

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**



**GENDER IN JOURNALISM: A STUDY OF THE NEWSROOM EXPERIENCES OF
FEMALE JOURNALISTS IN MULTIMEDIA GROUP LIMITED**

BY

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INTEGRI PROCEDAMUS

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and effort for the purpose of obtaining a Master of Art in Communication Studies under the supervision of Dr. Sarah Akrofi-Quarcoo of the Department of Communications Studies, University of Ghana. I confidently posit that this work contains no material published by any other person, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.



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DEDICATION

This project work is dedicated to the Almighty God for his wisdom and protection also to my father, Mr Godfred K. Nyanney for guiding me through this project and to my siblings, Samuel Opandoh Nyanney, Elizabeth Armah, Francis Nyanney, Godfred B. Nyanney & Faustina Nyanney for their support throughout the study.



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ABSTRACT

This study explored the newsroom experiences of female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited, in order to ascertain whether gender played a role in the news production practices and to examine how female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited, experience gender in the newsroom. Underpinned by the phenomenological theory, the study employed the qualitative research design that purposively sampled 10 female journalists for an in-depth interview. The data was collected using a semi-structured interview guide.

The study revealed that, although in the same newsroom, the experiences of female journalists varied from person to person. This was because of the meaning and perceptions everyone attached to their experience with a particular issue. The study found that, roles assigned to female journalists were not based on their gender but based on their capabilities to perform a particular role or task. Also, female journalists viewed their male counterparts as work colleagues. The study further found that, gendered practices existed in the newsroom but was minute, however, not to detriment of the career of female journalists, but for the efficiency and effectiveness in news production. In addition, the study revealed that, gender roles were implicated in the assignment of news beats only if the beat covered feminine areas like menstruation, pregnancy, and child-birth complications.

It is recommended that, Multimedia Group Limited train all staff (both male and female journalists) on the job to increase their capabilities and efficiency in news production. This will help reduce and prevent the incidence of gender disparity. Also, female journalists of Multimedia Group Limited need to be self-motivated to increase their work rate. This will help prevent the incidence of only hardworking male journalists obtaining the opportunities in the company.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of background of the study, problem statement, research objectives and questions, explanation of concepts, significance of study, and the organization of the entire study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Journalism across the world has been viewed as a key force in societal upliftment and a source of information to the world. This information termed as ‘news’ keeps citizens abreast of current happenings or events around and beyond them and helps them make the best possible decisions about their lives, their societies, their communities, and their governments through diverse media (Widholm,2016).

News, according to the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP, 2010, p.6) is considered as “a key element of the public and private space in which people, nations and societies live.” The production of news is a collaborative effort of all journalists working in the newsroom and it starts as soon as journalists see or hear something as newsworthy and then go through a process of writing, reporting, editing and finally selecting what should be produced as news.

Thus, both male and female journalists are assigned roles and responsibilities in the process of news making just as roles and responsibilities of men and women are created in our families, societies and our cultures including the expectations held about the behaviors and characteristics of both men and women. Seeing as gender defines the roles of men and women in the societies

we live in today, including our work - places, it is possible to find gender roles playing out in the newsroom too.

Gender in Journalism

Over the years, there has been a considerable amount of research on journalism from a gendered perspective (Byerly 2013; Chambers, Steiner & Fleming 2004; North, 2009) and the findings from these studies have noted that, journalism profession is deeply gendered with men dominating in most areas of the journalism profession and this further transcends into the newsroom. Notwithstanding the increasing number of women in the newsroom, men still outnumber women. This has hampered women's equal participation in the newsroom. Also, it has presented a dominant 'masculine culture' in the newsroom (North, 2012).

Some scholars in western context (North, 2012; Everbach, 2006) argue that, this masculine culture inherent in the newsroom brings about gender related issues like discrimination in job assignment, few women in decision-making positions in the newsroom, and lack of promotional opportunities which in turn affect the processes of news production.

For instance, the newsroom is believed to be largely dominated by men and has come to define the criteria used to determine what news is and, the socialization process in the newsroom further reproduces these news values. Thus, female journalists are socialized to accept and adapt to masculine ways of covering, writing, and reporting news in order to be regarded as real journalists (Beam & Cicco, 2010).

Also, the practices of the newsroom, including the production of news are “masculinized” and “feminized” (Meeks, 2013). This implies that, female journalists dominate in low status areas of news production and are assigned specific beats such as family, culture, education, and other human-interest areas termed as “soft news”, while men on the other hand dominate in high status areas of the news production such as chief editors and are mostly assigned “hard beats” such as politics, business and sports. One of the most gendered news arenas apart from sports is war correspondence. Most often, females who report on war are judged differently from men. While it is viewed as “normal” for a man to report on war, women, especially mothers are condemned from covering war. In addition, some women in the newsroom experience physical and online harassment when performing their duties as compared to their male counterpart but they mostly fail to report to their supervisors due to the fear of losing their job (Steiner, 2017).

Profile of Multimedia Group Limited

This study is limited to Multimedia Group Limited, the largest independent commercial media and entertainment company in Ghana. The company was founded in 1995 by Ghanaian entrepreneur, Mr. Kwasi Twum. The company is one of the first media houses to enjoy media freedom because of liberalization of Ghana’s airwaves. The company commenced operation with one radio station—Joy 99.7 FM and 12 employees. The company is now equipped with 700 employees across its **6 radio brands and 3** online assets across the nation. Multimedia Group Limited has been in operation in Ghana for over 25 years. The company now has Television Station, Radio, and Digital network. The company has a board of 10 directors. The board members comprise 8 males and 2 females. Multimedia Group Limited has 26 team leaders including only two females.

1.2 Problem Statement

In Australia, USA, India and other western contexts, studies conducted (North, 2012; byerly, 2011) on gender and newsroom practices have found that, the newsroom and its practices are gendered, and some argue that, this is as a result of male dominance in the newsrooms. Thus, males are considered as the ones in control of the newsroom and decide what should be done, in what way, and by whom in the newsroom leaving female journalists mostly disfavored and less privileged as compared to their male counterparts as they go about their duties in the newsroom. For instance, Mugwe (2012) found that, female journalists are less likely to occupy higher decision-making positions in the newsroom as compared to their male colleagues.

Similarly, North (2012) argued that, female journalists experience the newsroom differently from their male counterparts. For instance, although process of news production is a collaborative effort of all journalists, managerial positions tend to skew towards males. Not only do the male journalists occupies managerial (editorial) positions the most but are also privileged to supersede female counterparts in all news production processes (Women's Media Center report, 2017).

However, there have been varying findings pertaining to the experiences of female journalists in the newsroom. For instance, some studies (Rivera, 2007; Mugwe, 2012) found that, female journalists who have a family were not allowed to take on supervisory roles that required staying up late in the newsroom because of women's traditional role as home keepers, while studies conducted by Ruoho & Torkkola (2018) showed that, gender conventions have changed as their findings revealed that, responsibility for the home and family is not self-evidently delegated to women and also, demands for equality have influenced journalism practices, making the journalism field as well as the newsroom more family friendly.

Also, most of these experiences female journalists are confronted with, as they go about their journalistic routine are perceived by some scholars (Mugwe, 2012; Safa & Akter, 2015) to be gender related and portray challenges because of male-dominated nature of the newsroom. This includes discrimination in news assignments, lack of promotional opportunities, and family-work tension amongst others. However, Anyidoho et al., (2016) noted that, “female journalists’ experiences are not uniformly of oppression, marginalization and vulnerability but also of joy, pleasure, power and creativity”.

The International Women Media Foundation (IWMF) Global report (2010) revealed that in Ghana, just like in other African countries, although women have been able to advance in both decision-making roles and are approaching parity in most of the news gathering, news reporting and editorial functions or categories, men still outnumber women in the newsroom and dominate in higher positions in the newsroom.

Whereas most works on gendered journalism (Beam & Cicco, 2010; Safa & Akter, 2004) focus largely on how many women are now present in the newsrooms, how many have cracked the glass ceilings to attaining higher positions, and how many are now included in decision-making positions, it will be very necessary to look beyond the percentage and rather look into what actually goes on in the newsroom, how gender has shaped the understanding and perception of female journalists as a result of what they have personally experienced in their professional practices in the newsroom.



This study therefore seeks to explore the newsroom experiences of female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited about the gendered practices and culture of the newsroom in the Ghanaian context.

1.3 Research Objectives

The overarching goal of this study is to explore gender in news production culture based on the experiences of female journalists.

The specific objectives for this study are:

1. To explore the news production experiences of female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited, in relation to their assigned roles (reporters, editors/gatekeepers, presenters, writers, producers).
2. To understand how female journalists perceive and understand gender about their experiences in the newsroom.
3. To ascertain whether news production practices in Multimedia Group Limited are gendered.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the news production experiences of female journalists in Multimedia in relation to their assigned roles?
2. How do female journalists perceive and understand gender in the newsroom about their roles in news production?
3. To what extent are news production practices in Multimedia Group Limited gendered?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The role of media houses in every economy is very significant and as such need to operate in a conducive atmosphere where their professionals will feel equal and accepted. Disparity and inequality in the newsroom pose a threat to information dissemination.

In that regard, this research seeks to provide literature with vital information and on the experiences of female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited about gendered production practices in newsrooms. The findings of this study will also help shape the ideology of media scholars on the impact gendered practices pose to news production.

Also, the study will help bridge the information gap in academia by providing insight into the experiences of female journalists in relation to the newsroom practices of Multimedia Group Limited. This study will serve as a base for further research thereby increasing knowledge in academia.

1.6 Operational Definitions

The lists below are key terms that are employed in this study. Although their meanings may be different in other context, these operational definitions have been structured and well explained to fit the context of this study.

Experiences: Experience in this study refers to journalists' practical contact with events or occurrences and observations of facts in the newsroom that may have left either positive or negative (or both) impressions on journalists. These may imply challenges as well as opportunities available for female journalists working in the newsroom. Newsroom experiences may be used interchangeably with news production experience in this study.

