UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

WOMEN IN SPORTS JOURNALISM: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF

SELECTED FEMALE SPORTS JOURNALISTS IN GHANA

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Linda Konadu Tuah declare that this Dissertation, with the exception of quotation 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 elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: …………………………...

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SUPERVISOR"S DECLARATION

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

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: ……………………………………………………

SIGNATURE: ………………………………………………………………….

DATE: …………………………………………………………………………..

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ABSRACT

The study investigated the experiences of female sports journalists in Ghana. The study was based on the feminist and stereotype theories. The research investigated selected female sports journalists" lived experiences and their perceptions on being in a male-dominated profession. The study was conducted using in-depth interviews with selected female sports journalists. The study revealed that sports journalism is clearly a gendered profession that not only welcomes men enthusiastically than women but also serves as a site for celebrating skills and values clearly marked as masculine. Women in the world of sports journalism are often overlooked and marginalized as they are deemed inferior in skills and knowledge to their male counterparts. Again, drawing on the feminist and stereotype theories, the study showed that, in sports journalism, women are treated as "outsiders" by virtue of their gender but "insiders" by their adherence to journalistic norms and values. Men therefore dominate and have all the authority in the field and this eventually leads to the underrepresentation of women in the sports journalism profession.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction to the study, focusing on the background, statement of problem, objectives and research questions. The significance of the study and the delimitation of the study are also outlined.

1.1 Background to the study

Historically, men have always been dominant in the area of journalism but over recent decades, more women have swarmed into journalism often making up equal numbers of journalists covering hard news stories in our media across the globe (Strong, 2007). It is common to see women as political reporters, business reporters, health reporters, crime reporters, entertainment reporters; yet very few women venture into sports reporting. Although the media is key to overcoming barriers to women"s participation and progressively achieving gender equality in sports, little effort is being done by the media to promote women"s participation in the sport profession (Mwambwa, 2009). This according to Creedon (1998) is because mass media portray the dominant images in societies of the industrialized world and depict life in our societies. Media coverage is therefore important and does matter as it has the potential to strongly influence our ideas (Lines, 2000). Kirk (1993) argues:

Media culture is not merely consumed and discarded but it is utilized to

construct personal identities…the material the media supplies is not

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passively absorbed, but is actively appropriated as the stuff of people's

sense of self, their place in the world, and the bases of their hopes and

expectations of the future… (p. 18).

Women do participate in sports but mostly at the margins. This is because media coverage establishes sports as a male domain (Messner, Dunbar & Hunt, 2000). Melnick and Jackson (1998) indicate that the media overall presents sports as "an essentially male-skewed world… one in which females have reasons to wonder about their social positions and roles" (p.550). The ideology of the media about sports journalism have led to the media "symbolically annihilating" women in the arena of sports journalism. In the newsroom of countries like the U.S and New Zealand for example, sports department has historically been the most male dominated space (Hardin & Shain, 2005). The same can be said of countries in the Southern parts of Africa such as South Africa and Malawi (Kwabena & Thole, 2013).

Although women have come a long way in reporting, the issue of gender discrimination and sexism is still prevalent in the industry and sports journalism is no exception to this. When people think about sports writers and broadcasters, they assume they are male because of the generalizations made by the media that sports is a field for men. This has made the realm of sports a male dominated area and Hanson (2012) indicates that women can do anything a man can do but in the world of sports, the way they are viewed does not match their abilities.

Scholars such as Hardin and Shain (2005) and Kian (2007) contend that sport is a masculine hegemonic domain. Hegemonic masculinity according to Pederson (2002) is the general acceptance of masculinity in society that places women in positions below

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men. Cornell (1995) therefore states that masculine traits are the most desired and valued and masculinity is the standard for which everything is measured in hegemonic societies. Sport therefore according to scholars such as Hargreaves, (1994) and Hardin and Shain, (2005) has become a hegemonic institution to preserve the power of men over women thus unlike other areas in journalism, sports journalism is resistant to change because of the deep-seated ideology surrounding the profession which sees it as the preserve of men (Hardin & Shain, 2005).

Over the years, women have been trying to break the barrier and cross over into sports reporting. Women and men must have and enjoy the same rights and opportunities across all sectors of society including sports, health, education, decision making and economic participation. The issue of gender bias has however resulted in the unequal treatment of women wherever they find themselves. The endemic issue of gender bias and inequality has relegated women to the background in all spheres of life of which sports is no exception (Klein & Shiffman, 2009).

Wilde (2007) purports that society has been structured in a way that right from birth males are expected to demonstrate behaviours and characteristics that are "masculine" while females are held accountable for being "feminine". This is because of media-generated stereotypes that have formed over time presenting women as caretakers, mothers, wife, sex objects and a weakling that is not capable of surviving in a male dominated field. Women have therefore been stereotyped as being feminine. Women journalists would therefore have a greater tendency to cover stories that conform to the social roles of women. They would rather want to treat themes thought of as „feminine‟, such as health, education and family (Schoch, 2013). Thus when the principle of

femininity is applied, females are expected to live up to specific gender roles that are held by both men and women in mainstream society (Wilde, 2007). It is therefore not surprising why many people think a firefighter, president or a sports journalist should be male while women should be associated with being a nurse or a teacher supporting Wilde"s claim that women should be caretakers.

Times have however changed and allowed the influx of women in reporting but sports reporting has lagged behind when it comes to the equal representation of both genders because of the negative postulations surrounding the field which has made it very difficult to see women in sports reporting (Gunther, Kautz & Roth, 2011). Boyle (2006) suggests that women in the media do not like covering sports due to the macho culture found in sports department and some male journalists" belief that women do not have adequate knowledge and interest to cover sports related stories. Women who do make it to the field of sports are a "rare breed", who are willing and able to face extraordinary challenges (Strong, 2007).

Sports has long been an important aspect of media output. Across the globe, sports has come to have a great significance in the culture of nations, receiving increasing attention in the media (Coakley, 2004). This according to Andrews (2005) has made sport the fastest growing sector in most English-speaking countries media of which Ghana is no exception. Sports coverage, which was previously often confined to the latter or three pages of newspapers or the weekend afternoons on radio and television, has now become vitally important to the success of both print and broadcast media (Toney 2013). Thus, sports coverage has for over a century had an essential function in attracting and retaining

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audiences, and sport has become „the heart of the battle for newspaper circulation‟ (Chambers, Fleming & Steiner, 2004).

However, even though more space is being devoted to sports in newspapers and the television throughout the developed world and more people joining the ranks of sports journalists (Andrews, 2005), sports journalism has remained an area of gender disparity. Sports journalism has traditionally been seen as a male domain, and researchers suggest that this tradition has not changed (Strong, 2007).

While some progress regarding the visibility of women has been made in broadcast sports journalism, there are still relatively few women sports writers in the newspaper industry. Wann, Schrader, Allison and McGeorge (1998) in a study discovered that only 3% of sports articles in selected college newspapers were written by women. Sports journalism thus is still a largely male-dominated area in countries all over the world (Schoch, 2013). Negative stigmas are often attached to women, and consequently are used as a mechanism to control and limit women‟s participation in sports (Wilde, 2007). Lutz, Holmes and Bridges (2014) purports to this fact in their work when they reiterate that women‟s understanding and knowledge of sports is usually questioned when they find themselves in the sports industry because of generalizations and stereotypes.

Sport news and sport reporting is highly gendered around the globe and Ghana with its strong sports identification is no exception. The sports sector in the print and broadcast media in Ghana is male dominated. The number of women in sports journalism in Ghana remains relatively low as compared to their male counterparts.

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Women face a rough path when pursuing a career in sports media and are often relegated to the background. This is because men do not only dominate the media world, they also dominate the sports media (Leslie, 2014). Lane (2013) indicates that female journalists hear and see their profession, reputation and careers reduced down to their appearance and sex and Leslie (2014) notes that this has come about because females are thought to know nothing about the sports compared to males so they are made fun of when doing a „man‟s‟ job. Women are therefore evaluated according to standards such as force, aggression, violence and "straight maleness" (Miller, 2001). Women face discrimination, challenges and recoiling experiences once they find themselves working in what is known as a male dominated field. Grubb and Billiot (2010) in a study interviewed numerous female sports reporters about their experiences and challenges they have faced in a male domain. Most of the results garnered from their research supported the evidence that most women in the field have experienced poor treatment because of their gender.

A UNESCO report indicates that one of the greatest challenges facing journalists, both men and women, is to resist the culture of casual stereotype in their everyday work. According to the report, in every region and culture there are fixed images, deeply entrenched prejudices and biased reflexes that pose challenges to journalists and media and with the current rate of stereotyping women, it will take another seventy-five years to achieve gender equality in the media. The stereotype that the sports industry is a place for men has left few women in the profession and women are viewed as the marginalized group and seen as less credible when it comes to sports reporting.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Newspaper editors have often argued that female reporters do not have the required skills or interest for reporting sports (Strong, 2007), but research has variously indicated that there is a clear lack of opportunity for women who want to go into sports journalism (North, 2009).

There is no question that female sports reporters have experienced countless incidents in which they were harassed and criticized because of their gender (Gunther et al, 2011). A study done by Hardin and Shain (2005) determined that 85% of female sports journalists feel inferior to their male colleagues and are not seen as equals because of their gender. Etling and Young (2007) concur with Hardin and Shain (2005) findings, noting that women were seen as inferior to men when it comes to sports journalism.

Clifton (2012) notes in her work that women have to fight for acceptance in what is considered an "all boys club". However, women have persevered until sports media has given at least some of them the benefit of the doubt that they do belong in a man's world. Chandler (2010) explains in her work that women who do make it to the "man's world" are ridiculed and represented as being a butch, mannish and aggressive. According to her the "mannishness", "aggression" and "butchness" have their roots in sexism and patriarchy.

Kwabena and Thole (2013) noted that women in Southern Part of Africa are scared to venture into sports reporting because of the violent scenes common at sporting matches. Women in Malawi and South Africa especially fear harassment from men and therefore opt to go into other profession because of these recoiling experiences. There are a lot of

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women sports journalists around the world who have recoiling experiences in their line of work because of the stereotype placed on sports.

Kian (2007) assessed the experiences and attitudes of male and female sports writing in the print media. Through an exploratory examination, the qualitative and quantitative research approaches were used to show that masculine hegemony is prevalent in sports. His research findings showed that sports media and the gender-related personal experiences leading up to sports writing careers differ between men and women. This according to him is because society is structured so that males are steered into sports reporting, while women are not. He concluded that women received differential treatment from management, co-workers, and the subject they interviewed just because of their binary classification as women.

To explore the experiences and attitudes of women in sports journalism, Hardin and Shain (2005) adopted the qualitative measure such as focus group discussions to get an in-depth understanding of women in the profession. Through a content analysis their research showed that women do face discrimination and harassment in the profession.

Gunther et al (2011) have looked at the credibility of female sports broadcasters from the perception of gender in a male dominated profession. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. Through focused group discussions and structured survey, they found out that though there is no bias against female broadcasters and women could be very good in the profession, stations will only hire women over men based on their sex appeal and how attractive they are. Experienced women in the profession would therefore have to prove themselves to be better than their male counterparts in order to retain their credibility.

Schoch (2013) also investigated the specificity of women sports journalists and the effect of gender on their work in Switzerland. Through a content analysis she found out that gender is a decisive factor in the working relations of sports sections. Her research also showed that women sports reporters worked within constraints of opportunities unique to them where their marital status and the presence of children played an important role in their position within the sports section. According to the findings of her research, this sometimes forces them to develop a more conventional way of writing. She concluded that sport „clearly remains the most masculine journalistic specialty". These studies have looked at experiences of women in sports journalism with different approaches in other parts of the world but minimal attention has been given to the experiences of women in sports journalism from the phenomenology approach. This study therefore attempts to look at a new dimension to the phenomenon by investigating the experiences of Ghanaian women in sports journalism through the phenomenology approach. Through the phenomenology approach, the research will seek to find out if Ghanaian women sports journalists share the same experiences as their female colleagues in other parts of the world or if culture plays a role in experiences women sports journalists face in their profession. It will use the feminist and stereotype theory as well as interviews to assess and analyze the experiences of Ghanaian women in sports journalism. Trujillo (1991) indicates that in the sport media profession, men occupy positions of power (i.e., editors, producers, managers). This supports the notion that sport media is a masculine hegemonic institution. Hardin and Shain (2005) therefore state that a woman going into sport journalism is unnatural because of the way society has been structured. Women are the focus of this study because as stated earlier, sports journalism is a male dominated

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realm. It is therefore prudent to find out the experiences of women once they find themselves in what is supposed to be a masculine profession.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The constant struggles of women trying to break the barrier of sports journalism which is considered as a preserve of men because of the way society is structured has given rise to much research regarding the experiences of women in sports journalism. The study seeks evidence to investigate and analyze the experiences of Ghanaian women in sports journalism.

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To investigate the pre-entry experiences of women in the profession.
2. To examine the post-entry experiences of female sports journalists in the profession.

1.4 Research Questions

The research would be guided by the following questions:

1. What are the pre-entry experiences of women in the profession?
2. What are the post-entry experiences of female sports journalists in the profession?

1.5 Significance of Study

Generalizations and stereotypes have categorized women into a group that has little knowledge of sports and is then questioned on its understanding of the sports industry. (Lutz et al, 2014). Society has been structured in a way that makes the idea of male sport journalist more comfortable and acceptable by the masses. Women who then make it into

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the industry are more likely to be stereotyped because society has been structured in a way to make sports and sports reporting an area for men and a prohibited area for women.

In examining the experiences of female sports journalists in Ghana, this study will add on to the database of research in the area of female sports journalism. It will serve as a guide to young female sports journalists and women who would want to pursue a career in sports reporting and are prepared perhaps to face similar experiences in the future.

The findings and recommendations of this study will also help these women on how to succeed in the profession whenever they are faced with challenges in their line of work. It will also be useful in checking the representations of women sports journalists in Ghana as well as curb the negative postulations surrounding the field concerning women.

1.6 Delimitation

This study is focused on analyzing the experiences of women in a profession that is considered as a male profession. That is sports journalism and the perspective of what male sports journalists have about their female counterparts. The study will be limited to Ghanaian women sports journalists. The study will border on women in the broadcast and print media. With the aim of finding out the experiences of women in the profession, women who have been in the profession for five years and above were chosen. I find it prudent to believe that women who have been in the profession for that long would have gathered adequate experiences to facilitate the writing of this thesis.

I therefore define women sports journalists as those women who have an extensive understanding of sports and everything connected to the profession. These women must

be practicing sports journalists who have been in the profession for five years and over and would have garnered enough experiences on the job. The researcher has operationally defined women sports journalists in this thesis to differentiate them from women sports analysts as a sport analyst will not necessarily be a journalist as there is a blurred line between a sports analyst and a sport journalist particularly in Ghana.

1.7 Organization of the study

The study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one embodies the background of the study, the objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations and the organization of the study. The second chapter presents a review of literature on the study and delineates the theoretical framework underpinning the study. Chapter three presents the methods and procedure used for the collection of data for analysis. Issues discussed under this chapter comprised the research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling technique, data collection instruments, reliability and validity, data collection procedure and method of data analysis. The fourth chapter was dedicated to the findings and discussions of the study. Chapter five presents the summary, conclusions from the findings and make recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses all relevant literature and written documents that is of concern to the research problem. The chapter depicts an important tie between existing knowledge and the problem under investigation. Literature review limits the scope of inquiry and conveys the importance of studying a topic to readers (Creswell, 2003).

