



Gender Mainstreaming and Representation in News Production, Delivery and Decision-Making at Selected TV Stations in Accra, Ghana

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Recommended Citation: Malik, B. (2025). Gender mainstreaming and representation in news production, delivery, and decision-making at selected TV stations in Accra, Ghana. *African Quarterly Social Science Review*, 2(1), 43–52.

<https://doi.org/10.51867/AQSSR.2.1.4>

ABSTRACT

This study explores gender mainstreaming and representation in news production, delivery, and decision-making within selected television stations in Accra, Ghana. Despite strides in gender equality globally, the media landscape remains male-dominated, with significant underrepresentation of women in leadership roles and public discourse. The study was guided by the Critical Theory and with the use of qualitative research and case study design, data were gathered through interviews with seven media professionals from television stations in Accra. Using thematic analysis, the study explored the extent of female involvement in media operations and the challenges they face. Findings reveal progress in female participation, particularly in production roles, yet men predominantly hold top managerial positions. Women in media encounter gender-based challenges, including stereotyping, exclusion from key decision-making processes, and role assignments influenced by societal biases. Although gender-sensitive policies exist, their implementation is limited, perpetuating disparities. It can be concluded that females are increasingly gaining chances that they did not have decades ago, though this is good for gender mainstreaming. However, some top management positions and jobs are still reserved for males. This research recommended the need for deliberate efforts to enhance women's representation and influence in Ghanaian media. Promoting gender-sensitive policies, equitable opportunities, and inclusive practices can drive meaningful change. The findings contribute to broader discussions on achieving gender equality in the media, a vital component of sustainable development and social equity.

Keywords: Gender, Gender Mainstreaming, Gender Stereotypes, Gender Equality, Media, Representation

I. INTRODUCTION

Notwithstanding the significant success of women's participation in policymaking in Africa, this is still far from the fifty per cent gender equality target set by the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Morsy, 2019). The Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) Section "J" on women and the media, called attention to the centrality of media and ICTs for gender equality. Resounding the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), the 47th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2003 noted the responsibility of these industries to end discrimination against women. Most recently, Sustainable Development Goal 5 also referred to the role of media and ICTs in women's empowerment (World Association for Christian Communication, 2018). The role of women in every aspect of social life cannot be taken for granted and Morsey (2019) added that by influencing policymaking in their countries, women can help lift barriers to their participation in labour markets which at 61% remains lower than men at 67%. Gender mainstreaming is therefore vital in achieving this parity.

Gender Mainstreaming provides women with a chance to take up their position in society and to recognize and avail opportunities to generate wealth: thus, it is also a crucial component in alleviating poverty, achieving greater food and nutrition security, and enabling good governance and sustainable development (Okyere-Nyako et al., 2015). According to the Development Bank of South Africa (2022), gender mainstreaming has been at the centre of a lot of companies recently since more and more people demand equality across all sexes, genders and people at large. Even though the idea will bring vast opportunities for many people and economies, adapting to it may have challenges, especially in previously underdeveloped African countries.

The absence of inclusivity in the media is one justification for far and wide orientation about gender. According to the 2020 Global Media Monitoring Project, the news media, for instance, is far from being an inclusive space for women. For instance, only 26% of news stories feature women as subjects or sources, and only 31% of experts consulted for televised COVID-19 stories were women (Grand, 2021). This can be seen as an indication that promoting gender

equality in the media has not been taken seriously in the push for the equality agenda. Ross and Padovani (2017) opined that the relationship between gender and the media remains one of the major challenges in achieving gender equality globally. In addition, Rodriguez (2021) opined that gender stereotypes and underrepresentation in media can contribute to harmful disrespect and violence toward women. Yet, the progress to address the problem has been far too trivial to make gender equality in the media a reality.

