

**Analysis of Women Journalists' Roles in
*Daily Trust, Leadership, The Nation and
The Guardian* Newspaper Organisations
in Nigeria**

Prof. Maryam Ibrahim
Department of Mass Communication,
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
+234 8036046637
ibrahimm@abu.edu.ng,
maryamibrahim672@gmail.com

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Prof. Ibrahim Jimoh,
Department of Mass Communication
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
+234 8067986731
jimbra_01@yahoo.com,
ijimoh@abu.edu.ng

Abstract

Studies have shown that journalism has been a male-dominated profession since inception. And just like in political, economic and social life, women, as argued by scholars, continued to be relegated in journalism practice despite a significant increase in the enrolment of female students in communication studies globally. Many studies have documented that more women are studying mass communication or journalism worldwide. However, that increase seems not to translate into more women in the media and better status of women in journalism practice even in countries where women constitute the majority in journalism workforce. International Federation of Journalists Report (2009) indicates that women still do not play an important role in the reporting process as well as the top hierarchy of the profession. Thus, there is need to investigate the roles assign to women journalists in print media in Nigeria to determine how they fair in that sector. In the conduct of this therefore, the quantitative and qualitative survey methods were relied on with the instruments of the questionnaire used to gather data from all the female journalists working in the four selected newspapers. This is because the size of the population of women journalists is small and does not require a sample to determine the objectives of the study. Therefore, the study is a census study where sample size and sampling technique are not needed. The Key Informant Interview (KII) schedule to gather qualitative data from two senior editors from each of the newspaper organisations. In the end, it was found that women roles in the newspaper organisations studied are either editorial or reportorial roles and that roles were not assigned on the basis of gender even though in *The Nation* newspaper, only were assigned to women desk. It was also found that the criteria for assigning roles to women journalists in the newspaper organizations are merit and ability to deliver, working experience and they are not gender based. And it was found that the major challenges women faced in carrying out assigned roles and overall career progression in *Daily Trust, Leadership, The Nation* and *The Guardian* newspaper organizations include closing time and other factors like sexual harassment and neglect, balancing professional duties with domestic responsibilities due to their biological nature and the stress associated with pregnancy which requires that they are treated carefully including incessant complaints by husbands. It was

therefore recommended among others that there is the need to improve women journalists' welfare by increasing their pay and the provision of day care support and, company bus service.

Introduction

Journalism as a profession offers a variety of career opportunities in such areas as broadcasting, print journalism, public relations, advertising, book publishing as well as teaching communication in the various institutions of higher learning. Historically, journalism evolved as a male dominated profession and it continued to be a profession of men because the men control the power and also give voice in the profession. This is despite the increasing number of female students in mass communication and journalism studies globally. Franks (2014) points that the number of women studying journalism has surpassed that of men currently in the United States and the UK.

It was expected that the increase in the number of female students in journalism courses would turn into an increase in their number in the profession. But despite the recorded increase in the number of female students globally, there is no significant increase in their number in the profession which is surprising to many scholars as what can be the reasons behind the slow increase of the number of women in journalism practice. The GMMP Report (2020) reveal that worldwide in the last five years, there is small incremental shifts towards parity in topics and sources,

particularly in radio news. The report also describes the pace of change as slow as one could even speak of stagnation.

According to Franks (2014) family responsibility is the major factor that determines whether women succeed in journalism or not. This is because women continue to shoulder a disproportionate burden in the home, either because society expects it or they want to, which makes things harder to manage if the workplace becomes demanding. This indicates that women are first seen as mothers and care givers in the society before they are considered as professionals. So their responsibilities at home and in the family do not allow them to compete on equal terms with their men counterparts.

Furthermore, journalism is a field which is defined by political, economic and professional forces. These are also the case in all fields where struggle for hegemony exists. Journalism, like all these fields is gendered and the male voice is the norm although in less proportion now in some places. Media as social institutions reflect the social stratification in the society such as sex role ideology and domesticity which excluded women from full participation and control in other social systems as well as in the media. Some scholars argue that the exclusion of women from public realm

is an important aspect in their diminished social status.

Although there is an increase in the number of women who work as journalists in recent years, entrenched patterns of gender-based discrimination still represent a challenge for their ability to develop a career in the field on equal terms with men (Villarreal, 2021). It was observed that this situation has even worsened due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Global Status of Women Report (2011) indicates that 73% of the top management of media jobs is occupied by men leaving only 27% to women. Also, male reporters hold two-thirds of the jobs compared to the 36% held by women. However, women are nearing parity with 41% in news gathering, editing and writing jobs.

In Nigeria, the situation is similar to the global scenario as men also dominate all facets of Journalism practice and education, despite the fact that women constitute the majority of students in journalism and mass communication studies. It is an issue of concern to find out what usually happens to the majority of female graduates and why it has not led to their increase in journalism practice. Ibrahim (2016) found out that women are underrepresented in the management and leadership positions in the broadcast media in northern Nigeria.

Similarly, women are assigned soft beats while the men dominate the hard beats. This indicates gender inequality in some media organizations in Nigeria.

Considering the powerful influence of the mass media in shaping societal attitudes and behaviours, its practices and improvement processes especially in gender equality have the potential to impact other dimensions of community life. Thus, the media can assist in improving the status of women in the society and their advancement. This should also be reflected in giving women more opportunities to perform important roles in the media and the society at large.