2.1 The Media and Sports

Sports is a global phenomenon that has a symbiotic relationship with the media. Just as sports is critical to the media, the media is equally critical to sport (Govender, 2010). Both the sports sector and the media sector have therefore developed a self-interest relationship. According to Bolotny and Bourg (2006) as cited by Lefever (2012), this means that while sports provides valuable contents and audiences for media operators, the media is a revenue source and promotional tool for sport. Marwat, Waseem, Kattak, Abbas and Bi (2014) in showing how sport and the media are intermingled state that media and sport are closely associated two different institutions in the society in that sport as a field of live action and entertainment need the media to provide path to that live action in order to reach the masses of near and remote areas. Relating to this, Bernstein and Blain (2002) state that many developments within mass sports have been guided by economic considerations that can easily be traced back to the media, and especially television. Sports for its part have also transformed the media. The relationship between

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sports and the media is the defining commercial connection for both industries at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The media has become part and parcel of everyday life. This is because the media basically is the disseminating medium of different types of news and information to the public through print and electronic sources (Marwat et al., 2014). To Hamidi and Choobine (2000), people‟s common activity in their free time is sitting in front of television. Radio and TV channels are always busy around the clock in the coverage of sport activities and disseminating information about sport throughout the media. The print medium is however comparatively slow in dispersal and disseminating of sport news (Marwat et al., 2014). Sport as a content can absorb copious quantities of media space and time. It stands at the confluence of the two principal functions (news and entertainment) of the mass media and is carefully structured into the „softer‟ spaces of news bulletins and newspaper sections (Rowe, 2004).

2.1.1 Television

Many developments within mass sport recently have been guided by economic considerations that can easily be traced back to the media, and especially television (Bernstein & Blain, 2002). For example, the principal source of revenue for sports organisations and clubs is the sale of exclusive live sports broadcasting rights on television. Also media operators use live sports content on television to create an attractive programming for their audience (Grant & Graeme, 2008). TV coverage has become part of the sport activities at local, national and international level competition. TV plays a significant role in popularizing sport activities among masses (Marwat et al.,

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2014). Broadcasting rights of sport on television can lead to highly valued rights for contracts for popular sports events. For instance, rights of the English Premier League (EPL) were acquired by Sextant and BSkyB in 2006 for around € 2.5 billion (Ofcom, 2007). This was further increased by 4.5% in 2010-2013 (Lefever, 2012).

Sports leagues can significantly be exposed to the masses if they are widely covered on television. Such exposure can deliver private benefits to the league and the clubs in the form of increased revenue from sponsorship and attraction of news supporters (Grant & Graeme, 2008). This is probably the reason why the European Leagues are more attractive and why their clubs have more supporters in Ghana compared to the Ghana Premier League (GPL). Teams in the GPL are now struggling for sponsorship because of its lack of attractiveness (Gyamera-Antwi, 2016).

Football clubs have used TV in order to connect with the public by launching their own TV channels to offer highlight of matches, exclusive interviews with players and coaches, daily news and so on. Manchester United was the first club to launch a TV channel "MUTV" in 1998 in order to promote the identity and image of the club (ENPA, 2005). According to the ENPA (2005) this example was followed by other big clubs such as Barcelona with "Barca TV" and Real Madrid with "Real Madrid TV", as well as smaller clubs such as the RSC Anderlecht with "RSCA TV". Television has therefore become a major driving force of media sport because of sports" pursuit of broadcast rights (Rowe, 2012) As a result, transmission of sport event on television has become the routine activity.

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2.1.2 Radio

Radio, apart from television is also playing a significant role in popularizing and economically boosting sport. Since broadcasting became a mass medium in 1920, radio has played a significant role in the development of sport (McCoy, 1997). With the passage of time, radio has remained the only effective source of instant communication of the latest information of the proceedings of the live sport events for so many years (Marwat et al., 2014).

According to Covil (n.d.) radio has the abilities that other media does not. This according to him is because radio can be listened to almost everywhere no matter what one is doing or where one is. For example one can listen to the radio at home, at work, as they drive in their cars or even while exercising but other media like the television or the internet require unmanageable devices for use or are intrusive in their use. People are therefore more likely to be reached on radio more than any other media. Keith (2002) asserts that there are twice as many car radio in use (approximately 140 million) as compared to the total circulation (60 million) of all daily newspapers in the United States.

The prime distinction of radio coverage to listeners is the live reporting about the activity and the simultaneous transmission of information (Marwat et al., 2014). Marwat et al continue that radio has fulfilled the earnest desires of the masses by broadcasting live proceedings of sports events. Radio stations like Citi FM, Asempa FM and Happy FM in Ghana continue to satisfy the masses by broadcasting proceedings of live matches to the public. Citi FM for example are noted for broadcasting live matches of the EPL every Saturday and Sunday and sometimes on different days depending on the day the matches are played where as Asempa and Happy FM are noted for their live coverage of local

football matches and the UEFA Champions League matches. The number of radio stations that specialize in sport-only content in the last 20 years has therefore exploded (Keith, 2002). This he says has paved way for radio sports talk shows.

According to Zagacki and Grano (2005) radio sports talk shows in recent years have grown in popularity and have opened a public space where ideas and attitudes of ordinary people seem to matter. They furthermore state that this has enabled fans and broadcasters to share dramatic interpretations about relationship between sport and society. Radio has therefore become one media that has had the greatest impact on sports and audiences.

2.1.3 Print Media

In the seventeenth century, newspapers were commonly focusing upon political, social, administrative, commercial and trade related issues. There were no space for sports coverage in the early newspapers (Marwat et al., 2014). Marwat et al., (2014) further state that it took more a century for some space to be allocated for sport news in its daily editions. According to Greer (1999) the media ought to give an accurate account of sporting events in newspapers. To Greer, several people read and trust newspapers because they are the efficient forms of mass communication ever created.

According to Harris (1998) as cited in Rowe (2004) the linkage between sport and the media did not await the arrival of television and radio. Newspapers were the key promotional tools for the elite English societies as entrepreneurs had started to construct business around public reaction since Newspapers were the fastest way to reach the public. Sport is structured into the „softer‟ spaces of news bulletins and newspaper sections (Rowe, 2004). Most sports stories in Ghana are usually found at the back pages of the newspaper.

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With the emergence of social media in recent times, many will argue that the print media''s contribution to sports will soon fade out. Marwat et al., (2014) however opine that this stance is highly debatable as considerable increase in the volume of circulation of different newspapers and the enlargement in the sport fictions in the daily and weekly issues is a testimony to the fact that the print media is still having the potential to compete and work on professional grounds. To them more than sixty thousand newspapers are published in the form of Daily, Weekly, Fortnightly and Monthly bases, having in excess of sixty five million circulations throughout the world. The need of the hour and size of sport section in the newspaper has therefore increased.

2.2 The Concept of Gender and Gender Situation in Ghana

Gender can be described as a cultural construction, which makes biological and physical differences into socially meaningful that seem reasonable and appropriate (Nanda & Warms, 2004). Butler (1999) sees gender as an act that requires repetitive performance of a set of meanings already socially established; it is the mundane and ritualized form of their legitimizations. Janus (2008) purports that gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a particular society considers appropriate for men and women. For this reason, Wilde (2007) adds that society expects males and females to adopt, believe in, and fulfill specific gender roles and stereotypes that have been established. Gender roles are therefore "the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity, and which these transformed needs are satisfied" Reiter (1975 cited in Janus, 2008). Society demands compliance to the enforced gender order and once these gender norms are violated, it is common to see labels given to the person violating these norms (Wilde, 2007). Lips

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(2001) adds on to this and states that gender roles and stereotypes affect men and women in different ways. To him, individuals may therefore be judged by how well they conform to the gender roles established by the society. The discussion of power has also been built into the gender system of which the male is the norm and the female the subordinate one (of the two genders). Masculinity therefore becomes the order and the standard for which everything is measured hence the marginalization of women in this case sports journalism.

The status of women in Ghana today like many African countries has been determined by the kind of girlhood they have had. Traditional values, cultural norms as well as socializing process, all appear to bestow a low status on the girl child and low status on Ghanaian women (Braimah, 2015). Abbam (1991) states that right from birth, the Ghanaian society instills the idea of male superiority and female inferiority on the mind of the child. Men undermine the self-esteem of women by subjugating them. Women therefore overplay their feminity by accepting that they are the weaker sexes. This is prevalent in contemporary societies of which Ghana is no exception (Allah-Mensah, 2005).

Though noticeable improvements have been made, inequalities between men and women in terms of employment in Ghana are still common. This gender discrimination in employment occurs through unequal access to work, unequal payment for equal work, unfair prerogatives in favour of men pertaining to parental authority and access to leadership positions (Braimah, 2015). Women in Ghana are still employed in undervalued positions even when they have higher levels of education (Thompson, 2008). One reason why this inequality may persist is because of the culture that exists in

the professions women find themselves and the lack of women in decision-making (Hardin & Shain, 2005). This inequality is dramatic enough that Hardin and Whiteside (2006) suggested that women comprise a „token" status within sports journalism.

The gender division of labour in Ghana is evident across the country. There are strong divides between work that is acceptable for women and work that is acceptable to men traditionally. The field of sports journalism is therefore seen as a field acceptable to men than women because of the masculine traits assigned to sports. Women who find themselves in professions seen as a masculine preserve of men often have to go through a great deal of frustration and discrimination and dissatisfaction.

2.3 Global Focus on Gender and Media

The media was first identified as a site for action of the first United Nations World Conference on women in Mexico City in 1975 where active public discourse on gender and media in Africa begun (Gadzekpo 2009). According to Geertsema (2008) the media continues to face the challenge of ensuring equal and fair representation to the entire population where gender and media activists in particular have taken up the challenge of bringing about change. Research shows that women are under-represented as reporters, news sources and audience members and have not yet achieved equal representation as compared to men (Geertsema, 2008).

Gender inequality manifests itself in all aspects of human life: economy, security, education, politics and sports. The fewer women in a society participate in formal decision-making, the less likely it is that the decision made are working in favour of more gender equality. To improve gender equality therefore, it is important to include more women in decision-making positions (Tsikata, 2009). Abbam (1975) as cited in

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Gadzekpo (2009) observed that women were concentrated at the bottom of organisations and were rarely to be found in the middle or top management. There are only very few countries that actually have equitable representation of women and men in decision-making. The situation however is not the same in Ghana. For example, the number of women in parliament decreased after the elections in 2004 from 11% to less than 9%. Not only that, the representation of women in government does not reach the declared goal of 40% (Tsikata, 2009). According to Gadzekpo (2009) the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) in 1995 purports that women are silenced relative to men on topics in the news and their views least heard on politics, government, the economy and business.

The media was generally considered as inhospitable site for female employees as well as gender activism. This is because under the old political order, journalists were co-opted, intimidated and harassed making journalism a hostile place for women (Gadzekpo, 2008). It is therefore hoped that more women would have access to the media and become more visible in the media as employees, as decision makers, as subjects of the news and as news makers with the proliferation of media outlets, media freedoms and pluralism as well as the rebirth of civil society (Gadzekpo, 2009). This stance is yet to materialize as several studies indicate that women remain under-represented in newsrooms across the globe and the majority of newsrooms remain male (Steyn & De Beer, 2004 as cited in Gadzekpo, 2009). Women are not treated equally to men in the media and according to a study conducted by the South African National Editors‟ Forum (SANEF) as cited by Steyn and De Beer (2004), women in the media are forced to cover "soft" news stories such as human interest and entertainment stories whiles the men covered "hard" news such as politics, sports and economics.

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Women these days are however able to produce their own magazines and newspapers because media pluralism and liberalization of the airwaves have provided the opportunities for more women to do so. For example, community radio stations like the Meridian and Mama FM in Ghana and Uganda respectively are set up and managed by women (Gadzekpo, 2009). These initiatives are encouraging because it shows women are edging towards a balance with men in the media. Morna (2002) however states that while the numbers of male and female journalists are edging towards a balance, only few women in the media are advancing to senior or management levels giving them limited control over how news is defined or on hiring and promotion practices. There are still very few women owners and managers of main stream media organisations whether print or broadcast. There is a continuous increase in the marginalization of women in the media in "developing" countries regardless of the gains women make in the traditional media, such as print and broadcasting.

> A vicious negative circle is at work. The gender in-balances in society reflect the institution of the media. These in turn, reflect in the editorial content of the media that is guilty of both sins of omission, that is, stories not covered; and the sins of commission, that is, the way stories are covered (Morna, 2002:3).

In Nigeria for example videos tend to portray women as wayward people who are of low morality, easily lured by material thing, subservient to men and only good for domestic rather than professional career roles and dependent on men. These videos mostly produced by men define for women stereotypical roles and continue to put women down (Johnson-Phillips, 2002; Okunna, 2002). Women are thus often simply missing in the

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media. According to Morna (2002) certain women such as the elderly women, women from minority ethnicities, religious groups, the working class and women with different sexual orientations receive even less attention in the media and continue to battle the oppression of culture and tradition. For women to survive in the media especially in male dominated areas such as sports and politics, they have adopted certain male tendencies in order to survive. They are regularly demonized and infantilized in the media and are branded as "unfeminine" or "iron woman"-ruthless, belligerent and doggedly determined (Morna, 2002; Wilde, 2007).

Women in media are only able to predominate as presenters on television and usually make their names there than other professional category in the media. A study conducted by the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) in 2000 as cited by Morna (2002) 56% of women in the media prefer to be TV presenters, 28% radio reporters and 26% prefer to be newspaper reporters. The physical attributes of women which is served to reinforce gender stereotypes of women presenters who are slim, glamorous, well presented and articulate the role model for young women to aspire to become presenters are invariably household names and therefore exercise a powerful influence (Morna, 2002). Television has therefore seen the steady growth of the number of women in their workforce. When assessing the media, women have not yet achieved equal access and representation as compared to men women are therefore under-represented as reporters, news sources and audience members in countries like South Africa, Zambia and Ghana. What could significantly close the gap in the media attention is an improvement in the literacy, education and employment of woman (Geertsema, 2008; Gadzekpo, 2009; Morna, 2002).

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2.4 Women in Journalism

Women were not seen as the producers of news during the 19th and early 20th century. They were rather regarded as consumers of the news (Franks, 2013). The increase in commercial media outlets however has forced editors desperate for trained talents to hire women *en masse* (Robins, 2000). Women therefore started to enter journalism in higher numbers. But rather than becoming part of journalism as a whole, women remain a minority and are still marginalized in journalism (Franks, 2013). A landmark survey in 2011 of more than 500 media companies worldwide found that women made up only about one-third of the journalism workforce (Journalist"s resource, 2015).

Women are marginalized in journalism because they are considered to be inferior to the man and are not expected to talk in public. People tend to rationalize this thought by using the story of creation which says the woman was formed from the rib of the man in order to be a helper to him (Chi, 2011). Chi (2011) continues that if we are to accept the "helper" motif, it follows that a "helper" cannot function on equal footing in the man"s labour. The woman"s place in the African society therefore is clearly distinct from that of the man in all spheres of life making women play a background role to men in most African societies.

Women play a background role to men because we live in a patriarchal society where male dominance is deeply rooted in the ethos of society. Men continue to dominate women in every aspect of their lives in a patriarchal society. Males and females are therefore expected by society to adopt, believe in, and fulfill specific gender roles and stereotypes that have been established (Wilde, 2007). In recent years however as more African women gain access to higher education, they have entered formerly all-male

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professional bastions. The educated African woman now has new possibilities opened up for her because of an explosion in private mass media in countries that have turned to a market economy in recent years.