Girls can face inequalities from the time of their birth and throughout their entire lives. Girls often lack access to health care, wholesome food, and possibilities for schooling in poor nations. Lack of access to skills and constrained employment chances result from educational disadvantages (Jamil & Appiah-Adjei, 2019). Gender is a rational way to raise the consciousness of injustices distorted by institutional systems in various societies worldwide. It emphasizes the roles and demands of men and women, rather than just on women as a distinct and homogeneous group (Pant, 2020).

According to Pajnik and Frelih (2018), media systems have always been patriarchal with fewer women in top managerial positions, less paid and engaged in precarious jobs than their male counterparts. Media-based gender stereotypes have a significant impact on how women are perceived. As a result, their chances of fully and effectively participating in public life are impacted (Grand, 2021). Also, a study by Franks (2021) shows that male experts outnumber female experts by more than 10 to 1 on Ghana's leading radio and TV news programmes (Franks, 2021). The media have been essential in the construction of gender ideologies hence the need for gender mainstreaming in the media is identified as vital.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Gender mainstreaming in media refers to the discussion of issues, experiences, and interests of women and men in light of the development agenda. It extends beyond boosting the engagement of women in all forms of media. To ensure that both men and women may influence, participate in, and benefit from development processes, it might be necessary to adjust objectives, plans, and tactics (Pant, 2020). Morsey (2019) opined that to achieve significant levels of gender equality, there is a need to consider the needs of each gender in various aspects of social life including in the world of work. Ross and Padovani (2017) noted that the media mirrors reality and shapes public opinion and culture. One cannot discount the role that gender plays in the daily news cycle and the factors that shape what makes for good news and what does not. Although women made strides in journalism throughout the 1900s, the sector has remained largely male (Sackey et al., 2021).

However, promoting gender equality in the media has not been taken seriously in pushing the equality agenda (Morsy, 2019). In Ghana, GH One Television's Nana Aba Anamoah, Joy FM's Emma Morrison, and the Graphic Communications Group's Baaba Otoo are just a few examples of women who have over the years advanced to higher positions in Ghana's media landscape, according to a study by Sackey et al. (2021). Unfortunately, even though these women hold such influential positions, men still outnumber them. In addition, women journalists are not offered the same opportunities as their male counterparts regarding newsroom chores (Meyers & Gayle, 2015). For example, Sackey et al (2021) found that although there may be female hosts at the station who are equally qualified to present these shows, most morning programs are hosted by men. Also, some roles for reporting are assigned based on gender, which can be to the disadvantage of one gender. Statistics in Ghana have shown that the rate at which women journalists are discriminated against and harassed is because of the gendered role assigned to them in society (Kabah, 2019). With few studies in areas of gender representation in Ghanaian news production, delivery and decision-making in Ghana, this paper will, therefore, bring to light the challenges of gender mainstreaming in the media and investigate gender representation in news production, delivery and decision-making.

According to Yeboah-Banin et al. (2020), Ghana's media has witnessed momentous growth since the liberalization of the media over two decades ago. What initiated the nation's return to democracy in 1993 as a little industry with one national broadcaster and mostly state-owned newspapers, is in contemporary times a vivacious industry constituting more than 400 active radio stations and over 100 TV stations. Notwithstanding this media liberalization, the contribution of women in decision-making is minimal with men dominating management positions, broadcasting as hosts, guests, analysts et cetera. Ross and Padovani (2017) opined that the relationship between gender and the media remains one of the major challenges in achieving gender equality globally. In addition, Rodriguez (2021) opined that gender stereotypes and underrepresentation in media can contribute to harmful disrespect and violence towards women. Yet, the progress to address the problem has been far too trivial to make gender equality in the media a reality. Also in Ghana, as in many other countries, the media continue to be influential in setting the public agenda and offering pivotal prominence to issues. It is imperative to know that the media have contributed largely in constructive ways to advancing women's participation in the country even though Lowe (2002) noted that the media is "the most important yet challenging area of work for advancing gender equality".

