


WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT WITH RADIO BROADCASTING IN POST-
COLONIAL GHANA, 1960-1975

BY

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The image features a large, semi-transparent watermark of the University of Ghana crest in the background. The crest is a shield-shaped emblem with a light blue background and a yellow border. It is divided into two horizontal sections. The upper section contains three stylized yellow leaves or branches. The lower section contains a central yellow emblem with four curved, scroll-like elements extending outwards. Below the shield, the Latin motto 'INTEGRITATEM PROCEDAMUS' is written in a light blue, serif font.

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DEDICATION

To Almighty God for granting me GRACE to undertake this project.

To my dear son, Kevin Kwasi Anno Firempong-Boakye who inspired me to pursue academic work.

To my parents, Mr. Shedrack Dartey Akrofi-Quarcoo and Madam Dora Lokko who did not live to enjoy the fruits of their labour.

To my maternal uncle, Mr Henry Ardey Aryeetey for believing in me.



DECLARATION

I, Sarah Akrofi-Quarcoop declare that except for references to other people’s work which have been duly acknowledged, this work is the result of my own original research and has neither in whole nor in part, been presented for another degree elsewhere.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADM	Administrative Series (Original correspondence)
ARU	Audience Research Unit of Radio Ghana
ASWIM	Association of Women in Media
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CPP	Convention People's Party
CSO	Colonial Secretary Office
GAW	Ghana Assembly of Women
FGCW:	Federation of Gold Coast Women
GBC	Ghana Broadcasting Corporation
GBS	Ghana Broadcasting System
GCBS	Gold Coast Broadcasting Systems
GCP	Gold Coast Programmes
GOS:	General Overseas Service
GRRTVT	Ghana Radio Review and Television Times
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
NCWD	National Council on Women and Development
NLC	National Liberation Council
NLCC	Native Ladies of Cape Coast
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
POD	Programme Operations Department
PRAAD	Public Records Administration and Archives Department
PRD	Public Relations Department
SOB	Superintendent of Broadcasting
SMC	Supreme Military Council
URA Radio	Upper West Region Agriculture FM Station
WIB	Women in Broadcasting
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

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ABSTRACT

What did Ghanaian Women do with Radio, for what purposes and to what ends? Combining scholarship from gender and colonialism with media theories, archival research (written and audio), and oral history, this study on Women's Radio history explores Ghanaian Women's relationships with Radio, "an important Imperialist asset" involved in the mission of "civilising" primitive Africans and empire-building. The overarching theoretical foundation for the study is modernisation, packaged as Victorian styled "domesticity" a framework for British cultural imperialism. The study argues that women across various levels of social and cultural power, appropriated Radio and transformed it into a resource to contest their subordination, to expand their communication space and to negotiate new and more equitable gendered relationship within a predominantly patriarchal domestic space. In support of the thesis, the study examines three areas of women's relationship with radio. Firstly, it explores the employment trajectory of women in radio careers focusing on the pioneers and key personalities and their contribution to the development of radio in Ghana. Secondly, it unearths the neglected history of Women's Radio Programmes and shows how post-colonial Ghanaian women used the programme space to subvert colonial and neo-colonial agenda of promoting Victorian-styled domesticity and separate women's sphere. Thirdly, the study examines the history of women's listening relationship with radio. Findings from the study indicate that by taking up careers in radio, Ghanaian women transcended historical prejudices against women in the exclusively male-defined economic space of Radio Broadcasting to contribute to the development of radio. In their roles as programme producers, journalists, and programme makers, Ghanaian women were agents in the early construction of national unity and the grander agenda of African Unity. The study also found that Ghanaian women had a strong voice on radio using the Women's Radio Magazine spaces strategically to advocate women's rights; to educate women on many issues peculiar to their sex and on national issues of health, hygiene, economics, science, sports and patriotism. As radio listeners, post-colonial Ghanaian women were not passive to radio programmes but selective of the programmes they listened to and engaged with content to facilitate their "personal modernity" and integration into "modern society." This study presents new evidence that aside propaganda, radio was a primary tool of domesticity from the early 1930s. It also addresses critical historical issues regarding the use of radio to propagate Victorian domesticity in post-colonial Ghana particularly after independence. The study rejects the notion that domesticity was a negative feature of post-colonial Ghanaian women's life and argues that post-colonial Ghanaian women appropriated radio, a domestic technology and a tool of domesticity and transformed it into a resource to foster their integration into "modern society."

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The colonial mission of ‘civilising’ Africans took various forms and in the mid 1930s, radio broadcasting became instrumental in pursuit of this enterprise. Therefore, less than two decades after radio had been pioneered in North America and Western Europe the British colonial administration introduced the technology to its colonies of west and east Africa.¹ This unusual speed in the introduction of an innovation into the colonies was due, first, to perceptions that colonial subjects were “primitive” and needed to be brought into enlightenment; secondly, that the terrains of the colonies lacked physical infrastructure and social amenities to propel the desired ‘enlightenment.’ Under these twin conditions, radio presented itself as uniquely suited to propel the “civilising” and empire building mission.

In colonial Ghana as in other British colonies in Africa where cultures have been predominantly oral, the advent of this oral medium, heralded an era of mass communication. Positioned as a medium of modernity, radio was set to expand the space of communication beyond the confines of local communities and individuals and also beyond the sounds of the “gong-gong” and the talking drums.²

Historical accounts attest to the overwhelming acceptance of radio in colonial Ghana as an instrument of information and enlightenment. Making its presence first in urban homes and later in selected public places such as schools, markets and lorry parks during and after

¹ Radio broadcasting was established in Sierra Leone in 1934 by Governor Sir Arnold Hodson who introduced the technology in Gold Coast (Ghana) a year later. Kenya was the first in eastern Africa to benefit from this technology in 1928.

² The “gong-gong” or talking drums were traditional forms of mass communication before the introduction of modern mass communication devices especially the radio. The talking drums were used by the Ashantis in particular, in coded signals that covered a considerable distance. See Kwame Karikari ed., *Independent Broadcasting in Ghana Implications and Challenges* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1994), vii.

WWII, radio was also hailed not only for its novelty and presence, but also for “breathing new interests into daily activities” of urban life.³



Picture 1: The proverbial “Adawura Kofi” (gong-gong beater)
Source: *50 years of Broadcasting in Ghana, 1935-1985*.

By independence in 1957, radio had become the primary source of information, the cheapest source of entertainment and the fastest means of sharing knowledge and new ideas to a mass of the people. Besides newspapers and traditional face-to-face communication, post-colonial radio became an important discursive space for building and reconfiguring the boundaries of nationhood; for adjudicating over tradition and modernity; for negotiating the boundaries of the public and private spheres and also for negotiating gender boundaries and re-defining women’s status.

In 1985 when delivering the Golden Jubilee Lectures of radio in Ghana, communication scholar Paul Ansah remarked that radio had become “such a familiar object that we take it for granted.”⁴ More than simply a familiar object, Ansah highlighted radio’s relationship with

³ 50 Years of Broadcasting in Ghana, 1935-1985, 6.

⁴ Paul A.V. Ansah, *Golden Jubilee Lectures: Ghana Broadcasting Corporation* (Accra: Tema Press, 1985), 1. The number of radio sets in Sub Sahara Africa was estimated at 42,600 in 1985 according to a survey documented by Graham Mytton. For details of the survey see Graham Mytton, “Sub-Saharan Survey,” in *African Broadcast Cultures Radio in Transition*, edited by Richard Fardon and Graham Furniss (Westport, Connecticut: PRAEGER, 2000), 8; and Paul A.V. Ansah, “Kwame Nkrumah and the Mass Media,” in *The Life and Work of Kwame*

state power, pointing out that although successive post-colonial governments maintained the propaganda and ideological legacies of the colonial government, they also used the medium to promote cultural self-assertion, national development and integration, and for nation building.⁵ Another communication scholar, Kwame Karikari described radio as “as indispensable to the existence, cohesion and development of modern society as oxygen is to the survival of living beings.”⁶ Karikari referred to the use of radio for social mobilisation and awareness creation drawing attention to developmental programmes for rural and non-literate populations and what he terms, the “media-marginalised in society.” In this regard, Karikari mentions Women’s Radio Magazines underscoring their potential for providing voice to women.⁷

References to Women’s Radio Magazines and to the concession of spaces for women on radio are not uncommon in various accounts of radio in Africa. Typically accounts of radio history in Africa reinforce a patriarchal dominance in the public sphere by over-emphasising state and politics. As a result, little empirical information exists on the social history of radio, and in this context, scholarship on how “media-marginalised groups” including women who were targets of radio’s civilising missions engaged with this medium of modernity beyond being target audiences.

This thesis projects women into radio history in Ghana. It explores women’s diverse relationships with radio in the light of the overarching questions: What did Ghanaian women do with radio, and in what ways did they engage with this medium of mass communication, ‘modernity’ and cultural production? For what purposes and to what ends? These questions enable us to document the social history of radio by exploring gender in radio history and interrogating historical questions pertaining to women’s agency in accessing and using radio

Nkrumah, edited by Kwame Arhin (Trenton, NJ: African World Press, 1993), 89-107.

⁵ Ansah, *Golden Jubilee Lectures*, 1

⁶ Kwame Karikari, ed., *Independent Broadcasting in Ghana Implications and Challenges* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1994) 1.

⁷ Kwame Karikari, ed., *Independent Broadcasting in Ghana Implications and Challenges* (Ghana Universities Press, 1994), 7.

and their contributions to the development of public radio in Ghana at the levels of institution, production and reception. The study also enables us to explore the “civilising mission” of radio for women within the framework of Victorian ideologies of domesticity and the separate women’s sphere. It argues that women appropriated radio, a tool of modernity as a resource for re-defining their status, for expanding their communicative and public speaking spaces, for contesting their marginalisation in society and for negotiating their integration into ‘modern society.’ Their primary objective as this study seeks to show, was to negotiate new and more equitable gendered relations within a predominantly patriarchal domestic society.

1.2 Statement of Problem

This study was inspired by the burgeoning body of work concerned with gendering colonial and post-colonial historiography, specifically, interest in exploring women’s media and communication history, and women’s radio history in particular. Nancy Rose Hunt is among several Africanist historians to propose that African women are no longer invisible in the historiography due to the gendering of colonial historiography.⁸ There are justifiable reasons for celebrating the achievement given that until African Feminist historians started to question what they regard as Western ideologies such as the separate spheres of women and men, and dichotomies of public/private spheres, African historiography had assumed a politically masculine posture, dominated by what Fredrick Cooper described as “metanarratives of nationalist victory...told as stories of men...”⁹ Constructing nationalism as masculine obscured women in nationalist histories. Based on ideological demarcations such as public versus private spheres used to organise historical subjects, political accounts were perceived as a male domain.

⁸ Nancy Rose Hunt, “Placing African History and Locating Gender,” *Social History*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (1989), 359-379.

⁹ Frederick Cooper, “Conflict and Connection: Rethinking Colonial African History,” *American Historical Review*, Vol. 99, No. 5 (USA: American Historical Association: 1994), 1523.

With the gendering of the historiography, Africanist feminists have demonstrated the fluidity and complementarity of gender roles in African cultures and the scholarship is now replete with examples of female presence and agency in previously presumed male spheres. For example, Susan Geiger's work on Tanzanian women and nationalism illustrates women's contributions to the country's political struggle and their agency in shaping their space within the changing colonial system.¹⁰ As the historiography on gender and colonialism expands, scholars such as Durba Ghosh have questioned whether the scholarship has affected other fields of history.¹¹ Kwabena O. Akurang-Parry has conceded that the scholarship has so far been useful in "demarcating new terrains of synthesis."¹²

Scholarship in the field of media and communication history in Ghana is one of the new terrains just beginning to attract research attention and in this respect, Audrey Gadzekpo's work on Women's Engagement with Gold Coast Print Culture is an invaluable input.¹³ Gadzekpo's study proved that women were not absent from newspaper history as previously documented and that even at a time that they were known to have little literary skills, women used newspaper columns and pages on the predominantly privately-owned and male controlled press to advance their advocacy objectives, targeting female readers and asserting their authority as writers and columnists.¹⁴ Gadzekpo discovered that women such as Mabel Dove Danquah and Mercy Ffoulks-Crabbe authored newspaper articles in the Gold Coast Press under pseudonyms such as Marjorie Mensah and Gloria.¹⁵ Takiwa Manuh also identified prominent women such

¹⁰ Susan Geiger, "Tanganyikan Nationalism as 'Women's Work': Life Histories, Collective Biographies and Changing Historiography," *Journal of African History* Vol. 99, No. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 36.

¹¹ Durba Ghosh, "Gender and Colonialism: Expansion or Marginalization?" *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 47, No. 3 (2004), 737.

¹² Kwabena O. Akurang-Parry, "Aspects of Elite Women's Activism in the Gold Coast, 1874-1890," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (Boston: Boston University African Center, 2004), 463-482.

¹³ Audrey Gadzekpo, "Women's Engagement with Gold Coast Print Culture From 1857- 1957" (PhD dissertation, University of Birmingham, Centre for West African Studies, 2001).

¹⁴ Gadzekpo, *Women's Engagement with Gold Coast Print*, 50.

¹⁵ Mabel Dove Danquah, a renowned journalist, wrote under the pseudonym Marjorie Mensah while Mercy Ffoulks-Crabbe, a pioneer in women's education wrote under the name, Gloria from the late nineteenth century..

as Akua Asabea Ayisi as pioneer print journalists who worked with Nkrumah on the *Evening News* writing articles to demand independence.¹⁶

Documented evidence from women's history suggests that the emergence of radio in colonial Ghana was preceded by a period of gender crisis. Feminist historians contend that the crisis, attributed largely to the introduction of capitalism and patriarchy, altered the dynamics of work and family to the advantage of men. However, as Jean Allman for example, postulates, women did not succumb to the impact of such forces but sought ways to circumvent the crisis by "beginning to negotiate their own spaces within the colonial economy."¹⁷ The evidence provokes historical and theoretical questions regarding women's relationships with this oral communication medium, with potential for public expression and advocacy and positioned as a medium of "modernity" and cultural production.

The study seeks to explore how women's encounters with radio enabled or hindered their efforts at re-integration and securing equitable gendered relations within the changing society in flux. It seeks to show that besides newspapers, Ghanaian women across different levels of social and cultural power, had a distinct relationship with radio not only as target listeners but also as agents in the development of radio in Ghana. As agents, Ghanaian women engaged with radio not only to promote the "civilising" and empire building missions of radio and subsequently, post-colonial objectives of national development, national integration and modernisation but also, to contest their marginalisation in society and to insert their voices into the public space.

This research on Women's Radio History has been motivated also, by two main concerns expressed within feminist media and communication scholarship. One is the suggestion by Pamela Creedon for a re-visioning of gender and communication/media

¹⁶ Takyiwaa Manuh, "Women and their Organisations during the Convention People's Party Period," in *The Life and Work of Kwame Nkrumah*, ed., K. Arhin. (Trenton, NJ: African World Press, 1993), 108-134.

¹⁷ Jean Allman, "Making Mothers, Missionaries, Medical Officers and Women's Work in Colonial Asante, 1924-1945," *History Workshop* 38: 28 (1994).

scholarship.¹⁸ Creedon argued that scholarship that challenges assumptions and construction of gender in media has been consistently muted since the 1970s when research on gender and media began.¹⁹ Creedon opined that quantitative techniques used in most feminist studies on media tended to distort women's diverse experience and silenced their voices. Carolyn Byerly has also pointed out that media scholarship is overwhelmingly "misogynistic"²⁰ This may be partly because the scholarship has tended to overlook women's agency and experiences and instead, focused on what media such as radio have 'done' to women rather than what women 'did' with radio. Gaye Tuchman used the phrase "symbolic annihilation" to describe a phenomenon of absence and invisibility of women in media through a process of trivialisation, condemnation, and objectification.²¹ By this phenomenon of trivialisation, the media effectively distort – even erase – women from social reality and from significant presence in the public sphere. The phenomenon, partly accounts for the dearth of historical scholarship on women and media as women's voices have been missing from primary sources.

The second concern, linked to the call for re-visioning communication scholarship was expressed by Pilar Riaño who highlighted the absence of women's voices in public communication. Riaño argued that "Third World" women blame colonialism and neo-colonialism for excluding women from public communication, pointing out that the use of metaphors such as "silence" to describe women's public communication implies "a denial of

¹⁸ Pamela J. Creedon, "The Challenge of Re-Visioning Gender Values," *Women in Mass Communication*. Second Edition. ed., Pamela J. Creedon. (Newbury Park, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications Inc., 1993) 3-23.

¹⁹ Creedon, *The Challenge of Re-visioning Gender Values*, 19.

²⁰ Carolyn M. Byerly and Karen Ross, *Women and Media: A critical Introduction* (USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 8.

²¹ Gaye Tuchman, "The symbolic annihilation of women by the media," *Hearth and Home: Images of Women in the Mass Media*, eds. Gaye Tuchman, A.K. Daniels, and J. Benet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) Cited in Carolyn Byerly, "Feminist Intervention in Newsrooms," *Women and Media, International Perspectives*, eds. Karen Ross and Carolyn M. Byerly (United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 109.

women's history" and suggests that a re-visioning of the media scholarship must take the specific history of women into account.²² She wrote:

The metaphor of women's silence and its associated assumption of women's passivity, describes a dominant discourse that, according to the specific context speaks of issues of colonialism, racism, class, or gender oppression.²³

The evidence suggest that media history could be changed by examining women's history. Media historian Susan Henry has noted that valuable ideas from women's history has received very little attention from most journalism historians. She suggest that research on women's culture for example, provides a framework for studying particular forms of media history and points to media produced by women such as women's magazine programmes.²⁴ By focusing on women's history, Henry believes also, that media historians could avoid limitations of "contribution history", a method by which men "become the measure of significance" for judging women's lives.²⁵ Henry's suggestion partly underscores the relevance of my study which is to use ideas from women's history to construct a history on women and radio. This is a fresh terrain in the context of women's history in Ghana.

This study focuses on Radio Ghana as it provides a unique platform for exploring Women's Radio History because the station represents the beginnings of radio in Ghana. Radio Ghana like most radio stations across Africa was developed as a state institution. As a legacy of colonial rule, the station pursued the ideological missions of radio including promoting Victorian ideologies of domesticity, a framework that has barely been explored in radio histories in Africa because of the patriarchal nature of the scholarship. Despite its authoritarian nature and public perception that it was "the voice of government" Radio Ghana has also been

²² Pilar Riaño, *Women In Grassroots Communication Furthering Social Change*. (California: Sage Publications Inc.:1994), 40.

²³ Riano, *Women in Grassroots*, 40.

²⁴ Susan Henry, "Changing Media History though Women's History" in *Women in Mass Communication*. Second Edition. ed., Pamela Creedon. (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications Inc: 1993), 341-151.

²⁵ Henry, *Changing women's history*, 348.

involved in the construction of a democratic public sphere since the early 1950s, addressing all members of the public in six Ghanaian language and providing the impetus for diverse groups of people across ethnic, gender and socio-economic lines to engage with the medium. Few will disagree with Leslie Steeves' observation that across diverse cultures public radio provides greater opportunities for women's participation and voice than private radio.²⁶

Radio Ghana was also involved in the promotion of African Unity and integration in the early 1960s. It provided external broadcasting services and functioned as the voice of Africa from the early 1960s in support of emerging independent African states. For close to 65 years out of its 81 year history, Radio Ghana provided a forum for robust and constant commitment to women and by extension, sustaining the interest of its female audiences. The study argues that such commitments to women was largely due to the agency of female programme makers and broadcasters who were recruited to speak to women and for women. The fundamental question for this study is, what were women's missions for engaging with radio in the ways they did and how did these missions differ from colonial and post-colonial intentions for women and radio?

1.3 Objectives of the study

The study is guided by the following objectives:

- To explore the genesis and context of women's relationship with radio broadcasting, their access and early encounters with radio in the light of the history of radio, its aims and missions and also colonial and post governments' intentions regarding women and radio.
- To document the employment history of women in radio careers by showing some of the pioneers and their diverse contributions to the development of radio in Ghana and also to

²⁶ H. Leslie Steeves, "Gender and Mass Communication in a Global Context," in *Women in Mass Communication*, Second Edition, edited by Pamela J. Creedon (Newbury Park, California: Sage, 1993), 24-32.

describe how they negotiated domesticity, femininity and patriarchy to secure careers in the male dominated space.

- To explore and document the history of women's radio magazines, the missions, historical significance and functions, women's engagement and use of the programme and the purposes for which they did.
- To document the reminiscences of women's listening experiences focusing on what women listened to, the spatial context of their listening, motivations and gratifications for listening and factors that enabled or inhibited their listening experience.

1.4 Research questions

- What was the historical and social context of women's early encounters with radio? What were the intentions of colonial and post-colonial governments for women and radio as regards access to radio, reception, and participation in radio work?
- When, why, and how did women gain employment in radio careers? What were the historical barriers, opportunities, conditions and context of their employment? How did these conditions change over time? Who were the pioneers and what were their occupational roles at the time?
- What necessitated the creation of special programme spaces for women? How did these programmes develop and what were their historical functions over time? How did women use these programmes and what were the dominant discourses in content during the period demarcated for this study?
- Why did Ghanaian women listen to radio and what role did gender play in women's listening practices? Why did women listen to radio and for what purposes? What programmes did they listen to and for what purposes? What were the spatial and social contexts of listening and reception and how did these change over time? What were the social and cultural practices associated with radio listening?

1.5 Significance of the research

The significance of this research is evidenced by the dearth of historical writings on radio in Ghana and Africa as a whole and also women's radio history in particular. To date, accounts of radio's past are overwhelmingly political, institutional, technical, and male-centric. Richard Fardon and Graham Furniss are among scholars who have commented on the lack of sufficient academic attention accorded to radio despite the growing importance of the medium on the continent.²⁷ They have noted that literature on radio in Africa emanates from interest groups such as practitioners and lobbyist rather than anthropologists. In the Ghanaian context, communication scholar Paul Ansah's Golden Jubilee Lecture on Radio Ghana is quoted extensively as a source of radio history by both media and communication students and scholars writing on radio in Ghana.

The edited work of Fardon and Furniss on African broadcast cultures seemed to have aimed at addressing the lacuna in radio scholarship. Yet all the essays in the book tended to gloss over women's experiences in broadcast cultures at all levels – production, reception, and institution. This study does not seek to re-write radio history, but to document women's presence and historical experiences within this history at the production, reception, and institutional/occupational levels. This research makes a contribution not only to radio but also to mass media and communication history in general. Media history has tended to over-emphasise print at the expense of radio. Even so, Gadzekpo notes that scholars have done “little more than to document the absence of women in the newspaper industry or at best relegate one or two women to their footnotes.”²⁸ Radio has not fared any better and feminist media scholars assert that the medium remains relatively neglected and under-researched within the

²⁷ Richard Fardon and Graham Furniss, eds. *African Broadcast Cultures Radio in Transition*. (Westport, Connecticut: PRAEGER, 2002).

²⁸ Gadzekpo, *Women's Engagement with Gold Coast Print Culture*, 20.

discipline.²⁹ In recent times, not only is interest in radio research growing, but it is also taking account of women. A recent collection of essays entitled *Radio in Africa: Publics Cultures and Communities* includes an article by Dorothea Schulz's examines the voices of Malian women preachers on local radio stations.³⁰ In the Ghanaian context there is little consideration within the academy on the history of women's participation in broadcasting beyond anecdotal evidence available in a couple of written documents.³¹

This study makes five distinct contributions to women's radio history. First, it addresses a lacuna in media history in Ghana by not only gendering radio history but also contributing to scholarship on women's history and women's media history. Gendering radio history is not only meant to insert the female story in historical scholarship. It is an important history in its own right and merit. It provides new evidence of radio's implication in the civilising agenda of making educated middle class Ghanaian women, housewives. A gender perspective of radio history sheds light on the ideologies that underpin radio operations and functions as a cultural medium. Secondly, the research documents for the first time, the history and evolution of women's careers in radio. It provides primary evidence to correct assumptions in previous scholarship regarding the presence of women in radio employment. It also exposes readers to some of the female pioneers whose diverse contributions to the development of radio made women visible in this predominantly male-dominated institution.

Thirdly, Women's Radio History uncovers the neglected history of women's radio magazine programmes and their significance in women's historical attempts to negotiating new

²⁹ Jane Arthurs and Usha Zacharias, "Introduction: Women and Radio" *Feminist Media Studies* Vol. 7, No. 3 (Taylor and Francis, 2007), 334-337.

³⁰ See Dorothea Schulz, "Equivocal Resonances: Islamic Revival and Female Radio 'Preachers' in Urban Mali," in *Radio in Africa: Publics, Cultures and Communities*, eds., Liz Gunner, Dina Ligaga and Dumisani Moyo (South Africa: Wits University Press, 2011).

³¹ See *Women in the Ghanaian Media, Low Level of Representation and its Effect on Their Corporate Progression*. (Accra: PANOS Institute, 1998); Kwasi Ansu-Kyeremeh and Kwame Karikari, *Media Ghana, Ghanaian Media Overview, Practitioners and Institutions* (Accra: University of Ghana Press, 1998).

and more equitable gendered relations in a predominantly male society. Fourthly, the study contributes to knowledge on the history of female radio audiences and their motivations and gratification for engaging with radio. Fifthly, the study presents new evidence that radio was a primary tool of domesticity which women appropriated and transformed into a resource to foster their integration into the modern society.

Audrey Gadzekpo's history on Women and the Gold Coast Press, referred to earlier, focused on elite women. This is understandable considering that the press has, by virtue of requiring literacy to access been an inherently elite medium.³² Radio has no such disadvantage given its oral nature. Therefore, the present study examines both educated and illiterate women's relationship with radio. The focus on female radio personalities is an important history in its own right given the gap in historical scholarship in this regard. Allison McCracken argued in the context of American radio history that radio personalities connected intimately with listeners and created "friendly personas" who became familiar to listeners through their daily or weekly appearances in their homes.³³ By valorising the key personalities, the study documents the "voices" and names of women who were once not on friendly personas but household names in the Ghanaian society but only survive today in the lived experiences and memories of listeners.

Broadcasters are recognised as the agents and barometers of change and development. Unfortunately, accounts of radio history in Ghana have barely recognised the voices on or behind the technology (the microphone), let alone those of women and the roles they played in the development of radio in Ghana. Government speeches during anniversary celebrations have

³²Gadzekpo, *Women's Engagement with Gold Coast Print Culture*, 28.

³³Allison McCracken, "Scary Women and Scared Men Suspense, Gender Trouble and Postwar Changes," in *Radio Reader Essays in the Cultural History of Radio*, edited by Michele Hilmes and Jason Laviglio (New York: Rutledge, 2002), 183-207

only expressed “gratitude to past and present personnel” for dedicated service.³⁴ Typically, ‘dedicated’ personnel happened to be male as depicted in pictures in anniversary brochures. The obvious absence of women in both text and pictorial accounts may have led to the conclusion that women’s occupational relationships with radio was inconsequential. This study takes a departure from the predominantly institutional, regulatory and political history of radio in Ghana to account for the absence of women in radio history.

1.6 Periodisation

The study spans the period 1960 to 1975. However, it takes a step back to the colonial period when radio started in 1935 given the exploratory nature of the study. The colonial era provides a discursive berth for demonstrating the trajectory of women’s careers and diverse engagements with the medium and to tease out the changes and continuities found firstly, in the history of public service radio in Ghana; secondly, in women’s history and thirdly, in the history of women’s relationship with radio. More importantly, recounting the colonial era helps to elucidate some of historical and theoretical issues that undergird women’s relationship with radio notably, Victorian ideology of domesticity and the separate sphere.

Ghana gained political independence in 1957 and the post-colonial period, 1960-1975 represents a new age for women in Ghana and also a new age for radio. The era is important in the trajectory of radio’s development and also as regards the increasing number of women in radio employment. With regard to radio, some of the important landmarks of the decade include, the establishment of the rural, external and commercial broadcasting networks. Radio’s missions and goals were modified to include the promotion of cultural self-assertion, national integration and development as well as the broader goals of African unity. The late 1950’s, marked the professionalisation of radio work with the setting up of the radio production

³⁴ Kofi Totobi Quarkyi, “Special Message from PNDC Under-Secretary for Information” in *GBC at 60* (Accra: GBC Publication, 1985), 3.

and engineering training schools and also the Ghana Institute of Journalism. Opportunities were opened for women in such training institutions and radio work and it is important to shed light on how the post-colonial woman embraced such opportunities to be part radio work.

Feminist scholars document the period of the 1960s as one of consciousness raising on women's rights and gender equality. In the context of Ghana, the post-colonial woman gained civic rights and greater employment and educational opportunities to enable her to realise her full potential in society.³⁵ The immediate post-colonial government of the Convention People's Party (CPP) was favourably disposed towards women. Kwame Nkrumah introduced affirmative action policies that saw the appointment of 10 women to the Legislative Assembly. Thus, women had greater opportunities to negotiate new spaces as citizens in the new state of Ghana, outside the domestic sphere as housewives.

The UN Decade for Development was declared in 1960 at the same time as theories about the modernisation/development role of media emerged. The theory underpinned the modernisation objectives of post-colonial governments and by extension renewed agenda to use radio for national development. The years 1975 to 1985 marked the UN Decade for Women. In many countries including Ghana, national machineries were set up for the first time, to implement policies and activities aimed towards women's advancement and to promote gender equality. The government of Ghana, specifically the military government of the Supreme Military Council demonstrated commitment to women and to efforts at attaining gender equality by establishing the National Council for Women and Development (NCWD) with Mrs Justice Annie Jiagge as Chair. She was one of the female voices on predominantly male panelled radio discussion programmes. These various developments provide context for interrogating Ghanaian women's relationship with radio. The thesis terminates at the beginning

³⁵ Manuh, *Women and their Organisations*, 108-134.

of the UN Decade for women, 1975-1985, partly because of the difficulty in obtaining substantial primary evidence to cover the period after 1975. The decade of women marks another phase in the development of women and radio which could be addressed more comprehensively in another study.

1.7 Historiographical context

Because of its multi-disciplinary nature this research is located within four inter-related historiographical and theoretical contexts. First is the body of work ostensibly concerned with the impact of colonialism on women's status. The second examines women's indigenous communication activities and public speaking within the context of their historical struggles and advocacy activities. The third is located within feminist communication and media scholarship while the fourth is located within radio theories, particularly, the modernisation/development concept of radio.

The corpus of scholarship in the field on women's colonial history covers various disciplines and is grounded on two schools of thought. One school argues that colonialism reduced African women's status and autonomy by introducing and imposing on them, patriarchy and Western cultures including the Victorian ideology of domesticity and women's separate sphere.³⁶ The second school of thought argues that at various times in history, women negotiated, contested, engaged with or appropriated opportunities within the changing colonial and post-colonial systems to redefine their status in life outside the confines of patriarchy.³⁷

³⁶ For adherents to this school, see for example, Oyeronke Oyewumi, *The Invention of Women, Making An African Sense of Western, Gender Discourse*. (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001); Obioma Nnaemeka, *Sisterhood, Feminism and Power: From Africa to the Diaspora* (Trenton: Africa World Press Inc., 1998). Takyiwaa Manuh, "Changes in Marriage and Funeral Exchanges Among the Asante: A Case Study from Kona, Afigya-Kwabre," in *Money Matters*, edited by J. I. Guyer (Portsmouth NH: Heinemann, 1995), 188-201

³⁷ Notable works in this regard include Jean Allman, Susan Geiger, and Nakanyike Musisi, eds., *Women in African Colonial Histories* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002); Emmanuel Akyeampong, *Drink, Power and Cultural Change: A Social History of Alcohol in Ghana, c. 1800-recent times* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann and Oxford: James Currey, 1996); Sandra Green, *Gender, Ethnicity and Social Change in the Upper Slave Coast History of Anlo-Ewe* (Portsmouth, NH: James Currey, London Heinemann, 1996); Gracia Clark, *Onions Are My Husband: Survival and Accumulation by West African Market Women* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010); Claire Robertson, *Sharing the Same Bowl: A Socio-Economic History of Women in Accra, Ghana* (USA:

The position affirms women's agency in the various encounters with colonialism and suggests that women had the capacity to trade off aspects of the system for their own benefits.

Both schools of thought may be criticised from diverse perspectives. The first school assigns too much power to colonial administrators and has tended to overlook the impact of indigenous patriarchy in women's lives. Also, the school of thought deny African women's agency by considering them as passive victims of colonialism. As Andrea Cornwall for example rightly argued, although colonial rule was partial and inconsistent, it was far from omnipotent.³⁸ While the second school of thought acknowledges women's agency as historical subjects it may be criticised for over-generalising the situation and agency. Also women are not a homogenous group who encountered colonialism in diverse ways. Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch for example, cautioned that although femaleness is a common factor, the African woman must be seen as a peasant or a city-dweller, an intellectual or working-class, an overburdened and overworked mother, independent, single, or divorced.³⁹

In gendering radio history this research takes account of the criticisms of both schools of thought. Being colonial oriented, the approach may be criticised as relatively narrow in measuring the entire post-colonial period. However, it is useful because it provides room to explore this new terrain by providing a discursive berth for explaining the historical context of Ghanaian women's relationship with radio.

The second body of work that informs this study examines women communication and public speaking activities as part of their historical struggles and advocacy. Pieces of

University of Michigan Press, 1990); Stephano Boni, "Twentieth Century Transformations in Notions of Gender, Parenthood, and Marriage in Southern Ghana: A Critique of the Hypothesis of "Retrograde Steps" for Akan Women," *History of Africa*, Vol. 28 (African Studies Association, 2001); and Kwabena O. Akurang-Parry, "Aspects of Elite Women's Activism in the Gold Coast, 1874-1890," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (Boston: Boston University African Centre, 2004), 463-482.

³⁸ Andrea Cornwall, "Introduction: Perspectives on Gender in Africa," in *Readings in Gender in Africa*, edited by Andrea Cornwall (London: The International African Institute: 2005), 3.

³⁹ Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, *African Women A Modern History*, trans. Beth Gillian Raps. (Colorado, USA: Westview Press, 1997), 1.

information on elite women's advocacy activities provide evidences of how both educated and illiterate women used oral communication strategies to insert their voices into public issues. Akurang-Parry's account of aspects of activism by elite women shows that the Native Ladies of Cape Coast (NLCC) appropriated petitions as a communication tool to advocate the abolition of slavery.⁴⁰ Similarly, Takyiwaa Manuh noted Ghanaian market women's communication activities as part of their advocacy and struggle for independence in the 1950s, pointing out that market women followed Nkrumah across the country on his speaking tours during which they also addressed political rallies.⁴¹

Nationalist histories on Tanzania and Guinea further illustrate how women used oral expressive forms such as storytelling and music to support their advocacy and struggles.⁴² Such oral forms drew attention to, and introduced within the polity, a growing awareness of the role of women in national life. This effort has often then been functionalist, arising as it does from the existential realities of community and grassroots movements. Pilar Riaño illustrates this position with experiences of Latin American women. She points out, that women assumed a "social motherhood" role in their communities and appropriated the local social context as a space for oral and feminine expressiveness and as a source of information.⁴³ A collection of women's literary works that recovers West African female voices in modern traditional writing for example, indicate that such oral forms praise singing, dance and other traditional forms of communication such as story telling forums represent female traditions of power.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Akurang-Parry defines this group of women as those who belong to the upper strata of society; characteristically they were literate, wealthy, influential and heterogeneous. See Akurang-Parry, *Aspects of Elite Women's Activism in the Gold Coast*, 463-482.

⁴¹ Manuh, *Women and their Organisations*, 115.

⁴² Susan Geiger, "Tanganyikan Nationalism as 'Women's Work' Life Histories: Collective Biography and Changing Historiography," *Journal of African History*, Vol. 37 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 465-478; Elizabeth Schmidt, "Emancipate Your Husbands!" *Women and Nationalism in Guinea, 1953-1958*, in *Women in African Colonial Histories*, edited by Jean Allman, Susan Geiger, and Nankanyike Musisi. (USA: Indiana University Press, 2002), 282-304.

⁴³ Riaño, *Women in Grassroots Communication*, 47.

⁴⁴ Esi Sutherland-Addy and Aminata Diaw, *Women writing Africa, West Africa and the Sahel* Vol. II (New York: The Feminist Press, City University, 2003), 8.

In the light of the evidence above, some scholarship on indigenous communication insist that the diffusion of western communication technologies such as radio and print tended to weaken traditional communication and women's communicative roles by spreading Western modes of communication that tended to disadvantage women as a result.⁴⁵ Penina Mlama for example posits that the one-way communication character of radio and other modern communication tools such as television, film or print made the technologies less accessible to most African populations, majority being women.⁴⁶ However, it is also a fact that in most African communities, women's speaking rights were restricted in certain political contexts. Scholarship from linguistics draws attention to socio-cultural factors that relegate Ghanaian women to inferior positions in public communication inhibiting them from speaking out in certain political contexts. For example, in the context of Akan society in Ghana, Kwesi Yankah points out that the cultural expectation of reticence on the part of women in certain political contexts imposed constraints on their public expressions.⁴⁷ Yankah however concedes that women maintained their speaking rights at different levels of political power, as reflected in their leadership roles as queen mothers for example.

This study argues that the advent of radio, held greater promise for all women. This is because as a spoken medium, radio had the potential to expand women's communication capacity beyond restricted male spaces. Radio taps into the oral fabric of society and replicates oral formats such as storytelling associated with women's communication. Evidence from the existing scholarship attests to the significance of radio in amplifying women's voices and

⁴⁵ Kwasi Ansu-Kyeremeh, *Communication, Education and Development, Exploring an African Cultural Setting* (Ghana Universities Press, 1997). Also Leslie Steeves has argued that the introduction of modern media of communication, weakened women's information roles. Steeves' position refers to the print media – newspapers – which were owned largely by private male individuals who had the means to produce newspapers at the time. See Leslie H. Steeves, "Feminist theories and media studies." *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 4 (2) 1987, 95-135.

⁴⁶ Penina Mlama, "Reinforcing Indigenous Communication Skills: The Use of Dance in Tanzania," in *Women In Grassroots Communication Furthering Social Change*, edited by Pilar Riaño (California: Sage, 1994, Year), 45.

⁴⁷ See Kwesi Yankah, *Speaking for the Chief: Okyeame and the Politics of Akan Royal Oratory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).

bringing such voices to the public.⁴⁸ Sani Aba Alihu's example of Hausa women in northern Nigeria shows that women used cultural programme spaces on radio to expand their public communication in society.⁴⁹ Arguably, interpersonal communication and traditional forms of communication cannot match radio in terms of audience reach and socio-cultural influences. As Winston Mano affirmed, radio is "Africa's medium of choice" on account of its ability to overcome communication barriers of illiteracy, poverty, and linguistic diversity.⁵⁰ The evidence of women's agency in using radio is necessarily equivocal, therefore the need arises for a critical examination of the potential and use of radio by and for women.

The third body of work that underpins this thesis is grounded in feminist media and communication scholarship and this addresses three overarching themes. Firstly, women's access and use of modern media including radio; secondly, women's participation and representations in media content, and thirdly, women's employment status in media.⁵¹ It is important to note that although many of these studies are not entirely historical, they provide theoretical basis for historical inquiry into women's relationship with radio.⁵² Theories and concepts such as gender stereotyping, segregation, symbolic annihilation and domesticity have been used to suggest women's marginalisation in media careers and content.⁵³

⁴⁸ Kristin Skoog, "Focus on the Housewife: The BBC and the Post-War Woman 1945-1955," *Journal of MeCCSA Postgraduate Network*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (2009), 1-12.

⁴⁹ See Sani Aba Alihu, "Hausa Women as Oral Storytellers in Northern Nigeria," in *Writing African Women: Gender, Popular Culture and Literature in West Africa*, edited by Stephanie Newell (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1997).

⁵⁰ Winston Mano, "Why radio is Africa's Medium of Choice in the Global Age," in *Radio in Africa Publics, Cultures, Communities*, edited by Liz Gunner, Dina Ligaga, and Dumisani Mayo (South Africa: Wits University Press, 2010), 102-115.

⁵¹ Examples of work in the field could be found in Cynthia Carter, Gill Branston, and Allan Stuart eds., *Gender, News and Power* (London: Routledge, 1998); Rosalind Gill, *Gender and the Media* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007); Carolyn Byerly and Karen Ross eds., *Women and Media: A critical Introduction* (USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006).

⁵² See, Rosalind Gill, *Gender and the Media* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

⁵³ See Margaret Gallagher, *Unequal Opportunities: The case of women and the Media* (Paris: UNESCO, 1981). See also Gaye Tuchman, "The Symbolic Annihilation of Women by the Media," in *Hearth and Home: Images of Women in the Mass Media*, eds., Gaye Tuchman, A.K. Daniels, and J. Benet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

With regard to women's employment status, the scholarship focus has been on their marginalisation in the structure, organisation, and programming output of media and communication content and also women's participation in such institutions.⁵⁴ Some of the major studies in the field have been concerned with making visible the gendered and patriarchal nature of radio institutions in terms ownership, structure, and gender representation at editorial and management positions. For example, Judith Cramer's work on women's employment in American radio has documented that generally American women's engagement with early radio in the 1920s was in "singing, acting and giving household hints," describing the situation as "a logical extension of women's roles in the home."⁵⁵

Recent scholarship on women's radio productions such as Women's Radio Magazines is gaining historical attention.⁵⁶ As regards access/use, scholarship attention has been on ownership and audience and such studies cover television, film, popular culture and the internet with less attention on radio. There is a dearth of research on radio audiences within the humanities. Within the social sciences however, research on audiences generally reflects shifts from the position of examining listeners as passive recipients of content to studying them as active participants. The thesis is placed within the theoretical framework of women's agency to access, use and participate in radio at the levels of institution, reception, and production. It argues that these relationships with radio at the various levels enabled women to define their status outside the confines of patriarchy to insert their voices in the public sphere.

The fourth historiographical context that undergirds this study is grounded in theories on radio specifically, on the modernisation/development paradigm. This discourse framed the

⁵⁴ Notable work include Margaret Gallagher, *Unequal Opportunities: The case of women and the Media*. (UNESCO) Cited by Leslie, H. Steeves. "Gender and Mass Communication in a Global Context," *Women in Mass Communication*. Second Edition, ed. Pamela J. Creedon. (California: Sage Publications Inc. 1993), 32-60.

⁵⁵ Judith A. Cramer, "Radio A Woman's Place Is On the Air" in *Women In Mass Communication* Second Edition edited by Pamela J. Creedon (London: Sage, 1993), 155-171.

⁵⁶ See Jane Arthurs and Usha Zacharia, "Introduction" in "Women and Radio," *Feminist Media Studies*, Vol. 7 No. 3 (London: Routledge, 2007), 338-341.

role of media in Africa in the late colonial period into the early independence period.⁵⁷ In this discourse, radio has been acknowledged as both empowering and disempowering – as an agent and index of change on one hand and on another hand, as destructive to indigenous cultural expressions and communication experiences.⁵⁸ Radio’s disempowering nature has been discussed within the framework of cultural imperialism/cultural indoctrination. Conversely, the empowering nature of radio is associated with ideas about enlightenment – mass literacy/mass education campaigns, educational broadcasting, social mobilisation and awareness creation on health as well as disseminating agricultural education. These concepts are dominant in development communication scholarship that also sees radio as providing voice for the voiceless.⁵⁹ Both frameworks are relevant for interrogating women’s relationship with radio given the medium’s role in the transmission of foreign ideas and ideologies and at the same time its potential as an oral medium for cultural self-assertion. In this regard the study seeks to examine whether Victorian-styled domesticity, a framework for British cultural imperialism was a negative feature of Ghanaian women’s life.

Given the dearth of literature on women’s radio history in Africa, this study draws on Western scholarship, specifically from Britain, Australia and Germany for theoretical guidance and insight. Scholarship on women’s radio history in these countries is grounded in the modernisation theory. In this regard, Kate Lacey’s book on women and radio in Germany and

⁵⁷ See Bianca Murillo, “Ideal Home and the Gender Politics of Consumerism in Postcolonial Ghana, 1960-70,” *Gender and History*, Vol. 21 No. 3 (November, 2009), 560-573; Stephan Miescher, “Building the City of the Future: Visions and Experiences of Modernity in Ghana’s Akosombo Township,” *Journal of African History*, 53 (2012), 367-90; Mhoze Chikowero, “Is Propaganda Modernity? Press and Radio for “Africans” in Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Malawi during World War II and Its Aftermath,” in *Modernisation as Spectacle in Africa*, edited by Peter J. Bloom, Stephan F. Miescher, and Takyiwaa Manuh. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 112-135.

⁵⁸ Penina Mloma, “Reinforcing Indigenous Communication Skills: The Use of Dance in Tanzania,” in *Women in Grassroots Communication Furthering Social Change*, ed., Pilar Riaño (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1993), 51-65.

⁵⁹ Srinivas Melkote and Leslie Sleeves contend that modernisation was based on the grand project of Enlightenment associated with attributes such as reasoning, objectivity, rationality and other philosophical principles of Western science. See Srinivas R. Melkote and H. Leslie Steeves, ed., *Communication for Development in the Third World Theory and Practice for Empowerment*. 2nd Edition. (Thousand Oaks, London: Sage Publications, 2001). The Enlightenment notion is embedded in the civilising missions of colonialism with radio playing a central radio.

articles by Kristen Skoog, Sally Feldman and Cristiana Baade's were helpful in contextualizing special programme spaces for women in colonial and post-colonial Ghana.⁶⁰

All the four frameworks complement one another and each contributes to explicating in diverse but parallel ways, the ideological role of radio in promoting modernisation of women framed as domesticity. The frameworks also help to clarify discourses on the social mobilisation, education and enlightenment of women towards self-improvement and towards creating a more equitable gendered relations in Ghanaian society.

1.8 Literature review

1.8.1 Colonialism and Women's Status

The complexities of colonial and post-colonial societies and the status of women within these societies have been documented extensively. Within the scholarship, there appears to be a consensus that the last three decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century mark important periods in social formation within coastal towns and in Ashanti. Various scholars acknowledge that during these periods, women's status changed in diverse ways. On one hand there was an increase in Ghanaian women's assertiveness and on the other hand, an erosion of their traditional autonomy.⁶¹

Takyiwaa Manuh asserts that pre-colonial Ghanaian women enjoyed economic autonomy. They combined work both in and outside the home, mothering children, cooking, processing and storing food.⁶² Pre-colonial Ghanaian women farmed different crops and

⁶⁰Kristin Skoog, *Focus on the Housewife*, 1-12; Sally Feldman, "Desperate Housewives, 60 years of BBC Radio's Woman's hour" *Feminist Media Studies*, Vol. 7 No. 3 (London: Routledge 2007), 333-341; Cristiana Baade, "Between Factory and Work Music While You Work and Women Listeners at the Wartime BBC," *Feminist Media Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (London: Routledge, 2007), 334-338.

⁶¹ Notable works include, Akyeampong, *Drink, Power and Cultural Change*, 16. See Sandra Green, *Gender, Ethnicity and Social Change in the Upper Slave Coast History of Anlo-Ewe*. (Portsmouth, NH: James Currey, London Heinemann, 1996); Jean Allman, "Rounding Up Spinsters: Gender Chaos and Unmarried Woman in Colonial Asante" in *"Wicked" Women and the Reconfiguration of Gender in Africa*, edited by Dorothy L. Hodgson and Sheryl A. McCurdy. (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2001), 131-145.

⁶² Manuh, *Women and their Organisations*, 111.

engaged in crafts such as pottery. In Akan political and legal systems for example, women were guaranteed political, social and economic rights and both Akan women and men took complementary leadership roles in society even though Manuh conceded that only women of royalty enjoyed such status and rights. She blamed colonialism for reducing women's economic status and argued that the rise of cash crop farming introduced in the colonial period increased women's workload and offered them little reward. The development redefined social relations as attempts were made by "chiefs, elders and husbands to assert greater control over the labour and sexuality of women."⁶³

Jean Allman also points to the rise of cash crop farming as a reason for the decline in women's socio-economic status. Allman described the 1920's and 1930s as periods of gender crisis in Ashanti. According to Allman, the crisis resulted from the spread of cocoa as cash crop (a trade controlled mainly by men) and the expansion of trade in foodstuffs.⁶⁴ The crisis had profound repercussions on relationships between Ashanti men and women in this matrilineal society. Allman posited that during the period, marriage, divorce and maternal/paternal responsibilities towards children were challenged, contested and redefined due to sweeping economic changes. The development affected future economic autonomy and security for Ashanti women who until the focus on cocoa as cash crop, grew food crops which fed the family and provided them with cash from the sale of surplus to which they were entitled.

In another study, Allman and Victoria Tashjian explored the interactions and responses by women to changes in the colonial economy.⁶⁵ The authors argued that despite efforts by colonial authorities to gain control over women's productive and reproductive labour, women

⁶³ Takyiwaa Manuh, "Changes in Marriage and Funeral Exchanges Among the Asante: A Case Study from Kona, Afigya-Kwabre," in *Money Matters*, edited by J. I. Guyer (Portsmouth NH: Heinemann, 1995), 188-201.

⁶⁴ Allman, *Making Mothers*, 23-47.

⁶⁵ See Jean Allman and Victoria Tashjian, "Introduction" in *I Will Not Eat Stone: A Women's History of Colonial Asante* (Portsmouth, HN: Heinemann, 2000).

created new opportunities in trading and cocoa farming for themselves, and these empowered them to challenge “the shifting terrain of patriarchal power.”⁶⁶ Emmanuel Akyeampong shares a similar view about women’s agency in negotiating spaces within the cash economy.⁶⁷ He contends that Ghanaian women had opportunities to acquire wealth and to gain social and economic autonomy in towns and villages largely because of the colonial impact on rural cash crop cultivation, urban capital production, and British customary law. He charted changes in gender relations dating to the sixteenth century resulting from upheavals due to wars and contends that Ghanaian women had long been under the guardianship first of their fathers and then under their husbands for most of their lives before colonial intervention. The early colonial period then provided the opportunity for women to define their autonomy outside male authority.

In her work on Anlo-Ewe society straddling both pre-colonial and colonial periods, Sandra Green posits that colonialism, simultaneously advantaged and disadvantaged women.⁶⁸ Green contends that prior to the seventeenth century, Anlo women inherited land from their mothers and fathers and likewise they could bequeath land to their children. They were also more economically and socially autonomous and participated in decision-making before colonial times. By the nineteenth century, younger women had lost their right to participate in decision making concerning their marriage. With regard to their occupational roles, Green argued that the introduction of a cash economy which resulted in changes in gender relations, Anlo-Ewe women lost their right to harvest shellfish, and instead were restricted to selling and processing the harvest of their male kin.

⁶⁶Allman and Tashjian, *I will not eat stone*, xxxiv

⁶⁷ Akyeampong, *Drink, Power and Cultural Change*, 16.

⁶⁸ Sandra Green, *Gender, Ethnicity and Social Change in the Upper Slave Coast History of Anlo-Ewe*. (Portsmouth, NH: James Currey, London Heinemann, 1996).

Claire Robertson provides an account of the socio-economic changes in the lives of Ga women over the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century.⁶⁹ Her work *Sharing from the Same Bowl: A socio economic history of women in Accra*, supported the contradictory conclusion that during the colonial and post-colonial periods, Usher Town women gained increased autonomy, but decreasing power due to lack of resources. Her work demonstrates changes in the organisation of female trade, residence, marriage, inheritance, fertility, education, and support for dependants. She identified three historical periods when the autonomy of Ga women of Usher Town underwent transformation. Evidence from the study indicates that during the pre-colonial period before 1860 Usher Town experienced a phenomenon of male and female hierarchies in modes of production. Between 1860 and 1952 women grew in strength and autonomy as male authority declined due to the transition from corporate mode of production to a capitalist mode. This was because many educated Ga men became wage earners. However, the period after 1952 permitted the reassertion of male authority buttressed by the development of a peripheral capitalist mode of production.

In another study on Accra (Ga) women, Robertson argued that market girls were more likely to rely on their earnings rather than earnings from men to support themselves and their families.⁷⁰ Robertson examined the impact of Universal Primary Education on Accra women's economic activities specifically on their apprenticeships.⁷¹ Robertson compared the marketing knowledge of school girls and market girls of ages between 11 and 16 to ascertain the impact of formal classroom education on women's economic opportunities and financial autonomy. She found that far more market girls than school girls expected to rely on their earnings to

⁶⁹ Claire Robertson, *Sharing the Same Bowl: A Socio-Economic History of Women in Accra, Ghana* (USA: University of Michigan Press, 1990).

⁷⁰ Claire Robertson, "Formal or Non-Formal Education? Entrepreneurial Women in Ghana," *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (Nov., 1984), 639-658.

⁷¹The 1951 Accelerated Plan for Education in the Gold Coast declared education at the basic level to be free and compulsory. The immediate post-independence government of the Convention People's Party (CPP) called for Universal Primary Education for all under the 1961 Education Act.

support themselves and their families. Conversely, school girls expected their future husbands to provide most or all of their needs. She argued that the gendered content of the school curriculum which was maintained after independence did not help girls in securing commercial work. Therefore, formal education for girls during the post-colonial period promoted female dependency on males. Robertson argued in agreement with Weis that girls' educational curriculum in Ghana aimed at "removing women from economic life and re-socialising them for consumptive domesticity."⁷² She concluded that the Western type of education inherited from colonial government created a dilemma for women particularly educated women who were more likely than illiterate women to adopt lifestyles, consistent with the Victorian-styled housewife who depended largely on the spouse, the breadwinner, for her upkeep.

Gracia Clark emphasises the agency of market women in defining their economic autonomy outside formal sector work.⁷³ In her book on *Onions Are My husband: Survival and Accumulation by West African Market Women*, Clark uses life histories of market women in Kumasi to show the creative and energetic roles post-colonial market women played as foodstuff wholesalers even during a period of serious economic challenges, including currency devaluation. These circumstances underscore the realities and significance of women's earning power and their autonomy and independence outside their relationships with men.

Kwabena Akurang-Parry has documented evidence to the effect that mid nineteenth century Euro-African societies had women of independent wealth.⁷⁴ Akurang-Parry names women such as Mary Barnes and Eliz Waldron who were executives of Native Ladies of Cape Coast (NLCC). These women bore European names due to factors such as Christianity, Afro-European marriage, and the influence of acculturation and creolisation. As members of

⁷² Robertson, *Formal or Non-Formal Education*, 655.

⁷³ Gracia Clark, *Onions Are My Husband: Survival and Accumulation by West African Market Women* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).

⁷⁴ Akurang-Parry, *Aspects of Elite Women's Activism*, 465.

voluntary and charity organisations, elite women worked to reform both indigenous and colonial patriarchies. The NLCC members could mobilise funds to reduce their vulnerability and dependence. According to Akurang-Parry the activities of these women illustrate that social change and acculturation remoulded women's indigenous organisations and groups. Elite women grafted aspects of the colonial system onto indigenous systems to define and shape their status, and to improve the conditions of less privileged women.⁷⁵

Stephano Boni, one of the scholars who has challenged the theory of women's degradation and subordination contends that there is no certainty over when Ghanaian women lost their status due to colonialism.⁷⁶ The author used colonial court records from Sefwi Wiaso in the Western region of Ghana to examine three issues in Akan society – marriage, rights of fatherhood and gendered division of parental responsibility – to challenge the argument of degradation attributed to the impact of colonialism.⁷⁷ Boni's critique of the "Retrograde Steps" hypothesis argued that despite the persistence of the ideology of women's subordination in marriage and household organisation, its application (apparent reference to Victorian notions of women as housewives and men as breadwinners) was flexible and open to negotiation in different contexts. Consistent with the literature, Boni posited that although women were excluded from cocoa farming in the period between 1900 and 1920, they also gained wealth in later years suggesting that change in women's status, if it did occur, did not result in a degradation and subordination. According to Boni, there was limited evidence of change to support the thesis of degradation and concluded that despite consistent evidence that women

⁷⁵ Akurang-Parry, *Aspects of Elite Women's Activism*, 471.

