Women in Nigerian News Media: Status, Experiences and Structures.

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Abstract

This study investigates women journalists' experience of journalism practice in Nigeria and reviews the structures that moderate those experiences. The thesis employs an ethnographic approach in answering the research questions. An observation of women journalists' interaction with their colleagues in the newsrooms of two news media organisations were conducted for a total of four weeks, 46 media workers (two HR managers, one production staff, 11 male journalists and 32 female journalists) were interviewed and the staff regulation and policy handbooks of five news organisations were reviewed to understand Nigerian news media organisations' equality and gender policies. A study grounded in African feminist theory and a phenomenological approach to research; this thesis privileges women journalists' experiences and is focused primarily on documenting how they experience the news industry in Nigeria.

Analysing findings using thematic analysis, the study reveals that women journalists experience various inequalities in the Nigerian news industry. Key findings are that even though more women are increasingly covering the hard beats, women journalists are nonetheless clustered in the soft beats. Contrary to previous evidence, pay equality is in theory but not practice as negotiation, nepotism and gender norms sometimes cause salary differentials for men and women journalists. The non-payment of salaries drives women out of media organisations. Sexual harassment and sexism are rife in Nigerian news companies and many organisations do not have policies and frameworks to address them, the few who handle sexual harassment complaints do so unofficially and off the records. Marriage and motherhood are the dominant factors creating glass ceilings for women journalists working in the Nigerian news media.

This study contributes to knowledge by providing original insight into how women experience journalism practice in Nigeria, thus filling a huge gap as the bulk of feminist media research on the gendered nature of media production processes and how women experience the news industry have been on the global North.

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"Which of the favours of your Lord would you deny?" – Qur'an 55:38

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My family gave a lot for me to finish this programme. I want to value my wonderful husband and lovely kids for all the sacrifices they made; now you can have your wife and mummy back. You all mean the world to me and I am indeed honoured to have you all – love you to the moon and back! To the best mum in the world (Maami; I love you) – you're God's greatest gift - and my siblings - it's great to be a part of the 5 man squad. Your support all through is beyond measure. To my Dad who started this journey with me but wasn't alive to see the completion - my prayers are always with you.

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Introduction

The glass ceiling for Nigerian women journalists…is at the executive ranks of top management and governance. (Byerly, 2011, p.122)

Why Study Women in Nigeria's News Media?

Women's experience of journalism practice has been studied globally and similar results seem to emanate from them all: "sticky floors, glass ceilings, gender pay gaps, unfair dismissal around maternity, lack of access to jobs or training, bullying, harassment and increasing violence" (Ran, 2015, p.53). The international scholarly literature "examining the gendered nature of production processes" and investigating how women "journalists have experienced industry change" (North, 2009, p.1) demonstrate the considerable scholarship feminist media production studies have generated the world over. But more importantly, they reflect the dearth of such studies on Africa and Nigeria in particular. The bulk of feminist media research on Nigeria has been on the portrayal of women in media and the representation of women in news (e.g. Ogwezzy 2004; Ogunleye 2005; Harrison et. al., 2008; Omojola, 2014) with few publications on media culture/structures and almost none on the status of women news workers in Nigeria (except for a very few like Ikem, 1996 and recently, Byerly 2011).

I was working as a news editor and news programmes producer in Voice of Nigeria (VON), Nigeria's external radio broadcasting service, when I was recruited among the 160 researchers who gathered data to compile Carolyn Byerly's 59-nation study - *Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media* (2011). Until then, I never gave a thought to how women experience journalism practice. Byerly's *Global Report* provided hard evidence to gender inequalities in the Nigerian media [women in top management and governance levels are just a paltry 15 per cent], and lack of equal opportunity policies [only 13 per cent of media companies sampled in Nigeria have a gender equality policy] (Byerly, 2011, pp. 9, 124). As instructive as Byerly's (2011) research is, its nature as a quantitative and global study prevented it from interrogating women's experiences in the newsrooms of the 59 nations studied. Regrettably, when Byerly published in 2013 a collection of 29-nation analysis and contextualisation of the implications of the findings of the *Global Report* on how women experience working in the news media, Nigeria was among the countries omitted due to "space limitations" (Byerly, 2013, p.xiv) among other considerations. So, again, there was

no critical analysis of the implications of the findings on how women working in the Nigerian news media experience the industry. This is a gap this study, therefore, fills.

Consequently, this study explores the status of women in the Nigerian news media; it examines the inequalities that exist across the gender divide, explores how such inequalities are produced, negotiated and challenged, and the forms they take in specific institutional (media industry), cultural (African) and geographical (Nigeria) contexts, as, according to Franks, "some of the hurdles faced by women working in journalism are difficult to disentangle from the wider context" (2013, p.53).

Project Objectives

This thesis, influenced by Louise North's Australian monograph, *The Gendered Newsroom: How Journalists Experience the Changing World of Media* (2009), is focused principally on the women in the Nigerian news media; their status, experiences and the structures within which they operate. Thus, the main objective of this study is to determine:

- Women journalists' status in the Nigerian news media and how they experience journalism practice in the country's news companies.

Sub-questions include:

- In what kind of social, political, cultural and economic structures do Nigerian women journalists operate? What can be done or recommended to enhance gender equality in the Nigerian news media?
- How do Nigerian women journalists navigate the many expectations placed on them: (the obligation) to balance home, family and career?
- How has the availability or absence of gender and sexual harassment policies impacted the conditions of women news workers in the Nigerian news media?

Thesis Structure

This seven-chapter thesis begins with a context chapter about Nigeria as a country, the place of women in the Nigerian society and a critical look at the Nigerian news media landscape. It provides a vivid and critical look into the cultural and industrial environment in which the country's women journalists operate. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section is an overview of Nigeria. It shows how the country's underdeveloped economy affects the smooth operations of news companies. It also notes that despite the heterogeneous

nature of Nigerians, patriarchy is a cultural feature that binds them together. It argues that the patriarchal nature of the society reflects on the institutions within it, thus affecting how women journalists experience the industry. The second section on the place of women in the Nigerian society reviews the status of women in pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial Nigeria and justifies the arguments of scholars that the place and status of women in the Nigerian society and industry have always been moderated by patriarchy (Chuku, 2009; Olurode, 2013). The last section on the Nigerian media landscape evaluates the history of Nigerian news media as well as its current dynamics and its implications on how women experience the practice of journalism in the country. The section argues that the political factors that moderated the establishment of the Nigerian news media, the significant absence of women in the public sphere at the time, current poor remuneration (Olukotun, 2017) and inadequate gender policies in Nigerian news companies combine to create an 'oppressive' and unfavourable working environment for women journalists. In all, this first chapter sets the tone and helps to create an understanding of Nigeria's economic situation, the gender culture in the country, the place of women in culture and an overview of the Nigerian news industry – key arguments that help to put subsequent literature and findings chapters into perspective.

The second chapter, which is the second literature chapter, is divided into two sections. The chapter opens with a review of the international scholarly literature on the status of women in the global news media, and gives an overview of women journalists' experience of journalism practice globally. The chapter then provides a summary of the four feminist theories that underpin this study: liberal feminism, Black feminism, Postcolonial feminism and African feminism. Basically, liberal feminism is relevant to this study as it is ideal at helping women to secure gender equality and sexual harassment policies (Jaggar, 1983; Humm, 1992; Whelehan, 1995; Bryson, 2003) that are grossly absent and/or inadequate in news media organisations in Nigeria (Byerly, 2011, p.124). Unfortunately, liberal feminism's deficiency of focusing on the oppressions of "white, middle-class English speaking women" (Mills, 1998, p.98) makes the inclusion of Black, Postcolonial and African feminist theories in the study important as they help locate the inter-sectionality of race, colonialism, location and culture on the status and experiences of Nigerian women journalists. Black and Postcolonial feminisms are significant to the study as they identify the impact of slavery and living in a former colony on the career experiences of Nigerian women journalists. However,

their inability to relate the realities of living in Africa and the role of African culture on the personal and professional lives of Nigerian women journalists create a significant deficiency that African feminism fills. African feminism is a feminist ideology dedicated to securing equal rights for African women and liberating them from patriarchy and all other forms of subjugation through ideology, custom, traditions, laws or systems without jettisoning the African culture and values (like heterosexual marriage, motherhood, among others) that majority of African women are believed to subscribe to (Mbilinyi, 1992; Ogunyemi, 1996; Arndt, 2000; Nnaemeka, 2003). African feminism can help improve the experiences and status of women journalists without contradicting the African feminist ideology that in my view most Nigerian women journalists uphold (based on my interviews and interactions with them).

Chapter Three - my methods chapter begins with a section on the implications of conducting my research using feminist methodology. This section is essentially a reflection on the ways feminists conduct research with the aim of improving women's lives and securing equality for women and the implications of this standpoint on the research process. The section addresses reflexivity (the assumptions and preconceptions that are brought into research by researchers and how this affects the entire research process). It notes that feminists bring feminist perspectives to research and are not interested in being "politically neutral" (Maynard and Purvis, 1994, p.23) or methodologically 'objective' (Harding, 1991). I then move on to clarify some misconceptions about women's studies by justifying the reason for interviewing men as part of my research even though the study is about women journalists in Nigeria. I argue that feminist research may be women-focused but can still be conducted by studying subjects different from women and investigating texts and institutions because they help in understanding how gender inequality is "structured and reproduced" (Kelly, Burton and Regan, 1994, p.33) in societies. Next, I proceed to explain feminist methodology by clarifying that there are no research methods exclusive to feminist research. Feminist researchers have used qualitative, quantitative and sometimes mixed methods in researching about women although feminist scholars have privileged methods that include women's voices and experiences (See Kelly, Burton and Regan, 1994, pp.34-36; see also, Reinharz, 1979; Depner, 1981; Kelly, 1990; Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991, Mies, 1991; Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009). The second section in the chapter is on research ethics. In the section, I explain that decisions on informed consent, confidentiality and data security were made

following the guidelines provided by the British Sociological Association (BSA) Statement of Ethical Practice (2009) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Framework for Research Ethics (2015). Thus, the institutions studied and the subjects interviewed are anonymised to protect them. The third section on research praxis justifies the qualitative research design adopted, noting that the research is focused on privileging Nigerian women journalists' voices and experiences. I then explain in detail the research method; ethnography (which involves observation, interviews and archival analysis), highlighting the fact that the multi-method approach of ethnography (Brewer, 2004) provided a creative opportunity to observe women journalists' interactions with their colleagues in the newsrooms of two news media organisations for a total of four weeks, interview 46 media workers afterwards to understand their experience of the journalism profession as well as the opportunity to review gender policies of five Nigerian news media organisations through archival analysis. After discussing the data gathering process, I subsequently clarify the method used in analysing the findings – thematic analysis. I explain that this method was selected because it aids the understanding of issues from the perspectives of subjects (Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas, 2013, p.398) by organising similarities in subjects' experiences under parallel headings (themes). I conclude the findings chapter by explaining the thematic analysis process, noting that I applied the procedure recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006, pp.86-93).

The methods chapter is followed by the three findings chapters (Chapters Four, Five and Six) which detail the original and key results derived from the investigations into how women experience journalism practice in Nigeria. Chapter Four - the first findings chapter presents the findings from two of the four broad themes derived from the findings: gendering and feminisation of news along with the impact of non-payment of wages and poor working conditions on how women experience the Nigerian news industry. The chapter argues that although more women journalists are covering hard beats, they are still clustered in soft beats and women journalists have to work extra hard to prove they can be competent on hard beats. The chapter also reveals that many women have resigned from journalism practice in Nigeria due to poor and irregular payment of salaries. The most significant finding in Chapter Four is the discovery that the assumed equality of pay in the Nigerian news media (see for example; Byerly, 2011; Tijani-Adenle, 2014) is in theory but not practice; as negotiation, nepotism and gender norms have been known to sometimes privilege male journalists' earnings above

those of their female colleagues. The fifth chapter (the second findings chapter) discusses how sexism and sexual harassment affect the productivity and growth of women in the Nigerian news media. The chapter exposes the inadequate gender and sexual harassment policies in Nigerian news media, as well as the unofficial ways sexual harassment complaints are handled. Most importantly, the chapter proves that culture and societal mores greatly moderate the handling of sexual harassment issues in Nigerian news organisations and this increases women journalists' vulnerability to sexual harassment. The chapter establishes that sexual harassment is a recurring challenge for women journalists in Nigeria, it affects their productivity and in extreme cases, it pushes them out of the industry. The sixth chapter (the last findings chapter) presents detailed information on the most significant challenges affecting women's progression in the Nigerian news media: marriage and motherhood. The chapter discusses how the nurturing and home maintenance roles culturally placed on Nigerian women affect their professional progress, as well as the concealed discrimination that married women and women with children face (with regards to securing editorial and management positions) because they are deemed incapable of meeting the highly demanding schedules due to family commitments. Many women journalists end up marrying late, remaining single or becoming single mothers because they are not 'lucky' enough to find 'understanding men' who can accommodate the peculiarities of their career. The chapter thus argues that most women who break the glass ceilings in the Nigerian news media are either unmarried, single mothers or older women without the encumbrances of young marriages and young children. The chapter maintains that for as long as the Nigerian culture expects women to handle majority of house and child-care roles, they will continue to be limited by glass ceilings in the journalism profession.

The thesis ends with Chapter Seven (the conclusion chapter) which includes the summary, recommendations, limitations and suggestions for further studies sections. The summary section reviews the contents of the first six chapters and notes key findings from the study - women journalists are still clustered in soft beats and work extra hard to prove their competence on hard beats, despite the fact that more women are increasingly covering the hard beats. Equality in pay is in theory but not practice as negotiation, nepotism, patriarchy and gender norms are sometimes responsible for salary differentials between men and women journalists on the same employment level. Poor remuneration and irregular payment of salaries continue to drive women out of the media. Although some journalists deny the

existence of sexual harassment, most interviewees agree that sexual harassment is prevalent in news media organisations in Nigeria. Women journalists leave the organisation, endure sexual harassment or give in when they become overwhelmed. Only few journalists report harassment to Human Resource Managers, albeit unofficially, and such managers equally address the complaints off-the-record. The absence or inadequate gender and sexual harassment policies as well as the African culture of silence/secrecy around issues of sexual harassment continue to moderate how such complaints are handled in news media organisations in Nigeria. Marriage and motherhood remain the dominant factors creating glass ceilings for women journalists working in the Nigerian news media. Journalism is a very demanding profession and marriage and motherhood are seen as encumbrances, especially because the Nigerian culture places the burden of home and childcare majorly at the feet of women. Women journalists end up remaining single, marrying late, becoming single mothers or getting separated or divorced due to the challenging nature of the job. Only women journalists with understanding husbands and very strong support systems are able to keep their homes and progress professionally while in young marriages or with young children. Ultimately, it is majorly women without the encumbrances of marriage and motherhood or elderly women with mature marriages and older children that get to break glass ceilings and rise to top editorial and management positions.

After presenting the summary of the six previous chapters, I proceed to consider recommendations that may aid the career advancement and generate better professional experiences for women journalists in Nigeria. The civil society and the academia need to continue to monitor and record the horizontal segregation in news gathering and reporting roles so that editors and news managers can be conscious of the problem and not limit women journalists to the soft beats. Organisers of journalism awards need to include awards for soft content in award categories so that journalists covering the soft beats can also be recognised. Journalism unions, civil society organisations and government agencies regulating news media organisations have to address the shocking wage situation in Nigeria where journalists are sometimes owed up to 48 months salaries without compunction. Journalists also have to be more open about their income so that unlawful salary differentials (due to nepotism and negotiation) could be known and the female (and the male) journalists affected can seek justice. News media organisations need to have defined, written and published policies against sexual harassment. News organisations need to handle sexual harassment complaints

officially and there is serious need to protect students on internships from sexual harassment so that negative experiences during internships do not discourage them from joining the news media after their education. On the challenges of marriage and motherhood, news organisations need to hire more workers so that women journalists can have more time to attend to their family needs. It is important to create on-site childcare facilities as well, so that women journalists can concentrate better on the job without worrying about the welfare of their young children. There is a necessity for a culture shift for more men to share in childcare roles, so that women will have more time for their careers.

Next, I mention the limitation to the study, which is that the subjects interviewed are majorly resident in South-West Nigeria, where the headquarters of most national news media organisations in the country are located. Working for national news organisations and living in urban centres may possibly moderate the experiences of the subjects interviewed. Although the findings of this study are illustrative of the typical experiences of women journalists working in the Nigerian news media, women journalists resident in other regions of the country (other than the South-West) may experience the industry a little differently due to the peculiarities of their specific locations. The chapter ends with a suggestion for further studies section, which highlights the need to study women journalists working for news organisations based in other regions, apart from Lagos State and the South-West Nigeria. It is also important to study the endemic harassment of female undergraduates doing internships in news organisations and the impact of this on their career choices after graduation. Women journalists are constantly leaving the industry; it is imperative to study their reasons for leaving and how some of them are exploring the opportunities available from information communication technologies (ICTs) to become media entrepreneurs.

Now that the reasons for undertaking the study, project objectives and summary of the contents of the chapters in the thesis have been provided, I now proceed to present the contents of this thesis, beginning with chapter one, which is a brief overview of the country - Nigeria, the status of women in the nation and a review of the Nigerian media landscape, in order to create an understanding of the environment in which women journalists are located and how this moderates their experience of the news industry.

Chapter One: Context

"The hurdles faced by women working in journalism are difficult to disentangle from the wider context" (Franks, 2013, p.53).

1.0   Introduction

The socio-cultural, economic and political environments in which media systems are located are of immense importance as the media do not exist in a vacuum. They are located in societies and the organisation and administration of media systems, their contents and how news workers experience the industry are naturally influenced by the governments, forms of administration and the socio-cultural mores existing in the society in which the media industries operate (Croteau and Hoynes, 2014). This chapter (in three sub-sections) provides a brief overview of Nigeria as a country (principally as it shapes the management of news companies), locates the status of women in the nation and presents a review of the country's news media landscape to justify how these dynamics moderate women journalists' experience of the news industry.

1.1   Overview: Nigeria in Perspective

This section reviews the state of the Nigerian nation and how it affects the news industry, and, by extension, the status and experiences of women journalists in the sector. Nigeria came into existence in 1914 when the British colonial administration under the authority of Sir Frederick Lugard amalgamated the Northern and Southern protectorates, thereby bringing together small nations of almost 200 ethnic groups, speaking over 250 languages with their diverse cultures and traditions. Nigeria gained independence on October 1, 1960 and became a republic in 1963 (Ikime, 1977; Ojiakor, 1997; Okafor and Emeka, 1998; Falola, 1999; Falola and Heaton, 2008).

"Nigerian pre-colonial communities were multicultural with a near absence of ethnic bigotry" (Ukiwo, 2005, p.11) until colonial authorities politicised ethnicity in Nigeria to entrench the indirect rule system and protect their exogenous imperial interests. They regionalised the country around the three major ethnic groups (North [Hausa], South: East [Igbo] and West [Yoruba]) with a disregard for its implications on the equality of citizens in the nation as well as the interests of the close to 200 ethnic minority groups spread all over the country (Afigbo, 1989; Madiebo, 1984; Metz, 1991). The colonial authorities neither sought their subjects' positions on the regionalisation (Nwaoga, Nche and Olihe, 2014) nor seek to foster common

values among the regions (Jacob, 2012, p.15). Even after the amalgamation of the regions in 1914 to form Nigeria, British colonial authorities continued to rule the regions independently, using different administrative structures and judicial systems (different legal codes) (Lentz, 1995; Mustapha, 2006; Salawu and Hassan, 2011). Budgetary allocations were disbursed along regional lines (Kalejaiye and Alliyu, 2013, p.254), competition over financial resources heightened especially after the discovery of crude oil (Olurode, 1999), and the agitation for resource control increased (Suberu, 1996, 2001). Nigeria is thus plagued with ethnicity, leading to coups and counter-coups allegedly motivated by tribalism and accusations of corruption from independence until 1999 "except for a few years; 1960-1965; 1979-1983" (Falola, 1999, p.4). The country has since enjoyed democratic rule and majorly peaceful but eventful transitions of government since 1999 (Falola and Heaton, 2008) but that has not resulted in a significant development of the nation or an improvement in the standard of living of the masses. There is mal-distribution of wealth, unemployment/underemployment, low level of infrastructural development and poor standard of living (Akinwale, 2010; Ogundiya, 2012; Atelhe and Agada, 2014).

Nigeria is largely dependent on the exportation of crude oil (petroleum) which was discovered in large quantities in January 1956 in the Southern part of the country (Burns, 1972, p.304). Many have argued about whether this discovery is a blessing or a curse for the country (Gelb, 1988; Sala-I-Martin and Subrananian, 2003; Mehlum, Moene and Torvic, 2006; Alexeev and Conrad, 2009; Ross, 2012; Osaghae, 2015) as Nigeria has under-developed other sectors of its economy because of crude oil, which generates "about 85 per cent of government revenues, and over 90 per cent of exports" (Gboyega et. al, 2011, p.7). There are some improvements in the manufacturing, agriculture and service industries, but all these are not fully developed and do not generate proportionate revenue, considering the prospects of the country, a nation rich in natural resources and human capital. The economy is currently fragile as Nigeria is just recovering from a huge recession that almost crippled the country's financial system from 2015 to 2018 (Chukwu, Liman and Ehiaghe, 2015; Olaniyi, Adewale and Ayodele, 2017; Lasisi and Olayinka, 2017). Almost all the sectors of the economy in Nigeria are struggling, including the news media.

News companies in Nigeria consistently struggle with the challenges of operating in an unstable economy. The majority of equipment and consumables used by news companies are imported. This results in very high cost of operations. News organisations largely depend on

industrial generators to power their companies due to irregular power supply. Poor roads affect print media's distribution of publications while circulation figures are consistently falling due to a reduction in the purchasing power of the masses and the availability of free news online (Jonathan, 2018). Broadcast news companies rely solely on advertisements as residents do not pay television or radio tax/license. The poor state of the economy affects advertisement revenues for the print and broadcast media, along with competition from online news outlets. The Nigerian media can be said to be operating in a very harsh environment (Ekpu, 1990; Idowu, 1996; Mbachu, 2003; Yusuf, 2002; Diso, 2005; Dauda, 2017) and this considerably affects the management of news companies and their treatment of employees, which in turn influence how journalists generally and women journalists in particular experience the industry. I engage more with how political ineptitude in Nigeria affects the administration of the nation's news companies and its implications for women journalists in Section 1.3. Nonetheless, it is important to note that the instability of the Nigerian economy makes the industry hostile for owners and managers of news companies. This results in the poor welfare of workers and a lackadaisical attitude to the rights of their employees. Most Nigerian news companies owe salaries, do not pay enough or do not pay on time; they hardly have insurance for workers and there is no job security in the industry (Idowu, 1996; Jason, 1996; Yusuf, 2002; Diso, 2005; Olawunmi, 2014; Buhari, 2017; Olukotun, 2017).

Now, in a patriarchal nation (Falola, 1999, 2013; Chinwuba, 2016), what is bad for men is worse for women, and consequently, Nigerian women journalists find working in the news industry hostile because patriarchy and gender inequalities intersect with the economic and administrative challenges of working in the country's media to create a complex professional environment. I detail the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society in the next section (Section 1.2) and how the nature of the Nigerian news industry affects the status of women journalists in Section 1.3. Now, I discuss the concept of patriarchy as used in this study.

Patriarchy is integral to this study; it is, therefore, imperative to promptly provide an understanding of the concept as it is used in this context before delving into the discourse. In all societies across the world and at different times, studies have shown that men are privileged over women (Ortner, 1974, 1996; Goldberg, 1973; Figes, 1978; Rowbotham, 1982; Jaggar, 1983; Murray, 1995). Men are presented as rational, strong and capable while women are perceived as emotional and weak. Men are positioned to manage governance,

economy, security and social life while women are to perform their 'natural' responsibilities of home and/or child care (Acker, 1989; Lerner, 1986; Wheelehan, 1995; Walby, 1989, 1997; Bryson, 1999; Jackson and Jones, 1998; hooks, 2004; Kolmar and Bartkowski, 2005; Smith, B., 2005; Weeks, 2011; Chigbu, 2015). This thought, about the hierarchical order of the world that subordinates women to men is what is commonly referred to as patriarchy and it is with this understanding that it is used in this thesis. It is important to note that "patriarchy's stubborn survival and its remarkable adaptability" (Enloe, 2017, p.17) to modern socio-cultural, economic and political systems has enhanced the capacity of modern societies to continue to subjugate women, thus maintaining a world with "unequal power relations" where women are made "vulnerable by gender roles and relations" due to the "complicity of entire societies" (Enloe, 2017, p.87). This knowledge will aid the appreciation of women's status and experience of journalism practice as well as the feminist theories that are later discussed in Chapter Two. The section that follows about the status of women in the Nigerian society (across ages) shows that patriarchy has been embedded in the country before colonisation and it persists during colonisation and in present postcolonial Nigeria.

1.2   Travelling in a Rocking Chair: The Status of Women in Nigeria

This section locates the status of women in the Nigerian society and identifies how it impacts the position of women in the country's news media. To do this effectively, there is a need to review the status of women in Nigeria, understand the status of women in the Nigerian news media and explore the connection between both. The history, laws and culture in Nigeria clearly define the status of women in the country while the status of women in the country moderates how women experience working in the country's news media. This is due to the fact that the media does not exist in a vacuum. The news media's location and operation within the Nigerian society indicate that their policies and organisational cultures are influenced by the larger societal culture, and so is the status of the women working in those organisations.

To better create understanding, this section discusses the status of women in Nigeria while the next section on the Nigerian media landscape illustrates how the place of women in Nigeria and the administration of the country's news companies impact the status of women working in the news media. I have divided the section into three sub-sections to address the status of women; in pre-colonial Nigeria, under colonialism and in present postcolonial

Nigeria. Although certain variations exist, records show that Nigerian women have consistently battled patriarchy from the pre-colonial era to present times.

1.2.1 *Queens, Queen Mothers, Priestesses and Power*: Women in Pre-Colonial Nigeria

> *"In reality, women can be subordinate; powerful; marginalised; and central: and can occupy different positions at different times or at the same time in different contexts"* (Flew et al., 1999, p.399).

History is replete with glorious accounts of the political, religious and economic feats achieved by women in pre-colonial Nigeria. These accounts argue that women were indeed powerful and significant in the scheme of things before the colonisation of their country (Bammeke, 2013; Olurode, 2013). These exploits are discussed by citing the history of some ethnic groups in Nigeria with records of women playing significant roles in the pre-colonial period. The details are brief as the essence is simply to locate the position of women in pre-colonial Nigeria and how this impacts the current status of women working in the Nigerian news media.

Politically, women played significant roles in pre-colonial Nigeria. In the North, queens and royal women played considerable roles around the sixteenth century. "The queens of ancient Zauzau and Daura are legendary and remain popular in contemporary times" (Mack, 1991, p.110) and there are records that the ancient city of Daura had nine queens who succeeded one another (Smith, M.G., 1978, p.57). Other royal women also occupied positions that empowered them politically. There are equally records of some female sovereigns, one of who was the famous Queen Amina of Katsina who ruled in the fifteenth century (Lebeuf, 1963). The Yorùbá (in South-Western Nigeria) had women who occupied the highest position of authority in the land. Until the seventeenth century, different Yorùbá kingdoms had female kings (Smith, 1965, 1969; Fadipe, 1994), although in few numbers (Denzer, 1994). The Yorùbá, till present time, reserve a seat for a woman representative in the Council of the Oba (King), the highest ruling authority in the community. She is called the *Iyalode* meaning "mother of the town" (Hinderer, 1872, p. 110). The dual-sex political system operational among the Igbo in Eastern Nigeria (Mikkell, 1997) empowers women to participate in politics using their own institutions (women's courts, market authorities, secret societies, and age-grade institutions) parallel to those of the males (Chuku, 2009, p.84). There are also some titles that are awarded to prominent women, which empower them above men

(Ekejiuba, 1967) or grant them authority to attend meetings meant particularly for men (Amadiume, 1987).

Unfortunately, most of the titles (in all the regions) were defunct by the nineteenth century while the few which are still in existence have no significant powers or authorities vested in them as women were gradually "ousted from positions of administrative control and public power" (Mack, 1991, p.113). By implication, women were no longer significant players politically by the time Britain began colonising the various kingdoms and empires that now form Nigeria. Men were the ones in political positions and they were the ones that participated in journalism when missionaries began establishing newspapers in Nigerian territories, starting with the publication of the *"Iwe-Irohin Fun Awon Egba ati Yoruba"* (meaning – The Newspaper for the Egba and Yoruba Race [The Egba is a tribe among the Yoruba in South-West, Nigeria]) by Reverend Henry Townsend on December 3, 1859 at Abeokuta (now in Ogun State in South-West Nigeria) (see: Omu, 1978; Azikiwe, 1970; Sobowale, 1985; Duyile, 1987; Malaolu, 2004, Ajibade, 2003).

Economically, women engaged in trade and commerce and they had control over their resources (Coker, 1966). Yorùbá women were very active in the economic sector and they were very bold and brave, engaging in both short distance and even long-distance trades amidst great risks (Hinderer, 1872; Biobaku, 1960; Clarke, 1972). Eastern women planted crops and engaged in the production of palm oil and general trade (Mba, 1982, pp.32-33). Even the women of the Northern region (believed to be subdued by culture and religion) engaged, nonetheless, in production, farming and trade (Smith, 1954; Cohen, 1969; Hill, 1977; VerEecke, 1993). Unfortunately, women's enterprise was majorly in trade; they did not venture into journalism and/or news production and "very little information" (Omu, 1996, p.13) is available about women who worked in the very early Nigerian press. The fact that women were largely absent in the media during this period shows they started late and their late entry into the media resulted in their inferior status in the industry. This section cannot exhaust the depth of agency attributed to Nigerian women in pre-colonial societies but it is regrettable that this agency did not extend to the news media.

Despite the economic, political and religious positions that (some privileged) women held in pre-colonial Nigerian, women were generally subordinate to men and patriarchy directed interactions between men and women and controlled the place of women. By the nineteenth

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century, women in Northern Nigeria were already in seclusion, not holding political positions, and were subordinate to men (Smith, M.G., 1954, 1960, 1978; Cohen, 1969, Coles and Mack, 1991). In Southern Nigeria, women were only leaders over women, not over men and women and such women were significantly few (Denzer, 1994). Also, the fact that most of the women who held political positions or influenced policies were related to men in political positions by marriage or blood (Amadiume, 1987; Barnes, 1990, 1997; Denzer, 1994; Kaplan, 1997) equally suggests that the majority of women did not have powers and only a few women who were privileged to be rich or related to men in power were able to break into positions of influence. This possibly explains why the news media in Nigeria and other parts of Africa still identify women politicians or other notable women with their family statuses or in relation to their powerful or prominent husbands, fathers or other male relatives, rather than in their own rights (Akatsa-Bukacha, 2005; Okunna, 2005; GMMP Nigeria and Africa Regional Reports, 2010; Motsaathebe, 2011; Tijani Adenle and Oso, 2014).

1.2.2 *Two sides of a coin:* Women in Colonial Nigeria

> *"The colonial order, in several of its policies, removed the women of Africa from the public domain to the sphere of domesticity"* (Olurode, 2013, p.21).

The status and position of women in colonial Nigeria have remained controversial. While some scholars argue that the colonisation of Nigeria (which began in some parts of the country in 1851 but commenced officially for the entire country in 1901 [Pakenham, 1991]) eroded the status of women and stripped them of the authority and visibility they enjoyed in pre-colonial societies (Sudarkasa, 1986; Ezeigbo, 1990; Denver, 1994; Chuku, 2009, Bammeke, 2013; Olurode, 2013), others contend that colonisation merely entrenched the patriarchy that already existed (Smith, M.G., 1954, 1960, 1978; Cohen, 1969, Coles and Mack, 1991). Still, some scholars debate that colonialism actually endowed the country's women with some rights (such as religious and social rights) which they did not enjoy prior to the country's colonisation by Britain (Mba, 1982; Denzer, 1994).

In Northern Nigeria, men took advantage of the tenets of Islam to exploit women. They distorted the laws on the rights of women to suit their plans and restricted their education, social and political interactions (Usman, Y., 1987; Usman, H., 1989, Yusuf, 1991). Northern women were symbolically invisible and absent from public life as at the time the country was colonised (Coles and Mack, 1991). The British colonialists, through their "policy of indirect rule in Northern Nigeria and its protection of Islam in the North" (Mba, 1982, p.60), in

addition to the British administrators' own patriarchal belief about the place of women (Raeburn, 1973; Rowbotham, 1974) indirectly entrenched patriarchy in Northern Nigeria. Even though they did not have significant political and social status by the time Nigeria was colonised by Britain, Northern women were further subjugated under colonialism. The seclusion of wives continued (Mack, 1991) or began "under colonialism" (Mba, 1982, p.60; Smith, M. G., 1954, p. 22) and Northern women are yet to catch up (in terms of education, freedom and social development) with Southern women who had more freedom and access to education, trade and social interactions during the colonial era (Usman, Y., 1987; Usman, H., 1989; Yusuf, 1991; Benna, 1999).

The colonial period was very eventful for women in Southern Nigeria. As at the time Nigeria was colonised by Britain, Southern women held significant political, religious, economic and social positions but colonialism disrupted all that and rendered the women invisible and insignificant (Afigbo, 1972). On the plus side, colonial authority's introduction of Western education and Christianity opened new frontiers for Southern women by empowering them with some religious and social rights (Mba, 1982). The colonial period was thus a mixed period of empowerment and subjugation for women in Southern Nigeria.

The political authority and agency that women held in traditional pre-colonial Nigerian societies through appointments, family or marriage relationships, women associations, the market, religious institutions, age grades, among others, were all lost in the colonial era (See for example: Clarke, 1972; Mba, 1982; Amadiume, 1987; Mack, 1988, 1991; Coles and Mack, 1991; Awe, 1991; Denzer, 1994). The colonisers disregarded and ignored women when establishing the colonial administrative structures with which they ruled Nigeria. "The women's titles became less meaningful, the titleholders of less account" (Mba, 1982, p.38) and their powers, positions and authorities became defunct or ceremonial. The rulers in the North, the sole native administrators in the West, the warrant chiefs in the East as well as the local township government in Lagos Colony (Mba, 1982, p.39) ignored the women and did not consult them even on matters that concerned them very closely, like marriage and divorce. Areas that were previously the sole preserve of women, like the market, judging on women's issues and several others, were taken up by the colonial authorities and their associates (Afigbo, 1972, 1978; Mba, 1982). These rendered women powerless and less influential. Women were thus rendered invisible and weak politically and socially by colonisation (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1982, 1993). Thus, by the time nationalists started

establishing newspapers to tackle colonialists, women were absent because they were already less visible in the public sphere, as they were not occupying positions that could empower them to utilise the news media like the men.

Women's economic power, which was vibrant in the pre-colonial era and boosted at the start of colonialism, later plummeted and women lost control of the economy to men. The colonial authorities encouraged the production of cash crops (like cocoa, palm produce, kola nuts, groundnuts and rubber) by men and the exportation of these greatly empowered the men above women. The taxation of women, who were already bearing the brunt of the taxes being paid by their husbands and sons, also affected women's economic power. Most of all, the venturing of men into trade by selling in the markets, as well as importing and exporting products broke women's monopoly of trade. This shift in economic dynamics greatly affected women. Men could get appointive positions from colonial authorities as well as engage in trade while women majorly had access, singularly, to trade and men broke that monopoly and weakened women economically. Women, therefore, lost the administration and control of the markets to men and colonial authorities (see for example: Cohen, 1969; Mba, 1982; Amadiume, 1987; Ogundipe-Leslie, 1993; Denzer, 1994; Lorber, 2005). Women were also largely responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the home as well as the feeding and education of their children (Bay, 1982, p.5; Ntoimo and Isiugo-Abanihe, 2014, p.1996); so, most of their gains were expended on the family rather than ploughing them back into their businesses. Men were thus able to progress significantly above women and engage in large scale trading and distribution while most women remained petty traders. Nonetheless, there were individual women who were business icons and who were able to make money or consolidate on their wealth during colonialism. But on the whole, women ended the colonial era poorer, compared to men, and less economically powerful than they were before the colonisation of the country. A lot of women started entering the formal and informal sectors of the economy, but the population of women who could compete with men economically were considerably few (Denzer, 1994). Thus, majority of the nationalists who had the financial muscle to establish newspapers to tackle colonial authorities were men. Again, women were incapacitated financially and therefore had a late start into the media, compared to men.

Regarding education in Southern Nigeria, "British patriarchal values coincided with deep-rooted *Yorùbá* (indeed Nigerian) patriarchal values, resulting in the slow development of

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girls' education" in the country (Denzer, 1994, p.20; see also: Olurode, 2013, p.21). Education was boys-centred and there were more school for boys than there were for girls; the school system was basically training boys with technical and managerial education to proceed to the industry and take over governance while girls were being prepared for marriage and home-making because that was deemed to be their place (Mba, 1982, p.61). Up till the time Nigeria gained independence, parents still had a preference for educating their male children and "neither the Christian missionaries nor the colonial government made concerted efforts to change these attitudes because they had their own prejudices against the education of females" (Mba, 1982, p.66). Consequently, more men had the education and skills to establish and work in the early Nigerian news media compared to women, again, giving men advantage over women in operating in the industry.

The reality was, therefore, that Nigerian women were secondary to men and were dominated by patriarchy during the colonial era and as at the time the country gained independence from Britain in 1960 (Mikell, 1995; Shields, 1997). The secondary position of women in colonial Nigeria thus resulted in an inferior status for women in the news media. This is due to the fact that women in colonial Nigeria were disadvantaged politically, economically and educationally compared to men. This, therefore, placed them in an inferior position in the news industry.

1.2.3 *Evolving yet Rigid*: Gender, Marriage and Work Norms in Postcolonial Nigeria

> *"The authority of the extended family, and within it, the dominance of men over women has not been specifically disturbed by the increasing Westernisation and rural-urban migration that has taken place since independence… In this regard, modern Western educated women in Nigeria are increasingly finding themselves in the dilemma of being educationally equal or better than the men on the one hand but culturally and socially expected to remain or behave inferior to men"*
> (Usman, H., 1989, p.IX, 176).

A lot has changed in Nigeria since the country gained independence from Britain (in 1960). In almost 60 years, Nigerian women have made significant progress politically, economically and socially, but they are yet to transcend the challenge of patriarchy. Nigeria's 1999 Constitution guarantees the equality of the sexes and the country has a National Gender Policy (2006) on women aimed at ensuring that the country's women and girls achieve their full potential, are protected from oppression and discrimination and are able to contribute to the development of the country (Nigeria's National Gender Policy, 2006). The country is also a signatory to several international treaties on equality for women and the elimination of all

forms of discriminations against women. Analysts have however argued that these elaborate documents have not necessarily translated into practical "changes in the lives of women and children" in Nigeria (British Council Gender in Nigeria Report, 2012, p.1).

Few women have been able to break into spheres of influence (in different sectors of the Nigerian economy) and there is the temptation to argue that women no longer have a battle with patriarchy in the country because of those few exceptional individuals. However, a glimpse at some statistics reflects that women still have a long way to go. Politics is a good sector to consider. In the present administration (2015-2019), only 20 (six per cent) of the 360 members of the Nigerian House of Representatives are women while only seven (seven per cent) of the 108 members of the Senate are women, ranking Nigeria as 178 of 187 countries with women in governance (Keen and Cracknell, 2016, p. 20; the House of Representatives and Senate are Nigeria's lower and upper legislative houses). The issue is not just about the figures or the population of women in positions; the concern is also with the place of women even when they 'manage' to get into those positions of authority.

Two examples: one in the present and another in the past will be used to explain this. On July 12, 2016, a member of the Nigerian Senate, Senator Dino Melaye, male, during a heated argument with another member of the Senate (a woman – Senator Oluremi Tinubu), charged at her and threatened to beat and ***impregnate*** her (the latter) on the floor of the Senate. Senator Oluremi Tinubu complained that she had to petition the police, the party leaders [both senators were in the same ruling party, the All Progressives Congress (APC)] and the Senate President after waiting "for one week" (without seeing any of the persons occupying those positions take any action on the threats (Baiyewu, 2016). The issue ended with Senator Oluremi Tinubu "forgiving" Senator Dino Melaye with no legal or administrative sanctions meted out to him. And that is despite the fact that Senator Oluremi Tinubu is a privileged woman in Nigeria; a second-time senator, a former first lady of Lagos State (her husband was governor for eight years and he is also the kingpin of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) (Adebayo, 2016; Baiyewu, 2016; Sahara Reporters, 2016). A lawmaker was daring enough to threaten to rape a woman in the country's upper legislative chamber and nothing was done about it. The second instance (from the past) is the frank comment of the Speaker of the House of Representatives in the Second Republic, Benjamin Cha'aha, who, when explaining the reason why women law makers were not being made the chairmen of legislative committees said: "If women were picked to head any of the thirty-four

committees, men would refuse to serve under them...Such committees would die natural deaths" (*Sunday Guardian*, July 31, 1983, p. 5, cited in Yusuf, 1991, p.91).

The reality in Nigeria, therefore, is that although there are legal instruments entrenching and protecting the rights of women, the gender norms in the country, though evolving, are yet to change and patriarchy is still very much in control of the place of women in culture. Nigerian women, like women in several other climes, can, therefore, be said to have "equal opportunities in theory but not practice" (Mendes, 2013, p.176). This sub-section (by discussing marriage and work norms) gives instances of how patriarchy is still moderating the lives of Nigerian women and why it is significant when researching the status and experiences of the women working in the country's news media.

1.2.3.1   Marriage and Work Norms

Be you as beautiful as a mermaid,
the beauty of a woman is to have a husband.

Be you one who has been to the land of white people,
the beauty of a woman is to have a husband.

If a woman does not marry, her beauty declines.
One who is beautiful is best to be in her husband's house.

When you get to your husband's house, have a baby.
After you look after the child, the child will
Look after you.

[Marriage songs of the Nnobi women of Anambra State in South East Nigeria (Amadiume, 1987, p.72)]

Marriage is a very strong institution in Nigeria (Fadipe, 1994; Eades, 1980; Mann, 1981; Denzer, 1994; Ochonu, 2011; Alanamu, 2015) and conceivably the world over. Children, especially girls, are raised from young ages towards becoming good wives and mothers in future. A lot indeed goes towards preparing females for marriage, like training girls in home keeping, food preparations and child rearing skills (Hallet, 1964; Shields, 1997; Osagie, 2003; Ejikeme, 2003; Abidogun, 2007). Work, whether it is farming, production, trade or provision of services, is also very important in Nigeria. Individuals, societies and the country survive through these activities. The reason marriage and work are discussed together is because Nigerian men get legitimate access to women's "productive and reproductive labour"

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(Alanamu, 2015, p.330) through marriage by paying the dowry and/or going through the traditional marriage processes (Simmons, 1998; Falola, 2013).

The responsibilities of husband, child and house care are placed entirely on married women in Nigeria (Simmons, 1998; Asiyanbola, 2005; Para-Mallam, 2006; Okonkwo, 2013) and these greatly moderate the extent to which women can commit to their careers and even the responsibilities that employers are (covertly) willing to place on women (especially married women). The status and experiences of women journalists in Nigeria are therefore, greatly moderated in part, by the extent to which the profession affects their abilities to perform their marital duties as wives (to their spouses and in-laws) and as mothers to their children. The current marriage and work culture in Nigeria are discussed as well as how these affect the status and experiences of women in the Nigerian news media.

1.2.3.1.1   Marriage Norms

> *"No matter how highly placed a man is, he has not attained full manhood until he marries. For a woman, she is an obstacle in the family and cannot forget that she is considered a parasite. Marriage bestows social prestige to both men and women"* (Umeasiegbu, 1982, p.4).

Marriage is seen as the coming of age of an individual and a mature person who is not married is regarded as irresponsible or unsuccessful (Umeasiegbu, 1982; Denzer, 1994; Ochonu, 2011; Ntoimo and Isiugo-Abanihe, 2014) regardless of the gender of the person. The appropriate marriage age is for "women in their twenties, men in their thirties" (Denzer, 1994, p.3) although girls marry much earlier in the North (Madauchi, Yahaya and Daura, 1968), in rural settings (in the South) and among the non-literate (all over the country). Family, friends and society generally start to raise concerns when it is getting later than the expected 'normal' period (Olurode, 1990). Nonetheless, it is more acceptable for a man to marry late or not marry at all than for a woman to marry late or be single after middle age (Usman, H., 1989; Ochonu, 2011; Falola, 2013; Ntoimo and Isiugo-Abanihe, 2014). If a man is over thirty and is still unmarried, the Nigerian society does not berate him but assume he "has not quite come around to making his pick" (Adichie, 2014, p.30), but a woman that is in her late twenties or older is pitied, seen as "a deep personal failure" (Adichie, 2014, p.30) and blamed for possessing strong personal defects supposedly discouraging well-meaning suitors (Ntoimo and Isiugo-Abanihe, 2014; Olurode, 1990). A former Speaker of Nigeria's House of Representatives for the Third Republic (from 2007 – 2011), Dimeji Bankole was unmarried

at the age of thirty-seven (37) when he became the leader of the country's legislative house. Although he was reported to have married soon after that, because the society expected a person occupying such a position to be married as a sign of responsibility (Mama, 1998), he would not have gotten to the position in the first instance if he was female and unmarried at that age. The Nigerian society would have judged such a woman as irresponsible, promiscuous or a 'career-woman' who gives preference to her profession above the honourable role of being a wife and mother.

Individuals and social establishments use their capacities to protect the marriage institution and make women do the 'proper thing' by getting married. Olurode writes that "Single women are more discriminated against once they are of marriageable age…Landlords generally discriminate against single girls. A single lady once commented: 'Do you know I had to tell my landlord that I was engaged before he agreed to rent out my flat?' Renting out your flat to single girls is taken as renting out to harlots who associate with criminals - Single men are not similarly treated" (Olurode, 1990, p.11). In a more recent study, Ogechi, 36 years old and single, a vice-principal in a co-educational secondary school in Lagos State told the researcher that "The ultimate ambition for any woman is to get married at some point in her life. . . No matter how hard you work, no matter how forward-looking, how upwardly mobile, if you're not married, [people] still look down on you. Even if it is your choice to remain single, *they will think there is something very bad about you, which prevents men from coming for your hand*" (Okeke-Ihejirika, 2004, p.82, emphasis mine).

The implication of these marriage norms is that single women news workers may be pressured to sacrifice their jobs to get married or keep their homes. They may also be pressured to slow down professionally to create more time for their relationships or marriages which may ultimately affect their professional progress. Also, women news workers who may be financially comfortable and socially famous may not be regarded by some as good wives as they may be deemed career women who will not have time for their husbands and the homes. Just like some Nigerian men feel intimidated by single women who drive cars (Ntoimo and Isiugo-Abanihe, 2014, p.1996), men might also feel intimidated by unmarried women journalists occupying top editorial positions. Single women journalists may, therefore, unconsciously or deliberately "slow down" to be able to get married.

1.2.3.1.2   Work Norms

> *"It is not in our culture for women not to work. Women who refuse to work are called 'Alabodo' [a lazy woman who prefers sex and food only]* (Yusuff, 2015, p.213).

Work norms in Nigeria as they pertain to gender are as interesting as the marriage norms because of the paradox inherent in the culture about women's work. The paradox is this: women can work; in fact, women should and must work, but the work must not prevent them from husband, house and child care; neither should it place them above the husband (Fapohunda, 1982). It may seem a little awkward but the studies discussed below clarify it.

Women have always worked in Nigeria, including during the pre-colonial and colonial periods. Studies in Nigerian history have shown women (across all Nigerian cultures – from the North to the South) working either as farmers, local food and supplies producers and retailers, market women, large scale traders, including importation and exportation as well as providers of services (Boserup, 1970; Bay, 1982; Strobel, 1982; Sudarkasa, 1986; Usman, H., 1989; Pittin, 1991; Shields, 1997; Cornwall, 2007; Ogunlela and Mukhtar, 2009). In postcolonial Nigeria, women have formed a large part of the labour force and there is hardly any sector of the economy that does not have women working in them; the population of women are, however, low in some fields due to patriarchy and gender norms. Nonetheless, women have been able to break into almost all spheres of influence in the country (see for example: Pittin, 1991; Fuwape and Popoola, 2005; Ogbogu, 2011; Akinjobi-Babatunde, 2015).

The Nigerian culture abhors women not working. Several cultures have different derogatory names for women who are house wives, homemakers or 'stay-at-home mums' (Yusuff, 2015, p.213). The economic condition in Nigeria is also tough. Men are consciously looking towards marrying women who can share in the financial responsibilities and contribute to the family's economic wellbeing (Ntoimo and Isiugo-Abanihe**,** 2014, p.1996; Yusuff, 2015). Researchers have noted that women contribute significantly to the family upkeep in Nigeria, estimating "the average female contribution to household expenditures to be around 50 per cent of total household expenditures" (Staveren and Odebode, 2007, p.916).

Relating these findings to women journalists' career, therefore, we can say that the Nigerian society does not explicitly see anything wrong in being a journalist or working, but the culture is against working late into the night, working on weekends and public holidays,

travelling and being away from the family and other aspects of the job that prevent or hinder women journalists from performing their culturally sanctioned responsibilities. The journalism profession is particularly challenging for women in Nigeria because it does not operate within the 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. schedule that allow women do their gendered responsibilities of taking care of the home, raising kids and attending to the physical and social needs of the husband.

Now that the status of women in Nigeria and its impact on the position of women in the country's news industry has been discussed, the next sub-section subsequently analyses how the state of the Nigerian nation affect the administration of Nigerian news companies and the resultant effect on the women working in the country's news media.

1.3 Nigerian Media Landscape: *A Reflection of the Nation*

> *"Like Siamese twins, the history of journalism is congenitally bound to the history of the nation"* (Williams, 2014, p.17).

This section (in three segments) provides an overview of the Nigerian news media; it reflects on how the socio-political and economic situation of the country impacts news companies and the resultant effect on the location of women journalists in the industry. Understanding the Nigerian news media landscape will help to create an appreciation of the professional environment in which women journalists in the country operate, as well as how this environment moderates their industry experiences and career progression. The first sub-section discusses the history of the Nigerian news media and how its dynamics affect the place of women in the industry. The second sub-section reviews Nigeria's political system and how it moderates the status of women journalists while the third and last sub-section reviews salary challenges in Nigeria's news companies and how it is driving women out of the industry.

1.3.1 *Poor Start*: The Creation of the Nigerian News Media and the Absence of Women

> *"Nigerian journalism was thus created by anti-colonial protest, baptised in the waters of nationalist propaganda, and matured in party politics."* (Golding and Elliott, 1979, p.31)

This section is about the origin of the Nigerian news media and its implications for the status of women in the industry. The media evolved in Nigeria at the time British Christian missionaries were establishing themselves in the country for proselytisation (Sobowale, 1985,

Ajibade, 2003), the British traders were transporting the natural resources and agricultural produce needed for Britain and Europe's development from the country, and the forces of Imperial Britain were establishing military bases and administrative control posts to colonise different sections of the nation later to be amalgamated (in 1914) as Nigeria (Uche, 1989; Falola, 1999; Malaolu, 2004).

Although the first newspaper in Nigeria, *Iwe-Irohin*, was published in 1859 (Ajibade, 2003), the "emergence of modern Nigeria in 1914" (Omu, 1978, p.39) paved the way for a vibrant media scene, and numerous nationalists established newspapers [like Sir Akitoye Ajasa (*Nigerian Pioneer*, 1914), Ernest Sese Ikoli (*African Messenger*, 1921), Herbert Macaulay (*Lagos Daily News*, 1925), Malam Abubakar Imam (*Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo, 1939)*, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe (*West African Pilot*, 1937), among others] for the propagation of self-government, nationalist agitations and to counter the excesses of colonial regimes, like excessive taxation, the repudiation of Nigerian religions, languages and traditional-political institutions, oppression of Nigerians and abuse of their rights among others (see Omu, 1978, Falola, 1999; Malaolu, 2004; Daramola, 2013).

The development of the broadcast media was not as rapid as the print media. Nonetheless, its establishment and progress is no less political. Broadcasting commenced in Nigeria in 1932 when "Lagos began to relay the British Empire Service from Daventry, England" (Uche, 1989, p.36). However, as soon as regions (Northern, Western and Eastern) were established in preparation for the country's independence, the indigenous regional governments swiftly established their broadcasting systems to tackle colonial authority's exogenous broadcasting policies and to project their regional cultures, policies and political parties (Uche, 1989). Essentially, the early Nigerian news media were inevitably political (Omu, 1978, p.11). The news media served as watchdogs to the colonial administrations and sensitised the people on the need to oppose the imperialists and fight for self-governance. Unfortunately, and as demonstrated in Section 1.2, women were not key players at this critical point in the history of the media because the social and gender norms in colonial Nigeria did not encourage women to practise the "nationalist and agitational journalism" (Omu, 1996, p.13) that was seen as too dangerous and daring for women, who were perceived to be weak, needed protection and expected to tend to the home and children (Denzer, 1994; Omenugha, 2005; Omadjohwoefe, 2011; Bammeke, 2013; Olurode, 2013).

It would not be correct, however, to assume that women were completely absent from the media scene in colonial Nigeria. There were few women who made their marks although "very little information" (Omu, 1996, p.13) is available about them in the literature. There is a record of a Miss F. Ronke Ajayi who edited *Nigerian Daily Mail* that was published in 1931 (Omu, 1978, p.67) but she was known as the friend of the publisher, H. Antus Williams and "there were those who saw her appointment as a joke" (Omu, 1996, p.13). By the 1950s, women had gained considerable entry into Nigerian journalism (Ikem, 1996, p.189) but the majority of them were writing features as well as women content and gossip pages. Some of the columns or pages were titled "As I see it" by A. O. Alakija of *Daily Times*, "Women's Corner" by Eve, *Pilot* Newspaper's "Milady's Bower" among others (see Coker, 1952).

In all, women were significantly absent from the media scene and even when they were given opportunities, it was on the soft beats where 'critical' and/or dangerous reporting was not perceived to be taking place (Ikem, 1996). The significance of this for the status of women journalists in Nigeria is that women did not join the media as early as men and so they had a late start/entry into the industry. They were also assigned to low level and less significant beats when they eventually joined. Hence, this can be said to be the foundation of the inferior position of women in the Nigerian news media today, as the industry was established when very few women were involved in governance and the economy, and significantly absent from the public sphere.

1.3.2 Stragglers*: Women Journalists in a Struggling News Industry*

> *"Nigeria's development as a nation state has similarly influenced the way and manner of the organisation, administration and contents of her mass media systems"* (Uche, 1989, ix).

This section is about the state of the Nigerian news media post-independence and how it impacts the status of women journalists in the country. Nigeria gained independence in 1960 but the country was under military rule from 1966 (with a very short interregnum, 1979-1983) until 1999 when the country returned to democratic governance (Falola, 1999, p.4). The media were adversarial to the different military regimes and their stance to the repressive governments was aggressive. The country's media and journalists were, therefore, constantly under persecution. The media's overt war with military regimes led to the assassination of some journalists[1], the incarceration of many others[2], the proscription of newspapers

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[1] Dele Giwa of *Newswatch* Magazine "by a parcel bomb in his home" – Unaegbu, 2017, p.172.

(Abayomi, 2003), the take-over of media organisations, the prevention of newspapers from circulating their publications as well as the enactment of several obnoxious decrees[3] to curtail the activities of the news media (see Omu, 1978, Uche, 1989, Abayomi, 2003; Okoye, 2003, Malaolu, 2004).

Although the media were vibrant and fought for the progress of the nation, the instability that characterised the years between 1960 and 1999 did not create a situation where women journalists could actively demand equity and equality in the news media when the entire industry was dealing with repressive governments, killings and imprisonment of journalists, financial sanctions on adversarial media, heavy taxation, proscriptions and seizure of publications among several other suppressive tactics from military regimes as well as some corrupt democratic administrations. Women journalists were assigned to the "quiet and safe beats" (Ikem, 1996, p.190; see also: Unaegbu, 2017, p.172) to keep them away from the violence that the journalists covering the hard beats were exposed to. African feminists have noted that their feminism is still very concerned with achieving good governance on the continent (Mikell, 1997, p.4) and this usually diminishes the need to focus on challenging the inequalities that women face in different sectors, especially in the news media, where the manifestations of these inequalities were not immediately perceptible.

Despite the seemingly hopeless situation, Nigerian women did not lose their agency. The period between 1960, when Nigeria gained independence, and 1999, when the country returned to stable democratic governance, was nonetheless remarkable for the status of women journalists as they gained more entry into the news media, broke glass ceilings and made significant contributions to the journalism profession (Ikem, 1996). The creation of women pages by almost all newspapers and magazines gave women inroads into the media with many becoming women page editors and editors of soft desks and publications as well as editors of magazines in the 1970s to 1990s[4]. Dr. Doyin Abiola became the first female

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[2] Ray Ekpu (*Newswatch*), Agwu Okpanku, Henry Onyedike, Minere Amakiri, Tunde Thompson, Nduka Irabor, Ayo Adedun (*Sketch* Editor), Tunji Oseni, Ajibade Thomas (*Daily Express* Editor), Edward Aderinokun (*Daily Express*), Theo Ola (*Daily Times*), Alhaji Babatunde Jose (*Daily Times*), Laban Namme (*Daily Times*) (see Abayomi, 2003; Okoye, 2003).

