MEDIA FRAMING OF WOMEN IN POLITICAL AND NON-POLITICAL SPACES: AN ANALYSIS OF HOW NEWSPAPERS FRAMED WOMEN LEADERS IN GHANA FROM 2009 TO 2010.

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DECLARATION

I BENEDINE AZANU DECLARE THAT THIS DISSERTATION, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF QUOTATIONS AND REFERENCES CONTAINED IN PUBLISHED WORKS WHICH HAVE ALL BEEN IDENTIFIED AND ACKNOWLEDGED, IS ENTIRELY MY OWN ORIGINAL WORK, AND IT HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED, EITHER IN PART OR WHOLE, FOR ANOTHER DEGREE ELSWHERE

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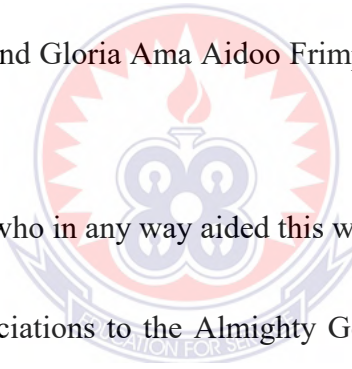
DEDICATION

To my mother, Anastasia Abla Addo, with loads of love.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the media coverage of women leaders in political and non-political spaces. The study identified the frames used in news coverage and the degree to which the representations reinforce the theoretical assumptions that the media engage in symbolic annihilation in representing women leaders. Again, the study sought to discover the reason behind the frames from the perspective of the journalist. The research also analysed the perceptions of the women leaders towards these frames. In addition, the study determined whether the frames employed are dependent on the particular space occupied by the woman leader. The study informed by framing analysis, employed Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA), a research design that combined both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and analyse data from three Ghanaian newspapers: *Daily Graphic*, *Daily Guide* and *The Ghanaian Times*. Another source of data analysed is interviews with the journalists who wrote the stories as well as women who were covered in the news stories. The findings of this study provide evidences of strong socio-cultural gender constructs that impede women's access to and performance within leadership roles. Critical to challenging this status-quo is media identification and promotion of a female leadership norm, for women to be seen as human beings who have leadership qualities that is equal to but may not necessarily be similar to the male norm.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Globally, it has become conventional that development must necessarily be informed by gender analysis due to the persistence of gender gaps at all levels of the society. This leads to questions as regards the "open space" available to women in relation to "the state, institutional rules and processes" (Desai & Potter, 2008). As a result, all major development agencies have conceptualised frameworks to ensure that gender issues are taken into consideration in their varied efforts to get women into leadership roles. The United Nations (UN) has led these "efforts by international organizations and governments complemented by civil society organizations (CSOs), Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), multilateral institutions and individuals" (Allah-Mensah, 2005, p.5). Examples of the UN's efforts include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 (CEDAW) of which Ghana is a signatory. This convention mandates all signatories "To take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, appropriate measures, including legislation to ensure the full development and advancement of women…" (United Nations, 1979).

In addition, the Beijing Conference and Platform for Action of 1995 which was adopted by the UN, sought to prescribe a platform of action aimed at empowering women. Among the 'critical areas of concern' identified by Beijing conference was "Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels" and "Stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and

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participation in all communication systems, especially in the media" (Chapter III, Article 46). More recently, the media industry has "muted the blatant simplicity of stereotypical gender images" as a result of feminists organising for social change. However, these images have taken "subtler forms" (Croteau & Hoynes, 1997).

Non-governmental Organizations have not relented in their efforts at achieving equal participation of women and men in positions of power and decision-making across the world (Allah-Mensah, 2005). For instance, Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO) launched a 50/50 campaign to raise the representation of women in political decision-making positions. Ghana's visibility in these efforts is evidenced in her role as one of the 'key architects' of the Lagos Plan of Action in 1981. The plan called attention to the importance of women in leadership as paramount to having their views and concerns incorporated into national development plans. At home, the 1992 Constitution provides a framework aimed at enhancing the chances of women in gaining leadership roles. The inclusion of clauses to promote the rights of Ghanaian women and to boost their participation in competing with men for public office is spelled out in Article 27 (3) of the 1992 constitution. It states: "*women shall be guaranteed equal rights to training and promotion without any impediments from any person*". It also states in article 6 that: "*the state shall afford equality of economic opportunity to all citizens; and, in particular, the State shall take all necessary steps so as to ensure the full integration of women into the mainstream of the economic development of Ghana"*. In furtherance of this constitutional provision, Ghana established the Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs (MOWCA) by Executive Instrument (EI 8) in 2001 as state institutional

machinery to respond to gender inequality and coordinate issues of women's advancement and survival and development of Ghanaian children.

The number of seats held by women in national Parliament is one of the indicators used to track the goal of promoting gender equality and empowering women in line with Goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals. According to WEDO (2008), 24 countries had achieved a critical mass of 30% women in national parliaments by the end of 2008. By the end of the same period Ghana suffered a setback which saw a reduction from 25 to 20 representing below 10% women representatives in parliament[1]. Further women representation in the following year 2009 saw a decline to 18 representing 7.8%. The Progress of the World's Women 2008/2009 published by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) summarises the status of women representation in national parliaments as follows:

> Halfway to 2015, the year when the MDGs should be met by all countries, progress has been mixed. This volume of Progress of the World's Women demonstrates that the MDGs and other international commitments to women will only be met if gender-responsive accountability systems are put in place both nationally and internationally. (Progress of the World's Women 2008/2009:1).

1.1.0   BACKGROUND

Despite all these efforts women still remain underrepresented. Gaye Tuchman (1978) attributed the situation to the concept of "symbolic annihilation"- the absence of representation in the media. Tuchman explains the concept from three directions: media's

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[1] Millennium Development Goals Indicators -
http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/area-of-work/mdg.shtml

condemnation, trivialisation and exclusion of women. More recent studies (Latvia, 2004; Klaus and Kassel, 2007; Fountaine & McGregor, 2002) have also applied this concept to examine gender representation which revealed different aspect occurring under different circumstances.

Recent studies (Nkansah, 2009; Mawugbe, 2010), have shown that there has been a systematic decrease of the number of women leaders in political and non-political spaces in Ghana. The studies reveal that three factors are responsible for this phenomenon: "…the cultural environment, the role of the media and the internal dynamics within the advocacy groups" (Nkansah, 2009, p. ix). Mawugbe (2010) notes that the media fall short of its plural role by underrepresenting women, the elderly, and the young. According to the study, only 4% of media space was accorded gender issues in 2009, 1.6% to women despite the central role women continue to play in economic development. Lafky (1993) contends that issues of inadequate representation in governance processes continue to contest with other issues for media representation.

The media is an important – if not the most important institution – through which people get information which forms the basis for forming opinions about issues. In effect the media wields the power to raise awareness about gender issues and change attitudes regarding gender. Furthermore, the media, specifically the press, currently represents the real public space through which citizens understand the "political" (e.g. Corner & Pels 2003); especially so when a recent phenomenon of top stories from major newspapers are reported and analysed on television and radio stations (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009). If the media determine the political, then the ways, in which women

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and men are portrayed, their access to media, and their visibility as political and for that matter, non-political agents in the media is important.

Again, Corner (2003, p.75) found that the media are the public sphere where the identity of the politician as a "person of qualities" is constructed. These "media-performative" criteria according to Pantti (2005) have the tendency to disqualify certain candidates (in this context, women) "either from becoming public political figures at all or at least from competing for high office" (1.1 Society has changed: Women's Political representation, para. 5). The media in this case provide an important space within which the qualities of women leaders with competencies to become public (political or non-political) personalities are constructed. Hence these constructions have the capacities to determine whether women will compete for or refrain from seeking high office – increase or decrease women leaders in the public space. In effect how these constructs get formed and the perceptions of the women leaders about whom these constructs are made are essential.

1.2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Between 2009 and 2010, a series of events threatened to further decrease the little public leadership space occupied by women in Ghana. In 2010, there were calls in the print media for the resignations of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice Betty Mould-Iddrisu and Chief Justice, Georgina Wood in some major newspapers in Ghana. It is imperative to note at this point that within the study period of 2009 and 2010, women occupied three key decision-making positions in Ghana: Speaker of Parliament, Chief Justice, and Minister of Justice and Attorney General. A striking feature of the

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presentation of these articles is the latent existence of the conceptual frames of 'incompetence' ascribed to the Attorney General and Chief Justice positions.

Another aspect of interest to the researcher is how the articles construct these frames signifying the existence of collective actors at play. These samples of headlines that characterised articles about these women leaders become even more important when early in 2011, the woman Minister of Justice and Attorney General, was moved to the Ministry of Education– further decreasing the number of women who occupy important decision-making positions in the country – perhaps an indication of the existence in the belief of women being better at domestic issues like education and welfare rather than "tough" issues (Norris, 1997).

Media representation of women leaders in Ghana in terms of nature of coverage as an area of research cannot be underestimated as regards the limited space they occupy and which continues to decrease as shown by Mawugbe (2010).

1.3.0   OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

This study therefore inquired into how newspapers frame women leaders in political and non-political spaces. To examine these issues, the researcher worked within the following objectives:

1.   The study identifies the frames used to cover these identified women leaders to   examine the degree to which the representations reinforce the theoretical   assumptions that the media engage in symbolic annihilation in representing   women leaders (Tuchman, 1978).

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2.   The study seeks to discover the reason behind these frames from the perspective   of the journalist.

3.   The research also analyses the perceptions of these women leaders towards these frames.

4.   Again the study determines whether the frames employed are dependent on the particular space occupied by the woman leader.

1.4.0   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main objective of this study is to analyse how women leaders occupying political and non-political spaces are framed in the print media space. The study sought to identify and discuss key types of conceptual frames and understand when and why they were at work. Further, the study also looked at the perceptions of these women leaders towards the frames. To achieve these objectives the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. (a) What frames do newspapers employ to represent women leaders in Ghana?

    (b) How are the frames employed dependent on the particular space occupied by the woman leader?

2. What are the reasons behind these frames from the perspective of the journalist?

3. What are the perceptions of these women leaders towards these frames?

1.5.0   DELIMITATION

This study is not a comparative study of which of the newspapers (or articles) have the most negative or positive frames. Rather it identifies the kinds of frames used in the articles to be analysed. In other words, this study focused on an analysis of how women leaders occupying political and non-political spaces were framed.

Articles for the study were taken from *the Daily Graphic*, the *Daily Guide*, *The Ghanaian Times newspapers* on basis of circulation, credibility and funding. The *Daily Graphic* is the oldest newspaper which enjoys the widest circulation in Ghana and as such has a readership that spans the entire country (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009). According to the African Media Development Initiative(AMDI): Ghana Context (2006), "At national level, among the 11 national dailies, the state-owned *Daily Graphic* is the oldest and most widely-read newspaper in Ghana, and it is distributed in all 120 districts nationwide," and 100% government-owned. The *Daily Guide*, the next strongest in terms of circulation is privately-owned and together these two newspapers account for a wide newspaper readership in Ghana and provide diversity in the voices of the ownership as "Many papers seem to have been set up primarily to act as mouthpieces for their owners' political views." (Ghana AMDI report, 2006). The third newspaper selected for this study is *The Ghanaian Times*, a state-owned newspaper enjoys a market share of 30%. [2]

The study analysed newspaper articles covering the subjects within the period of 2009 and 2010. This period marks a time when the Chief Justice (CJ), the Attorney

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[2] *The Ghanaian Times*. The New Times Corporate Profile (n. d). Retrieved on March 14, 2011from http://newtimes.com.gh/about

General and Minister of Justice (AG & MOJ) were women and frequently covered in the news. Subjects for the study who occupy political spaces are the Attorney General and Minister of Justice (2009-2010) - Betty Mould-Iddrisu, and Ursula Owusu (New Patiotic Party, NPP); subjects for non-political spaces are Chief Justice Georgina Wood and Joyce Aryee.

1.6.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Becoming aware of different types of frames is necessary to understand when, why and how frames are deployed in the media. It is hoped that this study will aid understanding of how construction of frames of women leaders have occurred in the print media and enable stakeholders of gender issues to identify such frames and utilize them in gender and feminist advocacy. The study will also extend literature in the communication field and inform policy formulation.

This study is also important to research for a number of reasons which makes contributions to the following concepts and issues:

Framing analysis - This study makes a significant contribution to *framing* (Goffman, 1974) as a concept for the study of major issue of gender and media representation in Ghana.

Framing and symbolic annihilation – Through identifying frames, the study examines whether media coverage of women in political and non-political spaces in Ghana have improved in terms of the quantity and quality in relation to Tuchman's (1978) omission,

condemnation and trivialisation concept. The study also discusses the role of media in decreasing the media space given women in leadership.

Women issues – The research diversifies the discourse of gender issues in Ghana. The rationale is the importance of varying available information on women issues especially the manner in which the media in Ghana represent women in leadership roles especially when Ghana has failed to reach a critical mass of women representation in parliament. The study also provides a critical dimension of the dynamics encountered by women on the journey from the private to the public space.

Newspapers and women and gender – The enquiry enriches research on relationships between the media, women and gender issues. It also broadens the understanding on how newspapers cover women from a local perspective.

Communication and policy formulation – The investigation provides for NGOs, CSOs and many other agencies diversity in information for planning effective media strategy to promote the public awareness on women and gender issues. Becoming aware of different types of frames is necessary to understand when and why different frames are at work. The study aids understanding of how construction of frames of women leaders have occurred in the Ghanaian print media to enable stakeholders of gender issues to act on such frames.

1.7.0   OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Political space: Leadership role that is acquired through political appointment to represent a particular political party's interest or through contesting for the position on a political party's ticket.

Non-political space: National key leadership positions that are not dependent on political appointment or contest but merit based and on specific professional requirements.

Women leaders: Women who occupy high leadership and decision making positions of public and private kind.

1.8.0   OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

In terms of structure, this study is divided into six chapters. Chapter one which is the introductory chapter, sets out the background with a review of discourse on media women representation from general view to the Ghanaian context. This chapter also states the research questions that guide the enquiry and the rationale for the study whiles providing a scope. In addition the significance of the study to academic research is articulated here.

Chapter two reviews current related literature on similar studies that have looked at aspects of the issues that this study looks at. Again, the chapter focuses on media's core role within a society in relationship to women representation and women in leadership. In addition gender as a social constructs influencing media products are also discussed.

Chapter three outlines the theoretical framework that provides concepts and ideas for examining the issues in this research. A conceptual framework is also offered. As noted by Molotch and Lester (1974), the study is undertaken from the standpoint that news is socially constructed and do not result from the inherent importance but from the requirements of "promoters, assemblers and consumers" (Bullock, 2007) within the society. This chapter also acknowledges the gendered phases that media representation of women has gone through over the years in terms of framing and symbolic annihilation.

Chapter four provides the methods and procedures used to collect and analyse data. It indicates Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) as the research design. Details of the unit of analysis are provided here, methods of data collection and instruments, and data handling. It then outlines the coding instruments and protocol employed for the study.

Chapter five presents the findings and analyses of what emerged from the news articles. Drawing on the theoretical framework, it discusses the outcomes with reference to the research questions. In addition the chapter discusses and analyzes data collected from informants.

Chapter six draws on the findings and analyses, and makes interpretations on issues detailed in chapters four and five. It also evaluates the new trends in the coverage of women in leadership in Ghana. In conclusion, the chapter acknowledges the limitations of the study, and outlines issues for future research. The chapter, finally, provides recommendations for the coverage of women in leadership issues in Ghana.

1.9.0 SUMMARY

Despite strides made in efforts to improve women representation there still remains a lot to achieve parity. The declining women's media representation (Mawugbe, 2010) on the surface is commensurate to the declining women representation of women in parliament. This study thus is important to examine frame in news discourses as means to shedding light on what subtle stereotypes are present as a result of the gendered social constructs in the Ghanaian society.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews literature on the role of media, women in leadership and their projection in the media. The related studies outlined here offer understanding of the research from the perspectives of United States of America, Europe and Africa; the media's role in the creation of a platform that educate society for its betterment; the dynamic processes media engages to enable them effectively play this role; and the outcomes of such processes have been elucidated. The multiple meanings that are embedded in these media products and audiences meaning making influenced by their constructed realities informed by socio-cultural constructs are laid bare. In addition, media provision of the space (Burton, 2010) within which exchange and debate of meanings take place is explored. Links between the media, the thwarted varied efforts aimed at increasing women in leadership and gendered constructs are drawn.

2.1.0 THE MEDIA AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Integral to the role of the mass media among education, information, surveillance and entertainment is that of information dissemination to the public. Littlejohn and Foss (2009) explain mass media as "the process whereby media organizations produce messages and transmit to large audiences and the process by which those messages are sought, used, understood and influenced by audiences." (p. 273). Ofori-Birikorang (2009) states that, "…the mass media are able to perform their role of providing

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information for individuals by encouraging people to adopt the cultural norms that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society" (p.29). In other words, the public depend on the media for information for social integration. Thus the extent to which audiences are able to understand issues, and consequently form opinions depends on the degree of coverage given the issues by the media (Collins, Abelson, Pyman, & Lavis, 2006; Miller, Kitzinger, Williams, & Beharell, 1998). Evidence exists to support the concept that mass media shapes public opinion (Price and Tewksbury 1997; Gamson and Modigliani 1989).

Though the media is widely recognized as playing such an important and powerful role, rarely do audiences consider the sources of information and how information gets to them. Media text contains the ability to produce multimedia content and thus has the immense power to change an individual's perception of reality. It is of no wonder that in order to believe in something, one has to have complete faith in the source of information. According to Kuypers (2002), "Although we often look to friends for information on [these] issues, we look to experts as well. We seek the opinions of politicians, prominent social figures, religious leaders, and academic and technical experts. Yet it is not often that we consider the messenger…" (p. 1). The media in performing its 'messenger' function often does so as a system for communicating images to the general populace (Herman & Chomsky, 1998). Hence the media employs a number of processes to engage in this function: selection of news stories by gatekeepers and thereby making such stories salient and newsworthy to the readers, depending on the amount of information provided and the manner of presentation, (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The media also depend on the audiences for production of news. Burton (2005)

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observed that "at the production level, contact between the news production institution the audience is established in various ways. Consequently, the makers of documentary or the writers of articles go out to the public to gather material for production. As indicated by Kuypers (2002), even though sources of information vary from one person to academic institutions, the mass media remains the main "source of information flow for public policy issues, and determine the ground upon which public opinion get shaped on those policy initiatives" (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009, p. 29). This idea bestows power on the media to provoke public debate on policy issues (Wallack, 1994), through direct communication to and application of pressure on policy makers.

In exercising this power in the production of news for the public the media provides a 'space', (Burton, 2010; Collins et al, 2006; Iyengar, 1997; Soroka, 2002) where according to Burton (2010), "information could be exchanged and public debate could take place" (p. 95). Burton (2010) previously explained the relationship between the media and the audience as not only a 'transmission model' (media affect audience) but also a 'dynamic process model'. He explained the dynamic process as a model in which "as manufacturers of representations, the media variously and simultaneously remake versions of society, but also are themselves shaped by forces within the society" (p. 82), when they play their role as institutions of society, draw material from society and propose information to society . Like education, media is a cultural institution used by society to further its aims and facilitate inter human relations and activities.

Indeed the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and its follow-up Action Plans have identified the media as one of the critical areas of concern [3] towards achieving gender equality and empowerment for women[4]. However studies over the years have shown that the media have not succeeded in proposing information to educate society in a manner commensurate with tenets of global action plans. Rather, media remains a space that is dominated by men's superior representations and where women's subordinate position in society is continuously depicted and reinforced, (Len-Rios, Rodgers, Thorson & Yoon, 2005; Fox, 2010).

2.2.0   WOMEN, LEADERSHIP AND MEDIA

Scholarships pertaining to women leaders and how the media cover them often do so from the perspective of gender representation. Issues of gender in the media aim to understand gender difference and gender inequality and focus on gender politics and sexuality. Often, such analyses provide understanding of social and political power relations, with the focus to promote women's rights. Examples of themes examined in gender-media relations include stereotyping, discrimination, objectification (sexual), oppression and patriarchy.

Studies on placement and spaces for women underrepresentation in news stories are varied (Rodgers & Thorson, 2003: They can be located in news stories on front pages

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[3] The 12 critical areas of concern are poverty, education, health, violence, armed conflict, economic disparity, power sharing, institutions, human rights, mass media, environment and the girl child.

[4] Achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa Progress Report of the Sixth African Development Forum (ADF VI) held from November 19 to 21 2008 at the United Nations Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

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(Gibbons, 2000; Potter, 1985), the *New York Times Magazine* ("Marginalizing," 1996; Zoch & Turk, 1998);   business sections (Davis, 1982; Greenwald, 1990), and news photographs (Blackwood, 1983; Miller, 1975; Rodgers & Thorson, 2000). They seek to answer questions that will uncover the dynamics that characterise media women representations aimed at improving the status of women. The 2005 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) lists among others questions typical of women media relations studies: Do female politician and male politicians get an equal treatment in the media? Are the media neutral in their portrayal of politicians regarding gender, or are they circulating gender stereotypes? How is the representation of politicians linked to the question of the quality of journalism?

Potter's (1913; 1933; 1963; 1983) studies of newspapers (as cited in Len-Ríos et al, 2005) indicate that "proportion of women portrayed decreased over time" (p.115). Similarly, a study conducted in Ghana by Mawugbe (2010) notes that the media fell short of its plural role by under representing women, the elderly, and the young. According to the study, of 4% of media space accorded gender issues in 2009 only 1.6% was given to women. According to Mawugbe (2010), the consistent trend of editorial focus on women being 7% in 2006, 2007 and 2008 which dropped to 4% in 2009 indicates dwindling interest and commitment of editors to gender issues. He contends that, "The results also confirm the assertion that news is not the inevitable product of chance events- rather it has been the result of decision made within news organizations (Epstein, 1981). Hence it calls for critical evaluation of editor's attention and commitment to women / gender issues in editorial coverage" (p. 16).

Researchers have proposed a myriad of reasons that account for this phenomenon. One explanation is that when journalists engage in news production, they often cover newsworthy stories by political and societal elites, who are mostly males and thus, reproduce societal norms that privilege men (Croteau & Hoynes, 1997). The explanation supports feminist point of view that cultural hegemony is pervasive and accepted as commonplace (Jones, 1994; Meyers, 1997; Stanko, 1988; 1999; Danner & Walsh, 1999) – even in the newsroom (Len-Rios et al, 2005). Nkansah (2009) explains underrepresentation of women in Ghana as due to the "…apparent relationship of mistrust between women activists and the media in Ghana…" (p.58), for fear of being victimised. He further explains that the situation is a product of the media holding women to the standards set by the Ghanaian cultural environment which encourages men rather than women to seek public office. In addition, he asserts that women given most coverage are often first ladies, which finds basis on "the cultural environment in Ghana" which "dictates for instance that women who accompany men to public functions are given more attention than women who go alone" a "communal belief" that has moved to the national level.(p.75).

Len-Ríos, Rodgers, Thorson, and Yoon, (2005) using data triangulation from news: staff perceptions (producers), news stories and photos (content), and newspaper readers' perceptions (reception) of the representation of women compared news content to perception of audience. Again, the content-analysis results revealed a greater coverage of males than females in both content and photos in the two newspapers studied. The study also showed that female staffers were more disposed than their male counterparts to perceive these differences in representation. Further, news readers perceived an even

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greater disparity than the news staffs. The study also found that news staffs were less likely to notice disparities in the editorial, travel, and entertainment sections of the newspapers.

