

https://dspace.org/

The working conditions of professional black women journalists: phase two

Zimu, Nokwazi

2012-02-08
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/11261

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

THE WORKING CONDITIONS OF PROFESSIONAL BLACK WOMEN JOURNALISTS:

PHASE TWO

BY: NOKWAZI ZIMU

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OFMASTER OF ARTS

SUPERVISOR: PROF P.D. GQOLA

14th day of December 2011

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

CHAPTER 1 RESEARCH PROCESS 4

1.1. AIM 4
1.2. INTRODUCTION 5
1.3. RATIONALE 7
1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS 12

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE 13

2.1. INTRODUCTION 13
2.2. LITERATURE REVIEW 13
2.2.1 The black women's struggle is not yet 13
2.2.2. Patriarchy lives as black women at the top are silenced 16
2.2.3. Womanising the newsroom and news 21
2.2.4. Marginalising the black/woman journalist/professional 24
2.2.5. Misrepresenting the black woman 28
2.2.6. Challenging SANEF 32
2.2.7. Women in the "old boys club" 34
2.2.8. Unemployment sends black women to professional prisons 37
2.2.9 Educating black women 39
2.3. CONCLUSION 39

CHAPTER 3 METHODS 40

3.1. INTRODUCTION 40
3.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK 40
3.2.1. African feminism and feminisms versus Western feminism 40
3.2.2. Womanism: the possible answer to media gender equity 45
3.3. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH: THE CASE STUDY, SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE, FOCUS GROUP AND INTERVIEWS 49
3.3.1 Qualitative research 49
3.3.2. Case study 50
3.3.3 Survey questionnaire 50
3.3.4. Focus group 52
3.3.5. Interviews 53
3.4. SELF-REFLEXIVE RESEARCH METHOD 56
3.5. DATA ANALYSIS 57
3.6. CONCLUSION 58

CHAPTER 4 COLLECTION 59

4.1. RESEARCH DATA 59
4.1.1. Introduction 59
4.1.2. Focus group data findings 59
4.1.3. The survey questionnaire and data findings 60
4.1.4. Tables of Findings: Phase 1 and 2 74
4.1.5. Survey Questionnaire Data Analysis 75
4.1.6. Survey Questionnaire and Data Findings (continued) 79

4.1.7. Interview Data Findings *83*
4.1.8. Structured News Source Interviews *101*
4.1.9. Self-Reflexive Data *107*
4.2. CONCLUSION 110

CHAPTER 5 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION 112

5.1. INTRODUCTION 112
5.2 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE 112
5.3. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FOCUS GROUP 119
5.4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS 120
5.5. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE SHORT STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS 131

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION 136

6.1. REFLECTING ON THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS 136

BIBLIOGRAPHY 141

WEBSITES: 148

APPENDICES 150

APPENDIX: 1.1 151
APPENDIX: 1.2. 179
APPENDIX: 1. 3 180

Chapter 1 Research Process

1.1. Aim

In 2009 I conducted a study as part of my BA (Hons) degree titled "The working conditions of professional black women in South African newsrooms". In that project, which I refer to as "Phase One", I was interested in finding out what the working conditions of black women journalists in the country are like and whether there is an awareness of what was happening among both the workers and the employers. As with the present thesis I used the SABC TV newsroom as my case study, and therefore I surveyed eight current and former employees of the SABC. My findings showed that the industry does not have much care for black women, both as employees and as news sources/makers/subjects. The terms "news source", "news maker", and "news subject" are used to define any actor in the news broadcasts, whether she makes a statement or not. I found that as employees black women are marginalised and completely disregarded as equals in the industry. All of the women surveyed argued that their salaries and positions were lower than those of their male counterparts, while at the same time they had to work twice as hard, if not much more, as their male colleagues and women colleagues of other races. Phase One also shows that the marginalisation stretches through to black women in the news as sources, in the sense that they are rarely mentioned in the news. When they are mentioned it is often in stereotypical or negative roles, such as victims of rape or domestic abuse, or prostitutes. This thesis is therefore the second phase of the study, focusing on the same issues, while further examining differences that may have occurred since the research was last conducted in 2009. The aim of this thesis is to seek changes in the realities, problems, experiences and challenges faced by black women in their jobs, since the Phase One findings. It is important to note that this thesis does not simply revise what the first phase of the study has already covered. As explained above, it further examines the results of the previous study, consequently extending the number of women surveyed and later interviewing five of the

respondents to explore other issues affecting the role, or mere existence, of black women in the media as both employees and sources. As in 2009's research, this study seeks to analyse issues affecting the roles of black women and the conditions under which they play those roles in South Africa's media. Furthermore, I will study the patterns of the representation of black women as news sources in the media, as a result of the working conditions of black women journalists. At this point a further five women are interviewed as news sources, to get a clear estimation of how women as an audience see their representation in the news. All in all this thesis looks at ways the media have adopted to do what I prefer to term womanise (the noun being womanisation) the industry, if they have made any such effort at all. Many have previously referred to what I call womanisation as feminisation (see Casale 2004: 6),[1] as shown the literature review section. However, I have chosen not to use "feminise" because during my research I have learnt that in much of the literature on gender and representation, "feminisation" is used in a negative form, to denote the ways in which some labour has been devalued as more women entered. It represents the lack of transformation of workplaces into sites that enable women to move, grow, and be more visible and respected as they take charge. As demonstrated in the first phase of my study, junior positions and the so-called "soft news" beats have been feminised in the media industry. I have therefore coined the term "womanisation" to be the direct opposite of the former term, indicating a positive transformation that takes on board what changes, structurally and otherwise, need to be in place for workplaces to be equitable in gender terms. The term "black" in both studies refers only to people of African descent, which therefore excludes coloured and Indian women as subjects of the research. The design of this thesis will be much longer and more complex than Phase One, with a largely extended literature review section and a longer methodology, which has been transformed to methods.

1.2. Introduction

[1] Please refer to Casale (2004: 6) in page 28 of the literature review section.

This study explores the numerical representation of black professional women in South African newsrooms and asks whether this and other prevailing circumstances provide a fair balance of working conditions for black women journalists. It also considers the representation of women as portrayed in news reports. Therefore the paper seeks to find out what kind of effect these professional levels of representation have on black women as newsmakers and sources. In other words, I am interested in the representations of black women in both senses of "representation", as used in academic research: numeric placement as well as portrayal.

In relation to working conditions, I go on to study the kinds of positions these women hold in the newsrooms, the kinds of experiences they have, and how long they have served in their newsrooms. Furthermore this study delves much deeper than Phase One into differentiated issues that may shape their working conditions, such as the respect accorded them by colleagues of the opposite race or gender. The paper further examines salary discrepancies, comparing the salaries of black women to those of colleagues differently marked by race and gender. Most importantly, this phase of the study investigates the effect that the employment levels and conditions of these women continue to have on the representation of black women in the news, as sources or newsmakers.

As in the first phase of this study, I address the above questions in a systematic manner, beginning with an explanatory literature review on employment patterns within the media for women. Employment patterns as determined by gender comparisons in other industries, outside of the media, have also been selected and presented. The conditions under which black women work in South African newsrooms is read against the larger emerging picture of black women's employment patterns, illuminated by the scholarship reviewed here. This paper studies these patterns, offering a critique of what appears to be unbalanced working conditions for black women, which stand in sharp contrast to the circumstances of their counterparts of other races and gender. The literature is extended as it explores the attempts and efforts to implement womanisation of the media, in a way

that all black women of South Africa can identify with what the media portrays. The work studied here offers a very bleak picture in this instance.

The theoretical framework follows next, with a thorough explanation that states the feminist and womanist theories chosen to argue the case that black women are subjected to unfair working conditions and poor portrayal by the media as news makers/sources. Two methods have been selected and presented to conduct this research: the qualitative and self-reflexive research methods. Data findings are presented as collected and received from participants of the survey, in both focus group and interviews. The analysis of the data is then presented with the brief support of thematic content analysis and a thorough verbatim form of interview transcription, as well as by incorporating and expanding on theory and the literature review. I further respond to the four research questions through the data analysis.

1.3. Rationale

In present South Africa the representation of men and women journalists has equalised in numbers. This has been confirmed by a number of studies conducted in this field of research. A study conducted by the South African National Editors Forum (SANEF), "The Glass Ceiling Two: An audit of women and men in South African newsrooms, 2007", found the same result. However, SANEF (2007) argues that according to Statistics South Africa, black women constitute the biggest group defined by race and gender in South Africa, representing 46% of the population. SANEF further argues that "although employers had up to 45% women in their newsrooms, only 18% of those women are black" (Ibid). However, because "black" in the SANEF study includes coloured, African and Indian women, the number of African black women in newsrooms would be even lower.

It is hence clear that this equal distribution of men and women within South African newsrooms does not translate into equal and equitable distribution of gender and race across the news landscape. For instance, as the SANEF study shows, there are very low numbers of black women occupying senior and top management echelons, and few women on the hard news beats. The findings of the first phase of my study in 2009, showed that the majority of black women are found in junior reporter and general levels in the newsrooms. The research revealed that many of these women are often assigned to softer news stories, such as human interest, weather, education, travel and entertainment. In the history of news media, soft news has often been considered "weak", therefore because women are also patriarchal-ly constructed as weak, they are often aligned with such stories. The hard news beat stories, such as politics, finance, sport and crime, are given to the men, the "stronger" gender.

The SANEF study further highlights the lower remuneration rates for black women, who earn, on average, 25% less than their white male counterparts. The findings of the SANEF study discussed above, along with my experiences as a black woman journalist formerly employed by many of the country's broadcast newsrooms, are some of the underlying motivations for this study. Indeed, my experience resonates with the findings of the "Glass Ceiling" research report as well as the experiences of survey participants from the first phase of my study, which is further illustrated in this paper. The importance of ascertaining answers to the questions posed in this paper was further affirmed by the fact that black women constitute nearly half of South Africa's population, and yet are rendered both invisible and junior in South African newsrooms. Building on my 2009 paper, this second phase continues to probe the conditions under which black women work in the SABC TV newsroom; it will illuminate the context that enables the findings of the "Glass Ceiling" study.

A few other studies on racism and/or sexism in the media, conducted internationally and locally since the 1970s, raise concerns about the ill treatment, poor status and financial

definition of black female professionals in the country's newsrooms. Among these is the series of SANEF studies which simply point out that black women remain at the receiving end of discrimination in all forms. What studies of this kind fail to do, however, is to delve deeper into the core of the problems leading to this situation, and they also fall short of finding solutions to these problems. My 2009 research paper used all the information it had gathered to explore these issues affecting black women in newsrooms, in order to establish whether changes had been implemented or not. It further suggested a movement be formed by the women involved to address the problems identified. It established that no matter the experience and qualifications black women have, they simply remain at the bottom of the industry. Of all eight women surveyed, only two had less than nine years' experience, with one of the two having seven years' experience. This shows that all but one was adequately experienced for middle to senior management positions. Hence, I find it inequitable that only three of these women have even been considered for management, and even then, not at a high rank. The issues of salary discrepancies and lack of growth are also at the forefront, as all women in the sample believed they deserved better salaries. Some believed they should be paid more because male counterparts and women of other racial groups earn much more than them.

Leaving their employer was found to be a commonly considered option among the respondents; two have in fact already left, and did so because they were unhappy in their positions. Four of those remaining, including the anonymous anchor/producer, also intended to leave, due to unhappiness about, amongst other things, inequitable opportunities and remuneration. Considering these women's levels of experience, it is indeed distressing that seasoned journalists have resorted to abandoning a career they are most passionate about, or are likely to do so, rather than fighting any longer.

While I also chose to resign under similar circumstances, one should question what that has solved. In hindsight I find that my decision to leave, along with others like myself,

has instead helped contribute to the 'juniorisation'[2] and 'dumbing-down'[3] of the newsroom, resulting in a greater number of inexperienced and uninformed young black women being exploited. Thus, the representation of black women in the news deteriorates further.

Zama Mbalo, a camera person, and Ntombi Miya, a junior reporter, provide precise evidence in support of this theory, as they displayed a lack of knowledge and experience regarding the operation of managing structures in this industry. For example, Mbalo was seemingly happy with the fact that she is now employed on a permanent basis. Her excitement came regardless of the fact that her permanent contract as a senior camera operator was only signed four years after her appointment to the SABC, a company at which she arrived with two years' experience in her field.

Having worked a total of six and a half years, upon the upgrading of her contract Mbalo was in actual fact qualified to serve at the level of supervisor/junior management. Furthermore, she also seemed to be oblivious to the fact that her permanent contract is restrictive, not allowing her to freelance, as most of her male counterparts are able to do. Having worked with this team myself, I believe that Mbalo was misled, and hence clearly failed to consider this when she and her male colleagues compared salary slips, as a means to avoid exploitation. It is therefore my contention that patriarchy, even in Mbalo's department, which she deems equitable in all aspects, may be alive and well on the part of her colleagues, considering they might have deliberately misled her on the issue of freelancing. This reflects the argument by Smith (2000) that, "despite enjoying the privilege of 'insider' status as a black professional, a journalist, academic, cyber-feminist with literary agency, the right to be a critical, self-theorising subject remained elusive".

[2] Juniorisation is commonly used term in media to indicate that a news team is junior and possesses minimal experience.
[3] Dumbing-down is a term used to indicate reduction of intellect.

I therefore suggested a resistance movement as the solution to the inequality experienced by black women in the media. This movement, I concluded, could be used as a tool to scrutinise the senseless and patriarchal decisions that place men at the helm of the media. It would act politically as well, seeking to install black women in key political positions that influence the industry. Women elected as representatives of the movement would be women who have absolutely no fear about taking up ownership of the media. I also concluded in the first phase that educating black women is key to fighting the continued marginalisation of the black women in the industry.

It is also crucial for media studies scholars and professionals to know the current situation with these women. I have therefore found it imperative to explore these issues at further length. In both the 2009 paper and the present thesis I have chosen the SABC TV newsroom as the case study. I have done this because the SABC TV newsroom is very large, consisting of various language news teams, organised into morning, afternoon, weekend and children's news sections, among others. The fact that I am a former employee of that newsroom also plays an important role, as it gives me easier access to the black women employed there. Their trust in me and the ease with which they shared conversation with me has made it easy for both the SABC and my former colleagues to allow me time to conduct the research. At the same time, not all black women in the newsroom were open to the study, and while some were open enough to take part in the survey, they had some reservations about being interviewed, opting to remain silent. In conducting the first phase of the study, I found that the women's attitudes were completely withdrawn from the idea of working together with the men at the helm. The anger or resentment displayed towards the men by several of them has grown to the extent that they are now simply focused on taking over the reins.

In studying the SABC TV newsroom, this thesis will extend its analysis of the current experiences of and working conditions for black women journalists. Certainly, as in the

initial study, I continue to look at who these women are, why they are in their current positions, how long have they been there, how long they intend to stay and why. I will also consider how they feel about their positions and what kind of response or treatment they receive from colleagues, especially probing how this has changed since 2009 for those who participated in that year's study. Moreover this phase of the research will look at the effects the working conditions and experiences of these women have had and continue to have on the coverage of black women as newsmakers/sources in the news.

1.4. Research Questions

The following are the research questions explored in the study:

1. How does gender affect the working conditions of professional black women in South African newsrooms?

2. Does the professional representation of black women indicate implementation of the womanisation of the news and media?

Chapter 2 Literature

2.1. Introduction

Employment patterns of black women in media remain in a very poor state, regardless of what the media moguls have claimed with regard to transforming the industry. This chapter attempts to explain and critique these patterns with regard to black women, in comparison to men and to women of other races. It also considers how black women are covered in the news, either as news makers or news sources. I also expand on how news coverage of black women is affected by the working conditions of the women in the media. To establish this point I use the third research question, which asks; does the professional representation of black women indicate implementation of the womanisation of the news and media?

2.2. Literature Review

2.2.1 The black women's struggle is not yet

From the beginning of conducting this study for my BA (Hons) degree in 2009, it became very clear that there is little information or scholarship on women as media workers in South Africa, especially with regard to black women working in the news media. It has also been very apparent that where this literature does exist, only specific kinds of information are revealed. Hence the thesis does not only rely on material that is specific to the topic, but primarily on written material that covers similar ground to my study.

Having said that, among the literature that looks at women in the media are "The Glass Ceiling" (SANEF) studies. The very naming of these studies derives from the recognition that there are structural impediments to women's mobility within the workplace. The first is "The Glass Ceiling: Studying employment patterns in the media, 2006". That study leads the previously cited "Glass Ceiling Two". Both play a major role in shaping my series of studies. I am particularly drawn to this work, because SANEF conducted it to find out whether women are likely to hit the glass gender ceiling assumed to exist in South African newsrooms. Once that had been determined, the research intended to uncover what exactly caused this and what changes were being made, if any.

The research findings gave no cause for pleasure. The study found:

> [D]espite having a Constitution that entrenches equal rights, discriminatory practices, structural inequalities, cultural factors, prejudices, patriarchy and sexism are still alive and well in South African newsrooms. These are clearly prohibiting the country's women journalists from realising their potential (SANEF 2006).

