

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**PHOTOJOURNALISM PRACTICE IN GHANA: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL  
STUDY OF SOME SELECTED PHOTOJOURNALISTS**

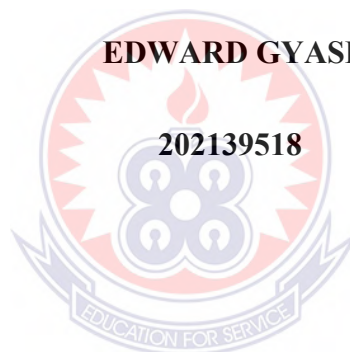


**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

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STUDY OF SOME SELECTED PHOTOJOURNALISTS**



**A Thesis in the Department of Strategic Communication, School of  
Communication and Media Studies, Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of  
Master of Philosophy  
(Strategic Communication)  
in University of Education, Winneba**

**November, 2022**

## DECLARATION

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, **Edward Gyasi**, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my original work and has not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

**SIGNATURE**.....

**DATE**.....

### SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

**NAME OF SUPERVISOR:**

**SIGNATURE**.....

**DATE**.....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my father Mr. Shawcross Yamoah Gyasi, My mother Mrs. Olivia Oteng and my three junior brothers. God bless you for your unflinching support.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank God almighty for his guidance and protection throughout my academic journey. It was impossible without His mercies and love. My sincere gratitude goes to my able supervisor, Michael Yao Wodui Sewornoo (PhD) for his immense contribution to this work, his words of encouragement and guidance kept me going. I also acknowledge all the people who accepted to participate in this research work. I am extremely grateful.



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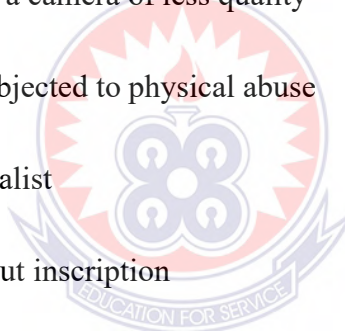
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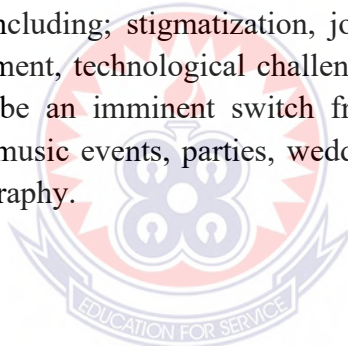
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## ABSTRACT

Premised on disruptive technologies theory and professional identity theory, this study examines the practice of photojournalism in Ghana by identifying and understanding the specific roles of the practitioners, their experiences in terms of the challenges they face as well as perspectives of the future outlook of the practice in Ghana. Using a qualitative research approach and phenomenology as a design, the data for the study was collected via in-depth interviews. This study sampled 6 photojournalists who work for some selected highly patronized media institutions in Ghana. The study revealed that the roles of photojournalists in Ghana include; covering new events, creating online photo essays as well as taking videos and creating short skits for social media. The study confirmed that the influx of new technologies has affected the traditional notion of photojournalism practice. Hence, photojournalism roles have become democratized, creating competition between professionals and amateur or iPhone-armed photographers. Therefore, photojournalists are expected to upskill to expand their capabilities and remain relevant in the newsroom. The study also identified the diverse challenges photojournalists face in their practice in Ghana, including; stigmatization, job losses, financial crisis, physical abuses, copyright infringement, technological challenges etc. The study revealed that in future, there is likely to be an imminent switch from news photography to fashion programs, awards shows, music events, parties, weddings and funerals due to financial difficulties in news photography.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Background of the study

The use of photographs by the media is as old as newspaper publications (Jarvie & Thornton, 2012). According to Carlebach (1992), the practice of illustrating news stories with photographs was first made possible by printing and photography innovations that occurred between 1880 and 1897. While newsworthy events were photographed as early as the 1850s, printing presses could only publish from engravings in the 1880s. Professionals in this field are known as photojournalists (Hadland et al., 2015).

Photojournalism is playing an increasingly important role in society (Tirohl, 2000). Lehtela (2007) posits that when individuals read the newspaper, they pay close attention to the headlines, photographs, and subtitles. News photographs are emotional representations that elicit meanings regarding reality and situations more subtly than writings (Loiri & Juholin, 1998). Tirohl (2000) argues that journalism creates, maintains, and transforms people's perceptions of the world, whereas photography is used to act as a witness to the comments made in news reporting, and since photography has traditionally been explicitly linked to objectivity, it presumes to be a tool ideally suited to the purpose of news reporting. Tirohl (2000) further points out that the use of photographs in newspapers is now widespread that in some cases photographs take larger parts of the pages. Tirohl (2000) study on newspapers in the United Kingdom revealed that the use of photographs in the UK press is prolific. He discovered that around 10 million customers in the United Kingdom get their daily knowledge on world events through newspapers,

with over 50% of the front page regularly devoted to images with a leading title, and just 20% of the surface space allocated to text. The absence of pictures makes the page dull and unattractive.

Photography can help us see things that cannot be put into words, or cannot be verbalized with ease or efficiency (Huggins, 2008). Reiterating the essence of photographs, Langford et. al. (2010) said that photography is a powerful medium of persuasion and propaganda. Similarly, Garcia and Stark (1991) argued that images are the primary entry points into stories and that the content, size, placement, and colour of photos pull readers.

Sport for instance is mostly experienced through visual media, such as television, still photography, and, increasingly, digital media (Vilas Boas et. al., 2010). According to Huggins (2008), sport has always been characterized by a plethora of imagery and visual symbolism, value-laden interpretations of the sports world that change from time to time and place to place, reflecting and contributing to the social and cultural environment in which they were created. Similarly, Vilas Boas et. al. (2010) said sport is a highly visual activity and from a historical point of view, sports have traditionally been associated with photography. Indeed, the first photographs of athletic events date back to the dawn of photography. Media coverage has always stated the reality and so we can find an incredible amount of sports photographs in the mass media. Both the competition or events and the human achievements (Vilas Boas et al., 2010). Analysis of the aforementioned literature confirm the role photography plays in communication, news dissemination and journalism in general.

Photojournalists distinguish their images from others in part by intention; the purpose of making and distributing the images is to show the truth, to the extent that any

human can discern and understand stories that are significant to their lives (Newton, 2009). In the same vein, Nwanyelugo and Nwadiukwu (2009) assert that photography is just the capturing of the aesthetic of a thing, people or event in a graphic form whilst photojournalism judges a photograph not merely on its beauty but how well or effective that photograph is to deliver a message. This means that the image taken by photojournalists must carry a particular message across to the audience. Although aesthetics could be necessary the emphasis is not embedded on that but rather the intended message of the photojournalist (Nwanyelugo and Nwadiukwu, 2009).

The need for photojournalism emerged because of the quest to archive, preserve and commemorate specific personalities and events of importance (Newton, 2009). Photography arose because words alone could not describe and well express people's emotions after sporting events (Hirsch, 2008). The young African kid will grow to hear about the first ever world cup hosted on African soil, words alone might not be enough to explain the beautiful spectacle and euphoria created by the vociferous vuvuzela. The motion pictures and images created by photographers will help to tell history in future.

However, photojournalism has experienced a revolution which according to researchers (Caldera-Serrano, 2008; Hashim, 2018), the digital era with new technology have majorly impacted the practice. Haynes et. al. (2018) believe that these digital and technological impact have presented major challenges to the survival of photojournalism as a professional practice. Hutchins and Rowe (2012, p.5) suggest that —there is a prevailing ambivalence towards photojournalism as a practice. This ambivalence may have made it easy to dismiss or dismantle it completely. This study therefore examines the state of photojournalism practice in Ghana, their challenges and the future of the

practice in Ghana.

### **1.1 Statement of the problem**

According to Mortensen et al. (2017), visual priorities appear to be increasingly driving journalism, with the sheer volume, spread, and re-inflexion of newsworthy imagery expanding exponentially, particularly across social media platforms. Nonetheless, various research works have discussed how digitization or technological changes have brought negative impact such that it has become easy for people to predict the death of photojournalism. (Halstead, 2009; Howe, 2001).

Hadland et al. (2015) in examining the state of photojournalism argued that the work practices of the professional photojournalist are currently undergoing some challenges in the digital era. They postulate that new technologies, new platforms and new methods of visual storytelling are exerting a wide range of pressures and influences that require photojournalists to adapt and respond in different ways. Hadland et. al. (2015) posit that the disruption of the digital era has produced many profound changes in photojournalists' work patterns, income sources, technology use, and perhaps their ethical principles.

Although many studies have recounted that new technology has improved the profession of photojournalism and made shooting and distribution of photographs simpler, (Mortensen & Gade, 2018; Haynes et. al. 2018; Adelabu et. al. 2020), it has also caused disregard for professionals, created job losses and severe economic challenges to practitioners (Haynes et al., 2018). For instance, according to Hadland et. al. (2015), the Internet became more widespread; it allowed photojournalists to publish their work online instantly, and consumers were able to see photojournalists' work on an Internet

platform. However, Mailot (2019) in discussing the negative impacts of internet on photojournalism, argued that the internet has also made it easier for other people to steal photographs from practitioners and claim ownership. Consumers online can easily claim photojournalists' photos as their own (Haynes et.al, 2018). This leads to photojournalists not being compensated for their work. Photojournalists earn their living based on the compensation they receive from their photographs (Mailot, 2019). When people do not pay for an image, photojournalists do not receive compensation. Therefore practitioners become challenged with financial difficulties (Haynes et.al, 2018).

Haynes et al. (2018) studied the current professional practices of photojournalists focusing on the contemporary challenges faced by these photojournalists. They asserted that the rhetoric proclaiming the death of photojournalism in the age of video technology and self-mass communication of digital photographs, has presented a major challenge to the survival of photographers and photography as a professional practice in news media. Similarly, Láb and Štefaniková (2017) said the advent of digital technology, together with contemporary economic realities have had an impact on the entire process of producing visual news. There is also an impact on the traditional notion and identity of photojournalism, as a result, news photographers are faced with a slew of new problems (Brown, 2013). Despite the fact that photography is becoming increasingly vital, news companies have reduced personnel, leaving those few who remain employed with additional workload and responsibilities (Mailot, 2019).

Astrid et al. (2017) also studied the impact of democratization of photojournalism and termed it as a challenge for practitioners. They posit that modern technologies such as the Internet and digital camera have democratized the photographic sources available to journalists. Astrid et.al. (2017) postulate that editors have access to large amount of

visual materials from a multiplicity of sources. In particular, the rapid development of accessible technologies and the possibility of instant sharing of imagery on social media have helped usher in a democratization of photography (Mailot, 2019). Adelabu et al. (2020) agree that the advent of new photographic technology has reduced the need to rely on the memories of people who observed events to relay the narrative; nevertheless, they believe that technology has enabled ordinary individuals to capture photos that some photojournalists have missed, therefore practitioners must fight for their positions.

Also, Brown (2013) argues that democratization of photojournalism now poses a threat to professionals. It has changed everything, even how photojournalists are compensated. Brown (2013) further argues that democratization is driving photojournalists to seek out new venues for their work. Also, the participation of non-professionals in the practice of photojournalism is on the increase especially with the availability and opportunities created by the digital camera which are affordable and relatively easy to operate (Brown, 2013). The reduction in the number of full-time professional photojournalists and their replacement by other sources of visual material may also be viewed as a result of photojournalism's democratization (Brown, 2013).

Patrick and Allan (2013) said that due to democratization of image media and strong budget demands, many newsrooms undervalue the importance of maintaining a full-time professional photo department. Newsrooms must rely on images provided by staff reporters. As news organizations cut staff and budgets, it is now common for a multimedia reporter equipped with a simple digital camera, or even a smartphone, to be forced to do it all; gather information, take photographs, write articles, and shoot and edit video (Bock, 2008).

According to Hartley (2015), professional photojournalists and their jobs are



under threat, and there are a few explanations to this challenge, one of the most popular is that everyone now has access to some kind of camera capable of producing good, broadcast-able quality images and video, further blurring the lines between amateurs and professionals. It is no secret that digital technology has been a disruptive innovation in journalism in general, and particularly in photography (Christensen, 2013; Gade, 2011; T. Mortensen, 2014).

In discussing occupational losses of practitioners, Mortensen and Gade (2018) argued that there is a trend of widespread layoffs of staff photojournalists. According to Anderson (2013), the number of U.S. newspaper photographers was reduced by 18% between 2010 and 2012, 3 times more than the rate that reporters lost their jobs. Sports Illustrated have laid off most of their photojournalists in recent years (Anderson, 2013; Hadland, Lambert, & Campbell, 2016; Winslow, 2013). A variety of reasons have contributed to professional photojournalism being viewed as a disposable asset (Brennen & Brennen, 2015; Klein-Avraham & Reich, 2016). In the digital age, photographic images are ubiquitous, a commodity widely available and shared through social media. Almost everyone owns a mobile phone with a camera, allowing individuals to capture and share important occurrences in real time (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2011).

The advantages of digital photography contribute to the perception, even among some news executives that anybody can take news photos (Johnson, 2015; Klein-Avraham & Reich, 2016; Lydersen, 2013). Since anyone can take pictures, news companies are increasingly prepared to replace professional photographers with iPhone-armed reporters and citizen-shot photography (Allan, 2013; Hartley, 2007; Ornebring, 2013). Similarly on photojournalists and job losses, a study conducted by Mailot (2019) posits that at least 36 percent of the largest newspapers across the United States as well as

at least 23 percent of the highest-traffic digital news-outlets experienced layoffs between January 2017 and April 2018. Photojournalists have been among those who have been affected by the widely described "crisis" of journalism (Reinardy, 2011).

On the roles of photojournalists, Santania and Russial (2013) argued that less consideration has been given to photojournalists, who have assumed the lead role in shooting news video. Photographers' ability to capture engaging photos with a trained eye is at the core of the expertise photographers' offer to the newsroom (Santana & Russial, 2013). Caple (2019) argues that photojournalists are shouldering new responsibilities in an era of significant journalism volatility. Additional technological requirements are imposed on these journalists (Caple, 2019). New responsibilities bring new issues, new training, and new demands on photojournalists' time, including time away from the field (Santania and Russial, 2013). The increased burden, on the other hand, might not imply a less rewarding employment (Allan, 2013).

In discussing the future of photojournalism practice, Haynes et al. (2018) argue that there are some major challenges to the survival of photojournalism as a professional practice. These challenges force scholars to predict the death of photojournalism in future.

*—There is a prevailing ambivalence towards photojournalism as a practice. This ambivalence may have made it easy to dismiss or dismantle photojournalism completely (Hutchins and Rowe, 2012, pp. 2)*

The discipline of photojournalism has swiftly evolved as society has grown into a more visually dominated period (Cartwright, 2001), with billions of photographs

uploaded every day on the Internet through digital cameras, computers, and smart phones. However, for scholars, this digital transformation in practice has resulted in a slew of forecasts for the future of photography, from instant success to impending demise (Newton, 2009). Allan (2014, p.115) asks -who needs photojournalism now that everyone has a mobile camera? Implying that citizen photojournalism will displace professional photojournalism.

In the African context, Mapesa (2014) explored the challenges and potential solutions regarding the integration of photojournalism as a core course unit in journalism programs across several universities in Rwanda. However, Mapesa (2014) did not examine the challenges of the practitioners nor the perspectives of the future of the practice. Also, Brown (2013) studied the personal challenges of photojournalism practice in Nigeria. The study was basically extracted from personal experiences of photojournalists in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states; believing these parts of Nigeria have been neglected and voiceless on steaming issues concerning photojournalism in the practice of print media reportage. Brown (2013) limited his study to only photojournalists in the print media industry hence his study lacked diversity.

The aforementioned studies have well discussed photojournalism practice but majority of these are the cases of the western world. Very little is known about photojournalism in Sub-Sahara Africa. Also majority of these studies employed either quantitative research methods or surveys. Therefore the exact experiences of practitioners were not well discovered and analyzed.

In Ghana, mainstream journalism is already struggling with non-payment, bad working conditions and lack of job opportunities for practitioners (Fosu, 2010; Quansah et al., 2012). Despite the significant role of photojournalism in documenting and

narrating stories, no studies have been done on photojournalism practice in Ghana. This research aims to explore the practice of photojournalism in Ghana through a phenomenological study of some selected photojournalists, with specific objectives to understand their roles as practitioners, identify the challenges they face, and gain insights into their perspectives on the future of the practice. By shedding light on the lived experiences of photojournalists in Ghana, this study contributes to the broader understanding of the field, inform educational and professional development initiatives, and ultimately enhance the quality and impact of photojournalism in the country.

## **1.2 Research objectives**

1. To identify the roles of photojournalists in the newsroom
2. To identify the challenges photojournalists face
3. To examine the perspectives of photojournalists on the future of the practice in Ghana

## **1.3 Research questions**

1. What are the roles of photojournalists in the newsroom?
2. What challenges do photojournalists face in their practice?
3. What are the perspectives of photojournalists on the future of the field in Ghana?

## **1.4 Significance of the study**

Photojournalists are an understudied group of creative practitioners. Practitioners have long sought for equal prominence in the newsroom with others (Brennen, 1998). In examining the practice of photojournalism in Ghana, the study will serve as a guide for people who will want to pursue a career in photojournalism. It will be beneficial to

academia and also add to the existing body of international research on photojournalism and hopefully encourage similar investigations elsewhere.

The study will promote scholarship, help educational institutions and also help policy makers. The findings and recommendations of this study will also help people on how to succeed in the profession whenever they are faced with challenges in their line of work.

### **1.5 Delimitation of the study**

This study focused on examining photojournalism practice in Ghana. It looked the roles and the challenges faced by practitioners as well as the practitioners' perceptions on the future of photojournalism in Ghana. The study was limited to only six (6) practitioners who have at least one year working experience in Ghana. These people would have a considerable level of experience in the field to facilitate the writing of this thesis. The study border on both employed and independent photojournalists who were identified. The selection of the practitioners was purely based on recommendation, proximity and willingness to participate. General apathy amongst some Ghanaians towards research have also limited the scope as some declined the researcher's request.

### **1.6 Organization of the study**

The study is organized into five separate chapters. Chapter one embodies the background of the study, the objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations and the organization of the study. The second chapter presents a review of literature on the study and delineates the theoretical framework underpinning the study.

Chapter three discusses the methods and procedure used for the collection of data for analysis. This chapter discusses the selected research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling technique, data collection instruments, data collection procedure and method of data analysis. The fourth chapter was dedicated to the findings and discussions of the study. Chapter five presents the summary, conclusions from the findings and make recommendations.