Statement of the Problem

GMMP report (2020) indicates that women remain shockingly underrepresented in the media and in global news coverage due to male dominance in journalism profession globally. The report also observed that the media reinforced many cultural underpinnings of gender inequality and discrimination against women in many countries (GMMP, 2020).

Studies have documented this male dominance which allows men to dominate all important aspect of the profession and put women at disadvantage position compared to their male counterparts. (see Villarreal, 2021; GMMP, 2020, Ibrahim,

2016; Franks, 2014; Nwabueze, 2013; Steiner, 2009; Chatterjee, 2006; Rush, 2004 etc).

According to Villareal (2021) although the number of women journalists has increased in recent years, there are still entrenched patterns of gender-based discriminations that represent an enormous challenge for them to develop a career in the field of journalism on equal terms with men. Steiner (2009) observed that women are still relegated in the profession and continue to be assigned to beats considered unimportant. Even in Nigeria, Nwabueze (2013) argued that journalism continues to be a profession of men, while women are managing to compete in this masculine space.

Similarly, International Federation of Journalists Report (2024) still advocates for gender equality in workplaces for women. The report indicates that more women are working in the media and in some countries, they form a majority of the journalism workforce, but they are still underrepresented in some regions, while others face glass ceiling and wage gap in some places. Gender equality continued to be an issue for women journalists as the IFJ in its 68th Annual Commission on the Status of Women (SW68) still advocates for more gender equality in the workplace for

women. Some of the issues raised at the discussion include; more equality for women at work, equal access for women in newsroom's decision-making positions, Artificial Intelligence that does not deprive journalists of their work and reflects gender equality in its use as well as preventing disproportionate and harmful taxation on women. This indicates that equality is still an issue for women in journalism not only in Nigeria but in many other places in the world.

Since the media is the mirror of the society, the status of women in the media generally reflects their status in the society. Thus, the study seeks to find the representation of women in print media in Nigeria, who determines roles and the kind of roles assign to women with specific reference to print media in Nigeria in this 21st century.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to determine women's roles in select print media organisations in Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

- i. To find out the women's roles in *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *The Nation* and *The Guardian* newspaper organizations.

- ii. To examine the criteria for assigning roles to women in in *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *The Nation* and *The Guardian* newspaper organizations.
- iii. To highlight the challenges women faced in carrying out assigned roles and overall career progression in *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *The Nation* and *The Guardian* newspaper organizations.

Literature Review

Women in the Media

GMMP report (2020) indicates that women remain shockingly underrepresented in the media and in global news coverage. Similarly, women voices were absent from the conversations during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020 report signals consistency in the slow cumulative pace of change over time.

According to Gallagher (2002) media representations in general and of women in particular, are deeply embedded in political and economic contexts. And behind many stories lie a power structure-social, political and economic to which men are considered to be central and predominant. Rush (2004) asserts that women always and everywhere get what is left over. This amounts to one-quarter to one-third of symbolic representation, status

and salary. Udoudu and Neku (2011) indict the media for women under-representation in journalism and add that globally women are unrecognized, hidden within the margins and are relatively powerless.

According to the International Women's Media Foundation Report (IWMF, 2011) women represent only a third (33.3%) of the full-time journalism workforce in the 522 companies surveyed from the 59 countries involved in the research. Similarly, the International Federation of Journalists Report (IFJ, 2009) indicates that in many countries, women are strongly represented in newsrooms, but media are still very male-dominated in top executive positions. Moreover, Gallagher (2001) observes that women are consistently under-represented in senior editorial and management jobs. According to her, this pattern seems to hold even in the new commercial broadcasting companies, a finding that confounds the view that market-driven systems and audience goals will result in an increase of women's power at the top.

The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP, 2010) in a global survey stated that 52% of all television news presenters were women, yet only 44% of news items were written by female reporters. In addition, the media themselves

are seen as perpetuating stereotyped portrayals of women, giving less voice to women in general and women experts in particular and trivializing issues of concern to women. As a result, women may not be sent on specific assignments such as war reporting and the rules of journalistic culture may also dis-favour women in a variety of direct and indirect ways. In 2010, a fourth global study was conducted in 108 countries across the globe by the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) in collaboration with the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), an international NGO that promotes communication for social change that indicated the following findings:

- There has been a steady increase in the percentage of news items reported by women from 28% in 1995 to 31% in 2000, reaching 37% in 2005 and 2010. However, female reporters have gained more ground in radio and television than in newspapers.
- Women presenters are more likely to be found in television than in radio with 57% of TV items presented by women in 2005 and 52% in 2010. This is the only area in which females outnumber males mostly due to their look. In radio 49% of items were presented by women in 2005 and 45% in 2010.
- On the screen presence of women decreases with age. Up to the age of 34 women are in the majority as both news presenters and reporters on TV. By the age of 50, only 17% of reporters and 7% of presenters are female. This indicates that for women in the profession, a youthful appearance is more valued than experience. However, male presenters and reporters continue to appear on screen well into their 50s and even 60s. However, GMMP (2010) report indicates a little improvement because more stories are presented by older women in that year than 5 years ago.
- In most news organizations, local news is deemed less prestigious than national or international news. Female reporters are more likely to work on local stories (44%) than on national (34%) or international stories (32%) in 2005. However, the 2010 report indicates that women report foreign stories almost to the same extent as local stories.
- Female reporters predominate in only two topics weather reports on TV and radio (52%) and stories on poverty, housing and welfare

(51%). There is a 50-50 gender balance among reporters in celebrity news and in stories on consumer issues. In all other topics, male reporters are in the majority. Sports news is the least likely to be reported by women with just 21% of female reporters.