⁷⁶ Stephano Boni, *Twentieth Century Transformations*, in *Notions of Gender, Parenthood, and Marriage in Southern Ghana: A critique of the Hypothesis of Retrograde Steps" for Akan Women,* *History of Africa*, Vol. 28, (2001), 15-41.

⁷⁷ Boni, *Twentieth Century Transformations*, 20.

were “penalized by twentieth century dynamics, the degradation of female status is at times upheld for domains for which there is little evidence of change.”⁷⁸

1.8.2 Gender and Colonialism

The apparent confusion over women’s status in Africa partly stems from what Oyeronke Oyewumi called “gender logic.”⁷⁹ She maintained that colonialism must be blamed for reducing women’s status because the system introduced rigid gender categories linked to biology and sex and also to women’s subordination. She argued that by the creation of “woman” as a category for organising the social world, colonialism reduced the status of women by differentiating between male and female bodies. She contended in the context of Nigeria, that gender did not exist in pre-colonial Yoruba culture, but rather was invented and imposed onto the culture by the West based on an ideology of biological determinism. Oyewumi states:

The emergence of women as an identifiable category, defined by their anatomy and subordinated to men in all situations, resulted, in part, from the imposition of a patriarchal colonial state. For females, colonization was a twofold process of racial inferiorisation and gender subordination.⁸⁰

Oyewumi’s claim that gender is a colonial construct is debatable given that much of African cultural norms and social relations are inherently patriarchal. This is evident in institutions such as marriage, chieftaincy, inheritance, and property ownership.

Writing on *Gender in Yoruba Religious Change*, J. D. Y. Peel disagreed with Oyewumi’s assertion that gender did not exist in indigenous Yoruba conception pointing out that “there are clear Yoruba voices which express the sexual division of labour as normative reality.”⁸¹ Peel argued that Christianity and early church life in nineteenth century Yoruba

⁷⁸ Boni, “Twentieth Century Transformation,” 38.

⁷⁹ Oyeronke Oyewumi, *The Invention of Women, Making an African Sense of Western, Gender Discourse* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001), 61.

⁸⁰ Oyeronke Oyewumi, *The Invention of Women*, 62.

⁸¹ J. D. Y. Peel, “Gender in Yoruba Religious Change,” *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 32. Fasc. 2 (2002), 138.

land were shaped by conceptions of gender prevalent in indigenous society and religion. According to Peel, although the indigenous gods (*orisa*) lacked gender as a fixed attribute, gender conceptions were projected on them. Religious practices were highly gendered; witchcraft for example was mostly attributed to females as victims and perpetrators while men and ancestral cults were responsible for its control.⁸² Peel's asserts that gender is a social construct and rejects the notion of biological determinism as a construct imposed on African cultures.

Naira Sudarkasa supports the notion that gender is a social phenomenon but affirmed that in the Nigerian context a "neutral and complementary rather than a superordination/subordination" more accurately describes female and male roles in various pre-colonial African societies.⁸³ Further, women's economic roles were both public and private and complemented those of men. She noted that except for highly Islamized societies in Sub-Saharan Africa, Nigerian women in pre-colonial times were conspicuous in high places as queen mothers, queen sisters, princesses, chiefs, and holders of other offices in towns and villages and also were occasional warriors in Yoruba culture.⁸⁴

In agreement with Oyewumi, Obioma Nnaemeka asserted that universalising concepts such as gender present difficulties in understanding gender relations and by extension the status of women in Africa.⁸⁵ Naemeka criticised Western feminist scholars for failing to recognise that at times, an analysis based on rural and urban dichotomies rather than sex are more relevant in the African context. Responding to the point on biological determinism she posited that unlike the English language which inscribes body parts as a way of enforcing individualism,

⁸² Peel, *Gender in Yoruba Religious Change*, 136.

⁸³ Sudarkasa, *The Status of women in indigenous*, 101.

⁸⁴ Naira Sudarkasa, "The Status of Women in indigenous African societies," *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1986), 91-103.

⁸⁵ See Obioma Nnaemeka, ed., *Sisterhood, Feminism and Power. From Africa to the Diaspora*, edited by Obioma Nnaemeka. (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1998).

separateness and conflict or opposition, Igbo language uses body parts to emphasise reciprocity and contact zones, suggesting that gender relations in Africa as seen through Western perspectives have been distorted.⁸⁶

Other scholars have acknowledged that a hierarchy of relationship existed in many pre-colonial societies not determined by gender but by age, social positions and social identities rather than sex. Therefore, recent scholarship no longer privileges male over female but recognises the fluidity and interlocking spheres between male and female roles. Also within the scholarship, some feminists' attempt to differentiate between gender and sex have pointed to the need to place gender at the same level of significance as politics and the economy. Barbara J. Risman for example, suggested the need to see gender as a social structure stressing that by doing so, one could analyse the ways in which gender was embedded at different levels of society.⁸⁷ Lisa A. Lindsay also urged that gender should be seen as flexible and performative pointing out that people act in particular ways for particular reasons partly due to existing gender ideologies.⁸⁸

1.8.3 Domesticity as a Colonial “Artifact”

Amina Mama has contended that the oppression of women in Europe had a direct bearing on the treatment of women in the colonies.⁸⁹ Mama attributed the decline in women's status to cultural indoctrination specifically, the imposition of Victorian styled domesticity and the separate sphere of women. She suggested that gender is the root cause and argued that the ideology tended to limit women's sphere of influence to the home perceived as the place where

⁸⁶ Nnaemeka, “Mapping African Feminisms” Introduction to *Reading the Rainbow*,” in *Sisterhood, Feminism and Power: From Africa to the Diaspora*, edited by Obioma Nnaemeka. (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1998), 33.

⁸⁷ Barbara J. Risman, “Gender as a Social Construct: Theory Wrestling and Activism,” *Gender and Society*, Vol. 18. No. 4 (August 2004), 429-450.

⁸⁸ Lisa A. Lindsay, “Working with Gender: The Emergence of “Male Breadwinner” in Southwestern Nigeria,” in *Africa After Gender*, edited by Catherine M. Cole, Takyiwaa Manuh, and Stephan F. Miescher. (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007), 252-263.

⁸⁹ See Amina Mama, *Beyond the Mask: Race, Gender and Subjectivity* (London: Routledge, 1995).

women naturally and legitimately belonged and where they should exercise power. Mama suggested that the ideology was fundamental to the discrimination women suffered in leadership and economic and political structures such as the Legislative Council, town councils and public service.

Kay Boardman definition of Victorian-styled domesticity as a feature of seventeenth century British life partly supports Mama's argument. Boardman states:

The ideology of domesticity was a feature of middle-class life and helped form a cohesive identity, the family represented a secure productive and reproductive unit. Whilst men accumulated money to support home and family, women regulated household consumption in activities ranging from spending surplus income to organise servants, and the ideal domestic woman used all her time to make the home run smoothly.⁹⁰

The definition suggests that Victorian-styled domesticity was a critical aspect of the civilising and empire building missions. In the colonial context, it was directed at both middle class and working class women at different periods with different objectives. These are discussed further in all the chapters which also shows the role radio played in this regard. For now, it is essential to know that domesticity got transposed unto African cultures during colonial rule. Allman observed in her work on "Making Women Mothers..." Victorian domesticity "fostered concepts of household relations that mirrored functions of the civilised wife in line with Western standards of housekeeping and childrearing."⁹¹

Secondary evidence supports Mama's position about perceived and real negative effects of domesticity on women in public service employment. For example, Akosua Perbi's work on the status of Ghanaian women in the Colonial Government Service suggests that the ideology of domesticity is partly to blame for the discrimination and subordination of women

⁹⁰ Kay Boardman, "The Ideology of Domesticity: The Regulation of the Household Economy in Victorian Women's Magazines," *Victorian Periodical Review*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (2000), 150.

⁹¹ Jean Allman, Susan Geiger, Nakanyike Musisi eds., *Women in African Colonial Histories* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 6.

in the public service.⁹² Perbi's investigations show that marriage and domesticity were assigned great value in the 'colonising' missions and these were legally enforced. Female civil servants were forced by law to resign their jobs after pregnancy and marriage to take care of the home. Women were initially excluded from colonial structures of the public sector altogether but were subsequently allowed in selected areas by the 1890s. Perbi further noted that it was only during the Africanisation process in the late 1920s that public service opportunities became available to women. Subsequently by 1939, about eight percent of women were employed in public office as teachers, telephonists, nurses, midwives and other health workers.⁹³ By 1954, 370 women were working in the Gold Coast Civil Service.⁹⁴

According to Manuh, Victorian notions of domesticity that defined men as breadwinners and women as housewives accounted for the situation where Ghanaian women in public service received lower salaries than their male counterparts.⁹⁵ Claire Robertson has also posited that the ideology of domesticity promoted female dependency on men and encouraged 'consumptive domesticity.'⁹⁶ It also created an image of the 'housewife' as passive and dependent.

The works of Manuh, Perbi and Robertson, suggest that domesticity was a negative force on women's life. Rather than a space for female power, "women's separate sphere" as the scholars suggest, placed women in inferior positions to men. Their position may be attributed in part, to their extensive focus on educated women without attention to aspects of domesticity that encouraged women's power and autonomy, particularly among illiterate women.

⁹²Akosua A. Perbi, "Women in the Government Service in the Pre-Independence and Post-Independence Periods of Ghana's History," *GreenHill Journal of Administration*, Vol. 8 (1) (1992), 66-81.

⁹³ Perbi, *Women in Public Service*, 71.

⁹⁴ ADM/4/5/115, *The Gold Coast Public Servant*, April 1954 Issue No. 1.

⁹⁵ Manuh, *Women and their Organisations*, 112.

⁹⁶ Robertson, *Sharing the Same Bowl*, 10.

Melinda Adam's account on colonial policies and women's participation in public life discounted as negative, the impact of domesticity on African women's status. Although Adam argued that colonial encounters tended to have multiple and sometimes contradictory meanings and African women as agents sometimes rejected or even transformed such policies that did not meet their needs.⁹⁷ Drawing from colonial policies in British Southern Cameroon and focusing also on educated women, Adam pointed out that Cameroonian women managed to take some of the skills obtained from domestic science centres, colonial schools and colonial women's groups and put them to use in the post-colonial era in ways that increased their status and facilitated their participation in public life. Such skills were taught within the context of "women's domestic work", or "women's work" in line with the ideology of women's separate sphere as spaces of female power.

Other scholars such as Nancy Rose Hunt, Paul Jenkins and Kate Skinner have provided evidence in different articles, to support Adam's position that women appropriated the separate sphere ideology to better their lives.⁹⁸ For example, in her work that focused on mass literacy and community development and democracy in 1950s Asante, Skinner noted that female learners of "women's work" programmes under the mass literacy project were expected to use the new skills in their households and communities, serve as models of domesticity and become voluntary leaders of women's groups. However, some of the women had other intentions as Skinner illustrates:

Some of the women, however, instead made their way to the Asante capital, Kumasi, and generated cash income by dressmaking, or by baking and selling cakes, biscuits and doughnuts...women invested some of this income in building modern houses in their hometowns and in paying children's school fees.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Melinda Adam, "Colonial Policies and women's participation in public life: The case of British Southern Cameroon," *African Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 8 No. 3 (2008), 14.

⁹⁸ Nancy Rose Hunt, "Domesticity and Colonialism in Belgian Africa: Usumbura's Foyer Social 1946-1960," *Signs* Vol. 15 (1990), 447-474; Paul Jenkins, "Everyday Life Encapsulated? Two photographs concerning women in Basel Mission in West Africa, c.1900," *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, Vol.15, No. 1 (June, 2002), 45-60; and Kate Skinner, "It brought some kind of neatness to mankind: Mass Literacy, Community Development and Democracy in 1950s Asante," *Africa* 79 (4) (2009), 485-499.

⁹⁹ Skinner, *It brought some kind of neatness*, 485.

Teaching literacy, dressmaking, baking cakes, biscuits and doughnuts were new ideas for wealth accumulation and new sources of economic power for illiterate as well as for educated women. As evidence from the literature suggests, African women were already active in similar economic activities and playing roles as community leaders before their encounters with colonialism. It is argued therefore that women appropriated new ideas from the Victorian framework to improve their lives.

Although historians disagree about the details of domesticity and women's separate sphere and the extent to which it is confining or liberating, they generally agree it was an important part of the lives of women across different levels of power. This research on radio history provides new evidence on domesticity and the separate sphere. This study argues that domesticity was not entirely a colonial artifact and that elements derived from Victorian styled domesticity were appropriated by women to constitute what may be called, "localised domesticity." In this regard, radio played a critical role as a mass communication medium and a primary tool and site for negotiating and contesting Victorian-styled domesticity and spate women's sphere.

The debate over the impact of colonialism on the status of women continues even after 59 years of Ghanaian independence and remains a dominant framework for examining the history of women in diverse disciplines. Gwendolyn Mikell pointed out in a more recent study on the status of rural women in Ghana that between 1978 and 1985 the collapse of the national economy (blamed on structural adjustment policies) led to severe dislocations in family economic relations with severe negative consequences for women and children.¹⁰⁰

Distilling from the literature reviewed, there is reason to conclude that changes did occur in the social, economic and political status of nineteenth century Ghanaian women over

¹⁰⁰ Gwendolyn Mikell, "Filiations, Economic Crisis and the Status of Women in Rural Ghana" *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 18, 195-219.

time. The changes resulted from a combination of colonial and indigenous factors. Colonialism engaged with existing patriarchal structures to precipitate changes in gender relations, and by extension changes in women's economic, social and political status. Even so, it affected women at different levels of social and cultural power – the urban educated/illiterate woman, the rural illiterate woman, farmers, fishmongers and traders alike. Colonialism and Christianity brought new ideas about the home, the family, work and marriage. These new ideas were no doubt, embedded in the Victorian ideologies of domesticity as part of the modernisation and development missions of colonial and post-colonial states. The various literature reviewed show that Ghanaian women from various social and cultural background responded actively to the rapid changes around them and sought opportunities in the changing environment to enhance their social status. This study seeks to show that one of the ways by which women pursued their objectives of change was through their engagements with radio.

1.8.4 A Domestic Technology, the home and the Public sphere

The home and domesticity are key notions in studies concerning women and radio. Radio is seen as a domestic technology as it was considered as part of the domestic appliances because of its location in the home. Scholarship on radio and the home has been influenced partly by ethnographic research on radio use that conceptualises the medium as a domestic technology involved in the daily lives of the family and people within the space of the home. Kate Lacey indicated that Roger Silverstone's position on the home and media technologies provide the framework for such conceptualisation.¹⁰¹

According to Silverstone, modern domestic technologies such as radio, had varying effects on the household from a cultural and sociological perspective. Once radio entered the

¹⁰¹ Roger Silverstone wrote extensively on the home and the role of media in the home. This reference has been cited from the work of Kate Lacey, "Home, Work and Everyday Life: Roger Silverstone at Sussex," *International Journal of Communication*, Feature (2007), 61-69.

household, everything changed. Silverstone postulated that the home where much radio listening took place was also where the private and public converge and undergo transformation. Therefore he saw radio as possessing a dual character with the capacity to operate in both the public and private spheres. Silverstone described the household as “a distinct social and cultural space” a space where individuals, objects and processes which form the currency of public life are transformed.¹⁰² Information technologies, including radio have functional significance in the home by serving as links between households and between individual members of households and the world beyond.¹⁰³

Paddy Scannell expanded on the concept of radio’s dual nature pointing out that it is a medium that bridges the domestic and the public spheres.¹⁰⁴ According to Scannell, radio brought public life into the private space of the home and by doing so, it opened up the outside world to the home. In his work on *Broadcast Talk*, Scannell noted that “broadcast output though articulated in the public domain as public discourse, was received within the sphere of privacy.”¹⁰⁵ Scannell further explained how the domestic/private space influenced the nature and style of radio programming and also how audience listening practices and behaviours shaped the form and content of programme to fit the circumstances of listening.¹⁰⁶

Both Scannell and Silverstone, drew on German philosopher, Jurgen Habermas’ theory of the “public sphere” in their conceptualisation of radio. Habermas conceived of the public sphere as an arena dedicated to rational debate, a space where public opinion is formed and

¹⁰² Kate Lacey, “Home, Work and Everyday Life,” 63.

¹⁰³ Roger Silverstone, Eric Hirsch, and David Morley, “Information Communication Technologies and the Moral Economy of the Household,” in *Consuming Technologies, Media and information in domestic spaces*, eds., Roger Silverstone and Eric Hirsch (London: Routledge, 1992), 13.

¹⁰⁴ Paddy Scannell, “Public Service Broadcasting and Modern Public Life,” *Media, Culture and Society*, Vol. 11 (1989), 135-166.

¹⁰⁵ Paddy Scannell, *Broadcast Talk* (London: Sage, 1991), 3.

¹⁰⁶ Scannell, *Broadcast Talk*, 3.

where people outside the state apparatus deliberated about the affairs of the state.¹⁰⁷ One of the criticisms against the theory is the predominance of elite and the exclusion of women and other social groups. Scannell and Silverstone saw radio not only as a public medium for critical debates, but also a medium with the potential to bring into public discourses, critical voices from the private domain which were excluded from the public arena. Feminist scholars have used the theory of the public sphere to refer to everything outside the domestic or the familial space. According to Richard Price, the boundary between the private and public spheres traces the line between the family and society which provides the logic for domesticity.¹⁰⁸ This may partly be a reason for some feminists' position that domesticity is negative. However as Price pointed out, domesticity and the private spheres were not stable constructions. Nancy Fraser for example sees the public sphere as a site for the production and circulation of power.¹⁰⁹

Ideas about the dual nature of radio as a medium that bridges the public and the private inform much of the scholarship on women's radio history. By this framework, scholars on Women Radio History have successfully projected, albeit in theory, women's sphere of influence from the home to the public. The following works by Kate Lacey and Kristin Skoog are illustrative. Kate Lacey's work on German radio and women from 1923 to 1945, conceptualised radio's relationship with women in terms of the public and private sphere also arguing that: "the relationship between women and radio was an expression of the relationship between the public and the private spheres."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Cited by Daya Kishan Thussu, *International Communication Continuity and Change*, London: Arnold, 2000), 70.

¹⁰⁸ Richard Price, *British Society 1680-1880: Dynamism, Containment and Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999)

¹⁰⁹ Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *Social Text* No 25/26 (1990), 56-80.

¹¹⁰ Kate Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies: Gender, German Radio and the Public Sphere, 1923-1945* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 15.

According to Lacey, radio was one of the technological appliances that changed women's experiences in the home. German radio saw women as a distinct audience and separate departments were set up for women's programmes. Lacey noted, also that public radio stations across various regions of Germany anticipated having a progression on women's presence in the public space of politics. However, instead of educating women on politics, the programmes became forums for housewives, mothers and consumers. She used contemporary journals as primary sources to establish a relationship between women and radio. Lackey's study focused on women as programme makers and was less concerned with audiences and their engagements with programmes. Lacey pointed to radio's role in the modernisation of home and the integration of women into modern life.

1.8.5 The housewife and radio

Based on the domesticity ideology, the housewife has been the central focus in historical accounts on radio and women. Scholarship on the housewife and radio and media in general was influenced by Betty Friedan's work – the *Feminist Mystique* – which believed that the American mass media and psychologists portrayed the post-war housewife as housebound, who was fulfilled by staying at home. Friedan's study urged women for higher achievements outside the home. Scholars including Joanne Meyerowitz have criticised Friedan for presenting domesticity as a problem while validating women's experiences outside the home as a source of public service and personal achievements.¹¹¹

Kristin Skoog's study on the relationship between the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the post-war housewife drew on the theory of radio's dual nature as a private/public medium to dismiss the notion of the passive homebound housewife who had no sense of responsibility or realism.¹¹² Based on a study of a special programme for housewives, produced

¹¹¹ See Joanne Meyerowitz, "Beyond the Feminist Mystique: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture 1946-1958" *The Journal of American History* Vol. 79 No. 3 (1993): 1455-1482.

¹¹² Skoog, *Focus on the Housewife*, 4.

by the Features Department of the BBC in 1948, Skoog argued that the post-war British housewife was an important citizen crucial to the rebuilding of her country. British housewives used radio to bring the voices of women into the public sphere. According to Skoog, as audiences, housewives could also speak politically. Therefore, housewives were influential in drawing national attention to high cost of living. Skoog asserted women's agency as housewives and in agreement with Judy Giles rejected notions in feminist scholarship that saw domesticity as something negative and something that must be left behind if one was to become modern and emancipated subject.

Consistent with Skoog's position, Maggie Andrews intimated that the domestic space has been discursively and symbolically constructed as a mundane, emotional space belonging to women.¹¹³ However, the introduction of radio in British homes in the 1920 and 1930s changed women's experiences of domesticity by offering them education and enlightenment and reducing isolation in the home. The present study seeks to show that domesticity and the concept of 'housewife' were means by which Ghanaian women became integrated into modern society and radio was instrumental in this regard.

1.8.6 Radio Audiences and listening practices

Ownership of radio sets, control and access are major considerations in studying audiences and their listening culture. Anthropologist Debra Spitulnik who studied the daily experiences of radio audiences in Zambia, examined how features of the medium enabled or inhibited audience engagements. The features include its portability, commodity status which is correlated with the status of the owner/user and the technology's capacity to form new social relations.¹¹⁴ Spitulnik disagreed with the concept of active audiences who listened to radio

¹¹³ Maggie Andrews, "Homes Both Sides of the Microphone: The Wireless and Domestic Space in Inter-War Britain" *Westminster Review* Vol. 21 No. 4 (2012), 605-621.

¹¹⁴ Debra Spitulnik, "Documenting Radio Culture as Lived Experiences, Reception Studies and the Mobile Machine in Zambia," in *African Broadcast Culture, Radio in Transition*, eds., Richard Fardon and Graham Furniss (Westport, Connecticut: James Currey/ PRAEGER, 2000), 144-162.

within the space of the home for purposes of leisure. She argued that most Zambians did not spend leisure time in the home clustered around radio as claimed in the case of radio listening in western cultures. Rather, in the Zambian context, the male head of the household spent his leisure outside the home, while the female head of household was either busy working in the home or conversing with other adult women. Listeners hardly engaged actively with radio content as they used the medium more as background noise.

Brian Larkin analysed the cultural impact and role of media technologies, including radio in the developing urban space of Kano in Nigeria and argued that media technologies are more than transmitters of content. The technologies represent cultural ambitions and modes of leisure.¹¹⁵ Larkin posited that in the context of the Muslim Hausa city, the introduction of radio was linked to the development of urban public space which included the provision of infrastructure for utilities such as electricity and water. Radio was installed in public places and listening took place in public where the sounds of radio mixed with the pleasures of urban life. His account implicitly rejects the notion of the domestication of radio. He argued that radio and other media technologies operated as technical systems that circulated knowledge, but also became part of the pleasures and leisure of urban Nigeria.

Charles Ambler also explored the history of mass media as a vehicle for leisure activities in urban social life.¹¹⁶ He focused on audiences and their everyday experience of pleasure in their encounter with various media. Ambler asserted that listening to radio, like reading and watching movies was a group activity and contended that ownership of radio receivers affected listening habits of audiences. Thus the development of radio went hand in hand with the production of radio sets for audiences. When radio sets were few, listening had

¹¹⁵ Brian Larkin, *Signals and Noise, Media, Infrastructure, and Urban Culture in Nigeria* (Durban and London: Duke University Press, 2008).

¹¹⁶ Charles Ambler, "Leisure in African History," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 1, Special Issue (2002), 119-136.

a public character with groups gathering at welfare halls and similar locations to listen to news and entertainment programmes. However as the number of sets increased, especially after the introduction of simple battery operated radios, listening migrated into homes and became more private.¹¹⁷ Ambler referred to a study by anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker on radio listening in the Zambian Copperbelt in the 1950s in which the researcher found the gendered and youthful nature of radio audiences. Women preferred to listen to radio in homes or the homes of friends rather than public sites. Listeners were also younger, more educated, and recalled very little of what they heard on air.

The scholarly work by Ambler, Spitulnik and Larkin did not directly focus on women and for this reason did not adequately address the gender factors that underlined listening patterns of women. However, their works provide useful leads on gender, youth and audiences which this study intends to explore. Some of the findings confirm Ayesha Imam's study in the northern Nigerian city of Kano that examined women's use of radio.¹¹⁸ Although Imam's study is not a historical study, it is relevant in providing a sense of women's access to and use of radio in the context of Africa. Ayesha found radio to be the most important source of information for both high and low income women in Kano city. Ninety-six percent of women had access to radio but not as owners. More than 50 percent listened to radio advice programmes for women and children.¹¹⁹

Janice Kelly Windborne also studied radio use among market women in the Volta region of Ghana in 1999.¹²⁰ Windborne defined her informants as poor. Access to radio, interest in programmes and representation of women in radio and relations of power in women's

¹¹⁷ Ambler, *Leisure in African History*, 131.

¹¹⁸ See Ayesha M. Imam, "Ideology, Women and Mass Media: A Case Study of Kano Nigeria," in *Hausa Women in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Catherine Coles and Beverly Mack. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 244-251.

¹¹⁹ Imam, *Ideology, Women and Mass Media*, 250.

¹²⁰ Janice Kelly Windborne, "Media Markets and Messages: Radio as a Tool for Development for Ghanaian Market Women" (PhD diss., Ohio University, 1999).

relationship with radio were some of the concepts incorporated in the research process. The study found that women enjoyed programmes that addressed them as wives, mothers and, heads of households. They liked religious programmes, drama, and all programmes in local languages they could speak and understand. She concluded that women responded positively to radio and considered the medium as key in addressing their information and education needs. The present study, examines Ghanaian female audiences' relationship with radio, their access and use of the medium and the context of their listening at different times of their lives.

1.9. Methodological considerations

This is a qualitative study. David Silverman posited that the kind of research method for any qualitative historical study should depend on what one is trying to find out.¹²¹ Obviously studying women's engagement with radio at the level of institution, reception and production requires multiple approaches. This is pertinent for a study on radio, a medium that is pervasive yet evasive and transient because of its sound and oral nature. Even more important in adopting multiple approaches for this study is the fact that the study is exploratory. Multiple approaches are recommended for studies with few or no earlier empirical research data to build on and for which a comprehensive exploratory account is required for inferences and reckoning.¹²² Research on Women Radio History is a fresh terrain to explore in the context of Ghana. Radio research and indeed the focus on women is a growing area of scholarship. Media and gender scholars acknowledge that the "existing body of knowledge has not been systematically examined or organised from a theoretical perspective."¹²³ Thus, this study draws on a combination of methods and sources from history and media/communication research, anthropology, media and feminist media studies, including feminist scholarship on

¹²¹ David Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*, Third Edition (London: Sage, 2000).

¹²² See Earl Barbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, 13th Edition (Belmont, Ca: Wadsworth, 2013)

¹²³ Creedon, "The Challenge of Re-Visioning Gender Values," 13.

development communication to provide a worthwhile account of women's relationship with radio. In this regard, the following sources and methods were used.

1.9.1 Primary sources

A combination of archival sources (written and audio), oral history, field research, personal records and biographical data, Radio Ghana publications/journals and sound archival documents constitute the primary source of data for the study. These sources complemented one another, each with its own strengths and weakness as discussed below.

1.9.2 Archival sources (Written)

Public Records Administration and Archives (PRAAD), Accra Office

The ADM and CSO files of the Public Records Administration and Archives (PRAAD) in Accra provided much of the primary data on the history of radio in Ghana. The files contained records of staff promotions covering the early 1960s and colonial records on the development of broadcasting in the Gold Coast such as copies of Governor Arnold Hodson's address to the Legislative Assembly on radio, correspondence between the governor and the Colonial Office and also between the Governor and broadcast officials of the Public Relations Office (PRO) responsible for broadcasting operations in Accra. Other documents in the files were annual reports on broadcasting, information on the opening of relay stations and installation of wired rediffusion boxes, committee reports on the re-organisation of broadcasting and public reaction to broadcast content in the early years. It was observed that some of the pages in the files were missing while some parts of the documents were torn due to poor handling. Duplicate carbon copies of some of the documents were faded and did not make for easy reading.

The Evelyn Amarteifio Papers

The Evelyn Amarteifio Collection is lodged with the Institute of African Studies University of Ghana, Legon. Amarteifio was a pioneer guest artiste who presented radio talks in Ga in the early 1950s. The collection does not contain information on her radio experience as was presumed but instead, contained publications that provided useful leads on her involvement in charity work and training programmes aimed at improving the lives of women and girls. For example, it was discovered that Amarteifio was a founding member and General Secretary to the Ghana Assembly of Women (GAW) and chair of the Editorial Board for *The Ghanaian Woman*, a publication by the GAW. Copies of the publication obtained from the collection provided useful information on Amarteifio's association with diverse women's groups and her interest in using media for purposes of advocacy.

Biographical sources - Obituaries/Order of Service

Biographies contained in obituaries/order of service of three pioneers –Betty Quashi-Idun, Rose Odamtten and Lily Nketia were obtained from private collections of friends and family. The documents confirmed the engagement of the three in radio careers and their specific functions. However published information was not detailed enough and needed to be supported with interviews with their professional colleagues and family.

The Balme Library

The Africana section of the Balme Library of the University of Ghana provided records of Legislative Council Debates and comments by Council members on the development of radio. Also in the Balme Library are useful government publications such as *Gold Coast Weekly Review*, *West Africa* and *Ghana Today*. The publications contain information on government projects and projects undertaken by women's groups and women's training institutions such as housewife training, dressmaking and bread making centres for rural and urban women.

Ministry of Information Library

The Ministry of Information library was unfortunately disappointing. The Ministry originally served as the Public Relations Office during the colonial period and broadcasting was operated from that office. The library has only a summary of the history of the development of government media institutions such as the Radio Ghana compiled as “Sectorial Brief of Activities of the Ministry of Information and Organisations /Departments.” The library also hosts a collection of Ghanaian newspapers including the *Daily Graphic*. The latter was useful as it has a regular page for women and a page that published “Letter to the Editor” from the public some of which commented on radio programme content and therefore gave a sense of audience engagement with radio.

Ghana Radio Review and Television Times (GRRTVT)

Radio Ghana’s programme schedules – *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times* (GRRTV) – proved the most valuable written source of history on radio broadcasting, programme schedules and synopses. The journal became known in 1965 as the Ghana Radio Review and Television Times when full transmission of television service began that year.

Called *The Newspaper of the Air*, the journal was a reference guide to the range of radio output and contains information, both written and pictorial on some of the women who engaged with radio in different capacities. It also contains printed copies of previously broadcast programmes such as talks, poetry, short stories and audience letters and important speeches of government officials on broadcasting and information related events. It reserved a page, not consistent though, for audiences’ reactions and suggestions for improving programme content. The programme guide section contained brief synopses of programmes for broadcast which were useful (particularly in the case of women’s magazines) as they included details such as

names of programme, topics and time for broadcast, names of programme hosts/presenters as well as producers, resource persons and discussion panel members.

The journal had a women's page called "Mainly for Women" edited by "Boatemaa" in the early 1960s and it hosted most of the published versions of the broadcast talks read on the English magazine programme, "Women's Half Hour." Some of the talks were translated for broadcast on women's programmes in the local language. Also, the journal carried pictures with names of some programme operations and production staff as well as contributors and resource persons for various programmes. Being a sound only medium, pictures published in the journal complemented and compensated for the "dismembered voices" of those who featured on radio programmes.

The front pages of the journals were typically adorned with pictures of women in their different occupational roles and also as resource persons and guests. For example, a picture showing Theodosia Takyiwa behind the console as a studio manager was displayed on the front page of one of the issues of the journal.¹²⁴ Pictures of women programme makers and newsreaders were similarly displayed in the middle pages. They included "ace" newsreader Emelia Cromwell-Adama (nee Elliot) and hosts of local language programmes like Akosua Bawa and Esi Bedu for Akan; Ayikailey Naa Noben for Ga; Habiba Ibrahim for Hausa and Nana Mayah for Nzema.¹²⁵

In the June 10, 1960 edition, the front page was adorned with the picture of a Caterer of the Kingsway Department Store Essi Abensetts who was scheduled to present a talk on "Women's Half Hour" on "How to cater for a party without tears."¹²⁶ The pictorial displays of women on the front page provide evidence of the diverse contributions of women in broadcast

¹²⁴ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, June 3, 1960.

¹²⁵ *Ghana Radio and TV Times Review*, 1964-1965.

¹²⁶ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, June 10, 1960.

production and content development. However some of the captions to the pictures tended to sexualise women in radio work creating the impression that their work was trivial. For example, the June 3, 1960 edition showed a picture of Josephine Adjin-Tettey with this caption:

The pretty young lady dazzling men's eyes from behind the microphone is Josephine Adjin-Tettey who produces "Ga Women's Magazine" for Radio Ghana. Her programme can be heard on Wednesday afternoon.¹²⁷

The journal was launched in March 1960 – three years after Ghana's independence and 25 years after radio had been introduced to the country. It was a weekly publication but it became irregular and less detailed gradually, from the mid 1970s when radio services had been expanded to cover both rural and international broadcasting. By 1985 it was published as a quarterly and content became sketchy as programme synopses covered only programme title and times of broadcast. Publication of the journals ceased in the late 1980s due to financial constraints.¹²⁸

Most of the volumes were missing from the archives and could not be traced; not from the PRADD or the Ministry of Information libraries where copies of such documents are lodged as public records. Other journals consulted are the *External Service Programme Journal of Radio Ghana* and the *Overseas Programmes Journal of the BBC*. These were obtained from the personal collections of a Radio Ghana staff member, Amankwa Ampofo. These contained useful information on the kind of programmes broadcast in the 1950s and pictures of personalities behind the programmes.

The Broadcaster/Anniversary Brochures

The Broadcaster was the internal house journal of Radio Ghana. It was a useful archival document as it carried information such as employee promotions, internal training

¹²⁷ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, June 3, 1960.

¹²⁸ Interview with Albert Luttrodt, Head, GBC Audience Research Unit, GBC Office, September, 16, 2012.

programmes, new appointments employee achievements and general issues of interest. Only two copies of the Broadcaster were available at the time of this research. Two anniversary brochures, “50 Years of Broadcasting in Ghana” and “GBC at 60” available at the GBC library also provided part of the primary data on the institutional history of radio. The publications carried pictures of staff and management and featured some women who have negotiated spaces in male dominated occupational areas such as engineering and technical services departments. Eva Lokko, who became Director General of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) in 2004, was featured in the Golden Jubilee Anniversary Brochure (1935-1985) as the first female engineer in radio broadcasting in Ghana. The publications were augmented with personal records of employees obtained with permission from the Director of Administration of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC). The publication contain information on the employment history of women that were useful for this thesis.

Radio Audience Research Documents

The Audience Research Unit (ARU) of Radio Ghana was consulted specifically for reports on surveys of audience programme preferences, opinions, attitudes and listening habits. Unfortunately, according to the head of unit, Albert Lutroddt, pre-1990 reports had been destroyed due to inadequate storage facilities.¹²⁹ Evidence of poor record keeping in this important national institution was striking. For example, programme makers did not file letters as records of the station, as required by convention. Instead, programme makers tended to treat such letters as personal to them.¹³⁰ Yet, none of those interviewed for the study kept any such documents. According to Maud Blankson-Mills a retired Director of Corporate Affairs responsible for the ARU, programme makers feared that unfavourable comments from

¹²⁹Interview with Albert Lutroddt, September, 16, 2012.

¹³⁰Interview with Gertrude Opare-Addo, retired broadcaster, former Head of GBC English Language Department, North Kaneshie, and August 20, 2013.

audience on their programmes could result in taking the programme off air.¹³¹ However, some letters addressed to the ARU got published in the *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times* (GRRTV). These, together with public comments published in “Letters to the Editor” column of the *Daily Graphic* were useful primary sources as these still provided evidence of audience especially female engagements with radio.

Both female and male authored letters were considered as the published letters were rather few. Besides, it was difficult to make a conclusive judgment on the gender of the authors because of the likelihood that authors may have used pseudonyms. Audrey Gadzekpo discovered in her study on print culture that some women were behind anonymous articles and also used pseudonyms to disguise authorship.¹³² There are social implications in the act of audience participation through letter writing as only views and opinions of educated audiences could appear in print. Therefore it would be erroneous to conclude that those who wrote letters represented the majority of Ghanaians.

1.9.3 Radio Ghana Sound archives

The archives host audio recorded programmes that have been aired on the station, some dating back to the mid 1930s. These include gramophone recordings of programmes from the Colonial Service of the BBC; recordings of live events of national interest such as the opening of the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly; independence anniversary events and important political speeches by government officials. Also in the archives are newsreel reports, current affairs programmes, dramatised educational programmes, documentaries and women’s magazine programmes which were of great value to the study. The sound archives enabled the researcher to locate and retrieve women’s voices in programme content partly as proof of their participation in on-the-air roles as anchors, presenters, newsreaders, guest artistes and resource

¹³¹ Interview with Maud Blankson-Mills, Retired Director of GBC Public Affairs, Roman Ridge, Accra, January, 9 and 20, 2013.

¹³²Gadzekpo, *Women’s Engagement with Gold Coast Print Culture*, 15.

persons. The voice recordings carry additional information that are not easily discerned from scripted texts or written sources. Information such as presentation style, delivery and diction were important considerations. As the study shows, “a clear spoken voice” was one of the requirements for female recruitment to radio work. Diction was very important if one wanted access to on-air roles as newsreaders, continuity announcers and as journalists. The recorded programmes also provided evidence of production formats and other sound elements such as signature tunes, discussion programmes, talks and interviews.

The search focused specifically on information programmes as well as dramatised educational programmes. These included *Gold Coast/Ghana Theatre*, *Radio Doctor*, Newsreel reports, Women’s Magazine Programmes in Ga and in English and also literary programmes such as “Voices of Our Time.” The latter is a collection of poetry written and presented by members of the public. Women’s Programmes in other local languages were not selected for the research because of language limitations. However, some producers of the local language programmes were interviewed. The initial optimism for consulting the sound archives was soon to be replaced by disappointment upon discovering that all these programmes had missing issues in large quantities over long periods of time. For example, it was impossible to obtain complete editions of the Women’s Magazine Programmes both for English and Ga, covering the period delineated for the study.

Godfred Addow, Head of Sound Archives, GBC was unhappy about the inconsistent manner in which producers filed audio reel tapes. He regretted that tapes that had been previously filed were borrowed but were never returned. Addow said poor filing of audio tapes and the attitude of failing to return borrowed ones from the archives became common practice in the late 1970s. This was when producers started to complain about shortages.¹³³ Interviews with some male and female producers confirmed that the culture of filing away programmes

¹³³ Interview with Godfred Addow, Head, Sound Archives G.B.C. Radio Ghana, October 12, 2012.

with the sound archives was not consistent. Some producers kept recorded audio tapes meant for the archives in their various drawers for future play back when necessary while other producers had to recycle the tape for future productions. Millicent Ablodepey related that a large quantity of recordings by individual programme makers was recently recovered from various offices. The reel tapes were mouldy and information on them was not recoverable.¹³⁴ Nonetheless, the few programmes obtained were useful as examples for describing the nature and communicative features of the programmes produced during different times. Essentially all the programmes examined gave a sense of female participation in radio as guest artistes and resource persons on radio.

It was observed that archival audio recordings were still kept in obsolete formats such as gramophone records and reel to reel tapes. These could not be played back on new and advanced studio recording, playback and storage equipment that Radio Ghana uses currently. As such, most of the recordings could not be used in the existing format. Some of the recordings of relevance to this study were thus transferred and stored digitally for play-back and analysis. Because of these challenges including the incomplete nature of the archives, the few programmes obtained were used as examples to describe the nature and communicative features of the programmes produced during different times. Essentially all the programmes examined gave a sense of female participation in radio as guest artistes and resource persons on radio.

1.9.4 Oral Historical Research

Scholarship from anthropologists and sociologists who have studied media audience narrate that audience interactions with radio are embedded in their daily social relations and cultural practices and propose the use of ethnographic methods. For example, Debra Spitulnik posits that the ethnographic approach facilitates understanding on media use and also highlights

¹³⁴ Interview with Millicent Ablodepey, Head, GBC Radio Programme Operations, GBC office, October 20, 2012.

audience practices.¹³⁵ Since it is impossible to study audiences ethnographically as they engaged with radio during the period demarcated for the study, key informant interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) methods were used to gather data from female audiences' lived experiences/reminiscences of their relationships with radio.

Oral historian Jan Vansina observes that reminiscences are the most typical products of human memory. They are part of the expression of experiences and bits of history that everyone holds.¹³⁶ Despite problems of distortions due partly to memory loss, oral history is considered the most appropriate for gathering primary information on the past regarding women's listening experiences with an innovation like radio. Using reminiscences as primary sources and also as a method of field research was crucial, given the paucity of written documents accounting for female engagements with radio. Jean Allman, who used this method of oral history admits to its inherent weaknesses. She noted from her fieldwork experiences in Asante in 1992 that one of her informants, who was a child in the early 1930s was too young at the time to be able to understand fully the ongoing phenomenon she was investigating. She admitted the informant's recollection of the event was imperfect.

The inherent weaknesses of this approach were taken into account. These weaknesses including imperfect recollection of the event due to age.¹³⁷ Despite these challenges oral history has its strengths. Vansina reminds us that events and situations are forgotten when irrelevant or inconvenient. Conversely such events and situations are retained when they are of relevance to the informant. Presumably therefore, women's encounter with radio, a novel technology that became entwined in everyday life, should be of relevance to key informants. Such oral accounts

¹³⁵ Spitulnik, *Documenting Radio Culture as Lived Experiences*, 144-162.

¹³⁶ Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 3.

¹³⁷ Jean Allman, "Rounding Up Spinsters," 135.

are meant to augment the sound and written archives, but are also important sources in their own right.

With regard to methods employed, in-depth interviews using semi-structured instruments were conducted with key informants – practicing and retired broadcasters and guest artistes. These informants provided reminiscences of their various relationships and experiences with radio careers. Male colleagues of female producers were also interviewed on the working relationship they had with women broadcasters in order to validate evidence and also obtain new information on women who had died. It was not possible to obtain interviews from the first three women who pioneered radio production because they had died. One of them, Florence Prah, died in the mid 1950s, barely ten years after her employment. Her son, Professor Kwasi Prah now 72 years, granted an interview to the researcher.¹³⁸ Surviving relations of the other two who were contacted knew little about their mother's work. Other people interviewed for information on the pioneers included Professor Emeritus Kobina Nketia who provided information on his late wife, Lily Nketia, She produced Women and Children's programmes in the 1960s.¹³⁹

Key informant interviews were also conducted with female radio listeners in Accra, Cape Coast and Elmina. These cities were selected because radio broadcasting started from Accra and extended to Cape Coast, Elmina and other coastal towns before independence in 1935. The informants were identified through snowball sampling with the assistance of radio producers, family members and personal contacts. The method was useful in addressing major difficulties inherent in identifying potential informants given the pervasive nature of radio and the fact that most of potential informants may have been dead at the time of data collection.

¹³⁸ Interview with Professor Kwasi Kwaa Prah, son of Florence Prah, West Legon, December 20, 2014.

¹³⁹ Interview with Professor Kwabena Nketia, husband of late Lily Nketia, Medina residence, May 20, 2013

Some of the informants were traced to old Ga rural communities such as Abokobi and Pantang near Accra to reflect the diversity of their experiences with radio. The key informants were interviewed in-depth and issues discovered their access to radio, listening practices, recollections of specific programmes they listened and their reasons for engaging with radio.

As regards the FGD, participants were reached in church (St. Francis Catholic Church at Ashaley Botwe) where a mix of educated and illiterate women particularly elderly women were found. Those above 60 years were invited to take part in the FGD. Those who consented had first experienced radio in towns outside Accra, namely Bibiani, Obuasi, Nsawam, Konongo, Axim, Tarkwa, Keta and Ho. Initial installation of radio were concentrated in some of these towns, particularly, the mining towns of Obuasi, Tarkwa and Bibiani. Two groups, eight people in each group took part in the discussions which focused on recollections of their access to radio, listening habits, programmes they listened to, the listening context and their motivations and gratification for listening to radio. Time was a challenge in using this method. The discussions were conducted after church service on Sunday with the aid of an assistant who recorded the sessions. Although participants had consented to the time, some were in a hurry to get home. Three of them left the group an hour after the discussion which was expected to last for two hours each. All the interviews, in-depth and the FGD, were recorded and later transcribed for analysis.

1.9.5 Secondary Sources

Some of the books consulted were obtained largely from the University of Birmingham Library in the UK where the researcher spent four months conducting research for the thesis. Books consulted include Claire Robertson's book, *Sharing from the Same Bowl: A socio-economic history of women in Accra*; Sandra Green's book on *Gender, Ethnicity and Social Change in the Upper Slave Coast History of Anlo-Ewe*; Gracia Clark's book entitled *Onions are my Husband* and Kate Lacey's book, *Feminine Frequencies Gender, German Radio and*

the Public Sphere, 1923-1945. The document, *Mass Education in African Society* was obtained from the library of the Faculty of Education at Birmingham University. Some of the books for this work were obtained also from the Balme Library of the University of Ghana. In addition, this work relied extensively on journal articles downloaded from Jstor on different dates.

1.9.6 Other data gathering method used

Radio content analysis

The content of the talk segment of the “Women’s World,” originally “Women’s Half Hour” was examined. These were largely contributions from the female writers and the subject of the talks was based on their interests and daily life experiences. Both the manifest and latent content of the programmes were examined in order to shed light on the ideological discourses in the talk segment of the programme and how these were framed. Thus the study did not rely on the traditional content analysis method which demands a systematic quantification of content. Feminist media scholar Janice Winship argues that the major problem with the traditional quantitative content analysis is the failure to acknowledge difference because it focuses on manifest content at the expense of latent and ideological meanings.¹⁴⁰ Categories were created based on dominant themes/frames identified in the text for analyses.

1.10 Analytical/ presentation approaches

The analysis of data obtained from both secondary and primary sources employed a descriptive and discursive approach in the Foucauldian sense. The Foucauldian discourse analysis is an analysis of power, hierarchies, knowledge and other social processes expressed through language. According to Rosalind Gill, discourse embraces “talk and text, whether in naturally occurring conversations, interviews material, or written or broadcast text of any kind.”¹⁴¹ In this study, radio talk, written and presented by women was the focus of analysis.

¹⁴⁰ Janice Winship, “Handling Sex,” *Media Culture and Society*, Vol. 3 (1) (1981), 25-41.

¹⁴¹ Rosalind Gill, *Gender and the Media* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 58.

Kate Lacey who used Foucault's approach in her work on women and radio contended that the approach involves not only examining women as individual agents but, "foregrounds gender as an analytical category."¹⁴² Joan Scott posits that gender as an analytical tool is a primary way of signifying relations of power and at the same time recognises that social power is not universal but discursively constructed and therefore makes room for human agency.¹⁴³ Therefore, besides the fact that it allows neglected areas of history to be uncovered, gender also enables an appreciation of the social and cultural factors that define women and men's agency.

1.10.1 "Potted Histories"

The information on the pioneers and key personalities documented in this study has been presented as potted histories to highlight the specific roles and functions of each pioneer across the different historical trajectories of the organisation. Potted history is an abridged and concise way of presenting specific information about someone or something. It is also different from biographies/life history and collective life history which are more rigorous and detailed and also in which different experiences of the people are used as auxiliary evidence to flesh out the bigger story of an event woven around an exceptional person.¹⁴⁴ Susan Geiger explains that biographical treatment focuses on exceptional individuals while its subset, life histories focus on so-called ordinary people. "Rather than being exceptional, the ordinary person's biography must be typical or representative".¹⁴⁵ The pioneers of broadcasting are not ordinary but exceptional in the sense of the specific functions they performed in broadcasting, the contributions they made to the development of specific areas of broadcasting, and the development of this new organization.

¹⁴² Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies*, 9.

¹⁴³ Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Review* Vol. 19, No. 5 (1986), 1053-1075.

¹⁴⁴ Geiger, *Tanganyikan Nationalism*, 465-478.

¹⁴⁵ Geiger, *Tanganyikan Nationalism*, 466.

Potted Histories are used in this study to enable the reader learn about individual women selected on the basis of their pioneering role in particular areas of broadcast programme production and operation such as external service broadcasting, rural broadcasting, national service broadcasting, and professional roles such as disk jockey, journalism, and programme production. These production functions were typically performed by men. The selection reflects the different trajectories of the organisation's development history. Potted histories of 14 women are documented in this study. This excludes the first three production assistants and the first female guest artistes on Radio Ghana. Profiles of the two groups are presented as two separate histories.

Some of the accounts in the potted histories are based on data obtained from employment records of retired and working broadcasters, obituaries, as well as personal testimonies. The mode of presentation also compensates for the difficulty in obtaining adequate information on the pioneers most of who were dead at the time of data collection. Some of the pioneers who were available for the interviews had worked for short periods with radio (between three and five years). This situation presented challenges in documenting an account that would embrace the period delineated for the study and also enable a neat chronicle of the continuities and changes in female employment as a typical historical account demands.

1.11 Scope and Limitations

Many women took up careers in radio broadcasting as waged and salaried employees and were involved in a range of occupational roles as technicians, administrators, journalists, researchers in programme operations and in finance. This study's emphasis is on women in production and presentation roles, such as programme makers, journalists and guest artistes. Two other women from the Audience Research Unit and technical services were purposively included because their functions complemented programme production and also because they are pioneers in such predominantly male spaces. Although the public station had programme

staff across the country, the study focused on female staff who worked at the national station because much of radio work started from Accra.

As a public service broadcaster, Radio Ghana was open to diverse groups of women – rural, urban, farmers, traders, educated and uneducated, regional and national. This study has tried to ensure representation of these diverse audience groups. However, due to the multiplicity of languages used on the station, the study restricted itself to English language broadcasts and one local language broadcast in Ga. The researcher is most conversant with the two languages. Also the Ga language is spoken by the indigenous residents of Accra where broadcasting was started.

1.12 Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis is arranged thematically in four chapters. This mode of arrangement as opposed to one emphasising chronology better enables a discussion and analysis of the ways in which women engaged with radio at different times throughout the period under consideration. A thematic mode of arrangement rather than a chronology has been used due also to a paucity of sources and empirical studies on women's contribution to the development of radio. As pointed out under the sub-section on methodology, many of the primary records on radio (written and audio tape recordings) were incomplete to cover the entire period of the research. I tried through the confines of the themes, to posit the chronological structure essential to the discipline of historical scholarship.

This introduction chapter draws attention to key concepts and discourses on women and also women and broadcasting. The chapter problematises the subject of women and radio, outlines the objectives and research questions, discusses the historiographical context and reviews pertinent literature from a diversity of sources.

Chapter one is “The Development of Radio and Women's Early Encounter with the technology.” It explores the genesis and context of women's engagements with radio by first

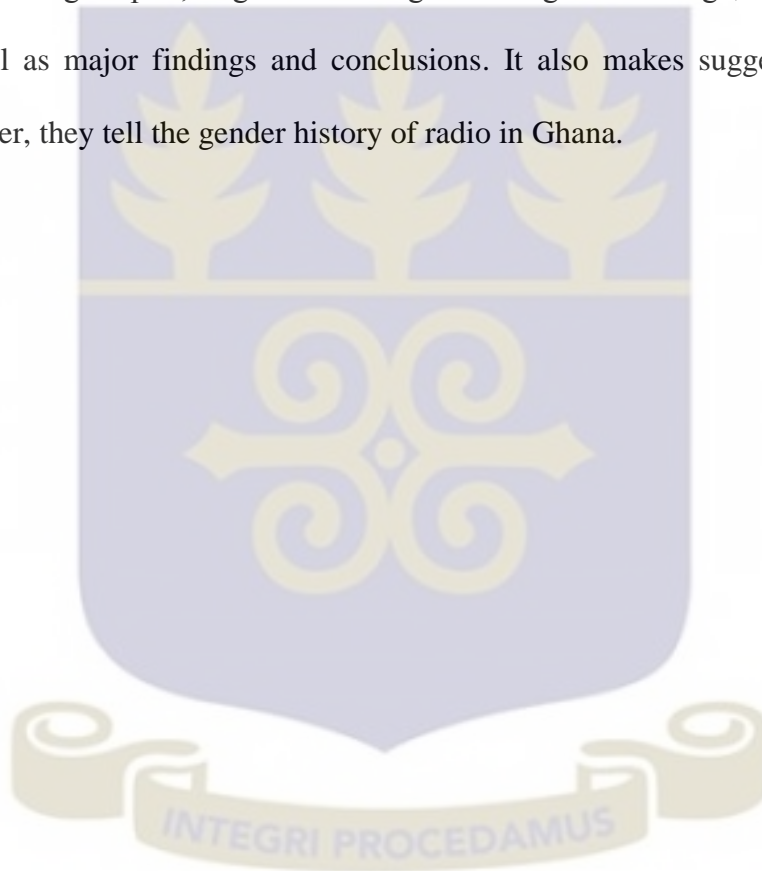
looking at the history of radio, the aims and missions, as well as colonial and post-colonial policies regarding radio and women. It explains and how gender is implicated in this trajectory. The chapter provides evidence of some women's early encounters with radio and identifies issues of women's access and attraction to the technology.

Chapter Two is "Women Pioneering Broadcasting in Ghana." It focuses on the trajectory of women's employment in radio occupation and examines some of the contradictions in colonial policy regarding recruiting women as programme assistants to undertake the 'civilising' mission of promoting domesticity, even as recruitment policies were known to discriminate against women. The chapter introduces the pioneer broadcasters/programme makers by way of potted histories based on the different trajectories in the development of radio, the programmes they worked on, and their diverse contributions to the development of broadcast services such as external and rural broadcasting services.

Chapter Three is "For Women by Women: Special Programme Spaces for Women on the Airwaves." It discusses the rise of women's radio; the historical and ideological significance and functions of programme spaces targeted at women. It also explores how women engaged with the programmes space over time as contributors, that is, as guest artistes and discussants and resource persons. Part of the chapter analyses the talk segment of the English magazine programme from 1960 to 1975 to show dominant issues that women 'talked' about and how they used the programme space to negotiate their changing status and integration into the modern society. Another part of the chapter examines production format and presentation to show how these programmes were made and how they functioned over time to make women experts on the air and to bring the voices of women from diverse backgrounds on the air. The chapter also makes the production functions of women more explicit by examining the production and presentation of such cultural programmes for women.

Chapter Four is “Radio and Female Audiences in Ghana.” Building on the previous chapter, it examines female audiences as a product of history based on the reminiscence of 16 women, educated, semi-educated and illiterate women during different stages of their lives. The chapter discusses listeners’ relationship with radio, examines the spatial and social context of their listening activities, their motivation and gratification for listening to radio and the social cultural practices around radio listening.

The concluding chapter, “Agents of Change and Targets of Change,” is summary of the chapters, as well as major findings and conclusions. It also makes suggestions for future research. Together, they tell the gender history of radio in Ghana.



CHAPTER ONE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RADIO AND WOMEN'S EARLY ENCOUNTER WITH THE TECHNOLOGY

2.0 Introduction

This chapter explores the development of radio in colonial Ghana with the purpose of providing context to the genesis of women's relationship with the technology. It explains the aims and missions of radio and shows that as a state initiative, radio was used in many predictable and unpredictable ways including serving to promote ideologies about men and women. The chapter examines how gender was implicated in the installation, access and ownership of radio. It provides evidence of the ideological frame regarding women's relationship with radio as listeners. The chapter also provides evidence of women's early encounters with the technology and shows that although both colonial and post-colonial broadcast administrators promoted particular views about women and radio, individual women's experiences with radio reveal the potential and possibilities for engaging with the medium in diverse ways and for different purposes.