Also, the media have been essential in the construction of gender ideologies. They have a substantial influence on how gender is defined and understood. The media not only mirror reality but also shape public opinion and culture



(Ross & Padovani 2017). This paper will, therefore, bring to light the challenges of gender mainstreaming and interrogate the status of women in the media landscape in Ghana. This exposition will be guided by inquiries on the dominance of men in media broadcasting in Ghana and the exclusion of women in decision-making in the media.

1.2 Research Objectives

To investigate the challenges and barriers to gender mainstreaming in media organizations in Ghana, focusing on news production, delivery, and decision-making processes.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Critical Theory

The theory that guided this study is the Critical Theory. The critical theory examines social science with a focus on power, inequality, and social reform. The theory originated with scholars who believed that everything is determined by power. People have established norms because they are in positions of power (Qadir, 2022). The critical paradigm asserts that social science can never be fully objective or value-free, in contrast to the positivist paradigm. Moreover, this paradigm functions under the premise that scientific research ought to be carried out specifically to bring about social change. The theory originates from the works of a group of twentieth-century authors who were affiliated with the Institute of Social Research at the University of Frankfurt, hence the name 'the Frankfurt School' (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016).

From the view of Tyson (2006) and Tallack (1995), the types identified include Marxist criticism, psychoanalytic criticism, feminist criticism, new criticism, reader-response criticism, structuralist criticism, deconstructive criticism, new historical and cultural criticism, lesbian, gay and queer criticism, African-American criticism, postcolonial criticism. Also, critical theory has been understood as the works of the Frankfurt School with its origin in the works of scholars like Herbert Marcuse, Max Horkheimer, and Theodor W. Adorno (Held 1980; Wiggershaus, 1995). Critical theory stance is grounded in the belief that knowledge is shaped by power dynamics and social structures. Researchers who adopt a critical theory stance seek to uncover and challenge power imbalances and injustices in society (Scotland, 2012). Critical theory researchers aim at critiquing and transforming social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender values (Yong et al., 2021). Since this study seeks to explore the issues of gender inequality in media organisations, critical theory was deemed appropriate. This is because the study tries to understand the reasons for power inequality that exist in media organisations with respect to issues of gender mainstreaming in news production, delivery and decision making.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Women in Decision-Making in the Media

The exclusion of women in the media has been in existence for many years as research has proven. A study (Global Media Monitoring Project) spanning twenty years in one hundred and fourteen countries found that women comprise only 24% of the people we read about, see or hear from on the television, radio and in the newspapers (Alaoui, 2021). In Ghana, over the years, the media continues to be influential in setting the public agenda and giving decisive visibility to issues. Thus, their failure to consciously include women in their programming means that increasingly, only a few women get the chance to participate or be involved in public discourse and decision-making processes. The dominance of men in the media is one major thing that has perpetuated gender disparity in the media space in Ghana. In a study by Kriout (2021) that surveyed six broadcasts in Ghana, it was discovered that politicians, lawyers, doctors, university teachers and other men referred to as experts and analysts dominated the programmes and out of 1,476 experts studied, only 128 were females. This figure is even less than 10% of the total experts included in the study.

Another study by Kabah (2019) on Ghana radio and TV programming found that male experts outstrip female experts by more than 10 to 1 on Ghana's leading radio and TV news programmes. The situation in Ghana is nothing less than what the global statistics suggest. According to Rattan et al. (2019), women made up a mere 19% of experts featured in news stories and 37% of reporters telling stories globally. The implication of this in decision-making is conspicuous as discussions and agendas pushed will only be through the lenses of the men with little or no viewpoint of women. The insignificant role of women in decision-making was made clear in the findings of a report by Yeboah-Banin et al. (2020) that shows that out of 318 respondents, 74% are generally found at the lower levels of the organisational hierarchy, occupying staff positions such as senior and junior reporters. The consequence of this is that they are not able to have a significant contribution to decision-making in the organisation. Upon tuning to a radio station every morning in Ghana, one will most likely hear the voice of men. This can either be that of the host, analysts,