- Overall, male journalists report 'hard' news spectrum such as politics and government (where women report only 32% of stories). Females are more likely to report on the 'soft' stories such as social and legal issues (40% reported by women).
- There are more female news subjects in stories reported by female journalists (25%) than in stories reported by male journalists (20%).

Thus, when looking for women in media, they are most likely found in the soft spectrum of news making due to stereotypically segregated male and female dimensions of journalism. The male dimension includes hard news, public sphere, male sources and perspective, while the female sphere is supposed to involve female sources and perspectives, soft news, private sphere and it is characterized by intimidation and empathy (GMMP, 2005). Van Zoonen (2005) identified horizontal

and vertical segregation in the media. In horizontal segregation, men dominate in technical areas while women are over-represented in administration, while in terms of vertical segregation it is a common phenomenon in the media to find less women in managerial positions even in the areas where they dominate.

Furthermore, the recruitment of women to executive positions in the media is in no way commensurate with the number of women in journalism. In fact, women are being denied an equal place at the reporters table (Djerf-pierre, 2009; Allan, 2011). Despite several important breakthroughs in the 1990s, male dominance at the top echelons of the media industry was still strong in 2001 (3 out of 4 were men). Thus, women had much less access to formal positions of power in the media and when they did have such access, it was primarily a question of editorial power. Economic power remained in male hands and women's representation in top positions has not increased in anywhere near the same proportion as the numbers of women in journalism. Gallagher (2001) states that in the US, figures by National Federation of Press Women (1993) show that the increase of women's share of management posts is only by one percent since 1977. She asserts that if that rate continues, it will take 30 years before there

is gender balance in top newspaper jobs in the US. Josephi (2004) asserts that many female journalists still experience slow and limited progress, if not total stagnation in their career.

Further, women are underrepresented in executive positions in media organizations. The Global Status of Women Report puts the figure at 10% of all executive positions and only 3% of top leadership posts in most countries (GSW, 2009). In another study, women's representation in top-level management is said to be 27.3% compared to men's 72.7%. The top-level management includes publishers, chief executive officers, director generals and chief financial officers of news organizations (Djerf-Pierre, 2009). However, there is relatively higher representation of women in both governance and top management within both Eastern Europe (32.9% and 43.4% respectively) and Nordic Europe (35.7% and 36.8% respectively) compared to other regions (IWMF, 2010). Although, in senior management positions, women hold only one-third (38.7%) compared to men's nearly two-thirds (61.3%) in the companies surveyed by the IWMF. Also, women hold only 28.7% in middle management positions compared to men's 71.3% in the senior professional level, the report indicates a greater degree of gender

balance with men slightly more than half (59%) and women nearing parity (41%).

One interesting point to note in IWMF report (2011) is that women's under-representation was found in 26 of the 59 countries surveyed indicating 44% parity. Thus, women's under-representation was the predominant gendered pattern in journalism employment in all regions of the world, with the exception of Eastern Europe. Gallagher (2001) observed that this exception is due to different status of the profession from that in Western Europe. She asserts that as the media systems of these countries move from a state-financed to a commercially-financed basis, the proportion of women employed as journalists will fall as documented in the case of the former German Democratic Republic.

Gender Equality in Journalism

The traditional news media remain the major source of information, ideas and opinions for most people around the world, despite the proliferation of the social media. This indicates that who and what appears in the news and how people and events are portrayed in the media matters a lot, likewise who is left out and what is not covered are all important. It was observed that the media reinforced many cultural underpinnings of gender inequality and

discrimination against women in many countries (GMMP, 2020).

According to the GMMP (2020) gender equality in the news media is first and foremost a human right issue and a crucial aspect of media quality. The systematic and persistence lack of gender equality in the news media across the globe is also a consequential for other parts of political, economic and social life. Also, more stories as at 2020 raise gender (in) equality issues than fifteen years ago. The proportion of such stories has fallen in Europe by one percent, stagnated in Latin America, and risen by one to three percent in the rest of the world. These issues include career advancement, wages and salaries, access to resources, or discrimination in relation to rights of various kinds. However, the report argues that full gender equality on numerical counts is insufficient without improvement in the quality of journalism from a gender perspective.

Although, gender discrimination in hiring and compensation was made illegal with the passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Hoobler, Lemmon & Wayne, 2011) after which, the assumption was that women within a short time will acquire the requisite experience to rise to positions of prominence especially in American

businesses. However, 15 years after gender discrimination was made illegal, women were still not ascending to the top jobs mostly attributed to glass ceiling due to many varied causes such as sex role stereotyping. Thus, equality refers to balance among individuals and parties, and everyone benefits from eliminating discrimination and those in the decision-making or advocacy positions have a moral responsibility to pursue the project of equality for all (UNESCO, 2009; Rush, Oukrop & Sarikakis, 2010; Aryal & LaMay, 2013).

The Women Media Center report (2013) points out to what they term as a stubborn gender inequality in the way women are employed and represented in the US media. The report also indicated the following findings:

- i. Its current pace, it will take until 2085 for women to reach parity with men in the leadership roles in government/politics, business, etc.
- ii. Only 17 women at media and technology companies are on Fortune's 50 most powerful women in business.
- iii. By a nearly 3 to 1 margin, male front-page bylines at top newspapers outnumbered female bylines in coverage of the 2012

presidential election. Men were also more likely to be quoted than women in newspapers, televisions and public radio.