2.1 A New Vista of Life

Radio was established in the Gold Coast as a *Rediffusion System* of the Colonial Service (a division of the overseas service) of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) after the colonial government had experimented with the technology in some of its colonies for five years.¹⁴⁶ The inauguration of *Station ZOY* (code-name for the station) on July 31st 1935 was said to have been an exciting day for residents of Accra where the first relay station was located. Sir Arnold Hodson, nicknamed 'Sunshine Governor' for bringing radio to the Gold Coast

¹⁴⁶ The Rediffusion System was a broadcast relay service managed by the BBC. The system relayed programmes from the BBC by wire to British colonies. The technology was the cheapest means of broadcasting.

promised the people a new vista of life with radio.¹⁴⁷ Amidst shouts of excitement and the chimes of “Big Ben,” Governor Hodson told the large crowd that witnessed the event that:

I consider and I think you will agree with me that a new broadcast service opens up a new vista of life for all of us who live in Accra. Few can realise what the new service will mean. It opens up a new horizon. It brings the latest news to our doors. It is very similar to the magic stone we read about in the fairy tales. We press a button and transport it to London. Again, we press it and hear again an opera from Berlin. In fact, nearly the whole world is at our beck and call.¹⁴⁸

Radio was to be a window to the outside world; a vehicle to transport the supposedly “primitive” African from a “traditional” society to a “modern world.”



Picture 2: Governor Sir Arnold Hodson, Father of radio broadcasting in Ghana, nicknamed “Sunshine Governor.”

¹⁴⁷ Governor Arnold Hodson earned the name “Sunshine Governor” for bringing radio to the colony. See brochure on 50 years of Broadcasting in Ghana. The governor was known for his informal relationship and interest in people. One of the women interviewed for this study, 83-year-old Kate Bannerman lived near the governor’s residence – the fort Christiansborg at Osu. She recalled with nostalgia that she and her siblings had frequently requested the governor to help them to carry their buckets of water on their heads each time he was seen returning from his usual stroll and he had obliged them. She did not however associate the governor with radio. Sydney Head makes similar note about the governor’s relationship with people. See Sydney W. Head, “British Colonial Broadcasting Policies: The case of the Gold Coast,” *African Studies Review*, Vol. 22 No. 2 (1979), 39-47.

¹⁴⁸ Governor Arnold Hodson, “Address at Inaugural of Station ZOY” Tape no. FLN 21/CK990 (Accra: Radio Ghana Sound Archives), 1935.

Brian Larkin argued in the context of Nigeria, that radio's establishment was part of the larger project of opening up the country to new ideas; connecting isolated colonies to the world outside and making the colony more cosmopolitan and integral to the wider world.¹⁴⁹ Governor Hodson's promise of a new vista of life for all, seems to reflect similar views regarding the development of radio in colonial Ghana. The speed and instantaneous nature of radio as signified by the 'press of a button' and the live broadcast of the inauguration demonstrated the "magical" power of radio to connect colonial Ghana to the rest of the world. An opera from Berlin and fairy tales from the imperial country reflected the "psychic mobility" effect of Daniel Lerner's modernisation theory, which essentially saw the road of progress through a process of acculturation of western cultures, access to education, mass media, and literacy.¹⁵⁰ A new vista of life for all therefore confers on radio the task of creating an enlightened, educated and informed public of women and men, and making colonial Ghana an integral part of the 'modern' world.

In a congratulatory message broadcast from the BBC studios as part of the formal inauguration of radio that day, Secretary of State for the Colonies Sir Malcolm Mac Donald, underscored the principal objectives of radio as follows:

I should like to see the colonial broadcasting service used not only as an instrument of entertainment and recreation though that must remain the primary use but also as means of giving education both generally and in such important specialised fields as public health and agriculture. I have very much at heart the development to the fullest possible extent in the colonies of this powerful and miraculous instrument for increasing human knowledge, pleasure and well-being.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ Brian Larkin, *Signals and Noise, Media, Infrastructure, and Urban Culture in Nigeria*. (Durban and London: Duke University Press, 2008), 4.

¹⁵⁰ Daniel Lerner, "Toward a Communication Theory of Modernisation: A Set of Considerations" in *International Communication Reader*. Daya Kishan Thusu ed. (London and New York: Routledge), 73- 88.

¹⁵¹ Sir Malcolm Mac Donald, "Address at inaugural of Station ZOY" Tape no. FLN 21/CK990 (Accra: Radio Ghana Sound Archives), 1935.

The live broadcast of Sir Malcolm Mac Donald's voice from the BBC studios conveyed also, colonial authority and control over radio. This authority was reinforced by the live transmissions from Westminster Abbey of lectures marking the silver jubilee of the coronation of the British monarch King George V which was planned to coincide with the formal inauguration of radio. An estimated audience of 20,000 in Accra heard the lectures from loudspeakers installed in churches, parks and public places for the purpose.¹⁵² Subsequently, radio programmes of news, music, and talks were also relayed from the Empire service of the BBC. Radio historian Peter J. Bloom described the voice of colonial administrators on radio as a means of enacting and administering colonial authority.¹⁵³ A memorandum circulated within the governor's office in Accra a year later on October 20, 1936 expanded on the initial objectives, underscoring colonial authority over radio. Radio was to serve as "an instrument of advance administration... for the enlightenment and education of the more backward sections of the population..."¹⁵⁴ In order to understand the significance of this latter objective, it is necessary to examine the social, economic and political context of radio's birth.

2.2 The Pre-Radio Years

According to David Killingray, effective colonial administration rested on two pillars. One was the maintenance of law and order to uphold colonial authority and the other was to collect revenue to finance the running of the administration.¹⁵⁵ Documented evidence suggests that the pre-radio years between the early 1920s and 1930s which also marked part of the period of indirect rule in colonial Ghana, were characterised by political, economic and social tensions

¹⁵² PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/100, Annual Reports on Broadcasting Department, 1936/1937.

¹⁵³ Peter J. Bloom, "Elocution, Englishness, and Empire Film and Radio in Late Colonial Ghana," in *Modernisation as Spectacle in Africa*, eds., Peter J. Bloom, Stephan F. Miescher, and Takyiwah Manuh (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 113.

¹⁵⁴ CSO 7/5/48, Broadcast Relay Service List of Subscribers, P.R.A.A.D., Accra. The circular was based on recommendations made by a committee on colonial broadcasting chaired by Lord Plymouth. See also Sydney W. Head, "British Colonial Broadcasting Policies: The case of the Gold Coast" *African Studies Review*, Vol. 22 No. 2 (Sep., 1979), 39-47.

¹⁵⁵ David Killingray, "The Maintenance of Law and Order in British Colonial Africa," *African Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 340 (July 1986), 411-457.

some of which challenged colonial authority and public order. According to Wendell Holbrook, street demonstrations, riots, work stoppages, boycotts, opposition to chiefs and the system of indirect rule, and general expressions of frustration and resentment towards the colonial administration were typical.¹⁵⁶ One of the most violent disturbances resulted from government attempts to raise revenue by introducing an urban income tax in the depth of depression in 1931 leading to drop in cocoa prices.¹⁵⁷

Also, during the period, official concern was increasingly expressed over communist-inspired subversive activities. Stanley Shaloff notes, such fears were expressed more anxiously following the formation of the League against Imperialism in 1927 and the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in 1928.¹⁵⁸ The local independent press which provided the main outlet for “educated urban elite, worried cocoa farmers, redundant clerks and disappointed school leavers” to express their frustrations were perceived to be linked to subversive communist propaganda.¹⁵⁹ The colonial government passed a Sedition Bill in 1934 to prevent the private independent press from publicly criticising the administration.

Besides the political, psychological interpretations were also assigned to the spate of social disorder. The colonial administrators perceived that rapid social change due to colonialism and associated ‘modernisation’ and capitalism were causes of alienation and social upheavals dominant in the period. Colonial administrators also felt that urbanisation, industrialisation and education contained within them seeds of disaffection. In a study on colonialism and African illness Megan Vaughan noted that various scientific research projects were undertaken in some parts of the colonies in the 1920s to support the theory that

¹⁵⁶ Wendell Holbrook, “British Propaganda and the Mobilisation of the Gold Coast War Effort, 1939-1945,” *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (1985), 347-361.

¹⁵⁷ Stanley Shaloff, “The Income Tax, Indirect Rule, and the Depression: The Gold Coast Riots of 1931,” *Cahiers d’Etude Africaines*, Vol.14, Cahier 54 (1974), 359-375.

¹⁵⁸ Stanley Shaloff, “Press Controls and Sedition Proceedings in the Gold Coast, 1933-1939,” *African Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 284 (Jul., 1972), 241-263. Communist International abbreviated as Comintern, was an international organisation that advocated Communism. The organisation was formed in 1919 before World War I.

¹⁵⁹ Shaloff, “The Income Tax, Indirect Rule,” 241.

acculturation, literacy, and cultural contact were making Africans mad.¹⁶⁰ Quoting psychologist Margaret Field, who worked in colonial Ghana as an anthropologist, Vaughan explained that literates were more prone to mental disorders than non-literates due to the fact that the former had heavier demands on their diligence, endurance, integrity, adaptability, and judgment. According to Vaughan, the anthropologist, Field thought there was a growing sense of insecurity particularly among women in cocoa growing areas.¹⁶¹ Such findings had implications for the objective of using radio for entertainment and leisure.

In the midst of the upheavals of the late 1920 was a gender crisis. Historian Jean Allman and other scholars also attributed the growing sense of insecurity among women particularly in cocoa growing areas of Asante to a gender crisis resulting from changes in gender relations.¹⁶² The crisis was linked to the introduction of capitalism and industrialisation, particularly the spread of cocoa as a cash crop. According to Allman, the crisis had profound consequences for women and men in Asante as marriages, divorces, and maternal/parental responsibilities towards children were “contested, challenged and at times redefined.”¹⁶³ Beverly Grier further recounts that the drop in cocoa prices in colonial Ghana following the global depression and the rise of imported goods put a further strain on farmers and created considerable poverty.¹⁶⁴ Borrowing became the most common way of relieving hardship and this was done at the expense of female dependants some of whom were pawned to pay off the debts.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰Megan Vaughan, “The Madman and the Medicine Men: Colonial Psychiatry and the Theory of Deculturation,” *Curing their Ills Colonial Power and African Illness*. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1991), 101-127.

¹⁶¹ Ibid. 113.

¹⁶² Jean Allman, Making Mothers, Missionaries, Medical Officers and Women’s Work in Colonial Asante, 1924-1945, *History Workshop*. No. 38 (1994), 23-47.

¹⁶³ Allman, *Making Mothers: Missionaries*, 26.

¹⁶⁴ Beverly Grier, “Pawns, Porters and Petty Traders: Women in Transition to Cash Crop Agriculture in Colonial Ghana,” *Signs*. Vol. 17. No. 2 (1992), 304-328.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 306.

As pointed out above, the spate of discontent marking the pre-radio years was partly directed at chiefs and the system of indirect rule. Under this system, chiefs enjoyed immense powers from the government to rule on its behalf and to maintain social order. Some scholars have blamed chiefs for the crisis in gender relations. Postulating that women were the worse victims of indirect rule Allman wrote:

Indirect rule had special implications for mediating gender conflict, shaping gendered boundaries and reformulating gender subordination. While it served the obvious ends of providing administration on the cheap and legitimating the colonial enterprise, indirect rule also facilitated colonization of the domestic realm – the world of marriage, divorce, adultery, childbirth and death. Asante chiefs as the arbiter of ‘customary law’, through executive order and through native tribunals, were empowered by indirect rule to manipulate meanings and redefine relationships. Indeed one cannot help but be struck by the near obsession of Asante chiefs with women’s roles, sexuality and with women’s challenges to existing definitions of marriage and divorce...¹⁶⁶

The evidence implicates chiefs as custodians of customary law in the “civilising” agenda of promoting domesticity. Besides mobilising the people for development, chiefs had a communication role serving as the voice between the government and the people. The evidence suggests that chiefs used this role to their advantage and also to serve the civilising agenda of the colonial administration. The evidence also intimates that changes in gender relations resulting partly from the system of indirect rule affected the economic and social status of women. With a majority of women already disadvantaged by colonial education, women were made poorer and became increasingly dependent. The two developments had implications for female ownership, access and use of radio. The subject is discussed later in subsection 2.7 of this chapter and in chapter five of the thesis.

At this point it is worthy to note that the intention of using radio for advanced administration suggests a state-centric view that echoes the French scholar, Louis Althusser’s perspective of mass media institutions including radio as ideological state apparatuses.¹⁶⁷ Hilda

¹⁶⁶ Allman, *Making Mothers*, 28

¹⁶⁷ Louis Althusser’s framework provides an understanding of the ideological role of mass media including radio. Under state ownership, the media are used to perpetuate and reinforce dominant ideologies of the owner.

Matheson who worked with the Empire service of the BBC in the early 1930s reinforced this position by describing radio in Africa as an “important Imperialist asset.”¹⁶⁸ The point resonates with Bloom’s position that radio was set to be used for mass education, to impose order within the colonial system of indirect rule ...¹⁶⁹ In this sense, radio was to become the new channel for direct communication between the government and the people, instead of the established pattern of communication mediated by chiefs under the system of indirect rule.

Unlike the newspapers owned largely by private indigenous individuals, radio was a state asset. Given the advantages of pervasiveness and capacity to overcome barriers of illiteracy and linguistic diversity, radio was potentially suited to counteract perceived communist information from the local independent press (already suffering from low circulation) and simultaneously, to provide entertainment to reduce prevailing social tensions. It is within these various political, social and psychological contexts that the objective of using radio for advanced administration should be understood. This study argues that as an instrument of advanced administration, radio was to function as a state asset to be used in ways that would bring order to a ‘disordered’ society beginning from the home as the basic unit society.

2.3 An Instrument for advanced administration: The Post-Radio Years, 1936-1938

Primary evidence shows that on several occasions, Governor Hodson confessed to the use of radio to address the spate of social upheavals that dogged the period the pre-radio years. In 1937 for instance, when he first made known his intention to acquire a transmitter for the station, the governor who was concerned about incidents of rumour mongering, announced his achievement in using radio for propaganda, recreation and leisure. He told the Colonial Office

See for example, Michael Gurevitch, Tony Bennett, James Curran and Janet Woolcott ed, *Culture Society and the Media* (London and New York: Methuen and Co. Ltd, 1982).

¹⁶⁸ Hilda Matheson, “Broadcasting in Africa,” *Journal of the Royal African Society*, Vol. 4. No. 137 (1935), 388.

¹⁶⁹ Bloom, “Elocution, Englishness and Empire”, 113.

that “...from the imperial point of view... we have found by actual experience that where a broadcast station exists, communism, sedition and slap trap of that...automatically disappear.”¹⁷⁰ Also, when he addressed the Legislative Assembly later in 1939 Governor Hodson proposed that radio programmes including music, plays, lectures, and talks could be used to occupy the minds of listeners “to the exclusion of more mischievous pabulum.”¹⁷¹ The study argues that it was for purposes of maintaining law and order that radio became a tool for entertainment and leisure.

Paul Ansah and several other scholars such as Mhoze Chikowero have provided evidence of the propaganda uses of radio for advanced administration and colonial “statecrafting.”¹⁷² According to Ansah, using radio for propaganda was uppermost in the minds of the colonial administration and the objective was “to inculcate in the citizens of the Gold Coast certain aspects of British culture and ideas and thereby inoculate them against undesirable ideas which might come from outside.”¹⁷³ An aspects of British culture that was vigorously pursued as part of the “advanced administration” was the domesticity ideology and the spate sphere of women. Turning first to radio’s propaganda missions, evidence indicates that in 1939 before the outbreak of World War II, Governor Hodson requested permission from the Colonial Office to have a short-wave transmitter installed in Accra. The request was to enable him to undertake wireless broadcasting beyond the limited capacity of the rediffusion system, accommodate the growing demand for the service and also enable the government to exert greater control over radio content. The short-wave transmitter, as the governor explained, would enable the government to “keep Accra in touch with all the stations as well as with

¹⁷⁰ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/102, Report on Broadcasting Programmes 1938-39.

¹⁷¹ PRAAD (Accra), ADM. 5/4/263, Despatch from Governor to Secretary of State, January-February, 1938.

¹⁷² Ansah, *Golden Jubilee Lectures*, 4; and Mhoze Chikowero, “Is Propaganda Modernity? Press and Radio for “Africans” in Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Malawi during World War II and Its Aftermath,” in *Modernisation as Spectacle in Africa*, edited by Peter J. Bloom, Stephan F. Miescher, and Takyiwah Manuh (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 112-135.

¹⁷³ Ansah, *Golden Jubilee Lectures*, 5.

private owners of a wireless set.”¹⁷⁴ The governor further acknowledged that the move would “enable us to broadcast our local news every night, as well as other programmes and also in time of anxiety or trouble, it will enable the Governor to speak to the whole colony.”¹⁷⁵

Radio assumed a more defining role as an instrument of propaganda during World War II in 1939. It was part of a multi-media campaign for the war propaganda. Station ZOY was used to elicit local support for the war and to broadcast war propaganda for the allied forces that included African countries within the colonies of the British Empire. Counter-propaganda was broadcast in French to neighbouring French colonies of the Axis powers. Sir Alan C. M. Burns who succeeded Hodson as governor in 1941 directed *Station ZOY* services to concentrate more exclusively at delivering propaganda.¹⁷⁶ Consequently, during this period all other programmes, particularly entertainment programmes by local artistes were suspended and martial music played instead in order to further the propaganda agenda, which included dispelling perceptions that the war was a white man’s war.¹⁷⁷

Secondary evidence confirms that World War II propaganda campaign was directed at schools and school children. Remembering the event, a key informant for the research Kate Bannerman testified that she heard about the war on radio, and at school she later saw some of the soldiers who returned from the war. She said: “Someone from radio by the name Adjei [most likely a “vernacular announcer] visited the school once a week to inform us on progress of the war. He was nicknamed *Ofella* (spitfire) Adjei because he spoke a lot about aeroplanes that were spitting fire.”¹⁷⁸ She also remembered this: “Our school organised an exhibition for us to see the soldiers who came back from the war and what *Ofella* Adjei told us.”¹⁷⁹ The

¹⁷⁴ PRAAD (Accra), CSO. 7/5/ 101, Extension of Broadcasting in the Gold Coast, 1936-1937.

¹⁷⁵ PRAAD (Accra), CSO. 7/5/ 101, Report on Broadcasting 1936-1937.

¹⁷⁶ Gold Coast Colony Legislative Council Debates Session 1946, Issue No. I. (March 21, 1943), 29.

¹⁷⁷ Holbrook, *British Propaganda*, 349.

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Kate Bannerman, Retired Civil Servant at Osu residence on November 14, 2014.

¹⁷⁹ Interview with Bannerman, November 14, 2014.

exhibition may have been aimed at reinforcing the message of radio so that children could rely on radio as a primary source of credible information.

Besides the empire-building and propaganda use of radio, the technology was also applied for enlightenment and social transformation in line with the mission of advanced administration. In first four years before the war, radio the medium was used to create awareness and provide information on health and agriculture. Leading authorities and experts gave radio talks on yellow fever and its prevention, on malaria, child welfare, forestry and cocoa farming and; on important ordinances passed over the year. These talks broadcast in English, targeted at educated populations were also translated into selected local languages for broadcast. Also in support of social transformation and modernisation objectives, Governor Hodson used radio for both in-and out-of school education as he expected that the impact of education on school children would be reflected in both the home and the public sphere.

Ansah, for example, has suggested that a reason for targeting school children was for purposes of political propaganda as radio was expected to influence the political outlook as the new generations of educated Africans both boys and girls. However, primary evidence also suggests that interest in school children was in part, meant to inculcate in children the habit of listening so that they could rely on the medium as their primary source of information rather than on rumours. It was expected that radio would change the outlook of school children by exposing them to news and information programmes on government policies and good citizenship. The colonial government's interest in children and radio was demonstrated in several ways. The governor connected 17 schools in important towns to wire-broadcasting. Toward the end of 1936 weekly broadcasts were transmitted to schools connected to radio to support formal classroom education and general education.

The Superintendent of broadcasting, F.W. K. Byron stated in his annual report of 1936/1937 that the first broadcasts brought large numbers of children of all ages into one class

alone such that it became nearly impossible to hear the loudspeaker from a distance of ten feet due to whisperings and shuffling of feet.¹⁸⁰ The evidence suggests that children more curious to see the radio than the desire to engage with content. It may be argued also that not much effort was made to ensure attentive listening. Later in 1937, an inter-school quiz, “Spelling Bee” was broadcast once weekly from the Accra and Sekondi studios ostensibly to encourage attentive listening and a competitive spirit among children. The broadcasts were aired under more controlled conditions.

The response to the quiz was said to be overwhelming. The final competition was between the Government Boys’ School and the Government Girls’ School both in Accra. An ‘African’ listener offered a prize for the first school in Accra to spell all the 12 words correctly. No school managed to spell all the words correctly, but several came very near to it.¹⁸¹ Kate Bannerman testified in an interview that her school, the Government Girls School, and the Government Boys School were in the final round.¹⁸² Documentary evidence however discounts her claim that the Girls School won the ultimate prize. The Boys’ School spelt eleven correctly and the Girls’ School ten.¹⁸³ Although inaccurate, Bannerman’s testimony cannot be ignored. The testimony implies how girls her age negotiated their intellectual status in an environment that privileged boys’ education. The creation of a platform for girls and boys to compete intellectually, coupled with the governor’s interest in reaching adolescent boys and girls with radio suggests also radio’s instrumentality in moderating changes in gender relations during its formative years.

Also, Governor Hodson saw school children as potential agents of change who could serve as conduits for transmitting the ‘civilising’ and modernisation missions. To illustrate,

¹⁸⁰ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 100, Reports on Broadcasting Department, 1936/1937.

¹⁸¹ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 100, 1936/1937.

¹⁸² Interview with Bannerman, November 14, 2013.

¹⁸³ P.R.A.A.D., CSO 7/5/ 100, 1936/1937.

most of the 17 schools where radio services were installed were located in mining communities some of which were notorious for antisocial activities. Jim Silver informs us that the mining town of Tarkwa and its villages had an unusually active life.¹⁸⁴ According to Silver, “nearly every house at Tarkwa and Abosso is a grog shop, and both are the resort of ruffians of the country.”¹⁸⁵ The two mining towns were also noted for drunkenness and gambling.¹⁸⁶ The governor considered the adolescent school boy and girl and teachers as agents of change who as he argued, constituted the “intelligent and level-headed section of the community, “capable of exercising a strong influence for good on public opinion.”¹⁸⁷ Listening to radio was also a preventive measure – to keep them away from criminal activities with the society.

Evidence from archival records suggests that the development of radio, especially the extension of relay stations to particular regions and areas of the country was partly motivated also by imperial interests, economic interests. A point of reference is the extension of relay services to mining towns of Akwatia, Bibiani, Prestea, Obuasi and Tarkwa. Documented evidence shows that besides trading in slaves and cocoa, colonial administrators also had immense interest in gold and other natural resources. This interest in gold culminated in the British colonisation of the Gold Coast (now Ghana) in the nineteenth century. Ofosu-Mensah argues that until recently, the Obuasi mines alone accounted for over sixty percent of total gold production and the single largest gross foreign exchange industrial earning establisher in Ghana.¹⁸⁸ The governor who had returned from a visit to the mines in 1937 confessed to the colonial government’s commercial and empire-building interests. In a letter to the Colonial office, Hodson stated:

¹⁸⁴ Jim Silver, “The Failure of European Mining Companies in the Nineteen-Century Gold Coast,” *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1981), 511-529.

¹⁸⁵ Silver, “The Failure of European Mining Companies, 514.

¹⁸⁶ Silver, “The Failure of European Mining”, 514.

¹⁸⁷ PRAAD (Accra), ADM 1/2/236, Hodson’s letter to Colonial Office, Letter No. 20, Jan. 1939.

¹⁸⁸ Emmanuel Ababio Ofosu-Mensah, “Gold Mining and the Socio-Economic Development of Obuasi in Adanse,” *African Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. 3 (4) (2011), 54-64.

Mining developments are really proceeding at a tremendous pace and on very large scale...A great deal of capital is being poured into this country and, I think, if the price of gold keeps up and nothing untoward happens, it will have been well invested...You will be pleased to hear that several of the mines are joining up. I give them their own rediffusion system with an expert to run it for them and they pay the government a lump sum per annum. I feel confident, within a comparatively short period, that every mine will be thus equipped. It makes all the difference to their European and African employees and keeps them happy and contented.¹⁸⁹

The extension of radio to the mines, made more difference to Europeans than to the African employees as the evidence suggests. The colonial government earned revenue for installation and running of the relay stations. Simultaneously, radio was used instrumentally in the mines as a form of social control to ensure the peace needed for capitalism to thrive by exploiting the country's gold resources. The evidence suggests that aside the empire-building role of radio in the mines, radio was also used instrumentally in the mines as a form of social control. Making African miners happy and contented had implications of stability in the home, the family and the state.

Ibrahim Abdullah for instance, has shown that between 1933 and 1938, miners in Sierra Leone especially labourers, engaged in strike activities in order to redefine themselves as a group and to contest state and capital's attempts to maximize profit and increase productivity at their expense.¹⁹⁰ Many conflicts in mines were linked to poor family resources of miners. In an example from Nigeria, Carolyn A. Brown indicated that in embarking on industrial actions, miners at Iva Valley at Enugu argued that because of low wages they could not "fulfil their role as breadwinners and to protect their families from indignities of overcrowded and unsuitable housing."¹⁹¹ Jane L. Parpart's study which examined gender and class struggles in

¹⁸⁹ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/102, Letter from Governor Hodson to Sir Cecil Bottomley dated April 17, 1937. 1938-39.

¹⁹⁰ Ibrahim Abdullah, "Profit versus Social Reproduction: Labour Protests in the Sierra Iron-Ore Mines, 1933-1938," *African Studies Review*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (1992), 13-41.

¹⁹¹ Carolyn A. Brown, "Becoming 'Men', Becoming 'Workers': Race, Gender and Workplace Struggle in the Nigerian Coal Industry, 1937-49" in *Racialising Class, and classifying race; labour and difference in Britain, the USA and Africa* edited by Peter Alexander and Rick Halpern (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 169.

the Zambian Copperbelt between 1926 and 1964 elucidates the point.¹⁹² Parpart points out that conflicts over family resources fuelled both feelings of exploitation and willingness to confront capital. In the context of colonial Ghana, making miners happy and contented by providing radio services in the mines was a way of ensuring a trouble free mining environment.

The discussion so far has focused on the aims and missions of radio, highlighting the social and political context of radio's advent. It has shown that radio was used as an instrument for advanced administration radio was used ideologically in many ways to support empire-building, propaganda and modernisation, for maintaining law and order and for promoting British cultural values. The next section concentrates on the installation of radio and points out that that the initial installation in the home was partly driven by objective of modernising the home and the family.

2.4. Radio Comes to the Home

The installation of the radio rediffusion boxes generated instant fascination and appeal in the colony which in 1935 could boast of 650 privately owned radio sets with only 147 owned by Africans.¹⁹³ Primary records show that in 1935, the Accra relay station, the first in the colony, connected 350 homes and households to radio via wired rediffusion boxes.¹⁹⁴ This number increased further within the year and in February 1936, Governor Arnold Hodson told the Gold Coast Legislative Council that 750 houses in Accra had been connected to the relay service.¹⁹⁵

The new “vista of life” as promised by Governor Hodson was to begin from the home where the rediffusion boxes were first installed. Therefore, the home assumed great importance as a space of “modernity” and social transformation. Scholarship from other cultures outside

¹⁹² Jane L. Parpart, “The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class Struggles on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926-64” *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Oct. 1986), 36-56.

¹⁹³ Holbrook, *British Propaganda*, 347-361.

¹⁹⁴ GBC, *50 Years of Broadcasting in Ghana, Golden Jubilee, 1935-1985* (Accra: GBC, 1985).

¹⁹⁵ Gold Coast Colony Legislative Council Debates Session 1936, Issue No. I. (February 20, 1936), 4.

Africa suggest that the installation of the technology in homes may have been encouraged partly because of its potential impact on the progression and transformation of women's experience at home as mothers and "home managers."¹⁹⁶ Importantly, the sheer novelty of this sound technology as a tool for enlightenment and entertainment made radio extremely popular. Although radio listening was promoted as a family activity, households with radio attracted large crowds of neighbours and extended family members ostensibly to listen to the "new guest." In theory and practice, the development challenged the boundary of listening intended as a nuclear family activity within the domestic/private space of the home.

Kate Bannerman testified that her uncle was among the early subscribers of the rediffusion service. She and her siblings had to trek to the his residence some few kilometres away from their parents' home at Osu to listen to the children's programmes "Story Time" and "Spelling Bee." She stated: "Our father wasn't happy that we were going outside to listen to radio so he got one installed in our home. It was placed in the sitting room for all of us to hear."¹⁹⁷



Picture 3: The Radio Rediffusion Box, popularly called *Kofi Adaka* or *Papa Adaka*
Source: *Private collection of Grace Armah*

¹⁹⁶ Kate Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies: Gender, German Radio and the Public Sphere, 1923-1945* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 17.

¹⁹⁷ Interview with Kate Bannerman, November 14, 2013.

Besides reading, listening to the radio became a new form of sociality, seen as civilising and edifying and people who owned the radio were regarded with respect. Radio became a status symbol. Bannerman's father's action suggest that he endorsed listening to radio within the space of the immediated family. At the same time, his action suggests a desire to encourage his children to engage more with this medium of modernity. By making radio accessible to his children at home, Bannerman's father endorsed his children's early engagement with radio as a new source of learning and recreation for the family.

The presence of radio in a town signalled 'modernity.' Chiefs and their retinue travelled down to Accra during the early years to request that radio be extended to their villages and towns.¹⁹⁸ Also, due to its potential social impact as an instrument of leisure and entertainment, the United Africa Company Limited (UAC) requested to have loudspeakers installed on the premises of Kingsway Stores (its subsidiary) in Accra to support a cocktail bar which was "proving quite a popular rendezvous" for its patrons.¹⁹⁹ As the archival record shows, the request was not granted because of copyright implications. A letter in response to the request, indicate that Reuters News Agency, a supplier of news to the BBC did not allow rebroadcast of its news outside homes.²⁰⁰

The demand for rediffusion boxes was overwhelming and came from diverse quarters both within and outside Accra. Outside Accra, four additional relay stations were opened in Cape Coast, Kumasi, Koforidua and Tamale between 1936 and 1937 devolved from Station ZOY making it possible for more households to join the radio-owning community. The annual report of 1936/37 by the Superintendent of Broadcasting, F.W.K. Byron recorded 2,920 installations made to homes within the period. In Accra alone, subscribers numbered 1,150 by

¹⁹⁸ 50 Years of Broadcasting in Ghana, Golden Jubilee (1935-1985), 4.

¹⁹⁹ See CSO 7/5/ 101, Extension of Broadcasting in the Gold Coast, P.R.A.A.D, Accra. The request was not granted because of copyright implications. Reuters News Agency did not allow rebroadcast of its news outside homes.

²⁰⁰ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 101, Extension of Broadcasting in the Gold Coast, July 12, 1938.

the end of 1937.²⁰¹ In Cape Coast (originally the capital of the Gold Coast) 300 subscribers were connected within the period. Furthermore, 500 homes in Sekondi-Takoradi, 600 in Kumasi; 200 at Koforidua and 80 subscribers in Tamale were connected to the radio service during the same year.²⁰²

Five additional relay stations were opened the following year in mining towns including Tarkwa to serve mining towns of Abontiakoon, Nsuta, the Tamsu, Fanti, and Abosso. Two more stations were opened the same year at the cocoa trading area of Nsawam in the Eastern Region and also at Winneba in the Central Region.²⁰³ By 1939, the number of subscribers stood at 4,220 spread across 16 wired relay stations and it was the Governor's plan to open 40 more relay stations to cover other parts of the country in the shortest possible time.²⁰⁴

Radio ownership and access evoked tensions due largely to high subscription costs and issues related to class. The initial targets of radio were European settlers and a few educated Africans. The aim was to enable European settlers stay in touch with their metropolitan countries and to provide information and entertainment to the educated Africans. Nonetheless, it was also the colonial government's intention to "make the technology available to the average citizen."²⁰⁵ In the first four years, however, access to the technology privileged educated families and also school children in important areas of the country such as mining towns as these communities were of commercial and imperial interest. Individual efforts to access radio suffered a setback partly because of the high subscription cost and the ambivalent attitude of the government in making good its intentions for the average citizen including the illiterate male and female.

²⁰¹ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 100, 1936/1937.

²⁰² PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 100, 1936/1937.

²⁰³ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 100, 1936/1937.

²⁰⁴ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 101, July 12, 1938.

²⁰⁵ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 100, 1936/1937.

Subscription policy required that apart from government officials, subscribers must make advance payments of 30 shillings for installation to cover six months after which the service was to be renewed for a further six months at the same cost. The costs were considered too high and African subscribers were reluctant to make further advance payments of 30 shillings for renewal. The issue generated criticism from the local press and also from African members of the Legislative Assembly. In February 1936, just under a year after radio's inauguration, Superintendent of Broadcasting F.W.K. Byron sent a proposal to Governor Hodson to have the policy reviewed, stating:

I am reluctant to remove a subscriber's loud-speaker just because at the time the subscription was due he cannot pay the full half year's subscription. I have to recommend therefore that after the initial half year's subscription is paid, subscribers may at my discretion be permitted to pay quarterly installments instead of the usual half yearly payments.²⁰⁶

Government response did not change the policy significantly. Old subscribers were permitted to pay 10 shillings monthly. The lump sum advance payment of 30 shillings for new installations remained unchanged.²⁰⁷

Again in April 1939, Byron made another attempt, urging the government to reconsider the advance payment as he thought it to be "a stumbling block to many Africans" and to the objective of "obtaining as many new subscribers as we might."²⁰⁸ He requested that the broadcasting department should be given the discretion to install loudspeakers for new subscribers in return for an initial payment of 10 shillings to cover two months service provided the subscriber agrees to take the service for a minimum period of six months.²⁰⁹ Although permission was granted, the proposal did not resolve the problem of high costs.

²⁰⁶ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 98, February 24, 1936.

²⁰⁷ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 98, February 24, 1936.

²⁰⁸ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 80, Byron's letter to Governor Hudson, File no 389/34. Dated June 2, 1939.

²⁰⁹ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 80, June 2, 1939.

Despite his apparent show of interest in making radio accessible to the illiterate population, Byron rejected suggestions from the local press for a reduction from five shillings a month to two shillings and six pence. He also disagreed with suggestions from some quarters for a reduction in service cost to four shillings a month. Rather, he argued in a letter to the Governor: “We have already the cream of the populace connected to our system and I do not think that a reduction in fees would cause an increase in subscribers to any great extent.”²¹⁰ The cream of society with access to radio included government officials. This group of people, predominantly male, was exempted from the lump sum payment of subscription. Government bungalows where some loudspeakers were installed in the early years even before the inauguration in 1935 were occupied by male officials as a list of subscribers in the early years show.²¹¹ Very few women may have benefitted from the opportunity because until the early 1950s employment policies discouraged female employment, particularly in the government service.²¹²

The contradictory stand by Byron with regard to making radio accessible to all, was partly grounded in colonial attitudes and perceptions about the local population, particularly about the illiterate population including women. It was perceived that the Gold Coast African was “notoriously thrifty” and saw radio as a luxury. For example, when revenue from subscriptions fell in the 1938/1939 annual year, Byron placed part of the blame on the local population, farmers in particular. He stated: “To the African a loudspeaker is still a luxury and any economy he is forced to make results, inevitably, in a temporary discontinuance of his subscription.”²¹³ Such attitudes and perceptions had implications for women’s access to radio

²¹⁰ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 80, June 2, 1939.

²¹¹ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/98, February 24, 1936.

²¹² Miranda Greenstreet, “Employment of Women in Ghana,” *International Labour Review*, Vol. 103 (1971), 117-29.

²¹³ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 100 Letter from Byron to Governor Hodson, April 29, 1938

as evidence from key informants for this study suggest that women had access to radio if their husbands or fathers owned one.

Despite the demand for radio, it was also true that many Africans did not subscribe to the technology partly because of cost and also because they did not as yet appreciate the value of radio given the preponderance of English language programmes. In the first four years before WWII and also during the war, Station ZOY still relied largely on relays from the Empire Service of the BBC and local programme constituted approximately one hour a week of entire content. These were 15 minutes package of local news broadcast daily in three Ghanaian languages – Ga, Fanti and Ewe. When the preponderance of English language programmes on the station was challenged, Byron claimed that the “illiterate man” generally went to bed at about 7:00 p.m. and argued that if the “illiterate African” was given more local programmes, “everything would have to be in vernacular and this would make things difficult.”²¹⁴

Byron considered it difficult to provide more local language programmes, partly because the colonial government was more interested in generating revenue from radio than incurring additional costs by producing local programmes for a population that brought in little revenue. Besides revenue, primary and secondary evidence suggest that broadcast administrators were concerned with promoting the speaking of English than the local languages.²¹⁵ Byron’s response implies also that broadcast administrators barely considered the programming needs of women particularly the illiterate. Governor Hodson impressed upon him the need to enhance access to the local population as conveyed in the following evidence:

Since it is for the amusement and enlightenment of the average citizen (and not merely a tool for aristocracy) that the rediffusion stations are being built, should we not give serious consideration to the question whether a much larger proportion of the programme should not be given to the vernacular despite the difficulties which this

²¹⁴PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/98 Report on Broadcasting Department, 1938/1939.

²¹⁵ Bloom, *Elocution, Englishness, and Empire*, 113.

change in policy may involve? It has been emphasised over and over again that the broadcasting service is of incalculable value to government in that it provides means for the dissemination of ungarbled information on matters of public interest. That being so it is undesirable to restrict (even for the sake of a small measure of economy) the field of its operations.²¹⁶

The governor's statement reveals some of the contradictions and ambivalence in initial government's attitude and commitment to making radio available to the average person including women. Access to radio remained the preserve of the minority – a tool for aristocracy – until the outbreak of World War II and thereafter.

2.5 Radio during and after Wartime, 1939- 1951

The use of radio for war propaganda between 1939 and 1945 affected the development of radio both positively and negatively. Although the extension of relay stations was suspended during the period, nearly 2000 more homes and households were connected to wire rediffusion boxes during the period.²¹⁷ The outbreak of World War II in September 1939 provided the impetus to expand services to the underprivileged majority including people in the rural areas. This was partly because radio was part of a multi-media propaganda campaign that mobilised local and British West African support for the war.

Wendell Holbrook has pointed out that the war altered communication patterns in the Gold Coast as mobilising support for the war would not have been fruitful if the government had relied on established patterns of communication alone.²¹⁸ Until the war, the established form of government communication with the people was through chiefs. The Gold Coast Information Department tasked with coordinating the propaganda campaign adopted the framework of mass communication as the most rapid means for disseminating propaganda

²¹⁶ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/98. Hodson's letter to Byron, dated February 22, 1936.

²¹⁷ See Table in Appendix.

²¹⁸ Holbrook, *British Propaganda and the Mobilisation of the Gold Coast War Effort*, 347-361.

news. By this approach of mass communication, directing government communication through chiefs as part of the system of indirect rule was partially cast aside.

The use of radio for war propaganda between 1939 and 1945 affected the development of radio both positively and negatively. Although the extension of relay stations was suspended, nearly 2000 more homes and households were connected to wire rediffusion boxes during the period.²¹⁹ Prior to the war, a 1.3 kW transmitter was installed in Accra for experimenting with wireless broadcasting. A new 5 kW transmitter was also installed to serve the information needs of the people of the Gold Coast and neighbouring countries who were eager to hear war news and information about the fate of their soldiers in the war.

Radio loudspeakers were installed at key sites such as markets, lorry parks community centres, and newly established Information Bureaus for collective reception and wider public access to the radio. Such collective reception points were part of the innovations introduced to expand radio access to the average person including women, and also to garner public support for the war. It was common to see listeners hurrying to the new information bureaus in the afternoons when it was time to broadcast war news in the local language.²²⁰ More than just physical locations, scholars such as Kate Lacey contend that such public spaces in which radio operated were, “potential public spheres.”²²¹ Broadcasting to such public places during the war extended the sounds of radio beyond the confines of homes to the public.

People at home were hungry for news about the war, indeed, anxious about the conditions of their male relations who had been conscripted to fight outside their home country,

²¹⁹ See Table in Appendix.

²²⁰ An account by one of the pioneer Vernacular Announcers, Ben Gadzekpo, published in *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 29, 1960)

²²¹ Kate Lacey refers to reception centres such as public halls as potential public sphere in the sense of Jurgen Habermas’ historical reference to “opinion-publics” that developed outside the state to defend general interest and to advocate through open discussion progressive change in government policy. This conceptualisation is relevant in the case of colonial Gold Coast where communal radio reception gained attention only during and after the war in the late colonial period spanning into the post-independence years. See Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies*, 25.

while those fighting also wanted to be reminded of home. It is said that the army headquarters in colonial Ghana, received thousands of letters from soldiers who wanted to hear news about their wives, children and relatives and responses were compiled in local languages as programmes and for playback to them.²²² About 300 gramophone recordings consisting of local news, music, and greetings from relatives and friends were made for Ghanaian troops in Burma. Governor Alan Burns told the Legislative Assembly that the gramophone recordings were broadcast on All-India radio in Burma. Similarly, All-India radio made recordings of Ghanaian troops in Burma for relations back home. These recordings were broadcast on *Station ZOY*.²²³

Another important landmark in the development of radio was the engagement of Africans, named “Vernacular Announcers.” As the name suggests, they were recruited to communicate war news in local languages as a way of mobilising local populations’ support for the war. The development came hand in hand with the expansion of existing local languages used on radio. In addition to Ga, Twi, Ewe and Fanti, Moshi and Hausa were included. Although Hausa is not a Ghanaian language, it was used because most of the soldiers recruited understood Hausa. Many Hausa speaking people were settled in *Zongo* communities in the country. Initially, Hausa announcers were recruited from Nigeria for this purpose but the language was dropped after the war when Hausa announcers had to return home to northern Nigeria. It was restored later during the process of Africanising radio in the after the war with the appointment of western educated Hausas.²²⁴ French was used too, to reach out to neighbouring African countries. Also, after the War and on account of the Africanisation of

²²² Mr. Kobla Senaya was a pioneer “vernacular announcer” and a teacher was initially recruited by the Gold Coast Army to teach the soldiers who were preparing for the war, short sentences such as head, hand, feet, go, come, shoot, lie down go, march. *See Ghana Radio Review and TV Times Review*, (July 29, 1960)

²²³ Gold Coast Colony Legislative Council Debates Session 1946, Issue No. I. (March 21, 1946), 12-17.

²²⁴ Ben Gadzekpo, “*Ghana Muntie*” (Unpublished manuscript, n.d.) in Audrey Gadzekpo’s Private Collections.

radio, two more languages – Dagbani and Nzema were added in the early 1950s, but Moshi was dropped.

Charles Armour wrote that after the war, the Colonial Office in London was concerned that radio broadcasting had achieved little progress over its 12 years of existence and the Secretary of State Arthur Creech Jones had told governors in Africa of the urgent need to give greater attention to the development of broadcasting services.²²⁵ Creech Jones was an ardent supporter of mass education who believed in the potential of radio as a mass communication tool to support literacy.²²⁶ Under his leadership, a sub-committee of the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies was tasked to consider how to deliver mass education and literacy using communication tools such as radio and film. The sub-committee's Memorandum – Mass Education in African Society (1944) put great stress on the use of radio, cinema, and the press.²²⁷ With regards to radio, its success for mass education and for social and political development in the colonies depended on the availability of receiving sets, preparation and presentation of the programmes, and popular support from listeners. With regards to receiving sets, the report stated:

Wherever broadcasting is introduced on a wide scale, the question of providing receiving sets arises. In some areas, such as the big towns, many households may be able to buy receiving sets especially if they can be supplied at a cheap rate. But when the educational needs of the community cannot be met by the payment of subscription by the majority of households, receiving sets should be installed in places readily accessible to the public and suitable conditions for listening should be maintained in their vicinity.²²⁸

Experiments with mass education involving the use of radio to support adult literacy and classroom education in 1948 were carried out alongside the expansion of radio services. This

²²⁵ Charles Armour, "The BBC and the Development of Broadcasting in British Colonial Africa 1946-1956," *African Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 332 (July, 1984), 359-402.

²²⁶ Peter J. Bloom and Kate Skinner, "Modernity in Danger: The Boy Kumasenu and the Work of the Gold Coast Film Unit," *Ghana Studies*, Vol. 12/13 (2009/2010), 127.

²²⁷ *Mass Education in African Society*, London, His Majesty's Stationary Office 1944. Colonial No.186.

²²⁸ *Mass Education in African Society*, paragraph 116.

also meant making the technology more accessible to the less privileged majority, including women.

By 1946, the number of subscribers of the rediffusion boxes had shot up to 6,095 and many more demands for subscription to the service were yet to be met. Sadly, the same year Governor Allan Burns told the Legislative Council that owing to shortage of broadcast material, the broadcasting department had been “unable to connect many hundreds of intending subscribers.”²²⁹ The annual estimates for broadcast programmes were also cut down that year. Reacting to this news during the Assembly session, Legislative Assembly member Nana Tsibu Darku IX stated:

In the Gold Coast of tomorrow, one of the important things will be information. The country suffers from mass illiteracy. The local press has a very small circulation and in the vast majority the only means of transmission of news and views is by means of the spoken word. If government is to carry the people with them in the process of the many changes that will take place, it is very important that this difficulty should be overcome. The average Gold Coast citizen will play his part if he knows what he is expected to do and why he is expected to do it...I am therefore suggesting that all Native Administration headquarters should be connected to the broadcasting system in order that the inhabitants of outlying districts might have the opportunity of getting the programmes of current events.²³⁰

Native authorities had been responsible for mobilising the people for development of their communities, hence Nana Tsibu Darku’s obvious interest in getting radio facilities installed in Native Administration headquarters. His statement underscores the value attached to radio as a tool for enlightenment, education and development. Implicit in the statement was his state-centric view of radio. Beneath his endorsement of radio as an instrument of to be managed by the state were also fears that government might be losing interest in radio, a move that would deepen the state of illiteracy and disrupt the process of development by possibly opening radio management to private, commercial concerns.

²²⁹ Gold Coast Colony Legislative Council Debates Session 1946, Issue No. I. (March 12, 1946), 12-17.

²³⁰ Ibid, 129.

Five relay stations were opened between 1948 and 1950. These were located at Mampong-Akwapim, Keta, Konongo, Dunkwa and Koforidua Tafo. Interest in the development of radio sets increased with transformations in the technology. Receiving sets were provided in most deprived, rural bound segments of the population, for community listening in schools, village halls, and information centres. In the early 1950s, bigger loudspeakers, called Public Broadcasting Kiosks (PBK) were mounted on a pilot basis in rural communities not yet served by the wire-rediffusion technology. The plan was to erect up to 2,000 in all by the end of 1952.²³¹ The kiosks had specially made loudspeaker horns designed to give audibility to about 50 people and each structure was powered by a dry cell battery expected to last two months. It was switched on and off by a volunteer from the community at specific times of the day to connect to news from Station ZOY.²³²

By making such facilities available for broadcast in public places, access was extended beyond the privacy of elite homes. Collective reception or communal listening was encouraged alongside initiatives to make receiving sets available. A programme to provide battery receiving sets to individuals who could not make a one-off payment was introduced.



Picture 4: Public Broadcast Kiosk (PBK) located in the Volta Region.

Source: *Gold Coast Weekend Review Vol. II No. 1, 1952.*

²³¹ *Gold Coast Weekly*, Vol. II No. 1. (January 2, 1952).

²³² *New Ghana*, Vol. 1 No. 8 (December 18, 1957), 5.

Following the 1951 elections which brought Dr Kwame Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP) to share power with the colonial government, a committee with Mr John Grenfell Williams from the BBC as chairman, was appointed to advise on ways of improving broadcasting.²³³ The committee's recommendation charted a new path for radio by recommending the formation of the Gold Coast Broadcasting Service (GCBS) to take over the existing radio management from the Public Relations Department. Effectively, the recommendation endorsed the GBSC as a state-owned entity.²³⁴

Some projects to expand radio facilities such as the establishment of a 20 kilowatt transmitter in Accra came into full operation by independence. This improved radio reception in all areas of the country and in adjacent territories of West Africa.²³⁵ Also by 1957, 32 relay stations had been established across the country. The total number of subscribers stood at 34,422 the same year.²³⁶ A pilot scheme to encourage the sale and servicing of wireless sets in rural areas was successfully carried out at the beginning of 1957 and over 700 sets were sold in the Agona-Swedru area in the course of three months. The scheme aimed at getting people in the rural areas to encourage commercial firms to undertake similar schemes of providing direct sale and servicing of wireless sets in villages.²³⁷

2.6 Policy Continuities and Radio's Development (1957-1985)

One of the tasks facing the new state after independence was to forge a united state with a common culture and identity. Consequently, the CPP government assigned to radio, the role of inculcating the idea of state in the minds of the people. The task of holding the new state together was not to be taken for granted given the realities of secessionist agitations in parts of

²³³ PRAAD, (Accra), ADM 5/3/91, Report of the Broadcasting Commission Appointed by the Government of the Gold Coast, Accra, 1953.

²³⁴ PRAAD (Accra), ADM 5/3/91, Report, 1953.

²³⁵ *New Ghana*, Vol. 1 No. 8 (December 18, 1957).

²³⁶ See table in Appendix.

²³⁷ *New Ghana*, Vol. 1 No. 8 (December 18, 1957).

the country before independence. As Dennis Austin informs us, “Ashanti was threatening to secede, the cocoa price was falling, the army was an enigma, and the stability of the public service uncertain.”²³⁸ There were questions regarding whether the society would “achieve a common patriotism and a ‘Ghanaian nationality.’”²³⁹ Broadcasting was again seen as an antidote to such simmering political tensions. In the same way radio was used for empire-building and maintenance of law and order, Nkrumah’s government and successive governments after him mobilised radio to support the building of the new nation, Ghana, by maintaining the colonial legacy of state control over the organisation.

In 1960 when Radio Ghana celebrated its silver jubilee, Minister of Information and Broadcasting Kweku Boateng justified the role of radio in forging a spirit of patriotism and oneness in his anniversary message as follows:

For a country to know itself, for true patriotism to arise; for old fashioned ties of allegiance to village and tribe to be replaced by a spirit of devotion to our country...a radio service whose national programmes reach the remotest village can be a power for the good of all.²⁴⁰

In order to make radio a power for the good of all, the Convention People’s Party (CPP) emphasised the creation of a national broadcasting service and the expansion of the listening audience.

Between the late 1950s and early 1960s, radio broadcasting gained greater prominence as transmission services expanded and new portable radio sets became available thus expanding access to the technology. Under the government’s First Development Plan, a modern broadcasting house was constructed in 1958 with six studios made up of a music, drama, and talk studio, a continuity suit, recording channels, a gramophone library containing

²³⁸ Dennis Austin, “Ghana since Independence,” *The World Today*, Vol. 17 No. 10 (Oct. 1961), 424.

²³⁹ Austin, “Ghana Since Independence” 454.

²⁴⁰ Kweku Boateng, “Radio Can Be a Power for the Good of All,” in *Ghana Radio Review and TV Time*, July 29, 1960, 4.

about 35,000 discs, a newsroom, and offices for administration staff.²⁴¹ Radio Ghana also ordered special broadcast equipment including Outside Broadcast (OB) vans with VHF transmitters that enabled live commentaries on special events from other parts of the country. One of the important events first covered by the OB van was the royal visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Ghana in 1960. The expansion in radio infrastructure was remarkable given that three years earlier the government had to rely on such facilities from the BBC to provide live coverage of Ghana's independence celebrations. The new studio facilities enabled the production of a variety of programmes in local languages already started as part of the Africanisation of radio.

In 1965, the CPP government set up a special department, the Rural Broadcasting Department (RBD) for rural audiences, with broadcasts in six local languages. The service was meant to be development focused and provide information, education, and enlightenment to rural farmers and also to support ongoing mass education and mass literacy campaigns under Nkrumah's Plan for Mass Literacy and Social Welfare with its related self-help projects in the village. The plan was launched in 1952, a year after his election victory and drew on the ideas and concepts in the colonial blueprint for mass education in Africa referred to earlier. Subsequently the RBD became involved in the Non-Formal Education programme (NFEP) campaign with the specific task of mounting "promotional and awareness-creating programmes" before the campaign starts. The task also included "supporting open-broadcast of informational and educative programmes targeted specifically at study groups as direct teaching programmes."²⁴²

²⁴¹ See *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 29, 1960). Also see, *New Ghana*, (May 27, 1959).

²⁴² Ministry of Information Library, *Sectoral Brief of Activities of the Ministry of Information and Organisations /Departments under the Ministry*.

Also in 1961, the government established an External Service department to project Africa to the rest of the world and to support the post-colonial agenda of African Unity and Pan Africanism, crusaded by Nkrumah and the CPP government. The 100 kW transmitters for the External Service, the first of such capacity, expanded the reach of radio beyond Africa to parts of Europe and programmes in international languages including Swahili, Arabic, and French. Transmitters for the external service were set up in the modern township of Tema. The township was one of the multiple modernisation projects that were underway in the country at the time. Television broadcasting was also introduced in Ghana in 1965 and resulted in a name change of the organisation from the Ghana Broadcasting System (GBS) to the Ghana Radio and Television Broadcasting Corporation (GRTC) under one management. On July 2, 1965, the GRTC was established as a corporate body under LI 474.²⁴³

An important policy shift in the operations and development of radio was the introduction of commercial broadcasting in 1967, a year after the 24 February coup that overthrew Nkrumah's CPP government) by the new military-led government of the National Liberation Council (NLC). In 1968 a decree established the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation under NLCD 226 by the ruling military government. The decree enjoined the Corporation to undertake sound, commercial and television broadcasting. The establishment of commercial broadcasting was another legacy of the colonial government, indeed, one of the recommendations made by the Grenfell Williams' commission for the development of broadcasting. The Commission on broadcasting was set up in the early 1950s to consider the future of radio. The NLC government's free-market policies which encouraged private business and welcomed foreign investment suggestively influenced the establishment of the station which became known as Radio II.

²⁴³ Akoto Ampaw, *Legislation on Media Speech and Expression in Ghana: A Source Book* (Accra: Media Foundation for West Africa, 2004).

In the plan of the NLC government, commercial broadcasting was intended to “give our business community and other individuals the chance of selling their goods and services through the fastest available means” while supplementing government subvention for radio services.²⁴⁴ Having overthrown an elected government for reasons of economic mismanagement, the leadership of the NLC was set on a path of repairing the great and extensive “damage done to our national economy.”²⁴⁵ In this sense, radio was considered instrumental to its mission. In a *Broadcast talk*, the Leader, Lt. General Ankrah had asked Ghanaians to bear with the new government saying:

It would be unfair to expect too much of the Government in the initial stages of replanning our economy. The economic situation in the country is grave and a sudden drop in prices of commodities should not be expected although every effort is being made by the new government of Ghana to ensure the plentiful supply of all commodities at reasonable prices.²⁴⁶

The statement, delivered through radio indicates the NLC government’s faith in using radio to keep in touch with the people.

The Supreme Military Council (SMC) which assumed power in 1972 following the overthrow of the second Republican government of Kofi Abrefa Busia used radio to promote agricultural development under the government’s programme of “Operation Feed Yourself.” Successive post-colonial governments after Dr. Nkrumah continued with the latter’s policy to produce radio sets locally by building on the transistor technology to expand access and also to develop technical capacity in the construction of radio sets.

The 1970s saw a decline in the infrastructure of the GBC partly due to financial difficulties and an apparent lack of state interest in the physical development of the organisation as did the colonial government and the immediate post-colonial government of the CPP.

²⁴⁴ Cited in John Kugblenu ed., *Broadcasting in Ghana* (Accra: Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, 1978), 14.

²⁴⁵ PRAAD (Accra), ADM 5/4/263, “The Aspirations of Our New Nation, Broadcast Talk,” March 3, 1966.

²⁴⁶ PRAAD (Accra), ADM 5/4/263, 10.

Available evidence suggests that like any other state broadcasting institution in Africa, Radio Ghana had been taken over by coup plotters for announcing military coup d'états. This interest in using radio for political expediency was however not matched by a corresponding interest in the development of the station's infrastructure. This was part of the reasons for the decline. Things were to change in 1985 when Radio Ghana celebrated its golden jubilee. A month before the anniversary, the ruling Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) government commissioned three new 50 kW high frequency transmitters to improve radio reception and reach.