[3] Like the Seditious Meeting Act No. 8 of 1961; the Official Secrets Act of 1962; the Defamation Amendment Act No. 1 of 1963; the Newspaper Amendment Act of 1964; Circulation of Newspapers Decree, 1966, Newspapers (Prohibition of Circulation) Decree, 1967; Public Officers (Protection Against False Accusation) Decree, 1979; State Security (Detention of Persons) Decree No 2 of 1984; Public Officers (Protection Against False Accusation) Decree No. 4, 1984; Decree No. 43 of 1999.

[4] For example; Lizzy Ikem – *Home Studies*, Ms. Toyin Johnson – *Woman's World*, Medilin Tadlor and Lola Olakunrin of *Poise*, May Ezekiel Mofe-Damijo (MEE) – Quality Magazine and Classique Magazine) and title

editor of a national newspaper, the *National Concord*, in 1980 – this is late both for Sub-Saharan Africa as well as the global North because women were already assuming management and editorial positions in Ghana in the early 1960s (Akrofi-Quarcoo 2006; Gadzekpo, 2013) and much earlier in the West (Franks, 2013). A female journalism pressure group - the Nigerian Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) - was created in 1989 (Ikem, 1996; Omu, 1996). Many journalism and mass communication courses were developed in polytechnics and universities (Akinfeleye, 2011, p.35), female students became preponderant in the journalism, media and communication departments (Domatob, 1988; Emenyeonu, 1991) and more women (compared to the colonial period) entered the news media.

Media scholars have, however, been fast to show that this progress, although remarkable; do not indicate that women journalists have achieved equality with their male counterparts in the profession. Women were largely seen as only capable of handling the soft beats effectively (Omu, 1996) and the efforts of remarkable women were rubbished as opportunities or favouritism. For instance, Dr. Doyin Abiola, the first woman editor of a national newspaper in Nigeria, the *National Concord* was perceived to have attained the position because her husband was the publisher, despite possessing the qualifications and experience to merit the position (Ikem, 1996, p.191). This strikes at the core of the nepotism debate in Nigeria where it is easier to get to a position if you know or are related to people in power and authority. This is not to diminish her achievement but to highlight the fact that she might not have attained the position (regardless of her competence) without the right contacts.

Nigeria has been under stable democratic rule since 1999 and that has created an enabling environment for stability and growth in the media industry as well as freedom of the press. The passage of the Freedom of Information Act, 2011 has also further empowered the media to perform their roles (Omotayo, 2015). It is important to note however, that the freedom of the press is not absolute as the rights of media organisations and journalists are still abused even in the present administration (2015-2019). On January 19, 2017, the Publisher of *Premium Times* Newspaper, Dapo Olorunyomi and the newspaper's judiciary correspondent, Evelyn Okakwu were arrested by plain-clothed police officers after the property of the news organisation was searched. Police spokesman, Don Awunah, told *Premium Times* earlier the

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editors (e.g., Ms. Modupe Ajayi- *Weekend Times*, Ms. Amma Ogan – *The Guardian on Sunday*, Rose Umoren – *Business Concord*, Bilikisu Yusuf - *Sunday Triumph*).

raid and the arrests were carried out following complaints filed by lawyers to the Chief of Army Staff, Brig.-Gen. Tukur Buratai, that the news medium published some reports the Army Chief perceived as defamatory to his person, hostile to the Nigerian Army and favourable to Boko Haram, a terrorist group in the country. They were detained for hours before their eventual release without being charged to court (Ogundipe, 2017). Similar arrests have been made of bloggers in March, 2017, ordinary citizens and even former government officials in April, 2017 (see Sahara Reporters, 2017). On May 12, 2016, *The Nation* reporter, Sampson Unamka, was alleged to have been slapped severally by police officers, and threatened to be charged for attempting to take pictures of a police officer who was beating up a motorist and a passenger in Mushin area of Lagos State (MFWA, 2016).

Unfortunately, a stable political system is not all that is required to create an equitable media industry and a favourable professional environment for women. The Nigerian media system, although freer and operating in a more stable political and socio-economic system, is still dealing with numerous professional, organisational and administrative challenges that undermine the ability of women journalists to remain in the industry, break glass ceilings and rise to top editorial and management positions. Some of these challenges are occasional arrest and intimidation of journalists, poor infrastructural facilities and social amenities, high cost of production, ethical issues, low advertisement revenue, editorial interference, inadequate technology, poor working conditions for journalists and above all, the inconsistent or non-payment of journalists' salaries by media administrators (see Olukotun, 2017).

Unlike the situation in most countries where women journalists' challenge with remuneration is unequal wages based on gender (Byerly, 2011, 2013), the women journalists in Nigerian news companies deal with something more complex: the non-payment of salaries. Non-payment, irregular or delay in paying remuneration has become a norm in the Nigerian news industry (Olukotun, 2017). This problem seriously impacts how women (and men) journalists experience the industry. The section below discusses the precarious wage situation in the Nigerian news media and shows how it affects women journalists (more than their male colleagues) as it is one of the reasons some women journalists leave the industry (as shown in Section 4.2).

1.3.3 The (Un)Paid Piper: Administrative Challenges Affecting Nigerian Journalists

> *"Across the industry, working conditions for Nigerian journalists and other media professionals are poor. Salaries are low, irregular and in some cases, inexistent. This is not only true of private media organisations. Even journalists of state-owned media are underpaid and complain of lack of career prospects. Many workers in the state-owned media are also recruited as casual staff and work under even more pathetic conditions"* (African Media Barometer, 2011, p.52).

The challenge of keeping up with the fast-changing global technological advancements in media and communication is one major problem affecting the media in Nigeria (Mbachu, 2003). The media also have to confront the unstable economy and poor infrastructural facilities (Dauda, 2017) that make it difficult for news organisations to survive in a "harsh economic environment" (Ekpu, 1990, p.116) like Nigeria. The reality is that "Nigeria's structural defects" are adversely affecting the media industries' "sectoral performance" (Diso, 2005, p.286) and the country's journalists "are not immune to the generally oppressive socioeconomic conditions of the country" (Diso, 2005, p.289). Nigerian journalists continuously confront "poor remuneration, ineffective welfare system, insecurity and undesirable operating facilities [like transportation, information gathering and transmission equipment, etc.]" (Yusuf, 2002, p.158). One of the major challenges journalists encounter in Nigeria, which has a significant impact on the way journalists in general and women journalists (in particular) experience the industry, is that of wages. A lot of media organisations in Nigeria owe salaries, do not pay in time or do not pay enough (Idowu, 1996; Jason, 1996; Yusuf, 2002; Diso, 2005; Olawunmi, 2014; *Premium Times*, 2017; Olukotun, 2017).

The shocking reality about the wage situation is the fact that the Nigerian media is one of the sectors most notorious for owing salaries in the country. On January 17, 2017, the then Chairman of the Lagos Council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists [NUJ], Mr. Deji Elumoye, in a statement, threatened to sue media organisations for defaulting in the payment of their workers (Buhari, 2017). It is important to note that such threats are rare as the media "are very silent about themselves" (Omu, 1978, p. ix) and media regulatory authorities in the country are yet to do anything significant to address the precarious wage situation.

There is need to make a clarification here, as both women and men journalists experience salary problems, since Nigerian news companies do not discriminate in paying journalists. However, the problem affects women journalists more because the challenges of managing

the home with their career do not give them the opportunity to generate income from other sources like a lot of male journalists – a point I will discuss in detail in Section 4.2. I now discuss the dynamics that enable male journalists earn money through alternative means and remain longer in the industry compared to women journalists.

In order to remain in the industry and perform their functions despite the non-payment of salaries, journalists and the Nigerian society have devised furtive ways for media workers to survive (Ali, 2013; Nwabueze, 2010; Okpo, 2013). Three examples of such are the use of brown envelopes, beat associations and moonlighting, although experts have argued that these do not affect Nigeria alone, but they permeate "much of Africa" (Gade, Nduka and Dastgeer, 2017, p.5) and many other parts of the world.

'Brown envelope' symbolises the practice of giving journalists money, freebies and other incentives to cover/report an event and ensure the publication or broadcast of such event in their media (Kasoma, 2010; Skjerdal, 2010). It also involves giving money or other gifts by news sources, political figures, governments or organisations to induce positive coverage in the media (Okoro and Chinweobo-Onuoha, 2013; Owolabi, 2014). The brown envelope syndrome has become so engrained in the Nigerian and African culture that it has become the norm to provide brown envelopes (cash), honorarium, freebies and/or gifts for journalists when inviting them for press briefings/conferences, events coverage, new product launches among others. In fact, not providing these incentives would be the aberration (Ekeanyanwu and Obianigwe, 2012; Okoro and Chinweobo-Onuoha, 2013). Now, brown envelopes alone do not justify the (unethical) income differentials for male and female journalists but beat associations do.

Beat associations are the handmaidens of brown envelopes in the Nigerian media. "Beat reporting refers to a system where journalists are deployed to some locations or subject-specific areas for news coverage over a period and on a consistent basis" (Olawunmi, 2014, p.56). This in itself is not a bad thing. It enables professionalism, in-depth reporting and provides easy access to the journalists covering the beats by news sources or organisations. Journalists also have faster access to news releases, among others. Almost every beat has an association of journalists covering it in Nigeria. So critical are beat associations that some are more lucrative than others, and journalists compete to be posted to the more lucrative ones [like economy, banking, aviation, motoring, state and legislative houses among others]

(Agbese, 2001) by the news editor or other desk editors who have the prerogatives (Olawunmi, 2014, p.62). There is intense beat politics in Nigerian journalism, such that beat deployments "can be a form of humiliation or promotion" or "a reward and sanction system" (Olawunmi, 2014, p.62). It is only members of the beat associations that can gain access to beat events and get their share of the brown envelopes for the coverage of such events. It may also take a while for a new journalist posted to a new beat to get registered or 'accepted' on the beat – by implication, get access to receive brown envelopes and freebies distributed to registered beat members. Beat associations operate like a "closed shop" and they can "shut out a replacement correspondent deployed to a beat if they are unhappy with the removal of the former member" (Olawunmi, 2014, p.65). Journalists and beat associations request news sources and organisations they cover to sponsor trainings; some of them give awards to such sponsors (news sources) while other news sources on specific beats openly pay the beat transport allowance of reporters and give them emoluments because even journalists posted to beats "like their generalist colleagues do not earn regular pay" (Olawunmi, 2014, p.64). Female journalists posted to hard beats perceived as male-inclined may have issues with being accepted by 'the boys' and not 'benefit' adequately financially from the largesse of the beats. This could worsen women journalists' financial situation and deter them from staying longer in the news media. I discuss this in more detail in Section 4.2.

Now, journalists who have spent considerable time on beats usually become engaged as public relations experts to news sources or organisations operating within those beats, while still retaining their journalism jobs. They write news/press releases for them, syndicate and ensure that the other journalists on their beats report and publish the releases as well as get other journalists to attend the press conferences of their partners (Idowu, 1996, p.202). Even though this is deemed unethical and seen to affect the ability of journalists to be objective, moonlighting is very common in Nigeria and perhaps the world over (Limor and Himelboim, 2009; Mabweazara, 2010; Fröhlich, Koch and Obermaier, 2013). More male journalists get these roles (because they have enough time to hang around news sources, they are not termed wayward by doing such and they have extra time on their hands to also perform the functions associated with such roles) because they do not have to worry about tending to the children and maintaining the home, unlike female journalists.

The unfortunate remuneration situation in the journalism industry in Nigeria makes journalists vulnerable to seeking money from news sources and news events as well as

seeking PR contracts from sources and organisations. In an environment where gender norms moderate the attitudes of women and require that women do not show as much aggressiveness as men, women journalists are unlikely to make as much money from these "unethical" sources as male journalists. They are thus more affected by the poor and inconsistent remuneration than male journalists and they are, therefore, more likely to quit the industry compared to male journalists. These issues, as saddening as they are, show some of the reasons women do not wait long enough in the news media to reach top management and editorial positions in Nigeria.

1.4   Conclusion

This chapter has provided a comprehensive background with which the critical issues that affect the location of women in the Nigerian news media (which are discussed in subsequent chapters) can be appreciated. It starts by providing an overview of patriarchy in Nigeria. Then it focuses on the position of women in the country, starting from pre-colonial period till date and showing that Nigerian women have continuously battled with patriarchy, regardless of its divergent manifestations across different periods. Then the chapter ends with a critical analysis of the historical and contemporary challenges affecting the administration of news companies in Nigeria and show how they influence the location and status of women in the country's news media.

Now that I have discussed how the Nigerian culture, the status of women in the country and the peculiar nature of the country's media landscape affect the status of women in the news media, I will proceed to discuss (in the next chapter) the international scholarly literature on the status of women in the global news media and the feminist theories that underpin this study.

Chapter Two: Literature

Aspects of the mass media's relationship to women - in terms of both portrayal and employment - could be seen to transcend cultural and class boundaries. Although differences do exist, it is the similarities which are ultimately striking, suggesting a universality of certain dimensions of women's concerns and of the women and media relationship" (Gallagher, 1979, p. 7).

2.0   Introduction

This chapter, in two separate sections, reviews the scholarly literature on the status of women in the global news media and the theories that ground this investigation into the status of women journalists in the Nigerian news media. Evaluating the status of women in the global news media helps in situating the experiences of Nigerian women journalists (which are later discussed in the thesis) within the global scholarly research and civil society agency advocating for equity and equality for women working in the news media. Reviewing the feminist theories that ground this investigation on the other hand contextualises the peculiar experiences of women journalists in Nigerian news companies within the institutional, cultural and geographical environments in which they are located. Essentially, the chapter argues that while the inequalities that women journalists face globally seem to be universal, the structures that institute these inequalities and the solutions and agency that women journalists can seek to address them are greatly moderated by the government, institutional and cultural environments in which they operate.

2.1   Women in the Global News Media

Women have significantly secured entry into the news media the world over, but increased access has not eradicated the persistence of misogynist, sexist, and limiting roles for women. Women are often deemed incapable of handling the rigours of news journalism and thus assigned to cover 'soft' beats and systematically excluded from reaching editorial and top management positions (Byerly, 2013, 2014; Franks, 2013; Ross, 2014). It has been argued that until the newsroom culture, which is highly patriarchal, is changed, there will not be major improvements in the circumstances of women journalists working in the news media (De Bruin, 2014, p. 41-44).

This section (in four sub-sections) examines four critical issues moderating the status of women journalists globally: gendering or feminisation of news; inequality in remuneration; sexism and sexual harassment as well as the challenges of combining marriage and

motherhood with news work. These highlighted issues are discussed in relation to this research which is focused on locating the status of women in the Nigerian news media as scholars have identified striking similarities in the universality of the oppressions that women journalists encounter in the global news media (Gallagher, 1979; Byerly, 2013).

2.1.1 The Gendering or Feminisation of News

> *"Research from around the globe has long emphasised the problem of vertical segregation in the news media where women remain largely absent from key editorial decision-making roles. Horizontal segregation, however, where there are gendered divisions of tasks associated with reporting, is also an ongoing issue... while more female reporters appear to be covering hard news rounds like politics and business, the majority are still assigned to cover the bulk of the soft news areas of features, the arts, education and health—and most perceive that female reporters remain pigeon-holed in those traditionally female story areas"*
> (North, 2016a, p. 356).

In many parts the world, including Nigeria, news is chiefly categorised as 'hard' or 'soft' – a classification that defines the place of women journalists in the industry. This categorisation influences the beats women journalists are assigned to cover, the stories they are requested to write, the interviews allotted to them and how their writings are assessed/appreciated. Ultimately, it institutes their influence, career prospects and promotion. In the end, it plays a major role in determining whether they would reach top management and editorial positions or remain in lower or middle level roles.

The impact of this categorisation has led many to inquire into what hard and soft news are, the extent to which they are different or gendered and how this categorisation continues to influence the perpetual subjugation of women working in the news media. Although "scholarly definitions of what constitutes hard and soft news are ubiquitous and by no means agreed upon" (North, 2016a, p. 356) - hard news "refers to politics, business news, union issues, and war, but sometimes also to technology, science, crime and sports news" (Djerf-Pierre and Lofgren-Nilsson, 2004, p. 82) to be "covered by male journalists" (Carter, Branston and Allan, 1998, p. 13). Soft news, on the other hand refers to "stories about trends, personalities, or lifestyles" (Brooks *et al.*, 1985, p. 529). In the opinion of Mills, soft news is "news about the Four F's – family, food, fashion, and furnishings." (1988, p. 10). They are stories that "any editor immediately recognises as interesting to his readers and, therefore, 'important' for his paper" (Mott, 1952, p. 32) but which are "(trivial and insignificant)" and "reported by female journalists" (Carter, Branston and Allan, 1998, p. 13).

Hard news is seen as men's work while women news workers are believed to be better suited for soft news. Most journalists consider "soft news less serious, less important, second tier, and, for some, even second rate" (Poindexter, 2008, p. 72). And just as soft news is regarded as less important, so are women news workers who produce soft contents seen as less significant to the operations of the news media. According to Gallagher, "a journalist writing about 'hard politics' is supported and regarded as good promotion material. Someone writing about 'human' and 'everyday' issues is seen as unambitious (because of apparent disinterest in the top priorities of the organisation), and tends to remain a rank-and file reporter" (2001, p.64). It therefore explicates why ambitious women news workers abhor and shun the soft beats in order to be taken seriously (Anyanwu, 2001, p. 71; Byerly, 2004, p.116; Harrison et al., 2008).

Several global, regional and national studies have established the clustering of women on the soft beats (Zoonen 1998; Djerf-Pierre and Lofgren-Nilsson 2004; Joseph, 2006; Poindexter, Meraz and Weiss, 2008; Made and Morna, 2009; Byerly, 2011, 2013; Ross and Carter 2011; North, 2016a) with scholars noting that it has become "a well-established practice that is hard to change" (Sarikakis, 2014, p.67). Findings from the 2015 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) will be a good one to cite. The GMMP has been monitoring media contents for gender equity every five years from 1995. The 2015 study, which surveys 114 countries (including Nigeria) across media platforms, notes that "Political and crime news are the two topics least reported by women in most regions" (GMMP, 2015, p.52). The report also notes that "the greatest gain for women has been in reporting celebrity, arts, media and sports stories" (GMMP, 2015, p.52). Mindy Ran, the Gender Council Co-Chair of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), while commenting on the GMMP findings, notes that "Sadly, these statistics tell us that we are still not being trusted or respected to tell the story, to analyse events, to investigate and to bring the major topics to our audiences and readers" (Ran, 2015, p.53).

Scholars have studied how this structural discrimination plays out. While some women journalists identify and genuinely prefer writing soft news, others note that women opt for the soft beats once they get married or have children in order to have more time for their families. At other times, some women journalists who dislike soft news and have shown competence in producing hard content are nonetheless assigned to soft beats by editors because of their gender. Social and cultural norms, where male journalists find it easier to relate with

politicians and hard news sources, also entrench the assigning of more male journalists to hard news beats (Williams, 2010; Franks, 2013; Voronova, 2014).

An interesting twist to the issue, however, is that the feminisation of news has surprisingly created opportunities for women in the news industry. The reality of the political-economies of media management, particularly print news journalism, has revealed that publishers and editors are not particularly interested in reporting women's issues but they are principally concerned with raising circulation figures and using the figures of women news readers in securing advertisements (Sarikakis, 2014). Women have thus continued to gain entry into the news media (through the soft beats route) due to a demand for writers of soft content, but a good number of these women later move to producing hard content and eventually rise to holding top editorial positions or becoming editors of newspapers or news magazines (Lumsden, 1995; Franks, 2013, p.48). Although soft contents are not exclusively written and edited by females, the majority of the journalists who produce soft content are women, and the route is a great opportunity for women to gain access to the media. Unfortunately, while the feminisation of news has created inroads for women to gain access into the news media (Franks, 2013); it has nonetheless relegated them to the pink ghettos and limited their career progress (Christmas, 2008; Ross and Carter 2011; Franks, 2013; Sarikakis, 2014; North 2016a).

This situation holds true in the Nigerian context. Hard news is seen as the most important news and so are those writing it. However, news organisations in the country understand the importance of soft news. Broadcast news organisations have entertainment segments in their main news broadcasts. Most newspapers in Nigeria have entertainment and style pages. In addition, "almost every newspaper in Nigeria now has a weekend supplement, most likely a Sunday publication in a magazine format" (Tijani-Adenle, 2016, p.400) that is inserted into the main publication. News organisations need soft news to drive advertisement and traffic, but they do not give the producers of such content corresponding esteem. As shown in Section 4.1, horizontal segregation in news gathering is high, with more Nigerian women journalists still covering soft beats despite the increasing number of women covering hard beats. This has, therefore, resulted in more women journalists occupying inferior positions compared to men. Women journalists who aspire to reach top management and editorial positions tactically shun the production of soft contents (Anyanwu, 2001, p. 71).

2.1.2 (Un)Equal Pay in (Gender)Equal News Media

> *"The pay gap between male and female journalists remains a stubbornly wide one"* (Suzanne Franks, 2013, p. vii).

Global news media organisations, through a neo-liberal address, claim to run gender-neutral organisations (De Bruin, 2000a; North, 2016a), with many having gender-equality policies (Byerly, 2011). It appears shocking, however, that news organisations' neutrality and equality do not extend to salaries and remunerations as recent studies prove that "women still tend to lag behind in terms of career progression and salary" (Ross and Carter, 2011, p.1161) with women journalists earning lower pay compared to their male colleagues with equal education, training and competence (Byerly, 2013). As far back as 1988, Beasley and Theus noted that the salaries of women working in the media were lower to those of their male colleagues doing comparable work, and recent studies maintain that this pay gap "remains a stubbornly wide one" (Franks, 2013, p. vii; see also Byerly 2011, 2013). It is, therefore, baffling that in democracies that boast of equal wage legislations and where organisations assert gender equality or neutrality, women journalists still earn (unequally) lower pay for comparable work with their equally educated and qualified male colleagues.

It will be enlightening to review the findings of some key studies which have researched the disparity in the salaries of journalists based on gender. The Status of Women in the U.S. Media Report finds that women journalists in the country are yet to achieve equality in pay across all levels, with women of colour fairing worst (Women's Media Center, 2015). In a similar study reviewing gender inequality in Nordic countries, Norwegian broadcaster, Kristin Helle-Valle documents how she earned NOK100,000[5] (£9,062[6]) lower than her "less educated and less experienced male colleague" and how it took her many years of fighting to get a salary equal to what her younger and less qualified male colleague was earning. She also mentioned how another female colleague was told she was lucky to have "earned more than her mother ever had" when she requested for a salary increase (Helle-Valle, 2014, p.71). Results from a global study of 16 countries (from Africa, Europe and South America) by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) in 2012 indicates that male wages exceed female wages in all 16 countries studied, with gender inequalities reflecting even in employee benefits (Central European Labour Studies Institute and Wage Indicator Foundation, 2012). Carolyn Byerly's *Global Report* also finds pay gap for women journalists in most of the 59

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[5] Norwegian Krone
[6] British Pounds

nations studied (2011) while contributors' analyses of 29 of those countries in her *Palgrave International Handbook of Women in Journalism* (2013) identify pay gap in a good number of the countries.

Individual researchers have also published findings that corroborate the results of the reports and edited volumes mentioned above. Folker Hanusch (2013) and Louise North (2009) both document pay disparity based on gender in Australian news media. Sue Lafky (1991, 1993), David Weaver and Cleveland Wilhoit (1991) report pay disparities in the U.S. media while most of the contributors to Karen Ross and Claudia Padovani's *Gender Equality and the Media: A Challenge for Europe* (2016) also mention the existence of gaps in the salaries of women journalists across the continent. Although not exhaustive, these studies reflect how researches from different continents substantiate one another and entrench the reality of wage inequality for women in the global news media.

Different factors have been identified as responsible for this persistent discrimination. Patriarchal beliefs are at the heart of it. There is the assumption that women do not need to earn the "family wage". The supposition is that men need more money to care for their families while women 'only' need money to provide for their 'personal' needs (Ferree, 1995; Whelehan, 1995; Newman, 2013). When U.K.'s *Channel 4 News* presenter Cathy Newman was with the *Financial Times*, she discovered that a junior (male) colleague was earning more than she was and when she challenged management, she was told she did not need more money as she had neither a mortgage nor a family (See Newman, 2013). Women journalists have also been noted to be "particularly poor at negotiating individual pay deals and undersell themselves in these situations" (Franks, 2013, p.33). This argument seems to be validated by the comments of Norwegian journalist, Kristin Hellen-Valle, who mentions that when she was asked what salary she felt she deserved, she answered that "the important thing for me was to do a good job and help TV2 become a success". She later complains that she was paid NOK 100,000 lower than her "less educated and less experienced male colleague" (Hellen-Valle, 2014, p. 71).

Women journalists have exercised some agency in trying to challenge pay discriminations at work, but as expected, fighting establishments is always challenging. In most cases, the women experience the backlash of career loss and end up suffering psychological, emotional and social trauma in the end. Women journalists who have sought legal redress have had important assignments restricted from them and found their performance assessments become

very critical, some have had to resign from the prosecuted organisations with most ending up leaving the news industry altogether while others had to withdraw their claims after years of protracted legal process (see Beasley and Gibbons, 1993; Thornton, 2001; North, 2009).

There is an interesting twist to available information about wage situations in Nigeria. Previous studies have noted that pay disparity does not exist for women journalists in the country's news media. Carolyn Byerly's *Global Report* specifically notes that "In Nigeria, women and men journalists are paid equally or, in some cases, women's salaries exceed men's wages" (2011, p.10). I also affirmed this finding, using Byerly's *Global Report* and my industry experience in the country's news media (Tijani-Adenle, 2014). Despite this knowledge, this thesis nonetheless investigated the wage situation in the Nigerian news media and found that equality in remuneration is in theory but not practice as factors like negotiation, nepotism and unstructured promotions sometimes create an uneven wage situation (which is open to both genders) but usually favourable to more male journalists in the country's news industry. It should be noted that Byerly's study could not unravel the discrepancies due to the fact that it was a quantitative study and news company representatives gave responses based on policy and not practice and they are unlikely to provide problematic information about organisational management to researchers. The immediate findings about unequal wages and how they impact the status and career experiences of women journalists in Nigeria are discussed extensively in Section 4.2.

2.1.3 Working in Chilly Climate: Sexual Harassment, Sexism and Masculine Newsroom Culture

> *"Sexual harassment flourishes in cultures that privilege hegemonic masculinity, and the male dominated microcosm of the…news media has provided a fertile breeding ground for harassment to become an engrained part of the occupational culture of journalism"* (North, 2016b, p. 495).

It is imperative to address sexual harassment, sexism and masculine newsroom culture as distinct issues due to their impact on the professional experiences of women journalists and their career progress in the news media. Sexual harassment, sexism and 'male-dominated' newsroom cultures have consistently subjugated and intimidated women journalists by making the newsroom (in particular) and the journalism profession (in general) hostile and unfriendly, thereby reducing women's confidence, stifling their efforts and affecting their productivity (see Barton and Storm, 2014; North, 2016b).

Defining sexual harassment is as tricky as proving it - different nations and cultures have varied opinions on what constitute sexual harassment, just as events, public debate and agency continue to re-shape and redefine what behaviours or actions should be regarded as sexually harassing. A plethora of definitions exist, but sexual harassment generally involves making unsolicited and unwelcome sexual advances to a woman (or man) physically, verbally or through any other means which is discernible to the harassed. It may also involve unwarranted attention or discrimination on the basis of gender, which may also link "academic or professional standing or success to sexual favours or that interferes with work or learning" (Wood, 2011, p.295; See also: Melki and Farah, 2014; Murphy et al, 2015; Page and Pina, 2015; Holland and Cortina, 2016; North, 2016b). It is now agreed that most women experience sexual harassment in their work and social lives (Lopez, Hodson, and Roscigno 2009; Wood, 2011; Holland and Cortina, 2016).

Perceived as a form of relaxation, a means of coping with the rigours of the profession and harmless interaction, sexual harassment has become a tradition of male-dominated newsrooms (North, 2009, pp. 81-84). Some men have tried rationalising their harassing behaviour as "harmless or even complimentary" (Wood, 2011, p.297) and, at most, innocently flirtatious but women have insisted that "harassment' is the important part of the term, not 'sexual" (Leslie Wolfe in Weaver, 1992) and that there is nothing 'sexy' in 'sexual harassment' (see also: Kurth, Spiller and Travis, 2000; Levy and Paludi, 2002). Sexual harassment of women news workers by their male colleagues is not a mere past time. At the very least, it is a covert attempt to subjugate, intimidate and seclude women from the profession. Apart from staring and leering, sexist jokes are also a form of harassment that men would claim are harmless, but anthropologists have argued that even sexual humour "maintains a sexist social order" (Crawford, 2000, p. 220) and it is a "disciplinary tactic designed to keep women docile within the traditional masculine sphere" (Thornton, 1996, p. 262).

Numerous studies around the world show that between 44 and 80 per cent of female journalists have experienced some form of sexual harassment in the newsroom (see: Kossan, 1992; Weaver, 1992; Bowen and Laurion, 1994; Flatow, 1994; McAdams and Beasley, 1994; Walsh-Childers, Chance and Hergoz, 1996; MEAA/IFJ, 1996; Ross, 2004; Hardin and Shain, 2005). A 2018 International Media Support survey reveals that 42 per cent of Jordanian female journalists sampled have experienced a form of sexual harassment (Zaideh, 2018) while the 2016 Afghan Journalists Safety Committee Report on the Condition of Afghan

Female Journalists notes that 69 per cent of the female journalists who participated in the study had endured sexual harassment in the course of their practice (AJSC, 2016). Barton and Storm's 2014 violence and harassment of women in the global news media study for the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) confirm that even with policy and education, almost half of 683 female journalists sampled had experienced sexual harassment, with nearly half of those experiences happening in the office (Barton and Storm, 2014, pp. 22 - 27).

Women journalists are consistently harassed by their male colleagues, superiors, subordinates and even news sources (Weaver, 1992; Kossan, 1992; Lachover, 2005; Melki and Farah, 2014; Barton and Storm, 2014; North, 2009, 2016b). Also, women journalists constantly receive online "threats of sexual nature" from media audiences (Carlsson and Pöyhtäri, 2017). More disheartening, women journalists are increasingly exposed to physical and sexual assault from private individuals while covering news (Lohner and Banjac, 2017). On June 15, 2018, Colombian reporter, Julieth Gonzalez Theran, was groped and kissed in a city square in Saransk, Russia, by a male football fan as she went on live television to give a report on the World Cup for Deutsche Welle. In 2013, a Dutch journalist (female) was gang-raped in Cairo's Tahrir Square while covering Egypt's uprising, the same location where CBS's Chief Foreign Correspondent, Lara Loghan, was sexually assaulted in 2011 (Lohner and Banjac, 2017). It is essential to note that these are just minute examples from a multitude of high profile recorded cases of sexual assault against women journalists globally. Many more harassments go on locally (in several countries) which do not receive such global mention and attention (Melki and Mallat, 2013, p.441).

These experiences greatly affect the career experiences of women journalists. North's qualitative study of sexual harassment in Australian newsrooms reveals that women journalists find sexual harassment so damaging that some resigned while others developed psychological issues like depression or anxiety, due to the oppression (2016b). North's revelations (2016b) about the psychological impact of sexual harassment on women journalists is consistent with other qualitative studies that have revealed that women journalists withdrew socially, refused to form positive relationships with their colleagues, avoided official social functions, changed the way they dressed, refused to make eye contacts, started feeling inferior and inadequate, experienced difficulty carrying out their tasks, cried, had depression, sought therapy or resigned from the job altogether due to sexual harassment

in the newsrooms and on the job (see for example; Bowen and Laurion, 1994; Walsh-Childers, Chance and Hergoz, 1996; Ross, 2004, De Bruin, 2004, North, 2007, 2012, 2016b; Barton and Storms, 2014).

Apart from outright sexual harassment, sexism and sex-based discrimination [e.g., lower salaries for women news workers and relegating women journalists to pink ghettos] have become ingrained in newsroom cultures that they have become accepted as normal, inconspicuous and part of the occupational culture (Holland, 1998; Okunna, 2005; Frohlick, 2007; Poindexter and Harp, 2008a; North, 2009, 2014; Ross and Carter; 2011; Byerly, 2013, Franks, 2013). Studies have confirmed that women journalists have to work extra-hard to prove their worth, struggle against stereotypes or 'become one of the boys' to establish that they are not less of journalists than their male colleagues (Ross, 2001, 2004; de Bruin and Ross, 2004; Okunna, 2005; Frohlick, 2007; Poindexter and Harp, 2008; North, 2009, 2014; Ross and Carter; 2011).

In a study conducted by Ross (2004, p.147), 75 per cent of respondents confirm that they have been discriminated against in the newsroom. Examples of such discriminations include hostility "to all working parents especially mothers", "discriminatory allocation of news stories", exhibiting of bullying and threatening behaviour as well as subtle and overt sexual harassment (Ross, 2004, pp. 14-149) among others. Sexism is so ingrained in the newsroom culture that it has become internalised by men, and in some cases, even women journalists. Some women journalists have come to accept or adjust to sexism while some will even deny that it exists (Phillips, 1991; Ross, 2004). North's 2007 study of sexual harassment, like De Bruin's 2004 study, show how women journalists refuse to identify sexual harassing experiences with the label to avoid the social and professional repercussions. A lot of women journalists have, therefore, been bullied into enduring and keeping quiet about sexual harassment, sex-based discrimination or sexism, even when the combination of these ills make the newsroom hostile and contribute significantly to their negative experience of the industry.

Sexual harassment policies exist in the news industry in most Western countries (Byerly, 2011); yet, very few women news workers make recourse to the provisions of these policies. In a survey on sexual harassment conducted by the Associated Press Managing Editors Association [APME] in the United States, only two per cent of harassed women journalists

reported officially to their companies' personnel departments (Kossan, 1992) while less than one-fifth of the 683 female journalists who had experienced sexual harassment in the IWMF study reported officially (Barton and Storm, 2014).

Women have been accused of complicity in sexual harassment cases, seeing it as something they have to endure, tolerate or negotiate (Weaver, 1992, Lachover, 2005; North, 2009, 2016b). Various factors are responsible for this. Sexual harassment discourse tends more to "devalue women" (North, 2009:101) by reflecting "on the recipient, not the perpetrator" (Wood, 1994). Companies have also been accused of not backing their policies with explicit enforcement plans or clear ways/methodology of filling complaints. This policy deficiency thus deters women from seeking justice. Women are also browbeaten from reporting sexual harassment officially because of fears of backlash, like being socially boycotted, portrayed as immature or overly-sensitive, re-assigned to less-prestigious beats or even sacked (Kossan, 1992; De Bruin, 2004; Ross, 2004; Hardin and Shain, 2005; North, 2007, 2016b).

Attention must be drawn to the fact that sexual harassment persists in news companies in the Western democracies investigated in the studies discussed above despite the availability of legal documents, like gender equality and sexual harassment policies in media organisations (Kossan, 1992; Barton and Storm, 2014). The first implication is that women journalists are supposed to be liberated in theory, but the male-dominated newsroom culture has continued to limit and subjugate them in practice (Mendes, 2013). The second and most important inference, however, is an imagination of the conditions of women journalists in countries (like Nigeria) and other regions (like Africa and the Middle East) where gender equality and sexual harassment policies (in national laws and organisational policies) are either just emerging, non-existence, negligible or not enforced.

Byerly's *Global Report* shows that few news companies in Nigeria (2011, p.124) and Africa (2011, p.80) have policies on sexual harassment. Even though women who have worked in news companies in African countries attest to the existence of sexual harassment in the industry (Kaija, 2013), "evidence on the prevalence and nature of sexual harassment is often anecdotal and difficult to obtain" (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.114; see also, Kur, 2012) due to the culture of shame and silence around sexual harassment issues on the continent. Victims do not make official complaints, managements do not handle complaints officially and incidents of sexual harassment are thus handled off the radar without solace for victims or

consequence for alleged perpetrators. Women journalists end up enduring sexual abuse in the news media (Mishra et al, 2008, p. 217) with debilitating emotional, psychological and professional consequences, part of which results in their leaving the industry or remaining in inferior positions due to its impact on their productivity.

2.1.4 Managing Wollstonecraft's Dilemma: Mothers in the Media

"It is unfortunate women's promotional opportunities are affected by their child or children, but I do understand and accept why; simply put a person can't be in two places at once, even if they want to be. It seems more women than men take on the primary carer role, while still trying to be the peak performance journo she used to be. It can't work, and I think news managers sense that." (Commercial TV reporter, aged 40–44). [Quote from Louise North's *Still a 'blokes club': The motherhood dilemma in journalism* (2016c, p.325)].

Feminist media researchers have long identified that women journalists are disadvantaged because they have to juggle family and career responsibilities together, in an industry that does not grant adequate concessions for child care or family responsibilities, and in which women journalists with children are sidelined to the soft beats or denied promotions (Organ et al., 1979; Lafky, 1991; Byerly and Warren, 1996; Sieghart and Henry, 1998; Ross, 2001; Williams, 2010; Byerly, 2011; North, 2009, 2012, 2016c; Franks, 2013).

The moment a woman marries or bears children, her career path is significantly altered as marriage and children greatly moderate how she experiences journalism practice, particularly in the Nigerian (and African) context. It is not uncommon for women journalists to make sacrifices for their careers, either in terms of love, marriage, or family life. The fact that journalism is not an 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. kind of career makes it more difficult as the 'regular' child-care options available are not able to cater for the needs of journalists (Williams, 2010). If a woman works late shifts and gives a lot to journalism to reach the pinnacle of her career and break the glass ceilings in her path, she would be meeting the masculine culture of not having 'emotional distractions'. The implications are, however, that she may remain single, childless, unmarried or in uncommitted relationships (North, 2016c, p.320, also, p.323); thus sacrificing her emotional needs (if they involve heterosexual-marriage and having children). Scholars have noted that the "relatively few women who do get these jobs at a higher level have few outside responsibilities; for example, they are far more likely than men to be childless" (Franks, 2013, p. vii; North, 2016c). However, if women get married and have children and these commitments make demands on their time and prevent them from spending "the long hours required for promotion" (Metropolitan newspaper reporter in North,

2016c, p.320), or if they request for casual leaves to attend to children and/or family, then they will appear not to fit in and be judged incapable of meeting the demands required to manage top editorial positions in the news media. Other women journalists limit their ambitions the moment they get married and/or have children and take only responsibilities that will give them time to attend to family (North, 2016c, p.323). The implication of this 'self-censorship' is that women journalists tend to keep their jobs but cannot aspire to reach top management positions. Men do not have this dilemma to contend with; even when they marry and/or have children, it does not affect their career as it is not 'usually' their responsibilities to cater for the home or care for the children. Male journalists thus have a natural and socio-cultural advantage over women.

A lot of factors are considered before deciding who gets promoted to what positions in news companies. Even though "in theory women have equal opportunity for promotion but in practice" only women who are regarded as having freedom and flexibility are actually promoted (Metropolitan newspaper reporter in North, 2016c, p.320). The implication of this is that if management is aware that a female journalist has 'personal commitments' that can make demands on her time, she may be denied promotions or appointments to key editorial positions based on that, regardless of whether she qualifies for them or not. Thus, women with family commitments are not likely to 'protest' if they are denied promotions because it is an unwritten rule that senior editorial roles "are difficult for anyone with other responsibilities" (Franks, 2013, p. vii). A theory that explains this principle is known as the 'Rational Bias Theory'. The theory is an organisational theory on gender and racial discrimination which posits that managers would discriminate against gender or race if they perceive that "business norms favour discrimination and that compliance with the norms is important to business success" (Trentham and Larwood, 1998, p.3, see also, Larwood, Gutek and Gattiker, 1984; Larwood and Gattiker, 1985). The two key concepts of rational bias theory have to do with the perception that the business norm in that industry favours discrimination and that there is need to comply with that norm if the business would succeed.

Relating this to the employment and promotion pattern in the news media, the norm is for male journalists to head top management and editorial positions (Byerly and Ross, 2011; Byerly, 2013; North, 2016c) as well as to discriminate against women journalists with marriage and child care responsibilities (MEAA and IFJ, 1996; North, 2012, 2016c) because those responsibilities are believed to distract from and impede the ability to perform the

responsibilities attached to heading editorial and top management positions (North, 2016c). Women journalists themselves believe that their attention are divided the moment they get married and have children, and that women with spouses and children are unable to spend the long hours required of such positions (Williams, 2010; North, 2016c). It is critical to note that apart from losing promotions and key appointments, women journalists with child care responsibilities have also reported being offered less senior roles on their return from maternity leave (North, 2009, p.159; see also, North, 2016c). It therefore means that women journalists' positions may not only remain static, but can also diminish to lower statuses due to taking time out to raise children.

It is important to note that the findings above are from studies conducted in the global North where men are more receptive to helping with house chores and child care than in Africa. Also, governments subsidise child care in those countries while that is not the case in Africa. One can, therefore, imagine the dilemma women journalists face in a highly patriarchal country, like Nigeria, where very few men share in child care responsibilities and the government does not subsidise childcare (Okeke-Ihejirika, 2004). Women journalists are, therefore, seriously affected by the challenges of juggling motherhood with media work. Unfortunately, there are no studies that have explicitly explored how women journalists experience motherhood in Nigeria (and I dare say, Africa). But there are anthropological, sociological and cultural studies about women and work in Africa (and Nigeria) and they all note that the burden is completely on women; husbands are not responsible for home and/or child-care. It is 'uncommon or untraditional' for them to be. Organisations do not provide leverage and women censure their career progress or make personal sacrifices to ensure they make the tough balance between motherhood and career (Bay, 1982; Fapohunda, 1978, 1982; Pittin, 2002; Ukwani and Suchindran, 2003; Okeke-Ihejirika, 2004; Aryee, 2005; Okafor and Amayo, 2006).

Now that I have discussed the major factors affecting the status of women in the global news media and how they relate to the position of women journalists in Nigeria, I will now discuss in the section below the theoretical assumptions that underpin this study - liberal, Black, postcolonial and African feminism. These theories contextualise the peculiar experiences of women journalists in Nigerian news companies within the institutional, cultural and geographical environments in which they operate. They posit that the structures that institute the inequalities inherent in the news media and the solutions and agency that women

journalists can seek to address them are greatly moderated by the legal, institutional and cultural dynamics of their distinct socio-cultural locations.

2.2   *Peeping through a Diverging Lens*: Theorising Feminist Philosophies

> The "basic issue that has concerned feminist theory is, depending on the terms one prefers, women's inequality, subordination, or domination by men...Feminist theories examine and try to explain the causes and conditions in which men are more powerful and men's production, ideas, and activities are seen as having greater value and higher status than women's. For many feminist theorists, this comes to mean examining and explaining all structures of domination, whether based on gender, race, class, age, sexuality, nation or some other difference"
> (Kolmar and Bartkowski 2005, p. 2).

Over time, both overtly and covertly, women have come to be excluded, segregated or marginalised in almost all spheres of life, while men have assumed control of the different sectors as the statutory heads (Acker, 1989; Lerner, 1986; Wheelehan, 1995; Walby, 1989, 1997; Bryson, 1999; Jackson and Jones, 1998; hooks, 2004; Kolmar and Bartkowski, 2005; Smith, B., 2005; Chigbu, 2015). This discriminatory and unjust organisation of the world deprives women the opportunities to maximise their potentials and contribute optimally to the development of their societies (McGuire and Popkin, 1990; Sarkar, 2006). This is thus the goal of feminist theorists - to present an approach to understanding the difficult situations and experiences of women in all fields and cultures and to proffer solutions to earn women their true positions in the scheme of things.

It is interesting to note, however, that although women are universally subordinate to men, the challenges they face are mediated by their race, class and the socio-cultural environments in which they live or operate. The implication of this, therefore, is that even though women are collectively oppressed, they experience the oppression, subjugation and inequalities differently (Ortner, 1974; Afshar and Maynard, 1994; Ali, Coate and Goro, 2000). As a result, anthropologists, feminist - theorists, activists and researchers have developed diverse concepts and philosophies on what constitute oppression for women and how these inequalities can/should be challenged, negotiated and/or resolved. Feminist theories are, therefore, as diverse as the status and circumstances of women globally, as well as the ideologies of the feminists conceiving the theories.

Discussing all the feminist theories available in the academe will not only be a herculean task but also a pointless venture for they do not all apply to this study which is focused on the

status of women journalists and how they experience the professional culture in the Nigeria news media. This section consequently discusses only the feminist theories applicable to this study: liberal, Black, postcolonial and African feminisms, explaining how they are relevant to the study and how they can aid in improving the status and experiences of women journalists working in the Nigerian news media.

Liberal feminism, an ideology notable for helping women secure legal equality (Jaggar, 1983; Humm, 1992; Whelehan, 1995; Bryson, 2003), is important for this study as it can help Nigerian women journalists secure gender equality and sexual harassment policies that are grossly absent and/or inadequate in news media organisations in the country (Byerly, 2011, p.124). It could be assumed that this should be sufficient in addressing the challenges women journalists face in Nigeria, but that is not the case. Liberal feminism has been criticised for focusing on the oppressions of white, middle class English-speaking women – thereby making it ineffective in addressing some of the challenges of Nigerian women journalists which originate from the peculiar institutional (media industry), cultural (African) and geographical (Nigeria) contexts in which they operate. The inclusion of Black, Postcolonial and African feminist theories in the study is, therefore, important as they help locate the inter-sectionality of race, colonialism, location and culture on the status and experiences of Nigerian women journalists. Black and Postcolonial feminisms help to identify the impact of slavery and living in a former colony on the career experiences of Nigerian women journalists. However, their inability to relate the realities of living in Africa and the role of African culture on the personal and professional lives of Nigerian women journalists create a significant deficiency that African feminism fills.

African feminism is a feminist ideology dedicated to securing equal rights for African women and liberating them from patriarchy and all other forms of subjugation through ideology, customs, traditions, laws or systems without jettisoning the African culture and values (like heterosexual marriage, motherhood, among others) that the majority of African women are believed to subscribe to (Mbilinyi, 1992; Ogunyemi, 1996; Arndt, 2000; Nnaemeka, 2003). African feminism can help to improve the experiences and status of women journalists without contradicting the African feminist ideology that, in my view, most Nigerian women journalists uphold. It is, therefore, most applicable to studying the status and experiences of women journalists in the Nigerian news media because it takes into consideration their

personal ideologies, worldviews and peculiar socio-cultural circumstances in their struggle for equity and justice in the news industry.

This sub-section is divided into two: the first part reviews liberal feminism, which is a feminist political theory; while the second sub-section discusses the alternative feminist theories (Black, Postcolonial and African feminisms) which lend themselves better to appreciating the challenges and experiences of women working in the Nigerian news media. I have referred to these theories as 'alternative feminist theories' because they depart from feminist political theories to address special and unique concerns of women who experience gender inequalities differently from women in the global North due to their race, culture and location.

2.2.1   Feminist Political Theory: Liberal Feminism

While I initially considered discussing four main feminist political theories under this part, I found that Marxist, socialist and radical feminist theories are unsuitable for this study and, therefore, limit myself to reviewing only liberal feminist theory. Marxist feminism provides a class based analysis of women's oppression by locating their domination in capitalist systems and private ownership of property (Jaggar, 1983). It can be argued that this theory is applicable to the situation of women journalists working for capitalist news media organisations in Nigeria. However, a major deficiency of the theory as it relates to this study is that Marxist feminism is not able to account for the way in which patriarchy is manifest in Nigeria due to the country's peculiar socio-cultural norms which differentiate women's experience of patriarchy compared to those experienced and discussed by Western Marxist feminists. It also seeks to obliterate capitalism, which is the economic system that is operational in Nigeria, hence rendering it inappropriate for the study.

Socialist feminism expands Marxist feminism as it identifies more than economic oppression as the basis of women's subjugation in society. Although socialist feminists identify the impact of capitalism on the inferior status of women in society, they are not under the illusion that obliterating capitalism and class struggle will ultimately eradicate gender oppression. Consequently, they equally subscribe to the radical feminist positions that gender and patriarchy are also systems and ideologies that help in perpetuating the oppression of women and thus will have to be dealt with, if women are to be fully liberated (see; Jaggar, 1983; Tong, 1989, Whelehan, 1995; Bealsey, C., 1999; Bryson, 2003). Social feminism, therefore,

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"makes an explicit commitment to the abolition of both class and gender" (Jaggar 1983, p. 221), which are the core challenges that the subjects of this study (women journalists) contend with in Nigeria. Unfortunately, the solutions proffered by socialist feminism to free women from the burdens of the private sphere hindering them from active participation in the industry (like the use of public child care facilities, involvement of men in domestic chores, communalisation of feeding and professionalisation of housework - Jaggar, 1983) are contrary to the socio-cultural organisation of Nigeria, the political system in the country and the feminist philosophy of women working in the Nigerian news media. The Nigerian government does not subsidise childcare while the Nigerian culture expects women to perform house and child-care roles regardless of their position in the industry (Tijani-Adenle, 2016). So, even though more men are beginning to assist in the home and women use nannies and housekeepers, the African culture still sees those responsibilities as primarily women's duties which they should only (temporarily) seek help for when they are unable to perform them. Consequently, while socialist feminism may be able to articulate the challenges of women working in the Nigerian news media (in the public and private sphere), it is unable to offer solutions for the women due to the divergent socio-cultural, economic and political systems operational in Nigeria as well as the ideologies of the subjects of this study.

Radical feminism is focused primarily on gender and patriarchy as the sources of women's oppression and does not look towards using existing legal, economic and political structures to address the inequity due to its standpoint that current economic and socio-political establishments are innately patriarchal (see; Jaggar, 1983; Tong, 1989, Whelehan, 1995; Bealsey, C., 1999; Bryson, 2003). They are, therefore, more concerned about the oppression women experience in their private lives and focused on generating advocacy to create awareness and motivate action. Despite the fact that radical feminism adequately captures the realities of the oppressions in the private lives of women, its methodologies are inadequate in addressing the challenges women working in Nigerian news media encounter because they work in established institutions and will require policies in securing legal rights.

The inadequacies identified with Marxist, socialist and radical feminism have shown their unsuitability for this study. I will now discuss liberal feminism and why I believe that it is the most applicable to this study among the four feminist political theories discussed above.

2.2.1.1 Liberal Feminism

Liberal political theory glorifies the equality of all men and the right of every individual to a fair share of the available resources within the society (Jaggar, 1983, p.28-29). The challenge with liberal philosophy, however, is that it distinguishes "between male and female nature" (Whelehan, 1995, p.29). So, it cannot be assumed that the quality of rationality attributed to men also naturally applies to women. Liberal feminism, which derives its theory from liberal philosophy, postulates that all human beings are equal and should consequently enjoy equal rights and opportunities in the state. It rests on the notion that "justice requires equal opportunities and equal consideration for every individual regardless of sex" (Jaggar, 1983, p.176). Liberal feminist theory subsequently argues that since men and women are both human beings with equal faculties and talents, then they are both equally entitled to the resources and opportunities available in a state, both in formal and informal settings.

It is with this principle that feminists commenced the equality struggle and "won for women legal advances and public emancipation. The struggle for the vote, and the latter battles for family allowances, contraception, abortion and welfare rights…the endowment of motherhood, protective legislation, and women's legal status" (Humm, 1992, p.14). With the feats achieved by first wave feminists, it was assumed that the inequality problem for women had been resolved. However, liberal feminists soon realised that an institutionalisation of the legal equality and rights of women did not amount to an instantaneous eradication of all the political, economic, social and sexual exploitations of women.

Despite its success in securing legal equality for women, some major drawbacks have been identified with liberal feminism. Foremost, the individualistic philosophy of liberal theory that "it is up to each person to make the best of his or her own life" (Bryson, 2003, p.157) is totally not in keeping with the "feminist awareness of group disadvantage and the need for collective action" (Bryson, 2003, p.157). Critics of liberal feminism are convinced that women are an "oppressed class that could only be freed by its own collective struggle" (Bryson, 2003, p. 33). Marxist and radical feminists have argued that liberal feminism's philosophy that individual women should develop their skills and capacity to compete with men in the industry to get their rights, denies or overlook the extent to which women's abilities and capacity to compete adequately in the industry is impeded by class domination, racial prejudice and the challenges posed by patriarchy (Jaggar, 1983; Whelehan, 1995;

Jackson and Jones, 1998; Bryson, 2003). Therefore, expecting individual women to fight against gender discrimination is to deny women the opportunity of collective action through which they can secure their rights.

Liberal feminism has also been accused of contributing to the "superwoman myth" (Whelehan, 1995, p.34) which is also called the "Wollstonecraft's Dilemma" (Pateman 1988, p.252) by ignoring the domestic realities in the lives of women which would deny them the opportunities of benefiting from the equal rights they struggled to obtain for women. This is due to the fact that expecting women to compete with men at work and singularly bear the burden of maintaining the home ultimately makes women "over-extend themselves to the point of mental and physical collapse" (Whelehan, 1995, p.34). Liberal feminist theory thus privileges "public equality" above "private oppressions" (Bryson, 2003, p. 33) which are capable of denying women the opportunities of enjoying the benefits that public equality provides.

Regrettably, liberal feminism is class blind and does not recognise the "non-sexual forms of oppression" (Bryson, 2003, p.19) which women of colour contend with. It has been accused of furthering only the interests of white, middle class English-speaking women since it does not acknowledge "class or racial difference as a significant handicap in the path of self-advancement" (Whelehan, 1995, p.39). This is a serious short-fall for liberal feminism as women of colour suffer from multiple layers of oppression due to their gender and other dynamics (like race and class) which moderate how they experience their femininity and the world. The shortfalls of this theory, notwithstanding, liberal feminism, by securing legal and equality rights for women, provided the women's movement and all feminists' struggles with a good "starting point for future struggles" (Bryson, 2003, p.162), standards that feminist theorists believe "must remain in some way part of feminism" (Jaggar, 1983, p. 47).

Reviewed on the surface, liberal feminist theory seems suited for this study into the status, experiences and structures within which women journalists operate in the Nigerian news media. This is due to the fact that it has the capacity to secure gender equality policies for women working in the West African country's news media, especially when research studies have established that significant numbers of news media organisations in Nigeria do not have gender-equality, sexual harassment and/or child-care policies (Byerly, 2011, p.124). Unfortunately, the fact that liberal feminist theory is class and race blind and does not recognise the fact that non-white middle class women have to battle with additional forms of

oppression arising from other factors apart from their gender makes it partly unsuitable for this study. Women working in the Nigerian news media are not just women, but they are Black-Africans (and Nigerians) living in a traditional, multi-ethnic, multi-religious country with economic, political and security challenges. Their conditions can, therefore, not be appreciated or aided by a theory that does not acknowledge the dynamics of the socio-cultural environment which moderates their professional practice. This is in line with Black feminism's critique of liberal feminism. Black feminism emphasises the intersection of race, class and gender oppression for Black women, noting that liberal feminism ignores the racial and class dimensions to women's subjugation. Black feminists argue that liberal feminists disregard the fact that the sexual oppressions Black women experience is structured by racism and class, thus wrongly assuming that they could speak for the experiences of Black women whose lived realities are significantly different from theirs (Lerner, 1973; hooks, 1981; Lorde, 1982; Collins, 1990, 2000, 2002, 2017; Carby, 1997; Springer, 2002; Moraga and Anzaldúa, 2015).

Even though liberal feminist theory in its entirety may not be perfect for this study, its attribute of securing legal equality for women through legislation makes its inclusion in the study very essential. This is due to the fact that the absence (and/or inadequacy) of gender equality and sexual harassment policies in most news organisations in Nigeria (Byerly, 2011, p.124) has been identified as one of the factors impeding women's career progress and preventing them from having a more positive experience of the industry. To this end, liberal feminism is in synch with the most applicable theory for this study - African feminism (discussed in Section 2.2.2.3) due to the fact that African feminism is neither apolitical nor anti-establishment. It seeks to improve the status and experience of women within existing structures using acceptable means (like advocacy and institutionalisation of policies) while ensuring the protection of the African values and traditions that are not inimical to women's rights (Hudson-Weems, 1989, 1995; Ogunyemi, 1996; Mikell, 1997; Nnaemeka, 2003).