experts, politicians and so on. Global report status of women in the news media found men outnumber women by almost 2:1 in a study of six media organisations in Ghana (Ghana Women Experts, 2021). A recent study by Yeboah-Banin et al. (2020), however, indicated that significant improvements are being achieved. According to the findings of the study, the media's growth has been accompanied by improved female involvement, although male journalists still outstrip female journalists in most newsrooms (Yeboah-Banin et al., 2020). Also, to remedy this, there is a need for media organisations to make significant efforts to correct gender disparities. Asante and Kamkam-Badu (2022) added that even though journalists and broadcasters cannot influence who makes the news, they do have choices about the expert guests invited as interviewees and to comment on news events. Efforts in this direction will go a long way to promote gender mainstreaming.

Regarding women in management and top positions, media advocacy on these issues has also not been sustainable, particularly for the traditional media spaces, such efforts have remained at the discretion of media owners, managers and programme producers other than a conscious effort to create a legitimate avenue for women in the media. In a study by the Media Foundation of West Africa, out of twenty-five media organisations, only three were headed by women. Also, regarding decision-making at top management levels in the media, men outnumber women by 2:1. In addition to their absence from leadership positions, their perspectives and concerns are often excluded (Asante & Kamkam-Boadu, 2022). Various reasons were found in this study that can be attributed to the reason for the lower number of women in management positions. In addition, research by Brodolini et al. (2013) shows that women in media face countless barriers, such as gender-based discrimination, which interfere with their successful functioning and career progression.

In a study by Yeboah-Banin et al., (2020) 30 per cent of the women sampled are in management roles; of these most are in middle management (20%) as opposed to senior management (5%) or hold positions as executive heads (1%). Evidently, with the number of women in these positions, it means little contributions would be derived from them in the media organisations that they work in. Implicitly, an improved presentation of women in decision-making roles in the media is likely to make a difference in the stereotypical portrayal of women (Byerly & Padovani 2017). If women had larger access to decision-making in the media, they could contribute to more gender-sensitive content. With this, gender-sensitive policies will be encouraged and passed on in these media organisations. The constraints, however, are due to the socially constructed roles including marriage and childbirth that do not allow women to progress to management roles. In dealing with these challenges and empowering women to assume managerial roles and therefore have a voice in gender mainstreaming, it is argued by Morsy (2019) that it starts with the implementation of laws that empower women and ensure that their voices are heard. Although many African countries have made legal provisions guaranteeing equal rights for men and women in policymaking and have even established gender parity in their electoral systems, only a handful have implemented these laws (Morsy, 2019).

2.2.2 Portrayal and Stereotyping of Women in the Media

The media has also been instrumental in perpetuating gender stereotyping. According to Brodolini et al. (2013), gender stereotyping shows the procedure through which gender roles are reinforced in the socialisation of individuals. It refers to preconceived ideas, whereby males and females are arbitrarily assigned attributes and roles determined and limited by their sex. Movies, documentaries, print and online media have in one way or another echoed the "accepted" roles of women in Ghanaian society. Studies of gender in media have pointed to glaring gaps, including low numbers of female protagonists in popular films and an underrepresentation of women in award shows (Alaoui, 2021). This, Kriout (2021) believes contributes to the shaping of harmful attitudes of disrespect and violence towards women. In addressing these issues, Rodriguez (2021) suggested that creating news by, for, and about women is an essential step in the direction of advancing gender equality and safeguarding that women and girls can have equal prospects for education, employment, and well-being.

Ghanaian movies show women being second to men, staying at home as home keepers while the men pursue a career. Brodolini et al. (2013) also added that although the audiences are (relatively) free to accept or refuse media content and meanings, it is the media system that has the power to decide which gender role models will be visible and which ones will not, as described by the classic agenda-setting theory.