### **1.7 Summary**

In this chapter it was established that photojournalism has the capacity to help us see things that cannot be put into words, or cannot be verbalized with ease or efficiency. Photography is a powerful medium of persuasion and propaganda. It is the primary entry points into stories, and that the content, size, placement, and color of photos pull readers. However, photojournalism has experienced a revolution which according to researchers the digital era with new technology have majorly impacted the practice. It was established that the rhetoric proclaiming the death of photojournalism in the age of video technology and self-mass communication of digital photographs, has presented a major challenge to the survival of photographers and photography as a professional practice in news media. However, little is known about photojournalism in Ghana.

This study therefore examines the practice of photojournalism in Ghana by identifying the specific roles of the practitioners, the challenges they face as well as perspectives of the future of the practice in Ghana.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter demonstrates a substantial link between existing knowledge and the subject under study. It touches on the definition of photojournalism and then establishes the relationship between photos and mass media. There's a review of studies on the history of photojournalism and the different types of the practice. Secondly the researcher reviewed literature on the roles of photojournalists in both the analogue and digital era. After which diverse studies on the state of photojournalism practice were reviewed. It then examines studies on the challenges of photojournalism practice before reviewing the perspectives of the future of the practice of photojournalism. Finally the researcher reviewed the theories that grounded the study and how relevant they are to the study.

#### 2.1 Definition of Photojournalism

According to Newton (2001), photojournalism is a descriptive term used to denote the practice of reporting visual information through various media platforms. Newton (2001) in his article, "Introduction to Photojournalism" argued that, the practice involves capturing and presenting images that depict newsworthy events, human experiences, and societal issues. Photojournalists play a crucial role in documenting and conveying news stories through their photographs, often working in collaboration with journalists and news organizations (Newton, 2001).

Similarly, Hariman and Lucaites (2002) in defining photojournalism emphasized the importance of the practice as a form of visual communication. They argue that

photojournalistic images possess the power to shape public understanding and discourse, serving as a means of persuasion and commentary on social and political issues.

Focusing on the ethical dimension, Schwartz (2005) highlights that photojournalism operates within the ethical framework of journalism, adhering to principles such as truthfulness, accuracy, and fairness. In this sense, photojournalists are expected to present objective and unbiased visual representations of events and stories.

A different perspective is offered by Chanan (2016), who argues that photojournalism goes beyond simply reporting the news. Drawing on documentary photography traditions, Chanan contends that photojournalism encompasses a broader documentary approach, aiming to capture and convey the complex realities of the world, often with a social or political message.

Building on these discussions, Kobre (2020) asserts that photojournalism is a storytelling medium that combines aesthetics, journalism, and documentary practices. He emphasizes the importance of visual storytelling, where photographs are used to engage and inform audiences, evoking emotions and conveying meaning. The advent of digital technology has significantly impacted the definition of photojournalism (Kobre, 2020). The digitalization of media has expanded the possibilities for capturing, editing, and distributing photographs, leading to a greater democratization of the practice (Lough, 2021). With the rise of social media platforms, citizen journalism, and mobile photography, the boundaries of traditional photojournalism have become blurred, and the definition has expanded to include a wider range of contributors (Lough, 2021).

Despite these changes, the core essence of photojournalism remains rooted in its ability to capture and convey significant moments in a truthful and ethical manner (Caldera-Serrano, 2013). . The work of photojournalists continues to be guided by



principles such as objectivity, accuracy, and respect for the subjects depicted in their images (Caldera-Serrano, 2013).

Newton (2001) further opines that, the origins of photojournalism may be traced back to the dawn of civilization, to a period when seeing clearly might literally mean the difference between life and death. She argues that humans can expand their visual scanning and signaling capabilities by using cameras and lenses of varying sizes, quality, and cost, digital recording media, and unparalleled forms of distribution that allow anyone. Photojournalists separate their photos from others in part by intent: the goal of creating and sharing the images is to portray the truth, to the extent that, any human can detect and express it (Lester, 2015).

Hirsch (2008) in analyzing the relevance of photojournalism posits that, photography arose as a result of the inability of words to adequately define and express the interrelationship between man and the world around them. He argues that, photography has the capacity to help us see things that cannot be put into words, or cannot be verbalized with ease or efficiency. What and how we recall things create our worldview, and photos can offer the stimulation to spark one's memory (Huggins, 2008).

Jayaswal (2008) also examined the differences in photography. He alluded to the fact that photojournalism is a type of journalism that uses photos to convey a story, and it is an important aspect of current news reporting. Jayaswal (2008) further distinguished photojournalism from other branches of photography by employing three qualities of the craft;

(A) Timeliness: The images have meaning in the context of a published chronological record of events.

(B) Objectivity: The situation implied by the images is a fair and accurate representation of the events they depict.

(C) Narrative: The images combine with other news elements, to inform and give insight to the viewer or reader (p.33).

Photojournalists have built their own professional culture that is similar to yet distinct from that of word-based journalists (Lowrey, 2002). Lowrey (2002, p.9) argues that –this occupational group combine two areas of specialized knowledge and skills— those of artists and journalists—into a professional identity, complete with its own lexicon and standards of quality.

### ***2.1.1 Mass Media and Pictures***

According to Simbiat (2006, p.31), the mass media, particularly print, is ineffective without photographs or visuals. Pictures give color, decoration, and an illustrative perspective to the written words in newspaper and magazine news pieces, features, and articles (Simbiat, 2006). They do not only demonstrate, but also clarify, characterize, illuminate, enlarge, brighten, and validate the assertions of the story. As a result, it's no surprise that photos play such important roles in today's media (Jere, 2019).

Television, movies, social media, books, journals, newspapers, and magazines, particularly the latter two, rely heavily on photos to achieve their expressive purposes (Lacey, 2018). In fact, some readers today may simply skim through the images that accompany stories to get the substance and move on, thus journalism is no longer complete without photography (Lester, 2006). According to Simbiat (2006), pictures today stimulate readers' interest and attention greatly because they provide a sense of involvement or, at the very least, intimate witnessing, which makes it easier to empathize

with people.

Simbiat (2006) further argues that because photographs are encoded in terms of both their graphic and written content, they make it easier to retrieve stored information from memory. The availability of a second memory code for visual items increases their likelihood of recall, because if one is forgotten or simply unavailable for retrieval, the other can be used instead (Lester, 2006). According to Hibbing et al. (2003), pictures present more details than words do and provide a better grasp of relationship. They argue that clarification allows readers to form accurate visual memories of unfamiliar people and event and to remember events done in the past.

### ***2.1.2 History of Photojournalism***

Photography, as a visual journalistic activity, has demonstrated to be very important in attracting readers' and viewers' attention to the news (Bucher & Schumacher 2006), and as such, it has been an element of news practice since the early twentieth century. For journalism, news photography has served as a necessary validation of an external reality, offering proof and objective truth to the reported news (Brennan and Hart, 1999). As a result, photographers have typically functioned as a subgroup within the profession of journalism (Lindlom, 2015).

Newton (2001) wrote on the introduction of photojournalism where he stated that the term photography originates from Greek and basically means "writing with light." Photographic images were first assumed to be devoid of human involvement and generated simply by a chemical process based on "recording light-based information onto a reactive surface" (Newton 2001, p.5). According to Winslow (2006), photojournalism is typically concerned with the dissemination of news and information largely via visual

photographs. Although the term was coined in response to the development of picture magazines established during the 1920s and 1930s, the concept of photojournalism has actually been used to showcase a variety of photographic practices that began in the 1830s (Griffin 1999).

PBS Learning Media (2017) assert that the earliest image used in the illustration of a newspaper item was a portrayal of barricades in Paris during the June Days revolt, which was taken on 25 June 1848 and published as an engraving in *Illustration* of 1-8 July 1848. Berkley (2009) also argues that during the Crimean War, the International Lawyers Network (ILN) pioneered the birth of early photojournalism by printing pictures of the war that had been taken by Roger Fenton.

According to Keith (2010), Fenton was the first official war photographer, and his work included chronicling the consequences of the conflict on the troops, panoramas of the landscapes where fights occurred, model representations of the action, and portraits of leaders, laying the framework for modern photojournalism. During this time, the printing of images in newspapers was a rare occurrence (Keith, 2010). Parker (1977) posits that photos were employed to supplement the text rather than to serve as a source of information in their own right. This began to alter in the late 1870s with the efforts of one of the pioneers of photojournalism, John Thomson (Parker, 1977).

Photojournalists mirrored contemporary newsworthiness ideals, verifying or disputing the facts and providing visuals of the news (Hardt & Brennen 1999). The practitioners sought to showcase the poetry in the reality of life and they wanted the flexibility to choose their own stories and the amount of time they spent documenting them (Keith, 2010). According to Brennen (2010), throughout its history, photojournalism has responded to expectations to provide aesthetically pleasing images

while still providing accurate and factual information about the world. Photographs gained an aura of authenticity, truth, and objectivity as they began to give impartial news stories, enhancing the authority of journalism and recording crucial events for readers (Brennen, 2010). Others, on the other hand, began to concentrate on another feature of photography: its capacity to offer surveillance for powerful individuals in government, industry, and science (Tagg, 1993).

*"The camera, like the state, is never impartial. Its images are heavily coded, and the power it wields is never really its own. As a tool of recording, it appears on the scene with a specific authority to arrest, photograph, and modify everyday life; a power to observe and record; a power of surveillance" (Tagg, 1993, p.8).*

### **2.1.3 Types of photojournalism**

Jere (2019) identified the diverse types of photojournalism and its evolution. He posits that photojournalism has evolved into a highly specialized kind of photography with numerous avenues. Photographers have chosen specialized areas based on their interests. Jere (2019) described the following as the types of photojournalism;

- A. Sports photojournalism: Sports photographers are in high demand since sporting events are such an important part of the news. This is also due to the fact that sports photography needs both specialized knowledge and equipment. There are now photojournalists who specialize in individual sports photography.
- B. War photojournalism: This is the first kind of photojournalism, in which photographers covered conflicts and delivered images from the front lines.

There are a lot of images in newspapers depicting internal issues, such as terrorist activity or riots, when the photographer is in a perilous situation but still manages to give us pictures, putting his life on the line.

- C. Glamour photojournalism: Most people desire to peek into the lives of the affluent and famous, therefore film stars and other famous persons have become a prominent element of news coverage. Photojournalists who specialize in this type of photography are known as paparazzi, which is borrowed from Italy.
- D. Spot news photojournalism: This means covering events that make day to day news, like political events, crime, accidents etc. This is in fact the most common type of photojournalism and is most demanding for a photojournalist.
- E. Wildlife photojournalism: This is considered one of the most difficult types of photojournalism. Wildlife photography necessitates advanced photographic equipment as well as a thorough understanding of how wild animals behave (Jere 2019, p.30)

## **2.2 Roles of photojournalists in the news room**

As a visual journalistic practice, photography has shown to be important in attracting readers' and viewers' attention to the news (Bucher & Schumacher 2006) and as such, it has been a part of news practice since the turn of the twentieth century. For journalists, news photography has served as a necessary validation of an external reality, offering proof and objective truth to journalistically reported news (Brennan and Hart, 1999). As a result, photographers have always operated as a subset inside the field of

journalism, and as such, they have been guided by the journalistic routines, norms, and ideals that define news reporting until this point (Allan, 2013).

In their study on the role of photojournalism, Santania and Russial (2013) examined the various functions and responsibilities that photojournalists undertake. They found that photojournalists play a critical role in visually documenting news events and capturing compelling images that convey stories and evoke emotions. Furthermore, the researchers identified that photojournalists not only serve as visual storytellers but also act as witnesses to important events, providing an objective and unbiased perspective through their photographs.

Santania and Russial (2013) highlighted the significance of photojournalists' ability to capture decisive moments, which can greatly influence public perception and understanding of news events. They emphasized that the power of visual storytelling lies in the photojournalists' skill in composing images, choosing angles, and capturing the essence of a story through their photographs.

Moreover, the study revealed that photojournalists often face challenges in their profession, such as ethical dilemmas, access to sensitive or restricted areas, and the need to balance their responsibilities with safety concerns. Santania and Russial (2013) emphasized the importance of ethical considerations in photojournalism, as photographers must make decisions regarding image manipulation, privacy rights, and the potential impact of their work on subjects and society.

According to Bock (2010), newsrooms across the United States have believed that video is a natural progression of the duties photojournalists already do. Photojournalists are a unique hybrid, tethered to more electronic equipment than any other member of the newsroom due to the new reality of online journalism (Keller, 2013).

*"It is this blending of body and machine that distinguishes photography news work from other forms of journalism," (Bock, 2010, p.15).*

Santana and Russial (2013) argue that photojournalists are shouldering new responsibilities in an era of significant journalism volatility. Additional technological requirements are imposed on these journalists (Caple, 2019). New responsibilities come with new issues, new training, and new demands on photojournalists' time, including time away from the field (Keller, 2013). The increased burden, on the other hand, might not imply a less rewarding employment (Keller, 2013). Photojournalists have proven to be versatile and adaptable to changes and technological advancements (Caple, 2019). A photojournalist who has a still camera slung over one shoulder and a video camera over the other, must decide in an instant which photo to use (Cartier-Bresson, 1993). News photographers have traditionally been charged with a host of duties revolving around the making of photographs (Caple, 2019). Imaging functions, such as scaling, cropping and image adjustments, have usually fallen to members of the photo or graphics department (Santana and Russial, 2013).

Allan (2017) delved into the intricacies of photojournalism and its relationship with citizen journalism. Specifically, the author examines the roles of photojournalists within this evolving landscape. According to Allan (2017), photojournalists play a crucial role in capturing and documenting significant events, stories, and issues. Their primary responsibility is to visually communicate news and information to the public through powerful and thought-provoking images. By carefully selecting and composing photographs, photojournalists aim to provide a visual narrative that informs, educates, and engages viewers.



In analyzing the roles of photojournalists, Allan (2017) compared the traditional roles to the modern roles just to be able to identify the changes. In reference to Ford (1998), Allan (2017) posits that although the photojournalist's role and responsibilities vary by newspaper, the main obligation remains the same: to provide clear, easy-to-read, high-quality, truthful images to their newspaper for publication, that communicate a meaningful message for the readers of the publication that they work for.

Ford (1998, p. 56) runs through a typical day of an analogue photojournalist:

- Photojournalist arrives and reads messages and mail left for them
- Photo assignments are picked up, on average three per shift
- The photographer reads over the assignments, makes sure of the details, contact names, telephone numbers and directions, questions are directed at the reporter or desk editor
- After completing one or two of the shoots the photographer returns to the newspaper to process film
- While the film dries the photographer may take a lunch break before proceeding to the next shoot
- After completing the next shoot the photographer returns once again and while the negatives develop he/she may edit and scan the first two sets of negatives
- The photographer will then get to view the negatives with the photographic editor
- They will critique the negatives and choose the suitable frames

- The photographer then crops, adjusts colour balance, contrast and bums and dodges if need be, on the computer
- The photographer must also write caption information for each picture.
- At the end of the shift the negatives must be filed and the assignments logged in the diary.

Allan (2017) however, argues that technological improvements have always been a catalyst for change. New technical tools necessitate the acquisition of new skills. The transition to digital cameras should have a significant impact on how photojournalists approach their work (Allan, 2017). He further posits that some of these changes include additional time that could be spent in the field shooting and the modification of deadlines due to the elimination of processing time and the submission of photographs from the field. Cooper (2017) focuses on the issue of gatekeeping, stating that, in the past, photographic editors served as gatekeepers by editing copy and photographs prior to publication. With the introduction of digital photography, it's now possible to send copy and photographs directly to the page designers, bypassing the picture desk, especially if the images were of an event that occurred near the deadline (Cooper, 2017). This suggests that the gatekeeper's duty is no longer necessary.

## **2.3 State of Photojournalism Practice**

### ***2.3.1 Digitalization of Photojournalism Practice***

Photojournalism has seen one of the most significant transformations since the birth of photography in the previous two decades (Štefaniková & Lab, 2016). Klein-Avraham and Reich's (2014) study on the digitalization of photojournalism provides

valuable insights into the transformation of the field in the digital age. They examined the impact of digital technologies on the practice of photojournalism, considering both the challenges and opportunities that arise from this digital shift. The study highlights the ways in which digitalization has reshaped the processes of photojournalism, from image capture to distribution.

According to Klein-Avraham and Reich (2014), digitalization or the adoption of digital technologies, in conjunction with current economic realities, have affected the entire process of photojournalistic material production, including how photographs are captured, edited, chosen, archived, and accessed. Photojournalists are not constrained by material: with digital cameras, they can instantaneously evaluate their images, remove and retake them if necessary and submit their shots to the newsroom no matter where they are (Davenport et al., 2007).

Although the initial phase of photojournalist digitization occurred in the 1980s, when "chemically generated" pictures and films were scanned and turned into digital images, the second phase, which represents the core phenomenon, began just a decade later, with the advent of digital cameras (Cookman, 2009; Newton, 2009). Beyond the shift in capturing and preserving light (Brennen, 2010) the dramatic digitization induced a shift in professional photojournalism routines and practices (Cookman, 2009). Few studies have explored its specific impact on the routines of professional photojournalism (e.g. Mortensen and Keshelashvili, 2013; Newton, 2009; Russial, 2000; Zavoina and Reichert, 2000). These studies have discussed how these new routines and practices are associated with the current threats to professional photojournalism

To zero in on Mortensen and Keshelashvili (2013), they posit that professional photojournalism faces several current threats that have the potential to undermine its

integrity and sustainability. These threats include the rise of citizen journalism, where anyone with a smartphone can capture and share images, leading to a blurring of the lines between professional and amateur photographers. Additionally, the increased availability and affordability of high-quality digital cameras have made it easier for non-professionals to produce visually appealing images, further challenging the authority and exclusivity traditionally associated with professional photojournalism.

Also, Newton (2009) in his study “Photojournalism's future: The challenges and opportunities of the new media landscape” highlights some significant threats to professional photojournalism. One such threat is the decline of traditional media outlets, particularly newspapers, due to the rise of online platforms and the changing landscape of media consumption. This decline has led to a decrease in job opportunities for professional photojournalists and a reduction in the resources allocated to visual storytelling. Furthermore, Newton points out that the increasing demand for immediacy and speed in news dissemination has resulted in a preference for user-generated content over professionally produced photojournalism.

Some of the effects of digitization on photojournalism have been undeniably negative, such as the unprecedented ease with which photographs can be manipulated and the democratization of photojournalism (Newton, 2009). Láb and Štefaniková (2017) in their study ‘Visual journalism in the digital age’ argued that the introduction of digital technology and the influence of current economic conditions have significantly impacted the entire process of creating visual news. They posit that the shift to digital platforms and the proliferation of online news sources have led to changes in the way visual news is captured, edited, and disseminated.