- iv. In both legacy and online news sites, women are too often relegated to writing about the “pink topics” of food, family, furniture and fashion.
- v. Talk radio and sports talk radio hosts are overwhelmingly male.
- vi. As newspaper employment continues to tumble, so does the number of women in key jobs.
- vii. Newer, online-only news sites have fallen into the same rut as legacy media. Male bylines outnumbered female bylines at four of six sites reviewed.
- viii. The percentage of women who are television news directors edged up, reaching 30 percent for the first time. Overall employment of women in television news remains flat.
- ix. Men write most newspaper op-eds; female voices are emerging in new media.
- x. Women who just graduated from a journalism and mass communication programme are slightly more likely to land a job than men, but they are also more

likely to pursue work in public relations and advertising.

- xi. Out of 100 honorees, the Newsweek Daily Beast Digital Power Index includes only seven women.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Acker’s theory of Gendered Organizations. The theory was developed observing the failure of existing gender-based theories to adequately analyse and provide an insightful explanation of the impact of gender in organizations. The theory posits that organizations and workplace interactions contain normative gendered expectations that privilege men and oppress women.

According to Acker (1990) organisations have been pretending to run on “rational, abstract workers”. But that “abstract worker” is actually imagined as a man- with no body, no family, no emotions. Acker argued that the description of “abstract worker” fits the traditional male breadwinner, so women, caregivers, and anyone with a body/life outside work are automatically “deviant” from the norm. As a result of that, the whole structure ends up favouring men and disadvantaging women.

Acker identified 5 processes through which gender is reproduced in the workplace:

1. Gendered Division of Labour ties to behaviour, physical space and established power dynamics resulting from divided labour markets, family and State. Thus, jobs are labelled “men’s work” or “women work”.
2. Gendered Cultural Symbols and Images including beliefs, dress, ideology, images, language and symbols that express and reinforce gendered divisions.
3. Workplace interactions or the gendered production of social structures and relations including those that enact dominance and submission.
4. Individual identities or the creation of a gendered identity that may or may not include the consciousness of the existence of other component of gender and its production.
5. Organizational logic or conceptualizing and producing organizations as gender-neutral, wherein jobs are available to all and jobs comprise abstract workers, void of domestic ties who are dedicated to the organization.

Further work was done on the theory in 2012 where Acker provided a framework for investigating the organizational mechanisms through which

inequality in workplace is created, normalised and reproduced.

Adisa et al, (2021) while engaging the theory observed that Nigerian workplaces often reproduce gender inequality through organizational hierarchies, gendered division of labour, cultural expectations and organizational practices that privilege men in positions of authority. Eke, (2025) added that the privileging of masculine leadership characteristics can reinforce gendered organizational expectations and contribute to the marginalisation of women seeking leadership positions in Nigerian organizations. Ogbuefi et al (2026) also argued that gendered organizational structures can restrict Nigerian women's participation and advancement by concentrating women in particular occupational roles while limiting their access to leadership, decision making, mentoring networks and other organizational resources.

Critics of the theory argued that researchers use Acker's theory simply to establish that organizations are gendered rather than empirically investigating how, when and to what extent particular organizations reproduce gender (Bates 2022).

This theory is relevant to the study as it aims to understand the role of women journalists in the selected media organizations.

Methodology

The study employed qualitative and quantitative survey research methods, while Key Informant Interview (KII) and the questionnaire were used as instruments to obtain data from respondents. Both methods and instruments respectively, were employed for strength of data and by extension, strength of findings. This is a census study as all the women journalists constituted the respondents of the study because the population of women journalists was not large to warrant taking a sample for study as indicated by the list of staff in the organisation from the Human Resource Units. Thus, there is no need for sample size and sampling technique. The instrument of the KII schedule was used to gather the qualitative data from purposively two selected senior editors of each of the newspaper organisations making it eight in total.

Four Nigerian newspapers were selected for the study. Specifically, two newspapers from the north (*Daily Trust* and *Leadership*), and two from the south (*The*

Results

Nation and *The Guardian*). This is for the purpose of understanding the role of women in the print media organizations in the north and south of Nigeria without comparison per se. The questionnaire was administered to all the women journalists in the selected newspapers, while the eight editors, irrespective of their gender, of the selected newspapers were interviewed. The data were gathered by eight enumerators (two for each of the newspaper organisations) supervised by four research Assistants (one for each of the newspaper organisations), who were trained for the job. Both the questionnaire and the KII schedule were validated by three experts and a pilot test conducted by the trained enumerators.

The quantitative data were analysed using the latest version of the social science statistical application (SPSS version 27), while the qualitative data were analysed thematically and used to support the results of the analyses of the quantitative data. The results of the quantitative data analysis were presented using tables and charts for clarity of understanding, while the qualitative data were used as support concurrently.

