

ARB clears MultiChoice of racial stereotyping in streaming ad

 By [Karabo Ledwaba](#)

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The Directorate of the Advertising Regulatory Board (ARB) has cleared MultiChoice and DStv of racial stereotyping after a consumer filed a complaint against it regarding a television advertisement promoting its streaming service.



Source: www.unsplash.com

The complaint contended that the advertisement perpetuated racial stereotypes by portraying a Black man in a negative light while depicting a White woman as responsible and concerned. Here's a breakdown of the incident and the ARB's decision:

The Advertisement Description

The advertisement showcases a young Black man sneaking into a parking lot during work hours to watch a soccer match streaming on his phone. An older White woman, presumably a colleague, arrives at the scene looking for him. The advertisement ends with DStv promoting its streaming service.

The Complaint

The complainant found the advertisement offensive, arguing that it depicted a Black man as irresponsible for neglecting his work to watch soccer while presenting the White woman as responsible and concerned. They further criticised the portrayal of the woman as maternalistic and the man as idiotic.



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The Response

DStv defended the advertisement, stating that it targeted the youth demographic and aimed to be entertaining and

humorous. They said that the focus was on contrasting characters – a playful young man and a serious older woman – rather than race. The advertisement highlighted the accessibility of DStv's streaming service, showcasing it as a convenient option for viewers.

ARB decides

The ARB evaluated the complaint based on clauses related to offensive advertising and discrimination. While acknowledging the irresponsible behaviour depicted in the advertisement, the ARB found no evidence of racial discrimination. They concluded that the characters' actions were not attributed to their race, and the advertisement aimed to appeal to its target audience rather than perpetuate stereotypes.

After considering the context and content of the advertisement, the ARB concluded that it did not violate advertising standards. They noted that the commercial's portrayal of characters reflected demographic realities and attempted to resonate with the target market. Additionally, the ARB highlighted the importance of distinguishing between racial representation and discriminatory messaging in advertising.

ABOUT KARABO LEDWABA

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