Láb and Štefaniková (2017) noted that the advancements in digital technology have made it easier and more affordable for journalists to capture and process visual content. The availability of high-quality cameras and editing software has democratized the production of visual news, allowing more individuals to participate in the creation and sharing of images. However, this increased accessibility has also raised concerns about the quality and credibility of visual news, as the ease of manipulation and dissemination can lead to misinformation and the spread of unverified images (Láb and Štefaniková, 2017).

There is also an impact on the traditional notion of photojournalism, as a result, news photographers are faced with a slew of new problems (Hadland, 2015).

Greenwood and Reinardy (2011) in their study “New technology, new challenges: The changing face of photojournalism in the digital age” concur that the emergence of digital technology presented professional photojournalists with numerous challenges. They not only had to adapt to and master new technological tools but also had to develop new strategies for capturing photographs.

Greenwood and Reinardy (2011) noted that the shift to digital technology required photojournalists to learn new skills and techniques, such as digital image editing and processing. They had to become proficient in using software programs for photo manipulation and enhancing visual elements. Photojournalists had to navigate the technical aspects of digital cameras, including understanding image sensors, file formats, and storage systems (Greenwood and Reinardy, 2011).

Kelvin-Abraham & Reich (2014) posit that digitization had much wider ripples than just accelerating the speed and efficiency with which news photos can be taken,

transmitted, selected, manipulated, stored, and retrieved. The ways in which digitization was implemented evoked a negative synergy of old and new weaknesses of photojournalists as visual creatures in predominantly textual kingdoms (Reich & Klein-Avraham, 2014), leaving them in one of their most vulnerable positions to face the broader crisis in journalism.

Rosenblum (2007) in the article, “Amateur eyes, news eyes” asserts that with the advent of the cell phone camera, electronic imaging has become even more widely available and omnipresent, and photojournalists may find their professional expertise threatened or even supplanted by amateurs with cell phones who happened to present at significant events. According to Stefanikova (2015), photojournalism is a threatened profession. She argues that digitalization has resulted in the most fundamental developments since the birth of photography during the previous two decades. Many professional photojournalists who lost their jobs during the 2008 economic crisis have been replaced by reporters, citizen journalists and the public, equipped with digital cameras or mobile phones (Stefanikova, 2015)

### ***2.3.2 Photojournalism Education and Training***

In discussing the lives and livelihoods of photojournalists, Hadland et. al. (2015) examined the education level of sampled practitioners from the six continents of the world. They discovered that photographers are generally highly educated. The majority has tertiary education and many have higher degrees. Interestingly the highly educated photojournalists were mainly self-employed.

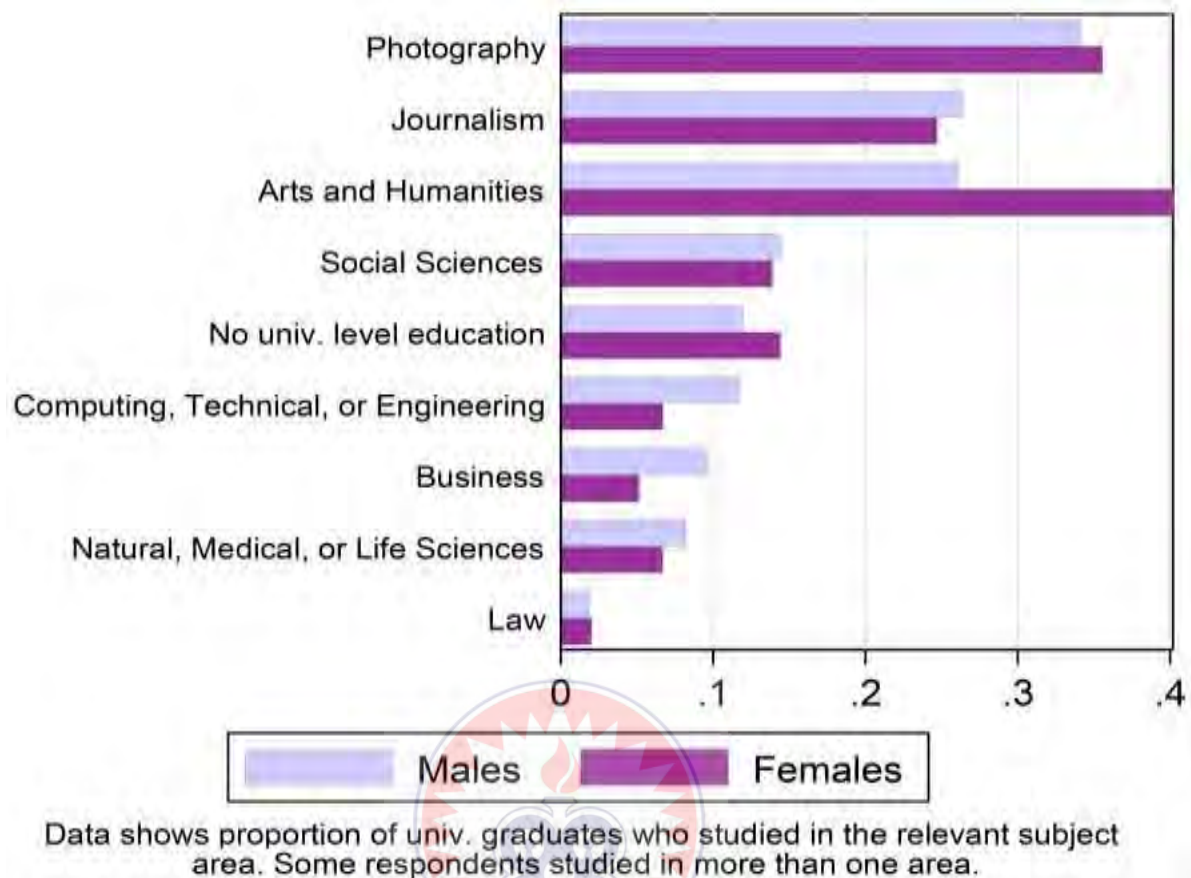


Figure 1: Proportion of graduates who studied in the relevant subject area (Hadland, 2015).

Hadland, De Maaker, and Aburabia (2015) conducted a comparative study examining the employment patterns of university-educated photographers in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Jordan. The aim of the study was to explore how different educational backgrounds and cultural contexts influence the career trajectories of photographers. The researchers employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods. The study involved an online survey administered to university-educated photographers in the three countries, as well as in-depth interviews with a subset of participants (see Figure 1). Participants who had studied journalism were more likely to be employed by a firm than being self-employed (Hadland et al., 2015).

The number of photojournalists who had studied journalism varied greatly from continent to continent as suggested in figure 1.

Hadland et al. (2015) further assert that, while the majority of photographers had studied at the university level, only about a third of the 1,556 photographers surveyed said they had formally studied or trained in photography at a tertiary level, leading us to believe that most photographers learn on the job, either through in-house training provision, from their peers, or from their mentors (if they are apprentices or photographer's assistants). About a quarter of photographers surveyed said they had received in-house training (Hadland et al., 2015). In-house training tended to be more common in South/Central America, Asia, and Africa (all around 33%), but less so in Europe (22%) or North America (15%). Overall, though, some 80% of respondents described some form of specific training concerning their work as a photographer (Hadland et al., 2015).

The photographers who took part in the Hadland et al. (2015) survey did not believe their university courses were particularly useful in preparing them for the work they do, and they hoped that in the future, skills such as communications, presentation skills, networking, and entrepreneurship would allow photojournalists to perform more effectively. When asked if their formal education had prepared them for their chosen job, less than half of those who had undergone training agreed (Hadland et al., 2015). In essence a sizable proportion believed their education had failed to prepare them in any way. These findings indicate that although most photojournalists acquire some level of education but their education barely has an impact on the work they do now.



### ***2.3.3 Professional and Non-Professional Photojournalists***

The field of photojournalism has experienced significant changes with the rise of digital technologies and the accessibility of high-quality cameras to the general public. Professional photojournalists, who have traditionally been employed by news organizations and undergone professional training, face increasing competition from non-professional photojournalists who are amateurs or citizen contributors (Hadland et al., 2018). This shift has sparked debates and discussions within the field (Hanusch, 2016; Tandoc et al., 2018; Papacharissi and Fatima, 2008).

Papacharissi and Fatima (2008) explore the role of amateur or unprofessional photojournalism in news production, highlighting how citizen journalists can challenge the monopoly of traditional news organizations and contribute alternative perspectives. Their study emphasizes the potential for non-professionals to challenge traditional power structures and expand the scope of news coverage. Also, Tandoc et al. (2018) investigated the perception of news credibility when images are sourced from professional and non-professional photojournalists. Their findings suggest that images attributed to professionals are generally perceived as more credible, indicating that professional photojournalists still hold a certain level of authority and trust in the eyes of audiences.

Lindgren and Lundström (2017) on the other hand conducted interviews with non-professional photojournalists and found that they often engage in photojournalism out of personal interest, passion, and a desire to contribute to public discourse. However, they also identified challenges related to validation, recognition, and the ability to sustain long-term commitment. In terms of the professional photojournalists' perspective, research has examined their strategies for adapting to the changing landscape and

maintaining their competitive edge. Hanusch (2016) conducted interviews with professional photojournalists and explored their perceptions and responses to the challenges posed by non-professionals. The study reveals that professional photojournalists emphasize the importance of their expertise, experience, and professionalism as distinguishing factors. According to the findings, professional photojournalists regard their works as compelling and informative as compared to that of the unprofessionals.

It is no secret that digital technology has been a disruptive innovation in journalism in general, and particularly in photojournalism (Christensen, 2013; Gade, 2011; T. Mortensen, 2014). The practically endless ecology of information and visual material accessible on the internet, the majority of which is free, has produced an excess of media options, reducing viewers' dependency on only professionals (Picard, 2009). With print circulation declining and no clear digital revenue models, news companies have shrunk their operations in search of cost-cutting measures. A variety of reasons have contributed to professional photography being viewed as a disposable asset (Klein-Avraham & Reich, 2016).

#### ***2.3.4 Gender and Photojournalism***

Lough (2020) in the article “Photography, Women's Visibility, and Patriarchal Oppression” argues that while there is an increase in the number of women working in the field of photography, their treatment by their male peers continues to be unequal. This suggests that patriarchal oppression persists within photojournalism.

Lough (2020) highlights that, despite the progress made in terms of gender equality in various fields, photography continues to be an area where gender disparities

and discriminatory practices persist. Women photographers often face challenges such as unequal pay, limited opportunities for career advancement, and a lack of recognition for their work.

Lough's assertion of patriarchal oppression in photography implies that there is a systemic power dynamic in which men hold a dominant position and women are marginalized or undervalued. This inequality not only affects women's professional growth but also influences the representation of diverse perspectives and narratives within the field. While women have broken boundaries throughout the history of photojournalism, there are still many obstacles and problems that serve to oppress the female voice and presence, whether through explicit harassment and discrimination or more subtle forms of oppression (Lough, 2020).

Since the early 1900s, when Jessie Tarbox was employed by *The Buffalo Inquirer* and *The Courier*, women have been involved in photojournalism (Brannan, 2011). Several other notable women, including Margaret Bourke-White and Dorothea Lange, followed her in the field, paving the path for current female photojournalists (Estrin, 2017). However, the list of women in news photography history is significantly smaller than the list of men, and these women are frequently the only women of their gender in their industries (Estrin, 2017). While modern photojournalism has typically been dominated by men, either in terms of numbers (Lowry, 2015) or in terms of who obtains the best jobs (Estrin, 2017), more women have recently entered the field. *WomenPhotograph.com*, a dedicated digital database of experienced female editorial photographers was recently launched with the goal of exposing excellent female photographers and promoting them for future work (Women Photograph, 2017).

According to Hadland et al. (2015), women are severely underrepresented among

professional photojournalists, making up only a minuscule portion of the workforce. Moreover, women in the field tend to be concentrated in specific segments of the industry, such as fashion and entertainment photography. The study suggest that there are significant gender disparities within the profession, with women facing barriers and limited opportunities for advancement in certain areas of photography. The concentration of women in fields like fashion and entertainment photography may be influenced by societal expectations and stereotypes about gender roles in visual industries (Campbell & Critcher 2017).

Thomas (2007) argues that women have been discouraged historically from pursuing photojournalism because it was not considered as an appropriate occupation for women. She posits that the profession continues to be lonesome and risky for women who face both sexism and physical danger at work. Hadland and Barnett (2018) found out that women in photojournalism face demanding circumstances than their male counterparts. Women are over-represented in the lowest income brackets and under-represented in the highest income brackets (Hadland and Barnett 2018).

Findings from Hadland and Barnett (2018) suggest that only a few women will take up full-time employment in this area in the future given the structural biases, historical underrepresentation and widespread self-employment among women in the sector. Women professional photojournalists and are concentrated into particular segments of the industry, such as fashion, entertainment rather than sports (Campbell and Critcher 2017).

While women have risen to the top of the photographic leadership ranks at major magazines (Estrin, 2017), a culture of sexual harassment in photojournalism still remains,

as evidenced by recent revelations of the –Me Too Movement's| resurgence (Chick, 2018). Interviews with more than 50 persons were conducted for the Columbia Journalism Review's article on sexual harassment in photojournalism (Chick, 2018). They revealed that women photojournalists go through different kinds of physical and emotional abuses.

*'There's just this very paternalistic thread that exists within the news photography community of guys believing they need to impart wisdom on the women photographers. On a regular basis, there are also explicit acts of sexual harassment' (Mallonee, 2017, p.8)*

### **2.3.5 Photojournalism in Ghana**

Photojournalism is pushed to the perimeters of literature, little or no work is published by scholars on photojournalism in Ghana. However, historically, photojournalists have played integral roles towards the growth or development of media in Ghana (Nubuke, 2019). According to Nubuke (2019), James Barnor is widely recognized as the pioneer of photojournalism, he developed as a renowned photojournalists after the country gained its independence in 1957. Barnor's work spans a remarkable era in history, transcending continents and photography genres to construct a transatlantic narrative characterized by his deep interest in people and cultures Nubuke (2019). Barnor's images, through the art of portraiture, depict societies in transition: Ghana gaining independence and London becoming a cosmopolitan, multicultural metropolis (Nubuke, 2019). Barnor captured intimate moments of luminaries and key political figures, including Ghana's first Prime Minister, Kwame Nkrumah as he pushed

for pan-African unity, photographing the leader on several special occasions (Nubuke, 2019).

Nubuke (2019) further posit that James Barnor was not only hired as the first photojournalist to work for the Daily Graphic — a newspaper launched to Ghana by the British media firm, the Daily Mirror. He was often commissioned by Drum magazine, South Africa's renowned anti-apartheid lifestyle and politics publication, for whom he photographed numerous news stories, including a staged nuclear family breakfast with Gold Coast champion boxer Roy Ankrah, dubbed The Black Flash (Nubuke, 2019).





*Figure 2: Sample photograph of James Banor*

Figure 3: photography of James Banor

Many photojournalist have emerged years after James Banor rose to prominence. However, the field has been tainted with some misfortunes (GNA, 2020). Photojournalism is indispensable to journalism especially in current times but

photojournalists often risk all forms of abuse ranging from getting manhandled to even death in the course of their duties (GNA, 2020). According to GNA (2020) photojournalists are always the target of antagonistic attacks because of the power of photography. A photojournalist taking pictures of violent scenes at a political rally or a demonstration will therefore not be spared (GNA, 2020). In Ghana, photojournalism is neglected by researchers, very little is known about the state of photojournalism.

## **2.4 Challenges of photojournalism**

Many researchers have discussed the diverse challenges photojournalists face especially after digitalization and democratization of photojournalism. (Hadland et al. 2015; Reich and Klein-Avraham, 2014). According to Láb and Štefaniková (2017), there is an impact on the traditional notion of photojournalism, as a result, news photographers are faced with a slew of new problems. Professional photojournalists are faced with several challenges, (Greenwood and Reinardy, 2011; Russial and Wanta, 1998) ranging from technological difficulties, financial crisis, safety and risk, ethical dilemma, loss of jobs etc.

### **2.4.1 Risk and Safety of Photojournalism**

Hadland et al. (2015) conducted a study on the risks faced by photojournalists in their line of duty, focusing on the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Jordan. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining a quantitative online survey with qualitative in-depth interviews. According to their findings, risk of physical harm or death is felt deeply across the genders and across age groups with most photographers believing that it will increase over time. Hadland et al. (2015) found that photojournalists are concerned about high risk of injury or death, erratic income, failure to provide for



families and a decrease demand for work. Also, Hadland et al. (2015) in the analysis of their findings asserted that financial risks faced by photojournalists are felt keenly, however, they are highly concerned about the issue of physical risks.

The study concluded that only 8.5% of respondents had *never* faced physical risks at work, whilst 62.1% reported that they *sometimes* faced risks, and 29.4% of respondents said that they faced physical risks *about half the time*, *often* or *always* (Hadland et al., 2015). These findings suggest that photojournalists are extremely vulnerable to physical risk, though this is not the only risk to which they are subject. The risk of physical injury or death is felt strongly by all the respondents (Hadland et al., 2015). Also, the next most worrisome risk was erratic or unpredictable income followed by *not providing for my family*, *failure of my company or agency*, *decreasing long-term demand for my work* and *damage to my professional reputation* (Hadland et al., 2015). According to Ghana News Agency (2020) photojournalists are always the target of antagonistic attacks because of the power of photography.

#### ***2.4.2 Job losses and financial crises***

Pictures have been important and necessary component of modern communication (Mailot, 2019). However, the professional photographer's position has never been more vulnerable than it is in the digital era (Anderson, 2013).

Deuze, Brunson, and Christensen, (2019) studied the impact of job loss and career transitions within the field of photojournalism. Their findings highlight the profound impact of job loss on the personal and professional lives of photojournalists. The study reveals the emotional toll of losing a job, such as feelings of disappointment, uncertainty, and a sense of identity loss. Deuze et. al. (2019) posit that financial

challenges arise when photojournalists navigate their careers amidst job instability. Furthermore, the study examined the adaptive strategies employed by photojournalists to survive and thrive in the face of adversity. These strategies encompassed various approaches, including embracing new technologies, diversifying skills, and exploring alternative career paths both within and outside the traditional boundaries of photojournalism.

A variety of reasons have contributed to professional photography being viewed as a disposable asset (Brennen & Brennen, 2015; Klein-Avraham & Reich, 2016). Brennen and Brennen (2015) examined the changing landscape of photojournalism in the digital age, focusing on the commodification and devaluation of professional photography. According to their study, the rise of user-generated content, social media platforms, and citizen journalism has contributed to the perception of professional photography as disposable. Brennen and Brennen (2015) argue that the abundance of free or low-cost visual content has led to a devaluation of professional photographers and their work. Also, Klein-Avraham and Reich (2016) investigated the factors influencing the perceived value of professional photography. It explores how the accessibility of affordable digital cameras and the prevalence of stock photography have contributed to the perception that professional photography is replaceable. The study reveals that, cost considerations, convenience, and the desire for quick results have influenced the decision-making process in selecting visual assets and that editors are not obliged to contact professional practitioners since they have access to many pictures..