A total of 33 copies of the questionnaire were administered on women journalists in

Daily Trust, *Leadership*, *The Nation* and *The Guardian* newspapers. All the copies were retrieved (100% response rate, perhaps due to the small size of the population) and analysed accordingly. A total of eight editors were interviewed from the four newspapers studied namely, *The Nation*, *The Guardian*, *Daily Trust* and *Leadership* newspapers. The responses were analysed thematically and used to support (concurrently) the results of the analyses of the quantitative data as follows:

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

			18-27	28-37	38-47	48-57	Total
Name of Media: <i>The Nations</i>	Count		0	2	2	3	7
Organization Newspaper		% within Name of Media Organization	0.0%	28.6%	28.6%	42.9%	100.0%
<i>The Guardian</i>	Count		1	3	3	2	9
		% within Name of Media Organization	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	22.2%	100.0%
<i>Daily Trust</i>	Count		2	4	1	4	11
		% within Name of Media Organization	18.2%	36.4%	9.1%	36.4%	100.0%
<i>Leadership</i>	Count		1	2	1	2	6

	% within Name of Media Organization	16.7%	33.3%	16.7%	33.3%	100.0%
Total	Count	4	11	7	11	33
	% within Name of Media Organization	12.1%	33.3%	21.2%	33.3%	100.0%

Table 1 shows the age distribution of respondents. The results of the analyses indicate that most of the respondents were between the ages of 28-57 with a total of

87.8 % against the 12.1% that were below the age of 28 years. *Daily Trust* has the highest number of respondents between the ages of 28-57.

Table 2: Educational Attainment of Respondents

			BA/B.Sc./HND	MASTERS	MA/MSC	Total
Name of The Media: <i>Nations</i> Organization Newspaper	Count	4	2	1	7	
	% within Name of Media Organization	57.1%	28.6%	14.3%	100.0%	
<i>The Guardian</i> Newspaper	Count	7	1	1	9	
	% within Name of Media Organization	77.8%	11.1%	11.1%	100.0%	
	Count	10	1	0	11	

	% within	90.9%	9.1%	0.0%	100.0%
<i>Daily Trust</i>	Name of				
Newspaper	Media				
	Organization				
<i>Leadership</i>	Count	5	1	0	6
Newspaper	% within	83.3%	16.7%	0.0%	100.0%
	Name of				
	Media				
	Organization				
Total	Count	26	5	2	33
	% within	78.8%	15.2%	6.1%	100.0%
	Name of				
	Media				
	Organization				

The results of the analyses in table 2 show the educational attainment of respondents. Majority of the respondents (78.8%) have B.A., B. Sc. or HND. *Daily Trust* has the highest from this category with 90.9%,

followed by *Leadership* with 83.3%, while *The Nation* has the highest respondents with M.A./M. Sc. with 14.3% followed by *The Guardian* with 11.1%, while *Daily Trust* has none.

Table 3: Years of Experience of Respondents

	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21 years and above	Total
Name of <i>The Nations</i> Count	2	1	0	2	2	7
Media: Newspaper						
Organization						

	% within Name of Media Organization	28.6%	14.3%	0.0%	28.6%	28.6%	100.0%
<i>The Guardian</i> Newspaper	Count	2	2	2	3	0	9
	% within Name of Media Organization	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%	33.3%	0.0%	100.0%
<i>Daily Trust</i> Newspaper	Count	4	3	0	3	1	11
	% within Name of Media Organization	36.4%	27.3%	0.0%	27.3%	9.1%	100.0%
<i>Leadership</i> Newspaper	Count	3	1	1	0	1	6
	% within Name of Media Organization	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	0.0%	16.7%	100.0%
Total	Count	11	7	3	8	4	33
	% within Name of Media Organization	33.3%	21.2%	9.1%	24.2%	12.1%	100.0%

The results in Table 3 reveal that majority of the respondents (33.3%) have 1-5 years working experience followed by those who

worked for 16-20 years and 6-10 years respectively. *Leadership* has the highest respondents who have 1-5 years working

experience perhaps because the paper is the youngest of the four newspapers understudy. The results indicate that the

respondents have adequate working experience in the newspaper environment.

Table 4: Rank of Respondents

			Reporter	Editor	Correspondents	Producer	Others	Total
Name of Media Organization	<i>The Nations Newspaper</i>	Count	4	1	1	0	1	7
		% within Name of Media Organization	57.1%	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	14.3%	100.0%
	<i>The Guardian Newspaper</i>	Count	6	1	2	0	0	9
		% within Name of Media Organization	66.7%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	<i>Daily Trust Newspaper</i>	Count	7	2	0	2	0	11
		% within Name of Media Organization	63.6%	18.2%	0.0%	18.2%	0.0%	100.0%
	<i>Leadership Newspaper</i>	Count	5	0	0	1	0	6
		% within Name of Media Organization	83.3%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	100.0%

Total	Count	22	4	3	3	1	33
	% within Name of Media Organization	66.7%	12.1%	9.1%	9.1%	3.0%	100.0%

Results in table 4 indicate that majority of the respondents were reporters with 66.7% followed by editors with 12.1%. *Leadership* newspaper has the largest number of reporters with 83.3% compared

to the other newspapers. However, the results reveal that there was no woman editor in *Leadership* newspaper, while *Daily Trust* has the highest number with 18.2%.