Journalism has historically been a male dominated field or an all-male professional bastion (Schmidt, 2013). Women reporters were vilified in journalism because journalism has always been seen as a male dominated field. According to Chi (2011) the patriarchal nature of African society extends right into the newsroom. Male journalists are given pride of place over females, regardless of competence. This she says is because most editors retain the outmoded idea that women have a limited intellectual capacity. Female journalists are regarded by their employer, editor and counterparts as women not as colleagues. They are rarely given the opportunity to prove their competence and if, by accident, they come up with applaudable results, they are accused of having used their "feminine charms" to achieve it (Chi, 2011). Women are often hired to fulfill the part of „hostesses‟, rather than actual reporters (Clift, 2013). However, regardless of the position women held as reporters, even the most talented continued to be challenged because of her gender (Clift, 2013). A United Nations report (1995) states that the lack of gender sensitivity in the media is evidenced by the failure to eliminate gender-based stereotyping that can be found in public and private local, national and international media organisations.

The gap between men and women in the newsroom however has closed in recent decades. For example, according to Ryan and Mapaye (2010) as cited in Schmidt (2013), men reported 73% of stories in 1987; by 2007, men reported 48% of stories (women reported 40%, and the remaining 12% of stories were team efforts) in television broadcast

news. This shows that times have indeed changed over the years allowing more women in the newsroom. As a result, women are changing the face of the newsroom.

The rising number of women in journalism, however, does not address the distribution of jobs and assignments in the newsroom which mirrors the situations of formally educated women in all professions (Robins, 2000). Female journalists in most African newsroom do not benefit from the same access to or encouragement to pursue training and career advancement as do their male counterparts (Chi, 2011). There is a clear lack of opportunity for women in journalism to take up senior posts or hold positions of power in media organisations. A survey of the employment status of women in the southern African media, conducted by the Federation of African women, supports this stance and confirms that women are greatly outnumbered by men in senior-level posts (Robins, 2011). Within media organisations, women continue to remain a minority in top managerial positions and according to Chambers et al. (2004) they have not achieved parity in serious fields of news. Female journalists are simply not taken seriously and few have opportunities to climb the ladder in journalism. According to Strong (2007) women do not rise to higher positions because their career span in journalism is shorter that of the male journalists because of numerous obstacles they face as women in a male dominated profession. They recommended in their work that more must be done to create a working environment that encourages women to stay in the journalism industry long term, in order to rise to senior positions.

Women in journalism are hardly assigned career-boosting stories. Everbach and Flournoy (2007) say this is so because female journalists become indoctrinated to accept „masculine‟ news values as professional standards when they enter male-dominated

newsrooms. They are instead more likely to be clustered in what is considered „soft‟ news, such as human interest stories and features (Chambers et al., 2004). Building on this, Strong and Hannis (2007) conducted a count of by-lines in the major Australian Newspapers. They discovered that 29 per cent of news stories in newspapers were written by women whereas the global average in media overall was 37 per cent. Van Zoonen (1998) thus states, female journalists have a "much more fragmented and contradictory professional identity than men" (p.45) since they must eschew and embrace gender role expectations. This clearly shows that women continue to play inferior roles in journalism not only in Africa but in other parts of the world as well.

2.5 Women in Sports Journalism

Historically, women have always strived for equality often in male-dominated fields of which sports journalism is no exception. According to Franks (2014) sports journalism has traditionally been a male stronghold in many countries. Women started joining the ranks of sport journalists in the 1920s, and while most English speaking countries have a few high-profile women sports reporters, the sport departments in the majority of newsrooms remain a male-specific environment (Strong, 2007). Women were still a rare sight in the world of sports reporting before the 1960s. If there were women reporting on sports, it was primarily for women‟s sports team (Swanson, 2009).The Associated Press (AP) in the early 1970s estimated that twenty-five women worked in newspaper sports departments, and just five worked in sports broadcasting in the United States (Hardin & Shain, 2005).

The gender imbalance in sports journalism was not highlighted until the women‟s movement of the 1970s (Chamber et al., 2004; Strong, 2007). While other areas of

reporting saw a subsequent shift to an improved gender balance, sports journalism still lagged behind (Franks, 2014). The quest to get women to enter sport journalism slightly increased, but even by the mid-1990s, there had not been a significant shift in the number of female sports journalists. The paucity of women in sports journalism has stretched into the new millennium (Strong, 2007).

Women feared entering into sports journalism because sports have traditionally been restricted to and associated with masculinity, males, and the "manly domain" (Wilde, 2007). If women went into journalism, they were commonly seen as political reporters, business reporters, crime reporters, or health reporters. Only few women dared to go into sports reporting. Those who eventually become sports reporters are a "rare breed", willing and able to face extraordinary challenges (Strong, 2007).

Hardin and Shain (2005) posit that sports has long been criticized for perpetuating or reinforcing male hegemony. That is, the natural idea that men are more apt for and deserving of dominance in sports and sports journalism and (consequently) culture. Connell (1995) adds to this by stating that in hegemonic societies, masculinity is the standard from which everything else is measured, and masculine traits are the most desired and valued in society. Women are therefore continually viewed as the marginalized group when it comes to sport reporting and remain the "other" in the newsroom. For this reason, women are often overlooked in the world of sports journalism. It is thought that simply because of their gender, they cannot be as equally good as their male counterparts, so even if they are more knowledgeable about a certain sports, their opinions are rejected because they are not middle-aged men (Cezero, 2015). In the world of sports therefore, the woman"s abilities do not meet her capabilities.

It is not uncommon these days to be watching a sporting event on television and see a female on the sideline reporting. It was not always a common occurrence (Gunther et al., 2011). Women are gradually going into sports reporting though the number remains relatively low, and this particular area of reporting remains predominantly male-dominated specialty all over the world (Hardin & Shain, 2005) showing that gender disparity still prevails in sport reporting. According to Horky and Nieland (2011) as cited in Franks (2014) a clear evidence of the gender disparity in sport reporting can be found in a number of studies across the world conducted by the International Sports Press Survey (1SPS) in 2011. The study looked at 80 newspapers across 22 countries and recorded the gender of those who wrote sports articles. The study discovered that out of more than 11,000 sports articles carrying a by-line, only 8 per cent were written by women.

The numbers have significantly increased and according to Schoch (2013) it was only in the early 2000s that the number of female sports journalists significantly increased and the female journalist workforce saw a growth from 17% at the beginning of the 1980s to 36 per cent in 2008. With this increment, many will therefore argue that because sports journalism has welcomed more women in the field as compared to previous times, opportunities and equality for women is more prevalent in sports journalism than ever before. Women however continue to face discrimination in trying to be accepted in sport journalism (Hardin & Shain, 2005) and have to be twice as good as their male journalists in order to be recognized (Robins, 2011). Regardless of the positions women held as sport reporters, even the most talented continue to be challenged because of her gender (Clift, 2013).

Female sports reporters continue to face unfair skepticism of their knowledge and abilities about sports and continue to struggle for recognition (Schmidt, 2015). Content therefore continues to be defined and controlled by men, gender stereotypes continue to be perpetuated and women continue to lack the opportunities, resources, or clout to make institutional change (Schmidt, 2015). This inhospitable environment female sports reporters face in male dominated field according to Hardin & Whiteside, (2009) make them leave the field at rates substantially higher than their male counterparts. For example CBS football sideline reporter Bonnie Bernstein left her job early in 2006 because she saw the profession as limiting women‟s opportunities for a more substantial rule sports at CBS ("Stepping off", 2006).

2.6 The Treatment of Women Sports Journalists

Even though women are increasingly becoming present in the media worldwide, the media continues to fail women; sports journalism particularly so. Sports journalism remains a difficult environment for female journalists (Arnadottir, 2014). To Arnadottir (2014), women are always a minority in the sports newsroom and working reporters because the average working environment of sport media is particularly difficult for female sports journalists. Female sports journalists will therefore need to overcome general barriers but face particular opposition from male journalists (Arnadottir, 2014).

There have been several females that have paved way for other females to enter the sports journalism field. Some have even held positions such as editors in their line of work but regardless of the positions women held as reporters, even the most talented continued to be challenged because of their gender (Gunther et al., 2011). The treatment of women sports journalists is such that women are treated as "outsiders" by virtue of their gender,

but "insiders" by virtue of their adherence to journalistic norms and values (Hardin & Shain, 2006). Kian (2005) therefore asserts that women in sports journalism will have to strive to fit in a male dominated environment, knowing they are often under scrutiny by male sports journalists and are treated as if their capabilities in the profession do not match their abilities.

In the world of sports journalism, women are often overlooked as it is thought that they cannot be as good as their male counterparts simply because of their gender and are not taken seriously. Cerezo (2015) recounts the treatment of Sarah Carbonero, a sportscaster who was reporting from the field of play during the match between Spain and Switzerland at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. Spain lost the match 0-1 to Switzerland. Carbonero happened to be the girlfriend of Spain"s goal keeper Iker Casillas. As soon as the match ended, the Spanish press (and the public through social media) blamed this defeat on one person Sarah Carbonero for being a distraction to Casillas. Carbonero was after scrutinized and criticized for every little thing she did as many felt the only reason she had her job in the first place was simply for the mere reason of being a woman with good looks. This is so because according to Clift (2013) most people believe that women who are in the profession are hired to fill the part of "hostesses" rather than actual reporters. Leslie Visser attempted to interview Pittsburg Steelers quarterback, Terry Bradshaw in the mid-1970s. She approached him to ask a question whereupon Bradshaw took her notepad, signed his autograph and handed the notepad back to her. During an NFL season, the Minnesota Vikings banned all reporters from the locker room because of the presence of one female sports journalists (Grubb & Billiot, 2010). To Gunther et al., (2011) many have argued that female reporters in the

locker room would violate the players' privacy. Those who dared go into the locker rooms were accused of being voyeurs and are sometimes sexually harassed. Hardin and Shain (2005) warns female sports journalists against sexual harassment not only in the locker rooms but also in the workplace. In March 2005, National Basket Ball Association (NBA) announced it was investigating a locker room incident where a player made a lewd remark to a female television sports reporter (Hardin, 2005). Some female sports journalists who have been sexually harassed shared their experiences in Hardin's work. One respondent reported having players masturbate in front of her or throw jock straps at her while other respondents also reported being on the receiving end of sexually suggestive comments (Hardin, 2005).

In Grubb and Billiot (2010) work, some interviewees identified derogatory comments, sexual innuendo and hate mails as examples of the type of treatment they encountered in the industry. One of the interviewee Peggy Kusinski said that if she had dinner with a coach, an athlete or a front office executive it would be read as a sexual encounter rather than business (Grubb & Billiot, 2010).

 What now determines whether women will reach higher positions in sports journalism is whether they have family responsibilities. For example exacting roles such as news reporting or senior editor positions are dependent upon a news output agenda is seen as difficult for anyone with other responsibilities thus the few women who do rise to higher positions are those who have few other responsibilities especially those who are childless (Franks, 2013).

The male-centric culture and the negative treatment of women in sports journalism can have other negative effects which ultimately drive women from the work place (Schmidt,

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2013). This stance is supported by Chamber et al., (2004) when they say women sports journalists leave the field early because of the constant pressure to prove their competency.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

Generally, principles from different theories can be used to explain the findings from a phenomenological study into the experiences of female sports journalists in Ghana. However, the researcher found the following two theories, Feminist and Stereotype theories, as more relevant to the study. The following sections provide discussion of the two theories.

2.7.1 Feminist Theory

There is little doubt that feminism has been one of the most significant influences in academia debate in the past three decades (Casey, Calvert, French & Lewis, 2008).

According to Brantley and Lengermann (2004) feminist theory is a generalized, wide-ranging system of ideas about social life and human experience developed from a woman-centered perspective. Casey et al., (2008) on the other hand see the feminist theory as a political and social important aspect of social identity. To Birrel (2000) feminist theory is a continually dynamic evolving complex of theories that take as their point of departure the analysis of gender as a category of experience in society. Brewer (2002) seeks to explain feminism as how women find their own power especially in the world grounded on patriarchy and stereotypes. The theory is woman-centered and according to Brantley and Lengermann (2004) it is woman-centred in three ways. Firstly, the experiences of women in the society are the major object for investigation. The second is to see the world from the distinctive vantage points of women as they are the

central "subject" of the investigation. The third is to seek and produce a better world for women. Feminist theory could therefore be a movement to liberate the subordination of women in a patriarchal society which will eventually lead to the empowerment of women worldwide. This according to Birrel (2000) is because all feminists share an assumption that women are oppressed within a patriarchy society and have the commitment to change those conditions.

Sports journalism is clearly a gendered profession, that is, a profession that not only welcomes boys or men enthusiastically than women but also serves as a site for celebrating skills and values clearly marked as „masculine" (Birrel, 2000). This clearly goes against the beliefs of the feminist theory as women are not treated nor seen as the central „subjects" in sports journalism.

2.7.2 Basic Theoretical Questions Underpinning the Feminist Theory

Brantley and Lengermann (2004) underlines three basic and important questions that underpins the feminist theory which produce a revolutionary switch in understanding of the world. The questions lead us to discover how women have been taken for granted and lead to an absolute knowledge of the world; knowledge derived from the experiences of women in living in a society where men are seen as the "masters."

> The first question is: "*And what about women?*" In other words, where are the women in any situation being investigated? If they are not present, why? If they are present, what exactly are they doing? How do they experience the situation? What do they contribute to it? What does it mean to them? (p. 437)

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To Brantley and Lengermann (2004) in any situation being studied if the women are not there it means there has been a deliberate effort to exclude them. The field of sport journalism is not seen as a field for women and they are not encouraged to enter into the field. This according to Wilde (2007) is because in a patriarchal society, males are expected to demonstrate certain characteristics and behaviours that are "masculine" while females are held accountable for being "feminine". Women are therefore not in sports journalism not because they lack the ability or interest but because society does not see the field of sports journalism as a place for women thus the deliberate effort to exclude them as opined by Brantley & Lengermann, (2004).

The second question Brantley & Lengermann (2004) ask is:

> *"Why is all this as it is?"* As the first question calls for description of the social world, the second question requires an explanation of that world-description and explanation are two facts of any sociological theory. Feminism"s answers to these questions give us a general social theory (p. 437).

In explaining the reason for the second question Wilde (2007) says people are bombarded with gender stereotypes right from birth until death and females are expected to live up to these specific gender roles that are held by both men and women in the mainstream society. Hardin and Shain (2005) thus say that gender stereotypes ingrained in culture is very difficult to change. Sports journalism has become a male dominated field because of stereotypes that have formed over time especially through the media.

The third question according to Brantley and Lengermann (2004) for all feminists is:

"How can we change and improve the social world so as to make it a more just place for women and for all people?" This commitment to social transformation in the interest of justice is the distinctive characteristics of social theory, a commitment shared in sociology by feminism (p. 437).

According to Grubb and Billiot (2015) the challenges women face once they go into sports journalism can only change if they are treated with the utmost respect and seen as having the credibility and knowledge about sports as their male colleagues. Chandler (2010) on her part also opines that the field of sport journalism can be a better place for women once the negative postulations surrounding the field as a preserve of men are changed.

The fourth question probe by feminist according to Brantley and Lengermann (2014) is:

"And what about the differences among women?" The answers to this question lead to a general conclusion that the invisibility, inequality, and the role differences in relation to men which generally characterize women's lives are profoundly affected by a woman's social location-that is by her class, race, age, affectional preferences, marital status, region, ethnicity, and global location (p. 438).

Gender plays a very pivotal role in the way women are treated in a profession that is considered a male bastion and according to Hardin and Shain (2006) women in sports journalism are "outsiders" by virtue of their gender, but "insiders" by virtue of their adherence to journalistic norms and values. A central theme in sports journalism is male

superiority and female inferiority where the standard for which performances or knowledge about the profession is measured becomes maleness (Creedon, 1998). In sports, male hegemony has been more complete and more resistant to change than in other areas of culture and this ultimately oppress them in their profession (Hargreaves, 1994).