According to this study, then, the conditions under which women work in South African newsrooms contradict the equitable spirit of the Constitution. In my previous paper I argue that "these conditions are institutional and directly impact on how far women journalists can progress in their careers" (Zimu 2009: 12). The study found that women occupy less than 30% of top management posts, and one out of three senior management positions in newsrooms. Conversely, women comprise 48% of junior managers and almost 70% of all semi-skilled workers in the newsroom. Several newsrooms do not have any women at top and senior management levels. An exceptional few, such as Kaya FM and Primedia, have women in well over half of their top and senior management positions, with 100% and 78% representation in these two organisations, respectively, at the time of the study.

Having touched on our Constitution, it is obvious that over the 16 years since South Africa's democracy came into being, new laws, such as the Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998, which includes sections that favour women and black people, have been established and put into action. For example, Chapter 2 subsections 6.1 and 6.3 of the Act state that no person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against an employee in any employment policy or practice, on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibility, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, HIV status, conscience, belief, political opinion, culture, language and birth. It further states that harassment of an employee is a form of unfair discrimination and is prohibited on any one or a combination of the grounds of unfair discrimination listed above.

The media have since taken on a new growth, moving from being government controlled to being free. However, the freedom for black women in the industry and those who depend on it to make their voices heard is yet to come. Many of the discriminatory practices listed by the Employment Equity Act mentioned above are still very prevalent in South African newsrooms. This is a fact I established in the survey and interviews I conducted with participating black women journalists and other black women outside of the industry, who represent the possible news sources or subjects. Three of the journalists interviewed feel, as news subjects, women are overwhelmingly tend to be portrayed in a negative manner, such as victims of domestic violence and rape, or shown as sex symbols. This is a commonly shared feeling, as all of the non-journalists were also of the same view.

October (2004: 2) agrees with my views as expressed above, arguing in the Stellenbosch Media Forum, that, while South Africa has come a long way since the 1956 march by some 20 000 women to the Union Buildings, protesting against pass laws, "today the

women's struggle is not yet". She continues: "[P]roblems of representation in terms of race and gender are still hampering the media (Ibid)."

2.2.2. Patriarchy lives as black women at the top are silenced

In the second "Glass Ceiling" study, SANEF (2007) argues that "while there have been deliberate investments into redressing the racial imbalances of the past, these have mainly been to the benefit of black men. Not much has happened to redress those concerning black women. Black men constituted 16% of top and senior managers in the newsrooms in 1999." By 2006 this percentage had increased to 23,5%. Black women, on the other hand, remained at the bottom of the ladder. SANEF found that black women account for a mere six percent of top and senior management in newsrooms (Ibid). This study proves that patriarchy and sexism are still alive and well in our newsrooms. Men are seemingly the gender of the black population that is climbing the career ladder in this industry, with women remaining at the bottom.

It is further worrying that men are more likely than women to be employed in open-ended full-time contracts while women are more likely to be contracted on a part-time basis. According to SANEF, 65% of women journalists are employed part-time and 52,1% on a fixed full-time contract, varied in different media houses (Ibid). This clearly indicates that this industry provides fewer options for women with regard to binding employment contracts.

The SANEF report has stimulated several responses, including follow-up research by Gender Links across Southern Africa. This particular study completed the "Glass Ceiling" series of studies by providing baseline data on the internal institutional make-up and practices of the media through a gender lens. This research was conducted on the basis of media houses instead of newsrooms only. Its findings are along the same lines as

those of the previous studies. It found that men still dominate as employees in the media, occupying 59% of the positions, with 41% taken up by women. Women continue to be assigned to supporting positions, such clerical and administrative, while men are in top managerial posts, including those in editing and production, and directorships. Male chauvinism was apparent. As one respondent put it, "We expect women to be home at 6pm cooking and not at press conferences mingling with ministers (Made and Lowe Morna 2009: 11)."

What this study shows is that even after several years of attempts to highlight inequalities that exist in the newsrooms and the media at large across South Africa and the Southern African region, there has in fact been very minimal change towards creating a proper gender balance in this industry. It is clear that women, especially black women, are always at the bottom of the ladder and outside of the decision-making boardrooms.

With that said, an argument borrowed by Gallagher (2002: 4) from May Kahhale, the media advisor to former President of Lebanon, comes into light. She argued: "The reality shows a presence rather than a role of women in the media." Kahhale had been quoted in the sense of women in general by Dabbous-Sensenig (2000: 15). Gallagher agrees with this point, arguing:

> [I]t is undeniable that women are now 'present' as an important middle-level cohort of producers, directors, journalists and reporters in the media of many countries round the world. For although it is true that more women than ever before are entering media industries in almost all world regions, women still have very little real decision-making power (Gallagher 2002: 4 – 5).

Gallagher (2001: 1) makes the same argument, saying, "wherever one looks in the world, women still have relatively little decision making power either inside the media

organizations themselves, or in the political and economic institutions with which these organizations must interface". Although Gallagher's study was published nine years ago, as a former black woman journalist employee of the case study subject, I find it very relevant, as I do Kahhale's views above. My point is that the scholars mentioned above, along with many other feminists across the globe, are debating the issue of gender equity; however, if there are equity divisions even among the very rebels against gender inequity, then surely the battle we face is far much bigger than many of us realise. Nonetheless on the main point of discussion, black women in the media, Frohlich (2007: 165) suggests that in relation to the upper echelons of journalism the notion that what she terms feminisation could be imminent, or even to think that it actually does exist, is indeed risible.

In fact, Frohlich is seemingly the only scholar who has stood to challenge directly the notion of active feminisation of the media as a myth (Ibid). In her study "Three Steps Forward and Two Back? Women Journalists in the Western World between Progress, Standstill, and Retreat", Frohlich (Ibid: 174) argues:

> [W]hile making three steps forward in the 1980s female journalists throughout the world have taken two steps backward, since the mid-1990s. Contemporary journalism is characterized by an imbalance between women's visibility and their lack of influence in the field. (Ibid)

While I do not agree with the term "feminisation" of the media, preferring "womanisation", I do support Frohlich's argument that the notion of making the industry better for the women in it is somewhat of a myth, because although this has become a commonly heard promise by those who control the industry, the result bears little relationship to their words, and even less for the black women of this country.

In her response to the SANEF (2006) study, Duncan (2006: 22) argues that "there is in fact a general poverty of strategy when it comes to achieving gender balance in the media". She further argues:

> [T]here are deep structural reasons why women are so under-represented. A common sense approach to addressing gender imbalances in the media has taken root, built on an often undeclared set of theoretical assumptions. I would agree that these assumptions are built on the liberal feminist tradition, which emphasises the attainment of equal rights while remaining blind to the structural reasons why such rights are allocated unequally (Ibid).

With reference to this observation, it is clear that the common sense approach to addressing gender inequity is itself unequal. Relying on the liberal feminist tradition, this widespread approach remains oblivious to or at least somewhat unaware of the fact that even though there are structures in place to address the under-representation of women, this very subject remains a problem and continues to get worse.

Duncan's views are therefore obviously indicative of anger towards a media gender imbalance that has seemingly been exacerbated by the willingness of women to be blinded by minimal career growth, accepting it as appropriate growth for women. She expresses this with her reference to the liberal feminist tradition. As in my 2009 study, I agree with Duncan's observations, arguing that these women fail to see and hence address that one move closer to the glass ceiling is not the same as a move through the ceiling. I argued then that liberal feminism should therefore be structured in a manner recognising that while there may be a few women appointed to senior management positions, there is a great possibility that they do not have a say in the boardroom, or that they may not be women of colour, let alone black women. Having said that, those women who may have seats appointed to them in the boardrooms may also be earning far less

than their male counterparts. Therefore Duncan's anger towards this kind of blindness is indeed justifiable.

In agreement with Duncan, Rabe (2006: 20) argues that with results such as those in the SANEF (2006) study, "it is clear that some senior women journalists not only experience a glass ceiling but indeed one made of concrete". In the case of my study Rabe's views are on point, as black women are completely blocked from even getting a glimpse of what it is like in the upper echelons of the industry.

Indeed the extent of this denial to the black woman, this complete blockage of career ambition, is a great pity, perhaps the biggest error that those in charge of the industry could have made, or continue to make in this day. What I mean by this, is that the industry's top management is missing the most crucial point: the great potential for success linked to employing black women, who have made a reputation for themselves as being responsible and reliable and having the sense of commitment to their duties, both in the private and public spheres. Prekel (1995: 7) argues the same point:

> From tribal times, black women have worked hard. As single parents, while husbands are working elsewhere, or as breadwinners when their husbands are unemployed, they have learned to take responsibility. Increasingly employers are realising that many black women are exceptionally reliable, diligent, productive and loyal. (Prekel 1995:7)

However, by the same token, the argument Prekel and I make above could also be the very reason why black women remain in the lower echelons in the media. As the saying goes, "the higher one goes the less work one does". Authorities may be of the view that promoting these hard workers would be detrimental to productivity in the lower levels of their newsrooms. They may therefore prefer to promote workers that are less productive, less committed, less reliable, etc. Indeed this could be a clever way to retain skills and

productivity in their companies; however, it is an immoral and selfish practice that only suits the patriarchal minds that currently prevail.

2.2.3. Womanising the newsroom and news

With these problems still occurring in the country's newsrooms, there is definitely still a long way to go before black South African women become equals of their fellow citizens. This brings to mind the research question, does the representation of black women in the news itself indicate that the womanisation of news for the average black woman has been implemented? Judging by the literature I have surveyed, my response to this question is no. It is evident that the news has not turned to favour the average black woman of South Africa. If anything, it most recently seems to have turned even more against the black woman, who is once again rarely featured.

Having said that, the situation of women remaining in the background is not specific to South Africa. It appears to be a global problem. In India, for instance, women there are still fighting sexism in and by the media. In her article "Media Don't Portray the Realities of Women's Lives", Narasimhan (2001: 6) writes:

> [W]omen journalists break stock exchange scam stories and, at the same time, sexist depictions of the female continue to appear alongside their work. What we are experiencing in mainstream media as well as in women's magazines is an amorphous mix of traditional and "modern" viewpoints and perspectives. And this is happening, in part, because the status of women in Indian society is itself in a state of flux, and the business priorities override the efforts and sensibilities of those who argue that the realities of women's lives, both their achievements and their huge challenges ought to be honestly portrayed.

Business takes centre stage, while gender equity waits in the wings in India. Narasimhan's example and argument above clearly shows this; however, again, it is not an issue specific to that country alone. Global ownership of the media, including South Africa, has unashamedly demonstrated its undivided attention to business, instead of equalising gender rights and roles, among other issues.

Therefore Narasimhan is correct to point out that women may break the very business stories in which women are rendered less important than men. It is a known fact that while the number of black women business journalists is on the rise in South Africa, the number of businesses exploiting other women – as phone sex models, pornography stars or simply a pretty face in a power suit – is increasing at an even higher rate. Good examples of this are the recently launched series of black pornography films, largely filmed in Soweto among a host of black townships, and the South African *Playboy* magazine. Hence I stress once again that the increasing numbers of black women in previously uncharted professional terrains/territories has made no difference with regard to the portrayal of black women. The increase remains just what it is, a number.

In the article "In Nigerian Newspapers, Women are Seen, not Heard; Even influential women journalists stay away from coverage of women's issues", Anyawu (2001: 2) argues her point in this manner:

> [T]he definition of news, what makes news, real marketable news in Nigeria inevitably excludes a sizeable chunk of the population, especially women. A recent survey conducted by the Independent Journalism Center (IJC) in Lagos in conjunction with the Panos Institute of Washington and the Center for War, Peace and the News Media of New York established that 80 percent of practicing journalists in Nigeria are male. Women's issues are also not given adequate coverage in the media. Where they are

> covered, they are treated from the male perspective. The dominant attitude among Nigerian journalists is that women's issues rarely make marketable news. Women's issues belong to a genre of information considered lightweight news. Frivolous. No serious editor wants his newspaper trivialized. Therefore, such stories are considered to properly belong to the tabloids dealing in trivia and sex and scandal.

Once again the issue I raise above about women being seen as mere sex objects has been raised, and clearly since women are seen as such in most countries. Anyawu has it that "serious" (men) editors keep women out to maintain the seriousness of their newspapers. According to Lowe-Morna (2001: 3), "Women invariably feature as sex objects or as victims of violence in the media. Ironically although women constitute the majority of media consumers, little attention is paid to what they would be interested in knowing." Often it is what is omitted from the media, rather than what is covered, that reveals that news media are not as unbiased and objective as they claim to be. Lowe-Morna further argues:

> [W]omen are seldom portrayed as politicians, newsmakers, experts, business leaders, and a host of other roles in which men regularly feature – even where women have broken into nontraditional jobs and social roles (Ibid: 31).

Curphey (2003: 2) agrees, asking, if media are an unbiased reflection of society, why it is that "when a woman's words do make their way into the news, she is most likely to be a beauty contestant, sex worker or a homemaker". Luimes-Sindane (2006: 8) argues that such representation of women in the news comes as a result of the poor or low key presence of women in newsrooms. It is also important to add that this may be intellectually the case even though may be an adequate numeric presence.

2.2.4. Marginalising the black/woman journalist/professional

Luimes-Sindane's argument above along with mine are *sadly* true, and I emphasise *sadly*, because in the first phase of this study I argue that "the effect of black women as newsmakers is conditional upon what society sees as portraying black women on their television sets, or what they hear on their radios and read in their newspapers every day" (Zimu 2009: 15). Hence if black women as media practitioners are just not afforded a stage to better equip themselves and prove what they truly represent, then indeed the public face and idea of the black woman will remain as it is; poor, sex object, villain and unintelligent victim of rape and domestic abuse.

In that paper, I also raise the point that black women working in the newsrooms are constantly reminded of their marginalisation through the persistence of imbalanced gender representation in their places of work, expressed in low salaries, stagnant job progression and the like (Ibid). Such treatment has led many women to believe they would be better off in other industries and therefore to ending their media careers. I draw on the views of Joyce Dube, a former journalist, now the SABC's corporate social investments project manager, on why a pool of black women journalists, herself included, never progressed in the industry. In an SABC online open letter to her mother, Dube (2005: 2) argues:

> [M]en were very scared of us. We were too knowledgeable for them and tough. Even our male colleagues were scared of promoting us to senior positions, as it is the case to date.

This statement suggests that given the opportunity, economic support and proper training, black women journalists have the strength to take over the media. Dube's words strongly suggest that those in charge fear what would happen to the "old boys' club" should black women be allowed to occupy leadership positions in the media.

Gail Smith (2000) argues that "while black women journalists and commentators are present in the 'new' South Africa, their opinions were largely limited to women's pages, or political commentary with only a passing reference to their gender and race". Overall, Smith argues that "although critical black women thinkers are extremely active, their perspective on the 'new' South Africa is rarely allowed to play an influential public role" (Ibid).

I have argued that Smith's argument clarifies the fact that little has changed in South Africa's newsrooms (Zimu 2009: 17), as Dube (2005: 3) does when she says, "[W]omen were sidelined to play inferior roles in the newsrooms. Some were degraded to be sex mates and some just could not go through the media glass ceiling." Dube comments that "some left journalism to pursue more rewarding careers in public relations, law, corporate and marketing" (Ibid). While she does not clearly state what exactly made these women relinquish their careers in journalism, it is clear that being sidelined, as I have pointed out above, or perhaps, as Smith (2000) argues, being pushed to "the margins of society", made these women seek employment in sectors where their intelligence and ability to perform would be acknowledged and therefore rewarded accordingly.

The trend to abandon the industry for other sectors where black women feel better utilised has continued. In a period extending for slightly more than two years I came to know of 15 black women who left broadcasting news for careers in the corporate sector. Many others have resigned from other media departments to pursue careers outside the industry. Pushed on her reasons for leaving the industry, one of these women, whom I have given the fictional name Nonhlanhla Malinga,[4] asked:

[4] This spontaneously interviewed former black woman journalist shall otherwise remain anonymous.

> [W]hat's the point of sticking around? I would rather work a typical 8-5 office-based job that appreciates my contributions and talent, better than a creative job that just does not seem to even acknowledge my creativity. It's really a pity that one cannot do what one loves (Nonhlanhla Malinga 2010).

As pointed out in my previous paper, the lack of status of black women professionals is not confined to the newsroom. Casale (2004: 6) argues that while the womanisation, which she refers to as the "feminisation", of the labour market has indeed occurred in South Africa, "it has not fundamentally challenged the disadvantaged position of women in the labour market relative to that of men". Her views are echoed by Berger, who quotes Francis Baard, in her 1986 interview with Barbie Schreiner, as saying:

> [T]hey used to employ women in canning factories because, the women always work faster than the men with all the peeling and cutting, taking the pips out and with those factories you can't be slow;… And then too, they could pay the women less than they paid the men (Baard 1986: 21 – 2, in Berger 2007: 203).