From what was discussed above, it is clear that countries in developed and developing worlds still have significant work to do in achieving gender parity in the media. The situation in Ghana is not different. From the secondary data reviewed and a cursory look at most media houses in Ghana, it is clear that women hold fewer positions in management, they are less represented as guests and analysts in programmes and news coverages do not give much attention to them. In summing up how significant the voice of women is in the media, Alaoui (2021) argued that women's representation and equal participation in the media should not be discretionary; it is indispensable. If we want to break negative stereotypes of women off-screen, we will need to tackle them on-screen, too.



III. METHODOLOGY

This study made use of one main approach to research; qualitative methods. Qualitative research methods focus on the gathering of mainly verbal data rather than measurements. It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. Qualitative Research is also used to uncover trends in thought and opinions and dive deeper into the problem (DeFranzo, 2011). The qualitative research approach has its main attention on the narrative of the investigation. It is an examination of a variable or phenomenon in a deep comprehensive manner (Rhodes, 2014). These qualitative research approaches help to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014). The case study design was used for this study. A case study “explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (observations, interviews, audio-visual materials, documents and reports) and reports a case description and case themes” (Creswell, 2014 p. 97).

For a qualitative study of this kind, a total of six respondents sharing the described characteristics were involved in the study. The ideal number of respondents for a qualitative study was stated by Proctor (2003:529), he noted that qualitative research “usually involves small samples, which attempt to elicit descriptive information about the thoughts and feelings of respondents’ on a topic of interest to the research”. These seven respondents were purposively sampled. This type of sampling is where members of the target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, their knowledge of the subject matter and their willingness to participate are included in the study (Dörnyei, 2007).

Data collection was done through the use of a designed interview guide. The qualitative design dealt with the face-to-face interview of respondents within the research scope. Other interviews were also done over the phone and through the WhatsApp mobile application. This implies the design of an interview guide. The interview guide included details that streamlined the interview process to ensure that only relevant questions are interrogated according to the objectives of the study. Data was gathered through interviews and observation of two leading television stations in Accra. Data gathered was halted when a point of saturation was reached. Respondents include the staff in middle-management positions like the head of production, supervisors, producers, editors and heads of departments and production heads. This category of respondents sees to the day-to-day production of news and current affairs programmes and hence has enough data of interest to the researcher. To identify patterns of meaning in a qualitative dataset, Braun et al. (2016) suggested the use of thematic analysis. The thematic analysis provides a technique for recognizing patterns (themes) in a dataset and describing and understanding their connotation and significance. In analyzing this study, the six-phase model proposed by Braun and Clarke (2013) was followed. This normally constitutes a recursive, reflexive process of moving forward (and sometimes backwards) through data familiarization, coding, theme development, revision, naming, and writing up.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Response Rate

This section presents results from the fieldwork after interviews were conducted. This study is considered necessary because, there are few studies in areas of gender representation in Ghanaian news production, delivery and decision-making, therefore, the main objective of this paper is to investigate the challenges and barriers to gender mainstreaming in media organizations in Ghana, with the focus on news production, delivery, and decision-making processes. Interviews were conducted with seven (7) media persons in a bid to bring to light the challenges associated with females in the media, especially in the areas of news production, delivery and decision-making. In research, anonymity and confidentiality of participants are very necessary hence, each interviewee was given a code in place of their real name. The codes used were: P1 (Producer, Sports/News, GHONE TV), P2 (Producer/Journalist, Max TV), P3 (Presidential Reporter and Senior Producer- Metro TV), P4 (Senior Producer, Original TV/Metro TV), P5 (Content Lead, Channel One TV), P6 (Senior News Editor/Supervisor, Ignite Media) and P7 (Deputy Business News Editor TV3).