Working from the grounded idea that news will generally be socially constructed in ways that help maintain patriarchal power structures and their inherent marginalisation of women, Bullock (2007) examined the framing of one year's worth of coverage of domestic violence fatalities in Utah newspapers. Using deductive and inductive framing analyses she identified primary content-related frames and determined that most coverage portrayed domestic violence fatalities in ways that supported patriarchal institutions. She also discovered, however, that a small number of the articles proved domestic violence had roots in patriarchy and men's subordination of women, "confirming that mainstream newspapers can, and sometimes do publish views that challenge the dominant ones." This idea is in agreement with Consalvo's view (1998b) that, "there will always be competing views that challenge the dominant views, and hegemony does allow for some competing views to be heard" (p. 207).

2.3.0 WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Adler (1993) states, "About the single most uncontroversial, incontrovertible statement to make about women in management is that there are very few of them" (as cited in Alimo-Metcalfe, 1995). Males have always dominated public spaces ensuring that women remain in private space. Various reports (WEDO 2008 Report; World Women 2010-Trends and Statistics states) support the fact that worldwide, the number of women in decision-making positions is persistently low. According to WEDO, apart

from Rwanda with 56.3 percent women representation in parliament, the average worldwide is at 18.2 percent while twenty-two countries spanning all regions have reached 30 percent. By the beginning of 2011 there was a total of 28 female heads of state and government in office, worldwide.

According to the World Women 2010-Trends and Statistics

Public governance is one of the arenas where inequality between men and women is highly visible. Limited female participation in structures of governance where key policy decisions are made and resource allocations decided often has a negative impact on women's political, economic and social opportunities. (p. 112)

The report also indicates that whereas women form about half of the electorate in elections worldwide, they are underrepresented whiles stressing that "the importance of women's political empowerment has been recognized within the framework of the MDGs …" The report which covers four main areas (politics and governance, the judiciary, civil service and the private sector), lists key findings that best describe the status of women in leadership at the end of 2010:

- Becoming the Head of State or Head of Government remains elusive for women, with only 14 women in the world currently holding either position.

- In just 23 countries do women comprise a critical mass – over 30 per cent – in the lower or single house of their national parliament?

- Worldwide on average only one in six cabinet ministers is a woman.

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- Women are highly underrepresented in decision-making positions at local government levels.

- In the private sector, women continue to be severely underrepresented in the top decision-making positions.

- Only 13 of the 500 largest corporations in the world have a female Chief Executive Officer.

This phenomenon finds explanation in early leadership theories ('Great Man' and trait) which identified only men as having such leadership qualities (Irby, Brown, Duffy, Trautman, 2002). For the last thirty years, gender activists and feminists have challenged conventional assumptions about leadership and the role of women in society. Irby et al (2001) state that, "modernist theories in leadership were traditionally dominated by masculine incorporation and lacked feminine presence in development and language." Hence the Synergistic Leadership Theory (SLT) provides a framework to examine and reflect on the feminine voice, as it is gender inclusive, and acknowledges that women bring leadership behaviours differing from traditional male leadership behaviours (Irby et al, 2002). This theory gives four key considerations for understanding the relational and interactional dimensions of leadership. These elements include: (1) organizational structure, (2) leadership behaviours, (3) external forces, and (4) beliefs, attitudes and values.

In a study of six female leaders, Muller (1994) investigates empowerment as a leadership component. The female leaders were found to empower others by encouraging individual growth and creativity and recognizing the growth potential of others as against a desire to have individual power. The female leaders empowered the organizational

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structure of the work environment through strengthening and valuing individuals leading to successes of the organisations they led.

Ida Bull (2000) argues that male dominance of public life in Europe can be traced to the household. According to her, in the early modern era European public life was built around the household structure: the head of the household was the tax payer thus the representative of the household. Bull (2002) explains that since men were often the tax payers they became representatives with rare exceptions of widows who were allowed to represent their households.

Tamale (1999), with reference to this genesis, argues that this phenomenon was brought to Africa through colonization. She recognizes patriarchy as one of the elements that is used by society to hinder women access to public office and the media as one of the conduits of patriarchy in Uganda.

In context, Ghana had three women occupying important decision-making positions between 2009 and 2010; Minister of Justice and Attorney General, Chief Justice and Speaker of Parliament. By the beginning of 2011, the Attorney General and Minister of Justice had been moved to the Ministry of Education.

All studies reviewed here have focused often on women in politics especially during campaigns, prior to elections whiles comparing them with their male counterparts. The kind of coverage given women in leadership therefore requires further investigation because of the possibility of it being negative, thus accounting for the poor representation cannot be overlooked. Hence, this study however sought to look at the quality of coverage and determined whether differences existed depending on the type of space occupied by the women leaders.

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2.4.0 SUMMARY

Media role in every society is critical as a source for information, education, entertainment and surveillance for the development of individuals within that society. Women form part of the Ghanaian society and as a matter of course, must be reflected realistically in the media. This is important especially that media role is an agent of socialisation making women's representation in terms of media omission, trivialisation and condemnation an issue of concern.

The power of media cannot be underestimated. Media can change an individual's perception of reality and modify behaviour. This is evidenced in the use of media for advertisements, to tackle developmental issues and communicate policy. The provision of a space for information and public debate (Burton, 2010), often dominated by politicians, public officials, religious leaders, technical experts and other social prominent figures raises issues of who is represented within that space and providing information, participating in the debate and influencing policy. Women's underrepresentation in this 'space' has been established. However, reasons for the state of affairs are varied and numerous. They range from cultural and religious lack of belief in the leadership potential of women to, very significantly the media role as a repository of cultural artefacts and how they reinforce such beliefs. Conventional assumptions about the lack of leadership skills in women in society have been challenged in recent times that have espoused frameworks that examine and reflect the feminine voice. Despite the varied reasons for women's underrepresentation in the public space media's role still remains paramount.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the theories that underpin the study as a means to understanding the portrayal of women leaders in the Ghanaian print media. According to Eisenhart (1991) theoretical framework is defined as "a structure that guides research by relying on a formal theory…constructed by using an established, coherent explanation of certain phenomena and relationships" (p. 205). To this end this study employs theories of social construction of news, framing, and symbolic annihilation to examine the type of media discourse deployed to represent women in the media.

3.1.0   THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF NEWS

The socio-cultural approach to communication theory dwells on the creation of reality as a result of individual interactions that take place in communities, groups and cultures (Neuman, Justy & Crigler, 1992; Rhee, 1997). By extension, the constructivist aspect of this approach focuses on human knowledge through social construction. According to Ofori-Birikorang, "Through these complex interactions individuals become active participants in the social process and through such engagement construct their own social realities". (p. 32). Further, individual realities have the potential to create both social reality and reflect social reality (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Miller & Turnbull, 1986; Snyder, 1984). Thus the audience is actively involved in the meaning making process.

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Newspaper content, from the constructivist point of view, reflect the way journalist and news institutions work within and interact with the larger social structure (Demers, 1996; Dunwoody & Griffin, 1999; Gans, 1979; Manoff & Schudson, 1986; Parenti, 1986; Roshco, 1975). News results from a number of complex processes guided by a set of "professional codes used in the selection, construction and presentation of news stories in corporately produced press and broadcasting" (O'Sullivan et al, 1994). Similarly, Branston & Stafford (2006) state that "news values systematically construct rather than simply accompany the gathering of news." According to Sigal (1973) "news is not reality, but a sampling of reality" (p. 187).

For an event to achieve selection as news several factors spanning number of studies are identified. They include relevance; proximity; negativity; recency; timeliness; and, novelty (Lester, 1980; Turner, 1982; vanDijk, 1988, Fishman, 1980), frequency, threshold, intensity, unambiguity, meaningfulness, consonance, predictability, unexpectedness, continuity, composition, and the deviant construct of the occurrence being reported (Galtrung & Ruge 1965; Hester, 1973; Ostgaard, 1965; Shoemaker, Chang & Brendlinger, 1986). In addition Branston and Stafford (2006) list personalisation, narrativisation and visual imperatives as news values. News values are what journalist and editors deem to be newsworthy and differ from one news organisation to another. These factors that inform choice (or rejection) of specific issues or events by news editors as newsworthy in the process of performing their 'gatekeeping' role, acquire legitimacy through reinforcing certain aspects of social reality rather than mirror society. Thus they help form the opinion of the audience akin to what is represented as news. Similarly, the

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news production processes: use of news sources, selection of stories over others, and "the media specificity of providing definitions for events and conditions that resonate with subjects of the social milieu are deeply cast in a social constructivist mould," (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009) are in tandem with other studies (Short, 1984; Stallling ,1990; Spencer & Triche, 1994). This starting point in news production does not only call attention to the importance of considering social and cultural factors that may shape news but also which individuals, groups, and institutions influence news content. Media contains the ability to produce multimedia content that has the immense power to change an individual's perception of reality.

Media content and for that matter news content may not necessarily, embody only the cultural images of a cultural setting (Best 1991) but also indicate those who hold power in the society. Nyamnjoh (2000), discusses how the rise of "multiparty politics and liberalisation of the society" (p.32), through the media have resulted in "unprofessional and unethical journalism" in Africa. He apportions blame on the lack of influence of "African ethic" on the imported professed universal codes that guide media practitioners despite the fact that Africa's priorities differ from the West; and the governments' lack of interest in ensuring that this happens albeit they control the main journalism schools.

Hasty (2005) drawing on her personal experiences as a journalist for both state-owned and private Ghanaian newspapers through interviews with journalists and close reading of news texts provides evidences (corrupt practices) for systematic chain of influence, definitive of a style that are "events oriented" characteristic of journalism in the Ghanaian state media. She argues that this is representative of "attempts by

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journalists and state officials alike to redefine and re-enchant the widening divide between the state and civil society…" (p.365) resulting in the dependency relationship that exists for production of news. Contextually, this trend isolates the public/audience from the "reality" that may exist and is embedded with the power that consequently defines the meaning of issues and events that occur – hence generate varied responses from the public. Further, Hasty (2005) makes an analogy between the state-owned media and situates the trend in the historically and culturally based role of the *okyeame*, describing the state-owned media as positioned as an interpreter of official discourse to the public. Journalists in private press, on the other hand, are seen to be "political opposition" who expose corruption.

There exists rare consensus on the nature of the constituents of media discourse. Very early on the Glasgow University Media Group (GUMG), focusing on industrial news items like strikes argued that "the news consistently favored the already powerful because journalists shared assumptions about the real world which are rarely seriously questioned, such as the view that strikes are harmful and destructive," (Branston & Stafford, 2006). The GUMG after content analysing 102 TV news reports on the 1975 Glasgow dustmen's strike found that out of the 14 people interviewed no dustman was interviewed to get his side of the story. The selection of other sources or omission of the dustmen suggests that the strikers were not worth listening to. In effect, even though people make news, the choice of who makes news remains on news producers and journalists who often rely on the powerful in society (GUMG, 1975). Similarly, Bennett, Pickard, Lozzi, Schroeder, Lagos & Caswell (2004) in their study revealed that the journalistic process employed in the coverage of the 2001-2003 World Economic Forum

(WEF) favoured elites over citizen-activists. Applying a "simple measureable and comparative model based on three aspects of source and issue construction in news accounts: access, recognition and responsiveness," where they found that even though both demonstrators and WEF participants were given news coverage, the latter group were more formally recognized and given more input in news content. Becker (1963) suggests a hierarchy of credibility with the elite and powerful occupying the top. According to Hall (1980), what is considered news is first selected, filtered and then *framed* within a context of conjectures (news values) about what is important. Frames have to do with how news is presented and their effects on audiences.

3.2.0   FRAMING

As a theoretical tool for analysis, this research employs framing analysis to examine the way the media cover women in political and non-political spaces. The issue, as critics suggest, is that media coverage of women reinforces rather than challenges the dominant culture, and thereby contributes toward women in leadership underrepresentation, trivialisation and condemnation in public life. This is the focus of this study. A common way of understanding the news process is through the theory of framing, propounded by the sociologist Erving Goffman (1974).

Following other studies Fountaine & McGregor, (2002); Iyengar and Kinder, (1987); Smith & Wakefield, (2005); Valeda, (2002) and Verdoolaege, (2005); Ofori-Birikorang, (2009), this research uses framing analysis as a theoretical tool in understanding how local newspapers in an African environment represented issues on women leaders. This theoretical position becomes very important for the following

reasons: framing allows for issues at stake to be defined and determined and allow for links between media coverage of events or issues, and individual views to be explored (Valeda, 2002).

Several studies have been conducted on the varied effects of news media on audiences (Iyengar, Peters & Kinder, 1983; Iyengar & Simon, 1993; Mcombs & Shaw, 1972; Edelman, 1993). Framing theory posits that by framing issues in specific ways, the media can play an integral role in not only *what* issues are presented to the public, but also *how* these issues are perceived. Collins et al (2006) suggested that print news, in particular, has been recognised as an integral source of public policy information as well as a medium to persuade public opinion, depending on selection and presentation of the issues. Further, while it may be impractical to control how consumers receive media messages, media producers have some control over presentation quality (Collins, Abelson, Pyman & Lavis, 2006).

A frame refers to the way media and media gatekeepers organise and present events and issues they cover, and the way audiences interpret what they are provided. Frames are abstract ideas that serve to organize or structure social meanings. Frames in the news may affect learning, interpretation, and evaluation of issues and events. In defining media frames, Ofori-Birikorang (2009) states that in performing its function "the media have been noted to consciously or unconsciously enact a pattern of reportage that involves active selection of some issues and making them more salient. This concept of selection and salience is known as *framing*." This form of agenda-setting not only tells what to think about, but also how to think about it. Agenda setting theory states that through selection by gatekeepers of particular news, readers learn what issues are salient

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and newsworthy (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Importance of a news story may also be determined by the amount of information and the way the information is presented (McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

Edelman (1993) emphasizes the power inherent in the selection and use of frames and the varied meanings they may evoke (in audiences), by giving prominence or repressing the disposition, causes and consequence of issues - (the social world is...a kaleidoscope of potential realities, any of which can be readily evoked by altering the ways in which observations are framed and categorized (Edelman, 1993, p. 232).

Understanding and identifying frames are essential as they influence the perception of the news readers. To this end, Entman (1993) explains that the process of framing involves selecting a certain aspect of an issue and making it salient to the community by defining the problem, diagnosing the cause, making moral judgments and suggesting a remedy. In other words, how media frame an issue largely determines how the public perceives that issue. Entman (1993) further explains that this can be done by selecting and giving prominence to certain features of reality while omitting or downplaying others. Entman's framing theory suggests that all news content is not equally salient and influential, thus it may be key to examining knowledge and perception of a particular issue. Entman (1993, p. 55) concludes that "frames call attention to some aspects of reality, while obscuring others." In the same vein and taking this concept further, experiments conducted by Kahneman and Tversky (1984) suggest that frames are omissions as well as inclusions of potential problem definitions, explanations, evaluations, and recommendations which were critical in guiding the understanding of audiences.

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A similarly themed study of framing (Mastin, Choi, Barboza, & Post, 2007) examined newspaper coverage of elder Racial Framing abuse and how newspapers frame coverage of the abuse on the individual instead of the societal level which ignores some of the realities of the problem. The study finds that the media's role as gatekeepers of important information shaping perception of the facts to fit a common idea – even if it is falsely perceived.

3.3.0   MEDIA FRAMING OF WOMEN LEADERS

The mass media encourage stereotype and hence can misrepresent social reality. According to Wood (1994), (as cited in Shaefer, 2004), media underrepresentation of women suggests that "men are the cultural standard and women are insignificant". A simple juxtaposing of the recent national census with recent studies (Mawugbe, 2010) supports this assertion: women are underrepresented despite the reality of outnumbering men in Ghana. Thus is it important to understand the frames employed in representing news and how they re-entrench this phenomenon.

Framing theory is considered especially pertinent to the study of media in political life (Reese, 2001). Gender theorists have also used the approach to explore the framing of women politicians and women's issues. Studies indicate that the monolithic stereotypes that characterised media representations of women in the 1970s and 1980s have changed somewhat (Gallagher, 2001, p. 5), warranting a different approach to studying more recent subtle gendered media representations. In this context, the research aims to examine how the Ghanaian media selected from the reality of women in leadership in news-making in a way that highlights a particular viewpoint of "definition, causal

interpretation, and moral evaluation and/ or treatment recommendation" (Entman, 1993, p.52).

3.4.0   SYMBOLIC ANNIHILATION

The concept of symbolic annihilation in the media refers to the ways in which poor media treatment can lead to social disempowerment where absence in popular communication results in erasure from public consciousness, (Coleman & Yochim, 2008). The concept was first introduced by George Gerbner in 1972 where he states that, "representation in the fictional world signifies social existence; absence means symbolic annihilation" (p. 44). Gerbner argued that media representation as well as omission fostered certain assumptions about how the world works and in who or where power is located. Gerbner & Gross (1976) retained the meaning but expanded its application. They used symbolic annihilation to describe the absence of certain groups in popular communication with Gaye Tuchman (1978) expanding the concept to include 'condemnation' and 'trivialisation'. They argued that even though media audiences, mainly television viewers knew that entertainment programming is fictional, they still adopt 'TV answer' thereby equating media content to social reality. For instance, if women are represented in the media as secretaries, the social expectation is that women are to be secretaries and not men, providing "evidence that a representational *lack* in media can be just as problematic as a stereotypical presence", (Coleman &Yochim, 2008, p.3).

Following the propounding of framing in 1976 by Erving Goffman, Gaye Tuchman (1978) popularised the concept of symbolic annihilation which she divides into

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three aspects of women media representation; absence/omission, trivialisation, and condemnation. Tuchman (1978), surveying newspapers, magazines, television and their accompanying advertisements gathered evidence to support the concept that women were symbolically annihilated when they were ignored or portrayed in stereotypical roles of victims and consumers. Generally, women were rarely represented in the media and when they appeared, they were found in unpaid, traditional domestic roles, as homemakers and mothers, in the private space. There was absence of women depicted to have strong character and occupying responsible positions. Even in the home, they were still dominated by men. Further, if they were in paid employment, they were either clerks or engaged in "pink-collar' jobs, positions which attracted low salaries and were down the ladder. Magazines in particular were found to depict women in roles that did not encourage education, training and choices that led to positions of power, authority and power, but rather, marriage and child rearing. The results of these depictions rendered the woman dependent and unable to live her life without the 'guidance' of the man. Again, of particular importance to Tuchman of these media depictions was the inherent power to serve as role models for girls and young women who will inadvertently step into such stereotypical roles, backed by the concept of media reflection of dominant social values.

Tuchman suggests that changes in society would eventually reflect in more and better representation of women although a period of "cultural lag" would have to be endured. Coleman and Yochim, (2008) in their conclusion emphasise the usefulness of symbolic annihilation for "describing representations that fit into dichotomous relationships of presence or absence and to elucidate the destructive consequences of poor or absent media attention".

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In 1997, Norris found evidence supporting the need for more subtle analysis of media coverage of women leaders since most of the coverage did not contain the easily identifiable simple stereotyping but "reflected a more subtle conventional wisdom about how women are seen as politicians" (p. 161). Gidengil and Everitt (1999) also identify three phases in examining the portrayal of women in politics by the media. They begin with visibility/invisibility, then focus on coverage of women politicians, and finally into "gendered mediation", a focus on the more subtle, but arguably more insidious form of bias that arises when conventional political frames are applied to female politicians" (p. 49). In this study, the concept of media framing through framing analysis is applied to news media in examining media coverage of women leaders within the framework of symbolic annihilation theory in the Ghanaian context.

Some studies have discovered new emerging trends regarding symbolic annihilation, particularly, the role of women in trivialising themselves or other women in the media. Informed by the theory that women are symbolically annihilated and from the perspective that news is socially constructed, McGregor (1996) studied press coverage of New Zealand daily and Sunday newspapers and leading business and management magazines over a period of six weeks. The study focused on the appointment of a female to a top corporate position in New Zealand. The study found that news was framed mainly around gender and age as a primary theme. In addition, issues of "marital status and child-bearing devalued and trivialized" the rise of women to the top. Further, in contrast to other studies evidence was found to support the idea that female journalists framed news differently from their male counterparts.

Susan Fountaine & Judy McGregor (2002) examined the New Zealand election of 2001 and provide instances of "self-trivialisation". They give examples of the 'Eighteen year old Paula Gillon' who 'stripped down to blue tulle and a smile for a photograph' used for billboards and postcards and the subsequent criticisms she received from other women. In the latter instance of trivialisation the researchers demonstrate 'some instances of trivial media portrayals' as a result of 'public relations strategies employed by women for political gain.' According to GMMP 2005 report, "The wider impact of women's exploitation of gender, for instance female politicians playing bimbo, may hinder progress toward equality in media representations."

While symbolic annihilation, from the aspect of absence/omission, hold true on the surface in the Ghanaian context[5] from studies reviewed, it is important to examine this concept from the aspects of trivialization and condemnation in media representation of women leaders.

3.5.0 GENDER AND LEADERSHIP

Often the meanings of sex and gender are confused. To this end, Reeves and Baden (2000), differentiate between sex and gender when they assert that "[s]ex refers to the biological characteristics that categorise someone as either female or male; whereas gender refers to the socially determined ideas and practices of what it is to be female or male". (p.3) Further, Morna (2002), defines gender as "... the socially constructed differences between men and women, which can change over time and which vary within

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[5] Who Makes the News? - Global Media Monitoring Project 2010

a given society from one society to the next. Our gender identity determines how we are perceived and how we are expected to behave as men and women." (p.43)

Accordingly, gender theory refers to concepts of accepted socially constructed culturally based power relations that place limitations on people by virtue of imposed sex binary system of femininity and masculinity. At birth an individual is sexed based on how the genitalia look like, but does not have a gender – ideas of masculinity and femininity are learned, (Butler, 1988). Hence a person's sex determines what gendered roles are socially accepted and is allowed to 'perform', a deviation from which calls attention to "cultural, social, or aesthetic dissonances" (Garber 1992, p.16). Giddens (2010) states that "Gender refers to psychological, social and cultural differences between males and females... linked to socially constructed notions of masculinity and femininity", (p.601).

From birth through stages of growth, there is in operation society's prescription of appropriate gendered constructs (of differences and similarities accompanied by responsibilities and roles) to ensure conformity, reproduction and sustenance of what is feminine and masculine, a process which finds legitimacy in "religion, law, science, and the society's entire set of values" (Lorber, 1994). As Simone de Beauvoir (as cited in Butler, 1988) said, "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature... which is described as feminine" (p.159).

Children learn *to do gender* as it serves as a central concept to organising the social world. Individuals through learning by interaction and perform appropriate culturally gendered behaviour "to be considered competent members of society..." (Coltrane, 1996, p. 114). Similarly, Butler (1988) argues that "gender is what is put on,

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invariably, under constraint, daily and incessantly, with anxiety and pleasure, but if this continuous act is mistaken for a natural or linguistic given, power is relinquished to expand the cultural field bodily through subversive performances of various kinds." (p.531)

The ability for society to predict, manage and control its resources necessitates gendering. Understanding society's need for gendering humans from birth according to Lorber (1994) should be done from the perspective of gender as a 'social institution' apart from individuals' experiences of gender. Lorber (1994) argues that,

> Human society depends on a predictable division of labor, a designated allocation of scarce goods, assigned responsibility for children and others who cannot care for themselves, common values and their systematic transmission to new members, legitimate leadership, music, art, stories, games, and other symbolic productions.