News Production practices/Processes: This entails all processes in the production of news beginning from when a journalist sees something as newsworthy, gathers the information and then it goes through the various desks of reporters, producers, editors, and other managerial staff till it is approved as news and ready to be disseminated to audience for consumption. News production practices or process may be used interchangeably in this study.

Newsroom culture/ newsroom routines: These are procedures and routines that have been established and accepted as norms in news gathering, pre-production of news, and news production in Multimedia Group Limited.

Gendered Roles in Newsroom: This refers to roles assigned based on the gender of an individual. For instance, females are assigned news topics that pertain to women like family, while males are assigned news topics that pertain to men like sports.

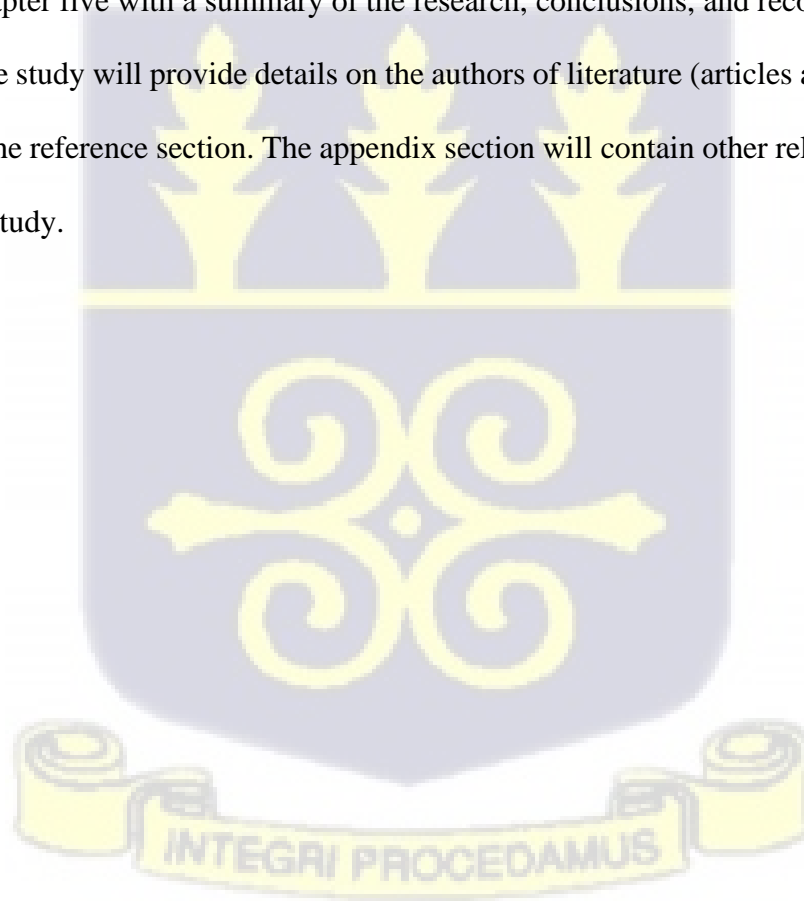
Gatekeeping Processes: These are processes, by which selections are made in media work, especially decisions on whether to admit a particular news story to pass through the gates of a news medium which information go through till it is selected to be regarded news and in what forms they should take. This process begins when news is gathered and goes through all desks (writing, reporting, subeditors' desk) and gets to the final editor's desk. Some items may be disregarded as they go through the gatekeeping process.

News beats: this is a particular topic or subject area a journalist is assigned to cover and keep track of all events happening there.

1.7 Organization of the Study

In this research, chapter one provides general concept about experiences of female journalists, media, gender roles, news production, and gender in journalism as the background of the study.

The chapter continues with the problem statement of the study, highlighting the gap this study seeks to fill. In addition, the chapter talked about the objectives of the research and its related questions. Furthermore, the significance of the study is inclusive in this chapter. The study continues with Chapter two- which is the literature review. This chapter provides insight into the previous findings of media scholars on the news production experiences of female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited and other related topics. Chapter three follows immediately with the methodology through which this study will achieve the set objectives. The methodology includes the research design, population of the study, sampling technique and sample size, data collection technique, data analysis technique and a profile of Multimedia Group Limited. Chapter four talks about the presentation of data gathered in the study and the analysis conducted. Finally, the study concludes in chapter five with a summary of the research, conclusions, and recommendations. Nevertheless, the study will provide details on the authors of literature (articles and journals) cited in this study at the reference section. The appendix section will contain other relevant information included in the study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Chapter two of the study concentrates on the theoretical framework, namely the phenomenological theory. The chapter further reviews related works on gender and journalism, particularly issues bordering on gender and newsroom cultures, gender in beats assignments, newsroom experiences of female journalists and newsroom decision-making processes.

2.1 Theoretical framework

The theory underpinning the study is the phenomenological theory. Phenomenology as a concept was introduced in communication and media studies by Paddy Scannell (1996). He first used the theory to explore radio and television use for audiences' "ways of being in the world". Other perspectives of the phenomenological theory were applied in feminist media studies (e.g. Durham 2011) and in sports communication (e.g. Gibbs & Haynes 2013).

Phenomenology is a field of study that helps to explore the experiences, perception, and views of people across cultures. Phenomenology basically explains how people experience the world around them as well as meanings people attach to certain things, based on what they have experienced referring to the everyday experiences that are familiar to humans and to how they perceive, interpret and act in the world they find themselves. This concept is concerned about understanding the social and psychological phenomena that affect the lives of individuals from the perspective of the person or people involved.

Phenomenologically oriented theorists argue that, personality is not merely passively molded by internal motivational or external situational forces that ‘shape’ individuals’ experience. Thus, it presents media studies scholars with an approach to inquiry to a particular phenomenon, in this case, experiences of female journalists about gender.

The phenomenological theory best fits qualitative approach which seeks to explore a particular phenomenon. In the case of this study, the phenomenological theory will help researcher to explore the experiences, perception, and views of female journalists in the newsroom. It will also help researcher to understand the perception, ideas, views, and knowledge female journalists have about gender, based on what they have experienced themselves in the newsroom.

2.2 Related studies

This section discussed the related literature reviewed for the study

2.2.1 Experiences of Female Journalists

In a study conducted by North (2012), to investigate the views of female journalists in Australia regarding gendered story allocations, found that while most female reporters appear to be covering hard news beats such as politics and business, majority are still assigned to cover most soft news beats in the areas of education and entertainment, and it was not as a result of their gender. Also, respondents gave a more definite response to a subsidiary question that there are still news areas traditionally allocated to male reporters, with 60 percent agreeing that this is the case.

In another study conducted by Boateng & Lauk (2020), to explore the work life experiences of female journalists in Ghana, revealed that the respondents’ juggle numerous other social roles apart

from working as media women. The findings also revealed that, they tend to cover multiple news events daily irrespective of their gender. Some of the respondents also reveal that even on lean news days, they engage in other news production activities, including feature writing, articles, or maintaining news blogs.

Rao and Rodney-Gunde (2020) conducted a study using the qualitative method of data collection to find out the perception of female journalists' regarding their own role, power in the newsroom and their influence over the news agenda. Their findings revealed that, female journalists voiced their experiences of newsroom culture as hegemonically masculine. While it appears that female journalists trust that women have made some strides in covering political news, they still see their influence as limited and continue to battle pre-existing professional stereotypes.

Shellhoffs (2007), conducted a study using interview to explore the experiences of female journalists in some selected media house in U.S and found that, female journalists encounter barriers in the assignment of roles and responsibilities in the newsroom contrary to male counterparts due to family-work tension. Shellhoffs (2007), finding further revealed that these barriers limit female journalists' opportunities to hold positions of power such as supervisory roles that require long, late, and irregular hours. This therefore allows male counterparts to occupy these positions with ease. Rivera (2007) findings also revealed that, the culture of the newsroom disfavored female journalists in terms of promotion to higher positions due to family duties. He further explained that female journalist who wanted to have children come back from maternal leave and find their positions taken away by male colleagues. This is mostly as a result of the

traditional preconception that females are caretakers of the home, hence must spend more time with the family.

However, in a survey conducted by Safa & Akter (2015) to identify the challenges of female journalists in Bangladesh, found that, some of these female journalists who overlook and still want to strive to the top, must put their lives at risk and struggle to get their story and attain a fair and gender sensitive reportage. In a study conducted by Everbach (2006), conducted ethnography of a U.S newspaper led by all-female management and found that, family-work relation is not a disruption to newsroom schedules of female journalists. This was because of the organization female journalists worked with (Tribune Herald). It had family-friendly policies which Everbach (2006) argues it is because of being an all-female led management and thus these policies made the newsroom more favorable for female journalists.

2.2.2 Gender and Newsroom Cultures

Gender issues have come to play a critical role in our society today. It is common to observe disparity among male and female in most working environment and in all spheres of our life. Journalism is no exception to these phenomena. According to Rhuoho and Torkhola (2018), the journalism profession is gendered, and these values have further transcended into the news. Studies from Byerly (2011) and North (2012), have all noted the gendered practices in various newsrooms and term it as ‘masculine’.

According to De Bruin (2014), the differences between men and women in the newsroom production was not recognized as issues deserving any attention when studies on newsrooms

started to be published in the early 1950s and throughout the 1960s. Rather, most research works focused on the individual behavior of newsroom workers and the interpersonal or group dynamics between them. There was no regard for the sex disparities until some feminist media criticism identified other ‘structures of power’ and pointed out the potentially negative effects of gender stereotyping in media content. Feminist media studies examine the processes of socialization into newsroom, where journalists learn the skills needed for their daily jobs. Some studies posit that newsrooms around the world practice ‘masculine culture’ hence follow ‘masculine’ accepted norms of news production. Consequently, females in these newsrooms are forced to adapt to the masculine way of news production. For instance, North (2012) in a study to explore the experiences of female journalists in a male dominated newsroom conducted an interview with some selected media house in Australia and found that, female journalists were not free to write stories especially those that “spoke” in favor of women. Female journalists who still wanted to write had to disguise themselves so that their identities are not known.