2.2.2 Alternative Femininities: Feminist Theories of Race, Location and Culture

> *"Women are not a homogenous group. This is not merely to restate a truism – that we are not all alike – but to underline the social significance of differences among us. We are differently located within global and local social contexts and differently represented in art, literature and other media. Distinctions of nationality, ethnicity, education, language, family, class, employment, ability/disability and sexuality are important. These are not merely differences, which can be acknowledged and passed over; these differences are often hierarchical, producing inequalities among women which intersect with gender inequality. Hence, while we need to pay attention to commonalities among women, we cannot afford to ignore these crucial differences."* (Jackson and Jones, 1998, pp.1-2)

This section addresses the intersectionality of race, class, location, culture and patriarchy in evaluating the gendered dimensions to women journalists' experience of working in the Nigerian news media. There is a "need to account for multiple grounds of identity when considering how the social world is constructed" (Crenshaw, 1994, p.94) and how women experience that world. Mainstream feminist discourses have been criticised for ignoring the intersectionality of race, class and patriarchy in shaping how non-white middle class women experience sexism and negotiate gender discrimination in their private and/or professional lives (Crenshaw, 1989, 1994). Contemporary feminists have been criticised for failing to recognise that the experiences of non-white middle class women "are frequently the product of intersecting patterns of racism and sexism" (Crenshaw, 1994, p.93; see also: Blay, 2008, p.63) as well as other identity elements, like location, history and culture – and how these "multilayered and routinised forms of domination that often converge in these women's lives" (Crenshaw, 1994, p.94) make them experience gender inequality differently.

The review of international scholarship (in Section 2.1) about how women experience working in the global news media and how these realities compare with the experiences of women working in the Nigerian news media has shown that although women may experience seemingly comparable challenges as journalists working in the news media, the peculiarities of their social contexts and their locations in different cultural societies intersect to produce hierarchical, complex and unique forms of gender discrimination (in the news media) that is neither experienced by women journalists in other climes nor appreciated by feminist activists and theorists not located in those "local social contexts" (Jackson and Jones, 1998, p.1).

Despite the merits of a feminist movement that mobilises for the emancipation of women as a universally subjugated group, contemporary feminism has been accused of perpetuating intra-group domination by erroneously seeking to speak for all women, in spite of their different social and local contexts, and seeking solutions that ignore the peculiarities of non-white middle class women (hooks, 1981, 1989; Richardson, 1987; Crenshaw, 1989, 1994; Collins, 1990, 2000, 2002, 2017; James and Busia, 1993; Mirza, 1997; Kanneh, 1998; Jackson and Jones, 1998; James and Sharpley-Whiting, 2000; Bryson, 2003; Lorber, 2005; Steady, 2005; Phillips, 2006; Blay, 2008; Mazama, 2009; Moses, 2012).

Feminist theory has today, developed and diversified through "a constant process of debate, critique and reflection" (Jackson and Jones, 1998, p.3) to embrace the peculiarities of various groups of women. Feminist philosophy now has an array of contemporary strands of theories that cater for divergent socio-cultural contexts, "political affiliations, theoretical traditions and disciplinary backgrounds which feminists bring to their theorising" (Jackson and Jones, 1998, p.2). It can be said that a critique of earlier feminist theories and their perceived 'inadequacies' is responsible for this. Still, it can also be argued that non-white feminists are beginning to explore how feminism can be tailored to work for their specific purposes, considering the fact that mainstream feminist theorists have been accused of focusing majorly on the realities of "white, middle-class English speaking women" (Mills, 1998, p.98). These contemporary feminist theories range from queer, lesbian, Black, postcolonial, postmodern, psychoanalytical, third-wave, multicultural/multiracial and standpoint theory, to name a few (See: Nicholson, 1990; Whelehan, 1995; Sauliner, 1996; Jackson and Jones, 1998; Bryson, 2003; Lorber, 2005). Nonetheless, this section will only highlight the expositions of Black, Postcolonial and African feminist theories that have been purposely selected as they are applicable to the categories of women similar to the subjects of this research – Black Africans living in a postcolonial and developing economy. It does not mean, however, that they are all perfectly suited for this study. Their principles will be discussed, as well as the extent to which they can provide insights into the conditions of women working in the Nigerian news media. It is important to note that the multiracial and multicultural feminist theories that will be discussed here do not necessarily "offer a single or unified" (Zinn and Dill, 1996, p.323) feminist philosophy, but they provide insight into how "systems of oppression are mutually reinforcing, producing experiences of gender, which vary" (Bryson, 2003, p.229) in relation

to the race, class, history, culture and location of women working in the Nigerian news media.

2.2.2.1   Black Feminism

"What is bad for women is worse for Black women" – (Amina Mama, 1997, p. 40)

Black feminism represents the feminist philosophy that is concerned with theorising the intersection of race, class and gender oppression of Black women. Black feminists, like other feminists, are concerned with liberating women from sexual oppression, but Black feminists are also concerned about the racial dimensions to women's domination. Black feminist theory fundamentally reflects the extent to which the experiences of racism is gendered or the extent to which Black women's sexual subjugation is structured by slavery and racism (hooks, 1981, 1989; Richardson, 1987; Collins, 1990, 2000, 2002, 2017; James and Busia, 1993; Mirza, 1997; Kanneh, 1998; James and Sharpley-Whiting, 2000; Bryson, 2003; Lorber, 2005; Mazama, 2009; Moses, 2012).

Mainstream feminism has been Euro-American centric and Black women's insights and agency for women's liberation have been largely invisible, neglected or ignored even though "Black women have contributed to feminist thought and activism from at least the early nineteenth century" (Bryson, 2003, p.226; see also, Amos and Parmar, 1984, 1997; Carby, 1997). Black feminists have condemned white feminists for claiming or appearing to talk for all women and projecting an alleged sisterhood that denies or neglects the past and present lived racial, class and patriarchal oppressions of Black women in Western societies (Lerner, 1973; hooks, 1981; Collins, 1990, 2000, 2002, 2017; Carby, 1997; Springer, 2002; Mazama, 2009; Moraga and Anzaldúa, 2015). Black feminist theory is not presently being discussed as a critique of Western feminist thoughts but in its own rights as a "global theoretical, empirical and political perspective" (Lorber, 2005, p.201) due to its ability to aid the appreciation of the "matrix of domination" (Collins, 1990, p.231; see also, Moses, 2012) that Black women constantly negotiate.

There is an important need to define who Black women are before delving into this discourse as the term is very fluid and open to several interpretations (hooks, 1981; Steady, 1981; Moranga and Anzaldua, 1983; Hurtado, 1996; Bakare-Yusuf; 1997; Mirza, 1997). Although Black women are sometimes politically defined to include women of African, Asian or Caribbean descent (see for example: Carby, 1997; Mama, 1997; Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe,

1997), for the purpose of this study, Black women are solely defined as women of African descent living in non-African countries. Examples of these women are the descendants of African manumitted slaves in the United States of America/Europe or the Black (African)-migrant population who have settled in America, Europe, Australia or other continents. Other women of colour like Asians, Caribbean and other non-white categories are excluded from this definition. It means that, for the purpose of this study, Black women (women of African descent) who are citizens of America and other European countries are the ones who fall into this category. Basically, they are Black "outsiders-within" (Zinn and Dill, 1996, p.323) Western territories. I have done this to draw a distinction between Black feminism and African feminism which is discussed later in this sub-section. The implication of this categorisation is that in this study, Black women would refer to women of African descent who are located in the West as a result of slavery, colonialism and/or migration (see Hurtado, 1996, p.11). The basic reason for this categorisation is that although Black women (as I have chosen to define them) and African women may appear to be of the same race, the social location and cultural differences between these two similar but distinct groups of women are indeed very significant; differences that alter the way each category experience gender oppression.

The 'matrix of domination' for Black women in Europe and America (the West – henceforth) is moderated by slavery, colonialism and migration. The negative images Western societies have of Black women as slaves, destitute colonial subjects and desperate migrants still influence the perceptions of Black women in Western societies. Black women, though equal in law are socially unequal citizens in Western nations (James and Busia, 1993; Hurtado, 1996; Mirza, 1997; James and Sharpley-Whiting, 2000; Mazama, 2009). Despite the existence of countless legal documents proclaiming the equality of all humans in the United States, 'Black Lives Matter' is a movement that vividly demonstrates the deep-seated societal and institutional oppression and subjugation of Blacks (and by extension, Black women) in present-day United States of America (Edwards, 2016; Edwards and Harris, 2016; Davary, 2017). In the United Kingdom and the rest of Europe, Black labour serviced sectors are the cheapest, fastest disappearing and most under-valued sectors in the country (Mama, 1997, p.37). Indeed, it is established that there is a global exploitation of Black women the world over and scholars have referred to this as a "global gendered apartheid" (Collins, 2000, p.232). No doubt, "the intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender and sexuality" are the

"ties that bind Black women globally" (Blay, 2008, p.63) as Black women in the West experience multiple layers of subjugation due to the oppressions resulting from slavery (descendants of manumitted slaves), racial discrimination (being Blacks), class (lower or working class citizens) and then gender - as women (Mazama, 2009).

Unfortunately, Black feminists have placed Western or "U.S. Black women's experiences in the center of analysis" (Collins, 2000, p.228) of the oppressions of Black women, ths overtly or inadvertently privileging those experiences over those of Black women not resident in the West, especially Black women domiciled in Africa. Thus, Black feminists have repeated the mistakes of White, middle-class, English speaking feminists by assuming that having racial commonality with Black African women empowers them to frame and advocate for the rights of those women. They ignore the implications of the differences in location and culture and how these intersect with other factors to moderate how African women experience gender oppression differently. This has motivated some African feminists to argue that Black feminists "present themselves in similar paternalist fashion as does Western feminism" (Blay, 2008, p.63).

Black women may share a history of slavery and/or colonialism with women in Nigeria, but while the former's experiences of gender subjugation are now significantly mediated by race and class, the women in Nigeria (and in the Nigerian news media) battle with issues around ethnicity, resource control, poor governance, inadequate infrastructural facilities, internecine conflicts and religious differences (Falola, 1998; Osaghae, 1998; Abdullahi, 2015; Kuenzi and Lambright, 2015; Reed and Mberu, 2015). Black women and Nigerian women share a similar history (of slavery), but the difference in the location and culture of these two categories of women has significantly altered their present realities. Although Black, Black women (as defined in this study) due to their citizenship and residence in Western countries are not African and the Black feminist theories articulating their concerns and seeking equality for them cannot adequately speak to the continental and national challenges women in Africa and Nigeria are presently burdened with due to its lack of appreciation of the implications of "history and culture" (Blay, 2008, p.63) in the way Nigerian women journalists experience gender.

2.2.2.2   Postcolonial Feminism

> *"Colonisation was a two-fold process of racial inferiorization and gender subordination"* (Oyewumi, 1997, p.124)

Postcolonial feminist theory (like liberal, Marxist and socialist feminist theories) derives from an existing theory – the postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory is concerned with analysing the "enduring impact of nineteenth-century European colonialism" (Mills, 1998, p. 98) on former colonies, like India and countries on the African continent, as well as on the European countries that colonised those nations as well (Mills, 1998; Lorber, 2005). It analyses various issues that occurred during colonialism (like economic exploitation, political imperialism, social discrimination etc.) as well as other matters (e.g., cultural imperialism, neo-colonialism etc.) that have continued to define the interactions between the West and their former-colonies or trade partners (Gandhi, 1998; Childs and William, 2013).

Postcolonial feminist theory consequently situates feminist discourse into the mainstream postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory, until the emergence of feminist postcolonial theory, did not address gender in postcolonial discourse. Although there are different strands of postcolonial feminist theory, one argument that resonates with all postcolonial feminist discourse is that gender dynamics were critical to establishing and sustaining colonialism during the imperial period (see Mies, Bennholdt-Thomsen and Von Werlhof, 1988; Mohanty, 1991a, 1991b, 2003; Lorber, 2005; McClintock, 1996; Nnaemeka, 1998a) and that the impact of colonialism, in addition to present-day neo-colonialism, still shape how women in former colonies experience gender (Nnaemeka, 1998b, 1998c, 2003). Indeed, globalisation is the new form of colonisation (Steady, 2005) and "corporate globalization is increasing marginalization of African countries in the global economy, a process that transcends gender but that has gender implications" (Steady, 2005, p.317). It will be inequitable to presume that the 'official political independence' of colonised nations has resulted in absolute cultural, social, economic or 'political' independence. Colonisation occasioned not only the control of the natural resources and domination of those nations but resulted in the oppression of their people, especially the women. Of course, both men and women experienced colonisation, but the women endured layers of oppression because they were subjugated first as colonial subjects, then as women. The labour of men was privileged over women's labour. During colonialism, men were in charge of the cash crops that generated foreign exchange. Women were excluded from the new colonial political structures and the old political structures that

gave them authority were destroyed (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1982, 1993). Colonialism thus further entrenched the patriarchy that already existed in African countries and the system subsists till present time (Mba, 1982; Amadiume, 1987; Denzer, 1994). Therefore, the "study of gender in Africa cannot escape the realities of post-colonial domination" as through the "reproduction of colonial-like policies supported by international financial institutions and international corporate laws, the patriarchal ideologies of colonization are being reproduced through globalization" (Steady, 2005, p.313-314).

The reality is that very few African and developing countries are truly democratic. There are numerous African countries with presidents who have been in power for decades. Political transition is still a popular cause of civil strife in most developing countries and many individuals in power cannot be said to have emerged as a result of popular choice (Haynes, 2013; Cheeseman, 2015). Corruption is rife and economic development is poor. Provision of basic infrastructural facilities is negligible and standard of living is low. Many previously colonised nations still seek investment and financial aids from their former colonial masters or Western-controlled international financial institutions, with the latter imposing economic restructuring and industrialisation policies that further impoverish the populace (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1993; Lorber, 2005; Cudd and Holmstrom, 2011). Scholars concur that "the marginalization of Africa through corporate globalization has led to widespread poverty, the destruction of many African economies, social dislocation and civil strife. This is compounded by the erosion of the life- supporting capacities of many African ecosystems. Authoritarian regimes and gender-based discrimination complete the picture" (Steady, 2005, p.313). Thus, women suffer more in these circumstances as they are more vulnerable to physical and sexual violence during civil war or strife (Sharlach, 2000; Cohen and Green, 2012). They earn less (due to patriarchy and glass ceilings) and carry the major burden of catering for the families, especially during economic crises (Shields, 1997; Kritz and Makinwa-Adebusoye, 1999; Staveren and Odebode, 2007; Bammeke, 2013) and they are more susceptible to modern-day slavery, like prostitution, exploited migrant labour and similar vices (Fitzgibbon, 2003; Steady, 2005; Scarpa, 2008; Kara, 2009).

The political, economic and socio-cultural challenges that Black women are negotiating are unquestionably daunting. Still, they do not discountenance the challenges that white, educated and middle-class women face as a result of "power, patriarchy and profit" (Sarikakis, 2014, p79) in the so-called industrialised nations of the world. The argument of

postcolonial feminist theorists is that while white women only have to battle with patriarchy, and capitalism (depending on their location), women of colour combat a neo-colonial, sexist, classist, cultural and sometimes ethnic multi-headed dragon in their countries and the neglect of this fact is a major issue and source of concern for postcolonial feminists. White feminists cannot theorise for all 'women' because they cannot talk for people whose lived experiences are significantly different from their own.

As much as there is a need for unity among feminists - as it has been said that women generally are an oppressed class that "can only be freed by its own collective struggle" (Bryson, 2003, p. 33), there is still a necessity to appreciate the need for women from under-developed or developing countries to be allowed the opportunity to tackle their problems and present their issues in ways that can suit their contexts. They cannot be forced into a 'sisterhood' that does not reflect their primary concerns nor address their basic difficulties. Like bell hooks suggests, what is required is a solidarity that will enable feminists to come together to fight the oppression and subjugation of women without ignoring the diverse ways different women experience domination due to their location, race, culture and other factors (hooks, 1981). The reality is that women's oppression is multi-layered and varies due to several other factors (like ethnicity, class, location, status, etc.) that define their circumstances. In sum, postcolonial feminist theory articulates "a women's struggle that, while fighting sex discrimination internally and globally, recognises that many of those things that oppress them are part of an inequitable and exploitative global order which the elimination of sex-based discrimination will not eradicate" (Johnson-Odim, 2001, p.113: see also; Narayan 1997, 2000; Spivak 1999; Mohanty 2003).

Nigeria gained independence from Great Britain in 1960; yet, nearly sixty years after colonisation, the country is still battling with serious political, economic, security, infrastructure and social problems. These challenges moderate the lives of all Nigerians, particularly women, and most importantly, the women working in the country's news media. Unfortunately, postcolonial feminist theory cannot be used exclusively for this study because it cannot speak to the socio-cultural issues affecting the status and experiences of women working in the Nigerian news media. Nonetheless, it is significant for this study as it helps in putting the issues into context because the colonial history of Nigeria has significantly influenced the status of women in the country.

2.2.2.3   African Feminism

> *"**Whatever we choose to call our feminism is our prerogative.** However, in this journey that is feminist engagement, we need to walk like the chameleon – goal-oriented, cautious, accommodating, adaptable, and open to diverse views"* (Nnaemeka, 2003, p.382, emphasis mine).

Obioma Nnaemeka's words above capture the philosophy of African feminism: fluid, dynamic, diverse, but culturally African. It also subtly conveys African feminists' standpoint that we do own our feminism and we will define and apply it our way (African Feminist Forum Feminist Charter, 2006). Analysis of feminist political theories have shown that even though some of them actually have some strengths that can benefit African women, they are largely Euro-centric and not in synch with the realities of the lives of women resident in Africa (Walker, 1983; Ogunyemi, 1985, 1996; Acholonu, 1995; Kolawole, 1997; Nnaemeka, 1998a, 2003, Phillips, 2006). Black feminist theory appears closer to home, but the fact that Black women share similar histories with African women does not discountenance the fact that although their journeys might have started at the same points, the paths of Black and African women are now different due to their distinct locations. Postcolonial feminist theory speaks to the location of African women but is unable to capture the impact of socio-cultural norms in moderating the gendered experiences of African women. African women now need to chart their own feminist course, if it will aid their cause.

Different feminists have tried to name African feminism and define it (from their perspectives). Alice Walker calls hers *Womanism* (1983). Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi equally calls hers *Womanism* (1985) and later *African Womanism* (1996). Alice Walker's *Womanism* (1983) and Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi's *Womanism* (1985) may appear to be the same but the theories are different. Alice Walker, for instance, believes in lesbianism while Chikwenye Ogunyemi does not. This probably explains the reason why Ogunyemi updated it to *African Womanism* in 1996. Clenora Hudson-Weems names hers *Africana Womanism* (1989, 1993). To Obioma Nnaemeka, it is *African Feminisms* (1998a) and/or *Nego-feminism* (2003). Mary Kolawole also has her own *Womanism* (1997) while it is *Motherism* for Catherine Acholonu (1995). Molara Ogundipe-Leslie (1994) developed "indigenous feminisms" (p.223) and *Stiwanism* – an acronym for Social Transformation Including Women in Africa (p.229). The list is endless. But like Nnaemeka (2003, p.382) says, regardless of whatever they call it, what is important is that the feminism meant for African women appreciates and protects the African cultures they value and is directed "at

bringing existing socio-cultural ideas of gender into the open" and raising "suggestions for finding acceptable resolutions" (Mikell, 1997, p.5).

Naming African feminism has been "an act of resistance" (Omenugha, 2005, p.25; see also: Phillips, 2006) for some African feminist theorists due to their decision not to align with some radicalism that has been associated with Western feminism (Arndt, 2000, p.710). Other theorists have chosen to eschew the word 'feminism' to show that whatever agency and theory is exercised or created towards achieving equality for women in Africa originates from the continent and is not an alien philosophy imported from the West or imposed on the continent from imperial North (Meena, 1992; Mikell, 1995, 1997; Phillips, 2006; Moses, 2012).

My standpoint, for the purpose of this study and after gaining a deep insight into what feminism stands for and its heterogeneity, is that any ideology that is dedicated to securing equal rights for African women and liberating them from patriarchy and all other forms of subjugation through ideologies, customs, traditions, laws or systems will be defined as African feminism, regardless of what its originator labels it (for justification of my position, see: Mbilinyi, 1992; Arndt, 2000; Nnaemeka, 2003; Phillips, 2006). This is because a lot of African feminist theorists will reject any link with feminism, even when they are dedicated to its ideals in order to "deflect energies from constantly having to respond to charges of imitating Western feminism" (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1994, p.229). Also, international award-winning Nigerian author, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, recently commented on how some Nigerians, including journalists have expressed their aversion for her feminist advocacy (Adichie, 2014) due to a wrong perception of what feminism entails.

It is important to note that the bulk of the literature that discuss the challenges of the Black woman focus on the African-American woman or the Black women of African-descent living in the global North. They discuss and critique the impact slavery, colonialism and migration have had on the images and lives of these women and how these persist in producing a cycle of racial, class and gender oppression, suppression and subjugation even in present times (See: hooks, 1981, 1989; Richardson, 1987; Collins, 1990, 2000, 2002, 2017; James and Busia, 1993; Hurtado, 1996; Zinn and Dill, 1996; Amos and Parmar, 1997; Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe, 1997; Carby, 1997; Mama, 1997; Mirza, 1997; Kanneh, 1998; James and Sharpley-Whiting, 2000; Lorber, 2005; Moraga and Anzaldúa, 2015). It is as though it is taken for granted that the Black women in Africa share the same fate and destiny with their

sisters living in the global North. If this is implied, then Black feminism and/or African-American feminism may indirectly be repeating the mistakes of liberal feminists who believe that they are qualified to represent all 'women' by also thinking that Black feminism can address the problems of all Black women (regardless of their location) (see Ogunyemi, 1996; Blay, 2008). Black women all over the world may be *Black* (those from African-descent), but the political, economic and socio-cultural environments in which they function and the specific forms of domination and discrimination they encounter are different. So, if feminism will address the challenges of the Black, African women living in Africa, it has to deliberately address the specific challenges that are created by virtue of their being African women living on the African continent (Arndt, 2000; Mazama, 2001).

Women in different parts of Africa are battling with various issues ranging from political instability, religious extremism, coups, wars, civil strife, ethnicity, hunger, famine and starvation, HIV/AIDS, child labour, human trafficking, prostitution, economic recession, inflation, among others (Collier and Gunning, 1999; White, Killick and Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 2001; Comolli, 2015; Maconachie and Hilson, 2016). Patriarchy and sexual oppression cannot be fought if these problems are not tackled, and these problems also create their own attendant problems for women. Some of these problems are displacement, rape, high maternal and child mortality, to mention a few. It is important to realise that women are part of the continent and they are affected by its challenges. The challenges of women in Africa can therefore not be addressed without considering the environment within which these women live (Ogunyemi, 1996, 1997; Mikell, 1997). I do not subscribe to the 'Africa is a dark continent' theory, as a lot of things are working well on the continent and a lot of women are getting empowered and developing agency. Nonetheless, it will be hypocritical to ignore the thorny issues bedevilling Africa and its women, and pretend they do not exist. That will be blind patriotism.

The African continent (like most other continents) is patriarchal, but the political systems applied in pre-Western (Amadiume, 1987; Mikell, 1997) contact and pre-colonial period still empowered women with political, economic, religious and social powers. The advent of Islam, introduction of Christianity and, ultimately, the colonisation of the continent destroyed whatever power women wielded, crushed the agency they exercised, removed them from the public-sphere and further entrenched the patriarchy that already existed prior to colonisation (Mba, 1982; Amadiume, 1987; Ogundipe-Leslie, 1993; Denzer, 1994; Mama, 1997; Mikell,

1997; Nnaemeka, 2003). Africa's ruling elite with a male-dominated party politics has maintained the systemic suppression of women after independence because the present system benefits them (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1993; Mama, 1997).

African women are sometimes made to feel guilty for seeking personal liberation and gender equality when the continent is burdened with coups and military regimes, economic recession and political instability, among others. Nevertheless, African feminists have smartly learnt to "respond to the persistent gender hierarchy in ways that are personally liberating as well as politically positive" (Mikell, 1997, p.3). Feminism, therefore, for sub-Saharan African women is still very "concerned with many bread, butter, culture and power issues" (Mikell, 1997, p.4). African feminists have had to include campaigns for quality healthcare, education, water and sanitation, reproductive rights, abortion, equal remuneration, maternity leave policy, among others, on their agenda, due to the state of governance on the continent (African Feminist Forum Feminist Charter, 2006).

African feminists thus "propose African-centered approaches to the study of gender in Africa" (Blay, 2008, p.69) which they argue will be "based on an understanding of African socio-cultural realities, feminist traditions and philosophies" with the intention to "develop gender-focused frameworks of analysis that can bring out the multiple and varied social locations of African women while maintaining their specific identities and priorities" (Steady, 2005, p.314). By implication, African feminists use "culture as the paradigmatic framework that has the potential of producing action-oriented research capable of transforming society and empowering women" (Steady, 2005, p.327) by carefully "[examining] African societies for institutions which are of value to women and [rejecting] those which work to their detriment" (Boyce Davies, 1986, p.9).

African feminism is heterosexual, pro-natal and liberal (Hudson-Weems, 1989; Ogunyemi, 1996; Mikell, 1997) by recognising women as nurturers, encouraging procreation and child-care and discouraging homosexual relationships. Like liberal feminism, it is not radical and does not intend to disrupt existing structures. Rather, African feminism intends to better the conditions of African women within the existing political and economic spheres using legal, rational and non-violent means (Nnaemeka, 2003). This makes African feminism very similar to liberal feminism. The principles are the same while the only difference is that African feminism seeks to secure equality for African women within the context of (and without

jeopardising) the African culture and traditions the women are believed to subscribe to. In the same vein, African feminism appreciates the extra challenges that African women experience as a result of their location on the African continent.

Like most feminists, African feminists do not see all men as the enemy. African feminism welcomes male-feminists (men who want to improve the lives of women) and selects enemies based on ideology rather than gender (Nnaemeka, 2003, p.378, note 17). African feminism is very cultural and intends to maintain and protect African traditional and cultural values that are not repugnant to human rights and the principles of social justice (Ogunyemi, 1996). Reproduction for African feminists is sublime; an opportunity to contribute to nature and the continuity of the human race. A renowned African feminist, Gwendolyn Mikell asserts that "No self-respecting African woman fails to bear children and to be an autonomous economic contributor" (Mikell, 1997, p.9). The goal of African feminists, is, therefore, the creation of an environment where women will be empowered to contribute to the development of their societies, earn income through respectable careers and get the support of their spouses (to help in house chores and child care) and government (through policies and their implementation) to raise children and maintain a home in a peaceful and economically prosperous continent without jeopardising their career or professional development.

African feminists are not fighting for the right to work, earn an income or participate in careers because these are all given and taken for granted. African women have always worked, even before colonialism, and the African culture does not prevent or discourage them from working (Aidoo 1998, p.46). The main challenge African feminists face is that the burden of raising children and maintaining the homes are majorly on women, in spite of their working and contributing financially to the upkeep of the home, basically because the patriarchal culture discourages men from helping at chores. The lack of equality policies, like child care, maternity leave and sexual harassment policies in organisations, including the will to apply them where they do exist, also alienate women in professional circles and build glass ceilings for them professionally. It also prevents them from rising to their capacities. Patriarchy also hinders women from attaining some positions because, culturally, women are not deemed capable of being overall heads in some sectors (Yusuf, 1991). Most importantly, the poor governance and corruption that is preventing government from providing adequate social infrastructure for good standard of living and curbing of avoidable deaths from

preventable diseases as well as maternal and infant mortality to mention a few also create additional psychological and social burdens that distract women from equality issues. In sum, African feminists are concerned about good governance and the need to prevent religious terrorism, coups, civil war and strive, from which women bear the greatest brunt.

It must be stated that these opinions do not imply that there are no individual African feminists with ideologies that are different from those expressed above. For instance, Alice Walker's *Womanism* (1983, xi) supports lesbianism while Ogunyemi's *African Womanism* (1996, p.133) rejects Walker's theory altogether, stating unequivocally that homosexuality is un-African. It should be noted that Alice Walker is an African-American, and I will identify her (in this study) as a Black feminist and not an African feminist because African feminists believe that it is only Black-African women who live in Africa that can truly and genuinely theorise for African women (see Ogunyemi, 1996). This is not to say, however, that the ideologies of all African feminists are homogenous (Blay, 2008). In all, the ideology of African feminists, especially when they theorise (as individual feminists or academics) or come together as a group (e.g., African Feminist Forum Feminist Charter, 2006) is a liberal philosophy dedicated to preserving African ideals and using legislation to improve the lot of women (Ogunyemi, 1996; Mikell, 1997; African Feminist Forum Feminist Charter, 2006). Overall, for feminist research to be of use for women in Africa, it must be "historically and culturally specific, and practical and solution-oriented" (Blay, 2008, p.61). This study into the status and experiences of women in the Nigerian news media and the structures within which they operate is best researched and analysed using African feminism. Of all the reviewed theories, African feminism is the theory with the principles that mirror the realities of the personal and professional lives of women journalists working in traditional, cultural, religious Sub-Saharan African Nigeria. It is liberal and concerned with improving the status of women within the existing structures using legislations, policies, and advocacy while taking cognisance of the cultural, political and professional environments within which the women journalists operate. As a result, this is the most appropriate feminist theory for investigating women journalists' status and experiences in the Nigerian news media. The theory is equally the most ideal for providing transformative solutions that can help in breaking the glass ceilings that restrict Nigerian women journalists to low rank, non-management and non-editorial positions.

2.3   Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the body of research on the status of women in journalism globally to help situate the experiences of Nigerian women journalists (which are later discussed in the findings chapters) within the international scholarly literature on women's experience of journalism practice. It also reviews the feminist theories that underpin this study - liberal, Black, postcolonial and African feminisms - highlighting the significance of each theory to the study but noting that African feminism is the most appropriate theory for this study into women journalists' experience of the Nigerian news media.

Liberal feminism is able to help secure equality laws and policies that have been identified to be grossly inadequate in Nigerian news companies (Byerly, 2011). Black feminism compensates for the class and racial blindness of liberal feminism by reviewing the intersectionality of Nigerian women's race and class with the challenges they face as women while postcolonial feminism reviews the economic and political impact of colonialism on Nigeria and its implications on the lives of women living in the country, including women journalists. Black and postcolonial feminism speak to some of the realities of the lived experiences of women in Nigeria, but they do not capture the socio-cultural implications of being African, living in Africa and having an African worldview on the personal and professional lives of Nigerian women news workers. These are all captured in African feminism and it is on this basis that the theory is deemed the most applicable for this study.

After presenting an account of the literature and the theories that underpin this research, I will now proceed to the methods chapter which provides the details of the data gathering and analysis methods. A qualitative praxis was adopted as the study is aimed at understanding how women experience working in the news media. The ethnography method was used in gathering data due to the fact that it is a multi-method approach that involves observation, interviews and archival analysis that provide a comprehensive outlook into the lived experience of subjects and their perceptions of those experiences.

Chapter Three: Methods

> *"Clarity on process and practice of method is vital."*
> – (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.80)

3.0   Introduction

This chapter explains both the theory and technique of the research process used in investigating how women journalists experience the Nigerian news media. As the project objectives have been highlighted under 'Introduction', I proceed immediately to the first sub-section, which provides an explanation of the feminist perspectives guiding the research by clarifying how my feminist inclinations were brought to the study without jeopardising the integrity of the research. Next, I discuss the ethical decisions taken around informed consent, confidentiality and data security, noting that the principles that influenced the decisions were based on protecting research subjects and not harming them in the course of the study. Once ethical decisions are clarified, I then explore the data gathering procedure. I explain that the ethnographic method of data gathering was used as it provided the opportunity of understanding the experiences of subjects, which is critical to this research. It also has the added advantage of a multi-method approach (combination of observation, interviews and archival analysis) which offers a variety of information that helped to create better understanding of the subject of inquiry and in addition, reinforce findings. I also include a discussion of how the observations, interviews and archival analysis were conducted and recorded. After that, I describe the data analysis process, explaining that the thematic analysis method of data analysis was used in evaluating the findings due to its capacity to reflect "complex relationships across participants' experiences" (Henderson and Baffour, 2015, p.1965) as well as its ability to generate similarities and relationships from the data produced using the multi-method approach (observations, interviews and archival analysis). The last sub-section explains the parameters used in anonymising the interviewees.

3.1 Research Perspective: *Frankly Feminist*

"Taking account of women and adopting a feminist perspective affects the research process" (Maynard and Purvis, 1994, p.1).

This study on how women journalists experience working in the Nigerian news media is feminist in orientation. Guided by African feminist theory, it is conducted by a researcher who regards herself as an African feminist, and is targeted at achieving feminist goals. This section discusses in three sub-sections the fundamental implications of the feminist philosophy underpinning this research. The first sub-section is on reflexivity – a review of the implications of the feminist perspective with which the study is conducted. The second sub-section makes a brief distinction between women and feminist studies, justifying the interview of male journalists as part of the research (even though the study is about women journalists) while the last sub-section substantiates the adoption of a qualitative research framework.

3.1.1 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is an examination of the filters and lenses through which we see the world (Mansfield, 2006). It involves exploring and consciously acknowledging the assumptions and preconceptions that are brought into research by the researcher(s) and how this affects the entire research process (King, 2004; Butler-Kisber, 2010; Patton, 2015). Feminist research is reflexive because feminists allow feminist theory to influence their conceptualisation, investigation and analysis of feminist studies. Reflexivity does not diminish the accuracy of feminist research. In fact, feminist research is passionate scholarship which "demands rigour, precision and responsibility" (Du Bois, 1983, p.113). Feminist studies are concerned primarily with improving women's lives; therefore, "no feminist study can be politically neutral" (Maynard and Purvis, 1994, p.23) or methodologically 'objective' (Harding, 1991). In line with this standpoint, I am also not interested in scientific or politically correct objectivity that has been faulted by critics (see for example: Du Bois, 1983, p.105; Gould, 1996, pp.53-54). As a feminist, I am primarily concerned with exposing the realities of the career experiences of Nigerian women journalists in order to generate advocacy that can lead to improvements in their work conditions. Nonetheless, I did not allow my feminist leaning to interfere with ensuring the study meets the basic standards and ethics of good research.

3.1.2 Women's Studies

There is an assumption that comes with doing feminist research, that feminist studies are only about and/or with women, for women and by women (Kelly, Burton and Regan, 1994, p.32). Assessed superficially, it appears factual and obvious since feminism is women-focused. However, this assumption is nothing more than an oversimplification of feminist scholarship (Maynard and Purvis, 1994). It is crucial to note that feminist research is not merely about interviewing women (Kelly, 1988, p.3). Although feminist studies are about unravelling the inequalities that women suffer and seeking ways to resolve them, feminist research can be undertaken by analysing media contents, documents and texts, interviewing male participants and studying institutions (Laws, 1990; Kelly, Burton and Regan, 1994). Feminist research cannot be absolutely restricted to women because studying women's lives implies that patriarchy, "male dominance, masculinity and men are always part of the research" (Kelly, Burton and Regan, 1994, p.33). There are several challenges that women face that can be better understood and resolved if there is informed knowledge on how men benefit from the situation, their perceptions of it, their roles in or contributions to the situation and what options they perceive as solutions to the problem (Stanley and Wise, 1983).

It is important to note that although this research is about the status and experiences of women journalists in the Nigerian news media, male journalists and men holding management/editorial positions were interviewed. There is a need to clarify the reason for interviewing men as part of efforts towards understanding how women experience working in the news media. If this study will unravel the reasons for women's oppression and how to resolve them, there is a need "to target our attention on the ways it is structured and reproduced" (Kelly, Burton and Regan, 1994, p.33) and that can be better achieved if the men that are suspected of perpetuating sexist oppression and/or benefiting from the patriarchal and male-cultured news media are also studied. This position is supported by Reinharz who mentions that feminist researchers "sometimes interview and observe both sexes for the purposes of examining how behaviour is patterned by gender" (Reinharz, 1992, pp. 53-54), especially in "feminist observational research in a mixed-gender setting" (Reinharz, 1992, p.54). This is the case in this research as women journalists were observed in mixed-gender newsrooms.

3.1.3   Feminist Methodology

There is a notion that there is a 'feminist methodology' explicit to and best suited for feminist research and/or that feminist scholarship has its own unique or specific set of research methods (Holloway, 1997; Ackerly and True, 2010). It must be clarified that feminism is not limited to any specific discipline, as it is a multi-disciplinary philosophy that guides all feminist scholarship (Mies, 1983, p.117; Maynard and Purvis, 1988, p. 3; Reinharz, 1992, p.10; Sarantakos, 2004). Some scholars have criticised the arguments that there are feminist methods, noting that, "whilst there are grounds for defining research as feminist, there is not, as yet, a distinctive 'feminist methodology'" (Maynard and Purvis, 1988, pp.5-6). The methods mostly used by feminists are not original to feminism because they were not discovered by feminist scholarship, and they have been in use prior to the commencement of feminist research (Stanley and Wise, 1983; Tuttle, 1987; Kelly, 1988). It is their argument, however, that rather than methods making research feminist, it is the theoretical frameworks underlying the use of the methods that make studies feminist. Feminist scholars have opined that *"there are no feminist methods but methods that feminists use"* (Du Bois, 1983, p.109, italics mine; see also: Cook and Fonow, 1990; Laws, 1990; Robertson, 1993; Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, 2006).

Of importance when considering feminist methodology, is the debate on the scientific value or appropriateness of qualitative and/or quantitative methods for undertaking feminist research. Although some feminist scholars have advocated for the use of mixed methods for feminist research (Bryman, 2006, Silverman, 2013), including using quantitative or qualitative methods independently and/or together, depending on the nature of the study and the kind of information to be generated (Kelly, Burton and Regan, 1994; Epstein Jayaratne and Stewart 2008), qualitative methods are however regarded as better suited for feminist research (Mies, 1991; Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009).

Nonetheless, the emphasis when conducting feminist research should be "on using methods which can best answer particular research questions" (Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991, p.91; see also, Jayaratne and Abibail, 1991) rather than 'politically' restricting the research to quantitative or qualitative methods. Care must equally be taken to ensure that whichever method(s) chosen are used "in ways which are consistent with broad feminist goals and ideology" (Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991, p.91; see also, Miner-Rubino and Jayaratne, 2007;

King and Horrocks, 2010, p.7). This is in line with my standpoint that the most important factor when considering methodology for feminist research is in choosing the method(s) that will best answer the research questions and that are most appropriate for the research goals and broader feminist ideals (e.g., protecting research subjects). Therefore, for this study that seeks to understand how women experience the Nigerian news media, qualitative research methodology was used as it is best suited for investigating experience. It is equally the method that was used by some other researchers who have studied how women experience the news media (North, 2009; Williams, 2010; Pate, 2014).

As the main feminist frameworks underpinning the methodology of this study have been explained, there is an important need to now discuss the ethical issues that influenced how this research was undertaken and its findings presented.

3.2 Research Ethics: *Fishing in Muddy Waters*

> *"We can never fully know what consequences our work will have on others. We cannot control context and readings. But we can have some control over what we choose to write and how we write it"* (Whyte, 1955) *because for us, the research "might be 'text'; for them it is life* (Richardson, 1997, p.117).

Informed consent, confidentiality and the security of data are discussed in this section based on guidelines provided by the British Sociological Association (BSA) Statement of Ethical Practice (2009) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Framework for Research Ethics (2015).

3.2.1 Informed Consent

The nature of the research was explained to the managers of the two media organisations I studied while seeking access to their newsrooms and the terms of the agreement (which is majorly to maintain the anonymity of the organisations) were not breached. All the individuals interviewed were taken through what the study was about, they signed the informed consent forms before the commencement of the interviews (with the understanding that they did not have to answer awkward questions and can withdraw from the interview at any point) and they all consented to the interview being recorded before I used the recording device. The interviewees were also contacted after transcribing the interviews to read the transcripts and they were permitted to make comments about anything they would like to change and/or correct in the interview transcripts. Most of the interviewees did not make significant changes to their transcripts. They also signed the interview release forms after

reading the transcripts of the interviews. Sample copies of the interview consent form and interview release form are in the appendix.

3.2.2 Confidentiality

In line with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Framework for Research Ethics recommendation that "Research should be designed in such a way that the dignity and (when possible) the autonomy of research participants is respected and appropriately protected" (2015, p.5), I made a decision not to identify most of the journalists interviewed and all the news media organisations sampled in my research in this thesis for ethical purposes. One interviewee was, however, identified in some sections of the findings chapters due to the unique position she occupied and the difficulty in keeping her anonymous. The interviewee was aware of this and consented to being identified.

The male (and female) journalists and media managers interviewed for this thesis expressed frank personal opinions about their perceptions of women journalists and their place in the industry, human resource managers articulated their organisations' gender, maternity and sexual harassment policies and/or lack of it while women journalists, in addition to discussing how they experienced the industry, went personal and explained how journalism practice affected their marital and/or emotional relationships. Revealing the identities of these organisations and individuals will, therefore, be complicated and against the principles of research ethics which ask that "researchers avoid harming participants involved in the process by respecting and taking into account their needs and interests" (Flick, 2009, p.36). Also, the majority of studies on the status of women in the news media, globally, do not identify their research participants, they protect their identities and grant them adequate anonymity (see for example; Gallagher, 1995; Made and Morna, 2009; Williams, 2010; North, 2009, 2016a, 2016b; Byerly, 2011, 2013; Pate, 2014; MEAA Women in Media Report, 2016).

The interview transcriber also signed a confidentiality form and was mandated to delete the records of the audio interviews and the word document transcripts with him after submitting same to me. A sample of the confidentiality agreement signed by the interview transcriber is in the appendix.

3.2.3 Data Security

All the audio interviews, the soft copies of the interview transcripts and the scanned copies of the interview consent and interview release forms are in a password-protected cloud drive opened specifically for the security of the data. The print copies of the interviews, interview consent and interview release forms are saved securely in a locked cabinet and will only be stored for the maximum of seven years after the submission of this thesis. All the print copies of the transcribed interviews used for data analysis have been destroyed after analysis and writing.

After explaining consent, confidentiality and the security of data decisions, the next section will provide detailed information about the methods used in gathering data for this research, justify the reasons for their selection, and explain how they were deployed.

3.3   Research Praxis: *Understanding Experiences*

> "*What makes research 'feminist' is not the methods as such, but the framework within which they are located, and the particular ways in which they are deployed*" (Kelly, Burton and Regan, 1994, p.46).

My standpoint on doing feminist research (see Section 3.1.3) determined the research design that was used in gathering data for this thesis. I align with scholars who are of the opinion that the best research methods to adopt are those that are capable of eliciting answers to the research questions being investigated (See Du Bois, 1983; Jayaratne, 1983; Stanley and Wise, 1983; Fonow and Cook, 1991; McLaughlin, 1991; Brannen, 1992; Kelly, Burton and Regan, 1994) as long as they are in conformity with feminist goals, values and ideology (Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991; Miner-Rubino and Jayaratne, 2007; King and Horrocks, 2010; Epstein, Jayaratne and Stewart, 2008).

After considering the opportunities of using either and/or both quantitative and qualitative designs for answering my research questions, I chose the qualitative research design in gathering data for this thesis due to my perspective that it is more suitable for studying experiences as its approaches are better at conceptualising and articulating the various aspects of participants' realities (Silverman, 2001; Gherardi and Turner, 2002; Miner-Rubino and Jayaratne, 2007; Bryman, 2008; Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009). The design thus enabled me to focus more on the experiences of the women journalists studied for this thesis and, therefore, generate information that provide significant and original knowledge about how

women experience journalism career in Nigeria "from the point of view of the people studied" (Hammersley, 1992, p. 45).

3.3.1   Research Practice: *Privileging Women Journalists' Experience*

> *"Women's experiences constitute a different view of reality, an entirely different 'ontology' or way of going about making sense of the world"* – Stanley and Wise (1983, p.117).

To understand how women journalists experience working in the Nigerian news media, an ethnographic approach was adopted as a means of gathering data for this thesis. Ethnography is "the description and interpretation of a culture or social group" (Holloway, Brown and Shipway, 2010, p. 76; see also, Fetterman, 1998). It entails "gaining access to naturally occurring events, observing, uncovering and comprehending the meanings which the social actors involved attach to these events to produce a systematic written account of what has been ethnographically observed and heard (Giazitzoglu and Payne, 2018, p.1150). Ethnography also involves investigating the lived realities, meanings and perspectives of research subjects, groups or cultures in order to be able to get insightful data that will present insiders' views of the explored reality (Wolcott, 1999; Angrosino, 2007).

Ethnographers gather data from natural settings where research subjects conduct their regular social, religious, political and/or economic activities by "carefully observing and participating" (Sangasubana, 2011, p.567) in the lives and/or activities of people being studied. By providing access to subjects' real life contexts, ethnography is able to supply "detailed, authentic information unattainable by any other research method" (Li, 2008, p.101). This is due to the fact that researchers are able to compare information provided by subjects to what they observe on the field (Gans, 1999). Ethnography also provides researchers with the opportunity to study groups (for example, deviant groups) that would ordinarily be closed to researchers if other methods of data gathering were used (Li, 2008).

It is important to note that "ethnography is a style of research rather than a single research method" because it "uses a variety of techniques" (Brewer, 2004, p.312) to collect data "in multiple ways for triangulation over an extended period of time" (Sangasubana, 2011, p.567). In the words of Denzin, it is "a curious blending of methodological techniques" (Denzin, 1978, p.183). Ethnography is thus a "multimethod research" process that "includes observation, participation, archival analysis and interviewing" (Reinharz, 1992, p.46);

methods which offer the best opportunities of providing answers to sociological issues (Fusch and Ness, 2015; Marshall and Rossman, 2016).

It was selected for this study because "it makes women's *lives* visible" and involves practices such as observations and interviews. As scholars note, the use of interviewing "makes women's *voices* audible" (Reinharz, 1992, p.48) and no method can be more appropriate in exploring Nigerian women journalists' realities than a method that manifests their experiences from their perspectives. By taking advantage of the multiple methods and data sources that are obtainable by using ethnography, this methodology allowed me "to develop a complex picture" of the career experiences of women journalists in the Nigerian news media, an opportunity that would have been otherwise "unavailable if only one method were utilised" (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005, p.41).

It is crucial to note that as much as standard qualitative research procedures were applied in gathering and analysing data for this research, I followed the advice of Maxwell (2012, p.87) by allowing the issue I was "studying and the specific context of" my research as well as other components of my design (like the African feminist theory applied to the study and the socio-cultural location of my investigation [Nigeria]) to influence the decisions I made regarding methodology and how they were deployed. In essence, I am one of those feminist researchers whose "research follows their own definition of feminism" (Reinharz, 1992, p.46).

3.3.2   Research Techniques: *Benefiting from the Potpourri*

> *"It is frequently useful to select a range of methods, with a view to maximizing input to the research"* – (Maynard and Purvis, 1994, p.3).

For this study, the ethnography method was used and its blend of techniques (observation, interviews and archival analysis) were, therefore, utilised in gathering data for this study. First, an observation study of how women work and interact with their male and female colleagues in Nigerian newsrooms was done; then, interviews were conducted with women and men journalists, managers and media organisations' administrators to explore how women journalists experience their career in the news media in order to derive an understanding of the factors that influence this. Finally, a review of staff handbooks of five media organisations was done to gain more perspectives about the organisational policies of news media organisations in Nigeria and how they define the industry experience and career progression of women journalists in the country. The sub-sections below explain in detail the

three techniques used in gathering data for this study as well as clarify why and how they were deployed towards gaining understanding of how women journalists experience working in the Nigerian news media.

3.3.2.1 Observation

"As so often happens in fieldwork, the genealogy of research – entry, normalisation, and exit – reveals as much about the society as the research itself" (Burawoy and Lukacs, 1992, p.4)

The first technique that was used in gathering data for this study was observation. An observational study of the professional cum social interactions of women journalists in the newsrooms of two news media organisations in Nigeria was done to appreciate women journalists' "activities, behaviours, actions" and the nature of their "interpersonal interactions" (Patton, 2015, p.14) with their colleagues (both men and women) in the news media. It is important to note that the essence of the observation was primarily to see first-hand how women journalists interacted with their colleagues as this information was used in relating with the experiences women journalists later shared in the interviews. I felt this observation was important in order for me to refresh my experience and understanding of women's journalists' newsroom interactions with their colleagues in different media environments rather than relying on my experience of their interactions in the few years I spent in the news media before joining the academia in 2009. This clarification is important as the access I requested for and was granted in the two news organisations studied only provided me access to the workers and physical facilities (like newsroom, studios, printing press etc.) and not to access their organisational documents (like organisational policy or staff handbook) or attend management and/or editorial meetings. The access granted was adequate for the purpose of my observational study. More importantly, I believed it was what was practical and realistic as the "Nigerian media organisations have not gotten to the stage where they can feel comfortable allowing researchers access their organisational documents and attend sensitive meetings, like editorial board meetings" (Lai Oso[7], personal communication, May 13, 2017). It is equally salient to note that some scholars have classed studies like mine mini-ethnographies (White, 2009) due to the short duration of the observation which lasted for a total of four weeks in the two newsrooms (two weeks per organisation). They argue that ethnographies that last between a few weeks (Alfonso, Nickelson and Cohen, 2012) and a

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[7] Lai Oso is a Professor of Media and Communication at Lagos State University and the President of the Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN).

maximum of one year (Yang et al., 2011) are mini-ethnographies (Storesund & McMurray, 2009).

The two media organisations observed for the study are a national mainstream newspaper and a national news television channel, both with headquarters in South West[8] Nigeria. Two full weeks were spent in the newsroom of each organisation (at the organisation's headquarters) making the duration of the observation study a total of four weeks for the two organisations. While the dissertation does not explicitly identify the organisations (with their names), I recognise it is possible that those with in-depth knowledge of the Nigerian media landscape might be able to identify my selected case studies as a result of some of their unique characteristics. Therefore, to further protect the identities of the organisations, I mentioned the reasons for their selection (in the sub-sections below) without providing abundant information about them (e.g., name, exact location, year of establishment, staff strength etc.). I also took care not to provide identifying information (like names and positions) of individual staff journalists when describing my observations (of women journalists' interactions with their colleagues) in the findings chapter.

During my observations at the two news media organisations, I kept a notebook for recording events, remarks, interactions or any other information I perceived important to my study. I would note the date, actors and what transpired and why I believed this was significant for the study. I read the notes during my analysis and used them in reviewing my findings. Details of how the observations noted were used in the analysis of data for this study are explained in the research analysis procedure section (Section 3.4.2).

Facilitating Access

To gain access to the two selected organisations, I used a combination of resources. An initial contact was made through personal relationships. With both the television station and newspaper, I relied on my elder brother, Kayode Tijani, who is an independent sports journalist with over twenty-five years industry experience (but had worked in a number of media organisations and the Federal Government sports ministry). He introduced me to the management of both organisations who agreed to grant me access. At both meetings, I brought with me an official letter from my Ph.D. supervisor which explained what my project was about, what I would be doing in the newsroom and the support I required. The letter

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[8] The state has been deliberately excluded to prevent easy identification of the organisations.

noted that I would adhere to De Montfort University's ethical guidelines. Using my relative and acquaintance to gain access is not inappropriate as scholars approve the use of family, friends, acquaintances, colleagues, gatekeepers, among others as part of the tactics that can be used in gaining access for ethnography (Bryman and Bells, 2003). David Silverman also notes that qualitative researchers "use their existing relationships and contacts for their research" (2013, p.215) and a lack of such relationships and contacts could mean no access or limited access.

It is noteworthy to identify the role that my elder brother (a male journalist), played in my getting access. I doubt if I would have gained access had I simply walked up to the management of the sampled organisations, introduced myself and my study and requested their support. More importantly, I would like to identify the fact that it would require an experienced journalist who had spent considerable time in the industry and with interpersonal relationships with some workers on senior management level to facilitate such links. Although women journalists holding top positions could facilitate such access, their numbers are considerably few in Nigeria.

3.3.2.1.1 Case Study 1: 24-Hour Television News Channel

The television station is a 24-hour news dedicated channel which has earned a reputation both locally and internationally for being a professional and objective medium in terms of news gathering and analyses. The station also streams its programmes online. The organisation is one of the most technologically equipped in the country and it has a high number of women journalists in its employ. I will not give abundant and specific details about this news station in order not to give identifying information that may jeopardise anonymity.

3.3.2.1.1.1 Observation at the Television Station

I did my observation of women journalists in the newsroom of the television station from April 19 to May 2, 2015. I had a small 11.6-inch laptop that was placed on the table wherever I was seated so I could make my notes and jottings without attracting attention even though I also had a hard cover note that I made jottings in. So, most observations were noted on the field while some were noted later at home while reviewing the day. Within a few days, I had made a few friends and introduced myself to people. I would move around and ask questions about operations and general information and I was attended to warmly. I had a key informant who had a role that put him practically in the office daily (I will prefer not to

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identify the role). So, I was lucky to have him around and from him I was able to understand the shifts, the news cycle and a lot about the operations of the station. He introduced me to a lot of female reporters who I spoke with generally and some who I had in-depth interviews with (after bookings appointments) at later times.

I would go to the station very early at 7 a.m. to witness the early morning movement of reporters and their camera crew to beats and coverage sites while I also stayed late at night (until 9 p.m. when the prime time news commenced) to see how many women journalists worked late. I also went to the station at weekends to have a feel of the newsroom at those periods as well (although I usually arrived in the afternoons around 2 p.m. and left early around 5 p.m. because the schedules were lighter). My focus during the observation was to review women journalists' interpersonal interactions with their colleagues and it was observations that fit these themes that were noted.

I would say that I was a partial insider (Chavez, 2008) for this observation because even though I had practised journalism, I had left the profession for the academia six years before my study. I also did not participate in production in any form during my observation. This role has also been identified as peripheral membership (Alder & Alder, 1987) or detached insider (Li, 2008). Nonetheless, my past journalism and broadcast newsroom experienced eased my understanding of activities in the newsroom (during my observation) and made it easy for me to gather information for my study. The journalists I spoke with also felt comfortable discussing with me knowing I had practised before and was also teaching journalism in the university.

3.3.2.1.2   Case Study 2: National Mainstream Daily Newspaper

The second news media organisation selected was a mainstream newspaper with a national reach. The newspaper has a reputation for good journalism practice and is one of the newspaper organisations that have survived the economic hardships that have taken a good number of Nigerian dailies off the newsstands (Olukotun, 2017). It also has a national presence and established national distribution channels as well as a significant number of women journalists in its employ. The organisation's employees' gender-ratio represents the average Nigerian newspaper organisation employment ratio and that is also another key reason for its selection - the fact that it provides an environment with a semblance of what is obtainable in the average news media organisation in the country. Again, I will not give

abundant and specific details about this newspaper in order not to give identifying information that will jeopardise anonymity.

3.3.2.1.2.1 Observation at the Newspaper

I did my observation of the newsroom of the newspaper from May 10 to May 23, 2015, after concluding the observation of the television station. A very good friend of mine edits and plans a daily (week-days) page and late in the evenings when the production rush was high, he would give me a few planned pages to proof-read for grammatical and spelling errors before giving them to the Assistant Editor assigned to supervise his desk. So, without planning to participate, my familiarity with some of the staff of this newspaper (as well as my previous industry experience) changed my role from being a 'complete observer' to one that participated 'occasionally' in production. I will like to note that it is not unusual for the status of researchers to change on the field when conducting ethnographic studies and that is why scholars have proposed that the role of ethnographers should not be placed strictly on insider or outsider categories but rather on a continuum, as circumstances sometimes arise on the field that alter these positions (Breen, 2007; Trowler, 2012). Although I was a partial insider ([Chavez, 2008]) due to my previous journalism practice and familiarity with some staff, my role changed to that of a participant-observer on some days. However, due to the fact that my role was limited, it would be inaccurate to say I became a total insider (Chavez, 2008). Luckily, Giazitzoglu and Payne's three level model of insider ethnography provide a seemingly accurate description of my role which was a second level insider. Their level one insider category is a researcher with a lived familiarity with subjects such as race, gender, language and other similar markers which enable the researcher to gain access and acceptance. The second level insider has a "shared cultural capital and the ability to enact routine collective behaviour, general discourses and core styles in a given cultural field" (Giazitzoglu and Payne, 2018, p.1153). My previous journalism experience afforded me with the knowledge and skills to perform some duties at the newspaper and also engage in discussions with the journalists and this enriched my observation. Level three involves active participation in subjects' activities, game or profession and this was not the case in my study as my focus was basically observing women journalists' interactions with their colleagues in the newsroom. I did not go for news coverage, submit reports nor participate in editorial meetings.

I stayed late in the newsroom of the newspaper during my observation (like 10pm on most days and 11pm on a few occasions) compared to the television station, because I had a friend working in the newsroom who drove me home. So, this made it easy for me to stay later at this newspaper during my observation compared to the television station because I did not have a car. On two occasions, I stayed at the newspaper past midnight, which was only feasible because he was willing to drive me home afterwards. This experience gave me new insights into some of the perhaps more 'hidden' challenges of being a female journalist working late shift. This was perhaps not something that would have been apparent by simply observing women in the newsroom.