4.1.1 Women to Men Ratio

Calls for gender equality have been at the forefront of human rights movements for decades and in the millennial era, these calls have become even more louder. The rise of more feminists has also helped this course and the results seen in organizations are encouraging to say the least. The participants in this study were asked if the number of females in their respective organizations was significant and six (6) out of the total number of seven (7) participants responded in the affirmative (Yes). This, therefore, led to the derivation of the theme “Women to Men Ratio”. This implies that



even females are now satisfied with the number of their female counterparts given opportunities in the mainstream media. This further means that a greater number of females are now enjoying equality in terms of news production, delivery and decision-making in some major TV stations in Accra as compared to times past. The majority of the participants (6) also confirmed that there are enough women as compared to men working in mainstream media. However, manning top positions is still the reserve of males according to the participants. For instance, P2, P4 and P7 shared the following views.

“Yes, there are enough women as compared to men but not in top positions”.

“There are enough women as compared to men. However, this is not evenly distributed as some departments do not have enough”.

“There are more men than women in almost all the departments except for entertainment”.

This indicates that, yes there have been improvements and positives chalked regarding female representation in the media space but there are still some hurdles. It cannot be entirely made out to be a gender problem, since manning top positions in media houses is dependent on knowledge, level of education, experience, temperament, leadership skills and a host of other parameters. This notwithstanding, females in the media space are considered qualified personnel and as a result, they deserve chances to prove themselves in capacities same as males. According to Sackey et al. (2022), although there may be female hosts at the station who are equally qualified to present these shows, the majority of morning programs are hosted by men.

4.2 Challenges of Females

Females find it tough in many disciplines, especially in countries where masculinity is seen as the superior power such as Ghana. The country is a male-domineering nation, where females find it difficult to break barriers. The media space in Ghana has always been male-domineering hence, it is no surprise females are facing multiple challenges as captured by the theme and in the face of gender mainstreaming, new terrains such as Ghana will present daunting challenges. As articulately captured by the Development Bank of South Africa (2022), gender mainstreaming has been at the centre of a lot of companies recently since more and more people demand equality across all sexes, genders and people at large. Even though the idea will bring vast opportunities for many people and economies, adapting to it may have challenges, especially in previously underdeveloped African countries. According to the study's participants, it can be implied that the challenges differ according to the workplace but the common factor is the male domination. One of the participants identified the domination of males in the decision-making at the organisation as her major challenge to gender mainstreaming. Also, data gathered showed that certain coverage of new items is assigned based on gender roles. As opined by P3, P4 and P7;

Due to certain perceptions and stereotypes women in the department are limited to certain beats. For instance, men are mostly assigned to cover sports beats and present sports programmes than women due to the wide-held view that women have no interest in sports. Again, due to the notion that women are the weaker vessels, they are not assigned to cover beats that require a lot of physical/ rigorous activities like protests/ demonstrations.

Some challenges are faced in the instance of coverage of certain news items due to the terrain, for instance, a demonstration.

Women are not given equal opportunities in the journalism space in my workplace and the few who are given the opportunity have conditions either most have made their name or built their brand already before being employed, they treat women as if they are being given a favour, several hardcore platforms are not entrusted to women, women are taken off air for especially news anchoring when they attain a certain age even with all the experience they have, they overlook experience and focus more on trends and following.

The data gathered indicate that, women face multiple challenges in the media space and all these challenges are associated with news production, delivery and decision-making hence, making the concept of gender mainstreaming, an absent variable in the Ghanaian media space. According to Okyere-Nyako et al. (2015), Gender Mainstreaming provides women with a chance to take up their position in society and to recognize and avail opportunities to generate wealth: thus, it is also a crucial component in alleviating poverty, achieving greater food and nutrition security, and enabling good governance and sustainable development. This is further indicative of the fact that males' voices are considered over females when it comes to news production, delivery and decision-making. As stated earlier, Ghana is engulfed in a male-domineering culture and even though positive strides have been made towards gender equality and women empowerment; chances are slim and far in-between for females due to stereotyping and the perception that females cannot be “alphas” hence, their exclusion in sports programmes and stories regarding demonstrations according to the findings. This may not only affect their chances and self-esteem but also puts them in the public light as weaklings which may inadvertently portray them as easy prey in the public light. According to Rodriguez (2021), gender stereotypes and underrepresentation in media can contribute to harmful disrespect and violence toward women. Yet,

the progress to address the problem has been far too trivial to make gender equality in the media reality. In addition, media-based gender stereotypes have a significant impact on how women are perceived. As a result, their chances of fully and effectively participating in public life are impacted (Grand, 2021).