North (2009), studied experiences of female journalists in a male dominated newsroom of some selected media house in Australia, using an in-depth interview and found that, despite the increasing number of female journalists in newsrooms around the world, male counterparts still consider females as outsiders. North (2009), further posits that, this ideology of female considered as outsiders is based on the male-centered professional culture which is deeply rooted in newsrooms. Many male journalists, particularly those in position of authority in newsrooms, often do not experience a ‘newsroom culture’ as such. Rather, they are the ‘culture’; the newsroom is ‘theirs’. The male journalists guard the parameters from ‘outsiders’, allowing some in, but rarely to the core where power is experienced, wielded and often shared (North, 2009).

2.2.3 Gender in Beats Assignment

According to Chambers et al. (2004), there is discrimination in the assignments and roles played by journalists because of the gendered nature of the news production process. In that regard, Mugwe (2012) studied the challenges facing Kenyan women media practitioners using a survey and found that, often, news on politics, sports, foreign affairs, crime, business, economics and finance are considered as ‘masculine’ while news on family, fashion, culture, health, education, arts and entertainments are considered as ‘feminine’. The same ideology is reiterated in the findings of Lachover(2005), that topics on courts, crime, police cases, and business are classified as ‘masculine’ and ‘hard news’ hence are treated with much urgency than news pertaining to education, culture and health—classified as ‘soft news’ or ‘feminine’.

Simons (2007), posit that some female journalists have risen beyond these limitations. In accordance with the findings of North (2012), female journalist has now “disrupted the emphasis on ‘bullets’ and ‘bombs’” which is a typical traditional masculine reporting style. For instance, female journalists have developed a novel style of reporting war news by emphasizing on civilian sufferings, systematic rape of women and other intended and unintended side-effects of war.

2.3 Processes in Newsroom Decision-making

According to Ettema (2008), news production refers to the activities of journalists engaged in the production of written, visual, or audio texts of information gathered. This information appears in print form, radio and television broadcast and internet presentations. The process of news production and dissemination follows the laid-down path of information going through the desk of reporters, producers, technical staff, and managerial staff before being considered worthy for

audience consumption. More often, editors (managerial staff) have the final decisions on what to be presented as news to the public (Hanitzch and Hoxha, 2016). Hanitzch and Hoxha further concluded that decision making in newsroom follows three hierarchies. These hierarchies include the rank-and-file stage, the junior managers' stage, and the senior executive managers' stage.

1. Rank-and-File:

This is regarded as the lowest level in the decision-making hierarchy. It consists of reporters who gather news and information from the field. They have limited or no autonomy in decision making concerning news production. They adhere to the instructions of their superiors.

2. Junior Managers:

They are journalists with some level of autonomy in decision making regarding operations in sub-divisions of the newsroom. Newsroom sub-divisions include news desk, departments, and beats. Junior managers play supervisory roles for rank-and-file members.

3. Senior Executive Managers:

These are managers who hold the apex positions in the newsroom. They have absolute authority in newsroom production and practices. They make corporate decisions which affect the goals and objectives of the media house and every member of the newsroom. They make decisions about what is worthy as news for the public consumption. These positions are often occupied by male journalists with a handful of female journalists occupying these positions (Tsui and Lee, 2011).

Whereas all these experiences are relevant to the western context, yet the findings are inconsistent. It will therefore be impossible to conclude that, female journalists in Ghana will have same experiences in the newsroom. Thus, this study will use in-depth interviews to explore gender in news production practices based on the experiences of female journalists in Ghana.

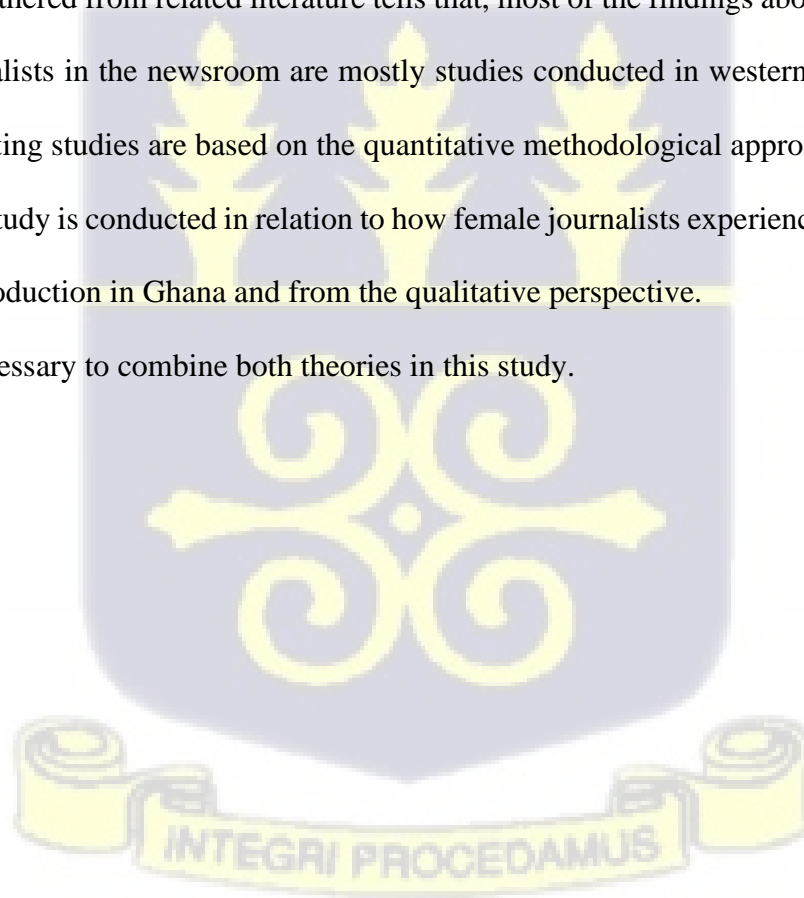
2.4 Summary

This chapter presented the literature review and theoretical framework that underpinned the study. The theory adopted for this study was the phenomenological theory as it helps to understand and explain how and what people experience.

The literature was reviewed from related studies on experiences of female journalists and newsroom production conducted in different settings. The review was solely based on earlier studies that explored experiences of female journalists, gender roles, newsroom culture, news production process, specific gatekeeping routines and general newsroom practices.

The evidence gathered from related literature tells that, most of the findings about the experiences of female journalists in the newsroom are mostly studies conducted in western context. Besides, most of the existing studies are based on the quantitative methodological approach. It is therefore essential that a study is conducted in relation to how female journalists experience gender relations in newsroom production in Ghana and from the qualitative perspective.

Thus, it was necessary to combine both theories in this study.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter of the study presented and discussed the approach used by the researcher to gather data. It consists of the Population, sample size, sampling technique, data collection technique, data analysis technique and a brief profile of Multimedia Group Limited as well as why multimedia was used as a case study.

3.1 Research Design

McCombes, (2019) explains research design as an imperious way of conducting research in which conclusions and recommendations are suggested to fill academia gap. The study adopted the qualitative research design. According to Wimmer& Dominik (2011), the qualitative research allows for in-depth understanding and further probing into a particular research problem. Most of the studies (Lobo et al. 2017; Larkin, Watts & Clifton 2006) conducted to gain understanding of how female journalists make sense of their own lived experiences used in-depth interviews. In addition, Shellhoffs (2007) conducted a study using in-depth interview to explore the experiences of female journalists in some selected media house in United States likewise North (2012).

This study therefore adopted the qualitative research design to gain in-depth knowledge and understanding on how female journalists experience gender in the newsroom as well as their perceptions and views about gender in the production of news. This is in line with the phenomenological requirement in relating and interpreting the meanings of human experiences. Thus, this study used in-depth interviews to gather data and analyze it from a phenomenological point of view.

3.2 Population

The population of a study is described to be all the subjects with similar characteristics from which a sample can be selected as a representation of the population. From the data retrieved from the human resource manager, Multimedia Group Limited is equipped with 78 staff members. This number comprise of writer, reporters, editors, producers, and all other newsroom staff members. Amongst the 78 staff are 32 females and 46 males.

3.3 Sampling Technique and Sampling Size

A Sample is defined as a subcategory of a population, Malhotra (2010). The sample has the same characteristics as any member of the population. Estimation of sample size in quantitative research is simple and direct following a statistics-based rule. However, studies by Morse (2000), noted that, sample size for qualitative research has been up for consideration by many scholars in time past. Not until recently that an evidence-based approach is being used to estimate sample size in qualitative research.

Sandelowski (2000), posit that qualitative research sample size should be large enough to reveal new understanding and small enough to inspire profound case-oriented analysis. Information redundancy is a crucial factor to consider in determining the sample size for qualitative research. Hence, Lincoln and Guba (2003), are of the view that, in the absence of new information from the sample, the same size should be small to prevent information repetitions. In view of this, the purposive sampling technique which is non-probability sampling technique was used to sample ten female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited. Amongst them were two reporters, two subeditors, presenter, two producers, one chief editor and the manager of Joy Business.

Interviewees were selected one each from the two major newsroom brands (English and Twi/Local) under Multimedia Group Limited. According to Wimmer & Dominick (2011), the purposive sample “includes respondents, elements or subjects selected for specific characteristics or qualities and eliminates those who fail to meet these criteria”.

Multimedia Group Limited was selected because in Multimedia newsrooms, journalists are not specifically assigned to one beat, say broadcast, radio or online but they juggle between all the three, hence each journalist in any of the two major newsrooms in Multimedia Group Limited (English and the local/Twi brands) has had varying news production practices experiences in broadcast, radio and online and thus will help researcher attain a more detailed and all round information on what female journalists in multimedia newsroom experience, with regards to news production.

3.4 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis is female journalists in multimedia Group Limited. The study is interested in the lived experiences of female journalists in the newsroom. Therefore, female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited becomes the best choice for the unit of analysis of this study.