Also, Hadland, Lambert, and Campbell (2016) in their study "The Future of Professional Photojournalism: Perceptions of Risk" explored the job and financial risks

faced by professional photojournalists in the evolving media landscape. The study delved into the multifaceted risks that photojournalists face. It explores factors such as declining job opportunities, reduced staff positions in media organizations, and the growth of freelance and gig economy models in the industry. According to Hadland et al. (2016) these financial challenges include; declining rates of pay, increasing competition, and delay of pays.

Even in comparison to the declining number of full-time journalists over the last two decades, photographers have lost a disproportionate number of positions (Mortensen, 2014). Christensen (2013) postulate that it is no secret that digital technology has been a disruptive innovation in journalism in general, and particularly in photography.

News organizations have become willing to replace professional photojournalists with iPhone-armed reporters, wire service photos, and citizen-shot photography (Allan, 2013). However, photojournalists assert that their professional expertise cannot be reproduced by non-professionals (Klein- Avraham & Reich, 2016). A photojournalist who worked in both the chemical and digital eras asserts that digital age news managers think –the photographer is irrelevantl and –no one cares how the photo looks (Klein-Avraham & Reich, 2016). There is a perception among news managers that visuals can come from reporters with iPhones and members of the public (Johnson, 2015).

Štefaniková and Láb (2018) examined the impact of digital technology on photojournalism practice in the Czech Republic. Their study argues that digital technology has affected the traditional employment structures and career prospects within photojournalism in the Czech Republic. According to their findings, the challenges faced

by professional photojournalists, including potential job losses or shifts in employment models due to factors such as the increased use of freelance photographers, the integration of citizen journalism, or the demand for visual content from alternative sources (Štefaniková and Láb, 2018). Also, Patrick and Allan (2013) posit that with the democratization of the imaging media and intense financial pressure, it is becoming increasingly difficult for many newsrooms to sustain full-time professional photo departments. Meanwhile, Bock (2008) said that much of the pressure is motivated by economics rather than innovation. It enabled news organizations to withdraw major outposts that marked their traditional involvement and commitment to photojournalism, outsourcing them to individual photographers, and thus invite a massive invasion of less-skilled or unskilled (and cheaper) photographers. He said these make the news industry a much less friendly and rewarding workplace for professional photojournalists. Professional photojournalists are increasingly alienated, underpaid, and unemployed or sometimes laid-off, due to billions of images uploaded onto the internet every day, the field has become crowded (Bock, 2008).

The democratization of image production has also coincided with media firm layoffs as traditional businesses struggle to adapt to the digital era's disruption (Brennen & Brennen, 2015; Klein-Avraham & Reich, 2016). If any industry has suffered from the generally referred to "crisis," it is journalism (Reinardy, 2011), photojournalists have been among them

### ***2.4.3 Photojournalism and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder***

Journalistic work, especially in news production, involves ongoing exposure to trauma in the attempt to meet the constant demand for up-to-date and instantaneous

coverage of disaster, crises, and violence in society (MacDonald et al., 2017). According to research, this process of repetitive trauma exposure among journalists can result in a wide range of negative psychological consequences, including drug abuse, signs of posttraumatic stress disorder, and depression (Pyevich, Newman, & Daleiden, 2003).

According to the American Psychiatric Association (2013), individuals might acquire trauma reactions as a result of personal exposure, seeing a Post Traumatic Event (PTE) as it occurs to someone else, or repeated exposure to specifics of a PTE. As a result, journalists are a demographic of interest since they are likely to be exposed to a variety of PTEs both directly and indirectly as a result of their employment (APA, 2013). Research shows how journalists and photojournalists who witness violence and trauma are affected by symptoms of traumatic stress to varying degrees (Feinstein & Nicholson, 2005; Feinstein et al., 2002; McMahon, 2001)

For example, when Feinstein and Owen (2002) studied self-report questionnaires of photographers covering war and conflict, they found respondents reporting a higher incidence of posttraumatic stress symptoms. They argue that this might be due to the heightened risk of danger in having to move in closer to photograph their subjects, as well as the nature of the images themselves. Theories of photojournalistic practice have rarely included exposure to traumatizing events among their conceptual elements.

Pyevich et al. (2003) looked at symptoms of PTSD among photojournalists. Total assignments, personal exposure, and social support were all significant predictors of whether or not a photojournalist would suffer from symptoms of PTSD. Results showed that photojournalists actually experienced PTSD at a level lower than that of emergency workers. Only a minority suffered symptoms of actual PTSD, but a larger minority suffered from some form of trauma-related symptoms

Keats (2010) posits that newsrooms and journalists in general expect photographers to generate specific kinds of photos with a specific focus. Even before accepting assignments, photographers must demonstrate to editors that they are competent of taking good photographs and managing local trauma projects (Keats, 2010). According to Greenwood and Smith (2007), photographers assigned to assignments were generally drawn to and focused on violent circumstances, as news is frequently associated with struggle, warfare, and terrorism. Lasorsa and Dai (2007) suggested that current newsroom culture encourages a -toxicl environment in which the -outsidel world exists only to fulfill the demands of the newsroom. In this regard, photojournalists' dramatic or prize-winning photographs are likely to attract editors' attention and contribute to career goals (Lasorsa and Dai, 2007). This means this type of motivation may encourage photojournalists to take serious risks

Photojournalists are increasingly disclosing the negative consequences their profession has on their physical, mental, and family lives (Fitzgerald, 1989), particularly while documenting violent events (Ricchiardi, 1999). Stories regarding these impacts are extremely important, because newsroom culture of stoicism, impartiality, and the "desire to get the job done" might inhibit news workers from admitting to anguish caused by job-related exposure to traumatic events (Ricchiardi, 1999).



**Figure 3: A bystander attempts CPR on the lifeless body**



**Figure 4: A photograph of a woman on her way to church killed by gory accident - Starr fm**

## 2.5 The Future of Photojournalism Practice

Some scholars have unraveled the major challenges to the survival of photojournalism as a professional practice (Christin & Anderson, 2016; Haynes et al., 2018; Allan, 2013; Hadland, 2015). In examining the future of photojournalist practice, Haynes et. al. (2018) suggest that there are certain key threats to the survival of photojournalism as a professional discipline. These obstacles have forced scholars to predict the death of photojournalism in future (Haynes et. al., 2018).

Christin and Anderson's (2016) study explores the future of photojournalism in the context of the digital age. The researchers employed a combination of content analysis of news photographs and interviews with professional photojournalists to investigate the changing nature of the field. According to Christin and Anderson's (2016), there will be transformation in the role of photojournalists due to the advent of digital technology and the rise of online platforms. Photojournalists now face the challenge of not only capturing compelling images but also navigating the digital landscape, curating content, and engaging with audiences (Christin & Anderson, 2016). Their study also argued that the abundance of visual information poses challenges for professional photojournalists. With the democratization of imaging technologies, anyone with a smartphone can capture and share images. As a result, the value and credibility of professional photojournalism are being reevaluated (Christin & Anderson, 2016).

The discipline of photojournalism has swiftly evolved as society has grown into a more visually dominated period (Sturken & Cartwright, 2001), with billions of photographs uploaded every day on the Internet through digital cameras, computers, and smart phones. However, for scholars, this digital transformation in practice has resulted



in a slew of forecasts for the future of photography, from instant success to impending death (Newton, 2009). Allan (2014, p.115) asks; “*Who needs photojournalism now that everyone has a mobile camera? Implying that citizen photojournalism will displace professional photojournalism in future*”.

In examining the future of photojournalism practice, Hadland et al. (2016) argues that the professional photographer's position as a core and crucial component in modern communications has never been more vulnerable than it is in the digital era. Hadland et al. (2016) alluded to the fact that, it is not just the growth of visual media as a mass phenomenon that has an influence on the professional news photographer's future; it is also changing work patterns and even ethical difficulties. According to Hadland et al. (2016), professional photography is an extremely risky occupation and is getting riskier. They assert that there is anticipation of growing threat of physical risk to which the overwhelming majority of photographers now feel they are increasingly vulnerable. Even in comparison to the declining number of full-time journalists over the last two decades, photographers have lost a disproportionate number of positions (Anderson 2013; Mortensen 2014).

According to Howe (2001), the predictions of the death of photojournalism have substantially been exaggerated. He however accepts that photojournalism isn't what it used to be and its glory days are gone. -It is of course simplistic to argue that photojournalism has pass its golden age, its present is leaden and its future remains

mysteriousl (Howe, 2001, para.8). Some practitioners of photojournalism have had diverse perspectives of the state of the practice and its future. In an interview with LensCulture (2021), Lars Boering, Managing Director of the World Press Photo (WPP) argued that the most serious threat to photojournalism's future is the disruption of the current commercial paradigm. This suggests that journalism in general is going through a paradigm shift and practitioners are therefore expected to meet it halfway. Golon (2021) asserts that photojournalism will remain active if practitioners find new business models and approaches.



## 2.6 Theoretical Framework

As an important prerequisite for many qualitative inquiries and media research, this study will make use of two related and relevant theories – Disruptive technologies theory and Professional identity theory. These choices are informed by the objectives underpinning this study.

### (A) *Disruptive Technologies Theory*

Disruptive technologies theory, introduced by Christensen (1997), has gained significant attention in various fields as a framework for understanding the impact of technological innovations on industries and organizations. The theory suggests that disruptive technologies can disrupt established markets and business models, leading to significant changes in the competitive landscape. One of the seminal works in this area is Christensen's book "The Innovator's Dilemma" (1997). He argues that disruptive technologies initially cater to niche markets and offer limited functionalities compared to existing technologies. However, over time, these disruptive technologies improve in performance and gradually displace established technologies. This process of disruption occurs due to the unique characteristics of disruptive technologies, such as lower cost, simplicity, and accessibility (Christensen, 1997).

According to Omenugha (2019), as technology progresses, so does the impact of technical products. For example, as much as the introduction of digital and interactive technologies have shaped the way we conduct our modern activities and lives, the Stone Age era with fire and stone tools was an essential kind of technology that influenced how pre-modern humans lived and thrived (Omenugha, 2019). However, not everyone has equal access to technology. Technical advancements bring about changes that lead to

ever-increasing disparities, a phenomenon known as the digital divide (Christensen, 2013).

To differentiate between sustaining and disruptive technologies, Christensen (1997) coined the term "disruptive technologies." According to Christensen, incumbent businesses collapse often as a result of new, low-end items presented by tiny inventive competitors. Today's technologies are having an influence on the media industry, with the surge of "smart" technologies disrupting how modern media operates, as well as how information is created, consumed, and shared (Abendroth, 2013). Furthermore, the convergence of new media technologies and digitalization in the media production process and management practice have resulted in newsroom roles that are multi-skilled and multi-tasking.

Christensen (2006) and Christensen et al. (2013) argue that disruptive innovations can undermine not only firms and corporations but also professions and occupations that are technologically driven like photojournalism. Therefore, professional photojournalists should be more prepared to identify and mitigate future disruptions. Instead of belittling the new competitors or amateurs and what is often thought to be their typically lower professional standards (Mortensen and Keshelashvili, 2013) professional photojournalists should consider migrating to these "developing or unimportant markets" sooner rather than later, and search for inventive and profitable methods to use their specialized skills in the new rising sector as suggested by Christensen (1997).

Omenugha (2019) in contextualizing disruptive technologies in media management asserts that in terms of current media practice and management, technology and media are inextricably linked, and neither can be separated. He said technology has changed how and where information is processed and distributed since the invention of

printing and the electronic press. Omenugha (2019) argues that there is a growing focus on new digital (new media technologies) since it is hard to examine media practice and ways that societies interact without addressing the rapidly changing pace of technology. Furthermore, the activities of new media technologies and digital platforms are perceived to be causing fundamental shifts in the media environment (Vandijk 2020). As a result, while considering and discussing how societies engage with media, new media technologies are primarily studied because of the profound effects they have on societies and the media environment (Vandijk 2020).

In practice, these platforms are internet-enabled and have been deemed to be influencing and modifying the ways and approaches that established media perform their activities (Haynes et.al. 2018). This includes developing new skills, tasks, and different methods for accessing, creating, producing, and disseminating material (Omenugha 2019). According to Hackli et.al. (2009), Changes brought on by digital technologies and platforms are deemed disruptive, at least in the sense that things do not remain the same once they are implemented. Omenugha (2019) asserts that this disruptiveness suggests and demonstrates a fundamental unsettling of traditional and regular media activity, which might offer traditional media with both difficulties and possibilities depending on the variables at play in the given setting. As a result, the term "disruptive" can have both negative and positive implications. For example, the internet as a technology has allowed easy and faster distribution of pictures, however it has helped people to claim people's work as theirs or increased issues of copyright in the media industry (Haynes et al., 2018).

Due to the introduction of disruptive innovations, the media sector ecosystem has experienced and continues to undergo changes (Bock, 2008). These disruptive ideas are

built on cutting-edge technology (Omenugha, 2019). Disruptive technologies operate differently than mainstream technologies and are inferior to mainstream technologies in the areas that matter the most to mainstream customers (Adner & Zemsky 2005). For instance, the works of iPhone or amateur photographers with smart phones are regarded inferior (Bock, 2008).

Omenugha (2019) posits that disruptive technologies, such as new media technologies, produce new management principles and systems. New technologies, such as the Internet, mobile smart phones, and other digital devices are set to provide a slew of new dangers to the sector (Omenugha, 2019).

### ***(B) Relevance of Theories of the Study***

Disruptive technologies have significantly influenced various industries, including the field of photojournalism (Omenugha, 2019). One of the key objectives of the study is to understand the roles of photojournalism practitioners and as noted by Bwalya and Mulenga (2020), disruptive technologies have transformed the traditional roles of photojournalists, leading to new responsibilities and challenges. For instance, photojournalists are now expected to possess digital skills to effectively utilize advanced equipment and digital platforms in their work. These technologies have also expanded the scope of their roles, as they are now involved in multimedia storytelling and social media engagement (Bwalya & Mulenga, 2020).

Moreover, the research identifies the challenges that photojournalists face. According to Karimi, McLennan, and Shafiq (2018), the emergence of smartphones and social media platforms has created a saturated media environment, making it challenging for photojournalists to stand out and maintain their relevance. Additionally,

the constant need to adapt to rapidly evolving technologies can be overwhelming for some practitioners, leading to a sense of insecurity and job instability (Karimi et al., 2018).

Lastly, the study aims to explore the perspectives of Ghanaian photojournalists on the future of the practice in light of disruptive technologies. As highlighted by Gomes and Costa (2020), there are divergent opinions among practitioners regarding the impact of technologies on the future of photojournalism. Some photojournalists are optimistic about the possibilities brought by these technologies, such as increased audience reach and storytelling opportunities. However, others express concerns about the survival of the practice (Gomes & Costa, 2020).

### ***2.6.1. Professional Identity Theory***

Professional identity is described as a person's professional self-concept based on their qualities, beliefs, values, motivations, and experiences (Ibarra, 1999; Schein, 1978). The study of professional identity is entwined with the study of personal identity, which Gecas and Burke (1995, p. 42) define as "the various meanings given to oneself by self and others". Gecas and Burke (1995) emphasize the relevance of identity in determining an individual's place in society through the relationships to others implied by the meanings people select for themselves. Membership in a profession, by extension, influences self-definition and shapes how others perceive an individual (Gecas & Burke, 1995). Accordingly, professional identity is described as the set of characteristics, beliefs, and values that people use to define themselves in specialized, skill- and education-based occupations or vocations (Benveniste, 1987; Ibarra, 1999).

Professional identity is built on a common set of beliefs, role descriptions, and

interests—the mechanics of cohesion that allow journalists to give meaning to their work, negotiate and assign essential values to their practices, and build an aura of authority based on a set of competences (Zelizer, 1993). It is a construct, and hence flexible and multiple, rather than fixed and singular, and it is the result of norms, practices, and status that are tied to a professional ideology, organizational affiliation, and the individual's social position (Wiik, 2010).

This means professional identity connects the individual to other journalists and fosters a sense of belonging. However, it also contributes to the institution's long-term sustainability, as well as the preserving of its goals and occupational boundaries (Evetts 2003; Heinonen 1999). From a journalistic perspective, certain aspects seem to be more influential than others due to the homogeneity of journalists as a group (Kirpal & Brown, 2007). Acceptance of conformity is bolstered by the security it offers as a professional identity by providing a "psychological home" where individuals know their way around and may feel secure (Kirpal & Brown 2007; Raeder & Grote 2007). However, the willingness to defend and sustain professional identity must also be considered in light of the Spractitioners'prestige and recognition (Raeder & Grote 2007).

Identity conflict may occur between professional and family identities (Halpern, 2005) or when identifying with different workgroups (Pratt et al., 2012). Also, identity complexity is considered to emerge when numerous identities coexist rather than when one dominates (Caza & Wilson, 2009). A professional identity is an important cognitive mechanism that influences workers' attitudes, and affect their behaviors in and out of the workplace (Halpern, 2005). Van Maanen and Barley (1984) posit that professional identities can also be viewed as social identities because identifying with a profession



allows individuals to have some kind of relationship with certain group of people who share a common approach to a specific type of work.

A few key assumptions underpin the conceptualization of professional identity. First and foremost, Roberts et al. (2005) argue that a person's professional identity is a subjective construct shaped by interpersonal interactions with others concerning their employment. It is commonly known that individuals understand who they are as a professional by viewing themselves in the eyes of others (Goffman, 1963). An individual's professional identity, whether as a social or role identity, is significant since it is a major way for individuals to ascribe meaning to themselves and impacts work attitudes, and behavior (Siebert & Siebert, 2005). Also, professional identity can serve as an organizing framework for an individual's self-concept (Hughes, 1958; Stryker, 1987). What this means is that the individual's professional identity is a focal point of their larger self- system. As Collin and Young (1992, p.8) explained, in today's workplace, an individual's profession provides a context of meaning within which a life is lived and through which life is interpreted by others'. This essentially means that individuals can claim purpose and meaning for themselves and explain how they contribute to society by developing a professional identity.

Furthermore, one's professional identity can have an impact on one's psychological well-being (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). It has been suggested that valued role identities can protect people from depression and anxiety (Thoits, 1983). This is possibly due to the fact that people frequently judge their own worth and competence through the lens of their identities (Goffman, 1963). Role identities that are valued are associated with sense of effectiveness and esteem. (Ervin & Stryker, 2001). As such, associating

oneself with a valued profession can be a crucial source of well-being, esteem and pride (Dutton et al., 2010). Professional occupations are seen to play important roles in society. Individuals who identify strongly with a valued profession are able to gain the benefits of a positive work identity (Dutton et al., 2010).