4.3 High Level of Female Involvement in Production

The opportunities available to women in the Ghanaian media space have been already described as few and far between. However, one area that appears to be offering opportunities to females is news production. Females may not have much influence in decision-making processes but are firmly involved in production which is one area that can contribute positively to gender mainstreaming. The majority of the study's participants attested to the fact that females are highly involved in the production which implied that, this was the norm in multiple TV stations in Ghana. P3 for example noted that:

There is a significant number of women at my organization actively involved in the production of news and current affairs programmes.

From the findings, it can be implied that the majority of females in the Ghanaian media space, specifically those working with TV stations have production roles ranging from current affairs, entertainment, and sports to business programmes and this is a positive step in the fight for gender equality. The concept of gender mainstreaming involves giving opportunities to both males and females so by allowing females to produce news items; a part of the gender mainstreaming policy is being enforced. There is still work to be done but this is an encouraging start for females working in TV stations.

4.4 Low Levels of Females in Top Management

In as much as females are afforded roles in production in the media space; their influence and opportunities are limited when it comes to top management. This is the Ghanaian reality where males occupy almost all the important positions in almost every discipline. Males dominate in ministerial appointments, make up the majority of members in parliament, CEOs of corporations, and Hotel and Bank managerial positions just to mention a few. This culture of entitlement and confidence in the male gender may never be bettered and for this fact, females may remain in the background regardless of policies designed to change the narrative. According to research, statistics in Ghana have shown that the rate at which women journalists are discriminated against and harassed is because of the gendered role assigned to them in society (Kabah, 2019). According to the study's participants; only a few females are in high-ranking positions in the sampled TV stations in Accra. This opinion was shared by P2, P3, P4, and P5. In the words of P5 for instance:

Yes, we have women in managerial positions. The positions of head of news, HR manager, and HR Assistant are occupied by women. One of our two administrators is a woman. The programmes, events and radio sales departments are all headed by women.

P7 however was the only respondent who was able to confirm that women occupy managerial positions in her media organisation. She mentioned that the CEO, HR, Manager at Adesa production, and sub-Editor TV News are all women.

Generally, however, findings from data confirm the claim that there are low levels of females in top management, especially in the television aspect of media operations in Accra. This implies that since females are primarily not in positions of power; it is likely they are bypassed when issues of decision-making are presented. Their views are likely to be disregarded and thus, decisions taken are solely taken by males even though, females also work in the media space. Such decisions can be considered as one-sided and thus, barely represents or considers females and their views. Therefore, females in the Ghanaian media space with respect to TV stations in Accra do not involve females in decision-making processes and thus, are not fulfilling the demands of gender mainstreaming. This is not surprising, however, as research has already indicated that, females are at a disadvantage when competing against males in the media space. According to Pajnik and Frelah (2018), media systems have always been patriarchal in nature with fewer women in top managerial positions, less paid and engaged in precarious jobs than their male counterparts. In addition, the failure to consciously include women in their programming means that increasingly, only a few women get the chance to participate or be involved in public discourse and decision-making processes.

4.5 Policies Support All Gender Roles

Work conditions and ethics demand that both males and females are provided with tools that will enable them to enjoy working together and be afforded equal opportunities. So according to the study's participants, there are no policies that support male supremacy in media houses. This implies that media houses will support anyone given the nod to perform in a managerial capacity regardless of gender. P1, P3, P5 and P7 shared similar opinions on the existence of gender policy in their respective organisations.



There are work policies. But that doesn't limit the female staff or the male staff. We believe everyone is capable of doing something when given a role.