Due to my familiarity with some members of staff (I met some of them during my internship as a university undergraduate and in the few years I spent in the industry), I did not have a key informant at the newspaper and did not require much help in moving around or getting answers to my questions. This difference in position undoubtedly impacted the quality of my findings. Although the observations at both organisations were meaningful, my stay at the newspaper was more interesting because I was familiar with more people in the newsroom and I felt more welcomed as more journalists were eager to respond to my questions. On the other hand, when reflecting about my experiences, the downside of being an insider was that I felt I was able to observe more at the television station because I was not very familiar with the people and environment and was, therefore, more conscious of my role than when I was in the newsroom of the newspaper organisation. This is due to the fact that I felt very comfortable in the newsroom of the newspaper and could have been (unconsciously) unmindful of some interactions. Scholars have identified how familiarity with subjects of research and "lack of anthropological distance" can sometimes make researchers "slow to recognise the significance of some taken-for-granted matters" (Giazitzoglu and Payne, 2018, p. 1150).

3.3.2.2   Interviews

> *"Interviewing is one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow humans."* – (Fontana and Prokos, 2007, p.9)

The second technique that was used in gathering data for this study was interviews. Interviewing involves asking respondent(s) questions to elicit responses that can help answer research questions or unravel meaningful information about people, society or the subject(s) of interest (Silverman 1993; Atkinson and Silverman 1997). Interviews are believed to be the

method preferred by social science researchers in understanding the experiences of their subjects (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2008; Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault, 2015). Interview was used in gathering data for this study because it offered me access to the participants' "ideas, thoughts and memories in their own words" (Reinharz, 1992, p. 19) and that is very crucial to this study as its essence is to capture the experiences of women journalists, and there is no better technique than one that manifests these experiences "from the point of view" (Hammersley, 1992, p.45) of the women journalists themselves. Interviewing is also "clearly related to participant observation" (Bertrand and Hughes, 2005, p.74) as while observation provided me with a glimpse into the newsroom culture, interviews elicited the viewpoints of individual women journalists and yielded information that helped to put the evidences derived from the observation into meaningful perspectives. Feminist scholars have agreed that qualitative interviewing is "especially appropriate" (Bryman, 2008, p.463) for feminist research. The major forms of interviews that have been used in gathering information from people are "structured, semi-structured, or unstructured" interviews (Fontana and Prokos, 2007, p.9). I will clarify very briefly the reason for not using the structured and unstructured format before focusing on the semi-structured interview format that was used for this study.

Structured interviewing involves asking "respondents the same series of pre-established questions with a limited set of response categories. There is generally little room for variation in response except where open-ended questions (which are infrequent) may be used" (Fontana and Prokos, 2007, p.19). Structured interviews have been used in feminist research generally and in studying the status of women in the media in particular (see for example: Gallagher, 1995; Made and Morna, 2009; Byerly, 2011; North, 2016a, 2016b). Other studies do a mix of both structured and semi-structured interviews by first asking respondents to fill structured questionnaires or respond to surveys and then do a follow-up with semi-structured or unstructured interviews by selecting some of the respondents who participated in the structured survey for interview (Pate, 2014). However, I decided not to use structured interview in gathering data for this study due to the fact that structured interview would present the challenge of "reduced scope for probing questions" and deny me the opportunity of getting "comprehensive accounts of women's experiences" (Williams, 2010, pp.62-63) of working in the Nigerian news media. Structured interviews are also known to "make it difficult for interviewers to gain rapport with participants" and they also "give participants the impression that the interview team has already made up its mind about what is important"

(Wilson, 2014, p.6). Using this method would have, therefore, made me lose valuable information that could create great insight into the experiences of women working in the Nigerian news media.

Unstructured interview attempts to "understand the complex behaviour of members of society without imposing any a priori categorisation that may limit the field of inquiry" (Fontana and Prokos, 2007, p.40). This implies that unlike structured interview where the researcher controls the data gathering process, the unstructured interview is in a format where the researcher simply asks probing questions in very open ways (Bailey, 2008). This form of interview is seen as the most appropriate for qualitative studies as it is capable of eliciting detailed, comprehensive and thorough information from research subjects (David and Sutton, 2011). I did not attempt to use this method to gather data for this thesis due to the fact that I believed using unstructured interviews may make it difficult to answer my research questions if my respondents do not respond to my inquiries or address the aspects of their professional lives relevant to my study. Unstructured interview conversations would be difficult to re-direct and drawing patterns from information realised from unstructured interviewees may equally be challenging (Chilisa, 2012). I also did a pilot study by interviewing a few journalists while doing my observations of women journalists in the newsroom and realised that Nigerian women journalists did not enjoy unstructured interviews. I believed (from my pilot study) that they felt more comfortable with direct but open-ended questions rather than being requested to talk generally on their career experiences. This left me with the third option which is the semi-structured interview format.

The "general goal of the semi-structured interview is to gather systematic information about a set of central topics, while also allowing some exploration when new issues or topics emerge" (Wilson, 2014, p.24). This implies that using an interview guide, an interviewer has a predetermined set of open-ended questions to ask the respondent(s) but she/he is free to ask probing questions on comments or new issues that emanate in the course of discussions. This is why semi-structured interviews are said to "vary tremendously. At one extreme, the questions are very simple, and the order of questions easily adhered to. At the other, the questions can be very open and the conversations can take many directions before all the areas you want to address are covered" (Fylan, 2005, p.66). In essence, the interviewer has the discretion to adjust the questions based on the circumstances of the interview. Semi-structured interviews are, therefore, more flexible than structured interviews in that the

method enables the interviewer to ask probing or follow-up questions, ask questions not on the interview guide and re-arrange the questions to suit the interviewee or the context of the specific interview (see King and Horrocks, 2010; Roulston, 2010; Wilson, 2014). This is due to the fact that in semi-structured interviews, the "conversation is free to vary and is likely to change substantially between participants" (Fylan, 2005, p.65).

There are a lot of benefits in using semi-structured interviews in gathering data. Semi-structured interviews have been known to "uncover previously unknown issues (in contrast to a structured interview), address complex topics through probes and clarifications, ensure that particular points are covered with each participant and also allow interviewers to raise additional concerns and issues" (Wilson, 2014, p.26). Numerous studies on gendered production of news have also used semi-structured interviews in investigating the status of women in the news media (see for example: North, 2009; Williams, 2010; Pate, 2014).

After considering the strengths of semi-structured interviews, evaluating similar studies that have used semi-structured interviews in gathering data, as well as assessing the nature of respondents that would be interviewed for my thesis, I, therefore, decided to use semi-structured interviews to gather data for my thesis. This interview format also helped to create the rapport that was required to get women journalists to talk about their experiences (especially aspects that are deemed personal or sensitive in Nigeria, like managing marriage [or dealing with lack of it] and child-rearing with journalism). This interview format also benefitted my research by providing the opportunity to probe comments or information not in my guide, adapt my interview to suit the contexts of the different categories of individuals I interviewed (the journalists had varied industry experience, work on different beats and have different types of family support system to undertake their career) and generally facilitate a conversation format that was not too open or too strict for the nature of individuals I interviewed.

As ethnography does not include the systematic ordering of methods, interviews were done at varying times during the data gathering period. In a few cases, the interviews were done during my time at the news organisations, but in most cases, the interviews were conducted after my ethnographic observations had been concluded. A lot of interviews were done whenever I was able to contact a woman journalist who fit into my sampling frame (which was sometimes after analysis had commenced) while the rest were done when I was about starting the writing up and realised that interviewing some category of journalists would

improve my analysis (e.g., women journalists who have left the news media for other industries and women journalists who left the news media to establish their private news blogs or websites). This is supported by the observation that "research is not a linear process" (Maynard and Purvis, 1994, p.1). Overall, all the 45 interviews conducted were done between 2015 and 2017.

After justifying the type of interview used in gathering data for this study, the next sub-section will now explain the different forms of interviews conducted for data gathering as different categories of people were interviewed for this thesis and for different purposes.

3.2.2.2.1 Forms of Interviews Conducted

Basically, three forms of interviews were conducted for this study using the semi-structured interview method. The first form of interview conducted was the **ethnographic interview**. Experts have also called this the "informal conversation interview" (Turner, 2010, p.754) which occurs "as part of ongoing participant observation fieldwork" (Gall, Gall and Borg, 2003, p.239). These were interviews conducted during my observations of women journalists' interactions with their male colleagues in the two newsrooms. The journalists or news media staff discussed with for the ethnographic interviews are referred to in this study as 'general informants' as they were not all journalists and the interviews were basically "friendly conversations" (Spradley, 1979, p.58) that occurred "in the field" (Flick, 2009, p.169) aimed at assisting me to understand the organisations, their cultures, operations, occurrences in the newsroom and/or other observations made during my observation of the women journalists interactions with their colleagues in the newsrooms. These interviews were not planned nor recorded. I simply discussed with them to gain perspective and noted any substantial information in my observation book or the observation file (Microsoft word document) on my computer system.

The second form of interviews that was used in gathering data for this study is the **key informant interview**. Key informant interviewing involves conducting interviews with individuals "who are particularly competent as authorities on certain matter of facts" (Deeke, 1995, p.8). To effectively answer this study's research questions, it was crucial to understand Nigerian media organisations' equality and gender policies, administrative structures and the management of women journalists. To get the required information, it was crucial to interview individuals who held certain positions in the Nigerian news industry and who could

provide deep insight into these issues. Most of the individuals under this category were interviewed in "their capacity as experts" (Flick, 2009, p.165) holding top management, editorial positions or administration managers in news media organisations in Nigeria. The individuals selected for the key informant interviews who worked in the news media organisations that were observed were interviewed during the observation while the others (who did not work in the organisations I observed) were interviewed after the completion of my observation of the two newsrooms. The questions asked informants vary depending on their positions, expertise or the purpose for which they were being interviewed. The individuals interviewed in this category were both men and women (depending on the sex of the individual holding the position). The positions and experiences of the persons interviewed determined the questions that were asked. A total of 14 key informant interviews were conducted with three females and 11 males. The shortest interview was three minutes and 11 seconds while the longest was 40 minutes. Something is striking in the gender ratio of the individuals interviewed under this category and it is the fact that men outnumber women significantly despite this study being about women journalists and their experience of the industry. It is important to note that this category of interview was focused on discussing with individuals occupying top management and editorial positions to review Nigerian media organisations' equality and gender policies, administrative structures and the management of women journalists. I was, therefore, keen to speak to individuals occupying those positions in the two news organisations I studied as well as other organisations I could access without discriminating for gender. The low number of women in this sample is a reflection of the absence of women "at the executive ranks of top management and governance" (Byerly, 2011, p.122) positions in the Nigerian news media.

The third form of interview that was used in gathering data was the women's journalists' industry **experience interview**. I regard this as the most important of the interviews conducted as it was what revealed the context within which women journalists operate and how they relate with, negotiate and/or challenge the newsroom culture. Participants were encouraged to discuss how they got into the journalism profession, if and how their practice was gendered, their experience of newsroom culture and the ways they have been able to manage their personal lives with their journalism career. Other issues discussed were their organisation's gender, equality and sexual harassment policies and what their perspectives were on the contents of those policies or their non-availability. Initially, 27 women journalists

were interviewed. I later interviewed five other women journalists who had left the newsroom to establish news/entertainment websites or blogs or left the industry altogether – bringing the experience interviews to 32. The duration of the shortest experience interview with women journalists was seven minutes 43 seconds while the longest was a little over an hour. The semi-structured interview guide is in the appendix. Summarily, this brings all the interviews conducted in total (for all categories) to 46 (two HR managers, one production staff, 11 male journalists and 32 female journalists).

Now that the forms of interviews conducted are understood, there is a need to clarify the set of principles and techniques that directed the way respondents interviewed were selected for the study.

3.3.2.2.2 Sampling Strategies for Interviews

> *"Sampling in qualitative research is purposive. The aim is to describe the processes involved in a phenomenon rather than its distribution"* (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005, p. 44-45).

Sampling strategy or technique is the design or scheme that a researcher applies in sample selection to ensure that the selected sample is capable of eliciting rich information that will aid in answering research questions. As this is a qualitative study, I used purposive sampling techniques in selecting the journalists and media managers interviewed for the study. Purposive sampling involves "the selection of participants or sources of data to be used in a study, based on their anticipated richness and relevance of information in relation to the study's research questions" (Yin, 2011, p. 311). This is due to the fact that studying information-rich cases is believed to yield "insights and in-depth understanding" (Patton, 2015, p. 264) on specific issues, which are the focus and essence of the qualitative enquiry. I chose to use purposeful sampling strategy in gathering data for this study as this is a qualitative study focused on generating and gaining in-depth and comprehensive information about how women experience working in the Nigerian news media and it is the strategy that I was convinced would help achieve the research goals. This sampling strategy is also in line with the methods that have been used in gathering data for feminist media production studies focused on investigating how women experience working in male-cultured news media (North, 2009; Williams, 2010).

3.3.2.2.2.1   Sampling Frame

Determining my sampling frame (a complete list of all the members of the population that we wish to study – in this case, women journalists and other key informants interviewed for this thesis) was direct. The focus was mainly to identify participants who would be able to provide detailed and comprehensive understanding of how women experience working in the Nigerian news media or provide information about the administration, management, policy and structures of news media establishments that impact how women experience working in the Nigerian news media. I was thus interested in speaking with women journalists who had gathered adequate journalism experience and spent considerable time working in the news media. I also interviewed other key informants who had held key management and administrative positions, gathered experiences and could provide useful information about the administration of news media organisations, as well as the management of the newsroom and the way they impact the professional experiences of Nigerian women journalists. This indicates that I purposefully selected participants I believed qualified to be in these categories and deemed capable of providing in-depth and meaningful information. This method is supported by experts who have argued that "sampling in qualitative research is purposive. The aim is to describe the processes involved in a phenomenon rather than its distribution" (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005, p.44-45).

3.3.2.2.2.2   Sampling Techniques

After determining my sampling frame, I used different sampling techniques in selecting different participants for the study. The implication of this sampling decision was that my participants' selection method was triangulated. By triangulated sampling, I mean using a combination of sampling techniques "in a multitude of ways to suit the particular needs" (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005, p. 48) of my research. Patton also supports using "combination or mixed purposeful sampling" methods in gathering data as "each approach serves a somewhat different purpose" and "more than one qualitative sampling strategy may be used at some point" (1990, p. 181) in research, if the researcher finds a need for it.

The majority of the women journalists interviewed were middle and management level women journalists who had gathered significant experience in the industry and who had been able to excel in the 'tough blokes' club'. I believed that women who had stayed in the profession and risen through the ranks were the ones who could really provide detailed

information about how women experience the Nigerian news media. I was particularly interested in women who were excelling in their careers because I believed their pedigree would not allow their challenges to be waved away as coming from incompetent and/or disgruntled employees who were frustrated due to lack of career progress. Again, different sampling strategies were used in sourcing the participants due to the fact that I discovered using a single strategy could not deliver the categories of women journalists with the in-depth knowledge, experience, position and willingness required to provide deep insight into women's experience of journalism practice in Nigeria.

The 'Typical Case' sampling strategy was used in selecting the organisations observed and the individuals interviewed in them (administration managers, news editors/directors, general managers etc). The typical case sampling method assists in selecting for investigation - sources or participants that represent "typical, normal, average...distribution of characteristics" of the study population that will elicit information that are "illustrative not definitive" about the general population which cannot be deemed "atypical, extreme, deviant or intensely unusual" (Patton, 1990, pp.173-174). The sampled media organisations represent (from my knowledge, research and discussions) typical examples of organised and professional Nigerian news media organisations and findings from interviews and observations from the news organisations' newsrooms presented outcomes that cannot be said to "permit generalisations in any rigorous sense" (Patton, 1990, p.173), but nonetheless, present a typical analogy of what is obtainable in an average Nigerian news media organisation.

I used opportunistic sampling technique to interview women journalists who fit into the categories of my sample frame during my ethnographic study of women journalists' interaction with their colleagues in the two news media organisations I studied. Opportunistic sampling involves making sampling decisions during the data gathering process. The technique enables the researcher to "take advantage of unforeseen opportunities after fieldwork has begun", thereby permitting the "sample to emerge during fieldwork" (Patton, 2002, p.240) as opportunities present themselves.

Also, I used intensity sampling strategy to get women journalists who fit into my sampling frame. Intensity sampling technique involves selecting "information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon of interest intensely (but not extremely)" (Patton, 2002, p.234). In this case,

since I was interested not just in women journalists generally but women journalists who were excelling in their careers and holding editorial and management positions. I collated names of women journalists (through content analysis of newspapers' editorial staff and speaking with individuals familiar with the Nigerian news industry) who were desk editors, weekend or title editors, assistant editors, news editors, editors-in-chief, general managers or members of editorial boards. After noting their names and the organisations they worked for, I then sought them out for interviews, using different schemes depending on the personalities of the women and means available to reach them. For instance, I used my contacts in the media to get their mobile telephone numbers. I then sent them text messages introducing myself and my research and requesting for interviews. After sending the text messages, I made telephone calls to them to discuss further and see if an appointment could be fixed for the interview. I did not send email messages as I feared the messages could be easily ignored (coming from an unknown contact who was also requesting for their time) or be spammed by their email providers since I was not on their contact lists, unlike a telephone text message. Not all the women journalists contacted this way agreed to be interviewed, but I did get a good number interviewed for the study.

Finally, I used snowball or chain sampling [which involves identifying cases that exhibit intensely the phenomenon of interest through referrals from key informants or similar cases (Patton, 2002, p.237)] to interview the five women journalists who had left the news industry altogether or those who left paid journalism employment to establish their own online news organisations. This is due to the fact that it was easier to request women journalists who were still in the industry to refer me to some of their colleagues who had left the industry than trying to seek them out myself.

3.3.2.2.3   Conducting the Interviews

This subsection details how the different key informant and experience interviews were conducted for the study. I will like to note that I recorded my observations about the interview sessions and anything deemed significant about the interviewees in my observation notebook during or after the interviews. Details of how the observations noted were used in the analysis of data for this study are explained in the research analysis procedure section (Section 3.4.2).

3.3.2.2.3.1 Key Informant Interviews and Women Journalists Still in Full-Time Employment

The interviews were conducted in the media organisations in which the key informants and the women journalists worked either before the commencement of their shift/coverage/production, during their breaks or at the end of their shifts for the day. This is due to the fact that the journalists preferred to be interviewed at work because they usually want to use their off-duty days for their personal needs. Only two interviews were conducted outside of the media houses: one at the Lagos State Statehouse Correspondents' Centre and another at the venue of a two-day workshop the interviewee was attending. I was practically a guest in these women's offices so I did not provide refreshments or compensation. A decision was made to have the interviews conducted at locations preferred by participants because I have learnt that researchers need to "'pay homage' to the routines of the persons with whom they come into contact – by not requesting them to depart from their usual schedules or contexts of interaction" (Roper and Shapira, 2000, p.17). We usually looked for unoccupied offices or spots that were quiet and private in the news organisations to conduct the interviews in.

3.3.2.2.3.2 Women Journalists outside Full-Time Employment or Out of the Media Industry

Different locations were used in interviewing women journalists outside full-time employment or out of the news industry, depending on what was convenient for the women. One interview was done in the office of a woman who had started her own online entertainment news company after leaving paid employment; another was done over the phone because of the location of the interviewee (she was working with a civil society organisation in North Central Nigeria). I did yet another interview in the home of a woman who had left the media altogether and was not working (at the time of the interview), while an additional interview was done with another woman (who had also left paid employment) in her car (parked) at a filling station from where she left for the coverage of an event for her blog. Only one interview was done in a restaurant with a woman who had started her own personal blog after her exit from the corporate news media and she was the only respondent I provided refreshments for.

3.3.2.3 Archival Analysis

Archival research involves "answering empirical questions" (Goodwin, 2009, p.372) by using "factual information in existing records" (McBurney and White, 2010, p.228) that have "already been gathered for some reason aside from the research project at hand" (Goodwin, 2009, p.386). It was important to understand Nigerian news media organisations' equality and gender policies (in order to understand how their forms, availability, absence or inadequacy affects the career experiences of the country's women journalists), but getting news media organisations to release documents containing this information was impossible. I will not be able to tell now why the administrative managers of the news media organisations that were observed declined to release documents containing their organisations' equality and gender policy handbooks, but the most the administrative managers were willing to do was to talk me through their organisations' positions rather than give me access to the documents. My assumption was that the news media managers were unwilling to release their staff handbooks because they were worried that an inadequate or lack of gender and/or equality policies could put their organisations in bad light.

Nonetheless, I was convinced that it was important to review these policy documents directly to fully understand their impact on how women journalists experience the news media. So, I contacted friends and former colleagues working as journalists in media organisations to give me their personal copies of the staff handbooks of the news organisations they worked for. My target was to get the handbooks of five different media organisations and I stopped searching and requesting after meeting the target. I will not identify the five media organisations whose handbooks were reviewed (for ethical reasons) but will simply state that I had handbooks for two federal government funded media organisations (a television and a radio station) and three privately-owned news media organisations: a radio station, a television station and a newspaper. The focus of the analysis was to check for gender and equality policies, as well as policies on maternity leave and remuneration. I was convinced that it was ethical to use these documents (even though I had gotten them without the organisations' managements' consent) because the organisations whose staff policies were reviewed were not identified in my research. I based my decision and resulting action on the argument of Uwe Flick that "thinking about the ethical dilemmas, however, should not prevent you from doing your research, but should help you do it in a more reflective way" (Flick, 2009, p.43). The findings derived from these documents are analysed and discussed in

Chapter Five (Sexual Harassment, Sexism and Masculine Newsroom Culture) and Chapter Six (Challenges of Marriage and Motherhood).

Now that the three techniques used in gathering data and how they were deployed have been explained, I will now discuss the methodology used in analysing the information derived from the observation, interviews and archival study undertaken towards investigating how women experience working in the Nigerian news media.

3.4   Research Analysis: Giving Meaning to the Method

This section clarifies the methodology used in analysing all the information gathered (using interviews, ethnography and archival analysis) towards appreciating how women experience working in the Nigerian news media. The section also explains in detail how the analysis was done.

3.4.1   Research Analysis Approach: *The Preference for Thematic Analysis*

> *"Thematic analysis provides a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex, account of data."*
> - (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.78)

There are several approaches to analysing qualitative data, such as thematic analysis (Clarke and Braun, 2013) "grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, action research, narrative analysis, and discourse analysis" (Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas, 2013, p. 398), among others. However, I will only engage with thematic analysis, which is the method used in analysing the findings for this study. Thematic analysis was preferred above other methods due to its capacity to identify similarities in findings across different types of data – a technique found appropriate for this study which gathered data using three techniques: observation, interviews and archival analysis.

Thematic analysis is "an independent approach within the qualitative descriptive methodologies" (Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas, 2013, p.404) that involves identifying similarities and relationships in qualitative data known as "themes and patterns" (Aronson, 1995, p.1) and analysing and explaining their meanings to reflect the "complex relationships across participants' experiences" (Henderson and Baffour, 2015, p.1965). It is "the search for, and identification of common threads that extend throughout an entire interview or set of interviews" (Morse and Field, 1995, p.139). Thematic analysis also explores findings "within and across" different types of qualitative data "in relation to participants' lived experiences,

views and perspectives" as well as their "behaviour and practices" with the view "to understand what participants think, feel and do" (Clarke and Braun, 2017, p.297). Essentially, thematic analysis is "a method for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning ("themes") within qualitative data (Clarke and Braun, 2017, p.297).

Thematic analysis was favoured as the method of data analysis for this research because it is one of those qualitative approaches that help at arriving "at an understanding of a particular phenomenon from the perspectives of those experiencing it" (Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas, 2013, p.398) through the organisation of the similarities in their experiences under parallel headings (themes). This technique also provides a thorough interpretation of the various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998) and that is vital to this study, which is focused at privileging Nigerian women journalists' experiences and reviewing the key issues moderating how they experience working in the Nigerian news media.

Using thematic analysis as my method of data analysis has some implications for this study. First, my analysis was not bound to any theoretical framework. Rather, I was able to allow the context of my research to influence how my findings were analysed. Also, I maximised the opportunities inherent in using both inductive and theoretical approaches in thematic analysis for my research. I reviewed the findings directly in relation to the socio-cultural environment of my subjects without losing sight of how their situation relates to the experiences of women journalists in the global news industry. To finish, I used the semantic level approach to data analysis by reviewing findings on their surface level without seeking to theorise or seek implicit meanings to interviews, observations or archival records. These implications are further discussed below in how I approached the application of thematic analysis to this study.

3.4.1.1 Contextualist Method

The flexibility of thematic analysis as a method of data analysis implies that it is not bound by any theoretical commitments; it is "essentially independent of theory and epistemology" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.78) and can, therefore, "be applied across a range of theoretical frameworks and indeed research paradigms" (Clarke and Braun, 2017, p.297; see also, Clarke and Braun, 2013). In the analysis of the findings of this study, I used the contextualist approach (a blend of essentialist and constructionist approaches) "which acknowledge the ways individuals make meaning of their experiences, and, in turn, the ways the broader social

context impinges on those meanings" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.81). Using this approach implies that I took cognisance of the experiences of Nigerian women news journalists using the interview data (participants' views of their experience of journalism practice in Nigeria) and then analysed these in relation to the context within which these women function (Nigerian news media organisational policies and structures and most importantly, the place of women in the Nigerian society) as all these factors moderate how women ultimately experience working in the Nigerian news media. This is due to the fact that the experiences of women working in the Nigerian news media cannot be adequately appreciated without reviewing them within the context of the Nigerian socio-cultural environment.

3.4.1.2 A Bit of Both: Inductive and Theoretical Analysis

For this study into the experiences of Nigerian women journalists, I analysed the data using both the inductive and theoretical approaches to thematic analysis. Investigations into the way women experience journalism practice in Nigeria (and indeed Africa) is under-researched and "inductive approaches are particularly useful when exploring new terrain" (Clarke and Braun, 2017, p.298). This is because they provide the researcher with the opportunity to explore the data to generate original findings for the study. Using the inductive approach enabled me to relate with the data and generate themes original and explicit to the experiences of Nigerian women journalists. The approach also provided the opportunity to relate how Nigeria's media landscape, as well as the country's socio-cultural, economic and political culture moderate women journalists' career experiences.

Nonetheless, there is significant global scholarship on feminist media production and how women experience working in the news media (E.g., Byerly, 2013; de Bruin and Ross, 2004; Franks, 2013; Joseph and Sharma, 2006; North, 2009, 2014, 2016a, 2016b; Ross and Padovani, 2016) and these studies have identified key issues that moderate how women experience journalism practice. My interactions with these literatures "generated theoretical and analytical interests" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.84) in some key issues influencing how women experience the news industry. I, therefore, equally approached my data, seeking to review how those theoretical conceptions about the issues that moderate the way women experience journalism practice in the global community are true for Nigeria, thus equally using the theoretical approach.

Consequently, the theme on irregular income and poor working conditions was derived, using the inductive approach while the other three themes on gendering of news, sexual harassment and challenges of marriage and motherhood were inspired by the theoretical and analytical conceptions that stimulated my interest in studying the status of women in the Nigerian news media.

3.4.1.3 Semantic Thematic Analysis

Themes in thematic analysis can be identified at two levels: the semantic (explicit) level and the latent (interpretative) level (Boyatzis, 1998). The semantic level approach to thematic analysis involves identifying themes "within the explicit or surface meanings of data" without seeking for interpretations "beyond what a participant has said or what has been written" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.84). Basically, the findings from the data gathered are structured to "show patterns in semantic content, and summarised, to interpretation, where there is an attempt to theorise the significance of the patterns and their broader meanings and implications often in relation to previous literature (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.84). The latent (or interpretative) approach on the other hand is more complicated. It "goes beyond the semantic content of the data, and starts to identify or examine the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualisations - and ideologies - that are theorised as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data", which means that "for latent thematic analysis, the development of the themes themselves involves interpretative work, and the analysis that is produced is not just description, but is already theorized" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.84). For the purpose of this study, I applied the semantic level approach to thematic analysis because it was sufficient for the analysis and presentation of my findings, as well as answering my research questions.

Now that thematic analysis has been explained, the reasons for its selection as my method of data analysis identified and the analysis approach decisions that were made discussed, the next section will explore in detail my analysis of the data gathered for this research using the thematic analysis method.

3.4.2 Research Analysis Procedure: *Conducting Thematic Analysis*

> *"If themes 'reside' anywhere, they reside in our heads from our thinking about our data and creating links as we understand them."*
>
> - Ely et al., 1997, pp. 205-208

While I initially thought to use Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) software [software programs developed to "facilitate storage, coding, retrieval, comparing, and linking" of qualitative data for research (Patton, 2015, p.529)] for analysing my data, I found that I was more at ease with doing it manually as this was easier for me and also provided me with the opportunity to relate more with the data directly. As "analysis and reporting are where reflexivity comes to fore" (Patton, 2015, p.604), then I should be *reflective* enough to admit that I preferred to do my data analysis manually. Also, "using software is not a requisite for qualitative analysis" (Patton, 2015, p.531) and regardless of whether I used software or not, the onus was still on me, as the researcher, to communicate "the essence of what the data reveal" (Patton, 2015, p. 521) in my findings.

I applied as much as possible the thematic analysis guide provided by Braun and Clarke (2006, pp.86-93; see the outline of the guide in the appendix) without being rigid as "analysis is not a linear process of simply moving from one phase to the next. Instead, it is a more recursive process, where movement is back and forth as needed, throughout the phases" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.86). I detail the analysis process in the sub-sections below.

3.4.2.1 Transcription of Interviews and Familiarisation with Data

The archival data (organisational policies of the media organisations) were already in text format as well as my observations during the ethnographic study of the newsrooms of the two media organisations as well as those made during interviews. The only data set that was originally not in text format were the interviews and a transcriber was paid to transcribe the oral interviews to written form. As I was doing my analysis, using the semantic level approach, I applied the transcription method of Clarke and Kitzinger in their study of how popular television talk shows frame lesbian and gay parenting by "reproducing the semantic level of talk" without trying to reproduce "fine details of talk" or transcribe "features such as in-breaths, a creaky voice and so on" (Clarke and Kitzinger, 2004, pp.198-200) as I do not find it necessary for my study. This method has also been used by feminist media production scholars who have interviewed women journalists to understand how they experience working in the news media (see for example; Pate, 2014; Williams, 2010; North, 2009). After

receiving the transcripts from the paid transcriber, I listened to the audios of the interviews and reviewed them with the transcripts to ensure accuracy. I made numerous corrections, as required.

Then, I read all the interview transcripts again, and I equally read all the relevant sections of the five news organisations' staff handbooks as well as reviewed the jottings I made during the ethnographic observations in the two newsrooms. In short, I re-read all the information in the entire data corpus to ensure that I familiarised myself with the data and created a mind map of all the available information that could be used in the analysis.

3.4.2.2 Generating Initial Codes and Searching for Themes

After putting the information in text format and familiarising myself with the data, the next task was to start generating initial codes to aid my analysis. I printed the interviews and then had all the data in print by making photocopies of relevant pages of the five news organisations' staff handbooks as well as my ethnographic and interview observations. Then I read all the information again, and as I did this, I took note of codes (comments, statements, information or facts) that I deemed interesting and salient for analysis by underlining them with pencil or highlighting them with coloured pens while I noted in a jotter (meant specifically for analysis) the likely themes I felt the codes I was generating by reading the texts would probably fall under.

3.4.2.3 Reviewing, Defining and Naming Themes

Unlike Braun and Wilkinson (2003), I was unable to use visual illustrations, diagrams or mind maps to refine the codes into themes as I do not see myself as talented in using graphics. Rather, what I did was note down (in a jotter) suggested themes that came to mind as I identified codes. After this, I looked through all the codes identified in the texts to ensure there are themes they were related to. Afterwards, I looked through the codes to ensure that each theme had adequate codes to support them, without doing away with the codes that were contrary to the established themes or in variance with the general codes that inspired a theme. At the end of the exercise, I had four major themes (gendering and feminisation of news, irregular income and poor working conditions, sexual harassment and sexism as well the challenges of coping with marriage and motherhood) which are discussed in Chapters Four to Six in the thesis.

The process of reviewing, defining and naming the themes classifiable from the identified codes was greatly moderated by the fact that I had familiarised myself significantly with literature on the status of women in the global news media before commencing my analysis. The fact that I was using the inductive (data-driven) approach along with the deductive (theory-driven) approach to thematic analysis enabled me to approach my data with prior "theoretical or analytic interest in the area" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.84) without disregarding original information from my data. I found that the codes I identified (using the inductive or data-driven approach) happened to form themes that fit into my initial "theoretical and epistemological commitments" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.84) from the literature I had read about the status of women in the news media.

I conclude that these theoretical commitments might have subliminally guided my analysis to look for data to address popular concepts on how women experience the news media, like the feminisation of news, sexual harassment and newsroom cultures, as well as joggling journalism career with marriage and children. However, my theoretical commitments did not prevent me from critically engaging with all the data gathered as the theme on irregular income and poor working conditions was derived specifically from information generated from interviews and observations using the inductive approach. Thus, I was able to present a detailed description of the overall data and findings as they relate specifically to the context of women journalists in Nigeria.

3.4.2.4 Producing the Report

This was the final stage of the thematic analysis process. The products of this stage are presented in the next three findings chapters (Chapters Four, Five and Six). The names given to the themes identified at the analysis stage changed at the discussion and presentation of findings stage. This did not change the content of the findings discussed under each theme as the change was required for the purpose of clarity and good presentation.

To present the findings under each theme, I made copies of the entire data corpus (the entire data gathered for this study) and grouped them into four (the number of the main themes identified). Then I created a folder for each theme and put all the documents in each. I also labelled the folders with the name of each identified theme. So, to discuss each theme, I re-read all the texts, found codes applicable to the theme and highlighted these for my analysis. I did this for all the four identified themes. This method ensured that I had the opportunity of

providing detailed description of data and offered adequate information and analysis to discuss the implications of each identified theme. Another implication was that it was possible for a data extract to be used multiple times under different themes if the information in the extract helped to analyse the theme that was being discussed.

Apart from using extracts from the gathered data, I provided detailed descriptive and interpretative analysis by relating the findings on women journalists' experience of journalism practice in Nigeria to the global literature on the status of women in the news media.

3.5   Codes for Identifying Interviewees

I designed a code to identify interviewees in the findings chapters. I used the type of interview conducted, career level and interview number to tag the interviewees since they are anonymised and their identities shielded.

Tag: Each interviewee is identified using the following tags
Nature of interview/Interview number/Nature of job/Occupational Level/Sex.

For example:
KII/01/J/LL/Female

Interviewees' Numbers: The names of all the interviewees were arranged in alphabetical order and numbers assigned from 1 to 46 in alphabetical order.

Table 3.1: Nature of Interview

Nature of Interview	Code
Key Informant Interview: includes interviews with two Human Resource Managers (HR), one Production Staff and 11 Male Journalists on different employment levels across print and broadcast media.	KII
Experience Interview: includes interviews with 32 women journalists on different employment levels across print and broadcast media.	EI

Table 3.2: Nature of Job

Nature of Job	Code
Human Resource Manager	HRM
News Production Staff	NPS
Journalist	J
Retired Journalist	RJ

Table 3.3: Occupational Level of Interviewee

Position	Code
Lower level: E.g; Graphic Artists (Print), Journalists (Green Horns), Reporters (Print/Broadcast), Assistant News Producers (Broadcast).	LL
Middle Management: Senior Correspondents (Print), Chief Correspondents (Print), Senior News Producers (Broadcast), News Editors (Broadcast).	MM
Senior Management: Page Editors (Print), Beat Editors (Print), Deputy Editors (Print), Chief News Producers (Broadcast), Head of Reportorial (Broadcast).	SM
Management and Editorial Positions: Administrative Managers, Head of News (Broadcast), Deputy Editor (Print), News Editor (Print), Title Editors (Saturday and Sunday – Print) Online News Editor (Print/Broadcast), Editorial Board Member (Print/Broadcast), Manager News (Broadcast), Manager (News Programmes), General Manager (Broadcast), Editor-in-Chief (Print), Managing Director (Print), Chief Executive Officer (Broadcast)	MEP

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter explained the theory and technique of the research process used in investigating how women journalists experience the Nigerian news media. It notes the implications of the feminist perspectives that underpin the study, which are: reflexivity – the fact that my feminist inclinations influenced the investigation process and analysis of research findings, women's studies – a clarification of the validity of observing and interviewing men as subjects in a feminist study, and feminist methodology – the explanation of the validity of using quantitative and qualitative methods for feminist research and a justification of the qualitative methodology used in gathering data for this study.

Next, the chapter clarified that the ethical choices made on securing research subjects' consent, ensuring their confidentiality and keeping data secure were made based on the British Sociological Association's (BSA) Statement of Ethical Practice (2009), the Economic and Social Research Council's (ESRC) Framework for Research Ethics (2015) as well as an ethical obligation to ensure that the subjects and participants in the study are not harmed at any of the data gathering, analysis and writing stages.

Then, the chapter detailed the data gathering procedure, which was centred on privileging Nigerian women's journalists' experience of the industry. The ethnography method of data gathering was employed and its techniques of observation, interviews and archival analysis were deployed to gain a comprehensive understanding of women journalists' experience of journalism practice in Nigeria. The interactions and activities of women journalists were observed in the newsrooms of two news media organisations in Nigeria for a period of four weeks, a total of 46 media workers were interviewed and the policy documents of five news organisations were reviewed to answer the study's research questions.

Thematic analysis was used in analysing the findings from the investigations due to its ability to identify similarities and relationships in findings across different forms of data. The thematic analysis guide provided by Braun and Clarke (2006, pp.86-93) was applied in deriving information from the findings. Four themes were identified after the analysis: gendering and feminisation of news, inconsistent remuneration and poor working conditions, sexual harassment and sexism as well as the challenges of coping with marriage and motherhood. The comprehensive details of the findings derived in each theme are discussed in the next three chapters (chapters four to six).

Chapter Four: The Colour of News and the Shape of Money

'Power, patriarchy and profit' (Sarikakis, 2014, p.66) *remain the 'powerful triangle'* (Tijani-Adenle, 2016, p.397) *preventing the advancement of women in journalism.*

4.0   Introduction

This chapter (in two broad sections) presents the findings from the first two themes: gendering and feminisation of news as well as the impact of unequal and irregular wages, in addition to poor working conditions on how women experience the Nigerian news industry. The first section shows that although women journalists are increasingly reporting the hard beats, they are still clustered on the soft beats due to patriarchy and newsroom culture. The second section proves that contrary to previous knowledge, equality in remuneration for Nigerian women and men journalists is in theory but not practice. The section also reveals the shocking reality of irregular and low wages in the Nigerian news industry and how this anomaly continues to drive women journalists out of the industry.

4.1   *When Colour Pink is Blurred:* Gendering and Feminisation of News

"The news may be more 'feminised' than ever before, but 'soft' news still doesn't bring the financial rewards or peer accolades that 'hard' news does." (Louise North, 2009, p.129).

Globally, the fact that hard news is more valued than soft news is established (Ross and Carter 2011; Franks, 2013, North 2014; Sarikakis, 2014) and that journalists who aspire to reach top management and editorial positions can mostly get there through the hard beats route is agreed upon (North, 2009; Williams, 2010; Franks, 2013). In Nigeria, the situation is not different as previous studies have shown that ambitious women journalists deliberately distance themselves from covering soft issues in order to be taken seriously and not tagged as feminists or women libbers (Anyanwu, 2001, p. 71). This section considers the distribution of women journalists across the hard and soft beats in the Nigerian news media and discusses how this affects their progress in the industry. The section is sub-divided into three: the first sub-section presents the views of journalists (both men and women) on the capacity of women journalists to cover the hard beats, the second sub-section presents the views of journalists who believe that women are clustered due to their interests in soft beats, while the last sub-section discusses the opinions of those who believe that women journalists are stereotyped and pressured to work on soft beats despite their preference for the hard beats.

4.1.1 *Fair Weather Friends:* Testifying to Women Journalists' Abilities to Cover the Hard Beats despite their Low Numbers on the Beats

Previous studies have argued that women journalists deliberately tend towards the soft beats because they are more interested in human angle stories while others posit that they are sometimes pressured to cover such beats (North, 2009; Williams, 2010; Franks, 2013). However, women journalists' abilities to cover the hard beats have not been put to question. The journalists interviewed for this study are convinced that women journalists, although clustered in soft beats, are able to cover hard beats effectively if interested or when given the opportunity. It is important to discuss this aspect of ability so that we can eliminate it from the reasons women journalists are clustered in soft beats.

None of the journalists interviewed for this study was of the opinion that women journalists are incapable of covering the hard beats. They all believed that women journalists who have covered the hard beats or who are on the hard beats, although few, are great and very competent.

> *If you want to roll out the list of journalists who have won awards, in the industry generally, the females take an appreciable proportion, though I want to say that it is possible that the males outnumber females in the profession, but in terms of performance, I think the females are doing great* (KII/02/J/MM/Male).

> *They are few and the few ones are very good, they compete favourably with their male counterparts. Some of them have really gone to earn positions* (KII/03/J/MEP/Male).

It is clear from the views of the male journalists presented above that women are indeed few on the hard beats but this is not as a result of ability, as the 'few' women journalists on those beats are formidable. This probably explains why it has not been put to question, nor engaged with, as it was evident that gender does not inhibit the reporting or editing abilities of women. Barbara Kaija, while analysing the implications of Byerly's *Global Report* for Uganda highlights women journalists' competence and skills:

> "Where both sexes are given equal opportunity, women excel as well as the men. Indeed, female journalists in Uganda have, over the years, excelled in what is traditionally considered the male beat: investigations, politics and war" (Kaija, 2013, p.322).

My experience in the newsroom of Voice of Nigeria (VON) as a news editor and news programmes producer also supports this view. A lot of the women in the newsroom were very good on the job, pulling their weight and making their marks. During my four-week ethnographic study in the newsrooms of two news media organisations, managers also identified women journalists on hard beats who were doing well and were well respected. Women journalists also agreed that they were competent and capable of covering the hard beats and women's clustering in the soft beats has absolutely nothing to do with competence.

> *When I went for the Nigerian Media Merit Award 2014 in Owerri...Most of us were in categories with men. Me, I was in a category with a guy and I dusted him. It was a business story award. Many women won awards. So it's not as if we're not intelligent or we're not really hard working or we cannot even do this thing* (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

Women journalists are not just seen as competent, they are equally regarded as assets and good resources to have on the team because women journalists, apart from being skilled, are also able to get stories, access sources or reach contacts that male journalists are sometimes unable to.

> *We could assign a woman to a case that she could treat, that she could have an interface, a mild interface with the people we need information from rather than send a man. Men could be aggressive, not all of them but for the fact that he is a male, it might be difficult for him to get the information that we seek to make the investigation of the report solid. So women are usually used for such* (KII/39/J/MEP/Male).

> *Sometimes you might be trying to get an interview with a particular person and it might be easier for the lady that will get it, you know men tend to want to listen to women more and it has really worked for the women* (EI/19/J/MM/Female).

Media production scholars have also documented how the presence of women journalists on beats previously dominated by men, like war and conflict, brings "a multiplicity of voices" (Franks, 2013, p.viii) and creativity to reporting because they can assess women and other stakeholders that male journalists are sometimes unable to reach. They are also able to highlight the human angle and several non-physical and uneasily deciphered implications of war and other social issues that men were previously not engaging with (Sebba, 1994; Colvin, 2012; Franks, 2013). Media managers understand and appreciate this and thus keep resourceful women journalists on their team for such sensitive assignments.

Now that we have established that women journalists are capable of covering hard beats and are seen as assets to the news gathering and production team in Nigeria, there is a need to understand why a lot of women continue to be clustered on the soft beats. The next sub-section discusses the views of those who believe that women are clustered in soft beats on their own volition and not due to any structural inequality or organisational culture.

4.1.2   *Right Here!* Locating Nigerian Women Journalists on the Soft Beats

Previous studies on women journalists' experience of the news media have revealed that some women news workers actually enjoy working on soft beats, they note such women believe that is where their talents and interests lie and do not see being on the soft desks as disenfranchising them from the more important beats and growth opportunities (Opoku-Mensah, 2004; Williams, 2010). Opoku-Mensah's research on 'Women, Gender and Newsroom Cultures in Africa' also confirms the perception that women journalists prefer the soft beats, with respondents selected from five African countries noting that "Women shy away from political issues", "They are comfortable with female topics – fashion, entertainment and these days health issues" and "Most of the leading writers on health, population etc. are women" (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.110). These findings are consistent with the situation in Nigeria.

> *I have covered health beat in the last 16 or 20 years or thereabout because I'm very passionate about women's and children's issues... I'm still handling the health pages and the women's and children's issues along with the religious pages* (EI/35/J/MEP/Female).

> *We have a lot of women in the news room covering politics, business desk. There are a lot of them there; it's a matter of your own choice. I was not interested in politics, if not I would have been there...I just wasn't interested.* (EI/36/J/MEP/Female)

Some of the Nigerian women journalists covering soft beats confirmed that they liked the beats they were working on and would not be interested in being transferred to the hard beats. When asked if they would have loved to be on other desks, if they had not been posted to the entertainment desk, these two reporters (quoted below) gave the following responses:

> *I don't think I'll enjoy covering crime as a journalist really...I don't think I would enjoy doing that. But women are covering hard beats now like the men, yeah* (EI/06/RJ/MM/Female).

> *I enjoy working here...I think I'm used to the entertainment desk* (EI/17/J/LL/Female).

The responses of these two women journalists echo the views of many others who are of the opinion that they enjoy what they do and do not see themselves as less of journalists compared to those who cover the hard beats. They either believe that their posting to the soft beats was good for them as that is where their interests and abilities lie, they were just posted there because that was where the organisation needed staff, so their location on the soft beats is not a form of inequality or stereotype. The story of how this senior entertainment correspondent got her job and her perception of her posting is relevant here.

> *She came to cover the tournament from [name of organisation] as a journalist while I was there as a press liaison for the tournament organisers. So we got talking, we became friends...So after the tournament, she was now like, they wanted to start a fashion segment in [name of national newspaper] that would I want to be a contributor... So that was how my journey in [name of organisation] started (EI/06/RJ/MM/Female).*

To this former senior correspondent, there is no inequality or gender stereotype at play in beat allocation. The news organisation she worked for wanted women journalists to join their new fashion segment and she was invited; that was what was available, and she had the interest and competence and was employed to do it. She enjoyed working on the fashion segment and stayed on the desk for the 19 years she spent in the organisation before leaving to establish her own online entertainment medium.

Male and female managers also share the views that women journalists love the soft beats and that explains the reason they also allocate them to such beats, except a female journalist protests or shows her inclinations towards working on the hard beats.

> *Female journalists in Nigeria, averagely, they like to do the soft part of the job such as reporting entertainment, women affairs, and feminine stuffs with a few exceptions who go into the serious aspect of journalism (KII/03/J/MEP/Male).*

> *From my little experience since 1997 till date, I have noticed that it's not actually the fault of the men, it's actually the fault of the women. Most women tend towards the soft beats...I have seen that women too also belittle themselves...the women too allow themselves to be pigeonholed into soft beats like fashion, like entertainment writing, like society and all those beats (EI/04/J/MEP/Female).*

> *I feel it's a two-way thing; women are stereotyped by society and then women also stereotype themselves...I have students and people walking in here saying they want to work here and you ask what are your interests? And you hear fashion, entertainment, music (EI/40/J/MEP/Female).*

Some other women do not see a problem with being posted to the soft beats as they believe that posting is not a rigid thing and they can be re-posted to hard desks or other mainstream desks if they are good and prove their worth. A former Style Editor at a national newspaper said she was transferred from the Style Desk and made the Features Editor because of the quality of her writing and that her being on the style desk initially was not an inhibition.

> *[Name of national newspaper] will appreciate good writers. If you write well, in fact when they took me (from Style) to Features, I was like good one for me* (EI/21/J/SM/Female).

> *But even if on those children's pages you are just struggling and you are not doing a good job, definitely you would not be considered for a higher position* (EI/44/J/MEP/Female).

Others are of the opinion that the management of news organisations are at liberty to post journalists (whether male or female) to whatever beats they deem fit and journalists are not meant to complain but to settle in and work wherever they are posted.

> *You know in media houses, they have different kind of desks - health desk, sport desk, education, business. So you don't choose beats except they transfer you* (EI/06/RJ/MM/Female).

> *As a reporter, you are supposed to adjust to any desk you are posted to* (EI/17/J/LL/Female).

The two comments above are from women journalists on soft beats. They are not interested in working on the hard beats and seem to be disinterested in the politics of beat allocation. The former has since left the newspaper organisation to establish an online news entertainment medium while the latter intends to leave the newsroom sometime in the future.

Another top female editor is also of the opinion that management have the prerogative to deploy reporters to whatever beats they choose and journalists should not have a problem with this.

> *You see, this profession is not a profession where you have to resist or reject, you know, where you are taken or assignments you are given. It's like a military setup...the thing is that once you are moved, you have to move* (EI/10/J/MEP/Female).

It is a good thing for journalists to move beats, but moving within hard beats is different from being posted to soft beats. The choices men are given are different from the choices and opportunities that are made available to women, and this ultimately determines their place in the industry. This opinion, coming from a woman who is one of the few women occupying

such top positions betrays a lack of awareness of the politics of beat journalism in the news industry. Some people have argued that this is part of the "'glass menagerie' or the Mrs. Thatcher factor" (Franks, 2013, p. 35) where the success of a few women obliterates the realities on the ground. The fact that some women who have been assigned or transferred to soft beats have transitioned and risen to top editorial positions cannot obliterate the fact that women who work on soft beats find it impossible or extremely hard to rise to management and editorial positions except they transit to hard beats or are extremely lucky. This will lead us to the next sub-section which details the opinions of male journalists and managers who think women should be made to cover women and soft stories as well as those of women journalists who think there is a culture of dumping women journalists in soft beats in news media organisations.

4.1.3 *Tucked in Here!* **Allocating Women Journalists to the 'Job for the Girls'**

Women are seen as innate nurturers, emotional and care-givers and they, therefore, readily gain entry and are allowed to progress within occupations and roles regarded as 'women's jobs' or functions that require women's emotional and care-giving nature (Hartman, 1981; Ferree, 1995; Whelehan, 1995). There are several reasons why women journalists are allocated more to cover soft beats, compared to the men, and one of such reasons is the fact that editors or media managers believe, without prejudice, that events or issues that are related to women, children, health and similar matters should naturally go to women because of their nature.

> *When you want to talk about the soft nature of women and you say okay, we need somebody to give a story a soft touch, somebody who can bring the softness in her to reflect on what this assignment is all about, then we can say women should go and cover it because she will meet her fellow women there or let her go and cover the one that involves children because she's a mother, she will have that motherly feeling for the kids* (KII/23/J/MEP/Male).

> *If I look back at those who have been in charge of women and children desks, they have been women because here you will need to have somebody who has the passion, somebody who can understand the treatment expected in that kind of programme* (KII/39/J/MEP/Male).

These comments confirm that editors and media managers believe women are suited for such roles. The story of how this weekend editor got her job is instructive. Even though a well-

written hard copy got her the job, she was nonetheless posted to work on a soft desk at the start of her career.

> *The story that brought me to mainstream journalism was about the structural adjustment programme...So they then gave me the job. But surprisingly I was given 'Women's World', you know, those soft sell women's magazines, some of them foreign, to read, and they said this is what we will like you to write. So I started writing a column called [name of column] which was relationship-based* (EI/15/J/MEP/Female).

Viewed on the surface, the arguments of these media managers seem genuine enough; women are culturally perceived as soft and are needed to bring their softness and passion to the reportage of 'soft' issues.

Surprisingly, some women journalists assigned to cover pregnancy, women's and children's issues find it "infuriating", arguing that their marital or childbearing status should not validate the wrong assumption that they would love to cover such beats (North, 2016a, p.367).

> *If they had posted me there, I would have left. Yes, because it would have meant that they were stereotyping me* (EI/38/J/MEP/Female).

Apart from assigning women to soft beats because they are seen as emotional and better able to handle soft news, women journalists are also assigned to soft beats by media managers because of "the existence of the perception that women are the weaker sex" (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.109), they are more vulnerable to violence and editors feel the need to protect them from harm. Women journalists are, therefore, shielded from covering riots, protests, conflicts and other events occurring at sites deemed volatile or dangerous.

> *When it comes to assignments on beats, you have to consider the gender. There is no way we won't have to consider the gender. For instance...let's say a fight breaks out between some touts at a motor park...I can gauge the kind of risk involved...Would you deploy a female reporter to cover the event? No, first instinct will tell you no, don't do that, except that person is trained as a crime reporter (*KII/09/J/MEP/Male).

> *I won't attach a woman to the military formation that is facing Boko Haram in the forest, no, I wouldn't...I feel more comfortable sending a man to go* (KII/39/J/MEP/Male).

Concerns for the safety of journalists generally and women journalists (in particular) are not out of place. Globally, journalists have come under threats and assaults while performing their duties. Men and women journalists have been killed, assaulted, imprisoned and intimidated. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) in its 2014 report documents 370

cases of journalists murdered in different countries between 2004 and 2013 (CPJ, 2014). Of course, there were other cases of unlawful detention, assault, harassment and intimidation. Women journalists are not spared from impunity with some even experiencing sexual assault in the line of duty (INSI, 2012).

The need to protect women journalists from harm and sexual assault is so great that in 2011, the French branch of Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) issued a statement requesting the international news media to stop sending women reporters to cover the Egypt uprising due to their exposure to sexual assault. Although the branch was forced to withdraw the statement and issue an apology, it nonetheless illustrates the perceived obligation to protect women journalists (Von Der Lippe and Ottosen, 2017). There is nothing wrong with the intention, which is laudable, but the challenge is that shielding women from such assignments is tantamount to denying them career progress as it is such coverages and tasks that earn journalists promotions and appointments to management and editorial positions.

In Nigeria, journalists do not fare better. The Global Impunity Against Journalists Index (2017) published by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) ranked Nigeria 11th among countries where journalists are killed, and their killers go unpunished, despite the country being on the "governing council of the Community of Democracies, a coalition dedicated to upholding and strengthening democratic norms" (CPJ, 2017, p.4). Nigeria's International Press Council notes that 47 journalists were attacked between November 2014 and April 2015 [the period preceding the 2015 general elections and shortly after, even though the transition was peaceful and the election largely regarded as free and fair] (IPC 2015). The "political instability, organised crime, terrorism, and communal conflict" occuring in Nigeria provide an atmosphere conducive for the censorship of the media "through withdrawal of licenses" and an environment in which journalists are "physically or verbally harassed or assaulted, killed, kidnapped, imprisoned" (Unaegbu, 2017, pp.171-174).

Media managers have protected women journalists so well (by shielding them from hard beats and hot spots) that no woman journalist has been reported murdered in the line of duty in Nigeria (Unaegbu, 2017, p.172). These 'hot beats', according to Unaegbu in her study on safety in the Nigerian media, are "politics, conflicts, elections, news, and sports" (Unaegbu, 2017, p.178). Ironically, if well covered, these are some of the beats that earn journalists promotion to management and editorial positions.

Ordinarily the tendency is for the editor or whoever is taking the decision to want to stereotype women and say go to certain beats. Maybe five reporters are sent to an editor, the more serious beats he might want to give men, then the lighter beats he will say a woman will do better, the women should join fashion, women in development (EI/44/J/MEP/Female).

Assignment to beats in [name of national newspaper]... it's not openly gender-based but there are some stereotypical beats that are left for men or women. In my 11 years in journalism, and you know being with [name of national newspaper] from inception, I would say I have never known of a woman to be on the political beat; the political desk has always been manned by men (EI/22/J/SM/Female).

Media managements also see the need to protect women from assault in a country where journalists can be assaulted without justice and in which most media organisations do not provide life insurance for their workers. But, unfortunately, it is more complicated than that. Soft news, although needed to drive patronage from viewers, listeners and readers as well as the much-needed advertisement revenue, is disdained in the news media. Media managers do not value soft news nor its producers and when promotion opportunities come, writers or producers of soft content are not seen as worthy of being promoted to head the highly rated and revered editorial and management positions.

For you to become an editor of a paper or chief editor or MD, you must have gone through the mill, you must have gone through the difficult aspects of the job. Nobody will make you an editor if you have not gone through the ranks. You can't be writing feminine things and they will make you an editor; you cannot do the job. You must be in the mix, the proper, before you can be an editor (KII/03/J/MEP/Male).

It's very rare for you to get a woman who covers fashion and style to be editor for crying out loud. Nobody is going to entrust a national newspaper to you, having covered entertainment and style. They don't see those beats as serious beats... So to me, if you are a woman and you want to rise, come on, you can't rise by writing fashion police, nobody is going to take you serious (EI/04/J/MEP/Female).

There is this discrimination as if you're not serious… I think it's because we are not in the mainstream…There is a limit to how far you can rise. In this establishment no matter how I rise, I can never become the editor of the paper because I'm not in that line…The way it's been structured here, this desk is on its own (EI/46/J/SM/Female).

The discrimination against the soft beats and the limitations in career growth that are associated with them have motivated some women journalists with ambition for career progression in the news media to shun the soft beats completely.