2.7.3 The Liberal Feminist Response

Liberal feminism according to Hardin and Shain (2005) is based on humanist ontological notion which stipulates that women and men are more alike than different and advocates that women take their equal place alongside men in society"s institutions. The first element in the liberal feminist argument historically has been the claim for gender equality (Brantley & Lengermann, 2004). Thus it can then be said that the lens of the liberal feminism is gender equality; individuals should be allowed to exercise their freedom and fulfill themselves regardless of their gender. Contents in sports journalism continue to be defined and controlled by men (McDaniel & Sullivan, 1998), gender stereotypes continue to be perpetuated and women continue to lack the opportunities, resources or make institutional changes (Schmidt, 2015). It is based on some of these challenges women face in sports journalism that the liberal feminists continue to argue and emphasize on equality of opportunity to all persons regardless of their gender.

. Brantley and Lengermann (2004) therefore state that the liberal feminism rests on the beliefs that:

> All human beings have certain essential features-capacities for reason, moral
> agency, and self-actualizations, (2) the exercise of these capacities can be
> secured through legal recognition and universal rights, (3) the inequalities

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between men and women assigned by sex are social constructions having no basis in "nature", and (4) social change for equality can be produced by an organized appeal to a reasonable public and the use of the state.

Women are positioned as the biologically grounded and domestically oriented thus, naturally suited to being controlled; the reason why they are controlled by their male colleagues in sports journalism since the profession is seen as the preserve of men hence their marginalization in the profession (Hardin & Shain, 2005). Some liberal feminists according to Hardin and Shain (2005) have argued that the only way marginalization of women in sport journalism can be curbed is the hiring of more female gatekeepers, who would not be resistant to coverage of women in sports.

There should however be a change for women in sports journalism. The liberal feminists therefore call for a change in sports journalism to make the profession a better place for women. Brantley and Lengermann (2004) thus state that the liberal feminists" agenda for change is to eliminate gender as an organizing principle in the distribution of social "goods". They continue to argue that the ideal gender arrangement is one in which each individual is free to act based on the choice suitable to her or him

2.7.4 The Radical Feminist Response

Radical feminists opposed the liberal feminists" claim about neutrality of institutional structures and ideas in the modern state. They claim that institutions and practices, which have been traditionally occupied and controlled by males and the positioning of females into these institutions and practices would not by itself, produce an authoritative female voice (Burke, 2001). Radical feminists believe that women everywhere are violently oppressed by the system of patriarchy and see in every institution society"s most basic

structures; heterosexuality, class race, caste, ethnicity, age and gender systems of oppression in which some people dominate others (Brantley & Lengermann, 2004). To the radical feminists therefore women are most oppressed in a patriarchal society and their oppression provides a conceptual model for understanding all other forms of oppression.

Millet (1969), one of the earliest radical feminist claimed that in a patriarchal society, the social construction and gender-appropriate behavior have limited women‟s access to positions of authority which has in turn led to the oppressed position of women in that society. According to Lerner (1986) as cited in Brantley and Lengermann (2004), patriarchy is not only the first structure of domination and submission. Historically, it is also the most pervasive and enduring system of inequality which is the basic societal model of domination. To Burke (2001), women from the onset were trained to accept and value the virtues of passivity, nurturance, deference and care for others. These virtues were enacted in their roles as wife or lover, mother, homemaker or in the limited employment opportunities that women were deemed capable of filling. Women will therefore not succeed in a male dominated field such as sports journalism because the roles a patriarchal society has established for them is not enough to survive in the field. These roles women play are the complete opposite of what a male bastion profession like sports journalism needs.

What radical feminists seek to do is to oppose the gender-roles and rather imagine a society where androgyny was a possibility. They speak against all social structures because they are created by men and because they believe men control the norms of acceptable sexual behaviours (Burke, 2001). Radical feminists according to Brantley and

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Lengermann (2004) believe that men create and maintain patriarchy not only because they have the resources to do so but because they have real interests in making women serve as compliant tools who are effective only when they are satisfying the sexual needs of men and are thus taken for granted. The physical attributes of a woman is considered the most important thing for women in broadcast media especially television. Female sport journalist are not exempted from this. The slim, glamorous, well presented and articulate nature of women in broadcast media is the most important for men in a patriarchal society (Morna, 2002).

Radical feminists believe that for patriarchy to be defeated women"s consciousness need to be reworked so that each woman recognizes her own value and strength; see herself as a strong and independent person by rejecting patriarchal pressures and work in unity with other women regardless of the differences between them (Brantley & Lengermann, 2004). Adding to this Burke (2001) purports that there is the need to break down or deconstruct the existing structures and ideas that maintain the priority of the rationalist patriarchal perspective, and also create new structures and ideas that produce new freedoms and opportunities for women from their own experiences.

2.8 Stereotype Theory

Most people recognize and utilize stereotypes. They are often regarded as harmless form of shorthand; a fast track to recognizing the characteristics of a person, group or situations (Casey et al., 2008). The concept was developed in the twentieth century by American journalist, Walter Lippmann (Casey et al., 2008). Lippmann (1922) as cited in Casey et al., (2008) in his book *Public Opinion* defined the concept to mean fixed and narrow pictures in our head. The fixed and narrow pictures is as a result of

representations of issues and O‟Sullivan, Dutton and Rayner (1998) observe that people come to understand the world around them and the people who live in it through the continuous flow images and information from the media. This according to Creedon (1998) is because the media portray the dominant images in societies of industrialized world and depict the life in our societies. Jones (1999) defines a stereotype as a set of overly simplified and often inaccurate beliefs about typical characteristics of a particular group. The danger of using stereotypes according to him is that they categorize people into generalized compartments that might not hold true for the individual.

Lippmann (1922) recognizes two crucial aspects of stereotypes formed by the media; first, stereotypes tend to be resistant to change and second, they generally carry a pejorative and narrow range of meanings. To Casey et al., (2008) stereotypes are inaccurate, simplistic generalisations about a group of individuals that may lead to particular perceptions of the group by others. Lippmann (1922) in his book *Public Opinion* argues that the way things are in the real world are often not the same as images that exist in the minds of people living in a society yet the dominant group perpetuate the inaccurate images. Casey et al., (2008) thus link stereotype to issues of power in that it may be easier to stereotype less powerful groups in society than it is to stereotype those with greater power. Society is also responsible for one group stereotyping another group as Brewer (2010) says stereotypes tend to separate individuals into subgroups within the society based on membership of a particular group of people. Casey et al., (2008) therefore state that categorizing members of a group in narrow ways may lead to the group being treated prejudicially and according to narrow expectations. There is therefore

no doubt that women in sport journalism are categorized as members in the minority group hence the prejudicial treatment meted out to them.

Mckillip, DiMiceli, and Luebeke (1977) identify a category of stereotype referred to as the reciprocal stereotype which develops men to be more competent and assertive while women are identified to be submissive, warm and gentle in nature while men are cold and rough. These characteristics established is the reason why women face extreme challenges in the field of sports journalism due to the stereotype placed on them as submissive, warm and gentle; characteristics which are not needed in sports. The danger of stereotyping according to Adorno (1957) as cited in Williams (2003) is that, it provides false impressions of a certain group which may ultimately let people being stereotyped lose insight of their life experience which might also be dulled.

2.8.1 Stereotypical Images of Women in Sports Journalism

Every job has a stereotype associated with it. This is as a result of pictures we create in our heads as children and try to alter as we grow, sports journalism particularly so. Many of these images we create and foster involve the gender of those in the occupation (Perri, 2012). Many people will associate being a nurse to a woman and a firefighter to a man. It is the same with sports journalism. When people think about a sports journalists, they immediately assume the person should be a man because the profession is male-dominated. Stereotypes have a complex relationship to reality (Casey et al., 2008). Kanahara (2006) defines stereotype as negative thoughts or ideas thought to be true of every member of specific group. Members of a dominant group in the society are likely to have these negative thoughts or ideas. In sport journalism men are the ones thought as to be the dominant group while women are seen as the sub-group. Kinkade and Katovich

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(1997) categorizes these groups at the "in-group" and the "out-group". Kinkade and Katovich (1997) define the in-group as any group or category to which people feel they belong and regard themselves as "we" or "us" and the out-group as any group or category to which people feel they do not belong and are viewed as "they" or "them". In sports journalism a field that is male dominated it is clear men are considered as those who belong to the in-group and women as those who belong to the out-group. When this happens, women become the stereotyped group and men become the group who stereotype (Rettew, Billman & Davis, 1993). Men who belong to the in-group stereotype women because they typically feel distinct and superior and see themselves as better than people in the out-group Merton, (1968) as cited in Kinkade & Katovich, (1997).

Stereotypes at the very least acts as a means of establishing boundaries between "insiders" and "outsiders" (Casey et al., 2008). Deemed to be the "weaker" sex-physically, mentally, and emotionally, women have been stereotyped as being feminine (Sherrow, 1996). Women in sports journalism are therefore stereotyped as being too feminine to survive in a male dominated profession. The main reason for this according to Wilde (2007) is because society expects women to be "ladylike", and not to demonstrate characteristics that are defined as being masculine. Women who cross the line of being feminine and enter a male profession like sports journalism are seen as exhibiting "manly traits" and their sexual orientations, values, and social roles are often questioned (Griffin, 1998). These negative stigmas and stereotypes attached to women according to Wilde (2007) are used as a mechanism to control and limit women's participation in sports journalism.

The result of female stereotyping is as a result of patriarchal society which tends to elevate men who are in the dominant group and oppress women who are in the sub-group hence their marginalization in the profession. According to Sherrow (1997) the stereotypes placed on women have resulted in many women shunning the profession since they wouldn"t want to be stereotyped as being masculine. Women are sometimes stereotyped as being a "butch", "mannish" and being too aggressive once they get into a male dominated field of which sports journalism is no exception (Wilde, 2007). Women in sports journalism are not seen as professionals who deserve to be there. They are rather stereotyped as being "sexy", "pretty", "cute" or anything pejorative (Cerezo, 2015). According to Cerezo (2015) it is their "sexy", "pretty" and "cute" nature that got them their jobs in the first place and not because of their capabilities as being knowledgeable about the profession and probably the reason why their opinions do not count as much as the men"s. Perri (2012) mentioned that if female sports journalists are mentioned there is the assumption that the person should be a model and recounts an interview conducted between a reporter and a former basketball star, Charles Barkley. In the interview, Barkley made a comment which discriminates against women in the profession-"If you are an ugly woman, you have no chance of getting a job as a TV reporter". To Barkley, only women who are beautiful should be sports journalists. Most men would therefore not see the capabilities female sports journalists have and the effort female sports journalists put in their work but rather see how they appear while working (Perri, 2012).

2.9 Summary

In reviewing the literature, there is an indication that gender exists in sports journalism all the world over. Women sports journalists in Ghana cannot be exempted from this

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discovery because of the media generated stereotype that has made sports and sports journalism the preserve of men. Gender issues therefore exists in sports journalism hence the reason why women continue to face unnecessary challenges, discriminations and stereotypes. Some of the issues identified from the literature are, sexual harassment, unnecessary stereotypes, women occupying lower positions, questions of credibility, women leaving the field early because of gender and hiring and so on. The study is grounded on the Feminist and the Stereotype theory to investigate the challenges women in sports journalism face with regards to their experiences.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines methods and procedures employed to obtain and analyse data to study the experiences of women in sports journalism. Again, this chapter discusses the underlying principles for the methods and procedures for the data analysis. The chapter finally explains the methods that were used to collect data for each of the research questions. It is therefore proper to restate the research questions. They are:

1. What are the pre-entry experiences of women in the profession?

2. What are the post-entry experiences of female sports journalists in the profession?

3.1 Research Approach

This research was based mainly on the qualitative method of analysis. Qualitative method according to Denzin and Lincoln (1994) implies an emphasis on processes and meanings that are not rigorously examined, measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency.

Yin (2009) adds that qualitative research enables social science researchers to study a particular phenomenon or culture because it gives room for flexibility and the attainment of a deeper understanding of the subject or the phenomenon. Thus qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meanings people have constructed, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world. This point is reiterated by Creswell (2013) who says qualitative research is an approach interested in exploring

and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche &Delport (2002) state that qualitative research as a model stimulates participant‟s meaning, experiences or perceptions. This view is endorsed by Domengan and Fleming (2007) who explain that qualitative research aims to explore and discover issues about a problem on hand, because very little is known about the problem. There is usually uncertainty about the degree and characteristics of the problem; the approach uses „soft‟ data and gets „rich data‟ (p. 24).

For their part, Lindlof and Taylor (2004) emphasize that qualitative research studies focus on social practices and meanings of people in a specific historical or cultural context. It is therefore effective in obtaining cultural specific information about the values and opinions of a particular population. The interest of this study is knowing the experiences of female sports journalists in Ghana. The data was collected by examining texts on the experiences of women in a male dominated field and analyzing interviews gathered from participants using words and phrases and then building them into themes. This is the reason why this study adopted the qualitative approach.

Nkwi, Nyamongo, and Ryan (2001) assert that "Qualitative research involves any research that uses data that do not indicate ordinal values" (p. 1). This perspective is relevant because the study is interested in studying a phenomenon, that is, to know the experiences of female sports journalists prior to their entry into sports journalism and also know the experiences of these females once they get into a profession known to be a field for men, through interpretative means and not through statistical representation. This is reiterated by Lindlof and Taylor (2002) who say qualitative researchers seek to preserve

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and analyse the situated form, content and experience of the social action rather than subject it to mathematical or other formal transformations.

3.2 Research Design

Amoani (2005) explains that research design is an arrangement of conditions for collecting and analyzing data relevant to the researcher in the most economical manner that determines the sample size, sampling technique, the type of data and how to collect it as well as the method of data analysis. This is consistent with Carriger (2000) who says research design is a strategy, a plan, and a structure of conducting a research project. The selection of a research design is also based on the nature of the research problem or issue being addressed, the researchers" personal experiences, and the audiences for the study (Creswell, 2014). The research design for this study was phenomenology considering the purposes and the nature of the research problem. Creswell (2013) states that phenomenology culminates in the essence of the experiences for several individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon.

The primary objective of a phenomenological study is to explicate the meaning, structure and essence of the lived experience of a person, or a group of people around a specific phenomenon (Littlejohn & Foss, 2008). Littlejohn and Foss (2008) point out that theories under phenomenology usually assume that people actively interpret their experiences and come to understand the world by their personal experience of it.

The study thrives on exploratory, descriptive and contextual qualitative research techniques to investigate the dominant platforms that attract the services of female sports journalists and their experiences. Burns and Grove (1998) define an exploratory research

as a research conducted to gain new insights, discover new ideas or increase knowledge of a phenomena. In view of this the researcher reckoned that the reality of the phenomena of the experiences of female sports journalists can be explored through the experiences of the individuals involved. To gain new insights and discover new ideas about the experiences of women in sports journalism, the researcher therefore entered the research field with the curiosity of not knowing (Burns & Grove, 1998; Creswell, 2014).

In this study, the descriptive approach was used to collect data as Kvale (1996) recommends that you talk to people if you want to know how they understand their world and their life. As a descriptive research, the approach was to describe variables rather than to test a predicted relationship between variables.

Some open-ended questions were posed which required in-depth responses from the female interviewees. In these processes useful information that was closely linked to their experiences emerged. It was also used to get the perception of male sports journalists on women working in that profession. As a contextual study, the researcher collected the data from the participants at their various work places or media houses. The phenomenon in a contextual study is for its intrinsic and immediate contextual significance according to Mouton, (1996). To ensure that data were collected within context and free from manipulation, the researcher was in contact with the participants on the field.This design allowed for the making of vivid description of the phenomenon and with evidence from the lived experiences of the female sports journalists.