3.5 Data Collection Method

Data collection technique is the means or process by which data needed in a study is obtained. The interview approach was used in this study to obtain data from the female journalists of Multimedia Group Limited. In-depth interviews, according to Newing(2011, p. 98), are “two-way conversations, with discussions and follow-up questions on each point”. Thus, in-depth interviews

make it possible for researcher to probe further, clearly understand and make meaning out what the respondents say (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011).

On that note, interviews were used to gather first-hand information on the experiences of female journalists in multimedia Group Limited. An interview guide was designed and outlined according to the roles of the respondents and used as a tool for data collection to retrieve responses from journalists. The guide contained and addressed the newsroom experiences of female journalists, their roles in the news gathering and selection processes and respondents' knowledge or perception and understanding of gender.

Each interview lasted between thirty minutes to an hour. With the permission of the respondents and an assurance of confidentiality, a voice recorder was used to help record interviews and a note and pen was used to take notes alongside to make data analysis and further reference easier.

All interviews were done face-to-face except for one where the respondent opted for phone interview. The phone interview was equally recorded and took 45 to 50 minutes. However, not all face-to-face interviews were done in the newsroom. Interviews that took place in the newsroom were done at a time where most of the journalists had closed from their daily activities and about leaving for home. Two of the interviews took place at the dressing studio.



3.6 Procedure

After identifying a problem and putting out the objectives and questions to be asked, the researcher developed a sampling strategy. This included those who are beliefs and attitudes matter to the research and how to find them as well as what phenomenon to be examined.

After all these were done, an approval was granted from the Department of Communication and an introduction letter was given as a way of gaining access into multimedia Group Limited. The letter was received by the Head of Human Resource and a date was given for follow up. Permission was eventually given after two weeks of negotiation as staff had been informed not to host visitors because of the outbreak of Covid-19 field work began. An in-depth interview guide that contains the questions to be asked during the interview was written and potential respondents were contacted to complete the interview. The interviews were done in two forms. The first one entailed that of all respondents in the English brand newsroom after which respondents in the Twi brand newsroom had their turn. This was because the respondents were working in shifts as a way of ensuring adherence to the Covid-19 protocols.

The researcher started off by asking general questions pertaining to respondents' role in the newsroom and then the questions on the guide followed. The researcher listened to the responses from respondents and took notes of salient points that came up during the interviews. Follow up questions were also asked by researcher for the sake of clarity and responses were recorded.

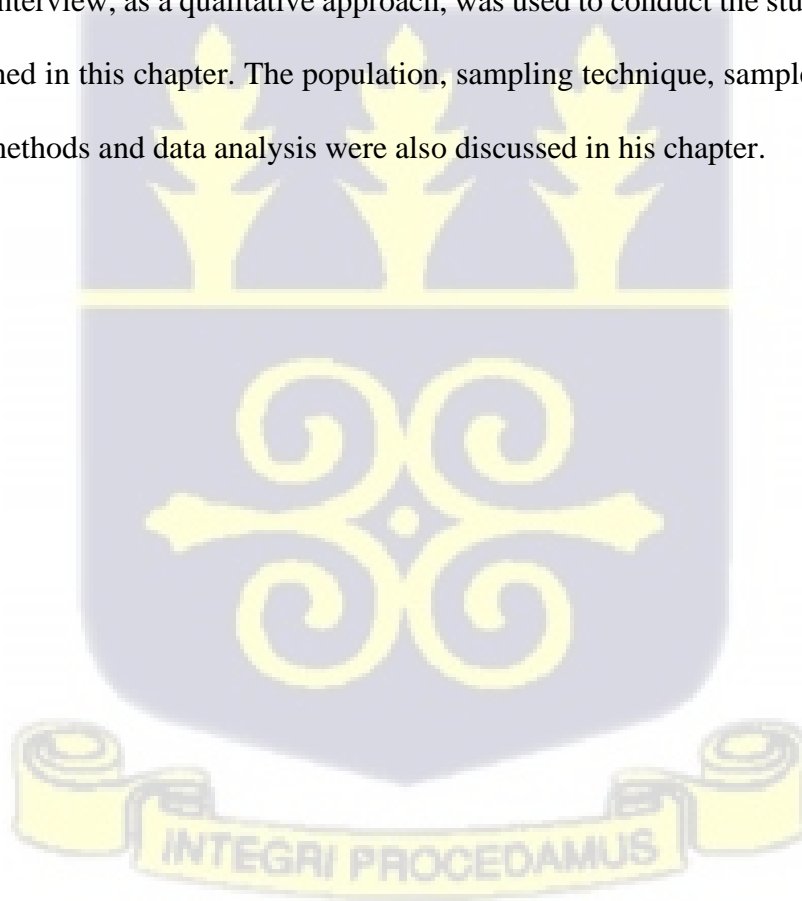


3.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to the qualitative or quantitative interpretation of data gathered in the course of a study. The data gathered from the interview in form of voice recordings was transcribed into text and was grouped thematically and analyzed based on the phenomenological theory. Themes that emerged out of the data gathered included, newsroom experiences of female journalists, newsroom roles, knowledge / perception of gender roles, criteria for news selection and newsroom policies.

3.8 Summary

This chapter entailed the research design and research methods that was applied in conducting the study, In-depth interview, as a qualitative approach, was used to conduct the study and why it was used was explained in this chapter. The population, sampling technique, sample, unit of analysis, data collection methods and data analysis were also discussed in his chapter.



CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is focused on the presentation of data gathered during the interview, its analysis and interpretation. The data gathered and analyzed in the study is in relation to the objectives of the study. This section is divided into two. The first will present the findings gathered from the interview and the second part will discuss the key findings of the study in relation to the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework.

4.1 Brief Description of Multimedia Group Limited Newsrooms

Multimedia Group Limited is divided into two major brands, which are the Twi brand (comprising of Adom FM, Adom TV, Asempa FM) and the English brand comprising of (Joy Prime, Joy News, joy FM, Hitz FM, Joy Business, myjoyonline.com). Both brands have separate newsrooms in separate buildings, opposite to each other.

Joy newsroom as well as Adom newsroom comprises radio, television, and online journalists. In both newsrooms there are labeled desks for various beats. For instance, there is the sports desk, the politics desk, the Economics desk, and other areas where journalists cover. The editors share the same office with the journalists but have their desk a little further away from the other journalists.



4.2 Characteristics of Interviewees

The female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited interviewed, were between the ages 25 and 45 years old (an average of 35 years). Five of them are married and five singles. One of the interviewees holds a chief editorial position and doubles as the manager for Joy Business News. Two were reporters, two presenters, three sub editors, and two producers. All interviewees have had tertiary education in journalism ranging from bachelor's degree (BA) to master's degree (MA). However, seven have BA qualification while three have an MA qualification. Some of the interviewees have been working for the company between 5 and 15 years while others have worked with the company from its inception. All interviewees are full time staff of Multi-media Group Limited. All interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide to obtain the necessary information for the study.

4.3 Presentation of findings

4.3.1 Objective one: To explore the newsroom experiences of female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited, in relation to their assigned roles (reporters, editors/gatekeepers, presenters, writers, producers).

Newsroom Roles

To gain an understanding of what interviewees perform as duties in the newsroom, interviewees were asked about their roles as female journalists in Multi-media Group Limited. Female journalists explained that they perform diverse roles in the newsroom multimedia newsroom; journalists are not strictly entitled to a particular role. They perform duties as assigned by their bosses. For instance, one journalist explained that she was a reporter and at the same time a presenter and she sometimes write her own stories.

Reporter 1: I am a reporter and a presenter, often, I write my own stories and then submit to my boss to edit.

Another explained that her role in the newsroom is a reporter, so she basically goes out to cover stories and events that will make headway as news.

The sub-editors interviewed explained that, their role was to take editorial decisions on the news bulleting; to give guidelines on what should be published as news and what should not be selected and published as news. These are what the 2 sub editors said:

Sub Editor 1: So, if you are asking me my role, my duties as an editor is to take editorial decisions on the bulleting, the news, to give guidelines on what should go and what shouldn't and to scope stories so that we get all angles covered in order not to air just one-sided stories.

Sub Editor 2: I am an editor for Joy News. I edit stories that journalists bring from their beats. I make sure the story falls in line with the requirement of what should serve as news. I either add or deduce from the information received and once it falls within that criterion, it is accepted as news and finally presented to the chief editor who has the final say.

One of the 2 presenters interviewed revealed that she doubled as a producer and a presenter for a TV program.

In multimedia Group limited, journalists are not strictly assigned to radio or television or online media, but rather journalists juggle between all the three roles when the need be, thus they are all trained in all these areas to equip them adequately to undertake whichever role assigned to them as explained by one journalist:

Here in multimedia, we don't have journalists purposely trained for radio and those trained for television, we are all radio journalists as well as television journalist. At any point in time, any of us can be called to cover, report, present, or write anything at any time and we should be able to do it because we have been trained in every area.

The head of Joy business news work as a chief editor, writer, producer, presenter and sometimes a reporter. She explained that her role comprised a lot because she was responsible for managing the entire unit and that required putting herself in the job to get the desired results from her team.

When asked her role as the head of joy business, she said:

Head 1: I am the head of joy business, and my role requires more than just being a manager. I report, write, edit, produce, and sometimes present news. I expect much from those under me and this is how I choose to teach my subjects what is expected of them. I therefore need to put myself in the job to attain the results I expect.

News production experiences of female Journalists

To explore the experiences of female journalists in Multi-media Group Limited, the researcher asked interviewees questions pertaining to what they encounter as they go by their day-to-day activities in the production of news. Interviewees shared their personal experiences in news gathering, reporting, editing, presenting and news production during the interview session. While some were indifferent about what they had experienced, whether it was good or bad, others were very much sensitive and explained that their experiences were more of challenges than opportunities. Some also revealed that it was a blend of both challenges and opportunities that favored them.