Radio Ghana was then using two 10 kW transmitters with no standby. The new 50 kW transmitters were powerful enough to cover the whole country with improved signals that also enabled a 24-hour service and the revival of the external service broadcasting which had been suspended in the early 1980s. The project was financed with a Japanese grant at a cost of \$3.2 million with a cedi component of 7.9 million. This investment in broadcasting demonstrated a further commitment of government to using radio as the fastest means of delivering development to rural populations. The Head of State and chairman of PNDC Flt. Lt. Rawlings had said that the amount invested to extend radio services to rural farmers could cover "2 years importation of books to schools."²⁴⁷ The action suggests that the government had immense faith in the potential benefits of radio to propel the development of rural communities.

From the account so far it is evident that although access to radio initially privileged European settlers and a minority educated population, including school children and teachers, both colonial and post-colonial governments made efforts to extend radio access to a wide range of people including women. The thesis has also shown that in spite of the ideological

²⁴⁷ Jerry John Rawlings, Address: "Commissioning of new Radio Transmitters" in *50 Years of Broadcasting in Ghana: Golden Jubilee 1935-1985*, (Accra: GBC), 23.

uses of radio for propaganda, statecrafting and cultural indoctrination, radio was also used to propel social transformation; enlightenment, information and education. Radio was seen as an instrument of modernity and this underscored the rapid spread of the technology and the increased demands for subscription in the face of high the cost. The next section focuses on government policy for women and radio highlighting the impact of the policy on domesticity on women's access, ownership and reception of radio programmes.

2.7 A Primary Tool of Domesticity

So far, this study has shown that both colonial and post-independence governments applied radio as a gendered tool – a tool and a channel for disseminating Victorian ideologies of domesticity and women's separate sphere. Gender emphasised the binary formations of the public as male and the private as female and underscored the ideological and sociological logic of domesticity. From the onset, Governor Hodson identified women as potential radio listeners and home managers by defining their access to radio and their reception context in gender terms within the framework of the breadwinner and the housewife as evident in his address at the inauguration of Station ZOY in 1935.

You can imagine what an influence this will have from the psychological point of view; mothers when the children have been fractious or when they have had a trying day, cooking and washing clothes or men who have had a hard day's work, will sit down and listen to first class music which will banish their cares and make them forget their worries...²⁴⁸

As discussed previously, initial access to radio privileged the European settlers the educated class and children. These groups included women and adolescent school girls. The content of the address suggests that the message was not intended only for the wives of European settlers but primarily for educated African women, the emerging middle class who he addressed as “ladies.”

²⁴⁸ Governor Arnold Hodson, “Address at inauguration of Station ZOY” Tape no. FLN 21/CK990 (Accra: Radio Ghana Sound Archives), 1935.

As the governor's address suggests, radio sought to replicate Victorian-styled domesticity by focusing on educated African women and girls as future mothers. They were to become the primary agents of change; the conduits for disseminating and propagating Victorian styled domesticity and the separate sphere of women. The governor's statement also proposed that men as breadwinners were expected to accumulate money to support the home and provide for the family needs including making modern 'luxury' items such as radio available to their wives for their entertainment and leisure as they engaged in domestic work. Women were to access radio purchased by their husbands, and listen to the medium from the domestic space of the home while they took care of the productive and reproductive labour and by so doing maintain social order at home in the interest of the stability of the state.

Governor Hodson's statement suggests too, that similar to work schedules in formal sector employment, radio was intended to teach women how to manage their domestic chores in ways that would enable them to make time for specific radio programmes during specific times of their day to day lives. This is consistent with literature on women audiences. As Maggie Andrews points out housewives in Britain were identified as audiences of day time radio programmes, suggesting that radio became a key element of the home, in other words, the domestic space, where women were expected to listen to programmes of edification and enlightenment.²⁴⁹ Governor Hodson's address underscored the phenomenon of domesticity in relation to women's time for domestic chores and time for listening for relaxation and edification. He states:

At present we intend to give two receptions a day. The first will be from ten to one which, I trust will amuse and interest the ladies when their husbands are away at their offices. This reception is generally an excellent one and it includes orchestral music from London and any important speeches which are being made by cabinet and others at official lunches in England.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁹ Maggie Andrews, "Home Both Sides of the Microphone: The Wireless and Domestic Space in Inter-War Britain," *Westminster Review* Vol. 21 No. 4 (September, 2012), 606-621.

²⁵⁰ Arnold Hodson, "Address at Inauguration of Station ZOY," 1935.

Educated women were the imagined community of female radio listeners who were enjoined to listen to radio programmes for information and knowledge to enable their edification as modern women, in order to become conversant with events around them and to serve as agents of change. Radio was the modern source for new ideas and information on world affairs such as “important speeches” made by cabinet and other speeches “at official launches in England.” Such programmes would enable them connect with the outside world and to become conversant with public issues. Later in the late 1940s, a special programme in English was designed for educated women entitled, “Women’s Half-Hour” which was a model of the BBC programme “Women’s Hour” and subsequently similar programmes were created for illiterate women underpinned by domesticity ideologies. These are discussed in chapter three of the thesis to emphasise the point that domesticity operated at different levels and targeted also illiterate women.

Essentially, one of the ways by which the ideology was promoted was by exempting public servants, largely men, from the lump sum subscription payment that was required for initial installation of radio. The exemption enabled men as “breadwinners” to provide radios for the home, so that housewives who were virtually absent from the public service could have access to radio as the wives of public servants. The discursive construction of ‘public’ and ‘private’ as distinctly different spaces resonated with notions of radio and domesticity and public sphere.

During the war, radio played a mediating role between the home and the front by bringing war news from Burma to families at home and taking back recorded voices of family members from the private domestic space to the front.²⁵¹ This line of communication reinforced the ideological role of radio in bridging the barriers between the domestic and the public space.

²⁵¹ Legislative Council Debates Session 1946, Issue No. I. (March 21, 1946), 12-17. Report by Gold Coast Governor Sir Alan Burns to the Gold Coast Legislative Council.

Domestic issues became central to the public in the outside world while public issues from the outside world became important to the domestic place of the home. Essentially, the process enabled local women's voices, particularly, illiterate women and their families to get into the war. It is argued that this mediating role made radio central to the modernisation of social and cultural life as the voices of women were heard on radio for the first time on the public space of radio.

Post-Independence radio administrators perpetuated the ideology of domesticity in different ways. They encouraged the employment of women in male dominated radio careers by supporting their participation in both gendered and non-gendered programme making areas and occupational roles. They encouraged the development of more women's programmes in the local languages. Women's radio programmes, notably women's radio magazines, modelled different types of women's "separate spheres" as differentiated by language and targeted at both educated and illiterate women across different levels of social and cultural power. Women utilised these spaces to speak to other women as experts on domestic issues and to insert women's voices into public discourses.

After independence, the Victorian ideologies were transported into post-colonial women's life and continued to dominate discourses around radio access and listening. Evidence suggests that within the broader agenda of promoting women's participation in development and making women's issues critical to national development, the National Council for Women and Development established in 1975 and other women's groups used radio spaces to educate women on diverse issues related to family, health care and also income generating activities. Thus, post-colonial administrators appropriated the notion of "women's domestic work" as a framework for empowering women to be their own agents of their own change.

For example, the introduction of rural broadcasting in 1965, expanded radio access to rural women farmers. Separate programmes created for women farmers in local languages, cast women as ‘housewives.’ The first African Director of Broadcasting William Coleman who was appointed in the early 1960s, noted that “apart from being primary producers themselves, women are also housewives helping to make the rural home that together constitute the rural community – the target audience of rural broadcasts.”²⁵² Women farmers were enabled to access radio through the rural farm forums introduced as components of rural broadcasting. Drama genres in local languages introduced women to cultures associated with modern lifestyles such as relaxing with music. The context of listening was influenced by gender as women were encouraged to listen in groups through such organised receptions forums – the rural Radio Forums – during specific days and times in the week.

2.8 Individual Women’s Early Encounters with Radio

One of the raging debates about the disempowering nature of media technologies such as radio to women relate to accessibility. Development communication scholars see radio not only as an agent of change but also as an index of change. Accessibility rather than ownership was a measure of development. Thus, for instance, the number of radio receiving sets in a country was an indicator of the country’s level of development and modernisation.²⁵³

It is not known how many women subscribed to radio boxes or owned radio sets during the course of this period of history. However, it is known that female ownership of radio was possible in the early 1960s when women’s economic status changed largely due to greater employment opportunities in both formal and non-formal sectors. The subject is discussed further in Chapter four of this thesis. Before then however, individual women’s access to radio came about in different ways. Some of the informants for this study encountered radio as

²⁵² William F. Coleman and Andrew A. Opoku, “Rural Radio Project in Ghana” *An African Experiment in Radio Forums for Rural Development*, Reports and Papers on Mass Communication No. 51 (UNESCO: 1964/1965), 7.

²⁵³ UNESCO Statistical Yearbook 1996, Paris, UNESCO, 1997.

children at home and also at school before the war and in the late 1940s when the technology was not yet widespread. As 83-year-old Kate Bannerman testified, she and her siblings were instrumental in getting their father to subscribe to the rediffusion box in the initial years. This may not have been an isolated case as other children may have done the same in their time.

All the informants for this study first encountered radio during different stages of their lives. Education and also status of parents or husbands and regional location were key factors that determined early or late access to the technology. For example, testimonies of informants suggest that illiterate women who lived in rural areas encountered radio after independence. Access was enhanced with the introduction of portable radio sets. As children and teenagers then, some of the educated informants who lived in communities where the relay stations had been installed in schools, had listening access in schools. Informants from the mining areas of Obuasi, Bibiani, and Tarkwa recalled they first saw radio in the early 1950s at school and at home. Yet for other women like Mary Henaku her first encounter with radio was the sound from a neighbour's radio.²⁵⁴

Nearly all the informants who had access to radio mentioned their fathers as owners of the sets. Some of the women also mentioned their husbands as owners. Only one informant, said her mother, a teacher subscribed to the rediffusion box that served the extended family home.²⁵⁵ Her mother, got the rediffusion box installed in the maternal family house at Korle Gonno where she lived with her grandmother, siblings and mother's siblings on the same compound. Despite widespread male ownership of radio, women had access to the technology because their fathers and husbands owned radio.

²⁵⁴ Interview with Mary Henaku, (retired teacher), Diana Mercy Darymple-Hayfron, (retired teacher), Mary Henaku, (Retired Teacher), Victoria Casmás (Retired civil servant), Cecelia Ahensan-Mensah, (retired nurse) Cecelia A Dontoh, (retired civil servant) Vivian Amoo Blankson, Veronica Opoku (retired teacher), Florence Asem, (retired teacher), Alberta Yeboa (retired nurse), Betice Voegbetor (retired civil servant), Focus group of radio listeners, St. Kizito Catholic Church, Ashaley Botwe, March 8, 2015. Hereafter, Henaku et al.

²⁵⁵ Interview with Juliana Wuta-Ofei, Retired civil servant, Anyaa, December, 3 2013.

2.9 Conclusion

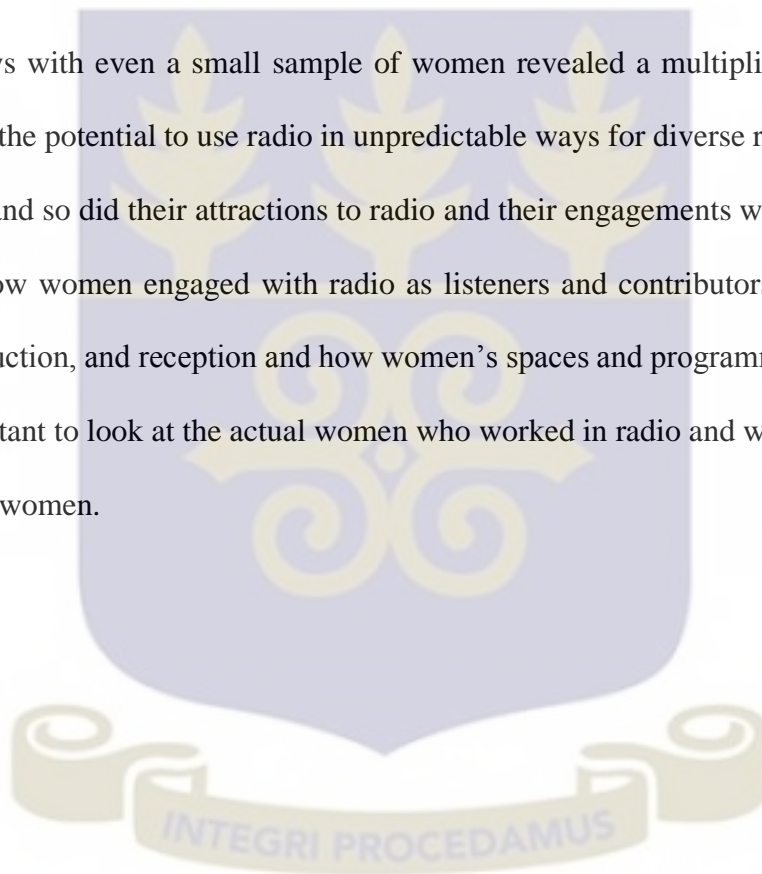
The introduction of radio in colonial Ghana was intended to propel the ‘civilising’ and modernisation missions of the colonial administration and subsequently successive the post-colonial governments. Primarily aimed at creating an informed, enlightened and an educated public, radio was used to propel the ideological missions of both colonial and post-colonial governments. Besides propaganda, radio was used as a gendered tool by both colonial and post-colonial administrations and for acculturation based on the framework of Victorian ideologies of domesticity and the public sphere of women.

Until the outbreak of the World War II, access to radio privileged a minority educated population due partly to high subscription fees and the preponderance of foreign content. The subscription policy privileged men particularly those who were employed in the colonial civil service. After the War, both colonial and post-colonial governments made tremendous efforts to facilitate radio services and provide access to a wide range of people by way of expansion of the rediffusion system and the introduction of transistorised battery operated sets as well as Radio Broadcasting Kiosks.

Both the colonial government and successive post-colonial governments perceived radio as a tool for propelling dominant societal ideologies including gender. Radio’s development – installation and expansion of the technology – as well as access and context of reception were framed in gendered terms connected to ideas about the home. Radio’s access privileged the educated minority Africans and European settlers and these included educated women. As housewives educated women were to serve as agents of modernisation. The chapter has shown that once men got radio installed in the home women had access to the medium. The evidence suggests, that once radio was installed in homes, women had access to the technology as imagined.

Radio targeted adolescent girls and boys with classroom and general information in order to insert radio listening into their lives so that they would rely on radio as a primary and credible source of information and knowledge and be the conduits for promoting modernisation. A platform was created on radio for girls and boys to compete intellectually and this suggests radio's instrumentality in not only promoting gender ideologies but also in moderating changes in gender relations. The account on the "Spelling Bee" competition illustrates the point.

Interviews with even a small sample of women revealed a multiplicity of individual experiences and the potential to use radio in unpredictable ways for diverse reasons. Women's interests varied and so did their attractions to radio and their engagements with radio. In order to understand how women engaged with radio as listeners and contributors, at the levels of institution, production, and reception and how women's spaces and programmes developed on radio, it is important to look at the actual women who worked in radio and went on to produce programmes for women.



CHAPTER TWO

PIONEERING WOMEN BROADCASTERS IN GHANA

3.0 Introduction

Radio became a site for female employment three years after World War II and 13 years after its advent in the colony. Station ZOY was still a place of experimentation and innovation. This chapter documents the trajectory of female employment in radio and profiles some of the pioneers whose various contributions accounted for the presence of women in an otherwise male dominated profession. The chapter examines how women negotiated both indigenous cultural barriers and professional stereotypes about female voices and roles in this male dominated profession to contribute to the development of radio in Ghana and to insert women's "voice" in national and international discourses. Potted histories are used to show some of the pioneers of various historical periods in the development of broadcasting as an institution from *Station ZOY* (1953-1957) through the Gold Coast Broadcasting System (GCBS); then from the Ghana Broadcasting Service (GBS) from 1957 to 1967 and then to Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) from 1967 to 1985. The chapter also explores the motivations of these pioneers for choosing to work in radio and challenges they encountered, including how they overcame public perceptions about female participation in radio occupations to become experts.

3.1 Context of Female Employment in Colonial Ghana

Historians and other social researchers have documented that the colonial administration discriminated against female employment in the formal workforce due in part to the grand agenda of promoting Victorian ideology of domesticity and the separate sphere of women. The ideology sought to confine women to the "separate sphere" of domestic, viewed as women's natural and legitimate space in society. Women's employment to the service was restricted to few departments only – as telephonists in Post and Telecommunication and the

medical departments as nurses.²⁵⁶ Women were not employed in the civil service until the late nineteenth century. Primary records show that Miss Elizabeth Ferguson was the first African woman to be admitted to the colonial civil service in 1890 as postmistress and telegraphic clerk in the Gold Coast Telegraphic Department. In recommending her appointment to the Colonial Secretary, Governor Branford Griffith stated:

I strongly incline to the belief that the admission of young ladies who are natives of the Colony to the public service is calculated to have a most useful moralizing effect generally in that service.²⁵⁷

The governor's statement resonates with the theory of biological determinism which Oyeronke Oluyemi has argued, was a colonial imposition linked to African women's subordination.²⁵⁸ Christianity, the precursor of colonisation considered it natural for women to be morally uprights. The colonial civil service prescribed rules on moral behavior for women employed in the service. Below is an example of this rule directed at teachers in 1934.

A woman officer whose duties are concerned with or are liable to be concerned with teaching or inspection in primary, middle, or secondary schools or training colleges, who is not married, or who has not reported her marriage, must, if she becomes pregnant, report her pregnancy. She will then be required by her Head of Department to resign, or to retire if she is eligible for a retiring award, unless her special qualifications or experience make it in the interest of the service to retain her.²⁵⁹

Secondary evidence suggests that in order to maintain their careers, some female teachers who became pregnant circumvented the General Orders. Mercy Ffoulkes Crabbe, a pioneer in female education and first headmistress of the Cape Coast Girls' School between 1921 and 1948 is an example.²⁶⁰ She hid her pregnancy and delivered her child secretly. Also, she remained an unmarried mother for nine years following the birth of her daughter in 1934.

²⁵⁶ See ADM 5/4/128, *The Gold Coast Public Servant* April 1954, Issue No. 1, P.R.A.A.D., Accra

²⁵⁷ ADM 5/4/128, *The Gold Coast Public Servant* April 1954, Issue No. 1, P.R.A.A.D., Accra

²⁵⁸ Oyeronke Oyewumi, *The Invention of Women, Making an African Sense of Western, Gender Discourse* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001), 61.

²⁵⁹ Gold Coast, *Blue Book* (Accra: Government Printing Office, 1935).

²⁶⁰ Audrey Gadzekpo, "Public but Private: A Transformational Reading of The Memoirs and Newspaper Writings of Mercy Ffoulkes Crabbe" in *African's Hidden Histories, Everyday Literacy and Making of the Self*, ed., Karin Barber (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), 314-336.

Certain positions in the civil service were closed to women due partly to gender ideologies of male and female roles. By the late 1940s, broadcasting opened up a new space of employment in the public sector for women who were conventionally ‘confined’ to occupations such as teaching in mission schools, nursing and telephone operations. Gender was critical in determining female and male roles and functions in this new economic space.

3.2 Gendered Roles and Gendered Voices

Preoccupation with providing information about the war, coupled with the establishment of relay stations and the installation of radio boxes created opportunities in broadcasting for men from the onset in 1935. However, the evidence suggests that “gender-logic” also shaped recruitment of women to broadcast work. Men were recruited to build the physical infrastructure as this was considered to be ‘men’s work.’ Also, men were recruited on part-time basis as “Vernacular Announcers” to translate and announce war news. Secondary evidence by radio historian Sydney Head indicates that a letter by Governor Hodson in 1935 requested that British expatriate staff needed for the colonial office for radio broadcasting should be people with a “peculiar combination of technical ability, keenness and broadcasting technique” and they should also have “a good speaking voice for microphone announcements.”

Head pointed out that the work description, called for a man with “thorough training in Wireless and overhead line work.”²⁶¹ Also, in the annual report on broadcasting for 1936/1937, Superintendent of Broadcasting (SOB) F.W.K. Byron presented a staff list of 15; a broadcast officer, three second division clerks, one second division storekeeper, two station assistants, eight senior apprentices and apprentices and one senior electrician.²⁶² The 1937/1938 annual report recorded a 52-member staff made up of five Broadcast officers, 15 second division clerks, one second division store keeper, two station assistants, 28 senior apprentices and

²⁶¹ Head, *British Colonial Broadcasting Policies*, 39-47.

²⁶²PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 100, Broadcasting Department Annual Reports, 1936/1937.

apprentices and one senior electrician. It is not clear from the report whether any woman was included. However, given that few women could qualify for employment as storekeepers, due to the gendered nature of education and training and given that the public sector policy did not encourage female employment, it would not be out of place to conclude that women were not part of this initial staff list.

Nonetheless, as a medium that thrives on the spoken word, women's voices were not completely missing on radio before the war ended. Wendell Holbrook has recorded that prior to the outbreak of the war, two prominent Ghanaian women, Mabel Dove-Danquah and Ruby Quartey-Papafio, were invited to present radio talks in support of the multimedia propaganda campaign to whip up local support for the war.²⁶³ Dove-Danquah was the doyenne of Gold Coast journalism, noted also for her literary work and for being the first African woman elected by popular vote to the Legislative Assembly in 1954. Quartey-Papafio was a distinguished educationist and active in women's charity groups in support of the improvement of young women. Their involvement in radio was solicited in order, also, to obtain women's support for the war probably in anticipation that the women would in turn influence their husbands and male family members to be favourably disposed towards the war, given widespread apathy, initially among rural and grassroots community towards the war and also the feeling that the war was a 'white man's war.'²⁶⁴

Because radio programmes were largely relays from the Empire Service of the BBC there were female expatriates such as Margaret Denholm, who was described as a "familiar voice to General Overseas Listeners," and Gytha Owen and Ms Rowlette who were programme officers with Station ZOY in the early 1940s.²⁶⁵ Also, archival evidence shows that during the

²⁶³ Holbrook, "British Propaganda," 347-361.

²⁶⁴ Holbrook, "British Propaganda," 347-361

²⁶⁵ BBC General Overseas Programme Guide: GPD/W6825/10000/12-51.

war, Madame Dupuy, an expert shorthand-stenographer was supplying the BBC news in French twice weekly from Koforidua where she was based.²⁶⁶ Dupuy, who was accustomed to journalistic work, took down notes in shorthand from French propaganda, transmitted by the BBC from which she made an expanded version of the news. The expanded versions formed the basis of 50 cyclostyled copies of the French news bulletins sent to Abidjan, Lome and Palime at the Ghana/Togo border.²⁶⁷ The pieces of evidence, suggest that women were present in radio work earlier than the late 1940s as previously assumed in secondary texts on media history in Ghana.²⁶⁸

Women's involvement in radio work was considered urgent after the war partly due to renewed focus on using radio for mass education, and partly due to the devolution and Africanisation of radio. Part of broadcasting's interest in women also resonated with post-war global consciousness regarding women's status and rights, sparked by the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) which was established in 1946 after the inauguration of the United Nations General Assembly a year earlier. In the colony itself the subject of women's status and rights resonated with anxieties over discriminatory colonial policies against female employment in the public service.

In September 1948, a letter signed by G.N. Levack of the Public Relations Department (PRD) recommended to the Executive Council that four women should be employed to produce programmes in local languages for "women and children listeners who do not at present get suitable vernacular broadcasts."²⁶⁹ A month later in October 1948, the recommendation for the formal recruitment of women was accepted resulting in the following announcement:

It is notified for general information that applications are invited from Twi, Fanti, Ewe and Ga speakers for posts of Women Programme Assistants in the Broadcasting Section

²⁶⁶ PRAAD (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 102, Extension of Broadcasting in the Gold Coast, 1937/1938.

²⁶⁷ PRAA.D (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 102, Extension of Broadcasting in the Gold Coast, 1937/1938.

²⁶⁸ See Kwasi Ansu-Kyeremeh and Kwame Karikari, ed. *Media Ghana, Ghanaian Media Overview, Practitioners and Institutions* (Accra: School of Communication Studies Press, 1998).

²⁶⁹ AAGBC: 2881. Staff file for Susie Laryea.

of the Public Relations Department. Applicants must be able to write as well as speak in the vernacular. They must also be capable of making correct spoken a clear speaking voice [sic]. The posts are permanent and pensionable... Point of entry into the scale will be determined by previous experience. Applicants should be between the ages of twenty-five and thirty five and hold the Senior Cambridge School Certificate or its equivalent.²⁷⁰

The ability to write and speak clearly in the local language as the announcement demanded of prospective applicants was critical partly, for purposes of accurate translation of English scripts into the local languages. Already in 1938, the Christian Council had complained over the quality of the local language used on radio by “vernacular announcers” and had enquired from the Colonial Secretary, “what degree and method of supervision is exercised over the Vernacular Broadcasts from the Broadcasting station at Accra.”²⁷¹ Also Governor Hodson had to respond to complaints from the Legislative Assembly on the quality of announcing on radio as shown in the following statement:

It must be borne in mind that the duties of these young men, for which they have been specially trained, are chiefly technical and that announcing so to speak is an extra duty they perform. Every effort is being made to train them in elocution, and to speak good English I would therefore ask the Honourable Unofficial Members to be lenient and charitable in their criticism...²⁷²

As the evidence suggests, the search for ‘a clear speaking voice’ should take account of elocution and the ability to speak good English, without any local accent. Robert Owusu, a retired broadcaster and a key informant for this study, said broadcasters were expected to have a clear “voice” and must speak and sound like the English meaning that the voice must be free of local accent to qualify for on-the-air roles.²⁷³ To speak like the English also had connotations

²⁷⁰ AAGBC: 2881, Staff file for Susie Laryea.

²⁷¹ PRAA.D (Accra), CSO 7/5/ 55, Enquiry Regarding Degree and Method of Supervision of Vernacular Broadcasts for the Broadcasting Station at Accra, PRAA.D, Accra.

²⁷² Governor Hodson to the Legislative Assembly, cited by Head, *Broadcasting Policies in Africa*, 43

²⁷³ Interview with Robert Owusu, Retired Broadcaster at GBC Club House on November 15, 2013.

of class as Gertrude Opare-Addo, also a retired broadcaster, said: “Those who spoke like the English commanded respect. It was a mark of class.”²⁷⁴

Radio was to become the new site for learning the English language and broadcasters were to teach the listening public how to speak good English. This was one of the ideological missions of radio. Secondary evidence in Peter Bloom’s work on radio affirms that a primary mission of radio was to promote learning of the English language and elocution.²⁷⁵ One of the original programmes that survived changes in programme content after independence was *English by Radio*, later known as *Lets Speak English* from the 1960s. Therefore, a clear speaking voice as required in the announcement should be suitable for the microphone, free of local accents and must also be distinctly feminine as the pioneers were expected to lend voices to programmes including English language programmes that required feminine enactments. A clear speaking voice also had connotations of gender related to specific on air functions. This is discussed in subsection 3.6 of this chapter.

Primary evidence suggests that the employment of qualified women to speak to women and children in local languages was more urgent than voice in 1948 when the announcements were made. The evidence shows that before the deadline for the submission of applications ended, the department was contemplating another advertisement, presumably, because of perceived “difficulty” in finding women within the specified age bracket who were sufficiently educated and articulate enough to undertake the assignment. In a later conversation (before the deadline for the application) between Rowlett and E.E. Frewin both of the broadcasting sections of the Public Relations Office, the former had contemplated extending the age upper age limit of 35 years.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁴ Interview with Gertrude Opare-Addo, North Kaneshie, July 20, 2013.

²⁷⁵ Bloom, *Elocution, Englishness, and Empire*, 113.

²⁷⁶ AAGBC: 2881. Staff file for Susie Laryea.

3.2 Pioneer Programme Assistants

Mrs Susan Laryea, Mrs Florence Prah, Miss Marian Smith-Mensah and Miss Dora Kwofie were the very first female programme assistants to be recruited for radio as full-time employees. The appointments of the pioneers took effect on different dates between December 1948 and March 1949 after serving three years on probation.



Picture 5: Mrs. Susanna Laryea
Pioneer Programmes Assistant (1949)



Picture 6: Mariam Smith-Mensah
Pioneer Programme Assistant (1949)

Source: *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times* (1960)

All four were teachers with varying years of experience: Susanna Laryea was a 31-year-old certificated teacher with four years of experience and she could speak and write Ga and Twi fluently; Florence Prah, 27, was the headmistress of St. Mary's Catholic School at Korle Bu in Accra with eight years teaching experience; Dora Kwofie, 25, was a certificated and trained teacher with seven years of experience, while Marian Smith-Mensah, 32, had 12 years teaching experience and was "Achimota trained."²⁷⁷ As the evidence suggests, their decision to seek new opportunities in this new economic environment exemplify the ambition of several other women to contest historical barriers and prejudices against women in order to be part of the predominantly male space of radio. The fact that all the four programme assistants were

²⁷⁷ An Achimota trained teacher was considered of special value because the school was the first to train teachers across the country.

teachers suggests also that the educational role of radio made broadcasting attractive to teachers who were also the first set of Africans to work with radio as vernacular announcers.

The programme makers started their careers from the newly created Programme Operations Department (POD), which was considered the heart of broadcast work. They were assigned later to substantive occupational roles of producing women's radio in the different languages. Laryea was assigned to the Ga women's magazine. Smith-Mensah produced the Fanti programme while Prah produced Twi and English programmes for women. This notion of women speaking to women is consistent with the literature on the history of women's employment in radio that says that opportunities for women in early radio were extensions of their domestic roles in the home.²⁷⁸ Primary evidence suggests that the new production assistants did not confine themselves to programme making spaces defined by their gender. Broadcasting was still at its formative years and as such was an arena for experimentation and innovation. Therefore women explored and experimented with several duties such as lending voices to scripts, undertaking programme operations and continuity announcing the latter, documented in the literature as a male preserve.

Continuity announcers were the front line voices of radio stations; the first and last voices to be heard on the station; the voices that announced the opening and closing of transmission. The continuity announcer role was considered prominent because the announcer mediated the identity of the station and ensured continuity between programmes as well as guided listeners through their radio experience by providing information on up-coming programmes and time schedules. Frances Ademola, (profiled later in the chapter) described the pioneers as "adventurers" because of the agency and determination to learn and explore all

²⁷⁸ Judith Cramer, "Radio: A Woman's Place is On the Air," in *Women in Mass Communication*. Second Edition, ed., Pamela J. Creedon, (Newbury Park, London: Sage, 1993), 154-166.

aspects of production and presentation without confining themselves to one space.²⁷⁹ Ademola thought that the continuity the announcer's role was better performed by women than men arguing that "if you are going into people's homes with your voice, you need a certain charm and gentleness and women have an advantage."²⁸⁰ Ademola's position may represent the position of other women who saw radio work as a contested space, hence the need to create niches for themselves.

Essentially, the broadcasters worked hard to improve the quality of their voice and presentation skill as these were considered crucial for on-the-air roles. A report on the performance of Laryea by Studio Manager, J.F.K. Kenyon during her probation period in October 1951 states: "During the last year, Mrs. Laryea has shown considerable advancement in her standard of announcing and has set a particularly high example of her work in the continuity."²⁸¹ A similar report on Smith-Mensah the same year expressed satisfaction with her work as far as presentation and her duties were concerned. It noted: "Originally her voice was very dull and unsuited to English broadcasting but constant perseverance with rehearsals and voice training has improved her voice a great deal."²⁸² With improvements in voice quality, the two provided 'voice' to creative programmes in English such as drama. For example, Laryea was the narrator for the English play "Rebecca," broadcast in 1950 while Smith-Mensah played the part of Frances Crawly in the same play.²⁸³ To augment the training received on the job, these determined and ambitious women obtained government scholarships to train at the BBC in the early years of their appointments.

²⁷⁹ Interview with Frances Ademola, Retired Broadcaster, at "The Loom," Adabraka on 6 August 2013.

²⁸⁰ Interview with Ademola, August 6, 2013.

²⁸¹ AAGBC: 2881. Staff file for Susie Laryea.

²⁸² AAGBC: 2882. Staff file for Mariam Smith-Mensah.

²⁸³ GBC: Sound Archival Tape Log Book No. 118-125, 22/8/1950.

3.3 Negotiating femininity, domesticity and equal pay

As discussed early in the chapter, colonial administration discriminated against female employment in the formal workforce through rules expressed in the general orders. In 1948 when the announcement of female production assistants was made, the general orders that sought to control women's productive and reproductive rights still existed. Having been employed from the teaching field, the pioneers were already familiar with the General Orders directed at teachers. However, after their appointments the pioneer broadcasters were notified of General Order 137 (i) that was worded as follows:

In offering appointments to women, Heads of Department must give written notice to each candidate that in the event of her marriage or pregnancy she may be called upon to resign and that the continuation of her appointment will be at the discretion of the Head of the Department.²⁸⁴

Prah was already married with children even while with the teaching service. So was Laryea married. The latter must have been pregnant while serving her probation. Barely a year after her appointment, Laryea received approval to take "maternity leave on half pay" quoting a Colonial Secretary's Circular dated March 23rd, 1949.²⁸⁵ Smith-Mensah applied for marriage leave some years later stating clearly that she did not intend to resign after that.²⁸⁶ These pieces of evidence are indications that the rules on pregnancy and marriage were more relaxed by the late 1940s. Essentially, the fact that the women offered to work as programme assistants in the new field of broadcasting, when such rules still existed underscored their agency to define their occupational relationship with the new institution as wives, mothers and career women.

The pioneers contested the arbitrariness in the process of fixing their salaries. One of the pioneers, Dora Kwofie resigned in 1949, shortly after her appointment over discrepancies in the salaries of the pioneers. As stated in the announcement for recruitment referred to earlier,

²⁸⁴ AAGBC: 2882, Staff file for Mariam Smith-Mensah.

²⁸⁵ AAGBC: 2881, Staff file for Susie Laryea.

²⁸⁶ AAGBC: 2882, Staff file for Mariam Smith-Mensah.

the point of entry on the salary scale in radio work was to be determined by previous experience. With respect to the recruitment of teachers from mission schools, the policy states:

...it was usual government practice to appoint Mission Teachers on initial salaries equivalent to the salaries they were drawing from Government service, when such appointments are made with little or no breaks between the date of leaving the Educational Unit and the date of Government appointment.²⁸⁷

In the light of the policy, the pioneers expected the same salaries as male programme assistants who had been recruited from the mission schools with the same experience. But this was not so as evidence suggests.

Levack who had been involved in the employment of the pioneers seemed to have overlooked the “usual government practice” and the factor of previous experience. For example, Smith-Mensah with 12 years teaching experience petitioned against her salary suggesting gender discrimination as she considered her salary to be lower than some male production assistants with the same number of years of experience. When asked to explain how he arrived at the salaries for the pioneers, Levack argued as follows:

It should be appreciated that all the ladies whose services have been obtained can command reasonable salaries in the mission schools. They are therefore not unduly impressed by the security which we attach to inclusion in the Government Service. I append for your information the comments of the senior programme officer of my department...‘it seems clear that in the matter of women programme assistants we are bargaining in a ‘seller’s market’ and that the status or long term advantages of government services...do not provide enough to retain the seller’s services...’ One lady Miss Kwofie has already resigned and I gather that her resignation was not unconnected with her salary question...Miss Smith-Mensah and Mrs. Prah have both received offers for their return to the mission schools and will certainly follow Miss Kwofie if there is further delay and if the salary is not attractive enough.²⁸⁸

Although the issue of salaries was resolved quickly to address the discrepancies, Kwofie’s resignation created fear in the department. Official response to Smith Mensah’s petition assured her and the new programme assistants that “the department had the same salary policy for both

²⁸⁷ AAGBC: 2882, Staff file for Mariam Smith-Mensah.

²⁸⁸ AAGBC: 2882, Staff file for Mariam Smith-Mensah.

men and women.”²⁸⁹ The evidence is an indication that the pioneers contested possible discrimination to secure equal conditions of service for women in broadcast work and to subvert rules that fostered domesticity and threatened to exclude them from male-dominated economic spaces.

Levack spelt out the various strengths of the new production assistants. Although Laryea was the least experienced in terms of teaching, Levack considered her an asset to radio as she “carries great authority with more people.”²⁹⁰ Prah, with nine years teaching experience, was equally a great asset. She was assigned to the production of English programmes for women and at the same time was responsible for producing programmes in Twi for women. Smith-Mensah had the longest years of teaching experience, and she was seen as an asset to radio for Fanti language broadcast. This move by Levack may be seen as a way of reinforcing the value that the administration attached to the potential contributions of women to the development of broadcasting in general and to the modernisation of women and children in particular.

3.4 Pioneer guest artistes

Other women got a foothold into radio work as guest artistes in the late 1940s. In those roles, they translated and provided “voices” to written scripts. They also wrote and presented talks on diverse social issues such as health, children, the home and the family. The Director of Radio Administration in 2006, Harrison Afful, indicated that the guest artistes were invited because then, the station was looking for housewives to provide household tips to women.²⁹¹ Those who responded to the invitation included Evelyn Amarteifio, Emily Hesse, Christiana Sawyerr and Grace Amarteifio who presented talks in Ga. Esther Ocloo (nee Nkulenu), Benedicta Ocloo and Christine Alordeh also presented talks in Ewe. Anne Oldham and Clare

²⁸⁹ AAGBC: 2882, Staff file for Mariam Smith-Mensah.

²⁹⁰ AAGBC: 2882, Staff file for Mariam Smith-Mensah.

²⁹¹ Interview with Harrison Afful, Retired Broadcaster, at GBC on September 20, 2006.

Packham handled English programmes.²⁹² However, none of the guest artistes was a 'housewife' in the sense of the idealised Victorian housewife who felt fulfilled by staying at home.

For example, Evelyn Amarteifio was a teacher and social worker, renowned for her work in resettling victims of the 1939 earthquake in Accra. Emily Hesse was a renowned educationist and Esther Ocloo (nee Nkulenu) was a budding entrepreneur. The three women were founding members of the Federation of Gold Coast Women (FGCW), an organisation formed in 1953 to support programmes aimed at uplifting and improving the lives of girls and women.²⁹³ These women were agents of change and as a group, their organisation endorsed domesticity as a means of improving and modernising Ghanaian women through domestic skills training. They used radio as a resource to further their objectives of social transformation and advocacy for a gender equitable society. Their radio appearances were essential parts of the multiplicity of their daily activities and advocacy objectives that also included charity work. Sadly, family members did not recall the aspect of their activities with radio despite the visibility they might have enjoyed at the time.²⁹⁴

Initially, it appeared Radio Ghana was more committed to recruiting women as guest artistes than employing them for full time production work. But as the evidence suggests, some of the women themselves preferred part-time work to full time work as they considered the former as more convenient. Besides, as mentioned earlier, some of the women who showed interest in radio work such as Evelyn Amarteifio, Hesse and Ocloo in particular, were already full-time employees in regular careers as teachers, social workers and civil servants. Work as

²⁹² BBC General Overseas Programme Guide: GPD/W6825/10000/12-51. In Private Collection of Amankwa Ampofo.

²⁹³ See Amarteifio's Papers, lodged with the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.

²⁹⁴ Esther Nkulenu's first son, Vincent Malm when contacted did not know about her mother's relationship with radio; the same for Evelyn Amarteifio and Emily Hesse whose relations did not doubt the fact but did not know about the broadcasting aspect of their relations' lives. Contact with the relatives was made through Josephine Sappor a retired journalist of the Ghana News Agency (GNA) who worked with Amarteifio, Ocloo and Hesse. Sappor was a member of the Editorial Board of *The Ghanaian Woman*, a publication of the Ghana Assembly of Women (GAW) which Amarteifio chaired.

guest artistes enabled some of them to combine their radio appearances with their careers, managing their homes and engaging in social activities such as charity work or church activities. This way the guest artistes enjoyed the prestige associated with being on radio as well as pursuing their original careers.

Evidence suggests that Nkulenu (later Ocloo) worked more intensively with radio well into the early 1960s as has been mentioned in a programme line up in 1960 as producer of the Ewe women's programme.²⁹⁵ However, Grace Amarteifio, then a pupil teacher, accepted a contract as producer for the Ga women's magazine. She said she was not particularly involved in women's group associations or charity work at the time.

Other guest artistes engaged in the late 1950s, did not accept full time employment. For example Grace Armah who was the headmistress of the Anglican Girls Middle School at Kaneshie in Accra said:

I did not want to begin a fresh career. I was progressing in the teaching field and did not want to start afresh. People were recruited from the Civil service on their same scale. Although radio paid more than teaching, I thought more of my future progression and hoped conditions in the teaching field would improve. I wanted to be in teaching and do radio as part time.²⁹⁶

Having risen to that high position of headmistress, one could understand why Armah opted to remain a guest artiste instead of taking up full time radio career. Progress for Armah implied power and authority, which few women at the time enjoyed. Starting a new career in radio meant forfeiting that authority and power.

Pioneer guest artiste Grace Amarteifio (known on-air as Naa Ajekai Mansah) was 83 years old at the time of this research. She said while on contract, she produced three different programmes a week. "Radio took a lot of my time because once I finished a programme, I had to prepare for the next programme and sometimes it was really tiring with one recording studio

²⁹⁵ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (June 1960)

²⁹⁶ Interview with Grace Armah, Retired Teacher /Guest artiste at Kaneshie on June 29, 2013.

for everyone's use.”²⁹⁷ Amarteifio was on contract at Radio Ghana for 10 years during which time she engaged other women as guest artistes to contribute to her programmes. Her programmes contained out-of-studio interviews which brought the voices of ordinary women from the confines of the markets, beaches, and trading places into the public space.

The name Laura Quartey was found in the records suggesting that there were other female guest artistes in the early 1950s when the production assistants were employed. Quartey may have worked on contract too as most guest artistes did in the 1960s. She worked with five male commentators assigned to provide live coverage on events marking the silver jubilee of radio in 1960.²⁹⁸ Some of the guest artistes also took up full time careers as programme producers. An example is Lily Nketsia who is profiled later in the chapter.

By the late 1950s, before independence from colonial rule, the pioneer production assistants, Laryea, Prah and Smith-Mensah with the support of the guest artistes and expatriate staff had become “expert” programme makers. The pioneers laid the production structures of women's radio programmes in local languages and also in English. The production and presentation styles and format they adopted from the beginning became the model for producers of women and children's radio programmes on Radio Ghana for several decades. The pioneers supported each other in order to maintain their space in radio work. For example, Laura Quartey stood in for Sussie Laryea on the latter's request while she was on training at the BBC in 1954.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁷ Interview with Grace Amarteifio, Pioneer Guest Artiste at North Kaneshie on July 31, 2013.

²⁹⁸ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (April 5, 1960)

²⁹⁹ AAGBC: Staff file for Susie Laryea.

Pioneer Guest Artistes on Station ZOY



Picture 7: Benedicta Ocloo (1952)
Presenting Ewe Women's Programme.



Picture 8: Evelyn Amarteifio (1952)
Presenting Ga Women Programme.



Picture 9: Esther Nkulenu (1952)
Presenting Women's programme in Ewe.



Picture 10: Emily Hesse (1952)
Presenting Women's Programme in Gã.



Picture 11: Christine Alordey (1952)
Presenting Women's Magazine in Ewe.



Picture 12: Christiana Sawyerr (1952)
Presenting Women's Magazine in Ga.



Picture 13: Grace Amarteifio, Presenting Women's Magazine in Ga.

Source: *BBC General Overseas Programme Guide: GPD/W6825/10000/12-51.*

3.5 From ZOY to the Gold Coast Broadcasting System (GCBS)

The transition from *Station ZOY* to the GCBS in 1954 saw the recruitment of four more female programme makers in 1955 (the 'intake of 1955') and a couple of others after them before Ghana became a republic in 1960. The transition followed recommendations made by a commission set up by the Colonial Office with John Grenfell Williams as chair to advise the government on improving broadcasting in the colony.³⁰⁰ Regarding recruitment, the starting point was the school certificate. However, the commission made room for individuals "likely to show creative abilities as writers or as linguists or in music or in any other capacity that would be useful to broadcasting."³⁰¹ Thus, besides teachers, women from other disciplines with higher qualifications than the school certificate, applied for broadcasting careers. This second group of pioneers was known as the 'intake of 1955.'

The 'intake of 1955' included four women, namely, Comfort Odame, Vida Koranteng-Asante, Joyce Naa Adole Addo, and Rose Odamtten.³⁰² With the impending transition to independence the new intake together with the pioneer programme assistants were to prepare radio broadcasting services for the new era. Consequently, they received formal training at the

³⁰⁰ PRAAD (Accra), ADM 5/3/91, Report of the Broadcasting Commission Appointed by the Government of the Gold Coast, 1953.

³⁰¹ PRAAD (Accra), ADM 5/3/91, 32.

³⁰² Interview with Robert Owusu, November 15, 2013.

newly established radio training school, known in the circles of the trainees as ‘Perowne’s Radio Academy’ before joining the programmes operation staff.³⁰³ The new programme makers also negotiated production spaces outside specific gender spaces on air such as running live commentary, lending voices to radio scripts, conducting personality interviews and reading major news bulletins. The profiles of the four women and one other, Frances Ademola (nee Quashie-Idun) recruited in the early hours of independence are documented below.

Vida Koranteng-Asante was a clerical assistant at the Kumasi regional station of the GCBS when she applied for employment as a programme organiser.³⁰⁴ She recalled that while working as a clerical assistant, she also assisted with programme productions in Twi. “I love radio and I love to hear myself on air. I remember that on one occasion when the Twi producer was on annual leave I produced and presented the women’s programme in Twi.”³⁰⁵ When she settled in Accra after training in Britain, Koranteng-Asante became associated with news reading from the late 1970s, a role she performed until she retired in the early 1990. Her colleagues considered her colleagues as one of the most articulate female news readers in between late 1970s and 1990s. She was also noted for her elocution skills.³⁰⁶ While in Kumasi in the Ashanti Region, Koranteng-Asante produced entertainment programmes such as “Time for Dancing,” and “Children’s Corner” and also worked as continuity announcer.³⁰⁷ Essentially, Koranteng-Asante was the first female regional correspondent for Radio Ghana. She gathered and filed reports in English on important events in Kumasi for national broadcasts. This was in 1957 when regional news correspondents were assigned to the region.

³⁰³ Perowne Radio Academy was an unofficial name of the training school used by the trainees. Leslie Perowne was the first trainer and head of the radio training school.

³⁰⁴ Interview with Vida Koranteng-Asante, retired broadcaster, Nyaniba Estates, November 19, 2013.

³⁰⁵ Interview with Koranteng Asante, November 19, 2013.

³⁰⁶ Interview with Robert Owusu, November 15, 2013.

³⁰⁷ AAGBC: Staff file for Vida Koranteng-Asante.

Koranteng-Asante covered the first official visit to the Ashanti region of the Acting Governor-General, Sir Arku Korsah in 1957.³⁰⁸

Rose Odamtten (nee Djabanor) was a teacher with diverse interests; fashion, science, and socializing. Odamtten had received tuition in English and elocution while in Britain for four years after her secondary education in colonial Ghana. She was also conversant in French and in the early years of external service broadcasting Odamtten translated scripts for the station. Having been appointed as an announcer, she was initially attached to the newly established presentation section managed by British expatriate Jack Lawton and assisted by Susanne Laryea and Emmanuel Senayah. She worked as a continuity announcer for nearly two years, after which she was made a producer of the women's magazine programme in English, "Women's Half-Hour," and she contributed scripts on fashion and beauty to the programme. Of course, this was also an area that no male commentator on the team could have covered adequately. In May 1966, the German Foundation for Development invited Odamtten to take part in a seminar in Berlin on "Women in Professional and Political Life."



Picture 14: Rose Odamtten behind the console.
Source: *Private Collection of Robert Owusu*

³⁰⁸ GBC: Sound Archives Log Book Item no. 337.

When television broadcasting started in 1965, Odamtten requested transfer to television and evidence from her personal files suggests that she resisted attempts to prevent her from transferring to television in order to achieve her objective – “a chance in the development of TV in Ghana.”³⁰⁹ While with television, Odamtten created several programmes including “Around Town” – a mix of news, current affairs and recorded interviews with ordinary people in the streets of major cities and towns. Robert Owusu wrote this tribute read at her burial ceremony in 2006.

Rose Odamtten will always be remembered as one of the pioneers of radio and television who saw and managed the transition from the Gold Coast Broadcasting Service to the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation and the birth and nurture of Ghana Television.³¹⁰

Odamtten’s transfer from radio to television demonstrates women’s agency for self-advancement and also for expanding their economic and social status outside the confines of patriarchy and domesticity.

Joyce Naa Adoley Addo asserted her presence in radio work not only in news reading, but also in programme production and host of “Women’s Half Hour.” Robert Owusu, who was then a Studio Manager, remembers Addo for her creativity as a radio producer. “She was too meticulous to a fault. She used all the sound elements – music, dialogue and sound effects – with precision.”³¹¹

³⁰⁹ AAGBC: 2452. Staff File of Rose Odamtten.

³¹⁰ AAGBC: 2452. Staff File of Rose Odamtten.

³¹¹ Interview with, Robert Owusu, November 15, 2013.



Picture 15: Joyce Naa Adoley Addo as Presenteer/Host of “Women’s Half-Hour”
Source: *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, 1960

Addo combined her professional skill and talent as a dramatist to work in several areas of broadcasting. Besides producing and hosting the women’s magazines in English, Addo also produced “Radio Theatre” previously, “Gold Coast Theatre.” Chris Tackie who worked with Addo on most of the productions said: “This lady was so creative and one of the best we had.”³¹² Like Odamtten, Addo also transferred to television in 1965 making another important step in her career advancement with broadcasting. In the early 1970s Joyce Addo became a household name because of two television programmes she created, produced and directed. The first, “Villa Kakalika,” was based on the concept of mystery and it raised cultural issues such as belief in life after death. The second, “Avenue A,” was a television series that reflected the realities of daily life experiences and pressures of the modern Ghanaian home, changes within the family institution, and public reactions to such changes. These productions and several others, shot Addo to prominence, earning her a national award, the Grand Medal (Civil Division) for her distinguished achievement in the field of television drama and to the development of television broadcasting in Ghana.

³¹² Interview with Chris Tackie, Retired Broadcaster at Teshie Nungua on March 12, 2013.

Comfort Appiah (nee Odame) was also assigned to the presentation section where she started as a continuity announcer. By working as continuity announcers, women's voices became more audible on the airwaves and gave the station a gendered identity. Continuity announcing was previously a male dominated occupational role. Comfort Appiah's voice also earned her a place as one of the early female news readers after independence. Joe Cofie described Appiah as "one of the hardest working and dedicated women Radio Ghana ever had, meticulous and disciplined in her approach to work."³¹³



Picture 16: Comfort Odame as Continuity Announcer.
Source: *GBC: 50 years of Broadcasting, 1935 - 1985*

Appiah was noted for bringing greater discipline to production work by filing recorded tapes on time. Importantly too, Appiah used radio to uplift people's social and spiritual lives through entertainment and religious programmes. She is credited with the popular music request programme, "Listener's Choice" broadcast on radio five days a week in the mid 1960s. Over 500 musical requests were made each week (an average of 90 letters a day). She had to sort through over 40,000 records in the library in order to meet audiences' needs.³¹⁴ Appiah was in charge of the gramophone library in the 1970s. She later became the Head of the Religious Department before her retirement in the early 1980s.

³¹³ Interview with Joe Cofie, Retired Broadcaster at Mamprobi, on November 14, 2013.

³¹⁴ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 5, 1962).

Frances Ademola (nee Quashie-Idun) also joined broadcasting in 1956. Together with the pioneers she and other colleagues recruited before her, were to prepare radio for the new era. She had recently completed her university education in the United Kingdom. While in the UK in 1954, Ademola was invited by the Gold Coast High Commission in Britain to attend a six week course at the BBC for colonial broadcasters. All the other participants were male and also there was only one representative from the Gold Coast. This singular action by the Commission, signifies interest in sharpening women's interest in radio careers. After the course, Ademola worked with the BBC Service on two programmes, "Calling West Africa" and "West African Voices."³¹⁵ The latter was an interview programme on the service that targeted and reflected voices of West Africans in their respective countries on issues in the sub region.

Back home Ademola hosted "People in the News," a personality programme previously hosted by a senior male colleague, Gilbert Addy. She also created a new programme, "Sunday Magazine. She said: "Both were well received particularly by the elite in society who were the programme's primary target."³¹⁶ "People in the News" was a 15-minute one-on-one interview with government delegations and personalities visiting Ghana after independence while the "Sunday Magazine" was a 30-minute package of news and personality interviews. Ademola's eloquence and training at the BBC enabled her to establish her presence on radio within some few months of her engagement by creating a niche in conducting personality interviews.

I interviewed Adlai Stevenson, one of America's presidential candidates who was visiting Ghana in the early years of independence in the 1960s. I also interviewed Mrs. Allan Lodge, Organiser of World Women's Christian Temperance Union.³¹⁷

Ademola described radio work as new in the colony and both women and men working at the time as "adventurers." She monitored her programmes for feedback and stated that:

³¹⁵ Interview with Ademola, August 6, 2013.

³¹⁶ Interview with Ademola, August 6, 2013.

³¹⁷ Radio Ghana Sound Archive, Tape no. RR 9859.

The Sunday Magazine taught me a few things about broadcasting and that was working late into the night and understanding audience listening habits. Those who wanted to listen sat and listened. Those who used radio as background picked a few things only.³¹⁸

Ademola said she received instant feedback on her programme through telephone calls and brief notes from prominent people such as J.B Danquah, one of the six prominent politicians who played a leading role in the attainment of Ghana's independence. This made her extremely proud of her success with radio. She continued her broadcasting career between 1958 and 1969 in Nigeria where she lived with her husband. She joined television broadcasting on her return home and created a new television programme, "Correct English" on Ghana Television.

Apart from the pioneers profiled above there were also broadcasters such as Patience Asante, one of the pioneers of the Kwame Nkrumah University who broke the dominant mould of working on women's programmes. She became Head of Schools Broadcasting in the mid 1960s. Another broadcaster, Barbara Oddoye conducted personality interviews, including one with census expert, Dr. Benjamin Gill in 1959 on the 1960 census in Ghana.³¹⁹ Also there was Betty Quashie-Idun who broke the prevailing myth about women and news reading in 1959.³²⁰



Picture 17: Betty Quashie-Idun. First Female Newsreader on Radio Ghana.
Source: *Private Collection of Family.*

³¹⁸ Interview with Ademola, August 6, 2013.

³¹⁹ Radio Ghana Sound Archive, Tape no. RR 9859.

³²⁰ Interview with Cleland Ababio, Retired Broadcaster, at GBC on April 26, 2007.

Quashie-Idun was the first Ghanaian female to read the World News. Until then, women were not allowed to read this major news bulletin despite the fact that their voices were heard on several other programmes. Broadcast voice trainer Cleland Ababio confirmed: “We were told that women do not read the news.”³²¹ The “rule” was verbally transmitted but the source was unknown. Broadcasters interviewed for this thesis did not know the reason for the exclusion of women from this high profile role. The “rule” however remained unquestioned for years probably because it reinforced cultural claims that conferred public speaking rights on men as Kwesi Yankah had contended.³²² Ben Gadzekpo, a vernacular announcer in the 1940s who became Head of Radio Ghana Training School in the 1960s made the following observation in his memoir entitled *Ghana Muntie* (Listen, Ghanaian). He wrote:

Like the practice at the BBC, women now also read the news in Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. When this system started as an experiment 16 years ago, and it had to be dropped, on the ground that it was against Ghanaian custom for women to act as linguists. As a chief’s message reaches his people through the linguist, so the critics argued a news broadcast which they regarded as a message from the Government reaches the people through the newsreader.³²³

Gadzekpo’s explanation suggests that women’s exclusion from news reading resulted from indigenous cultural claims of male authority as communication intermediaries.

Literature on women and radio outside Africa asserts that the politics around the female voice on major on-air roles was due to professional stereotypes. For example, David Horsley and Gayle Yamada point out in the context of America that at first, the female voice was considered unsuitable for news reading because it was shrill and lacked authority in terms of quality.³²⁴ Consistent with arguments about the gendered nature of technology, Kate Lacey blames the development of the microphone for distorting women’s voices suggesting that

³²¹ Interview with Ababio, April 26, 2007.