3.3 Population

Population refers to the objects, subjects, phenomena, cases, events or activities specified for the purpose of sampling (Brynard & Hanekon, 2005). Opoku-Amankwa (2009)

defines population as the total number of subjects, people, concepts or phenomena the researcher is interested in studying or researching about. For this study, the population consisted of all female and male sports journalists working in the print and broadcast media in Ghana. According to Polit and Hungler (2004), target population includes all cases about which the researcher would like to make generalisations. The target population in this study involved female sports journalists at Graphic Sports, GTV and TV3. Another criteria used for the selection was that only those female sports journalists who have been in the profession for five years and over were taken into consideration. They should have spent reasonable number of years in the profession as sports journalists to ensure that they have gained enough experiences to assist in the research.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

According to Palys (2008) the sampling technique of a study could be determined by the research objectives set by the study. Per the objectives of the study, the purposive sampling technique was employed for the study. Purposive sampling is a common qualitative research tool that aids in data gathering. According to Sekaran (2002) purposive sampling as a specific data or subjects can provide the desired information either because they are the only ones who have it or conform to the criteria of the researcher. Wimmer and Dominic (2000) purport that purposive sampling includes data or subjects that are selected for possessing specific characteristics that are in line with the study. Baxter and Jack (2008) also add that convenience is the core of qualitative research. They assert that availability of participants who will provide data for the study is an important consideration in purposive sampling. The sampling unit for this study is female sports journalists in the print and broadcast media. According to Lindlof and

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Taylor (2002), the importance of using persons as a sampling unit is most obvious in interview-based studies because, the researcher recruits persons who have experiences and possess knowledge important to the research.

The sample was selected with the purposive sampling technique. A purposive sample according to Opoku-Amankwa (2009) includes subjects selected on the basis of specific characteristics and eliminates those who fail to meet these criteria. The purposive sampling technique was used because the researcher needed specific information from a specific group of people as suggested by Sekara (2002). The researcher purposively selected five (5) female sports journalists in the print and broadcast media. These individuals were willing to participate in the study and were able to provide specific information regarding the research questions because of their experiences in the profession.

The scope of the study was 5 (five) female sports journalists. These sports journalists are both in the print and broadcast media: Graphic Sports, Ghana Television (GTV) and TV3.

These media houses were selected for this study because they are competent and well-known media houses in Ghana. According to Geopoll (2015) TV3 is the second highest viewed television station in Ghana with an average number of 545, 000 viewers per half hour whiles GTV is the third highest with an average number of 365, 000 viewers per half hour in Ghana. Graphic Sports was selected because it belongs to the Daily Graphic Newsgroup. Kafewoo (2015) states that the Daily Graphic is the strongest newspaper and the most widely-read newspaper in Ghana which is distributed to 120 districts nationwide. The scope of the study is therefore limited to female sports journalists

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working in these selected media houses. They should have been in the profession for five (5) years and over because the researcher believes that is a considerable number of years where the sports journalists would have gained enough experiences to give rich contributions to the study.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Interviews

Interview, with the aid of an interview guide was the main data collection instrument. Kvale (1996) sees interviews as interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest. The respondent type of interview was employed by the researcher to elicit open-ended responses (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). This type of interview was employed because the researcher needed interviewees to talk about their lived experiences in their own words and also to elicit accurate unrestrained accounts from informants that were based on their knowledge and experience. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) again state that:

> Appropriate experiences in a scene are usually the key considerations in selecting respondents; those persons who have been through the critical events, career paths of their institutions and groups are likely to deliver to deliver a rich lode of information (p. 179).

Interviews allow respondents to „express and contextualize their true feelings rather than having them pigeon-holed into boxes and with little or no opportunity for contextualize explanations‟ (p. 43). Respondents through interview as described by Tuckman (1972) cited in Cohen, et al, (2006) are able to provide access to what is "inside a person‟s head"

measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences) and what a person thinks (attitudes and believes).

In order to be consistent with participants, the researcher had a set of pre-planned core questions for guidance such that the same areas were covered with interviewees; an interview guide. Questions were derived from the research questions guiding the study. As the interview progressed however, the interviewee was given opportunity to elaborate or provide more relevant information as they opted to do so.

The researcher translated the research objectives and questions to make up the main body of the interview guide. The in-depth semi-structured approach to interviews was used to allow for spontaneity in interviewer"s and interviewee"s respective questioning and answering (Moore, 2000). So that insights on issues could be developed from the responses. It also helped the researcher to feel free to modify the sequence of questions, change the wording, and/or explain them along the way (Lindloff & Taylor, 2002). In a way, the researcher played the subordinate role and allowed the participants to do most of the talking.

A rapport was created with the respondents by the researcher in order to put the respondents in a relaxed mood for the interview. A conversational informal approach adopted by the researcher was therefore used, which Lindlof and Taylor (2002) suggest, sets the tone that relaxes people, making it more comfortable for them to share their intimate thoughts. Some techniques which the researcher adopted to create rapport among respondents include a personal introduction of the researcher to the respondents, researcher"s clarity of purpose for the research, and encouraging the respondents to bring

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up issues that were relevant to the research topic whilst admitting the fact that she did not know everything.

3.6 Data collection Procedure

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992) the primary objective of analysis of qualitative data is to discover patterns, concepts, themes and meanings. Qualitative data analysis is defined as working with the data, organizing, breaking them into handy units, coding, synthesizing, and searching for patterns (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Interviews at the initial stages were exploratory, as such, considerable time was spent to evaluate the adequacy of the coverage of the interview schedule and the appropriateness of the question asked. This helped in adjusting the interview guide to better suit the purpose of the research. The actual fieldwork was done in two stages from October 2015 to March 2016, during the validation processes, some of the recordings were played after the interviews and used to further clarify points from other subjects.

In order that the researcher's identity comes to the fore to avoid doubts and suspicions, an introductory letter was acquired from the researcher's department; Communication and Media Studies, UEW, Winneba. The introductory letter was also used to gain access to the field where the data were collected. The researcher scheduled interview dates and times with interviewees, depending on the convenience of the latter.

The traditional face-to-face interview as indicated by Giorgi (2009) was used for the study. The researcher also used probes and follow-up questions to get the respondents to further clarify some statements made in their responses. Each interview lasted for an average time of thirty minutes. The interview was recorded and retrieved with the researcher's smart phone. This recorder was used as primary tool in collecting data for

each meeting. Field notes were also taken to supplement the interviews conducted and were also used to provide extra information which the recorder may not capture.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

The data analysis was done to preserve the uniqueness of individual interviewee's lived experiences while permitting an understanding of the phenomenon under study. The process of data analyses started with the first interview. One important thing in this study was to clarify the preconceptions about the phenomenon under study. Tesch (1992) refers to this as "bracketing" and it implies, suspending as much as possible, the researcher's meaning and interpretation and entering in to the world of the interviewee. Interviews were recorded, played and transcribed. Transcripts were then read through severally. The researcher in each of these exercises underlined and noted all units of meaning relevant to the research questions.

Relevant themes were categorized according to their likeness for the discussion. In this regard, the thematic type of qualitative analysis was used for the study. Themes developed include *Socialization, Lack of Interest, Fear, Passion for Sports, Stereotype, Sexual Harassment, Maternity Leave, Work-life balance Gender and Editorial Position, Inferior Roles, Questions of Credibility*. In interpreting the data, the researcher identified emergent issues as they were reported by respondents, how the issues connected or related to each other, and meanings were drawn and discussed from these. The researcher also identified and extracted significant statements, which she quoted to support her claims in her analysis and discussions of issues.

3.8 Ethical Issues

The researcher identified some issues that came up for consideration. These issues were: confidentiality, informed consent, and the consequences of the interviews. The consent of the respondents were sought for their participation in the interviews. Again, they were informed about their interviewer‟s intention to record the interviews, and recordings were done upon the consents of respondents.

Respondents were assured of their privacy, anonymity and confidentiality, since some of the responses were considered personal and confidential. For instance, individual respondents were neither named nor were their responses attributed to their institutions, rather these and other identifiers were linked to codes, to ensure that respondents‟ privacies were protected.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Commenting on issues relating to validity and reliability, Creswell (2014) observes that validity in qualitative research does not carry the same connotation it does in quantitative research. He asserts that in qualitative research, "validity is used to determine whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers account" (Creswell, 2014: p.201). For their part, Cohen and Crabtree (2006) remark that validity might be addressed through richness, depth, honesty and scope of data achieved, the respondents approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher. According to Lincoln and Guba (2000) broadly equivalent concepts can be found and apply to qualitative research. These could be: Credibility, trustworthiness-internal validity; fittingness-external validity and audibility-reliability. In this study the researcher in line with the above suggestions, gave back copies of typed

transcripts of the journalists to validate whether or not their views were captured as they were expressed. The researcher also checked the tapes with her supervisor and other course mates to ensure that the contents were the same as what has been used in the presentation of results. Finally, records on dates for the interviews have been documented for audit and verifications.

This study again provided account of field experiences through rich and thick description. According to Holloway (1997) "Thick description" is the in-depth interpretation of field experiences; in other words, paying attention to contextual details when observing and interpreting social meanings in qualitative research. A rich and thick description of the experiences of female sports journalists was therefore obtained by the researcher playing a subordinate role, allowing the respondents to do much of the talking on open-ended questions posed to them. It also facilitated the descriptive, contextual and exploratory nature of the study by providing detailed accounts of the sports journalists" experiences.

The researcher acknowledged that subjectivity of respondents, their opinions, attitudes and perspectives together contribute to a degree of bias. However, Glesne (1999) states that subjectivity can be considered an attribute if monitored appropriately. Therefore, as Gronlund (1981, cited in Cohen, et al, 2006) postulates, the issue of validity in this study was seen as a matter of degree rather than an absolute state.

In ensuring the reliability of the instrument, the researcher was in agreement with Silverman (1993) who suggested that it is important for each interviewee to understand the question in the same way. According to him, the reliability of the interview is enhanced by careful piloting of interview schedules, and the use of closed questions alongside open-ended questions.

In this case, a semi-structured interview guide guided the interviews among all five (5) sports journalists. Questions were made simple and self-explanatory, without ambiguities, which aided equal understanding by all interviewees, thus experiences which were similar to respondents were presented similarly.

Also, King, Morris and Fitz-Cubbob (1987) as cited in Cohen, et al (2006) suggest that consistency in the use of instruments to catch accurate, representative, relevant and comprehensive data aids in the attainment of reliability in qualitative research. The researcher employed the same instruments: interviews and document analysis, for data gathering in the research.

3.10 Summary

Chapter three introduces the methods used to gather data for the study. The reason for the choice of research design and approached were explained. The various steps outlined include the research design, sampling technique, data collection instrument, themes identified which include *Socialization, Lack of Interest, Fear, Passion for Sports, Stereotype, Sexual Harassment, Maternity Leave, Work-life Balance, Gender and Editorial Position, Inferior Roles, Questions of Credibility* as well the validity of the work.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter of the study presents the findings, discussions and analysis of data collected from the interviews and from documents on women in sports journalism. The chapter also presents analysis from the outcome of the data collected from the interviews conducted to find out the experiences of Ghanaian women sports journalists who find themselves in what is considered a male dominated field. For the purpose of ensuring participants‟ anonymity the researcher used pseudonyms for all the participants (female sports journalists). Below are the research questions that guided the data collection:

1. What are the pre-entry experiences of women in the profession?
2. What are the post-entry experiences of female sports journalists in the profession?

RQ1: What are the pre-entry experiences of women in the profession?

Although the number of women in journalism across the world has risen dramatically over the years, the number of women entering sports journalism however remains predominantly low (Chambers et al., 2004; Schoch & Ohl, 2011; Van Zoonen, 1994). This according to Kian (2007) and Hardin and Shain (2005) is because of the masculine hegemonic nature of sports journalism. Women therefore do not have the interest of entering into an all-male profession hence the reason why there are few women in the profession (Schoch & Ohl, 2011). This research question therefore sought to look at the experiences of women leading up to their career in sports reporting. Participants‟

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experiences are categorized into themes which are *socialization, lack of interest, fear and passion for sports.*

4. 1 Socialization

The socialization process of attitudinal formation towards sports is similar for all women. This is because society is structured so that males are steered into sports and sports reporting while females are not (Kian, 2007). This has created the general perception among sports journalists that the profession should be a male bastion. Kian (2007) asserts that men going into sports and sports journalism is ingrained in general culture. Research has shown that boys are more likely to be socialized by peer groups and families to participate and follow sports (Adler & Adler, 1998). The pattern of socialization is also true for steering more men into sports journalism than women making the profession male dominated. Anna had this to say:

Becoming a sports journalist I must say was probably by chance…but basically I must say that most women don‟t go into sports journalism right from the onset because of the masculine nature of the profession and we grow up thinking that sports is a place for men and the woman‟s place should be in the kitchen. Again it is always not easy being the only female in the midst of men and trying to do what they do.

The entrance of most women going into sports journalism usually is accidental or by chance (Hardin & Shain, 2005). According to Wilde (2007), this is because society expects males and females to adopt, believe in, and fulfill specific gender roles and stereotypes that have been established. Alicia also alluded her not getting into sports journalism from the beginning of her journalism career to the negative things she had

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heard about sports from the people around her growing up as well as the negative treatment meted out to female journalists who found themselves in male dominated departments in journalism for which sports journalism is no exception. For this reason she felt sports journalism was a field she would not succeed in though she liked sports in general. Therefore her entrance into the profession just like Anna was also accidental supporting Hardin and Shain"s (2005) stance. This experience was shared by all the respondents interviewed for this research. None of them said they went into sports journalism right from the onset of their career because of how they have been socialized while growing up. For this reason Alicia added:

> Sports journalism for me was an accident to actually go into it. Even though I loved sports I never thought of becoming a sports journalist or doing sports journalism. The opportunity came while editing a sports programme once on the job and I"ve never looked back since then.

Olivia also added:

> Before starting my career in journalism, I never in a million years thought I would end up doing sports. Don"t get me wrong. I loved sports then and still do now but having a career in it I thought was impossible because you never saw a woman at the sports department or reporting in sports. You just have to forget what your colleagues or society think about sports journalism not being a place for women. Women can also survive in this field too.

The above response from the respondents shows that society does play a role in women not going into sports journalism from the onset of their career. Women are made to believe that sports journalism is a field where only men can survive. Their love for sports does not even encourage them to get into the profession from the start of their journalism career making their entrance into the profession purely accidental. However, once they get into the profession they realize that women can also survive in a profession that is male dominated and the negative postulations surrounding the profession are all things constructed by the society to gear more men into the profession than women. Kian (2007) supports this stance when he says females do not dream or have the aspiration of going into sports journalism because they hardly see few female role models in the profession or because no one ever discussed or encouraged them to take up sports journalism as a career. To Wilde (2007) this is because society has been "trained" to think of sports in terms of "genderness". Women therefore stumble into sports journalism unlike their male counterparts because society right from birth socialize women into believing sports should be for men.

4. 2 Lack of Interest

Strong (2007) observed that the reason why women show lack of interest in going into sports journalism is because they are subtly discouraged to go into sports and sports journalism right at a younger age. Respondents in this study opined that the negative treatments of women in a male dominated field did not make the profession attractive for them. This made them lose interest in taking up sports journalism as a career prior to their entrance in journalism even if they had an interest in sports. For this reason Sophia said:

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I love sports very much and it is a huge part of my life but having a career in it didn''t really interest me that much going into journalism. I didn''t see sports journalism as a field where I could succeed. So I went into features writing before sports because I loved writing and being creative. You know there are not a lot of us in the profession and I''ve seen the harsh way the women in the profession are treated so I never had any interest of going into sports journalism. Till I went into sports I was fine where I was.