An editor from Adom newsroom explained that, her experience was a mixed one. She is the only female among four editors on the editorial board who decide on what should be aired and what should not. According to her, she mostly receives undue favor from her colleagues because she is a female. She further explained that, her colleagues never took a decision without her inputs but rather, will wait for her to be present to take final decision. On the other hand, she is sometimes in dilemma as an editor to decide especially when the story has to do with women or child abuse. She is not supposed to attach her feelings to the story and neither does she want to give his male colleagues the leeway to condemn her as a female when she starts to defend women. She said:

Editor 1: We are a team of six. I am the only female amongst them. I don't feel treated differently. I don't feel there are things they hide from me. I don't feel they take decisions based on my gender. Also, when we go for meetings, my contributions are valued as much as others are. And I don't see them telling me that I can't do this or that because I am a female. And perhaps it is because I have proven myself that I am capable. So, nobody is looking at me as a woman, but looking at me as a colleague, an editor, that's it.

Like the above explanation, another editor said:

Editor 2: So, on the funny side, we formed a platform for sub editors, and we are a team of seven with only two females. Because of that, they call us mothers on the platform. We sometimes get unfair advantage. For instance, if there is a deliberation on an issue, after they have all given their suggestions, they will say, now let us listen to what our mothers have to say. And after that, they will all agree on what we say and then in a funny way say, “let us take what our mothers are saying because they are our mothers”.

However, another journalist from Adom FM recounts the number of times she is considered as less capable by her boss as he makes her sit and wait for him while he goes in to gather information. She explained that she has had challenging encounters in the newsroom, but this was the very obvious one she would mention anywhere because.

She said:

Reporter 2: I remember I went out with a senior reporter to the police headquarters and then for like three times he asked me to sit outside as he goes into the meeting room. So, one day I asked him why he always asked me to sit outside, and he told me this kind of meeting involves high profile personalities in attendance. He further said that information regarding police cases was very sensitive and confidential and so required ‘tough’ journalists to cover. Did this mean that I wasn’t a tough journalist?

A writer and a reporter from joy news shared their experiences on how people related to them as female journalists in relation to news gathering.

Reporter 3: My experience as female journalist relates to how females respond to issues compared to male counterparts. For instance, I have written a lot of stories that people talk to me because I am a woman. I spoke to a woman who had been beaten by her husband to point where she was sent to the Intensive Crime Unit (ICU). She was open and told me about everything that transpired but when my colleague male journalist was sent earlier, she withheld most of the information she disclosed to me. I believe it was because of the reception and responses I gave her which made her feel more comfortable and welcoming.

One thing I have realized working as a female journalist is that, it is not just about being a woman or female journalist, but people naturally relate to people differently. So, I met one politician whom I wanted to interview, but initially, he did not see me as a lady journalist but as a girl doing her own thing until I spoke to him on personal bases and then I started asking trivial questions. That was when he realized I was a journalist, and he was fascinated about my stature and gave me the opportunity to interview him on our show.

Challenges in the Newsroom

To understand the challenges female journalist faces in news production in relation to gendered practices, the researcher asked them to share some of the challenges they encountered as female journalists working with male colleagues. Although they all have experienced challenges some termed it as normal or trivial while others saw opportunities in the challenges. Also, some of these challenges were more related to gender. Some journalists explained:

Reporter 4: Personally, I have had tough experiences working as a female journalist in the newsroom. Sometimes I need to do more or go the extra mile regardless of my gender to get the work done for my boss even if it means staying late to finish my task. This is the only means by which I can be promoted.

I think the only challenge is that, as female journalist you must also work hard to prove that you are capable of working in the newsroom. If it means staying awake to finish your work, you have to. Because, if male journalist works hard, every opportunity will be presented to him, so if you also want benefit from every opportunity in the newsroom, then

you must also work hard. I will say it is a positive challenge since in every institution regardless of your gender you are required to perform your duties with diligence.

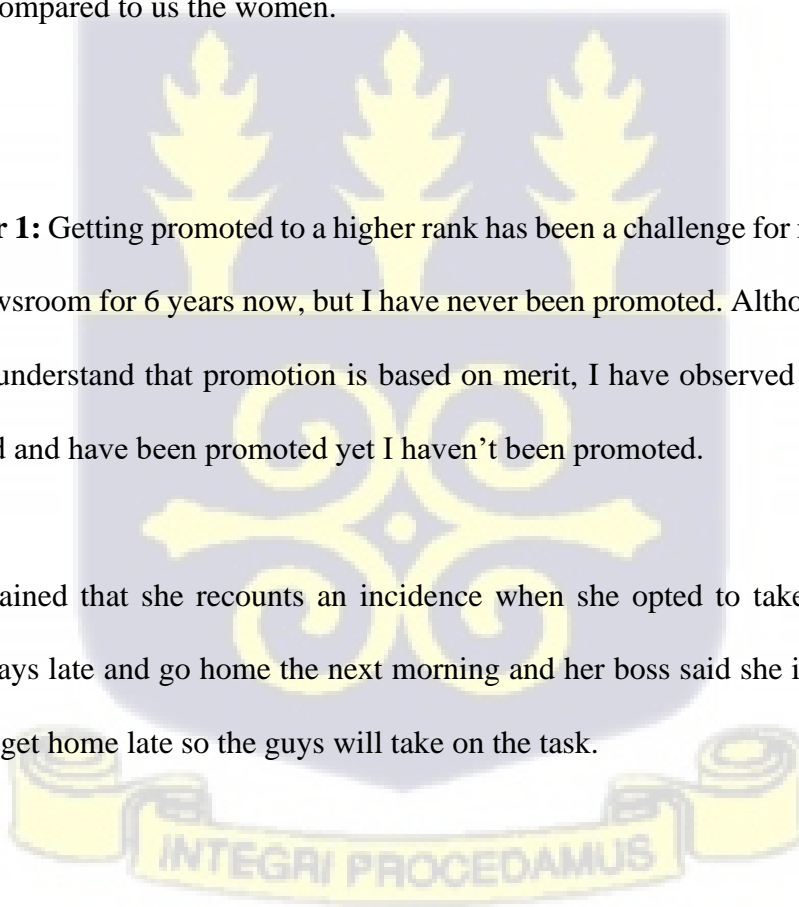
The manager of joy business said:

I am a manager and a senior editor with a sub team made up of men. I am mostly seen as a woman and not necessarily a boss. Male colleagues expect me to be calm and considerate when they need to be corrected and they see me as overreacting should I correct them. Sometimes, I give instructions to them to carry out a task and they do so in a way they feel should work better for them, which is not right. I don't think it is the nature of the profession that has caused that but rather, how society and culture has made men feel they are more capable compared to us the women.

A producer said:

Producer 1: Getting promoted to a higher rank has been a challenge for me, I have worked in the newsroom for 6 years now, but I have never been promoted. Although we have been made to understand that promotion is based on merit, I have observed people coming in after I did and have been promoted yet I haven't been promoted.

She further explained that she recounts an incidence when she opted to take on a task which demanded she stays late and go home the next morning and her boss said she is a family woman and needs not to get home late so the guys will take on the task.



The researcher further asked whether there were policies that may cover women who may want to give birth or women with children. The respondents explained that there were policies generally made for the company and that which specifically favored women during birth. In multimedia Group limited, female journalists are given maternal leave when they have few months to give birth and resume their duty once their leave is over. Female journalists who resumed work after birth closed earlier than they used to close before giving birth.

Presenter 1: When I was pregnant, I came to work throughout till I was due birth. I went on leave for 7 months and I came back to work. My position had not been assigned to anyone, neither was my role changed.

Another reporter said:

Reporter 5: I had complications few months after taking seed, so I had to stay home for several months till I was due and stayed 7 months after birth. I resumed work after the 8 months, and I resumed my duty. A colleague was assisting in the task I could not finish before I left but once I came back, I resumed work and I closed earlier than I used to close.

Also, respondents were asked how they balance work with family and most of journalists explained that they had assistance from family thus making it less of a problem. Some responses include:

My mother and little sister have come to stay with me, so they take care of the children. I only have to prepare the baby's milk and store it for them and then I am good to go. I take the kids to school before coming to work and my husband close earlier than I do so he picks them up and take care of them till I come. So, it is not really a difficult task. But I no

longer took the night shifts I used to take, though it was an advantage. I manage to juggle between work and taking care of the family. I have 3 children and that I wake up very early to prepare them for school before I come to work, and it has become normal. But the only challenge is when I have an assignment on a weekend. Leaving all the three for my husband is quite hectic, so I normally don't take on task on Saturdays even if it comes with an added advantage.

When I gave birth to my first born, I was staying with my husband only and my mother had travelled and so I took my baby to a mother care where I was assisted to take care of her so that I can carry on my duties at work.

4.3.2 Objective two: To understand how female journalists perceive and understand gender about their experiences in the newsroom.

Perception on Gendered Practices in Newsroom

Female journalists of Multi-media Group Limited were asked questions about their knowledge and perception of gender in the news production process what they think gender does in newsroom production.

The researcher asked questions pertaining to how journalists understood and perceived gender in the newsroom, and how journalists think gender affected how work was done in the newsroom. Most journalists were of the view that, gender was not an issue in multimedia Group limited newsroom. All tasks and assignments were given and done regardless of one's gender. Also, the gender of a reporter, presenter, producer, writer or even an editor did not favor them above their

opposite colleagues. However, there was an exception to the rule. Some journalists upon responding to the questions asked said:

Reporter 6: I don't think gender exists here in Multi-media Group limited. Everything done in the newsroom is done with professionalism. Tasks are given based on journalists' capabilities, to handle a particular story, event, or news. Not necessarily because the person is a male or female.

Reporter 7: I will say gender plays a role in newsroom production for about five percent of the time. For instance, in a situation where a journalist may be put under undue pressure, male journalists are sent to cover such areas since female journalists may not be able to thrive under that pressure. Example is during demonstrations, since it will last from morning to evening and the stress that comes with it, often times male journalists are asked to cover such news.