³²² Yankah, *Speaking for the Chief*, 68.

³²³ Ben Gadzekpo, *Ghana Muntie* (Unpublished Memoir on Radio Ghana, n.d.), 55. In Private Collections of Audrey Gadzekpo.

³²⁴ David Horsley and Gayle Yamada, *Hard News: Women in Broadcast Journalism* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1987), 50.

women's initial exclusion from radio in the context of German radio was due to the development of the technology which did not consider women as potential users.³²⁵ Allison McCracken also referred to Michele Hilmes to explain in the context of America that "because radio is invisible, the voice cannot be visually fixed to a gendered body and therefore the detached women's voice is potentially disturbing."³²⁶ The literature makes claims based on biological determinism that men have a natural voice for radio. However, Jacqueline St John contends that such claims of "a natural on-the-air superiority of men" were used to exclude women from prominent roles.³²⁷ These pieces of evidence suggest that such claims and positions both indigenous and inherited professional stereotypes, may have influenced thinking about women and news reading in the early years of radio broadcasting in Ghana.

The profiles of the female pioneers show that by 1960 women programme makers had expanded their programme making spaces and carved out niches for themselves including running live commentaries and conducting personality interviews. From a place of novelty and experimentation, radio became one of the most prestigious and sought after places of employment after independence and the pioneers did not hide that. Testimonies of broadcasters, female and male and those who were recruited in the early 1960s suggest so. Unlike the previous years when women were sought after to speak to women and children, in the late 1960s many women found it tough to secure careers as programme producers and production assistants. Other career spaces such as radio journalism and studio technicians were created as a result of institutional expansion and the move toward specialisation. In the following sections the thesis shows through additional profiles some of the pioneers in such specialised areas. The context of women's employment after independence is first examined.

³²⁵ Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies*, 3

³²⁶ Allison McCracken, "Scary Women and Scared Men Suspense, Gender Trouble and Postwar Changes," in *Radio Reader Essays in the Cultural History of Radio*, edited by Michele Hilmes and Jason Laviglio. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 184-5.

³²⁷ Jacqueline D. St John, "Sex Role Stereotyping in Early Broadcast History: The Career of Mary Margaret McBride," *Frontiers*, Vol. III No. 1 (1978), 32.

3.6 Context of Women's Employment in Radio after Independence

In addition to the euphoria that characterised the attainment of independence was also a mood of anxiety and expectation. Concerned about their status in society, women were not only expectant of what the new era had in store for them but also how they could participate in national affairs and improve their own status in the nascent state. Such expectations may have been inspired by the fact that prior to independence in 1957, a number of women gained access to public and decision making positions in the country. For example, Mabel Dove became the first woman to be elected to the National Assembly from 1951-1954.

The government of the Convention People's Party (CPP) under President Nkrumah was favourably disposed towards women and fostered policies to improve their civic rights and employment opportunities. Ghanaian women's history documents the period of the early 1960s as the era of the "first woman" because the country witnessed for the first time, the presence of Ghanaian females in professions male dominated professions such as the legal, medical, journalism and engineering fields.³²⁸ During the decade of the 1960s, many women took up managerial positions in several economic disciplines as well. The media did not lose sight of these important historical moments for women. For example, when Ms Marian Asafu-Adjei was appointed a manageress of Kingsway Stores in 1961, she was celebrated on the front page of the *Daily Graphic* as the fifth female African among 148 men with managerial status in United African Company (UAC).³²⁹ Advocacy for female education that started in the late colonial period was enhanced by Nkrumah's policies on education which were aimed at encouraging women's direct involvement in political life as well as emphasising their potential economic contributions to build the new nation, Ghana. In 1969 Ghana's first female high court judge Mrs Justice Annie Jiagge was elected by the United Nations General Assembly as the

³²⁸ Dzodzi Tsikata, "Affirmative Action Policies for Ghana" (Accra: FES, 2012).

³²⁹ *Daily Graphic*, January, 1961.

first African woman chair of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. The appointment of Justice Jiagge to this international office signalled the growing status of Ghanaian women worldwide. The high court judge was appointed after the overthrow of the CPP government under Dr Nkrumah in the first ever military coup d'état in the country.

Be that as it may, the decade of the 1960s was a historic one for women in broadcasting employment. The creation of separate departments such as News and Current Affairs and Audience Research Departments and subsequently, the introduction of External Service and Rural Broadcasting opened up employment opportunities for more women. Recognising the importance of professional training, Nkrumah established the Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ) in 1959 to produce professionally trained personnel to operate and to manage the country's mass communication media. Three women were among the pioneers of the school. They were Dorinda Bannerman-Bruce, Victoria Vivian Seshie and Patience Kwame. Victoria Vivian Seshie was later employed at the radio newsroom.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting undertook a staff recruitment drive after independence through several job advertisements such as Youth-In-Training and scholarships for journalism training. Three women and 20 women enrolled with the Youth-in-Training programme offered by Radio Ghana's Engineering Training School and qualified as technicians at different periods in the late 1960s. The women were Angelina Nelly Nortey, Florence Marian Dick and Christiana Dankwa.³³⁰ Recruitment was also made directly from universities, colleges and schools as part of the staff recruitment drive by the then Minister of Information and Broadcasting E.A. Inkumsah in 1964.³³¹

Several high calibre employees, including women were recruited for broadcasting during the decade. Eight women were among the first crop of graduates from the University of

³³⁰ *The Broadcaster*, (July-August, 1968).

³³¹ *Ghana Today*, (June 17, 1964).

Ghana, recruited for international broadcasting. Amongst the group were Jane Cole, Stella Ansah (nee Telfer), Gertude Twum, Rose Twum-Danso and Anna Sai (nee Clark). All of them worked in the English language section of the service alongside other women in the Arabic, Portuguese, Swahili and French sections. Other key persons employed in the 1960s include Rosina Amaning, Maud Blankson Mills, Miranda Greenstreet, Janet Esseku, Helen Odamtten, Augustina Akwei, Wilhemina Longdon, Genevive Nylander, Harriet Techie-Menson and Patience Asante. Others are Mildred Vanderpuye, Emelia Cromwell-Adama (nee Elliot), Gertrude Opare-Addo, Lily Whitaker, Augustina Moses, Augustina Akwei and many others who contributed in diverse ways to the development of radio.

The expansion and organisation of broadcasting, including the acquisition of equipment and recruitment of staff, created a new and vibrant institution replete with talents and ideas. While before independence women broadcasters were considered largely for occupational roles related to their gender, developments in the physical and human expansion of the organization after independence, found women breaking out of strictly gender specific programming spaces into other spaces such as journalism and international broadcasting. The new environment with many more women, also affected women in complex ways. For example, some women on contract did not have their contracts renewed. Grace Amarteifio, a pioneer guest artiste was one such victim. She recalls:

Radio Ghana gave me a letter thanking me for my services but did not give reasons for dispensing of my services. They claimed my husband was working there and I should not continue to work there. I did not challenge it.³³²

She felt it was only an excuse to get rid of her and she was probably right because following her termination a couple of months later in 1965, 16 programme assistants were appointed on contract, three of them, women.³³³ Amarteifio's disengagement may be partly due to conflict

³³² Interview with Miranda Greenstreet, former broadcaster, East Legon, July 29, 2013.

³³³ *The Broadcaster*, (August, 1965).

of interest. The evidence also suggests that women were more likely than men to lose their job when events of this nature cropped up.

3.7 From Ghana Broadcast System (GBS) to Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC)

Miranda Greenstreet joined radio in 1960 after her university education in the United Kingdom and she worked for two years with Radio Ghana before taking up an appointment with the University of Ghana. After two sessions as a guest artiste, Greenstreet joined the permanent staff. Like her predecessors she contributed scripts and interviewed guests for “Women’s Half-Hour” and “The Doctor and I” a programme on health produced by Wilhelmina Longdon. Subsequently, she worked with the English language department writing and editing features on diverse development issues. Greenstreet considered as most her stint at running live commentary. This was during Queen Elizabeth’s visit to Ghana in 1961. This account of her experience is worth quoting:

During the queen’s visit I was asked to be a commentator with Festus Adae. At first I was a bit nervous about being a commentator because I thought I wouldn’t be able to describe the various things that I saw. But Festus encouraged me and said: You and I are here. The audience can’t see what we see so whatever we say is what they know is happening here. So that gave me sufficient confidence to commentate properly on the Queen’s visit not just here in Accra but we went as far as to Takoradi even when she was returning home. And when some of these tapes were sent to England, they said this is the Audrey Russell of Radio Ghana. ³³⁴

It was Greenstreet’s voice and elocution that earned her the recognition as the “Audrey Russell” of Radio Ghana. Her experience seems to dismiss arguments about male superiority in on-the-air functions such as commentating and suggests that women could run live radio commentaries as efficiently as men.

While this may be so, the evidence also suggests that when women tried to break into male domains such as commentating, they were still confined to roles related to their gender

³³⁴ Interview with Greenstreet, July 29, 2013. Audrey Russell was a commentator with the BBC in the 1960s.

and that tended to reinforce professional stereotypes inherent in production practices.

Greenstreet's recall of the content of her broadcast illustrates this position:

I was responsible for describing what was happening to the females around the queen including the queen herself the dress she was wearing, the hat, and the colours, how she turned out, how people interacted with her when she visited several places.³³⁵

Gender restrictions inherent in production practices were taken for granted and considered as normal and logical. Primary evidence shows that two other women, Laura Quartey a free-lance broadcaster and Rose Odamtten were restricted to similar gendered roles on different occasions when they presented live commentaries with their male colleagues. For example, at a state ball in 1960 to celebrate Ghana's attainment of republican status, Quartey, was assigned to "keep you women informed on the new frocks that the ladies attending the ball were wearing."³³⁶

Despite the gender politics inherent in production processes specifically, in the assignment of roles, Greenstreet and other female broadcasters profiled later in the chapter, believed that performing the same duties as their male colleagues was an achievement for women. Women felt the development was liberating rather than confining as women did not shy away from such duties. This message was conveyed in the following statement by Greenstreet:

...women were everywhere in radio work and we did the same work as the males. You needed to produce programmes by going out into the field, chatting with people, recording their voices, conducting research on the topic and packaging the voices and information gathered in the best way for listeners to understand. This is what radio is all about and this is what we all did, both men and women.³³⁷

Greenstreet's statement endorsed women as significant contributors to the development of radio. She was part of the skeleton staff of the external service during the test transmission

³³⁵ Interview with Greenstreet, July 29, 2013.

³³⁶ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (June 24, 1960).

³³⁷ Interview with Greenstreet, July 29, 2013.

period and she presented programmes such as “Women’s Forum” produced jointly with Genevieve Nylander. The latter was a prominent newsreader in the early 1970s.

Greenstreet recalled producing several features on water, traditional birth attendants, lorry parks, rural to urban migration and health and sanitation. She considered the subjects addressed in the features as critical developmental issues of interest to both genders. Greenstreet resigned when she got pregnant with her second child in 1962. Her resignation was not related to her pregnancy. She resigned to prepare for a new career in academia with the Institute of Adult education, at the University of Ghana. Greenstreet attributed her interest in adult education to her work with radio. She states:

I believe that my stint at radio Ghana was a very good thing for me in particular because it opened my eyes to the problems and the developmental issues in this country. So when I went to work for the university with the Institute of Adult education I had already been grounded in some of the issues confronting our society...The interest in adult education was developed as a result of my work with radio Ghana.³³⁸

Aside of preparing her for a future career in academia, Greenstreet’s testimony suggests also that Ghanaian women took advantage of opportunities in the changing society not only to enhance their social and cultural capital but also to negotiate new and equitable gender spaces in public life outside the confines of domesticity. Professor Greenstreet retired as the director of the Institute of Adult Education in the early 1990s.

Jane Cole was among the first group of graduates recruited in 1964 purposely for the newly established External Broadcasting Service. The graduates were assigned to produce programmes directed at promoting the government’s vision of African unity. Cole and her colleagues were assigned to the English Service Department and they produced and aired programmes for English speaking audiences in West, East, Central and Northern Africa to support national liberation struggles typical of the 1960s. She notes that “We all did current

³³⁸ Interview with Greenstreet, July 29, 2013.

affairs programmes. We picked any current topics of interest and researched on how events impacted Africans either positively or negatively.”³³⁹ An excerpt of a script on industrialisation and African culture she wrote is illustrative. It says in part that:

...the development of transport made for national unity. By means of the development of transport, the idea of belongingness which emanated from tribal unity has been translated into national unity and it is this same idea which inspire [sic] and continue [sic] to inspire the movement of African unity.³⁴⁰

Cole noted that the team contributed scripts on various topical issues and events in Africa, aired on programmes such as the “African Scene.” The objective was to promote African unity. Apart from transportation, the broadcasters discussed politics, economic issues and African history. The work of the fresh graduates was guided by Nkrumah’s statement at the inauguration of the External Service station in November, 1960.

In this External Broadcasting System we now have a Voice which will boom and resound across the shores and over the mountains and valleys, carrying with it a message of hope and encouragement to our compatriots in our beloved continent. The Voice of this service will not necessarily be the voice of Ghana; indeed it will be the Voice of Africa.³⁴¹

Cole’s consciousness of her African and international audiences inspired her commitment to providing relevant information to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the ideals of the OAU and continental unity. And as she points out:

We were enthusiastic to work in radio. People were listening to you including heads of states and we were motivated by this fact. We were excited during the OAU summit when we met some of these heads of state.³⁴²

Cole created the discussion programme “Africa Today” (later changed to “Africa This Week” in the early 1980s). She said: “We got people in the studio to talk about Africa, raise questions

³³⁹ Interview with Jane Cole, former broadcaster, at East Legon on July 10, 2012.

³⁴⁰ Jane Cole, “Industrialisation and African Culture” in *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times* (Accra: GBC, May 28, 1965).

³⁴¹ Kwame Nkrumah, “Statement at the Inauguration of External Service of GBC” in *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times* (Accra: GBC, November 3, 1961).

³⁴² Interview with Cole, July 10, 2012.

and think about emerging issues on the continent and then to make suggestions on how to get Africa united.”³⁴³ In 1967, while on a training in Canada, Cole was assigned to cover the Expo '67 Fair taking place in Montreal. In a letter dated 29th May, 1967 the Deputy-Director General E.G.K. Adjorlorlo asked Cole to provide voice casts for Ghana Newsreel and file reports on Ghana Day at the fair attended by Head of State General Ankrah and 11 delegates from Ghana. She was also asked to cover “interesting features of the Fair, particularly with African flavour”.³⁴⁴

Cole shared the following view on the relevance of the External Service Station in the 1960:

The External Service was instrumental in putting Ghana in the forefront. People looked up to Ghana as pace setters. The station defined the African public space. That was our contribution as broadcasters, both men and women. We broadcast to Africa with a clear vision – to see that one day, Africa would unite.³⁴⁵

Still in support of the African unity goals, Cole contributed scripts to several other programmes including “Our African Cultural Heritage” aired on the national network in 1965.

In 1976, Cole was seconded by the ruling Supreme Military Council (SMC) government as Executive Secretary of the newly established National Council on Women and Development (NCWD). Cole’s radio career served as her springboard into this quasi-political career which entailed formulating and implementing policies to address gender inequalities and promote the emancipation of women. The quasi-state machinery was meant to maintain a channel of communication between women and the government. It was the first national machinery mandated to pursue the integration and development of Ghanaian women in national development. As executive secretary, Cole coordinated several activities including conducting research into specific areas and issues of concern to women. The NCWD provided income

³⁴³ Interview with Cole, July 10, 2012.

³⁴⁴ AAGBC: Staff file for Jane Cole.

³⁴⁵ Interview with Cole, July 10, 2012.

generation skills to women in areas such as *gari* and palm oil processing, beads making and basket weaving. These were ways by which rural women were assisted to improve their lives and standard of living. Having been involved with international broadcasting for 12 years, Cole admitted that while working with the Council:

... I saw the usefulness of radio in reaching out to rural women. I collaborated with people in Radio Ghana to educate women and implement the educational policies of NCWD. Even there, I saw myself as using radio to promote Africa's development in that whatever programmes you did was aimed at ameliorating the situation of women on the continent.³⁴⁶

Cole took advantage of another opportunity to start a career in international development. She resigned from the Council to work with the UN Children Fund (UNICEF) in 1979. She was posted to Mogadishu in Somalia to manage an integrated social development programme as part of Somalia's development plan. She also worked in Ethiopia where she was in charge of Regional Integrated Basic Services which comprised working on development issues including water, health sanitation and community development. Cole was transferred from the Horn Africa to UNICEF headquarters in New York where she worked as programme officer for the African Desk. In this position, she was responsible for programmes in Angola, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Namibia, Kenya and Eritrea/Ethiopia. She also worked in Uganda, Tanzania, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe. Clearly, Cole's work in international broadcasting, may have prepared her adequately for these international assignments in development work.

Stella Ansah's (nee Telfer) was one of the pioneer women hired for international broadcasting and like Cole and Janet Esseku (profiled below), was instrumental in the promotion and construction of African unity. Ansah carved out her own niche by writing extensively on political developments in North Africa for broadcast on "African Scene" and

³⁴⁶Interview with Cole, July 10, 2012.

“African Forum.” Her two part broadcast on Tunisia in 1965, provided a detailed historical account of events that led to independence in the North African country.³⁴⁷ Telfer’s contributions to political issues in Africa demonstrate the diversity of interests that pioneer female broadcasters had and which they shared with listeners. Her profile reinforces the point that women were not confined to professionally stereotypical duties and issues. Besides political programmes, Telfer was also associated with the production of “Mail Bag,” a programme that discussed letters from African countries that received the external service transmissions.

Janet Esseku had been working in several departments before moving to rural broadcasting when the service was established in 1965.³⁴⁸ She was employed in 1961. Esseku’s first assignment with Radio Ghana was undertaken at the programme operations department as a continuity announcer. She was later transferred to the Transcription Department in late 1962 which was an aspect of external service broadcasting. Work involved listening to recorded broadcasts from radio stations across the world and recommending them to programme producers. She notes that “the useful thing about working on transcription tapes is you had access to first-hand information even if producers did not use the content.”³⁴⁹ Another aspect of her work at the transcription department was compiling programmes for African countries in line with Radio Ghana’s mission of promoting African unity. Esseku compiled some of the programmes on the first conference of the Organisation of African Union (OAU) held in Accra in 1963 that were dispatched to participating countries thus playing a prominent role in connecting Africans with each other through information sharing and exchange.

³⁴⁷ Stella Telfer, “Tunisia, From Colonial Domination to Self-Rule,” in *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times* (May 28, 1965).

³⁴⁸ Interview with Janet Esseku, retired broadcaster at Henry Dei Pension House on August 6, 2013.

³⁴⁹ Interview with Janet Esseku, August 6, 2013.



Picture 18: Janet Esseku, pioneer, Rural Broadcasting
Source: *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, 1960.

Esseku was transferred to rural broadcast when the network was set up in 1965. She was the first female to work in the department. Sawuratu Alhassan who worked with Esseku at the department described her as “a strong pillar in the development of rural broadcasting and the radio farm forum” in particular.³⁵⁰ The 80-year old retired broadcaster said the farm forum format was one of the best ways of engaging the rural listener because it group discussions and feedback after listening sessions. She shared this experience:

We travelled to the Western region crossing the Ankobra River on a pontoon to Tikobo Number One. The people were happy that we had travelled all the way from Accra so that people in Accra will hear about them.³⁵¹

Although such travels to rural communities took female broadcasters away from home for days, Esseku said they did not relent in their efforts to provide the rural women relevant information and ideas through radio and also through such personal interactions with them.

Essentially, Esseku said she was motivated by the desire to improve the lives of rural women and their families and to encourage radio listening among. Her radio programmes on development were means by which rural communities connected with people and events in the

³⁵⁰ Interview with Sawuratu Alhassan, retired broadcaster, GBC Club House on September 11, 2013.

³⁵¹ Interview with Esseku, August 6, 2013.

urban areas and vice versa. Esseku aimed at according status and recognition to rural people, particularly women farmers who were happy to be heard on national radio. Her story is consistent with literature by Paddy Scannell on the power of broadcasters to use the studio space to accord recognition to people by bringing their voices onto the public space of radio.”³⁵²

Esseku created a programme for Ga rural families entitled, *Onye Otsu onye oye* (If you can work, you can feed yourself). The programme was in support of “Operation Feed Yourself,” a national agricultural programme launched in the mid 1970s by the ruling Supreme Military Council (SMC) government and aimed at making Ghana self-sufficient in food production. The dramatised series addressed issues such as family planning and maternal and infant care. The messages sought to “modernise” rural women. She recalled that rural women had diverse views about modern family planning methods and many held on strongly to their traditional belief in large family size. She also contributed to the “West African Farmer” a programme aired on the external service in the early 1970s. Her experiences show the prominent roles women broadcasters played as agents of change and development Esseku retired as Head of Rural Broadcasting in 1993.

Harriet Techie-Menson is acknowledged as the pioneer female disk jockey (D.J.) on Radio Ghana. The disk jockey role was popularised as a male occupational role when the commercial service station, Radio Two, was established in 1967. The tasks required basic skills such as playing music or “gramophone records”, continuity announcing and studio management. Already equipped with these skills, Techie-Menson registered her presence on the station with her “feminine voice and good sense of music.”³⁵³ HTM, as she called herself

³⁵² Scannell, *Broadcast Talk*, 2.

³⁵³ Interview with Joe Cofie, November 14, 2013.

negotiated her transfer from the programme operation unit to join the commercial service network despite comments from male colleagues that she wanted to do men's work.



Picture 19: Harriet Techie-Menson. First Female Disk Jockey (1970)
Source: Source: *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*

Techie-Menson admitted however that time schedules were more rigid and work more demanding as a D.J but her determination to excel and prove the male critiques wrong urged her on.³⁵⁴ She is celebrated for blazing the trail for other female DJs at Radio Ghana like Lucy Banini and more vibrant and younger ones like Nana Ayensua Amonoo and Sussie Ardeyfiio (Naa Ayele Ardeyfiio). Techie- Menson negotiated another transfer from entertainment broadcasting to the English Language department in the early 1980s to take charge of the production of “Women’s World.” In the late 1990s, she carved out another niche for herself as a broadcast administrator. She was one of two women to be appointed as regional directors, the first in the history of radio and was responsible for Cape Coast and retired in the early 2000.

Lily Agyeman Nketia cultivated a relationship with broadcasting and indeed female broadcasters when she became a regular resource person on the women’s magazine programme, Women’s World. She was an active member of social clubs and voluntary groups

³⁵⁴ Interview with Harriet Techie-Menson, retired broadcaster at North Kaneshie on November 15, 2013.

such as the Young Women's Christian Association (YMCA) and Legon Women's Club. Working within the framework of domesticity, these clubs and associations helped to equip Ghanaian girls with vocational skills so that they could earn incomes to support themselves and families. Nketia saw the need to use radio for purposes of advocacy. Therefore, while serving as a resource person, Nketia facilitated greater relationships between female broadcasters and women's clubs/groups.³⁵⁵ Her efforts contributed to bringing more public and national attention to the concerns of women and their efforts at promoting a more equitable society.

Nketia secured a full-time career in broadcasting in 1964 as a programme producer taking over the production of the Women's World following the demise of the regular producer, Florence Prah. Primary evidence suggests that most female broadcasters engaged in the production of women's programme did not confine themselves to that programming space but took on additional productions. Thus, in addition to the women's magazine programme, Nketia produced a 15-minute programme on history entitled "Digging the Past" broadcast between 1972 and 1976. She also produced "Children's Quarter Hour," a weekly magazine in English. She engaged children as artistes from different schools. Nketia retired as Comptroller of Programmes in 1981.

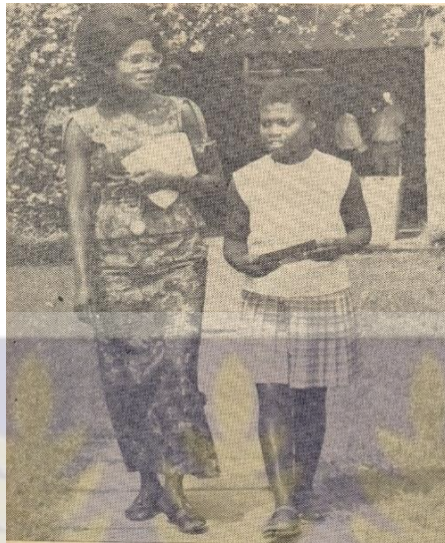
Hannah Danquah-Smith started her 30-year career in radio broadcasting after resigning from teaching in the mid 1960s. She recognised the power of radio in fostering change early during her teaching career and although she had long desired to work in radio, she only got employed in 1967. She said:

Radio was something I wanted to do all the time I wanted to work at the GBC because I found radio as a powerful educational tool. I applied, attended an interview, passed but I was dropped. I applied again. I was asked to go for voice training. But I told them that if they didn't take me I would come back again.³⁵⁶

³⁵⁵ Interview with Professor Emeritus Kwabena Nketia, Spouse of Lily Nketia at Madina on June 12, 2013.

³⁵⁶ Interview with Hannah Danquah-Smith, retired broadcaster at Sakumono, on February 2, 2013.

Although Danquah-Smith did not assign reasons for the difficulty in securing employment with radio, evidence suggests that her determination to work for radio paid off.



Picture 20: Hannah Danquah-Smith with Henrietta Banful
Source: Source: *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times* (1960)

Her first assignment was to produce English language programmes for children. At the same time, she produced and created several programmes, two being “Thinking Aloud” and “Law in Action” that targeted the intellectual community including university lecturers who also served as resource persons. Danquah-Smith re-introduced the health programme, the “Doctor and I” under a new title “Family Doctor” and also changed the presentation style from discussion to a dramatised series with an interview segment. The programmes were aired between 1970 and 1980. Danquah-Smith is not one of the pioneers of radio. However, she is acknowledged for her long service, creativity and commitment to radio. Her commitment was evidenced in her purposive use of radio for change in pursuit of national development goals. Danquah-Smith introduced drama and Ananse tales to children’s programmes writing her own drama scripts and providing children space on her programmes to air their literary work.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁷ Ananse is the name given to the spider who is known for being cunning and tricky in Ghanaian folklore.

Victoria Vivian Seshie was the first female journalist to work in the radio news department. The department was set up in 1956 to take charge of the journalistic output of radio as a core function of the public service station. Seshie was one of three female pioneers of the Ghana Institute of Journalism who graduated in 1961.³⁵⁸ She joined the radio newsroom department in 1962 as an assistant reporter and became a regular voice on “Ghana Newsreel” – a news magazine programme on events and personalities making news in Ghana. Elizabeth Akyeampong, another trained journalist joined the radio newsroom two years after Seshie also as an assistant reporter. However, both exited as assistant editors in 1972 under different circumstances. Seshie resigned on the grounds of family responsibilities and rigid work schedules that involved running the shift system. Akyeampong however sought transfer to the rural broadcasting department in 1972. There, Akyeampong produced two programmes in Akan that targeted farmers and women – *Kuaye mu Adwen* (Farmers Questions and Answers) and *Obra ye Bona* (Struggles of Daily Life).

Radio’s development and expansion had varied effects on staff particularly young mothers as radio operations became more rigid with stricter time schedules. Seshie’s resignation could be partly attributed to the effect of such changes in radio operations. Until the early 1960s, some members of staff had been working regular hours from 8:00 a.m. to eight 5:00 p.m. The introduction of the shift system in the mid 1960s affected women in diverse ways. Married women with children especially those who were involved in live programme productions such as technicians, journalists, continuity announcers and disk jockeys were the most affected. Such was the context under which Seshie resigned from her work. Her personal records suggest that previous attempts to negotiate her work schedule to enable her to perform

³⁵⁸ The two others were Dorinda Bannerman Bruce and Patience Kwame who were both employed with the Information Services Department, Ministry of Information.

other news related duties that did not require running the shift system proved futile. In one communication for example, Seshie stated:

I know that family or parental matters should not always necessarily override official demands. But I beg to state that I view the demand on me to go back to the shift system as an attempt however unintentional at creating hardship and inconvenience....If this shift system is found unbearable for the male staff, how can it work for long periods with a female with children, the youngest under one year. ³⁵⁹

Seshie's letter suggests that gender discrimination in the assignment of work schedules due partly to lack of gender sensitivity and flexibility in newsroom management, accounted partly for her resignation. Gender and media historian Linda Steiner who has documented similar experiences in the context of America, pointed out that sustaining such processes of resisting, complaining and protecting their own space and self-definition become exhausting for women and force them to resign.³⁶⁰

The exit of Seshie and Akyeampong from the news department created a vacuum which may have partly, affected women's interest in radio journalism for a long time. However, three female journalists – June Annan, Miss Van Lare and Elsinia Dei (later Kakraba-Quashie) – worked briefly in the newsroom between 1972 and 1974 after graduating from the Ghana Institute of Journalism. Another journalist with a degree from Russia, Victoria Baaba Barnes also worked in the newsroom from 1975 to 1981. She was the first female to head one of three editorial teams. A reason for the low participation in broadcast journalism may also be due to the low numbers of females graduating from the Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ). Records from the school show that in the 1971/1973 graduating year, nine out the 48 students were women.

³⁵⁹ AAGBC: 2961. Staff File for Victoria Vivian Seshie.

³⁶⁰ Linda Steiner, "Newsroom Accounts of Power at Work," in *News, Gender and Power*, edited by Cynthia Carter, Gill Branston, and Stuart Allan. (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 145-159.

Between 1972/1974, eight of the 38 diploma holders from the institute were female. Seven out of the 32 students who graduated in 1973/1975 were female.³⁶¹ Enrolment figures of females started to increase from 1976 and that year, four out of 13 women from the institute secured employment in the newsroom. The following year, four more were employed in the newsroom out of a graduating number of 14 women. Three of the five females who graduated in 1982 obtained employment with the newsroom.

Ellen Avorgbedor was among the 1976 group. She is recognised for being the first female journalist in Radio Ghana history to rise to the level of a Regional Director. She was responsible for the Central region.³⁶² Avorgbedor recalled that her senior colleagues were assigned to the Newsreel desk where they worked regular hours from 8:00 am to 5:00 p.m suggesting that work schedules had become more flexible as the shift system was re-organised later. As a reporter, Avorgbedor remembered covering both prestigious and less prestigious assignments, suggesting that there was no gender discrimination in daily news gathering and production processes.

She cited her story on the visit of the Commonwealth Secretary General, Sir Shridath Ramphal to Ghana in the early 1980s as one of the prestigious assignments she covered. She also remembered covering activities of women's groups and writing on social issues. However, Avorgbedor's beat was labour and trade unionisms and she was the first female radio journalist to cover the areas consistently for years. While she thought that women in Radio Ghana newsrooms were more likely than men to cover assignments related to their gender, Avorgbedor did not see newsroom operations as gendered. Avorgbedor said: "I worked as a journalist, not as a female journalist."³⁶³

³⁶¹ Figure of graduating student by gender was obtained from the Ghana Institute of Journalism administration department.

³⁶² Interview with Ellen Avorgbedor, Eastern Regional Director of GBC at Cape Coast on October 20, 2013.

³⁶³ Interview with Avorgbedor, October 20, 2013.

Inherent in Avordgedor's statement however, is an expression of resistance to gendered professional practices which manifest in what Paula Skidmore terms "informal discrimination."³⁶⁴ Gender and communication scholar Linda Steiner also contends that certain attitudes, values and beliefs are often taken for granted as "common sense" and yet they inform the criteria underpinning what counts as 'professionalism.'³⁶⁵ Avorgbedor's statement suggests that she, like many women in media careers, took gender practices in newsrooms for granted and considered such as normal. Her statement also suggests that to excel as a journalist, means playing by male defined rules.

The profiles so far presented have focused on the contributions of women in programme making and journalism. The following profiles focus on two women in areas related to programme production notably, audience research and technical services.

Maud Blankson-Mills, a graduate of the University of Ghana, was employed in 1962 as Listener Research Assistant with the Audience Research Department (ARD) of Radio Ghana. The department, then known as Listener Research, was set up in 1956 to inform management on audience listening preferences, suitable listening times, listening habits, audience interests, opinions, attitude and reactions to programmes. Broadcasters' interest in audiences resulted from the decision to use radio for mass education.

Blankson-Mills said she opted to work with radio instead of the foreign ministry because of her background in statistics.³⁶⁶ Blankson-Mills' profile illustrates the role that education played and continues to play in expanding women's employment choices and career options in radio outside gendered programming spaces. Her interest in audience research was

³⁶⁴ Paula Skidmore, "Gender and the Agenda: News Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse," in *News, Gender and Power*, edited by Cynthia Carter, Gill Branston, and Stuart Allan. (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 204-218.

³⁶⁵ Steiner, *Newsroom Accounts of Power at Work*, 145-15.

³⁶⁶ Interview with Maud Blankson-Mills, Retired broadcaster, Roman Ridge on January 9, 2013.

deepened after a year's training at Radio Canada, Voice of America and the BBC. She became head of the department in 1972 and during the period, Blankson-Mills had to navigate institutional barriers in order to provide data to improve upon the quality and content of programmes. She said: "Audience research was important to the station. However, it was also expensive and often resources were limited."³⁶⁷

Blankson-Mills recounted that public attitudes to audience research made the work even more expensive and difficult and cited patriarchy as a barrier to research noting for example, that female listeners in rural communities did not want to speak in the presence of their spouses. Therefore, separate interviews had to be arranged for them as their views were equally important in helping to shape programme content and to address their information needs. Blankson-Mills fostered greater interactions between Radio Ghana and its diverse audiences through print publications and inspection tours.

Importantly too, Blankson-Mills was concerned about improving women's status and giving them a public voice. Therefore, aside of research, she wrote articles under the pseudo name Amba Atta to crusade female education and career development using the radio space. Some of the articles were aired as broadcast talks on Women's World and published in the GRRTVT in the early 1960s. She was a founding member of the Association of Women in Media (ASWIM) formed in the early 1980s to promote welfare and rights of women in media. The association was instrumental in raising the consciousness of media women on gender inequalities in media. She was also the patron of Women in Broadcasting (WIB) an association formed in 1995 to advocate female voice and presence in broadcast work. She became the Director of Corporate Affairs in 1996 until she retired in 1996.

Christiana Dankwa is recognised for pioneering women's presence in the technical services department of the radio division. The former technician was employed from Radio

³⁶⁷ Interview with Blankson-Mills, January 20, 2013.

Ghana's Youth-in-Training programme in 1968 after graduating from Kumasi radio training school with a diploma in mathematics, radio and lines transmission, engineering sciences and principles. Dankwa was among the 18th batch of trainees and the only female in the group. Her career started from the national broadcasting studios in Accra and later, the external service studios. Dankwa worked in three regions – the Upper East, Upper West and Western regions as the technician in charge of the recording studios.

Dankwa had negotiated her transfer from Greater Accra in order to be close to her husband, also a technician who was on transfer in these regions. The transfer enabled her to maintain her career as a technician and to fulfil her domestic and conjugal responsibilities at the same time. More importantly Dankwa carved a niche for herself in the regions as the first female technician to work outside Accra for many years. She said proudly: “We were the people who installed equipment for URA Radio.”³⁶⁸

URA Radio was the first FM station in Ghana and was established at Bolgatanga in the Upper West region of Ghana. Installation of equipment was completed by 1985, the golden jubilee of radio in Ghana. Dankwa recalled: “At Bolgatanga, I recorded programmes in six local languages a day, including Frafra, Gruni Kasena.”³⁶⁹ Her work also involved travelling extensively across the region to record programmes for the national studios in Accra. “I worked long hours, especially during live commentary programmes such as football matches because I needed to be at the location early enough to line up for the commentator.”

Although she found work as a broadcast technician challenging, Dankwa was determined to succeed in a field where very few women at the time worked. She noted:

A lot of people saw me as a special person because of the work I did. And ehh.. it wasn't easy as a lady. If there is a fault you should be able to fix it. You are not to look for any man to say, master come and do it for me because both of you have been trained. So

³⁶⁸ Interview with Christiana Dankwa, Pioneer female technician, Adenta on July 23, 2013.

³⁶⁹ Interview with Dankwa, July 23, 2013.

you don't depend on the man. You are supposed to have been trained and so just go through what you have learnt and apply.³⁷⁰

Dankwa may have been considered exceptional or perhaps 'out of place' because of the gendered expectation associated with her profession. She retired as Chief Technical Coordinator in 2006. Although she did not achieve her dream of reaching the topmost position of Director of Technical Services she was happy that her presence in radio work charted a path for other female technicians.

3.8 Motivations and achievements

Several factors motivated women to take up careers in radio. Some of the pioneers profiled said they were enticed to work in radio partly because of the visibility it offered. Some were motivated by a sense of public service. They wanted to be involved in an area of work that would enable them to change people's lives and considered radio as offering an expanded space to achieve that aim. Danquah-Smith was precise on this point:

I opted for a radio career because radio extends beyond the classroom and I knew the value of what I could use radio for. My goal was to improve the lives of women and children on a national scale.³⁷¹

And guest artiste/producer Grace Amarteifio said she saw radio as a bigger space to speak to women and foster change. Using the analogy of a priest and the pulpit she said:

...like a priest standing in the pulpit preaching, some of the listeners know the preacher but the preacher wouldn't know everybody in the room. He is good, preaching to people to change and you are at the back of radio talking to people to know how to go about things and it's about change.³⁷²

Another guest artiste, Grace Armah a teacher saw radio as an extension of the classroom and a powerful tool for extending teaching of life skills to more women and girls.

I taught in the classroom as a teacher but also to a larger audience throughout the country through radio. Guest artists were paid well and promptly too. But we were not

³⁷⁰ Interview with Dankwa, July 23, 2013.

³⁷¹ Interview with Danquah-Smith, February 2, 2013.

³⁷² Interview with Amarteifio, July 31, 2013.

interested in the money but being on radio. Women were being heard and that was all. We were more interested in educating them and we used radio to speak to women.³⁷³

The pioneers believed that their objectives for engaging with radio were achieved. The profiles of Hannah Danquah-Smith and Janet Esseku illustrate the point. Esseku felt she fulfilled the desires of rural women by bringing their voices on air.

Although pioneers like Jane Cole and Miranda Greenstreet did not remain in broadcast careers, their initial engagements with radio served as a springboard to development work that sought to improve the lives and welfare of society by providing information, education and enlightenment in diverse ways. Essentially, the motivations of women to work in radio must be seen as part of a bigger agenda by women to expand their frontiers beyond the domestic and domesticity to secure new and equitable gender relations in society.

3.9 The Balancing Act: Between Domesticity and Radio Careers

While Ghanaian women broadcasters contested professional stereotypes and indigenous patriarchy, and also negotiated femininity to carve out spaces for themselves in radio work, the feeling that women belonged to the home and therefore could not commit entirely to radio work lingered. In 1960 the Head of Programme Operations, Jack Lawton, wrote about Susanne Laryea as follows:

If anyone is in any doubt that a woman can work as hard as a man, I can assure them that Susie Laryea, a mother of eight children is not only running her home but is also doing a man size job in the G.B.S. [sic] She not only looks after the operational schedule, but also organises the hours of work for all those on what I shall call the 'Voice Side' since we also have a 'Technical side'.³⁷⁴

³⁷³ Interview with Armah, June 29, 2013.

³⁷⁴ Jack Lawton "Who Makes Radio Ghana Tick?" in *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times* (Accra: GBC, July 29, 1960).

Lawton's assessment of Laryea's performance may have been intended to dismiss lingering perceptions pertaining to femininity and motherhood and to show that it was possible for married women with children to combine radio career with motherhood and still excel.

"Doing a man size job" and working "as hard as a man" had connotations that tended to play down feminine values and reinforce stereotypes that associate hard work with male. Media historian Jacqueline St John argued that hardwork and success at the workplace are values associated with masculinity and measured in male terms.³⁷⁵ While Lawton's notion of hard work may resonate with St. John's position, it is also known as Florence Dolphyne argued, that in the context of Ghana, associating female performance and leadership style with male is a form of admiration for women who excel.³⁷⁶ Such women, according to Florence Dolphyne were referred to as "woman-man" or "a woman-like-a-man" which is not derogatory but a form of admiration.³⁷⁷

Joe Cofie, programme assistant who worked under Laryea recalled that the former was called unofficially by similar nicknames. "She was too strict and her subordinates gave her nicknames because of her strictness."³⁷⁸ Indeed Laryea's strictness and disciplinarian attitude, it is suggested, was a way of contesting ideological stereotypes and discriminatory employment policies against women. According to Cofie, Laryea had once jokingly told female staff in the presentation unit to plan their maternity leave in ways that would not disrupt their regular schedules and training opportunities since childbirth and motherhood had often been cited as reasons for delaying women's promotions and for denying women such training opportunities. Laryea had jokingly warned that she would prepare a maternity leave roster for programme

³⁷⁵ St. John, "Sex Role Stereotyping", 32.

³⁷⁶ Florence Abena Dolphyne, *The Emancipation of Women: An African Perspective* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1991).

³⁷⁷ Dolphyne, *The Emancipation of Women*, 42.

³⁷⁸ Interview with Cofie, November, 14, 2013.

makers to ensure an uninterrupted work schedule. The joke may have been meant to show women how to juggle domestic chores with motherhood and career.

Promotions came to women at a slow pace. In 1965 recommendations made to the Board of Directors for appointments and promotions graded women's performance as "below average" and "work not satisfactory" to justify their exclusion from promotions. Despite perceptions of gender discrimination and other biases, some of the pioneers were ambivalent in their responses regarding promotions. Hannah Danquah-Smith said:

Both men and women got promoted if you were lucky. But I was pushed down there not because I am a woman. Promotion went to people they wanted to promote. I was at my maximum as a teacher but I was engaged as a senior programme assistant instead of as Assistant Comptroller of programmes. I was sacrificed.³⁷⁹

Danquah-Smith's evidence suggests that conditions and principles regarding promotions were not followed. Although she dismissed gender as a reason for her not being promoted, the statement suggests what gender scholars describe as the "glass ceiling" which refers to invisible but nonetheless real barrier that women encounter at workplace in the course of their upward mobility.

Ellen Avorgbedor indicated that even though she felt at a point that she had been unfairly treated, she did not attribute that to gender and said: "Let me state categorically that whatever treatment I had, I never felt that it was because I am a woman. I think that probably it was the system."³⁸⁰ Indeed, the system, as some of the evidences suggest, did not seem to favour women as candidates for promotion. Christiana Dankwa shared the following experience:

I lost one promotion. As a technician you are expected to write an examination for promotion. I did not write. That was the time I was pregnant. Some people were still technical assistants when I retired because they never passed the examinations. Those

³⁷⁹ Interview with Danquah-Smith, February 2, 2013.

³⁸⁰ Interview with Avorgbedor, October, 27, 2013.

who never passed were male and I wouldn't attribute my situation to gender discrimination.³⁸¹

Nonetheless, Dankwa's testimony suggests that the system was not sensitive to issues of women. Her testimony did not dismiss the role that gender played in promotions. This written testimony of Maud Blankson-Mills who worked for 40 years in radio is illustrative. She states:

My progression has been long and painful. I had for instance to remain on one grade for eight years ...even though I had consistently had excellent confidential reports and over qualified for promotion. There were times when I had started handing in my resignation but for the quote from the Holy Bible which my father referred me to " And Jesus said to him, anyone who starts to plough and keeps looking back is of no use to the Kingdom of God" Luke 9:12. Frustrations arising out of prejudice and discrimination have made me shed tears, but that was insignificant compared with the pressure I have had to exert because if confidential reports were anything to go by, I knew I had cause to fight for my rights. I did not have any queries on my file!³⁸²

Blankson-Mills' experience is a further indication of the glass ceiling syndrome as only few women were represented in radio management spaces in the early 1980s.

As mentioned earlier, Ghanaian women's voices had become familiar on radio by the 1960s. However, experiences of some of the pioneers suggest that some male newsmakers and sources still did not accept women in male dominated roles such as conducting live interviews. Ademola indicated that a male Sudanese Muslim she interviewed for "People in the News" while he was visiting Ghana after independence gave monosyllabic responses to her questions to indicate his resentment of a female interviewer.³⁸³ Vida Koranteng-Asante also recalled that in the late 1950s a chief who heard her speak a second local language on air had told her that women who were fluent in more than one local language were regarded as immoral.³⁸⁴ Such perceptions, imposed on women including those in radio work, eroded with time as more female voices were heard on air.

³⁸¹ Interview with Avorgbedor, October, 27, 2013.

³⁸² Maud Blankson-Mills, "Women's Participation in Mass Media Challenges and Prospects" (paper presented at a workshop for female journalists, Accra, February 22, 1990).

³⁸³ Interview with Ademola, August 6, 2013.

³⁸⁴ Interview with Koranteng-Asante, November, 19, 2013.

The pioneers recounted that to excel was to make sacrifices that affected conjugal and motherhood roles. Long and unpredictable working hours were some of the discomforts of radio work especially when the organisation began to expand. Some of the pioneers testified that they adopted several strategies in order to counter perceptions about their performance. Such strategies included negotiating different work schedules; working extra hours during weekends, or reporting to work early enough to finish up recordings before the studio got choked with everybody trying to use the facility.³⁸⁵ Joe Cofie confirmed women's commitment to radio careers asserting that "women were more passionate about the work than about salaries."³⁸⁶ Maud Blankson Mills also stated as follows:

Women used all strategies to survive in this profession where men were predators as newsmakers. Women did not want to cover certain assignment because of their experience with people in positions who tried to take advantage of them.³⁸⁷

According to Blankson-Mills, journalists were the prime targets of sexual harassments.

3.10 Women in Radio Ghana Management

A number of women, including those who had retired had risen to the position of Heads of Departments when Radio Ghana celebrated its golden jubilee in 1985. The highest position that female programme makers ever attained in the 50 year history of radio was Head of Department (HOD). Susanne Laryea retired as Head of External Service and Chief Comptroller of Programmes in the mid 1970s. One of the pioneers, Marian Smith-Mensah, retired as Head of the local language department in the mid 1970s. Jane Cole, who made an early exit from radio, was Head of External Service when she was seconded to the NCWD in 1976. Helen

³⁸⁵ Interview with Hannah Danquah-Smith, February 2, 2013.

³⁸⁶ Interview with Cofie, November, 14, 2013.

³⁸⁷ Maud Blankson-Mills, "Women's Participation in Mass Media."

Odamtten exited as Head of Radio Training School in 1975. Janet Esseku similarly retired as Head of Rural Broadcasting in 1993.

Male dominance at top levels of broadcasting was attributed to political interference which is a reflection of the patriarchal nature of governance in Ghana. Successive post-colonial governments made appointments to the position of Director General and typically, such appointments favoured men. Ansu-Kyeremeh and Karikari observed later in 1998 that:

The position of Director General or Director of radio has been appointed by the head of state under the statute of the corporation most of the time and it does not seem that as far as radio is concerned the women have satisfied the criteria used by the political authorities for such appointments.³⁸⁸

In the period under discussion, women did not make it to the top as Director General of radio. However, they were not absent from broadcast management and on the board of directors. In 1960, Mrs Efua Sutherland a renowned dramatist and writer, was the first female appointed by the CPP government as chairman of the Broadcasting Advisory Board. While many women with the best prospects of rising to management positions did not stay in the profession to qualify for management positions, many others, equally promising women who stayed on, progressed at a relatively “tortoise” pace. Thus, it was not until the 1990s that some of the women employed in the early 1960s gained positions in radio broadcast management. For example, Anna Sai retired as acting director of radio in the early 1990s while Harriet Techie-Menson and Rosina Amaning later became Regional Directors after the liberalisation of broadcasting in 1992. Maud Blankson-Mills also retired as Director of Corporate Affairs in 1996. Frances Ademola also served on the GBC Board of Directors in the early 1990s. She contributed to the drafting of policies on broadcasting standards when plural broadcasting was

³⁸⁸Ansu-Kyeremeh and Karikari, *Media Ghana*, 9.

introduced in the early 1990s. She also has also become involved in training broadcasters in elocution.

The number of women employed in radio was significantly less than men. But importantly, they were not absent and this chapter has shown the women who pioneered radio as full time and as guest artistes. Women were visibly present in radio work from the late colonial period into the immediate post-colonial period. The first crop of full time employees, all teachers with varied years of experience, were employed in 1949 to produce programmes in three Ghanaian languages for women and children in three local languages. Also some women made a foothold into radio work as guest artistes in the early years of 1950. This second crop of pioneers were employed in 1955 and 1956 and they included teachers, university graduates, diploma holders and professional broadcasters. The numbers increased in the decade of the 1960s after Ghana attained Republican status and also following the expansion of broadcast service especially the establishment of external service, station rural broadcasting and commercial broadcasting.

More telling than the numbers of women in radio work are the roles they played and the contributions they made to the development of radio. The chapter has shown that although women were initially engaged to produce programmes for women and children, they broke out of the mould of women's programme spaces and negotiated spaces in new areas of broadcasting such as international broadcasting, rural broadcasting, news and current affairs, and technical services. Also, they contested spaces in all aspects of radio work as producers, news readers, disk jockeys, and as journalists and created niches for themselves as continuity announcers, interviewers and presenters. The pioneers wrote scripts for drama, provided voice-overs for written scripts and also created and disseminated a variety of programmes that sought to improve the lives and conditions of women and to promote women's rights and gender equality.

Those who produced women and children's programmes influenced public opinion on women and brought national attention to women's concerns. Such programmes produced for women featuring women as guest artistes, interviewers and resource persons contributed to the debate over women's status and role in society. Thus, the chapter has shown that women programme producers were advocates of women's rights, agents in the construction of national unity and also African unity. As producers, the women were also instrumental in the development and modernisation of rural communities and in creating an informed and educated public.

The chapter has shown that gender role stereotyping combined with cultural claims about women and public speaking and inherited traditions about the female voice accounted for women's initial exclusion from radio work in the early years. However, women transcended such historical prejudices against them in new economic spaces to be part of radio employment. It has also shown the various ways by which women negotiated such issues of femininity and patriarchy to be in radio. The chapter has shown that gender role stereotyping combined with cultural claims about women and public speaking and inherited traditions about the female voice accounted for women's late entry into radio work. The next chapter on special programme spaces for women, makes the production role of women more explicit.

CHAPTER THREE

FOR WOMEN BY WOMEN: SPECIAL PROGRAMME SPACES ON THE AIRWAVES

4.0 Introduction

As noted in the previous chapter, women's employment with radio broadcasting as programme assistants was tied to the development of special programmes spaces for women and children. This chapter makes the production functions of women explicit and explores the historical significance of these special programme spaces. Focusing on special programme spaces on radio for women enables us to consider how Women's Radio Magazines functioned in ways other than simply spaces for transmitting ideological stereotypes about the housewife and domesticity. Part of the chapter describes how early programme makers sought to attract and persuade women to listen to radio. It uses as a case study a Ga programme broadcast in 1957 to demonstrate that women's radio magazines were not only didactic, but were also investigative, interactive, and challenging. Another part of the chapter analyses the "talk" segment of the English programme "Women's Half Hour" from 1960 to 1975 to show post-colonial women's interventions in the public space and the dominant issues they 'talked' about. The chapter argues that the magazine programmes served as new communicative spaces for women's social and political expressions; for promoting women's rights, and for bringing women's voices into the public sphere. The programmes also functioned as spaces where women mediated their experiences of some of the contradictions of modernity and tradition, domesticity, ideologies about the housewife and also their status, roles and integration in the "modern" Ghanaian society. Importantly too, the programmes served to make female programme makers "experts on air."

4.1 Domesticity on the Airwaves

Scholarship on women and radio history suggests that broadcasting's interest in women derives from assumptions of a "female listener," a homebound housewife, and the "domesticated" nature of radio. Maggie Andrews, for example, points out that in the 1920s the BBCs interest in female audiences was due to the location of radio in the home and also, that housewives were key audiences of daytime listening.³⁸⁹ According to Sally Feldman, the creation of the BBC programme, "Woman's Hour," was intended "to help women recreate domestic life after the ravages of the war."³⁹⁰ In colonial Ghana, the creation of such special programmes for women was inspired by the civilising mission, packaged as domesticity. The special programme spaces were to attract female audiences to listen to radio and to serve as women's new channels for learning new ideas about the home, children, domesticity and the family; and to enable women to recreate domestic life.

Primary evidence suggests that special programme spaces were foremost intended to attract female audiences to radio and make radio listening part of their daily lives. Colonial discourses on the "civilising" and modernisation missions of radio suggest that women more than men needed special programmes of education and enlightenment to facilitate their integration into the emerging modern state. For example, in her account on *Broadcasting in Africa* BBC employee Hilda Matheson's referred to women in particular as the conservative elements of African societies least reached by ordinary education and therefore needed education through radio.³⁹¹ Women's education through radio was necessitated by concerns over the precarious conditions of women and children's health as well as poverty not only in colonial Africa but globally.

³⁸⁹Andrew, "Homes Both Sides," 606-621.

³⁹⁰Feldman, "Desperate Housewives," 339.

³⁹¹Matheson, *Broadcasting in Africa*, 388.

Specific to colonial Ghana, David Patterson's history on health in colonial Ghana between 1900 and 1940 is instructive. The history noted for example, "appalling problems of poverty and crowding" and a strikingly high level of infant mortality among children between one and five years due to infectious diseases and malnutrition.³⁹² This was the period of "gender crisis" that caused dislocation of families, challenges in marriage, divorce, and abandonment of parental responsibilities towards children in parts of cocoa growing communities.³⁹³ It was also a period of immense poverty and borrowing became the most common way of relieving hardship. As Beverly Grier has argued, families borrowed at the expense of female dependants some of whom were pawned to pay off the debts.³⁹⁴ The creation of special programme spaces on *Station ZOY* was intended to encourage and persuade women to listen to radio in order to gain new ideas to virtually, fight a "war" against disease, ignorance, poverty, infant mortality, and gender inequality and also to recreate domestic life resulting from social change.

One of the ways by which women learnt to recreate their lives was through domesticity projects. Domesticity projects were already being vigorously carried out through formal classroom education and training programmes run by Basel and Methodist missionaries, nurses, midwives and teachers. Beneficiaries of the domesticity projects were trained in home making and motherhood skills some of which, arguably were as mundane as teaching local women how to bath and feed babies and to prepare pancakes.³⁹⁵ Women were also trained in sewing, dressmaking and darning. Some of these projects date back to the 1900s. Paul Jenkins' study that analysed photographs showing girls in handiwork training sessions run by the Basel

³⁹²K. David Patterson. "Health in Urban Ghana: The Case of Accra 1900-1940," *Social Science and Medical*, Vol. 138B (Pergamon Press Limited: 1979), 251-268.

³⁹³ Allman, *Making Mothers*, 23-47.

³⁹⁴ Beverly Grier, "Pawns, Porters and Petty Traders: Women in Transition to Cash Crop Agriculture in Colonial Ghana," *Signs*. Vol. 17. No. 2 (1992), 304-328.

³⁹⁵ Allman, "Making Mothers," 26.

missionary school at Akropong in the Eastern region illustrates this point.³⁹⁶ Primary evidence shows that in 1947, the Methodist Church which had established a school for housewives at the Kwadaso Women Training Centre offered literacy classes for young girls and housewives alongside bible studies, and taught courses such as domestic science, embroidery, knitting and darning and sewing.³⁹⁷ The evidence suggests that colonial interest in civilising women took several forms. In 1948, radio became a new site for pursuing the agenda.

Radio's ubiquitous nature, linguistic malleability and reach were major advantages for mass communication. While women's domestic projects and special programme spaces on radio shared similar objectives of promoting domesticity, both functioned in complex ways including serving as spaces of economic, political and social empowerment. As shown in the previous chapter, the "domesticity" space was the outlet for women's recruitment for radio careers. As the evidence on the health of women and children suggests, the creation of radio spaces for illiterate women was based on the assumption that women needed information and enlightenment to enable them to maintain good health, take care of their children and families and to manage their homes so that they could function effectively as mothers and housewives. But how did these spaces function? In what ways did women engage with the spaces and to what ends?