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That is one thing I tried to do at the beginning of my career. You know, there is this tendency to look at women and view them as women editors, you know. They just try to tailor your activities towards being a woman editor. That I rejected very early, I mean, I am a journalist, I don't have to be a woman editor. You don't have to say that I have to deal with women, I can also deal with men, with serious issues and I think we can do anything, depending on the individual (EI/29/J/MEP/Female).

The fact that some Nigerian women journalists avoid the soft beats in order to be taken seriously has also been noted in previous studies (Anyanwu, 2001). It could be a good career move for women journalists, and the decision could help highlight their skills on the hard beats where it would be better appreciated. But the implication for the coverage of women's issues could be limiting if creative women writers are shunning the coverage of women's issues.

To navigate the challenge of being relegated to the soft beats, Nigerian women journalists (who find themselves on soft beats but are interested in career growth) have devised a plan to navigate to the mainstream by covering the soft beats in more critical ways or contributing articles to other beats so they can be recognised. Scholars have also opined that the soft beats route and the feminisation of news is a plus for women journalists as it provides them with more opportunities to gain entry into journalism and that women can later move to producing hard content and subsequently rise to top editorial positions (Mills, 1997; Sebba, 1994; Lumsden, 1995; Franks, 2013). What they have not critically examined is how women journalists achieve this. The following comments highlight strategies women journalists have applied to transition to the hard beats and/or the advice they give other women journalists (interested in career growth) who find themselves on the soft beats.

If they give you a beat, it's okay, poke your nose into other beats and write any story, that is the only way to show your capacity (EI/38/J/MEP/Female).

Don't limit yourself, your writing to a particular place, try to develop interest in other fields and also write in other areas of interest so that you are not limited and boxed into one corner (EI/44/J/MEP/Female).

At other times, women journalists have had to struggle to be allocated to the hard beats, with some walking up to their editors and/or managers and requesting to be assigned to the hard beats and sent on the coverage of other issues like their male colleagues.

> *Another thing also it that there are some, you know, because it's a business paper, there are some stories... like finance stories, investigative stories, stories that have to do with figures...that they don't want to assign to you because you are woman. They will say it's a man's job and I will tell them no!* (EI/13/RJ/MEP/Female)

> *"On the issues around feminism and all that, a lot of women want to prove their point that 'look, don't zone me alone to the women thing, I can do these equally with the guys'"* (KII/39/J/MEP/Male).

It becomes interesting that women journalists not only have to prove their competence by working extra hard on 'hard' beats, they sometimes have to struggle to even get the opportunity to be posted to the beats in the first instance. The gendering of beats is not a rigid thing; it is subtle but deep. Women journalists struggle to get the hard beats that go to male journalists effortlessly. Once there, they then need to work twice as hard to convince superiors of their competence.

4.1.4 *Section Summary*: The Politics of Beat Reporting is Real!

The reality of beat allocation in the Nigerian news media is that men are naturally seen as suitable for the hard beats while women are reflexively allocated to the soft beats unless they prove their worth and/or fight for it by writing for the hard desks (while on soft beats), demanding to be given equal treatment or working extra hard to prove their competence. Despite the fact that soft desks are now readership drivers and advertisement generators, producers of soft contents are still not highly rated, soft desks are rarely recognised at journalism awards and only journalists on the hard beats are regarded as competent enough to handle management and editorial positions. This may be responsible for the reason more women are entering the journalism profession in Nigeria but their increased entry has not resulted in a corresponding improvement in their status.

Meanwhile, the gender politics in beat associations in the Nigerian media industry, although not critical, is another factor that hinders women from covering beats that are dominated by men. Male journalists on hard beat associations sometimes edge women off the beats by using the power of the beat associations to isolate women (Olawunmi, 2014; Arogundade, 2015). Governments, industries and brands recognise beat associations in Nigeria and they invite journalists for events, issue press releases and grant interviews using the beat associations rather than contacting individual journalists and media organisations directly. A female journalist who was once allocated to cover the motoring beat talked about how the male

journalists who dominated the beats made sure she was not invited for events because they were mostly males and she was not a part of their caucus:

> *At a point, it got to a stage if you're not in that clique, they won't invite you for events* (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

There is a caste system in the Nigerian news media and it is based on the beats that journalists cover; the categorisation of beats into hard and soft will not change and neither will the value allocated to them. Even in other African countries, the "most important story in the Kenyan media is the political story, and the most important reporter in the Kenyan media is the political reporter" (Kareithi, 2013, p.273). So, this categorisation and its implications are all over. Women journalists will continue to be located at the bottom of that caste if they are relegated to the soft beats. The only solution is for women to struggle to ensure they are not pigeonholed to the soft beats. The implication however, is that the coverage of women's and children's issues will suffer as the beats that cover such issues are cannibalised.

Now that the realities of beat allocation and its impact on the place of women in the Nigerian news media is established, the next section will discuss the shocking remuneration culture in the Nigerian news industry and the impact of the anomaly on women journalists' experience of journalism practice.

4.2 (*Un*)*Paid Pipers*: Irregular Salaries, Poor Work and Social Conditions Pushing Women out of the Nigerian News Media

> *"In line with the nation's 4th place global ranking for pay equity, Nigerian women and men journalists are paid equally or, in some cases, with women's salaries exceeding men's"* (Byerly, 2011, p.124).

Prior to analysing the findings of this study, I believed (based on available evidence) that there was no gender pay gap in the Nigerian news media. I spent some years working as a news editor at Voice of Nigeria (VON) and believed (based on what was apparent to me) that remuneration was based on cadre and position and was not negatively skewed based on gender. I was one of two local researchers who gathered data for Byerly's '*Global Report*' for Nigeria and did not record any data indicating otherwise. After collating findings from the eight companies surveyed in Nigeria, Byerly concludes that "Nigerian women and men journalists are paid equally" (Byerly, 2011, p.124). Byerly's findings from other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are also similar to those of Nigeria, making her to conclude (for the region) that:

> *"Men's and women's salaries are similar at the average low range across occupational levels of these companies. The same is true at the average high range in most of the occupational levels. The two exceptions occur in the decision-making ranks of top management and governance, where men's salaries are substantially more than women's in the average high range"* (Byerly, 2011, p.79).

I was thus convinced that disparity in salary for doing the same work was not prevalent in Nigeria and most countries in the sub-region. I defended this position in a review of Suzanne Frank's *Women in Journalism* (2013), arguing that contrary to what is obtainable in the global North, gender pay gaps do not exist "in sub-Saharan Africa. Men at top management levels may enjoy some privileges of office, but salaries are basically the same for men and women" (Tijani-Adenle, 2014, p.390).

Alas, findings from this study have proven that one cannot authoritatively declare that there are no differentials in the salaries of journalists in Nigeria based on gender. What may be practical will be to note that salaries are supposed to be equal for both men and women journalists on the same cadre in theory, but this is not *always* the case in practice. The peculiar circumstances that sometimes create this differential are discussed below in Section 4.2.2. Prior to that, I discuss the shocking reality of irregular payment of wages in the Nigerian news media (in Section 4.2.1) and how it affects the position of women in the

industry. Obviously, information on the impact of irregular payment of salaries on how women experience the news media is absent in the global literature on the status of women in the news media because this is an aberration that does not exist in the international community. This section, therefore, fills that gap.

What appears critical in terms of remuneration in Nigeria is the fact that journalists (both men and women) are not being paid salaries, with news companies owing journalists wages for periods sometimes exceeding 24 months! A lot of media organisations in Nigeria owe salaries, do not pay on time or do not pay enough (Idowu, 1996; Jason, 1996; Yusuf, 2002; Diso, 2005; Olawunmi, 2014; Buhari, 2017; Olukotun, 2017). To review the various ramifications of irregular remuneration and poor work and social conditions on how women experience the news industry, this section is further divided into three parts: the first sub-section evaluates how irregularity in remuneration affect women journalists (in particular) even though the non-payment of salaries affects both men and women journalists; the second part examines the issue of disparity in remuneration across gender, while the last part briefly reviews how inadequate social amenities in the country is equally impeding the progress of women in the news media.

4.2.1 "Show me the Money": How Irregular Salaries are Driving Women Journalists out of the News Media

The fact that news companies in Nigeria owe salaries, do not pay on time or do not pay enough is established (Idowu, 1996; Jason, 1996; Yusuf, 2002; Diso, 2005; Olawunmi, 2014; Buhari, 2017; Olukotun, 2017). What has not been engaged with is the implication of this anomaly on women's experience of the news industry. Sociologists in Nigeria have validated the fact that across cultures and ethnicities, women contribute significantly to the financial upkeep of the family, with "the average female contribution to household expenditures to be around 50 per cent of total household expenditures" (Staveren and Odebode, 2007, p.916). When women work, therefore, there is an expectation that they will use part of their income to cater for the financial needs of their families. It is important to note, however, that the fact that Nigerian women work and contribute their income to maintaining the family does not reduce the burden of household maintenance and child-rearing chores they are burdened with. Women are encouraged to undertake paid employment and/or commercial activities that will provide them with resources to contribute to the family without preventing them from

carrying out their domestic responsibilities (Asiyanbola, 2001, 2005; Olajubu, 2004; Omenugha, 2005; Omadjohwoefe, 2011; Okonkwo, 2013).

The situation of women journalists working in the Nigerian news media is, therefore, precarious. They work in an industry that denies them the opportunity of effectively carrying out socially-sanctioned domestic responsibilities while they are equally unable to adequately contribute financially to the upkeep of the home because they are either owed salaries or underpaid by the news companies they work for. This, therefore, makes it easy for their spouses, relatives or in-laws, who are uncomfortable with them working in the news industry to pressurise them to resign. In a society where the marital status of women matters so much, most women journalists who find themselves in such situations end up succumbing to pressure.

Unfortunately, the media organisations I studied and interviewed women journalists from are among the most financially stable in the country. So, the salaries of most of my interviewees were paid. Luckily, I was able to interview other journalists in some of the unstable news companies and the insights shared by the journalists are revealing.

> *I decided that I probably wanted to leave the media because I was just tired of the salary. Always being owed, you know, having to do so much work. I decided that, I love journalism but it's not an easy job, to now not be paid at the end of the month. And I kept doing it and everywhere I worked, I was always owed salary. So, in 2015, I just said, I'm done with the media. That I wasn't going to do it again* (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

This former desk editor, who had won awards at local journalism award events, left the media after working for 15 years in five national newspapers. She regretted that she was always owed salaries in all five news organisations she worked in.

> *In the NBC (Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation) Code, except if they have removed it, they provided that the license of any broadcast medium that doesn't pay salary should be revoked. But have they revoked any? Or are they saying that they are unaware of broadcast organisations owing more than six months salaries? So these are the issues* (EI/30/J/MEP/Female).

> *For a lot of us working with privately owned media houses there's been a lot of challenges in terms of pay. You see some media houses owing their staff upward of a year salary* (EI/35/J/MEP/Female).

With these challenges, women journalists who are unlucky to find themselves in such media houses have been forced to leave; again, making the industry lose more women journalists who could have reached top editorial and management positions and improved the status of women in the news media.

> *Some media houses owe two years plus in salaries...so I see more women leaving now, the few men (husbands) who were tolerant before, I see them having a rethink now because it won't just be realistic* (EI/15/J/MEP/Female).

Media organisations which constantly pay salaries definitely aid women journalists in staying in the profession. When I discussed with this woman journalist (nursing a set of triplets) who worked in one of the very stable news companies in Nigeria, she stated that perhaps she would have left journalism if her salary was not regular, and that although she had interests in other fields aside journalism, she had stayed majorly because of the regular income.

Respondent: If I didn't have children maybe I may not be a journalist.
Me: Why?
Respondent: I would have left and done something else.
Me: Why? That's strange.
Respondent: I would have pursued my passion.
Me: What's your passion?
Respondent: Like take risks, go into business or do something else.
Me: So you think journalism is more stable, more defined?
Respon dent: Not really, maybe because I have mouths to feed and I have a steady income. Leaving that and starting a business, you know business is a risk, it may pay; it may not, especially when I have children. It may not really be a smart decision. It doesn't mean that it's something I can't do, but it won't be on my number one list (EI/18/J/MM/Female).

This discussion really illustrates the very powerful role steady income can play in retaining women journalists in the profession. Even a woman journalist who has interests in other industries stayed on in one of the oldest news organisations in Nigeria due to the stable income. Findings from this section are similar to what is obtainable in some other countries in Africa. While I did not find studies on how the non-payment of salaries drive women journalists out of the newsroom in other African countries, Barbara Kaija's feminist analysis of Uganda's news media documents how women journalists complain of very low salaries "compared to the amount of work" they do and the high cost of living in their country. She notes that women journalists think "the long working hours would be tolerable if the pay were good" (Kaija, 2013, p.325). Remuneration for journalists is equally low in Ghana, with a study revealing that pay for some journalists are below the national minimum wage (Otoo

and Asafu-Adjaye 2011). Indeed, regular and commensurate income play key roles in determining whether women journalists would stay long enough in the journalism profession to reach top editorial and management positions.

4.2.1.1   How Male Journalists Cope

It is not out of place to wonder at this point how male journalists are coping and why they are able to stay in the industry longer, if both men and women are being owed salaries. I was curious about this as well and asked my respondents.

> *Most of them, their wives have good jobs, and even if not good jobs, their wives are paid regularly. Even if she is a teacher, there is a regular income coming, that's why they can afford to stay there* (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

> *Also, some of them, I think they do other things by the side... For instance I overheard one person saying him and his wife, they do printing business, and that's by the side...I know there is one that said that they have a school – a crèche that the wife runs* (EI/06/RJ/MM/Female).

These revelations entrench the fact that Nigerian women are encouraged (and expected) to support the family financially. This gives male journalists some reprieve. Their wives are able to hold forth when salaries are not coming. Also, the fact that men do not do chores at home or attend to children give them the free time to do other businesses aside journalism, thus helping with supplementary income when salaries are not being paid - a luxury most women journalists cannot afford. Unfortunately, majority of women journalists do not have the luxury of doing businesses, apart from news job, because they want to optimise their free time to take care of the home and attend to the needs of their children. They, therefore, feel the pangs of irregular payment of salaries more than men.

Nigeria's patriarchal culture also shames a man who doesn't have a job. So men continue to work just to have a place to go.

> *But the men will say "I'm a man. I cannot just sit at home. I'll rather just leave the house and come and sit down so that my wife will see me leaving the house everyday". So, it's just that 'I'm a man thing'. It's not as if they are not suffering... There are very few men that will say they are not paying me, I will sit at home. Most of them just continue that suffering and smiling because they don't want to sit at home* (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

Also, women who are married to male journalists not bringing in money cannot ask their husbands to resign. However, culturally, men married to women journalists being owed

salary can mandate their wives to resign because of the argument that a job that takes her away from her primary responsibilities in the house and is not paying is not in the interest of the family. Male journalists are not responsible for household chores and child care; so, their non-availability in the house is not an issue to be considered along with irregular payment of salaries by their employers.

Apart from the family dynamics, the corruption in the news industry is another factor that makes it easier for more men to keep working without salaries, compared to women. There are mechanisms in the news industry that make it easier for male journalists to survive without salaries, compared to women. These mechanisms are brown envelopes, beat associations and moonlighting. To start, women journalists also benefit from these three mechanisms, only that societal factors make it easy for men to benefit more, thereby making it easier for them to remain in the industry without salaries.

As discussed in Chapter One, 'brown envelope' is a term used to describe (in specific terms) monetary gifts given to journalists to provide positive coverage for brands (individuals, governments, organisations, celebrities, among others) or to prevent the negative coverage of such brands (Sanders, 2003; Kasoma, 2010; Skjerdal, 2010; Okoro and Chinweobo-Onuoha, 2013; Owolabi, 2014). Brown envelope also (generally) refers to non-monetary gifts, like freebies, perks, junkets, giveaways, favours, inducements and all forms of privileges granted to journalists to secure their loyalty or buy their goodwill (Ristow, 2010; Frost, 2015). Additionally, beat associations are unions of journalists covering the same subject areas. They encourage specialisations and aid easy access of sources to journalists and assist journalists in assessing information, documents, news releases, press conferences among others. The financial situation in Nigeria has expanded beat associations' functions to include brown envelope racketeering such that brands and the leadership of beat associations work together. Only journalists recognised as members of beat associations are allowed entry to cover beat events and given brown envelopes prepared by brands for such coverages (Agbese, 2001; Olawunmi, 2014). Last of all, moonlighting is also very common in Nigeria, just like the rest of the world (Limor and Himelboim, 2009; Mabweazara, 2010; Fröhlich, Koch and Obermaier, 2013). Journalists who have mastered the coverage of beats and/or brands and have access to other journalists on their beats through the beat associations or other means are employed by government agencies and functionaries, organisations and other brands to manage their media and public relations. Such journalists are paid to organise

journalists for press conferences, write press releases and ensure their colleagues use such materials positively in their publications. They are also paid to coordinate other journalists to cover their cronies positively or kill negative stories about them (Idowu, 1996).

These three mechanisms favour male journalists above women journalists and make the working environment more financially rewarding for the men. Let's start with brown envelopes. Male journalists earn more from brown envelopes than women journalists because more male journalists are posted to the hard and/or prestigious beats (like business, politics, motoring, information technology, aviation among others) where the brown envelopes given to journalists are higher, compared to what is given on the soft and underrated beats, like entertainment, health, education and so on. As regards beat associations, due to the fact that they have the power to accept or reject the posting of journalists to join their beats and determine whether to share the apportioned brown envelopes to new journalists or not (Olawunmi, 2014, p.65), women journalists posted to hard beats perceived as male-inclined may have issues with being accepted by 'the boys' and not 'benefit' adequately financially from the largesse of the beat. This could worsen women journalists' financial situation and deter them from staying longer in the news media.

> *You know when you go for brand events, they might give you ₦10,000 but motoring, the least they give is ₦25,000 so that kind of beat is a beat that you're supposed to enjoy but I didn't enjoy it. They will not even invite me for events. I don't know how the guys will make sure they cut me off because we were just like two ladies there. The two of us were just doing sisters club* (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

On being employed as public relations specialists by the opinion leaders on their beats, more male journalists get these roles (because they have enough time to hang around news sources, they are not termed wayward by doing such and they have extra time on their hands to also perform the functions associated with such roles) because they do not have to worry about tending to the children and maintaining the home, unlike women journalists.

> Interviewee: *When I was with [name of national newspaper], a woman, she was on the Motoring Desk...there was something happening in Bauchi or someplace, one of these Northern States, her baby was like five months, she went with the baby. Eh, they almost finished her. They insulted and insulted her.*
>
> Me: *Who?*

Interviewee*: All the guys around. "What's wrong with her, what money is she looking for?" And you know those kinds of trips, they will pay her some money. "What money is she looking for that she carried a baby? Why didn't she just sit at home?" But if it's a man that did it, nobody will say anything* (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

So, these are the financial realities sending more women out of the news media, compared to the men. It is important to note that this lady quoted above discussed some of the unethical means by which journalists earn money because she has left the industry. Most of the other journalists I interviewed agreed that journalists working in news companies owing salaries find other means of making money but did not want to be specific about some of those means, despite convincing them of their anonymity. My thoughts are that the interviewees who did not know that I had industry experience did not want to expose trade secrets while those who knew I had (industry experience) said I knew the answers already and did not want to comment for fear of backlash from industry colleagues.

During my years in the industry, the general discourse was that some media owners and employers justify their non-payment of salaries with the excuse that journalists earn money illegally using their positions, so their 'identity cards' were a source of income. By implication, by giving them identity cards and news pages or airtime, such managers and proprietors assert that they had given the journalists a source of income. The fact that no journalist has ever instituted legal action against a media employer for non-payment of salaries also shows the complexity of the situation. It could be due to a lack of confidence in the Nigerian judiciary, a fear of backlash from other employers in the industry or a disinterest due to the fact that they are able to somehow manage by meeting their financial needs from unethical means. We are unable to clearly tell without a thorough research and that is why this issue deserves to be further investigated. It is hoped that media researchers will examine the factors sustaining the impunity around remuneration in the Nigerian news industry.

Now that the peculiar remuneration challenges Nigeria women journalists deal with has been discussed, there is a need to review the global problem of inequity in salaries based on gender and assess the extent to which this is relevant to the industrial experiences of women working in the Nigerian news media.

4.2.2 (Un)Equal Pay in (Gender)Equal News Media: Pay Equality in Theory, but Not Practice

As earlier discussed in Section 4.2, previous evidence suggest that there is equality in the remuneration of journalists in Nigeria and women journalists are not deprived based on their gender (Byerly, 2011; Tijani-Adenle, 2014). Men and women journalists doing the same jobs are said to earn the same salary unless such men were occupying editorial and/or management positions that entitle them to some perquisites of office (Tijani-Adenle, 2014, p.390). However, since my study provided me with access to the human resource managers of news companies, the policy documents of news organisations as well as journalists working in the industry, I decided to re-examine the issue of gendered disparity in remuneration in the news media in order to further establish my previous position (Tijani-Adenle, 2014, p.390).

Surprisingly, the findings from this study question my earlier position. I find that although policy documents and management procedures provide for equality in remuneration for (both men and women) journalists on the same positions, there are instances where some journalists (both men and women) are able to earn more than their colleagues. I will show how more men are able to benefit from these situations even though the conditions that enable these are open to both men and women journalists. In this section, I present my findings, which confirm that although salaries are equal in theory, this is not always the case in practice.

I interviewed a total of 46 media workers (two HR managers, one production staff, 11 male journalists and 32 female journalists) and the general rhetoric is that men and women journalists on the same level or position earn the same pay with a few variations, which are based on other factors that have absolutely nothing to do with gender. The general opinion that all journalists earn the same salaries is presented, and the variations that exist and the reasons for that are discussed in this section.

4.2.2.1   Journalists Earn the Same Salary Regardless of Gender

The two human resource managers in the organisations I studied for my research mentioned that their organisations are essentially gender-blind and that their workers were paid based on position and not gender.

> *We have a fixed structure, irrespective of your gender, there are certain amount specified to each role...So it's got nothing to do with gender* (KII/37/HRM/MEP/Female).

A lot of journalists are aware of this policy and corroborate the fact that in their organisations, there is an amount fixed to every position, and that is what whoever occupies the position earns, regardless of gender.

> *Well, we have a salary scale; it does not know gender.* (KII/24/J/MEP/Male)

> *Not here, I know that is a problem in so many countries but not in Nigeria* (EI/41/J/MEP/Female).

So, the opinions of these journalists (and many others who were also interviwed), my experience while working in the new media as well as my interviews with news company managers all corroborate the fact that salaries are not unevenly skewed against women based on gender, all journalists on the same cadre (male and female) earn the same salary for doing the same work and gender is not a factor whatsoever.

However, a justification offered by newspaper managers and/or journalists for inequality in journalists' income (when they are on the same level) is based on the title the journalists are working with, in the organisation. Journalists on the daily titles earn more than those working with the weekend titles because it is believed that their schedules are more rigorous compared to those who work on weekend papers.

> *In [name of newspaper], they pay based on your title but they believe weekend titles staff don't do more like the dailies so they get paid more when you are on the daily beats compared to when you are on the weekends* (EI/21/J/SM/Female).

Journalists working in government-owned news media organisations definitely do not have any variation in salaries; the structure is very solid and cannot be altered.

> *If you were a civil servant working in a government parastatal...you earn the same thing a man will earn on your salary grade level and step...*

there's no difference in wages because of gender. There's no such thing (EI/14/J/MEP/Female).

The only difference that may exist is for those occupying management and editorial positions to enjoy benefits based on their administrative roles. I will now discuss the factors that can make journalists earn different income for doing the same job in the Nigerian news media.

4.2.2.2 Journalists Doing the Same Job Can Earn differently based on Negotiating Power

The human resource managers of the sampled organisations and mangers of other news companies I interviewed attest to the fact that the income of journalists (doing the same job) may vary, based on their perceived value and/or their negotiating powers, but that this has absolutely nothing to do with gender.

> *Over here, yes, there is room for negotiation...And then those who stand the chance of negotiating are the people - there some particular roles that we really really need. Such specialised roles, we sometimes have to bend backward when it comes to salaries. Such period there is room for negotiation* (KII/37/HRM/MEP/Female).

> *There is supposed to, I'm choosing my words now, there is supposed to be a salary scale but the company is at liberty to go outside that scale...It is not cast in stone that they must follow the scale. Some people have been employed on salaries higher than what is on the scale; it depends on how good the person is* (KII/23/J/MEP/Male).

At other times, management of news companies use the irregularity in the payment of salary in news organisations in the country to curtail the bargaining power of both men and women journalists. The experiences shared by these two journalists are insightful.

> *I spoke with someone who said he was asked how much they pay him from where he was coming from and he said 50k. They told him they could only offer him 35k here. He said 35k was too small. You should remain jobless then, here 35 is constant. You get it every month, there is no delay. His complaint was that where he was coming from they owe them salary, as at the time of the interview he had not been paid for three months, so they used that as an opportunity; is it better to be owing you three months or you go to work and it's more like you beg for money. But here you are being paid constantly, so why not take it? And he took it.* (KII/26/NPS/MM/Female)

> *You might even be talking about negotiating salary and you come in and without any recourse to you, your salary will be slashed and they tell you*

if you don't want it you can go, so most times what you see is salary peg.
(EI/16/J/MM/Female)

So, basically, there is room for negotiation and some journalists may earn more than others but these managers and editors claim it has nothing to do with gender. Nevertheless, experts who have studied salary differentials have observed that men seem to be able to negotiate salaries better than women. Women journalists have also been noted to be "particularly poor at negotiating individual pay deals and undersell themselves in these situations" (Franks, 2013, p.33; Hellen-Valle, 2014, p. 71). This situation may resonate in Nigeria. Despite the fact that stakeholders claim that salary differentials are based purely on negotiation and not gender, the male-dominated newsroom culture creates an atmosphere where more men are allowed to negotiate their salaries, compared to women. This female news producer and presenter talks (below) about there being no room for negotiation in an organisation where the HR Manager admitted in an interview with me that they allow some workers to negotiate.

> *I expected the opportunity to bargain would be there but I realised they*
> *had a fixed salary scale, so there was no opportunity to bargain, it is*
> *either you take it or you leave it* (EI/31/J/MM/Female).

The impression that male journalists are also free from impediments and family commitments may also motivate management to agree to pay them more than women journalists, based on the perception that the men will not require concessions nor request for special considerations to attend to family, like the women. This may not apply in all instances as the excerpt below suggests.

Interviewee:	I know some female entertainment editors that are earning more than male editors.
Me:	And they are on the same level?
Interviewee:	Yes
Me:	Why would that be?
Interviewee:	I don't know. I was not there when they were negotiating salary. I'm not part of management. I don't know. I really mind my business about things like that (EI/06/RJ/MM/Female).

Patriarchal beliefs are at the heart of it. Women are presumed not to be earning the "family wage". The assumption is that men need more money to care for their families while women 'only' need money to provide for their 'personal' needs (Ferree, 1995; Whelehan, 1995; Newman, 2013). This is despite the fact that it is general knowledge that women also contribute financially to the upkeep of the family in Nigeria. A female journalist once told me how a formidable woman editor asked her (during a job interview) what she needed so much

money for since she was single. The interviewee said she was disappointed because she respected the woman editor and thought she was a feminist who shared equality values and sentiments.

> *You know how it's funny in Nigeria, you find out that people don't discuss their salaries...I know people hide a lot and don't discuss their salaries* (EI/40/J/MEP/Female).

Like this interviewee observes, the secrecy surrounding what journalists earn in the global North (Franks, 2013, p.33) is also prevalent in the Nigerian news industry. The journalists interviewed are unaware of what their colleagues and (sometimes) subordinates actually earn; so, they are unable to say categorically if more men negotiate better and thus earn better than women journalists. The general impression the journalists I interviewed have is that although there is a salary structure attached to positions, some journalists still earn more income compared to their colleagues and/or superiors based on several factors which coalesce with gender, like the power of negotiation and nepotism.

4.2.2.3   Journalists Doing the Same Job May Earn Differently due to Nepotism

Due to the secrecy that surrounds remuneration in news organisations, some of the journalists I interviewed explained that information about their colleagues or subordinates earning more than them filter like rumours and although they are sad and unhappy about the inequity, there is not much they could do about it. They also believe that this injustice is perpetuated based on nepotism and not solely on gender as these 'favoured colleagues' have turned out to be both men and women.

> *I know some people that earn more than me. They are people that met me on the job, but those things don't bother me. I don't let those things bother me* (EI/06/RJ/MM/Female).
>
> *I think generally in Nigerian media, it is not even about your sex...It is actually about who you know (especially for the organisations I worked with), who employed you when you were joining the organization...I have seen cases, not once, not twice, that they employed some green horns, they paid them more than they paid some of us that had worked in the system for like five years and we were the ones even training those people on how to write and they were even earning more salary* (EI/13/RJ/MEP/Female).

Again, the rhetoric that pay disparity is not about gender persists. It seems Nigerian journalists are more concerned about nepotism and the power of negotiation as factors more responsible for pay inequality than gender. Perhaps it is because these are more concrete and

easily discernible, compared to gender, that is subtle and not easily identifiable as responsible for the bias.

In sum, the secrecy about earnings helps to moderate most of the crisis that would have resulted from salary differentials. The information is always unconfirmed and moves around in the form of gossips. Journalists also believe media owners have the authority to pay their workers whatever they choose, so there is hardly anyone thinking of protesting or taking legal actions. The most they said they could do was to leave and seek other jobs in better-paying organisations. Nigerian journalists seem to have adopted a form of neoliberal thinking which puts the onus on them to seek better paying jobs rather than impress it on their employers to be fair and transparent about pay.

> *If I feel that I am underpaid, it's a matter of looking for a better place to earn a better pay or I perform better so I can be promoted to the next level that will get me better remuneration. So that's just my own thinking* (EI/32/J/SM/Female).

It is difficult for journalists in public news establishments in Nigeria to earn more than they deserve because salaries are strictly based on positions. However, if there is going to be a form of discrimination, it is usually done at the point of employment by, maybe, placing a person in a higher level and grade, compared to what is due to them. However, once journalists are employed and placed on specific levels and steps, they all earn the same salaries, regardless of gender. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of those working in the private sector. Consequently, nepotism is confirmed as one of the factors that influence salary differentials in the Nigerian news industry.

Despite the claims by media organisations that salary differentials are not based on gender, there are situations that may make male journalists eventually earn more than their women colleagues who join the news companies at the same time, and on the same level. That is the last aspect of the issue to be reviewed.

4.2.2.4   Men Journalists Eventually Earn More than Women Journalists due to Masculine newsroom Cultures

As salaries are paid based on the positions occupied, male journalists eventually earn more than female journalists, not through a direct policy but due to masculine newsroom cultures as male journalists progress faster than female journalists and they get to occupy editorial and management positions (with higher incomes) earlier.

> *If you are working well, they will keep promoting you above someone you came in together, this is not the civil service where they just count years* (KII/03/J/MEP/Male).

This Deputy Editor's comments show that journalists who work well and impress management can get accelerated promotion. While this appears fair, the reality of the circumstances of women journalists, however, is that marriage and/or family commitments do not usually provide them with the opportunities to enjoy such recognition and promotion because they take time out to cater for their families or nurse children.

> *Well, we have a salary scale, it does not know gender. If you find yourself in some of the positions, you earn the salary for those positions. That one has nothing to do with gender except where a lady is supposed to be a manager but because of her situation, she is an assistant editor and earns the salary of an assistant editor because she is not where she should be but basically, the salary is based on the company's salary scale* (KII/24/J/MEP/Male).

> *If you are on this level, in most organisations you are earning the same whether you are a man or a woman. The only difference is may be if we were both reporters and because you're a man they now make you an assistant editor and make me a correspondent, they will definitely pay you higher. But it's not like both of us are assistant editors and they will now pay you more, hun hun. The men don't earn more on the same level* (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

The reality with the situation of women journalists regarding salaries is such that based on policy, they should earn what the men on their levels earn, but masculine newsroom cultures overtake this and their male colleagues end up earning more than them. This is due to the fact that the men get promoted to higher positions with more income (due to being on hard beats that earn journalists recognition and promotion) while the women stay in lower positions with lower income owing to masculine newsroom cultures which undervalue their labour because they have family responsibilities and are on soft beats which do not command recognition

and esteem. This can be demoralising for many women. Some will become disinterested and just do the needful to maintain their employment and earn an income – making it less likely for them to progress. Others become frustrated and leave the industry, further reducing the population of women in the news media and thus creating a glass ceiling. Only few continue to work extra hard and increase their sacrifices on the job until their efforts pay off with recognition and promotion. But most women journalists with young families are unable to do this. This scenario is comparable to similar findings which show how women journalists do not progress like their male colleagues because they take time out to attend to family or raise children. Others note that most women who are able to break glass ceilings are either single women without children or mature women who have grown-up children who are not dependent on them (Williams, 2010; Franks, 2013). For instance, an interviewee notes in Williams' study that "I think…Women having children is why men tend to reach more senior roles" (Williams, 2010, p.257) earlier than women.

Meanwhile, the criteria used for promotion of journalists in news companies in Nigeria are very subjective and unstructured. There are no specific targets that journalists can use to demand for promotion if they are denied. Promotions are at the discretion of management and so women journalists who feel they are unjustly denied promotion are not able to query or contest the perceived injustice.

> *And then you realise that you can be a correspondent for the next ten years. You don't get to see promotions like you see in other industries* (EI/16/J/MM/Female).

> *Well I think another challenge in the media in Nigeria is the issue of proper structure. You should be able to have a structure in an organisation where you say, okay, you do a review on a yearly basis or maybe once in two years and say okay this person has been a reporter for five years. There should be an evaluation form: you should be able to evaluate a person based on quality of stories, based on number of by-lines, based on the general output and disposition to the job...But most of the organisations in Nigeria they don't have that* (EI/13/RJ/MEP/Female).

> *In fact, I know one particular person...she was a reporter until she resigned in 2015 and I met her in the system so she was in that organisation for 10 years or 11 years of her life on the same salary, on the same level till she left. Is that progression or retrogression, so it is very annoying* (EI/13/RJ/MEP/Female).

The ideal is that although women and men are meant to receive the same salary for doing the same job, men end up earning more than women because they are considered more for higher

positions due to their perceived availability and reliability. This disparity in income makes more men stay longer than women, while the lack of career progression and non-increase in salaries definitely makes the news environment hostile and uncomfortable for women.

Now that the different dynamics responsible for gender pay gaps have been discussed, I will now consider how inadequate social amenities in Nigeria further make the journalism profession more cumbersome for women journalists.

4.2.3 *Suffering and Smiling:* How Inadequate Social Amenities make Journalism Hostile for Women

Aside from the myriad issues around remuneration, one other factor influencing how women experience working in the news media in Nigeria is inadequate social amenities, especially electricity and transportation. As discussed in Section 1.1, the realities of the Nigerian society, especially in urban cities where overpopulation compounds the challenges of poor infrastructure, is that everyday facilities that are taken for granted elsewhere are luxuries here (Cairncoss, Hardoy and Satterthwaite, 1990; Adenikinju, 2005; Akinwale, 2010). Infrastructure problems make the logistics of operations and management more expensive and cumbersome for news companies. Managing a news organisation is tough in Nigeria due to the level of development. This is why the rate at which news companies, especially those in the print sector, collapse is very high (Olukotun, 2017). This is another factor peculiar to the Nigerian news industry and it highlights the ways in which the socio-political contexts of societies impact media industries (Franks, 2013; Croteau and Hoynes, 2014). The effects of the harsh economic climate in Nigeria are not suffered by news companies alone. The journalists working in the organisations equally feel the pangs, if not more, and they are the focus of this study, particularly the women journalists.

Journalists, just like the average Nigerian, contend with infrastructure challenges. Nigerians use alternative sources of energy, like generators and inverters, to generate electricity. There is pretty little most people can do about traffic and bad roads except to live close to their places of work. This is very expensive for the average citizen. Accommodation in most industrial areas is extremely expensive and the average income of journalists cannot fund housing in such locations. As a result, most journalists live far away from the media houses they work in, except for those who are lucky to have their organisations located in affordable areas. Sometimes the distance between journalists' residence is not that long but bad roads

and traffic congestion make commuting very difficult. Now, for women journalists who have the additional burden of house and child care, erratic power supply and challenges with commuting compound the burden of work-life balance. So, while poor social infrastructures make living burdensome for the average Nigerian, they make journalism career challenging for news workers generally and further compound the difficulties faced by women journalists in particular.

The peculiarities of living on the African continent and in a country like Nigeria significantly moderate the professional lives of women journalists. Infrastructure challenges make women in the global South experience the news industry differently, compared to women journalists in the global North, even though both are faced with the challenges of patriarchy and gender inequality. It also resonates with Postcolonial and African feminists' arguments that the impact of colonialism, neo-colonialism, political instability, low level of development, wars and internecine conflicts, among others, affect the status of African women. They argue that feminist activism will not yield adequate results if African feminists do not include the struggle for good governance in their agenda (Mikell, 1997, p.4; African Feminist Forum Feminist Charter, 2006). This is due to the fact that socio-political instability logically disrupts whatever equality achievements that might have been gained for women by creating peculiar power issues that further subjugate women. These include rape during conflicts, poverty caused by corruption, among others.

Again, the uniqueness of this problem to women in Nigeria, compared to the experiences of their counterparts in developed economies, highlights the significance of scholars' argument that "the hurdles faced by women working in journalism are difficult to disentangle from the wider context" (Franks, 2013, p.53). The nature of the socio-political environment in which media organisations are located significantly moderates the functioning of news companies which in turn affects how the journalists who work in those companies experience the industry. The impact of inadequate social infrastructure on the journalism experience of Nigerian women journalists is salient because it is a reality that significantly impacts their careers as shown below in this section.

It is worthy of note that there is no information related to how the adequacy or insufficiency of social amenities impact the newsroom experiences of women journalists in the literature from the global North because this is not a problem they contend with. So, while women journalists in the global North can take electricity and commuting to work for granted, the

average Nigerian woman journalist cannot, because they seriously impact how she experiences her journalism career. Related information is equally absent in the literature from Africa because feminist engagement with women's experience of the news media is just emerging (Opoku-Mensah, 2004; Tijani-Adenle, 2014). Therefore, the dynamics of the level of development of the region and how they impact women journalists' career experiences have not been engaged with and this section, therefore, fills that gap.

4.2.3.1 Electricity and Transportation

Women journalists' household responsibilities and child care roles are encumbered by epileptic supply of electricity and poor transportation networks. Women journalists are unable to cook and store food for long in the refrigerators, others are unable to store breast milk for their babies while majority spend long hours commuting to and from work, thus making them tired and less productive, as well as making combining marriage and motherhood with media work cumbersome and hectic.

> *I wanted to do exclusive breastfeeding...so I had done a lot of expressing, putting in freezer, then the power was poor so it didn't even help because all the stock I had before preparing for resumption I had to throw most of them away...the very first day of resumption...my mum called me that the milk is finished, 'your breast milk is finished, I am going to go and buy NAN (formula)'...and that was the end of exclusive for my baby, it was very very painful for me because I really wanted to do the exclusive* (EI/22/J/SM/Female).

This woman journalist could not do exclusive breastfeeding for her baby just because of erratic power supply. Most journalists have been requested to leave the profession by their spouses due to perceived inadequate care of children. If the electricity supply were adequate, women journalists would be better able to manage home and work challenges.

The journalist quoted below with the help of alternative sources of power could cook for her family for a week because she could preserve the food. It is not impossible that being able to do that assisted in saving her marriage and reducing likely conflicts that could have made things difficult for her or cause her to leave the industry.

> *I'll make my stew, different types of stew that would last a week, and then the next week I would cook again* (EI/12/J/MEP/Female).

It also shows the intersecting nature of the challenges women face. This journalist who was able to fund alternative power generation works in a news media organisation that pays

salaries consistently. A journalist working in a news organisation that owes salaries may be unable to fund consistent use of household power generators. So, she would not be able to stock her refrigerator with soups and the family may struggle with feeding and this may likely affect her work. It is either she spends long hours cooking repeatedly when she should have been running after news or she is unable to cook for the family. Such challenges compound the problem of work-life balance for women journalists, thus making them less productive and at other times, causing them to exit the industry altogether.

Transportation is another critical problem

> *My health was going and I just had to leave...I left [name of organisation] because I was living on the Mainland so coming to [location of organisation] everyday was something else. So I left [name of organisation], took care of my health for some time, so when I started getting better, I applied here and I got it* (EI/16/J/MM/Female).

The distance between this journalist's home is about 32 kilometres, bringing the total distance travelled to and from work daily to 64 kilometres and she worked for six days a week until she asked for concessions and it was reduced to five days in a week. In an ideal setting this should not be a problem, but overpopulation, bad roads and traffic congestions within Lagos State can sometimes make commuting within the state as strenuous as travelling to another state. She was spending about three to four hours on each leg of the journey, making it roughly about six hours on the average, daily. Additionally, for someone like her who was on the big size, sitting for so long started affecting her health and also reduced the time she had for the family. Her conditions became critical and she had to resign. She was only able to return to journalism because another news media organisation was established close to her residence and it was easier for her to commute to and from work. Her experience provides an insight into how something seemingly as mundane as commuting to work could make a woman resign and leave the news media.

> *No matter how early I close here, the traffic and everything, I still get home late. That's just it...When I say I close early, that is around 7pm so I will be getting home around past 10pm; that is when the traffic is not much* (EI/17/J/LL/Female).

This journalist (quoted above) told me she would leave the news media as soon as she achieves her target which is a job in a more conducive industry or funds to set up a business of her own. Although she did not say transportation challenges were exclusively responsible

for her decision to leave the media later, it is one of the factors that do not make the industry attractive for her.

> *I don't really like Lagos life that much; so much stress, traffic. Imagine if you close here by 11pm and you are going to somewhere around Ayobo. Before you get there you are going to spend about one and half hours, before you get home it's already the next day. And then you sit in traffic again to get here the next day. Now for women, that's difficult because they have responsibilities* (KII/09/J/MEP/Male).

The average journalist works with whichever news organisations employ them because unemployment is rife. They therefore do not have the opportunity to dictate which organisations they work with based on location or accessibility. Culturally, women also have to move in with their husbands after marriage and this is also an odd against women journalists as they do not really determine how far their residence will be from work. Sometimes, women even have to relocate to a different state after marriage.

> *I was employed at [name of organisation] in [name of city] then. When I got married, I relocated to Lagos and then I left [name of organisation] and joined [name of organisation]* (EI/29/J/MEP/Female).

This female journalist's experience confirms the challenges women have with location. Perhaps she would have been completely out of the industry if she did not get another media job after relocating to Lagos State. In all, transportation in general and commuting in particular are definitely issues for women journalists, as are other inadequate social amenities in the country like security, good health facilities and many more. Similar findings resonate in other developing economies as well. For instance, Kajalie Islam argues that in Bangladesh, "facilities as simple as office transport could aid women in overcoming actual obstacles of security which may currently be preventing them from travelling long distances or working late nights", thereby increasing their productivity and chances of career progression in the Bangladeshi news media (Islam, 2013, p.355).

Whilst it can be argued that every citizen contends with these challenges, it needs to be understood that their implications are different for women journalists because they work and close late and therefore get home later than the 'average' woman doing an 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. job. The more time they spend commuting, the less time they have to attend to home and children and this greatly affect work-life balance because the responsibilities that will be abandoned are those that are culturally seen as those of women (as discussed in Section 1.2 and Chapter 6).

The rush to beat the traffic and get home also critically affects women journalists' output. Some female journalists complain of not being as creative as they would have loved to be with their reports due to the stress of commuting or the need to hit the roads in order to get home early. I also witnessed (during my ethnography) how women journalists in the print media would submit reports and sneak home because they did not want the Assistant Editors in charge of the pages the story would be published in to delay them with questions or requests for revisions.

The fact that the journalists interviewed here were all resident in urban and commercial centres highlight the need to review the experiences of women journalists operating in bureaux offices outside the headquarters and less populated states. Their experiences may be different and they may not experience as much challenges. They may also be more likely to stay longer in the industry. The challenge however is that they are less likely to rise to key editorial and management positions if they are not in the midst of the action.

4.2.3.2 Security and Insurance

> *A colleague on my desk here was attacked at gun point, a lady; she had to start begging "please I don't have anything on me"...I just got back to Lagos and saw another colleague. There was swelling on his face, and I said what happened so he was explaining. He was attacked and you know being a man, he was trying to struggle with them and someone came from nowhere and hit him with a bottle, a deep scar, there was blood everywhere, he is still recovering. There has been no death. Thank God people are surviving.* (KII/26/NPS/MM/Female)

There are no records of the number of journalists and/or news production staff that have been attacked while going home late or trying to get to work early, despite the occurrence of such incidents. I also experienced how news presenters rushing to present the 05:00 hours GMT news (I produced while at Voice of Nigeria) were attacked or robbed on their way to the office. Although the organisation I was with had a flat not too far from the office for production staff to camp if they were working late (and unable to go home) or would be working very early the next day (and needed to lodge at the camp the night before), so many female staff would go home late or come from home early nonetheless. More men were using the facility compared to women. It could be because as men, they could easily stay away from home unlike women who had chores and children to attend to, in addition to having to get their spouses' permission. I never used the facility because I was uncomfortable with the fact that it was for both genders. I was never attacked because I slept in the office on my production days. I felt it was safer for me to stay back than go home late the night before and

rush down again the next morning, facing the huge risk of being attacked. I must emphasise that sleeping in the office was not official, although I knew several friends and colleagues in other organisations who were doing same. I was able to get away with it because I had a private arrangement to use the personal office of a management staff I had a personal relationship with. I would lock myself in his office and only go out when it was time for my production. It was safe because the organisation was always powered and there was security as well. I was also single (without a partner/husband) and did not have a child so I had no commitments, my colleagues who were married or with children did not have that luxury.

It is crucial to note that most news companies in Nigeria do not have insurance for staff. So, journalists do not have adequate support structures to recourse to when they are attacked while commuting to and from work. Colleagues and managements just say 'Ohs' and 'Ahs' and pray that such incidents do not occur again or lead to death and the work goes on. This implies that journalists may not always disclose all they lose to attacks and females too may never say if they have been sexually assaulted or not because it would only create stigma while there are no concrete hopes for justice. These too, no doubt contribute to making the newsroom more hostile for women journalists.

4.2.4   Section Summary: Equal Opportunities in Theory but not Practice

Remuneration, employment and promotion opportunities are equal for women journalists in theory but not in practice. Women journalists may be covertly denied employment if they are married, have children or perceived unavailable for journalism duties.

> *We don't look for women or men, we just employ but of course because of the perception that this is a job that needs to be done for 24 hours, it's a job that you don't want someone coming and giving excuses, so it's not deliberate but it's just that we (men) just fit into the calculus* (KII/24/J/MEP/Male).

The implication of this is that more men may get employed in journalism compared to women, although women who are single and/or seen to be free of encumbrances as well as married women with children are also employed. In terms of remuneration, men and women are to earn equally in theory, but men sometimes end up getting better salaries if they bargain better and if they are seen to be more valuable, a reality that plays out because men are known to be more available and reliable because they do not have family and childcare responsibilities. Men may also earn more if they have access to more industry bigwigs and

media management (as nepotism has been identified as responsible for inequity in earnings). In Nigeria, men are known to have more political godfathers and support networks (Ikuomola and Okunola, 2011, p.4). If that principle is applied to journalism, the implication is that more men will have more access to the social capital that will earn them higher positions at the point of employment and more pay, compared to women journalists. Finally, the fact that men are free from family and child care responsibilities and are not affected by electricity or transportation challenges (as compared to women) implies that they are more professionally available and dedicated since they *"can just get home and go to bed"* (EI/22/J/SM/Female), compared to women journalists who share their time and attention between the job and the home.

4.3   Conclusion

Applying the inductive approach of thematic analysis' method of data analysis assisted in exposing the unique and shocking realities of the wage system in the Nigerian news industry and how they affect the status and experiences of women journalists in the country. This is due to the fact that the information was derived exclusively from data as the analytical preconceptions I brought to the study were based on findings from the global North where non-payment of wages is unimaginable. More importantly, it uncovered how the poor state of infrastructure in Nigeria also compounds the difficulties of maintaining work-life balance for women journalists, and how this contributes to their increasing exit from the industry.

The chapter highlighted how other factors (like inadequate social infrastructure, insurance and security), which Western scholars may not think of, deeply impact the lives and experiences of women journalists in Africa, and Nigeria in particular. It also uncovers the nuanced ways women experience discrimination at work, or how men and women experience newsroom cultures differently. It shows in clear ways how the social contexts of media organisations impact news companies (Croteau and Hoynes, 2014) and how their workers in general and women journalists specifically experience the industry (Franks, 2013).

This chapter has exposed key findings that might not have been uncovered if qualitative methodology was not used in investigating the research objectives of this study. Although the status of women in the news media in Nigeria has been briefly studied (Byerly, 2011), the report does not capture the occasional inequality in the wages for journalists in the country because quantitative methodology was used. Data was collated using survey questionnaire

and not interviews. Quantitative methodology has been said to be deficient in capacity to explore critical areas of women's oppression (Roberts, 1981; Keller, 1990) and it does not capture the realities of the lives of subjects during data gathering (Mies, 1991; Gherardi and Turner, 2002; Miner-Rubino and Jayaratne, 2007; Bryman, 2008). Even when it does, those realities are lost in analysis as only the quantified data are analysed and discussed (Mies, 1991; Gherardi and Turner, 2002; Miner-Rubino and Jayaratne, 2007; Bryman, 2008). That is why the qualitative methodology used for this study is regarded as better suited for feminist research (Kelly, Burton and Regan, 1994, pp.34-36; see also, Reinharz, 1979; Depner, 1981; Kelly, 1990; Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991, Mies, 1991; Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009).

Speaking with media administrators and enquiring from journalists about remuneration in the news industry (using interviews) exposed the damning wage situation in the Nigerian news media where non-payment of salaries drives women journalists out of the newsrooms. It also showed how inadequate social amenities greatly impact women journalists' productivity. Most importantly, it challenged previous evidence that there is pay equality for women journalists in Nigeria (Byerly, 2011; Tijani-Adenle, 2014) and established that pay equality is in theory but not practice as men sometimes earn more wages than women journalists due to negotiation, nepotism and gender norms.

Indeed, findings from this chapter are consistent with African feminists' standpoint that Western feminists cannot theorise nor solve the problems of women on the African continent because they cannot truly appreciate the realities of the lived experiences of African women (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1994; Nnaemeka, 2003; Steady, 2005; Blay, 2008). Poor economic and infrastructural development, political instability, maladministration amongst other challenges have necessitated that African feminists include tackling corruption, supporting smooth transitions in governments, advocating for good governance and accountability on their agenda (Mikell, 1997; African Feminist Forum Feminist Charter, 2006) due to the standard of living on the continent. The intersectionality of location, level of socio-political and infrastructural development along with gender discrimination (Crenshaw, 1994) have coalesced to produce a unique form of glass ceiling for Nigerian women journalists that Western feminists cannot adequately appreciate or interrogate due to the difference in their locations and lived realities. To improve the status of Nigerian women journalists and create a better experience of journalism practise, news media organisations' non-payment of salaries must be tackled, nepotism in appointment and promotions has to be challenged while there

must be campaigns for infrastructural development. Although these issues are not on the global feminist agenda, the peculiarities of the African continent and the reality of the lives of African women have put the matters on the African feminist agenda.

Chapter Five: *Working in Chilly Climate* **- Sexual Harassment, Sexism and Masculine Newsroom Culture**

> *Another factor that often characterises and shapes working relations in African newsrooms is the rarely discussed problem of sexual harassment. This is often a sensitive and difficult issue for women to deal with. Many female journalists simply keep quiet about this for fear of reprisals from male colleagues and the media organisation. Consequently, evidence on the prevalence and nature of sexual harassment is often anecdotal and difficult to obtain* (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.114).

5.0 Introduction

One salient issue that moderates how women experience working in the news media is the silent epidemic of sexual harassment, sexism and masculine newsroom culture. This scourge is more complicated by the fact that unlike other issues, "it is rarely discussed" (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.114) and, therefore, inadequately engaged with, thus making it easy for the unpleasant sexist atmosphere in the news media to continue to dominate and intimidate women journalists (see Barton and Storm, 2014; North, 2016b).

Sufficient evidence from studies have established the fact that sexual harassment exists in media industries (Kossan, 1992; Weaver, 1992; Barton and Storm, 2014; Melki and Farah, 2014; North, 2009, 2016b) and that women news workers the world over experience sexual harassment from their male colleagues (Weaver, 1992; Gallagher, 1995; Trioli, 1996; Walsh-Childers, Chance and Hergoz, 1996; de Bruin, 2004; Ross, 2004; Haussegger, 2005; Barton and Storm, 2014; North, 2009, 2016b) and, at times, even male news sources (Lachover, 2005; Barton and Storm, 2014, Palm and Marimbe, 2018). Although there are arguments and records that prove that men also experience sexual harassment (Wood, 2011, p.295; Mclaughlin, Uggen and Blackstone, 2012, p. 625; Barton and Storm, 2014, p.24), this section will only discuss sexual harassment, sexism and masculine newsroom culture experienced by women journalists, because this study is mainly concerned about how women experience working in the news media, in addition to the fact that without doubt, women experience sexual harassment more than men (Weaver, 1992; Gallagher, 1995; Trioli, 1996; Walsh-Childers, Chance and Hergoz, 1996; de Bruin, 2004; Ross, 2004; Haussegger, 2005; Barton and Storm, 2014; North, 2007, 2009, 2016b).

5.1 Sexual Harassment Provisions in Africa

There has been a culture of silence and denial of sexual harassment in Nigeria and other African countries until a few decades ago (Oyewunmi, 2012). Until recent, African countries and institutions did not have legal instruments on sexual harassment and gender discrimination. For instance, Ghana's Labour Act of 2003, South African Employment Equity Act of 1998, South African Code of Good Practice on the Handling of Sexual Harassment Cases of 1998 (Amended, 2005) and the Namibian Labour Act 1992 as well as that of 2007 (see Parker, 2012) are still fairly recent legal documents. Equally, the academia in Nigeria, until recently, did not also study and engage with the silent epidemic that has been sinking the continent's women into abysses of psychological, social and professional problems (Yahaya, 1990; Ladebo, 2003; Johnson, 2010; Ekore, 2012). The issue is beginning to generate attention, but the awareness is still poor, adequate laws and policies are still evolving and societal culture still generates responses like ignoring, denying, trivialising and in extreme cases condoning sexual harassment, thereby protecting perpetrators from sanctions (see Oyewunmi, 2012).

The first explicit legislation on sexual harassment in Nigeria is the Criminal Law of Lagos State, which took effect on August 8, 2011. It has a section [Section 262 (1)] that criminalises sexual harassment by providing that any person who sexually harasses another is guilty of a felony and is liable to imprisonment for three years (Criminal Law of Lagos State, 2011). Until then, the only provisions under the Nigerian common law, under which a person could seek redress for sexual harassment were tort laws of trespass, neglect and private nuisance. These do not cover all forms of sexual harassment; they are difficult to prove and do not usually lend themselves to harassments that occur at work or official settings (Oyewunmi, 2012). It is important to note that the Criminal Law of Lagos State applies to only Lagos State. It excludes the 35 other states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) that make up the country. The implication of this is that residents of the country outside of the jurisdiction of Lagos State will not be able to benefit from this law. Also, Section 254C of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Third Alteration) Act of 2010 confers jurisdiction on the Nigerian National Industrial Court to handle cases on unfair labour practices and ensure industries abide by international best practices. So, it can be assumed that the court can also handle cases of sexual harassment, even though nothing in the Nigerian constitution and the National Industrial Court Act (2006) explicitly highlights sexual harassment as an offence.

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Plaintiffs, can, therefore only sue under unfair labour practice (see Oyewunmi, 2012). The unfortunate part of the issue is that there are no laws that prevent summary dismissal of workers in Nigeria (see Oyewunmi, 2012). So, women are wary of this and consider the fact that they could be sacked without reason, if they raise issues about sexual harassment, particularly against constituted authority or persons holding important leadership positions. The implication of the situation, therefore, is that women journalists in Nigeria's news media also have significant limitations in preventing or seeking redress for sexual harassment, especially harassment at work or on the field.

5.2   Sexual Harassment Policies in the African News Media

Byerly's *Global Report* notes that approximately, one-third of 117 media organisations sampled in 15 African countries do not have policies on gender and sexual harassment (Byerly, 2011, p.80). In particular, few media companies in Nigeria "have adopted a policy on gender equality, sexual harassment, paternity leave or child care" (Byerly, 2011, p.124). That means a little over one-third of the news companies in Nigeria sampled do not have policies on sexual harassment. For the organisations that do have policies, such policies are inadequate in protecting women journalists because, culturally, it is not an issue that is expected to be handled officially. Women journalists are expected to handle such issues personally or, at best, management would address them – but unofficially. "Consequently, evidence on the prevalence and nature of sexual harassment is often anecdotal and difficult to obtain" (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.114; see also, Kur, 2012) in Africa, even though women who have worked in the news industry on the continent confirm that sexual harassment persists in African news companies (Kaija, 2013). In the opinion of Mishra et al., the "unwritten principle seems to be for women journalists to quietly endure any discomfort or negative attitudes in the newsroom" (2008, p.217). This probably explains why there is a dearth of research on the issue in Africa, and particularly in Nigeria.