Inherent in the gendering process is stratification and structure, creating an end product of social statuses unequally ranked with men above women in terms of race and class whereby "the devalued genders have less power, prestige, and economic rewards than the valued genders" (Lorber, 1994).

Throughout an individual's life, gender norms are learned, performed and expected by means of gendered interactions in the family, workplace and institution especially the media that give reinforcement. Further, since the media serves as cite for reinforcement of gendered norms and expectations, there still remains possibilities for modification and transformation.

Nancy Jay (1981) says: "That which is defined, separated out, isolated from all else is A and pure. Not-A is necessarily impure, a random catchall, to which nothing is external except A and the principle of order that separates it from Not-A" (p.45). Lorber 1998 states that "In Western society, "man" is A, "woman" is Not-A". Similarly, Erving Goffman (1983) explains gender to be an aspect of *Felicity's Condition,* as "any arrangement which leads us to judge an individual's... acts not to be a manifestation of strangeness" (p.27). Thus inherent in Felicity's Condition is our sense of what is sane.

Gender relations in Africa bear some semblance to that which pertains in the West and for that matter prescribes different roles for women and men. Men in leadership are the social norm and expectation with a few women daring to contradict it. Pre-independence period across the African continent saw women take active participation in the struggle towards independence. Indeed women underrepresentation at the decision-making level has been noted as an incident of colonialism, remnants of which were sustained after independence by institutional systems (educational, economic, political etc.) inherited by the newly independent states, (Aidoo, 1995). Hence post-colonial structures imposed already entrenched European anti-feminist society on the African society (Aidoo, 1985; Tamale, 1999). On arrival in Ghana, European men and women were not familiar with the level of independence portrayed by the women they saw. Aidoo(1985) states that "the fierce independence of west African women who build their own houses, hold absolute titles to property, run their own businesses and educate their children in Europe ... is a marked tendency towards autonomy and self-reliance even when the women were married … characteristics which date back to our history and culture" (p.15). She explains that such women who exhibited independence and strong

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character did not find a place in the colonial system but were rather systematically excluded from the 'power' and 'prestige' of the colonial era, hence erasing the 'psychological basis of power' for the African woman. Aidoo argues that "The tragedy of the colonial experience for the African woman then is that she has been set backwards and has been made to function in this century as if on sufferance of colonial and post-colonial men, both European and African" (p.15).

However, there are also in existence socio-cultural gender role constructs that inhibit women from taking up leadership roles. Proverbs in the matrilineal Akan societies have been cited as explanations and descriptions in daily discourses which often reinforce stereotypes about women and men. The following examples of Ghanaian proverbs depict the 'place' of a woman in the society:

"If the gun lets out bullets, it is the man who receives them on his chest; Even if a woman makes a drum it leans against a man's hut; The hen also knows that it is dawn but it allows the cock to announce it." (Adomako Ampofo, 2001)

These are often used in everyday discourse serving as a reminder of what is the norm and expected behavior of women and men. Again, Amoah (1991) and Rattray (1927, as cited in Aidoo, 1985) provide common examples of sanctions in the form of 'insults'. Females who were seen to be too aggressive were called *babasia-kokonin* (woman-cock or male-woman) and men who stray from the acceptable masculine behavior were referred to as *benyin-basia* (male-female).

Similarly, other studies (Adomako Ampofo, 2001; Amoah, 1991) in Ghana, indicate that inculcation of these gender specific roles take place as early as childhood, a deviation from which spelled sanctions enforced by peers and significant others.

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Adomako Ampofo (2001) states that "with few exceptions patriarchal attitudes essentially prevail across age, sex and lineage type", (p.196). Through focused group discussions in matrilineal and patrilineal communities the research studied attitudes of adolescents towards sexual and reproductive health and adolescence as important for understanding gender differentials. She explains that opportunities and possibilities for the male expand whiles that of the female reduce and become restricted. "Boys enjoy new privileges reserved for men, and girls endure new restrictions reserved for women. Boys gain autonomy, mobility, opportunity and power including power over girls' reproductive lives" (Adomako Ampofo, 2001). The study cites the family as a force that shapes behaviour through gender socialisation. In conclusion, Adomako Ampofo, (2001), sums up gender socialisation in the Ghanaian context as follows:

> Children learn to distinguish female and male role expectations from an early age; boys are generally taught to be tough, decisive, powerful, and decision-makers; girls... to be passive, innocent, submissive, and to refrain from decision-making; ... men are justified as decision-makers and women for childbearing/rearing roles ... resulting in differences in girls' and boys' attitudes and behaviour... (p.201)

Opare (2005), in her study of gender representation in decision-making positions in rural areas in Ghana found culturally based persistent bias against women. Examining women's access to leadership positions of authority and responsibility, the study found the usual male dominance. Even though many women were found to have leadership capabilities, few got into leadership roles. When the communities were 'gracious' enough to give the women key positions, they were less responsible and had limited executive

functions, rendering the women 'less visible or influential' and still subordinate to the men. Opare (2005) outlines the following reasons as accountable for women's inability to take up leadership roles: the socio-cultural belief that men are the natural leaders both in the household and in the wider community, and that women are only there to support them; low educational levels; low female school enrolment; woman's marital status; early marriage; and women still over-burdened with routine domestic responsibilities.

The overstated issue that women are underrepresented in management does not make the statement any less factual. Studies on leadership have found evidences of myths and narratives that centre on masculinity to reinforce male identities that sustain unequal gender relations in organizations (Collinson & Hearn, 1996; Hearn et al., 1989). Again, Kets de Vries (1994) submits the persistent myth of logic and rationality, control and competitiveness (Fournier and Kelemen, 2001) as masculine implying the absence of emotion and irrationality as feminine amounting to associating male with power and authority thereby favouring masculinity. Fournier and Kelemen, (2001) analysing limited women management roles found that women were generally considered to be caring, nurturing, and sharing, traits that were seen as more suitable for the home and family, domestic activities, for that matter the private space while men, become natural leaders. Other studies also found similar trends of women in rural areas limited to positions of secretaries and treasurers which mostly meant 'holders of money' while the men kept the books (Djegal et al,. 1996).

There still remains little consensus on the roots of gender relations that pertains in Africa and for that matter Ghana and how they have influenced the dynamics of recent times. However evidences of its roots in some socio-cultural discourses outlined here

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cannot be overlooked. Again the role of the media as a site for reinforcement of gender inequality, gender oppression and patriarchy remains strong.

Consequently, this study offers a conceptual framework for examining media coverage of women leaders. Media through news constructs (frames as a mode of making meaning), informed by socially determined gender constructs of women as leaders get represented and reinforced. Again, media by its nature provides a space to challenge the gendered leadership constructs about women.
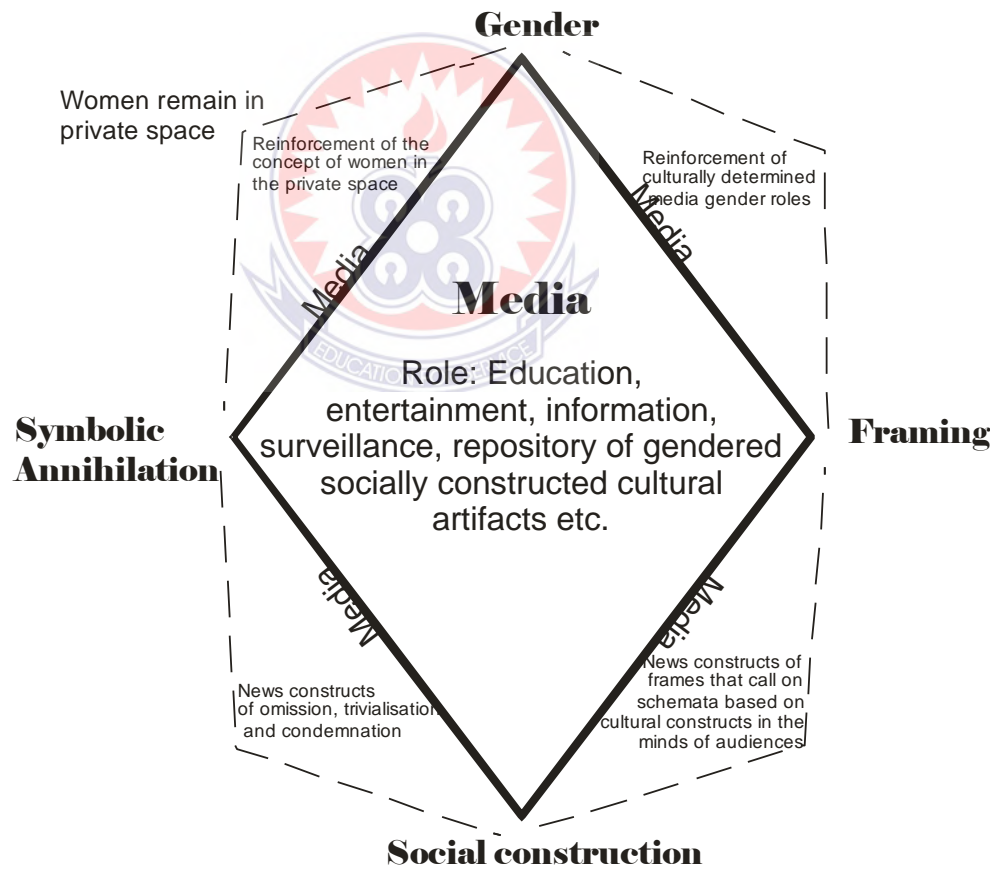
Figure 1: Conceptual framework

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3.6.0   SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the theoretical underpinnings of the study as a means to understanding the type of media coverage given women leaders in an African setting. Social construction of news, symbolic annihilation and framing all make assumptions about how constructs of gender emerge and are retained in the media. Further, these assumptions all point to the inherent power in the media to change these constructs towards achieving gender equality. Media's failure as vehicle of change despite the seeming freedom to do so remains a subject of research interest.

It is imperative to provide a brief sketch of the African and for that matter Ghanaian socio-cultural setting with a focus on gender as a backdrop for understanding the phenomenon under study. This is because (as will later be established), all theories employed by the study have at their core issues that invariably point to linkages between society, tradition and media as a cultural artefact and a site for reinforcement of the position of the powerful – male domination.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the methods and procedures employed to obtain and analyse data to study the media representation of four women leaders by three newspapers between 2009 and 2010. Specifically, it details the methods of data collection and instruments, data handling and analysis. Reasons for the choices made are also outlined. In addition, the chapter explains the underlying principles for the various methods and procedures for the research design.

Again, the coding instruments, coding protocol and operational definitions that lend meaning to the themes, issues, categories, and frames that emerged in the analysis of data are provided. Other procedures for data collection are also provided.

4.1.0   METHODS

Within social science, specifically media research, the choice of research methodology is usually between qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods. With the kind of information I was looking for, she needed to make a decision as to which of the three methodologies mentioned would enhance my chances of accessing the information. Following other researchers who "adopted the tenets of *paradigm relativism*, or the use of whatever philosophical and/or methodological approach [that] works for the particular research problem under study," (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 18), this research employed a mixed methodology that relies on both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009; Howe, 1988). However, the

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qualitative aspect predominates with the quantitative giving numerical presentations of the findings. Emphasis on the qualitative allowed the researcher to make meaning of the phenomena under study from an interpretive and natural approach. According to Lincoln (2000), "... qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p. 3).

This study explores through framing analysis, how women leaders are represented in the media and the reasons for the manner in which they appear. Here, it is imperative that the research questions are stated again so as to demonstrate how data collected effectively answers them. The research questions again are:

1. (a) What frames do newspapers employ to represent women leaders in Ghana?

    (b) Are the frames employed dependent on the particular space occupied by the woman leader?

2. What are the reasons behind these frames from the perspective of the journalist?

3. What are the perceptions of the women leaders towards these frames?

To answer the research questions, the researcher selected newspaper articles that covered women leaders from three Ghanaian newspapers for analysis. In particular, straight news stories on four women in leadership: two women in political spaces and two women in non-political spaces were selected.

4.2.0   RESEARCH DESIGN

4.2.1   <u>Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA)</u>

Using Ethnographic Content Analysis informed by framing, the study integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches. The approach which is based on inductive and reflective approach is used for this study as this affords the researcher the opportunity to identify and project latent and manifest content. Altheide (1996), advocated the application of the ethnographic perspective to examine patterns of human action by 'conceptualising document analysis as fieldwork'(p.13-14).

Ethnographic Content Analysis (Altheidi, 1996) is a method of enquiry which integrates procedures and techniques for spotting, categorising, retrieving and analyzing documents. ECA aims to find significance and meaning within documents. Altheidi (1987) espoused ECA approach by applying several aspect of ethnographic research approach to content analysis which he defines as "the reflexive analysis of documents" (p. 14), (as cited in Plummer, 1986). ECA moves beyond saliency of events to latent meanings and patterns through repeated study of content and the contexts within which representations are made. Altheidi (1996) assets that "ECA involves focusing on and collecting numerical and narrative data rather than following the positivist convention of QCA of forcing the former into predefined categories of the latter" (p.17).

Teer-Tomaselli (2008), in explaining the Radical Humanist paradigm under approaches to media research and how academic and practical research can complement each other states that "Ethnography is often used to study how individuals and communities interact with, and mobilise through, media". Human beings, in this case, are the centre of the study, constitute the subject matter and guide the approach of enquiry while determining the orientation of the investigator. However, where the

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meaning of an activity, "a product of social interaction" (in this case the meaning of the news articles under study) is the focus, ethnography is "considered a methodological orientation independently of the subject matter...looking at one feature in the context of what is understood about other features, allowing for constant comparison..." (Altheidi, 1987).

Additionally, ethnography moves the researcher beyond the numbers in content analysis by complementing with analysis of meanings of the articles constructed by the journalists and especially, the women leaders about who the articles are written in order to get the big picture (Teer-Tomaselli 2008).

4.2.2 <u>Content Analysis</u>

An essential tool in framing theory, content analysis helps identify cognitive patterns of dominant issues, categorise the issues into themes and interpretive forms which are then matched to meanings that are dominant in society's culture of ideas (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Norris, 1985; Valeda, 2000). These ideas also match this study. The news stories under study are examined through the lenses of news frames. The method of gathering information allows for the researcher to study cultural changes and track discourse over time and link media logic and formats to contents (Altheide, 2000).

Content analysis was used as early as 1891 by Ida B. Wells to test a widely held view that black men were lynched for raping white women. As a research method, she examined newspaper articles during the previous ten years (Babbie, 2005, p.329). Kirppendorf (1980) supports the assertion of the effectiveness of content analysis for the examination of recorded human communications especially when the meaning of

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the messages is latent. Later Kirppendorf (2004) asserts that content analysis is "a research technique for making replicable and valid references from texts to the context of their use," and essential to understanding data not only as a physical event but also as symbolic phenomena warranting an unobtrusive approach to their study. Though content analysis may involve predetermined categories of themes and variables, ethnographic methods allow other patterns and themes to emerge leading to "constant discovery and constant comparisons of relevant situations" (Altheidi, 1996 p.16).

4.2.3   Subjects of Study

The decision to choose newspapers for the study is based on a number of factors. To begin, the print media, such as newspapers, have been found to be an effective medium for influencing the general public as well as opinion leaders (Evans & Ulasevich, 2005). Further to this, newspapers have been found to be a strong source of influence in shaping the opinions of society where previously lack of personal experiences has worked for a strong stance on an issue (Iyenger, 1991; Zaller, 1992). Not only is the newspaper one of the most accessible and affordable sources of information, but it is widely used and accepted (Wasserman, 1999). Valeda (2002) has also indicated that newspapers are practical and of substantive value to research in framing. In Ghana, newspapers command a central role in social discourse of ordinary people (Hasty 2005). In addition, general public interest in newspapers has been enhanced by radio stations (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009). Ofori-Birikorang explains that daily morning shows on radio and television review newspapers and discuss headlines and salient issues with their audience which enables anyone who wants to follow up on

an issue do so with ease by getting a copy of the newspaper rather than getting a radio transcript which can, sometimes, prove difficult.

4.3.0   CHOICE OF NEWSPAPERS

Data for the study was collected from three newspapers in the entire population of newspapers in Ghana. They are *The Daily Graphic*, *Ghanaian Times* and *Daily Guide*. These newspapers as the content source for this study was informed by a number of considerations. *The Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times* are state-owned and enjoy an impressive daily circulation and are of significant historical reputation. The papers devote considerable attention to national politics, making its coverage of women more extensive than rival news organizations. They also play a major role in shaping the agenda of other news media, suggesting that its coverage influences other journalistic definitions of this period. The *Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times* enjoy a readership that cuts across the country and thus are seen as national newspapers. The *Daily Guide* has a significant influence on Ghanaian political discourse because of its ability to reach decision-making elites by virtue of the position it holds as the private newspaper with the highest circulation.

4.3.1 Daily Graphic

The *Daily Graphic* was established in 1953 in Ghana by the Mirror Group of London with its headquarters in the United Kingdom. However, Barton (1979) and Hatchen (1971), (as cited in Asante 1996), point to the fact that *Daily Graphic* was sold to the government and became nationalised in 1963. The newspaper currently enjoys the highest coverage in Ghana with a daily circulation of about 200,000 representing 45% of daily newspaper circulation and is published six days in a week (Monday to Saturday). Distribution is mainly within regional capitals and urban centres of the country.

The *Daily Graphic* is made up of 48 pages including pages for Gender and Children (pages 8-10) World news (page 2), Inside Africa (page 5), Editorial and Features/Opinion articles(page 4), Education (page 11), Politics (pages 15-19), Regional news (page 21), Metro news (page 29-31), Business (page 33), Classified and Funeral Announcement (pages 42-43) and Sports (pages 46-47). It is imperative to note that these pages may vary depending on the advertisements available for the day's publication.

The *Daily Graphic* has over the years attained a reputation for asserting its independence through editorial policies, a position often seen by governments as critical of their administration. As a result, several government interferences have occurred (Asante, 1996). However, the paper has continued to maintain its editorial independence and has remained economically viable.

4.3.2 Daily Guide

The *Daily Guide* is a private newspaper established in the middle of the 1990s as weekly newspaper. It has grown to become one of the leading private newspapers in Ghana, published from Monday to Saturday with the second highest circulation of 40,000 (AMDI, 2004). The paper is noted for its specialisation in political headlines with emphasis on political scandals for which about half of its pages are devoted (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009). The paper has grown from an 8-page paper to 16 pages fed with stories from correspondents in its offices located in all the ten regional capitals. Other news stories covered by the Daily Guide include Science and Environment, Life and Style, Entertainment, Sports, Business, Features and World News. It must be noted that the *Daily Guide* has in the past dedicated some of its pages to women's issues but was curtailed as a result of lack of editorial interest[6] (Mary Anane, personal communication, November 23, 2011). Like the *Daily Graphic*, the *Daily Guide* has offices in all the ten regional capitals with personnel covering their various regions for news stories.

4.3.3 The Ghanaian Times

The Ghanaian Times published its first newspaper on March 3, 1958 as the *Guinea Times* led by Ghana's first president, Dr Kwame Nkrumah who did so to propagate his own political agenda and that of his Convention People's Party (CPP). Established during the period when the CPP was in power, the paper operated an editorial policy that served to ensure the protection and defence of the government of

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[6] Mary Anane is a journalist the *Daily Guide* newspaper

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Nkrumah (Asante, 1996; Yankah, 1994). Following the overthrow of Kwame Nkrumah in 1966, the Guinea Press was transferred to the new government as state property. In 1971, an instrument of incorporation (Act 363, 1971) established the New Times Corporation to oversee the publication of *The Ghanaian Times*. The paper receives a major portion of its budget from government, a situation that lends itself to some form of governmental control, creating a seeming 'healthy' and 'dependable' relations with governments in power (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009).

The Ghanaian Times comes second to the *Daily Graphic* in terms of circulation which stands at 150,000 copies daily. Like the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide*, *The Ghanaian Times* is published from Mondays to Saturdays. The paper has a page extent of 32 including pages dedicated to Editorial op-ed (page 4), Africa News (page 5), World News (pages 6-7), Feature (pages 8-9), General News (pages 2, 11,14 and 21), , Regional News (pages 22-25), Business (page 26), Sports (pages 28-32) and Politics (pages 12-13) with the rest dedicated to advertisement. The paper has regional offices countrywide staffed with regional editors and journalists who submit news from their specific regions. Despite the fact that the New Times Corporation also publishes *The Spectator* (weekly), *The Sporting Times* and *The Evening News* (published daily in the afternoon) *The Ghanaian Times* has become representative of the company and its publications.

4.4.0   UNITS OF ANALYSIS

This research uses print articles from three newspapers to examine the context to which women leaders in political and non political spaces are framed. The unit of analysis is the paragraph. To this end, four women in leadership positions were selected

for the study. They are for political space: Betty Mould Iddrisu (former Attorney General and Minister of Justice, and former Minister of Education) and Ursula Owusu (a leading member of the New Patriotic Party (NPP); non-political space: Georgina Woode (the Chief Justice of the Republic of Ghana) and Joyce Aryee (CEO, Chamber of Mines)[7] for non-political space. Criteria to aid the selection of the articles within the stipulated timeframe were developed for the study. Articles were selected if they mentioned any of the four women leaders. Each edition of the three newspapers published within the study period was reviewed for articles that fit the study criteria.

According to Entman's 1991 study (as cited in Ju, 2005), a well recognised feature of framing analysis is comparison. This is often used as a better means for examining media frames due to the difficulty of identifying framing devices deployed in media narratives since they look 'natural' and may be missed. Consequently this study compares the media coverage of women in political and non-political spaces on one level and a second level comparison within each space. Betty Mould-Iddrisu and Ursula Owusu were selected for political spaces because they are both women leaders actively engaged in partisan politics. Betty Mould-Iddrisu is a member of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the ruling party and Ursula Owusu, a spokesperson for the main opposition political party New Patriotic Party (NPP). The choice of these political party-affiliated women also provide basis for collecting data through interviews to answer RQ 3 from the perspectives of experiences of women leaders both in government and opposition. The Chief Justice Georgina Wood and Joyce Aryee were

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[7] Joyce Aryee retired from her position in 2011, an event which occurred after the period of study.

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selected for non-political space because they both hold important leadership positions which are non-traditional gender roles for women.

News articles published within January 2009 to December 2010 and which contained the names of the sampled women leaders in the headline or lead were selected. A news article is defined to include any news story that discussed these women. News articles that had photographs of the women under study but did not say anything about them were not included in the sample. The units of analysis are paragraphs. Paragraphs as units of analysis allow for ease of identifying and categorising themes since entire news stories may have several themes.

The study used the purposive and availability sampling method (Bertrand & Hughes 2005, p. 199) and used "the entire universe of articles" available from the period of study (Valeda, 2002, p. 147). This method of sampling was applicable because news stories on women are few. In most cases news about women got published when they were controversial. In addition there was no pattern for selection of publication though the newspapers are published daily to warrant systematic, purposive, cluster, or quota sampling.

All together, 133 news articles were selected distributed as follows: *Daily Graphic* – 45, *Daily Guide* – 28 and *The Ghanaian Times* – 60. This translates into 1715 paragraphs.