In other workplace studies, professional identification has proven to have positive performance outcomes such as career success (Arthur et al., 1989). Clearly, the important role of professional identity in shaping both psychological and behavioral processes in the workplace cannot be underestimated. According to Goffman (1963), a stigmatized cultural identity is one in which members of a group are thought to be tainted or inferior, resulting in a blemished identity that makes simple integration in society difficult. This assumption of inferiority by members of society may cause poor outcomes such as economic or interpersonal discrimination (Crocker & Major, 1989). Stigmas marginalize people by reducing their identity to one-dimensional characteristics (Prasad et al., 2007). Therefore, stigmatized professional identity could affect the behavioural or work pattern of some people at the workplace. Professional identity theory will therefore help the researcher to study the state of photojournalism in Ghana by examining how practitioners identify their work or profession especially through the lenses of others.

### ***2.6.2 Relevance of Theories of the Study***

Professional identity theory is highly relevant to the topic of photojournalism practice in Ghana, as it provides a framework for understanding the formation and development of the professional identity of photojournalists. According to Van Maanen and Schein (1979), professional identity refers to the individual's perception of their

professional role and the values, beliefs, and behaviors associated with it. According to Dutton et al. (2010) professional identity theory plays an influential role by shaping both psychological and behavioural processes of practitioners in the workplace. Individuals who identify strongly with a valued profession are able to gain the benefits of a positive work identity, identify and perform their roles efficiently (Dutton et al., 2010).

The relevance of professional identity theory can be seen in the objectives of this study. By applying professional identity theory, the researcher examines how photojournalists in Ghana construct their professional roles, identify with the values and norms of their profession, and develop a sense of belonging to the photojournalism community.

Furthermore, understanding the roles of photojournalists in Ghana is crucial for comprehending the challenges they face in their practice. Professional identity theory sheds light on the expectations and responsibilities associated with the role of a photojournalist in Ghanaian society. By investigating how photojournalists perceive their professional role, the researcher gains insights into the challenges they encounter in fulfilling their duties.

Additionally, professional identity theory provides a valuable framework for exploring the perspectives of photojournalists on the future of the practice in Ghana. By examining how photojournalists envision their professional role evolving, the researcher identifies potential changes in the field and anticipate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. This understanding is vital for informing policies and interventions aimed at supporting the development and sustainability of photojournalism practice in Ghana.

## 2.7 Summary

Chapter two sets out to review the literature on photojournalism practice. It was established that studies have been done in many other jurisdiction. However, very little scholarship attention has been given to the practice in Ghana and Africa as a whole. It was established from the literature that the origins of photojournalism may be traced back to the dawn of civilization and still plays instrumental role in today's media. However, the field has undergone some changes due to technological advancements. Technological improvements have become a catalyst for change. New technical tools necessitate the acquisition of new skills which impose new roles on the practitioners. The advent of digital technology, together with contemporary economic realities have had an impact on the entire process of producing visual news. This has created an impact on the traditional notion of photojournalism, as a result, news photographers are faced with a slew of new problems or challenges which were reviewed in this chapter. Two theories underpin this study, disruptive technologies theory and professional identity theory.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

The chapter presents approaches and processes engaged in the collection and analysis of data. The section explicates the study's approach, design, sampling, data collection methods and the techniques used for data collection and analysis.

#### 3.1 Research Approach

The researcher adopted the qualitative research method for the study. Qualitative research is a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning (Hammarberg, 2016). It involves collecting, analyzing and interpreting information. According to Yin (2009), qualitative research allows social science researchers to explore a specific phenomenon or culture since it allows for greater flexibility and a deeper understanding of the subject or phenomenon. Qualitative researchers are fascinated by people's constructed meanings, how they make sense of the world, and the experiences they have in it (Creswell, 2013).

Qualitative research involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret a phenomenon in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Creswell (2013) argues that this model makes room for a richer comprehension of the participants by emphasizing an understanding and interpretation of the individual experiences of the participants who are involved in the study.

De Vos et al. (2002) state that qualitative research as a model stimulates participant's meaning, experiences or perceptions. Domengan and Fleming (2007) also reaffirm claims that qualitative research aims to explore and discover issues about a problem. -There is usually uncertainty about the degree and characteristics of the problem; the approach uses soft data and gets rich data (p. 24). This approach has been used by photojournalism researchers like Ndoma, (2013) who examined the experiences of photojournalism in Akwa Ibom State and Mailot (2019) who studied how the internet has changed photojournalism in southeast region of the United States of America.

Based on the aforementioned argument, this study therefore uses the qualitative approach to examine the practice of photojournalism in Ghana. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is the preferred model in cases where the study requires an examination of experiences to describe the state of specific phenomenon.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Yin (2009) suggests that research design is the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of study. The researcher has adopted phenomenology considering the purposes and the nature of the research problem. Phenomenology culminates in the essence of the experiences of several people who have all witnessed the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The operative word in phenomenological research, according to Giorgi (1994), is "describe". The researcher's goal is to describe the phenomenon as accurately as possible, avoiding any pre-determined framework while remaining true to the facts.

Welman and Kruger (1999) believe that phenomenologists are interested in gaining a better understanding of social and psychological phenomena from the viewpoints of those who are involved. The basic goal of a phenomenological study is to explain the meaning, structure, and essence of a person's or a group of people's lived experience (Littlejohn & Foss, 2008). A phenomenologist is interested in the lived experiences of people who are or were involved with the issue under investigation (Maypole & Davies, 2001).

The study is based on the experiences of photojournalists in Ghana to subsequently examine the practice of photojournalism in Ghana. The researcher approached the research field with the curiosity of not knowing in order to get fresh insights and uncover new ideas on the experiences of photojournalists (Creswell, 2014). The descriptive technique was chosen to collect data in this study because Kvale (1996) suggests that it is appropriate to talk to individuals if you want to discover how they view their world and their lives. Open-ended questions will be addressed, necessitating detailed replies from the interviewees. During these procedures, important knowledge related to their experiences will emerge.

### **3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique**

Burns and Bush (2010) note that a study sample refers to the number of units selected for the research study. The sampling technique used to select the sample size was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling occurs when a researcher determines what information is required and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information through knowledge or experience (Bernard, 2002). This was adopted because

it enabled the researcher to purposely select participants who have at least one year of experience and are willing to be studied. The choice of sampling enabled the researcher to make a systematic contact with participants with a minimum of wasted effort. Sekaran (2002) asserts that purposive sampling is useful when specific subjects can provide the desired information either because they are the only ones who have it or conform to the criteria of the researcher. With this, little time is wasted.

This study purposely sampled 6 photojournalists based on willingness to participate in the research, proximity and time. The six (6) selected photojournalists included (4) males and (2) females, (4) are employed and (2) are independent or freelancers. The researcher selected participants who work for highly patronized media institutions in Ghana per the media measurements of Geopoll, (2017). For diversity of data, participants were selected from broadcast, print and online media institutions.

### **3.4 Data Collection Method**

#### ***3.4.1 Interview***

The researcher interpreted the research objectives and questions to make up the main body of the interview guide. An in-depth semi-structured approach to interviews was used to help interviewees to well express themselves. The goal of research interviews is to obtain people's views, experiences, beliefs, and/or motivations on specific topics (Seidman, 1998). Qualitative methods, as opposed to purely quantitative methods like questionnaires, are thought to provide a "deeper" understanding of social phenomena (Gill et al., 2008). In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with photojournalists. Participants were encouraged to be opened and talk in-depth about the topic under investigation without the researcher's use of predetermined, focused, short-



answer questions (Given, 2008). It is vital to emphasize, however, that no single interview method fits every situation or all respondents (Denzin, et al 1974).

Seidman (1998) posits that the term "interviewing" applies a variety of techniques (including face-to-face, focus group, and telephone interviews). Therefore, the interview involved posing questions to respondents for answers in a face-to-face situation or by mobile phone. Respondents were encouraged to give their opinions on situations without interruptions by the researcher. Ndoma, (2013) in examining the experiences on photojournalism practice in Akwa Ibom used interviews to collect data. Since this study seeks to examine the state of photojournalism practice using the experiences of practitioners in Ghana, in-depth semi-structured interview is chosen to gather data.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedures**

A sample interview guide was first sent to four photojournalists within two weeks. The researcher got the chance to meet with four of the photojournalists to tell them about the study and schedule an interview session. The remaining participants were called on phone and briefed on the research before an interview dates were scheduled. The researcher had face-to-face interview sessions with four photojournalists. Two others were interviewed via telephone. Each of the interviews lasted from 50 to 70 minutes. All interview sessions were recorded with permission from participants. A smart phone was used as a tool for recording.

The recorded audio was transcribed into text and properly aligned. Dickson-Swift et al. (2007) noted that transcription is a tasking process which is hardly free from errors and may pose ethical challenges particularly when transcribers are employed. The researcher transcribed the recordings himself and crossed checked to ensure there were

no errors.

### **3.6 Method of Data Analysis**

The data analysis methods are based on Creswell (2007) three qualitative data analysis strategies, which include preparing and organizing the data, and presenting the data in the form of text, tables, or figures. Dawson (2009) also categorized qualitative data analysis into four components: thematic analysis, comparative analysis, content analysis and discourse analysis. The researcher therefore adopted thematic data analysis as suggested by Dawson for this study. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) assert that thematic analysis is a method of identifying patterns in data so that discovered themes may be analyzed as categories.

The fundamental goal of qualitative data analysis is to create meaning and make sense of the data (Dawson, 2009). According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the strengths of qualitative data rely on the competence with which their analysis is carried out. Transcripts were read through severally, relevant themes were formed and categorized based on the likeness of issues raised by the respondents.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

According to Pilot & Hungler (1999) when humans are used as study participants in a research project, caution must be exercised to ensure that the rights of those individuals are maintained. Informed permission, confidentiality, and deception avoidance are among the ethical concerns addressed in this work. In terms of informed consent, all participants were appropriately informed on the purpose of this study and then given the chance to decide on participation.

None of the participants were forced in any way to participate in this study. Also confidentiality was ensured. The responses attained were solely used for research purposes. The participants' and organizations' identities were kept anonymous, and the information provided could not be connected to the subjects of the research. Any information that may reveal the participants' identity, such as their name, e-mail address, phone number, or company name, was removed from the study.

### **3.8 Summary**

This chapter presented details of the processes and procedures of the research. Using a qualitative approach and phenomenology as a design, the data for the study was collected using interviews. This study sampled 6 photojournalists based on willingness to participate in the research, proximity and time. The six (6) selected photojournalists included (4) males and (2) Females. The researcher had face-to-face interview sessions with four photojournalists. Two others were interviewed via telephone. An in-depth semi-structured approach to interviews was used to help interviewees to well express themselves. The researcher adopted thematic data analysis as suggested by Dawson to effectively analyze the findings.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study. The analysis draws on the objectives of the study, the relevant literature, and the theoretical frameworks that underpin the study. Data which were generally qualitative were analyzed using thematic analysis. The presentation in this chapter covers how photojournalism is practiced in Ghana, the key roles of practitioners. The challenges faced by the practitioners and their perspectives on the future of the field in Ghana. Findings in this chapter was based on face-to-face and mobile interviews with six (6) photojournalists in Ghana.

The presentation consists of description and interpretation of the data in relation to the research objectives and questions. This allows for easy and better understanding of the data. Data collected from the field are presented and analyzed in this section. To ensure ethical conduct and protect participants' identity, the researcher used specific names to represent the participants. For the purpose of ensuring participants' anonymity the researcher used pseudonyms for all the participants. Below are the research questions that guided the data collection:

1. What are the roles of photojournalists in the newsroom?
2. What challenges do photojournalists face in their practice?
3. What are the perspectives of photojournalists on the future of the field in Ghana?

## **RQ1. What are the roles of photojournalists in the newsrooms?**

This research question unravels the diverse roles performed by Ghanaian photojournalists in the newsroom. Santana and Russial (2013) posit that photojournalists are shouldering new roles in an era of significant journalism volatility. Additional technological requirements are imposed on these journalists (Caple, 2019). New roles emerge with new issues, upskilling, and new demands on photojournalists' time, including time away from the field (Keller, 2013). The increased burden, on the other hand, might not imply a less rewarding employment (Keller, 2013).

Photojournalists have proven to be versatile and adaptable to changes and technological advancements (Caple, 2019). These changes affect or cause changes to their assigned roles. Responding to the roles photojournalists play in the newsroom, the following themes emerged;

### **4.1 Roles of photojournalists in the newsroom**

#### ***4.1.1 News events coverage***

The respondents unanimously said that they are usually assigned by news editors to cover newsworthy events and activities happening in the country. The photojournalists are expected to read notices early in the morning to find out their assigned events for the day. They make sure of the details, contact names, telephone numbers and directions to the event. According to the respondents, the assigned activities include, press conferences, political rallies, school programmes, sports events, music concerts, demonstrations, corporate events etc. Most often than not, photojournalists accompany their colleague reporters as .attached photographers' whose responsibility is to provide pictures and videos for the reporter. On this, participant 1 posits that:

*Usually I go for assignments to cover news events with a reporter. I'm attached to the reporter and the reporter is regarded as the leader for some reasons. So they always write the stories and ask for pictures or images from me. I provide him or her the images. He will grant the interviews and I will be taken the pictures and videos.*

However, the respondents said that there are other occasions where they are sent to cover events alone, especially when there are a lot of programmes to be covered. This eventually brings additional responsibilities to the photojournalists. They will have to take pictures and videos as well as interviewing people before writing the stories themselves. Photojournalists who have poor writing skills might fail to live up to expectation. Participant 4 asserts that:

*My biggest challenge was to write stories after I had attended events. It created so much fear and anxiety for me in the newsroom but I have learned it and I have improved now. It was extremely difficult for me because I had no background in journalism or news writing.*

The participant's suggests that the imposition of entirely new roles aside the traditional roles of the photojournalists i.e. taking and editing pictures create discomfort for some of the practitioners in the newsroom. Some of the respondent however, suggested that if they do not catch up with the demands of the newsroom, they will become useless and get expelled eventually. Therefore, some Ghanaian photojournalists

have upskilled to become better news writers. They are writing news stories and feature articles after covering events either alone or with their colleague reporters. Participant 4 said:

*I provide the reporters the images that will best accompany their stories but I make sure I pick some of the images and write a story with a different perspective or angle. I can confidently say that at times my stories are better than even the reporters. I get him the pictures he wants but quite apart from that I also look out for stories or angles to write.*

On this, Participant 6 added that

*I don't just take pictures, I work as a writer as well, I write my stories so I remain relevant in the news room. Yes technology has threatened our work as photojournalists however, personal development becomes key in this regard. Some of my colleagues have lost their jobs because they were not dynamic.*

Lindloom (2022) however, argues that, there is no need to force photojournalists to write stories just to remain relevant in the newsrooms. He asserts that writing requires a special kind of skills which photojournalists might not possess and therefore, they must not be forced to do what they have no interest in.

*—That would be —downright stupid to let photojournalists write. People have entered the professions for various*

*reasons, and I think they are two completely different abilities which should be kept apart, especially when it comes to writing* (Lindblom, 2022, p.15).

However, according to the respondents, writing of news and feature articles have become a key role of Ghanaian photojournalists in the newsroom.

#### **4.1.2 Online photo essays**

Another theme that emerged was creating of an online photo gallery and photo essays. Photojournalists make photo stories to share their editorial or journalistic work with the public. These documentary photography pieces are an excellent way to capture the attention of readers, especially in today's visual environment. Photojournalism does not always adhere to the same standards of perfection. Practitioners adhere to stringent picture editing limitations since their primary purpose is to distribute photographs honestly or provide a piece of information to the audience using pictures. As a result, they have less leeway in post-production. Excessive editing might affect the truth behind the photos. However, there is still a lot of space for creativity when it comes to producing a photo story. Below is an example of a photo essay created by the photojournalist of [myjoyonline.com](http://myjoyonline.com) in Ghana.



The screenshot shows the top of a mobile news application. At the top is a red header with the 'Jsy Online' logo and a search icon. Below the header, the article title '35 photos of the Arise Ghana demonstration' is displayed in large black text. Underneath the title, the source is listed as 'Source: David Andoh' and the timestamp is '29 June 2022 7:50pm'. A red circular icon with a white speaker symbol is followed by the text 'Listen to this article' and a waveform visualization. Below this are social media sharing icons for Listen, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Messenger, and Chat. The main content area features a large photograph of a protest with people in red shirts and a white flag, with a blue notification bell icon in the bottom left corner.

This block contains two screenshots from the photo essay. The top screenshot shows a group of protesters, with a woman in the foreground wearing a red shirt and a yellow cap, holding a yellow sign. The bottom screenshot shows a blue police vehicle with 'POLICE' written on its side, with a line of police officers standing behind it. Both screenshots have a blue notification bell icon in the bottom left corner.

This block contains two screenshots from the photo essay. The top screenshot shows a group of protesters, some wearing red shirts and some in uniform, walking on a street. The bottom screenshot shows a woman in a patterned top in the foreground, with other protesters in the background. Both screenshots have a blue notification bell icon in the bottom left corner.

This block contains two screenshots from the photo essay. The top screenshot shows a police officer in full riot gear, including a helmet and a shield, standing on a street. The bottom screenshot shows a person in a red shirt crouching on the ground near some debris, with a blue notification bell icon in the bottom left corner.

Figure 5: Sample of a photo essay

The photo essay above was accompanied by a brief write up which describes the story. It reads:

*—Members of the Arise Ghana group embarked on a two-day demonstration to express their displeasure about the difficult economic situation under the current government. The presumed peaceful demonstration turned chaotic when a misunderstanding between the police and the protestors led to the pelting of stones and firing of tear gas.*

The participants alluded to the fact that, they must always be creative to come with interesting photo essays each and every week. Topics for the photo essays are usually dependent on the trending topics of the week.