After a thorough search for literature, the only study related to the issue is Kur's survey on sexual harassment experiences of final year female Mass Communication students from three public universities in South-East Nigeria. The study reveals that 194 (approximately 85 per cent) of the 224 sampled students had experienced sexual harassment in the course of their education, with 73.1 per cent of the perpetrators being lectures (academic staff). Over half of the respondents said the harassment affected their academics; 62.9 per cent said it made them feel inferior, while 40.6 per cent said the harassment made them regret being females (Kur,

2012, p.475). This is a very sad trend as women journalists in training are already exposed to sexual harassment.

Media-focused women organisations on the continent are beginning to rise to the challenge and chart a way for their colleagues to rise above sexual harassment. One of such rare attempts is the publication of a booklet on sexual harassment in the media, titled: '*Who Do I Tell: What Should I Do?*' in March 2013 by Gender and Media Connect (GMC), formerly known as Federation of African Media Women (FAMWZ), in partnership with the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists (ZUJ), as part of efforts to tackle the problem of sexual harassment in the continent's news media.

5.3   *Blinking in the Dark:* Policies and Politics on Sexual Harassment

Carolyn Byerly's *Global Report* documents that only 13 per cent of the eight companies sampled in Nigeria have policies on sexual harassment. This will imply (when calculated) that about 1.04 news organisation(s) out of eight have policies on sexual harassment in the country. The report concludes that few companies in the country have adopted a policy on sexual harassment (Byerly, 2011, p.124). This result represents the reality in the Nigerian news media, a reality that could be worse because sometimes media organisations that handle sexual harassment complaints without having any written or documented policies and/or procedures may equally claim that they have policies on sexual harassment. The impact of this on how women journalists experience working in the Nigerian news industry is what this section addresses.

5.3.1   Policies and Frameworks on Sexual Harassment in the Nigerian News Media

To review the policy situation on sexual harassment in Nigeria, I interviewed the HR Managers of the two news media organisations I studied for this research. When asked if their organisations had policies on sexual harassment, these are the responses of the managers:

> *We have no express policy per se and there have not been any official complaints* (KII/11/HRM/11/Female).

Now, this human resource manager who has worked in this news company for 10 years and heads the administration department is qualified to speak on company policies. So, if this manager says the organisation does not have a policy on sexual harassment, it sure does not. Although she said there had never been any official complaint of sexual harassment in the

organisation in the past 10 years, male and female journalists working in that organisation confirmed the existence of sexual harassment in the organisation during their individual interviews for this thesis. The implication is that the management is turning a blind eye because journalists are not making official complaints. It could also be that she was deliberately denying the existence of sexual harassment to protect the image of the company she represents. Worse still, she could be denying the existence of sexual harassment because the company did not have any policy on sexual harassment nor procedure for the workers to seek redress. Agreeing that sexual harassment occurs would indict the organisation since they do not have policies or procedures in place to protect workers.

Now, the second human resource manager interviewed says her organisation does have a policy on sexual harassment but insists I could not have access to it because:

> *The employment handbook is only made available to [name of company] staff* (KII/37/HRM/MEP/Female).

So, there was no way of confirming if this organisation's policy is written. However, I did get some journalists working in five news organisations to get me their personal copies of their organisations' company policies and there is nowhere in the documents where sexual harassment was mentioned. Nonetheless, all the organisations have regulations to sanction misconduct, which are sometimes termed as acts of wrongdoing or improper behaviour. So, sexual harassment claims can be investigated under the misconduct rule. What is obtainable in the larger Nigerian society in which sexual harassment can mainly be prosecuted under tort laws of trespass, neglect and private nuisance seems to be what is equally obtainable in the news media where there are no express policies on sexual harassment but the opportunity to indict harassers under the misconduct rule. This situation is not peculiar to Nigeria, as Byerly's *Global Report* (2011) records how significant amount of news companies in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Middle East and Eastern Europe do not have policies on sexual harassment. This shows the level of work that needs to be done by academics, the civil society and feminist activists, if there are still countries in the world (existing in the 21st century) without national sexual harassment policies (Melki and Mallat, 2013, p.441) and news companies operating in several continents without sexual harassment and (sometimes) gender equality policies (Byerly, 2011, 2013).

5.3.2   Turning a Blind Eye: Media Managers and the Denial of Sexual Harassment

Apart from not having expressly stated policies on sexual harassment, the administrative managers of some media organisations as well as media managers and those holding top editorial positions sometimes deny the existence of sexual harassment in the industry. At other times, they look the other way, pretending it does not exist because there have not been official complaints or scandals relating to sexual harassment.

> *Sexual harassment is not common in the media. I have never heard it, I have never experienced it so it's not common. You are the first person telling me that and that is the truth* (EI/10/J/MEP/Female).

Responses like the one above are surprising and, in a way, shocking. This is because one need not do any covert investigation to uncover evidence of sexually harassing behaviour in the Nigerian media. It is obvious in the jokes, discussions, interactions, as well as in the shared experiences of women journalists. It can be assumed that it would be difficult for someone who has stayed long in the media to occupy a senior editorial position (like the respondent above) to be ignorant of it. It could be because she was speaking as a representative of the organisation and wants to protect the image of her company. Equally, her understanding of sexual harassment may be different, thus making her disregard some sexually harassing behaviours as normal. I did not define my understanding of sexual harassment to my interviewees and neither did I ask them to define it [in order not to impose my perspectives or influence their assumptions on the topic]. So, I am unable to say clearly what she regards or disregards as sexually harassing. I adopted this standpoint in order to investigate the concept from the perspectives of the subjects; and previous researchers have done same (see McKinney, 1990; Bowen and Laurion, 1994).

It is vital to note that even when some female journalists develop the courage to file complaints, media organisations with administrative, editorial and management staff who deny the existence of sexual harassment in the industry are unlikely to address these complaints or give the victims fair hearing.

> *They sacked the girl that wrote the petition for writing against her boss* (EI/21/RJ/SM/Female).

Situations like this show that such organisations are unlikely to do anything to protect their female workers from harassment. Other scholars who have studied how women negotiate sexual harassment in the African news media have arrived at similar findings. Barbara Kaija's

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research on women journalists in Uganda documents that women journalists 'handle' sexual harassment on their own without recourse to management. She notes how a female journalist left the news media because her editor was demanding for sex and she could not cope with it. Yet, *"for personal reasons, she preferred not to take the matter up with management"* (Kaija, 2013, p.325).

Women journalists working in the global North endure the same fate. Louise North documents how 87.2 per cent of respondents who had experienced sexual harassment in Australian news media chose not to report it officially, probably because management of news organisations in the country "ignored" sexual harassment complaints or took "no further action" in seeking justice for victims (North, 2016b, p.501). Same findings resonate in the United States with only two per cent of respondents in a survey conducted by the Associated Press Managing Editors Association [APME] reporting harassment (Kossan, 1992), and internationally in IWMF's global sexual harassment study with less than one-fifth of the 683 women journalists who had experienced sexual harassment reporting to news management (Barton and Storm, 2014). Clearly, women journalists in Nigeria, and other international newsrooms (where sexual harassment policies are even entrenched) do not have confidence they would get justice when they report harassment.

Other researchers have observed that women journalists' lack of confidence in management to protect them from harassment stems from the fact that, sometimes, some managers and editors are themselves culpable. Byerly narrates how she was "backed up against a filing cabinet by one newspaper publisher trying to kiss" her (Byerly, 2004, p.115), while Louise North was told by a female journalist that her newsroom "feels like a boys club, with the deputy editor, editor and general manager all very matey and sending each other pics of bikini girls etc, makes it difficult to complain about one of them" (North, 2016, p503). The situation is thus bleak when HR managers, publishers and journalists holding editorial and management positions deny the existence of sexual harassment or are themselves culpable. This makes them turn a blind eye to sexual harassment, shield perpetrators or even turn against victims who seek redress.

For the situation to change, people holding editorial positions need to show more responsibility and the culture of denial has to be eradicated in Nigerian and in international

newsrooms. The next sub-section discusses how sexual harassment complaints are addressed, when they do get addressed.

5.3.3 Keeping it on the Hush: How Sexual Harassment Complaints are Tackled

Despite the seemingly depressing handling of sexual harassment in Nigerian news media, the situation is not all bleak. Some media organisations recognise that sexual harassment exists in the industry and women (and men) journalists in their employ need to be protected.

> *There have been traces of sexual harassment from both male and females - surprised? Of course, it happens in every organisation, it's just that the complaint is not frequent...We have our work force, over 500, of course there will be. There are cases and like I said, such cases, it's very sensitive; it's not what we make public. We handle it case by case basis and I being the Manager, Human Resources, I work in line with the line manager and if it's the line manager that was found culpable, we have dealt with such issues in the past* (KII/37/HRM/MEP/Female).

So, this organisation that is pragmatic enough to recognise the existence of sexual harassment puts mechanisms in place to combat it. It can be assumed that unlike the Human Resource (HR) Manager of the previous organisation, who denied the existence of sexual harassment in her company (in Section 5.3.1), this HR Manager acknowledged the existence of sexual harassment in her organisation because, according to her, they have a policy and procedures in place to handle such complaints. This makes them feel responsible and more committed to protecting their workers from sexual harassment.

The challenge, however, is that despite the noble effort, patriarchy and masculine newsroom climate to a large extent influence how these issues are handled.

> *Such things, they don't write officially, they just come and meet you. You should know that anything sexual harassment is a very sensitive issue so, they just walk up to you or they could give you a call that they want to see you in private, and you tell them to come and meet you* (KII/37/HRM/MEP/Female).

So, female staff are encouraged to meet the HR 'privately' to 'unofficially' report sexual harassment while the administrative department equally 'quietly and privately' accost accused harassers to stop perpetuating abuse. Now, workers in those organisations, who were aware or privy to the abuse, may see it go away without any knowledge of reprimand to the suspected harasser. While such initiatives may be able to curb some instances of abuse (for women who are bold enough to approach management and are lucky to work in organisations

where management are pragmatic enough to 'do something' about it), it does not change the culture of abuse because of lack of awareness of the consequences of harassing colleagues or subordinates.

> HR Manager: So a situation when a male senior employee starts harassing the female junior employee, such reports get to us and we handle it strictly and our policy is clear on that. We frown against that. We give a warning reprimand and if there is a reoccurrence, then we will have to put up a stiff punitive sanction.
>
> Me: What is the highest form of punishment?
>
> HR Manager: It depends on the situation. We've never really been faced with such situation. Most times it's embarrassing enough to be warned about it. So we have never really had to melt out the ultimate punishment (KII/37/HRM/MEP/Female).

Basically, things are handled under the radar because sexual harassment is seen as shameful for both the victim and the culprit. Therefore, the workers in the organisation should not be exposed to such shameful information. This clearly resonates with the culture of silence in Nigeria about issues of sexual harassment and assault where victims are put off from going public because of the stigma and the indignity of the experience (Yahaya, 1990; Ladebo, 2003; Johnson, 2010; Ekore, 2012; Oyewunmi, 2012). The consequence of allegedly protecting victims, unfortunately, is that news companies end up shielding culprits of sexual harassment.

It is unfortunate that I was unable to speak with more HR departments of news media organisations to appreciate how more news companies handle sexual harassment complaints in their organisations. But what is clear is that regarding combating sexual harassment in the Nigerian news media, the efforts of news companies can be equated to blinking in the dark because most media organisations do not have policies and frameworks on sexual harassment. The staffs of a handful of news organisations that do have policies against sexual harassment are unaware because these 'policies and/or frameworks' are not stated in the organisations' staff regulations and conditions of service. Most organisations have hostile working environments which make reporting sexual harassment difficult for women while the few organisations which encourage women journalists to complain allow patriarchy and culture to moderate how such issues are handled as most are resolved unofficially.

Interestingly, women journalists in Australia, who work in organisations where sexual harassment complaints are handled strictly 'officially', express their preference for procedures "where informal processes" could be used "as a more comfortable starting point for redress" because they see formal processes "as having the potential to undermine the effectiveness of informal action" (North, 2016b, p.504). May I state that research has shown women journalists seem to seek less formal actions because colleagues and alleged perpetrators socially sanction victims for filing complaints by making things difficult for them. It has been discovered that having their complaints handled officially by setting up inquiries and investigation panels, like a radio presenter puts it to Louise North, makes "working with people you have complained about very difficult", affects their relationships with senior managers and ultimately "damaging to their careers and promotional opportunities" (North, 2016b, p.503). In the end, it all boils down to hegemonic masculine newsroom climates and how they make it difficult for women journalists to fight harassment.

Even if Nigerian news companies and news companies the world over consider addressing sexual harassment complaints unofficially (because societies surreptitiously punish victims for instituting formal action), it is still essential that policies and frameworks for handling complaints officially are in place to deter perpetrators. For instance, an Australian journalist narrated how a general manager who "squeezed her ass" the night before at a social gathering, called her "into his office" the next day to offer an "apology for his behaviour" due to the "fear of a sexual harassment claim" (North, 2009, p.88). One can only wonder if an apology would have been tendered if the manager knew for sure there would not be consequences for his actions. Regardless of the temporal reprieve unofficial procedures may provide, the ultimate goal should be for all news companies to have policies against sexual harassment, have institutionalised procedures for handling complaints officially and a newsroom culture that does not covertly punish victims for filing complaints.

Now that the policy, frameworks and administrative climates on hand for the management of sexual harassment complaints in news companies in Nigeria have been reviewed, I will now proceed to discuss the outlook of Nigerian journalists (both male and female) to sexual harassment in the news media and its impact how women experience the industry.

5.4 *Different Strokes for Different Folks:* **Nigerian Journalists' Perceptions of Sexism and Sexual Harassment in the News Media**

Speaking with scores of journalists about sexism and sexual harassment in the Nigerian news media provided really deep and conflicting opinions. Just like proving sexism and sexual harassment is tricky, getting an analogous opinion from different journalists (both male and female) is equally complicated. There seems to be a serious divergence across the sexes on what constitutes sexual harassment - whether the act 'legally' regarded as sexual harassment is harassing to women in the newsroom and their expectations of the modalities for handling it.

5.4.1 Sexism

To start, I will briefly discuss the issue of sexism before moving to sexual harassment. Sexism is generally understood to refer to discrimination, stereotyping or prejudice targeted at individuals (mostly females) on the basis of their sex. My interviewees spoke more on sexual harassment but nonetheless, sexism still came up in the discussions. The male journalists did not speak directly to sexism, they believed that the way women were treated were based entirely on women's individual personalities and not generally based on their gender. In fact, some of them believed that women journalists even perpetuate sexism against themselves. While speaking on how men are seen as deserving of successes and promotions when they are high performers and women as lobbying for it, regardless of their skills, this Deputy Editor says women journalists gossip about such female highfliers rather than appreciate them:

> *Then if such an opening comes and she gets the promotion, it is women*
> *like you that will be going round to gossip that she is this, she is that to the*
> *editor. That's why I said that the fault is that of you women*
> (KII/23/J/MEP/Male).

This view is supported in a similar study on women, gender and newsroom cultures in Africa where a former Zambian reporter and news reader mentions that "When a woman is ambitious and sets professional goals for herself and starts to shine or succeed, they simply conclude that you are sleeping your way to the top!" (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.112). Even in the Caribbean, women journalists have been reported to engage in "competition and rivalry" whilst also "back-biting" themselves (De Bruin, 2004, p.12), with experts noting that systematic discrimination of women and their poor status in mixed gender organisations could

affect cohesion and solidarity among women (Ely, 1994; Baxter and Wright, 2000). Nonetheless, some women journalists are convinced that sexism exists in the Nigerian news media and they present their arguments with some of their experiences.

> *There were times that male colleagues that were obviously lazy are rated and promoted above you and such things could really make you feel bad (EI/29/J/MEP/Female).*

> *But yes, there is something about the boys club that locks out women...It's a lot harder for a woman to succeed in the newsroom than it is for a man because for a man, it is taken, it's a given, but if you are a woman, you have to prove it that you are worthy and that pressure is not on any man (EI/04/J/MEP/Female).*

These women editors' comments confirm what a lot of the other interviewees mentioned, that men are naturally considered above women even when women were more competent, and that it takes a woman longer to rise than men because men are given more opportunities, compared to women. Experiences of sexism, like having men considered above them, having to work extra hard to prove their competence, are some of the many examples that my respondents cited.

Women journalists have also complained of not being appreciated, like the men, having their achievements ignored or even undermined by their superiors because they are women.

> *I was the first journalist in Nigeria to do a story on [mentions the issue]...and it made the front page...They didn't come out to say well done...If it was a man or someone who is in their caucus...you can imagine them commending the person and making an issue out of it (EI/13/RJ/MEP/Female).*

This former title editor even mentioned how, despite being a senior person in the organisation, an editor saw an outstanding story she had done and removed her by-line ["*The story came out without my name on it*" (EI/13/RJ/MEP/Female)], just to remove the shine from her and spite her. Sadly, these experiences are not limited to women journalists in Nigeria. Studies have shown how women journalists across regions suffer the same fate. In the Caribbean, women journalists also lament the lack of appreciation, telling the researcher, "My editor would know that I did a good job, but it would kill him to tell you it's good" and "I'll get my praise from outside if it boils down to that" (De Bruin, 2004, p.11). Being appreciated and commended boost self-confidence and encourage employees to do more.

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When women journalists' outstanding contributions are ignored, the psychological implication could be to slow down and do only the needful to keep their jobs as going the extra mile and sacrificing to break stories and turn in excellent copies/reports do not seem to be noticed or appreciated.

Men are also seen as having the opportunity to network and relate better with one another compared to women. When men meet at bars after production, they are seen as sociable while a woman that goes to similar places to network with men is seen as wayward.

> *For a women, you do that, you go hanging out with the guys, behind your back they may say "that girl hard o, you no see how many bottles she drink yesterday" meanwhile you are only trying to bond, to click with your male colleagues but they won't see it that way behind your back* (EI/04/J/MEP/Female).

Male journalists thus have more opportunities at progression due to easy access to those in power, compared to women who lack the access due to the fear of harassment or the need to protect their image (De Bruin, 2004). Other scholars have also observed how a woman working in an African newsroom is socially curtailed because she cannot "project herself in the same way [as a man] for fear that she will be viewed as 'too forward' or "aggressive," and, even "a loose woman" because she is always in company of men" (Made, 2000, p.3). Sexism is thus ingrained in the newsroom culture that women journalists unconsciously censure themselves in a lot of ways to meet cultural and patriarchal expectations of what a woman journalist should be.

It is interesting however, to note that there are women journalists who believe that there is either no discrimination at all or that women journalists can navigate sexism by working hard, blending in and becoming one of the boys.

> *Do you think there is discrimination? There is no discrimination. The job affects both men and women... So it is both ways (*EI/34/J/MM/Female).

> *There's no boys club, there's a newsroom club...There's nothing that helps the men because a bad reporter is a bad reporter even if he's male, he won't go far. There's nothing that helps them. What limits us is just nature* (EI/12/J/MEP/Female).

The conflicts in the experiences of these two categories of women journalists have been explained by Karen Ross who argues that "although some women undoubtedly do not experience sexism in their working lives, it is perhaps rather simplistic to believe that this

must mean that no women ever experience such behaviour, reducing those very real experiences as being mere excuses for special pleading" (Ross, 2004, p.146).

Apart from within the newsroom, women journalists also mention that sexism reflects in the journalism union in the country. A former executive of a state chapter of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) disclosed she experienced sexism from male colleagues when she was vying for the Chairmanship position within the union.

> *He said at that meeting that they should leave me to go and manage my husband's kitchen. That particular expression left an indelible mark on my person. He spurred me to go extra mile that I had to prove these people wrong that I deserved better than the kitchen even if the kitchen is naturally my habitat* (EI/30/J/MEP/Female).

It is interesting to note however, that at the time of this writing, a woman is the President of the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) and she was elected unopposed. In an interview days before her election, which was held in April, 2017, she commented that she did not experience any form of sexism and the support for her election had been massive.

> *As for whether the boys are doing the boys' club thing, no. I'll say perhaps I'm the luckiest because up till this moment, twenty something days to the election, I'm contesting unopposed. I've gotten endorsements around the country. For now, nobody has indicated interest in contesting; all I get are words of encouragement. I'm just the female president that they want. The boys, the girls, 28 years in journalism, they don't even see me as a girl anymore. I'm just one of them* (Funke Egbemode, MD, New Telegraph Newspaper and President, Nigerian Guild of Editors).

Some journalists would argue that the fact that some women have been empowered to overcome sexism and reach high positions in the country's news industry does not mean that sexism is non-existent for all women. They would argue their positions, citing some of the peculiarities or the luck those women enjoy which seem to set them apart or 'save' them from the discrimination they believe others are tackling. Due to confidentiality, mentioning some of those peculiarities could breach the anonymity of some of the sources or their subjects. But, again, it all still boils down to the wrong impression that the glass ceiling has disappeared because "a few women have broken into spheres of influence" (Franks, 2013, p.35). This is also evident in Gillwald's study of women in South African newsrooms (1994), where she observes that some women were using the examples of their own successes to deny the existence of sexism in the news media.

Finally, sexism also rears its head when women hold supervisory positions above male journalists. A number of women who are desk editors, news editors and the very few title editors have both male and female journalists reporting to them. Although this is no longer novel, the sexual undertones are still there. A senior male reporter, who was going to be employed in a national newspaper, was asked if he could work under a female desk editor before he was assigned to her desk at the point of employment.

> *The first question the editor asked me was that can I work with a woman? That was the first thing; somebody that is younger than you...He said 'don't come back and tell me there is a crisis o'* (KII/02/J/MM/Male).

This is a confirmation that it is known in the industry that men sometimes have issues with working under female superiors. Franks also documents how male journalists do not like working under female editors, citing instances that include a "male journalist who requested redeployment in reaction to the prospect of a female boss" (2013, p.4). The patriarchal view of women as emotional and less competent at directing and managing people is responsible for this. When asked if there were differences between male and female editors and managers, some journalists are of the opinion that men are better managers than women, and women journalists are more emotional than rational. When subordinates have challenges with male superiors, they rarely attribute these to the gender of the editor. The reverse is the case with female superiors.

> *The difference is like heaven to earth, it's a different ball game working with a woman. People still ask me, eight years down the line, how have you been able to cope. It's not easy working with a woman...The first thing is that naturally, women, you are bossy, and secondly, you always feel that, because of these complex issues, men love to take you for granted* (KII/02/J/MM/Male).

> *I think it's a cultural thing; it's a macho thing too. I think it's inbuilt in their system that...they tend to believe that men can do it better...Some people have not really gone out of that feeling that men are stronger, more intelligent, brilliant...they feel they can probably control their subordinates better* (EI/29/J/MEP/Female).

This situation plays out in other African newsrooms as well. In a study involving women journalists from Ghana, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Zambia, participants complained to the researcher that "even when they hold senior positions in the newsroom, they had a hard time getting men to take instructions from them" (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.113). An Assistant Editor (female) believes that women journalists sometimes do not understand newsroom

politics and that this is the reason they are seen as emotional and bad managers. When discussing how she changed the culture of journalists and columnists submitting copies late when she became a desk editor, this journalist (on editorial position) stressed how understanding the linguistics of power did it for her and did not pass her off as emotional.

> *Once you are able to understand power language and emotional language. I was saying: "They were delaying production, we were just sitting down doing nothing, wasting man-hours". My superiors said, 'write a memo to all of them', and that was when we began to finish work 7 o'clock, 7:30* (EI/38/J/MEP/Female).

Again, this argument reiterates the submission that women journalists have to imbibe masculine newsroom cultures (North, 2013, p.34) by abiding to the patriarchal culture of being macho and unemotional just to fit in and be accepted or regarded as good managers or supervisors. Sexism is thus entrenched in the global news media.

In the African news media, women are deprived training opportunities, loans and access to other social capital with lower chances of transfers outside the country, which are prestigious opportunities given to men (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.113-114). Globally, they receive lower wages, their achievements ignored, they get assigned to the less prestigious beats and denied promotion that are given to their less qualified male colleagues or even juniors (Ross, 2001, 2004; de Bruin and Ross, 2004; Okunna, 2005; Frohlick, 2007; Poindexter and Harp, 2008; North, 2009, 2014; Ross and Carter; 2011). The impact of sexism on the career experiences of women journalists is thus huge. It makes the newsroom environment hostile for women, dampens their morale and curtails their career progression. Unfortunately, it is difficult to combat because it is mostly covert and subtle. By implication, sexism will persist if there are no changes in the newsroom culture.

5.4.2   Sexual Harassment

As discussed in Section 2.1.3, sexual harassment generally involves making unsolicited and unwelcomed sexual advances to a woman (or man) physically, verbally or through any other means which is discernible to the harassed. It entails unwarranted attention or discrimination on the basis of gender which may also link "academic or professional standing or success to sexual favours or that interferes with work or learning" (Wood, 2011, p.295).

Global studies have documented sexual harassment against women journalists (Weaver, 1992; Kossan, 1992; Melki and Farah, 2014; Barton and Storm, 2014; North, 2009, 2016b)

with research on Africa showing that although it is rarely discussed, sexual harassment does occur in African news companies (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p. 114; Gadzekpo, 2013). Barbara Kaija's research on women journalists in Uganda documents the "use of sexist language and inappropriate touches" (Kaija, 2013, p.325). Similar actions were observed in my ethnographic study of the interactions between men and women journalists in two newsrooms for a four-week period and in my conversations with women and men journalists.

5.4.2.1   Ignorance or Justification

To start, I did not ask the journalists I interviewed to define sexual harassment in order not to moderate their views or impose my personal or theoretical opinions on them. Rather, I asked them (based on their own understanding and/or perceptions) to say if they felt sexual harassment occurs in Nigerian news media and if they believed this affects women journalists. The responses ranged from ignorance of the existence of sexual harassment, an explanation that such interactions are consensual to a justification that although acts that seem to constitute sexual harassment may occur, media workers know it is the newsroom culture and they are not targeted at undermining women journalists.

The following are the views of those who claim to be ignorant of sexual harassment in the news media or do not think it occurs:

> *In the newsroom we have adults, I think everybody in the newsroom is above 18. So the few times they joke...there is nothing in it that harasses the female folk or that tend to smear them* (EI/34/J/MM/Female).

> *Jokes are jokes, that's on a lighter note. I don't see them as a form of sexual harassment* (EI/10/J/MEP/Female).

For some others, it may occur in other newsrooms, but their own organisations have policies that discourage and prevent people from doing such:

> *You can't just open your mouth and say any nonsense or harass anybody...or beat somebody on her, ah, no...So I think here, we have risen above that* (EI/29/J/MEP/Female).

> *That kind of attitude is unprofessional for the male to come in the newsroom and grab the female or speak some demeaning words or sexist words and when I got here after a few months like that - grabbing, hugging and some of the women feel very uncomfortable. So I put a stop to it. I put out a memo and I told them anyone caught doing that kind of thing would be dismissed* (KII/42/J/MEP/Male).

Regrettably, not all journalists in Nigeria share the views of their colleagues quoted above that sexual harassment should be discouraged or sanctioned. Many of the journalists I interviewed believed or were of the opinion that some acts legally regarded as sexual harassment may not pass in the news media because of the newsroom culture as they have come to be seen as harmless or acceptable.

> *Many of the things our male colleagues do will pass for sexual harassment in other climes* (EI/15/J/MEP/Female).

Perceived as a form of relaxation, a means of coping with the rigours of the profession and harmless interaction, making lewd jokes and sexist comments have become a tradition of male-cultured newsrooms (North, 2009, pp. 81-84). Male journalists in the Nigerian news media have come to accept it as the newsroom tradition with some loving and enjoying it because they perceive it as harmless.

> *If a lady finds herself or decides to work in a media organisation...you have signed off that you know that people will harass you and you are ready for it* (KII/09/J/MEP/Male).

The immediate comment above is shared by many male journalists in Nigeria and rationalises the persistence of sexual harassment in the country's newsrooms. They seem to think that it is acceptable because it is supposedly a culture of the industry and so see no reason why anyone should complain or refuse to adapt to it. Women journalists have asserted that the newsroom is "not a place for the easily offended" (North, 2016b, p.505) due to the entrenched culture of harassment. This is similar to Kossan's finding that sexual harassment endures in male-dominated industries, including the news media, because male superiors hold the view that their organisations are part of "unique environments, where sexual harassment can be excused" (1992, p.3). The difference here, unfortunately, is that some women journalists also hold the same views.

> *When it is time for jokes, they joke: lewd jokes, all manner of things, but for me, I have not found it harassing* (EI/38/J/MEP/Female).
>
> *Naughty sex jokes are things you can't help in the newsroom because you know the nature of the newsroom everywhere...you can't help it, just do your job and don't let it bother you* (EI/08/J/SM/Female).
>
> *I don't mind those jokes because I'm game too. It keeps the newsroom lively, you know. That is one thing I like about the newsroom. The*

atmosphere is relaxed. Until you don't write your story or get the job done, your editor is pretty much a friend (EI/15/J/MEP/Female).

It also corresponds with my experience in the newsrooms (during my ethnography) where I witnessed both male and female journalists discussing freely, making lewd jokes and throwing banters in happy and exciting moods without anyone 'appearing' to feel offended. Many journalists who I believed were not in intimate relationships freely shook hands, hugged and had 'not too sensual' physical interactions without the women appearing uncomfortable. The views of journalists presented above as well as my ethnographic experience confirm the arguments of scholars that men rationalise sexual harassment as the newsroom culture and expect women to adjust to it (Kossan, 1992; Holland, 1998; Okunna, 2005; Frohlick, 2007; Poindexter and Harp, 2008a; North, 2009, 2014; Ross and Carter; 2011; Wood, 2011; Byerly, 2013, Franks, 2013), except that in this case, some women journalists in Nigeria are doing the same.

As a junior staff in Voice of Nigeria, I experienced sexist and naughty jokes from individuals (mostly men) occupying senior management and editorial positions. Although they were initially shocking, I did not take offence. We young staff felt those superiors were humble to play and relate with us on that level. Additionally, we believed it was part of the newsroom culture we needed to imbibe. It was not until I was recruited to gather data for the '*Global Report*' that I began to reflect and critique some of the things that I experienced in the newsroom. This speaks to the perceptions of some of the female journalists above, who believe that those comments and conduct were not harassing and/or sexist because they did not personally find them offensive, thus downplaying the need to appreciate the ways those discourse and behaviours are unprofessional and part of an entrenchment of a larger patriarchal structure of the workplace (Pease and Velazquez 1993; Melin-Higgins, 2004; McDonald and Charlesworth, 2013; Ross, 2014).

5.4.2.2 Damaging and Daunting: Effects of Sexual Harassment

The effects of sexual harassment on journalists can be very harmful. Many journalists complain about their experience of sexual harassment and its effect on their professional and personal lives. There is a general belief that sexual humour is the least form of harassment and it should not affect women. However, sexual humour, although perceived as harmless is not completely without effect. Anthropologists have argued that even sexual humour "maintains a

sexist social order" (Crawford, 2000, p. 220) and some women journalists do not find them amusing.

> *When I started my career as a journalist...I used to be shocked at the kind of jokes, you know, the insinuations, the connotations, it used to be shocking but it shocked me into silence. Once they just make jokes that make me uncomfortable, I would keep quiet or I would leave the place. It took me some time before getting used to it. I don't like teasing people as a person, so such jokes don't go down well with me* (EI/22/J/SM/Female).

> *I have developed a thick skin, it is either I don't respond or if I don't like it, I just keep quiet or I just smile or I just generally don't participate in such jokes. So of course, for a young woman just coming into the newsroom, you'll find the jokes harassing, if I can use that word, you'll find the jokes can make you feel uncomfortable* (EI/22/J/SM/Female).

Apart from sexist jokes, women journalists also have to endure inappropriate touches all in the name of interactions. Many male journalists ignore the discomfort of their colleagues, (especially junior colleagues) and go ahead to touch them even when the women show their discomfort.

> *As a female and me personally, I don't really like the habit of people tapping me. When I came in, I had issues with a lot of people. So I had to calm down... What I do is I just take my mind off it. And I try as much as possible to reduce the number of people I talk to* (EI/20/J/LL/Female).

I personally witnessed two occasions where a male journalist who was senior to the journalist quoted up here, was putting his hands on her shoulder and around her back. He did not stop even though she was moving away and looking uncomfortable. I noticed that she did not complain verbally, and she told me while discussing some days later that everyone knew she was not comfortable with it, but some of them persisted. She also explained that she had stopped complaining because it was beginning to seem like she was anti-social, considering the fact that she was relatively new in the newsroom and occupying a junior position.

This junior journalist's coping strategies to being touched without her consent were to ignore the unwanted physical contact and pretend it was not happening ("*take my mind off it*") and isolate herself socially to reduce the frequency of unwanted touch ("*reduce the number of people I talk to*"). This response is similar to Kaija's record of Ugandan women journalists who "ignored" in most cases "sexist language and inappropriate touches" from male

journalists (2013, p. 325). Now, isolating herself socially and professionally did not stop the harassment completely while it was hindering her from relating with colleagues as well as superiors who had the authority to influence and determine her career development. Such responses to sexual harassment are similar to those of women journalists in the Caribbean newsrooms who inadvertently removed "themselves from centers of power and influence" by distancing themselves from colleagues and social circles in a bid to curb harassment (De Bruin, 2004, p.10).

Barton and Storm's global study for the IWMF also records how women journalists who had experienced harassment "changed their behaviour around others, including not making eye contact, not attending work social functions (when harassment occurred in the workplace) and not forming friendships with anyone related to work. Several women said they have modified the way they dress for work, or make an effort to present themselves as personally conservative" (2014, p.27). Indeed, having to make such huge adjustments in their personalities (to protect themselves from harassment) has been recorded to inhibit women's creativity, productivity and cause them psychological distress, like depression and anxiety (see for example; Bowen and Laurion, 1994; Walsh-Childers, Chance and Hergoz, 1996; Ross, 2004, De Bruin, 2004, North, 2007, 2012, 2016b; Barton and Storms, 2014).

Despite the seeming atmosphere of acceptance or denial in media organisations, one woman journalist out of the 32 who were interviewed did comment that she had experienced sexual harassment and she fought it, noting that it stopped after reacting to three occurrences from different men.

> *I've had to slap somebody before in the newsroom. I don't want to mention where...I was going into the studio for a recording show. I was already dressed and made up and everything and I was going - he was like "gosh, you're so beautiful" and he touched my thigh. The next thing I knew- I had slapped him. And they were like 'Oh! You slapped a man' and I was like 'Oh yeah, then I'll do it again'* (EI/43/J/MM/Female).

It is possible that more women out of those who were interviewed had experienced sexual harassment but declined to mention it because of the culture of shame and silence that characterises such experiences in Nigeria (Oyewunmi, 2012). Many journalists agree sexual harassment cases are not officially reported as it is not easy for women to report abuse because they would be embarrassed, not taken seriously or could suffer backlash.

You will now go and say "this man is chasing me, he wants to sleep with me", you can't say it and our society is not too women friendly, not gender friendly, forget all the gender sensitisation programs...you can't go and tell the admin manager "I am being victimised", people will first of all laugh and will tell you "What's the big deal are you not a woman", that is the first thing they will say, so you should go and handle it...I think it is the embarrassment most women run away from and they just keep quiet and endure it...You could even be victimised and your fellow women will be complaining that are you supposed to report it? And nobody knows what you are going through but they will be like 'why should she say it?' (EI/21/J/SM/Female)

Although management tend to give many reasons that if a female staff is harassed, they should report, if a male staff is harassed, they should report but that hardly happens (KII/09/J/MEP/Male).

The quotes above show that women endure the psychological trauma of sexual harassment by keeping quiet because they want to avoid the shame and stigma that come with going public with harassment claims. It is seen as okay for men to express their desires (verbally and/or physically) and women journalists are expected to 'handle' them by either accepting or rejecting without squabbles. A woman is thus seen to be immature and shamed if she reports harassment officially rather than 'handle it' privately.

Sadly, this situation is not unique to Nigeria. The global hegemonic newsroom culture has a way of blackmailing women journalists into silence (from reporting harassment) due to hidden consequences and repercussions, like having important assignments restricted from them, getting very critical performance assessments, having to resign from the prosecuted organisations due to hostile work environments with most ending up leaving the news industry altogether, while others had to withdraw their claims after years of protracted legal process (see Beasley and Gibbons, 1993; Thornton, 2001; North, 2009, 2016b).

It is fascinating to note that although only one of the 32 journalists I interviewed revealed she experienced sexual harassment, most nonetheless mentioned they knew other people who had experienced sexual harassment in the Nigerian news media. When it comes to sharing experiences of harassment, women journalists in Australian news media have also been known to be more "comfortable explaining how it happened to other women than themselves" (North, 2009, p.89). Some male journalists also confirm that they had knowledge of the existence of sexual harassment in the industry.

I've actually had colleagues, friends that have said they wanted to move to another beat and the editor or line editor said they had to date him before they would do that but it never really happened to me (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

In fact, I remember a situation where the Women's Desk was dissolved at [name of organisation] because the women on the desk have gone round (had sex) the Ogas (senior editors) and there was disrespect to senior staff and to stop everything they just dissolved the desk (KII/24/J/MEP/Male).

I can marry a journalist but once we get married she has to leave the job because I have seen the job. I can't marry a career journalist. I have seen it all; I have seen the pressure of the job, I have seen the sexual harassments, I have seen everything...If somebody tells me that someone is harassing my wife or touching her buttocks, or I even imagine it, I won't like the possibility. And those are the things that I know that happen (KII/02/J/MM/Male).

There was an instance of a lady who was initially working with me in the [name of unit] but when she was employed she was taken to another desk. And she came and said the desk editor was harassing her and that she wants to come back and start working in my unit. But then I told her it wasn't possible that what if she didn't know me? I told her that you need to fight your own battle. My advice is that you do your job well and don't give room for undue familiarity and don't accept offers that will compromise you and things like that. So, in strict terms, we've never had cases of somebody reporting officially but you will hear stories of somebody making passes at another (KII/24/J/MEP/Male).

These quotes above from men and women journalists, along with the others in this sub-section, show the different dimensions to sexual harassment in Nigerian news companies. They also reveal how women have somehow learnt to adapt or endure rather than fight back and how media companies are able to claim ignorance of its existence because women journalists do not report officially. This is a dangerous trend because victims will continue to suffer emotional and psychological trauma due to lack of closure while perpetrators may be emboldened because they know their identities would be protected. This kind of environment make working in the newsroom hostile for women and subsequently reduce their confidence, stifle their efforts, affect their productivity and in extreme cases force them to leave the industry (see Barton and Storm, 2014; North, 2016b).

5.4.2.3   Interns as targets of Harassment

This thesis focuses on how Nigerian women journalists experience the news media. So, mass communication students on internships (to news organisations) were not supposed to be part of the investigation. However, due to the fact that interviews conducted were semi-structured, several interviewees mentioned interns in discussions and the inductive approach applied to the data analysis led to significant revelations that necessitate this section. Majority of my interviewees (male and female) mentioned that sexual harassment of interns is rampant in most news media organisations in Nigeria and acknowledged the fact that female interns are more susceptible to abuse than female staff. The reality is that the more inferior the status of women, the more vulnerable they are and the higher their susceptibility to abuse. Female students on internships in the newsroom are, therefore, "more vulnerable to sexual harassment" due to the fact that they occupy "lower status positions" in a "supervised role"; they are young, female and are a form of threat to workers as they could be employed if deemed qualified (Bowen and Laurion, 1994, p. 2-3). North's study of sexual harassment in Australia's newsrooms also reveal that women "in subordinate positions" experience sexual harassment more, compared to those "in positions of authority" (2016, p.502).

Media scholars have not adequately engaged with female student interns' experience of working in the news media. The majority of studies available are about students' experience of sexual harassment in work and university settings (Ademolakun, 1989; Kelly and Parsons, 2000; Ladebo, 2003; Shishima, 2005; Stratton et. al, 2005; Ekore, 2012; Kur, 2012) and female mass communication students' experience of sexual harassment in the faculty (Kur, 2012) with very few on how female mass communication students experience sexual harassments during internships in the newsrooms (Bowen and Laurion, 1994, p. 2-3).

Bowen and Laurion's study of 44 male and 52 female mass communication professionals' experience of sexual harassment as interns, students and professionals in Florida, the United States, reveals that almost half of the respondents experienced at least one form of sexual harassment during their internships. Participants experienced sexual harassment more as interns than as professionals; women experienced more incidents of sexual harassment than men in all three roles; men were the major perpetrators of harassment while victims of sexual harassment viewed their internship experiences more negatively than those who were not sexually harassed (Bowen and Laurion, 1994).

Although over two decades old, Bowen and Laurion's findings about how female interns experience their internships are the reality of female mass communication students on internships (popularly called Industrial Attachment [I.T.]) in the Nigerian news media. Sadly, there is no study about this phenomenon in Nigeria yet. The closest is Kur's study of female mass communication students' experience of sexual harassment in the faculty and the results are no less damning. Kur surveyed the sexual harassment experiences of final year female mass communication students from three public universities in South-East Nigeria. The study reveals that 194 (approximately 85 per cent of the 224 sampled students had experienced sexual harassment in the course of their education, with 73.1 per cent of the perpetrators being lectures (academic staff). Over half of the respondents said the harassment affected their academics, 62.9 per cent said it made them feel inferior while 40.6 per cent said the harassment made them regretted being females (Kur, 2012, p.475). This is a very sad trend as women journalists in training are already exposed to sexual harassment. The abuse continues when they join the newsrooms for their industrial attachment.

Perpetrators of sexual harassment target interns due to the fact that they know they are naive, inexperienced, insecure and ignorant of policies. Many journalists look back at their lack of agency when they suffered harassment during internships and state they would have pressed charges if they knew better. A participant declares in Kossan's study that:

> *I have suffered harassment, all from male supervisors. I consider newsrooms to be often hostile environments for women. Most of it comes in the form of joking and I never complained. I'm 37 now, and I would seek action if it happened now (Kossan, 1992, p.7).*

Scholars have argued that sexual harassments do not occur out of desire but due to the predilection to intimidate, control and keep women docile in the workplace or other settings (Thornton, 1996; Crawford, 2000). Some journalists struggling professionally see female interns as threats and seek to harass them to passivity as many journalists have joined the news media in Nigeria through excellent performances during internships.

> *I took over a page after two weeks of understudying and I did it for the next one year. So, they were just like...just come back. You have a job waiting...Immediately I finished in school, I submitted my project and resumed fully with [name of organisation]* (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

The unemployment rate in Nigeria is high and it is tough getting into the news media. Students on internships, therefore, seek to impress management so that they could secure employment after their internships. Male journalists know this and they use the opportunity to

exploit interns by promising them employment, by-lines and spaces on the front pages of newspapers.

> *Some of the interns who come here...because of the narrowness of the opportunity, they attempt to want to do what they are not supposed to do hoping that that will give them the passage. No, it's your work that will give you the passage (EI/30/J/MEP/Female).*

> *I always tell I.T students when they come. I tell them "don't sleep around for anybody to use your stories". They will tell you 'sleep with me, I will put your story on the front page'. It's a lie, they won't put your story on the front page because even them, they are struggling to get front page (EI/13/RJ/SM/Female).*

Unfortunately, there are no mechanisms in place to protect female interns from harassment. Rather, these young adults are left to handle the tough situations themselves with many subjected to circumstances that permanently impact their lives.

> *There was a particular girl when I was in the newsroom at that time, she got pregnant and she couldn't even know who was responsible because she had gone round and she had twins with that pregnancy (EI/13/RJ/SM/Female).*

Some female interns are assertive and refuse to give in to demands for 'relationships'. Shockingly, perpetrators do not leave such interns alone. They are bold enough to victimise interns who do not give in to their demands.

> *I've had a young intern walk up to me and say "Mr. [name], how do you survive when people make passes at you, you say no and they get hostile and make the work environment unconducive?" I had to counsel, that's the best that I could do (KII/24/J/MEP/Male).*

Apart from making the newsroom hostile for victims, perpetrators of harassment (in supervisory positions) also refuse to publish their stories/reports, thus denying them the opportunity of gaining the industry experience for which they came to the media, making them get low marks for the internships (when they do not have publications) and ultimately denying them of opportunities they could have gotten if they were given an enabling environment to showcase their skills and/or talents.

Despite such damning accounts, there is no specific policy or mechanism in place to protect the exploitation of young women sent to the newsrooms to understudy journalists and get industry experience in Nigeria. The best any news organisation has done was to verbally discourage workers from sexually exploiting interns.

<table>
<tr><td>Interviewee:</td><td>*I'm aware that there was a time management called a meeting and said there would be sanctions for harassment.*</td></tr>
<tr><td>Me:</td><td>*What was management's definition of harassment?*</td></tr>
<tr><td>Interviewee:</td><td>*Inducement, some male staff were inducing the interns who come to the newsroom to learn to go out with them and then at a point they were threatening that 'if you don't go out with me, I will make life miserable for you' and all that so it became an issue.* (KII/09/J/MEP/Male)</td></tr>
</table>

These comments not only show that sexual harassment does occur in the news media, they also highlight the fact that undergraduate students on internships are more vulnerable due to their "age, status and gender" (Bowen and Laurion, 1994, p.5). Unfortunately, universities and news media organisations have not seen it as a critical issue they need to seriously engage with due to the assumption that it is a normal thing for men to request to 'date' women and it is up to women to either accept or decline, disregarding the weak positions interns occupy and the power male journalists wield to harass them to submission.

> *One day a student on I.T, a girl, complained to me what she was experiencing, expecting that I would say it's very bad, it's not good etc. But I told her "I would be surprised if people don't chase you" and she was surprised. I told her that there is an age a lady gets to, that men would seek her out. It is either she wants to accept or not* (KII/24/J/MEP/Male).

Some of my interviewees (mostly females and a male) mentioned they had to mentor and counsel young interns against becoming victims of harassment. They also enlighten interns that perpetrators are unable to guarantee jobs or any other opportunities they may promise. Sadly, such journalists are few and not available in all newsrooms. Thus, interns who do not get access to such mentorship are extremely vulnerable. It is equally disheartening to note that none of the 46 media workers (two HR managers, one production staff, 11 male and 32 female journalists) that were interviewed knew of any journalist that had been sanctioned for harassing an intern. The reality is that the sexual harassment of female interns is one of the factors responsible for the low number of women joining the news media. This is due to the fact that such intimidating experiences could dissuade interns from seeking employment in the news media after graduation. The implication is that fewer women would gain entry into journalism, thus leaving very few women to work in the news media and compete for management and editorial positions with men. These findings demonstrate the need for feminist media scholars to pay more attention to how female interns experience working in the news media. Nigerian universities equally need to pay attention to "sexually harassing

behaviors that occur outside the university campus, but are still part of the academic life of their students" (Bowen and Laurion, 1994, p.1) while news media organisations need to be taken to task on the need to protect young interns posted to gain industry experience under their tutelage.

5.4.2.4 Responses to Harassment: Blaming the Victim, Social Isolation and Joining the Blokes

Journalists sometimes seek to protect the image of the profession by denying the existence of sexual harassment in the industry. Some others are pragmatic enough to acknowledge the existence of sexual harassment and its various ramifications. Still, the only similarity in the opinions of those who are in the second category is their acknowledgement of the vice. When it comes to how they expect women journalists to respond to it, their opinions vary considerably.

Most of the journalists who acknowledged the existence of sexual harassment are sometimes of the opinion that the victims bring it on themselves through their actions. Some others believe women journalists need to isolate themselves from the sexual banter and social activities in the newsroom to gain respect. At other times, these journalists who agree sexual harassment is rife in the news media are convinced that all women journalists need to do is join in the banter or imbibe the culture and they would be spared the harassment. I discuss the three arguments below and review their implications for women journalists.

Blaming the Victim

The culture of blaming the victim is entrenched in the global discourse of sexual harassment. For instance, perpetrators of sexual harassment are defended in China (and indeed many parts of the world) with rhetorics such as "the victim was provocatively dressed, spoke in a manner encouraging sexual advances, or made bodily gestures or movements that incited the harasser" (Srivastava and Gu 2009, p. 45). Sadly, this rhetoric has found a place in Nigeria's newsrooms as most of the interviewees concluded that if women journalists 'comport' themselves well, they would not be victims of sexual harassment.

> *But really, the touching, I don't know, nobody can come and touch me anyhow; it depends on how you actually carry yourself or portray yourself to them* (EI/21/RJ/SM/Female).

The ways our female colleagues dress, even we women we describe them as provocative and men are moved by sight...So it all depends on women (EI/32/J/SM/Female).

When it comes to sexy jokes and touches, it depends on the individual, you must from the beginning set a boundary that people won't cross...I have not experienced any of such because they know there are things I won't take (EI/31/J/MM/Female).

I never experienced sexual harassment, I never did in my 26 years, I never did. I think it's an energy thing, it's what you project; I think it's how you project yourself that will determine whether you will be sexually harassed or not (EI/38/J/MEP/Female).

There is a serious problem here; if women journalists (some holding top editorial and management positions) feel that their colleagues called for sexual harassment due to their actions or dispositions, then victims of sexual harassment will not get the required support from their female colleagues and management to fight abuse. This may embolden perpetrators. Such rhetoric also featured in Marjan de Bruin's research on newsroom cultures in the Caribbean news media with journalists arguing that women could prevent or stop sexual harassment if they were "firm and decisive, if they draw the boundaries seriously" (De Bruin, 2004, p.10).

Assuming that victims of harassment have the capacity to prevent abuse discourages colleagues and management from appreciating the sufferings of victims and downplays the efforts of women who try to prevent harassment without success. During my ethnography study of newsroom interactions, I experienced how some women journalists 'seem' to ignore being touched, not because they were comfortable with it but because they had been psychologically bullied to silence. Indeed, assuming that every woman should be able to hold her own against perpetrators of sexual harassment ignores the power dynamics in the news media and the extent to which age, status (Bowen and Laurion, 1994, p.5), personality and level of enlightenment of women journalists influence their vulnerability to sexual harassment. There is an opportunity here to enlighten journalists (both male and females alike) about the implications of blaming victims of harassment due to the thinking that they caused it. Abuse of all forms, especially sexual harassment, should not be justified, no matter the purported excuse.

Social Isolation

There are other journalists who are of the opinion that the only thing that can save women journalists from harassment is to not join in the jokes and to isolate themselves from social activities in the news media. They argue that the more women journalists exclude themselves, the less they are targeted and abused.

> *But what sensible women do is that when people are cracking those jokes they don't join in. This is because if you join in, they will think you're enjoying it* (KII/24/J/MEP/Male).

Apart from asking journalists to isolate themselves, some also believe that women journalists can easily stop abuse by showing discomfort.

> *If you now notice that may be a male colleague despite your comporting yourself well, a male colleague is going to the edge you don't like, we're all Africans and we have non-verbal ways of communicating our feelings. By the time you give the person a cold attitude, he will see the handwriting and may be walk away or leave you in your own world* (EI/32/J/SM/Female).

This latter opinion that victims of unwanted physical touch can use non-verbal signs or body language to dissuade perpetrators is contestable. I witnessed an incident where a woman journalist showed clearly through her response that she was not interested in being touched and the male colleague continued, despite her non-verbal disapproval. Besides, requesting that women journalists isolate themselves from their colleagues and supervisors is tantamount to calling on women journalists to commit professional suicide. Scholars have shown that such actions remove women from "centers of power and influence" (De Bruin, 2004, p.10) and delay or truncate their career growth.

Additionally, social isolation does not eliminate women journalists' exposure to sexual harassment completely, as show in Section 5.4.2.2 where a female journalist had continued to endure sexual harassment despite keeping to herself and "*reducing the number of people*" (EI/20/J/LL/Female) she talked to.

Lastly, asking women to isolate themselves at work puts the responsibility of preventing abuse on them and not on the perpetrators who should be sanctioned and mandated to stop abusing their female subordinates, contemporaries or even superiors. Covertly or openly requesting women journalists to change their behaviours around others, "including not

making eye contact, not attending work social functions (when harassment occurred in the workplace) and not forming friendships with anyone related to work" (Barton and Storm, 2014, p.27) place enormous emotional and psychological pressure on women journalists. Women journalists have lost their creativity, become less productive and developed psychological distress, like depression and anxiety, because they were socially conditioned to believe it was up to them to seek ways to curb or cope with abuse (see for example: Bowen and Laurion, 1994; Walsh-Childers, Chance and Hergoz, 1996; Ross, 2004, De Bruin, 2004, North, 2007, 2012, 2016b; Barton and Storms, 2014). Sexual harassment will not be curtailed in the news media if journalists and authorities place the burden of change at the feet of victims and not perpetrators.

Joining the Blokes

An interesting proposition by some women journalists to curb sexual harassment is a form of reverse psychology that aims to "beat the boys at their own game" (Ross, 2004, p.147) by recommending that women journalists join in the sexist jokes and incorporate other "sexually harassing behaviour" (North, 2009, p.89) that play out in the news media. They are of the opinion that actually blending in and being one of the boys is what can save women from sexual harassment.

> *I don't mind the jokes, sometimes I make the dirtiest of the jokes myself because I discovered from very early in my career that that is how to get them to leave you alone. If you are taking offence, you are blushing, you are hiding, then they are just going to continue but if they throw one at you and you throw a dirtier one back at them, they get used to you and they let you be* (EI/15/J/MEP/Female).
>
> *You smack me on my bum, I'll smack you back or I'll threaten to smack you in the other place. You won't do it again...Ladies just need to be confident* (EI/12/J/MEP/Female).
>
> *As a woman, you go on an official assignment, you're the only female, I need to zip up my dress, I just walk up to their rooms and tell one of the boys to zip my dress. I carry my necklace to the hotel lobby and say "you, hook my necklace" you know, I've become one of them* (EI/12/J/MEP/Female).

This is really a confirmation of the arguments of scholars, like North (2009, 2013) and Franks (2013), that women journalists who have survived and grown in the news industry have learnt to imbibe masculine newsroom cultures and become 'honourary men' (North, 2013, p.34) or

"one of the boys" (Melin-Higgins 2004, p.199; North 2009, 2016) just to fit in. Catherine MacKinnon (1979) also argues that the ability to put up with or endure sexual harassment is conditional for women surviving in the news media.

Women journalists just entering the profession see sexual harassment as a form of "rite of passage" (De Bruin, 2004, p.9) to induct them into the industry while others normalise "sexually abusing behaviour as part of newsroom culture" (North,, 2009, p.89) they have to imbibe. Regardless of the status of women journalists who believe in looking the other way or joining the blokes, "sexual harassment is pathologised in ways that reduce the possibility that the deeper problems of sexual inequality, sexism and gender will be identified and dealt with" (North, 2009, p.90).

5.4.2.5   Hazy Picture

Another reason why interviewees think management and journalists do not take abuse allegations seriously is also because they understand that journalists in media organisations date and go into relationships, with a good number ending in marriage. Since the Nigerian culture takes marriage seriously and encourages individuals to marry (Ochonu, 2011; Ntoimo and Isiugo-Abanihe, 2014; Alanamu, 2015), media organisations do not discourage relationships and/or marriages among their workers as long as they do not disturb operations. Some are, therefore, of the opinion that women are either in consensual relationships and are not being harassed or that they only complain of harassment when the relationships do not work out.

> *Well I dated somebody in my days as a journalist in [name of organisation]. What I saw were people dating each other...I can only remember relationships, no harassment* (EI/06/RJ/MM/Female).

> *I have dated in my newsroom before but this was not someone breathing down my back. I liked him, he liked me and you know, we had a relationship but nobody has ever harassed me sexually* (EI/15/J/MEP/Female).

The fact that media organisations rarely have policies against intra-organisational relationships and marriages, and the assumption by management that some sexual harassment claims started as consensual relationships may make it very difficult for women making harassment claims to get justice. Thus, making the situation very tricky for women.

It will be insightful, however, to note how women are treated when they are being harassed and how they challenge or negotiate abuse. The next sub-section discusses the impact of abuse on women journalists and their efforts to handle or deal with it.

5.5 *Counting the Cost:* The Price Women Pay for the Enduring Culture of Sexual Harassment and Sexism in the Nigerian News Media

Regardless of the divergent perspectives of Nigerian journalists on the existence of sexism and sexual harassment in the country's news industry, women journalists' lives and careers are affected by the scourge. It is definitely affecting their productivity and driving them out of the industry. Just like in other African countries, Nigerian women journalists choose the flight option above the fight alternative when the sexual harassment dragons are in their chase. The African society equally has a shocking way of making a woman reporting sexual harassment feel immature. Women would rather handle it their own way, accede to the harasser or leave the environment (Omonijo, et al., 2013; Kaija, 2013) than complain officially. Barbara Kaija's research on women journalists in Uganda documents how "One woman knew a younger female colleague who had left because the editor was demanding sexual favours in exchange for a byline. The affected woman chose to leave rather than put up with the demeaning treatment" (Kaija, 2013, p.325).