4.5.0   PERIOD OF STUDY

The newspapers selected for analysis in this study spans the period between January 2009 and December 2010. First, this period (2009 to 2010) is significant especially because it marks an important milestone in the history of women leadership

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in Ghana. For the first time, three women occupied key decision-making positions in Ghana at the same time: Minister of Justice and Attorney General, Speaker of Parliament, and Chief Justice. Betty Mould Iddrisu was appointed to the position of Minister of Justice and Attorney General from 2009 to 2010; a political appointment which she lost through a government reshuffle. Joyce Bamford-Addo is the speaker of the fifth parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. She is the first female to hold this position. Georgina Theodora Wood is the Chief Justice of the republic of Ghana and also the first female to occupy this position. It is therefore important to analyse the nature of discourse of the news articles they were covered in, more so when the space accorded women in leadership in Ghana was further decreased in 2010, through the transfer of Betty Mould Iddrisu from the Minister of Justice and Attorney General position to Ministry of Education. Similarities exist between this situation and outcomes of a study (Norris, 1997) that examines the quality of coverage of men and women. The results indicated that men are better at handling "tough" issues (economy and foreign policy) while women are better suited for more domesticated issues like education and welfare another stereotypical role "appropriate" for women.

The minimum period for studying a phenomenon using framing analysis is six months. However this study spans a period of two years and second, the study period falls within the range synonymous with similar studies (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009; Exner & Thurston, 2009; Valeda, 2000) which employ similar research designs.

4.6.0   DATA COLLECTION

4.6.1   <u>Newspapers</u>

Two major techniques of data collection were employed: news articles from selected newspapers and interviews of media practitioners. Data collection began with an exploratory study at the library of the Department of Communication and Media Studies, University of Education between October and December 2010. Here hard copies of news articles spanning the period of January to December 2009 were collected. Subsequently, the period of study was extended to December 2011 where further searches were conducted at University of Education library, the Balme Library at the University of Ghana, Legon, and online databases to obtain more news articles. Libraries of the *Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times* were also visited for their specific news articles.

As stated earlier, data was collected from newspaper articles covering the women leaders mentioned and interview of two media practitioners. Ethnographic content analysis was used to explore the "latent meaning of the text" and to understand "why-the-content-is-like-that" (Hall 1975, p.16). A content and textual analysis of newspaper articles about women was done. A close reading of the news stories was employed to identify the recurring frames in the reporting.

4.6.2   <u>Coding Instruments</u>

News articles concerning the four women leaders mentioned above appearing in the three newspapers between 2009 and 2010 were included in the sample and coded for analysis. As indicated earlier, the units of analysis is the paragraph. The coding was

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done using a coding scheme (see appendix 1). Two graduate students from the Communication and Media Studies Department of The University of Education, Winneba, were trained to code the articles. Inter-coder reliability was 89%. Each article was coded by coding the newspaper title, headline, date of publication, type of article, section, number of paragraphs, story centred on women leader, women leaders quoted, source of quotes, nature of story, themes used in framing the women leaders. The newspaper title, headline, date of publication, and section were coded as explicitly stated in the article. The total number of paragraphs in each article was coded by counting the number of paragraphs contained in the article. In addition, the number of paragraphs dedicated to the woman leader and other sources in addressing and/or explaining the issues were counted. The study established categories with a guide from the literature. Preliminary reviews of other studies, for example, the Global Media Monitoring Project, (2009/2010) found that women were framed around themes like their family status and Incompetence. These are already established frames and were quite obvious from my initial contact with some of the text they could be appropriated for this study. In line with other studies, a close reading of the news articles was done and some content categories were developed based on the interpretations, themes frames that emerged in each article or news story (Pickle, Quinn, & Brown, 2002). In addition, the following provided a guide on the selection of articles and coding:

Placement: The importance placed on a news story may also be determined by the positioning of the article, amount of information given and the way the information is presented. The stories were coded for placement on the front pages or other pages of the paper. Stories that had only headlines on the front page and the actual story appearing

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on another page were coded the same as those with the entire story on the front page. Placement of stories is important as it suggest that among the other stories in the newspapers the front page stories are ranked first in terms of importance by the newspaper company. Placement also plays a role of establishing a platform to illustrate, discuss or even debate social issues a paper wants to focus on, creating a mass of public discussion. As a result, there is a story behind to place the news stories.

News article centred on woman leader: The article's centeredness on the woman leader was also coded. To determine this, the total number of paragraphs were first counted then out of that, the number of paragraphs dedicated to the woman leader was then established.

Woman leader quoted directly in news article: Whether the woman leader was quoted or not was coded. This is important in the light of the fact of the importance placed on quotes by news editors as a basis for legitimacy of information. Again, since the news articles are about the women leaders, it follows then they would be quoted so as to achieve fairness.

Sources: The news stories were also coded for sources. It is typical of Ghanaian journalist to quote government officials/authorities, politicians and policy makers as a means to gaining legitimacy and credibility for their stories (Croteau and Hoynes, 1992) rather than independent and anonymous sources (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009; Allan, 2005; Bourgault, 1995; Hasty, 2005; Tumbler, 1999). Here the exclusion of women as sources of news is explored as few women are in leadership and often excluded from

giving their experiences on issues covered by the media, even in issues that directly affect women's livelihood.

Nature of story: The news articles were coded for the nature of the story to determine if they challenge or reinforce gender stereotypes or if they were neutral.

Frames and Categories: The data from the news articles were coded into nine (9) frames and twenty-seven (27) Sub-categories. Women covered using 10 frames: Incompetence, Vilification, Feminism, stereotypes, Politics, Social responsibility, and Development. These frames, it must be noted elicit certain specific cultural considerations within which meanings (which may be multi-dimensional) are made. It implies inducement of "what will be discussed, how it will be discussed, and above all, how it will not be discussed" (Altheidi 1996, p. 31). Provided below are the frames and their clustered sub-categories:

- Incompetence: *Incompetence*, *frustration, bias, unorthodoxy*

- Vilification: *corruption, mischief*

- Organised action: *popular support, anti-popular support*

- Feminism: *Feminist*

- Stereotypes: *Ignorance and petty-mindedness, family life relationship, naivety, endurance*

- Politics and Government: *politicization, state support*

- Social responsibility: *public service, challenges, social issues*

- Development: *human resource development, development of justice delivery system,*

  ICT, anti-corruption

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4.6.2 <u>**Interviews**</u>

In-depth interviews were conducted with 3 media practitioners to get their perspective on the kind of stories they produce in the process of covering women leaders. As a third source of data selection in addition to sampling newspaper articles, interviews with the women leaders were conducted, transcribed and analysed as a means seeking higher validation. Interviews as another source of data was important in the light that interviews enable the researcher understand the social actors experience from their own perspectives. The interviews threw more light on the findings from the newspaper articles while providing more validity.

All interviews were conducted face to face and lasted between 45 minutes to 60 minutes. The interaction which was conducted in English was guided by the following questions:

1. Please, kindly introduce yourself.

2. What are your views on how women are reported/ covered/portrayed in the media

3. Do you think that the media give enough coverage to women in leadership in Ghana?

4. If you consider women leaders as located in political and non-political spaces, which of the spaces do the media use to highlight women leaders in the country?

5. Does a woman have to be in politics or linked to politics before she can be acclaimed a leader of substance?

6.   Do you think that these reports portray the positive aspect of these women leaders?

7.   There is the view that women in political spaces have, in recent years been framed negatively, by a mainly male dominated media. How far is this assertion true?

8.   Do the media organizations that you work for have any ideology in regard to the coverage of women leaders?

9.   Generally, is there a newsroom ideology on how reports on women in leadership in the country should be covered?

10.   Are these reports objective?

11.   Please discuss the relevance of using invectives against women as news reporting style or tool in the current political dispensation?

12.   What is your opinion on the coverage of women political leaders in the current political dispensation?

It must be noted that the interviews were not structured according to the flow of the questions on the guide. Respondents were allowed to give extensive responses and where necessary, follow up questions were asked. In addition, a summary of the research and the question guide were sent to the respondents in advance to aid adequate preparation for the interview. Each interview was recorded on a digital recorder, transcribed and printed for analysis.

4.7.0 VALIDITY

The validity and reliability of any social science research can be ascertained from the data collection (Yin 2003). From the selection of the newspaper articles to reading the text, care was taken to ensure conformity with social science standards required for any social inquiry.

This study also used data source triangulation to examine the phenomenon from the perspectives of the texts in the news articles, the journalists who wrote the articles and the women leaders who were written about in the news stories. According to Tashakkori & Teddlie, (1998), triangulation developed from the groundbreaking work of Cambell and Fiske (1959) which they referred to as multimethod multitrait matrix. The study used more than one quantitative method to measure a psychological trait. Triangulation technique allowed the identification, exploration, and understanding of different dimensions of the units of study, thus strengthening the findings, enriching their interpretations and enabling the reduction of biases and deficiencies that may occur in the use of one method of enquiry. This study collected data from three sources: the news articles, interviews with the women leaders who are covered in the articles and interviews the journalists who wrote the stories. Data from the interviews provide as two extra dimensions from which the issues under study could be examined.

4.8.0   SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the methods used by the researcher to investigate the media framing of women leaders in Ghana between 2009 and 2010. In addition, the entire research design and the reasons that informed the choices made are explained. Processes used for data collection are also explained and the issue of validity is addressed. The various steps outlined under this chapter are research design, subjects of study, period of study, data collection, coding instrument and frames and themes identified and finally, the interviews conducted.

The research uses Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) informed by framing. ECA affords the researcher both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. However the emphasis is on the qualitative aspects with the quantitative in the background to aid the explanation of the qualitative aspect. Data was sourced from three sources: newspapers, interviews with media practitioners and women leaders – a process that yields data triangulation and ensures validity.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter captures the outcome of data collected from the newspapers and in-depth interviews conducted concerning women leadership. The results are presented through first, quantitative descriptions and analysis of the data collected from the newspapers. Second, the chapter also captures the findings and discussions resulting from the in-depth interviews of the media practitioners, and the women leaders and the links that connect their perspectives to the results from the textual analysis of the news stories.

In chapters 1 and 2, it was argued that news are social constructs and do not become so as a result of their importance but from an array of processes dependent on institutionalised choices made by individuals who often have mastered these routine processes. Further, the context within which the news process of interpreting and presenting events in order that audiences share in the 'meaning', is relevant especially as regards the use of literary devices influenced by cultural ideologies, heavily relied on. This ensures shared meaning. The use of gender-specific frames, informed by culturally based gender-specific roles women play often in the private space that are acquired through socialisation especially in cases where women leaders are involved, are evident. The resultant gendered patterns that have often characterised media news production have been attributed to lack of female representation in the news production processes and management of media organisations (Gallahger, 2010). The importance of the nature of media discourse is critical to women's representation, hence, the need for a more

critical analysis that goes beyond frequency of representation. The theory of symbolic annihilation offers a way of examining women's media representation from three perspectives – omission, trivialisation and condemnation.

Findings of this research are presented through quantitative descriptions and analysis from the outcome of data from the newspapers. The findings are also based on in-depth interviews with women leaders about whom the articles are written and some sampled journalists who wrote the articles. The research questions that guided the data collected and analysis are as follows:

1. (a) What frames do newspapers employ to represent women leaders in Ghana?

    (b) Are the frames employed dependent on the particular space occupied by the woman leader?

2. What are the reasons behind these frames from the perspective of the journalist?

3. What are the perceptions of the women leaders towards these frames?

RQ 1(a): What frames do newspapers employ to represent women leaders in Ghana?

This research question addresses the frames that were employed in the news discourse in the coverage of women leaders within the study period of 2009 and 2010. All together, eight frames emerged from the data analysed. The news frames as depicted in Table 1 below are: *Incompetence, vilification, organised action, feminism, stereotypes, politics, social responsibility and development*. The findings pertaining to women leaders in political spaces are presented first (Table 1 and Figure 2), followed by that for women

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leaders in non-political spaces (Table 2 and Figure 3). Tables 1 and 2 depict the distribution of the frequencies of the frames in the newspaper articles.

5.1.0   NEWS FRAMES – WOMEN LEADERS IN POLITICAL SPACES

Table 1

Frequency Distribution of News Frames used to cover Women Leaders in Political spaces by Three Newspapers from 2009 to 2010

News Frames	Daily Graphic	Daily Guide	Ghanaian Times
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Incompetence	14 (5%)	135 (35.9%)	30 (15.7%)
Vilification	8 (2.9%)	55 (14.6%)	0 (0%)
Organised action	5 (1.8%)	16 (4.3%)	6 (3.1%)
Feminism	36 (12.9%)	0 (0%)	6 (3.1%)
Stereotypes	146 (52.1%)	115 (30.6%)	55 (28.8%)
Politics	17 (6.1%)	38 (10.1%)	52 (27.2%)
Social responsibility	16 (5.7%)	5 (1.3%)	12 (6.3%)
Development	36 (12.8%)	8 (2.1%)	27 (14.1%)
Other	2 (0.7%)	4 (1.1%)	3 (1.6%)
Total thematic spaces	**N=280**	**N=376**	**N=191**

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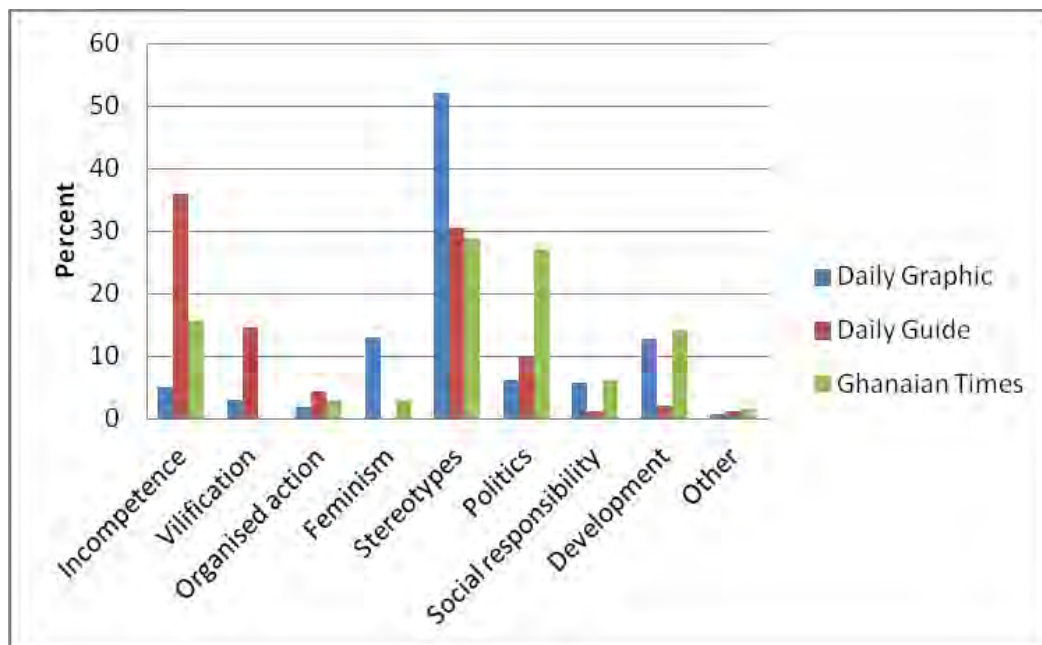
Figure 2: Bar graph of the cumulative frequency distribution of the eight news frames

5.1.1 Frame of Incompetence

The incompetence frame ranked very high in the themed coverage given women leaders in political spaces between 2009 and 2010. Of all the frames it ranked 2nd with a total of 179 out of the total thematic spaces of 847 devoted to the women leaders by the three newspapers (see Table 2). As depicted in Table 1, Figure 2, the newspaper that used most of the 179 in its coverage of the women leaders is *Daily Guide* with a total of 135 representing 35.9% of its total coverage accorded women leaders in political spaces within the study period. *The Ghanaian Times* employed the incompetence frame in only 30 that is 15.7% of the 191 thematic spaces it devoted to the women leaders. Even lower is the number of spaces that used this frame in the *Daily Graphic*. Only 14 indicative of 5% of the thematic space were found to have the incompetence frame out of the 280

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spaces. Examples of linguistic cues that informed the frame in the coverage of women leaders in political spaces include the following: bias, unorthodoxy, corruption, incompetence. To illustrate the frame of incompetence, two examples of paragraphs where the frame is obvious are provided by *The Ghanaian Times* and the *Daily Guide*:

> Responding to views that the A-G's outfit is losing a lot of cases, thus portraying a negative image about government, Madam Mould-Iddrisu said the media have not been fair in their reportage since very often, reports about 'defeats' by her outfit make the news while 'successful' ones are hardly reported.[8]

> (2009, December 17). *The Ghanaian Times*, p.13

> While Nana Addo empathised with her predicament, whereby influential persons within NDC are baying for her blood because of her sluggishness in bringing former NPP officials to trial, he stressed the belief that "there are more responsible ways of handling the pressure than resorting to unnecessary fabrications".[9]

> (2010, March 17) *Daily Guide*, p. 1&3

Another example of a subtler form of the frame of incompetence is seen *in The Ghanaian Times* newspaper article titled "Freedom of Information Bill - Govt reminded of campaign promise" is provided:

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[8] (2009, December 17). President's tenure of office to change? – Attorney-General. *The Ghanaian Times*, p.13

[9] Takyi-Boadu, C. (2010, March 17). Betty Lies, As NDC Cries for Blood. *Daily Guide*, p. 1&3

The Coalition which includes the Centre for Democratic Development (CDD) Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) and the Trades Union Congress, asked the government to provide a clear timeline within which, it intends to place the bill before parliament, after numerous promises by the Attorney General.[10]

(2009, April 24). *The Ghanaian Times*, p.13

5.1.2 <u>Frame of vilification</u>

This frame ranked 5th out of the 8 dominant frames that the newspapers made use of in the discussion of issues concerning women leaders in political spaces (see Table 2). Out of the 847 newspaper spaces, only 63 were devoted to the frame of vilification. Of the three newspapers, the *Daily Guide* again came out significantly ahead of the other two newspapers giving 55 signifying 14.6% out of its 376 thematic spaces to this frame. *Daily Graphic* framed only 2.9%, which is 8 of its 280 thematic news spaces with vilification, while *The Ghanaian Times* did not use this frame at all. To illustrate, two paragraphs are taken from two different news articles from the *Daily Guide*:

The 2008 Presidential Candidate of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo, has responded to the vicious lies being peddled against

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[10] Asare, K. (2009, April 24). Freedom of Information Bill - Govt reminded of campaign promise. *The Ghanaian Times*, p.13

him by Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Betty Mould-Iddrisu, who appears to be clutching for life to secure her position.[11]

(2010, March 17) *Daily Guide*, p. 1&3

Kwesi Pratt, Managing Editor of the Insight Newspaper, had earlier called on the New Patriotic Party flag bearer, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, to distance himself from rumours making rounds that he is considering choosing Ms Owusu as his running mate because she [Ursula] is arrogant and indecent and that her attitude could cause disaffection towards him.[12]

(2010, October 27). *Daily Guide*, p.6

5.1.3 Frame of Organised Action

This frame ranked last in the total number of frames devoting only 27 of the 847 spaces to organised action frame (see Table 2). Again the *Daily Guide* topped in terms of usage to discuss issues of women leaders. A percentage of 4.3 of the paper's entire coverage dedicated to women leaders in political spaces employed this frame. *The Ghanaian Times* used 6 of 191 while *Daily Graphic* devoted 5 of 280 of thematic spaces to the women leaders. While *The Ghanaian Times'* 6 thematic spaces of the organised action frame translate to 3.1%, that of *Daily Graphic* is indicative of 1.8%. A paragraph from *The Ghanaian Times* titled "AG's presence generates controversy in the House"

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[11] Takyi-Boadu, C. (2010, March 17). Betty Lies, As NDC Cries for Blood. *Daily Guide*, p. 1&3

[12] Ursula Shakes Pratt. (2010, October 27). *Daily Guide*, p.6

(2010, March 5, *The Ghanaian Times*, p.16), provides an example of the organised action frame: "Mrs. Mould-Iddrisu also touched on the work of the Constitutional Review Commission and urged the public to avail themselves of the work of the commission by contributing their views and making suggestions".[13] (2010, March 5). *The Ghanaian Times*, p.16.

5.1.4   <u>Frame of Feminism</u>

The frame of feminism ranked low placing 6th among the 8 frames as indicated in Table 2. No more than 42 out of the 847 news spaces used this frame. Out of this *Daily Graphic* dedicated the highest number of its news spaces to this frame devoting 12.9% of 280 thematic spaces. *The Ghanaian Times* employed this frame in only 6, representing 3.1% of its 191 news spaces. The *Daily Guide* however, did not make use of the feminism frame in the coverage of women leaders in political spaces. This frame largely consists of discussions that focused on issues of gender, education of the girl-child, and women in decision-making positions as a means to development. An excerpt under the headline "Encourage women to take up leadership positions – Says Betty Mould-Iddrisu", (2009, March 30, *Daily Graphic*, p. 17), discusses issues of the deeply ingrained idea of the female as inferior to the male:

> She said Ghanaian women had the ability to be president, ministers of state or lead any reputable institution when encouraged, financed or given any form of

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[13] Abdul-Rahaman, S. (2010, March 5). AG's presence generates controversy in the House. *The Ghanaian Times*, p.16

assistance. Mrs Mould-Iddrisu, who made this call at the annual get-together of African Women Lawyers Association (AWLA) challenged women not to see themselves as inferior to their male counterparts and strive to achieve their goals.[14]

(2009, March 30). *Daily Graphic*, p. 17

5.1.5   <u>**Frame of Stereotypes**</u>

The three newspapers altogether utilised this frame in 316 out of the 847 thematic spaces making the frame of stereotypes rank 1st among the 8 frames (see Table 2). Among the newspapers, *Daily Graphic* scored highest dedicating 146 out of the 280 news spaces. This represents 52.1%, followed by *Daily Guide* which provided 30.6% of its news thematic spaces framed around stereotypes. *The Ghanaian Times* utilised this frame in 55 or 28.8% of the 191 themed spaces. The following except from the *Daily Guide* illustrates evidence of the traditional stereotype of what is the expected appropriate behaviour for a woman rather than as an issue of personality trait:

Betty has without doubt been sensitive to the below-average reportage about her performance, exhibiting this vividly when she virtually said she doesn't care about the negative trend...With the announcement that she would adopt an

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[14] Donoo, J. & Kyei, F. Y. (2009, March 30). Encourage women to take up leadership positions – Says Betty Mould-Iddrisu. *Daily Graphic*, p. 17

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aggressive approach in a bid to achieve her desire, the legal system would be put to further test...[15]

(2009, December 23). *Daily Guide*, p.1&3

Kwesi Pratt, Managing Editor of the Insight Newspaper, had earlier called on the New Patriotic Party flag bearer, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, to distance himself from rumours making rounds that he is considering choosing Ms Owusu as his running mate because she [Ursula] is arrogant and indecent and that her attitude could cause disaffection towards him.[16]

(2010, October 27). *Daily Guide*, p.6

Another significant media portrayal of women leaders around the family is provided by the Daily Guide newspaper article with the headline, "Betty Lies, As NDC Cries for Blood" (2010, March 17, *Daily Guide*, p. 1&3).[17] It is important to note that this media stereotype did not inform the stereotypes frame significantly. Here the women leader's marital status and who she is married to is given importance: " Though it was common knowledge that Mrs. Mould Iddrisu was the wife of the former Defence Minister in the previous NDC administration, Alhaji Mahama Iddrisu..."