Reporter 8: I think gender play a little role in newsroom production. I will nevertheless say it is very minute because your capabilities as a journalist is what sets you apart and allows you to handle situations carefully. There are instances male journalists have covered issues related to female gender and vice versa. However, some cases are special and strictly for the female journalists. Example is an issue relating to feminism (menstruation, child abuse, sexual assault etc.). So, I will say there is a little bit of gender discrimination in news production.



Another reporter was asked whether she felt gender existed in the newsroom. Her response stated clearly that she has had series of encounters where her male colleagues expect her to do certain things because she is a female and that has shaped her understanding of gender. She said:

I didn't like it when at a get together one night, a male colleague called the ladies to come and serve them because we are the "women". I retaliated and said we can do it but not because we are women, and it is our duty.

She further explained that, she was surprised some of her female colleagues trolled her because of what she said and they succumbed to what the men said making her look as the odd one.

Following this response, the researcher asked the rest of the interviewees if they had experienced the same thing or something similar in the newsroom and what they think about it.

Three journalists said:

"I don't see anything wrong with serving the men at a party. You are a lady and that shouldn't be a difficult task for you".

"I don't have a problem if a male colleague should tell me to serve him because I am a woman. Of course, I am a woman and how long will it even take to serve them".

"I do it at home for the family, so why should it be a problem to serve my male colleagues in the office".

However, a producer at Joy News said

Producer 2: It is one thing to tell me to come and serve you and it is another to tell me to do so because I am a woman. To me it seems quite offensive because i cannot walk to a

male journalist's desk to say "you have to put food on my table at lunch because you are a man".

She further explained that, the behavior of some male journalists was as a result of the traditional gender roles that society has created which shaped the perception of male journalists in the newsroom.

4.3.3 Objective three: To ascertain whether news production practices in Multimedia Group Limited are gendered.

Gender in the news Production Practices

In order to know if news production practice in Multi-media Group Limited was gendered, respondents were asked if they are assigned to specific beats, whether they report, write, cover, produce and present news freely without restrictions and whether they encountered some challenges working with their male colleagues in the newsroom. They were also asked whether they think assignment of beats was based on their gender. Editors were also asked how and on what basis beats are assigned to journalists. This was to help the researcher identify and understand whether gender played a role in the news production practices in Multi-media Group Limited.

Assignment to Specific Beats

In multimedia Group Limited, beats are assigned by editors. They allocate journalists to areas where they can gather information and cover events or stories. However, journalists are free to cover any story they deem newsworthy even though it falls outside their beat area. Except for the correspondents who are specifically assigned to cover stories from the parliament/ flag staff house

and those who cover sports, all journalists are not bound to a specific beat they are required to cover stories from. Some journalists said:

Reporter 9: I am a reporter, and I don't have a particular beat assigned to me. I go out to cover events that I feel will make news. I have covered news on child abuse, I have covered stories on politics, and I do features about female reproductive health and lifestyle. Although there are some days my editor assigns me to cover a particular event as and when it comes, I cover any other story.

Here in multi-media, journalists can cover and report on any news, story or event. All we must do is to make sure the news or story is worthy to be called news for the audience. We are free to express ourselves as journalists here in multi-media.

“I am free to express myself in any area I want to report on with no restrictions. I don't have to hide my identity or disguise myself to put a story out there. However whatever story or news I want to cover, must present itself in full and not one sided, else it “won't fly”. That is, it won't be accepted by our editor”

Two sports journalists said:

Sports Journalist 1: I have worked as sports journalists in multimedia for 15 years; I only cover stories related to sports and nothing else. However, when I identify any event or story, I feel is newsworthy, I inform my colleagues to cover.

Sports Journalist 2: am a reporter and I cover local and intentional stories relating to sports. This is what I have been assigned to in Joy newsroom, but for the passion I have

for entertainment, I juggle between entertainment news and sports. According to my boss, I perform better in these two areas so although I am a sport journalist, I sometimes do entertainment.

Journalists were further asked if they felt beats were assigned based on their gender. Some journalists didn't think so while the responses from others explained that, they didn't see that as a problem and were not even concerned whether it was based on their gender or not.

Also, a reporter, presenter and a writer said:

Here in Multi-media, news is generally covered by both male and female journalists. However, when the story or news is subjected to females, then ideally female journalists are asked to cover so they can provide detail information. Also, when it comes to voice overs, often it is female journalists that do them. I have barely seen or heard a male doing voice over since I came in here 5 years ago.

I write feature stories I feel will be of interest to the public, my gender as a female does not influence what I write. The stories I write most are about politics, food hygiene and security.

I am a reporter and I cover any story and I don't think my gender plays a part in the beats I cover. Most often than not, I am sent to cover stories around areas of conflict. This is because I do better in that area regardless of my gender. In 2019 for instance i was the one sent to cover the story that was all over the net about the clash between two Ghanaian hip life musician, "stone buoy" and "Shatta wale" at a concert. It was very late in the night yet and

it was a risky assignment, but I did cover the story. However, I had a backup security when the fight was getting extreme.

Here in multimedia, stories on demonstrations are usually covered by men since it will last from morning to evening and the stress that comes with it. It is not common to find a woman covering demonstrations.

Another journalist said there is sometimes differentiation in the beats assigned to male or female. However, she doesn't consider it as a bias because she believes it is certainly the gender it relates to that can explain it better.

Well, yes, the basic thing that can differentiate between a beat for a male and a female is when the beat is about feminine hygiene or something about women that basically women can know a lot about than men. In that case, female journalists are assigned to cover such stories. When it is something general, either male or female journalists can be assigned to cover. However, I have never been prevented from covering a particular story because I am a female.

Editors in Multimedia assign beats to any one at any time be it an intern, service personnel or staff based on the capability of the journalist and not based on journalists' gender. However, editors pay much attention to the level of expertise of the reporters on a given subject matter.

An editor from Adom newsroom said:



Editor 3: As an editor, before I assign beats to any of the journalists, I look at their capabilities and not necessarily their gender. I look out for the journalist who is well vexed in an area where we want to cover as news and assign the person to that area irrespective of the gender. There are instances male journalists cover issues pertaining to female gender better than female journalists. It all depends on the capability of the journalist to obtain relevant fact from the right people. There are other instances where ideally male journalists are to be sent to cover a particular beat, but sometimes considering their capabilities, you realize that female journalists can help the company obtain more information than the males.

Another editor from joy news said

Editor 4: Actually, there is no favoritism here in multi-media. It is all about your capabilities, what you can do best. For instance, if a male journalist has the capabilities to obtain detailed information from a female respondent because the male journalist is attracted to the person or has good interpersonal relation, then the male journalist will cover that story. It is not a challenge; we are work colleagues and as such we must work hard irrespective of our gender.

I present the news on both television and radio just as my male colleagues do. We have a roaster scheduled for our turns. Although the men outnumber men in Adom newsroom, we are evenly scheduled so that each one of us will know when he or she is on duty.

The senior editor for joy business said:



Editor 5: I look at your capability, level of knowledge or how well vexed a person is in a particular area and the institutional memory. That is what a journalist already knows about the subject matter.

She further explained that some journalists are bad with figures, so she wouldn't let such people do business reports. However, she gives all journalists the opportunity to explore in that field in order to know who performs better in what area.

Criteria for news selection

Editors were asked on which criteria are news, stories or events selected to ascertain whether gender played a role in the selection criteria. Interviewees explained that, their selection criterion was void of gender biases but rather, the focus was on what the company value as news. An editor said:

Before a journalist go out to gather information from the field, he or she must speak to their editors and know what is expected of them and what angle the news should go. There are rules and guidelines in making stories, so once she returns and the news does not fall in line with what is expected, the story might not be aired.

Stories that are valued as news in multimedia include stories that are of human interest, stories that affect a large group of people and stories that are of much relevance to the audience. Also, stories that are conflicting or controversial in nature are valued in multimedia. Editors believe these are stories that are important to audience and will trigger their attention to get more information about.

Two editors said:

We report stories with human interest, stories that will bring information to people. So, we select stories, news or events based on that. The journalist going to cover the news must come back with full side of the story not half-based story else it will not be aired regardless of the gender of the journalist.

As an editor, I look out for full-ended stories. In an instance where there is an aggravation between two parties, I would have to get the views of both parties before we air it. Otherwise, it will not make it through the gate. Also, when it comes to sensational stories, I drop them, because we must look out for the impact the story will have on the audience.

Another editor said:

The kind of stories I drop the most are unethical stories, like insults and allegations, unless it is verified. And when it comes to dropping a story, it is not a matter of the journalist being a male or a female, I drop them. The stories must adhere to the rules and guidelines that govern news making and publication so if it does not, I will drop them.

The senior editor of Joy news said:

I have dropped a story that relates to women empowerment and have aired a story on the need of resources by farmers. Both stories came the same day, and one might think I should go in for the story on empowerment because I am a woman. But at that point in time, although the story on women empowerment was equally relevant, it would not affect many people compared to the effect the lack of resources farmers needed to produce food will have on Ghanaians as a whole.

4.4 Discussion of findings based on research objectives

This part constitutes the second part of the discussion of findings. Here, discussions will be done in relation to the relevant literature reviewed as well as the theoretical framework.

4.4.1 Objective one: To explore the news production experiences of female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited, in relation to their assigned roles.

Newsroom

Female journalists working in multimedia have worked in the media for at least 5 to 15 years, whether they have been poached from a different media house or have been working in Multimedia and have had lots of experience working as female journalists. The study revealed that, female journalists were at liberty to perform at least two roles and were not specifically assigned to a particular role. For instance, one female journalist played the role of a TV and radio presenter and wrote for online as well.

As journalists to take up varying roles across various news channels, they can sharpen their creativity, become versatile and relevant in the newsroom. Even in the absence of one journalist, another will be present to take up tasks effectively.

Also, the practice of working across various channels is characteristic of the company's brand: Multimedia.