The journalists interviewed for the study disclosed how the lives and careers of some women journalists they know have been affected by sexual harassment and/or sexism in the industry.

> *I've actually had colleagues, friends that have said they wanted to move to another beat and the editor or line editor said they had to date him before they would do that* (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

The politics of beat allocation and the authority wielded by Nigerian editors to allocate journalists to beats is recognised (Olawunmi, 2014; Arogundade, 2015). There is intense beat politics in Nigerian journalism and beat deployments "can be a form of humiliation or promotion" or "a reward and sanction system" (Olawunmi, 2014, p.62). That means that sometimes, women are denied the opportunity of transfer to beats on which their skills and talents can be highlighted due to sexual harassment in the news media. Although some people may want to argue that beats do not matter and a good journalist will perform on any beat, journalists on management and editorial positions have confirmed that sometimes women journalists' careers improve on some beats compared to others and that the beats they cover could be a defining factor for their survival and career advancement.

There was a lady that was used to covering one beat and she was never effective on that beat until they were going to sack her. I said give this girl a chance, let her go to court, let her just walk the streets and be writing features. In two months she became a superstar and she had been here for five years and they were like what is this girl doing here, nothing. Where we put her she is not functioning, until they tried her in another beat and there is no beat that girl cannot cover now. She has become a superstar in Lagos (EI/38/J/MEP/Female).

Apart from restricting women to beats (they do not desire) if they do not play ball, editors and superiors sometimes make the newsroom and working environment hostile for women journalists. Now, for a job that requires the creativity of writing, a hostile environment is all the men need to reduce women's confidence, stifle their efforts and weaken their productivity.

If they know you are different, of course they will persecute you. In fact, that is when they will start and you know they have a way of disgracing women (EI/13/J/SM/Female).

Sometimes some women are denied their due because they wouldn't bend over backwards to allow some men to have their way. Women who are very principled usually don't go far, they get frustrated. So when you look at so many challenges that women face, you will understand why they are not enough in managerial positions (KII/07/J/MEP/Male).

So, these journalists show that men have a way of making the newsroom uncomfortable for women journalists who do not acquiesce to their demands. Apart from those covert actions, superiors may deliberately not publish their victims' stories and in some rare instances when the victim's story is too good to ignore, they publish without showing her by-line:

In fact, do you know what, there was a time an editor has done this to me before, even as a senior person in the organization, he saw the good story I had done and removed my by-line. The story came out without my name on it (EI/13/J/SM/Female).

I have seen one or two, they will keep complaining on this one that one, she is too lazy, she's always running home, they will always have complaints and how many people do you want to tell that you are being victimised? They will just not like you for whatever reason. Your story will just not be good, for whatever reason (EI/21/J/SM/Female).

News journalists, especially those in the print media, know that it is either you publish or perish. So, refusing to publish a woman's story is as good as killing her professionally. Women journalists who have found themselves in such precarious situations have been

reported to have responded in different ways - from praying, to giving in and in some instances, quitting.

> *Some will say they prayed and they took them away from the desk and some would say maybe after so much pressure they gave in* (EI/21/J/SM/Female).

> *I know of one that resigned. She left to work in a bank* (EI/21/J/SM/Female).

These comments show that sexual harassment and sexism are making the Nigerian news industry lose talented "women journalists who can bring creativity and warmth into reporting" (Tijani-Adenle, 2014, pp.389-390). In addition to outright loss, those who remain are sometimes deprived of their deserved professional growth by refusal to publish their stories, sometimes publishing without their by-lines and denying them the recognition that should come with their efforts, making the working environment hostile and thereby stifling their productivity.

It is sad, however, to note that most women journalists, probably due to the knowledge of the working environment and the implications of reporting abuse (which ranges from embarrassment to being sacked), do not advocate reporting and seeking formal sanctions against perpetrators of abuse. Most journalists who are against sexism and harassment would rather advise victims to seek other ways of navigating the challenge without outright confrontation.

> *So do the story even if they don't use it, bring it to me, I will help you to use it, do you understand because they can't question me here but I can defend you when I publish it for you* (EI/13/RJ/MEP/Female).

> *Let's say you have a hostile editor and you continue to write your stories, let's say the editor for Saturday is harassing you, you can submit your stories for Sunday or daily. Journalism has one advantage; it's a very public enterprise. So if your editor comes and says you are not productive, they will aggregate these stories. The news is there, your by-line is what will keep you, your by-line is what will get you by on the job* (EI/15/J/MEP/Female).

The women journalists quoted above, although sensitive to the costs and implications of sexism and sexual harassment, expect victims of abuse to negotiate them within the cultural norms dictated by hegemonic masculinities and patriarchy, rather than challenge the very structures that sustain sexual harassment. This could actually be due to the prevailing social

norms or an appreciation of the fact that the organisations do not have adequate structures in place to protect the women. So they see no need stirring up the hornets' nest. This justifies the arguments of feminists that social and power structures help to entrench patriarchy (Tong, 1989; Walby, 1997) and make it difficult to curb abuse. In all, the persistence of sexism and sexual harassment in Nigerian news media continue to wreak havoc on innocent victims and the industry.

5.6   Conclusion

> *Harassment within the media sector cannot be understood in isolation from other forms of gender discrimination in society. Harsh economic conditions and rising unemployment levels are major contributors to the vulnerability of junior and entry-level journalists, mostly female, who fall prey to their seniors* (Palm and Marimbe, 2018, p.27).

The reality of the culture and climate of the Nigerian news industry is that sexual harassment and sexism are rampant and can be said to be the norm. While some journalists and a few media management recognise this and try to put measures in place to curb it, other media organisations ignore it and expect journalists to take care of themselves. Regrettably, even the policies and frameworks available in the media organisations which take initiatives cannot be said to be adequate. Patriarchy and the Nigerian culture strongly moderate how sexism and sexual harassment issues are addressed, with journalists rarely reporting and HR managers preferring to handle complaints unofficially and secretly. The shame and backlash that accompany reporting sexual harassment have silenced women journalists. Majority find unofficial and personal means of handling such abuse, like seeking advice, praying, giving in and sometimes resigning; thus creating a hostile environment for victims who choose to stay while making some others leave the industry.

Unfortunately, women journalists who have experienced abuse do not get the support they require from their female colleagues who are lucky not to face such challenges. They either wish their colleagues' sad experiences away because they did not experience harassment themselves or expect them to 'grow up and handle it' within the "existing structures of patriarchy rather than challenge the structures themselves" (Ross, 2004, p.146). After speaking to 32 women journalists, 11 male journalists and two human resource managers, spending two years in a news organisation as a news programmes producer and reporter and then observing the interactions of women and men journalists in the newsrooms of two news organisations in Nigeria for four weeks, I believe I can confidently say that sexism and sexual

harassment exist but women (and men) journalists do not see them because the anomalies have become the norm. Some journalists deny the existence of sexism and sexual harassment because they did not experience them personally while those who experience them do not handle them officially because they know there are no structures in place to protect them from embarrassment and backlash. Eventually, it all boils down to every woman designing personal strategies to navigate or negotiate abuse without challenging the status quo or rocking the boat. Indeed, sexism and sexual harassment deny the industry of the contributions of intelligent and creative women who bring diverse perspectives and ingenuity to news production.

Sexism and sexual harassment in the Nigerian news media and by extension, on the African continent are a set of problems that depend largely on African feminism for solution. The African culture has been noted to encourage the shaming of sexual harassment discourse (Oyewunmi, 2012), thus, inadvertently encouraging the bullying of victims to silence and emboldening perpetrators. As African feminism honours and protects the African tradition but tackles those repugnant to social justice (Boyce Davies, 1986, p.9), African feminists have acknowledged the need to engage in "more feminist political activism targeted at legal and policy reforms concerning sexual violence" (Bennett et. al., p.90), sexism and sexual harassment on the continent. Their efforts have yielded results as more laws have been promulgated against sexual harassment on the continent in the last two decades (Parker, 2012). By interrogating the intersectionality of history, culture and the state of governance on the continent, African feminists recognise that legal documents are not enough to tackle sexual harassment and so have stepped up advocacy to encourage women to speak out, file formal complaints, seek legal redress and fight establishments as well as reconceptualise and redefine what constitutes sexism and sexual harassment (FAMWZ and ZUJ, 2013) in social and official circles.

After discussing the silent epidemic of sexism and sexual harassment and reviewing their various ramifications for the status of women journalists and their experience of the industry, I will now discuss the fourth (and last) theme, the manifest impact of marriage and motherhood on the status and experiences of women journalists in the Nigerian news media.

Chapter Six   *Managing Wollstonecraft's Dilemma*: Challenges of Marriage and Motherhood

"What now so often determines whether women are reaching senior posts is whether they have family responsibilities. These exacting roles – such as news reporting or senior editor – which are dependent upon a news or output agenda are difficult for anyone with other responsibilities. The relatively few women who do get these jobs at a higher level have few outside responsibilities; for example, they are far more likely than men to be childless" (Franks, 2013, p.vii)

6.0   Introduction

If there is one issue that does not seem to be in contention when examining the concerns that moderate how women journalists experience the news media in Nigeria, it is the issue of marriage and motherhood. Every stakeholder in the news industry is in agreement that marriage and motherhood are two key factors affecting the place of women in the industry. The only divergence is the extent to which they think this should affect women and how they expect women journalists to negotiate combining the home front and their journalism careers. The dilemma women journalists face with combining marriage, motherhood and news production is not unique to Nigeria or even Africa; it's truly one of the true universal challenges that women in the news media tackle the world over. The literature is replete with evidence that women's progress in the news media is greatly restrained by their marriages and child-bearing/rearing duties. Unfortunately, most of these have been about women journalists in the global North (Organ et al., 1979; Christmas 1997; Aldridge 2001a; Aldridge 2001b; Ross, 2001; Journalism Training Forum 2002; Williams, 2010; North, 2009, 2016a) with just a few allusions to the motherhood and marriage dilemma for women in the African news media (see Opoku-Mensah, 2004; Byerly, 2013) and very little engagement or almost nothing about Nigeria.

This chapter details the various ways that marriage and motherhood pose challenges to Nigerian women journalists and how the resulting impact determines the place of women in the country's news media. The chapter is divided into three sections: the problems women journalists have with getting married and keeping the union; managing family and child-rearing with career; and the politics of appointing women with family responsibilities to management and editorial positions.

6.1   *In Search of Prince Charming*: Women Journalists and the Need for 'Superior' Men

Getting married and sustaining the home is a responsibility the Nigerian society places at the feet of women. No woman is spared this undertaking, regardless of her status or station in life (Adichie, 2014; Tijani-Adenle, 2016). Unfortunately, achieving this task is not as simple as it may seem. Women have to meet certain criteria before they are perceived as suitable for marriage and there are other conditions they must keep satisfying to keep the union intact. Most of these have to do with acquiescing to men and performing the house and child care functions – regardless of whether they work or contribute financially to the upkeep of the home (Fapohunda, 1982; Tijani-Adenle, 2016). Unfortunately, the reality of the journalism profession, especially when the woman works in the news or daily publications, is that she cannot adequately perform these responsibilities:

> *If you are a journalist you can't be a proper mother, you can't be a proper wife...you must resign yourself to that* (EI/12/J/MEP/Female).

Regrettably, the psyche of the 'average' Nigerian man is that their wives must do the things that an active journalism career will not fully permit a woman to do; or, at the least, they expect that she must find a way to ensure that these things are done (by getting family or paid help to do them). Women journalists who have reached top management and editorial positions in Nigeria are, therefore, lucky to have married 'superior men' who do not define their wives' love and loyalty by abandoning their careers and performing traditional roles. Others have had to sacrifice being 'ideal women' and follow their passions, thereby remaining unmarried, adopting the single parent option or getting divorced when the heat in the marriage becomes unbearable.

> *The truth is that if you see a woman who is so committed to journalism, you will see that some other aspects of her life will suffer. But a man can conveniently do it and still cope with other aspects, you have your wife to take care of what you cannot take care of* (KII/03/J/MEP/Male).

> *Yes, it is a big factor. That is the only thing affecting women on this job. That is why you find out that some of these women occupying top positions, if you find out, most of them are having issues in their marriages, most of them are divorced, some of them are single, you find just few of them still holding work and balancing it with their homes* (EI/19/J/MM/Female).

> *You can't marry just any man because only strong men marry journalists. That's why you see many female journalists not married. There are very*

few men who can fit into our schedule, the man who wants to be cooked
for three times daily can't marry a journalist (EI/12/J/MEP/Female).

The goal for women journalists who intend to remain in the profession, therefore, is to get partners who are different from the conventional Nigerian men; men who will not place too much cultural demands of cooking and home care on them, and who will not be jealous or insecure of their career progress as well. This is a tall order and the realities of the challenges that women journalists face in getting such men are discussed in the sub-section below.

6.1.1 Scarce Knights

Sadly, many women journalists are unable to find such men who are ready to lead unconventional married lives. Even those who promised such love and understanding back down when the realities of having a 'journalist-wife' hits home. Culturally, women perceived to have failed in marriage do not like to discuss it due to the social stigma attached to it. So, many women journalists who I knew to be in this category shied away from discussing how the profession affected them, and I did not push it. Luckily, a few were willing to share their experiences and it was obvious these beautiful, intelligent and hardworking women were still unmarried, separated or divorced because of their journalism careers.

> *I am not a typical Nigeria woman, in the sense that I have only one*
> *child...Apart from the initial stages, I haven't have the problem of*
> *managing children alongside with the career...And then for a long time*
> *after that, I wasn't married and now that I am married, am married to a*
> *journalist so he understands, though sometimes he still says all kinds of*
> *things. Sometimes he is pissed off like any other male*
> (EI/15/J/MEP/Female).

> *For me, I have a son. I will say journalism affected me as well because I got*
> *too busy and I have really no social life, and it affected my relationships*
> *and caused a lot of instabilities...A lot of quarrels with my partner, a lot of*
> *raging "we were planning to do this, now we can't, because of what,*
> *because you have to leave, again! Are you not going to leave this job? You*
> *have to leave this job" you know. And refusing to leave the job cost me*
> *heavily, I don't know whether I want to disclose the cost, I don't know*
> *whether I want to discuss the cost but it was a heavy cost, it was a heavy*
> *price to pay* (EI/22/J/SM/Female).

> *Marriage was a conscious thing for me not to go into. It's not as if I don't*
> *have offers and I still do, I just consciously decided to concentrate on my*
> *career. I'm okay that way. I have a son, he is three years old. Fortunately, I*
> *have loving people around me who help take care of him*
> (EI/04/J/MEP/Female).

It is important to note that these are not the average Nigerian women. They are women committed to their careers and confident enough to remain single without letting the social stigma affect them – at least on the surface. Even at that, one may argue that it is unfair that Nigerian women journalists have to sacrifice their emotional needs to sustain their careers and/or get to the peak while the men get to have the best of both worlds because the women they marry automatically take up all the home and childcare responsibilities so that they (the men) can face their careers. The implication is that the odds are already against the woman journalist from the start; she has to battle for her home and career while the man has just the career to fight for.

The odds are not only against women who are already married. Some other women journalists have remained single because they have refused to resign or promise prospective suitors they would leave the profession as soon as they marry. Apart from the men considering the hectic nature of the job, so many others are insecure about the fact that their prospective spouses meet and relate with the high and mighty, inferiority complex comes in and they insist the women just must resign.

> *It's quite difficult and that is the real challenge because even me as a single person, the person I am supposed to get married to is already raising serious eyebrows about the job, like, you cannot do this kind of a job after we get married (EI/19/J/MM/Female).*

> *I won't lie to you, I am not married and when I remember when I was in active journalism, it affected my personal life, my relationships mostly. I remember one time I met this guy, he was doing very well, and we were courting...so there was one day that he followed me to interview [name of celebrity] then, after the interview, [name of celebrity] shook my hands and hugged me. When we were leaving, he started complaining that he doesn't think he likes the job that I should resign, because he doesn't want men to be touching me or whatever, and I was like, don't you trust me? I thought it was an argument that we had, but he took it seriously. After like a week, I now said what you told me, are you serious about the fact that you want me to leave my job? He said he wanted to open a shop for me since I like fashion, he wanted to open a boutique for me, he said he was serious and that we were going to get married but that I had to leave my job. I thought he was joking but he wasn't, and he backed out. It really hurt me. I met another guy again who was serious initially, but he too became a bit jealous, he was saying I had to leave the job and he was relocating abroad and wanted me to leave my job and travel with him to America. I didn't think I wanted to leave my job or live abroad so the relationship ended. It really affected me (EI/06/RJ/MM/Female).*

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The comments from these women journalists are illustrations of the kinds of emotional sacrifices women have to make to stay in the profession. Even though some women journalists are lucky to find men who are supportive of their careers, the majority lose prospective suitors or marry late due to the challenge of finding men who would not demand that they choose between journalism and marriage. The socio-cultural demands of marriage and the pressures from family and friends eventually make women succumb to such pressure and leave the profession. That is why one would find young and promising women journalists leaving the Nigerian news media, thereby starving the industry of the strength of competent female population. Others stay in the profession but move to the soft-beats or desks that will allow them more time for the family (and opportunity to pacify suitors). Interestingly, women journalists from the global North have also been known to leave the profession after starting a family, move to less demanding desks or resign and start blogging to maintain a work-life balance (Howarth, 2000; Williams, 2010; Massey and Elmore, 2011; Franks, 2013).

6.1.2 Resigning to Fate

The category of women (discussed directly above in Section 6.1.1) who would sacrifice their emotional needs for their career is uncommon. The average Nigerian woman would resign when the pressure becomes unbearable. Many interviewees talked about knowing intelligent and award-winning women journalists who had resigned at different times to keep their marriages.

> *I know a lady in [name of organisation] who recently resigned, she said the husband had tried to tolerate her and her work but she thinks she would be pushing her luck if she continues work there; having to take care of the children and all kind of things* (KII/24/J/MEP/Male).

> *Lots of women that we know that are really good resigned even in [name of organisation] because of this kind of issues* (EI/19/J/MM/Female).

> *Every time I have to talk to younger women in the business, I tell them "you can't marry just anybody, otherwise you'll soon start going to Dubai to buy jewellery"* (EI/12/J/MEP/Female).

The challenge of women journalists with matrimony is not limited to having to resign after marriage. Sometimes it begins with even having the time to nurture relationships to marriage. Many journalists complain of not having the time to date, explaining that it could be the reason many women journalists marry their colleagues, the journalists they meet on their beats or the ones they work with in the same organisation.

Because we spend all our time in the newsroom, if you can't pick your husband in the newsroom, it might be difficult to be married...Even if you do not marry someone in your office, you marry someone that's in another media organisation because that's where we are (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

There is a tendency for women journalists to marry late. There is no time for social life, your relationship may revolve around the beat you cover, your colleagues in the office; maybe that's why a lot of journalists marry journalists – their colleagues they relate with (EI/22/J/SM/Female).

Many women journalists believe marrying their colleagues has helped them to cope better with the challenges of combining the home and career because the men understand the nature of the job and they are able to work around the logistics.

I think that's why it worked for me, because I married someone in the media. May be if I had married someone outside the media, I probably would have had problems (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

Because my husband was here and he knows the kind of things we do, if it were to be someone that has no idea of what this job is all about, I'm sure I would have resigned a very long time ago because like I said, I get home very, very late in the night (EI/17/J/LL/Female).

I only thank God because my husband is a media person, he's also a media person so he's very understanding (EI/08/J/SM/Female).

Surprisingly, it does not always work out as women journalists may still have to leave the profession, despite marrying journalists.

Like I have a case when a man and a woman get married here in this company, you see the woman resigning and the man continues (EI/19/J/MM/Female).

Some male journalists are not even interested in marrying women journalists, despite being in the industry and understanding the challenges their female colleagues contend with.

I can't do it because I know how much I am sacrificing for the job...So if I have my wife doing the same thing that I am doing, then who takes care of my children? (KII/09/J/MEP/Male)

I can marry a journalist but once we get married she has to leave the job because I have seen the job. I can't marry a career journalist. I have seen it all; I have seen the pressure of the job, I have seen the sexual harassments, I have seen everything (KII/02/J/MM/Male).

I can't be with a woman that will be working till mid night and the children will be at home, neglected. So it is not bright for female journalists, getting

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to the top is not very bright in our clime because of family matters (KII/03/J/MEP/Male).

The female journalist quoted below is married to a man in the industry but she must at least make stew/soup that the husband can use to eat other fast meals because he would not cook or eat food prepared by the nanny, despite his wife's busy schedule.

> *I came back around 10 p.m., I still made stew that night cause I knew the next day, the live programme I produce would also keep me away from home so I had to cook because the husband I have will not eat someone else's food* (EI/08/J/SM/Female).

One would expect that the men who should show more considerations for women journalists are male journalists, but the immediate comment above from this female journalist and the earlier three preceding it from Nigerian male journalists have shown that despite their exposure and understanding of the profession, a good number of them are still the regular traditional Nigerian men who expect their wives to focus on caring for the home and the children (and still contribute financially to the upkeep of the family) while they concentrate on their careers and raising funds for the home. It justifies the observations of historians and anthropologists that Nigerian society is still "essentially patriarchal" (Falola, 1999, p.6; also see Falola, 2013; Chinwuba, 2016).

6.1.3 Trojan Horse

Recognising the challenges women journalists encounter in marriage, media editors and managers immediately reduce the tasks and responsibilities assigned to them (women journalists) the moment they get married.

> *They don't send married women to places. They can inform you that you will be going to this place or that place but they can't just pick on you just like that* (EI/01/J/ML/Female).

> *You need to also know that if you employ a woman at a very young age and she grows in the company, she's bound to get married, she is bound to settle and these are areas that extremely are not in the books for us. Only we need to use our discretion as men in the broadcast field to assign them to areas where we can manage effectively and efficiently, add value to our organisation and also be able to manage their home and add value to their home, except one who is signed up for the job and says "for me, I'm still on this job, if I want to settle, I know when to take a walk," so these are few things that we consider in assigning women* (KII/39/J/MEP/Male).

> *We've seen, like when we had the election, all of us had to even sleep in the office because we worked till 2 a.m. and everybody had to sleep here. Some*

> *husbands had to come down here to make a serious scene, they were angry their wives had to sleep here, what kind of job is that, you know. They started talking, our bosses just had to like talk to some of them, like, you know, but that is how it is for some of the women* (EI/19/J/MM/Female).

It is alarming to note that even the women who remain in the media are automatically restricted on the job because the editors are concerned that their husbands may create scenes, make trouble or make the women's lives unbearable. The implication of this is that the women would remain on the job but their progression will be slow because they would not be assigned to the beats that will really highlight their skills and enhance their potentials. Women journalists themselves recognise this and some cut back, even if their superiors do not reduce the tasks assigned to them.

> *If your man begins to show signs of wear and tear, just hold on a bit on the job and then let him recover his self-confidence* (EI/12/J/MEP/Female).

> *You start cutting back, because you have to put in effort to have a baby, to keep your home, to do you work...they won't push themselves forward. They don't say "I can do this assignment, I can do that" cause they are thinking "if I do this, that means I will miss my child coming back from school, I will miss this and miss that, miss a lot of things" so instead of pushing themselves forward for daring assignments, assignments that will give them a lot of push and credit career wise and advance their career, they will just do the routine, fulfil that obligation so that at least they can keep their jobs; that's the balance they can achieve* (EI/22/J/SM/Female).

Reviewing these findings shows the dilemma women journalists encounter with their career once they marry on the job. First, they do not have enough time to socialise and invest in relationships. So, marriage proposals are slow in coming. Then, when the proposals come, they are with caveats that the women need to leave the profession, which a good number of them concede to due to the social pressure on women to marry. Then, those who are adamant about staying do so, unfortunately, with severe consequences, like remaining unmarried, becoming single mothers or sometimes leaving the marriage not long after it is starting because they are not ready to accede to the 'inferior men' who are not able to handle the strong women working in the media. Those who are lucky to get men who encourage them to keep their jobs consciously or unconsciously cut back on their performance and commitments to the job so they can have time for their marriages. Even their superiors understand this and reduce the tasks assigned to them, with the consequence that the women do not progress as much as they would have if the marriage encumbrances were absent.

> *I know that there are a lot of women that can actually do a better job if they have the time, some of the [name of position] editors that we have, they are all married, the [number] female [name of position] editors are all married. Now if you compare their efficiency levels with their male counterparts, you will know that when it is weekends they are not on duty, the females will not be on duty because they have to attend to their families and by virtue of television, most people watch televisions on Saturdays and Sundays so you have got to have the competent hands to handle the newsroom on weekends and that's the men. So when it's now time to position somebody to lead the team, naturally it favours the men because they are assumed to be always available.* (KII/09/J/MEP/Male).

The choices for women are like grabbing a double-edged sword, regardless of the part that touches, it hurts. Unfortunately, record keeping is porous in Nigeria (Agina, 2015); so, we are unable to provide the figure or percentage of women who have left the profession due to the need to marry or keep their homes. The reality, however, is that marriage depletes the population of women in journalism, especially young high flyers making impact, winning awards and on track to occupying top management and editorial positions, if they had stayed. Others remain in the media but do not get to reach top management and editorial positions because of concerns and/or considerations for their homes.

Fortunately, some women journalists are lucky to find their 'prince charming' who are able to cope with them remaining in the industry while others have strong support networks, like family who help to keep the home front running. The next section will explore the various means these women use to maintain their homes as well as remain active on the job.

6.2   *Matriarchs in the Media*: Wives and Mothers in the Nigerian News Media and the Support Networks that keep them Afloat!

Anecdotal evidence show that it is unusual to find a Nigerian woman journalist who is married, remains in the profession and rises to occupy top editorial and management positions without the support of her husband. The findings I present in this section confirm that it is not as a result of incompetence on the part of the women but due to the masculine newsroom culture and the highly patriarchal marriage and work norms in the country. Most women are unable to meet with the long hours of work required to reach such positions because Nigerian news companies require journalists on editorial positions to be free of domestic barriers that can affect their availability and concentration. On the other hand, their men do not share in the burden of house and child care (Ukwani and Suchindran, 2003; Okeke-Ihejirika, 2004; Aryee, 2005; Okafor and Amayo, 2006), thus making it almost

impossible for them to meet the requirements for the positions. Consequently, it is only women who are married to the unconventional men, who do not expect much from their wives or with strong support structures (to handle the home front), that are able to break the glass ceilings. Majority of women who are unable to find such men and such support networks either leave the profession to safeguard their marriages, transit to features or the soft beats that require less time (and unfortunately less prospects at leadership positions) or sacrifice their emotional desires for companionship and children by remaining single and/or childless.

Thus, it is rare to find among these women, those in young marriages and/or with young children who are able to cope without having family members or trusted help take care of their house and child care responsibilities. This section discusses the support structures in the Nigerian media, journalists' spouses/families and the publics that help these women to combine two seemingly incongruous responsibilities.

I will start with the support of husbands. All the women and men journalists interviewed were in agreement that no female journalist will remain married and rise in the profession without a supportive husband. The women, especially, were full of praises and thanks to their spouses for supporting them because it is not the norm for men to support their wives in professions that curtail women from performing house and child care responsibilities.

> *That is why I said I thank God for the kind of husband that I have* (EI/01/J/ML/Female)
>
> *I was able to cope and thanks to my husband who gave me the necessary support to go far, to go far on the job* (EI/10/J/MEP/Female).
>
> *I don't think there are women in the media who would remain in the media and get to this level and are married without the support of their husbands* (EI/14/J/MEP/Female).

Unfortunately, the fact that these women have the support of their husbands does not imply that the men would undertake home and childcare responsibilities; those are the duties of the women and it is their duty to get family or paid help to assist in undertaking the tasks. The Nigerian society still believes strongly that home and childcare are the responsibilities of women. Nigeria's lower legislative house on May 3, 2018, rejected a bill on paternity leave seeking to grant men two weeks leave off work after their wives must have been delivered of babies. The bill was voted out by the majority with one of the members of the House of

Representatives from the South-West, Mr. Kingsley Chinda, quoted as saying: "I don't think that, of all the serious issues out there, our constituents will be happy seeing us on live television debating a bill on paternity leave" (Ameh, 2018). This event is significant as it shows that customary marriage and gender norms remain established in Nigeria. There is hardly a woman who does not use her mother, her sisters, in-laws or paid help to take care of the home because the Nigerian society classifies them as women's work and does not expect men to be burdened by them.

> *May be his mother is visiting, comes around and he comes home before you or he goes to the day care to bring the children and he's making indomie (noodles) for them and the mother is seated in one corner wondering what is happening. She is not going to welcome you with wide arms, you start having problems from that point* (EI/15/J/MEP/Female).

To avoid such a situation (having problems with in-laws), women journalists ensure they make provisions for house and child care by getting their families and paid help to do those things, so it does not appear that they are taking the men's love, understanding and support for granted.

> *When I was still a nursing mother, I was able to combine both; I did very well because I was lucky to have helping hands. Back home, my mother was there, I had other people around who were taking care of my children while I went to work* (EI/10/J/MEP/Female).

> *I got a nanny and she was very reliable and she was a grandmother because I was looking for someone who is older, who doesn't have children to nurse so she had enough time to stay back and help me* (EI/13/RJ/MEP/Female).

> *I had my mother-in-law. She was alive and she was helpful with the children...There is always somebody to look after them when I'm not around; I think that one actually helped too. But now of course they are all grownups, all my children are graduates* (EI/44/J/MEP/Female).

Like the quotes above show, it is women journalists with strong support networks who do not break or adjust their career paths due to child-rearing activities in Nigeria. Interestingly, Chinese women journalists have been known not to be hindered by child-rearing because of the strong support system in their extended families, where grandparents help nurture their grandchildren at no cost (Cai, 2008, p.59). I did not find a similar record in the literature that details how women journalists in the global North take care of the home front when they occupy demanding positions. Rather, what is recorded is how marriage and motherhood

impact their careers. For example, women journalists are noted to have resigned, transited to less demanding beats, like features or soft news or exited full-term employment for freelancing or blogging (Williams, 2010; Franks, 2013; North, 2016c). It is obvious that the patriarchal culture in Nigeria (and Africa) where men are covertly and sometimes openly discouraged from participating in chores and child care (as discussed in Section 1.2) is really putting a heavy burden on the career progress of women journalists. It is not every woman journalist who is opportune to have family members who can spare the time and resources to help them care for their homes and children. Equally, it is not all those who do not have family members who can hold forth that can afford paid help, considering the poor and irregular wage situations. Likewise, even those who can afford paid help still do so with caution due to security concerns, as cases of child abuse and kidnappings by paid help are now becoming rampant across the country (Obi, 2017). Saddled with the social and cultural need to preserve their marriages, most women journalists will either leave the industry or slow down professionally to maintain a healthy work-life balance, thus remaining in low status positions.

6.2.1 Lone Rangers

Despite the extended family structure and relatively affordable cost of nannies and maids, a good number of women journalists are still unable to get relatives or reliable paid help to assist in managing their homes and children. Such women find it tough and they do unconventional things, like taking their children along to cover events or conduct interviews, taking them to work, enrolling them in boarding schools at young ages, among others, just to keep the job and the home front running. Others had help from family but were not satisfied because they could not raise their children the way they would have wanted.

> *For all the kids, I used to take them to work because I always breastfed exclusively...The most important thing is for me to do my stories. I take him, I breastfeed him, when he wants to play, I put him on my laps and am typing. When I go for interviews, they say "oh, you have a baby"; I say "yes, I do. Don't worry he's a quiet baby". I'm interviewing you; he cries, I say sorry, breastfeed. I'm going for events, "you came with your baby?" he will not disturb...Him (pointing to the last child), he is the only one I couldn't take to work because of the office structure...but he was at a crèche behind my office so I would just go there to breastfeed him* (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

I will like to note that this lady worked with a news magazine that published weekly. This implies that she had more time to meet deadlines, unlike some other women journalists who

worked on the news desks of daily newspapers who had to submit stories on a daily basis and/or plan pages. This is not to disregard the challenges she went through in doing this, as her comment shows that she had to convince interviewees and event organisers her baby would not disturb. Rather, it is to highlight the fact that she cannot be used as an exemplar for other women journalists because she still had some leverage that made her style of raising her babies less cumbersome.

> *I could remember that there was a time I used to do school runs, I mean I will go pick my children from school and still come back to work, there were times I brought my babies to the newsroom and then laid them on news prints, you know and there were times I laid them on tables in the newsroom and when they started growing, there were times I would bring them and they would just be playing around the compound...Then later when my children grew to the point where I could send them to boarding schools, I mean I couldn't just wait, so all of them went through boarding school* (EI/29/J/MEP/Female).

I have to note that this female journalist on management and editorial position was a sub-editor when she was raising children and could afford to adopt the methods she did. It might have been more difficult if she was on reportorial. While a good number of women slow down to take care of their children when the kids are young and then pick up the tempo again when the children became older and need less care, some opt to leave the profession when the available child care options are not suitable.

> *I just made that decision to quit, especially when this last one (baby) came, I just got tired of the whole thing* (EI/05/RJ/SM/Female).

> *I never had time with my son, then. I'm sure if I had time, there are some things that happened to him that wouldn't have happened to him* (EI/21/RJ/SM/Female).

These findings resonate with similar results in other African countries. In Uganda, for instance, "Unless one has a very supportive spouse and family, most female journalists will leave the newsroom when they get married" (Kaija, 2013, p.325). The literacy rate in Nigeria was not high, so the women journalists who had their mothers taking care of their children were lucky because the women were mostly uneducated women who did not have paid work or corporate commitments. The use of nannies and help was also easier because they were cheap and reliable. Now, young journalists in their twenties and early thirties entering the profession may not have the luxury of their mothers living with them because the present generation of grandmothers in the country are more educated and have jobs. Paid help and

nannies are equally becoming more expensive and unreliable with increasing reports of child abuse by house helps and nannies. Governments and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are equally cracking down on the use of small girls from villages as maids, so things are more complicated. Therefore, the options that worked for this crop of journalists may not be available for the new generation of women entering the news media.

> *But you know those traditional mothers are no longer available. Like me now, I am a grandmother and am still here* (EI/30/J/MEP/Female).

Surprisingly, some women journalists believe that the news media is also a place to raise children, especially for women who are not on the news desk but on other desks where they do not publish news daily, like the education, business or features desks, which have designated production days in a week. They also believe that it is easier for women in junior positions, those who do not have management functions. The women journalists occupying top editorial and management positions are mostly the ones with children who are already teenagers (and do not require so much care) or young adults, the ones who are single parents (with family taking care of their children) or single mothers. Others are either leaving the industry or reducing their commitments to the job so that they are able to manage both career and the home front.

> *I was on the sub-desk when I was raising my children which means that I didn't have to come to work in the mornings, I was coming in the afternoons, say maybe I resumed in the afternoon by 1pm and close probably around 9pm so from morning to that time I would be at home* (EI/29/J/MEP/Female).

> *For me, if you are that young in this profession, in fact it can be the best job for you...because if there is really no assignment you don't have to leave your house in the morning...But now I can just take my tablet and send the stories, send the pictures as I'm on my way, nobody needs you to come and edit, once we see your stories and you are in the specialized desk like the features, what are you even doing in the office?...the day of your production, you come and do your production; you can't have more than two strict serious days of production* (EI/38/J/MEP/Female).

These findings are similar to those of Williams (2010) in her study of women journalists in the UK. Her interviewees were also of the opinion that journalism is a good profession to raise children. She, however, notes that the journalists who hold these positions "were not holding such high-powered positions during the period their children were young and needed the most care" (Williams, 2010, p.280).

It will be insufficient to discuss how women journalists in the media are able to cope with raising children without discussing media organisations' maternity leave options and how this impact the experience of women journalists.

6.2.2   Maternity Leave Policies and Politics

Carolyn Byerly's '*Global Report*' documents that 75 per cent of media organisations in Nigeria have a maternity leave policy and women journalists who go on maternity leave can get their jobs back in 86 per cent of media organisations in the country (Byerly, 2011, p.124). Byerly's findings are an accurate depiction of what operates in the Nigerian news media. Women journalists are entitled to mostly three months paid maternity leave and they also get to return to their jobs after the leave. Most organisations also give women nursing babies opportunities to resume about an hour later or close an hour early (depending on the options women choose) for about six months after resumption.

> *Yes, we go by the Labour Law Act. It's just the same thing. Once you're a female, whether married or not, once you are pregnant and you give us notice, then you are entitled to your 90 days maternity leave and it's fully paid* (KII/11/HRM/11/Female).

> *If you have put in 12 months prior to delivery, you get complete full months' pay for the duration of three months and the three months starts from when you apply for your mat. leave* (KII/37/HRM/MEP/Female).

In a situation where a woman has not put in up to 12 calendar months in a news organisation before delivering a baby, she does not get up to exactly what the law stipulates.

> *When we're faced with such situations the person would only take half of her monthly pay during that period* (KII/37/HRM/MEP/Female).

This is what is obtainable in most media organisations in Nigeria, including where I worked at Voice of Nigeria and the organisations I studied for this research. Nonetheless, there are some politics that the management of media organisations and journalists play with maternity leave. I remember that between 2007 and 2009 when I was still in the industry, a reporter who was unmarried got pregnant for a married journalist and there was so much stigma around the pregnancy. She was told to apply for maternity leave and that it was not going to be paid or she was going to be paid half salary because she was not married. The woman (who was full of shame) did not contest it. What was certain was that she did not get the complete benefits of a three months maternity leave with full pay even though she had worked in the organisation for years before she got pregnant. While writing this section, I checked the

organisation's 'Staff Regulations and Conditions of Service' and there is nothing in the regulations that stipulates that a female staff must be married before she can enjoy maternity leave. The regulation states that:

> "*A female member of staff who is pregnant is entitled to 16 weeks maternity leave with full pay. The annual leave for that year will, however, be regarded as part of the maternity leave. Where this leave has already been enjoyed, the part of the maternity leave equivalent to the annual leave will be without pay. She is to submit a medical certificate two months to the date of delivery*" (Regulation No. 3, Chapter 4 (Leave), [Name of Organisation] Staff Regulations and Conditions of Service, 2008, p.25).

Most of us who learnt about the kind of leave she was given did not question the discrimination, and the journalist in question did not also challenge it. However, looking back and having reviewed the organisation's maternity leave policy, it is obvious that the management at that time 'punished' her for getting pregnant out of wedlock. In an industry where women journalists have challenges getting men to accept them with their careers, making the working environment hostile for a woman because she did something that was socially frowned at can constitute a form of harassment and make women leave the organisation, or industry.

Apart from management, women journalists also play politics with maternity leave. The regulation is for women to submit a medical report at least a month before the leave is to commence. Then management will request that they commence their leave two weeks to their estimated date of delivery (EDD) but because a lot of women find the three months maternity leave inadequate, many keep working until they deliver so that they can have more time with their babies.

> *Ordinarily, you are supposed to apply for and commence your mat. leave a month before your due date. That means you are only allowed two months after. But we find out that people are being discreet about their EDD and then they keep saying "Oh they've not given me at the hospital" and they will just bring it a day or two before and then you hear they have given birth two days afterwards* (KII/37/HRM/MEP/Female).

A few of the women journalists agree that they worked very close to their delivery dates.

> *So pregnancy, yes, I was in the newsroom with my tummy, working around, doing my production at a time when I knew it was time for me to put to bed. In fact, for my first child I put to bed on my production day so it was a challenge sending stories to the newsroom* (EI/13/RJ/MEP/Female).

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While it is true that women journalists get their jobs back, most are posted out of critical desks, like reporting for the news desk or similar duties with unpredictable schedules; so that women can come to work a little later or close a bit earlier and generally have more time with their babies. While this is considerate and thoughtful of media organisations, these changes, most times, imply slowing down the career progress of women journalists because the beats you cover and the tasks you undertake determine how you rise.

> *It is a draw back because when I came back after I have been away for four months I missed out on a lot of things. I won't lie to you. There are a lot of things, opportunities this year that I should take part in, but due to the fact that I'm a nursing mother I can't take part but, I must tell you I would do it over and over again because that is the joy of motherhood* (EI/33/J/ML/Female).

> *Yeah, it's a complex one because once they get pregnant, they slow down. So we give considerations to them in terms of assignments given, in terms of our expectations with their performance* (KII/03/J/MEP/Male).

> *Well, it affects women. Even here in [name of organisation], just this morning they were trying to work out a new roster and they had to like factor in the fact that some women are pregnant, some have kids that are not up to a year and all of that, so you find out that a lot of these women find it very difficult to go further in their careers because they are not putting in much of an effort* (EI/19/J/MM/Female).

Other women journalists who occupy editorial and/or management positions or work on critical beats where flexible schedules cannot be applied have insisted that they did not have such luxuries of considerations and/or concessions when they resumed from maternity leave. Most of them report resuming back to their regular schedules as soon as they returned to their jobs from maternity leave.

The politics around maternity leave sometimes also make the newsroom hostile for women and compel them to leave the industry. One of such women who held a key position discussed how the discrimination she encountered after returning from maternity leave led her to resign from paid employment.

> *In my office when you are on leave, because we are short-staffed so you still do your job, the only thing is that you are not physically there to supervise production. Then the way I now experienced discrimination was when I went for my second child...apparently maybe they weren't checking the paper, they didn't know I was still doing my job even when I was on maternity leave. So shortly after I came, some people got salary raise, some people got promotion. I never got any salary raise, I never got*

promotion and I felt short changed because even when I was supposed to concentrate on my baby I was still working, sending stories to them and all that... that was when I said I think I don't belong to the system anymore...So shortly after I had my second child in 2014, I left in 2015 (EI/13/RJ/MEP/Female).

Again, there are no records to highlight the number of outstanding women journalists who have left the Nigerian news media industry based on maternity and child care issues. But journalists and media managers mention the fact that some women do not resume from maternity leave while others resign shortly after resuming.

Some people you have them on the track and then they get pregnant and they go on maternity leave and they never come back. They will just call you when the maternity leave is about to end and they say, "You know what, I've decided I'm just going to stay with my baby". So you have to develop another hand to master that position. There have been a couple of issues of that situation (KII/42/J/MEP/Male).

We are unable to say whether these women refuse to resume or resign due to discrimination or due to their perceived inability to combine the profession with their child care roles. What we do know for certain is that the media industry loses women journalists who are in the child-bearing and rearing stages. This significantly impacts the status of women in the industry.

Although some women journalists have challenges with their organisations and superiors in getting the support and understanding they need when raising babies, sufficient anecdotal evidence suggest that media managers in Nigeria do a lot to assist women journalists who are pregnant or nursing babies. Unfortunately, these managers claim that women journalists get the help they need but some of them take the system for granted and request for frivolous concessions and considerations. The next sub-section will addresses the politics of assigning women in the childbearing and rearing stages to responsibilities and the burden of blame media managers put at the feet of women journalists accused of laziness and using family issues as excuses to abscond from work or not do enough.

6.3   *Excuse Peddlers:* Media Matriarchs and the Outlooks Preventing their Career Growth

Editors and media managers continuously find it taxing having to consider women's private lives when assigning responsibilities. So, a good number of times, they leave expectant mothers or nursing mothers out of some key roles in order to avoid the headache of having to cover for those women when the pregnancy and child care challenges surface.

> *They don't want to give you responsibilities that will make you have to be in the office when you should be at home. That's it. They have this sense that you'll need to go home anyway, so there are some things they won't let you do* (EI/15/J/MEP/Female).

This senior manager works in a broadcast organisation with a high number of female staff, but the challenge of having to cover for them when domestic roles come up has made the organisation take a very drastic decision:

> *We are thinking of putting a limit to the number of women we are going to employ. Why? It is very obvious. Most of them will get married, most of them will go on maternity for three months, who is going to cover in for them. So those are the things we've looked at and we now resolved that okay, we are going to stop recruiting women for now. It is not that we are not going to recruit women anyway, but we are going to recruit more men than women* (KII/27/J/MEP/Male).

The fact that media managers worry that women journalists will eventually get married, get pregnant and start asking for concessions is a big deterrent from employing them and assigning them to key roles. This means that regardless of the intellect and skills of women journalists, they are covertly denied some responsibilities that would have aided their career progression due to the concern that they would be distracted by marriage and child care responsibilities. Interestingly, a similar scenario played out in Ghana in 1982 when the management of the Ghana News Agency (GNA) came to a decision to stop employing women journalists because they gave frivolous excuses, like "a child is sick" or "a husband is sick" and they appeared to be, generally, laid back (Gadzekpo and Rivers, 1997; Gadzekpo, 2013)

This is part of the structural inequalities limiting the growth of women. It is not as if media managers are ideologically against women, no – a female journalist who is able to prove that she does not have encumbrances will go all the way (maybe she will encounter a bit of sexism which she will eventually overcome) but the moment there are distractions, they shift their

focus to the men. This is because of the fact that most media organisations are private and their proprietors need to recoup their investments.

> *We need to use our discretion as men in the broadcast field to assign them to areas where we can manage effectively and efficiently, add value to our organisation and also be able to manage their home and add value to their home, except one who is signed up for the job and says "for me, I'm still on this job, if I want to settle, I know when to take a walk,"* (KII/39/J/MEP/Male).

Women journalists understand this covert policy and a good number of them, who know they are good and are qualified for promotions, do not query or contest management decisions when they are replaced by men because they are not also ready to make the sacrifices required to keep those positions.

> *I don't want to compete with the men. I am not angry that I am not a news editor or an assistant news editor, do you understand, because I know if I want that position I must be ready to pay the price but am I?...So I won't be jealous of a man that can pay the price, do you understand?... I am not sure I can stay here till mid night every day. What will happen to my home?* (EI/22/J/SM/Female)

> *Now I am not married, I have all the time in the world and I want to use the leverage of the fact that I am not married and use all the time I have to grow as far as I can grow. I know that when I am married I am going to prioritize, the quantity of time I want to give to my spouse or for the home and the quantity of time I want to devote to my job. Definitely one must suffer* (EI/34/J/MM/Female).

Like the interviewee said in the last quote, what most young journalists do is to devote their time and do as much as they can when they are single, because they are aware of the challenges of maintaining work-life balance and the fact that they will be unable to achieve much the moment they get married. Many others are already planning their exit strategies, when to leave and what to do after leaving.

> *This is my 11 years in journalism, I should look for other opportunities outside journalism to advance my career, may be not practicing journalism the way it is, maybe practising it in another form or doing something else, like community relations, that was the reason I did a post-graduate degree in [name of course]* (EI/22/J/SM/Female).

> *Well, personally, usually I do say it that I wouldn't want to be doing this job, I mean working in a media house especially broadcasting after marriage. I will still love to be in the media, maybe public relations, do something in an advertising firm but not the broadcasting aspect of the job*

because I have seen what a lot of my married friends go through and it affects their homes (EI/19/J/MM/Female).

I think for every woman there should be a target to the number of years you want to work in an organisation especially when you have female children...So for me, I have a target, I am working towards it. Once I am able to achieve that, I am out (EI/17/J/LL/Female).

Most of these women journalists are doing great on their beats, winning awards and recognitions for their ingenuity and creativity. Yet, they will still leave due to the realities that career growth somehow freezes once marriage and child-rearing come into the picture. Sadly, media managers know these and they are, therefore, not looking towards investing too much in the women. They believe it is only a matter of time before they leave the industry. The implication is thus simple: male journalists are believed to stay longer in the industry so investments in them are more secure and they are seen as more dependable when it comes to appointing journalists to key editorial and management positions.

She went there to have her baby but when it was time to come back she called us that she's not coming back. She's staying there. We had to develop another hand in house that is learning the job (KII/42/J/MEP/Male).

In the next five years, I think most of them will find another job to do, probably get into private practice. Few of them can get to the next level...not the final top...the rest of them I see them going to the lecture rooms to teach students because they have gone through the experience (KII/09/J/MEP/Male).

Interestingly, a good number of the women journalists I interviewed asked about my programme and showed interest in doing a PhD because they were considering a future in academics or private practice. So, this is a very tricky situation. The women journalists cut back on their performance the moment they marry so they can have more time with their families. Their superiors also automatically reduce the tasks they are given so they can 'help them' maintain their homes and equally avoid disappointments. The women see they are not progressing and, therefore, plan to leave; their superiors believe they will leave and thus cut back on their trainings and assigning them to key tasks. It seems like an endless cycle of defeat for women journalists planning to combine the profession with marriage and child care, except when they stay long enough in the profession to outgrow the phase where their families no longer depend on them for most of their needs.

6.3.1 Frivolous Excuses

Nonetheless, media managers have argued that women journalists contribute significantly to the inequalities allegedly being perpetuated against them due to their attitudes of giving excuses and seeking special considerations. They argue that these attitudes deny women promotions because managements do not see them as reliable hands in an industry where employees are expected to always be constantly available and dependable. This creates a need to discuss some of the excuses and considerations media managers say set women up for redundancy in the industry.

Some will send you that text. I actually still have some on my phone... "Good morning Sir, I won't be able to come to work today because I'm not feeling fine. Thanks." Then they probably think you are angry so they will now be specific and say "I'm having menstrual pain..." You then have to call someone that is free and say "Can you go sit in for this person?" It's the last minute that the message will come. If a man makes that kind of request, I will just call him and say "My friend, don't give me that. Get back to work" (KII/09/J/MEP/Male).

In fact, the reasons they give are endless. At times someone calls and say "Sorry I have to close now because my nanny who is supposed to pick my child from the crèche didn't go there and I need to go. I have been trying her number it's not going through. The crèche manager just called me now that I need to come pick her" that is someone in the middle of a report (KII/09/J/MEP/Male).

Well, we have some issues of attendance for instance. When you come to work each day you expect that most of those who would not show up would be women. There is one problem or the other: either the car didn't start or she's just sick – either the child or husband is sick - something always comes up. Sometimes it's pure indiscipline, you know, "I woke up late" which shouldn't be an excuse. It's not like men don't have same kind of issues but it is more pronounced with women. Also in the office, there are some things that some of the women do, like complaints. They will complain about everything. You do a roster, they will never be happy with it. Every roster that comes out, they would come and complain. Why would you have me read in three bulletins and somebody else is reading two. Why am I working 1 hour longer than this person"... Issues like that are what you have to deal with every day (KII/42/J/MEP/Male).

With these perceived "frivolous" complaints and "pettiness", managers do not see women journalists as competent enough to hold editorial and management positions.

When I was Sunday editor, some of the women would tell me that "we want to go home to take care of our children", I would say fine, go, but if

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you go and tomorrow we want to appoint an editor there's no way we would appoint you because you are not even involved at the highest level of this work. (KII/24/J/MEP/Male)

All the editors quoted above are men. I asked women editors and managers if they also think their female subordinates give frivolous excuses and/or request for needless concessions. Surprisingly, their responses were the same as those of the men.

After being a General Manager for two years...I'd like to tell you it's hard to have so many women in an organization. I don't care who wants to fry me for this but it's my experience... I find a lot of lay back women, it hurts a lot (EI/14/J/MEP/Female).

Do you want to get to the newsroom and start making excuses about your children, your house girl? I need to go to the hospital, I'm having my period, I'm ovulating...I still think there is a way that many female journalists carry on that doesn't recommend them for certain responsibilities in the newsroom, and I say that with every sense of responsibility (EI/15/J/MEP/Female).

The journalists we have today, particularly ladies I just pray they don't take us back to that era where people will look down on us as female journalists and say 'what can they do' because they are not putting in their best. They are laid back journalists and they won't get to the peak to do what their male counterparts are doing (EI/30/J/MEP/Female).

A female came to me and said "my uncle died I have to go home" and I looked at her and said "really" and she said "I won't come to work tomorrow"...I then asked her where the Uncle's family lives, if I tell you this you will be shocked - they live abroad. I said 'so who do you want to go and meet at home?' I said 'you can't go and if by two o'clock tomorrow you are not here there will be trouble. Most likely a male will not do that (EI/38/J/MEP/Female).

Coming from women holding top editorial and management positions, it is certain, therefore, that there is a general perception in the industry that the average female journalist is perceived as lazy and a concession seeker. This may appear to contrast starkly with quotes in Section 4.1.1 where both male and female journalists say women journalists are great workers, but it does not invalidate it. Women journalists are seen as excuse peddlers once marriage and children come into the picture, but they are generally regarded as huge assets when they are free of the impediments and hindrances of marriage and child care.

This is a serious barrier to women's career progress because women journalists who intend to progress have to bend over backwards to erase the stereotype and secure the confidence of

their superiors. This can pose a challenge to the health and wellbeing of women journalists as they deny themselves some of their dues in order not to come across as concession-seeking.

> *Some young ladies tend to be hard working when they get the job...But when they get married their schedule changes and they will now be struggling...because I have about two of them now that are struggling to keep up with their schedule...They want to prove that the fact that I'm married doesn't mean I can't do my job. And it's affecting them, it's affecting their health, they are breaking down, landing in hospitals and you have to keep signing leave forms* (KII/09/J/MEP/Male).

> *I have been sleeping in this office every Friday for like three months; the job just demanded it. We have some internal issues that just made it impossible for me to go home on my production days...I could say to the management I can't do it. Then maybe they will get a male and say okay, "join madam", that is when they will call you madam and not editor. So this guy will join me. Maybe I will go home by 10 pm and leave him behind to wind up my production but that is going to stand against me one day* (EI/15/J/MEP/Female).

Women journalists have to, therefore, be as tough and as available as the men or they will be seen as unserious and incapable of holding key positions. Ironically, asking women journalists not to seek concessions, days off or excuses to cater for their children and/or families in a society where husbands hardly stay at home with sick children, take sick children to the hospital for treatment or immunisation, go for school open days or help with chores in the house is inequitable and unrealistic because women journalists without mothers, siblings or reliable help to handle these chores and responsibilities will have to do them by themselves, making them come across as unserious and undependable. The other option is to take up minimal responsibilities in the newsroom so they have adequate time for their families. The implication is that they will not grow in the profession. In extreme cases, women journalists quit when they are unable to productively combine their family responsibilities and career roles.

6.4   Conclusion

The Best of Both Worlds – An Illusion for Matriarchs in the Media

Combining journalism with marriage and motherhood is one of the major factors affecting the career progress of women journalists in Nigeria. If women journalists do not marry, they are judged as failures. Meanwhile, a lot of them have challenges with getting men to marry because their schedules limit their availability and curtail them from effectively doing the duties expected of 'ideal wives'. Many have to leave the profession to keep their prince charming. Those who get to marry without being asked to resign from their jobs have to cut back on their productivity to create time for the home, so they are not seen as taking their men for granted. The implication is that not much career progress is made when women journalists are within the child-bearing and rearing phase. Unfortunately, a lot of women are not patient enough to stay in the news media without significant progress to outgrow this stage.

Those who choose to stay while taking care of their young families may eventually get to occupy top positions later, but others may never have the opportunity due to the impressions they might have erroneously created of being lazy or laid back (while raising children).

Equally, women journalists who are unable to cope with the challenges of the early marriage and young children phase leave or start making preparations to leave. Media managers expect this so they also cut back on their investments on women journalists and limit the responsibilities assigned to them during this period. Unfortunately, the more women journalists sense inequality, the higher the chances that they leave; and the more women journalists leave the newsroom, the more editors and media managers determine that they are not reliable, making it a lose-lose situation for women journalists, regardless of the choices they make.

Related studies on women's experience of journalism practice in other African countries confirm this reality. A Southern Africa study reveals that fewer women journalists are sent to trainings because their editors expected the married women to stay with their families while others think they should not send female journalists to trainings on media technologies (Fagbemi and Ohiri-Aniche, 1997). Women journalists in Kenya are also restricted from roles editors or management perceive could make them 'marital truants' by keeping them away from their homes and families. Thus a lot of them leave the profession when they get tired of

working without hope of career progression (Kareithi, 2013). Although women have gained more entry into the Namibian news industry and their numbers have increased on the hard beats, "The perception that women are not interested in some media positions, coupled with the lack of support for entering media professions, including lack of child-care options, burdensome travel requirements and continuing societal stereotypes about women's roles may act as a barrier for many women" (Nghidinwa, 2013, p.312) in the country. Women journalists in Uganda also identified lack of career advancement as one of the main factors pushing them out of the industry. Some of the journalists lament that "you look ahead and you don't see where you might be going in the next five years" (Kaija, 2013, p.324). Others equally state that "Unless one has a very supportive spouse and family, most female journalists will leave the newsroom when they get married" (Kaija, 2013, p.325) due to the challenges that come with the responsibilities of marriage and child care. The situation seems bleak in Ghana where only 67 out of 257 women journalists surveyed in a study commissioned by Ghana's Trades Union Congress have access to paid maternity leave (Otoo and Asafu-Adjaye 2011, p. 25) while none of the six Ghanaian news companies sampled in Carolyn Byerly's 'Global Report' guarantee women journalists the same jobs when they return from maternity leave (Byerly, 2011, p.96). In all, marriage and motherhood continues to be a serious impediment for the career progress of women journalists in Nigeria and Africa. Sadly, the situation is not likely to change as long as women remain burdened with home and childcare.