Table 5: Occupational Roles of Respondents

			Editorial role	Reportorial role	All the above roles	Total
Name of Media Organization	<i>The Nations</i>	Count	1	1	5	7
	Newspaper	% within Name of Media Organization	14.3%	14.3%	71.4%	100.0%
	<i>The Guardian</i>	Count	0	1	8	9
	Newspaper	% within Name of Media Organization	0.0%	11.1%	88.9%	100.0%
	<i>Daily Trust</i>	Count	0	1	10	11
	Newspaper	% within Name of Media Organization	0.0%	9.1%	90.9%	100.0%

	<i>Leadership</i>	Count	0	0	6	6
	Newspaper	% within Name of Media Organization	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	1	3	29	33
		% within Name of Media Organization	3.0%	9.1%	87.9%	100.0%

The results in table 5 indicate that women perform both editorial and reportorial roles just as their male colleagues in all the newspaper organizations studied. In fact, the KII with editors showcased this as all of them agreed that roles were not assigned on the basis of gender. The KII indicate that all the eight editors stated that women journalists perform key roles just like their men counterparts. Thus, there is no segregation in the roles assigned to women journalists. KII Respondent 1 from *The Nation* newspaper said “We don’t discriminate between men and women journalists. We assigned them duties either as reporters or non-reporters, researchers or non-researchers. The only difference is the women desk where we only assigned women”. Similarly, Respondent 3 stated

“Women journalists play diverse and important roles across the newsroom. They work as reporters, editors, feature writers and researchers. Many of them cover key beats such as health, education, business, etc. Women journalists also contribute significantly to investigative stories, human interest, features and community focused reports. They often enrich stories especially on issues affecting women, children and vulnerable groups”. Also, Respondent 5 also stated that “there is no unique roles for women in the *Leadership Media Group*. Wherever you can find a man, a woman is also there, whether in a senior managerial role, a senior editorial role, women are everywhere. As we speak, a woman is the Chairman, Chief Executive Officer of the *Leadership Media Group*”

Table 6: Criteria for Assigning Roles to Women Journalists

Total

				Working experience	Educational qualification	Ability to deliver	
Merit							
Name of	<i>The</i>	Count	2	1	0	4	7
Media:	<i>Nations</i>	% within	28.6%	14.3%	0.0%	57.1%	100.0%
Organization	Newspaper	Name of Media Organization					
	<i>The</i>	Count	4	0	2	3	9
	<i>Guardian</i>	% within	44.4%	0.0%	22.2%	33.3%	100.0%
	Newspaper	Name of Media Organization					
	<i>Daily Trust</i>	Count	3	3	0	5	11
	Newspaper	% within	27.3%	27.3%	0.0%	45.5%	100.0%
		Name of Media Organization					
	<i>Leadership</i>	Count	3	2	1	0	6
	Newspaper	% within	50.0%	33.3%	16.7%	0.0%	100.0%
		Name of Media Organization					
Total		Count	12	6	3	12	33
		% within	36.4%	18.2%	9.1%	36.4%	100.0%
		Name of Media Organization					

Table 6 shows from the results of the analyses that the criteria for assigning roles to women journalists in the newspapers

organization studied. The results indicate that merit and ability to deliver (with 36.4%) are the criteria for assigning roles to

women journalists. Similarly, working experience is also considered when assigning responsibilities with 18.2%, while educational qualification is the least considered criterium for assigning responsibilities in the four newspaper organizations studied.

In the same vein, the KII indicate that there are unwritten criteria used in assigning responsibilities. The criteria are not gender based but based on competence, ability to deliver good stories with no gaps, confidence, ability to work independently with less or no supervision, ability to meet deadlines, etc. In fact, Respondent 3 stated that “the criteria for assigning responsibilities include experience, competence, area of specialization, reliability, professionalism, ability to meet deadlines and capacity to handle complex assignments independently”. Also, Respondent 8 stated that “of course, your confidence, your experience, and then your ability to deliver a good story actually stand you out when it comes to assigning job responsibilities”. However, respondent 2 stated that there are no specific criteria for assigning responsibilities. It depends on the ability of the journalist to deliver and his/her availability when called upon.

Table 7: Fairness of the Criteria to Women Journalists

			Yes	No	Total
Name of Media: <i>The Nations</i>	Count		7	0	7
Organization Newspaper					
	% within Name of Media Organization		100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
<i>The Guardian</i>	Count		8	1	9
Newspaper					
	% within Name of Media Organization		88.9%	11.1%	100.0%
<i>Daily Trust</i>	Count		11	0	11
Newspaper					
	% within Name of Media Organization		100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
<i>Leadership</i>	Count		6	0	6
Newspaper					
	% within Name of Media Organization		100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total	Count		32	1	33
	% within Name of Media Organization		97.0%	3.0%	100.0%

The results of the analyses in table 7 above reveal that almost all the respondents with the exception of one (who agreed that women and men journalists are treated

equally), see the criteria for assigning responsibilities to women journalists as fair. Specifically, 97% of the respondents agreed that the criteria were fair to them.