Baard speaks of what happened during the 1950s, but clearly what she says remains the same in today's labour market. Women are still hired in numbers, work more than their men colleagues, and yet are paid less. This is similar to the argument I have made above in relation to Prekel's (1995) views about black women having the ability to work diligently and loyally. Therefore the following argument by Blin (2008: 115) is valid: "The feminisation of the labour force has also implied increased flexibility and casualisation of labour across countries." Both Blin and Casale's arguments are also in sync with the statements above that womanisation exists only on paper, instead of in action. Casale (2004: 6) argues that "despite data concerns, the evidence would therefore seem to suggest that the continued feminisation of the labour force in South Africa between 1995 and 2001 has been associated principally with rapidly rising rates of

unemployment among women, as well as some growth in informal self-employment, considered to be a low-paying and insecure form of work".

Vokwana (2005: 166) comments, in a review of "Hear Our Voices: Race, gender and the status of black women in the academy" by R. Mabokela and Z. Magubane:

> [I]t is chilling to note that black faces are almost totally invisible in insitutions of higher learning, especially historically white ones. […] black faces, particularly those of black women, are far and few between, if not wholly absent.

According to Vokwana's review, this is a book that criticises and questions what the authors see as inappropriate treatment of black women academics. A stance such as this can be a tool for the black women in academia to use in ensuring that they are heard and respected by those in key decision-making positions.

Considering the fact that many black women journalists have left, and continue to leave the industry for better opportunities in other sectors, it is fair to argue that while Blin (2008: 124) is of the view that the feminisation of the labour market may not necessarily lead to salaried jobs, there are indeed a few organisations willing to take the leap of change in accepting women, specifically black women; acknowledging their skills, qualifications and talents; and in turn rewarding them accordingly. This stance is demonstrated by the views of many respondents/interviewees of both phases of my study. One cannot argue that many of the women who do leave the industry see this as the only solution at this time in life, however, there are indeed other ways of fighting this silencing of black women journalists, while remaining in the media. Indeed if, as suggested by the authors "Hear Our Voices", black women in academia should stand up and fight, I say black women in the media should do the same.

2.2.5. Misrepresenting the black woman

Commenting on the "Glass Ceiling" study at the International Women's Media Foundation Conference in 2006, SANEF Chairperson Ferial Haffajee (2006) said it painted a scary picture of "cosy boys' clubs" and "frustrated senior female journalists" for whom the promise of freedom is not arriving. Smith (2000) supports this statement thus:

> [O]n the one hand we were lauded for our groundbreaking Constitution and our impressive number of women in Parliament; on the other, we lived in a society where misogyny had reached endemic proportions. Theoretically we were passing with flying colours, but in reality 'gender' was being conflated with 'women's issues', and violent masculinity was lauded and rewarded and glamourised.

According to Smith, the media are completely contradicting the country's Constitution. Smith's argument takes us back to an earlier point about misrepresentations of black women. The qualitative research conducted in the gender and media baseline study by Gender Links and the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) in 2003 showed another disparity relating to women and the media. The study found that not only are women severely under-represented, but that they are also misrepresented in the media.

Another study, conducted by Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) as part of its research on the media coverage of the general elections in April 2009, found that the media generally neglect women's issues as much as politicians do. MMA (2009) further argues that "while the media neglect women's issues, not to mention, rarely offer a gender perspective in their stories and move beyond the objectification of women, the bar should

have been raised during the elections to highlight the importance of the issue in South Africa".

Buiten (2007: 117) argues that "the news media, as knowledgeable producers, are able to voice or silence and thereby create a platform from which to address social issues". In agreement with the MMA's (2009) findings, with specific reference to the media's reportage of gender-based violence (GBV), Buiten (2007: 121) contends that "the voices of those affected by GBV are thereby muffled through the normalisation of the brutality they experience and the lack of accountability imposed upon perpetrators through the media". Buiten further argues:

> [A]s long as these silences continue in the media, there is little hope for effective and widespread public engagement with the issues pertinent to gender based violence. The media has a role to play in the voicing and indeed silencing of social issues in need of transformation. The media needs to be strongly challenged on the nature and implications of these silences (Ibid).

While I agreed with Buiten in my 2009 paper, I found that her work fails to see the reasons behind poor media representation of women affected by GBV and women as a whole. I argued that Buiten needed to recognise that the media themselves needed transformation in order for them "to deal adequately with the silencing of social issues in need of transformation" (Zimu 2009: 20). Rossouw (2005: 225) argues that "the means of change is as important as the end, and the two should not be confused". She further argues that "the goal is not numerical: the goal is to have a news team that can accurately reflect – in the way that they deliver the news – every aspect of society".

I further argued in the first study that "newsrooms could begin their transformation by employing black women, considering they are the most affected by GBV, into higher

decision-making positions." (Zimu 2009: 21). In hindsight I still support this statement; however, I am now of the notion that those women who take on higher positions in the newsrooms would definitely need to be strong willed and hungry to stand against any form of racism, patriarchy and even ageism. These women should be possession of the kind of activist spirit that led Lillian Ngoyi and Bertha Gxowa to organise the march against pass laws for women in the 1950s. Such a spirit would definitely channel women's minds towards mobilising against patriarchal media systems, eventually toppling the men at the helm to place black women where they belong in order to represent those on the ground better.

As I continue studying black women in the news media, I find that many of those who do occupy senior and middle management positions are somewhat powerless in their positions. However, while some of those interviewed were honest enough to accept this, some were too embarrassed to tell the truth. Therefore, in that sense, I question just how black women who occupy leading positions in newsrooms are helping to womanise the news for the black woman. The positions that senior women hold often make no difference, considering that these women still report to the men at the helm. Many are afraid to defy power, while others have seemingly adjusted their femininity to masculinity, or at least their line of thinking has been adjusted in that manner. I explore this view further in the research findings section of this study.

Vochocova (2008: 232) supports my argument as she borrows from Wackwits-Rackow (2007: 265) the view that "the exploration of the relationship between the position of women in media and changes in the representation of women (and men) in media contents does not in itself imply an influence of these contents on individual audience members or on the society as a whole".

Rossouw (2005: 225) echoes this stance, arguing it in this manner:

> Transformation and diversity is not about numbers, it's about changing mindsets and structures of organizations. It is not about having the same number of women and black people in the newsroom as there are in society. Transformation will only be achieved when women and the black people of South Africa are given the same voice and power in the organization as men and white people.

Ross (2004: 157) agrees:

> [G]ender alone will not make a difference in changing the culture of newsrooms or on the type of news produced. A journalist's sex is no guarantee that she or he will either embrace sentiments that privilege equality nor hold specific values and beliefs that promote a more equitable and non-oppressive practice: Some men may well be more sympathetic to the ideals (and realities) of inclusion than some women. […] mass incorporation of women into the dominant (male) newsroom culture makes honorary men of everyone.

However, with that point in mind it is also very important to have women in numbers, not just in the profession as a whole, but also across all beats and sectors. No number of progressive men, if women continue to be limited to junior ranks and soft beats, will really address the situation of inadequate representation and portrayal of women.

The three scholars above argue a valid point that numbers alone will certainly not change the newsrooms to favour black women or make them equal practitioners in the industry. What these views illustrate is that some media have only equalised numbers; conditions of employment remain unchanged. Others in the industry have used so-called "tokenism" or "window dressing" by placing women in higher positions while they do not possess any power or authority to go with their new positions.

These arguments make it clear that the patriarchal system continues to marginalise women further, while at the same time ridiculing their worth. The mere fact that some women do get appointed to higher positions, but without being afforded the power to be in charge, is a clear indication that the system still does not take women seriously. This also illustrates that women are considered unintelligent, as whatever qualification and experience they may possess is undoubtedly ridiculed by this system. By increasing the number of women, while not adhering to the equal and positive representation of women in the news, or equalising working conditions, the media bosses are indeed further marginalising black women.

2.2.6. Challenging SANEF

Lowe-Morna (2007) echoes my sentiments above, as she points out that having more women decision-makers in newsrooms would not necessarily lead to more being written for and about women. Firstly, she argues that there is a positive correlation between having women in senior and top management positions and the hiring of higher numbers of women journalists. Having said that, she then challenges SANEF:

> [A]s the so-called "torch bearer of freedom and fairness in society", the media is seen by many as having a duty to lead by example in ensuring a level playing field in its backyard and in the content that it produces. As the media was issuing various challenges to governments on World Press Freedom Day, activists hold it will be challenged from within its own ranks to demonstrate that freedom starts at home. As a respondent in the study being launched this week noted: "SANEF really has to pull finger instead of providing lip service." Another put it more bluntly: "Just do it!" (Ibid).

Lowe-Morna's views point to a dissatisfaction among some feminists about the SANEF studies. Her reference to the respondent's comments, make it obvious that Lowe-Morna herself feels SANEF is failing the women journalists of this country. Her observations are correct. Having conducted these studies over a number of years, as the leading media body, SANEF should have been able to instill gender parity across news media in this country by now. As one of the respondents in this study points out, "the entire SANEF body is mainly made up of men, and so is the media ombudsman".

Gqola's view (2007: 116) chimes with that of Lowe-Morna:

> [A]lthough women's representation in all sectors of our society initially emerged as a radical and feminist call for transformation in the interest of a more equitable society, the version we have now, at least in public talk, is so watered down that it threatens to stall social transformation. It also means that those attempts, successful and failed, by women to alter the economic landscape are routinely under-reported, and undervalued.

To conclude, Gqola argues:

> [I]t is under this invisibilisation of women's real transformative work that one of the most powerful women in South Africa's business sector, Nolitha Fakude, spoke when she told a SANEF gathering that "you do us no favours when you make us seem like no more than pretty faces" in reporting on major Black Economic Empowerment deals (Ibid).

SANEF's failure to represent black women as it should, by reflecting, among other realities, that of women as successful hard workers, is noted not only by the women and scholarship in the media. As clearly evidenced by Fakude's words, which Gqola uses to

emphasise the point that key decision-makers are continuously talking about but not acting on transformation, the business sector is also aware of SANEF's failures.

2.2.7. Women in the "old boys club"

With the above point in mind it is also important to note that there are several reasons that may lead to black women who occupy decision-making positions in newsrooms failing to act towards womanising the newsrooms. De Bruin (2004: 1) argues that "journalists work under the influence of professional values and the requirements of the organization that employs them". She continues, "[W]hen analyzing journalists' influence on production it is thus important to take at least three factors into account: gender, professional standards and the media organization itself" (Ibid).

De Bruin makes a good argument in that while journalists themselves may have influence on the product that goes out to the public, one also has to consider their gender, where their morals lie professionally, and which organisation they represent. The reason these factors also play a crucial role is that the gender of the journalist alone does not necessarily indicate a bias towards, sympathy for, or understanding of their gender. On the same note, when a journalist tells a story, the end product largely depends on exactly where the story teller's morals lie. They may also be very influenced by those who control the organisations for which they report.

De Bruin makes a strong argument, however, when she raises another issue, which points to the fact that some women simply succumb to the prevailing masculinity, and thus become members of the so-called "boys clubs" (Ibid). She argues this point in such a manner:

> Solidarity with women journalists does not normally pay off in higher positions. The under-representation of women in high positions suggests that their mobility is limited, this maintains the dominant image of women's low status. Thus for women it may not be too advantageous to strongly identify with the female perspective. This can in fact lead to an over identification with traditional male professional values which women use in order to avoid gender tensions (Ibid: 7 – 13).

De Bruin's point is interesting as it illustrates a contradictory fact, that while some women fear being classified as "the weaker sex", by pulling away from identifying with the female perspective, they actually fail to realise that men have in fact already found a weakness in them, which is that they allow themselves to be pulled towards the male perspective. Hence there is "very little evidence of women performing differently from men in journalism, with the exception of women looking for female spokespersons" (Van Zoonen 1998: 37). Karen Ross supports this belief:

> [W]e need to take into account the influence of cultural and professional knowledge systems on journalists' everyday lives and to uncover specific meanings that people associate with their behavior. Indeed, even within one interpretive community we find various voices – thus even journalists who represent one professional group do not express the same views (Ross 2004: 154 – 155).

In line with Ross's views are the views of Aliza Lavie, who argues that "the work environment (thus also the environment of the newsroom) reproduces patterns of gender relationships that dominate in the society at large and it influences how women perceive themselves, their professional abilities and gender determined discrimination" (Lavie 2004: 119).

Lavie's views indicate that most people are guided by societal structures, which results in the same structural practices being carried out in every other part of life, including the office and what that office produces. In this case the newsroom as well as the news reports. Therefore if, for example, as it is in many instances, a family is based on patriarchal structures in which the head of the family is the man and the rest, including his wife, fall under him and are therefore expected to follow his rules, an individual from that family is likely to carry those attitudes into other spheres of life. Lavie speaks of this as having an influence on how women perceive themselves. It is an unfortunate fact, but it is true that patriarchy has succeeded in making many women think less of themselves and their worth. Therefore, based on these societal structures, women often limit their professional and thinking abilities; they act unintelligent, and in certain instances regard gender discrimination as acceptable, regardless of how unhappy it makes them. With that in mind, women therefore give in to the control of the opposite gender, and as the scholars above argue, fall into the trap of becoming one of their own oppressors.

Ross further argues that some of these women tend to turn against other women in the media. She points to her own study, in which she describes what she calls "gender-blindness" and a "self-deceptive" strategy – a kind of refusal to participate in the life experiences of other women, which she found in her research on newsroom cultures. Women in Ross's research de facto internalised a sexist approach and thought that other women should blame themselves for their subordinate position (Ross 2004: 146).

The women thus described by Ross do not only think that becoming part of the so-called "boys club" is the best way to fit themselves into the industry, they also seem to adhere to the very practices that women such as myself oppose. Instead of realising that women are indeed being oppressed, especially black women, they simply turn a blind eye. They exhibit, as Ross states, "a kind of refusal to participate in the life experiences of other women". This clearly shows that these women get drawn into the lifestyle and practices

of patriarchy to a point that they fail to realise the pain of their own experience of marginalisation, discrimination and oppression as women.

2.2.8. Unemployment sends black women to professional prisons

South Africa's high unemployment statistics play a key role in black women accepting or remaining in jobs where they are not treated as equals, or according to their experiences, qualifications and abilities/talents. According to the statistics released by Statistics South Africa in December 2009, approximately 4,2 million of the 17 million people who make up the labour force are unemployed. The report says that women, especially African (Black) women, are the most affected, at 31%, while for those classified as coloureds, Indians and Whites, the figures were 21%, 11% and 4,5% respectively. This in turn means that there are at least seven unemployed black women for every one white person.

Ndungu (2010: 1) argues that a situation like this forces most women to live off someone else's earnings, resulting in a multiplicity of negative social consequences, including the loss of independence and dignity, and also being forced to remain in abusive relationships.

Lack of employment among black women has also left many desperate to a point of accepting any work advertised or available. In most cases these women end up in abusive employment, where they are paid too little or where they work long hours and are possibly harassed in every sense. As a black woman journalist I struggled throughout my career, having to prove myself by working twice as hard as my colleagues of a different gender and race.

Ndungu (Ibid) echoes my sentiments in referring to a report published by the Department of Labour in 2008, although this report showed that by September 2007, there were more women than men in the work force. She argues that the report is misleading because most women have been absorbed in the fast-growing services sector, informal work and private households (see also Casale 2004).[5]. Ndungu demonstrates her point thus:

> [B]etween 2004 and 2007 when the South African economy was again growing at its fastest pace since the 1970s, the number of women working in the informal sector rose by a dramatic 105 000 to 1,1 million. On the other hand the number of men working in this sector rose by only 15 000 to 1,3 million (Ibid).

It is common knowledge that, in South Africa, black women are mostly occupied in informal and domestic work, the latter being what Ndungu refers to by "private households". The numbers she supplies are worrying, as they clearly show that black women are increasingly exposed to unprotected income and poor working conditions, frequently with no contractual guarantees in their jobs. An informal trader at a street corner could easily go without any income for days, possibly weeks or months, to a point of having to close down the business. Another point of concern is the domestic worker sector. Despite the department of labour's efforts to set up new regulations to ensure that domestic workers are registered for the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), many across the country remain unregistered and continue to be employed without any contractual agreements, which would guarantee their terms of employment. Therefore they could easily lose their jobs, unprotected by proper workers' rights. Exacerbating this fact is also a lack of education, which seems also to have largely affected the media industry.

[5] Please refer to Casale's (2004) arguments on the same matter on page 30 of the literature review in this thesis.

2.2.9 Educating black women

It is somewhat interesting that most black women, including myself, assume that better equipping themselves with higher education will be the tool with which they can break the glass ceiling. However, as it appears above from what one of the interviewees has said, education does not seem to make a difference. In hindsight I agree, as I realise that instead of being promoted to a senior position due to my continued effort to study, I was removed from two other positions I occupied, while away on maternity leave. Another respondent, who has both a BA (Hons) in media studies and an MBA, remains a general economics journalist/producer, and has been pushed out of her other position as economics news anchor. The interviewee who brought this point to my attention holds an MA in journalism, yet remains a simple camera person with no salary increase or promotion to recognize her achievement in gaining the degree. This is an issue I further scrutinise in the research findings in Chapter 5.