The position of female sports journalists is such that female sports journalists are not valued within the sport/media complex because they do not and can never meet the masculine standard on which the sport media is built. This and the aspect of society socializing more men than women into sports journalism have led to women having a lack of interest in sports journalism and the reason why they choose other aspects of journalism over sports journalism. Respondents in this study all supported the stance that for one to succeed in a profession, there is the need for the person to have an interest in that profession. Respondents said the interest serves as a catalyst for one to succeed, something they did not feel towards the profession prior to their entrance into the profession. They alluded their lack of interest in the profession to the unattractive way they had made the place for women and the harsh way women in that field were treated. Olivia''s experience supported this stance:

I believe you must have an interest in any profession you choose to do in order to succeed. There must be that special thing about your job that pushes you to wake up every day and go to work no matter the situation you find yourself. If the interest in your work is not there then you are

bound to fail. That was how I felt about sports journalism at first. The interest was just not there. Time has however changed the way I feel about the profession because of the way I constantly challenge myself to do more and I now enjoy what I do very much.

The response of the participants goes to support Kian‟s (2007) assertion that women lacked interest in sports reporting because of the masculine (hegemonic) nature of sports journalism because in a masculine (hegemonic) society, masculinity is the standard for which everything else is measured. It is, however, encouraging to know that sports journalism constantly challenges women after they get in the profession to do more and make them have that self-belief that there‟s nothing they can‟t do once they set their mind to it including surviving in a profession where their male colleagues and society expects them to fail.

4. 3 Fear

Sports has helped create and now uphold a masculine hegemonic order in society where men occupy positions of power and masculinity (Kian, 2007). Several authors purport that the media has assisted in maintaining sports as a masculine hegemonic domain to preserve the power of men over women. The lack of women in sports journalism supports the notion that sports is a masculine hegemonic domain. The socialization of women right from birth to believe that sports and sports journalism is the preserve of men and women not able to thrive in the profession leaves women with a fear that they will never reach a higher position when they get into the profession. These are some of the experiences women face prior to the entrance in sports journalism and why women will not directly go into sports journalism. Sophia said:

...the main reason why I went into features writing before sports even though I loved sports deep down was because of fear. Fear of being accepted by your colleagues and the public. Fear of surviving in the field. Fear of being capable of rising to the higher ranks in the profession and all these fears came true once I got into the profession.

Lynette added:

I think it's only natural to feel fear knowing very well that you are going to work in a profession that is male dominated and where you will probably be the only woman there. It is also known to be a profession where women are harassed almost all the time so the fear is there and I think every woman in the profession felt that way before going into it.

Sports journalism therefore remains a difficult environment for women. Women continue to remain in the minority because of the power that men have over women in the profession as well as the negative treatment they get once they enter into the profession. Respondents for this research said their knowledge of the treatment meted out to some women they knew in the profession left them with the fear of being treated the same prior to their entrance into the profession. Their major fear however was the fear of not being able to reach the higher ranks of the profession and not being able to measure up to their male colleagues. There was also the issue of acceptance by the public. These fears pushed women away from entering the profession once they got into journalism and the reason why the number of women in sports journalism remains relatively low as compared to the men because they would rather go into other parts of the profession where they would

easily be accepted and where they would easily rise up in the profession as shared by respondents.

The relationship that exists in sports journalism can be juxtaposed to that of the oppressed and the oppressor relationship by Freire (1973) where the oppressed are women and men the oppressors. In the oppressed-oppressor relationship (the oppressor being the men) are always afraid of losing their freedom (where their freedom is taking up higher positions) and because of that ends up killing the creativity and the initiative of the person being oppressed (women) so that they too will also have the opportunity to break free and take up higher positions. When this happens the oppressed will always remain marginalized because of their fear for their oppressors. The response from the female journalists interviewed showed that women do harbour some fear of failing and not being capable of surviving in the field. The fear of women being marginalised in sports journalism is one reason which hinders them from going into sports journalism at an earlier stage in their career.

4. 4 Passion for Sports

In this study all female sports journalists interviewed spontaneously referred to their passion for sports even before entering the profession. For example Anna said:

> I‟ve always been passionate about sports growing up. My father is a sports
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> fan so it encouraged me. I pick the *Daily Graphic* and the first page I read
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> is the sports page only because I was interested. You need to have this
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> passion for sports before you can even become a sports journalist. If you
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> don‟t understand sports you can‟t become a sports journalist. If you don‟t
>
> have the interest and passion, you can‟t survive.

Alicia added:

> I must say I was lucky because as a child my dad wouldn‟t say you are a
> girl so go to the kitchen. My parents encouraged me and have been really
> supportive. I grew up in a family where everybody enjoyed all kinds of
> sports from athletics, basketball to football. So I got my passion for sports
> from my family.

A woman going into sports journalism therefore must have the passion for sports before entering into the profession. The passion for sports is an important attribute a woman going into sports journalism must have because according to the respondents in this research, having that attribute is basically the reason why they continue to be in a profession where they are treated harshly and where their abilities are not seen as matching their capabilities. It is the passion for sports that makes them endure all these hardships they go through as females working in a male dominated field. They therefore believe females who have the passion for sports have a greater chance of surviving and lasting longer in the field than those who don‟t. For this reason Anna said:

> You don‟t only have to be interested in sports, the passion for it must also
> be there. You have to be knowledgeable because if you are unable to
> translate your interest into knowledge, you can‟t educate and inform
> people and you can‟t be in the press especially the print media

This finding also shows that for a woman to be passionate about sports, that woman should have been socialized into liking sports right at a tender age. If this is so then Wilde‟s (2007) assertion that males are expected to demonstrate certain characteristics

and behaviours that are "masculine" while females are held accountable for being "feminine" right from birth can be questioned. This is because responses from the women interviewed in this study clearly shows the opposite as they were trained to take up masculine behaviours such as sports right from birth. This stance from the respondents also goes to challenge Lipmann"s (1922) stance on stereotype where he opines stereotypes are resistant to change. These findings also contradict Schoch and Ohl"s (2011) findings which revealed that female sports journalists in Switzerland did not have any interest or passion for the sports prior to their entry into the profession. They purported that female sports journalists in Switzerland rather contributed their success in the profession to their ability to write and speak very well rather than their passion for sports.

RQ2: What are the post-entry experiences of female sports journalists in the profession?

This research question addresses the experiences women go through or face once they find themselves in a male dominated profession such as sports journalism in Ghana. Many studies such as Hardin and Shain (2005), Kian (2007), Schoch (2013), Strong (2007) as already stated in this work have all indicated that women in sports journalism go through some negative experiences and are treated differently because of their gender. From the experiences shared by the respondents it is clear that women in sports journalism the world over share the same experiences and that culture does not play a part in the experiences they go through as sports journalists. The experiences of the participants are categorized into themes which are *Stereotype, Sexual Harassment, Maternity Leave, Work-life balance, Gender and Editorial Position, Inferior Roles*, and

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Question of Credibility. These themes reinforced the notion that sports journalism continues to be a profession predominantly dominated by men and that masculine hegemony remains prevalent after their entrance into sports journalism hence the negative experiences female sports journalists go through as compared to their male counterparts.

4.5 Stereotypes

Women predominate in other parts of the media like entertainment and lifestyle reporters but do not feature much in sports journalism (Franks, 2013). There is a general perception that the idea of sports being a male profession is ingrained in general culture which is mostly a patriarchal one (Kian, 2007). Women are therefore not seen as people able to survive in the world of sports journalism and are treated differently. One treatment women in sports journalism experience is stereotype. Following from Casey et al., (2008), Kanahara (2006) and Lipmann (1992) stereotypes come in many forms and are often used to oppress and discriminate against people who are marginalized in any given situation, society or a profession which in this case are women in sports journalism. Stereotypes could also be a negative idea or image, thought to be true of every member of a specific group. In this study the most common stereotype identified and shared by all the respondents was them seen as exhibiting "manly traits" or being too "masculine". Anna had this to say:

I am always in trousers, sneakers and a shirt because of the nature of my

job. I have to dress up like one of the guys because it makes me smart and

easy to move around. I don¨t remember the last time I wore a skirt or a

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dress to work because you really don"t have the luxury to dress up like a woman if you want to fit in.

Deemed to be the "weaker sex"- physically, mentally, and emotionally, women have been stereotyped as being feminine in sports journalism (Wilde, 2007). Feminity, according to Sherrow (1996), is the issue of what is feminine in appearance and behaviour (i.e. being attractive, carefully groomed, submissive, nurturing women). To avoid being stereotyped as being too feminine in a masculine domain, female sports journalists are forced to put up certain male tendencies as a way of surviving in the field. Women are more likely to be treated well by their male colleagues as long as they act like one of the guys and learn how to assimilate into a masculine hegemonic structure (Kian, 2007). Sophia affirmed this stance:

Most of the men readily warm up to you when you behave like one of them. I think they sometimes forget we are women. But that is what keeps us going because they pretty much treated me on equal basis anytime I acted like one of them.

The expectation of feminity often results in women being aggressive; a trait associated with men. Women are not expected to exhibit masculine traits because society expects women to be "ladylike" and not demonstrate characteristics that are defined as being masculine. In a profession that is male-dominated like sports journalism however, female sports journalists are forced to be assertive in order to avoid being intimidated by their male colleagues (Wilde, 2007, Kian, 2007, Sherrow, 1997). Alicia said:

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In sports journalism you have to be very assertive and strong willed to prove your worth and to prove to your colleagues that you are capable of surviving in the field. Once I began to show them I was not going to be easily intimidated again, all the taunting and intimidation stopped. Not entirely though I must say but it got better.

Anna added to this stance:

As a female sports journalists, no one can intimidate me without my consent and it is luxury or privilege I afford no one. This is an advantage for me. The disadvantage however is when people begin to see you as too much of a boy, treat you differently from other women and begin to label you as a tom boy. These name calling or stereotypes can affect you negatively if you don''t have a strong personality.

When women do "cross the line" and exhibit these so-called "manly traits". Their gender identity, sexual orientation, values and social rules are often questioned (Griffin, 1998). Stereotypes in sports journalism is still prevalent as the profession continues to remain a male bastion which does not favour women. Lynette said:

The profession has been a male dominated field and still remains male dominated as the negative assumption surrounding the field as not being a place for women has not changed. Sometimes your colleagues will resort to name callings like lesbians if you challenge them too much.

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This goes to support Pirinen (1997) stance that women deviating from cultural idea of not being feminine may be labelled as unattractive, lesbian, or not-right women, alternatively; they may be completely invisible. The fear of being labeled a lesbian and the fear of its consequences also hampers full participation of women in sports journalism. A Forbes magazine in 2011 stereotyped women who found themselves in a profession typically reserved for men such as sports journalism as being unsympathetic, tough, ruthless and just being "masculine" (Goudreau, 2011). According to Van Zoonen (1998) these women were "one of the boys" and adjusted themselves to the male environment to be accepted as equal by their male colleagues. These women"s dress code, attitudes, and professional career aligned with the previously existing male career norms (Le Feuvre, 1999; Schoch & Ohl, 2011). These responses from respondents show that in sports journalism, women are forced to comply to and accept the masculine order or ethos in the profession as a means of survival. Women will do anything including discarding their known identities and picking up new ones or negotiating their identities to survive in the field. Those who go to the extreme end up being stereotyped as lesbians or being called out of their names. This goes to affirm Kanahara (2006) stance about the stereotype theory that members in the dominant group (men) are likely to have negative thoughts and stereotype members in the sub-groups (women).

Another stereotype so common in sports journalism is the idea that women journalists should be "sexy", "pretty", "smiling", "beautiful", "good-looking", "attractive", "gorgeous". The "feminine-looking female body" are seen as acceptable and the "masculine-looking female body" as unacceptable. These objectifying ways of seeing women are a typical aspect of sports journalism (Pirinen, 1997). According to Hardin and

Shain (2005) this stereotype is as a result of male sports journalists believing that female sports journalists only get into the profession because of the way they look and not because of their capabilities. This stance was shared by all the respondents interviewed for this study. Olivia had this to say:

> It"s sad really. I remember the first time I got hired and met my colleagues, most of whom were men and a lady. A male colleague was actually bold enough to tell me I would go far because he thought I was beautiful and for that matter wouldn"t find it very difficult to get stories when sent out.

Lynette added to this:

> My colleagues only take me out to cover the big stories only because they believe it would be easier to get the interviewees to talk when a woman is by their side. They always go like who would say no to being interviewed when I have a beautiful woman by my side or sometimes they would go like Lynette make sure you really dress up tomorrow.

The capabilities of women in sports journalism are not appreciated neither is it respected. The reason why this is so in answering Brantley and Lengermann (2004) in the feminist theory is because of media generated stereotypes that have formed over time making men to think and believe that the only reason why a woman will make it to the profession or get a major story is because she is either pretty or sexy. Anna also shared her experience where she had to interview a management member of a local team. The man really did not pay any attention to the interview as he kept looking at her in a seductive way. In a

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situation like this female sports journalists are forced to attempt to either ignore the seductive glances or stares thrown their way just to get their stories or are even forced to flirt back just to get their stories as shared by respondents. Thus for female sports journalists, appearances are very important. If you want that big story then make sure you dress in a very appealing way whether you like it or not which should not be the case. A woman should be able to get her story no matter how she is dressed or how she may appear. These experiences shared by the respondents go to confirm Perri"s (2002) claim that most men do not see the capabilities female sports journalists have and the effort female sports journalists put in their work but rather see how they appear while working. Hardin"s (2005) work showed that though female sports journalists have a tougher job than men do, opportunities for women are getting better especially if one is beautiful. Barkley simply put it in Perri (2012) only women who are beautiful should be sports journalists.

4.6 Gender and Editorial position

The culture of newsrooms has been characterized as male; many newsrooms are "aggressive/defensive", meaning they value independence, competitiveness and confrontation. An entire newsroom (especially sports departments) may be considered a male dominated workplace as men hold the majority of jobs and authority (Hardin, 2005). In Ghana similar to Hardin and Shain (2005), observations in the US as well as Schoch"s (2013) findings in Switzerland, female journalists are usually at the bottom of the professional hierarchy and have few promotion opportunities. Participants in this study acknowledged their gender as the reason for not moving up into positions of authority in sports journalism. Men are favoured over women to take up editorial

positions in sports journalism. Most of the attributes normally looked out for in a leader are attributes related to women. For example, a leader should be understanding, caring and have the interest of all her/his workers at heart and these attributes are attributes associated with women. If that is the case, why are women still occupying lower positions in their profession like sports journalism? This is because we live in a masculine (hegemonic) or a patriarchal society where masculinity is the standard for which everything else is measured and where men feel the need to be authoritative over women hence not occupying higher positions especially in a profession like sports journalism which is masculine dominated. Frölich (2004) also argues that because of women"s innate caring and communication skills they are easily employed into entry level jobs but these attributes become disadvantageous when they seek promotion because these same skills are associated with lack of assertiveness and lack of leadership. This goes to support the radical feminist claim that in a patriarchal society, the social construction and gender-appropriate behaviour have limited women"s access to positions of authority which has in turn led to the oppressed position of women in that society. This can also be seen as another conscious effort to exclude women from taking up higher positions and this goes to support Brantley and Lengermann (2004) feminist claim that if women are not present in any given situation then there is a conscious effort to exclude them. Sophia said:

> Here at my workplace most of the higher positions and editors in other departments are headed by the men. The sports department is not different from this. I am yet to see a woman head the sports department in my five years of working here and the other departments for that matter. The only

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department headed by women is the gender and women‟s department which is usually headed by women because they believe it is appropriate for a woman to head it since it has to do with women‟s affair.