Table 8: Challenges that Women Journalists face in their Professional Practice

			No Respon se	Closin g Late	Favo uritis m	Delaye d/Lack of Promot ion	Inse curi ty	Gen der Bias	Lack of Train ings	Others (sexual harassment , too much responsibili ty, neglect etc)	Total
Name of Media Organization	<i>The Nation Newspaper</i>	Count	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	2	7
	% with Name of Media Organization		0.0%	14.3%	14.3%	28.6%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	28.6%	100.0%
	<i>The Guardian</i>	Count	1	0	2	1	1	2	0	2	9

<i>an</i>	%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2	11.1%	11.1	22.2	0.0%	22.2%	100.0%	
Newspaper	with in Name of Media Organization			%		%	%				
<i>Daily Trust</i>	Count	1	4	0	0	2	0	2	2	11	
Newspaper	% with in Name of Media Organization	9.1%	36.4%	0.0%	0.0%	18.2	0.0	18.2	18.2%	100.0%	
						%	%	%			
<i>Leadership</i>	Count	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	6	
Newspaper	% with in Name of Media Organization	33.3%	16.7%	16.7	0.0%	0.0	16.7	16.7	0.0%	100.0%	
				%		%	%	%			
Total	Count	4	6	4	3	4	3	3	6	33	

% with in Na me of Med ia Org aniz atio n	12.1%	18.2%	12.1 %	9.1%	12.1 %	9.1 %	9.1%	18.2%	100. 0%	
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Results in table 8 show the challenges that women journalists face in the course of their practice. The results show that the most challenging issue to the women is closing time and other factors like sexual harassment and neglect with 18.2% respectively.

From the KII, the respondents pointed out some of the challenges faced by Women journalists while carrying out their assigned roles. The major challenge is reconciling or balancing professional duties with domestic responsibilities. According to Respondent 1, “women journalists face a lot because of their nature. This is as a result of biological differences with men. They are easily fatigue and they complain more than their male counterparts when it comes to assignments that would take days or weeks. And when they are pregnant, the natural thing is to treat them with care. Sometimes their husbands complained that they stay longer in the newsroom. Our work does not have a schedule, anything can

happen anytime and you have to write the story”. Respondent 3 stated some of the challenges women journalists face as “limited leadership opportunities, fewer mentorship structures and difficulty in balancing professional growth with personal responsibilities. In some cases, women journalists may also have fewer opportunities to handle high profile assignments that often lead to promotions”. Other challenges as stated by Respondent 4 include “sexual harassment, balancing work and family responsibilities as well as coping with the work environment. For the general newsroom, I think that is the major challenge. So, in most cases, from the lower rung of the ladder, they are everywhere, along the line, from the lower rungs rising through the steps to middle level career managers and to the top-level career managers, they begin to tune out. And because of the challenges of work and family balance, so going up, rising through the ladder, rising through the career

progression, they tend to not fade away but they tend to take the back seats”

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Table 9: Challenges that Hinder Women

Overall Career Progression in Journalism

		Bi as										
Name of Media Organization	<i>The Nations Newspaper</i>	Count	0	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	2	7
		% within	0.0	14.3	0.0	14.3	14.3	0.0	28.6	0.0	28.6	100.0
		Name of Media Organization	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	<i>The Guardian Newspaper</i>	Count	0	3	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	9
		% within	0.0	33.3	22.2	0.0	11.1	11.1	0.0	11.1	11.1	100.0
		Name of Media Organization	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	<i>Daily Trust Newspaper</i>	Count	0	0	2	1	0	3	1	1	3	11

		% within Name of Media Organiza tion	0.0 %	0.0 %	18.2 %	9.1 %	0.0 %	27.3 %	9.1 %	9.1 %	27.3 %	100.0 %
	<i>Leadership Newspaper</i>	Count	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	6
		% within Name of Media Organiza tion	16.7 %	16.7 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	33.3 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
Total		Count	1	5	4	2	4	6	3	2	6	33

% within of Media Organization	Name of Media Organization	3.0%	15.2%	12.1%	6.1%	12.1%	18.2%	9.1%	6.1%	18.2%	100.0%

The results of the analyses in table 9 indicate that

lack of training and job safety are the major challenges face by women journalists with 18.2% respectively. They are followed by poor pay with 15.2% and insecurity in the country and lack of promotion with 12.1% respectively. Another challenge worthy of note is gender bias/bias against women. However, male dominance is the least

challenge to women journalists in the newspaper organizations studied.

Again, the KII respondents identified some factors that hinder career progression of women journalists. Specifically, difficulty in balancing professional duties and domestic responsibilities seems to be the major

hinderance. Respondent 1 stated that “these challenges hinder the career progression of women. From my experience in *Comet* and the early days of *The Nation*, we have men who came to withdraw their wives and they didn’t allow them to return. We have husbands who openly protested in our office and the next thing, they went to seek jobs for them in Ministries and the private sector. So, journalism is better for those who are not married, some of them achieve progression and they do well. Their career progression, if there is conflict between work and domestic responsibilities, some will just leave like that. They are facing adjustment difficulties”. Also, Respondent 4 said “so, generally, there is a limited career progression, not because of their qualifications, not because they face lower career advancement compared to their male counterparts, process of taking a break during child bearing, you know it takes a toll. At the time they take that break, their male counterparts have taken some two,

three steps ahead of them. Also, the issue of safety, because of the dangers, particularly when you have to be at the forefront in the conflict situation, covering danger stories, seeking support from stakeholders. So, risk protection also creates a challenge for women, which men can face somehow easily”. To Respondent 7, “I will just mention one; childbirth. The moment a female journalist gets married, the next thing every person expects is for the person to start bearing children. When this starts, combining it with the profession may be a herculean task. This may hinder career progression”. Other factors as pointed out by Respondent 5 include stereotyping, cultural biases, religious factors and a lot of other things that militate against women’s career progression. Similarly, Respondent 6 stated “perhaps, family, marriage, and the need to attend to their children. These may keep them out of the field at a particular time of the day”.

