Leslie, who is Karen's archenemy. Subsequently, Karen questions Rosario when she returns from Leslie's abode late at night, demanding an explanation for her visit. In response, Rosario implies that Leslie treated her more kindly than when she worked alongside Karen, who had imposed stringent guidelines on Rosario, including dressing formally and refraining from picking food randomly.

Then, I focused on Karen's speech that renamed Rosario to *El Pollo*, a Spanish slang for a labourer who illegally pays to be smuggled or guided over the border into the United States. It can be inferred from her behaviour that she implicitly considers Rosario as an illegal immigrant when she returns to Karen's house, right after working at Leslie's house. Karen's utterance, which carries a certain discriminatory undertone, can undoubtedly be considered stereotyping since it is based on an assumption – that Rosario has illegally entered a place – without any tangible or credible supporting evidence.

Strict rules

Excerpt 10: *Will and Grace*, Season 5, Episode 18

Setting: Karen deliberately assumed that Rosario was poor

KAREN: What's the matter, Ro-Ro? You've been kinda grumpy all day. Where's the usual lumber in your step?

ROSARIO: It's this new uniform you got me. It's too tight, it's itchy, I can barely breathe.

KAREN: Why, you ingrate. How dare you complain? **When I found you, you were boxing donkeys for money.**

ROSARIO: You pulled me out of business school, you tipsy witch. I ain't wearing it.

Rosario's dissatisfaction with the new work uniform provided by Karen elicits a defensive response from Karen, who accuses Rosario of being ungrateful. Moreover, Karen reminds Rosario of a past in which she was worse off, seemingly to discredit her present discontent. However, instead of acquiescing to Karen's assertion, Rosario counters by referencing a time when Karen's actions disrupted her plans for her life. Specifically, Rosario alludes to being pulled out of business school. By bringing up past events, Rosario shifts the focus of the conflict to a broader context, thereby highlighting the complexity of Karen's stereotype toward Rosario whom she thought that Rosario was poor.

Discussion

The current study showcases ten excerpts derived from the sitcom *Will and Grace*, highlighting five distinct constellations of stereotypical humorous discourse. This analysis illuminates the various tactics implemented by Karen as an American in delivering her unfavourable impressions towards Rosario, specifically as an immigrant, which are utilized for a comedic effect. Now that we have specifically found out the focus of this study, that is how an American viewed an immigrant stereotypically, this section then focuses on discussing in general of how presently, the subject of stereotype can be used to convey humour.

Based on the analysis of the data gathered, Karen's stereotyping of Rosario exhibits a racialized character rooted in prejudices concerning Rosario's country of origin about the environment, work, and education. The identified acts of expression by Karen serve as evidence of her racist mentality and attitude towards individuals of certain races or ethnicities. In this context, humorous discourse creates humorous situations (Holmes & Hay, 1997; Boskin & Dorinson, 1985; Soucy-Humphreys et al., 2023).

My findings then, in contrast to what Holmes et al. (2003) found regarding the use of humour. They considered humour a linguistic and pragmatic technique that people who lack power can utilise to establish a favourable image of themselves while simultaneously challenging and pushing the limits of the prevailing norms established by those in authority. While in my findings, the one with higher power instead performed linguistic features that can be considered stereotypical humour towards the one who is the opposite.

Karen's assumption that Rosario was poor may stem from her biases and stereotypes towards Latin American immigrants, who are often viewed as coming from impoverished backgrounds. However, this assumption is not only inaccurate, but it also perpetuates harmful stereotypes towards immigrants and reinforces the existing power dynamic in which Karen feels superior to Rosario. This power dynamic can lead to the exploitation of immigrant labor and further perpetuate systemic racism and discrimination towards immigrants, who are often viewed as disposable commodities instead of human beings with rights and dignity.

Moreover, Karen's strict rules and guidelines governing Rosario's attire reveal a broader pattern of control that Karen seeks to exert over Rosario's life and identity. By dictating what Rosario can wear and how she should behave, Karen reinforces her power dynamic and reaffirms her belief that she is entitled to control Rosario's life. Such an approach can be seen as an effort to dehumanize Rosario and minimize her agency, making it easier for Karen to exploit her labour and maintain her power over her.

The discussion of Karen's actions and attitudes towards Rosario, and the broader implications of these actions and attitudes, must be connected with the use of stereotypical humour throughout the texts. Karen often employs humour that relies on negative stereotypes about immigrants, particularly those from Latin American backgrounds, to assert her power and maintain her control over Rosario. This humour reinforces existing stereotypes about immigrants and contributes to the perpetuation of systemic racism and discrimination towards these individuals.

For instance, Karen often jokes about Rosario's home country, El Salvador, using derogatory terms and metaphors that paint the country in a negative light. This humour not only reinforces stereotypes about El Salvador but also perpetuates harmful ideas about Latin American immigrants more broadly. Similarly, Karen often treats Rosario like a commodity, joking about her being sold or bought, and viewing her as interchangeable with other domestic workers. This humour further perpetuates the idea of immigrants being disposable and reinforces existing power dynamics.

Karen's use of humour serves to conceal the harmful implications of her actions and attitudes, making it easier for her to justify her behaviour. However, it is necessary to recognize the negative impact of stereotypical humour and challenge its use. Instead, one should strive to create a society that values diversity and promotes inclusivity, recognizing the inherent value and dignity of all individuals regardless of their background or immigration status. By doing so, it is hoped that one can combat the systemic racism and discrimination that continue to impact immigrant communities and create a more equitable and just society for all.

CONCLUSION

I have thoroughly analysed how stereotypes toward an immigrant was delivered to convey humorous situation. The results indicated that Karen tends to communicate most stereotypical messages through the readily perceivable physical forms of Rosario. However, in some cases, Karen assumes that Rosario is someone who lacks cognitive ability. It is essential to note that this type of humour is not for everyone, and one can go too far with their jokes, causing hurt and upset for certain audiences or groups (Jiang et al., 2019; Martin & Ford, 2018). However, when used thoughtfully and respectfully, stereotypes can certainly be used to convey humour and bring people together through shared experiences, laughter, and understanding.

This collection of constellations showcases the range of humorous stereotype that can be utilized in one sitcom. Further research is necessary to determine the frequency of these constellations and to establish which types of stereotypical humour are typical for the genre, using a larger dataset and more specific distinctions. The current exploration of sitcom humour expands comprehension of stereotypical humour, incorporating unique expressions of humour within the context of sitcom participation. The dynamic nature of participant roles is made evident, illustrating how viewers are required to engage in different ways to recognize and enjoy diverse forms of sitcom humour.

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