There are more numbers of women occupying lower levels of the profession as compared to those occupying executive positions as argued by Hon (1995). According to the U.S Department of Labour in 2008, women constituted less than 10 percent of executives despite the surge of women entering management in the last 45 years. Women in Ghana are still employed in undervalued positions even when they have higher levels of education (Thompson, 2008) and according to Hardin and Shain (2005) one reason why this inequality persists in higher management positions is because of the culture that exist in the professions where women find themselves and the lack of women in decision-making process. Millet (1969) claimed that women‟s access to positions of authority is limited due to the oppressed position of women in patriarchal society and the social construction of gender-appropriate behaviour. Anna Stated:

> No we don‟t take part in any decision-making or whatsoever. Most of the decision-making process concerning our jobs are done at the top and brought down to the bottom where you can find someone of us. Most of these decisions made do not favour us but you can‟t complain especially if you are a woman because you are in a profession where the people you work with believe you are in the wrong profession.

This finding reveals that in sports journalism, not only are female sports journalists left at the bottom of the hierarchical order, they are also left out of the decision making process

that concerns them. Women do not have any voice or whatsoever to air out their grievances because their opinions do not matter as they are thought of not having any knowledge about the profession even before they came into the profession by their male colleagues. It is this form of oppression and marginalization that the liberal feminists seek to fight against and ensure the equal representation of all no matter their gender. Women in sports journalism should therefore be treated equally regardless of their gender. Olivia added:

> We once had a female as our editor some three years ago. Those were the best because she made our work very easy and treated all of us equally. This did not last long however as this lady was frustrated to the extent that she had to quit her position. A male colleague made a mistake on the job which he later apologized for but all the blame was placed on this lady since she was the editor and as the editor she should have made sure the mistake had not happened to begin with. The guy who made the mistake was totally forgotten and the lady was treated harshly and frustrated that she gave up her position and eventually left our media house.

This experience by Olivia goes to show that women in sports journalism can actually make it into managerial or higher positions but the continuous and harsh treatments they get once they get into these higher positions force them to quit their positions or sometimes even leave the field all together, another conscious effort to exclude women once they are not found in any situation given drawing from the feminist theory. For this reason, Blankenship (2014) in her work stated that according to media scholars, women are much more likely to leave the field of journalism in their first five years. This she

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continues contributes to the uneven gender spread and the disparity between the large proportions of female working journalists. According to Gadzekpo (2009) there came the expectation that women would become more visible in the media as employees and as decision makers with the rebirth of civil society, media freedom and pluralism. From the findings of this research however it seems the above stance is yet to materialize as women continue to be marginalized when it comes to taking up higher positions and taking part in decisions that concerns them in their work. It is important to know, however, that most of these female sports journalists in subservient positions within sports journalism which had dramatic consequences for their careers are not doing much to rebel against this treatment. These female sports journalists rather seem to have internalized the organization‴s operational standards and consequently adapted to the dominant male ethos. That is they appeared to conform to a "female logic" (Acker, 1990 as cited in Schoch & Ohl, 2011).

4.7 Work-life Balance

Work-life balance can be defined as the satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum role conflict (Clark, 2000). Connel (2005) therefore purports that work-life problems will differ for men and women since women have to struggle between managing the home and also working. Women are at a greater disadvantage of juggling work and family life than men. Many women cited marriage and children as the primary reason according to Shetty, (2008). Daymond and Surma (2012) however assert that this issue might differ according to women‴s age, seniority and family life stage. Work-life balance is one of the many challenges that prevent the success of women as sports journalists as it prevents women from staying in the profession longer than their male

colleagues. They therefore remain less experienced than men (Schmidt, 2013). Anna shared her experience:

> There is the challenge of losing out on social life because most of the times sporting activities only happen during the weekend. That is when you look for stories to cover or you are sent on an assignment usually on Saturday. Those of us working in the print media especially have to come to work even on Sundays because you have to make sure you"ve filed your work for the next day before you leave for the house then come back to work early the next day to join in Monday"s production.

Combining work and family life is very difficult for women working in a very demanding field as sports journalism. Respondents with children interviewed in this study discussed the dilemma between fulfilling their traditional domestic responsibilities and pursuing a career that demands long hours, more intense travel and deadline driven stress in the newsroom. They talked about the toll their jobs take on their family and social lives. They shared that it becomes extremely difficult if one is married with children as well as adding other social responsibilities to their task. The findings from the respondents revealed that there had been many instances where they had lost out on major stories because they chose to attend to a an emergency family matter such as attending to issues that had to do with their children or husbands rather than go out to get their story. Anna articulated her dilemma:

> It is not easy. I have three young kids, especially on holidays, when they expect that you will be home, mummy is going to work and they don"t

understand. Like Easter Sunday, mummy is supposed to be at home but she"s working. But thankfully, I introduced them to the job quite early. Thankfully my husband closes from work earlier than I so he gets to spend the evening with the kids otherwise like many other young working mother, you are left with the challenge of leaving your child or your children in the hands of other caretakers. These are some of the challenges you face as a woman working in a demanding field as sports journalism.

Respondents articulated that the experiences they go through make them question the worth of their job. They also revealed that combining work life with family life also contributes to them being less experienced than the men as they had refused to take up important assignments because they had to attend to a family issue. They also attributed this to one of the reason why they leave the field earlier than their male counterparts. The encouraging thing however revealed by the respondents is that they had understanding and helpful husbands who are always willing to help with the chores around the house or take care of their children in serious situations where they cannot be excused from work. This they said relieved them from combining work with family work though not entirely. This revelation also goes to criticize and challenge Griffin (1998) and Sherrow"s (1996) stance that traditionally females have been expected to wear dresses, cook and clean, raise children and remain passive as clearly there is a reversal of roles here.

These findings support the findings of Smith (2000) who discovered that the difficulty of combining constant deadlines, the unpredictable hours, and the workplace demands challenged the woman journalist"s personal life. Although these respondents seemed resigned that their dilemmas could not be solved in the workplace, it is rather

encouraging to know the support they get from their spouses who even go to the extent of taking up the role of their wives so as to help their wives keep their jobs. The wellness of women are however at stake because their workplaces do not support a work life balance culture. This goes to confirm Parks and Langard"s (2008) assertion that positive association between work life balance and organizational engagement is mediated by wellness. Respondents also shared that as women it is always going to be difficult to combine work and family as well as other social responsibilities whether married or not. However, it is somewhat better for women who are not married than those who are. Sophia said:

> No I don"t have children but that doesn"t mean I also don"t struggle to balance my work life from family or social life. Sometimes you get lucky and close early from work and all you want to do is go home and rest but you can"t because you get home and you are required to cook or go to help with the cooking in the kitchen.

This goes to confirm the findings of Daymond and Surma (2012) that the effect of work life balance might differ according to women"s age, seniority and family life stage.

4.8 Maternity Leave

The Committee for the Eradication of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 2005) states that Ghana has put in place a number of policies to enhance gender equality. One of these policies is the provision of paid maternity leave. There is the need for organizations to put policies in place to help nurture the career of women due to the increasing number of women in organizations (Thomas & Ely, 2001). The study sought

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to find out if the media organizations the female journalists interviewed provided maternity leave for the women for which they answered in the affirmative. Anna said:

> Yes, we have a maternity leave policy which is very compulsory here. You have three months of maternity leave. And they have even done it in a way such that you add your annual work to it as well so you return around the sixth month which is a bit difficult because you are depending on your job to live. And then when you come, you don"t do a full day work. You do half day. You are supposed to work for five hours.

The research revealed that the media houses or the organizations the women worked for did make provisions for maternity leave. However it is the experiences they go through pre and post maternal leave which were challenging. Some of the respondents said that they worked throughout their pregnancy period but their sacrifices were neither acknowledged nor appreciated by their colleagues and editors. Some said they have had their positions taken from them during their time of pregnancy as their positions were given to their male colleagues since they could not work during their pregnancy. They said that their pregnancies were used as a reason to push them further to the background by their editors. From the interview garnered from the respondents, the research revealed that female sports journalists who are most likely to move up into higher positions in the profession are those likely to be non-nursing mothers.

Olivia added:

> I remember one of those things when I went for maternity leave when I had my second child and came back. By the end of the year, when I went

for my assessment, my boss wrote that, she could have done more but because of maternal reasons, she was just above the bar and I was so mad. Sometimes you ask yourself if all the sacrifices you make in this work is really worth it you know, if it is really worth it to miss out on your children's lives for a work where you are not appreciated no matter what you do

This goes to support Franks (2013) assertion that the relatively few women who do get jobs at higher level have few outside responsibilities; for example, they are far more likely than men to be childless.

4.9 Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment continues to be a problem of consequence for the contemporary working woman. Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when submission of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly on condition of an individual's employment (Nielson, 1996). Women in traditionally male dominant careers experience more of it (Whaley & Tucker, 1998). A workplace that is inhabited primarily by men will be highly sexualized, and have a higher likelihood of obscene sexual language, sexual jokes and emphasis on physical attractiveness (Sereni, Toth, Wright & Emig, 1998). It is estimated that between 20 to 50% of females are sexually harassed in sports at various levels (Fastings, 2005). Safe Sport International (2014) as cited in Appak and Sarpong (2015), reviewed 466 items in sports literature globally, and reported that sexual harassment and abuse in sports was as high as 28% with sexual harassment alone accounting for about 12%. The Ghana's Labour Act (2003) defined sexual

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harassment at the work place as any unwelcome offensive and importunate sexual advance or request made by an employer or supervisor or a co-worker to a worker whether the worker is a man or a woman. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) of the United States of America in 1980 as cited in Appak & Sarpong (2015), sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature which could be done when the conduct explicitly or implicitly affect individual"s employment, interferes with their work and created an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. About 74% of female employees in Ghana have experienced sexual harassment in the form of unwanted repeated proposals, unwanted sexual teasing, jokes, questions or remarks; pressure for dates; unwanted telephone calls, love letters, unwanted sexual looks, unwanted touching of intimated body parts and pressure for sexual favours within their working environment (Andoh, 2011) Anna stated:

> There is also the challenge of sexual harassment which is there and very
> real especially with the big men who will worry you especially if you are
> not married and I started very young. And so you have to be strong to
> ward off those advances. Somebody will tell you that if you want a story,
> you have to go out say with dinner or lunch with him and if you are lucky,
> it could be lunch but if not and the person says dinner, then you have to
> think of going or losing out on your story. Even after you"ve gone out with
> them they continue to worry you with more dates. For me most of these
> sexual harassment come outside of work when I go out to conduct an

interview or when I go out to get the story so there is always that challenge.

This goes to confirm the EEOC‟s (1980) stance that the harasser need not be employed by the victim‟s organization and that the victim can be anyone affected by the conduct (including those not directly targeted). The responses from respondents confirm sexual harassment continues to be a prevalent horrifying experience for female sports journalists in Ghana either by their male editors and colleagues at the work place or by other men outside their workplace. Sexual harassments come in different forms for these women. It could be by persistent inappropriate touching, throwing of sexual glances or passing lewd comments at them. The research revealed that what constitutes sexual harassment differs for these women. For example, one respondent said she does not see the glances her male colleagues throw at her as a sexual harassment while another said otherwise. Again another said she does not feel sexually harassed till she is touched on the sensitive parts of her body by male colleagues. She continued that some female sports journalists tend to blow the issue of sexual harassment out of proportion but she did acknowledge however that the issue of sexual harassment is prevalent for women in sports journalism and has experienced it before. Respondents also disclosed that they usually keep quiet when they are sexually harassed because they did not know who to report to as the people they could report to are the same people who sexually harass them so they eventually keep mute. Some said their colleagues like them better when they keep quiet on these issues rather than rebel against them so they eventually let it slide because according to them, the more their colleagues like them, the easier their work becomes. This goes to confirm the radical feminist stance according to Brantley and Lengermann (2004) that men create and

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maintain patriarchy not only because they have the resources to do so but because they have real interests in making women serve as compliant tools who are effective only when they are satisfying the sexual needs of men and are thus taken for granted. Again, Olivia said that she usually let these sexual harassments which occur outside work slide because she is just there to get her story and leave and would do anything to get the story if the need called for it. She therefore said that she sometimes flirts back with these men just to get the story and does not see anything wrong with it as she is not married. The research also revealed that women who are not married are more likely to be sexually harassed than those who are. The differences among women concerning sexual harassment is probably due to their social location which could be their marital status or affectional preferences as opined by the feminist theory. Alicia also shared her experience:

> Oh for that we go through it almost every day both at work and outside work. You go to interview these men and it''s either they try to touch demand that you go out with them on a date before you get your story and you come to work and your colleagues or any other male colleague at your workplace too treat you the same by making jokes or saying things that are really unwanted. What I''ve realized though is that they usually back off when you are married but if you are not like myself then you are in trouble.

The above statements made by the respondents confirm the findings of Sereni, et.al. (1998) which maintained that a workplace that is inhabited primarily by men tends to be highly sexualized, which means a higher likelihood of obscene sexual language and

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emphasis on physical attractiveness. Since the workplace is dominated by men, they tend to have sexual jokes and emphasized their attention on her body or attractiveness. It also goes to confirm Fasting‟s (2005) assertion that the sports environment has become a potential breeding ground for sexual harassment against females because of the high level of physical contact, male dominated atmospheres and unquestioned authority figures‟ power.

4.10 Inferior Roles

The patriarchal nature and order of sport has created an impression that women in sports are unimportant and inferior which hampers their full participation in the profession (Pirinen, 1997). Women in sports journalism are sidelined and forced to play inferior roles as compared to their male colleagues. Hardin and Shain (2005) purport that women‟s role in sports journalism are limited because of "systemic discrimination" that reduces them as mere token status. Different tasks are assigned to men and women in response to the demands and gender role expectations of clients (Yeomans, 2010) cited in Braimah (2015). Sophia said:

> …If you want a big story, it is always the men who will provide that for you. You will hardly see a female sports journalists covering a story on the world cup or other major tournaments like the EPL or the UEFA Champions League. That is always for the men to do. The only time we will cover football tournament is when the Black Queens or Maidens are playing in a world cup that they leave for us the women or you are sent to cover stories on hockey or athletics and those sports are considered as the lesser known sports in Ghana.

Alicia added:

> You know they prefer the guys going to the Black Stars camp. They will
> get all the exclusives. You know the Black Stars games are the highest
> rated games in the country and you the female will probably go to the
> hockey field to cover hockey stories. The funny thing is they will probably
> tell you that they are trying to help you out because they don''t want you to
> go through the hustle of having to deal with the rugged and rowdy players.
> But to you it feels more like they are rather not helping you to move up in
> the profession or they are rather retrogressing. So it happens where you
> are a female and you are pushed to play inferior roles but what can you
> do? It''s your job after all and you have to cover everything.

This goes to confirm Kian''s (2007) assertion that female sports journalists (writers especially) are more likely to be pigeonholed into covering women''s sports and other lesser known sports. From the responses gathered from the respondents, there is no doubt that men continue to control and pull all the strings in the profession. Women playing inferior roles show they are sidelined and marginalized in the profession. The research clearly reveals the exact thing women in sports journalism are doing; playing inferior roles as compared to their male colleagues. It is based on some of these challenges women face in sports journalism that the liberal feminists continue to argue and emphasize on equality of opportunity for all persons regardless of their gender. Women should be treated equally in sports journalism regardless of their gender. One way this can be achieved is when they are given equal opportunities to cover some of the major stories and also be put in the mainstream as the men. Lynette said:

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My editor believes women do a better job covering women's stories than men because he feels we are women and can relate to the stories so we always cover the women's story but if a female athlete do very well in a competition or there is some controversy surrounding a female athletes where you know the story will be very hot in the public, he'll ask the men to go and cover those stories so basically the men always get the big stories. The men are getting the bigger stories and all the glory in the profession.