4.2 History of Women's Radio Magazines

A Pioneer "Vernacular Announcer" in 1943, Ben Gadzekpo has documented in his unpublished memoirs that the women's radio magazine was first broadcast in 1947.³⁹⁸ Initial broadcast was in English and targeted educated women envisaged as "housewives." The

³⁹⁶ Paul Jenkins, *Everyday Life Encapsulated? Two photographs concerning Women in the Basil Mission in Africa, c 1900. Journal of African Cultural Studies*, Vol. 15 No. 1. *Everyday Life in Colonial Africa*. (June, 2002) 45-60.

³⁹⁷ *New Ghana*, October 1947, Vol. No.1

³⁹⁸ Ben Gadzekpo, *Ghana Muntie* (Unpublished Memoir on Radio Ghana, n.d.), 40. In Private Collections of Audrey Gadzekpo.

programme was compiled internally by British expatriates, Mary Rowlett and Gytha Owen (both employees of the Public Relations Department, PRD) from excerpts of the BBC programme “Woman’s Hour.” The BBC programme had started to air a year earlier in 1946. The following year in 1947, Ghanaian female teachers from different schools who could read and write specific local languages were invited to translate the English scripts into Ga, Twi, Ewe, and Fante and present them on air for illiterate women. By 1949, wire rediffusion services were available in the various regions where these languages were spoken and this partly explains the choice of these languages.³⁹⁹

The magazine programmes for both educated and illiterate women were created in the colonial era and they were developed within the framework of domesticity. However, as primary evidence suggests, the two programmes which were transported to post-colonial radio disseminated different visions of domesticity albeit with different focus for each. The English programmes targeted educated listeners as agents and targets of change. Educated listeners were the primary targets of Victorian-styled domesticity (framed as modernisation) who were envisaged to be mouth pieces and role models of “modernity” for the illiterate woman. Conversely, special programme spaces for illiterate women as targets of change were development focused. The local language programmes were meant to teach them new ideas to help them to improve their health and socio-economic conditions.

Evidence from programme schedules indicate that by 1952, women’s magazine programmes in both English and the four original local languages being used on radio were among the few programmes designated as Gold Coast Programmes (GCP) in the daily

³⁹⁹ The Gã language is spoken in Accra where the first wire rediffusion service was started. Fante is spoken by people in Cape Coast Sekondi Takoradi, the second and third urban communities to benefit from these service followed by Kumasi where Twi is the indigenous language. Ewe is spoken by people in the Volta region (British Togoland). By 1951 broadcast services had reached these four urban communities. See also Appendix for details on dates and official opening of the wired broadcasting stations.

broadcast on Station ZOY.⁴⁰⁰ The other programmes were news and musical performances by the Ghana Police Band, poetry recitals, local church choirs, and a health programme – “Family Doctor.” Paul Ansah observed that in 1953 local programmes received only 18 hours of broadcast time a week as against 58 hours of weekly broadcast from the General Overseas Service (GOS).⁴⁰¹

After independence in 1957, three more programmes were created for women who understood and spoke Dagbani, Hausa, and Nzema. The programmes in Fante and Twi were merged and broadcast as Akan Women’s Magazine.⁴⁰² All the programmes were broadcast on the local language service Radio One, which was the domestic service station of Radio Ghana. The broadcast were on different days of the week with repeat broadcasts on other days. Each programme had a 30 minutes time slot, constituting two and half hours of weekly broadcasts. Quantitatively, these programmes made up a small part of the programme schedules. Yet they were considered very important learning platforms. Broadcasters encouraged listeners to make time every week to engage with the programmes.

The women’s magazine programmes was one of the very few programmes that remained on the new programme schedules after independence. When Radio Ghana celebrated its silver jubilee in 1960, the local language programmes were included in the anniversary specials emphasising their significance as evidence in the text below.

This is the Silver Jubilee month of the Ghana Broadcasting System...Plans to mark the occasion have been made and this week’s programmes contain a number of anniversary specials. The specials begin on Wednesday afternoon (4 o’clock) with GA WOMEN’S MAGAZINE.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰⁰ See BBC Programme Guide: GPD/W1267/10,500/5-52. In Private Collection of Amankwa Ampofo.

⁴⁰¹ Ansah, *Golden Jubilee Lectures*, 25.

⁴⁰² Fante and Twi are Akan dialects. Although the populations which spoke these languages are located in different regions, they can understand each other.

⁴⁰³ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 22, 1960).

Post-colonial goal of using radio for cultural self-assertion, national development and integration, underscored the importance attached to women's radio magazines in the local languages. The modernisation/development agenda of the 1960s, partly motivated by the UN Decade of Development provided a rationale for using radio to promote women's development.

The declaration of the UN Decade for Development in 1960, contributed in part, to increased national attention on women as subjects of national development discourses. Women themselves, through organised groups such as the Ghana Women's League were active makers and shapers of such discourses. Therefore during the period, the women's magazines became important platforms for promoting women's reformation and empowerment. Programme makers played a vanguard role in this regard, by providing space for women to pursue their objective of improving the conditions and status of women.

The immediate post colonial government of the CPP under Dr. Nkrumah acknowledged that the political and social advancement of women was closely linked to their contributions to development of the society. Continued interest in the women's magazine programmes resulted in the subsequent extension of the programmes to other networks of Radio Ghana. This interest was inspired by the CPP's policies for women. These included enhancing women's political and civic rights; organising women to speak with one voice; promoting economic, educational and social measures for women to participate in society as well as promoting marriage, family and inheritance reforms and also African Unity.⁴⁰⁴ Radio was considered an important tool by both government and women to propel the achievement of these goals.

With the establishment of Rural Broadcasting service in 1965 and External Service broadcasting in 1961 similar spaces were created on the two networks for women's radio

⁴⁰⁴ Manuh, *Women and the Organisations*, 114-115.

programmes. On the rural broadcasting service, Women's Radio Magazines targeted women farmers as "primary producers" of food in their own right, and also as "housewives" who helped to build the rural home as well as the community.⁴⁰⁵ The rural programmes were transmitted in the six official languages used on radio. On the External Service Station, "Women's Forum" targeted English speaking women in West, East, and North Africa and the objective was to motivate them to promote African unity. The content of the programme focused on concerns of African women were obviously motivated by the vision of Kwame Nkrumah to involve women in the development of African unity and to support the independence of African countries still under colonial rule.

For example, in July 1960 when he addressed the Conference of Women of Africa and of African Descent, Nkrumah told African women that they had a mission to create better conditions of life for their children. They must also project the African personality to the rest of the world.⁴⁰⁶ Such exhortations resonated with Nkrumah's missions for the External Service station and thus formed the station's programme policy, including those that targeted women.

Fundamentally therefore, separate programmes for women on the External Service network in different languages were intended to help target listeners to imagine themselves as part of a bigger continent of African people with whom they shared similar historical and cultural circumstances. Likewise, in line with Dr Nkrumah's policy of forging national unity and integration, programmes in the local languages were meant to instill in listeners, the spirit of oneness and enable them to appreciate the need to contribute to national development and their integration into modern society.

⁴⁰⁵William F. Coleman and Andrew A. Opoku, "Rural Radio Farm Forum in Ghana" in *An African Experiment in radio forum for rural development, Ghana 1964/1965*, UNESCO Reports and Papers in Mass Communication, No. 51. 7-14.

⁴⁰⁶ Manuh, "Women and their Organisations," 118.

By the end of the 1970s, programme makers had expanded special programme spaces for women created in the Nkrumah era by initiating additional female content, particularly in the area of entertainment and drama in both English and local languages. These new programmes targeted farmers, traders, working women, mothers, and wives. They included “Housewives’ favourite” (an entertainment programme) and *Aware so* (Happy Marriage) an Akan language) family programme. Other programme genres targeted family and everyday life issues around the home, marriage, family, and work. Examples are *Obra Ye Bona* (Life is difficult) and *Kwemo Ni Ahi* (*Be careful*) – a Ga language programme on good behaviours for people from all walks of life.

Special programme spaces for women did not, however, translate into a separate department for women. All the women’s programmes were integrated into the English and local languages programmes department. In these separated departments, women still worked together by sharing resource persons and content, equipment, and transportation. For example, in 1960 Ruby Quartey-Papafio’s talk on the “Aims and Objectives of Girls Vocational Training Centre” was aired in the *Ewe Women’s Magazine* and the *Ga Women’s Magazine*.⁴⁰⁷

4.3 A new communicative space for women

The women’s radio magazines functioned in several ways. First and foremost, the programmes served as meeting places for learning and also as “communicative spaces” for educated and illiterate women who shared a common identity as wives and mothers with similar, but also diverse information resources and needs. Pilar Riano defines communicative spaces as representing as follows:

...a terrain for expression and collective action for transformation” and “alternative spaces for promoting the processes of transforming the individual subject and the collective we spaces for organising across differences and/or around commonalities of gender...”⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁷ See *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (August 3, 1960).

⁴⁰⁸ Riaño, “Introduction,” in *Women in Grassroots Communication*, xi.

This description resonates with the notion of “women’s separate sphere” and appropriately represents one of the ways in which the women’s magazine programmes functioned after independence. Importantly, also as Rosalind Gill asserts with reference to print magazines, women’s radio magazines were organised around the shared pleasures and labours of femininity.⁴⁰⁹ The programme content also focused on what women shared by dint of being women. The programmes served as forums where educated and literate women with similar visions of improving their own lives met to seek new ideas, knowledge and information to enable them to reposition themselves in the changing society.

Special programme spaces on the national network were meant to be non-political spaces and yet the programmes were political in the sense of being separate because they featured women as role models and achievers in the public sphere and at the same time, addressed them as housewives in the context of domestic space. For example, the June 7, 1960 edition of “Women’s Half Hour,” featured a journalist, Regina Addae, as the first Ghanaian woman to be appointed Public Relations Officer. She worked in an oil company. Several other women were celebrated in this “era of the first woman.”

Besides functioning as outlets for women’s social and political expressions, women’s radio magazines brought women together at the same time and at similar locations to learn from radio. Therefore, another historical function of the programme was education. According to a pioneer guest artiste, Grace Amarteifio the initial brief by the broadcast administrators was to give tit bits on housekeeping and to teach housewives how to manage their homes. Therefore the initial talk programmes in the 1950s targeted women at home with “tit-bits on

⁴⁰⁹ Rosalind Gill, *Gender and the Media* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 183.

housekeeping, health care, sanitation, nutrition, childcare, marriage, home management, and how to behave in society.”⁴¹⁰

Amarteifio indicated that her talks focused on *falefale feemo* (cleanliness). Personal hygiene and health care were key issues for talk presenters in the local language programmes in the early years.⁴¹¹ Claire Robertson’s social history on women in Accra provides the rationale for radio’s attention to cleanliness and personal hygiene. Robertson informs us that in the 1930s overcrowding and lack of sewerage facilities made Accra a breeding place for epidemics. For example, a nationwide malaria eradication campaign was also undertaken in 1964 as the sanitation situation had not changed much.⁴¹² In the 1930s however, prevention was also carried out by legal means. Sanitary inspectors were used to enforce clean environment. Robertson noted:

So many women came before the District courts for sanitary offences that the routine “he” referring to the accused in the court records was eventually changed to a routine “she.”⁴¹³

To emphasise Robertson’s evidence, David Patterson also notes that the Police Magistrate’s Court in Accra dealt with a steady stream of violators that among the women, the court became known as the *Loloi* (larva) Courts.⁴¹⁴

Grace Armah, another guest artiste on the Ga programmes for over 30 years, confirmed that women were summoned and prosecuted all the time at the District Court in Accra for sanitation offences such as keeping standing water in their compounds. Therefore, programme

⁴¹⁰ Interview with Grace Amarteifio, July 31, 2013.

⁴¹¹ Interview with Grace Amarteifio, July 31, 2013.

⁴¹² *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (August 8, 1964).

⁴¹³ Robertson, *Sharing the Same Bowl*, 44.

⁴¹⁴ Patterson, “Health in Urban Ghana,” 256.

makers addressed sanitation and home keeping as some of the key issues.⁴¹⁵ Armah confirmed in a key informant interview that:

We talked to the housewives on sanitation, and home keeping tips. We told them to cover *fufu* mortars and pestles to avoid flies settling on them, how to keep their surroundings clean and so on, so that they will have no problems with the law.⁴¹⁶

Information on home keeping practices was meant to expose women, particularly illiterate Ga women in urban Accra to new ideas based on rational information on the importance of keeping their mortars clean. Grace Armah said such information had to be communicated in ways for illiterate women to appreciate the link between poor hygiene and diseases or deaths.

4.4 Developing Ghanaian female audiences –presentation and style matter

Broadcast historians agree that presentation and style are critical to any effort at attracting and sustaining audiences and that in principle, in order to make people listen, programmes must be made listenable.⁴¹⁷ Within the scholarship, it has been noted that early broadcast presentation style was problematic because broadcasters were more concerned with the public output of programmes than the context of reception. Paddy Scannell for example, noted that although most British listened to radio at home, the style of presentation was monologue rather than dialogue and instructional rather than conversational.⁴¹⁸ Kate Lacey has criticised early mode of radio presentation styles as male and argued that the situation partly accounted for keeping German women off the air for so long.⁴¹⁹ Lacey explained that women had to adopt a presentation style that defined women's programmes on German radio. This was the informal chit chat and the staged interview between experts and women as mothers or housewives.

⁴¹⁵ Interview with Grace Armah, retired teacher/guest artiste, Mataheko, June 5, 2013. *Fufu* is a local food made from a mix of cooked cassava and plantain or cocoyam eaten with soup.

⁴¹⁶ Interview with Grace Armah, retired teacher/guest artiste, June 5, 2013.

⁴¹⁷ Scannell, *Broadcast Talk*, 2.

⁴¹⁸ Scannell, *Broadcast Talk*, 2.

⁴¹⁹ Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies*, 50.

In the context of Ghana, the colonial context in which broadcasting was started encouraged the monologue and male style of presentation in the early years. As Peter Bloom explains the English language was a voice of colonial authority channelled through radio and film.⁴²⁰ Programming decisions were influenced by a “hierarchy of listenership” categorised as the European listener; the “educated African” and the “illiterate African.”⁴²¹ Illiterate women were the least considered within this hierarchy. Therefore, besides assuming a male monologue posture in style and programming decisions, language disadvantaged women at different levels of social power.

In colonial Ghana as it pertains now, the English language was the dominant medium of expression in the public sphere. Until the mid-1950s, the presentation style for both English and local language broadcasts took the form of lectures, a style associated with formal speech and public speaking. For example, the annual report for 1936/1937 confirms that important information and education on women’s health and child welfare including malaria and yellow fever were presented first in English and later translated into local languages. Therefore, concerns expressed earlier about the suitability of content aimed at women and children could be attributable in part, to what may be termed the male authoritarian modes of presentation and the predominant use of English as a medium of public speaking also adopted by radio.

Pioneer women production assistants and guest artistes had much to contend with as they needed to explore and discover for themselves, the techniques and possibilities of the medium and how to engage both educated and illiterate audiences. They had to learn in practice what Scannell has theorised as the “communicative context” and “communicative intentionality.”⁴²² Moreover, programme makers needed to learn new presentational strategies

⁴²⁰ Bloom, *Elocution, Englishness, and Empire*, 137.

⁴²¹ PRAAD (ACCRA), CSO 7/5/98.

⁴²² Paddy Scannell defines communicative context as the context of reception. Communicative intentionality also means the concept and rationale of programmes. See Scannell, *Broadcast Talk*, 1.

for women's programmes in order to attract and sustain the interest of the audience at different levels of social power. While Lacey's example from German radio may be relevant to Ghana, it must be noted too, that in the mid 1950s, the women's programmes adopted the magazine format that is, a variety of dialogue forms of presentation and the style included chats and staged interviews. Since then, the magazine became the format of future women's radio programmes on Radio Ghana.

According to Hugh Chignell, the magazine format is historically associated with female and domestic audiences.⁴²³ The magazine is a mix of different formats presented as segments of one programme. It has the ability to deal with serious material as well as light and entertaining items at the same time. The main advantages of this format are its undemanding and flexible nature. An examination of the synopsis of programme schedules published in the *Ghana Radio and Television Times Review* from the early 1960s suggests that the magazine format was typically associated with women's programmes in both English and local languages. The synopsis and content showed that consistently, the programmes featured a woman as the resource person and female presenters for the various segments of the programme. By doing so, the programme makers created more spaces for women on radio. Other formats, namely, the discussion, interviews, the talk, and the question and answer (Q&A) were typically associated with male-produced programmes. Each segment featured different people.

The next section focuses more closely on the development and evolution of the production format as well as the content of local language programmes and shows how women used such formats to attract female listeners to radio and simultaneously, as training platforms for developing and honing their skills as broadcasters in order to become experts on air.

⁴²³ Hugh Chignell, *Key Concepts in Radio Studies* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2009), 30.

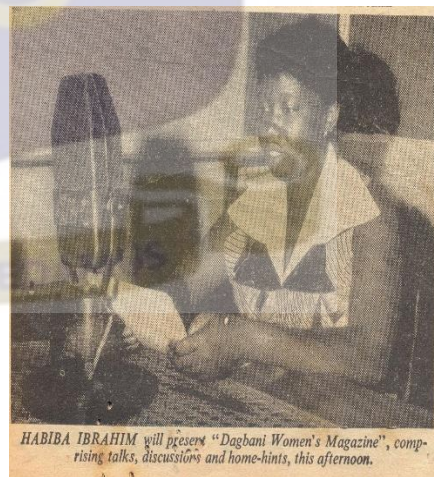
4.5 Producing Local language magazines

A pioneer guest artiste and a key informant for this study, Grace Amarteifio, said the original talk programme focused on different topics, but the presentation style was a monologue. As a matter of policy the talks were first scripted in the local language and translated into English for approval by the expatriate administrators before broadcast. In scrutinising the script, administrators sought to ensure accurate and credible information was disseminated. Also, the administrators wanted to ensure that content was not subversive. This was because of prevailing concerns over rumour mongering and the credibility broadcasting of local language broadcasts.

According to pioneer “vernacular announcer” Ben Gadzekpo, on many occasions during the war years broadcasts in the local languages were not believed because rumours spread widely among the uneducated population.⁴²⁴ It is also reported that close to the end of the war, when the demands for self-government was intensified, Africans and Europeans became suspicious of one another.⁴²⁵



Picture 21: Edina Otoo
Presenting Akan Women’s Magazine



Picture 22: Habiba Ibrahim (1960)
Presenting Dagbani Women’s Magazine

Source: Source: *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times* (1960)

⁴²⁴ Ben Gadzekpo personal account of radio as a vernacular announcer, published in Radio Ghana brochure, *50 Years of Broadcasting 1935-1985*.

⁴²⁵ 50 years, 8

Against this background, pioneer female broadcasters had the additional responsibility of presenting accurate information free of “subversive” elements to win the trust of the administrators and audiences and to persuade the latter to listen. Presenters used their local names instead of the English names on air as a persuasive strategy to gain acceptability and the trust of listeners. Amarteifio, was known on air as Naa Ajekai Mansa. Pioneer programme assistants Susie Laryea was known on air as Naa Ashami while Miriam Smith-Mensah was known as Ama Sasraku.

From the mid 1950s, programme makers and contributors gave the programmes a new character by bringing in guests (largely educated women) to share their experiences while at the same time interviewing illiterate women outside studio settings – at markets, farms, stores, beaches and in the streets. The new women’s magazine in the local language contained more dialogic formats such as interviews, discussions (panel), music, and occasionally a sketch, in addition to the traditional talk and music. Therefore, the format enabled more women to participate in the production of content in diverse roles – as discussants, resource persons, guest artistes and interview subjects. The programmes hosted a heterogeneity of female voices on the various segments.

In addition to the regular weekly magazines, was a 30-minutes panel discussion programme called “Women’s Monthly Forum” that focused on topical subjects. For example, the women’s monthly forum of the Ga Women’s Magazine broadcast on October 24, 1960 discussed two topics: “Who are more spendthrift, men or women?” and “Should hawking as a form of child labour be encouraged?”⁴²⁶ The programmes became the new communicative indeed, the dominant site for locating female voices on radio. Educated women used the space to publicise activities of interest to other women and as sites for social and political expressions.

⁴²⁶ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (October 24, 1960).

For example, Esther Ocloo gave an ‘eyewitness account’ of the inauguration of the Ghana Women’s League in Accra on the Ewe Women’s Magazine. Also in another Ewe Women’s Magazine the same month, the resource person, Muriel Wasi, was interviewed on the role of women in India.⁴²⁷ Exposing illiterate women to women’s activities in other countries suggests a nuanced agenda of raising women’s consciousness, politically and socially within the discursive space of the programme. At the same time some of the topics treated sought to broaden the horizons of the target audiences and to connect them as women to women in other countries. This demonstrates the social mobilisation function of the special programme spaces for women.

The programmes content disseminated information on diverse issues over and above didactic information and advice to women on home keeping. For example, a programme in Ga, called *Aanye koo* (well done) focused on the blacksmith. The introduction to the programme states: “We all ride in cars and big lorries. Have you ever wanted to know how these were made?” Generally, producers also invited women to speak on many issues including the personal development needs of women, marriage, and domestic affairs. For example, in June 1960, the Akan Women’s Magazine discussed women and reading. Secondary evidence suggests that the treatment of the subject on air was intended to encourage women attending literacy classes to sustain and commit to reading. Kate Skinner observed in her account on Mass Education and Social Welfare programmes carried out in the early 1950s that some women stopped practicing to read when they completed the literacy classes.⁴²⁸

Another topic discussed in one of the monthly forums was, “The influence of rivalry on a man.” A talk on *Efiefie Nsema Nsema* (domestic problems) was also aired in the Akan

⁴²⁷ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (September 16, 1960).

⁴²⁸ Kate Skinner, “Who Knew the Minds of People? Specialist Knowledge and Developmentalist Authoritarianism in Postcolonial Ghana,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (London: Routledge, 2011), 297-223.

Women's Magazine. Occasionally, some topics for discussions were also serialised in order to sustain audiences' interest in the programme. An example is a series on "eggs, cheese and butter" by Esther Ocloo in the 1960s. Although informal chit-chat was commonly associated with women's presentation styles, the format was more commonly used in the local language programmes. The local language programmes addressed target audiences simply mothers or married women.

According to Amarteifio, before independence in the mid 1950s programme makers addressed listeners of the Ga women's magazines as *yee gbayei* (married women/housewives). However, this form of address was changed in the mid 1960s and programme makers started to address women as *awomei ke nymimeiyei* (mothers and my sisters). Amarteifio explained that the new form of address was meant to acknowledge the contributions of women working outside the home in places such as market, the beach, and farms.⁴²⁹ The evidence suggests that addressing women as 'mothers' and 'my sisters' reflects an ideological shift that recognises women's reproductive and productive roles outside domestic spaces. The form of address also emphasises the collective role of the programme maker and the listener in the social and political transformation of women and to the larger project of the betterment of women.

Thus, with the change from a purely straight talk programme to a magazine format, the programmes became more challenging and investigative, conversational and interactive. This contrast with the otherwise didactic monologues. Programme makers went out into markets, beaches and farms to gather the voices of illiterate women and put them on air. Such programmes suggest women's active efforts to improve their wealth and economic status outside the home. The following programme in Ga produced by Grace Amarteifio in 1957 illustrates the production process and how women used the local language programmes to become experts on air.

⁴²⁹ Interview with Amarteifio, July 31, 2013.

Grace Amarteifio: *Agoo, awomei ke nyemimei yei fɛɛ, nyɛ haa manye...*

Greetings, mothers and all my female sisters, I bring you peace. Another Wednesday afternoon is with us again and these are the items we have for you. (*Amarteifio then goes on to present the menu for the weekly programme*). First you will hear a conversation based on a trip I made to the Salaga market and the Osu Fisheries Department both in Accra. This is followed by a write-up by *Owula* (Mr.) N.A Odoi praising the handwork of God.

A musical interlude that followed the introduction was a folk song entitled *Wo mii ya ale wuo* (We are going fishing). Amarteifio back announces after the song drawing attention to the lyrics of the song and the topic for discussion, which is fishing. Then she provides a context and rationale for the topic for discussion, scripted as follows:

For some time now, the country has been experiencing “shortage of sea fish” (*loo homo*). Currently, the situation has improved but not significantly. Wherever you go, the issue is on the lips of many. Because of this and for the sake of our relatives/families in other parts of the country, and for those in Accra too, it is necessary to know the causes of the problem. For this reason recently, I visited the Salaga fresh fish market in Accra and the James Town beach where the fishermen land their catch and also the government office at Osu which is the Fisheries department. And some of the things I saw there are what you are about to hear. First my tour took me to the fresh fish sales point at Salaga market. I arrived there in the evening. That time, some of the fish sellers had just returned from the beach and had started selling their wares. There were lots of buyers at the site, white people, men; the place was congested and there was hardly anywhere for me to stand. However, by sheer luck I met one of the fish sellers and had a conversation with her.⁴³⁰

The unscripted part of the presentation is essentially the more conversational aspect of the programme. The scripted part must be written in simple words so as to sound conversational in terms of delivery and tone of presentation. This scripted part was recorded in the studio while the interview segments were recorded outside the studio and here Amarteifio respected the communicative style and context. She established some relationship with the audience by addressing them in formal language. The greetings *he manye* is a form of address that extends

⁴³⁰ GBC, “A Visit to Salaga Market and Osu Fisheries Department.” In *Gã Women’s Magazine*, Radio Ghana Sound Archive, Tape no. WRM 4044.

respect and recognition to the audience. The interview segment used everyday language that brought the programme maker on the same footing with the interviewer.

Amarteifio's interview with the head of the Fisheries Department was used in the same programme with the fish seller. This illustrates how programme makers acknowledged the expertise of illiterate women in economic activities outside the sphere of the housewife/breadwinner model and projected them as economic actors in their own right. It also shows how concerns about livelihoods and domestic issues that women spoke about defined public sphere concerns. Also, it exemplifies how women broadcasters as agents of change, used radio programmes to expand the communicative space of illiterate women and accorded them status by bringing their voices on air.

Janet Esseku is another programme maker who interviewed women at the markets, the farm, and the beaches in mid 1960s and brought their voices to the studio to edit and compile for the weekly programmes in Ga. She equated interviewing illiterate women in the market with interviews conducted in offices and formal work spaces and also with studio interviews. She notes:

...It is just like inviting them to the studio. But you see these women have no time and it is difficult to get them to the studio so I interviewed them on location which made my programme even more interesting. The markets and beaches and farms, these are places where you can find the women.⁴³¹

As the evidence suggests, by interviewing women at various locations at market and trading centres, programme makers ensured the participation and voice of illiterate women in content and promoted their active listening. She notes:

After the live programme on Wednesdays, I returned to the field, to market or rural areas or anywhere, to get feedback from the women on the programme. I remember I went to the old Makola Market one day for such feedback. I interviewed a fish seller. I asked her to listen to my programme on Wednesday from 4.00 to 4.30pm. I was informed later when I went back to the market that at 4.00 when the women heard the

⁴³¹ Interview with Esseku, August, 6, 2013.

programme title, they gathered around the radio box in the market and when they heard the woman talking it was something else.⁴³²

Esseku ended her weekly programmes by reminding her listeners to tune in again the following week at the same time. She said that was her way of sustaining the interest and maintaining a relationship with the audience. She said women made time to listen when they knew of the programme and time of broadcast in advance. Interactions with women in their homes, at markets and on farms enabled broadcasters to share in the everyday life experiences of ordinary women and make them “radio stars” when other members of the community heard them on air.

Pre-production interactions with women provided programme makers with programme ideas as well as first-hand accounts of the day to day life of women. During one of her rounds in the market, Esseku interacted with a woman selling waist beads. “I asked her who her customers were and her response gave me an idea for my next programme.” Esseku quoted her interviewee as saying:

These days the men buy it more than the women. The men buy it and give to their wives and girlfriends. They call it the fan belt. A man came in one day and wasn't happy about the way the partner was using the beads because she bathed with it and it became smelly.⁴³³

According to Esseku, the programme on beads was oriented towards personal hygiene. Esseku also recalled that she interacted with someone preparing *fish soup* using an earthenware pot and wooden ladle as strainer. She said: “These are the little things we learn when we interact with people in the field.” Esseku's interactions with rural women showed the disjunctures between information disseminated to women and how such information is interpreted and accepted. This example relates to her work on the rural radio forum:

When we talked about family planning for example they said, before the white man came, we knew family planning because when someone delivers you go and stay with your parents. The mother and baby will stay with the parent for some time. When your husband comes to the village to visit you, you don't have any affair and it gives you the

⁴³² Interview with Esseku, August, 6, 2013.

⁴³³ Interview with Esseku, August, 6, 2013.

chance to feed your baby well. That is family planning. Now the way people tell you about breastfeeding for six months, you don't have to be with a man till after six months and all, it sounds like something new we are learning from the Europeans.

Notwithstanding their ideological positions on issues such as family planning, female audiences engaged more actively with broadcasters through the radio forums. They came to rely on producers as social workers and as people who could solve their problems including health issues. Esseku recalled that a Bilharzia outbreak in the Volta region in the mid 1970s brought the community rushing to Radio Ghana instead of reporting the incident to the Ministry of Health or a hospital. This evidence suggest that for most people, radio was not only a source of knowledge, information and entertainment but also 'an antidote' to all problems including health.

The topics handled on the women's magazines in the local languages were not significantly different from those discussed in the talk segment in the English programmes except for the level of sophistication and emphasis on western cultures and lifestyles found in the English programmes. For example, while the local language programmes educated the housewife on maintaining proper hygiene to avoid legal summons by sanitation inspectors, Women's Half Hour gave advice on how to decorate one's home or how to throw a party or plan a holiday.⁴³⁴ The programmes for educated and illiterate women suggest that both broadcasters and audiences had different ideas and perceptions of themselves and their role in the new state, Ghana, and they used special programme spaces such as the women's magazines to negotiate and contest colonial and post-colonial ideologies particularly about modernisation-framed-domesticity to facilitate their integration into modern society.

⁴³⁴ See *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times Synopsis*, (1960-1965).

4.6 Focus on Women's Own/Women's World

The original title of the first English programme was “Women’s Half-Hour.” Between 1962 and 1967, the title was changed twice. First it became known as “Women’s Own” and later as “Women’s World.” The original title, Women’s Half-Hour suggests that the focus was on persuading women to commit time, a half-hour weekly, to this new experience of listening to radio especially to women’s programmes. Hannah Danquah-Smith who produced the magazine in the late 1970s explained that the first change of title was meant to be a break from the colonial past to reflect the realities of women’s changing roles and status. Therefore, the programme aimed to attract women other than housewives. “Women’s Own targeted also married women working outside home”.⁴³⁵ The change to Women’s World in 1967 was a response to listener feedback which showed that the programme attracted male listeners as well. Gertrude Opare-Addo, another producer of Women’s World in the mid 1990s, explained:

“Our contributors and listeners felt the world of women was getting bigger and Women’s World reflects this bigger world. A women’s world is made up of the husband the children and home and work and society ...you name it.”⁴³⁶

While the format changed from a predominantly talk programme to a magazine, evidence from programme synopses between 1960 and 1975 suggests that the content reflected a diversity of subjects that women were concerned about. Essentially, issues on domesticity and women’s careers were contested and negotiated. Contributors disseminated diverse ideologies of femininity, about womanhood, and introduced new (arguably) alien ideas about the family, the home, domesticity, and consumption.

Archival evidence suggests that men listened and contributed to content. For example, men reacted to content through letters, served as resource persons and as moderators on some of the programmes. In 1962, for example, Daniel Acquah was one of a five-member panel of

⁴³⁵ Interview with Danquah-Smith, February 2, 2013.

⁴³⁶ Interview with Opare-Addo, July 20, 2013.

Women's Own that discussed, "What Contributions Women Can Make towards African Unity."⁴³⁷ Other members of the panel were Efua Sutherland who was appointed chair of the Broadcasting Council in 1960, and also Joyce Markham, Olayinka Dickson, and Sheila Gyandoh all prominent personalities. Their presence on radio enhanced their visibility and status as they served as role models for other women in the country.

Generally, Women's World played host to a diversity of educated women who were invited to the studio as experts and role models and also as guest artistes and writers to interact on air with target groups. In the early 1960s producers introduced an innovative segment to celebrate female role models and personalities. That was the era when women were taking up professions in male dominated disciplines. Role models interviewed on the programme included Ghana's first female medical doctor, Susan Ofori-Atta, Justice Annie Jiagge who was the first High Court Judge, and Regina Addae, a journalist of the *Daily Graphic* who became the first female public relations officer in Ghana.⁴³⁸ Archival evidence also shows that some executive members of the Ghana Assembly of Women (GAW) hosted and participated in panel discussions on the Women's Monthly Forum in 1969. They were, Delphina Barlette Vanderpuiye, Elsie Sowah, and Grace Nelson.

The talk segment of the programme lasted between two and three minutes and content was generated from members of the public. Writers of the talk were active contributing subjects who were typically not invited guests or resource persons. The programme makers addressed English speaking listeners as "ladies," and occasionally as housewives. To be called a lady or a housewife, women must have had some education and be cultured in Western lifestyles including communicating in English which were indicators of modernity. Women who wrote and presented talks typically did so as housewives and addressed the audiences the same way.

⁴³⁷ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (Jan. 24, 1962).

⁴³⁸ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (Jan. 24, 1962).

Those who gave talks seemed to be aware of the complexities of the changing roles of women and also who their target audiences were. Some of the writers claimed authority to speak to other women as experts. For instance, Pearl Jones-Quartey a teacher and social worker who gave regular talks on children, defended her authority as “a mother of four children” to talk on child care and related subjects.⁴³⁹ Another regular contributor was Amba Atta, who identified herself as a crusader for women’s education and a counsellor. Therefore the “talks” provide insight into the subjective experiences of the writers. Essentially, writers addressed personal issues as general issues in the pursuit of their own reformist agenda and the larger agenda of modernisation.



Picture 23: Pearl Jones Quartey, talk writer and presenter (1960s).
Source: *Radio Ghana Review and TV Times*, 1960

The talk segment of the programme is an example of what Jane Bryce described (in the case of print culture) as “an arena for women writers seeking a discursive space which has not been colonised by hegemonic critical values.”⁴⁴⁰ The segment provided the least contested channels for women’s expressiveness. It was managed by female programme makers who

⁴³⁹ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (Jan. 24, 1962).

⁴⁴⁰Jane Bryce, “A life on the Women’s Page: Treena Kwenta’s Dairy,” in *Writing African Women Gender, Popular Culture and Literature in West Africa*, edited by Stephanie Newell. (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1997), 47-66. :

exercised control over content and whose gatekeeping practices were biased towards feminine interest and needs.

4.7 Dominant discourses on Women's Own/Women's World

The “talk” segment was a site of contradictory discourses and fragmented ideologies that reflected women's diverse experiences with social change. Many of the talks celebrated the changes in women's lives and affirmed women's roles as housewives and their femininity. Simultaneously, some of the talks contested patriarchy and negotiated conflicts over women's roles and commitment to the home, to themselves and to the nation as working mothers and economic providers. The talks have been discussed thematically under seven categories and subthemes. These categories are not mutually exclusive as all the categories touched on social change. Essentially, the categories help in analysing the talks within the specific discursive frames implied by the titles. The themes and subthemes are:

1. Topics on domesticity and the separate sphere. The topic focused on women's experiences with Western-styled domesticity, women's roles, duties, and responsibilities as housewives and as working women.
2. Topics on women's status and society. These derive from themes of social change and depict women's views, perceptions, and experiences on women's rights and gender equality and also women's agency in changing their status and power in society.
3. Topics on edification and self-improvement: This category advocated educational opportunities for women and working mothers, career guidance, and self-improvement activities such as reading.
4. Topics on marriage and modernity focus on marriage and family, choosing a life partner, the responsibilities and expectations of married couples within ordinary marriages, such as opening joint accounts and domestic spending.

5. Topics on lifestyle include subjects such as throwing parties, shopping, planning vacations and picnics, gardening, hosting guests, civil behaviour in society, and blending modern lifestyles with tradition.
6. Topics on fashion, grooming and beautification covered sports, makeup techniques, hairdressing, and body care.
7. Topics on child welfare and development focused on child care, diet, nutrition and changing perceptions about children in the society.

4.7.1 Topics on Domesticity and Separate Sphere

Historians have highlighted the disjuncture between ideologies and projects that colonialism introduced and promoted for Africans and the uses Africans made of them. Discourses in this category simultaneously glorified domesticity and encouraged women to work outside the home. Ideas about being a housewife existed side by side with those of pursuing careers. Writers of the talk celebrated both domestic and non-domestic pursuits, applauded women who took up full time roles as housewives, and also those who combined work with domestic roles. Tensions between domestic ideals and women's personal achievements were also extensively discussed. Educated Ghanaian women had their own visions of the ideology of domesticity as reflected in the talk segments. Ghanaian women evaluated Victorian notions of domesticity and the separate sphere with their experiences and perceptions. In one of the talks broadcast in early 1960, an anonymous writer celebrated notions of domesticity and the "separate sphere" using metaphors such as "rule" to suggest feminine power over the domestic space. The talk was entitled "A woman can make or break a Home."

The woman of the house is the most important person in it. Her husband may be stronger and cleverer than she is. The wife may seem inferior to him in the more obvious ways, but there is one subtle way in which she can outdo him every time and that is in her influence in the home. A women's influence in the home is far greater than the husband's. He may be king of the castle but does not rule over the atmosphere in the home. His wife does. She may do it deliberately, but usually it is an unconscious poser

(sic) that she wields. She creates its predominant atmosphere and sets it's (sic) moods by her moods.⁴⁴¹

In this notion of domesticity, the writer challenges male hegemony and uses the domestic sphere to claim equal status with the breadwinner. The writer's vision rejects the dominant view within historiography that domesticity is something that women should challenge because the ideology subordinates and excludes their participation from the public sphere.⁴⁴² The writer suggests that even within the sphere of domesticity women could exercise power and acquire status.

A few such talks hailed the notion of man as head of the household and breadwinner promoting the logic of western domesticity. For example, Patience Akunor who wrote as a housewife considered the housewife's role as a natural female role. Women must not challenge, but go along with the perceived "natural" duties and responsibilities of the housewife such as "darning clothes and socks, fixing buttons and removing tattered collar."⁴⁴³ Suggestively, marriage and domesticity then were important means to power and status. Akunor views mending as humble work. Her position reflects values embedded in Christian marriage and the larger missionary projects that taught submissiveness and morality as natural virtues for women; and trained women and girls to become successful housewives and to accept domesticity as the natural way for women to acquire status.

Most of the topics on domesticity and women's separate sphere resonated with Linda Burzotta Nilson's view that the housewife was a prestige status associated with affluent households.⁴⁴⁴ Also, it resonated with Elizabeth England's position that for middle class women, control of the domestic sphere meant that they disseminate particular types of

⁴⁴¹ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 18, 1960).

⁴⁴² Manuh, "Women and their Organisations," 111.

⁴⁴³ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 27, 1968).

⁴⁴⁴ Linda Burzotta Nilson, "The Social Standing of the Housewife," *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 40 No.3 (Aug., 1978), 341-348.

knowledge that would ensure middleclass hegemony.⁴⁴⁵ Dolly Mundy-Castle's talk on "The Modern Ghanaian Housewife" illustrates the point. She wrote:

The modern Ghanaian housewife like the housewife in other countries has many duties to perform. She has to be a wife, a mother hostess and worker. How ably she carries out her tasks is reflected in her home. The true homemaker is concerned first of all with the comfort and wellbeing of the family. Whether her home is large or small she will strive for a restful atmosphere where one can work, eat and relax at the end of the day. She also wants to make her home beautiful and to be proud of it when she is entertaining guest and her husband's associates, her own friends, the children's playmates or the family. And that is not all; it has to be run efficiently, especially if she has a job outside, so as to enable her to make the most of her leisure hours. That's quite a big job for the so-called weaker sex.⁴⁴⁶

This writer raises new challenges due to shifts from the traditional family and kin network and its implications for the housewife's duties. Her emphasis on the home, and leisure, reflect the bigger reformist agenda by women's groups and the government to "modernise" Ghanaian women and especially the home as a place for nuclear rather than extended family; as a place of comfort and relaxation. This agenda was carried out through activities such as home exhibitions undertaken by women's groups and government in 1956 and 1967 respectively.

The 1956 exhibition was carried out jointly by the Federation of Gold Coast Women (FGCW) and the Department of Housing and Social Welfare and Community Development. Historian Bianca Murillo informs us that the exhibition by an "urban elite organisation" was a "tool to educate all classes" of women on the benefits of modern living and to encourage them to raise their standard of living.⁴⁴⁷ The FGCW expected that those who witnessed the exhibition would spread the information "in towns and villages and do likewise."

The contribution by Mundy-Castle to the talk segment in 1964 (evidence provided above) has resonance with the modernising ideology. Essentially, it shows how women used radio to disseminate new ideas to transform the lives of other women while promoting the

⁴⁴⁵ Elizabeth Langland, cited by Kay Boardman, "The Ideology of Domesticity: The regulation of the Household Economy in Victorian Women's Magazines," *Victorian Periodical Review*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (2000), 150.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 17, 1964).

⁴⁴⁷ Murillo, "Ideal Home," 560-573.

concept of the housewife. The writer's use of the phrase, "the modern Ghanaian housewife" acknowledges that the concept of the housewife was not new to Ghanaian women who always performed wifely duties and managed their homes. The word housewife and the English elements assigned to the term such as directing domestic servants, consumerism and shopping were the new elements. I argue that women who engaged with women's radio programmes contributed to popularising the term housewife.

One of the main features of the 1967 Ideal Home Exhibition organised by the NLC government led by Lieutenant General J. A. Ankrah was the abundance of consumer goods that aimed to help improve standard of living. According to historian Bianca Murillo, the exhibition directed consumer practices towards household consumption. Besides promoting domesticity, the exhibition, as Murillo noted also promoted "rational consumerism within the confines of an ideal home."⁴⁴⁸ Talks on radio a year after, reflected the outcome of the exhibition. For example Elaine Duncan's talk on "How to choose your tableware" in 1968 told listeners that:

The shops are full of attractive coloured China, so the housewife should be careful enough to choose a colour she can live with through the years. ...housewives should not overlook the grace that the ordinary Ghanaian clay pots can lend to the table. Dishes like palm soup and *Akplidzi* look best served in our own native and traditional ware.⁴⁴⁹

As the evidence suggests, the consumerist culture was pervasive but not restrictive in terms of the kind of goods it promoted. Alongside foreign goods, Ghanaian women were also reminded to patronise local goods as well.

Topics on women and work concentrated on the basic question of whether women should work outside the home and how best to combine such economic roles with family duties, marriage, and motherhood given their 'modern' responsibilities for transforming the home,

⁴⁴⁸ Murillo, "Ideal Home," 565.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (August 3, 1968). *Akplidzi* is a dish made from ground corn and palm nut soup. The maize is roasted and ground before use.

families and family life. What Murillo has termed “domestic emancipation” of women did not seem to have come easy for most women as some of the topics discussed suggest.⁴⁵⁰ The following broadcast on “The Home, the Career and the Wife” demonstrates the ways in which women negotiated such difficulties and justified the imperative of their presence and role in both the domestic and public spaces.

Sometime ago a career and a home were considered separate and incompatible. In modern days, these two go together but they present problems to most families. Let us find the main reason why a wife finds it necessary to work. Apart from keeping abreast with the time and breaking the monotony of home life, a wife’s income helps to increase the family income, and by this we are able to do and afford a lot of things we normally have had to wait a long time for. Also it helps towards educating our children and therefore aiming at what we call Sex Equality.⁴⁵¹

The discourse about sex equality speaks to broader issues about women’s autonomy and economic independence as more women became income earners. The subject attracted various views through the talks.

Some women were concerned that some husbands did not like to see “that their wives can be breadwinners for the family.” Such concerns were addressed in several talks that advised that the problem could be “handled tactfully by talking to the husband about it.” Some women also considered their entry into employment as secondary jobs in order to support family needs. Yet others thought that career and work gave women other interests apart from running their homes and help in the development of the community and nation as a whole. Other women too, lamented over problems of the “career housewife” as Ama Atta’s talk in March 1967 suggests:

The housewife has definite problems. Keeping the house neat, meet the laundry needs see to the health, spending time with the husband and children perhaps playing games with them or reading.⁴⁵²

⁴⁵⁰ Murillo, “Ideal Home,” 568.

⁴⁵¹ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (Sept. 10, 1960).

⁴⁵² *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (March 17, 1967).

Overall pieces of evidence provided in this subsection suggest that Ghanaian women promoted different ideologies of domesticity and these shaped and defined gender relations at home and the larger society.

4.7.2 Topics on women's status and society

Talks on women's status and society tapped into the growing sense of emancipation and liberation that women were beginning to feel after independence as a result of the CPP government's interest and support for women's emancipation. Therefore most of the talks under this theme, celebrated women's 'progress' and projected them as intellectually, socially, and politically capable partners in development and change. Talks on the programme also served to awaken and deepen women's social, political, and cultural consciousness about their changing status and roles in society. Thus women spoke about the "new woman" and changing status making references to the colonial past and sounding optimistic about the future and about their growing visibility in the public sphere.

Concepts such as "freedom" and "equality with men" and phrases like "walking side by side with men," and "venture into male dominated fields," were used to raise public consciousness about gender equality. The phrases reflect also women's reactions and thoughts on their status in the immediate post-colonial period. These notions also point to the objectives and goals of women in their quest to change their status and achieve gender equality. Mercy Donkor's topic on "The role of Ghana Women Today" illustrates this point.

The days are gone when our girls were never heard of in general discussions. A decade ago, it was a great problem for the Ghanaian girl to take part in social activities ...Women can now contend that the kitchen is no more their place...Ghana is on the move and women have rightly taken their place in the vanguard...Women everywhere are determined to walk abreast with (sic) men in all spheres of life. They feel that they must share duties and responsibilities with men so that they are justified in their claim to equal rights and privileges.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵³ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (June 17, 1960).

Donkor's talk suggests that some educated urban Ghanaian women were up in arms against Victorian notions of domesticity as they perceived the ideology as negative feature of Ghanaian women's life. She attributed women's 'progress' partly to their own agency at improving their situation and acknowledged the roles played by women's organisations in this regard. She used the "kitchen" to symbolise domesticity, presenting the ideology as a problem and suggested that gender equality could be achieved by staying out of the kitchen.

Key words such as rights, privileges and equality were more frequently used to justify Ghanaian women's position in this post-independence society as for example, this talk on "A women's role in society" by "A Correspondent." The writer contested enlightenment notions of rationality as a male preserve insisting that women were equally capable of exercising their intellect.

She has today become the equal and fitting complement to man. The old idea that helplessness is feminine is exploded. Knowledge, reason, strength and thoroughness are no longer rated as masculine. Woman has cast away her old timidities and gained a new freedom. She has achieved intellectual emancipation and is almost equal to man in every branch of intellectual achievement. ...Surely, with this emancipation from the fetters which in the past checked her development has emerged a new type of woman in society.⁴⁵⁴

Elizabeth Otoo shared similar views and experiences of progress in women's status and attributed such changes partly to social policies that benefited women and partly to women's agency in taking advantage of opportunities such as education. She cited the introduction of day nurseries and the increasing numbers of such facilities across the country as a development that had profound implications for women's advancement and status. Her talk, broadcast on "Women's Own" in 1965, illustrates how women sought to be circumvent domesticity in order to free of some of the domestic chores such as caring for children so that they could take

⁴⁵⁴ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (August 23, 1968).

advantage of opportunities for their own personal advancement in order to engage more with the public space.

Evidence from other talks broadcast on the women's programme suggests that while acknowledging progress, the "new" type of Ghanaian woman in the 1960s also questioned the patriarchal nature of the society in very practical ways. In her talk on "Mother's role at a wedding", Leone de Graft wrote:

"...one important person at a wedding who is invariably forgotten by guests is the mother of the bride. We tend to forget about her because no place is given her near the bride. The father of the bride had the bride on his arm as they advance up the aisle; the sister of the bride may follow the bride as a maid of honour. But where do we place the mother of the bride? She who for nine months of her life had had the bride as part of her. She who had sat up many nights nursing the bride as a baby. To her the bride owes a few of the things that add up to her personality. Why don't we have any place for her on the aisle?"⁴⁵⁵

The writer's talk suggests a concern about how society celebrated fatherhood at the expense of motherhood. Therefore, by seeking to have a place "on the aisle" for mothers, it is inferred that Leone de Grafts was demanding that society should be more accountable to the concerns of mothers as a way of promoting gender equality.

4.7.3 Topics on education, edification and self-improvement

"Our women must read" is the title of Amba Atta's talk. This writer set out to offer career guidance to young ladies and encourage women to pursue personal advancement by reading.

I stress the word reading because I notice that only a few women take real interest in reading. By reading story books and other kinds of literature, you will come across expressions and words and you can converse on topics bordering on your interest with precision."⁴⁵⁶

Amba Atta is noted for her contributions on counseling women to take charge of their personal transformation and get integrated into the modern society. In encouraging women to

⁴⁵⁵ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 7, 1968).

⁴⁵⁶ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (March 8, 1963).

read, she recommended two books, one by Eleanor MacDonalld entitled “The successful women at home and society,” and “How to make your home smart” by Diana Bridges. She did not dismiss domesticity as the title of the books suggest. Domesticity was one of the pathways to women’s social transformation. The other pathway she suggested is evidenced by advice she gave to girls to venture into male dominated careers such as pharmacy. An excerpt of the topic, “Pharmacy is no monopoly of men” states:

There is a cluster of women in the field of arts but only a few of them dotted among the large number of men in the field of science and technology. This phenomenon has baffled many and I suspect our male counterparts already think that the field of science and technology is their monopoly. The fact that some women have ventured into this field means that lots of women can follow their footsteps but only perhaps they lack the courage and perhaps the encouragement.⁴⁵⁷

As the evidence suggests, Amba Atta’s counselling was directed at both housewives and potential career seekers who need some edification to advance their social functioning. Topics on women’s edification and empowerment also covered sports and science and civil behaviours in society. These subjects were embedded in the larger debates about women’s status, and gender equality. A home economist encouraged housewives who may complain of boredom at home to take interest in the application of science at home.

In the kitchen there are many simple things which if explained scientifically take on an added interest. Why do covered kettles and pots boil quicker than uncovered ones? Why does food on a cooking spoon tend to fly away from the cooking pot when the spoon is knocked against the pot? ...There are many “Whys” and “Hows” for an interested housewife to discover.⁴⁵⁸

Impliedly, the writer was encouraging more critical thinking among women, a form of intellectual empowerment within the domestic space. Aside of knowing how to darn clothes and socks, fix buttons and remove tattered collar, housewives must negotiate Victorian-styled

⁴⁵⁷ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (March 1, 1963).

⁴⁵⁸ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (June 17, 1960).

domesticity by exploring the domestic space in order to understand and explain changes and developments around them more rationally.

Also Betty Okyne, sports mistress of Achimota School who presented a talk on the benefits of sports to women, challenged gendered ideologies about women and sports. She notes: “women all over the world have come to realise that they are capable of taking full part in all games and sports just as men.” Her talk focused on correcting some of such misconceptions. Okyne writes:

Sports rather make a woman subtle and give her good posture and poise. These are very necessary for every woman. The second argument which suggests that a woman is likely to injure her childbearing mechanism is also groundless. It is important for every woman to find ways of strengthening herself against the strain and stress of modern life....It has been concluded that a sure way of strengthening a nation is to strengthen the mothers who will in turn, have healthy children.⁴⁵⁹

Patricia Cole’s talk on “Politeness is the Basis of Good Manners” drew a link between changing status of women and their behaviour in society. She writes:

The peculiar position of women in the changing society of Ghana make it more impelling for women to learn how to behave in the most cordial manner. This attitude radiates good neighbourliness and makes us more adaptable to society.⁴⁶⁰

Other topics on self-improvement encouraged women to be creative and self-reliant. For example, a writer, Leone de Graft encouraged women to make their own flower vases using empty containers and jars. An author applauded the creativity of Ghanaian women but regretted that this value was getting lost:

Maybe, living as we now do in the age of comparative luxury we are losing a bit of our ability to improvise. But we must remember that to improvise is to think, and to think is to accept the challenges that the problems of today bring us.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁹ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (June 15, 1960).

⁴⁶⁰ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (October 28, 1960).

⁴⁶¹ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (April 2, 1960).

4.7.4 Topics on marriage and modernity

Ordinance marriage came with a set of expectations based on Christian ideology and European conventions which were markedly different from traditional marriage. Couples were required to register officially their marriages. Ordinance marriages practiced monogamy and were supposed to have a permanent union and nuclear family. The ideal was that the husband became the sole economic provider and the wife supported his efforts by keeping an efficient and cultured home. Customary marriage, on the other hand, embraced polygamy and emphasised kin ties, accepted divorce, and occurred in the context of the extended family. Christiane Oppong informs us that women had more power within traditional marriage as they could instigate dissolution of marriage if they thought the relationship was unrewarding and remarry someone considered more likely to offer agreeable marital relationship.⁴⁶²

The focus of Mrs. G. L. Thomas' talk on "What wedding veils can mean" seems to advocate traditional marriages that come with the power and freedom to move in and out of the marriage as against the "security" that ordinance marriages promised.

There may be young brides-to-be who are dreaming of their wedding – of a veil, the white dress, the flowers and all other romantic things connected with a wedding...It may come as a surprise to you to learn that the word "wedding" itself has a most unromantic origin. Because "wed" was the money given for the bride in the days when all brides were bought. What's more, buying a bride was a kind of lucky dip for in some countries, the bridegroom didn't clap eyes on his bride's face until after the ceremony, during which she'd concealed [sic] under a heavy veil...So you modern brides, the veil you are dreaming of represent your freedom. After the wedding off comes that veil – and away goes your freedom.⁴⁶³

Mrs. Thomas' advice to young women was taken up in another talk. While empowering girls to select marriage partners as against the prevailing traditional practices of arranged marriages the writer also proposed particular types of men to look out for and cautions: "Not the one that

⁴⁶² Christine Oppong, *Middle Class African Marriage: A family Study of Ghanaian Senior Civil Servants* (London: George Allen & Unwin Publishers Ltd., 1981), 116.

⁴⁶³ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (Sept. 10, 1960).

makes the bee line for the girls... not the one with a winning tongue” but the one who must “also be a good provider.”⁴⁶⁴

Some topics questioned some of the “modern” lifestyles that go with ordinance marriage and role expectations such as opening of joint accounts with spouses, reading husbands’ letters, and women contributing to the family budget as new income earners. Evidence from most of the talks suggests that the issue of a male breadwinner or provider was the most contested in modern marriage particularly in the light of women’s growing presence in the workforce. Gladys Kotey’s talk on “A career wife and the family budget” illustrates some of the concerns and implications.

Man has been known throughout the ages as the sole provider. However, conception about the man being the provider has taken a new turn with lots of married women working: and in so many cases earning more or as much as their men folk. Sooner or later there crops up the problem in such a set-up as to who pays for what. This always brings a lot of arguments and quarrels in its wake.⁴⁶⁵

Concerns over family income and women’s contributions to family budget attracted comments from government circles as well, specifically, the ruling military government of the National Redemption Council (NRC) which was later transformed to Supreme Military Council (SMC). This was in 1974 when members of the GAW and Vice President of the International Alliance of Women called on the Head of State, General Kutu Acheampong as part of the former’s working visit to Ghana.

General Acheampong who spoke on the role of women and their responsibility in society urged married women to go into ‘partnership’ with men. According to him, many young Ghanaian men go bankrupt because “their working wives keep their money and expect their husbands to provide everything.” He said: “it is not the responsibility of the husband alone to

⁴⁶⁴ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (Sept. 10, 1960).

⁴⁶⁵ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (Sept. 10, 1960).

provide all the needs when the wife is also earning a salary.”⁴⁶⁶ The evidence may be a reflection of male attitude toward women’s growing presence in the formal workforce as new income earners. Essentially too, it shows that distinct gender roles as breadwinners and housewives was not particularly acceptable to either women or men in post-colonial Ghanaian society.

Other problems about marriage and modernity related to high cost of living, high cost of Western marriage and whether or not to disclose one’s income to spouses. The following excerpt entitled “Wives must not know our Pay” was a response to a talk on Women’s World.