On this Participant 5 said that:

*The photo essays or gallery on the website is just like a newspaper column made for photojournalists. I am expected to upload interesting new photos every week. When I am lucky and there's a trending news, I follow it up to take pictures and upload them on the website. The pictures must be able to tell stories and attract attention. I did a photo essay on 'Green Ghana project'. I just went to green areas and I took beautiful pictures to create a sequence. I told a story about the importance of planting trees. I did this everyweek.*

The respondent also said that they are expected to upload photos every week but it becomes challenging when there isn't any interesting trending stories. However, they are able to come up with their own story ideas and topics. They go out on random days just to take pictures on the stories they want to tell. Participant 3 intimated that:

*I generate story ideas and then I will do photo essays on that particular story for our online platform. I take different angles or perspectives that can tell my stories. I just have to attach few paragraphs to the picture. I do that on regular basis. At times I visit the scene in the morning, afternoon and at night to understand the situation at different times. I named my work 'photos of the week'. This role makes me stay relevant at the news room because I produce new stories every week.*

Participant 2 added that:

*I have to find or generate story ideas every morning and work on them. It puts me on my toes. At times there are no regular schedule assignments from my boss, if I don't do something I might be irrelevant to the news room.*

#### **4.1.3 Short videos for social media**

With viewers increasingly preferring image-led digital channels to conventional print media and also opting videos over the written word, skills in video editing has become very crucial for professional photojournalists. Although shooting video is

completely different job that requires different skills, the respondents said it has been added to their responsibilities. According to Dermansky (2012) shooting video helps keep a photojournalist marketable as news media wants both stills and videos these days, and they want it for one price. If you can't do it, they take someone who can.

The respondents have the perception that, they must accept and adapt to changes and demands just to keep their jobs in the newsroom. According to participant 1, he needed to upskill and learn how to use new software technologies like Adobe Premiere Pro and Filmora to edit his videos. Participant 1 however, thinks that the hardest part of the situation is to decide whether to take pictures or videos at a given point in time.

*Editing of videos have now become my responsibility. It was extremely difficult because I knew nothing about it but I am happy to have learnt a new skill. The software was quite sophisticated but I didn't want them to employ a new person. They kept on asking questions about short videos for our social media platforms. The only problem now is when I have to decide to either take still pictures or videos. When I stop to take videos, I miss some of the best pictures I would have loved to take.*

The practice of photojournalism relies on well-known technology and has now become more of a multiskilled profession (Bock, 2011). Lindlom (2022) argues that photojournalists have to be skilled in photography and, even more, essential to know how to produce videos quickly to online platforms. This experience was shared by all the

Participants interviewed for the research. It was established that photojournalists in Ghana must be multiskilled in order to remain relevant in the newsroom.

Participant 4 alluded to the fact that, virtually everyone in the newsroom is taking pictures from the field. Therefore, the boundaries of photojournalism has been encroached by multiskilled journalists. A lazy photojournalist will be useless to the newsroom and eventually dismissed. Photojournalists must therefore keep up with the pace of the ever changing media technology. Video editing has become important because of the constant demand of content on social media. According to the findings, news contents are made in short skits and shared on the various social media platforms by the photojournalists. Participant 3 posits that:

*I take pictures and videos and put them together for our social media followers. Interestingly, I get more interactions on my videos than the pictures I send. At times I see my short news videos trend but the pictures don't. I see a better future in videography now.*

Aside the demands from the newsroom, Participant 2 said that video editing skills provide assignment opportunities outside of journalism. Corporate and Non-governmental organizations assign content creators to help them tell their stories using short videos. Additionally, photojournalists are confronted with gigs like marriage ceremonies, social events and gatherings etc. These assignments fetch additional money for multiskilled photojournalists.

*I get wedding gigs almost every weekend because of my ability to take pictures and videos as well as editing them. I must admit that I have become more interested in these gigs because of the money I get. Participant 2 added*

## **RQ2. What challenges do photojournalists face in their practice?**

Research question two sought to discuss the diverse challenges photojournalists face in their practice in Ghana. It is already established in literature that photojournalists in other jurisdictions are confronted by plethora of challenges in their line of duties (eg. Rosenblum, 2007; Hadland et al. 2015; Lowrey, 2002; Reich and Klein-Avraham, 2014). This research question however, sought to examine the challenges Ghanaian photojournalists face in their line of duties. The findings were categorized by identifying similarities in the responses of the participants to put them into themes.

### **4.2 Challenges of photojournalists in their practice**

#### ***4.2.1 Stigmatized Professional Identity***

Professional identity can serve as an organizing framework for an individual's self-concept (Hughes, 1958; Stryker, 1987). What this means is that the individual's professional identity is a focal point of their larger self-system. As Collin and Young (1992: 8) explained, in today's workplace, an individual's profession provides a context of meaning within which a life is lived and through which life is interpreted by others'. Through the construction of a professional identity, individuals are able to claim purpose and meaning for themselves, and explicate how they contribute to work. The response from the participants suggest that photojournalists feel stigmatized by their colleagues in the news room by referring to them as 'MY PHOTOGRAPHER'. They identify them as ordinary photographers instead of photojournalists.

Practitioners' responses showed clearly that they are not excited by such an identity. They find that as a demotion. -Mere photographer. This unwanted tag will

create bad working relationships and affect productivity. According to Goffman (1963), a stigmatized identity is one in which members of a group are assumed to be tainted or inferior, resulting in a blemished identity that prevents easy inclusion in society. This assumption of inferiority by members of society may result in poor outcomes such as economic or interpersonal discrimination (Crocker and Major, 1989).

Participant 5, had this to say;

*When I go for assignments with a reporter, the reporter is regarded as the leader for some reasons. So they always write the stories and ask for pictures or images from me. They regard me as a mere photographer not a journalist. Reporters introduce me to event organizers as their photographers. —Oh this is my photographer, DAN. I cannot say your photographer! I am your colleague, I am a photojournalist, I have had bad relationships with reporters because of such disrespect they show to me in front of people. Even our leaders disregard our work, they think we are useless. They are always trying to overshadow us. Even opportunities made for photojournalists are snatched for reporters. When there are photo conferences, you will see senior reporters with pocket cameras there. They think we are just photographers, we are useless.*

Participant 2, shared his sentiments on disregard for photojournalists by colleagues;

*I have issues with some colleagues in the news room, we go on assignment together and they will go and tell the organizers that ‘my photographer is here’. For me I will*

*correct you immediately, I am not your photographer, we are colleagues.*

Stigmas marginalize individuals by reducing their identity to one-dimensional characteristics (Prasad et al., 2007). Therefore, stigmatized professional identity affect the behavioral pattern of workers at the workplace. Participant 3, believes he has to put twice as much effort as the other reporters to become relevant at the work place.


*It is about the perception of photojournalism, the system is already against us, I have to put twice as much effort as the reporter to become relevant. What I have done over the years is to add value to my work, I don't just take pictures and dump them on my colleagues to write stories on them. I write them myself and I do that well than some of the reporters. This makes them realize that I am a photojournalist and I am different from a photographer.*

This Participant 3 perhaps confirms that individuals often evaluate their worth and competence through the lens of their identities as suggested by Goffman (1963). The respondents' effort to work hard to be seen as relevant to his organization also confirms Hovden (2012) argument that individuals working in disrespected fields have to invest more of themselves in their work and overcome stigmatization. According to the respondents, the stigma becomes a challenge for photojournalists because it creates inferiority complex, low self-esteem and reduces their confidence in the newsroom.



#### **4.2.2 Formal Photojournalism Education**

Hadland et al. (2015) examined the education level of sampled practitioners from the six continents of the world. They discovered that Photographers are generally highly educated. The majority has tertiary education and many have higher degrees, however, only a handful of them studied journalism as a course. Hadland et al. (2015) found out that about only 17% of the participants in Africa had studied journalism. In this study it emerged from the data that most of the respondents lack formal photojournalism education, partly because there is no program like that in Ghana and partly because they developed the interest later in their lives. This confirms Hadland et al. (2015) findings. On photojournalism education this is what participant 4, had to say;



*I have no formal education in photojournalism, I did political science but I loved sports journalism so I was working as a sports producer. I realized that getting photos of female footballers or athletes to accompany my stories was always difficult. I decided to get a camera and take pictures when I visited the stadium. I fell in love with it and now it has become what I do. I had some male friends who taught me few things about the camera and that was it.*

The response from participant 4 confirms Hadland et.al. (2015) assertion that photojournalists maybe highly educated but in different humanity courses, not photojournalism. Photojournalists do not have access to formal photojournalism education where they will learn new ideas to improve on their skill set and become even more relevant. For instance, if a Ghanaian photojournalist is required to learn new skills,

there is no academic institution to facilitate that. Most of the respondents learned through personal practice or apprenticeship. Unlike other genres of Journalism, schools in Ghana do not offer photojournalism as a major course, hence, practitioners are unable to improve academically.

Participant 5 also claimed that;

*I was a photographer, I went for an apprenticeship but not a formal school. I lacked the academic bit of the job, for instance how to write lengthy news and feature stories. I was clueless about that. I didn't know anything about story angles. I had poor interview skills as well. My colleague journalists were taught all these in school. How do I catch up with them? I think that's why we face disrespect in the newsroom.*

Participant 4 and Participant 5's responses suggest that most photojournalists learn on the job either through in-house training provision, from their peers, or from their mentors. With such training, they will only be acquainted with framing and releasing the shutter button. This findings suggests that photojournalists may have the skills as photographers, however, they are not educated or trained as journalists. Many of the practitioners learn the journalistic practice on the job to become photojournalists. Consequently, they struggle to have a full grasp of their duties as photojournalists.

One respondent knew nothing about photojournalism prior to his employment. He said he always saw beautiful pictures in Newspapers so he knew that photographers can work in the print media. He applied and got the job as a photographer of the company, later he read about photojournalism and then he started incorporating journalistic duties.

*I was not employed as a photojournalist, I came here as the photographer of the company. I am a trained photographer from Tema Technical Institute. Participant 2 said.*

This excerpt could suggest that the ways or procedure by which photographers are employed by media institutions contribute to the stigmatization which was earlier discussed. The findings suggests employers do not hire them as photojournalists, perhaps, they do not regard them as such. Their colleague journalists do not regard them as –colleagues| partly because of how they were employed, their academic background and partly because of their little understand of journalism. Some of the photojournalists are challenged due to lack of understanding of their journalistic duties especially when everybody can take pictures.

#### **4.2.3 Gender Stereotypes**

Photography is still overwhelmingly dominated by men, though there is some progress (Estrin, 2017). While women have broken boundaries throughout the history of photojournalism, there are still many obstacles and problems that serve to oppress the female voice and presence, whether through explicit harassment and discrimination or more subtle forms of oppression (2020, Lough). Women represent an infinitesimal fraction of professional photojournalists and are concentrated into particular segments of the industry, such as fashion and entertainment. (Campbell and Critcher 2017; Hadland, Campbell, and Lambert 2015).

*Honestly when I started it was very difficult for my parents to accept that job. I think they didn't really know much about sports photography. They asked me how many successful*

*women have I see in photojournalism. My mother saw it too masculine and so she wasn't happy about it. Probably they are harboring things and they can't tell me. It's possible because they are expecting me to get paid since I am working but I am not making any money out of it now. Participant 4 said.*

This excerpt above suggests that people identify photojournalism as a man's job in Ghana and therefore they find it weird to see women in it. This agrees with Thomas (2007) argument that women have been discouraged historically from pursuing photojournalism because it was not considered or identified as an appropriate occupation for women. She further argues that the profession continues to be lonesome and risky for women who face both sexism and physical danger at work. Women will have to convince their family members and other friends just to take a role in photojournalism.

Hadland and Lambert (2018) suggest that only a few women will take up full-time employment in this area in the future given the structural biases, historical underrepresentation and widespread self-employment among women in the sector. Sherrow (1996) defines femininity as "the issue of what is feminine in appearance and behavior" (i.e. being attractive, carefully groomed, and submissive, nurturing women). Female photojournalists are required to put up some male inclinations as a way of surviving in the field to avoid being categorized as being too feminine in a masculine environment. Women who act like one of the males and learn how to assimilate into a masculine hegemonic framework are more likely to be treated positively by their male coworkers (Kian, 2007) other than that, they are identified as timid or lethargic.

*I now dress like a man when I am going to work and people have started calling me ‘Tom girl’. I don’t know what caused the sudden change of my dressing style. I felt that was how I will be accepted as a photojournalist. Respondent LINDA said.*

This excerpt from Respondent Linda confirms that women photojournalists will have to portray some character or traits of their men counterparts, maybe in behavior or fashion. The dress code, attitudes, and professional careers of these women were all in line with the previously established male career norms (Le Feuvre, 1999; Schoch & Ohl, 2011). Women in photography are required to comply with and embrace the masculine order or ethos of the profession as a means of survival, according to the comments of respondents. Women who are unable to portray such features are identified as timid and unserious. To live in the field, women will do anything, including abandoning their previous identities and adopting new ones, or negotiating their identities. It has thus become a challenge for the others who can’t transform to manly features.

Participant 6 who is a sports photojournalist said because of modern technology, photojournalists don’t have to run or chase the athlete just to get a good image. Photojournalists can be stationed at a good position for long and still get quality pictures at the end of the day, which has made the work easier. Therefore the energy required for her job has reduced, however, people still require women to be strong and aggressive to become photojournalists. Participant 6 had this to say;

*Now, I don't need so much energy to work as a sports photojournalist, at first we saw photographers chasing the players all over, just to get good pictures. I guess that was the reason people regarded the job as too masculine. There is better technology to take better pictures even from afar, so I don't need to run. I don't use so much energy when I go to the stadium to work, I remain calm and creative that's all.*

Furthermore, the respondents talked about the issue of competition with their male counterparts and how the men always see their output as better. This makes the women doubt their competencies and always compare their works with the men. Participant 4 said that;

*I had a lot of criticism when I started, people were saying my pictures are not nice and I can do better than that. They were comparing me to pictures to the men's. I was a bit laid back because I couldn't overcome my fears of taken bad pictures. I felt lonely because at some point I was the only girl on the pitch taking pictures. When I see the men take pictures, I ask myself if I am also taking something good. It is a bit intimidating anytime people compare mine to theirs.*

These excerpts show how domineering men are in the field of photojournalism in Ghana. According to the findings men are automatically regarded as better photojournalists than women. Few women who are there are still facing obstacles and problems that serve to oppress the female voice and presence. Participant 2, believes

that some of his female colleagues feel isolated and less motivated because of the stereotypes and disregard they face in and outside the newsroom.

#### **4.2.4 Competition with other Reporters**

Rosenblum (2007) asserts that with the advent of the cell phone camera, electronic imaging has become even more widely available and omnipresent, and photojournalists may find their professional expertise threatened or even supplanted by amateurs with cell phones who happened to be present at significant events. Technology has allowed news organizations to withdraw major outposts that marked their traditional involvement and commitment to photojournalism (Bock, 2008). As news organizations cut staff and budgets, it is now common for a multimedia reporter equipped with a simple digital camera, or even a smartphone, to be forced to do it all; gather information, take photographs, write articles, and shoot and edit video (Bock, 2008).

According to the findings Newsrooms now rely on images provided by staff reporters. Every reporter is now obliged to take pictures of events they cover, with their smart phones or tablets. They do not have to be accompanied by professional photographers. This take away the traditional duty of the resident photojournalists.

Participant 2 claimed that;

*In my company it is made compulsory for every reporter to take pictures, they said this is the golden age of photojournalism. There's no single story in the media without a picture accompanying it. So we always need pictures. We don't publish stories that don't have pictures so*

*everybody in the company now is a photojournalist, they take their own pictures with their phones. They are compelled by the company so they go for assignments alone and they take their own pictures with their smart phones.*

Participant 1, added that;

*One of the things that is been encouraged lately is that reporters are asked to take pictures with their phones when they go for assignments. The reporters are encouraged to take pictures with their phones. They have rather bought Tablets for the reporters to take pictures for their stories. Media institutions are not too concerned about the quality of the pictures or who took the pictures. Once the picture can accompany the story that's it.*

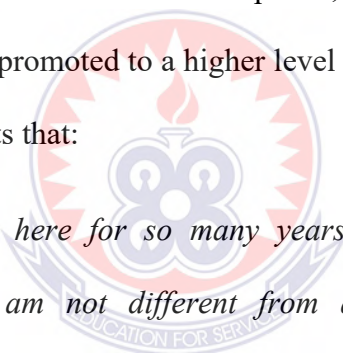
These excerpts from the respondents suggest that institutions still understand the key role photography plays in news media. However, they do not prioritize the services of professional photographers anymore. They have given the roles of photojournalists to their staff reporters, which means that they are not too concerned about the quality of images they produce. As postulated by the respondents, the staff reporters do not have the required training to take good pictures. The professional photojournalists' services are not regarded as essential anymore. According to the respondents, most of their colleagues have been sacked, others have entirely lost interest in the field.



The participation of non-professionals in the practice of photojournalism is on the increase especially with the availability and opportunities created by the digital camera which are affordable and relatively easy to operate (Brown, 2013). This has affected professional Ghanaian photojournalists' chances of getting employed by media institutions. As Brown (2013) asserts, democratization has affected the number of full time photojournalists and their replacement by other sources of visual materials.

#### ***4.2.5 No job promotion for photojournalists***

In this study all respondents mentioned that, unlike their colleague reporters, who can rise from a junior reporter to a senior reporter, to a sub-editor, to an editor, etc. Photojournalists do not get promoted to a higher level on the organizational structure. For example, Participant 2 posits that:



*I've worked here for so many years, my position hasn't changed. I am not different from an entry level news reporter. I have seen young reporters who walked in here some few years ago and have become bigger than me. In other countries I would have risen from an entry level photojournalist to a senior photojournalist and to senior photo-editor in the news room.*

Participant 3 added that:

*We do not rise on the organogram of the company and it's pathetic. A young graduate can get into the job today as a*

*reporter or news presenter and become bigger than you in few years. I think this is one of the reasons our colleagues do not respect us in the newsroom, because he has become better and more respected than you in the newsroom. He goes out with you on an assignment and he introduces you to people as ‘my photographer’. I get very peeved when I am introduced like that, I am no one’s photographer. I am a photojournalist for the organization. This tells us how less important we are to the organization.*

This suggests that there is a conscious or unconscious discrimination against photojournalists with regards to job promotion. According to England (1992, chap. 2.) such discrimination is caused by prejudice, stereotypes and statistic discrimination. Discrimination can affect career opportunity and long-run wages when wage growth relates to initial placement (Peterson & Saporka, 2004). Therefore, if a photojournalist remains in an entry level position, there is a possibility that his wages will also remain the same.

Workplace discrimination is associated with such negative consequences as stress, fatigue, demoralization, loss of professional commitment, tension and conflicts at work, and resignation (Zarikhafer et al., 2022). The respondents believe that their static position in the newsroom affects the professional identity of photojournalism practice in the sense that it makes them disrespected by their peers in the newsroom. Hence, their output as photojournalists are affected.