The findings in this chapter are consistent with African feminist theorists' standpoint that non-abusive marriages, procreation and child-rearing are noble and divine duties that women should undertake with pride (Ogunyemi, 1996; Mikell, 1997; Nnaemeka, 2003). That is why Nigerian women journalists proceed to get married and nurse children despite knowing the prejudice that awaits them once they take that route. An interviewee mentioned that despite missing out on trainings and foreign opportunities due to nursing an infant, she *"would do it over and over again because that is the joy of motherhood"* (EI/33/J/ML/Female). That is why African feminist theorists do not seek to change that orientation but seek ways to ensure the legislation and implementation of laws and policies that will alleviate the challenges working women face with raising children. The clamour for increased maternity leave with pay, on-site child care facilities, guarantees women would return to their jobs after maternity leave while encouraging men to support in the home to reduce the burden on women are

some of the solutions being proffered to this challenge (Fagbemi and Ohiri-Aniche, 1997; Otoo and Asafu-Adjaye 2011; Kareithi, 2013; Nghidinwa, 2013; Kaija, 2013), because African feminists seek to protect women on the continent without jeopardising "institutions which are of value" (Boyce Davies, 1986, p.9) to them.

Now that the fourth (and last theme) – the serious challenges posed by marriage and motherhood - have been exhaustively discussed, I will now proceed to the conclusions chapter where I do a brief summary of all the preceding chapters, make recommendations on how to improve the status of women journalists in the Nigerian news media, highlight the major limitations to the study and give suggestions for further research.

Chapter Seven   Conclusion

"The limitations upon women's progress into journalism and as media decision-makers are most apparent in the more traditional spheres. Where the styles of production and the approach to content are least changed then women have in general been less able to make an impact" (Franks, 2013, p. 51).

7.0   Introduction

The international scholarship on women journalists' experience of the news industry has focused mainly on the global North and some regions in the global South (North, 2009, p.1) with very little information about how women journalists experience journalism practice in Africa and, most importantly, Nigeria (Tijani-Adenle, 2014, p.390). If Nigerian women journalists are hindered by glass ceilings and are deprived of the benefits of adequate gender equality policies (Byerly, 2011, p.124), then there is a need to investigate their experience of journalism practice to fill the knowledge gap and provide empirical evidence that can guide advocacy and policy to improve their working conditions. This thesis set out to achieve these objectives by investigating Nigerian women's experience of journalism practice. It provides insight into the socio-cultural, political and economic structures within which Nigerian women journalists operate and explains how these structures influence their practice. It equally reviews the existing maternity and sexual harassment policies in Nigerian news companies and their impact on the status of women journalists. This chapter will present a summary of the six preceding literature, methodology and finding chapters. It will review key findings linked to the four themes analysed in the finding chapters (gendering and feminisation of news, poor wage system, sexual harassment, sexism and masculine newsroom culture as well as the challenges of marriage and motherhood) whilst elaborating on their implications for the career experience and progression of women journalists in Nigeria. Women journalists remain clustered on soft beats; non-payment of wages drives them out of the industry; they endure sexual harassment due to patriarchy, socio-cultural norms and the absence of polices, while the huge responsibilities of marriage and motherhood consign them to less prestigious positions. As this is a feminist transformative research, nine key recommendations (also linked to the four themes) are presented on how the inequalities experienced by Nigerian women journalists can be addressed. The chapter discusses the limitations to the study and ends with identifications of ways myself and future researchers can draw from this study to further investigate the diverse ways women experience the practice of journalism in Nigeria.

7.1   Summary

The intelligence, ingenuity and the creativity Nigerian women journalists bring to work are acknowledged (see Section 4.1.1), but poor governance, socio-cultural norms, masculine newsroom culture, power, profit, patriarchy as well as gender, marriage and work norms continue to impede their progress and keep them in lower level, less prestigious and low paying positions in the country's news industry. Unfortunately, the fact that a few women journalists have been able to break into spheres of influence is distracting from the deep inequalities endured by majority of women journalists working in Nigerian news companies. It is hoped that the significant findings presented in this thesis about the disheartening ways women journalists experience the news media in Nigeria will spiral the institution of research, laws, policies as well as the action, activism and advocacy needed to improve the status and experiences of women working in the Nigerian news media. The two sub-sections below present the summary of the literature, methodology and findings chapters as well as the key findings from this study into the status and experiences of women journalists in the Nigerian news media.

7.1.1   Summary of Chapters

This thesis details how women journalists experience journalism practice in Nigeria, a prominent African country in the global South. It shows the impact of Nigeria's socio-cultural, economic and political situation on the status of women journalists, emphasising how the Nigerian environment within which the women journalists operate significantly moderate their experience of working in the country's news industry.

The first chapter provides information about the environment within which women journalists in Nigeria function. First, information about the current economic and political situation in Nigeria is discussed to provide an overview of the West African country. Next, a review of the status of women in Nigeria - from the pre-colonial period to present post-colonial era - is done, to demonstrate that women in the country have consistently battled with patriarchy across ages (Mba, 1982; Denzer, 1994; Olurode, 2013). Then, the chapter is concluded with a critical section on the Nigerian media landscape. The section exposes how the news industry has been affected by economic challenges; funding news companies is tough due to dwindling advertising revenue, poor infrastructural facilities and high cost of importation of equipment and consumables (Diso, 2005; Dauda, 2017). Unfortunately, regarding workers' welfare,

news media organisations are not exempted from the political impunity that characterises the larger Nigerian society. Media organisations do not provide life insurance for workers nor pay their salaries on time (Olukotun, 2017), and no news organisation has been sanctioned for this abnormality. The arguments in this chapter justify the opinion of scholars that the government and the socio-cultural mores existing in the society in which media industries function affect their operations (Franks, 2013; Croteau and Hoynes, 2014) and administration.

The second literature chapter is presented in two sections: the first section reviews the international scholarly literature on the status of women in the news media, identifying four crucial factors moderating how women experience the news industry globally; gendering and feminisation of news, inequality in wages, sexism and sexual harassment and finally, the challenges of combining marriage and motherhood with media work (North, 2009; Byerly, 2011, 2013; Franks, 2013). The section notes that the world over, women journalists endure horizontal segregation to soft beats, unequal wages, glass ceilings, sexism and sexual harassment, as well as discrimination occasioned by the peculiar demands of marriage and motherhood. The second section discusses the feminist theories that ground the study (liberal, Black, postcolonial and African feminism), noting that although liberal, Black and postcolonial feminisms (Jaggar, 1983; Jackson and Jones, 1998; Bryson, 1999) speak to the career experiences of women journalists in Nigeria, it is actually African feminism that can effectively analyse the intersectionality of the masculine newsroom culture, the challenging political and economic situation in Nigeria as well as the impact of patriarchy, gender, marriage and work norms on women journalists' experience of the news industry (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1994; Nnaemeka, 2003). Liberal feminism can help with instituting salient policies, which are currently absent and/or inadequate. Black feminism highlights the impact of slavery and colonialism on Nigerian women while postcolonial feminism underscore the realities of the socio-political and economic situation in Nigeria (and by extension, news companies) attributable to neo-colonialism and the endemic corruption in the country. However, it is African feminism that is efficiently able to examine the intersectionality of economy, politics, history and culture on the career experiences of Nigerian women journalists. African feminism effectively explores how inequalities in Nigerian news companies are produced, negotiated and challenged and the forms they take in specific institutional (media industry), cultural (African) and geographical (Nigeria) contexts and the realistic solutions that can be offered to address them.

The third chapter is the methods chapter. The methodological approach is grounded in a feminist perspective. A qualitative approach was used in gathering and analysing data with the aim of privileging women journalists' realities, by reflecting the "lived experiences" (Holloway, 1997, p.68; See also: Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006, p.24) "ideas, thoughts and memories" (Reinharz, 1992, p.19) of the research subjects in the study. The ethnography method of data gathering was used and it presented the opportunity of utilising a triangulated method of observation, interviews and archival analysis in gathering data (Gobo and Molle, 2017). This way, I was able to explore women's experiences from their perspectives (by conducting 46 semi-structured interviews with male and female media workers, including 32 women journalists), enrich the study with information gathered from observing women journalists' interactions with their colleagues in the newsrooms of two news media organisations (for four weeks), as well as review the employment handbooks of five news media organisations in Nigeria.

The findings are presented in three chapters: chapters four, five and six. Findings gathered from all the three methods used are grouped into four themes based on the considerations of the objectives of the study as well as my theoretical and analytical interests in the status and experiences of women in the news media as earlier presented in the second literature chapter (see Section 2.1). Chapter Four - the first findings chapter presents the findings from two of the four broad themes derived from the findings: gendering and feminisation of news and the impact of irregular wages, unequal remuneration and poor working conditions on women's experience of the Nigerian news industry. The fifth chapter (the second findings chapter) discusses how sexism and sexual harassment affect the productivity and growth of women in the Nigerian news media while the sixth chapter (the last findings chapter) presents detailed information on how women journalists' career experiences are moderated and affected by marriage and motherhood. The next sub-section is dedicated to highlighting the key findings (from the four themes) presented in the three findings chapters, noting their significance and analysing their implications for the status and experiences of women journalists working in the Nigerian news media.

7.1.2   Original Contribution

This sub-section reviews the key findings from the study in relation to the four themes analysed in the finding chapters: gendering and feminisation of news, poor wage system, sexual harassment, sexism and masculine newsroom culture and the challenges of combining marriage and motherhood with a journalism career.

7.1.2.1   Gendering and Feminisation of News

Findings under the gendering and feminisation of news theme are analysed and discussed in Section 4.1. Globally, feminist media scholars have engaged with the horizontal segregation of women journalists to the soft beats with studies consistently noting that despite the increasing number of women covering the hard beats, women journalists are still clustered in the pink ghettos (Zoonen 1998; Djerf-Pierre and Lofgren-Nilsson 2004; Joseph, 2006; Poindexter, Meraz and Weiss, 2008; Made and Morna, 2009; Christmas, 2008; Ross and Carter 2011; Franks, 2013; Sarikakis, 2014; North 2016a). However, most of these studies do not query the ability of women journalists to effectively cover the hard beats. This thesis investigated the capacity of women journalists to function on the hard beats and affirms their competence, noting that their horizontal segregation to the soft beats is not due to lack of skills (see Section 4.1.1). This finding is salient as it helps to direct attention to the actual factors restricting women journalists to the soft beats since their abilities are not in question. The other findings under the gendering and feminisation of news theme [like masculine newsroom culture, patriarchy and gender norms (which are discussed below)] strengthen previous knowledge about the horizontal segregation of women journalists to the pink ghettos.

Findings under this theme show that Nigerian news managers routinely direct women journalists to cover the soft beats based on the perceptions that women journalists' interests lie in the soft beats, they have innate abilities to connect with the subjects and audiences of the beats and they need to be protected from the rigours and dangers associated with hard beats (see Section 4.1.3). These findings are consistent with the global literature on gendering of news. Women journalists are believed to be more interested in soft news (Ross and Carter 2011, North, 2016a), they are posted to cover pregnant women and children after giving birth (North, 2016a, p.367), relegated to the soft beats due to their perceived delicate nature and innate nurturing skills (van Zoonen 1998; Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.109) and the need to

protect them from violence on the job (Unaegbu, 2017). Even when women journalists cover the hard beats, they are still expected to write on the soft issues on those beats (Williams, 2010, p.240). Unfortunately, this newsroom culture confines women journalists to lower status positions as only those working on the hard beats are mostly considered for promotions to management and editorial positions (Section 4.1.3, also: North, 2016a, p.369). Thus, most Nigerian women journalists are denied growth opportunities due to this horizontal segregation. Some women journalists who are ambitious avoid covering the soft beats in order to evade the limitations imposed by reporting such issues (see Section 4.1.3). This finding is similar to the responses from Nigerian women journalists who told another researcher how they evade covering women's and children's issues in order to avoid being tagged feminists or women libbers (Anyanwu, 2001, p. 71). However, while this decision may be good for women journalists career wise, it is bad for the coverage of women's and children's issues as these issues will receive low coverage if the women journalists, who mostly report them, start avoiding them due to the need for career growth. Equally, it supports earlier evidence that women journalists have to imbibe masculine cultures (like shunning the coverage of soft news) before they can progress in the news media (North, 2009; Franks, 2013).

Meanwhile, whilst some women journalists revealed that they enjoyed working on the soft beats, not one of them mentioned they requested to be posted there (Section 4.1.2). This implies that these same journalists could have excelled and taken pleasure in working on the hard beats if they were given the opportunity. Therefore, the fact that some women journalists find career fulfilment in working on soft beats does not discountenance the "broader structural gender discrimination" (North, 2016a, p.366) in newsrooms that mostly restrict them to soft beats without giving them the opportunity to explore the hard beats and decide where they would have preferred. Consequently, women journalists are surreptitiously steered away from the hard beats where "esteem is gained and the promotion pool is typically delved" (North, 2016a, p.369).

Majority of the women journalists who end up on the hard beats in Nigerian newsrooms have had to challenge their allocation to soft beats by becoming vocal about where their ambitions lie and insisting on being posted to the hard beats. At other times, women journalists burden themselves by covering the hard beats in addition to the soft beat(s) they are assigned, to prove their capabilities (Section 4.1.3). This places extra burdens on women journalists that

their male colleagues do not have to contend with because men are seen as natural hard beat reporters and are posted there without having to struggle for it. This sexism gives male journalists an unfair advantage over their female colleagues. Several studies have documented how women journalists, globally, like their counterparts in Nigeria, have had to struggle to be allocated to the hard beats and recognised as competent enough to cover them (North, 2009, 2016a; Newsman, 2013). Now, in a country where women are the primary carers in homes, not all women journalists posted to the soft beats have the luxury of time to do the needful on the soft beats and still put in extra work to publish on the hard beats in order gain recognition.

Some journalists (including women) hold the view that Nigerian women journalists posted to soft beats should work on them without complaining (regardless of their interests) due to the perception that managements have the prerogative to determine where journalists should work (see Section 4.1.2). Their argument is that media managements are unbiased and can later move women journalists allocated to soft beats to hard beats when their services are required or when they are deemed qualified. While this might have happened in very few instances, it is not the norm, as most soft beat reporters do not routinely move to the hard beats and are rarely given management and editorial positions. Such perspectives about managements' prerogative deny the gender politics involved in beat allocations and the impact they have on the status of women in the industry (Franks, 2013; Sarikakis, 2014; North 2016a).

It is not all gloomy, however, as the political economies of news media management has sustained the inclusion of soft contents in news broadcasts and publications due to the need to increase circulation figures and generate advertisements. This has increased employment opportunities for women journalists in the Nigerian media (Tijani-Adenle, 2016, p.400) as they are seen as the primary providers of soft content. Many women journalists have gained employment in news organisations through this route with some later moving to hard beats. This is equally the situation in the global news media as women journalists have gained increased access to news organisations using the soft beats route and a good number of those women eventually move to producing hard contents (Franks, 2013, p.48; see also: Lumsden, 1995).

In all, findings under the gendering and feminisation of news theme confirm that Nigerian women journalists, like their counterparts the world over, are segregated to the soft beats

unless they struggle and work twice as hard as their male colleagues to break the stereotype. Masculine newsroom cultures sustain the allocation of women journalists to the soft beats, patriarchal culture makes it easy for men to cover the hard beats as it is seen as their place to cover hard issues and relate with the actors on those beats (who are mostly male) while gender norms deny women the agency they require to fight the discrimination. Ultimately, Nigerian women journalists are relegated to low status and low-paying positions because they are absent or few on the hard beats where the journalists who are seen as capable of effectively handling editorial and management positions are selected from.

7.1.2.2 Irregular Salaries, Poor Work and Social Conditions Pushing Women Journalists out of the Nigerian News Media

Findings under the remuneration, work and social conditions theme were analysed and discussed in Section 4.2. Overall, three main issues (with various ramifications) were discussed under this theme: first is irregular wages and how it drives women journalists out of the industry, the second is gender pay gaps, while the third details how inadequate infrastructure like electricity and poor transportation, make work-life balance difficult for women journalists.

Women journalists in Nigeria experience a unique challenge with wages. While women journalists the world over deal with gender pay gaps, Nigerian women journalists contend with non-payment of salaries. Nigerian news organisations pay low salaries, delay in paying monthly wages and consistently owe journalists wages over long periods, sometimes lasting up to 24 months (Buhari, 2017; Olukotun, 2017). Whilst it can be argued that both male and female journalists are confronted with non-payment of salaries in Nigeria, findings show that patriarchy and the masculine-cultured news industry enable men to benefit more from brown envelopes, freebies from beat associations, as well as moonlighting, thus making it possible for men to stay longer in the industry, despite the non-payment of wages compared to women (see Section 4.2.1). Now, in a society where women are expected to contribute financially to the upkeep of the family (Staveren and Odebode, 2007), women journalists are forced to leave the industry when wages are not being paid and yet, the job prevents them from playing the care roles which are culturally seen as their exclusive responsibilities. Several interviewees mention that husbands and families that were initially showing understanding with women journalists' unusual and busy schedules change tune and insist they resign when the women are neither at home to perform their traditional roles nor able to contribute

financially to the upkeep of the family. Consequently, the Nigerian news industry loses women journalists continuously due to non-payment of wages. It is not surprising that there is no record of women journalists leaving the news industry due to non-payment of wages in the global literature on gendered newsroom cultures. This is due to the fact that this anomaly is not replicated in advanced democracies or structured societies. The situation shows how the culture of impunity in Nigeria affects all the sectors of the economy in unimaginable ways. More importantly, it emphasises how the organisation of societies and the management of news organisations in those settings significantly moderate how women journalists experience journalism practice (Franks, 2013; Croteau and Hoynes, 2014). Thus, the fact that the non-payment of salaries affects the status of women journalists and even forces them out of the industry completely is an important contribution this thesis makes to existing knowledge on how women experience journalism practice in Nigeria.

Another significant finding under this theme is that contrary to previous evidence, pay equality for women and men journalists in Nigeria is in theory but not practice. After gathering data from news companies in Nigeria, using survey, Byerly's '*Global Report*' concludes that "Nigerian women and men journalists are paid equally" (Byerly, 2011, p.124). I also affirm, based on Byerly's findings, knowledge from my role as one of the researchers who gathered data for Nigeria for the '*Global Report*' and my few years' experience as a news producer at Voice of Nigeria (VON), that there was no gender pay gaps in the Nigerian news industry, arguing that "men at top management levels may experience some privileges of office, but salaries are basically the same for men and women" (Tijani-Adenle, 2014 p.390). Despite my 'conviction' about equality in wages in the Nigerian news industry ahead of gathering data for this thesis, I decided to validate this knowledge by investigating my supposition and I was shocked to discover that pay equality is in theory but not always in practice. This knowledge appeared hidden due to the survey method that was used in gathering data for the '*Global Report*' and also because I had worked in a junior position in a government news organisation and not in the private sector. Interviewing 46 media workers (two human resource managers, 43 male and female journalists on different levels and a production staff) revealed how negotiation, nepotism and masculine newsroom cultures sometimes create uneven wages for women and men journalists in Nigeria.

Negotiation was the first factor identified as responsible for salary differentials in Nigerian news organisations. It must be emphasised, however, that this is the case in private news

establishments only as salaries are strictly fixed to positions in government-owned news media. Some managements of private news establishments comment that journalists' wages are based on their negotiating prowess at the point of employment (see Section 4.2.2.2). Now in the Nigerian news industry where male journalists are seen as more available and free of family encumbrances, male journalists likely get better bargains. Managements also play politics with negotiation. A female journalist mentioned that she was told there was no room for negotiation (in a national news organisation) but surprisingly, the human resource manager of that organisation told me that they allow journalists they poach from other establishments or those they regard as valuable to negotiate. Consequently, more male journalists are allowed to negotiate compared to women journalists due to masculine newsroom culture (male journalists are believed to be more available than females due to the latter's expected care roles in the family) and patriarchy (men are seen as the head of the family and need to provide for their families' needs so they need more money). The politics around negotiation of salaries in Nigerian news companies is consistent with available evidence in the global literature where women journalists are short-changed in salaries and paid less than their male colleagues (and sometimes their juniors) due to masculine newsroom cultures (Ross and Carter, 2011; Central European Labour Studies Institute and Wage Indicator Foundation, 2012; Byerly, 2013; Franks, 2013; Women's Media Center, 2015; Ross and Padovani, 2016), assumptions that male journalists earn the family wage and therefore need more money (Ferree, 1995; Whelehan, 1995) as well as the allegation that women journalists are weak at negotiating remuneration (Newman, 2013).

The existence of nepotism in the Nigerian society is established (Tignor, 1993; Arowolo, 2010; Salawu, 2010) and the misnomer also influences employment, appointment and remuneration in news companies. Unfortunately, this plays out in the public and privately owned news organisations. The head of a government-owned news media organisation said during the interview that an individual could be employed to a position higher than what they merit in the public sector, thus enabling them to earn more than due, if they had been employed to the qualified position. Such individuals will, however, earn the fixed income for that (unmerited) position, regardless of their gender. The situation is worse in the private sector where news media entrepreneurs and/or management employ people, assign them to positions and fix their income at will (sometimes regardless of the structure). Many journalists on middle management levels (see Table 3.3) spoke of how they were earning less

than greenhorns who were employed years after them because the latter were connected to management or the proprietors of the news organisations (see Section 4.2.2.3). Interestingly, all the journalists interviewed attributed the pay gap to nepotism and power and not gender because of the consideration that those who benefit from such unfair wage systems have been from both genders. They fail to relate nepotism in wages with the reality in the larger Nigerian society where more men enjoy better access to the social capital that makes such benefits (albeit unethical) possible (Ikuomola and Okunola, 2011). Expectedly, this is a divergence from the situation in the global North. Although gender pay gaps have persisted in the global news media, it is not due to nepotism, as obtainable in Nigerian news organisations (Byerly, 2013; Women's Media Center, 2015; Ross and Padovani, 2016).

The last factor identified as responsible for gender pay gaps for women journalists in Nigerian news organisations is masculine newsroom culture. First, more male journalists are assigned to hard news beats while most of the females are assigned to soft news beats at the point of employment. Great stories written by male journalists on the hard beats earn them recognition as promotion materials while soft copies written by female journalists increase sales, circulation and/or audience figures without earning them journalism awards or recognition from management. When it is time to appoint or promote people to editorial and management positions, the male journalists on hard beats are seen as better suited and thus promoted to higher paying positions while most of the women journalists are neglected in the soft beats and less paying roles (see Section 4.2.2.4).

The last set of findings discussed under the theme is how inadequate infrastructure, such as unstable electricity, poor transportation, insecurity and absence of insurance, impact how Nigerian women journalists experience the industry. Unstable electricity prevents women journalists from cooking for long periods or expressing breast milk for their babies, thus making the profession seem unfavourable to married women and/or nursing mothers. Bad roads and traffic make women spend hours commuting to and from work, thereby reducing the time they spend at work and at home with their families. Exposure to attacks by thieves and miscreants while rushing to work early and/or leaving late at night put women's lives at risks and the absence of life insurance for journalists makes the profession less attractive (see Section 4.2.3). The section shows how the underdevelopment of the larger Nigerian society impacts women journalists' practice in ways their counterparts in developed economies cannot imagine. Similar finding resonates from another developing economy, Bangladesh,

where a facility as simple as office transport aids women journalists' productivity and increases their chances of career advancement by easing commuting and offering some form of security (Islam, 2013, p.355).

All the original findings about how gender pay gaps, irregular wages, unpaid salaries and inadequate infrastructure make journalism hostile for women journalists or drive them out of the news media were obtained because I approached my data using both the inductive and theoretical approaches to thematic analysis. If I had analysed my findings seeking only to review how my theoretical conceptions about the way women experience journalism practice in the global community are true for Nigeria, I would have missed the significant findings that reveal the unique ways women journalists experience journalism practice in Nigeria due to their peculiar circumstances.

More importantly, the qualitative method I used in gathering data enabled me to correct previous information that women and men journalists in Nigeria earn equally. Using interviews exposed the various factors that sometimes create salary differentials for men and women journalists; information that was not derived when survey data and personal experience were used (Byerly, 2011; Tijani-Adenle, 2014). Indeed, qualitative methodology is best at deriving information that captures the realities of the lives of subjects in research (Mies, 1991; Gherardi and Turner, 2002; Miner-Rubino and Jayaratne, 2007; Bryman, 2008).

7.1.2.3 Sexual Harassment, Sexism and Masculine Newsroom Culture

There is a dearth of information about sexism and sexual harassment in the African news media. Previously, sexism and sexual harassment in the continent's news media were rarely discussed (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.114), but more information is coming to light with increasing feminist engagement with the way women journalists in Africa experience journalism practice (Gillwald, 1994; Made, 2000; Opoku-Mensah, 2004, Okunna, 2005; Gadzekpo, 2013; Kaija, 2013). Findings on sexism and sexual harassment in the Nigerian news media are analysed in Chapter Five. The chapter demonstrates how the African culture of silence around issues of sexism and sexual harassment led to the very late promulgation of laws on the issues, highlighting the various gender discrimination and sexual harassment laws that were instituted in some African countries in the late 1990s and 2000s (see Section 5.1). The late promulgation of national gender discrimination and sexual harassment policies in Africa meant that news companies on the continent also lacked adequate gender equality

policies, with the '*Global Report*' noting that one-third of 117 media organisations sampled in 15 African countries do not have policies on gender and sexual harassment (Byerly, 2011, p.80). In short, the same narrative that defines sexism and sexual harassment in Nigerian and other African societies is true for women journalists in the news media: denial, disregard, justification and victim blaming.

Expectedly, one of the two news organisations studied for this thesis did not have a sexual harassment policy while the human resource manager of the organisation which claimed to have did not allow me view it. My archival analysis of the employment handbooks of five news organisations in Nigeria also showed lack of clear and explicit policies on sexual harassment although misdemeanours can be sanctioned under misconduct rules, which are available. This revelation is consistent with Byerly's findings in which only 13 per cent of news companies sampled in Nigeria have sexual harassment policies (Byerly, 2011, p.124). The absence of sexual harassment policy in the Nigerian news media highlights the vulnerability of women journalists and the level of advocacy that needs to be done to institute policies and eradicate sexual harassment in Nigerian news establishments. Sadly, this deficiency significantly moderates news companies' responses to sexual harassment in their organisations.

Nigerian news establishments sometimes deny the existence of sexual harassment in their organisations due to the absence of policies to handle complaints or from a perceived need to protect the image of their companies. This is sometimes taken to the extreme with the sacking of women journalists who make complaints due to the desperation to cover up the issues. Women journalists are aware of this and rarely file official complaints about sexual harassment due to a lack of faith in management to do the needful (see section 5.3.2). This is sadly the trend in some other African countries. There is a record of a female journalist who preferred to resign due to sexual harassment, instead of reporting to management (Kaija, 2013, p.325). Shockingly, women journalists in the global North who work in companies with sexual harassment policies also shy away from reporting because of managements' unwillingness to take action (Kossan, 1992; Barton and Storm, 2014) and due to the fact that some management staff who are expected to sanction perpetrators are themselves (sometimes) guilty of sexual harassment (North, 2016b, p.503).

Fortunately, some news organisations in Nigeria take sexual harassment complaints seriously; the challenge, however, is in the approach - gender norms influence how complaints are handled. Sexual harassment is seen as shameful and not something to be handled officially and publicly. Victims are thus encouraged to report unofficially while management investigates and/or reprimands privately. Although this approach may curb reported cases of harassment, it cannot prevent harassment altogether as perpetrators are not named and shamed and so, while abuse may be curbed, justice is not 'seen' to be done. Astonishingly, some women journalists in the global North, who work in news organisations where sexual harassment complaints are handled strictly officially, suggest they would prefer management to explore unofficial processes in resolving complaints before instituting formal actions (North, 2016b, p.504). This request shows the extent to which masculine newsroom cultures are ingrained in news establishments as women journalists who make complaints and follow through with formal processes are covertly sanctioned for doing so. The implication is that policies need to be supported with structures to protect women journalists from social sanctions for filing sexual harassment claims.

Various manifestations of sexism in Nigerian newsrooms were discussed before delving into those of sexual harassment (Section 5.4.1). Women journalists spoke of how male journalists are seen as hardworking or intelligent when they are highflyers but women journalists are perceived to be sleeping their ways to the top when they record achievements or earn recommendations. It is as though women are incapable of achieving such strides on merit. This is also the case in Zambia where women journalists making rapid career progressions are alleged to be using their bodies in exchange for promotions (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.112). Women journalists equally complained of not being appreciated nor commended like the men when they achieve great feats while their capacities to act in editorial and/or supervisory positions are likewise called into question. When it is time to promote journalists to critical positions, it is the men whose achievements are noted and who are seen as capable of performing supervisory roles that are promoted while the women whose efforts have not been appreciated nor recognised as capable of handling editorial positions are ignored. This is partly responsible for the low status of women journalists in the news industry. These findings are consistent with what is obtainable in the literature. Women journalists in the Caribbean newsrooms also complain of not being appreciated when they achieve feats (De Bruin, 2004, p.11) while women journalists in other African countries (Ghana, Kenya,

Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Zambia) complain that male journalists do not like taking orders from them when they act in supervisory capacities (Opoku-Mensah, 2004, p.113). It is not entirely different in the global North as there is a record of a male journalist who requested to be transferred from a beat to avoid reporting to a female editor (Franks, 2013, p.4). The reality is that sexism is still rife in Nigerian newsrooms and it contributes significantly to the low status of women journalists in the country's news industry, just like sexual harassment.

Nigerian journalists do not share similar views about sexual harassment. Some journalists deny the existence of sexual harassment in the country's newsrooms while others justify it with the argument that actions or speeches regarded as sexually harassing are harmless traditions of the news media. This latter argument is replicated in other studies with respondents arguing that the media are part of industries where some actions regarded as sexually harassing should be overlooked (Kossan, 1992, p.3; North, 2009, pp. 81-84; North, 2016b, p.505). This mindset, if not addressed, can further entrench the perpetuation of sexual harassment in the Nigerian news media.

Women journalists pay huge prices for the endemic harassment culture in Nigerian news industry. Many are affected emotionally and psychologically, with some withdrawing from socially interacting with their colleagues and superiors in a bid to curb harassment. Some women journalists are forced to give in to perpetrators while others leave the industry altogether (see Section 5.4.2.2). All these impact negatively on the way Nigerian women journalists experience working in the news media, contributing to their low numbers and inferior status in the industry. Similar findings resonate in the global literature with women journalists worldwide battling with the impact of sexual harassment on their lives and careers, regardless of whether they have recourse to justice or not (see for example; Bowen and Laurion, 1994; Walsh-Childers, Chance and Hergoz, 1996; Ross, 2004, De Bruin, 2004, North, 2007, 2012, 2016b; Kaija, 2013; Barton and Storms, 2014). Shockingly, university undergraduates on internships in Nigerian newsrooms are not excused by perpetrators, with respondents claiming interns are even more vulnerable than women journalists (Section 5.4.2.3). This is a negative trend that must be stopped as scholars have argued that interns who experience sexual harassment view their internships negatively, compared to those who are not sexually harassed (Bowen and Laurion, 1994) and the trauma of the harassment may deter them from seeking a career in the news media after their education.

Nigerian women journalists sometimes blame victims of sexual harassment, suggesting that they could ward off perpetrators if they were more assertive and confident. This rhetoric is a reflection of what is obtainable in the larger society and is replicated in other studies (De Bruin, 2004, p.10). However, this argument is flawed for failing to recognise how the peculiarities of women journalists (like age, position) sometimes make them more vulnerable to harassment (compared to others) and why such burden should not be placed at the feet of victims who have suffered enough already. Other women journalists see joining the 'blokes' as a form of security against harassment as some respondents claim harassments stopped (especially verbal) the moment they joined in the sexual jokes. While this may seem empowering, it actually confirms the arguments of scholars that women journalists have to imbibe masculine newsroom cultures to survive in the news media (Melin-Higgins 2004, p.199; North, 2013, p.34).

In all, sexism and sexual harassment are silent epidemics eliminating women journalists from Nigerian news companies and stifling the efforts of those who remain in the industry. Unfortunately, these ills have been allowed to fetter due to the culture of silence and permissibility in the industry and country. The management of sexism and sexual harassment in Nigerian news companies is greatly moderated by gender norms and culture. Victims are blamed for abuse or sometimes chastised for reporting officially rather than 'handling' the issues 'maturely'. So much stigma and indignity is attached to sexual harassment that even the very few organisations that are pragmatic enough to handle it do so in secrecy, involuntarily shielding perpetrators from sanctions. There is no record of a male journalist who has been sanctioned officially for sexual harassment or of a female journalist in Nigeria who has gone to court to challenge the way their complaints have been handled by employers. Most women journalists keep resisting until the harasser gets discouraged, accede to the harasser's demands after much pressure or resign from the media organisation altogether. Ultimately, what operates in the larger society plays out in the news media: every woman is for herself when it comes to fending off sexual harassment. The situation in the news industry has proven that legislation will not be adequate in stemming the tide of sexual harassment in Nigeria. Even where policies exist, gender and sexual norms need to be challenged for victims to seek redress and for the system to protect them. It may take ages for movements like #MeToo to be replicated in the country.

7.1.2.4   Challenges of Marriage and Motherhood

The fact that marriage and motherhood affect women journalists' career experience and progression is not in contention. Almost every journalist who participated in this study acknowledged that marriage and motherhood greatly moderate the industry experience and progress of women journalists in Nigeria. Many women have had to resign from the profession as a condition for marriage. Those who married without resigning from their jobs end up leaving when the challenges of home and child care compound. Still, others remain unmarried, childless or opt for the single-mother option due to their inability to attract men who can tolerate the peculiarities of the journalism career. Unfortunately, I am unable to compare these realities with those of women journalists in other parts of the world due to lack of specific information in the literature about how journalism practice affects women's marriage opportunities and choices. Nonetheless, there are women journalists who are married with children in active journalism practice in Nigeria and media managers seek to help them maintain their homes by reducing their tasks or assigning them to beats with flexible schedules that can accommodate home and child care roles. The challenge with the seemingly benevolent assistance, however, is that it takes women journalists away from critical beats to desks that are less rated, where the women's skills are least likely to be highlighted and where managements rarely look when seeking to promote workers to editorial positions (see Section 6.1). Routinely assigning women journalists to soft beats based on the assumption that "it fits with their caring roles and responsibilities outside work" (North, 2016a, p.369) seems to have become a global newsroom culture, despite the fact that scholars who have researched women journalists with care roles have documented how most of them do not desire to be relegated to the soft beats where their career progression is stagnated or truncated (Organ et al., 1979; Lafky, 1991; Byerly and Warren, 1996; Sieghart and Henry, 1998; Ross, 2001; Williams, 2010; Byerly, 2011; North, 2009, 2012, 2016a, 2016c; Franks, 2013).

Interestingly, some Nigerian women journalists are able to combine journalism practice with marriage and motherhood. Findings show these women are able to do so because they have supportive husbands who understand the peculiarities of their profession and are willing to make sacrifices for them to progress. Notwithstanding, the men still expect their wives (the women journalists) to perform their home and child care responsibilities or get family or paid help to handle things (see Section 6.2). This is due to the fact that Nigerian men who support

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their women to undertake unconventional or demanding careers still expect the women to seek ways to ensure the home front and children are taken care of, as the society frowns at men undertaking such tasks (Okeke-Ihejirika, 2004). Unfortunately, women journalists who do not have adequate fund to secure paid help or have reliable relatives who can help with these duties (while they focus on work) end up leaving the industry (see Section 6.2.1). This is similar to what is obtainable in other African countries where women journalists without strong family support structures and/or paid help resign from "the newsroom when they get married" (Kaija, 2013, p.325) due to their inability to maintain work-life balance.

The maternity leave policy in Nigerian news organisations significantly influences women journalists' status and experience of the industry. The general provision for women journalists who have put in a minimum of 12 months work is to get three months paid leave and get their jobs back on their return. Some news organisations also show extra considerations by allowing women journalists resume an hour later or close an hour earlier, depending on the options that women choose. Unfortunately, not all beats can accommodate such considerations; so, women are moved to less critical beats, and this affects their career progression, while others who hold key positions before giving birth resume their hectic and demanding schedules (like desk editors and reporters on critical beats) immediately after resumption without being able to benefit from any concessions. Some women journalists reported leaving the newsroom due to lack of satisfaction with the child care options available to their babies at the three-month resumption time; others left because they were denied promotion and pay increments on their return, while some management staff complain about losing resourceful women journalists they have invested in (through training) as some refuse to resume after going on maternity leave. The reality is that Nigerian women journalists encounter challenges combining nursing infants with journalism practice and this sometimes lead to their exit or delays their progression in the profession (Section 6.2.2).

In a culture where men are not expected to share in house chores or child care, women journalists end up demanding concessions at work to attend to the home or children. This puts them across as laid back, opportunists or concession seekers – all attributes that deny them management positions. The Nigerian culture does not expect women to pursue career at the detriment of their homes; so, women journalists who remain in the industry without rising see this as a noble sacrifice for their families. Male managers expect this scenario to play out so they look towards male journalists when filling key positions. Although many journalists

speak highly of women who have reached top management and editorial positions, they are nonetheless condescending when they discuss the marital status of such women. The women who are able to surmount this problem are those with strong family support and reliable paid help. Others stay in less demanding roles (without significant progress) until their children outgrow the demanding phase after which they devote more time to their careers. Most of the women who are currently title editors, news editors or those occupying other senior editorial positions in the Nigerian news media are either in their late 40s or early 50s with older children or they are younger women without marriage or child responsibilities altogether. This is similar to the situation in the UK where most women on editorial positions "were not holding such high-powered positions during the period their children were young and needed the most care" (Williams, 2010, p.280). Marriage and motherhood will continue to be a drawback for Nigerian women journalists professionally, unless they have strong support networks to cater for the home front. The other option is for a significant change in norm to occur which will encourage men to start sharing in house and child care responsibilities.

7.2   Recommendations

> *"Tackling some of the disparities faced by women in journalism involves a variety of adjustments: legislative, cultural, highlighting good practice. But...in many areas the necessary change involves no more than raising awareness of the problem, often through counting or measuring"* (Franks, 2013, p.53).

The three preceding findings chapters (chapters four, five and six) have presented evidence to women's unfavourable experience of journalism practice in Nigeria. It is consequently ideal that recommendations are made towards helping these women experience the industry in a more equitable way. It is important to note that women journalists alone cannot solve these problems, especially those still in the industry, as it is challenging to fight establishments. Journalism unions, the civil society and the academia have important roles to play in this regard. The following recommendations are greatly moderated by my understanding of the socio-cultural and legal environment in Nigeria, in addition to the African feminist theory that grounds this thesis and moderates the agency of most women in the country.

7.2.1 Horizontal Segregation

Academic associations, journalism unions and media centres dedicated to advancing the study and practice of journalism and mass communication in Nigeria, like the International Press Centre (IPC), Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN), African Council for Communication Education (ACCE) Nigeria, Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Nigerian Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ), among others, need to engage with the available evidence to raise awareness and dialogue with news media organisations on the need to end the horizontal segregation of women journalists to soft beats. Regular or scheduled studies by these organisations and the academia to monitor situations and document findings will also be helpful in this regard. Presently, the bulk falls on women journalists interested in covering hard beats to request or demand that they are posted to such beats since management and individuals holding editorial positions have the prerogative to assign reporters and they cannot be sanctioned for this.

Organisers of journalism awards in Nigeria, like the Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism (WSCIJ), Diamond Awards for Media Excellence (DAME), among others, equally need to include groundbreaking soft content in their award categories in order to give the deserved recognition to the efforts of women (and men) journalists covering women, children, health and other important desks categorised as soft beats.

7.2.2 Wages

What is obtainable in the Nigerian news industry regarding wages, where news companies owe salaries for months or years (without remorse) is extreme. Journalism unions, civil society organisations and government agencies regulating the media need to do something about this. Although an improvement will benefit both women and men journalists, it will nonetheless help retain more women journalists in the industry. There is a need to recognise the fact that some politicians and individuals holding government positions double as media entrepreneurs in Nigeria (Adejola and Bello, 2014) so the battle will be tough but journalism unions and the civil society organisations still have the capacity to name, shame and browbeat news companies to do the needful. Journalists who have left the industry or willing to leave the industry can also take legal actions against debtor organisations. Although unprecedented, a judgment in favour of such journalists can send a current in an industry where news companies owe with impunity.

Nigerian journalists also need to be less secretive about their incomes. The more credible information about wage differentials (due to negotiation and nepotism) are available, the easier it will be for women (and men) journalists who are short-changed to demand for their rights. The role of journalism unions, like the NUJ, NAWOJ, Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) and other media focused organisations, like ACSPN and WSCIJ, is crucial. Trade unions need to ensure that journalists who are bold enough to demand their rights are not summarily sacked. Without such guarantees, Nigerian journalists may be unable to seek redress, even if they obtain credible and verifiable information about unfair wage practices in news companies.

7.2.3 Transparency in Promotions

The recruitment and promotion processes in Nigerian news companies need to be more transparent and structured. The NUJ and media regulatory institutions, like the Nigerian Press Council (NPC) and the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) should demand that news organisations implement well defined benchmarks for promotions to definite positions so that women journalists are not easily cheated off positions.

Journalism unions, like the NUJ, NGE and NAWOJ, civil society organisations (like the IPC and WSCIJ) and government regulatory institutions (the NPC and NBC), need to pressure news companies to procure insurance for their workers and take responsibility when they experience hazards in the course of their jobs. Some news companies have transport facilities, for instance, but most are either defunct or inaccessible to all staff. Such amenities need to be in constant use and available to staff, especially women, so they are protected from undue harm when commuting to and from work very early in the morning or late in the night.

7.2.4 Sexual Harassment and Sexism

The battle here starts with journalists themselves. Women and men journalists need to be enlightened (by academic institutions, civil society organisations and journalism unions) to stop ignoring and/or justifying sexual harassment and sexism in news companies. The Nigerian Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) has a critical role to play in the areas of education, advocacy and empowerment of women journalists to seek redress.

Then, there is a need to demand that all news organisations have written and published sexual harassment policies so that their workers can know what they are protected against and how to seek redress. Media focused civil society organisations, like the IPC, WSCIJ or education and research and practice-focused establishments, like ACSPN, ACCE as well as NAWOJ and/or the NUJ, among others, can commission frameworks that can direct news organisations on policy and guidelines to prevent and manage sexism and sexual harassment in their establishments.

Legal documents, obviously, will not be enough here. There is a more difficult task of challenging the social norms that blame the victims and perceive sexual harassment as a calamity that must be hidden. News companies must start handling sexual harassment complaints officially and openly so that justice is not only done but is seen to be done. The harassment of undergraduate interns is a tragedy. Journalism training institutions need to enlighten the students they are posting to news companies about harassment and provide structures to protect them and seek redress when they are harassed. Creating a hostile environment for interns is a sure way to discourage them from joining the industry after their education.

7.2.5 Motherhood

Media organisations need to create on-site facilities for women journalists with children to alleviate the burden of child care. Considering the financial situation of most news organisations, women journalists may be made to pay while the companies subsidise as the economic situation in the country is unlikely to make such ventures attractive for news companies (for now).

Nationally, there needs to be a cultural shift where more husbands/partners are encouraged to contribute more to home and child-care roles; otherwise, women journalists will continue to have challenges at work. Nigeria's National Orientation Agency (NOA), community-based organisations, religious institutions and families have significant roles to play here.

Women journalists may need to endure the challenging periods of child rearing in journalism so they can still be in the industry to rise to top positions when their children are grown and no longer demand much attention. There is a need for news companies to hire more staff so journalists are not overworked and women journalists on maternity leave or those just

resuming are not tasked with responsibilities that will definitely portray them as laid back or inefficient.

These recommendations are by no means exhaustive, but I see them as foundation steps towards more critical adjustments that will be required later as women (and men) journalists, journalism unions, civil society organisations and government regulatory agencies become more committed to securing equality and equity for women journalists working in the Nigerian news industry. Ultimately, women in Nigerian news companies will only secure equity when the country (and all its people and structures) decide to tackle patriarchy and make "wider social adjustment about how working and caring are incorporated in twenty-first –century lives" (Franks, 2013, p.55) because women journalists' unequal experience of journalism practice is due to unequal gender roles in the Nigerian society.

7.3   Limitations

As with any project, there were a few limitations to this study. First, all the journalists interviewed for this study worked for news organisations with national reach and were based in Lagos and a few other states in South-West Nigeria, except a female journalist who had left the industry and was working with an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The reason for this was because the headquarters of the major national news organisations are in Lagos (and the South-West). Nonetheless, there are news organisations in other regions and although the women (and men) journalists interviewed are indigenes of the major ethnic groups in Nigeria, focusing on news companies located in Lagos and the South-West excluded the peculiar experiences of women journalists based in less industrial, less developed or less chaotic states (in terms of traffic, erratic power supply, etc.). Although the findings of this study are illustrative of the typical experiences of women journalists working in the Nigerian news media, women journalists resident in other regions of the country (other than the South-West) may experience the industry a little differently due to the peculiarities of their specific locations, which set them apart from Lagos. For instance, Lagos is the nation's commercial capital and it hosts the headquarters of most companies and organisations. It is highly congested and more liberal in the areas of culture and traditions.

Also, although many interviewees mentioned the harassment of female undergraduates on internship in media organisations, this study could not investigate further by interviewing the

interns themselves to explore how they experience the industry and the implications of the newsroom climate on their persons and career ambitions. Lastly, only five women journalists who left the news industry were interviewed and they revealed quite intriguing reasons for their exit. More interviews with women journalists who have left the industry would have revealed more factors sending women journalists out of the industry.

7.4   Suggestions for Further Studies

The limitations identified as well as other findings about how women experience journalism practice in Nigeria are pointers to more areas that need to be investigated to further appreciate women's experience of journalism practice in Nigeria.

There is a need to study the industrial experience of women journalists working in news companies' bureaux in other regions in Nigeria, either as state correspondents or contributors for national news companies based in Lagos or as employees of news organisations with headquarters in other regions of the country. It is important to review their experiences with those in this study to assess the extent to which they are similar or different, and if these are based on the locations of the organisations they work for or the intensity of the gender and social norms in those locations compared to Lagos State.

Female journalism and mass communication students who have undertaken internship in news organisations need to be interviewed to discuss their experiences of sexual harassment in news companies and the implications of this on their self-esteem and decision to join the news media after their education. Media training institutions also need to be probed to assess their level of awareness of this problem and the efforts they are making to protect their students.

Finally, a more extensive study of women journalists who have left the industry need to be conducted to note the factors driving them out of the news industry and enquire about the sectors they move to. There is an opportunity here to explore the innovative and creative ways the internet is empowering former women news company employees to set up their own online news or media platforms as three of the five women journalists who left the media that were interviewed as part of this study have all established their news websites.

7.5   Conclusion

In the last three decades, women have gained considerable entry into the Nigerian news media. As at the time of this writing, a woman (Mrs. Funke Egbemode) is the President of the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) and she doubles as the Managing Director of *New Telegraph Newspaper*. *The Punch Newspaper*, a well respected news medium in Nigeria with over 45 years of existence, had two female title editors (Saturday – Bisi Deji-Folutile and Sunday – Toyosi Ogunseye) as at December 2017, but the editor of the Sunday title, Toyosi Ogunseye, joined the BBC as the head of the global broadcaster's West African Languages team in January 2018. A woman, Adetutu Koyi, is the news editor of *The Sun Newspaper*; Tinu Ayaniyi is an Associate Editor in *Tribune Newspaper* (the oldest national newspaper in Nigeria); Ijeoma Nwogwugwu is Editor and Divisional Director of *ThisDay Newspaper*; Gbemisola Elujobi edits *Saturday Mirror* while Sekinah Lawal is also an Assistant Editor at *National Mirror*. Many other women occupy desk editor positions in many newspaper companies. In the broadcast media, Funke-Treasure Durodola is the General Manager of Radio One Fm (a government-owned news radio station); Toun Okewale Shonaya returned to Nigeria after some years outside the country to establish Women Radio (WFM) as the Chief Executive Officer; Olufunke Fadugba recently retired as the General Manager (News) of RayPower FM, the first private radio station in the country, while many women are programme directors and senior programme producers in government-owned broadcast stations as well as in several private news organisations.

The appointment of these women (mostly in the last decade) has created a wrong impression that the lack of access and the presence of glass ceilings for women have been solved because a few women have been able to break "into spheres of influence" (Franks, 2013, p.35). Unfortunately, this is contrary to reality. Findings from this study, which interviewed numerous journalists, reflect the reality: "the achievement of a few exceptional individuals does not mean that the landscape for women's advancement has been transformed" (Franks, 2013, p.36). There is also no guarantee that these women will be replaced by other women if/when they leave or get higher positions. For instance, *Sunday Punch*'s former Editor, Toyosi Ogunseye, who left to join the BBC in January 2018, was replaced by a male, Ademola Oni (although in acting capacity as at the time of this writing).

These exceptional women represent less than two per cent of the total population of the women working in the over 133 federal television stations, 122 state radio stations, 68 state

television stations, 51 multi-channel, multi-point distribution services, 97 private radio stations, 43 private television stations, 63 federal radio stations, 27 campus broadcasting stations, 17 community stations, over 120 print newspapers and more than 40 exclusive online news publications in Nigeria (*Punch*, September 1, 2015; Olukotun, 2017, p. 7). Indeed, "power, patriarchy and profit" (Sarikakis, 2014, p79) continue to moderate how women experience journalism practice in Nigeria.

To conclude, it is imperative to highlight the significance of applying African Feminist conceptual framework to the research process and its implications on the findings. African feminism, by taking into account the history, culture, governance and level of development in Nigeria provided the structure that exposed important and peculiar challenges that women journalists encounter in the country - like irregular wages, unfair wage differentials, inadequate infrastructural facilities, absence of gender equality, sexual harassment and maternity policies. African feminism equally aided the proposal of realistic recommendations that are feasible within the current existing realities in Nigeria, in tune with the culture and ideology of the research subjects and the larger Nigerian society. Indeed, "we need to conduct more studies using culture as the paradigmatic framework that has the potential of producing action-oriented research capable of transforming society and empowering women" (Steady, 2005, p.327).

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Appendixes

Appendix 1:   Interview Consent Form

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY LEICESTER   **Consent Form**

Title of Project:
Women in Nigerian News Media: Status, Experiences and Structures

Researcher:
Ganiyat Tijani-Adenle
p12046005@myemail.dmu.ac.uk

FOR THE PARTICIPANT:

Please read this form and sign it if you agree with the following statements:
• I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.   **Yes**   ☐   **No**   ☐
• I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study with the above investigator on all aspects of the study and have understood the advice and information given as a result. **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐
• I authorise the investigator to disclose the results of my participation in the study which she will use for her Ph.D. dissertation, forthcoming publications and conference papers. **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐
• I understand that information about me recorded during the study will be kept in a secure database. If data is transferred to others it will be made anonymous. Data will be kept for 7 years after the results of this study have been published.   **Yes**   ☐   **No** ☐
• I understand that I can ask for further instructions or explanations at any time. **Yes**   ☐   **No** ☐

• I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason for withdrawing. **Yes** ☐   **No** ☐

Do you wish to remain anonymous in this study?   **Yes**   ☐o   ☐
[Please Note that if you do not wish to be named, your name and other identifying information will not be disclosed].

Participant's Name:

……………………………………………………………………………………………
Address/Organisation:

……………………………………………………………………………………………
Email Address:

…………………………………………………………………………………………….

Signature: ……………………………………….. **Date:** ………………………………………

FOR THE RESEARCHER:

I confirm that I have fully explained the purpose of the study and what is involved, and have provided a copy of this form to the participant.

Researcher's Signature: ………………………….. **Date**:   ………………

**DE MONTFORT
UNIVERSITY
LEICESTER**

Interview Release Form

Please keep a copy of this document for your record purposes.

Thesis Title:	Women in the Nigerian News Media: Status, Experiences and Structures.
Researcher:	Ganiyat Tijani-Adenle

Grant

For consideration, which I, _____("the Interviewee"), acknowledge in this Agreement, I consent to the use of the attached interview and grant the researcher, Ganiyat Tijani-Adenle ("the interviewee") the right to copy, reproduce, and use all or portion of the Interview for incorporation in the following thesis [Women in the Nigerian News Media: Status, Experiences and Structures.] (the "Work") and all her future academic research publications. I have inspected a transcript of the Interview prior to publication and agree it is a true reflection of our discussion held on _____.

Identification

If my identity will be protected, I can be identified as: Female, _____ to _____ years (age), _____ with _____ years of media experience. _____ journalist.

[E.g., Male, 40 to 45 years, News Editor with 17 years of experience. Print journalist.]

I have read and understood this agreement fully and I am over the age of 18. This agreement expresses the complete understanding of the parties mentioned in the agreement.

Interviewee:

Name:	Signature:	Date:

Interviewer:

Name: Ganiyat Tijani-Adenle	Signature:	Date:

Appendix 3:   Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY LEICESTER

Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement

Title of Project:
Women in Nigerian News Media: Status, Experiences and Structures

Researcher:
Ganiyat Tijani-Adenle

I, [name of transcriber], agree to transcribe data for this study. I agree that I will:

1. Keep all research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than [Ganiyat Tijani-Adenle], the researcher for this study;
2. Keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) secure while it is in my possession. This includes:
   - using closed headphones when transcribing audio-taped interviews;
   - keeping all transcript documents and digitized interviews in computer password-protected files;
   - closing any transcription programs and documents when temporarily away from the computer;
   - keeping any printed transcripts in a secure location such as a locked file cabinet; and
   - permanently deleting any e-mail communication containing the data;
3. Give all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) to the primary investigator when I have completed the research tasks;
4. Erase or destroy all research information in any form or format that is not returnable to the primary investigator (e.g., information stored on my computer hard drive) upon completion of the research tasks.

Transcriber's name (printed) _____

Transcriber's signature & date _____

_____ _____

Signature of principal investigator   Date

Appendix 4: Semi-Structured Interview Guides

A: Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Women Journalists

1. Tell me about your journalism career; how you got in, when and why?
2. How would you describe the role and position of women in your organisation's newsroom?
3. Are there aspects of working in the newsroom that are gendered or is it a gender-blind newsroom?
4. How do you navigate your personal life as a woman with that of a journalist?
5. How would you describe the newsroom culture in your organisation?
6. Does your organisation have gender equality policies on remuneration, maternity leave, sexual harassment and other similar policies? Have you used any of these policies or do you know anyone who has? What implications do they have on the status of women in the news media?
7. How have you been balancing work and life? Which comes first? What do your husbands/families think about your career?

PLEASE NOTE: The questions above are generally leading questions and follow-up questions were asked based on the respondents' responses, positions and experiences?

B: Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Male Journalists/Managers

1. Tell me about your journalism career; how you got in, when and why?
2. How would you describe the role and position of women in your organisation's newsroom?
3. Are there aspects of working in the newsroom that are gendered or is it a gender-blind newsroom?
4. How would you describe the competence and status of women journalists as a media manager and/or colleague?
5. How would you describe the newsroom culture in your organisation?
6. Does your organisation have gender equality policies on remuneration, maternity leave, sexual harassment and other similar policies? Have you used any of these policies or do you know anyone who has? What implications do they have on the status of women in the news media?
7. Studies and industry data have confirmed glass ceilings for women journalists in Nigeria, do you agree and what factors do you think are responsibe for this?

PLEASE NOTE: The questions above are generally leading questions and follow-up questions were asked based on the respondents' responses, positions and experiences?

C: Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Human Resource Managers of News Organisations

1. What do you do and how long have you been here?
2. I'll like to know the organisation's employment policy as regards to gender. Do you just employ the best or is there any arrangement in place to ensure that there are equal numbers of males and females?
3. Is salary structured or do people negotiate for their salaries when they are getting employed and is it possible for people in the same position or doing the same job not to earn the same salary?
4. Are women journalists given preference for training, or is this gender neutral?
5. What is your maternity leave policy? How is it implemented?
6. Do you have a sexual harassment policy? Has any member of staff made official complaints? How are issues of sexual harassment handled?

PLEASE NOTE: The questions above are generally leading questions and follow-up questions were asked based on the respondents' responses, positions and experiences?

D: Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Women Journalists who left the News Media

1. Tell me about your journalism career; how you got in, when and why?
2. How would you describe the role and position of women in your organisation's newsroom?
3. Are there aspects of working in the newsroom that are gendered or is it a gender-blind newsroom?
4. How do you navigate your personal life as a woman with that of a journalist?
5. How would you describe the newsroom culture in your organisation?
6. Does your organisation have gender equality policies on remuneration, maternity leave, sexual harassment and other similar policies? Have you used any of these policies or do you know anyone who has? What implications do they have on the status of women in the news media?
7. How have you been balancing work and life? Which comes first? What do your husbands/families think about your career?
8. Why did you leave the news media and what are you doing now?

PLEASE NOTE: The questions above are generally leading questions and follow-up questions were asked based on the respondents' responses, positions and experiences?

Appendix 5: Thematic Analysis Guide

Table: Phases of Thematic Analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and rereading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking in the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic „map" of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells; generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Source: Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2), pp. 35.