I want to believe there exist policies streamlined to favour specific gender but none comes to mind immediately so I guess the policies are favourable for all types of gender.

I cannot answer this. I believe this is for management. What I do know is that roles are handed to capable hands and it does not matter if they are male or female.

I cannot tell because the policy exists that supports both genders but it does not work, because women are not given opportunities as men.

The results point to the fact that there are no gender-specific or gender-bias policies and that, opportunities are given to people worthy of them. It can, therefore, be implied that, although policies in media houses preach inclusivity, males are the greater beneficiaries when it comes to news production, delivery and decision-making. Literature exists that backs this claim; according to the 2020 Global Media Monitoring Project, the news media, for instance, is far from being an inclusive space for women. For instance, only 26% of news stories feature women as subjects or sources, and only 31% of experts consulted for televised COVID-19 stories were women (Grand, 2021). Perhaps, males are more hardworking as compared to females and also outnumber females hence, their dominance in all facets of media opportunities. A study by Morsey (2019) shows that male experts outnumber female experts by more than 10 to 1 on Ghana's leading radio and TV news programmes. On the other hand, it can be down to allowing males to become the dominant force as this is the modulus operandi in Ghana and thus, females are purposively overlooked to maintain alpha male dominance.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The main objective of the study focused on gender mainstreaming and representation in news production, delivery and decision-making using selected media houses (TV stations) in Accra. According to the data, even females are now content with the number of possibilities afforded to their female counterparts in the mainstream media. In certain major Accra TV stations, more females are now experiencing equality in terms of news production, distribution, and decision-making than in the past. It might also be argued that there are more women than males working in mainstream media. This leads to the conclusion that females are increasingly gaining chances that they did not have a decade before, which is good for gender mainstreaming. According to the study's findings, however, top jobs are still reserved for men. Indeed, based on the data, it was established that there are few females in high management, particularly in the television sector of Accra's media activities. As a result, their opinions are likely to be ignored, and choices are made primarily by men, even though women work in the media.

It may also be argued that women confront several problems in the media space, all of which are linked with news generation, distribution, and decision-making, making gender mainstreaming a missing variable in the Ghanaian media space. This demonstrates that male voices are prioritized over female voices in news creation, distribution, and decision-making. According to the findings, the majority of females in the Ghanaian media space, particularly those working with TV stations, have production roles ranging from current affairs, entertainment, sports, and business programs, which is a positive step forward in the fight for gender equality. The notion of gender mainstreaming is providing chances to both males and females, hence permitting females to generate news items is part of the gender mainstreaming strategy. There is more work to be done, but this is a promising start for female TV station employees.

5.2 Recommendations

This paper brings to light the issues of gender mainstreaming and questions the position of women in the media landscape in Ghana, with a particular focus on selected TV stations. This exposition was directed by investigations on the dominance of men in media in Ghana and the exclusion of women in decision-making in the media. Based on the study's conclusions three recommendations were arrived at:

Firstly, there is the need to promote gender equality in the position of leadership. There should be deliberate attempts to put in place programs and measures by media organisations to increase the number of women in senior management roles. To guarantee gender equality in decision-making processes, this can be achieved with the establishment of mentorship programs, leadership development for women, and institutional quotas for senior positions. With this, women will be able to occupy more leadership positions.

Secondly, gender-sensitive workplaces must be encouraged. The relevance of this cannot be understated. Putting in place regulations at the workplace that address issues like harassment and discrimination that women encounter in the media sector will go a long way to ensure gender equality. In doing this, there should be a clear anti-



harassment policy, frequent gender-sensitivity training for employees, and support networks to promote fair participation in news production and distribution are a few examples of these.

Thirdly, reinforce media content's gender mainstreaming practices. By including a variety of opinions and viewpoints, ensuring that male and female specialists are equally noticeable, and contending gender stereotypes in media narratives, news articles can encourage balanced gender representation. Also, gender-sensitive reporting should be required by editorial policies, and ongoing evaluations should be put in place to gauge success.

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