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[15] Gomda, A. R. (2009, December 23).I'll jail Kufuor Men. *Daily Guide*, p.1&3
[16] Ursula Shakes Pratt. (2010, October 27). *Daily Guide*, p.6
[17] Takyi-Boadu, C. (2010, March 17). Betty Lies, As NDC Cries for Blood. *Daily Guide*, p. 1&3

5.1.6 Frame of Politics

Politics frame features quite prominently in the coverage of women leaders in political spaces, occupying the third position with 107 out of the 847 as shown in Table 2. *The Ghanaian Times* scored highest usage for this frame allocating 52 of the 191 whiles *Daily Guide* allotted 38 of its 376. These translate to 27.2% for *The Ghanaian Times* and 10.11% for *Daily Guide*. *Daily Graphic* made use of this frame in only 17 out of the 280 themed spaces representing a percentage of 6.1. This finding is not so surprising considering that the space occupied is partisan political. The *Daily Guide* publication headlined "Ursula Shakes Pratt" (2010, October 27, *Daily Guide*, p. 6) presents a typical paragraph that employed the politics frame in its discussion, depicting the differences that exists between the two major political parties in Ghana (National Democratic Congress and New Patriotic Party).

Ursula Owusu however called on the government to call its members to order as far as insulting leading members of the opposition is concerned "because if they [NDC] try to intimidate the NPP with politics of insult, they would be matched boot for boot..."[18]

(2010, October 27). *Daily Guide*, p.6

5.1.7 Frame of Social Responsibility

Ranking 7th is the social responsibility frame with a total of 33 thematic spaces as shown in Table 2 below. Out of this, *Daily Graphic* with the highest usage of this frame accorded 16, representing 5.7% of its news spaces to cover the women leaders. *The*

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[18] Ursula Shakes Pratt. (2010, October 27). *Daily Guide*, p.6

Ghanaian Times allotted 12 representing 6.4% of its thematic spaces to the news discourse that framed discussions about women leaders around social responsibility. However, *Daily Guide* used this frame in only 5 indicative of 1.3% of 376 thematic spaces. An illustration of this frame is seen below:

> She said the Chronicle newspaper as part of the fourth estate of the republic was expected to play its role of educating and informing the public in an honest, objective and impartial manner. She therefore urged Chronicle to be civil and shirk itself of all malice to enable it to perform its civic responsibilities of educating the public with more honesty and candour.[19]
>
> (2009, September 24). *Daily Graphic*, p.13

5.1.8   <u>Frame of Development</u>

This frame ranked 4th with a total of 71 thematic spaces as seen in Table 2 below. Of this, *Daily Graphic* scored highest by dedicating 36 or 12.8% of 280 while *The Ghanaian Times* allocated 27 or 14.1%. *Daily Guide* ranked lowest in the use of this frame by assigning 8 or 2.1% to the development frame. The linguistic cues that determined this frame include: ICT development, innovation, efficiency, rural development, education. This finding is significant and can be interpreted to confirm the need to have women in leadership as a means to achieve development. Illustrations from the three newspapers are provided:

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[19] Attorney-General sets record straight. (2009, September 24). *Daily Graphic*, p.13

Mrs Mould-Iddrisu said in accord with the objective of establishing a progressive copyright regulatory environment, the law should endeavour to promote the public interest in the encouragement and dissemination of works of arts while at the same time providing a just reward for the creator.[20]

(2009, July 2). *The Ghanaian Times*, p. 10

Mrs. Mould-Iddrisu argued that law was a significant element for national development, indicating that law was not only a vehicle for personal development but the quality of the citizenry as a whole.[21]

(2010, February 25). *Daily Guide*, p. 6

The Attorney General said for an efficient restorative justice system which is one of her priorities, there is the need for an efficient social welfare system as the current system is non-functioning. She said there is the need for it to be well resourced to its role in the justice delivery system. [22]

(2009, December 9). *The Ghanaian Times*, p.13

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[20] Opoku-Darko, G. (2009, July 2). A.G. advocates fine-tuning of copyright regulatory environment. *The Ghanaian Times*, p.

[21] Owusu, M and Awuah Jnr, I. F. J. (2010, February 25). Law has made me poor – Betty. *Daily Guide*, p.6

[22] Attorney General visits DOVVSU. (2009, December 9). *The Ghanaian Times*, p.13.

Table 2

Cumulative Frequency Distribution of News Frames used to cover Women Leaders in political spaces by the Three Newspapers from 2009 to 2010

News frames	Frequency	Percent
Stereotypes	316	37.31
Incompetence	179	21.13
Politics	107	12.63
Development	71	8.38
Vilification	63	7.44
Feminism	42	4.96
Social Responsibility	33	3.9
Organised Action	27	3.19
Other	9	1.06
Cumulative thematic spaces	**N=847**	**N=100%**
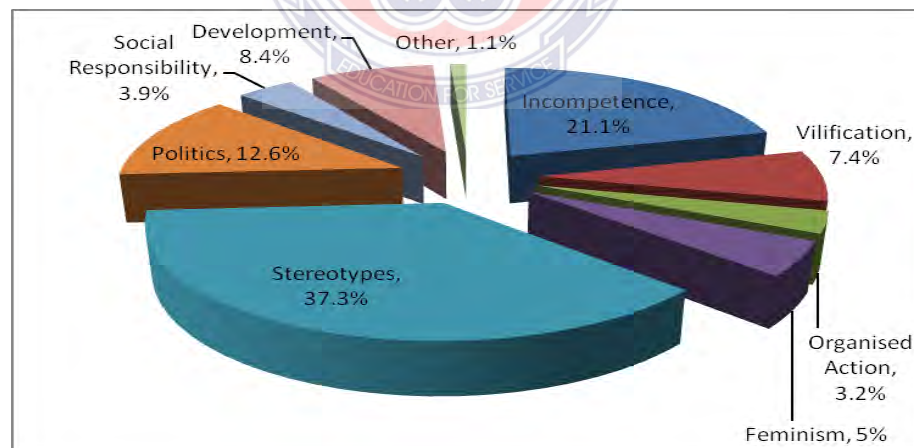
Figure 3: Pie chart of the cumulative frequency distribution of the eight news frames

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5.2.0   NEWS FRAMES – WOMEN LEADERS IN NON-POLITICAL SPACES

Table 3

Frequency Distribution of News Frames used to cover Women Leaders in Non-political spaces by the Three Newspapers from 2009 to 2010

News Frames	*Daily Graphic* N (%)	*Daily Guide* N (%)	*Ghanaian Times* N (%)
Incompetence	36 (8.7%)	52 (42.3%)	4 (1.2%)
Vilification	6 (1.5%)	10 (8.1%)	0 (0%)
Organised Action	22 (5.3%)	22 (17.9%)	4 (1.2%)
Feminism	10 (2.4%)	0 (0%)	5 (1.5%)
Stereotypes	159 (38.4%)	10 (8.1%)	107 (32.3%)
Politics	19 (4.6%)	0 (0%)	15 (4.5%)
Social responsibility	74 (17.9%)	11 (8.9%)	58 (17.5%)
Development	85 (20.5%)	16 (13.1)	137 (41.5%)
Other	3 (0.7%)	2(1.6%)	1 (0.3%)
Total thematic spaces	**N=414**	**N=123**	**N=331**
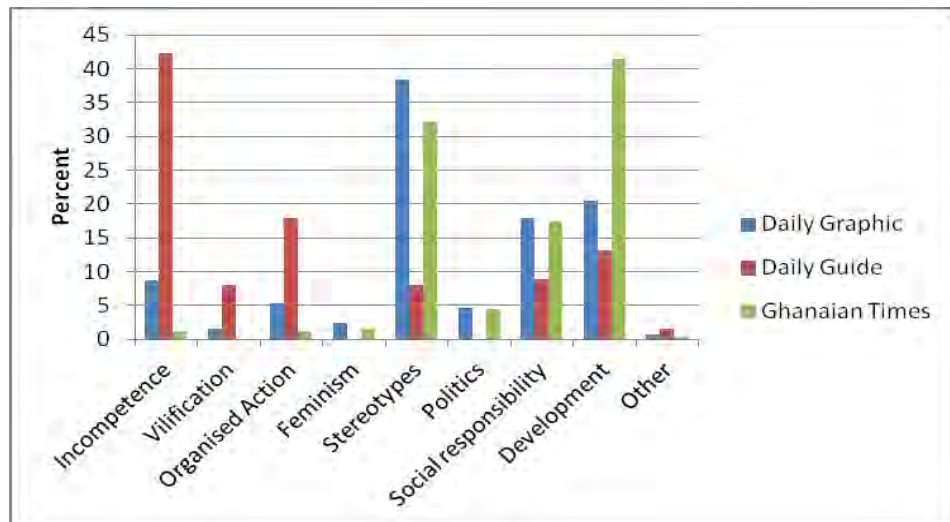
Figure 4: Bar graph of the cumulative frequency distribution of the eight news frames

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5.2.1   Frame of Incompetence

Out of the 868 thematic spaces (Table 3, Figure 4,) dedicated to non-political women leaders within the study period by the three newspapers, a total of 92 representing 10.6% used incompetence frame which ranks 4th (see Table 4). The *Daily Guide* a private newspaper ranked highest in terms of the use of the incompetence frame, dedicating 52 representing 42.3% out of its 123 thematic spaces to represent women leaders. The *Daily Graphic* follows with 36 of its 414. This represents 8.7% of the total coverage it dedicated to non-political women leaders within 2009 and 2010. *The Ghanaian Times* like the *Daily Graphic* presents a different scenario. *The Ghanaian Times* employed the incompetence frame in only 4 of its 331 thematic spaces representing 1.2%.

The dedication of most of *Daily Guide*'s thematic spaces to the incompetence frame in the coverage of women leaders in non-political spaces is an interesting finding. This is because the women leaders in question (Georgina Wood and Joyce Aryee) do not occupy a partisan political space in the light of *Daily Guide*'s core interest in the publication of stories with partisan politics value. The political undertone of the sample paragraphs in the *Daily Guide* news article with the headline, "NDC GRABS CHIEF JUSTICE NECK", (2010, August 25, Daily *Guide*, p.1&3) is synonymous with the newspaper's traditional interest in politics:

Mr. Obimpeh alleged that the CJ under the erstwhile Kufuor administration ensured that a number of NDC key officials were sent to the courts and eventually convicted whether guilty or not.

The regional chairmen made several allegations against Justice Wood which sought to not only portray her as biased but also a member of the New Patriotic Party (NPP).[23]

(2010, August 25). *Daily Guide*, p.1&3

5.2.2 <u>Frame of Vilification</u>

In support of other studies (Fountainne & McGregor, 2010), that often women in leadership are vilified, the theme of vilification ranked seventh in the use of the eight frames found in the news discourse of women leaders in non-political spaces. However, only 16 out of the 868 themed news spaces representing 1.8 % were accorded this frame. Again, *Daily Guide* comes out tops among the newspapers studied with 10 out of the 16 spaces. However, this figure represents only 8.1% of its entire thematic spaces accorded non-political women leaders by the newspaper. *The Ghanaian Times* did not use the vilification frame in its reportage under this aspect of the research leaving *Daily Graphic* with only 6, indicative of 1.5% of its news space to this frame. Here is an illustration from the *Daily Guide*:

Since her assumption of office, they noted that Mrs. Georgina Wood had decided to personally perform a task which they said hitherto was the preserve of the

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[23] Takyi-Boadu, C. (2010, August 25). NDC GRABS CHIEF JUSTICE NECK. *Daily Guide*, p.1&3

registrars of the various courts by assigning highly sensitive cases to her supposed favourites (judges)...[24]

(2010, August 25). *Daily Guide*, p.1&3

5.2.3   **Frame of Organised Action**

Daily Graphic and *Daily Guide* dedicated equal number of thematic spaces to the organised action frame. Out of the 22 spaces they each utilised this frame in 8 spaces which translates to 5.3% for *Daily Graphic* and 17.9% for *Daily Guide*. *The Ghanaian Times* again ranked lowest in the application of this frame giving only 4, signifying 1.2% of its 331 thematic spaces to this frame. *Daily Guide*'s example provided below show the deployment of the organised action frame:

It is gradually becoming clear that the unnecessary attacks on the country's judiciary by key and influential members of the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) are part of a grand design by the government to soften the grounds for the removal of Chief Justice Georgina Theodora Wood from office.[25]

(2010, August 25). *Daily Guide*, p.1&3

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[24] Takyi-Boadu, C. (2010, August 25). NDC GRABS CHIEF JUSTICE NECK. *Daily Guide*, p.1&3

[25] Takyi-Boadu, C. (2010, August 25). NDC GRABS CHIEF JUSTICE NECK. *Daily Guide*, p.1&3

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5.2.4   **Frame of Feminism**

Of all the thematic spaces dedicated to coverage of women in non-political spaces, the three newspapers employed the feminism frame in only 15 of the 868 spaces. Here, the *Daily Graphic* ranked highest with 10 which translate into 2.4% of its total themed spaces. *The Ghanaian Times* follows with evidence of the feminism frame in only 5, indicative of 1.5% of its 331 spaces. The *Daily Guide* on the other hand did not use this frame in its news discourse over the study period in the coverage of the women leaders. Similar to women leaders in political spaces, there were linguistic cues that determined this frame in the news discourse of women in political spaces. An illustration from *The Ghanaian Times* is provided here:

> The Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Chamber of Mines, Ms Joyce Aryee, who was the guest speaker, stated that education of the girl-child must be a reality, saying "advancing the girl-child education is fundamental for the development of nations and of generations".
>
> Education, she explained, presents women with the opportunity to make a better life themselves and for their families. [26]

(2009, March 9). *Ghanaian Times*, p.14

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[26] Yarboi-Tetteh, D. (2009, March 9). 3 or 4 years SHS? The problem is at the Basic level. *Ghanaian Times*, p.14

5.2.5   Frame of Stereotypes

Similar to women leaders in political spaces, this frame features very prominently in the overall thematic coverage of the women leaders in non-political spaces by the three newspapers (see Table 4). With 276 thematic news spaces out of the total of 868 thematic spaces accorded the women leaders, the stereotypes frame ranks first. *Daily Graphic* chalked the highest of these thematic spaces dedicating 159, which is representative of 38.4% of its 414 news spaces. *The Ghanaian Times* also used this frame in the discussion of issues about women leaders in non-political spaces in 107 corresponding to 32.3% of 331 spaces of the newspaper's thematic spaces. The *Daily Guide* however used the stereotypes frame in only 10, representing 8.1% of the 123. This finding must be understood from the backdrop of the use of formal titles to address the women leaders in the news stories as a means of achieving formality. In addition, the stereotypes frames activate socio-cultural values in the minds of the journalists and the reading audiences. The linguistic cues that largely informed this frame are 'Mrs' and 'Ms' which is found throughout most of the examples provided throughout this section of the findings.

5.2.6   Frame of Politics

This frame occupies the seventh position in terms of ranking. Themed discussions that run on the politics frame were found in 34 out of the 868 thematic spaces granted women leaders by the three newspapers (see Table 4). Out of the 34, *Daily Graphic* ranked highest with 17, indicative of 4.6% of 414. With 15 representative of 4.5% of 331 thematic spaces, *The Ghanaian Times* ranked second. The *Daily Guide* on the other hand gave no space to the politics frame in their news discourse of women leaders. Politics as a

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major frame in the news discourse in the coverage of women leaders in non-political spaces is out of the ordinary since the non-political space is not partisan political one. Again, the *Daily Guide* as a newspaper with its traditional interest in politics did not use this frame at all. Illustrations of this frame are provided here:

> He said the CJ must quit her position because she had shown to the entire world her political affiliation through her bias towards the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the exhibition of professional ineptitude as the head of the bench during the 2008 election run-off.[27]

(2010, September 4). *Daily Graphic*, p.13

5.2.7   Frame of Social Responsibility

Social responsibility frame is one of the major frames that characterised the news discourses of women leaders within the two-year study period. For women in non-political spaces, the newspapers dedicated 143 out the 868 varied themed news spaces to this frame (see Table 4, Figure 5). Out of the 143, the *Daily Graphic* devoted 74, indicative of 17.9% of 414, while *The Ghanaian Times* used 58 representing 17.5% of 331 to the social responsibility frame. *Daily Guide* devoted 8.9% of 123 thematic spaces in the coverage of women leaders. To illustrate, examples from *The Ghanaian Times* and the *Daily Graphic* are presented:

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[27] Dapatem, D. A. (2010, September 4). CJ urged to resign. *Daily Graphic*, p.13

She said the mining industry should have "the interest of the people first, followed by the planet before profits", because the Chamber is subscribing to the Equator Principle which insists on the best practices in Corporate Social Responsibility.[28]

(2009, March 27). *The Ghanaian Times*, p.8

The Chief Justice, Mrs Georgina Theodora Wood, has called on all legal practitioners in the country to see legal aid as a mandatory social responsibility.

She said legal aid should not be seen as a one-time exercise occasionally undertaken to keep up appearance of a good citizen or pacify individual conscience.[29]

(2009, September 9). *Daily Graphic*, p.10

5.2.8 Frame of Development

Most of the coverage of women leaders in non-political spaces was done mostly through framing the news discourse around development. The development frame ranked second with 238 out of the 868 thematic spaces dedicated to news coverage of the women leaders. *The Ghanaian Times* committed 137 which translate to 41.5% of the 331 to this frame whereas *Daily Graphic* used 85 out of 414 representing 20.5%. Out of its 123

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[28] The people, the planet, before mining profit. (2009, March 27). *The Ghanaian Times*, p.8

[29] Duodu, S. (2009, September 9). Legal aid must be mandatory – CJ. *Daily Graphic*, p.10

thematic spaces, the *Daily Guide* dedicated only 16 to this frame representing 13%. An illustration is taken from the *Daily Graphic* under the headline, 'Mining areas need strategic spatial plans'(2010, November 13, *Daily Graphic*, p.18): "She said the mining industry had experienced civil, social and environmental engineers who could assist in community development initiatives such as road building, construction and environmental management.[30]

Table 4

Cumulative Frequency Distribution of News Frames used to cover Women Leaders in Non-political Spaces by Three Newspapers from 2009 to 2010

News frames	Frequency	Percent
Stereotypes	276	31.8
Development	238	27.4
Social Responsibility	143	16.5
Incompetence	92	10.6
Organised Action	48	5.5
Politics	34	3.9
Vilification	16	1.8
Feminism	15	1.7
Other	6	0.7
Cumulative thematic spaces	**N=868**	**N=100%**

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[30] Marfo, K. A. (2010, November 13). 'Mining areas need strategic spatial plans'. *Daily Graphic*, p.18

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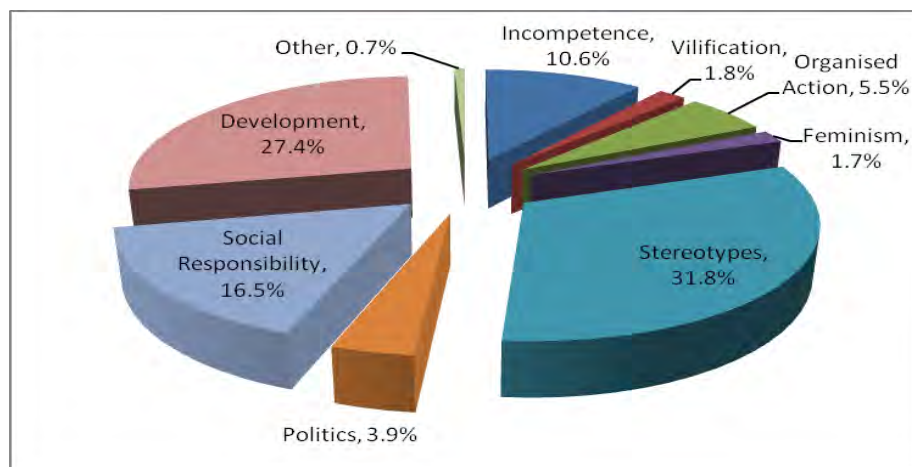
Figure 5: Pie chart of the cumulative frequency distribution of the eight news frames

5.3.0   COMPARISON OF LEADERSHIP SPACE-SPECIFIC FRAMES

RQ 1(b): Are the frames employed dependent on the particular space occupied by the woman leader?

Clearly, the results presented above indicate that there are distinct differences in the coverage of women leaders depending on whether the public leadership space they occupy is political or non-political. However it must be noted that the cumulative thematic coverage did not show any conspicuous difference. Women leaders in political spaces received 847 thematic spaces from the three newspapers, whiles that for the women leaders in non-political was 868. Provided below is an illustration of how the thematic spaces of women leaders in the two public spaces compare.

Table 5

Comparative Cumulative Frequency Distribution of News Frames used to cover Women Leaders in political spaces by Three Newspapers from 2009 to 2010

News frames	Frequency			
	Political	**Non-political**	**Cumulative**	**Percent**
Incompetence	179	92	271	15.8
Vilification	63	12	77	4.6
Organised action	27	48	75	4.4
Feminism	42	15	57	3.3
Stereotypes	316	276	592	34.5
Politics	107	34	141	8.2
Social responsibility	33	143	176	10.3
Development	71	238	309	18
Others	9	6	15	0.9
Cumulative thematic themes	**N=847**	**N=868**	**N=1715**	**N=100%**

Cumulatively, the stereotypes frame ranked 1st with 592 indicative of 34.5% of 1715 thematic spaces given women leaders in political and non-political spaces by the three newspapers. This is followed by the development frame which was employed in 309 thematic spaces, representative of 18%. The incompetence frame came 3rd amongst the other eight frames with a 271 thematic spaces using this frame. This is representative of 15% of the 1715 total thematic spaces given women leaders by the three newspapers. With 176 or 10.3% thematic spaces the social responsibility frame ranked 4th whiles the politics frame came in at 5th position with 141 or 8.2%. Frames of vilification and organised action ranked 6th and 7th respectively. Vilification frame was used in 79 indicative of 4.6% thematic spaces while organised action frame featured in 75 or 4.4%.