Table 10: Suggestions for Ways to Improve the Role of Women in Newspaper Organizations

			Women journalists should be motivated for career progression	There should be women equal in place of work	Improve general women journalists' welfare	Openness to women and motivation	More trainings for women	Others (provide Company vehicle, accommodation, day care for children)	Total
Name of Media Organization	<i>The Nations Newspaper</i>	Count	2	1	0	0	2	2	7
		% within	28.6%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	28.6%	28.6%	100.0%
		Name of Media Organization							
	<i>The Guardian Newspaper</i>	Count	0	2	4	0	0	3	9
		% within	0.0%	22.2%	44.4%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	100.0%
		Name of Media Organization							
	<i>Daily Trust Newspaper</i>	Count	2	4	3	1	1	0	11
		% within	18.2%	36.4%	27.3%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	100.0%
		Name of Media Organization							

Leader ship Newsp aper	Count	1	1	0	2	2	0	6
	% within	16.7%	16.7	0.0%	33.3%	33.3	0.0%	100.
	Name of Media Organiza tion		%			%		0%
Total	Count	5	8	7	3	5	5	33
	% within	15.2%	24.2	21.2%	9.1%	15.2	15.2%	100.
	Name of Media Organiza tion		%			%		0%

The results in the analyses in table 10 shows respondents' agreement to the ways of improving the role of women in the newspaper organizations studied. Majority of the respondents suggested the improvement of women's welfare (21.2%) and other institutional support such as child day care, company bus service (15.2%) as ways of improving women's roles. Other important suggestion is to ensure equality for women in the work place with 24.2%. The results indicate that improvement on the welfare of women journalists in the organisations could enhance their roles in their work.

Findings

From the results of the analyses of both the quantitative and qualitative data, it was found that women roles in all the newspapers studied are either editorial or reportorial roles as shown in the results of the analyses in table 5 which indicate that women perform both editorial and reportorial roles just as their male colleagues in all the newspaper organizations studied as supported by the KII as all the interviewees added that roles were not assigned on the basis of gender even though the Respondent 1 from *The Nation* newspaper stated "...the only difference is the women desk where we only assigned women". Indeed, the roles of women in the four newspapers are editorial (12.1% of the overall women in editorial roles, which is significant) and reportorial

as it is the case with men. This disproves the findings of The Women Media Center report (2013) in the US where in “both legacy and online news sites, women are too often relegated to writing about the “pink topics” of food, family, furniture and fashion”. In fact, it was found that a woman is the Chairman, Chief Executive Officer of the *Leadership Media Group*.

In the case of the criteria for assigning roles, it was found that majority of the respondents of the four newspapers respectively, stated that the criteria for assigning roles to women journalists in the newspaper organizations are merit and ability to deliver (with 36.4%, see table 6). They also agreed that working experience constituting 18.2% is also considered while assigning roles. In fact, the KIIs indicate that the criteria are not gender based (as against what obtains even in developed climes like the US, see The Women Media Center report, 2013) but based on competence, ability to deliver good stories with no gaps, confidence, ability to work independently with less or no supervision, ability to meet deadlines, etc.

The study found that challenges women faced in carrying out assigned roles and overall career progression in *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *The Nation* and *The Guardian* newspaper organizations include

closing time and other factors like sexual harassment and neglect with 18.2% (see table 8) respectively. To the KII respondents stated that the major challenge is reconciling or balancing professional duties with domestic responsibilities due to their biological nature and the stress associated with pregnancy which requires that they are treated carefully including incessant complaints by husbands”. Respondent 3 stated the challenge “limited leadership opportunities, fewer mentorship structures and difficulty in balancing professional growth with personal responsibility. In some cases, women journalists may also have fewer opportunities to handle high profile assignments that often lead to promotions”. And as Respondent 4 puts it, “...because of the challenges of work and family balance, so going up, rising through the ladder, rising through the career progression, they tend to not fade away but they tend to take the back seats”. Also, in the case of the challenges of job progression, results in table 9 indicate that lack of training and job safety including poor pay, insecurity in the country, lack of promotion and gender bias/bias against women were some of the challenges. Again, the KII respondents identified difficulty in balancing professional duties and domestic responsibilities which seems to be the

major hinderance. In fact, Respondent 1 stated that “these challenges hinder the career progression of women.” which is also attributed to process of taking a break during child bearing; their male counterparts have taken some two, three steps ahead of them and of course, not necessarily caused by men or male domination.

Conclusion

Following the findings of the study, women’s roles in *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *The Nation* and *The Guardian* newspaper organisations are not only editorial and reportorial, but also managerial like their male counterparts without the factor of gender with the exception of specific gender-based roles like the women desk. In fact, the criteria for assigning roles are not gender based, rather they are hinged on competence, ability to deliver and experience. Women performance on the job is largely hindered by the biological constraints women face during pregnancy and child birth, which also affects their career progression, as their male counterparts move up the promotion ladder during such period of maternity. By and large, male dominance, as noted in past studies, seems to be giving way (at least in the newspapers studied) to a more democratic culture in the work place where

everyone is treated fairly irrespective of gender.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are put forward for a better women’s roles and criteria for assigning such roles leading to career progression for women journalists in newspaper organizations:

- i. There is need to improve women’s welfare in terms of pay increase and other institutional support such as child day care, company bus service to take to them to and from work so as to reduce the stress and impact on their and career progression.
- ii. There is need for a gender policy where there is none (and where there is, it should be effectively implemented), to guide and emphasise the need for gender equality at least at assigning work roles.

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