News production experiences of female Journalists

The study also revealed that, female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited experienced the newsroom differently. That is experiences of female journalists differed from person to person and

what one female journalist considered as an experience to share differed from another. For instance, when asked about their experiences as they go about activities in the newsroom, some female journalists were concerned about how their male colleagues related to them. Others were concerned about how sources related to them when gathering news among others. This was because, the meanings individual journalists made out of their experiences varied as this was informed by their views and meanings, they made into gender issues based on their personal experiences. Thus, journalists who have had an unfair treatment based on their gender understood gender differently from journalists who were favored because of their gender.

From the responses of the two editors whose opinions were taken into consideration during decision making, they did not see gender as an issue in the newsroom. However, the journalist from Adom FM saw gender as an issue because she was presumed to be less capable to cover stories at the police station because she is a 'woman'. Thus, it has left a perception in her mind about how gendered the newsroom is. Both experiences are in line with the argument of the phenomenological theory which states that people interpret and attach meanings to phenomenon based on what they have experienced. Thus, female journalists who understood their experiences as one of joy and creativity interpreted it as such whereas journalists who understood their experience as oppression also interpreted it as such.

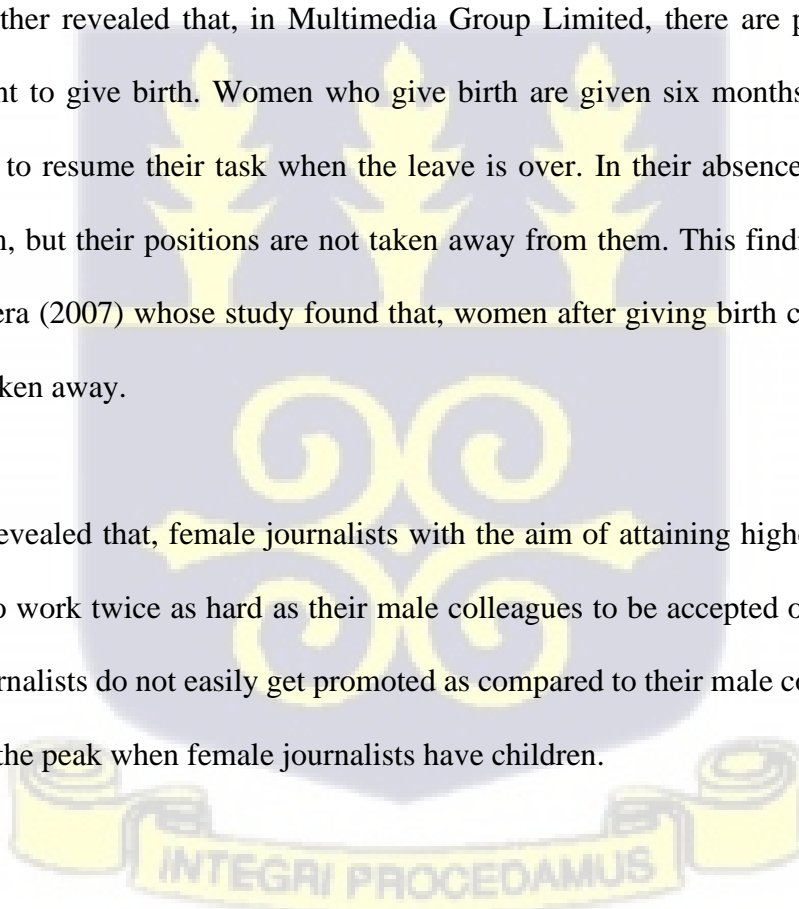
The study found that, female journalists encountered barriers such as child-bearing and family work tension which limit them in carrying out their day to day activities as Shelloff (2007) posited. However, those who still wanted to break through these limitations had to find alternative ways to

do so. Some resorted to family members for assistance while others got assistance from mother care facilities. Journalists who received support barely saw family work tension as an issue. However, journalists who did not have any support highly perceived balancing work and family as a serious issue in the newsroom.

The above explanations indicated that the experiences of female journalists in the newsroom are not always of oppression, marginalization, and vulnerability but also of joy and creativity as Anyidoho et, al (2016) posited. However, whether it is of joy or oppression depended on the viewpoint of the journalists experiencing it and the meaning they made from that experience.

The findings further revealed that, in Multimedia Group Limited, there are policies that favor women who want to give birth. Women who give birth are given six months work leave after delivery and are to resume their task when the leave is over. In their absence, other journalists stand in for them, but their positions are not taken away from them. This finding is inconsistent with that of Rivera (2007) whose study found that, women after giving birth come back to meet their positions taken away.

The study also revealed that, female journalists with the aim of attaining higher positions in the newsroom had to work twice as hard as their male colleagues to be accepted or seen as capable. Also, female journalists do not easily get promoted as compared to their male colleagues, and this situation gets to the peak when female journalists have children.



Furthermore, female journalists were less likely to be assigned tasks which involved staying up late. This is because they are assumed to be the caretakers of the home and as such should not stay late or be given longer hours to carry out an assignment. This finding is similar to the Bangladesh study by Safa and Akter (2015) who found that female journalists with children are not allowed to take up tasks that require staying in the newsroom for longer periods.

However, this study discovered that, a female journalist rose to the position of head of business news; an area which is predominantly occupied by males. This explained that, if female journalists can prove themselves beyond doubts, regardless of barriers that may encounter, they would be given the opportunity to take on higher positions.

4.4.2 Objective two: To understand how female journalists perceive and understand gender about their experiences in the newsroom.

The study revealed that, some female journalists were of the view that, gender existed in the newsroom where female journalists are expected to do certain things because they are females. The study for instance revealed the responses of some female journalists on their perception of gender on the issue of serving male colleagues because they are women. One said: “I don’t see anything wrong with serving the men at a party. You are a lady and that shouldn’t be a difficult task for you”. Another said, “I don’t have a problem if a male colleague should tell me to serve him because I am a woman. Of course, I am a woman and how long will it even take to serve them,” while a third person said: “I do it at home, for the family, so why should it be a problem to serve my male colleagues in the office”.

From the above responses, it could be seen that some female journalists considered serving male colleagues as part of their socially constructed traditional gender roles as mothers and caretakers. However, two of the journalists disagreed to serving male colleagues just because they were women.

Phenomenologically, female journalists who did not have an issue with serving males colleagues in the newsroom but rather saw it as their responsibilities are being influenced by how society has shaped their perception about gender roles. Thus, these roles are transcended into the newsroom. Similarly, female journalists who disagreed to serving male journalists in the newsroom could be attributed to the personal meanings they attached to such experiences.

4.4.3 Objective three: To ascertain whether news production practices in Multimedia Group Limited are gendered.

Gender in news Production Practices

News production practices in Multimedia Group Limited are gendered but subtly. In other words, gender is generally not an issue in multimedia newsroom. However, there are few exceptions where gender is implicated in the roles assigned to journalists.

In Multimedia Group Limited, female journalists are free to cover, report and to write and present any story and on any topic, they feel is newsworthy without disguising themselves or write using pseudonyms. Female journalists in multimedia cover stories on politics, sports, conflict, business,

family, health, and education. Female journalists are free to cover these stories but are only mandated to ensure news is in line with the company's news value. If it was the opposite, gatekeepers will thrash the story and it will not be aired. This finding is inconsistent with that of North (2012) and Mugwe (2012) who found that beats like crime, sports and business was specifically assigned to men and beats like education and culture assigned to women.

Editors at multimedia group limited assign beats to journalists based on their capabilities and level of knowledge about a particular subject matter. Thus, if the story is about women and a man has the capacity and is well vexed in that area, he will be allowed to cover and vice versa. Also, the status of editors as female does not influence the kind of news they will select to air and the news they will not air. They look out for news that will benefit the company as well as increase their audience base. Thus, beats are assigned to those they believe are capable of bringing innovative, detailed and impressive angles to stories regardless of whether it is a male or female.

Beats like sports, crime, conflict, and business are not specifically assigned to males nor beats like family, education, and culture assigned to females. Both male and female journalists cover any beats but most especially cover areas they are well versed in. This finding is inconsistent with the finding of Safa & Ackter, (2015) but consistent with that of Wanta (2004) who found that, female journalists are assigned to cover business news or stories.

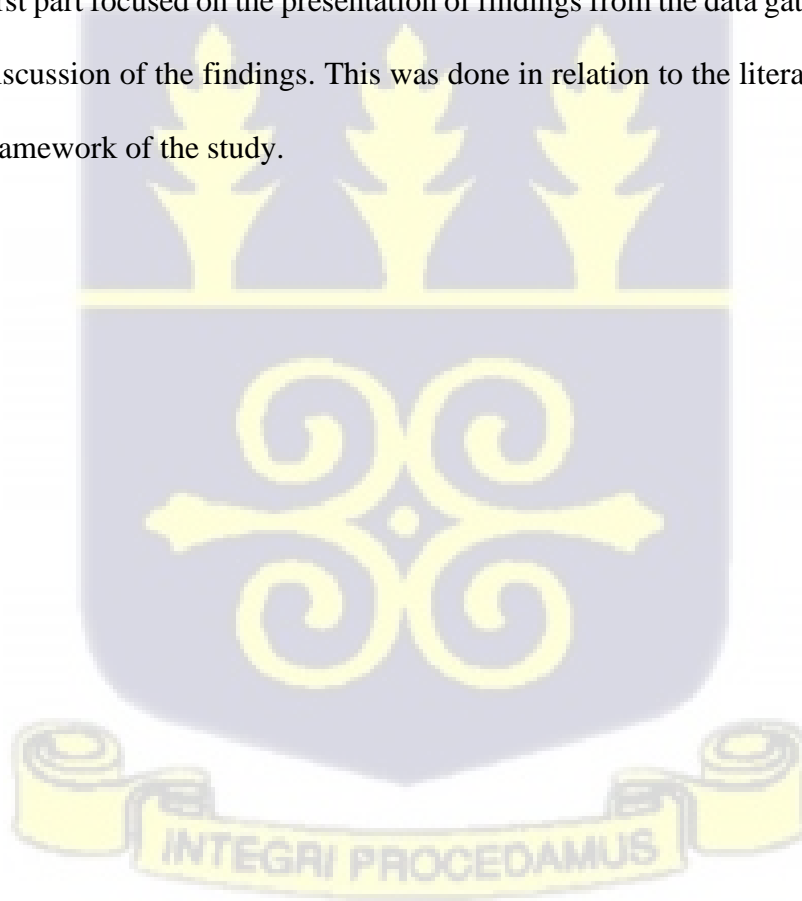
Although female journalists in Multimedia are not obliged to cover specific beats like education, family and other human interest related stories, there is an exception. Stories that pertain to

menstruation, feminine hygiene and child-birth are among the stories specifically assigned to women. This is because female is believed to relate better in these areas.