The frame least used in the cumulative coverage of women leaders in political and non-political spaces is the frame of feminism. This ranked 8th with its use in 57 or 3.3% the cumulative thematic spaces.
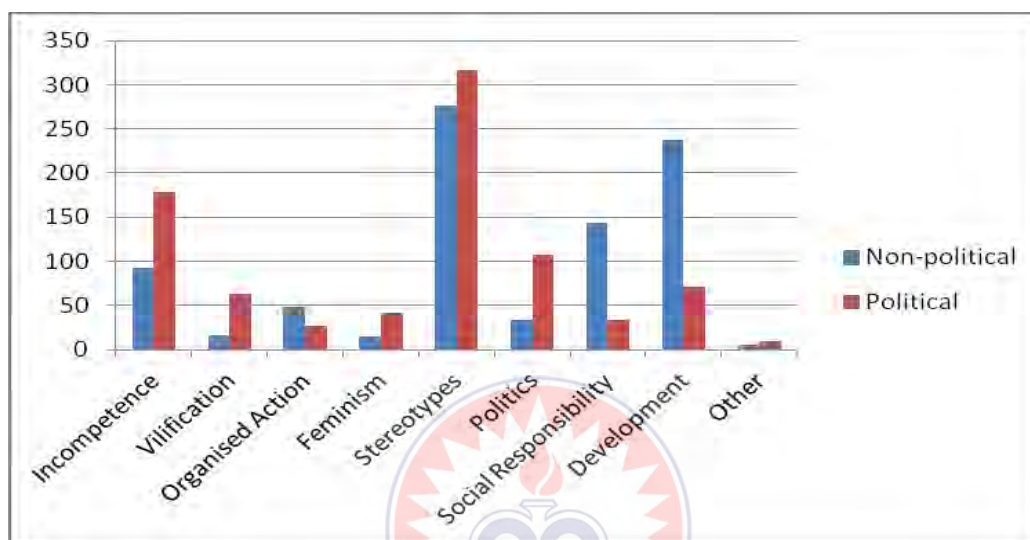
Figure 6: *Comparative frequency distribution of news frames by three Ghanaian newspapers between 2009 and 2010.*

5.4.0 DYNAMICS OF MEDIA COVERAGE OF WOMEN WITHIN THE POLITICAL AND NON-POLITICAL SPACES

There are other dynamics within each space that are important to note. This is because the newspapers' coverage of the women leaders within each leadership space differed. A distribution of coverage given women leaders by the three newspapers is shown below:

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Table 6

Distribution of News Stories to cover Women Leaders in political and non-political spaces by Three Newspapers from 2009 to 2010

Woman Leader	*Daily Graphic*	*Daily Guide*	*Ghanaian Times*	Total
Betty Mould Iddrisu	19	18	26	**63**
Georgina Wood	16	6	22	**44**
Ursula Owusu	0	1	1	**2**
Joyce Aryee	10	3	11	**24**
Total	**45**	**28**	**60**	133

The state-owned newspapers, *Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times* each gave Betty Mould-Iddrisu more coverage in terms of quantity than Ursula Owusu. *The Ghanaian Times* covered Betty Mould-Iddrisu in 26 news stories whiles it dedicated only 1 to Ursula Owusu while *Daily Graphic* covered Betty Mould-Iddrisu in 19 news articles and totally omitted Ursula Owusu. The large disparity of media coverage of the two women leaders within this space can be understood from the following stand points. First, the issue of the prominence of the space occupied by the woman becomes significant. Betty Mould-Iddrisu occupies a more prominent space than Ursula Owusu in that she is a state official and occupies that space by virtue of her affiliation to a political party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) –the ruling political party during the study period. This makes her more likely to receive more media coverage from the state-owned newspapers that place premium on the reproduction of state discourse rather than members of opposition political parties (Hasty, 2005). Further to this, the expectation is

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that Ursula Owusu should receive more coverage from the 'opposition' newspaper, *Daily Guide*. However, *Daily Guide* covered Ursula Owusu in only 1 out of the 28 new stories it dedicated to women leaders within the study period in political spaces.
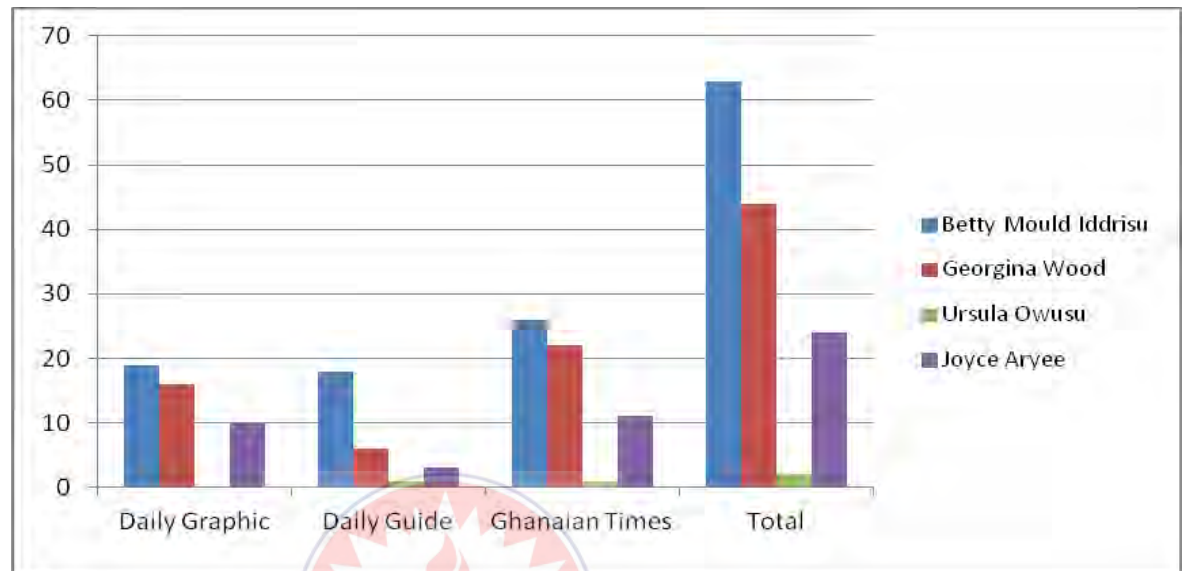
Figure 7: *Bar graph of the distribution of news stories by three Ghanaian newspapers between 2009 and 2010.*

5.4.1   <u>Prominence in Placement of News Stories</u>

Women leaders in political spaces

Table 7

Frequency Distribution of Location of news stories for the three Newspapers from January 2009-December 2010: women leaders in political spaces

Location	Daily Graphic	Daily Guide	Ghanaian Times	Total	Percent
Front page	2	10	4	16	24.6
Inside page	17	9	23	49	75.4

*n=65

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Placement of a news story in a newspaper signifies what is important to the producers of the news (Baran, 2012). Altogether, only 16 representing 24% out of the 65 news stories that covered women leaders in political spaces made it onto the front pages of the three news papers. Out of the 16, *Daily Guide* gave more prominence to women leaders in political spaces by placing 10 stories on its front page indicative of the newspaper's traditional interest in politics. This leaves *The Ghanaian Times* with 4 and the *Daily Graphic* with 2.

Figure 8: *Bar graph of the distribution of location of news stories by three Ghanaian newspapers between 2009 and 2010: women leaders in political spaces*

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Women leaders in non-political spaces

Table 8

Frequency Distribution of Location of news stories for the three Newspapers from January 2009-December 2010: women leaders in non-political spaces

Location	Daily Graphic	Daily Guide	Ghanaian Times	Total	Percent
Front page	1	1	2	4	5.8
Inside page	25	8	31	64	94.2

*n=68

As indicated in Table 8, only 4 or 5.8% out of the 68 news stories about women leaders in non-political spaces made it to the front pages of the three newspapers. The remaining 64 were placed on the inside pages. This is very low compared to the 16 (24.6%) of women leaders in political spaces. Of the 4, *The Ghanaian Times* placed 2 of the news stories on its front page while the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* each gave prominence to 1 news stories.
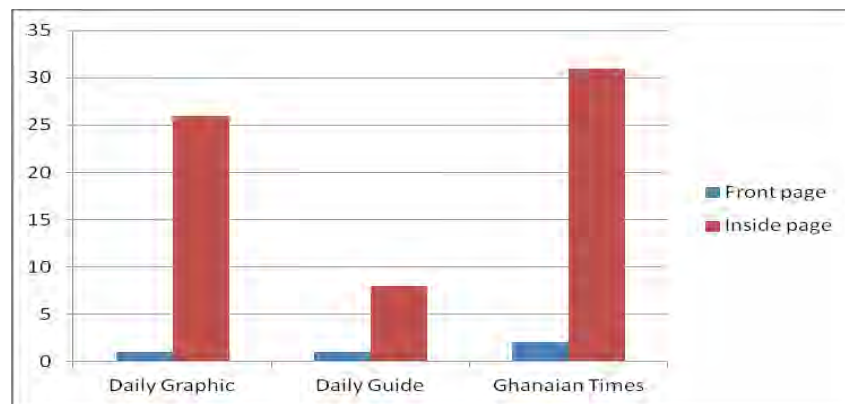
Figure 9: *Bar graph of the distribution of location of news stories by three Ghanaian newspapers between 2009 and 2010: women leaders in non-political spaces*

5.4.2 **Comparison of Prominence Given Women Leaders in Political and Non-political Spaces**

Table 9

Cumulative Frequency Distribution of Location of news stories for the three Newspapers

from January 2009-December 2010: women leaders in political and non-political spaces

Location	Political	Non-political	Total	Percent
Front page	16	4	**20**	**15**
Inside page	49	64	**113**	**85**

*N=133

As indicated in the tables above, only 20, representing 15% of the 133 news stories received prominence by the newspapers within the study period. The larger portion of the cumulative number of 133, representing 85% was placed inside the various newspapers.

Among other factors, it is also important to understand the placement of news articles as a result of the way it is presented (written) in the first instance by journalists. The importance of frames in newsroom language as an important factor for issues getting media coverage and prominence for that matter is critical. Choice of stories are sometimes/often made hurriedly at editorial conference based on reading the first three paragraphs of the story which must of essence capture specific frames that are easily identified/recognised by members of the editorial board as news worthy. This means that potentially newsworthy stories can be lost to other stories on the front page or may not get published at all if presentation of the facts is not framed in a manner that gatekeepers deem to be newsworthy. Consequently, if women leaders' stories do not fit the orthodox

expectation, because of the few numbers of women in leadership, this kind of treatment will be the outcome.
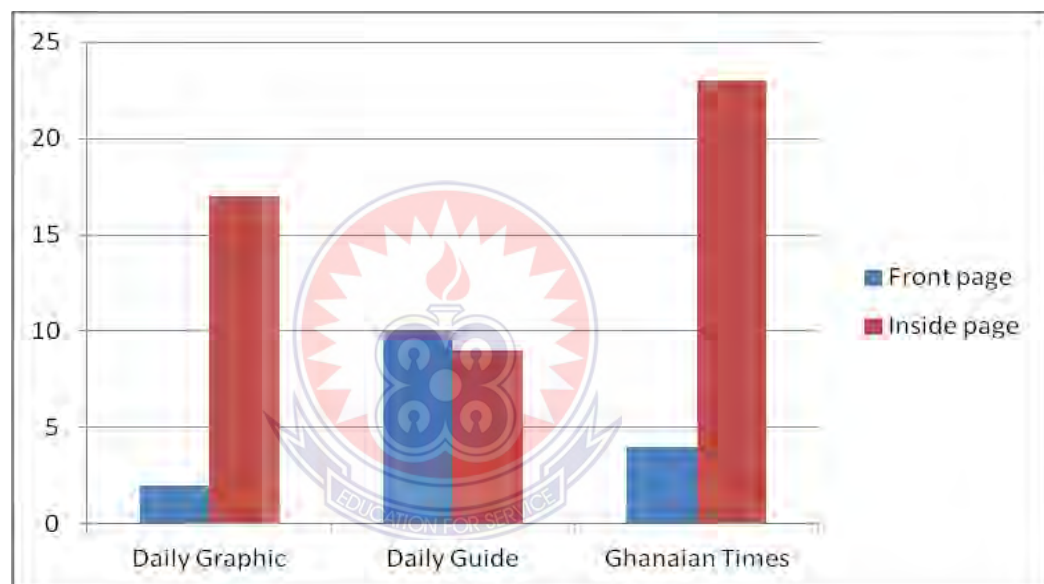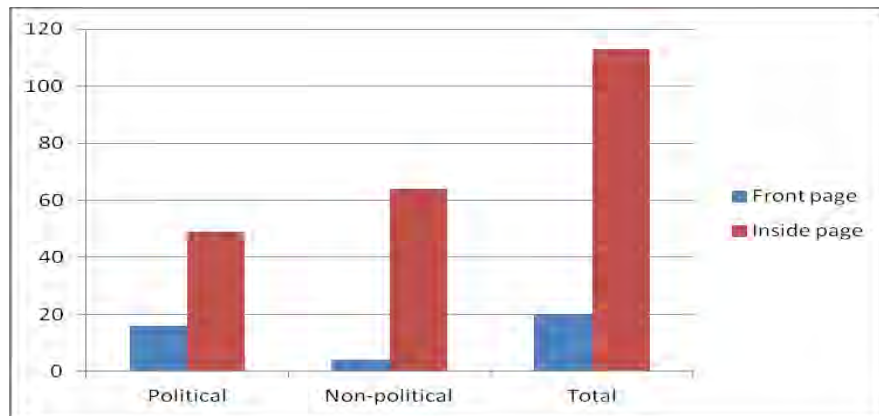

Figure 10: *Bar graph of the cumulative distribution of location of news stories by three Ghanaian newspapers between 2009 and 2010: women leaders in political and non-political spaces*

5.4.3   Woman Leader Quoted Directly in Story

Ghanaian newspapers rely on quotes form news sources as a means of achieving legitimacy (Hasty, 2005). Hence the importance to determine if this holds true for women leaders and also any differences in political and non-political spaces if any.

Women leaders in political spaces

Table 10

Frequency Distribution of news stories that quoted women leader in political spaces by three Newspapers from January 2009-December 2010

	Daily Graphic	*Daily Guide*	*Ghanaian Times*	*Total*	*Percent*
No. of news articles	19	19	27	65	100
Woman leader quoted	12	12	15	39	60

Altogether, 39 representing 60% of 65 news stories quoted women leaders in political spaces. Out of this, *The Ghanaian Times* quoted the women leaders in 15 out of the 27 news stories. The *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* each quoted the women leaders in political spaces 19 news stories.
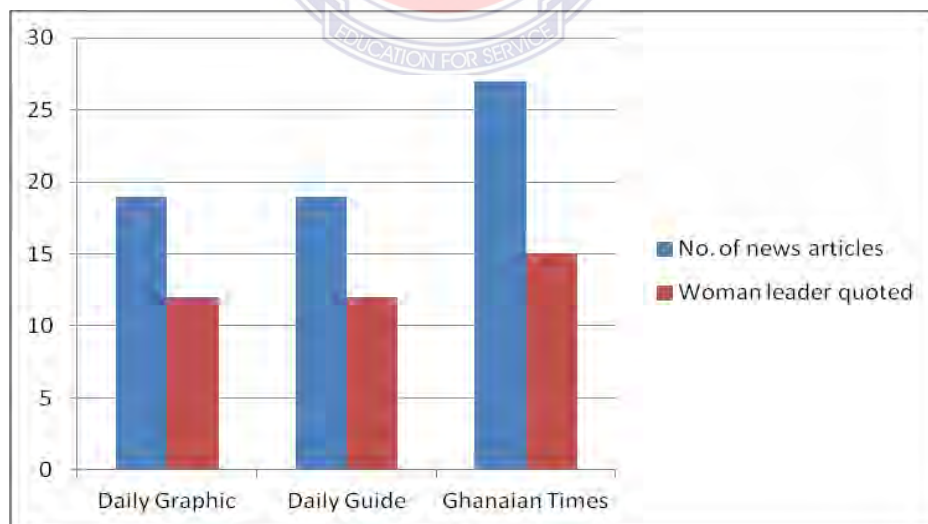
Figure 11*: Bar graph of frequency distribution of news stories that quoted women leader in political spaces by three Newspapers from January 2009-December 2010*

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Women leaders in non-political spaces

Table 11

Frequency Distribution of news stories that quoted women leader in non-political spaces by three Newspapers from January 2009-December 2010

	Daily Graphic	*Daily Guide*	*Ghanaian Times*	*Total*	*Percent*
No. of news articles	26	9	33	68	100
Woman leaders quoted	17	3	25	45	66.2

Similar to women in political spaces women leaders in non-political spaces were quoted in 45 of the 68 news stories dedicated to them by the three newspapers. This translates to 66.2%. Again, *The Ghanaian Times* quoted the women leaders in a greater number of its news articles. Out of the 33 *The Ghanaian Time* news stories, the women leaders were quoted in 25. The *Daily Graphic* follows quoting the women leaders in 17 out of 26 news stories. The *Daily Guide* incorporate quotes from women leaders in less than half its coverage of women leaders during the period of study. The *Daily Guide* quoted the women leaders out of only 3 of the 9 news articles.
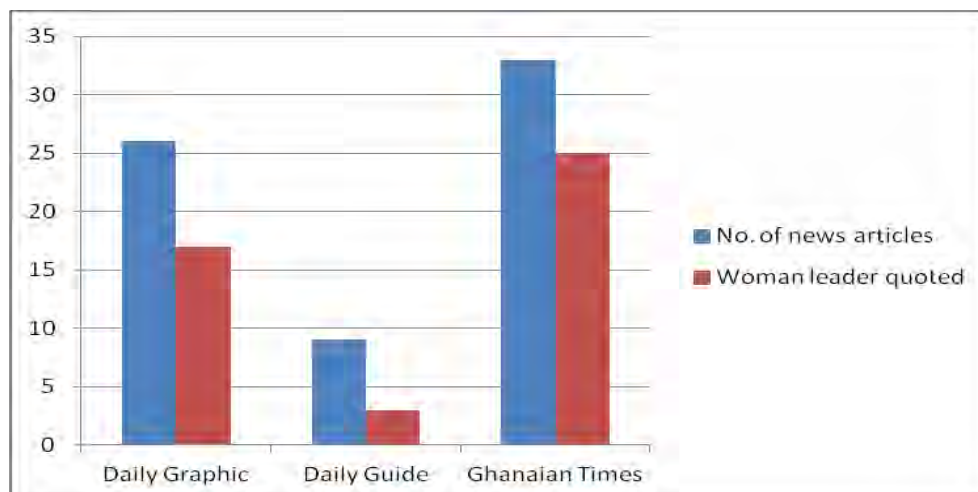
Figure 12: *Bar graph of frequency distribution of news stories that quoted women leader in non-political spaces by three Newspapers from January 2009-December 2010*

The findings (Table 10, Figure 11; Table 11 and Figure 12) support the reliance of journalists on quotes from news sources as a means of achieving legitimacy. In both instances of coverage of women leaders in political and non-political spaces more than half of the news stories quoted the women leaders. Sixty percent (60%) of total news stories dedicated to women leader in politics quoted them while women leaders in non-political spaces were quoted in 66.2% of their news stories. In both cases, *The Ghanaian Times* quoted women leaders in their coverage than *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide*, a translation of the relative high coverage *The Ghanaian Times* gave them.

5.5.0   INTERVIEWS

RQ 2: What are the reasons behind these frames from the perspective of the journalist?

Themes that emerged from the in-depth interview with media practitioners are as follows: Socio-cultural based gender stereotype constructs that blame women as impeding women's leadership roles; women prefer the more private space(non-political) because they do not have the 'guts' to be in politics; women are still outsiders to the public space; and, the depiction of women in non-political spaces as meriting their leadership positions more than women in political space.

5.5.1   <u>Socio-Cultural Based Gender Stereotype Constructs Blame Women for Impeding Women's Leadership Roles</u>

In-depth interviews with the journalists and editors revealed a heavy reliance on society's constructs of what it is to be a woman and associated roles and expectations as basis for the 'way the news discourse' is. Some of these socio-cultural constructs find reason in popular sayings, proverbs, gender biased interpretations etc. Interpretations of issues about disagreements involving two women in the public space (especially who represent opposing political views) often carry negative connotations. An example is the popular saying that influences such interpretations is 'Women are their own devils'. Often, a political disagreement that occurs between two females in politics in the media space is likely to be interpreted differently from a situation where the people involved are two males. Disagreements or arguments made on the platform of politics by males are

more socially accepted, expected and normal whereas two females in the same situation provides another example of women's 'typical' attitude of backbiting, unbecoming behaviour , unfeminine and socially unacceptable hence interpreted as lack of support from women for women in the public space. This saying is referred to by the two media practitioners interviewed for this study. Mary Anane[31], a journalist who made a direct allusion to this popular saying in explaining reasons for the negative media coverage of women leaders, especially those in political spaces had this to say about the issue:

> ... Some female will also support the men to fight...This does not encourage a lot of women because women we are our own enemies. The men do not... when you watch carefully it is the women that fight among themselves. That is my view ... So I won't say because the male are dominating no because the women themselves do not want to come together and then fight a common cause...

Similarly, Yaw Boadu-Ayeboafoh[32] alludes to this saying in explaining women's underrepresentation in the public sphere. Even though he admits that some of the responsibility rests with the media, he blames women's lack of support for their fellow women in leadership:

> ...in my office I'm dealing with an instance of two women and when I invited one of them she said...you see she prefers working with a man than a woman boss, I

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[31] Mary Anane is a journalist with the *Daily Guide* newspaper.

[32] Yaw Boadu-Ayeboafoh is a former editor of the *Daily Graphic* and is presently a General Manager, Newspapers, Graphic Group Communications Limited, the company that owns the *Daily Graphic* newspaper.

said what! And that is part of the problem. Because if a girl says that she can't work with a woman and she is saying that, what do you want the media to do?

He further explains that more often some women undermine the efforts to push women forward positively in the media by availing themselves more often for events that project them as being only interested in beauty and how they look. Citing beauty pageants he presents the example of women being represented often in roles in the media that entrenches stereotypes which works against efforts of gender activists.

In times of beauty pageants e.g. when people have been clamouring for recognition of women you see women themselves clamouring for those things that are not pushing them up but those which are seen as fantasies and the down side of life and yet they oversubscribe. And when some of those issues come up then people are asking that what is the problem with the women?"

Women lack confidence

Closely related to the above is one more reason for the nature of coverage of the women leaders. According to media practitioners, this stems from women leaders' lack of confidence about having their views heard in the media space because of the transfer of the social gendered expectation of women to be 'quiet' in the private space to remain so even within the public space. The 'quiet' woman leader then becomes more acceptable to the Ghanaian audience – an issue that influences the production of news as seen in the use of more positive frames and more thematic spaces in coverage of women in non-

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political spaces. In his response to the adequacy of coverage of women in leadership, one of the media practitioners asserts:

> ...it is fair because many of them don't want to open up....they fear that the public will say they are talking too much or something ... that lingering thing about culture where the woman's place is restricted to somewhere and that when people meet to discuss matters, the only time that the woman comes in is that they're going to consult the 'old lady'. But the 'old lady' is never part of the main meeting. So that kind of cultural trait lingers in the minds of us...and it has some serious impact on some of the things we [the media practitioners] do...

He further alludes to the power of the culturally constructed gendered expectations for women to limit their active participation in the public space:

> ...once they enter into politics they should close their eyes and forget about those cultural inhibitions...if they want to go back into those things it will limit them in the things that they do....it is very very easy to walk to a man and talk to him about an issue and they are open....if they don't open up we cannot break some of those cultural barriers...

Within this perception expressed by Yaw Boadu-Ayeboafoh is the issue of the ease of interviewing men leaders as against women leaders. One reason for this phenomenon is the fear of their comments being misrepresented by journalists (Nkansah, 2009). Again the issue of social gender socialisation that abhors outspoken women, cannot be overlooked.

5.5.2   <u>**Women Are Still Outsiders to the Public Space**</u>

According to the media practitioners, there was no deliberate attempt to frame women leaders negatively but the news articles reflected the events that occurred – if the events were negative or positive they appeared as such. However, in explaining the reasons for negative frames in media portrayal of women one of the media practitioners admitted that stereotypes about women and leadership still exists in the minds of the journalists and audiences. It is no surprise then that media stereotypes endure as a means (codes) to communicate information quickly to a diverse audience who need these frames to make meaning. He states:

> ... Basically Ghanaian society thinks that it is strange to see women in certain positions and when you do see them then it may be because of something else other than their own merit ... That is the global view of the average Ghanaian. And this is reflected in the media. There have been a number of instances where women have worked hard and still people had attributed their success to things outside their own personal development. And the media unfortunately sometimes, reflects some of these tendencies. And in as far as that is true, we can say, without any hesitation that the media has not been totally fair to women in terms of adequacy of coverage...

He also refers to gender stereotypes to elucidate the lack of belief in women's potential and capability to take up leadership roles (Mensah, 2005) giving basis for the positive

episodic coverage of events that mark women leaders' official entry into the public space. Inherent in this kind of coverage is the issue of women as outsiders to the public space, a frame that often gets activated in the media coverage of women leaders. This idea of women doing the unusual and therefore deserving media coverage quickly diminishes when the euphoria wanes and then journalists settle into doing the routine 'orthodox' coverage. In fact one of my respondents indicates that the fact that the women in this study had entered into leadership meant that they received sustained adequate coverage. However the respondent admits that the women leader's presence in leadership space was unusual and perhaps has a news value of 'oddity'.