2.3. Conclusion

Having argued the point above, I maintain that regardless of how stagnant movement to the top proves to be, with or without education in this industry, having more educated black women in the newsrooms will definitely improve the situation, as these women will be armed with literacy in their defence against every kind of abuse – for instance, when women are made to feel that being aligned to other women is a weakness, thus forcing them into the "old boys club". There is still a long way to go; however, I strongly believe that eventually women will unite to a point that whenever you place a highly educated woman in the company of others just as educated, she will become a womanist of strong will who realises that such manipulation is actually abuse, and stand against it. Therefore, as indeed stated in my previous paper, education accompanied by unity and the spirit of activism will eventually enable black women to shatter the glass ceiling and occupy those upper echelons currently monopolised by men.

Chapter 3 Methods

3.1. Introduction

I have chosen to use feminist and womanist theoretical frameworks as the most appropriate for the purposes of my investigation. As my thesis addresses issues concerning South African women, I therefore believe that understanding what womanism and feminism entail would help create a better understanding of where and how professional women should be placed in their working environments and under what conditions. Data has been collected through the use of two methods, the qualitative and self-reflexive methods. As stated previously, this research is conducted through a case study, in which a group of respondents has been selected and surveyed by means of a questionnaire. The participants were also involved in a focus group responsible for the structures of both the survey and the one-on-one interviews conducted with some of the women journalists. Further interviews were also conducted with five other women from different sectors of society in order to hear the voices of those the news should represent. The data thus collected is analysed through the support of thematic content analysis.

3.2. Theoretical Framework

3.2.1. African feminism and feminisms versus Western feminism

Black feminist women in the media and outside the industry continue to cry foul over white women being at the helm of women representation. In the first phase of my study I found that in most newsrooms when women are recognised and appointed to higher echelons, it is often white women, followed by Indian and then coloured, leaving the last spot open for the black women. hooks (2000: xvii) argues that "much feminist theory emerges from privileged women who live at the centre, whose perspectives on reality

rarely include awareness and knowledge of the women and men who live on the margin". She adds that

> [A]s a consequence the feminist theory lacks wholeness, lacks the broad analysis that could encompass the variety of human experiences. It was the dearth of material by and about black women that led me to write a book about a feminist theory that addresses margin and centre (Ibid).

Mangena (2003) argues the same point. However, she also explores the issue of pluralising the feminist term when it comes to the case of a black woman or African/Africana woman. Considering the case of South African black women, although there are some differences between the 'African feminisms' as raised by scholars such as Mangena, their historical trajectory does provide me with the necessary data, since all are premised on the life experiences of black, or African cum Africana, women. To explore these different philosophies, I turn first to Mangena's argument against the term "African feminisms" itself. Mangena believes that African feminism is "a science second to none" (Ibid: 100). She questions feminism as "initiated and projected by western women, both as a science and ideology", and argues that

> [A]s a science western feminism insists that it must be adopted by all women in the world and be used to deal with their specific and concrete problems. In reality, whenever people of cultures other than western cultures, challenge western universalism on the basis of their respective different material conditions, the west denies such difference by according it a non-scientific status. According to this logic, there is only one feminism that holds the true credentials of 'science' – western feminism (Mangena 2003: 98 – 99).

In this argument, Mangena subtly outlines the arrogance of the western women, who see no other type of feminism but their own. These women strongly believe that for any woman to fight and stand for women across the globe successfully, they would have to do so only through the structures of what she has termed "western feminism". Mangena's

criticism of this belief is justified; I firmly believe it is not only arrogant, but also naïve to believe that only one form of feminism could be qualified as an answer to the discrimination, marginalisation and other wrongs caused to all the diversely cultured women of the world. Indeed, for women who speak in many languages and are from different cultural backgrounds, it would be crucial for them to hear and clearly understand what a "feminism" that they would stand for represents and means for them as a population. Therefore perhaps Mangena's stance against a feminism that only abides by the standards most suitable to the women of the west, is the way to go, so that we opt instead to be aligned to a feminism that represents an individual's beliefs, regardless that it does not have the backing of academic qualification, according to the women of the west. By the same score this western women's belief may very well expose their insecurities, on the basis that, should there be other forms of feminisms opposed to the ideologies of this "western feminism", the so-called "only scientifically qualified feminism" may crumble. Having said that, Mangena's very naming of it as "western feminism" has already dented it.

Mangena further argues that the need to have the plural form of the term – "feminisms" – when it comes to Africa, "is because of the undying western superiority complex" (Ibid: 99). Accordingly, she argues:

> [T]he term 'African feminisms' is thus the best way to deny the African woman the capacity to ascend to the heights of 'science'. It is designed to preserve the questionable ideology of inequality between African and western women (Ibid).

According to Mangena, by using pluralism for the term of "African feminism/s", western feminists are disregarding any other form of feminism (in the singular) as co-existing with theirs, therefore not "qualifying" any of those other feminisms. Mangena, who has strongly shown above that this belief is a fallacy because far too many women who stand for the upliftment of the woman may not necessarily believe certain cultures and races

should come ahead of the other/s, also argues here that the pluralism of "African feminisms" is purely created to show that western women are still superior to African women. Clearly, if African women are still seen by their western counterparts as inferior to them, then there may well be no need for women to claim a unified stance against gender inequality and discrimination, because equity does not exist even among the women themselves.

Ramphele (1997: 36) is of the same notion as mine above, questioning these inequalities in this manner:

> [A]re the silences of black feminists about the differences amongst themselves not an indicator of a lack of or an inadequate theoretical grounding in, the politics of power and their dynamic interplay? What of the silences and defensiveness of black feminists with respect to black males' abuses of power in both the private and public spheres? Is that not an indicator of an inadequate theoretical understanding of the relationship between race, class, gender, age and other social constructs and their differential impact on people who are differently located in society?

Ramphele's questions are indicative of a frustration with the different levels presented in feminism leading to a failure to question and seek the correct answers to the discrimination and other gender inequity problems that black women continue to face in both the private and public spheres. Indeed her anger is justified: as I argue above, if we as a feminist scholarship are unable to reach common ground on how we should represent ourselves to the world, then what of those ordinary women who rely on our educational and professional experiences for solutions to their daily struggles?

Ramphele resolves her questions as follows:

> [W]e need to define a vision of gender equity that recognises the diversity of its meanings across the globe. Equality between men and women or even between women in different circumstances may be iniquitous. We need to problematize equality and develop an

> equity framework that enables us and our various societies to address the needs of people -men and women- in an equitable way, bearing in mind the differential impact of race, class, age, and other constraints on power relations (Ibid).

Indeed if black feminist scholarship, along with feminist media scholarship, finds a sole vision of gender equity, without failing to recognise the diverse cultures and traditions defining it from across the globe, there could be a clear-cut solution to addressing the needs of black women in and within the media, as well as ending the cruelty endured as a result of patriarchal practices.

Nonetheless this does not answer all questions posed with regards to African feminisms and black feminism. Gqola (2001: 18) questions the uncertainty of the term "African feminisms":

> In like vein, a Black feminist can be a feminist of any persuasion who is Black, one who espouses the tenets of Black feminism, or both. An African feminist is predicated as much on the kinds of feminism as on how one defines African. Many who identify as such use 'African' to refer to people of African descent, whether on the continent or in the diaspora. However, this is contested terrain since there are variations on this theme. Does the qualifier describe the subject who theorises her relationship to Africa, or does it simply refer to the location of the theory in relation to the perceived continental realities? (Ibid).

According to Gqola "Black feminism" is as ambiguous as "African feminism", because it can mean a feminist who is black technically, but only to an extent that there is an entire body of work, which has now developed to an ideology. In other words a black feminist cannot just be anyone who is black, it means a black person who subscribes to the ideology of "Black feminism". She further argues the structuring of "African feminism" which is a more complicated matter to define the feminist concerned, as there are variations in defining this theme. Therefore, Gqola questions who, then, is qualified to be an African feminist. In this sense, I am of the notion that an African feminist is any

African who lives on the continent and in the diaspora and is a feminist, without any need to subscribe to the movement.

3.2.2. Womanism: the possible answer to media gender equity

In Chapter 2 and the above segment of this chapter I have illustrated how feminism, as it has become known to the world, does not really apply to the media industry for black women both as practitioners and as subjects/sources. I believe that the failure to do this comes from the poor understanding of where the black woman has positioned herself in society, regardless of the hegemonic patriarchal structures that continue to exist. It also comes as a result of failure to recognise how the role of the black woman has evolved, along with her life/lifestyle.

What the industry seems to have shown and proven as being feminised in every sense is black women's poverty, the violence against them, and their humiliation. As I have stated previously, the news media continuously reports negatively on black women. An example is the case of Castor Semenya. The fame of the teenage sensation grew for all the wrong reasons – because her gender was being questioned by the world athletics body – instead of her being celebrated for her great achievement of winning the 800m race for women at the 2008 world championships. Semenya was not only harassed by international media wrongly reporting on her case, but she was also humiliated and belittled to the status of a victim, instead of the great achiever that she is. In the case of women professional practitioners, they are embedded in poverty by being kept in lower positions and therefore receiving poor pay, while others are exposed to sexual harassment/violence and constant disrespect of their true status as colleagues or equals of men.

Having made the point above, it is undeniable that 16 years after democracy, black women are still far from being portrayed as, and even allowed to be, an equal part of the

South African society, and this unequal portrayal is largely perpetuated through the news media. As Lowe-Morna argues in her interview with Curphey, in Curphey (2003: 4), "there is probably no greater force on earth today for changing the way people think than the media". While her views are based on using the industry positively, towards changing the mindsets of people on how they perceive women, it is a fact that the same could be done to instill negative perceptions and ideologies, which is my point in this instance.

Although they argue on the level of women in general, Byerly and Ross (2006: 39) demonstrate a similar view:

> [I]f news media fail to report the views of women judges, women parliamentarians, or women business leaders, but always report on violent crimes against women, then it is hardly surprising that the public fail to realize that women do in fact occupy significant roles in society or, equally, that men are much more likely to be victims of serious crime than women.

It is most frustrating to find such questions continuously raised by feminist media scholars, after decades of research by the very same scholarship on these very issues, particularly that of women's representation/portrayal by the media. I am not implying that the hard work conducted by these scholars has been a failure. I am, however, indicating that the world, and more so the media, continue to turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to these studies, precisely because of the hegemonic patriarchy.

In this perspective then it is perhaps most appropriate that feminism is pushed aside to allow for womanism, which various black feminist scholars have defined as a term that sympathises with all women, no matter standard of living, age and race. It is said that the term womanist first appeared in Alice Walker's "In Search of Our Mother's Gardens" (1983). Here Walker attributes the word's origin to

> the black folk expression of mothers to female children, 'You acting womanish,' i.e. like a woman … usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous, or willful behavior. Wanting to know more and in greater depth than is considered 'good' for one … [A

> womanist is also] a woman who loves other women sexually and/or nonsexually. Appreciates and prefers women's culture … and women's strength … committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female. Not a separatist … Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender (Ibid: xi–xii).

Although Walker states that a womanist is a black feminist or feminist of colour, she insists that "a black feminist as womanist talks back to feminism, brings new demands and different perspectives to feminism, and compels the expansion of feminist horizons in theory and practice" (Ibid).

By applying the term womanising, instead of feminising, the media, together with specific focus on the black women of this country, undoubtedly the South African black women's point of view will be heard, interpreted and understood as clearly as it was intended. Gqola (2001: 18) raised concerns about the ambiguity of "African feminism" and "black feminism", asking who then qualifies to be an African feminist? Here she finds a response to her question, which concurs with my argument that we should allow womanism to take hold in order to allow more activists to participate. She explains her response as follows:

> Within womanist circles, the ambiguity is lessened somewhat since it generally only relates to whether an African womanist and an Africana womanist are always necessarily the same thing. Since only women of colour can be womanists, it follows therefore that African and Africana womanists are always women of African descent. The latter always includes the diaspora so that an Africana womanist is a woman of African descent, whether she lives in the continent or the diaspora, who has a feminist consciousness; whereas the former is more ambiguous since it is as likely to include diasporic Africans as it is to exclude them (Ibid: 18 – 19).

The uncertainty of the black woman's role in the media, as well as society, would most likely be lessened, as well, if the women spearheading the struggle against gender discrimination spoke in a much clearer and unified voice. In womanism women are more

comfortable with who they are, what they represent and where they are headed. Therefore this makes it easier for them to express their needs, wants, oppositions and stance on society's perception as a result of the media's portrayal of them.

Kolawole (2002: 95) agrees with the theory of womanism, borrowing from Ongunyemi (1985/86: 63) who defines black womanism in this manner:

> [I]t is a "philosophy that celebrates black roots, the ideals of black life, while giving a balanced presentation of black womandom". It concerns itself as much with the black sexual power tussle as with the world power structure that subjugates blacks.

In Kolawole's view womanism is by all means the right way to fight for the black woman's recognition as an equal member of society, and therefore in the office and at home. Perhaps this is also an answer to another question posed by Ramphele (1995: 212) on the stance of black and African feminism: "how can womanism be a better term, or one more inclusive than feminism"? As Kolawole and several other scholars, including Gqola (2001), assert, womanism is better in the sense that it is inclusive of all black and African/Africana women. Indeed with womanism they can express their views, regardless of nationality, religion and culture.

Therefore feminist media scholars, particularly black feminists, need to apply a womanist approach in addressing the portrayal and representation of black women as media practitioners and ordinary women in the news. Womanism will bring new meaning and expectation, therefore stretching the industry to higher and further limits, possibly shattering the "glass/concrete ceiling". Realistically it will take a while before this is achieved, however, once it is achieved, it comforting to know that in this manner the point intended to be made will be received as accurately as it should.

3.3. Qualitative Research: The Case Study, Survey Questionnaire, Focus Group and Interviews

3.3.1 Qualitative research

To discuss what is meant by the qualitative method, I rely on the work of various scholars. Ezzy (2002) describes the qualitative research method as "the kind of research that is done through establishing relationships with people, places and performances". He further explains his understanding of qualitative research thus:

> Qualitative research and qualitative data analysis involves working out how the things that people do make sense from their perspectives. This can be done by entering their world, so that their world becomes our world. Qualitative observation and data analysis is best done when the observer becomes part of the dance (Ibid).

Ezzy further argues that "rigorously conducted qualitative research listens attentively to the data or to the other, and as a consequence reveals new understanding and builds new theory" (Ibid). He maintains that "rigorously conducted qualitative research does not pretend to be influenced by preexisting understandings. Rather it actively engages these preexisting understandings, theories and assumptions, allowing them to be transformed and changed so that new theory can be developed" (Ibid). Hence, the view expressed by Greenstein (1991: 49) that "qualitative research is social research that is based upon the need to understand human action and social interaction from the perspectives of insiders and participants" is applicable. Gunter (2000: 2) supports this notion, explaining his understanding of the method as "research that embraces methodologies that are theoretically framed by critical or interpretivist social science paradigms that emphasize interpretation over measurement". Evidence for this notion is to be found in the responses provided in the questionnaire used to collect data.

3.3.2. Case study

As has been repeatedly stated above, I have used the SABC TV newsroom as a case study to find answers to the research questions posed. Yin (1994) argues that "a case study is used to typically answer questions like how and why". The use of a case study is therefore appropriate for my purposes, as I pose questions of this kind. Yin elaborates by defining a case study as "an empirical inquiry, in which focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context and boundaries between phenomenon and its context are not clearly evident" (Ibid). He adds that "it is suitable for studying complex social phenomena" (Ibid). According to Yin, types of case studies might be explanatory, exploratory or descriptive, and case studies can be used with both qualitative and quantitative methods of research (Ibid).

Feagin et al (1991: 2) agree with Yin, simply explaining the case study as "an in-depth, multifaceted investigation, using qualitative research methods, of a single social phenomenon". They further elaborate that "the study is conducted in great detail and often relies on the use of several data sources" (Ibid). This belief, therefore, indicates that there is a strong link between my choices of methods and design, as I use the qualitative method of research. What the above arguments also allow is the decision to conduct a survey, focus group and interviews to collect data.

3.3.3 Survey questionnaire

The questionnaire was originally drawn up in the first phase of this study in 2009, aimed at only eight women who had agreed to be part in the research. In continuing the research I issued the same questionnaire and extended it to two other women, whose responses are thoroughly explored in this paper. I do, however, refer to the responses of the other eight

women in chapter four, as well as discussing and analysing the results of the phase one data.

De Vaus (2002: 4) argues that there are various types of surveys: "[T]he technique by which we generate data about the cases can vary between surveys." The first type of survey, which is the one applied in this study, in both the first and second phases, is by means of a questionnaire. De Vaus explains thus:

> We might collect information by giving a questionnaire to each person and then copying answers from each questionnaire into the data grid. Because questionnaires are highly structured they forward a straightforward way of obtaining information for the data grid (Ibid).

The second type of survey is linked to interviews; this is another method used to collect data in this study.

De Vaus (2002: 4) argues that there is no necessary connection between questionnaires and survey research. However, there is a school of thought that questionnaires and surveys work hand in hand, as to conduct a survey one needs a questionnaire to establish the views of the specific population one wishes to question. Surveys are also known as the most common form of research method in the social sciences. They're now used in all areas of life, including religion and politics. According to Du Plooy (1995):

> [T]here are two types of surveys commonly used by researchers. [One] is the Descriptive form, which attempts to picture or document current conditions or attitudes, in other words, describing what exists at the moment. The second form is analytical which attempts to describe and explain why certain situations exist. (Ibid).