This is clearly an injustice on the part of women. If these female sports journalists' editors believe that women are only good in covering women's sports then why are they excluded from covering stories on female athletes when they begin to make up all the big stories? Again, another clear deliberate effort to exclude women in any situation where women are not found as purported by the feminist theory.

Verhoeven (2010) asserts that stereotypical perceptions might lead to unequal distributions of gender roles and functions within organizations. When this happens many female sports journalists (writers especially) will not seek to cover women's sports, in large part due to lack of career enhancement opportunities and a perceived lack of interest in women's sports from newspaper readers (Kian, 2007). This implies female sports writers may help uphold masculine hegemony in sport (Hardin & Shain, 2005). Women in sports journalism therefore play inferior roles as compared to their male colleagues. They are forced to cover only women sports, a reason why they do not hold higher positions such as editors, producers and managers.

4.11 Questions of Credibility

Research suggest that there is a gender bias towards female sports journalists, with females being seen as less credible than males. Women have fought for acceptance in what is considered as an "all-boys club" and have persevered until sports media has given at least some the benefit of doubt that they do belong in a man's world (Clifton, 2012) but regardless of position these women held as reporters and writers, even the most talented continued to be challenged because of the gender (Gunther et al., 2011). A study done by Hardin and Shain (2005) determined that 85% of females feel as though they are not seen as equals because of their gender. Most women interviewed in Hardin and Shain's (2005) work mentioned that they felt constant pressure to "prove themselves" to their male colleagues and editors. Anna said:

> People don't warm up to you and don't believe in your capabilities because you are a woman and so it is challenging. It's challenging because you go and find out that you are only female among the men. You are pushed because some of them think that you are just there to add up to the numbers so invariably you are always pushed to prove to them that you know what you are talking about and you know what you are about.

Alicia added:

> Yes, I feel I have to put in extra effort than my male colleagues and constantly prove myself to them that I am in the profession because of my capabilities and understanding of the profession and not because of any other reason as my colleagues usually think. No matter what you do in this profession, your credibility is always going to be questioned so far as you

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are a woman. I do not know any female sports journalist who feels otherwise.

The findings of this research with regards to questions of credibility through the respondents revealed that most male sports journalists feel their female colleagues only gained entrance to the field of sports journalism based on other reasons such as their beauty rather than them actually having an extensive knowledge about the profession. One of the respondents in Schoch and Ohl work (2010) revealed that a male colleague had told everyone at their work place that she had slept her way through the job. Respondents shared that the credibility of female sports journalists are always going to be questioned simply because they work in a profession dominated by men who think they should not be there in the first place and who think they got into the profession because of other reasons such as their beauty and not because of their knowledge about the profession. The issue of female sports journalists‟ credibility being questioned as revealed by the research goes beyond their workplace. One respondent shared her experience where she encountered a male panelist who refused to be on the show simply because he had to be on the show with a woman. He felt she did not know anything about sports to be on the show. For this reason female sports journalists constantly have to work to prove themselves credible not only to their editors and male colleagues, but also to the public as their credibility is constantly scrutinized by these people.

> Yes our credibility as female sports journalists is always questioned. Your
> editor praises you because of a story you reported on and your colleagues
> begin to think that it was just sheer luck. If you are lucky and your good
> fortunes continue with your editor, then they go around whispering that

you might have some sort of relationship with your editor (Olivia)

This goes to confirm Hardin and Shain"s (2005) work which purports those most female sports journalists described a lack of respect directly related to their gender from male colleagues and fans as a regular part of their work experience. In addition, most of these female sports journalists feel they have to prove themselves as competent more than their male colleagues. Most respondents in Hardin and Shain (2005) findings believed that opportunities for women are better than ever but that female sports journalists have a tougher job than do men and that women in sports media are not taken as seriously by fans as are men doing the same job. Kian (2007) also asserts that there is the perception that women are often hired due to their sex and are given preferential treatment by management which creates animosity and resentment toward female writers on many sport staff.

4.12 Summary

This chapter presented the findings and discussions of the research questions for the study. Issues discovered by the study concerning the two major research questions were discussed into detail with references from the theories of the study. In all eleven themes were developed and discussed; four themes for the first objective and seven themes for the second objective. They are: *Socialization, Lack of Interest, Fear and Passion for Sports, Stereotype*, *Sexual Harassment*, *Maternity Leave*, *Work-Life Balance*, *Gender and Editorial Position*, *Inferior Roles*, and *Question of Credibility.*

Discussions started with findings garnered from the experiences of female sports journalists prior and post entry into sports journalism. The findings revealed that the

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masculine hegemonic nature of sports hinders women from going into sports journalism as compared to men. The findings also revealed that women continue to go through negative experiences once they enter the sports journalism profession because of their binary classification as women and the negative postulations surrounding the profession. These findings go to confirm the position of the stereotype theory which basically postulates that women in a profession which is male dominated are bound to go through some forms of stereotypes. The stereotypes placed on women have resulted in women shunning the profession right from the onset. The findings of the study also revealed that women continue to face constant struggles and challenges which relegate them to the background once they enter sports journalism. These struggles as revealed by the research are implicit in the masculine hegemony in which the sport is embedded and which makes men authoritative over women in sports journalism. The findings of the research supports the stance of the feminist theory which purports that women in patriarchal or a masculine hegemonic society are marginalized because of a deliberate effort to put them there. The liberal feminists therefore seek to ensure women enjoy the same rights as men no matter where they find themselves, a stance which respondents for this research hoped to reach in sports journalism.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter recaps the salient issues of the study, draws conclusions and makes recommendations to change the negative postulations surrounding the field of sports journalism. It also outlines suggestions for further research.

5.1 Summary

The purpose of the study was to explore the experiences of female sports journalists" pre and post entrance to the profession. The study was based on the concept of phenomenology. Five chapters make up the entire study, each focusing on a particular range of perspectives, all contributing to addressing the aim of this study, describing the experiences of female sports journalists in Ghana. In-depth semi-structured interviews were used to elicit responses from women on gender struggles they faced as females working in a male dominated profession such as sports journalism from the stereotype and feminist theory perspective.

5.2 Main Findings

The fourth chapter of the study sought to answer the two research questions posed in this work; the pre-entrance experiences of female sports journalists to the profession and also to find out their experiences once they enter into sports journalism which is a profession largely dominated by men.

First and foremost, the study revealed that female sports journalists in Ghana usually do not go into journalism with the aim of being sports journalists. For most of the

respondents interviewed going into sports journalism was either by chance or purely accidental. This is because they lacked the interest of going into the profession because of the negative postulations surrounding the field as a preserve for men. These negative postulations have come about because of the media generated stereotypes which have formed over time making the profession a prohibited area for females and also because society expects males and females to adopt, believe in, and fulfill specific gender roles and stereotypes that have been established as purported by Wilde (2007). Another reason women did not go directly into sports journalism as revealed in this research was that females are not socialized or steered to go into sports at an early age as compared to men. The socialization process is such that women are made to believe that people who go into sports should be strong, independent, and pure masculine; traits which are associated with men while women are expected to be quiet, obedient attractive nurturers.

Fear was another experience female sports journalists go through prior to their entrance into sports journalism. Fear of progressing and probably never holding higher positions in sports journalism like the men and fear of being treated negatively in the profession hindered women from going into sports journalism right from the onset of their career. The study also revealed that women who are passionate about sports at a tender age and even before entering into journalism are more inclined to go into sports journalism. The respondents for this research shared that the passion for sports drove them into sports journalism eventually. This passion they shared stemmed from them coming from a sports loving home.

Once women enter the profession, they encounter a lot of experiences or go through some negative experiences. They are treated differently because they find themselves in a

male-dominated profession. Female sports journalists encountered stereotypes which are used to oppress and discriminate against them. The research revealed that stereotypes marginalize the minority in any given situation, society or a profession which in this case are women in sports journalism. The research also revealed that stereotypes placed on female sports journalists forced them to comply with the dominant male ethos in sports journalism to feel accepted or to have a sense of belonginess in the profession.

Gender and editorial positions were also a main finding in this research. . Participants in this study acknowledged their gender as the reason for not moving up into positions of authority in sports journalism. The research revealed that in Ghana similar to Hardin and Shain‟s (2005) observations in the US as well as Schoch‟s (2011) findings in Switzerland, female journalists are usually at the bottom of the professional hierarchy and have few promotion opportunities. Men are favoured over women to take up editorial positions in sports journalism. Women who do make it to positions of higher positions as revealed by the research are treated harshly to the extent that they eventually leave the position or the field completely. Because women do not move up to higher positions or positions of authority, they are totally left out of decision making process concerning their careers. This goes to confirm Brantley and Lengermann (2004) stance that if women are not present in any given situation then there has been a conscious effort to exclude them.

The difficulty of balancing work with family and social life was also shared by respondents as an experience they go through working a very demanding field as sports journalism. The study revealed that work-life balance was one of the many challenges that prevented the success of women in sports journalism as it prevented them from

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staying in the profession longer than their male colleagues. They therefore remain less experienced than men. It is, however, encouraging to know that the spouses of these women gave their support to their wives being in a profession that kept them away from their homes most of the time as revealed by the respondents.

Another encouraging finding revealed by the research was the enforcement of a maternity leave policy in their various work places. The not so encouraging part was the frustrations and struggles women go through after their pregnancy as respondents revealed the frustrations they go through after pregnancy

Sexual harassment is very prevalent in sports journalism. The research revealed that women in a traditionally dominant profession like sports journalism are most likely to be sexually harassed. Respondents in this research attested to this stance. The sexual harassment came in forms such as unwelcome sexual advances, sexual jokes, request for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature either by a colleague or a boss. The research revealed that sexual harassment on women is trivialized at their work places as the harassers see nothing wrong with their actions and the women almost every time let their actions slide without taking any action against them just to get their work done.

The issue of women playing inferior roles is very prevalent in sports journalism as revealed by the research. This is because of the patriarchal nature and order of sport which has created an impression that women in sports are unimportant and inferior therefore hampering their full participation in the profession. Participants revealed that in sports journalism men cover the big and important stories whiles women are pigeonholed into covering women‟s and lesser known sports.

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Another main finding was the question of women‟s credibility in the profession. Women are seen as less credible than men in sports journalism because of the gender bias towards female sports journalists. The research revealed that female sports journalists have to work harder and constantly prove their worth before they can be respected in the profession. Participants revealed that no matter the position a woman hold in sports journalism, her credibility will still be questioned. The findings of this research with regards to questions of credibility revealed that most male sports journalists feel their female colleagues only gained entrance in the field of sports journalism based on other reasons such as their beauty rather than them actually having an extensive knowledge about the profession.

5.3 Conclusion

The findings of this research revealed that sports journalism is clearly a gendered profession, that is, a profession that not only welcomes boys or men enthusiastically than women but also serves as a site for celebrating skills and values clearly marked as masculine. This goes against the beliefs of the feminist theory as women are neither treated nor are they seen as the central „subjects‟ in sports journalism (Brantley & Lengermann, 2004). Participants believed that they are being oppressed and marginalized in the profession and their quest to fight this challenge is difficult because the profession is mostly dominated by men who have all the authority in the field. This goes to support Birrel (2000) stance that all feminists share an assumption that women are oppressed within a patriarchal society and have the commitment to change those conditions.

Drawing from Brantley and Lengermann‟s (2004) stance, this research revealed that though there are women in journalism, only few of them enter into sports journalism.

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Female sports journalists play inferior roles while the men play the superior roles. The research revealed that this is as it is because of the patriarchal nature of sports journalism and the media generated stereotypes that have formed over time making the profession the preserve of men. Again the research revealed that women‟s career as sports journalists are profoundly affected by their social location where they are seen as "outsiders" by virtue of their gender and "insiders" by virtue of their adherence to journalistic norms and values as well as their marital status. The study revealed that the profession becomes extremely difficult for women once they have children which sometimes force women to leave the field. Participants in this study however revealed that the support and encouragement they get from their spouses and families ease the pressure on them and help them stay in the field.

Drawing from the stereotype theory the research revealed that it is easier to stereotype less powerful groups in the society than it is to stereotype those with greater power. This tends to separate individuals into subgroups within society based on membership of a particular group of people. There is therefore no doubt that women in sports journalism are categorized as members in the minority group hence the prejudicial treatment meted out to them. In sports journalism women are pushed to change or negotiate their identities by either being very assertive or acting as one of the guys in order to survive in the field. This has led to female sports journalists being called out of their names and stereotyped as being too "masculine" or exhibiting "manly traits" or being tagged as lesbians.

Another stereotype common in sports journalism is the idea that female sports should be "sexy", "pretty", "smiling", "beautiful", "good-looking", "attractive", and "gorgeous". This leads to the idea that women who enter sports journalism are only allowed entry

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because of their beauty or because they had to sleep with someone and not because of their capability or ability of their knowledge about sports thus in sports journalism, the capability of women are not appreciated neither is it respected.

5.4 Limitations

The study set out to investigate the pre and post entrance experiences of female sports journalists in Ghana and also to elicit their responses to the issues from the feminist and stereotype theory perspective. However, the findings must be seen in the light of its limitations. Apart from the limitation of time and the difficulty in getting literature on the research topic, the researcher also faced further constraints.

Getting the women for the interview was very difficult because of the heavy schedule of the various locations of the media houses they worked for and also because of the relatively low number of female sports journalists in the profession. Again, some of the female journalists the researcher identified had only been in the profession for only a year or two and not the five years the researcher had purposively sampled. Those who had gained experiences in the profession for more than five years were also not willing to take part in the research. Therefore, instead of ten interviews the researcher had planned on conducting, the researcher was able to conduct only five. However, the five interviews adequately represented the female sports journalists in the print and broadcast media in Ghana. In spite of the above limitations, the study has critical implications for further studies.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

For further studies, it is being suggested that a follow up study be conducted to include interviews and surveys of male sports journalists and more female sports journalists,

representing different segment of the media industry (i.e., Internet, magazines) in order to know their gendered perspective. This can strengthen the reliability and validity of the study by expanding the sample population. Again, the inclusion of the perspective of the male sports journalists will balance out the discussion as well as obliterate the misinterpretation (an incorrect) assumption that feminism and all associated theories are parallel with the concept relating to the hatred of men.

5.6 Recommendations

Based on the discussions and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made to improve the working condition of female sports journalists in Ghana:

1. Women should be encouraged especially by the media to aspire to top management positions by providing them with the opportunities and formulating specific policies such as affirmative action on women. This will enable female sports journalists have a say in decisions that concern then in their line of work.

2. The media should do their work to curtail the negative postulation surrounding the field of sports journalism as a place for men as this will encourage more women to go into the profession.

3. Policies which would allow female sport journalists to attend their work as well as take care of other important aspect of their lives should be put in place by the various media houses these women work for, as well as put in place stringent measures to curtail sexual harassment in the media houses.

4. The media should increase awareness and appreciation of differences between men and women as well as decrease the stereotypes surrounding female sports

journalists and promote inclusions rather than highlighting the differences between men and women.

5. Drawing from the radical feminists belief women's consciousness need to be reworked so that each woman recognizes her own value and strength; see herself as a strong and independent person by rejecting patriarchal pressures and work in unity with other women regardless of the differences between them.

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