> ...women, because of their numbers...when women are in leadership, they get a lot of attraction because they are fewer women there. And that also is translated into when they come into politics. Because even though it is politics as such, as a category, you will still see that it is within the ambit of leadership and so a lot of them, they get a lot of publicity with the little that they do ... for instance hearing that this is the first woman to have been appointed into this kind of position ... Between 2009 and 2010 for instance the appointment of the first speaker who happens to be a woman, there was a lot of publicity about it...

The data from the newspapers and another study within the study period (Mawugbe, 2010) do not support this assertion.

The position taken on the issue of adequacy of coverage by the journalist may be based on the state-owned *Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times* newspapers' dedication of sections of its pages to Gender and Children. On the other hand, this

suggests a 'token' to appease the 'sensibilities' of NGOs and gender activists as against mainstreaming gender into the entire newspapers and the media organisations. The *Daily Guide* however, discontinued their 'token' to women and gender issues for lack of commitment on the part of management (Mary Anane, personal communication, November 2011). This finds basis in the differences between newspapers emphasising the state obligation of *Daily Graphic* to gender issues which was lacking for *Daily Guide*, a privately owned newspaper. This dimension is interesting considering the fact that gender advocacy had been spearheaded by Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The low news value placed on gender issues as indicated by media practitioners in this study echoes Mawugbe's (2010) finding of the consistent trend of minimal editorial focus on gender; 7% in 2006, 2007 and 2008 which dropped to 4% in 2009 indicative of dwindling interest and commitment of editors and their news organisations to gender issues. Mary Anane further states in her explanation of why *Daily Guide* discontinued its gender page said that:
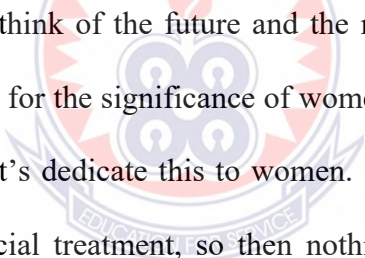
> ... I wouldn't say those handling the page were not doing well but I think that every media house has its own ... ideas. Whatever they want to achieve; like we have our way of reporting, we want politics ... so to them it was not important to report on issues on women. If it's not about politics then you have to forget about it ... I think they didn't see the importance...

The above explanation offered suggests that the *Daily Guide* newspaper did not consider gender issues important as a result of its lack of commitment on the part of the newspaper. This lack of commitment to women and gender issues is reflected in its

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coverage. Indeed the paper's interest in politics as a core news value did not reflect in the coverage of the women in politics. The politics frame was employed in 10.11% of its thematic spaces dedicated to women leaders in politics ranking 4th of the eight frames. Here women in politics were not 'political' enough to warrant *Daily Guide's* news space, further reifying the assertion that women are symbolically annihilated in media coverage.

In response to media 'tokenism' towards women representation, one of the women in non-political space found it insufficient and a source of marginalisation 'for the future and the role of women'. She explains the danger (inadequacy) of the media's 'special treatment' by the separation of women issues to specific pages and equating it to adequate media coverage:

> I think that as we think of the future and the role of women, I think we should begin to push more for the significance of women as people, you see. Because it's this separation ...let's dedicate this to women. So you'll find that they think that you're getting special treatment, so then nothing else matters. You know, as I said, maybe something about health and again unless the doctor is a woman or something like that, some nurse who is doing some significant thing will never be covered.

It is also imperative to note an important dimension of the limiting coverage of women to specific pages. For the two state-owned newspapers that have these news spaces (*Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times*), women and children's issues are lumped together - a media representation of state tokenism towards gender and children's issues that is symbolically situated in the creation of the Ministry of Women and

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Children's Affairs. This resonates and reinforces the culturally based gender role/expectation of women as caregivers and as such responsible for children.

Again the combination of women and children issues under one ministry suggests a symbolism of similarities of needs of the two groups. This means that women rather than being seen as 'equal' to men are regarded as occupying a space that is equal to the space occupied by children who have to be taken care of and controlled.

5.5.3 <u>Women in Non-Political Spaces Merit Their Leadership Positions More Than Women in Political Spaces</u>

Another important finding that emerged from the interview is the perception of journalists towards the spaces under study as a consequence of the way the media frame issues. One of the media practitioners found women leaders in non-political spaces more competent and capable for leadership than women in political spaces. He asserts that:

> Yeah, definitely I mean because they [women in non-political spaces] go there not on the patronage of anybody but more because they are capable. Take for instance the chief justice for instance...She was the Chief Justice because she had gone through the mill and was very, very capable in her own right ... And so in public service [non-political space], the women who are in public service actually are women of great merit....

Consequently, media practitioners contend that any reduction of the spaces occupied by non-political women leaders is unwelcome news for women's positive cause:

... A few of them like the Director of Immigration Service, ... when she was dropped for a man there was a whole lot of anger because the feeling was that here are these model who have dedicated themselves and have risen to the top not because of anything but because they are competent and capable unlike in politics...

5.5.4 Women Prefer the More Private (Non-Political) Space to The More Public (Political) Space

Another important issue that emerged from the interview with media practitioners is the notion that the non-political space is less public hence more private than the political space – a reason for women's preference for non-political spaces. This, according to Ayeboafoh is a consequence of women 'not confident about having their views represented...' (Yaw Boadu-Ayeboafoh, personal communication, May 2011). This may also account for giving women within this space more coverage as indicative of the newspaper analysis. This is what one of my interviewees said about women leaders, especially those in politics:

... a lot of them pass through the civil service and in the civil service, secrecy is, I mean you don't talk to anybody and the women like it that way because then they keep things to themselves. As soon as you get into politics you've done away with that ... and you don't own yourself anymore...you have become the property of all of us. And so whatever that you do will come into the public domain and therefore if you get scared about the things that you are doing getting into the

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public domain ... that is precisely what might have been bothering some of the women and keeping them away...

Intrinsically embedded in the above statement is women's inability to manage and cultivate media relations as part of the associated functions of public office - an issue that buttresses the subject of women's underrepresentation in the public space and so warrants their lack of experience within it. This is also confirmed by one of the women leaders interviewed, admitting that, "Some have. Not all. But maybe it's because people [women] don't see the media as allies. You know. People [women] are terrified of the media because of the terrible things they can do to you..." (Joyce Aryee, personal communication, August 2011)

5.5.5   Women Should Have Guts

Evidence was also found in the interview with media practitioners that indicate another gendered social construct that impedes women's participation in leadership roles: they lack the traditional 'masculine' personality traits that enable people in leadership roles to persevere in the face of media attacks and criticisms in females:

... They look for the bad sides of all politicians, not only women politicians. It is also imperative for women who go into politics to accept the fact that when you go into politics, you are an open book. That is the problem. People want to be in politics but they don't want their stories to be told, and that one is not possible. And so it will be better for women to close their minds off anything that people will say. Because look...bad things are written about the men but they never give

up. And so that is the same way that the women must persevere. But if the little that they write disables you, then it's going to be a problem...

However, evidence was also found in the newspaper analysis that does not support this assertion. Women leaders who display such 'masculine' tendencies were omitted or trivialised.

RQ 3: What are the perceptions of these women leaders towards these frames?

Following analysis of interviews conducted with the women leader, the following themes emerged: Varied perspectives of women in leadership on the coverage they received depending on the space they occupy; media representation of women leaders discourages women from getting into leadership roles; women and the management of competitive partisan politics – A price to pay for women in leadership.

5.5.6   Media Coverage of Women in Leadership

Quantity of coverage

Perceptions of women leaders on adequacy and nature of media coverage differed. Women leaders in non-political spaces believed the coverage given them is commensurate to the number of women in leadership. Joyce Aryee states that: "there is quite a bit of coverage for the women. Maybe because we are few, not that many. So there is ... there is coverage. That's what I'll say. There is coverage..." However, there seem to be an indication that the responsibility lies with women in leadership to cultivate the media to get the media coverage.   She emphasises:

...And I guess those of us who are females in leadership must also try and engage the media so they will see what we are doing...So I think that depending on what you are doing you could, as a woman, it would be useful to interact with the media beyond specific activities and get them involved in what you are doing...

On the other hand, women in politics according to Betty Mould-Iddrisu assert that "... we are discriminated against in terms of coverage of our events... we suffer from discrimination there." However, Betty Mould Iddrisu in her response to the question of who received more coverage as regards women in political spaces and those in non-political spaces, said women in politics received more coverage. Women in non-political spaces also agree on this point. Betty Mould Iddrisu in her response states that, "...I think that lately, the political has a lot of space. ...has a lot of coverage...". This does not support findings from the newspaper analysis – women in political spaces received 49.39% while women in non-political spaces received 50.61%.

This response can be explained on the notion that partisan politics is news. Especially so, given that most of the general media discourses centre on the subject of politics. It follows then that this should translate into people in politics receiving more media coverage including women in politics. However, cumulatively the politics frame ranked 5th among the eight frames with only 8.22% of the 1715 thematic spaces dedicated to women leaders.

Nature of coverage

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On the issue of the nature of the coverage given women leaders in political and non-political spaces, opinions again varied. Women in partisan politics indicate that the coverage was characterised by personality attacks, vilification, trivialisation, sensationalism, insensitivity, ignorance, petty-mindedness and stereotypes. One of the women leaders in politics clarifies this issue pointing to the language employed when journalists produce news:

> Most often when it comes to me they don't talk about issues. They want to talk about my personality. And when you are a public persona that's the issue...that's something you live with. It's fair that the media talks about you as a person. I've always, consistently objected to the media, and in fact I've had reason to write to the media commission about the insensitive coverage in terms of gender. For example, you headline a newspaper, an article about me, when for example I went to parliament and I had an exchange with the parliamentarians. For a man they would say, "Kofi Frimpong and parliamentarians exchange in heated debate" or "Kofi Frimpong was taken on by the MPs". For me, they say, "Betty Mould stripped naked". Why, why on earth would anyone want to say that? How do you think I feel, my family feels to see this kind of trivialisation?

Betty Mould-Iddrisu also touches on issues of the double standards of the media by representing women in leadership differently from the way they do men in leadership. This finding is in consonance with other studies that found the use of verbs and non-neutral language in reporting events reallocate the importance of "what was said" to "how it was said" often educe negative perception in the minds of the reading audiences

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(Gidengil & Everett 2003). This is how Betty Mould-Iddrisu describes the news media's double standards:

> So with women, they always try and get at us through that. As for a man, he can have ten girlfriends and have twenty children, no one cares. It becomes big news if a woman has an affair... so they talk about our persona. I saw something nasty about this other young lady. It's all about our persona and women when we see such things, sexual innuendos, you know, and things like that we become very scared about entering into politics and the political agenda. So that is something I think we need to look at.

The above statement also indicates that negative media reportage discourage other women who are qualified and may be interested in politics from entering that space. Women in non-political leadership space carry opinions and perspectives that are in accord with those of women in partisan political leadership as regards the difficulty of management of that space. Joyce Aryee offers a perspective on the nature of media coverage of women in political spaces:

> ... it's a pity that our politics has become ....sort of degenerated into a situation where we want to vilify people and ridicule them and paint them in a bad light. It's a pity. You know and competition should not lead us to do that.

The picture on the side of women leaders in non-political spaces looks different because from their perspective media coverage is adequate and positive in nature which is supported by the data from the newspapers. Indeed they received more positive

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thematic spaces within the study period – development frame: 27.42% and social responsibility frame: 16.47%. Issues in the media that dealt with sectors remotely related to the office of the woman leader were often presented by placing photographs of the woman leader by the news story so that at a glance the headline of the news story became associated with the woman leader[33]. On this issue Joyce Aryee, a woman leader in non-political space who has a significant experience relating with the media found it positive saying, "it looks as if they are making me synonymous with mining. Yeah it looks as if that is where it has come to." In addition, the woman leader ascribes the success she has had with media coverage as a result of "cultivating a relationship with the media..." as against "... seeing the media as good for occasional activity" emphasising that "...the media will give you greater reach." It is important to note that, in some cases, the reach has become negative – for the women leaders who received more negative thematic spaces (stereotypes frame-37.31%; incompetence frame-21.13%).

Further, for women leaders in political spaces, the use of photographs to accompany news articles that didn't mention the women leaders were found. For example every failure of the Attorney General's department was attributed to the Betty Mould-Iddrisu, who then occupied that position. This is because in a number of events that do

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[33] Mineworkers Screen Communities. (2010, October 21). *Daily Guide*, p. 19

Provide alternative livelihood training – GAWU tells mining companies. (2009, April 15). *The Ghanaian Times*, p.37

Nyanney, G. K. (2009, April 28). WR DOVVSU challenges Takoradi Circuit Court. *The Ghanaian Times*, p. 23

Syme, S. (2010, November 24). 82 prisoners freed. *Daily Graphic*, p.1 & 3.

not mention the Attorney General in name and covered other personalities, photographs of Betty Mould Iddrisu [34] are used rather than personalities and officials who are quoted in the news articles.

5.6.0 WOMEN AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PUBLIC LEADERSHIP SPACE

Similar to interviews with media practitioners, issues of management of the public leadership space were also found in the interviews with women leaders. However, these issues emerged in the form of family constraints within the private space. This finding also offers another dimension to Allah Mensah's (2005) study and that of other media critics' assertion that media representation of women leaders especially in politics are often framed around the family.

5.6.1 The Double-Edged Family Support

Another important issue that emerged from the in-depth interviews with the women leaders is the management of competitive partisan politics as a result of socio-cultural issues that border on gender that mediate women's functioning as leaders. Similar to Mensah's (2005) study that found "Challenge of support...low levels of education, domestic obligations and limited number in formal sector employment among

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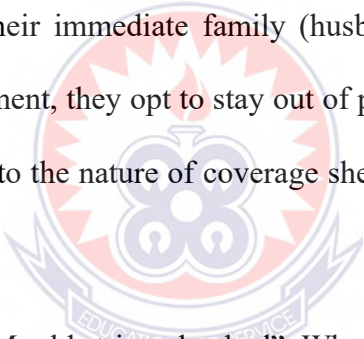
[34] Issah, Z. (2010, September 11). Juvenile Offenders need protection by all. *Daily Graphic*, p.11

Yeboako, L. (2009, April 8). Establish counseling centers for abused victims. *The Ghanaian Times*, p. 33

Asare, K. (2009, March 26). Why innocent persons languish in prison. *The Ghanaian Times*, p. 10

others" (p.101) as grounds for women underrepresentation in the public space, this study also found other dimensions of these issues that continue to militate against women once they step into the public space. In fact Mensah (2005) also found that the sustained support "from institutions and family members and the wider society" (p.101) after the woman has won any partisan political position was a source of worry for those who would want to be in partisan politics.

The lack of sustained support from institutions, family and society stems from deeply ingrained notions about domesticated women's gender roles and expectations and their attempts to support the woman leader to meet these expectations. So that in women's bid to protect their immediate family (husband and children in some cases) from negative media treatment, they opt to stay out of politics. One of the women leaders in politics in her response to the nature of coverage she received from the media clarifies this issue:

> ...they say, "Betty Mould stripped naked". Why, why on earth would anyone want to say that? And as a married woman and a mother and a grandmother why...how do you think I feel, my family feels to see this kind of trivialisation...

She again emphasises the importance of the double-edged family support for a woman in leadership and other women's inability to enter the public space as a result of wanting to 'protect' their family.

I know so many women who are equally as competent as myself and, you know, they are just not interested. They say as for you Betty you are tough, and I say if my mother were alive, I wouldn't...she wouldn't allow me to do this

Politics in Ghana is often described as 'dirty' and even 'dirtier' for a woman hence any 'good' family will discourage their women members from meddling in such 'dirt'. Joyce Aryee, one of the women leaders in non-partisan political space provides an apt description of the political terrain as seen through the media:

... it's a pity that our politics has become...sort of degenerated into a situation where we want to vilify people and ridicule them and paint them in a bad light. It's a pity. You know and competition should not lead us to do that.

One of the women leaders in politics gives other examples of other women leaders in political spaces (some of who belong to opposition political parties) who are also trivialised in the media:

To a certain extent, it's not me alone. Look at what they did when I was lobbying for the vice presidential slot, which might have been before your time [before the study period], which was in 2008. Look at what they did to this young lady, what's her name, she's not so young. Alima, Hajia Alima Mahama, when she wanted to stand. Even some of the insults they hurled against Ursula Owusu ...It's all about her persona...

Similarly, women leaders in non-political spaces point to this issue of the management of the double-edged family support as 'a balancing act' which has to be

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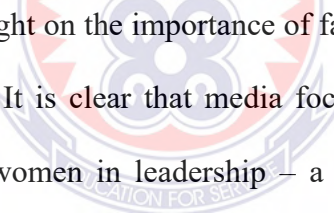
performed as a 'price to pay' by women in leadership (particularly in partisan politics) in addition to being competent for the space occupied – "...That also is one of the balances we have to make: career, marriage, motherhood, leadership. We have to grapple with how to balance all those things". (Joyce Aryeee, personal communication, 2011). She offers an explanation for the impact of negative media coverage on family members and especially other women who may want to get into leadership positions:

> It looks as if we are not managing the competitiveness of partisan politics very well. And that is why the women will be afraid. Because you know maybe the children...you don't want the children to wake up and take the paper and find their mother there or the wife there and horrible things are being said about her...you know...she's stolen money ...which may not even be true...you know ...so...any way it's a price you pay to be in public light...you have to pay a price. That is why you make sure that it's just not competency. It is also the right balance between the relationships with people, with institutions and so on...

Further, she offers another facet that specifies women limiting themselves from effectively managing their presence in the public space as a result of the gendered socialisation they have received and which favour men:

> Oh there will be problems and I think that the men also do have problems. There will be problems ... Some of which we ourselves as women are not able to shake... Sometimes I talk about the fact that you are more likely to find a woman feeling guilty for not spending quality time with the family than the man. The man seems to think well, I'm the bread winner...but the woman will feel guilty because she

has been socialised to feel that it is her duty to provide the quality time for the family, you see ... And it's a pity sometimes young girls will say oh most of the women who are in very high leadership positions are not married or they are divorced or something. And I say well there are many who are still married. Maybe we don't look out for them, but there are many who are still married... and it's important to focus also on such women...focus on women who are happily married, who are playing leading roles ...yes and they are in leadership. I think maybe we as women should focus more on women that way...rather than always giving the impression that if you need to be at the top it has to be at the cost of your marriage...yes at the cost of your family and so on...it doesn't have to be that way...

Joyce Aryee throws more light on the importance of family and its ability to limit women taking up leadership roles. It is clear that media focuses on women who are single or divorced as the norm for women in leadership – a price to pay – and unattractive to majority of women who have been socialised to be family oriented (put family first). She also indicates the lack of media focus on women who have succeeded in perfecting the 'balancing act' as a means to encourage other women to get into leadership roles. Rather, women who fail in any aspect of the 'balancing act' (successful career, marriage, motherhood, leadership) serves to exert undue pressure resulting to inadequacy and incapability on the part of the woman leader to take up leadership roles. The other side of the coin is society's receptiveness to these failures in men. As put aptly by Joyce Aryee:

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...as I keep saying, there are many incompetent men around. And I guess it doesn't really matter, just put the men there. But when it comes to the women then its like: Is she competent? ...So that is something we have to break...

Again, Betty Mould-Iddrisu makes a similar comment in response to the nature of coverage she received as Attorney General: "I don't see what it's all about but because I'm a woman they think that women are not as competent as men."

However Joyce Aryee asserts that such coverage comes as a result of the situation surrounding the Attorney General's office at the time and not because it was a woman who occupied that space. She states that:

... Again this is what I'm saying that it just so happened that she was a woman. It just so happened that she was a woman. Whoever was the Attorney General then would have gone through the same thing, and so I don't think it was because Betty was a woman...
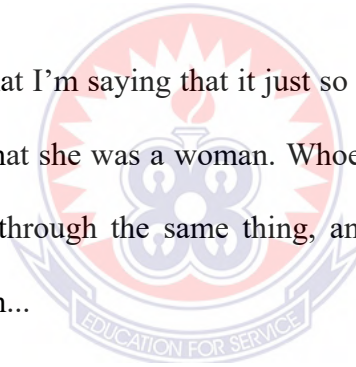
5.7.0 MEDIA COMMITMENT TO ITS ROLE AND GENDER ISSUES

In the global synchronization of cultures which have propelled the emergence and sustenance of mass cultures supported by the massive co-option of the youth, the media portrayals and reportage have failed in their application of these successes to the creation of gender awareness. Reasons for this failure may be understood from the perspective of mass media's refusal or inability to educate society on gender issues.

In Ghana, the state reinforced the idea of 'tokenism' on women and gender issues through the establishment of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. This token

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stand obliged state-owned media (*Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times*) to also commit to that token. Any expanded coverage on women is therefore not a result of commitment to be fair, objective and diversified but a consequence of their obligation to the course of the state and government. The lack of commitment to gender issues as an issue of social essence is demonstrated by the *Daily Guide* newspaper's non-allocation of specific space to gender issues.

Issues of women's underrepresentation in leadership persist and the assumption is that once the numbers increase, coverage will increase. However, as findings of this study indicate, gaps exists between women leaders and media producers of news which counter this assumed correlation. In addition, as other studies which employed symbolic annihilation to examine women's media coverage have indicated that there will be a period of lapse before (Tuchman, 1978), the correlation reflects in the media. The issue then is whether the Ghanaian media in the lapse period.

As the findings in this study show, there are more subtle stereotypes and frames that are employed in the coverage of women leaders. Within this type of media representation lies the power of socialising other women to accept the status of women as the norm despite Ghana's commitment to global efforts that seek women's equal participation as critical for socio-cultural development.

5.7.1   Women Leaders' Media Coverage Depends on the Public Space Occupied

Results from newspaper analysis indicated distinct differences in the media coverage of women during the study period. Women leaders in political spaces got more negative coverage than women leaders in non-political spaces. A situation that was

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confirmed by the women leaders interviewed. From the results presented in Table 5and Figure 5 the indications are that on the whole, women in political spaces received little less thematic spaces from the three newspapers than women leaders in non-political spaces and most of that coverage is negative. Out of the eight frames found, women leaders in politics received more of the three negative frames (incompetence, vilification and stereotypes. Again, it is in only three (organised action, social responsibility and development) out of the eight frames that women leaders in non-political spaces scored higher than women leaders in political spaces. As a result, women in non-political spaces are framed more positively than women in politics. The treatment of women in politics in this manner finds semblance with other studies (Gidengil & Everitt 2003; Latvia 2004, Fountaine & McCregor, 2005), that found similar phenomenon. Thus within the public space a woman leader's specific space occupied, whether partisan political or non-partisan political will affect the media coverage, positively or negatively.

Related to the above is the concept that politics and controversy make news and should therefore translate into more coverage for women in political leadership. However, in this study, women leaders in political spaces overall coverage was less. Here again, in the instance of women leaders in partisan politics and who make bold controversial statements, this concept does not apply. In this study evidence points to the fact that the least covered women leader (Ursula Owusu), who occupied a partisan political space, perceived often as controversial and as such should be newsworthy was barely in the news and received no coverage from *Daily Graphic* during the period of study . This revelation of the study contradicts the assertion that politics and controversy is news.