Du Plooy argues that "surveys involve three characteristics based on information collected by asking questions from a sample of an accessible population" (Ibid). The diagram below clarifies my interpretation of Du Plooy's argument.

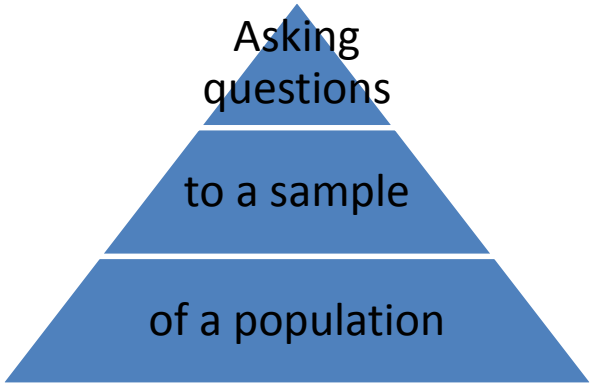


Figure 1. Du Plooy's three characteristics of a survey

Baker (1994) defines survey research as "a method of collecting data in which a specifically defined group of individuals are asked to answer a number of identical questions". And according to Babbie (1991), "survey research is the administration of questionnaires to a sample of respondents selected from some population".

As the final part of the methodology, a questionnaire, according to Ryan (2001 – 2005), is usually composed of one or more questions that are put to a large number of people. The results can be collected as a table of results or graph or pictogram. Allan and Skinner (1991) argue that "a good questionnaire is more than a collection of questions: it is a coherent document which takes account of the characteristics of respondents, the nature and volume of data to be collected, the format of data-gathering, and plans for analysis".

3.3.4. Focus group

Focus groups have been described as the new tool for qualitative research. According to Gunter (2000: 2), "the principal techniques in audience research comprise in-depth interviews, often conducted in a focus group format, and ethnographic approaches based on observation". While this is not an audience study, however, it will also use the focus group, as it does one-on-one in-depth interview methods. The focus group which has already been conducted in phase one of the study, was comprised of black women professionals from the SABC TV newsroom. As stated above, one-on-one interviews with other members of the group were conducted.

> Morgan and Spanish (1984) argue that "data collected in focus group sessions typically consist of tape-recorded group discussions among four to ten participants who share their thoughts and experiences on a set of topics selected by the researcher". In sync with the views of Gunter, it has been argued that "focus groups emerged in behavioural science research as a distinctive member of the qualitative research family, which also includes individual depth interviewing, ethnographic participant observation, and projective methods amongst others" (Stewart et al 2006: 1).

The focus group for this study held a brainstorming session towards drawing up the questionnaire, in order to come up with most suitable questions for the respondents and the research being conducted. The group also addressed possible critical aspects, such as the individual rights of the respondents that wanted to remain anonymous, and their rights of challenging being quoted out of context by myself as the researcher.

3.3.5. Interviews

This study is a qualitative feminist media research, which therefore uses interviews to find answers to its questions. One-on-one interviews have been conducted with five of the ten respondents. These include two women who currently occupy middle

management level positions in the SABC TV newsroom. The third woman is a senior camera person in the TV newsroom, the fourth is a producer/journalist in the SABC TV newsroom economic desk and the last interviewee is no longer employed by the SABC and is now a middle manager at another broadcaster. There were also structured interviews conducted with five other women who represent the ordinary black women who are likely to be news subjects or sources. While four of these interviews were conducted in person, one was done via e-mail, as the interviewee was unavailable for a face to face meeting. All five women come from different walks of life. One is a businesswoman who is a wife and mother of three in her mid-thirties. Another is a 29-year-old domestic worker, from rural Eastern Cape, working in Johannesburg. She is a single mother of two boys. The third interviewee is a retired 59-year-old single grandmother of three from Soweto. Another Sowetan is an unemployed married mother of two, who is 39 years old. The last is a professional communications executive with one of the country's biggest airline firms. She is also a single mother, student and former broadcast journalist.

De Vaus (2002: 4) argues that "data can be collected by other means, such as interviewing or observing each case by extracting information from records we have on each person". Which brings us to Kvale and Brinkmann's (2009: 1) definition of a qualitative research interview, which characterises it as attempting "to understand the world from the subject's points of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations". They further explain their view as follows:

> The research interview is based on the conversations of daily life and is a professional conversation; it is an inter-view, where knowledge is constructed in the inter-action between the interviewer and the interviewee. An interview is literally an *inter view*, an inter-change of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest (Ibid: 2).

In my judgment this is the best explanation of what is meant by the word "interview" itself. It simplifies the term, in turn making both persons involved realise that an interview is indeed simply an exchange of views in a form of asking and answering questions. Considering that most journalists are ironically not comfortable with being interviewed, I used Kvale and Brinkmann's justification to promote a more comfortable environment for my interviewees.

> Kvale (1996: 98) argues that interviews are often applied in case studies, with the purpose of possibly developing knowledge about one specific phenomenon. This is exactly what I intend to apply by using the SABC TV newsroom as a case study. Thematising an interview study, according to Kvale (Ibid: 97), also involves clarifying the purpose of the study – the "why". He concludes that while "interviews are powerful tools for obtaining knowledge, which is at the disposal of power and money, about human experience and behavior, (Ibid: 72) the outcome of an interview depends largely on the knowledge, sensitivity and empathy of the interviewer." (Ibid: 105).

Each of the interviews lasted one hour or more, with the number of questions ranging between 10 and 20 per conversation. Once conducted, the interviews were transcribed, analysed, verified and then reported as findings. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009: 177) define transcription as follows:

> Transcribing is the transformation of the oral interview conversation to a written text in the form of transcripts amenable to analysis. Transcription is an interpretative process, where the differences between oral speech and written texts give rise to a series of practical and principal issues.

I use the verbatim oral style of transcribing the interviews. Kvale and Brinkmann (Ibid: 178) are of the view that there are two forms of transcribing interviews. They argue that statements which are transcribed verbatim, are word-by-word, retaining frequent repetitions, noting "mm"s and the like, while more formal, written-style interviews do not include all sighs, laughter and pauses, for instance.

Transcribing is a very lengthy process, regardless of typing skills, especially when one is using the verbatim format. Nonetheless this thesis uses this format, because I am of the view that it has the power to enhance the expression of the interviewees, considering that the reader relies on only the written word in this study, and is therefore unable to see or hear the respondents. This lengthy process is also the reason I chose to interview only five women.

3.4. Self-Reflexive Research Method

As a former employee of the case study (SABC TV newsroom) and a qualified journalist who is a black woman myself, I have also taken part in the study as a respondent. Scholars such as May (1998) have termed this form of research the self-reflexive method. According to May reflexivity has two dimensions, the endogenous and the referential, which he explains thus:

> [E]ndogenous reflexivity is the examination of the processes by which a community is under study and/or it can refer to the research community itself. Referential reflexivity is the study of the relations between the person who engages in the research and the persons or groups who are the focus of that research (Ibid).

The latter, referential reflexivity is the dimension most applicable to this study, as I relate with the group I am is studying. This method is well linked to the qualitative method which is also utilised here, as illustrated above. Therefore the argument by Ezzy (2002) that "qualitative research is best performed when the researcher becomes part of the dance" is appropriate.

3.5. Data Analysis

To analyse all the collected data, this paper relies on thematic content analysis, which is a kind of qualitative content analysis. Krippendorff (2004: 3) defines content analysis as "what entails a systematic reading of a body of texts, images and symbolic matter, not necessary from an author's or user's perspective". He further argues that "in content analysis, the simplest task requires that a decision be made concerning whether something has occurred, was said or has been printed" (Ibid: 54). On that note, it is clear that to make such a decision one would need to read the available text numerous times, so as to be precise about the matter at hand.

The Oxford Dictionary defines the word "theme" thus:

1) a subject on which a person speaks, writes or thinks
2) an idea that is often repeated in a work of art or literature

With the second definition in mind, it is therefore accurate to say thematic content analysis refers to finding recurring subject matter or content. Micheal et al (2004: 186) agree, with the contention that "in thematic analysis, the coding scheme is based on categories designed to capture the dominant themes in a text". They stress that "different texts emphasize different things and different investigators could be looking for different things in the same texts" (Ibid.). Three themes were developed in the first phase of this study to better analyse the questionnaire findings. Each theme consisted of seven sub-

themes/clusters. While I do not dwell on the questionnaire findings, I summarise the data collected, as I do in the focus group. I do, however, expand further on the interviews.

3.6. Conclusion

Statements made and views argued above concur with my view that there is indeed a need to womanise the media: as I have further illustrated, with specific reference to Frohlich (2007), the media moguls' claim to have carried this out is a myth. The works studied above have not only demonstrated the need for transformation in employment patterns of South African newsrooms, especially considering the importance of the black woman as part of a decision-making team, but also laid the ground for the argument presented here by setting it against the background of feminist and womanist theory.

Chapter 4 Collection

4.1. Research Data

4.1.1. Introduction

A total of ten respondents were surveyed for this study. Eight of these women were given and responded to the questionnaire in the first phase of the study; two more completed the questionnaire and returned it as part of this second phase. It is important to note once again at this point that I have a dual role in this study, that of the researcher and respondent. In my capacity as a respondent, I am one of the informant voices, while as the researcher I am at liberty to find the information necessary to conduct the study and provide the scholastic analysis. I therefore took part in the first phase survey as the eighth respondent and one of the two "former employees" of the case study. Seven of the women are current employees of the SABC TV newsroom. Three others, including myself, no longer work for the SABC. All respondents are black, and all but one are over the age of 30 years. This chapter outlines the survey questionnaire, data findings and analysis of the first phase. Later the last two respondents' findings are also outlined, as are the findings of the focus group, in which I also participated, along with the information gained in the interviews with five women in the media and of the structured short interviews conducted with five women who stand as news sources/makers/subjects.[6] Please see the list of the women's names, positions and employment status for those who are employed, in appendix 1.2.

4.1.2. Focus group data findings

[6] The terms news source, news maker and news subject are used in this paper to define any actor appearing in a news broadcast and delivering or not delivering a textual statement.

The focus group held a five-hour-long discussion in trying to structure the questionnaire in a manner they felt was most comfortable. The group met at a neutral spot outside the SABC as some feared that being seen with me, as a former employee of the SABC, might "send the wrong message" or raise suspicions among the senior staff. Issues of anonymity were brought up for those who were not comfortable with being identified as part of the study. It was rather interesting that one of those who wished to remain anonymous was a former employee, whom I have to not have much criticism about the corporation. The fact that she fears to reveal her identity although she expressed very little negativity about her former employer is one more illustration of the black women's fear of those who lead the industry. Nevertheless my argument that this fear should be overcome was not welcomed by the group.

That discussed, anonymity received the majority vote, as many felt it was a right. It was also agreed that should the respondents no longer feel comfortable with going ahead with the research, they should be allowed to pull out. However, this was to be done on the basis that they should alert me as soon as possible, as should this not happen, it would delay the whole study, thus affecting everyone involved. It was during this consultation with the five-member focus group that it was decided that the other five respondents will do the one-on-one interviews.

4.1.3. The survey questionnaire and data findings

The survey questionnaire was structured according to three dominant themes, consisting of seven clusters, each of which contained between three and five questions. There were two different questionnaires distributed; one was given to six of the seven current SABC employees and another to me as a participant and another former employee. The third

former employee and one current staff member responded to the survey at a later stage of this second phase of the study. It must be pointed out however, that the two questionnaires were still structured according to the same themes and clusters. The questions were slightly shifted to past tense to accommodate the former employees. Two of the respondents requested to remain anonymous, one is a former employee, another, a current SABC staff member. Below is the discussion of the questionnaire structure, divided into each theme, with each of the clusters, and questions followed by the responses. Diagrams are used to illustrate the findings, which are further explained in detail.

Theme A: Working conditions

Cluster 1: Position Held

1) What position do/did you occupy in the SABC TV newsroom?

2) What level are/were you at?

3) Do/Did you think you deserve/d the position and the level at which you've been placed? Elaborate

4) How long have/had you been in that position?

5) Do/Did you like your job in the current position specifically? Why?

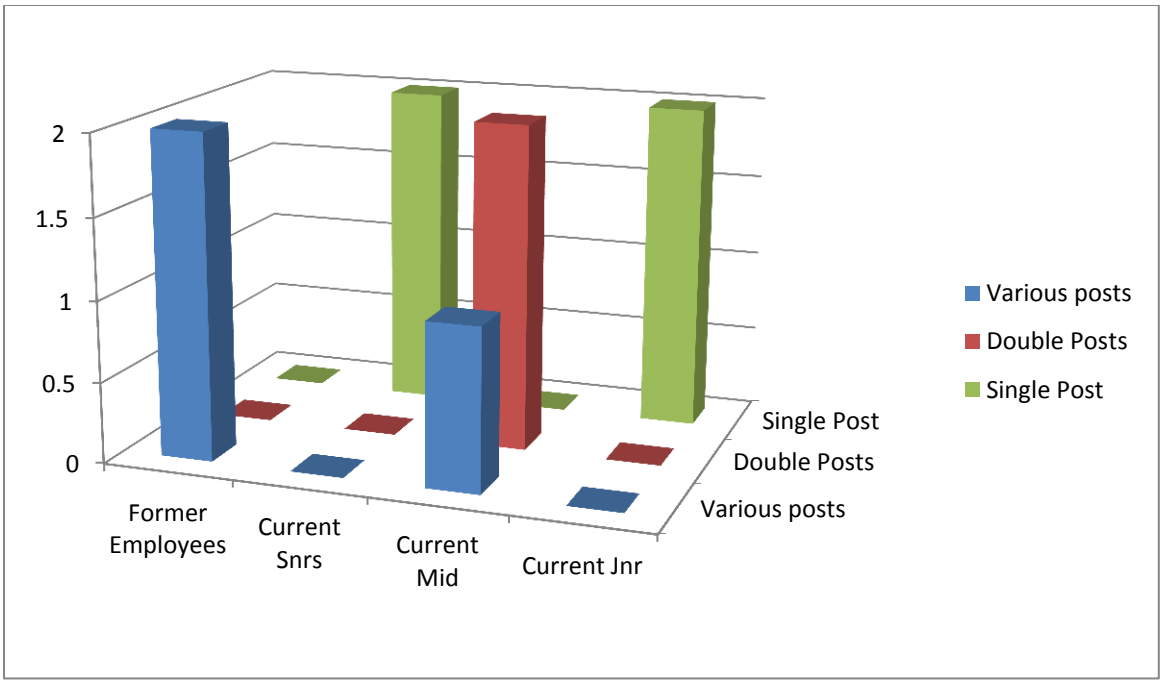


Figure 2: Position Held: Number of positions held and level of current position

Half of the respondents listed more than one position in response to the first question; the remainder had occupied just one position. Interestingly, the two former employees, myself included, had occupied the most positions, with three and four jobs simultaneously. Two of the current employees, being two of only three anchors among the respondents, held two positions each. Two of those with one position per person occupied the highest echelons in this group, that of middle management, while the other two were the most junior of the group, being the junior reporter and senior camera person.

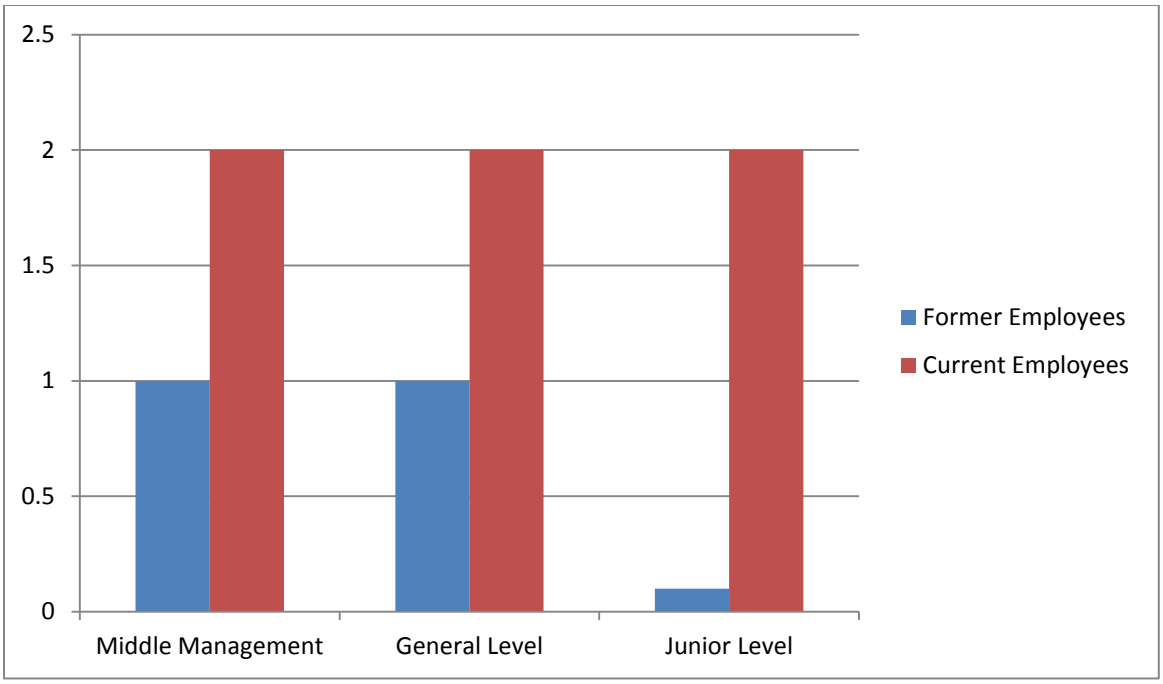


Figure 3: Position Held: Employment Levels

Only three of the eight respondents had made it to the middle management level. One has left the corporation while the other two remained. Three, including myself, were at the general level, but one of them is not sure, stating that it is hard to tell at the SABC, because more attention is paid to those holding executive producer and bulletin editor positions. At the junior level, one was a senior camera person, while another was a junior reporter. Hence the fractional display in the figure above.