Although I have very little experience in marriage, I know enough of the behaviour of women to be able to say something on whether or not husbands should tell their wives how much they earn. Some wives always try to compare their husbands with other people’s husbands, So that if they learnt their husbands earned less than others they begin to cast aspersions against them for being inefficient in their jobs. Such things either lead to separation or divorce.⁴⁶⁷

The dominant issue in this category on marriage and modernity was financial responsibilities of the couple as women earned incomes.

4.7.5 Topics on lifestyle

Topics on lifestyles included throwing parties, entertaining guests, flower gardening, home decorations, engaging in leisure activities such as going out for picnics and also taking vacations. Betty Bossman’s talk on Women’s Own in 1965 focused on throwing parties. The author impressed upon the “modern housewife” that she had an obligation to throw a party at a point in her life either for the fun of it or in the interest of her husband’s business or because of her social position. In a tone that exuded some level of expertise in such matters, Bossman exposes her listeners to different forms of parties to consider and the kind of dishes to serve.

In giving a party, there are two things to bear in mind: the first is the people you are inviting ...and the second is what type of party you want. Maybe you want a formal

⁴⁶⁶ *The Ghanaian Woman*, Vol. 1.No. 2 (April-June, 1974).

⁴⁶⁷ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 10, 1965).

dinner party, cocktails, a buffet dinner, an informal luncheon party, or something which is becoming rather fashionable these days – a breakfast party. Today, African dishes are the order of the day; they are, suitable and can be prepared in advance.⁴⁶⁸

Evidence from the talks suggests that while educated women sought to be modern by embracing Western lifestyles, they also made conscious efforts to maintain some aspects their traditions and cultures. Mary Addy's talk on "How to entertain friends to lunch" illustrates the point. She states:

If you visited a European, she would not dream of giving you an African dish, so if you have Europeans among your guests, do not try to impress them by cooking oriental dishes that might be very expensive and perhaps poor imitations.⁴⁶⁹

Promoting African foods and culture to non-Africans was in line with Nkrumah's ideals on African personality which was part of the larger mission of promoting African cultures and inserting the African voice into global affairs. Evidence suggests that food was one of the ways by which such objectives were pursued. Radio was in the forefront, publicising and drawing attention to local and international events that promoted African cultures such as exhibitions and fairs. For example, six Ghanaian women pursuing various courses in Britain, were reported to have taken part in a food fair in London in September 1960. These women were given high publicity on Radio Ghana for promoting Ghanaian dishes and for adding "typically Ghanaian flavours."⁴⁷⁰

Jane Gregory's talk on "Re-decorating Your Living Room" offered tips on the kind of items needed.⁴⁷¹ Another talk by M. Opare Abetsia considered it a responsibility of every woman to bring colour and beauty into her home by making use of exotic plants which abound in Ghana. She notes: "a vase of gay blossoms placed in a prominent position can transform the most ordinary room" and she suggested the use of earthenware pot.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁸ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (May 13, 1965).

⁴⁶⁹ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 3, 1964).

⁴⁷⁰ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (August 5, 1960).

⁴⁷¹ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (August 9, 1968).

⁴⁷² *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (April 2, 1965).

Topics on lifestyle also focused on picnic as a leisure activity. Literature on leisure conceptualizes the activity in relation to formal work and time spent outside home – “work time” and “leisure time.”⁴⁷³ Vera Symmons’ talk in July 1960, introduced picnic as a modern form of leisure activity for the modern Ghanaian woman who worked outside the home. The talks also provided hints on things one may require for a picnic. She writes:

As many of us, women spend our weekends confined to offices and stores or in the home, a Sunday or public holiday spent by the sea or in the country is relaxing. What you take for your picnic will depend on your means of transport. A leg of hot chicken and a potatoes baked in its skin is most enjoyable after a swim so are hot sausages and mashed potatoes or a hot pepper stew with boiled yam.⁴⁷⁴

Although Symmons’ talk recommended foreign foods such as baked potatoes, hot sausages and a leg of hot chicken for picnics she also reminded her listeners of their own local dishes – boiled yam and hot pepper stew – which may be cheaper and easily available.

4.7.6 Topics on fashion, personal grooming and beautification

Topics under this category proposed for women a powerful beauty mandate that emphasised women’s femininity. The topics suggest that the ideal Ghanaian housewife could also be glamorous, sophisticated and fashionable. Talks on grooming provided tips such as the removal of rashes on the skin, how to use make-ups such as face powders and beauty creams. See for example, an excerpt of Dede Abla’s talk below:

Face powdering is the main problem of women in the country because it is very rare to find the colour that suits our skin; and since it is important to select the appropriate colour for both the texture of our skin, we have to use several devices and imagination...Here are a few of the shades of loose powder and compressed powder that suit your complexion. For very light people the peach colour is quite nice but blend it with little Sun Tan colour. For dark skinned people use Sun Tan, Nile Goddess, Golden Goddess and the Dark Dark.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷³ Emmanuel Akyeampong and Charles Ambler, “Leisure in African History: An introduction,” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 1, Special Issue, (2002), 1-16.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (June 20, 1960).

⁴⁷⁵ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (September 9, 1960).

Many of the talks on beauty were prescriptive, persuasive and seemed to provide solutions to imaginary “problems.” Consumption of beauty products was part of the consumerist culture characteristic of the early years of independence in some African countries including Ghana. Historians such as Timothy Burke have observed that the consumerist culture was feminised, consciously directed at women to foster colonial domesticity and its post-colonial analogues.⁴⁷⁶ Evidence from the talks as well as secondary evidence suggest that women cannot be absolved of their involvement as they were the promoters of the sale and consumption of such beauty products. Manuh has shown that the early 1960s for example, witnessed the mass importation of skin lightening creams and wigs by wives and mistresses of ministers of state for local consumption.⁴⁷⁷

In contrast to the promotion of imported beauty products, Ama Boafo presented a talk on “The threaded hair” which focused on local fashion specifically, “hair tying,” and the commercialisation of the fashion.⁴⁷⁸ The article drew attention to the economic value of the local fashion and encouraged listeners with such skills to use them to make money. Ama Boafo also raised concerns with what she called “male intrusion into the women’s world” of hairdressing.⁴⁷⁹ The article, broadcast in 1965 said hairdressing was no longer the monopoly of women suggesting male appropriation of female roles in the same way that women negotiated spaces in male domains.

Some of the talks criticised women for being fashion crazy and extravagant. In his talk on the “The Modern Ghanaian Woman and Fashion” Nii Adama urged women to be fashion conscious and not fashion crazy by following just any foreign fashion.

Recently some of our women have taken to some weird ways of dyeing their hairs; one might see a streak of violet across ebony-dark hair. These things, if properly done, can

⁴⁷⁶ Burke, “‘Fork Up & Smile’: Marketing,” 394.

⁴⁷⁷ Manuh, *Women and their Organisations*, 121.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (May 14, 1965).

⁴⁷⁹ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (May 14, 1965).

without doubt enhance beauty. But unfortunately, some women do it just because they have seen others do it. And that, I am afraid, is not only reasonable, but unsightly. While every man likes to see a beautiful woman or girl, he inwardly would prefer her to be herself not a blind imitation of somebody else. I am quite sure that if our women will remember this they will be a little bit more original, and they will venture into the ever-changing world of fashion with caution and discretion.⁴⁸⁰

Adama's admonition provoked further criticism of women with regard to their lifestyle. Mabel

Atiemo's talk on the extravagance of Ghanaian women states:

Not a week passes without the cover shoulder taking new look – a different sleeve here, a new skirt there and so on... How many of us have stopped to think of the amount of money it costs to “move with the times” and be fashionable?... I know a woman who made it a point to attend every Memorial service in a new dress. There was one service almost every Sunday in the city and so it means she bought a new dress every week...If you can really afford it I suppose there is no harm done...Unfortunately when the example is set many people including who can barely afford their daily bread get hopelessly caught up by it and the result is very pathetic... If we spend less money on clothes we can help to run the home economically instead of leaving the burden on our poor husbands. After all when housewives want to work, the main excuse they give is they want to supplement their husband's earnings so why don't they do that? ⁴⁸¹

Atiemo's talk is only one of the many that attributed the high cost of living to the phenomenon of women living beyond their means in their attempts to remain modern. It is also one of several other articles that challenged contradictions in women's lives resulting partly from education and women's entry into the formal workforce.

4.7.7 Talks on child welfare and development

Discourses on children were generally couched in the language of modernity and covered examined topics such as child welfare, education and civic responsibilities in addition to tit bits on safety of children in home and happiness of children. Pearl Jones Quartey's talks on “How to Teach Your Children Good Manners” sought to help mothers inculcate values in their children such as saying “thank you” and please” and to avoid the use of offensive language and shouting.

The second way we can help our children in this matter of good manners is by having them like people- not just specific people – people in general. After all,

⁴⁸⁰ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 30, 1964).

⁴⁸¹ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (August 11, 1968).

the basis of good manners is a consideration for the other's feelings. As a child grows in his awareness of liking people, he cannot help but see reason, for extending to a wider circle his good manners learned at home.⁴⁸²

Jones-Quartey also suggests exposing children to modern play and recreational or leisure activities such as building a play hut, an outing to the beach, and organising special events such as having lunch in the play hut. These activities signalled a movement away from traditional game and recreational activities such as *ampe* (a game for girls that involves jumping and counting).

Girls were introduced to western play items such as dolls while boys were introduced to football, designated as a male sport. Eloisa Thornbourg's talk also tended to reinforce ideological stereotypes about men and women in society. This excerpt from the talk is illustrative:

Four or five year old girls are beginning to learn that the world is made up of many more people than Mummy and Daddy. They usually have a little brother by this time and it is not always easy for her to learn to be less dependent on Mummy for everything. So why not a doll?...Boys of four and five are learning to play together and they are learning the fun of working together as well as the fun of playing together. This is why they enjoy football that could be a game of fun when played alone but much better when it is shared.⁴⁸³

There was a proposition that children should be given pocket money regularly. Mawusi Kuwornu argues as follows:

My belief is that children should be given pocket money regularly as I don't think they would be better off without it. Children have got to handle money at some time and the sooner they learn to do so the better.⁴⁸⁴

One of the talks admonished parents for not taking proper care of children. It is interesting to note that the writer addressed "parents," not mothers and directed specific responsibilities to each parent.

⁴⁸² *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (Oct., 17, 1960).

⁴⁸³ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (August 6, 1972).

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

Apart from providing the child with shelter it is also obligatory for parents to provide their children with requisite standard of living which will no doubt enable him to move abreast with the times.⁴⁸⁵

The discourse on diet and nutrition provided rules for good diet for children and was linked to the development of the nation. Sylvia Boone, for example, pointed to the importance of food in promoting wellbeing.

It is not enough just not to feel hungry- today we are concerned that every child should have a feeling of optimum well-being. It is the person of strength and vigour who has the endowment for an interesting productive life.⁴⁸⁶

Talks on nutrition were meant to promote healthy living. Such talks contained detailed information on exercises and various functions of the body

By the mid 1970s before the UN Decade for Women, women's contributions to the programme had taken on a different tone. In 1974 for example, programmes were devoted to discussing the plight of girl migrants from rural communities. Panellists on the programmes were forthright in condemning traditional practices such as child marriages, prostitution and the negative impact of polygamous marriages on women.⁴⁸⁷ These issues had gained little attention as reflected in the discourses in the talk segment. Also some of the talks became more upfront in contesting gender inequalities. In one such talks, Gladys Kotey compared the duties of a housewife with those of the chief executive and argued that despite the importance of both duties, the work of the housewife was highly undervalued.

The chairman of the International Women's Year planning committee, Kate Abbam was interviewed on Women's World in 1975, and she used the platform of to appeal to men to help their wives to improve their standard of living. She notes:

Women as human resources can be tapped to contribute to the overall development. Think of women farmers. Husbands should help them to expand their farms. ---Everyone should help in the effort at promoting equality between women and men. We should remember that market women, most of them are

⁴⁸⁵ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (April 30, 1965).

⁴⁸⁶ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (June, 20 1964).

⁴⁸⁷ Women's World: Archival radio tape no. WRM 1210.

trading for the sake of trading. Direct them to get loans, join co-operatives and get support. ⁴⁸⁸

The changes in content reflect prevailing concerns that advocated a more equal gendered society. The content of women's programmes in English in particular, emphasised the education of men on diverse issues that worked against women's advancement. Women advocated education as a strategy to empower husbands to be more conscious of gender equality and girls' education to foster the reintegration of women into modern society.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the history of programme spaces on radio created for women with emphasis on the Women's Radio Magazine, the first of such programme spaces developed in the late 1940s. It discussed the functions and historical significance of the programme spaces and has shown that the magazines were not only sites for transmitting didactic information and ideas about Victorian-styled domesticity and the separate women sphere as was intended. Rather the programmes served as new platforms for post-colonial women's edification and also for contesting and negotiating their changing roles and experiences of some of the contradictions between modernity and tradition, including their roles as housewives, the changing terrain of gender and general issues that threatened women's autonomy and status.

The chapter has shown that the Women's Magazine Programmes functioned as new communicative spaces for post-colonial Ghanaian women by providing a discursive space for post-colonial women. They were differentiated by language and content but fundamentally, they functioned as the "separate sphere" of women in a different way. Rather than being spaces for only educated women, the programmes enabled all women – educated and illiterate, rural

⁴⁸⁸ Kate Abbam, "Interview on Women's World," (GBC: Archival tape recording, WRM 4022.) 1975.

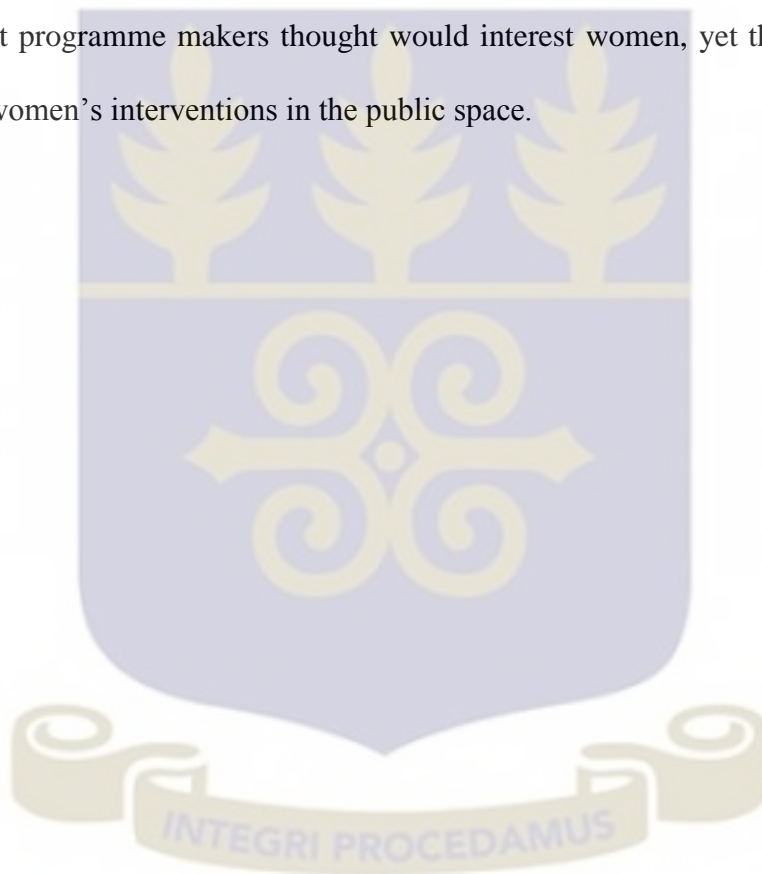
and urban including farmers, traders, professional women, traders and fish mongers to be part of this sphere by the fact of being Ghanaian. The programmes encouraged women to contribute to radio through writing and talk presentations on diverse themes of social change, energized by traditional concerns and traditional perspectives of motherhood, a wife and gender roles at home. Therefore, the magazine programmes became the dominant forum for social and political expression for post-colonial Ghanaian women.

Some of the writings and talks sought to subvert Victorian styled domesticity particularly aspects of the ideology that required women to be “housewives” by urging women to dump domesticity and seek careers in male dominated professions. Other writings encouraged women to appropriate new ideas embedded in the ideology to improve their wives. Yet other writer and talk presenters proposed strategies to combine careers with motherhood and their roles as wives. Essentially, post-colonial Ghanaian used the space to advocate equitable gender relations in the society. They also used the programmes to insert their voices into national and international issues; to contest women’s marginalisation in society and to negotiate women’s integration into the modern society as mothers, wives and career women.

The programmes were meant to be non-political. However, they were political in the sense of featuring women as resource persons, promoting them as achievers and as role models while becoming the dominant forum on radio for female expression on national and international issues. The programmes served as channels for advocacy on women’s rights and issues related to their sex. Women’s magazine programmes promoted the development and social transformation of post-colonial Ghanaian women by serving as new platforms for learning and sharing of new ideas about the home, the family, femininity and motherhood.

The chapter has demonstrated that one of the historical functions of the special programme spaces was, making programme makers experts on the air. The magazines

functioned as spaces where most female broadcasters learnt their craft and also learnt to attract female audiences and contributors to radio content. Women programmes makers were instrumental in forming a female listening public and contributors to radio content as presenters of talks, resource persons and panellists organised around a reformist agenda based on shared values of improving the status of women and seeking a more equitable relationship between men and women in a changing society in flux. The chapter has also demonstrated that although the programmes were disabling spaces in terms of limiting women's listening to specific time and to what programme makers thought would interest women, yet the talks produced bear witness to women's interventions in the public space.



CHAPTER FOUR

RADIO AND FEMALE AUDIENCES IN GHANA

Things like jewels and sewing machines are said to be the “best friends” of women. But there is another, which I think also occupies a very important place – in fact, as important a place as the former two – and that is the radio....Let us examine some of the things that make radio our friend. First since the nature of our work at home gives us very little time for other things outside, the radio is probably the only medium through which we may find some happiness in solitude. What are the benefits we women derive from the radio? First the radio gives us information about current affairs. Second it gives us music, both classical and highlife... Women’s magazine programmes also give us much to think about.

Patricia Cole⁴⁸⁹

5.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the thesis argued that a primary reason for creating separate programme spaces for women was to attract potential female audiences and to insert radio listening into their everyday lives as “housewives” for purposes of edification and leisure. The chapter showed how women engaged with radio through separate programme spaces as resource persons, writers of talks and panellists and programme hosts. Patricia Cole’s article quoted above suggests also, Ghanaian women’s agency as radio audiences and their motivation for listening to the radio. Entitled, “Radio, friend of the Housewife” the article implies that Ghanaian women valued radio as a resource for negotiating their integration into the modern society and for gratifying their needs for personal modernity.⁴⁹⁰

Through the lens of Cole, the chapter explores the agency and listening experiences of educated and illiterate Ghanaian women during different stages in their lives. Based on the reminiscences of 16 women, the chapter provides historical insights into how radio listening became a part of the daily lives of colonial and post-colonial Ghanaian women. Jan Vansina

⁴⁸⁹ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (November 18, 196).

⁴⁹⁰ See Tamara K. Hareven, “Modernization and Family History: Perspectives on Social Change.” *Signs*, Vol. 2 No. 1. University of Chicago Press: 1976: 190-206.

regards experiences as reflexive and constitutive of parts of personal reminiscences as “recollections of past events or situations given by participants long after the events.”⁴⁹¹ Informants gave testimonies covering the early 1930s through to the late 1980s. Two of the informants reside at Elmina and Cape Coast. The rest reside in Accra, some having migrated to the city from the mining towns of Bibiani, Axim, Tarkwa, Obuasi and Konongo and also from Nsawam, Keta and Ho. The ages of the informants ranged from 60 to 90 years. Five of the 16 women interviewed were illiterate and were farmers and traders. Of the educated, five were teachers, two were nurses, two were public servants and the other two, a secretary and a business woman. They all had children; some were married and lived with their spouses. Consistent with discussions in chapter one, most of them encountered radio as children during different historical periods in the life of radio.

5.1 Female Audiences and Radio

An enduring discourse in the scholarship frames female audiences of radio as avid radio listeners who being housewives, consumed largely ‘day time’ programmes targeted at them at home. This is particularly the case in Western scholarship where research on women’s radio history is dominant. Carolyn Mitchell, for example, notes in the context of Britain that radio is a “female medium in terms both of the intimate relationship women have with it as listeners, and of the programme content devised by or for them.”⁴⁹² Ann Karpf affirms that radio was “an explicit accompaniment” to British women’s domestic work.⁴⁹³ Ruth Palter’s work on women and radio also shows that American housewives were particularly attracted to radio and could not do without radio because it provided relief from the boredom of housework, served

⁴⁹¹ Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, 8.

⁴⁹² Caroline Mitchell, “Dangerously Feminine? Theory and Praxis of Women’s Alternative Radio” in *Women and Media International Perspectives*. Edited by Karen Ross and Carolyn Byerly. (London: Blackwell, 2004) 157-184.

⁴⁹³ Ann Karpf cited in Caroline Mitchell, *Dangerously Feminine*, 157.

as a family unifier, a protector from worry and loneliness, a fantasy escape, and a defence against dissatisfactions with domestic issues.⁴⁹⁴

Cole's article partly echoes the literature on what appears to be a "feminisation" of radio listening and suggests that like women in other cultures, Ghanaian women considered radio a friend and source of "happiness in solitude." At the same time, the article resonates with the civilising mission of colonial administration towards women which further found expression in the modernisation missions of post-colonial governments towards women. Cole's article also suggests that post-colonial Ghanaian women were avid radio listeners who valued radio not only for pleasure and leisure but for its transforming and modernising potentials.⁴⁹⁵

Cole's assertion that Women's Radio Magazines gave listeners "much to think about" further suggests that post-colonial Ghanaian women were not slaves to the content of radio programmes especially those targeted at them. Cole equated her relationship with radio with femininity, motherhood, marriage and domestic life as represented by the word 'jewels' and the sewing machine. By doing so, Cole communicated to her readers that radio and the sewing machine were not simply "domestic technologies" meant to facilitate their socialisation as housewives. Rather, these were sources of social and economic power for women. Radio was a new source of knowledge and a link to the public space, while the sewing machine was a source of wealth accumulation, and a link to social status and the public space. Like the sewing machine, radio was a primary tool of domesticity which post-colonial Ghanaian women transformed into a resource to negotiate their integration into modern society.⁴⁹⁶ Before discussing the reminiscences of the key informants' relationship with radio and their

⁴⁹⁴ See Ruth Palter, "Radio's Attraction for Housewives," *Hollywood Quarterly*, Vol. 3 No. 3 (1948), 248-257.

⁴⁹⁵ Skoog, "Focus on the Housewife," 1-12.

⁴⁹⁶ The sewing machine is historically associated with women's income generation and economic independence. Basel and Methodist Missionary-run domesticity training and also mass literacy and social welfare programmes show that sewing skills acquired enabled women to set up businesses in dress making. Notable literature on such programmes includes, Paul Jenkins, "Everyday Life Encapsulated? Two Photographs Concerning Women in the Basel Mission in Africa, c 1900," *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, Vol. 15 No. 1. (June: 2002), 45-60; Kate Skinner, *Who Knew the Minds of the People*, 297-323.

motivations for listening, it is useful to provide a brief account of colonial interest in African audiences and the social and material context of listening.

5.2 Broadcast Programmes from Station ZOY to Radio Ghana

The “Colonial Blueprint on Mass Education in Africa” recognised that for broadcasting to be effective as a technique for mass education, the listener and the programmes should be the starting point of discussion.⁴⁹⁷ Beginning with the audience and programming was significant because very little attention was paid to these important areas of broadcasting in the early years before WWII. It appeared broadcast administrators were more interested in using radio for propaganda and cultural indoctrination than for education and enlightenment. In the context of Britain for example, Christine Baade has provided evidence to the effect that in the BBC encouraged attentive listening as critical to the station’s mission of educating and uplifting the public during the inter-war years.⁴⁹⁸ Archival evidence further suggests that until 1944, the only audience research undertaken in colonial Africa was in Uganda in 1939.⁴⁹⁹

Testimonies of key informants for this study suggest that despite the excitement that greeted radio, some people including women, even those with access to radio, had an ambivalent attitude towards radio. For example, Betty Kwale Owoo, a trader, now 83 had access to radio when she was eight years. She lived in a house installed with the rediffusion box. However, she was indifferent to radio partly because programmes were broadcast predominantly in English, which she did not understand.⁵⁰⁰

As stated in chapter one of this thesis, initial broadcasts were mostly relays from the BBC’s General Overseas Service (GOS) with only a few local programmes of news and music,

⁴⁹⁷ Mass Education in African Society, Colonial Broadcasting XIII, No.186 (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1944), 38.

⁴⁹⁸ Christiana Baade, “Between Factory and Work Music While You Work and Women Listeners at the Wartime,” *Feminist Media Studies*. Vol. 7, No. 3 (Routledge, 2007), 334-338.

⁴⁹⁹ Mass Education in African Society, Colonial Broadcasting XIII, No.186 (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1944), 38.

⁵⁰⁰ Interview with Betty Kwale Owoo a trader, at Adabraka market, on November 12, 2014.

broadcast in local languages. In addition were regular broadcasts of concerts by the Gold Coast police and weekly programmes of African songs, and folk stories broadcast on Friday nights.⁵⁰¹ Following the indigenisation of programmes after the Second World War, the Overseas Service programmes were augmented with the Gold Coast programmes and both packages were aired at different times of the day. Routinely, transmission began and ended with Overseas Service programmes. A brief account of a programme schedule for October 2, 1952 illustrates a preponderance of not only Overseas Service programmes but also the gendered nature of the programmes.⁵⁰²

Morning transmission started at 6:30 a.m. with Overseas Service programmes – News and the Daily Service, Radio Newsreel and a 30-minute story presentation “The Case of the Night-Watchman’s friend, Mr. Vaugham Shows the Way”. This was followed by the News and Home News from Britain and the morning transmission ended at 7:45 a.m. Transmission resumed at 11 a.m. the same day with Overseas Service programmes and continued to mid-day with the programme entitled “Records from Your Studio” which was a package of Sports Round-up, News and News Talk, and Editorials. Gold Coast Programmes were transmitted at 12 noon and this was made up of 30 minutes of news programmes in Hausa, Ewe, Twi, Ga and Fanti followed by 15 minutes of dance music followed by another 15 minutes package of music called, “Studio Melodies” that featured British artistes such as Robert Fennon and his Orchestra. A 15-minute broadcast of Gold Coast news was followed by another 15 minutes of News and Newsreel from the BBC. The afternoon transmission resumed with an hour of Gold Coast Programme that included Ga Women’s Magazine, talks in Ga as well as choral and dance music. The day’s transmission ended at 9:30 p.m. The programmes from 6.p.m. to end of transmission were all Overseas Service programmes.

⁵⁰¹ PRAAD (Accra) CSO 7/5/98.

⁵⁰² BBC General Overseas programme schedule, GPD/W1267/10, 5000/5-52. In Private Collection of Amankwa Ampofo.

Intermittent changes were made to content of programmes beginning from 1955, two years before independence. To begin with, in addition to the news in both English and local languages, educational and cultural programmes were broadcast in line with the objective of cultural self-assertion and building of the new state, Ghana. By 1960, new programmes introduced included dramatised programmes on health, development and legal issues such as the “Radio Lawyer” and the “Radio Doctor.” Broadcasts were in English. However, some of the programmes were translated into the Ghanaian languages. In addition were discussion programmes including a critique of published African literature called “University of the Air; Sound Judgement the critics.” Other broadcasts included talks such as “African Scene,” educational programmes such as “Everyday English” and religious programmes. Cultural programmes broadcast included “African Drums and their interpretations.” Most of these programmes targeted largely educated listeners who owned radio.

Besides Women’s Magazines Programmes, broadcast content also targeted at specific audiences such as farmers and the youth. For example, a programme entitled “Farmers Questions and Answers” was broadcast in all six languages: *Wonbi nye sane* in Ga; *Yerebisa mo* in Akan; *Biabiawo Kple Nudodo*, in Ewe; *Shiren Manoma* in Hausa; *Bohigu Saha* in Dagbani and *Yebiza yeade* in Nzema. Radio was used more intensively during this period to support School’s Broadcast and a variety of educational programmes for secondary schools and training colleges including English, English Literature, History, French, Mathematics and Science were taught on air.

By the late 1960s Radio Ghana was broadcasting on three networks, namely: Radio One (in six local languages); Radio Two (the commercial service network with broadcasts in English only) and the External Service which transmitted in French, Portuguese, Swahili and English. Radio One was the national network and hosted also rural broadcasting. Testimonies of the informants suggest that educated women listened to both Radio One and Radio Two,

while illiterate women only listened to Radio One. Besides changes in content and expansion of networks, broadcast days for each of the six languages were changed and specific days were assigned to each language in order to ensure equal broadcast time for each. Listeners were expected to identify more with the new programmes and be persuaded to listen because of the variety the station provided and also because of increased local content and more audience targeted programmes.

5.3 Ownership, Access and Use

Ownership of radio sets was largely male. Key informants for this study testified that they had access to radio owned by their husbands and fathers. It appeared that prohibitive costs coupled with the discriminatory policy on the subscription of the wired rediffusion technology advantaged males as owners of radio. After World War II the colonial government announced shortage of broadcast materials.⁵⁰³ The development affected production and access to majority populations. Since women relied on their husbands and fathers to access radio, it is logical to assume that women were the ones worse affected by the shortage.

In the late 1940s, portable battery operated radio sets, known as pre-set radios, were promoted alongside the rediffusion boxes in order to expand access and ownership to diverse groups of people. By July 1960, over 40,000 relay boxes had been distributed across the country.⁵⁰⁴ By 1963, a total of 54, 389 rediffusion boxes had been installed in homes and by July 1959, a year before Ghana attained republican status in 1960, an estimated 70,000 radio sets (pre-set) were in use in the country.⁵⁰⁵ The transistor technology made radio popular as people could tune in to other stations without direct link to the source of transmission. In order to expand radio access, the CPP government established the State Electronic Products

⁵⁰³Governor Alan Burns announced shortage of broadcast materials to the Legislative Council Session on March 12, 1946. See Gold Coast Colony Legislative Assembly Debates Session 1946, Issue No. I.

⁵⁰⁴ *Radio Ghana Review and TV Times*, (July 29, 1960).

⁵⁰⁵ Ansu-Kyeremeh and Karikari, *Media Ghana*, 6.

Corporation in 1960 to produce low cost transistorised broadcast receivers using the transistorised technology. Also, records show that Ghana Sanyo Limited entered into partnership with the Japanese company Sanyo to assemble radio and television sets and related technologies at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.

The first made-in-Ghana radio set was produced in early August 1965.⁵⁰⁶ The small portable battery powered radio set was named *Akasanoma* (Talking bird). *Akasanoma* became a household name and it was promoted as a facility that would deliver “home comfort and endless pleasure” to Ghanaians. Simultaneously, the home was also being promoted as a ‘modern’ site for leisure with radio listening a new leisure activity. *Akasanoma* radios were available at reasonably affordable prices and competed favorably on the market with other imported sets from Europe such as Philips, National and Sierra. By the end of September that year, 170 sets were being produced daily.⁵⁰⁷



Picture 24: *Akasanoma* Transistor Radio
Source: *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*

In addition to the *Akasanoma*, imported portable transistorised radio sets proliferated during the decade of the 1960s. Marketers and advertisers encouraged receiver ownership by emphasising the mobile nature of the sets, thus giving radio listening a dual character in both

⁵⁰⁶ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 26, 1968).

⁵⁰⁷ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, 1968.

public and domestic spaces. Essentially, the miniaturisation of radio sets expanded access to diverse groups of people particularly those who were still not connected to radio. An informant from Axim and another from Tarkwa said their grandmothers benefited from free pre-set radio sets distributed to people in the communities.

Well into the 1970s both the rediffusion boxes and the portable radio sets were in use side by side as radio had become an important part of daily life. In the 1976/1977 budget, the ruling military government earmarked about a quarter of a million dollars for installing more radio boxes in order to extend coverage of existing ones. Although communication scholar Paul Ansah considered the radio box as “obsolete and cumbersome,” users of the technology valued the radio box for its advantages over battery operated portable radios.⁵⁰⁸ Pieces of evidence from primary sources attest to public preference for the old technology over the new.

For example, on January 12, 1976, the *Daily Graphic* published a Ghana News Agency (GNA) article about thieves who had raided a number of houses at Bawdua, Kade and Akwatia townships, all in the Eastern Region and stolen 11 rediffusion boxes. The paper reported also that about two months earlier, 16 loud speakers had been stolen in similar raids at Asamankese in the same region.⁵⁰⁹ Why the rediffusion radio boxes became attractive to thieves at a period when portable radio receivers had become common could be explained in part, by public complaints over the high cost of dry cell rechargeable batteries for the portable sets. An excerpt from the following letter published in the *Daily Graphic* the same year states:

Many people did not listen to the Head of State of SMC because there were no dry cell batteries. What is the cause of the shortage of this all-important commodity on the Ghanaian market? At present the price of a single ‘D’ size battery cost between 65p. and 1cedi. And one must be a “known” person to get one to purchase at cut throat price.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁸ Ansah, *Golden Jubilee Lectures*, 13.

⁵⁰⁹ *Daily Graphic Report*, (January 12, 1976).

⁵¹⁰ *Daily Graphic*, (February 2, 1976), 5.

The author of the letter used the shortage of radio batteries as a metaphor to describe the economic situation in the country. The content of the letter suggest that access to radio was still a challenge for many people in the mid 1970s. Citizens had to negotiate the social and economic realities of shortage of dry cell batteries and thefts of radio boxes to ensure consistent listening into special broadcasts such as those by Heads of State.

Broadcast by Ghanaian Heads of State commonly known as the “dawn broadcasts” attracted nationwide listenership because of the socio-political significance. While the broadcast sought to raise public consciousness to pertinent national issues, they also served a social purpose. For example, on different days and times in 1969, the Prime Minister Kofi Abrefa Busia addressed the nation on “A call to Service” and “Toward Social Justice.”⁵¹¹ Six informants mentioned the dawn broadcasts among the programmes they remembered listening to because listening to such broadcasts was a demonstration of citizenship. Importantly however, the testimonies point to the value women attached to radio and their agency to use the medium to connect with national events. Women used knowledge from radio to negotiate their marginalisation in the modern society.

The radio box was popularly known as *Papa Adaka* and *Kofi Adaka* (Papa’s box and Kofi’s box). The names were coined to describe the size and weight of the radio box. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the names might have been coined following the arrival of portable radio sets. The male names given to the box also reflected the predominantly male ownership. And, although it was considered cumbersome and obsolete, the radio box appeared central in the memories my informants partly because it symbolised their initial contact with radio. Obviously, as children informants could not have owned the rediffusion boxes. However, they thought it was more reliable than the battery operated portable receivers. Seventy-eight year

⁵¹¹ See PRAAD (Accra), ADM 5/4/323, Radio/TV Broadcast - A Call to Service; and ADM 5/4/345, Towards Social Justice.

old Amarkai Armah had kept her family's radio for 34 years, which is telling of the value she still attached to the technology. In addition to its value as an artifact, the radio box was also a status symbol for her.⁵¹² Armah thought the radio box was a cheaper and more accessible source of information than the portable radio set. She said: "It did not consume any electricity and you did not need to turn it on or off as long as Radio Ghana stayed on air."⁵¹³

Despite complaints of cost of batteries, portable radio sets proliferated during the decade of the 1960s as marketers and advertisers encouraged receiver ownership by emphasising features such as battery life and number of batteries used. Advertisements focused on the mobile nature of the sets and therefore its advantage of listening in both public and domestic spaces. The following advertisement from Sanyo is illustrative:

Wherever you go – take Sanyo along. If it's a day at the beach – travelling or in the home, your Sanyo Portable all transistor Radio will give you many hours of exciting listening everyday. This small but powerful portable Radio ...works on only four one and half volt penlight batteries. With normal use these batteries last for 3 months and only cost 6d. each to replace. When you tune in your Sanyo, the choice of programmes throughout the world is yours. You can easily get B.B.C and the Voice of America clearly. With a turn of the switch you can tune in to Radio Ghana, Nigeria, and all the closer stations.⁵¹⁴

As the evidence suggests, the portable radio sets were also promoted as basic necessities of everyday life, if one wanted to stay modern, that is, to be informed, knowledgeable and have a rational outlook and attitude to life. David Clayton has argued that although radio is a tangible "luxury" item, people consume it as a basic necessity of life and stated: "Humans also consume information in order to gain knowledge and, with it, the 'capabilities' to increase their wealth and improve their health."⁵¹⁵

⁵¹² Interview with Grace Armah, Retired Teacher/Former Guest Artiste at Kaneshie, June, 29, 2013.

⁵¹³ Interview with Armah, June, 29, 2013.

⁵¹⁴ *Ghana Radio Review and TV Times*, (July 20, 1960).

⁵¹⁵ David Clayton, "The Consumption of Radio Broadcast Technologies c. 1930- 1960," *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 57 No. 4 (Nov., 2004), 691-726.

Clayton's statement establishes a link between radio ownership, knowledge and social power, positioning information as an enabler and a source of social power. Where as in the early years, ownership favoured a largely male population, testimonies of informants suggest that this trend started to change when women entered formal workforce in higher numbers in the 1960s and earned regular incomes and when radio sets became mobile. Some of the female informants who were employed during the period said they bought the new portable radio sets from their own resources.

For example, Kate Bannerman, who relied on her father's radio as a school girl, said she used part of her first income as a secretary to purchase a radio receiver, underscoring the priority status of radio in her life and her desire to own one. She remembered that she bought "Philips" radio from Kingsway Stores. At the time, the Kingsway store was the new shopping experience for people in Accra where modern tangible goods, including different models of radio sets, could be obtained. But, more than just a modern shopping centre, Bianca Murillo points out that the departmental store was positioned as a symbol of modernity in the new independent state, Ghana.⁵¹⁶ Consistent with the literature, the 1960s heralded the era of Ghanaian women who were negotiating modernity and their integration into society through education and employment opportunities in both formal workforce and informal sectors in the new independent state.

Another informant Dalrymple-Hafron, a retired teacher testified that she bought an *Akasanoma* in the mid 1960s.⁵¹⁷ She was working at Obuasi at the time and she relied on the radio as her main source of news. Adzele Okuadzo a farmer at Pantang in a Ga rural community near Abokobi was equally thankful when in the late 1960s she received an *Akasanoma* as a gift

⁵¹⁶ Bianca Murillo, "The Modern Shopping Experience": Kingsway Department Store and Consumer Politics in Ghana," *Africa Journal of International African Institute*, Vol. 82. No. 3 (August: 2012), 368-392.

⁵¹⁷ Interview with Diana Mercy Dalrymple-Hayfron et al, Focus Group of Radio Listeners at St. Kizito Catholic Church, Adenta Housing Down on March 8, 2015.

from her niece who was working with Radio Ghana then.⁵¹⁸ Cecilia Ahensa-Mensah, a nurse, did not own radio but shared one with a cousin when they lived together in a rented house in Accra. Ahensa –Mensah, an Nzema from the Western region of Ghana was then pursuing a nursing course in Accra. She said she would have given anything to own a radio set and was thankful and pleased when her husband bought one. “Radio is my life, and the news is my passion. I don’t want to hear it from anybody but to listen to it myself direct from the radio.”⁵¹⁹

According to David Apter, a more flourishing entrepreneurial class including market women, emerged in both smaller and larger towns after independence in 1957.⁵²⁰ Therefore, women working in the non-formal sector including market women were also likely to have bought radio sets at the time too. The evidence of women buying and owning radio sets was part of the process of negotiating and defining their status in society by seeking access to knowledge and information through radio.

Debra Spitulnik has posited in the case of Zambia that “men own and control radio much more than women do. They also tuned in more frequently.”⁵²¹ The power relations as demonstrated by who owned and controlled the radio in the context of Ghana was played out in different ways. Some of the testimonies suggest that although men may have been more able to afford radio than women, once the radio entered home, women could make use of it. Some of the informants’ testimonies suggest that women had some level of autonomy in using the facility. For example, Comfort Larbi, a farmer said her husband did not prevent her from using

⁵¹⁸ Interview with Adzele Okuadzo, farmer at Abokobi on June 30, 2013. This was the first contact with Okuakzo before the date planned for a second interview.

⁵¹⁹ Interview with Cecilia Ahensa-Mensah et al, Focus group of radio listeners at St. Kizito Catholic Church, Adenta Housing Down on March 8, 2015.

⁵²⁰David E. Apter, “Ghana's Independence: Triumph and Paradox,” *Transition*, No. 98 (USA: Indiana University Press, 2008), 6-22.

⁵²¹Spitulnik, “Documenting Radio Culture,” 152.

the radio. She said: I could turn the radio on as often as I wanted and listen to the news even when my husband was around.”⁵²²

Unlike Larbi, Cecilia Adjei, a trader who encountered radio in the early 1960s, relied on the husband to turn on the radio for her to listen to her favourite programme on Saturdays, which is, Listeners Choice – a musical request programme in Ga. She said: “My husband will be angry if the radio got damaged.”⁵²³ The evidence suggests that some women may not turn on the radio as frequently as men did because of such “subtle” forms of control, and also the fact that most women did not own the radio. Therefore, even when there was radio at home, some women still desired to have personal radios. Some of the informants testified that ownership coupled with the mobile and transistorised nature of the set gave women greater control and autonomy over radio use. The transistorised technology offered more variety in content than the rediffusion box because there was more than one station to tune into.

For example, Dalrymple-Hafron said with the portable transistor, she could tune in to other stations of her choice, select the programmes, the time as well as the social space for listening.⁵²⁴ She could not do so with the radio box which broadcast on only one station, was listened to by all members of the household and hindered private and active listening. Her testimony is consistent with the literature that owner/user status and features such as portability of radio set influence engagements with radio.⁵²⁵ As the evidence suggests, some women’s motivation for buying radio was because of their desire to engage more with the medium within their own space and on their own terms. Some of the informants testified that they bought their own radio because they could carry the receiver around anywhere in the house in order to

⁵²² Interview with Comfort Larbi, Farmer at Pantang on September 3, 2013.

⁵²³ Interview with Cecilia Adjei, Trader at Ashonman on September 3, 2013.

⁵²⁴ Interview with Diana Mercy Dalrymple-Hayfron et al, Focus Group of Radio Listeners at St. Kizito Catholic Church, Adenta Housing Down on March 8, 2015.

⁵²⁵ Spitulnik, “Documenting Radio Culture,” 152.

follow their favourite programmes. They could not do the same with the rediffusion box. In sum, the nature of the technology affected ownership, access and use of the radio by women.

5.4 Space and Context of Listening

Historians and anthropologists have variously identified factors that enabled or inhibited radio listening to include location of radio, social space of listening, portability of the receiver and power relations regarding control of the radio. In Northern Nigeria for example, Brian Larkin has said that the technology was installed in public places in Kano as part of the infrastructural development of urban space.⁵²⁶ A vast majority of Hausa speakers could only listen to radio by gathering around the public loudspeaker at certain times of the day in the public place. Thus listening was not only limited in terms of time and frequency but also the levels of engagement. However in Ghana, listening to radio was developed as a domestic activity.



Picture 25: The Navropio, Paramount Chief of Navrongo with some members of his household listening to the radio (The rediffusion box).

Source: *New Ghana Vol. III No. 23, 1959, 4.*

The conception of listening within the domestic space was part of the modernisation mission directed at the home. Listening to radio was introduced also as a new form of leisure

⁵²⁶ Larkin, *Signals and Noise*, 27.

and recreation to take place at home. One of the ways by which the technology was integrated into homes was by locating it in the interior. Micheal Brown and Carley Dennis for example, have shown in the context of America that radio was introduced to the interior of the home as part of home furnishing.⁵²⁷ Thus the radio receiver served both aesthetic and social needs as listening was also expected to take place in the interior space. Testimonies of informants suggest that the domestic space where listening took place was dynamic but also contested.

The testimonies suggest that in most homes, the radio box was placed in the interior that is the hall or lobby/veranda. In the home of Grace Armah for instance, I saw the box affixed to a wall on the veranda which served as a lobby to the hall. She pointed to the box and said: “This is where we have kept the radio all these years.”⁵²⁸ It still looked robust and clean after 34 years in that position. This is a big house designed as self-contained with kitchen and other facilities attached. Other informants said the radio was in the sitting room/hall. The location of radio in the interior hindered listening access to some children because the hall was “traditionally” a space reserved for adults and for receiving visitors. One of the informants, Betty Kwale Owoo said she and her siblings were forbidden from staying in the hall. “We were told that children play outdoors and not indoors.”⁵²⁹ Some parents saw radio as a resource for adults only, since the social space of listening in the interior was associated with adults. Traditional views about the position of children in society and perceptions that children being curious, may tamper with the box seemed to have endorsed listening as an adult activity in some homes, regardless of the fact that some content was targeted at children.

Testimonies of some informants also indicate that the nature of housing space affected listening relationships with radio in diverse ways. In her historical study on Ideal Home

⁵²⁷ Michael Brown and Corley Dennison, “Integrating Radio into the Home, 1923-1929,” *Studies in Popular Culture*, Vol. 20. No. 3 (1998) 1-17

⁵²⁸ Interview with Amah, June 29, 2013.

⁵²⁹ Interview with Owoo, November 12, 2014.

Exhibition, Bianca Murillo noted that houses in Accra in the 1960s were single room rented apartments.⁵³⁰ Single room apartments in some areas of Accra and urban communities were typically “chamber and hall” – a bed room and a piece of enclosed veranda in front that sometimes got converted into sleeping places. David Patterson’s account on health in Urban Accra shows that such housing conditions were not new but existed in the 1900s.⁵³¹ Radio was installed in the interior under such conditions where there was hardly much space to accommodate listeners. Florence Asem remembered that in their own home, if one wanted to listen attentively to radio one needed to change location and this meant moving from the cooking area elsewhere on the compound close to the location of the radio on the veranda.⁵³²

Darlymple-Hayfron’s experience also illustrates that:

We didn’t have individual self-contained as we have now. So you go to a compound house where there are other tenants or family members. In opportune time, they turned on the radio and we all listened to the news.⁵³³

The testimonies of other informants show that some of the perceived barriers about housing designing worked also to women’s advantage as Mary Henaku’s testimony suggests. She stated:

The volume of the neighbour’s radio was so loud, you can hear. At that time, we didn’t have to buy one so far as there is one behind your house, you are ok. I heard of events around the world. When Kennedy died, and about the Queen’s places and those high places like *Abrotsre* (overseas) which we imagined was somewhere like heaven. We heard it all. We were happy we knew something was going on somewhere.⁵³⁴

The 90-year-old retired teacher lived at Nkawkaw where she was born. The design and nature of the housing made it possible for neighbours or co-tenants to hear the radio from afar when it was on, despite the unreliable nature of this form of access. It would take a really attentive

⁵³⁰Murillo, “Ideal Home and the Gender,” 567.

⁵³¹Patterson, “Health in Urban Ghana,” 251-268.

⁵³² Interview with Dalrymple-Hayfron et al. March 8, 2015

⁵³³ Interview with Darlymple-Hayfron et al. March 8, 2015.

⁵³⁴ Interview with Esseku, August 6, 2013.

listener to have heard all what Henaku mentioned given the possibility of distractions. Henaku said, she was quite elated when she purchased her own portable radio in the late 1960s. She kept it by her beside and listened to all programmes until she fell asleep.

Henaku was not alone in relying on the sound from the neighbour's radio. Another informant, Cecilia Adjei from Ashonman a rural community close to Pantang did not have that close experience with radio as she claimed that she only saw radio in the village in the 1960s when individuals bought the transistor receivers. She relied on the neighbour's transistorised radio which was sometimes turned on loud enough for other inhabitants of this compound house to hear although the sound was out of her reach much of the time.

The informants testified that they listened to radio at home most of the time, and sometimes in family houses or in the homes of their friends. None of them visited the information centre purposely to listen to the radio. The testimonies suggest, consistent with literature that women preferred to listen to radio in homes or the homes of friends rather than public sites. When portable radio sets proliferated the social space of radio listening was no longer restricted to the interior as it became possible to move the radio into the exterior.

5.5 Learning, Edification and Negotiating Modernity

When Kate Bannerman (mentioned earlier) bought a radio in the 1960s her reasons for desiring to own the set were clear. Radio was her primary source of information to connect with events in the country and around the world. As secretary of the Ghana Girl Guide Association for over 30 years, Kate had immense interest in travelling and learning diverse cultures. Listening to radio exposed her to different cultures in Ghana and outside Ghana. She said: "I never had any idea that there were other parts of Ghana where people spoke different languages such as Nzema and Dangbani. I heard these Ghanaian languages on radio."⁵³⁵

⁵³⁵Interview with Bannerman, November 14, 2013.

Women's primary motivation for acquiring radio sets was to obtain information and knowledge for purposes of enhancing their social functioning. Listening to radio, like reading newspapers was a marker of enlightenment and modernity. Listening was seen as edifying and a form of civilizational activity. Most of the informants said they listened to the radio everyday. Adjele Okuadzo, a farmer at Pantang (a rural community in Accra) was nicknamed *Radio Pantang* not only because she was an active listener but also because some members of the community depended on her for information she obtained from radio.⁵³⁶ She was one of the few who owned a radio set in the community in the early 1970s. Although she was illiterate, her active engagement with radio raised her status in the community as she was regarded as well informed on important national issues. When she was travelling, the first thing she packed was her portable radio which made her remain connected to information while she was away. The portable nature of the technology facilitated access, enabled her to listen at different locations, and importantly too she used her knowledge of issues from radio, to negotiate her status in the community.

The recollections of some informants on their radio use, motivations and gratifications were largely those of their childhood and teenage experiences. This observation has resonance with Charles Ambler's evidence that radio listeners in Zambia could recall their early experiences more than they could of those in later years.⁵³⁷ The evidence also suggests the significance of those early experiences with radio to the informants. As Jan Vansina argues, events and situations are retained when they are of relevance to the informer.⁵³⁸ Conversely, events of no relevance tend to be forgotten.

Most of the informants were familiar with "Spelling Bee." The programme was one of two children's programmes first aired in the 1930s and it became popular on local radio by the

⁵³⁶ Interview with Esseku, August 6, 2013.

⁵³⁷ Ambler, "Leisure in African History," 119-136.

⁵³⁸ Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, 9.

1950s. The other programme was “Story Time.” The informants confirmed that the “Spelling Bee” was broadcast on local radio stations in regions where some of the informants lived. Kate Bannerman remembered “Story Time” too. This was the programme that attracted her to radio when she was seven years old.

Some informants testified that they liked to listen to English programmes, specifically “Everyday English.” In the 1950s, the programme was broadcast as *English on Radio*. Informants testified that they listened to “Everyday English” in order to strengthen their oral skills in English. The testimonies suggest that women considered the ability to express themselves in English as a way of expanding their space beyond the domestic or the communities to engage with the public space. Given that English was the language spoken in official and public places, women considered it important to learn the language in order to facilitate their integration into society.

One of the informants Victoria Casmás, said her father encouraged her to listen to the radio because of the children’s programmes and “Everyday English.” She stated:

When it was time for children’s programmes, and also Everyday English, my father called us, the children, to listen and to learn English. My father said I should learn English so that I will become a lady.⁵³⁹

Becoming a lady was a mark of civility. Encouraging daughters to use radio to learn how to speak English demonstrates Casmás’ father’s interest in her social transformation. This was also the desire of many parents particularly, the illiterates, to see their children become ladies and gentlemen. The informants testified that sometimes they taught their mothers to speak English.

One of the informants Victoria Churchill-Koomson, a retired teacher at Elmina, said as a child, the father encouraged her to listen to radio always. When she got married, her husband

⁵³⁹ Interview with Victoria Casmás et al, Focus Group of Radio Listeners at St. Kizito Catholic Church Adenta Housing Down on March 8, 2015.

was instrumental in getting her to listen to radio daily.⁵⁴⁰ Her testimony suggests that some men, who desired to see their wives or children more sophisticated and transformed, encouraged them to listen to radio.

Both the educated and illiterate women testified that they preferred news and current affairs programmes because these gave them direct link to the public space as the testimony of 75-year-old farmer, Comfort Larbi illustrates.⁵⁴¹ The news on radio was her primary source of information on significant events in the country. She mentioned that she knew of visitors to Ghana during the independence period, Kwame Nkrumah's travels to other countries and the construction of the Akosombo dam. Veronica Opoku who lived at Konongo, mentioned the news as her favourite programme. Radio brought her the news of the assassination of US President John Kennedy in 1963 and Martin Luther King. She stated:

I was sitting by the radio when the announcement came on air. I think radio has been informative. There was no TV. We all depended on radio for information and for news. Radio was a focal point for everyone who wanted to know and learn. It was for entertainment as well as for informal education not only classroom education.⁵⁴²

Opoku, a former teacher, was 20 years old then. She liked to listen to news because it gave her information from other parts of the world.

Florence Asem, a former teacher, testified that her motivation for listening to the news was to expand her knowledge in order to engage intelligently in public discussions. She states:

Some women when they are arguing said, I heard it on the radio. They believed everything from the radio as authentic and nothing could change their minds. When Nkrumah was overthrown, it was on the news. We now realise it was just politics.⁵⁴³

⁵⁴⁰ Interview with Victoria Casmás et al. March 8, 2015.

⁵⁴¹ Interview with Larbi, September 3, 2013.

⁵⁴² Interview with Veronica Opoku et al, Focus group of radio listeners at St. Kizito Catholic Church, Adenta Housing Down on March 8, 2015.

⁵⁴³ Interview with Florence Asem et al, Focus group of radio listeners at St. Kizito Catholic Church, Adenta Housing Down on March 8, 2015..

The evidence suggests that some of the informants believed radio was a credible and reliable source of information. However, others thought that radio was for propaganda. Other informants said, alongside propaganda, both colonial and post-colonial governments used radio broadcasting to teach citizenship and patriotism.

Florence Asem recalled patriotic songs on radio and broadcast of Empire Day and Independence Day celebrations. She stated:

When we were going to celebrate Empire day, in those days, the way we dressed and the way we were taught how to die for our country. This continued with the CPP government when we celebrated Independence Day on the 6th March. It was a joy. During Kwame Nkrumah's time they were teaching us how to be patriotic and how to love our country and we did. In those days, but immediately after the coup everything has been erased.⁵⁴⁴

Informants shared memories of their participation in the Empire Day, and some recalled vividly the helmet they wore on Empire Day celebrations. They also talked excitedly about the parade of school children marking Ghana's Independence Day on March 6, every year. They recalled that both events were broadcast on radio.

Knowledge and information from radio was spread across various genres of programmes which listeners engaged with at different times of the day. Juliana Wuta-Ofei, a public servant, recalled that she learnt about the thermometer on radio in the mid 1960s on the children's programme *Taataa Tee*, (a lullaby) broadcast on Radio One.⁵⁴⁵ The knowledge was communicated through a song. She notes:

I liked the song so much. I did not know what a thermometer was. One day when I got sick and my mum took me to the hospital it was there I saw the thermometer. It was there they put the thermometer under my tongue. So when the nurses told me not to bite it, I held it very tight in my mouth so that it wouldn't fall.⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴⁴ Interview with Florence Asem, March 8, 2015.

⁵⁴⁵ Interview with Juliana Wuta-Ofei, Retired Civil Servant at Anyaa on December 3, 2013.

⁵⁴⁶ Interview with Wuta-Ofei, December, 3, 2013.

Wuta-Ofei became attached to radio after she had seen a thermometer. She made time every Saturday afternoon to listen to the Ga children's programmes. Radio became her main source of learning new concepts.

Primarily, both children and adults used the radio for learning and edification. While children learnt new concepts and information directly from radio, some of the testimonies suggest that they also received current information indirectly from their grandmothers who were active radio listeners. The informant from Axim Alberta Yeboa said she became interested in radio because of her grandmother, an ardent radio listener.