#### 4.2.6 Post-traumatic stress disorder

Photojournalists are increasingly disclosing the negative consequences their profession has on their physical, mental, and family lives (Aiken, 1996; Fitzgerald, 1989), particularly while documenting violent events (Ricchiardi, 1999; Ochberg, 1996). Stories regarding these impacts are extremely important, because newsroom culture of stoicism, impartiality, and the "desire to get the job done" might inhibit news workers from admitting to anguish caused by job-related exposure to traumatic events (Ricchiardi, 1999). The respondents discussed issues that usually affect their psychological wellbeing but most of them failed to regard those situations as signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to seek for medical help. Participant 2 believes that:

*I was manhandled and it was very bad, I had to think about a lot to ascertain whether this job is worth it. Most especially when I was not making enough money from it. It was difficult to see the culprit assault me and walk away free. The fact that they could do it and be assured that nothing at all will happen to them. That made me think a lot every morning. I have seen a lot of horrible scenes on the job, dead bodies, accidents etc., it takes a while to overcome my emotions eventually. I ponder over it for a while and I get back to work. However, I have stopped eating meat because of the things I have seen on the job. Accidents, fire outbreaks, dead bodies etc.*

The above extract suggests that, the respondents go through some sort of psychological problems after covering horrific or disturbing news like accidents, fire outbreaks and the others. However, they do not get any help from their workplace. They forced to overcome their emotions within some days without any help. It was revealed that some practitioners face illness to skip work the next morning. Pyevich et al. (2003) looked at symptoms of PTSD among photojournalists. Results showed that photojournalists actually experienced PTSD at a particular level. Some suffered symptoms of actual PTSD, but a larger minority suffered from some form of trauma-related symptoms. This consequently breeds fear in the practitioners. They become picky or choosy in news events to cover. PTSD has become a challenge for Ghanaian photojournalists due to lack of proper treatments or help.

#### ***4.2.7 Disposable Asset***

According to Hartley (2015), professional photojournalists and their jobs are under threat, and there are a few explanations to that, one of the most popular being that everyone now has access to some kind of camera capable of producing good, broadcastable quality images and video, further blurring the lines between amateurs and professionals. News organizations have become willing to replace professional photojournalists with iPhone-armed reporters, wire service photos, and citizen-shot photography (Allan, 2013; Hartley, 2007; Örnebring, 2013; Romenesko, 2013).

*In newspapers, photographers and photographic departments are frequently the first to go, at times suffering disproportionate cutbacks, especially in America (Mortensen, 2014; Anderson, 2013).*

Patrick and Allan (2013) said that due to democratization of image media and strong budget demands, many newsrooms undervalue the importance of maintaining a full-time professional photo department. In the digital age, photographic images are ubiquitous, a commodity widely available and shared through social media. Almost everyone owns a mobile phone with a camera, allowing individuals to capture and share important occurrences in real time (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2011). The advantages of digital photography contribute to the perception, even among some news executives that anybody can take news photos (Johnson, 2015; Klein-Avraham & Reich, 2016; Lydersen, 2013). Since anyone can take pictures, news companies are increasingly prepared to replace professional photographers with iPhone-armed reporters and citizen-shot photography (Allan, 2013; Hartley, 2007; Ornebring, 2013).

The four of the respondents who are employed by media institutions were the only photojournalists in their various news organizations. The remaining two who are freelancers recounted the struggles they have gone through in search of job opportunities. This is what participant 2 had to say;

*I worked more than a decade as a freelance, the companies I worked for didn't employ me. I sent pictures and stories almost every week, they used them but I wasn't employed. I didn't make any money from that, it was a sacrificial job. I was happy to see my name in the Newspaper as the photojournalist. I got broke a lot of times but I was driven by my passion. So imagine working for a decade without any financial gains.*

Participant 3 claims;

*I have stopped bothering about job security, because I know the situation of photojournalism. To be honest with you, I am ready for anything I worked for 7 good years for free, the companies used my pictures but I was not paid a penny. This is the only time I have gotten a full time job. I am not threatened because I have decided to do other things. In this big company I am the only photojournalist here, it should tell you the situation.*

These excerpts suggest that it is extremely difficult for photojournalists to get full time jobs in Ghana. The respondents worked for free in most part of their careers. This hugely affected their financial statuses. Participant 3 suggested that for photojournalists to remain relevant and not lose their jobs they must pay attention to personal development, be versatile and work twice as hard as their colleague in the news room.

*I don't just take pictures, I work as a writer as well, and I write my stories so I remain relevant in the news room. Yes technology has threatened our work as photojournalists however, personal development becomes key in this regard. Some of my colleagues have lost their jobs because they were not dynamic.*

On financial crises, the aforementioned excerpts give a clue on the situation of the practitioners. Images are readily available on social media platforms for free. People do

not see the need to buy images of pay photojournalist huge amount of money when they can get them for free. The respondents who are employed by media organizations said their salaries can never be compared to their colleague reporters and they find that very discouraging.

*You are a journalist as well but you are seen as a different kind of person. I am not considered for any higher position in the institution irrespective of how good I am. I am regarded as a 'photo guy'. There's no financial growth in that regard. Unlike your colleague reporters who have the chance to rise to become chief editor or even a manager. There's so much discrimination when it comes to financial benefits. Some reporters who met me here are even doing better with their finances because they gained promotions. The truth is once you become a photojournalist, it seems you are caged or boxed at one place, and there is no promotion or no room for growth. – Respondent DAN said.*

This excerpt confirms how stigmatized professional identity is affecting the financial statuses of photojournalists in the newsroom. They are not regarded as journalists who deserve equal benefits like their colleagues in the newsroom. A reporter can rise through the ranks within some short period of time to become senior reporter or senior editor.

The participants confirmed that they are not considered for any higher vacant position. Therefore, they hardly gain financial growth or improvement in their salaries. The unemployed or freelance photojournalists on the other hand recounted their financial

difficulties. The photographers have to move from news photography into studios or weddings and funerals to make money. Participant 4 intimated;

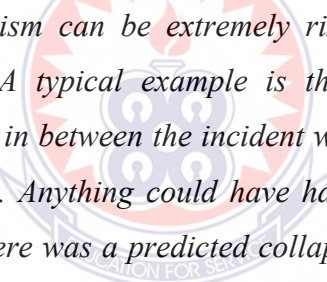
*I do sports photography and I don't make anything out of it. I see my pictures all over the place with my logo but nothing comes out of it. At times I expect the teams to help me with something small because I get them good pictures of their players, but no. For now I am doing sports photography because of the passion I have for it. I have never made a penny out of it. I have been taken weddings and birthday photo-shoot to make some coins. Even with that, it doesn't come easy for me, people recommend the men more than the women. They don't trust our competencies. People ask questions about my competencies when I tell them that I am a photojournalist. They don't believe I can take their wedding.*

This excerpt suggests that unemployed photojournalists are financially burdened since media institutions are neither ready to employ them nor willing to purchase their works. The fact that they are able to make money from covering events or programs suggests that they could possibly abandon news photography completely. Women face even more difficult challenges as compared to their male counterpart. This confirms Hadland and Barnett (2018) findings that Women in photojournalism face demanding circumstances than their male counterparts. They posit that women photojournalists are over-represented in the lowest income brackets and under-represented in the highest income brackets.



#### 4.2.8 *Physical Risk and Safety*

Photographers as a whole feel they are extremely vulnerable to physical risk, though this is not the only risk to which they are subject. The risk of physical injury or death is felt strongly by all genders, almost all forms of photography and by all ages (Hadland, Campbell & Lambert, 2015). Also, Hadland et al. (2015) argue that the risk of physical harm or death is felt deeply by most photographers believing that it will increase over time. The respondents are concerned about high risk of injury or death, failure to provide for families and a decrease demand for work. According to the respondents, they face a number of risky circumstances on the job, especially physical abuse, accidents, depression and job losses.



*Photojournalism can be extremely risky depending on the assignment. A typical example is the June 9 disaster at Circle, I was in between the incident working, and there was fire outbreak. Anything could have happened to me on that day. Also, there was a predicted collapse of buildings on the Weija hill so I decided to go there and take pictures to tell the story. I was nearly hit by two big rocks from nowhere. Aside that, people have some bad attitude towards camera, the moment they see camera on them they start to ask questions or try to mob you. Photojournalism is risky but I do not have any insurance or risk allowance. I do not feel safe at times. It is very challenging to work in some places in Accra– Participant 2*

Participant 4 also had this to say:

*It's very risky and safety is not guarantee. A reporter can hide somewhere and file their reports. Some decide to*

*monitor proceedings at home. For photojournalist, I have to be at the scene with my camera, and everyone can see me. I've been between twice on the job. When there are community conflicts or chaos, you need to be there to take pictures. Your bosses don't care about how risky the place was. I lost my camera, I was severely assaulted. I promised myself to prioritize my safety first in future. Until my security is guaranteed I will not go to some places because it's just not worth it. My company must fully guarantee my safety before I decide to go to some places with my camera. In the event of something happening to me, I must be rest assured that my wife and my children will not struggle.*

This excerpts discuss the risky nature of photojournalism in Ghana. The practitioners are not insured and therefore their safety must be paramount to them. As participant 4 said, he is not ready to perform roles that he finds risky. This affects his productivity. Aside the physical risks, the respondents talked about psychological risks they encounter as photojournalists.

*I still go to my parents for money to eat. I feel embarrassed about it. At times I shed some tears. I had to convince them about photojournalism, my mother wasn't happy about it when I started. I know they are harboring something but they are not telling me. There was a time I thought of quitting, I couldn't see where money will come from honestly. My parents are expecting I bring something home when I go out to work. I feel I am risking my life on a bad career. – Participant 5 said.*

This suggests that some photojournalists are scared about their future and the fact that they might not be able to take care of themselves and their families if they continue pursuing photojournalism. The respondents believe that at their age they should be capable of providing for themselves and their family. Their inability to do that makes them depressed which eventually affects their work output as professional photojournalists.

#### ***4.2.9 Quality of tools and equipment***

The next challenge that emerged from the interview was lack of quality tools and equipment for photojournalists. It is established in the previous chapters that technology plays an instrumental role in photojournalism practice. It has always played a central role in shaping and reshaping photojournalism (Brennen, 2010; Newton, 2008).

Technological advancements bring about changes that lead to ever-increasing disparities, a phenomenon known as the digital divide (Christensen, 2013). Practitioners must therefore catch up with the pace to remain relevant and competitive in the industry. The responses suggest that, a photographer is as good as the quality of his camera. This means that photojournalists need better equipment to produce better or quality images. Canon EOS 70D which was released in 2015 will most likely produce pictures with less quality as compared to Canon EOS R3 released in 2021.



Figure 6: A photojournalist with a camera of high quality



Figure 7: A photojournalist with a camera of less quality

On this, participant 2 claimed:

*One of the major problem for us is our inability to buy quality and modern equipment to work. If you are not making any better income how can you purchase a good camera. So our works are always below par if you compare it to other countries. I have used this camera for years and nobody has talked about it. For them any picture goes whether it is good or not. Once the picture can accompany the story that's it. We can't compete for international awards because we don't produce quality pictures. I submitted my works to MTN Ghana Media awards and they were all rejected. They said the pictures were not quality enough for the purpose. Nobody in Ghana got nominated so the category was scrapped.*

Participant 4 added that:

*I used to compare my works with international photographers a lot. I realized the difference is just the quality of the camera and not necessarily the angles or the framing. I cannot afford a modern camera because I don't make enough money from this job. 2022 models can cost between GHC 15,000 and GHC 30,000.*

The respondents also said that, they need better computers to edit their pictures before distribution. They are however provided with less powerful desktop computers in the newsroom. Their computers are unable to use modern photo and video editing software. These excerpts obviously suggest that Ghanaian photojournalists are technologically challenged, therefore the quality of the works they produced is questionable. Pictures have increasingly become necessary to news media in Ghana, however, the responses posit that news editors are not too concerned about the quality of

pictures that accompany their stories. This implies that non-professionals, reporters or amateurs with pocket cameras and smartphones can take pictures that will impress news editors. All they need is a picture to accompany the stories, disregarding its quality. Consequentially, the relevance of the photojournalists in the newsroom will be doubted.

#### ***4.2.10 Issues of Press Freedom***

A free press is essential to a democratic society. It has been argued that liberty is dependent on press freedom (Luther, 2010). Provisions for the freedom and independence of the media in Ghana are clearly stated in chapter twelve, article 162 of the 1992 fourth republican constitution of Ghana. Clause one states explicitly that, freedom and independence of the media are hereby guaranteed.

Despite journalists' critical role in informing the public, journalists are sometimes harassed for merely performing their jobs. According to RSF (2022), the safety of journalists has worsened dramatically in recent years. Security officers attacked reporters documenting the success of anti-Covid-19 measures in 2020. And political officials are once again threatening investigative journalists with death. Almost all incidences of law enforcement agents assaulting journalists go uninvestigated. RSF (2022) reported that a reporter working for the Ghana News Agency (GNA), was attacked by NPP supporters in Ajumako, a town 120 km west of Accra, on 2 May. Approached while filming an altercation between several NPP members, he was accused of being a member of the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) and was pushed to the ground. Ghana is ranked 60<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries in 2022 World Press Freedom index, has 30 places lower in the 2022 World Press Freedom index (BBC, 2022).



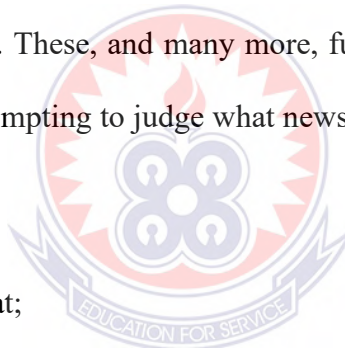
Figure 8: According to Yen.com, Ghanaian photojournalist was subjected to physical abuse in Obuasi.

The respondents mentioned that they usually get manhandled by many local Ghanaians when they start to film or take newsworthy pictures. They believe that press freedom for photojournalists is way lower than their other colleague journalists. This emerges because people have not come to terms with the fact that photojournalists are journalists and not ordinary photographers. Photojournalists are always confronted with the famous question –Why are you filming us? by local people. On this, Participant 1 postulated:

*For me, there is no press freedom in photojournalism, it's just a cliché. I personally believe there is nothing like freedom in photojournalism. I have been assaulted on two occasions. A military man assaulted me because I was taken photos of the president during the 56th Independence Day celebration. He used the Taser on me at the parade ground.*

*It went viral, the military high command had to step in and the GJA came in to negotiate on my behalf. They assault us and later refer to it as a minimum force. Then they go scot free.*

This excerpt suggest that photojournalists' freedom isn't suppressed by only ordinary or local Ghanaians but also national security officials who are expected to know better. Accredited photojournalists have the right to film or take pictures of news worthy events without hecklings. According to Nieman Reports (1952), censorship of photographic news begins in our courts and extends all the way down to Military, Police and the Department of Justice, firefighters, policemen, private residents, industries, labor union members, and so on. These, and many more, function as self-appointed censors at the source of the news, attempting to judge what news the public should or should not get (Costa, 1999).



Participant 2 also added that;

*People have some sort of apathy towards us. Once they see me with my camera they become harsh on me. I have been eaten several times on the field. We don't have press freedom, especially politicians, I have been assaulted by them on several occasions. When they are fighting or doing something illegal and you capture them, they will assault you and destroy your camera. They need to understand that their quarrels can escalate and result in murder or destruction of properties. I was attacked in Jamestown four years ago, I took the case to court but nothing came out of it. The case was adjourned on several occasions till my bosses lost the interest in the case. I didn't get any compensation.*





*Figure 9: A picture of people mishandling a photojournalist*

There is no organization in Ghana that does not consider images and press photographers when promoting initiatives that are important to them. Yet a week hardly goes by without a violent attack on a press photographer who is calmly documenting a news assignment in the public interest. This prevents Ghanaian photojournalists from covering stories from some locations in the country. The freedom of Ghanaian photojournalists is almost always infringed upon.

#### 4.2.11 Copyright Infringements

Copyright laws in Ghana and across the world offer the author the exclusive right to perform, reproduce, distribute, and exhibit the creative work to the public (Sunder, 2006). The significance of copyrights is to ensure that the owners get economic rewards for their work (Feather, 2019). Copyright material must be used with authorization from the owners, and the protective right takes effect immediately when a record in the form of a material is created (Sunder, 2006). A work protected by copyright does not have to be registered with any government institution in order to gain legal protection. This is so because copyright is concerned with the copying of actual words or other physical material, as opposed to reproduction of ideas (Jantjies, 2007).

Despite these protective measures the respondents said that one of their biggest challenges of their work is copyright infringement. The respondents mentioned that their works are easily used by people without permission or referencing. This confirms Haynes (2018) assertion that technology has helped people to claim people's work as theirs or increased issues of copyright in the media industry. Photojournalists earn their living based on the compensation they receive from their photographs (Mailot, 2019). On this, Participant 2 posits that:

*My pictures went viral but nobody knows I took those pictures, for example when a Member of Parliament Carlos Ahenkorah snatched the ballot papers in court, my viral picture told that story. But nobody knows I took the pictures because people just copied the picture and shared it as if it was theirs. My pictures go viral but my name doesn't because nobody references me or takes permission from. I virtually gain nothing from it and affects me a lot. Social*

*Media was made in the west but people don't use it to steal intellectual properties.*

Ghanaian photojournalists are unable to sell their pictures online as a result of rampant infringements of copyright laws. When people do not pay for an image, photojournalists are not receiving compensation. Therefore practitioners are challenged with financial difficulties (Haynes et.al, 2018). According to the respondents some Ghanaians regard their works as mere pictures and therefore it should be used without any cost.

Participant 1 also added that:

*Nobody is willing to buy photos in Ghana, they just pick them up and use them. I remember a big company wanted some of my photos, I told them they will have to pay, they said —Eii just photo? I said yes, this is an intellectual property. People don't value our work, they think it is just photos. Anybody can take the pictures and share. They don't see the picture as someone's work output.*

Ghanaian photojournalists' overall output will be affected because they are not rewarded for their efforts. Lack of compensation affects people's attitude to work. Unlike music movies and other forms of intellectual properties, it is difficult to prove ownership of images without watermark logos. Unfortunately some logos and watermarks can be covered with another logo or cleared completely. The images below gives a typical example of how photojournalist's images are stolen by others without permission or

credit. One with watermarked signature, the other doesn't. Photojournalists must prove ownership of his intellectual property which is stolen.



Figure 10: Two images, one with \_originator's inscription the other with no originator's inscriptionss

Infringement of photojournalists intellectual is on rampant because the respondents find it difficult to seek for legal redress. They find the legal processes cumbersome and time waste which would not result to anything positive. Participant 2 intimated that:

*I am not interested in taking my issues to court. When I was assaulted by violent people, I suffered injuries and my expensive camera was damaged. I took it the court but it was a complete waste of time and energy. After continuous adjournment of my case, I got tired with the back and forth. I*

*was just wasting money for nothing. I don't think I will go to court for copyright issues in Ghana. I will waste my time.*

This excerpt suggests that Ghanaian photojournalists don't have confidence in the Ghanaian court system, in terms of protection of intellectual properties. They will rather go through the challenge than wasting additional money and time in the courtroom to seek for redress.