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Evidences exist to support this finding that the public space, especially the political has become ruthlessly 'masculinised' environments that abhor the presence of women as they represent the other, the feminine. The few women in leadership who manage to stay in the public political space do so by adapting to 'masculinise' tendencies and yet often get 'punished' for their socially unacceptable masculine behaviour, a concept referred to as the 'double bind' (Gidengil & Everitt 2003; Latvia 2004).This concept is used to explain the contradicting social expectations for women when they are represented in media space. These studies found that when women leaders exhibit the traditional female 'norm' – femininity in the public sphere, they are deemed as incompetent whereas their colleagues who are aggressive and are seen to have adapted masculine characteristics are described as unfeminine and socially unacceptable. This double bind explains the media – the newspapers' – almost omission of Ursula Owusu. She has been described by some heads of some male dominated media houses, as being aggressive and outspoken as the men. This omission can be explained as punishment for doing that which is socially unacceptable – something unfeminine and not a socially expected of the female – entry into the socially preserved male domain (Adomako, 2001). Hence Tuchman's (1978) symbolic annihilation concept from the perspective of omission/absence finds confirmation here. In contrast, a woman leader in politics who doesn't act combatively is not omitted but framed mainly as incompetent (*Daily Guide* – 35.90%; *The Ghanaian Time* – 15.71%; *Daily Graphic* – 5%).

5.7.2 <u>Marriage is a Prerequisite for Women in Leadership</u>

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Scholarships on gender posit that gender relations of hierarchy that disadvantage women are culturally-based and as such subject to change over time. However, why these gendered positions continue to persist may be attributed to the failure of social institutions particularly the family and media (whose integral role it is to educate) to promote gendered ideologies capable of transforming power relations that present women as capable of leadership. To this end, Norris (1997) advocates the need for more subtle analysis of media coverage of women leaders since most of the coverage did not contain the easily identifiable simple stereotyping but "reflected a more subtle conventional wisdom about how women are seen as politicians" (p. 161).

The dorminant frames that characterised the news discourse on the coverage of women leaders by the three newspapers provide an understanding of the scoial constructs the journalists and news audiences share. These media constructs are the only means by which meaning is shared. In the social milieu, gender constructs as regards women as leaders remain a cultural artefact that gets carried into their representation in the media. When journalists engage in the process of writing news, they do so based on what kind of socialisation they have received from the society: primary, secondary (educational, institutional-media houses etc.), and for that matter convey the social constructs about women and leadedrship into the media product of news. Culturally, women are expected to be in the private space, a deviation from which presents a situation of 'fear' of the 'other' and renders the journalists inadequate to effectively cover the woman leader 'equitably' as they would men leaders.

Primary socialisation gets reinforced by media as a means of attaining legitimacy of how 'its supposed to be'. The *Daily Graphic*, *Daily Guide* and *The Ghanaian Times*

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utilized the stereotypes frame as the major frames in the thematic coverage they gave women leaders between 2009 and 2010. This is informed largely by the use of the title 'Mrs.' (34.5% of cumulative frames), employed in the coverage of women leaders. This is subtle and may not be easily identified as stereotypical but rather harmless – it is the social norm and expectation for all married women (Norris, 1997) to be identified by this title. For both groups of women in the study, stereotypes frame ranked first – 37.31% for political and 31.80% for non-political. Culturally, marriage is considered very important and as an achievement for women and for which public 'display' in terms of being addressed as such is expected whether orally or written. Failure to do so may be interpreted as a show of disrespect or ignorance of the status of the married woman.

As a social construct, the title 'Mrs' is laden with certain socio-cultural values: being responsible, morally upright, chaste and feminine, modest etc. The title with it's values become part of the systematic news values construct of the media houses (Branston & Stafford, 2006). Anytime the media uses this title for a woman leader, this stereotype frame is activated, making marriage a pre-requisite for getting into leadership without which questions are raised based on these values. This phenomenon becomes even more critical when 'ms/miss' is applied to a woman leader who is single or divorced as the case is with two of the women leaders in this study. In the same vein values of being a single woman (which stems from biased gender constructs) against women are also called upon and interogated in the media space. In fact Tsikata (2001), found "unsubstantiated spill of moral weakness of women politicians" as a societal issue that hindered women's participation in politics hightening such misconception for a single woman. Here it is imperative to state that the umarried single women leaders each fall

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under political and non-political spaces – Joyce Aryee for political and Ursula Owusu for non-political – and this study finds evidence that point to the fact that frames were employed based on the kind of public space the woman leader occupies. In fact the media made an issue out of the reasons why one of the women leaders got divorced[35].

In this study, media stereotypes are very critical in understanding why efforts to push women into the public space largely fail. Van Dijck (200) articulates this trend clearly:

> By and large, media images still reflect stereotypical reflections of gender roles. A male politician is first and foremost perceived as a politician. A female politician however is first and foremost seen as a woman, a wife and a mother. Her profession is rarely separated from her gender. By approaching a female politician as a woman, a mother or a wife, her social status tends to be diminished (Van Dijck, 2002).

Here, women's representation places importance on marriage as one of the essential things that a woman leader has to balance to be accepted as worthy of leadership.

Although women in non-political spaces are seen by society to have worked hard to merit the space that they occupy, it does not reflect significantly in the amount of coverage given them. Hence, the media do not show these women meriting their position if the coverage given them is not prominent – out of the 69 news stories, only 4 made it to the front page. The question that comes to mind is should women be encouraged to seek non-political leadership position because society thinks they merit their positions more, in

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[35] I left my husband, no man left me – says Ursula Owusu. The Chronicle

the light of the analysis above? If yes, could the reason be that women, as society expects, belong to the private space and as this study shows prefer leadership roles (like the public service) that does not require them to be 'open' as in politics or that because society finds such spaces less public and safe for women? Even though the woman leader who received the highest number of news stories occupied political space, most of that coverage was negative. It follows then that the media reach was mostly negative, and will discourage other women.

5.7.3   <u>Women and Gender Issues are Still Not Newsworthy</u>

The powerful or elite and, occasionally, some other groups of people in society actively participate in ensuring that events and issues about their activities make the news. This involves active cultivation of relationships by elites with news writers who cover events and issues from the field and the editorial board made up of news editors, page editors, sub-editors etc. who at the end of the day make the final decisions as to what issues and events make it onto the newspaper pages. As a result, the dualism of news producers and news consumers is replaced by a seeming web of individuals made up of both media personnel who are seen to produce the news and an active elite audience vigorously engaged and acting also as news sources in a seeming dialectic news production process. As indicated by data in this research, women leaders are largely unable to effectively cultivate this media relationship as a result of the deeply held notions about women's place being in the private space and the fear of having to sacrifice something that is socially expected of women if they have to deviate from this norm and step into the public space.

This elitist web remains exclusivist (to men) even though women leaders are seen to have achieved the status that should put them there. It was clear from the interviews of both women leaders and media practitioners that there was no question about the women leaders' status as leaders and role models. The study found that all the journalists who were interviewed referred to the women leaders under this study at one point or the other without the researcher having previously mentioned their individual names to the interviewees. In addition, the women leaders also referred to one another as examples of women in leadership in instances of the nature of media coverage. This justifies the choices of the women as women leaders for the study, the society and the media practitioners. For women leaders, getting into the public sphere alone is not enough to guarantee fair media representation since there still exists the difficulty in terms of (women's underrepresentation and commitment to improve on women's representation in this space) locating individuals who are actively making the news. Similarly, a study of three newspapers in the United States of America by Rodgers and Thorson (2003), indicate that newsrooms norms, "operate as a conformity mechanism that socializes all reporters, regardless of gender, to maintain the male-dominated power structure". (p. 673). Hence women as leaders is still a concept that has to be accepted as a norm by media practitioners for women who form more than 50% of Ghana's population.

This concerted effort is achieved through systematic societal institutionalization of male dominance in the media to consolidate their hold on the media in order to ensure a perception of reality that is commensurate with the objectives of the powers that be. Indeed studies elsewhere (Rodgers & Thorson, 2003; North, 2009b) show similar

findings. North (2009b) (as cited in Ross & Carter, 2011) asserts that usually, men do not consider the newsroom as

> ...having a gendered or macho context, failing to understand that they *are* the culture, the newsroom is theirs and they guard the parameters from outsiders, allowing some in, but rarely to the core, where power is experienced, wielded and often homosocially shared (p. 1150).

The socio-cultural constructs of leadership roles that are acknowledged and represented in the Ghanaian media as a male preserve impede women's perfomative acts as decision makers and capable of leadership. An important deduction that can be made from the study is media practitioners' understanding to some extent, of the power of culturally held notions to impede women's participation in leadership. However, this does not translate into efforts to change the news discourse accordingly. There seems to be some helplessness on the part of journalists and media practitioners (North, 2009b) who say they are only reflecting society. The in-depth interviews also confirm the suggestion of media practitioners' inability to effectively represent women without reinforcing the deeply rooted socio-cultural gender constructs about them. Thus media mirrors or reflects society through the use of cultural frames in the minds of Ghanaian audiences.

The importance of frames in newsroom language as an important factor for issues getting media coverage and prominence for that matter is critical. This puts some responsibility at the doorstep of the journalists whose reality of what is news or news worthy may vary in being negotiated by past personal experiences and socio-cultural

constructs of knowledge. Thus there exists the possibility of influencing these frames for better representation of women.

Women's lack of support for their fellow women as a trend indicated by producers of the news text needs to be understood from two stand points. First, women as well as men have received the same gendered socialisation. Second, gendered social constructs have informed the basis for the interpretation of behaviour among women which is often used as the reason for their underrepresentation. It is also the consequential frames within which women in leadership's portrayals in the media are situated.

5.8.0   SUMMARY

This Chapter dealt with the findings of this study and discusses their implications for media coverage of women in political and non-political spaces. Overall even though coverage differed slightly in terms of quantity of coverage (women leaders in political spaces-847; women leaders in non-political spaces-868), there were significant differences in the nature of coverage. The news discourse about women in leadership featured eight major frames. They are: incompetence, vilification, organised action, feminism, stereotypes, politics, social responsibility and development. The political spaces attracted more negative coverage while the non-political space received more positive coverage.

As regards political and non-political spaces, very few of the news stories about the women leaders made it to the front pages of the newspapers during the period of study (political spaces-24.6% and non-political spaces5.8%. Thus the *Daily Graphic, Daily Guide*, and *The Ghanaian Times* gave women leaders in political spaces more

prominence than those in non-political spaces. More than 50% of the total news stories about women leaders within 2009 and 2010 quoted the women leaders.

While journalists indicated that the news content was simply representing reality they also admitted that they sometimes fell short of achieving this. Women leaders' perception about media coverage also differed depending on the space occupied.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECCOMMENDATIONS

6.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter captures the summary of the conclusions that are drawn from the findings. In addition, this chapter discusses the limitations of the study, draws conclusions and makes recommendations.

6.1.0   SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This chapter reveals the nature of media coverage given women in political and non-political in spaces (leadership) in Ghana between 2009 and 2010. The findings are based on data collected from three newspapers, namely the *Daily Graphic, The Ghanaian Times* and the *Daily Guide*. In addition, results and analysis of interviews conducted with media practitioners, and some women leaders identified for this study are presented.

Dominant frames that characterised the coverage of women leaders in political and non-political spaces are presented. The dominant frames that were identified include: incompetence, vilification, organised action, stereotypes, feminism, politics, social responsibility and development. Even though the newspapers' coverage of women leaders differed based on the space occupied, the stereotypes frame ranked 1st in both the political and non-political spaces. Overall, the stereotypes frame dominated the news discourses of women leaders in both political and non-political spaces with a cumulative thematic space of 592 representing 34.5% of the total 1715 spaces.

Further, findings on the degree of prominence given news stories about women leaders are presented. While 24.6% of the stories of women leaders in political spaces made it to the front page of the three newspapers, only 5.8% of stories of women leaders in non-political spaces were given any degree of prominence.

In terms of the incorporation of quotes of women leaders' in the news articles, more than half had quotes sourced from the women leaders. Women leaders in political spaces were quoted in 60% of their news stories while women leaders in non-political spaces were quoted in 66.2% of their news articles.

Journalists and media practitioners justified the nature of the news discourse as a reflection of reality. Journalists interviewed are of the opinion that the type of coverage given to women leaders is a consequence of socio-cultural-based gender stereotype constructs that blame women as impeding women's leadership roles. Media practitioners also perceived women as preferring the more private space(non-political) to the political space because they do not have the 'guts' to be in politics. In addition, evidence was found to support the cultural concept of women as outsiders to the public space. Another perception that influences the coverage of women leaders is the depiction of women in non-political spaces as meriting their leadership positions more than women in political space.

Themes identified within the interviews of women leaders indicate that the perceptions of the women leaders differed depending on the space they occupied. However, women leaders in both spaces agreed that media representation of women leaders discourages other women from getting into leadership roles. There exists a difficulty in the management of the leadership space especially competitive partisan

politics – the price women have to pay to be in leadership. The double-edged family support tends to limit women's effective participation within the leadership space.

6.2.0   LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study set out to examine newspaper coverage of women leaders in political and non-political spaces by three newspapers. The study also sought to understand the reasons behind the newspapers content of the coverage from the perspective of the news producers (journalists and media practitioners) and the perception of the women leaders who are covered in these news stories. However, the findings must be seen in the light of its limitation. Apart from the limitation of time, access to the universe of news articles proved difficult and may have resulted in limited sampling population. For instance, the *Daily Graphic's* electronic archive consists of selected news stories and not the entire day's publication. This necessitated several visits to the newspaper's library and other libraries to find articles within the study period. An exercise that was challenging and affected the number of news articles that could be sampled for the study period.

Further, time constraint became an impediment that did not allow me to interview all the women leaders. However, the two who were finally interviewed adequately represented the political and non-political spaces. Again, future studies can strengthen the validity and reliability of the study by expanding the number of women leaders to be interviewed bearing in mind that there are few women leaders who occupy major leadership spaces. The study could be expanded to include other media i.e. radio and television to afford generalisation of the findings.

In spite of the limitations mentioned, the findings have critical implications for future studies, women's media representations and leadership, the state institution and gender advocacy.

6.3.0   CONCLUSIONS

Women's representation in the media in Ghana has come from the typical 1990's characterised by representation of first ladies, scholars and gender advocates (Gadzekpo, 2009). However, there still remains a long way to go to effectively represent the present day Ghanaian woman leader. Culture and social constructs influence news production and the dynamics of media representations have shifted from mere numbers to a more critical attention to subtle stereotypes that require media practitioners and journalists to be equipped with adequate media skills to challenge the traditional routine orthodox reportage. Again, media tokenism as a response to gender issues is woefully inadequate if it is considered as commitment to improving women's representation in the public space, especially the partisan political.

Framing of women leaders in political spaces in predominant negativity signals the discouragement of women to get into that space where they can impact decisions that take account of their realities. Often the negative coverage have resulted from personalisation of issues which give rise to issues like why personalisation still persist and whether it should be allowed in terms of invading individual privacy of public officials (Pantti, 2005).

Issues of women leaders' inability to effectively manage the public space, particularly media space, have roots in the 'double-edged' family support informed by

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socio-cultural gendered constructs of what value women should place on family. This calls for a different approach by gender activists, advocates and the state if women are to overcome cultural inhibitions when they get into the public space. Women leaders' media representation cannot be taken for granted if there is to be any improvement. As aptly stated by Ross and Carter (2011), "women's issues' into the news landscape, women's visibility as autonomous and important actors on the economic, social and political stage is still significantly less than their position in the 'real' world demands".

Gaps that exist within women leaders' perceptions of media coverage, dependent on the space occupied, indicate that there is the need for a more critical and dynamic approach to understanding media representation of women leaders by the producers of the news, the state, gender advocates and the women leaders themselves. The gaps that exist between the news content and the reasons behind the content as indicated by the media practitioners is proof of the lack of media literacy and the recognition of the media as a socialisation agent, granted that the commitment to improving women media representation is there. Consequently this requires the need for gender awareness, media literacy and issues of representation and diversity on the part of all stakeholders, especially, media practitioners.

6.4.0   RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear that there is the need for Media literacy for the social actors engaged in news production. If the media and the state are committed to gender issues and improving women's representation in leadership as a means to achieving development, then the media and the state must educate and equip themselves to effectively achieve this.

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Critical to this is the identification and promotion of a female leadership norm, if women are to be seen as human beings who have leadership qualities that may not necessarily be similar to the male norm. The media must work towards educating itself and society to understand the differences of sex and gender towards being more acceptable to femininity and masculinity as a 'human thing' expected in both sexes which should not warrant punishment. The media must move away from state tokenism to gender issues by mainstreaming gender issues into state apparatuses and equip the media houses to effectively cover gender issues and, especially, women in leadership spaces.

Gender advocates must pay particular attention to the dynamics of media coverage of women in political spaces since that space is a more difficult but powerful terrain. This is because as indicated in this study, successes chalked in the political space will impact positively on women's representation in leadership roles.

Media monitoring is critical to enhancing the understanding of issues of representation. Media must commit to improving women's coverage and one important way to look at women's issues and coverage in retrospect. As pointed out by Ross & Carter, (2011) "media monitoring ... make[s] transparent how different media tend to represent reality in ways that most benefit those in positions of power in society in a process of hegemonic reproduction and maintenance of the status quo"(p.1152). Again, Galtung, 1995 (as cited in Ross and Carter, 2011), monitoring the media is an important political activity since it provides the basis of understanding what is being represented in the media in order that we might 'act in an informed, well-reasoned way'. (p. 1152).

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APPENDIX A: CODING INSTRUMENT

1. Title of article _____

2. _____ **Newspaper**

1= Daily Graphic 2= Daily Guide 3=Ghanaian Times

3. __ __/__ __/__ __ **Date of article**

4. _____ **Placement of article**

1=Front page

2= Inside

3=Back page

5. _____ **Story centered on the woman leader**

1=Yes 2=No

a.   Total number of paragraphs=_____

b.   How many are about or related to woman leader=_____

6. _____ **Women leaders quoted directly in story**

1=Yes 2=No

7. _____ **Nature of story**

0=Neutral

1=Challenges Stereotype

2=Reinforces Stereotypes

8. _____ **Thematic Categories**

1= Yes 2= No

_____ Family life relationship

_____Public service

_____Stereotypes

_____Defamation

_____Vilification,

_____Ignorance and petty-mindedness

_____ Incompetence

_____ Corruption

_____Naivety

_____Endurance

_____Bias

_____Anti-corruption

_____Human resource development

_____ICT

_____Popular support

_____Anti-popular support

_____State support

_____Challenges

_____Mischief

_____Development of justice delivery

_____Politicisation

_____Feminist

_____ Social issues

9. _____ Frames

_____ Incompetence (*frustration, bias, unorthodoxy*)

_____ Vilification (*defamation vilification, corruption, mischief*)

_____ Organised action (*popular support, anti-popular support*)

_____ Feminism (*Feminist*)

_____ Stereotypes (*Ignorance and petty-mindedness, family life relationship,*

naivety, endurance)

_____ Politics (*politicization, state support*)

_____ Social responsibility (*public service, challenges, social issues*)

_____ Development (*human resource development, development of justice delivery*

system,

ICT, anti-corruption)

1= Incompetence

2=Vilification

3= Organised action

4= Feminism

5= Stereotypes

6= Politics

7= Social responsibility

8= Development

APPENDIX B: CODING PROTOCOL

Instructions

Explanations for various expressions and symbols on the coding sheet are outlined as follows. Please read each section careful and provide the corresponding digit or number in the space provided by each item on the coding sheet.

1. Title of Article: Write down or type the title of the news article precisely as it appears in the newspaper

2. Newspaper: Write the corresponding number/digit of the newspaper in the space provided. Indicate "1" for *Daily Graphic*; "2" *Daily Guide*; and "3" for *Ghanaian Times*

3. **Date of Article:** This is the date on which the article was published. This should be indicated in the following order: Month followed by Day and followed by the year as in the sample: Date of Article: 01/03/2012

4. **Placement of Article:** Indicate where the article is located in the newspaper by writing the corresponding number for the locations provided. Please indicate "1" for articles on the front page, "2" for inside and "3" for back page.

5. **Story centered on woman leader: Indicate "1" for Yes and "2" for No if the news article is centered on the woman leader.**

a. Total number of paragraphs: Indicate number of paragraphs in the space provided

b. How many are about or related to woman leader: Indicate number of paragraphs that actually mention or is about the woman leader

6. **Women leaders quoted directly in story**: Write "1" if woman leader is directly quoted in the news article and "2" if she is not.

7. **Nature of story**: Write 1 in the space provided if the news article challenges stereotypes. (For example is the woman leader presented as being in charge of the issue or situation). Write 2 if the woman leader is presented as weak or made reference to with respect to personal relationships that have no relevance to the story (example woman leader is referred to as a wife of someone); and 0 if story lacks gender perspective

8. **Thematic categories**: This refers to the various themes that are noted in the various themes in the news article. Write "1" for Yes if the article discusses that theme and "2" for No. Note that there may be more than one theme in a news article.

9. **Frames**: This corresponds to the frame under which the themes are discussed. Once a theme has been discovered find the frame cluster under which it falls and check by writing the corresponding digit in the space provided.

APPENDIX C: QUESTION GUIDE – JOURNALISTS/MEDIA PRACTITIONERS

13. Please, kindly introduce yourself.

14. What is you view on how women are reported/ covered/portrayed in the media

15. Do you think that the media give enough coverage to women in leadership in Ghana?

16. If you consider these women leaders as located in political and non-political spaces, which of the spaces do the media use to highlight women leaders in the country?

17. Does a woman have to be in politics or linked to politics before she can be acclaimed a leader of substance?

18. Do you think that these reports portray the positive aspect of these women leaders?

19. There is the view that women in political spaces have, in recent years been framed negatively, by a mainly male dominated media? How far is this assertion true

20. Does your organization have any ideology in regard to the coverage of women leaders?

21. Generally, is there a newsroom ideology on how reports on women in leadership in the country should be covered?

22. Are these reports objective?

23. Please, kindly discuss the relevance of using invectives against women as news reporting style or tool in the current political dispensation?

24. What is your opinion on the coverage of women political leaders in the current political dispensation?

APPENDIX D: QUESTION GUIDE – WOMEN LEADERS

1. Please, kindly introduce yourself.

2. What is you view on how women are reported/ covered/portrayed in the media

3. In terms of quantity, do you think that the media give enough coverage to women in leadership in Ghana?

4. If you consider these women leaders as located in political and non-political spaces, which of the spaces do the media use to highlight women leaders in the country?

5. Does a woman have to be in politics or linked to politics before she can be acclaimed a leader of substance?

6. Specifically what is your view on how the media covered you especially between 2009 and 2010?

7. Do you think that these reports portray your positive aspect?

8. What in your view are the reasons for such portrayals?

9. In your view, are the news articles fair?

10. Do you think the portrayals are as a result of a male dominated/controlled media?

11. Recent publications framed you as incompetent. What is your reaction?
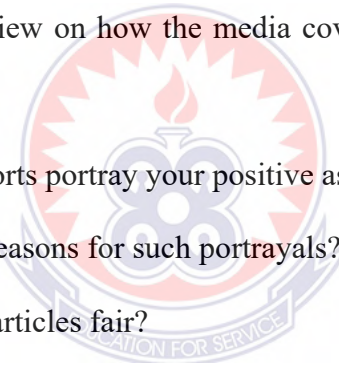
APPENDIX E: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Name	**Occupation**	**Date**
1. Dr. Joyce Aryee	Chief Executive Officer, Ghana Chamber of Mines	August 2, 2011
2. Mr. Betty Mould-Iddrisu	Minister of Education, Republic of Ghana	August 5, 2011
3. Mr. Yaw Boadu-Ayeboafoh	General Manager – Newspapers, Graphic Communications Group Ltd.	May 13, 2011
4. Ms. Mary Anane	Journalist, Daily Guide, Ghana	November 23, 2011