Of the eight respondents, six responded yes to the third question, about deserving their current position. However, all but one were unanimous that they deserved to be in higher positions, citing experience as the most common reason. One answered no, also citing experience as the reason. As researcher/participant I was the only respondent that had a split answer, with a yes for getting three promotions. However it was a no for the fact that the very same promotions were later taken away from me without consultation, while I was away on maternity leave. All but one respondent had served more than two years in their positions.

Responses to the last question in this cluster made it clear that all the women loved their jobs, however, while seven enjoyed doing it, one did not. She pointed out that her working conditions steal some of the joy she gets from performing her tasks.

Cluster 2: Experience and Duration

1) What is/was your experience in this profession, at the time of service to the SABC?

2) How long have/did you work/ed for the SABC?

3) Are/Were you happy at the SABC TV newsroom?

4) How long do/had you intend/ed to stay at the SABC? Why?

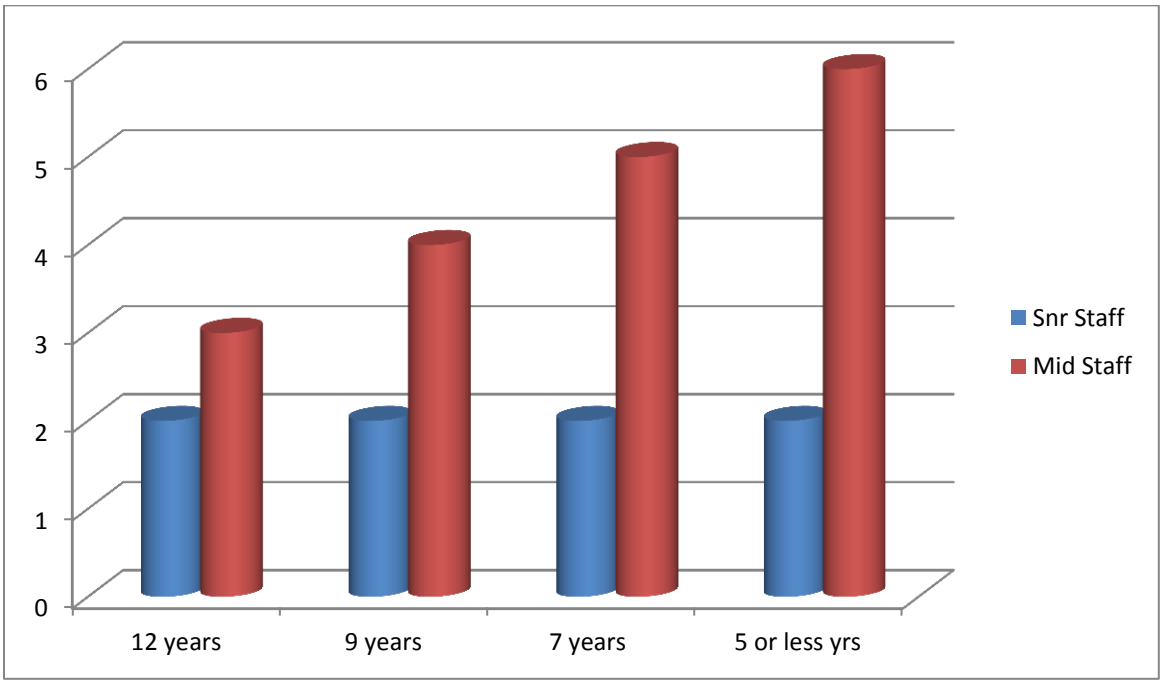


Figure 4. Experience and Duration: Years of experience

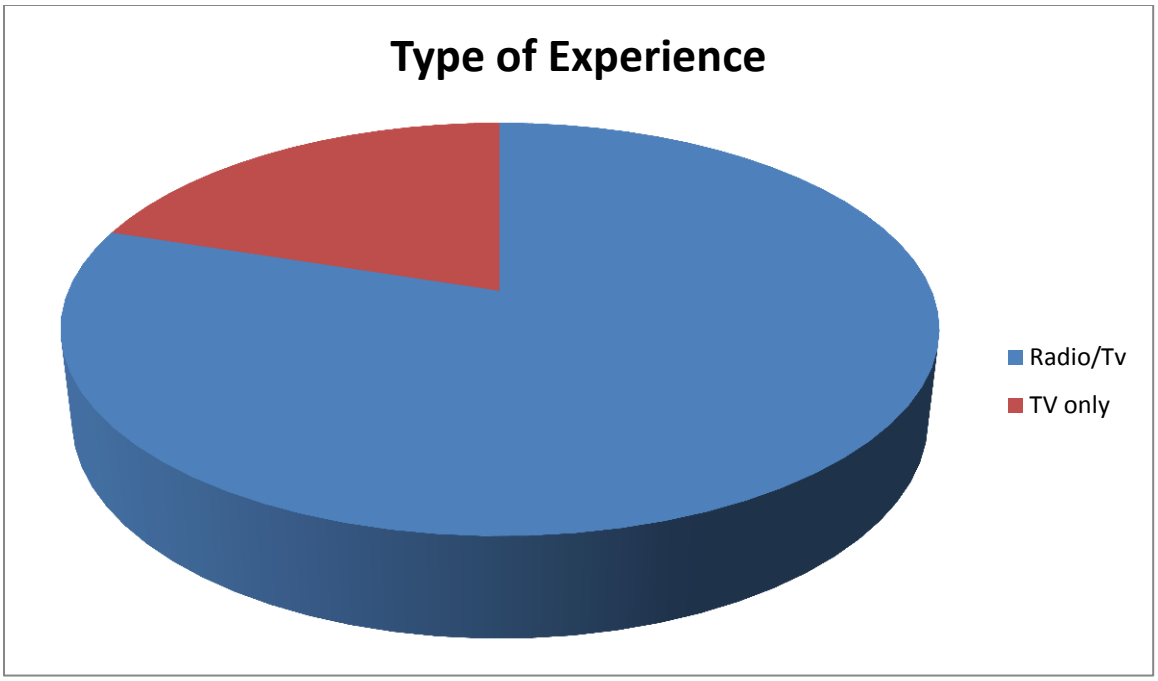


Figure 5: Experience and Duration: Type of work experience

An astonishing five of the respondents, including myself and the other former employee had over 12 years' experience each. All of us had worked for both radio and television during our careers. One had nine years' experience, also exposed to both radio and television. While one respondent only had television experience, it has also been of long duration – seven years. The most junior had been in the industry for four years. She had only been exposed to news research and television. According to South African broadcast news media laws, all these women are sufficiently qualified for senior positions, as that requires five years' experience. Three years' experience is required for a middle level appointment, and no experience is needed to be appointed to a junior position. The conclusion therefore is that it is inequitable that only three of these women had even been considered for management, and not at a high rank.

All of the women had been with the SABC TV newsroom for more than two years. Six reported that they were unhappy with their stay at the corporation, citing ageism, sexism, poor management and racism as some of the reasons. While two were happy, one of these

was discontented with the way the corporation was run. I had planned to retire there, while the anonymous former employee had not set a time frame. Four of the current employees, the exceptions being the two most junior workers, responded that they planned to leave soon, most with intentions of going into business. One was open to freelancing, as she feels there are better opportunities there. The other two respondents intended to stay for five more years.

Cluster 3: Working Conditions

1) How would you describe the conditions under which you work/ed as a woman journalist in that newsroom? Please compare with male colleagues?

2) What would you change?

3) Have/Did you ever encounter/ed any problems in your position, or at work in general? Elaborate

4) Do/Did you get the kind of respect you believe you deserve/d in your position in the newsroom, both from senior and junior colleagues?

Most of the women argued that senior management at the SABC is predominantly male, further stating that women are just not heard, especially since only a handful hold senior management posts. One of the respondents could remember only one black woman in one of the highest offices, while others could only think of others in middle management. Again, the two least experienced and most junior workers seemed comfortable with their working conditions. The camera operator stated that there is no difference in treatment based on gender, with no specific stories being assigned to men or women in her department. This proved a complete contradiction of what the general anchor/producer argued as difficult working conditions; she further explained that it is “at times even hostile” (to women) to work at the SABC TV newsroom. It also contradicts what one

middle management member describes as a “sexist environment plagued by gender discrimination”.

In response to the question about what changes they would make, three respondents said they would promote women to higher levels. Two supported the implementation of equitable pay and respect. Two would change the entire management structure, while only one the most junior of the group, felt there was too much favoritism, which urgently needed to be ended. Three of the respondents, spread between one of the current middle managers, the former middle manager and the junior reporter, had never really encountered any problems. I was struck hard by my sudden replacement as news anchor, documentary producer and presenter by a coloured woman and an older black man, while I was on maternity leave. For me, the company’s failure to consult with me about these drastic decisions regarding my career exacerbated the situation. One of the current anchor/producers argued that she constantly has to prove her worth and fight harder to get recognition. In a direct contradiction to the camera woman’s experience with regard to the previous question, this respondent states that she has to fight to be assigned serious stories. Her counterpart was removed from her usual position on the evening news to an early morning (5am) news slot, without consultation. Furthermore she was told that should she not want to do the morning shift, she should just leave. The camera person is often confronted by comments that camera operation is a man’s job.

Two respondents, one middle manager and the camera person, felt they get the respect they deserve. The junior journalist argues that respect is earned. Three, including another middle manager and the two former employees, had a split response, saying that some colleagues acknowledged their position and capabilities, but others just don’t care, with most senior colleagues tending to be condescending at times. The second current middle manager states that a lot of corridor talk continues about her getting the job because a certain senior manager likes her. The two anchor/producers feel there is absolutely no

respect for them in their positions, with one stating that "at this level, all you do is take instruction".

Theme B: Black women representation in the newsroom and news

Cluster 1: Black women representation

1) How would you describe the representation of black women in the SABC TV newsroom and their news bulletins?

2) Were/are you comfortable with that? Why?

3) Have/Had you ever directly or indirectly experienced racism, sexism or ageism in your newsroom? Elaborate

Two respondents are of the view that black women are fairly represented in the indigenous news groups and bulletins, but representation is lacking in the English team and bulletins. In my response I stated that the representation of the black woman in the newsroom is made to look good through the employment of coloured and Indian women. For example while I was at the SABC, in the Johannesburg English news, there were only three black women reporters in a team comprising three other women of another race (coloured) and eight black men. There were only two camera women in a team of more than ten people. Initially there were no black women reading the 7pm news, but soon I and another colleague were signed on to freelance in that news slot, along with the permanent Indian man and coloured woman. There was one black woman anchor for the 1pm news, alternating her shift with two Indian men, and only one black woman reading the 8:30pm and 10pm bulletins.

One of the anchor/producers agrees with the argument that women are under-represented, saying women news makers are never portrayed as strong and leading. If they appear at all, they are portrayed as victims or poor. The respondent contends that men still dominate as news sources, and are more dominant in the newsroom as decision makers. One study that focused on this issue was one conducted globally by Genderlinks and the Media Institute of Southern Africa (Misa) in 2003. The study covered a total of 25 110 news items in September 2002, across all Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. According to its findings, women constituted only 17% of news sources, 1% less than the global average of 18%. In South Africa the figure was 19%. Duncan (2006: 22) argues that the race and gender breakdown in South Africa is particularly disturbing, with only 7% of sources being black women, in spite of the fact that black women constitute 45% of the total population. Duncan's views and the Genderlinks and Misa (2002) findings are a clear reflection of the respondents' concerns about the representation of black women in the news bulletins broadcast on our screens.

Another study which was also a global project had similar findings. The research by the Global Media Monitoring Project was conducted in three sets of research data reported in the years 1995, 2000 and 2005. Gadzekpo (2009: 69 – 88) states that the Global Media Monitoring Project reported in 2005 that in 18 African countries, there has been only modest improvement over the ten-year period of the monitoring effort. She continues:

> [F]or example, in 2005, only 19 per cent of subjects of news in Africa were women. This represents a slight improvement on 2000 (17 per cent) but is lower than the global average of 21 per cent. Women are silenced relative to men on topics in the news, and their views are least heard on politics and government and the economy and business (Ibid; GMMP 1995, 2000, 2005).

In the same vein I can argue that, once again on the English news desk, during my stay at the SABC, the overall head of news was an Indian man; the General Manager of News, a

black man; the national news editor, a black man; and two of the three assignments editors were black men while one was a coloured woman. Gadzekpo (2009: 69 – 88), among other scholars, argues the same point in this manner:

> [I]n many countries the gap in numbers between male and female journalists is narrowing, but few women are advancing to senior or management levels and therefore women have limited control over how news is defined and have limited influence on hiring and promotion practices (see also Morna 2002; Okunna 2002; ABANTU for Development 2004; MISA and Gender Links 2003; GMMP 2005).

However, having said that, there is one team that is more favourable to black women in the SABC, as one of the responding middle managers states with confidence that it is her team of ten which includes nine women, most of whom are black. It is therefore well representative in this regard. Nonetheless she also feels the news bulletins at the SABC simply lack good representation of black women. Contrary to the obviously negative notion outlined above about the SABC newsroom's practices, the other middle manager is happy with the company's representation of black women. She says it is well balanced at 50/50 percentage. Her views are shared by the first responding camera person, while the junior reporter argues against everybody, saying black women dominate the TV newsroom. However, she emphasised that even so, most of these women remain at junior level.

Six of the respondents, including the junior reporter, are uncomfortable with the situation. One respondent, a middle manager, feels gender equality needs to be taken seriously. This is a view I strongly support as both researcher and respondent, because until there is balanced representation in the newsroom itself, black women will never be properly represented in the news bulletins. The anonymous anchor/producer argues that the South African demographics demand that black women, as the largest part of the population, be represented accordingly. However, the camera person and the second middle manager are

very comfortable with the situation as it is, elaborating that "it's about time women are recognised, and the SABC is doing just that after a long time of marginalising women and using them as tokens".

Four women in the survey have never experienced racism, sexism and ageism. Three, including myself, have, with one, the middle manager, being sexually harassed by a male colleague. I was told by a senior manager that my age and gender did not allow me to cover a potentially dangerous and prominent story. The anonymous anchor/producer contends that she has, and continues to experience these discriminations almost on a daily basis, constantly having to fend off subtle remarks about how "light weight" she is for serious broadcasts, simply because of her gender, race and age. Another respondent could not say for sure.

Cluster 2: Future plans in the industry

1) Do you have intensions of leaving this profession/SABC in future? Why?
   OR Why did you leave the SABC?

2) Are you still in the journalism industry? If not did you intend to leave the industry? Why? (Only applicable to former employees)

3) What would/could've make/made you stay?

4) (Should you leave) Do you intend going back to the journalism industry, if so would you go back to the SABC? Why?

I left the SABC because I was unhappy with my unjustly sudden replacement while on maternity leave, and therefore felt there was to some degree a concealed glass ceiling I had hit; hence my decision to further my education instead. The anonymous former middle manager, on the other hand, was simply lured by new challenges and better pay in

the corporate sector. Of the six current employees of the SABC, four had plans to leave, the presenter/producer intended to freelance for the corporation, while the camera person was not at all interested in leaving, contradicting her own assertion earlier that she planned to spend another five years there. The second question in this cluster was only intended for the former employees, who responded that they were both still indirectly involved with journalism. I have started my own media company, which is yet to grow, while my former colleague has taken on a communications manager post in the corporate sector.

The issues of better pay, respect and recognition, as well as higher and more suitable positions, were what would make or would have made seven of these women stay at the SABC. The camera person would simply be happy with telling more stories, especially about rural women, considering she is a rural woman herself. Five respondents, including myself, would return to the industry in future, citing love and passion for, and satisfaction with being the voice for the voiceless. One former employee would rather go into teaching, a passion she shares with the junior reporter. The camera person contended she will never leave the industry, as she is too passionate about it.

Cluster 3: Pride in Journalism

1) Are you proud of the journalism industry, as a black woman? Why?

2) Would you recommend it to younger women who have journalism aspirations? Why?

3) If at all, what change would you make in the profession?