### **RQ3. What are the perspectives of photojournalists on the future of the practice?**

The effects of the unending digital and technological changes have made the future of photojournalism extremely difficult to predict. The increasing connectivity and the growing use of new technologies have indisputably affected the professional boundaries of photojournalism (Caitlin & Allan, 2013; Hadland, Lambert, & Campbell, 2016), photojournalism's professional role has instead become even more destabilized (Caitlin & Allan, 2013; Hadland et al., 2016). Some photojournalists have changed fields, from journalism (Solaroli, 2015, 2016) because the diverse challenges that emanated. The research question four sort to unravel the perceptions of Ghanaian photojournalists on the future of the practice in Ghana. Participants' perspectives of the future of photojournalism practice are categorized into the following themes:

## **4.3 Photojournalists' perspectives on the future of photojournalism in Ghana**

### ***4.3.1 A shift to event photography***

The respondents alluded to the fact that news photojournalism practice will be more and more democratic due to the continuous emergence of new photo technology. Therefore, news organizations might not depend on professional photojournalists for

pictures. As photojournalism becomes democratic, citizen journalism will grow hence news pictures will become readily available for use as and when they happen. Contrary to the findings of Hadland et al. (2015) where photojournalists valued their work and remained positive and optimistic about the future, Ghanaian photojournalists are pessimistic about the future of news photography practice in Ghana. More than two-thirds of the respondents mentioned the imminent switch from news photography to fashion programs, awards shows, music events, parties, wedding and funerals. On this participant 4 said that;

*The financial burdens on me is way too much. I love to be a journalist but I always question myself if it is worth. I make no money from news photography, even till date. I am a woman and I need money to take care of at least my basic needs. I literally depend on the gigs I get when I take pictures for event organizers. Every weekend I get either a wedding or birthday shoot. I don't see myself in photojournalism in the next couple of years. I love photography but I need money so I will do another genre of it, maybe a wedding photographer.*

The excerpt suggests that photojournalists would more likely switch to areas where they can make money from their hard works. It is already established in the findings that in Ghana, news pictures are wanted for free. Practitioners make close to nothing from their hard works due to an incessant infringement of copyrights. Hence, there's an increased financial pressure on the practitioners. Most photojournalists are

likely to prioritize events where they will make money rather than news events where they will work for peanuts or nothing at all. According to participant 3, he recently spend most of his time editing pictures and videos of events he has covered instead of generating story ideas for the newsroom. This suggests that participant 3's attention is gradually shifting from his assigned duties in the newsroom to the gigs that bring him money.

*I have not decided to leave the newsroom yet, but I don't see my future here. It's like I will switch to mainstream photography for obvious reasons. There are many people in mainstream photography but there is space for all of us because people are organizing events week in and week out. I feel more welcomed there, now I spend a lot of time working on projects from the events I cover.*

The widespread of photography devices have made all genres of the field quite democratic. However, unlike news journalism, the high demand of event photography comes with financial rewards. In order to release themselves from the financial burdens, news practitioners will most like prefer event photography to news photography.

*I see more photojournalists at events organized by bigger institutions, they take pictures and submit to the institutions for their money. They are not interested in news photography or story writing more people are now interested in weddings, funerals and maybe fashion shows. Participant 6 added.*

#### ***4.3.2 Few resident photojournalists***

The respondents predicted that media organization will continue to regard the services of professional photojournalists useless, hence practitioners will not be employed. In recent years photojournalists have suffered lay-offs from their duties in the newsroom. Some had to upskill to encroach other areas in order to remain relevant to the newsroom. This is largely caused by widespread of technologies and disregard of the basic duties of photojournalists.

In recent years, the democratization of image production has also coincided with media firm layoffs as traditional businesses struggle to adapt to the digital era's disruption (Brennen & Brennen, 2015; Klein-Avraham & Reich, 2016). If any industry has suffered from the generally referred to "crisis," it is journalism (Reinardy, 2011), photojournalists have been among them. In newspapers, photographers and photographic departments are frequently the first to go, at times, suffering disproportionate cutbacks, especially in America (Mortensen, 2014; Anderson, 2013).

In Ghana, the participants work alone in the newsroom without any subordinates or senior photojournalists. Some big media institutions have only one resident photojournalist. This makes it easier for practitioners to predict that in the future news organization may not employ resident photojournalists at all. In fact, news reporters are now obliged to take pictures with their phone devices when they embark on news assignments. On this, participant 4 said that;

*There's going to be a decline in job opportunities, people might not hire photojournalists again because of the influx of more technology and citizen photojournalists. I don't see a lot of people coming*



*into photojournalism, people will rather get into other form of photography. I am even surprised some institutions still have resident photojournalists. I will predict that by 2025 there will no resident photojournalists.*

Unlike the other genres of journalism, photojournalism does not attract interns from the university. According to the respondents, the field is uninspiring to attract young people. Therefore, the respondents posit that future photographers will not apply for jobs in the newsroom. They have no interest in the profession.

*The future of photojournalism is challenged because when I came into the system, I was meeting a lot of photojournalists on assignment but I can't see them again. Yes some retired but they were not replaced. I was expecting students from GIJ and NAFTI to come into this job but they are not interested at all, so the future is challenged to be honest. This is because photojournalism in Ghana has become uninspiring. When people compare our standard of living to the others they will definitely not be interested. Participant 2 added.*

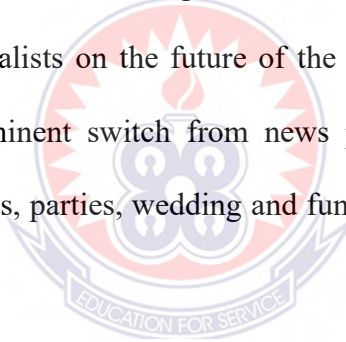
The excerpts suggest that in future, there will be a decline in both job seekers and job offers in photojournalism practice in Ghana. Both sides will show no interest in the professional practice of photojournalism.

#### **4.4 Summary**

This chapter presented the findings and discussions of the research questions for the study. Issues discovered by the study concerning the three major research questions

were well analyzed. In all, sixteen (16) themes were generated for the three research objectives. First and foremost, with regards to photojournalist roles in the newsroom, the study revealed a variety of roles played by practitioners in Ghana. Photojournalists are assigned to cover news events or programs (press conferences, demonstration, political rallies, sports events etc.). Photojournalists also create online photo gallery or photo essays that could tell captivating stories as well as creating news kits for social media platforms.

The study also unraveled the diverse challenges photojournalists face in their practice in Ghana. These included stigmatization, job loss, financial crisis, physical abuses, copyright infringement, technological challenges etc. The chapter also identified perspectives of photojournalists on the future of the practice in Ghana. It revealed that that there will be an imminent switch from news photography to fashion programs, awards shows, music events, parties, wedding and funerals due to financial difficulties in news photography



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings of the study, limitations of the study, and the conclusions drawn from the study. The chapter also seeks to make recommendations based on the observations and research findings that have emerged from the data gathered. The conclusions and recommendations are therefore based on all previous chapters discussed above.

#### 5.1 Summary of Findings

Firstly, with regards to the roles of photojournalists in the newsroom, the study unraveled quite a number of roles performed by practitioners in Ghana. First and foremost, photojournalists are obliged to cover news activities or programmes (press conferences, demonstration, political rallies, sports events etc.). The photojournalists are expected to read notices early in the morning to find out their assigned events for the day. Most often than not, photojournalists accompany their colleague reporters as .attached photographers' whose responsibility is to provide pictures and videos which will be published with the news stories.

Also, Ghanaian photojournalists are obliged to create online photo gallery or photo essays that could tell captivating stories. These pieces are an excellent way to capture the attention of readers, especially in today's visual environment. Photojournalists must creatively come out with photo essays each week. Topics for the photo essays are determined by the trending stories of the week. Again on the subject of the roles of the

photojournalists in the newsroom, practitioners are obliged to shoot and edit short videos which are posted on social media. Video editing has become important because of the constant demand of content on social media. According to the findings, news contents are made in short skits and shared on the various social media platforms by the photojournalists.

The study also unraveled the diverse challenges photojournalists face in their practice in Ghana. It was revealed that photojournalists are stigmatized by their colleagues and authorities in the newsroom by referring to them as ‘MY PHOTOGRAPHER’. According to the findings Practitioners regard this as gross disrespect to their professional identity. Their colleagues in the newsroom identify them as ordinary photographers instead of photojournalists. According to the respondents, the stigma has become a challenge for photojournalists because it creates inferiority complex, low self-esteem and reduces their confidence in the newsroom.

The research revealed that many of the practitioners lack formal photojournalism education, partly because there is no program like that in Ghana and partly because they developed the interest later in their lives. Photojournalists do not have access to photojournalism degree where they will learn new ideas to improve on their skill set and become even more relevant. Some of the photojournalists are challenged due to lack of understanding of their journalistic duties especially when everybody can take pictures.

Again on the challenges of photojournalism practice, it was identified that practitioners encounter financial crisis due to lesser job opportunities and disregard for their roles in the newsroom. Since anyone can take pictures, news companies are increasingly prepared to replace professional photographers with iPhone-armed reporters

and citizen-shot photography. The findings suggested that it is extremely difficult for photojournalists to get full time jobs in Ghana. Practitioners worked for free in most part of their careers. This has hugely affected their financial statuses. It was also identified that practitioners encounter a number of risky circumstances on the job, especially physical abuse, accidents, depression and job losses. Photojournalists are usually get manhandled by many local Ghanaians when they start to film or take newsworthy pictures. They believe that press freedom for photojournalists is way lower than their other colleague journalists. This emerges because people have not come to terms with the fact that photojournalists are journalists and not ordinary photographers

The study also found that Ghanaian photojournalists are technologically challenged, therefore the quality of the works they produced is questionable. Technological advancements bring about changes that lead to ever-increasing disparities, a phenomenon known as the digital divide (Christensen, 2013). Ghanaian photojournalist are however stuck on aged digital cameras which make them less competitive in their industry. Also, less powerful desktop computers are provided in the newsroom. These computers are unable to use modern photo and video editing software.

Pictures have increasingly become necessary to news media in Ghana, however, the authorities of the newsroom do not pay attention to the equipment needed by the practitioners.

Disregard for copyright or intellectual properties were also main findings of the study. It was revealed that one of the biggest challenges of the practitioners was copyright infringement. Ghanaian photojournalists are unable to sell their pictures online as a result of rampant infringements of copyright laws. When people do not pay for an

image, photojournalists do not receive compensation. Therefore practitioners are challenged with financial difficulties. According to the findings some Ghanaians regard their works as mere pictures and it should be used without any cost.

Finally on the challenges of photojournalism practice in Ghana, it was revealed that there is gender stereotypes in photojournalism. People identify photojournalism as a man's job in Ghana and therefore they find it weird to see women in it. This agrees with Thomas (2007) argument that women have been discouraged historically from pursuing photojournalism because it was not considered or identified as an appropriate occupation for women. Women in photography are required to comply with and embrace the masculine order or ethos of the profession as a means of survival, according to the comments of respondents. Women who are unable to portray such features are identified as timid and unserious.

The third objective was to identify the perspectives of photojournalists on the future of the practice. It was revealed that news photojournalism practice will be more and more democratic due to the continuous emergence of new photo technology. Ghanaian photojournalists are therefore pessimistic about the future of news photography practice in Ghana. The study found that there will be an imminent switch from news photography to fashion programs, awards shows, music events, parties, wedding and funerals due to financial difficulties in news photography. Also, Media organizations will continue to regard the services of professional photojournalists as less important, hence practitioners will not be employed. The study predicted a possibility of no resident photojournalists in the newsroom. Practitioners would have to encroach other areas of journalism to become relevant.

## 5.2 Conclusion

The findings of the study suggest that the practice of photojournalism in Ghana has been hugely influenced by the emergence of new technologies. The study agrees with the disruptive technology theory which asserts that today's technologies are having an influence on the media industry, with the surge of "smart" technologies disrupting how modern media operates, as well as how information is created, consumed, and shared (Abendroth, 2013). Due to technological advancements, the role of photojournalists in the newsroom has been democratized and pictures have become ubiquitous. Individuals need just smart phones or little pocket devices to perform the roles of photojournalism.

According to the study, reporters are now urged to always take photographs with their smart phones. The finding therefore agrees with (Allan, 2013; Hartley, 2007; rnebring, 2013; Romenesko, 2013; Stelter, 2013; White, 2012; Zhang, 2011) that professional photojournalists have been replaced by iPhone-armed reporters, wire service photographs, and citizen-shot photography, who are termed as non-professionals. Therefore, the professional identity of photojournalism has changed. It is being viewed in the newsroom as a disposable asset, hence, practitioners are often disrespected by their colleague journalists. The study revealed that such disrespects affects the performance of the photojournalists in the newsroom. This agrees with the professional identity theory which argues that a professional identity is an important cognitive mechanism that influences workers' attitudes, and affect their behaviors in and out of the workplace (Halpern, 2005). Photojournalists now need to up skill or learn new journalism roles like news writing and video editing to remain relevant in the newsroom or perhaps escape dismissal.

The research revealed that photojournalists in Ghana encounter scores of challenges when performing their duties. It is uncontested that majority of the challenges are caused by the emergence of new disruptive technologies which further affected or tainted the professional identity of photojournalism. For instance, the study revealed that because of the emergence of new technologies, Ghanaian photojournalists are facing a sterling competition from both colleague reporters and ordinary citizens who have smart phones. According to the findings the professional photojournalists' services are not regarded as essential anymore.

Practitioners stated that most of their colleagues have been sacked, others have entirely lost interest in the field. This agrees with Bock (2008) that technology has allowed news organizations to withdraw major outposts that marked their traditional involvement and commitment to photojournalism. Photojournalists in Ghana now find it extremely difficult to find full time employment. Most of the practitioners worked for free in most part of their careers due to the disregard of their roles. Also, due to democratization of photojournalism, pictures have become ubiquitous and are readily available on the internet, people do not see the need to purchase pictures. This has hugely affected the financial statuses of Ghanaian photojournalists.

The study also revealed that Ghanaians photojournalists encounter a number of risky circumstances on the job, especially accidents, physical abuse or manhandling by ordinary citizens and security personnel. It was identified that Ghanaians have adopted some kind of apathy towards news photographers. They have not come to terms with the duties of photojournalists. According to the practitioners, Ghanaians do not identify them as journalists who are performing their duties. Hence, they constantly come under attack



when performing their roles. It was also identified that one of the biggest challenges for Ghanaian photojournalists is copyright infringement. Practitioners' works are used by individuals and organizations without their permission. The internet as a technology has made it easier for people to steal intellectual properties with just 'copy and paste'. Hence, Ghanaian photojournalists are not receiving royalties or compensation for their works.

Also, the study identified that photojournalism practice in Ghana is regarded as a man's job, therefore only few women practice photojournalism in Ghana. This agrees with Hadland, Campbell, and Lambert (2015) that women represent an infinitesimal fraction of professional photojournalists. Women need to work twice as hard as their male counterpart to become relevant or even gain full time employment.

Finally, the study identified that contrary to the findings of Hadland et al. (2015) where photojournalists valued their work and remained positive and optimistic about the future of photojournalism, Ghanaian photojournalists are pessimistic about the future of news photography practice in Ghana. It was revealed that practitioners are likely to switch from news photography to other areas like, events photography, weddings, funerals, fashion and modelling due to financial difficulties.

### **5.3 Limitations**

The study set to examine the practice of photojournalism in Ghana by identifying the roles of the practitioners in the newsroom, the challenges they face in their line of duties as well as the perspectives of the practitioners on the future of the practice. However, the findings must be seen in the light of its limitations. Apart from the limitation of time and the difficulty in getting literature on the research topic, the researcher also faced additional constraints.

Finding the photojournalists for the interview was extremely difficult due to the busy schedules of the various media houses for which they worked, as well as the relatively low number of photojournalists in the profession. It was difficult for the researcher to find the practitioners, especially the freelance photojournalists. Some of the practitioners who were identified by the researcher had only been in the profession for few months and were less experienced. Therefore, instead of twelve interviews the researcher had planned on conducting, the researcher was able to conduct only six. However, the six interviews well represented photojournalists in Ghana.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings discussed above, the researcher makes the following recommendations to improve on the practice of photojournalism in Ghana.

1. There should be an academic facility where Ghanaians can be formally trained as photojournalists. This will help practitioners to acquire or understand the journalistic part of their jobs rather than just taking photographs.
2. Photojournalists must up skill or learn new journalistic roles to escape dismissal from their jobs. They must learn additional set of skills to be able to encroach the other areas of journalism and become more relevant to the media industry.
3. Ghanaians must decrease or avoid the stereotypes surrounding female photojournalists and promote inclusions rather than highlighting the differences between men and women.
4. Media organizations or practitioners themselves must be insured because of the risk and safety issues identified by the study.

5. Copyrights laws must be respected to ensure that the owners get economic rewards for their work. Copyright materials must be used with authorization from the owners, and the protective right must take effect immediately when a record in the form of a material is created. People must be punished for infringing copyright laws.
6. Photojournalists must be well recognized and compensated by their employers just as their colleagues in the newsroom. This will improve on their performances or output in the newsroom and encourage others into the field.

#### **Suggestions for future studies**

1. Future studies may consider to examine the perceptions of senior news editors and media managers on the roles of photojournalists in the newsroom. This will increase the body of knowledge and help scholars to properly predict the future of photojournalism practice in Ghana.
2. Future research may also examine the public perceptions of photojournalism practice in Ghana. This will help the researcher to ascertain the cause of brutality against practitioners as revealed by this study.

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## APPENDIX

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PHOTOJOURNALISTS

1. How long have you practiced photojournalism in Ghana?
2. Are you employed by an organization or self-employed?
3. Do you have training in journalism or photojournalism?
4. How many photojournalists do you work with in your organization?
5. Do you see any differences in how you are treated and how other journalists are treated by authorities in and outside the workplace?
6. Do you think photojournalism in Ghana is gender balanced? If not? Why?
7. What are your key roles and responsibilities as a photojournalist?
8. Who assigns you to your roles?
9. Do you find your roles difficult to perform?
10. Are you assigned to additional roles outside your expertise?
11. What are the challenges you face as a photojournalist?
12. What are the causes of those challenges?
13. How do you respond to those challenges?
14. How do you see the future of photojournalism in Ghana?
15. Do you foresee more people pursuing photojournalism?
16. Will you recommend people to practice photojournalism? If no, why?
17. Where do you see yourself in the next five to ten years?