The study also revealed that, in Multimedia Group Limited, voice overs were mostly done by female journalists. The voice overs are usually given to girls because they are presumed to have nice voices that may add style to the content. This reinforces the traditional stereotypes for females such as being soft, nice, or pleasant.

4.5 Summary

This chapter focused on the presentation of data gathered during the interview. This was done in two parts. The first part focused on the presentation of findings from the data gathered. The second part entailed a discussion of the findings. This was done in relation to the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework of the study.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This section provides the summary, limitation, conclusion, and recommendation of the study. The findings of the study are in relation to the objectives of the study and the research questions as well. Vital conclusions are also made from the findings of the study. Finally, recommendations are provided for future reference and relevant stakeholders in the media.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The data gathered in the study revealed that the interviewees for the interview are within the age range of 25 to 45 years which is within the working age bracket. Again, only one of the respondents is married. The data revealed that, the all the respondents have tertiary education and one with a further upgrade to master's degree level. The respondents are all full-time employees of Multimedia Group Limited. Furthermore, the result of the study revealed that, there are six editors in Multimedia Group Limited and consist of five males and one female.

The study revealed that, female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited experienced the newsroom differently. This was informed by their perception, views, and meanings they made into gender issues based on their personal experiences. Thus, journalists who have had an unfair treatment based on their gender perceived gender differently from journalists who were favored because of their gender

Although female journalists interviewed believed gender did not exist in the newsroom, one interviewee was of the view that, gender played a role in newsroom production, but in a subtle way. For example, she stated that, in news coverage, stories relating to women's health like menstruation, childbirth, feminine hygiene were specifically assigned to women. This response states clearly that, the majority who did not see that gender exist may either have overlooked or did not regard this as gender typing.

It is also revealed in the study that female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited can freely express themselves and cover any news, stories, or events. Female journalists are not assigned specific beats whereas male is assigned specific beats but rather they are allowed to gather news or cover stories they deem newsworthy. However, the story should be in line with the news values of the company. The stories they cover include business, politics, conflict, education, sports, among others.

In addition, the study revealed that, to a large extent, gender did not play a role in the assignment of beats to journalists in Multimedia Group Limited. Editors in Multimedia assign beats based on the level of knowledge of the journalist, his/her capabilities, how versed she is and the amount of institutional memory he/she has about a particular subject matter and not necessarily based on the gender of the journalist. However, from the editorial point of view, gender is not a base for news beat assignment in Multimedia Group Limited. This study contradicts the findings of Lachover (2004).



The study also revealed that, there are criteria for selection of news, stories, and events to be produced and aired as news. That is, the information gathered must follow and be consistent with the rules and guidelines for news production. The information must also be in full-context and not half, sensational or unethical. Thus, before a journalist goes on an assignment she needs to first speak to editors and know what is expected of them and what angle the news should go to limit the possibility of the story being rejected. This finding is inconsistent with the findings of Strömbäck et al. (2012) that sensational events were considered important in news selection.

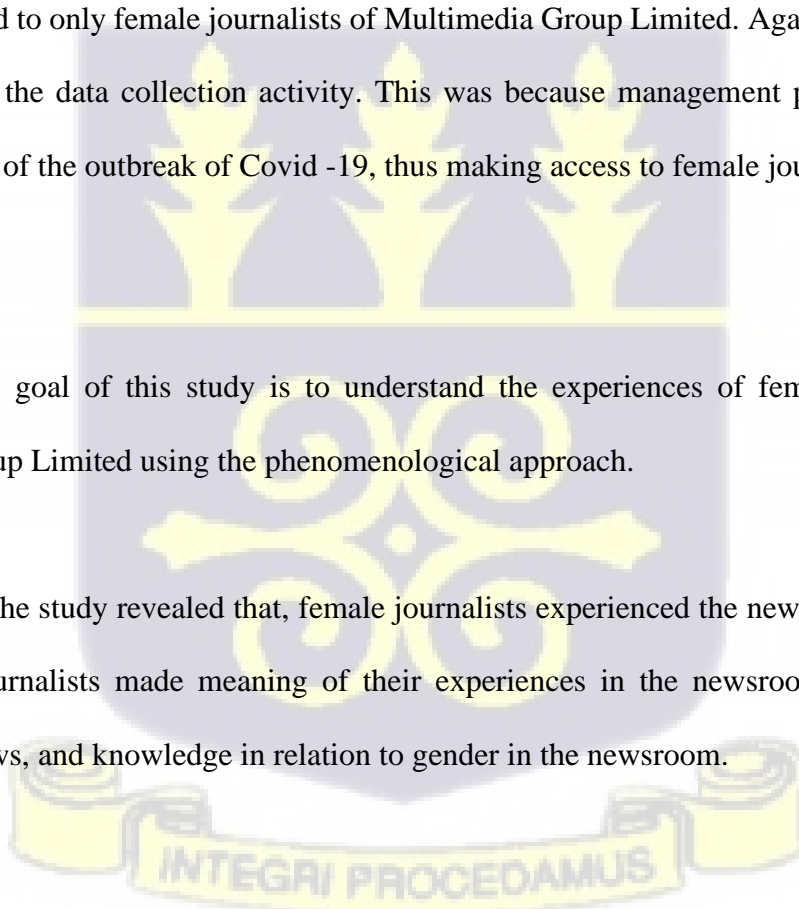
5.2 Limitations of the Study

Due to time constraints for the researcher to finish this work within the academic schedule, this study was limited to only female journalists of Multimedia Group Limited. Again, time constraint played a role in the data collection activity. This was because management put restrictions on visitors, because of the outbreak of Covid -19, thus making access to female journalist difficult.

5.3 Conclusion

The overarching goal of this study is to understand the experiences of female journalists in Multimedia Group Limited using the phenomenological approach.

The findings of the study revealed that, female journalists experienced the newsroom differently. Also, female journalists made meaning of their experiences in the newsroom based on their perceptions, views, and knowledge in relation to gender in the newsroom.



In addition, the study revealed that, journalists are of the opinion that roles were not based on their gender. It was only in exceptional cases such as when the story relates to feminine hygiene, female reproductive organ, or menstrual cycle that females are specifically assigned to cover.

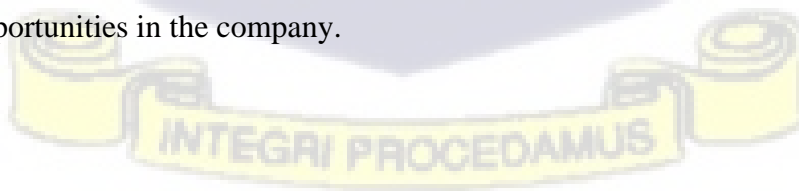
This phenomenological approach has been useful as a theory for studying human experience because it produces in-depth understanding to the experiences of women looking beyond the quantitative nature into what happens in the newsroom. The study emphasizes human agency as important players in news production beyond the issue of gender.

5.4 Recommendations

This study seeks to help bridge information gap in academia and provide Multimedia Group Limited with relevant information to help address the issues of gendered practices in newsroom production. The following are recommendations provided by the researcher based on the findings of the study.

It is recommended that, inquiry into the lived experiences of female journalists should be done from a qualitative point of view using the phenomenological theory which emphasizes women's agency.

It is also recommended that, female journalists of Multimedia Group Limited be self-motivated to increase their work rate. This will help prevent the incidence of only hardworking male journalists obtaining the opportunities in the company.



Furthermore, it is recommended that, as this research was done in only one media house in Ghana, further studies should be conducted in different media houses to get more detailed findings that can be generalized.



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APPENDIX A:

INTERVIEW GUIDE

I am Dinah Nyanney, a masters student conducting research on the experiences of female newsroom journalists in multimedia Group Limited. I will be most grateful if you answer the questions to the best of your ability. Your responses will be treated confidentially and used only for academic purposes.

Interview Guide for Female Journalists.

1. What are the roles of newsroom journalist?
2. What specific roles do you perform in the news production process?
3. What kind of stories do you cover?
4. What are your perceptions or opinion with regards to gender in the newsroom/ Do you feel gender exist in the newsroom?
5. What are some of your experiences with news gathering as a female journalist that differs from males?
6. Are you able to express yourself freely on what you report and write on?
7. Are there specific beats you are assigned to cover?
8. Have you ever been prevented from covering a story because you are a woman?
9. Do you feel restricted in the kind of news you want to produce?
10. Do you feel the sense of machoism/ Do you feel that male dominate in the general thinking of the newsroom?
11. Do you sometimes feel you have to use the masculine features and styles of working in the newsroom?

12. Are you expected to do some “domestic “work as part of your job such as “mothering” staff or serving food at meetings?

Interview Guide for Editors

12. Are you involved in making decisions about what finally gets published or aired?
13. As a female editor, has there ever been an incident where a decision regarding journalists in the newsroom has been nullified because of your gender?
14. What are the factors you consider in the assignment of news beats to male and female?
15. Does the gender of a reporter play a part in the selection of frontline stories in the news?

(What I mean by this question is that for instance, when a male and female reporter presents a story with the same level of accuracy, newsworthiness, and timeliness, but you have to select just one, on what criteria will the final decision be made, given the subject matter of the story).