Three respondents –myself, the anonymous anchor/producer, and the presenter/producer – were proud of the women who remain and fight against discrimination in the industry, but not proud of the industry itself. The anonymous anchor/producer elaborated that

when she sees the women who make it against all odds, she is proud, but when she hears of their daily struggles she is saddened. Four, being the middle managers, the junior reporter and the camera person, are very proud of the industry. And the former middle manager is just not proud, citing the lack of women empowerment as the reason. Journalism, as some of the women surveyed here, along with other scholars (see Lowe-Morna, in Curphey 2003: 4), have stated, is indeed a very powerful tool that can be used to empower women and change mindsets about the perceptions of black women's roles in both the private and public spheres, as well as what it is that they represent. Hence it is sad that many of the women in the industry are not proud of it.

All but one would recommend journalism as a career for young women, adding that it is the best way to build stronger women to fight discrimination and gender inequity in the future. Others simply feel it is an industry filled with opportunities of travel and means to control the masses: as the camera person states, "one can control everybody, from the president to the domestic worker". Given the chance, six respondents say they would turn the industry around to make it more woman friendly, with equitable opportunities for all. One would entrench a culture of putting people first, instead of profits and personal agendas. Another feels white people and the rich are still in control and that should change, while the junior reporter would not change a thing.

Theme C: Remuneration Discrepancies

Cluster 1: Employment and Salary Scale

1) Are/Were you employed on contract, freelance or permanent?

2) What was the reason behind the agreement and are/were you happy with that?

3) Are/Were you happy with your salary?

4) Is/Was it what you deserve/d and at what you believe/d to be the correct level, especially in comparison to your colleagues of other races and gender?

5) How do/did you know?

All eight respondents were employed on a permanent basis; however, I later resigned to freelance. Six were happy with their appointment; although in my response I do point out that my resignation was prompted by unhappiness, leading to a preference for freelancing. The anchor/producer is just not happy, while the presenter/producer says while she's comfortable with the permanent post, she is seriously considering freelancing. They all base the argument on their experience, saying they are worth much more than is being offered. All but the camera person were unhappy with their salaries. However, I must admit that I was also happy before learning that men less experienced and doing the same job as I was, with some of them being my juniors, earned more than I did.

Still on this matter, mine was not an isolated case, as most of these women are of the view that they deserve more money, either because of their experience or simply because their male counterparts earn much more than they do. The junior reporter, however, is of the view that all journalists are simply not paid well.

4.1.4. Tables of Findings: Phase 1 and 2[7]

Two tables were drawn up for this segment of the paper for a quicker reference to the questions and answers of the survey questionnaire. The first represents the current employees, and the second stands for the former staff members of the SABC TV

[7] Please refer to appendix 1.1 for the complete tables of findings

newsroom. The design of two tables was necessary, as was that of two separate yet linked questionnaires, in order better to accommodate all respondents involved. Please find these attached, as part of the appendicies.

4.1.5. Survey Questionnaire Data Analysis

As with this second phase of the study, I utilised thematic content analysis to analyse the data findings of Phase One. Ryan (2009: 654) believes that the world of the television news worker is a complicated place. With reference to what most of these women have said about their jobs, this notion clearly cannot be disputed, especially in the case of a black woman in the TV newsroom.

As earlier stated, two women, a former employee and a current one, have requested to remain anonymous. I have therefore elected to give these two women fictional names, calling the current anonymous anchor/producer Nonhlanhla Dlamini and the anonymous former middle manager, Lerato Motloung. Dlamini is conspicuous in that she seems most unhappy about her job and the SABC's representation of black women in the newsroom, and the news. Among other strong points she made, was that …

> … I enjoy what I do, but the conditions under which I work steal some of the joy I get from performing my tasks. (Dlamini: 2009)

She further states that working in the SABC TV newsroom is difficult, at times even hostile, most especially because she constantly has to prove her worth, fighting for recognition, a better salary and a serious story or programme as anchor. Based on this lack of regard, it is clear that this woman is having difficulty coping in her place of work

and job. As she points out herself, she will leave soon, after completing her studies. Leaving the company is obviously seen as a common solution among the respondents, as two, Motloung and I, have already left. We left because we were unhappy in our positions. We felt discriminated, overlooked and somewhat as though we were hitting the "glass ceiling". I was also pushed to making this decision because of my sudden replacement as a documentary producer, anchor and reader, without consultation, while on maternity leave. In my stance as both researcher and a former staff member of the case study, I find this as a classic example of how poorly the company regards the views of black women when making important decisions, especially if those decisions will affect the women themselves. Four of those remaining, including Dlamini, also intend to leave, due to unhappiness about, among others matters, inequitable opportunities and remuneration. Considering these women's experiences, it is indeed distressing that seasoned journalists have resorted to abandoning a career they are most passionate about, rather than fighting on.

While I have chosen to relinquish my career, one should question what problem exactly this has solved. Looking with a researcher's eye, I believe that instead of solving anything, my decision instead added to the "juniorisation" and "dumbing-down" (reducing intellect) of the newsroom, resulting in more inexperienced and uninformed young black women being exploited. Thus, the representation of black women in the news deteriorates further. Zama Mbalo, the camera person, and Ntombi Miya, the junior reporter, lend specific evidence to this theory, as they have displayed a lack of knowledge and experience regarding the operation of managing structures in this industry. For example, Mbalo is seemingly happy with the fact that she is now employed on a permanent basis, regardless of the fact that her permanent, senior camera contract was only signed four years after her appointment to the SABC, a company at which she arrived with two years' experience in her field. Having worked a total of six and a half years by the time of the upgrading of her contract, Mbalo had in actual fact qualified herself to serve at a position of supervisor/junior management level. Furthermore, she also seems to be oblivious to the fact that her permanent contract is restrictive, not

allowing her to freelance as her male counterparts do. Having worked with this team myself, I believe that Mbalo was misguided in her move to sign this permanent contract, and she clearly failed to consider refusing to sign as a possibility, when she and her colleagues exchanged those salary slips she claims they did as a means to avoid exploitation. It is therefore the contention of this thesis that patriarchy, even in her department, which she deems equitable in all terms, may be alive and well on the part of her colleagues, considering they misled her. This reflects the argument by Smith(2000) about a journalist, academic, cyber-feminist with literary agency who, despite enjoying the privilege of "insider" status as a black professional, had not realised her right to be a critical, self-theorising subject.

On the subject of juniorisation,[8] in 2005 TV news media executives, such as former e-TV editor in chief Joe Thloloe and former SABC general manager of news Snuki Zikalala were quoted by numerous media, including *The Star* (5 May 2005), as criticising the juniorisation and inexperience within South African newsrooms. They assumed that this lack of experience was the main contributor to poor news production. Their views have been largely supported by women journalists over the years, such as Karima Brown, who is a former SABC radio producer, saying that due to lack of experience younger journalists are often pressurised to align themselves with powerful interest groups instead of telling the story as it is. (Brown 2004: 68). While this is a valid argument, it fails to recognise that these inexperienced and junior journalists are also susceptible simply to doing as they are told by authority, and not to question what may be deemed immoral or merely wrong. These young journalists, as Ntombi Miya demonstrates, may be unaware of issues such as the poor representation of black women in the news bulletins, and moreover blinded to the root causes of this. What may be of most interest to these youngsters, as Miya has indeed shown in her survey response, are petty and mild issues, such as favoritism, and demanding respect from interns, while when it comes to working black women journalists, she is of the view that respect is earned.

[8] Juniorisation is a term commonly used in the media industry to imply that a news team is young and at a junior working level.

Nonetheless, having noted that problem, Miya seemingly does not see it appropriate to try to change or contribute towards changing the industry, as her response to that question in the survey was that she would "make no changes". On the other hand, the young reporter may be simply afraid to stand up against what she and other black women journalists deem to be unfair. Smith (2000) argues a similar point, stating that her greatest barrier to writing publicly was fear – fear of being criticised, fear of being ridiculed, fear of expressing an opinion, and the subconscious belief that she did not have a right to an opinion. She further elaborates that, in retrospect, the belief that her opinion would have such a dramatic impact and prompt such a deluge of considered criticism, is amusing.

But at the time, she explains, this belief effectively kept her silent. Underpinning much of this fear was a colonised mind (apartheid not only worked its magic on our bodies, but also on our minds) (Ibid). This fear may also have an effect on some of those women who have already accessed management positions. Similarly to myself, one of these women, Motloung, took the easy way out by simply abandoning her career for better pay, recognition and position. What she could have done to get the same benefits at the SABC would have been to remain and stand her ground as a black woman journalist, in turn making her own voice and that of others heard, through mobilising with other black women. Such mobilisation does not exist in this industry. Black women practising as journalists need to be conscious of the fact that a resistance movement could result in good benefits for all black women in the newsroom and the news. While one of the current executive producers, Portia Kobue, is vocal and takes action against whatever discrimination affects her unit, her counterpart, Puleng Magape, seems oblivious to most of these inequalities. Having worked at two different broadcasters with Magape, I can argue that she tends to retreat from opposing policy, as demonstrated in her responses: while she feels women need to be empowered, she contradicts herself by saying "the SABC has and continues to empower women, as it no longer marginalises them".

The issues of salary discrepancies and lack of growth are also at the forefront, as all women believed they deserved better salaries, some pointing to male counterparts earning much more than them as the reason. One anchor/producer, Mpho Matjila-Nkosi, stated that she intends to leave her permanent position at the SABC and work for them on a freelance basis, as she believed that would open the door to more opportunities and better pay. She further explained:

> I love what I do, but it is not worth my while to wake up to an environment where there is little room for growth and no acknowledgement for one's skills and abilities (Matjila-Nkosi 2009).

Considering my own experience and Ryan's (2009: 659) view that, given the economic status of the television news industry, the television freelancer is not going to go away, Matjila-Nkosi and Dlamini may indeed be right about the advantages of becoming freelancers. However, having said that, the black woman as a news media practitioner and source will continue to struggle, constantly facing subtle, but nonetheless condescending, statements by senior and mostly male colleagues.

4.1.6. Survey Questionnaire and Data Findings (continued)

The first two segments of this chapter have clearly outlined what the first phase of this study sought to do and find. Here is where the second phase begins to continue the research started in the previous paper. Two more women were surveyed on the basis of the same questionnaires. The first of the two is Nompumelelo Hlophe, a senior specialist camera person at the SABC, and the second is a former bulletin writer/vernacular translator, Phathiswa Magopeni. These women also received the two different questionnaires, each getting the one suitable to them as current and former employees.

Because I have already outlined the questions on the survey questionnaire above, I will not regurgitate them here. Only the women's responses will be specified. However, these will not be analysed in this chapter, as with those of the other women above, because the analysis of all data derived from this study, including the interviews, will be analysed together in the next chapter.

Replies to the first cluster of theme A indicated that both women had dual positions; however, neither was in a management position. Hlophe stated unequivocally that she enjoyed doing her job and did not mind being in that position as she feels it is the most senior in her department. Magopeni, however, did not enjoy her days as a translator/bulletin writer, saying her appointment required more involvement in the processing of stories but her executive producer felt this was unnecessary, limiting her to just "translating and voicing stories". She responded to the last question in this cluster, about enjoyment of the job, with: "No. Not interesting." Since leaving the SABC, Magopeni has indeed made a significant leap in her career, currently occupying the position of national news editor at another TV news channel.

Hlope had also been in the industry for longer than over ten years, with 15 years of experience. More interesting is that all these years had been spent at the SABC, from her days as an intern to date. Magopeni in this regard seems to have misunderstood the question – What is/was your experience in this profession, at the time of service to the SABC? – and instead responded that she did not have to make any effort, because it became a passive process. She further states that even when she did highlight problems with stories they were ignored and therefore it was very frustrating. Despite this frustration, though, Magopeni stayed at the SABC for two and a half years, before leaving for her current employer. While she clearly stated that she was unhappy throughout the two and a half years, upon her employment with the corporation Magopeni had originally intended to stay much longer. Hlophe, on the other hand, was

not sure how long she intended to stay at the corporation. However, she was not unhappy, but at the same time not a hundred percent happy either. She commented that "there are some changes that can be made to improve the end product, like getting more decisive editors and also the type of stories that are covered. It should not only be government stories, a bit more human stories".

Describing the working conditions, Magopeni said: "The environment was very patronising, the tone of my male colleagues and the way they would respond to my suggestions." Her views were not too different from those of Dlamini, in the first phase, who felt that the conditions were difficult and at times hostile. The situation for Hlophe however seems to be much better, as she said there was no difference between men and women's working conditions. Nonetheless, she did see a need to change management, as she felt it lacked people who are "more decisive and who have vision". Whereas Magopeni is of the view that the running of the news desk is in dire need of change in the news-gathering process and in putting emphasis on non-event-related news. On the third question of cluster three in this theme, Magopeni had this to say:

> Yes. I was approached by the Assignments desk to attend diary meetings and be trained as a standby EP [executive producer], the incumbent refused to do that and made it known that he did not appreciate what was being done (Magopeni 2010).

Hlophe was concerned about event stories being ill prepared by management, resulting in poor end product. However, with that said, and unlike Magopeni who simply felt there was also no respect for someone of her calibre in that newsroom, Hlophe was happy with the level of respect. Similarly to the junior reporter who feels respect is earned, Hlophe is of the view that respect is mutual.

Asked about representation of black women in both the newsroom and the news bulletins, the two women felt that it was fair and balanced; however Magopeni had a problem with what she called “quality and experience”. She further explained her stance thus:

> My sense was that the only time you would see themes involving women were abuse, rape and domestic violence related stories. Very few stories portrayed women in a positive, constructive light (Magopeni 2010).

Hlophe expressed the view that specialised desks such as politics are still male dominated and she’d be happier if these specialised and senior positions could be considered for women. Magopeni was deeply concerned by the tendency to ignore other positive things/work done by women, to which the media fail to give attention. She also stated that while there was sexism, she preferred to treat what would be seen as such as more about knowledge superiority. She further argued that men tend to think they owned knowledge and experience even when the reality was different. Hlophe felt she was overlooked for a salary increase because of her gender.

Neither of the two women was even considering leaving the media industry. However, they differed on their views of the case study, as Magopeni stated that she was very happy that she made the decision to leave the SABC, as she saw real progress in her career as well as significant recognition of her experience in the position she now holds. Hlophe said the only things that would ensure she remained at the SABC permanently would be an improved salary and more decisive bosses. However Magopeni said she would never return to the SABC, unless there was real improvement in work ethic and environment.

The sense of pride that the surveyed women had about this industry was unquestionable; however, like most of the respondents in the first phase, Magopeni felt the industry still

needed a lot of improvement. She believed it was still male-dominated, and men needed to start realising that women cannot just be relegated to editing magazines, because they can do more than that. The pride shown in this regard by all these women is a clear indication that black women are dedicated to the industry. This shows that they believe that indeed, as Mbalo put it, "the industry is a persuasive tool towards reaching the world audience". Magopeni agreed, saying that "it broadens one's horizons". Certainly, with this powerful tool called the media, and more so in television, women would break barriers, move boulders, cross rivers across the globe, and stand rightfully recognised as members of the media.

However, as all have said, to get to this level, the industry will need to make some if not all the changes suggested by these women, including improved salaries for black women. In this category, both Magopeni and Hlophe agreed with the majority above, that salaries should improve significantly. It was very interesting to learn that Magopeni had actually taken a salary cut, simply because she was driven to become a part of the SABC. She also explained that she was later told by a human resources officer that there had initially been a higher offer of remuneration; however her executive producer was opposed to this. Hlophe was also unhappy as she stated that her work load had doubled, but her salary remained the same. Both women were employed on a permanent basis, once again not given the freedom of flexibility afforded to many men, especially in the camera department, to freelance in various departments.

4.1.7. Interview Data Findings

Five interviews were conducted separately, with media practitioners who also took part in the survey. Each of the question-and-answer conversations lasted between one and two hours, with an average of 15 questions per discussion. There was a clear sense of themes developing among the various question and answer sessions, therefore I have created

eight themes to best accommodate the questions and responses provided and in the hope of answering the research questions posed. In this chapter I also allow the voices of the informants to be heard as I refer to their answers and my questions in discussing the collected data. However it is important to note that while this data discussion is very similar to that of the survey questionnaire above, it is also different in that the questions raised in each cluster were not the same for every woman interviewed, therefore there will be no clusters/sub themes.

Theme 1: Unhappiness/happiness at work

Four of the women had questions related to this theme with two of the women, Dlamini and Kuboe, responding that they were still unhappy in their jobs. Dlamini stated that she was no longer news anchor; she has instead shifted to news reporting, while she continues to produce. She further states that the conditions under which she works have not changed at all, "in fact the whole organisation has gone from bad to worse …".

> [S]o, because of that any ambitions to get a higher position or get higher pay are just not going to happen in the near future. So from that perspective things haven't changed much. If anything, they've gone from bad to worse (Dlamini 2010).

With such a response, it is easy to assume that Dlamini is on the verge of giving up, possibly following mine and many other women's example of leaving the industry, or at least the corporation. Indeed, as stated before, leaving is not the best decision as far as improving the situation is concerned. However, the continued discrimination and patriarchal hierarchy that exist in the media continues to drive many women out. Kuboe was another interviewee who expressed unhappiness with her job, which is a complete turn-around from her survey response, where she spoke about her happiness at work. This

time Kuboe simply said: “No, I am unhappy. The financial and administrative challenges at the SABC make it difficult to operate competently.”