She listened to everything on radio especially women's programmes in Fanti and when we closed from school she would tell us most of the things she heard on radio that she thought was relevant to children and also call my uncles and tell them what was relevant to them.⁵⁴⁷

Another informant, Cecilia Dontoh shared a similar experience.⁵⁴⁸ According to Dontoh, her grandmother who was blind was a devoted listener. She narrated every piece of information she could remember from listening to radio when the children returned from school, including complaints that the radio did not respond to her questions. The evidence suggests that women audiences sought more active engagements with the broadcaster and the station than what existed. This form of interactivity was hardly possible given the one-way nature of radio technology. Although audiences had the opportunity to do so through letters, barriers such as delayed feedback and illiteracy hindered frequent and instant interactions.

Lesley Johnson argued in her work on Radio for Popular Education that in the case of Australia, radio became a new institution and source of learning and socialisation instead of grandmothers and mothers and noted as follows:

No longer were women to draw on the traditional wisdom of the domestic culture of their mothers and grandmothers; they were the new women whose education would

⁵⁴⁷ Interview with Alberta Yeboa et al, Focus group of radio listeners at St. Kizito Catholic Church, Adenta Housing Down on March 8, 2015.

⁵⁴⁸ Interview with Cecilia Dontoh et al, Focus group of radio listeners at St. Kizito Catholic Church, Adenta Housing Down on March 8, 2015.

become dependent on institutions such as radio and the new women's magazines. No longer was their education to be part of a shared culture; their information and understanding were to be gained from an outside source.⁵⁴⁹

The reverse is true in the context of Ghana. Testimonies of informants suggest that grandmothers and mothers did not only listen to radio but became “mouthpieces” of modern ideas and rational information from radio and transmitted such knowledge to their children and grandchildren. Grandmothers were regarded as the custodians of traditional wisdom on domestic culture. The testimonies of Dontoh and Yeboa also indicate that the grandmothers used the radio to negotiate their own modernity and to contest their marginalisation as custodian of traditional wisdom in a new society. Such new knowledge delivered by grandmothers obtained from modern sources such as radio reinforced their new status and roles in society.

Some parents used listening to radio as an incentive to reward behaviour and to punish bad behaviours at home presumably in the spirit of promoting good citizenship. Two of the informants testified that their parents used radio as a form of social control. Diana Dalrymple-Hayfron also stated: “If you were disobedient, you were not allowed to listen to radio.”⁵⁵⁰ Her explanation of disobedience was refusal to run errands. However, Florence Asem said: “If you were supposed to cook and you have not done so by news time at One O’clock, you were not allowed to listen.”⁵⁵¹ Asem’s explanation underscores the value of news to women as a source of knowledge and information. At the same time, it also demonstrates that radio’s presence in the home reinforced stereotypes about female roles and the home. Thus women had to negotiate such gender roles such as cooking, washing and cleaning to accommodate radio listening as the latter was considered important to them.

⁵⁴⁹ Lesley Johnson, “Radio as a Popular Education,” *Labour History*, No. 45 (November, 1983), 68-79.

⁵⁵⁰ Interview with Darylmpole-Hayfron et al. March 8, 2015.

⁵⁵¹ Interview with Asem, March 8, 2015.

Domestic practices and routines simultaneously affected and were affected by the presence of the radio at home. Testimonies of the informants pointed to socio cultural practices that reinforced gender roles. Women used radio for time keeping. The beginning of the day's transmission at 5:30 a.m. and the end of transmission at 10:30 p.m. told women how early or how late in the day it was. Women used information provided by continuity announcers on programme schedules and also the use of signature tunes to announce programmes to learn to keep to time. Keeping to precise time has been a way of negotiating personal transformation and integration into modern society and radio was instrumental in this regard. Asem recalled:

If you hear the signature tune *Ghana Muntie* (Listen Ghana) you know it is one o'clock. If you have to cook, if you are late in cooking it reminded you it was time. It was a way of scheduling our time and house work. In the mornings you needed to sweep the compound before going to school.⁵⁵²

Sweeping the compound was part of girls' and women's domestic work in the mornings. Testimonies of the informants suggest that some women negotiated time in the morning to listen to radio by waking up early to start the day's chores before they went to school or work.

The evidence also suggests that the time keeping element of radio raised tensions in conjugal relationships between the breadwinner and the housewife with regard to resources for home keeping. One of the informants, 83 year old Emelia Yaa Botchway, a retired nurse, said she relied on radio time to check how early or late her husband returned from work.⁵⁵³ Botchway said from her observation, whenever her husband returned home late, there was no money for food the next day.

Consistent with the literature that radio was used as an accompaniment to domestic work, the study found that domestic activities such as washing, and ironing were done on Saturdays when children and parents were home. Those washing in groups of threes or twos in

⁵⁵² Interview with Asem, March 8, 2015.

⁵⁵³ Interview with Emelia Botchway, Retired Nurse, at Korle Gonno on September 11, 2012.

the open compound of the family home, were also listening to the radio on the loud sound of the radio located on the veranda. Wuta-Ofei's testimony explains this point.

Everyone was busy while listening to music. My senior sister and I will be helping our mother with cooking and my brothers either running errands or gone out to play. My aunties will be cooking as well or washing and doing housework. Listeners request programme was in the afternoon. Sometimes if you were lucky and a music request was played for someone in the family, then we all went gay with shouts and that was how we enjoyed radio. ⁵⁵⁴

Wuta-Ofei's testimony also confirms the gender issues associated with radio listening. As the testimony suggests, music request programmes were popular among women. Wuta-Ofei explained that the programmes boosted the ego of those whose names were mentioned on radio. "The feeling that the whole of Ghana heard your name on radio made one feel very happy and excited." This is consistent with the literature that radio accords status and honour.

Testimonies of informant were consistent with the literature on women's "friendship" with radio. Like Patricia Cole, Kate Bannerman testified that she has a life-long friendship with radio. Although she did not like music with lyrics that denigrate women, she still valued her friendship with radio more than with television. She still listened to radio and in her old age she considers radio as a means to engage with society and with current knowledge. At 90 years, Mary Henaku also sees radio as a lifelong friend. She stated:

What I noticed was that through radio some of us had companions in the house because of the music, the religious programmes and the news. The songs themselves were meaningful, full of wisdom and so you learnt something. Apart from hearing those songs you can be dancing in your house. So it was a big source of entertainment. ⁵⁵⁵

⁵⁵⁴ Interview with Wuta-Ofei, December 3, 2013.

⁵⁵⁵ Interview with Mary Henaku et al, Focus group of radio listeners at St. Kizito Catholic Church Adenta Housing Down on March 8, 2015.

Consistent with literature, some Ghanaian women have an intimate relationship with radio established over time. These relationships were not only based on their domestic activities as mothers but also as heads of household and as career women.

5.6 Listening to women's radio magazines

The previous chapter showed that special programme spaces were created based on the assumption of a female audience. In the article quoted at the beginning of this chapter, Patricia Cole has indicated that women's magazine programmes gave women "much to think about." Did Ghanaian women listen to women's magazine programmes? Dontoh and Yeboa testified that their grandmothers liked to listen to the women's magazines. They recalled that their grandmothers invited them to listen to the programmes with them when they were at home. Comfort Larbi for example, mentioned that she did not miss the women's magazine programme in Ga on Wednesdays and she became acquainted with the names of some of the presenters. Emelia Botchway also testified that she made time to listen to the women's radio magazine programmes in Ga. Another informant, Betice Voegbetor said she listened occasionally to the women's programmes after her domestic chores.⁵⁵⁶ She said sometimes she missed the beginning of the broadcast but followed the rest of the 30 minutes broadcast to the end.

The testimonies are consistent with Janice Kelly Windborne's findings that women listened to programmes designed for them.⁵⁵⁷ Some of the informants testified that they listened to women's programmes because they found the content educative and relevant to their information needs as mothers and as citizens. Vivian Amoo-Blankson recalled that she was particularly interested in learning new cooking recipes and was always ready with her pen and

⁵⁵⁶ Interview with Betice Voegbetor et al, Focus Group of Radio Listeners at St. Kizito Catholic Church Adenta Housing Down on March 8, 2015.

⁵⁵⁷ Janice Kelly Windborne, "Media Markets and Messages: Radio as a Tool for Development for Ghanaian Market Women" (PhD Dissertation, Ohio State University, Faculty of College and Communication, 1999), 285.

paper to take down tips during the cookery segment of the programme.⁵⁵⁸ Most of the educated women did not recall listening to women's radio magazines in English. Also, they could not recall the signature tune of the programme when it was played to them during the fieldwork. Some indicated that they listened to the local language versions rather infrequently. Some of the women said they liked religious programmes, drama and all programmes in local languages.

5.7 Listening for Leisure and Pleasure

In addition to education and information, radio was also to function as an instrument of leisure and pleasure and a new site for leisure. Testimonies of informants indicate that Ghanaian women listened to the radio also for leisure. The informants considered listening to music and entertainment programmes such as drama, radio dance programmes, and children's programmes as a form of leisure. For example, Cecilia Adjei testified that she listened to music programmes for pleasure and entertainment and found some of the songs enlightening and relevant to her personal life. She said the lyrics of particular songs enabled her to build a better relationship with her siblings and family members. Her primary motivation for engaging with radio was for purposes of leisure and pleasure.⁵⁵⁹ Mary Henaku, a retired teacher who associated drama on radio with pleasure and leisure stated: "These are stories with good morals. You needed to devote time to listen and this is the time that you are free."⁵⁶⁰ Florence Asem testified that she listened to radio more for information than for leisure because of the location of the radio in the interior. Listening for leisure also meant suspending house chores or listening during your free time. She said: "We had so much work with little time to relax."⁵⁶¹

⁵⁵⁸ Interview with Vivian Amoo-Mensah et al, Focus group of radio listeners at St. Kizito Catholic Church, Adenta Housing Down on March 8, 2015.

⁵⁵⁹ Interview, Adjei, September 3, 2013.

⁵⁶⁰ Interview, Henaku et al, March 8, 2015.

⁵⁶¹ Interview, Asem et al, March 8, 2015.

Scholarship on radio and audiences, particularly in Southern Africa suggest that listening as a leisure activity was prevalent when radio sets were few. This may be due in part, to the fact that group listening was encouraged at welfare halls which also served as places of leisure and socialisation. However, when radio battery operated sets proliferated, listening to the radio for leisure became less of a conscious activity and more of an accompaniment to work and social activities.⁵⁶² The radio was used as background noise to accompany work.

Testimonies of some informants suggest that before they acquired their own radios, they did not listen to radio as a leisure activity. This was partly due to time, work schedules at home, the social space for listening, and the nature of the radio set. However, they listened for leisure when they acquired their own portable sets.

5.8 Conclusion

As testimonies of the informants demonstrate, the introduction of portable radio sets coupled with changes in women's economic status brought about by their participation in the workforce enabled them to own radio and to engage more with the medium as audiences. While men owned radios and seldom stopped women from using them, testimonies of informants also suggest that the power relations around radio in terms of ownership and frequency of listening appeared subtle and indirect. A primary reason for owning radio was to seek information and knowledge. Women also desired greater autonomy in their engagements with radio as listeners and bought radio for that reason. The portable nature of the transistorised technology enabled this greater engagement with radio. Children were more likely than women to be controlled in their engagements with radio as listener. Also adults tended to use radio as a form of reward and punishment for good and bad behaviors.

⁵⁶² Ambler, "Leisure in African History," 120.

Women used knowledge and information from radio to define their status in the modern society, to contest their marginalisation in society, and as a link to the public space and for their integration into the modernity. Women engaged with specific programmes, particularly news programmes, to fulfil their social needs for enlightenment and edification and to connect with national events and international events and current affairs. The chapter has shown that at various stages of their life, women were engaged in a process of contesting and defining their status and marginalisation in society. They found radio as a useful source of knowledge to achieve their missions. Grandmothers who were the custodians of cultural and domestic knowledge, used radio to negotiate their roles and became mouthpieces of modernity who transmitted rational information to grandchildren. Women appropriated radio, a primary site of domesticity to negotiate their integration into the modern society.

The chapter has also shown that although radio listening was introduced as a new leisure activity, testimonies of informants suggest that women listened to radio more for education and information than for leisure. Factors such as housing designs and the gendered roles around radio listening influenced women's radio listening as a leisure activity. The interviews with women show how social and individual dimensions of gender interact with everyday use and interpretations of radio. Although women found radio a credible and reliable source of information, they also disliked radio's use for politics and propaganda.

CONCLUSION

AGENTS OF CHANGE, TARGETS OF CHANGE

African women's lives are a balancing act indeed. Fighting on all fronts to contend with external forces, bridge the fissures between public and private, link home and abroad and maintain sanity through it all requires great strength and imagination.

Obioma Nnaemeka⁵⁶³

6.0 Summary

The emergence of radio in colonial Ghana in the early 1930s opened up a new vista of life for Ghanaians in general and women in particular. Positioned as an agent and index of modernisation and development by both colonial and post-colonial governments, radio was aimed primarily at creating an enlightened, informed and educated public. In pursuit of this goal, women were singled out as both agents and targets of radio's "civilising" agenda. This research on Women's Radio history sought to explore the historical relationship between women and radio broadcasting in Ghana. The purpose was not only to insert women into radio and media history but to address a lacuna in women's history by providing new evidence of post colonial Ghanaian women's agency to contest patriarchy, unequal gender relations and redefine their status in society, using radio.

Within the historiography of African and Ghanaian women, scholars have variously acknowledged women's agency and efforts to change their lives and status in society, "fighting on all fronts." How did radio enhance or constrain their efforts in achieving their goals? The overarching question for the thesis was: What did women do with radio, for what purposes and to what ends? In addressing these questions, the study focused on three main areas of women's

⁵⁶³ Obioma Nnameka, Mapping African Feminism, Adapted version of "Introduction: Reading the Rainbow," in *Sisterhood, Feminism and Power: From Africa to the Diaspora*, edited by Obioma Nnaemeka. (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1998), 31.

relationship with radio at the institutional, production and reception levels. Specifically, it explored the employment history of women in radio as programme makers focusing on the pioneers, their contributions to the development of radio and the development of female audiences. Combining scholarship from women's colonial and post-colonial historiography with media theories, archival research (written and audio) and oral history, this study argued that: Women across various levels of social and cultural power, appropriated radio a primary tool of modernisation and used it as a resource to contest their marginalisation and subordination in a predominantly patriarchal society; to expand their communicative space, and to negotiate their integration into "modern society."

Chapter one of the thesis has provided evidence of the gendered discourses around radio and has shown that colonial governments' modernisation missions for women was embodied in ideological frames notably, Victorian-styled domesticity and the public sphere of women. The ideology shaped women's early engagements with radio. It defined their ownership, reception and employment relationship with the medium. The chapter has also shown that women had access to the radio as "wives" mothers and as children. Women's initial access was through their fathers and husbands. Ownership of radio was predominantly male. In the light of the domesticity ideology, men were considered as breadwinners and providers of modern luxury goods such as radio. Men who worked in the public service perceived as "breadwinners" were exempted from high cost of subscription for rediffusion boxes.

The second chapter has documented hitherto, undocumented trajectory of women's employment in radio broadcasting and has shown through potted histories, the women who pioneered radio as full time employees and also as guest artistes to affirm their presence in this exclusively male defined economic space of radio work. This history has provided evidence of women's presence in radio dating back to the late 1930s instead of the late 1940s as previously assumed in the literature on women and media in Ghana. The chapter has also shown that

women's initial exclusion from radio was due to historical prejudices and barriers coupled with professional stereotypes about female voices on air. The chapter has shown how women contested such barriers including femininity and Western-styled domesticity to engage with radio career. The potted histories of the pioneers show how women used radio programmes of diverse genres to disseminate information and knowledge to improve the lives of the people particularly women. The chapter has shown that although women were initially employed to produce programmes for women and children, they carved out new niches for themselves in male dominated spaces such as reading major news, continuity announcing, conducting personality interviews and in international and rural broadcasting. The potted histories of Jane Cole, Rose Odamtten and Comfort Odame illustrate the point. Jane Cole and Stella Telfer's histories demonstrate women's contributions to the development of international broadcasting in Ghana, specifically, their role in constructing the post-colonial agenda of promoting African unity.

The potted history of Christiana Dankwa has also shown women's historical presence in broadcast technical services while those of Greenstreet and Rose Odamtten and Harriet Techie-Menson and Comfort Appiah have shown how women sought to break out of gendered moulds of women's programmes to contest predominantly male roles in radio work. The potted history of Janet Esseku a pioneer in rural broadcasting has shown how her programmes and those of many other programme makers brought the voices of women into the public space. Specifically, Esseku's programmes linked rural women to events in the urban areas while connecting urban women to events in rural communities.

Chapter three provided a history of Women's Radio Magazine and has shown how the programmes expanded women's public communication and served as new communicative spaces for women's public and social expressions. The programmes also served as spaces for negotiating modernity and domesticity, as well as contesting issues such as motherhood and

careers. The women's programmes were broadcast in six local languages and thus provided opportunities for illiterate women to seek new and rational information to enable them to negotiate their own marginalisation. Analyses of the content of the Women's World/Women's Own and Women's Half Hour have shown that content of the programmes was not didactic as argued in scholarship on women's radio magazines. Rather, content was investigative, challenging and interactive. The analyses showed how post-colonial Ghanaian women negotiated Victorian-values of domesticity framed as modernity to secure an equitable gender relationship and their integration in the new "modern" society.

Chapter four of this thesis has shown that women engaged actively with radio as audiences. Testimonies of informants' listening experiences suggest that both educated and illiterate women sought information, knowledge and education from radio for purposes of personal modernity and for their integration into modern society. Radio was their primary source of information at different stages of their lives. Also, the chapter has shown that children who were initial targets of radio, did not only engage with programme spaces designed for them but also programmes that taught them how to speak English. The testimonies also suggest that grandmothers who were custodians of domestic and cultural information listened to women's programmes and transmitted this new information to children. Thus, grandmothers used radio knowledge to consolidate their authority as custodians of domestic knowledge. The chapters have provided evidence in support of the thesis of women's agency to use radio to negotiate and contest their marginalisation in society. Women negotiated access to information partly through gender spaces and used these spaces to define and assert their status.

6.1 Major findings

In line with the objectives and questions, this research on Women's Radio History has provided new insights into ways by which post-colonial Ghanaian women negotiate a new status for themselves in order to secure a more equitable gendered relations within a predominantly

patriarchal society using radio as a primary resource. The following are the major findings from the study:

1. Women were present in radio broadcasting work in the late 1930s but not as broadcasters. They were invited to provide talks as part of a multimedia propaganda campaigns in support of World War II. Susuanne Laryea, Mariam Smith-Mensah and Florence Prah were the first African women to be employed as Production Assistants with radio in the late 1940s.
2. Dr. Nkrumah's interest in the advancement of women and the CPP government's affirmative action orientation regarding women, coupled with expansions in broadcast services such as the establishment of the External, Rural and Commercial broadcasting stations, and professionalisation of radio/media, accounted largely for the increased number of women in broadcasting careers from the early years of independence into the 1960s.
3. Professional stereotypes about female voices and roles in radio work, combined with traditional notions of women's public speaking and Victorian notions of domesticity to exclude women from radio work in the early years of the 1930s. However, women negotiated those barriers to contribute to the development of public radio in Ghana.
4. By engaging with radio as programme makers, producers and organisers, Ghanaian women successfully transcended historical and cultural prejudices against women in male-defined economic roles as well as the colonial agenda of domesticity. Also as programme makers and producers, women were agents in the early construction of national unity, national development and cultural self-assertion and also the grander agenda of African unity.
5. Ghanaian women's advocacy for equality was first advanced by local women who had already broken the proverbial glass ceiling defying male dominated spaces in science and technology. Post-colonial Ghanaian women broadcasters also constituted a vanguard in women's liberation as well as pioneers in the construction of politically correct gender discourse.

6. Despite widespread male ownership and control of radio, women were seldom hindered from listening to radio. Women's ownership of radio sets enabled them to engage more with radio and to assert their autonomy and agency as users.
7. Besides reading, radio listening was another pathway adopted by post-colonial Ghanaian women in their pursuit of personal modernity and edification. Post-colonial Ghanaian women audiences saw radio as a link to the local and global public spaces. As audiences, they were not passive recipients of radio programmes but rather, they were selective in the programmes they listened to so as not to compromise their domestic work. Although women found radio as a credible source of information, they also perceived some radio content as propaganda and unduly political.
8. Women appropriated radio, a tool of domesticity and transformed it as a resource to subvert Victorian ideologies of domesticity and to negotiate new and equitable gendered relations in post-colonial society, to refashion their lives and to reformulate ideas about themselves, families and the society.
9. The Women's Magazines, historically, functioned as training grounds for programme makers to become experts on air. Far from being spaces for transmitting ideologies of domesticity, the magazines also functioned as new communicative platforms for their social and political expressions on national and international issues that affect their well-being and progress.
10. Post-colonial Ghanaian women used Women's Magazine Programmes spaces strategically to modernise Ghanaian homes by providing them alternative information and views about motherhood, the home and family and by encouraging them to contribute to the development of the nation. As programme makers, guest artistes and resource persons post-colonial women used the magazines strategically as communicative tools to advocate women's rights, and to educate women on a variety of issues peculiar to their sex as well

as national issues on health, hygiene, economics and patriotism. In sum, post-colonial Ghanaian women used radio as a source of information and new ideas to refashion their lives and to reformulate ideas about themselves and their families.

6.2 Conclusions

The study rejects the argument about women's subordinate and marginalised status as a product of colonialism that suggests, in the field of media and communication that modern tools such as radio weakened women's voice, access to information and in public communication. Radio broadcasting is an embodiment of power and status and several pieces of evidence from this study lead one to the conclusion that women who engaged with the medium as resource persons, as contributors, guest artistes and employees enjoyed this power and status. These radio personalities served as advocates of women's rights and as the vanguard of women's liberation on radio. Radio provided greater opportunities for both educated and illiterate women to expand their social and political status beyond the sphere of domesticity.

Apart from the well documented use of radio for purposes of propaganda, this research concludes that radio was also used ideologically as a tool and a site of domesticity, framed as modernisation. The modernisation missions of radio sought to promote Western cultures, based on Victorian-styled domesticity and women's separate sphere. This study concludes that post-colonial Ghanaian women defied the prepared script, and transformed the technology into a resource for their integration into "modern society" and for negotiating new and more equitable gendered relations within predominantly patriarchal domestic and public space. Post colonial women appropriated radio and used the technology to successfully subvert the values of Victorian-styled domesticity and patriarchy which sought to make them housewives and dependants of the spouses as "breadwinners."

Undoubtedly, colonialism brought new ideas about the home, the family, work and marriage. These new ideas were no doubt embedded in the Victorian ideologies of domesticity

as part of the modernisation and development missions of colonial and neo-colonialist agenda of post-colonial states. The study concludes that domesticity as an element of modernisation was not a negative feature of post-colonial Ghanaian women's lives. Rather, it was a means by which Ghanaian women negotiated new and equitable gendered relations and their integration into modern society. The ideology enabled Ghanaian women to consider new ways of maintaining their motherhood status, power and control over the home and household and also to reshape their status in the new society through what Obioma Nnameka's (quoted above) describe as a balancing act.⁵⁶⁴

Women's Radio Magazines have been key channels for contesting women's marginalisation and for promoting gender equality. At the same time the programmes have functioned as channels for spreading new ideas and knowledge about the home, the family, marriage, domesticity, and the housewife. Also, the magazine programmes were outlets for women's initial employment in radio careers and also for their engagements with radio as guest artistes and resource persons on non-gendered programmes. The study concludes that the programmes would continue to play these significant roles until gender equality is achieved.

Ghanaian women have always worked to support their families. Also, they have performed wifely duties. The roles of women as [house] wives and men as breadwinners were not separate and distinct but complementary and fluid in the context of Ghana. The British elements of the housewife role were new to Ghanaian culture. Ghanaian women as mothers, wives and grandmothers negotiated these new ideas with traditional notions of motherhood and work in order to consolidate their positions as custodians of domestic culture, in the changing society.

⁵⁶⁴ Nnameka, *Mapping African Feminism*, 31.

6.3 Suggestion for further research

This research project on Women's Radio History has made five concrete contributions to scholarship, by gendering radio history in Ghana and documenting the trajectory of women's employment in radio broadcasting and also writing a history of female radio audiences in Ghana. The study has unearthed the hidden history of Women's Radio Magazines in Ghana has provided new evidence that urban and rural women as well as educated and illiterate women appropriated radio as a tool of domesticity to pursue an equitable gendered relationship in a patriarchal society. Areas covered in this research are not exhaustive, hence the need for greater attention in particular aspects that could not be explored thoroughly in the space of this thesis. For this reason, I make the following suggestions for future research.

This study on women's radio history covered 1960 - 1975 which is the end of the pre-United Nations Decade for Women. Future directions would be to cover the post UN Decade for Women and to examine more closely the ways in which the Women's Movement that developed more strongly after the decade engaged with radio. The beginning and end of the decade in 1985, culminating in the 4th UN Conference in Beijing in 1985, saw the emergence of new women's movements inspired by ideologies of feminism which tended to advocate more intensively, women's rights and gender equality with radio as a primary tool.

Prior to independence, women had started to mobilise themselves to advocate an equal gender equality through the formation of advocacy groups such as the Federation of Gold Coast Women (FGCW) in 1953 and the Ghana Market Women's Association in 1956. And in the late 1960s, the defunct FGWC regrouped under a new name and leadership known as the Ghana Assembly of Women (GAW). The advocacy groups pursued a reformation agenda aimed at raising the standard of living of women particularly those in the rural areas. Did these groups find radio useful in the pursuit of their reformist objectives?

Future studies could also examine more closely women's programmes in local languages in order to show more cogently how illiterate women used radio to enhance their social functioning.

This is a history on women in public radio. It would be worthwhile documenting the history of women in private and community radio. For close to 60 years, radio was a monopoly of the state. Therefore, examining women's engagement with radio in a plural and liberal and environment could also provide a rich history to compare with the past.

Future contributions to this area of scholarship should be extended beyond Accra specifically to mining communities where many relay stations were concentrated. Such a study could throw light on the commercial role of radio in the empire building missions of colonialism. It would also be rewarding to look beyond Ghana to examine the subject of women and radio from regional and continental perspectives. A comparative analysis has the potential to show more comprehensively, women's engagements with the technology as users, employees and as audiences.

Radio listening was encouraged as a leisure activity. Scholarship on women and leisure is limited. It is suggested that future work could explore women's listening engagements with radio as a leisure activity. It would also be rewarding to examine radio listening habits of rural women in order to understand more clearly the power relations regarding use, ownership and access to radio from the perspectives of rural women.

Radio cultures specifically, production and audience cultures have changed over time due to factors such as transformations in technology, audience listening habits and lifestyles. These developments are worth exploring in future work.

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April 6, 1962; April 6, 1962; July 5, 1962; July 5, 1962.

March 1, 1963; March 1, 1963; March 8, 1963; March 8, 1963.

April 17, 1964; April 17, 1964; June, 20 1964; June, 20 1964.

April 30, 1965; April 30, 1965; May 13, 1965; May 13, 1965; May 28, 1965; May 28, 1965.

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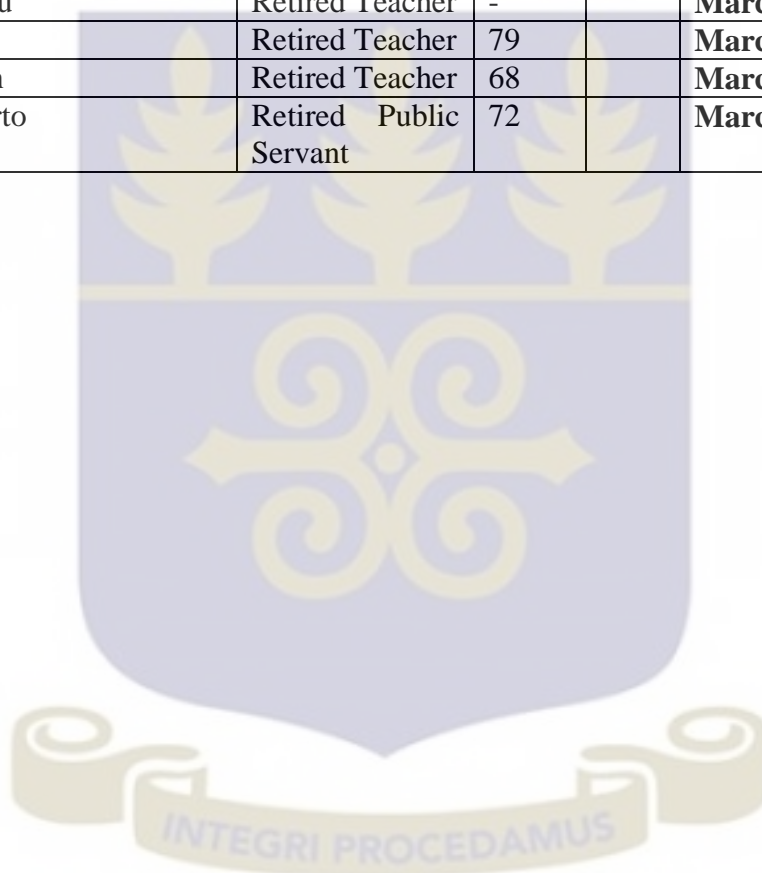
Name	Occupation	Age	Sex	Date of Interview
Harrison Afful	Retired Broadcaster	70	Male	September 20, 2006
Cleland Ababio	Retired Broadcaster	65	Male	April 26, 2007
Jane Cole		78	Female	July 10, 2012
Gertrude Opare-Addo	Retired Broadcaster	70	Female	June 15, 2012
Clara Hushie	Retired Broadcaster	65	Female	June 20, 2012
Albert Luttrodt	Head, ARU	58	Male	September 16, 2012
Godfred Addow	Head, GBC Sound Archives	58	Male	October 12, 2012
Millicent Ablodepey	Head, Programmes Operations, GBC	55	Female	October, 20 2012

Oral Interviews continued

Name	Occupation	Age	Sex	Date of Interview
Maud Blankson-Mills	Retired Broadcaster/ Director, Public Affairs	79	Female	January, 9 and 20, 2013
Hannah Danquah-Smith	Retired Broadcaster	80	Female	February 2, 2013
Chris Tackie	Retired Broadcaster/Director of Radio		Male	March 12, 2013
Prof. Emeritus J.H. Nketia	Retired University Professor	97	Male	May 20, 2013
Grace Amarkai Armah	Retired Teacher	78	Female	June 29, 2013
Adzele Okuadzo	Farmer	90	Female	June 30, 2013
Getrude Opere-Addo	Retired Broadcaster	70	Female	July 20, 2013
Miranda Greenstreet	Pioneer Broadcaster	-	Female	July 29, 2013
Grace Amarteifio	Pioneer Guest Artiste	83	Female	July 31, 2013
Christiana Dankwa	Pioneer, Technician	77	Female	July 23, 2013
Frances Ademola	Pioneer Broadcaster	-	Female	August 6, 2013
Janet Esseku	Pioneer, Rural Broadcasting	82	Female	August 6, 2013
Vida Koranteng Asante	Pioneer/Retired Broadcaster	-	Female	August 20, 2013
Sawuratu Alhassan	Retired Broadcaster	76	Female	September 11, 2013
Harriet Techie-Menson	Pioneer, Disc Jockey	75	Female	October 15, 2013
Vida Koranteng-Asante	Pioneer and Retired Newsreader	80	Female	November 19, 2013
Ellen Avorgbedor	Director, GBC, Central Region	59	Female	October 27, 2013
Victory Churchil- Koomson	Retired Teacher	78	Female	October 31, 2013
Joe Cofie	Retired Broadcaster	78	Male	November 14, 2013
Kate Bannerman	Retired Civil Servant	83	Female	November 14, 2013
Robert Owusu	Retired Broadcaster	82	Male	November, 15, 2013
Juliana Wuta-Ofei	Retired Civil Servant	62	Female	December 3, 2013
Emelia Yaa Botchway	Farmer	83	Female	June 30, 2013
Cecilia Adjei	Trader	74	Female	September 3, 2013
Comfort Larbi	Farmer	78	Female	September 3, 2013
Betty Kwarle Owoo	Trader	84	Female	November 12, 2014
Prof. Kwasi Kwaa Prah	Retired University Professor	-	Male	December 20, 2014

Focus Group Interview (conducted on March 8, 2015)

Name	Occupation	Age	Sex	Date of Interview
Diana Mercy Dalrymple-Hayfron	Retired Teacher	-	F	March 8, 2015
Mary Henaku	Retired Teacher	90		March 8, 2015
Victoria Casmus	Retired Secretary	-		March 8, 2015
Cecilia Ahensan-Mensah	Retired Nurse	75		March 8, 2015
Cecilia A. Dontoh	Trader/Business	70		March 8, 2015
Vivian Amoo-Blankson	Retired Public Servant	70		March 8, 2015.
Veronica Opoku	Retired Teacher	-		March 8, 2015
Florence Asem	Retired Teacher	79		March 8, 2015
Alberta Yeboah	Retired Teacher	68		March 8, 2015
Betice Voegborto	Retired Public Servant	72		March 8, 2015



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APPENDIX A: TRANSCRIPT

A VISIT TO SALAGA MARKET AND OSU FISHERIES DEPARTMENT

PRESENTED BY GRACE AMARTEIFIO

Introduction

Agoo awomei ke minyemimeɛ yei fɛɛ, nye hea manye. Sho shwane eshe ekonɔ, ni naa nibii ni wɔhiɛ ke ha nye. Klɛnkɛ lɛ, nyɛbaa nu sanegbaa ko ye shisharamo ni mifɛe ketee Sraha jara nɔ lɛ he ke Osu Fisheries Department.

Musical interlude (Title: Wɔ Mliya Ali Wuo)

Lala ni nye nu he nɛɛ gbɛi ji “Wɔ mliya ali wuo”. Ni eji lala ni wɔ aanye akɛɛ akɛ eji wɔnyemimeɛ wuoyalɔi lɛ alalai lɛ atɛɛ ekome. Ni ene tɛso wo dwɛɛmɔ yisɛɛ keyaa wɔnyemimeɛ lɛ a-nitsumɔ lɛ he. Nitsumɔ ni yeo buaawɔ waa, tritri ye wɔ ɛshɔɔ loo namɔ gbɛ fa. Aafe bei saɔ ni eho nɛɛ, maɔ lɛ mliye ɛshɔɔ loo hɔmɔ waa. Amrɔ nɛɛ, emli ehi fio. Ke lɛ jee tɔɔ ko. He fɛɛ he ni ootsɔ, ɛshɔɔ loo he hɔmɔyeli ji nɔko ni ma mɔfɛɛmɔ naa. Hewɔ, mijwɛɛ akɛ, kɛha wɔnyemimeɛ ni yɔ maɔ sɛ ke mɛi ni yɔ bie fɛɛ, asa akɛ wona boni nii lɛ shikamɔ yɔ ehaa. Ene hewolɛ, nyɛsɛɛ lɛ, mifɛe shisharamo ketee Gã Sraha loo ɛmɔɔ jara lɛ nɔ ke James Town ɛshɔɔɔɔ lɛ nɔ, niji heni wolɛi lɛ ba kplekeo shi ye titri. Ke abgene amralo nitsumɔ titri ni yɔ Osu nitsuo loo he nii ni astɛo lɛ akɛ Osu Fisheries Department. Ni nibii ni miyana ye jɛmɛ lɛ, nohe nyɛbaa nu lɛ.

Klɛnkɛ lɛ, mishiharamo lɛ ɛɔ mi ke tee Sraha jara lɛ nɔ, heni ahɔɔ loo ɛmɔɔ lɛ ye lɛ. Miya she jɛmɛ ye gkɛke naashi mli. No mli lɛ, yei lɛ atɛɛ mɛi ni ɛyahe loo kɛje ɛshɔɔɔɔ nɔ lɛ mli hɔɔ amɛ loo. Mɛi babao hu ɛba jɛmɛ kebaahe loo; blofomei, yei ke hii fɛɛ. No ji, atsi pɛpɛɛɛ ni gbɛ bɛ kraa. Ke lɛ henii anaa, mina loo ɛmɔɔ hɔɔɔ lɛ atɛn mokome ni mikɛɛ na sane gbaa fio;

(Interview on location- At Salaga Market)

Ah! Toiboloi bɛ naa heni mikɛnye wieɔ ye nɛɛ ji Sraha jara lɛ nɔ ye Gã. Wɔ ye heni ahɔɔ loo ɛmɔɔ lɛ ye lɛ. Ni loo ɛmɔɔ tɛmɛi ewo jara, shitɔ tɛmɛi ye afa, amɛo tɛmɛi ye afa, sabolai tɛmɛi ye afa, agbɛnɛ mɛi ni mi hɔɔ candre [candle] ke nibii hu ye afa gbɛ. Ni mikɛ oblayoo ko-astɛo lɛ Auntie Dodowa-mikɛ lɛ baana sane gbaa ye boni estuo enii lɛ ehaa;

Grace Amarteifio (GA): Auntie Dodowa, obie fɛ?

Auntie Dodowa (AD): Bie jogbaɔ!

GA: ...Loo he nii ostuo, aloo jee nakai?

AD: Hɛɛ!

GA: Aafe afii nyiɛ nɛ ni obuɛ nɛkɛ nitsumɔ nɛɛ?

AD: Aafe afii kpaanyɔ mamli ne

GA: Bɛ ostɛ! Obaanyɛ ogba wɔ onitsumɔ le saji komɛi?

AD: Hɛɛ!

GA: Te nyefeo tɛɛ nyɛnaa loo le nyɛhɔɔ?

AD: Wɔyaa ɲshɔnaa wɔyaheɔ. Ni kɛ wolɛi ba le, kɛ tro le, abaa to, wɔhu kɛ wɔhe le, kɛ wɔba to, kɛ etɛ Shilling le, kɛ wɔkɔ ekome. Shi bianɔnɛ [bianɛ-tɔɔ-nɛɛ], akɛɛ nibii fɛɛ estake, hewolɛ, bei komɛi le kɛ otee le, akɛɛ ekome..... nohewɔ le, obaaya he...bei pii le kɛ otee le enyo tɔ, beikomɛi le etɛ...beikomɛi obaaha Shilling kpaanyɔ, beikomɛi obaaha Shilling kpawɔ, beikomɛi obaaha Shilling ekpaa po, anaa mɔ ehe. Shi mɲɛnɛ mɲɛnɛ -na!- wɔyi ɛfa....kɛ otee dieɲtɛ po onaa ohe.

(Continued in Track 03)

GA: Nohewɔ, kɛ nyɛ yaahe ye ɲshɔnaa, etsɛɔ dani nyɛnaa, aloo etsɛɛ dani wolɛi le ba pklekeɔ shi?

AD: Ejɛɔ wuolɛi baamli. Bei komɛi le, amɛ baa mla, bei komɛi le, amɛ baa mla.

GA: Ni, meni loo neke afɔɔ namɔ?

AD: Bianɔnɛɛ agblaa tsaani. Kɛ eshe no bee le, wɔ yaa.

GA: Tsaani le, meni loi yɔɔ mli?

AD: Enaa bwuei abii, kɛ bwuei, kɛ odoi, kɛ tsukwei; loo sɔtɔi fɛɛ sɔtɔi ni yɔɔ nu shishi. Kanfra kɛ nibii, amɛ naa fɛɛ.

GA: Nohewɔ, bianɔnɛɛ, te jara le no yɔɔ tɛɛ? Loo le ehe jɔ fio aloo?

AD: Tsutsu ko le, aheɔ ni, shi ɲmɛnɛ ɲmɛnɛ le, ahee ni dɔɲ! Bianɔnɛɛ hu, ejara ewa. Nohewɔ, kɛ ohe keba le, beikomɛi esheɔ, beikomɛi hu esheɛ. Kɛ ohe le tamo atɔ shwemɔ.

GA: No le nakai! Nohewɔ, ni bohu no nɔɲɲ atsuɔ, ehii fɔmɔ fe be bɔfɛɛbɔ ni fee le esa ni omia ohie.

AD: Hɛɛ! Nohewɔle mihie mli. Kɛ gbi ni miba ni ehi le, ehi! Ni ehii hu...wɔsei kɛ mitee le mana ye jɛɲ. Nohewɔ, nakai ni wɔfɛɔ gbietɛnɛɛ.

GA: Nohewɔ, kɛ okɛ ohie wo mli le, enɛ nɔɲɲ ni kɛ otsu ni ebaa hi.

AD: Aja akɛshi, no hi eha mi. Bianɔnɛɛ, kɛ ebɔ mi le, namɔ baawo? Shi ma ya blofo nitsumɔ nɛɛ, shika pii dani mana nitsumɔ ni matsi. Kɛkɛ, fɛɛ sɛ le efɛɛ nyɔmɔ!

GA: Yoo, nohewɔ, ɲmɛnɛɛ mina akɛ jara le no efɛɛ sɔkɔsɔkɔ! Ana loo le moɲ nɛ, shi ejara le wa fioo.

AD: Ajaake, menihewɔ, ɲshɔnaa bianɔnɛɛ, ejara wa. Ekolɛ ato ete Shilling enyɔ yɛ jɛmɛ-bo hu woyoo-obao to enyɔ...ni bohu ona Kpaa ejwɛ.

GA: Shi oheɔ oyeɔ akɛ, beni aashe Hɔmɔwɔ mli lɛ, nibii amlɛ ehi saan?

AD: Ebei baahi, ejaake bei ni akɛ baa mli lɛ ebei amlɛ ni.

GA: Yoo! Bɛ, wo baashi bo koni bohu ayakwɛ oloo lɛ koni jɛɲ aka na bo.

AD: Ojogban!

(Continued in Track 04 and 05)

(Interview on location- At Osu Fisheries Department)

Grace Amarteifio (GA): Ofaine, ani oonyɛ otsɔ wɔ nitsumɔ pɔtɛɲɲ; boni nitsumɔ shikamɔ yɔɔ haa yɛ biɛ nɛɛ?

Interviewee (Factory Official-FO): Hmm! Wɔ biɛ nistumɔ [lɛ], ehe yɛ ahuntoo waa. Emli tsɔmɔ ji akɛshi, wɔstuu noko moɲ; wɔtsuɔ loo he nistumɔ, ni wɔkɛ loo wuɔ tsɛnsi mli. Ni nɔ niji enyɔ lɛ hu, wɔkɛ aduawai, tamo blofoɲme kɛ nibii nɛ, wɔkɛ wuɔ tsɛnsi mli.

GA: Ni loo ni nyekɛ wuɔ tsɛnsi mli lɛ, mɛni ji gbejianɔtoo dani esheɔ tsɛnsi lɛ amlɛ?

FO: Ehee! Anɔkwalɛ, leji, loo lɛ ban eke, tamɔ ana maɲɲ nekɛ ni akɛ baa biɛ nɛɛ, boni afeɔ lɛ ji, wɔ yɛ yei nitsuɔ nii yɛ biɛ. Emɛ ɲmalaa loo lɛ ahɛ, amɛ folɔ amɛ yitsei, ni agbɛnɛ hu, amɛ jieɔ emlinii lɛ fɛɛ. Kɛ agbɛ no naa lɛ, loo lɛ, afɔɔ he ni akuɔ sɛɛ ni akɛ wɔɔ nu mli. Ehiɔ mli aafe hiɲmeitswaa nyɔɲma. Kɛ ajie yɛ jɛmɛ, abaafɔ he yɛ nu kpakpa mli, kɛkɛ ato awo tsɛnsi amlɛ. Kɛ ato awo tsɛnsi amlɛ lɛ, kɛkɛ ebaaya noko ni astseo lɛ “retort” [mli]. Dani ebaaya “retort” lɛ mli lɛ, wɔ yɛ tsɔnɛ ni atseɔ lɛ “Clench-ure”; nekɛ “Clench-ture” nɛɛ, emɔɔ tsɛnsi lɛ naabu lɛ epetɛɔ shi, shi gbe ka he. Nohewɔ, kɛ ete mli nɔ, kɛ akɛ wo “retort” lɛ mli lɛ, ebaahi mli aafe miniti [minute] nyɔɲma pɛ, kɛkɛ tsɛnsi lɛ he edɔ klaklakla! Kɛ ehedɔ, kɔɔyɔɔ niyɔɔ tsɛnsi lɛ mli lɛ, eje mli. Kɛ eje mli abgenaa lɛ, kɛ a-seal naa; noji tsɛnsi lɛ naabu baamɔ pepepepe! Kɛkɛ agbɛnɛ lehu ebaaya “retort” nɛ nɔɲɲ mli ekɔɲɲ. Jɛmɛ, ebaahi jɛɲ aafe hiɲmeitswaa nyɔɲmai enyɔ, kɛ eje mli pɛ, efe yeli nɔɲɲ.

GA: Bei komɛi...nɔ ni amɛo kɛ nibii jwele yitei lɛ nohu te afeɔ lɛ tɛɛ?

FO: Kɛ wɔ [mli] tao ni wɔkɛ amɛo kɛ nibii ajwele yitei lɛ, amɛo nii lɛ, wɔ feo noko, atseɔ lɛ “sauce.” Nekɛ “sauce” nɛɛ, kɛ afeɛ lɛ, dani abato loo [lɛ] awo tsɛnsi lɛ amlɛ lɛ, akɛ amɛo nɛɛ-“sauce” nɛɛ -bɛɛ- aafe awale kome baawo shishi, ni kɛ ato loo lɛ agbenaa [lɛ], akɛ ekome baashwe eyitei. Kɛkɛ lɛ hu akɛ ba; tamo boni mitsuɔ klenɲklenɔ. Kɛkɛ akeba machine he...kɛ ena etso nekɛ “retort” mli nɔɲɲ, kɛkɛ egbenaa.

GA: Ni te nyefɛɔ tɛɛ nyɛnaa nyɛleo akɛ maɲbii lɛ nyaa nyɛ loo lɛ he?

FO: Ooh! Noji, wɔ loo ɛ anaa! Keji agbenaa [ɛ], obaana ake mɔfɛmɔ mliba ni aba he. Ni skuubii ɛ, ke amɛ ba amɛba he ɛ, amehɛo ɛ ke adekai. Ni ke anaa neke ɛ, ke amɛboi yeli.

GA: Ni te nyɛfɛɔ tɛɛ nyɛnaa loo hu?

FO: Loo hu, nɔni wɔfɛɔ wɔnaa ji, kule wɔyɛ ɛji komɛi ni amɛyaa wuo ɛ ye wɔ Gã nshɔŋ nɛɛ nɔ... Neke ɛɛ nɛɛ, eji ɛɛ ni tɔɔji gblaa. Keji amɛ jɛ wuo ɛ amɛ ba pɛ, ake loo ɛ baa biɛnɛɛ.

GA: Dani ke eba [ɛ] nyɛbaa tsu he nii?!

FO: ...Ke eba [ɛ], keke, wɔbaatsu henii fɛɛ.

GA: Nohewɔ, tɔɔji, eko ye biɛ ni mlitsunii lolo?

FO: Amrɔ-tɔɔ-nɛɛ, tɔɔji nɛ ekobe biɛ ni mlistunii ye biɛ. Mɛi fɛɛ ye Takoradi nshɔŋ. Ni nɔ ni amɛtsuɔ ye jɛŋ ji, amɛ [mli] tɔɔ wuolɛimɛi ni baaya wuo ɛ... ke amɛ [mli] tao amɛ ya wuo, ke amɛ [mli] tao amehɛ ɛɛ nɛɛ eko ɛ, boni afeɔ ni ake tsuɔ nii.

GA: Ni mɛɛba boŋ ni bianɛ [ɛ] ahaa neke ɛji nɛɛ eko atsunii ye biɛ?

FO: Noni hewɔ boŋ wɔhaa neke ɛji nɛɛ atsuni ye biɛ ji, akeshi, wɛbiɛ nshɔ ɛ, ekaashi ojobganŋ. Ni beikomei [ɛ] ke ahum tswa [ɛ], egbaa ɛji anaa waa. Neke ɛji ni ake yaa wuo nɛɛ, esani he ni amɛtsu ni ye ji he ni “habour” yɔ aloo he ni nshɔ kashi klpɛɛɛ ni nshɔke gbaa amɛnaa keji awoo kpaa.

GA: Nohewɔ,...ani gbejianɔtoo ko ye ni wuolɛimɛi baanye ni amɛdientse amɛ he neke ɛji nɛɛ eko?

FO: Oh! Gbejianɔtoo pii ye; bɔni wɔfɛi ji, wɔfɛe noko astɛɔ jɛŋ Boat-yard ni akpɛo ɛji nɛɛ eko yejɛŋ ye Takoradi, eye Sakunde nshɔŋ. Ni keji akpɛ neke ɛɛ nɛɛ, ake ni ajara wa hewo, amralofoi [ɛ] ke ɛɛ ha bo ni obaawoɔ nyɔmɔ-ekole-ke aja mli ejwɛ [ɛ], ni obaawo mli ekome. Noni eshwɛ ɛ obaawo daa nyɔɔŋgbele keyashi afii ejwɛ keke owo ogbenaa. Nohewɔ, beni okɛtsuɔnii nɛɛ, be oohe ɛɛ [ɛ].

GA: Nohewɔ, neke gbejianɔtoo nɛ, mɛ wamɔ ebaanye ewa ye neke loo hɔmɔ gbɛ?

FO: Wamɔ ni ebaawa ye neke loo hɔmɔ gbɛ ji ake, keji ɛji fa ni amɛ [mli] ya wuo ɛ- loo ɛɛ - amɛgbei waa. Ejaake amɛ sro bɔni amɛyaa wuo amɛhaa; amɛ baanye amɛ ya maŋ wuo, amɛ baanye eya nishaa- ebaanye eya wuo fɛɛ wuo. Shi nɔ ni ji oti ye mli ni eyaa ji ake shi, ake noko eba ni astɛɔ ɛ “trolling”; ɛ etamɔ agaa gblamor. Ni ɛɛ, bɔni ayaa, eye yaa ye esɛɛ ni kotoku ye he. Nohewɔ, hefɛɛhe numli ni ebaa tɔɔ, loo fɛɛ loo ni yoo egbenɔ, eyaje[ɔ] e-kotoku [ɛ] mli.

Conclusion

Ah! Ble toibolɔi, kɛtsɔ shisharamɔ fio nɛ nɔ, wɔna bɔni nshɔŋloo hɔmɔ niba nyɛsɛɛ nɛɛ shikamɔ yɔ haa ke mɔdɛŋ ni abɔ kɛha ehe nitsumɔ.

Music continued. (Title: Wɔ Mliya Ali Wuo).

APPENDIX B:

PICTURES



Picture 26: Transistor Radio used in the early 1960s.



Picture 27: Augustina Akwei, newsreader and continuity announcer in the 1960s.



Picture 28: (Right) Emelia Elliott, reading the Home News bulletin in 1965.

Source: *GRRTVT*, 1965.



Picture 29: School's Broadcasting using transistor radio. Source, GRRTVT, June 28, 1968.



Picture 30: Josephina Adjin Tettey, presenter, Women's Half Hour, 1960.



Picture 31: Kingsway Department Store Caterer Essi Abensetts, on Women's Half Hour, 1960

Source: GRRTVT, August 5, 1960.



Picture 32: Elizabeth Thomas, helped with training Radio Ghana announcers.

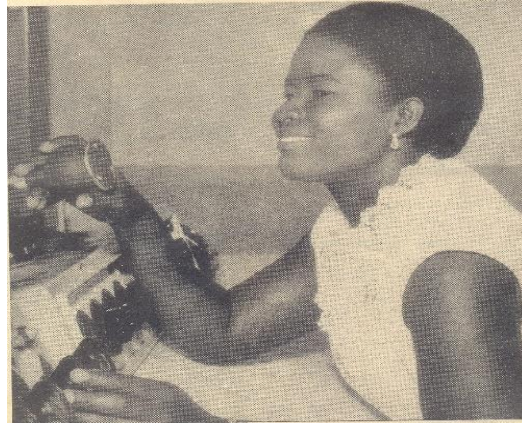


Picture 33: Ruby Quartey-Papafio, distinguished educationists and regular contributor to radio content.

Source: GRRTVT, August 5, 1960.



Picture 34: Florence Whittaker, Presenter, "Listeners Choice" in the 1960s. Source: GRRTTV, 1960.



Picture 35: Theodosia Takyiwa, behind the radio console as studio manager.
Source: GRRTVT, 1960.



Picture 36: Broadcasting to Schools using the radio box
Source: GRRTVT, Sept. 30 1960.

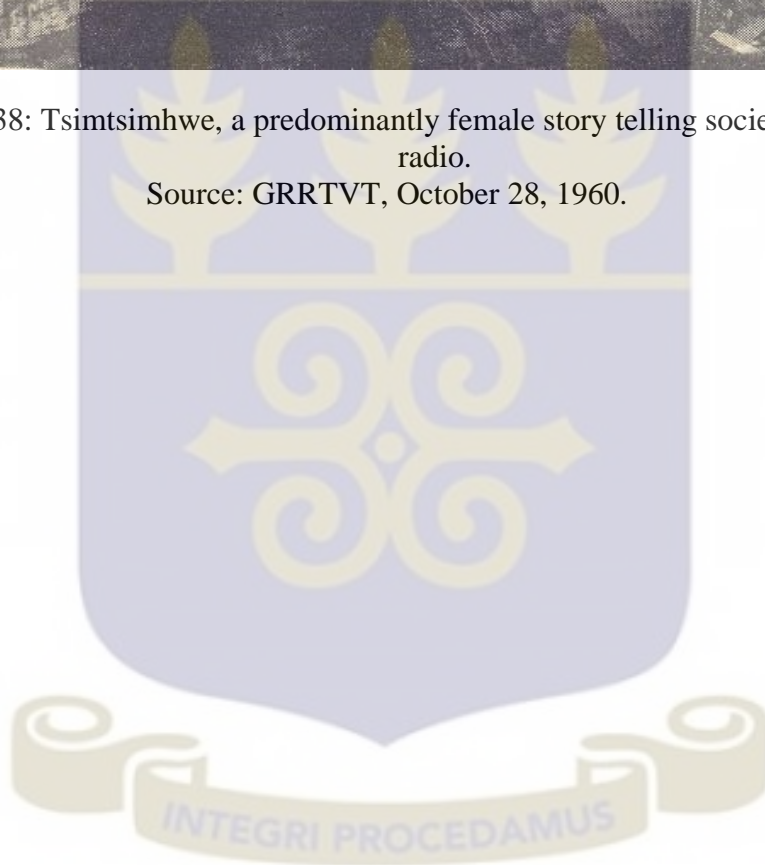


Picture 37: Getrude Opare-Addo (second from left) with discussants on Youth Forum.
Source: GRRTVT, 1960.



Picture 38: Tsimtsimhwe, a predominantly female story telling society performed on radio.

Source: GRRTVT, October 28, 1960.



APPENDIX C

Dates of Official Opening of Wired Relay Stations in Ghana (1935 – 1962)

Place	Date	Number Of Subscribers (Dec 1963)
Accra	31/7/35	10,204
Cape Coast	10/6/36	1,769
Sekondi-Takoradi	1/4/37	4,100
Koforidua	5/8/37	1,765
Kumasi	9/8/37	6,447
Tamale	1/12/37	1,267
Winneba	1/3/38	584
Tarkwa	3/5/38	2,311
Prestea	5/5/38	960
Obuasi	18/5/38	1,406
Akwatia	15/6/38	892
Saltpond	30/7/38	666
Bibiani	30/7/38	641
Nsawam	9/2/39	725
Oda	20/4/39	1,299
Swedru	21/4/39	2,694
Mampong-Akwapim	20/12/48	1,296
Keta	20/6/49	1,250
Konongo	2/1/50	935
Dunkwa	1/2/50	838
Tafo	1/6/50	1,090
Mpraeso	1/11/51	2,154
Ho	29/11/51	788
Hohoe	15/10/52	467
Bekwai	1/9/53	586
Apedwa	18/12/53	1,381
Yendi	2/11/54	353
Sunyani	1/4/55	1,112
Kpandu	3/3/56	545
Bolgatanga	25/8/56	344
Bawku	3/11/56	358
Wa	25/1/57	360
Axim	25/2/57	435
Pokoase	7/11/57	125
Navrongo	30/8/58	215
Adeiso	22/12/58	208
Berekum	14/1/61	491
Duayaw-Nkwanta	29/5/61	289
Tema	15/9/62	1040

TOTAL: 54,389.