Regardless, there are women who are not completely unhappy at the SABC. Hlophe for instance is on the border between happy and unhappy, because she still enjoys doing what she does as a specialist camera person and she has no aspirations to be in a management position any time soon. On the contrary, she does state that she would love to move on and become her own boss someday, filming documentaries around the globe. Magape was the only woman who did not give a clear response in this regard. Asked this question; “In the survey you responded that you were very happy in your position as executive producer, is that still the case?” She answered: “No. I am no longer an executive producer for World Today, I have been redeployed to SABC in Pretoria.”

Magape went on to tell me about her new position, without even attempting to say whether she is happy or not. I found her avoidance of the question about her happiness rather worrying, considering how she had expressed it in the survey. She has now been appointed to the much lower position of regional, not national, assignments editor. The position of national assignments editor would have been closest to her former job, as it would still have been on a national level, and hence there would be no reason for her to feel marginalised – and I do believe this is how she truly feels.

Theme 2: Lack of Respect

Another driving force behind the departure of many women from this industry is the lack of respect for them, either by colleagues or their superiors. Like many an issue raised and addressed in this study, among others across the globe, disrespect for black women journalists in the office as well as the lack of respect for black women as news sources

continues to be deepen. Magopeni argued that during her days in the SABC TV newsroom, management was fully aware of the continued patronising of black women both as practitioners and sources. However, nothing was ever done about it. Indeed news bulletins constantly contained, as they still do, stories portraying black women as old, cruel witches; rape or domestic violence victims; and naked human food trays. Magopeni's views were strongly supported by Dlamini who pointed out that respect was not regarded as important, the more so when you are a young black woman. She elaborated:

> [T]here is just very little respect for a young black woman. In this industry, in my organisation, it's just not there. And I think I would be very ambitious if I thought things would've changed in a year. It's still the same, you still have to work extra hard, you still have to prove yourself worthy of any position that you get, more than a man would. Errr… and it's all the same thing where every time you… let's say you pitching a story idea, you still have to work extra hard to get your managers to buy into that story because what do you know? With your ten years' experience, what do you know still? […] I've given up on trying to get anybody to respect me, I let my work speak for itself (Dlamini 2010).

Magopeni brought up an interesting notion, that Africanism also has a lot to do with a lack of respect with regard to the black woman. She argued her point like this:

> [T]his African thing, that if you are a man you are not supposed to be challenged by a woman, even worse that this woman happens to be younger than you. So it cascaded to a level where you are seen as a child in this position. As a woman this person just doesn't hear what you say. He doesn't recognise the value of having you in his team, just because you are a woman (Magopeni 2010).

Magopeni may have suffered discrimination from black men under the influence of Africanism, however, similarly to most of the women in this study, her very Africanism exposed her to an even bigger struggle, of racism, ageism and indeed 'genderism', better explained as gender inequity. Dlamini adds that at this rate she and many others of her kind will eventually leave the industry, to seek opportunities where she will be valued, where she might find people who …

> […] will appreciate my skills, that would respect me as a person, that would respect me as a woman, that would respect the brain and talent that I bring to the industry. So I'd rather go and study something else, and if I don't need to study something else, it's like if there's a communications thing coming up, I'd rather take that for whatever reason. […] We love journalism, but the way it's been crafted it's just not worth the sacrifice any more. So I shudder to think what the future of black women in journalism is going to be like. I, I don't have the confidence that it's going to get better (Dlamini 2010).

Indeed it is a shattering thought that the future of black women journalists is bleak, because studies such as this one should be aimed at finding solutions to the problem. It is a shattering thought to imagine the shrinkage of the numbers of fully skilled women journalists, as it will only exacerbate the problems being discussed in this paper instead of improving them. Therefore it is in this regard that I believe that feminist media scholarship should hastily and strongly unite with feminist media practitioners with a focus to shatter the glass/concrete ceilings instead, and defeat patriarchal constructs that continue to run the world against the rights of a black woman.

Theme 3: Imbalanced Salary Scale

One human right that the patriarchal system has taken away from black women and used to marginalise them further is that of unequal pay. All women interviewed and surveyed

are unhappy with their salaries, with some stating in the survey questionnaire that their male counterparts, along with women of other races, earn more than they do. However, only one woman brought up the issue during the interviews, saying there is a tendency to overlook people based on assumptions instead of facts:

> Errrr … we interact with the people who are decision makers and by looking at you they would think, oh she doesn't deserve, she doesn't, um … why does she need so much? She doesn't have any kids, she doesn't support A home, umm, so why? (Hlophe 2010).

Hlophe also states that she had attempted to make her superiors aware that she believes she deserves an increase, especially because her experience and needs were a clear indication of this. However, her views and attempts to reach out to them were ignored, and continue to be. Therefore this has led her to believe that she is just being used to the company's benefit instead of her own.

Theme 4: The Pretty Black Face, the Perfect Token

Hlophe's views above are an indication of what the industry has become notorious for, using black women as tokens to promote the ratings under false charades of employment equity. She argued that it was most frustrating because whenever black women had requests they were constantly turned down, although management was always claiming the SABC to be an equally gendered company, because "they're quick to say oh we have women, we have women in the department".

Her sentiments were shared by all the women, with Magopeni arguing that she was completely against women who allow themselves to be used as tokens, stating that the

industry was plagued by such women, the kind who would rather be a slave to fame. She added that this kind of behavior and belief should be ended, as it was indeed the biggest hurdle on the black women's road to equality. Dlamini was of the same opinion, but she was concerned about those who just may not be willing even to lift a finger against this disturbing trend.

> If we're going to fight that, we need to be prepared to sacrifice. Now I'm looking at any struggle that ever meant anything in the world, including the struggle for our liberation in this country. There was an element of sacrifice in it and that's why it was successful, lana [isiZulu for here], the problem here is, we are not prepared to sacrifice anything for gender equity, for just to be taken seriously as women. We're not prepared to sacrifice anything, so you take a woman like that who will stay on in that position and regardless of everything she stays on and you know what's going to happen. She stays on and these men in charge will continue doing the same thing over and over again (Dlamini 2010).

Dlamini's views are correct in the sense that for the system to change, women have to change themselves. This is similar to the argument I made previously about the fact that feminism has so many faces and divisions, which stand in the way of its work and efforts succeeding. However, if united as it is in womanism, it has a bigger chance of achieving its goals. Therefore for the media industry honchos to change, the black women must unite both in voice and action. Otherwise it will remain, as Magopeni said, juniorised. Borrowing from Science and Technology minister, Naledi Pandor she said:

> [T]here's a lack of "knowledge economy". We don't look at that when people are appointed, we look at numbers of the right race and gender, mind you my newsroom as is with most newsrooms including your case study, our former employer, they are juniorised. There's absolutely no experience and that is a major problem. We are struggling (Magopeni 2010).

Having said that, Magopeni admitted to being a token herself. However, she argued that her tokenism is not in the same wave length as that of the women criticised above. She stated that her tokenism had a purpose, which she hopes will empower black women in the future. She insisted that she is equipping herself to better understand the industry and educate herself so that in future she uses all her acquired skills and knowledge to upgrade the current status of the black woman media practitioner and the source.

> [S]o you can see that it's about fast tracking the process, yes it's about meeting the employment target, employment equity target. But still you do see that there is still commitment to help you and nurture you (Magopeni 2010).

While I am not particularly pleased with her way of approaching success, I do applaud her determination. Having said that, I am yet to understand how exactly her approach is improving the situation of marginalising the black woman as both practitioner and source as it stands. I absolutely do not recognise how allowing herself to be used, while she gets education and skills, which is what many of us in this study have already acquired, will improve the situation. Perhaps this is a state of disagreement with Magopeni that other women such as Kuboe share with me. Kuboe argued her point in this manner:

> [Y]ou see? That is why we need very stringent policies, including how we appoint these women to those positions. Seriously … they must be appointed based on their ability and commitment to reversing the gender imbalances in their area of competence. This should include addressing women's challenges in the workplace, ranging from their role as mothers, health challenges, etc … (Kuboe 2010).

In agreement with Kuboe's views, Magape simply stated that she would never allow herself to be used as a token, saying that she would rather resign. On the other hand, resignation from her position would be giving up the fight, something Magape believed

should not happen in this industry; therefore she is contradicting herself. I further explore her views on this matter in Theme 6: Defeated by Patriarchy.

Theme 5: The Patriarchal Mind

The arguments above show a sense of defiance in the voices of spirited women, who are by all means suitable to fight the struggle of gender inequity. However, the question remains: what of the tendency by some of these women to allow patriarchy to defeat the black woman's equal rights of individualism? For example, as rebellious as she sounds above, Magape's thinking has indeed been hampered by patriarchal constructs, as she seems accepting of the fact that she has been demoted, and is clearly, though unconvincingly, trying to make herself and others believe that she is happy – as with this with this rather sheepish statement:

> My present position is Assignment Editor in an input job not output anymore. Errr … I can say there's an improvement in that I am doing something that I am more …, that I am more passionate about which is interacting with journalists (Magape 2010).

At the same time, Magape seems to be careful not to say it is an improvement because the position is senior than her previous post, or perhaps that it is still on the same level, but an improvement because she is happier in the new position. Indeed that would not be true as it is not fact. While she states the truth about her position, her suggesting that it is an *improvement* because she is doing something she is more "passionate" about, is not true. The fact that she has been demoted implies that she has been given a salary cut. Secondly, she has been moved to another region, which meant she had to move her residence. Thirdly, it is highly unlikely for an individual who is a single parent and unmarried, with only one source of income, to be happy with a demotion, simply because

the work content is what she is passionate about. So it is my contention that she is saying this either because her mind has been trained to think in this manner, or she is in complete denial about what has happened to her career.

Dlamini concurs with my views, stating that the patriarchal system has completely ruined the black woman's state of mind. She argued her point in this manner:

> [I]n reality the system has messed us up so much. Patriarchy has messed us up so much, so much and as a gender that it's like the elephant with a chain. Chain an elephant, it can only move so far, even when you take off that chain the elephant will still move only to that level, because still in its mind it is a captive. And so I think what has happened with us is, because we have been told and treated like we are second best in society, sometimes, well the very very last of the pile as a black woman. Because of that, we have entrenched that into ourselves to the point where we just don't bother shaking it off any more. It's like yeah well I'm not going to bother any more […](Dlamini 2010)

Magopeni applied a different view to patriarchal mindsets, saying the men in charge are certainly of that mind:

> [T]he people you see in those positions are the people who saw being a manager as having authority, and it was more about authority, it's about power, while it's more about serving the people. It's about the talent that you have, to achieve more, because your success depends on those people (Magopeni 2010).

Kuboe agrees, saying this was her biggest problem at the SABC, because even though she was a decision maker as executive producer, often her decisions were overridden if

not completely disregarded. That makes her "insecure and feel disempowered and therefore demoralised".

Hlophe says sometimes the patriarchally constructed minds of women tend to put each other down – what has been popularly and loosely termed "the pull her down syndrome".[9] She says, for example, when one woman is driven and strives to get a higher position in the office, some women would make comments such as, "Why is she doing it? She's not good enough." Hlophe argued that what they forget is all the effort this woman may have put into her work, that she has the drive and capability to do the job she may be applying for, and often she can do even better. Hlophe's remarks are correct, and sadly so, because so many black women are capable of more than they believe they are. This is yet another precise example of a mind designed by patriarchy, a black woman thinking she could never perform equally to or better than the men.

Theme 6: Defeated by Patriarchy

In some instances, as some of these women indicated when interviewed, once women realise that they are fighting a losing battle, that they are alone in this fight, they succumb to the very system that they are against. For example, once they do eventually reach the top positions they fought so hard to occupy, they become "one of the boys" and forget the reason they had fought to get to that position in the first place. I asked Dlamini why she thought that is. She responded:

> I think it's a combination of issues. I think on the one hand you've got women that feel they've worked so hard to build themselves up as brands and you know the most respected women in society and they want to remain the only respected women in

[9] "Pull her down syndrome" is a term loosely used to explain a situation where women put each other down or negatively criticise each other instead of applauding each other's achievements.

> society. So they get very territorial around the top brass. But I think you also get these women that talk the talk but don't walk the walk. So in other words they talk about how they are mentoring and they are so concerned about the people that come behind them. They so want to empower other women and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Meanwhile it is who is this person? What can they do for my profile? So if I am a Jane Raphaely let's say, and I want to mentor somebody, I'm not going to mentor uNokwazi that is, who is she in society? uDumengani (isiZulu for what's her claim to fame)? But I will mentor uBasetsane Khumalo, because she's going to talk about me, she's gonna go all over and talk about me on Top Billing, about how great I am and I find that there's a lot of that, where even women high up in business, they're not gonna attend to any Tom, Dick and Harry. They're not going to pay attention to the women that actually need mentoring, but they will latch on to somebody that they think is going to up their profile and that is where the problem really is (Dlamini 2010).

Dlamini's argument is extreme. However, it makes a valid point, considering a lot of youngsters who truly do need and deserve mentoring by the women who do occupy positions in higher echelons are left to discover the ups and downs of the industry on their own, in the junior ranks of the newsrooms. By the same token, those younger women outside the media industry are left without an idea of where and how to start with their careers, and clueless on how to fight off any discrimination and glass/concrete ceilings. Hlophe agrees. However she was not critical of these women, instead she sympathised with them:

> [W]e don't wanna fight. You know it drains you, it drains you to a level where you feel what's the point. It drains you so much, that if you continue thinking about it you won't have any energy left. So your health is much better without this fight, or else you collapse. So you give in eventually (Hlophe 2010).

Kuboe also sympathised with these women, saying it was not their fault, but that of the companies that employ them. She further elaborated that in fact many of these women

remain focused on the reward of changing their mindsets to favour women. She said: "When companies and organisations implement clear policies on gender equality at different levels, followed by clear guidelines, linked to performance and outcomes, there will be a change." Magape on the other hand believes that women such as myself and Motloung have been defeated by patriarchy because we have left the industry. Notably this is a complete contradiction to her earlier views, in Theme 4, where she argued that she would rather resign than become a token. In my view, by quitting she would be doing exactly what she believes myself and Motloung to have done, abandoning the industry.

Moreover, Magape may not be entirely right in her argument that Motloung and I have been defeated, especially considering that I am improving my studies, with the aim of returning to the industry at a much higher level than just a reporter, producer or anchor. Indeed I do have plans to do as some of the women have indicated, develop my media company to a thriving media giant, where black women will be in the forefront. However, Magape does have a point, and a right to assume we have thrown in the towel. She is correct also to say throwing in the towel is not the right way to fight the battle against patriarchy, because those of us inside the industry may be the only tool by which women outside the industry, the potential news sources and those on the ground, could make their own presence felt and voices heard. If we give in, they may simply give in too. At the same time our resignations do not serve as a good example of the spirit of activism that we speak of, therefore it would be wiser for women such as myself to get themselves back in the saddle and ride along with our defiant colleagues towards an end to misogynistic media practices.

Theme 7: The evolving sense of fear and the glass/concrete ceiling

On questions related to this theme the women once again spoke openly, with some answers leading me to assume that there is indeed a sense of fear within them. Magopeni

pointed a finger towards herself, saying she was briefly among the women who feared challenging authority:

> [W]e tend to look down on ourselves as women. I remember when I was requested by my superiors to apply for this position, they said they were aware that I was not even considering applying, which was true. So that just tells you how we always assume the worst of ourselves before even trying out (Magopeni 2010).

It is very honourable that Magopeni knows her own weak points and is therefore not afraid to let them be known, such as her disclosure on being a token manager. Dlamini highlighted similarities to Magopeni's case at the SABC, saying there are so many women who have that fear of taking on higher positions, let alone challenging authority. She said that after speaking to most of the women in the office this is what she found:

> [T]hese are women with aspirations; women that want to get far. They would love that top job, they would love to do more than what they are doing now. Problem is, they've found that it's just not worth the fight, because you've got to fight so hard to get out of that box, that pretty face box, that all you do is read from and you're being done a favour actually by being put on the screen for millions of people to watch. You not really working, they'll be doing you a favour basically (laughter), but fact is, it's just too much of a hassle to fight the system. The system is so strong, it's so big and so male that for them it's just not worth it (Dlamini 2010).

Having worked closely with the women Dlamini is referring to myself, I can confirm that it is indeed true that while they do aspire to better/senior jobs and achievements in the newsroom, they back down from fear of challenging authority, believing they will lose the fight. As Dlamini states, they are afraid of the strength of the system, the fact that it is

big and controlled by men. This point alone highlights once again that black women have a tendency to think of themselves as weak when placed against men.

Hlophe concurred, saying it was just too difficult a fight to conquer, and what made it even harder is that women in senior positions were silenced as they were not given the chance even to make independent decisions. As Kuboe indicated earlier, management often overrides her decisions. Magape is faced with an analogous problem, saying: "At regional level I do have a final say but unfortunately when it comes to national issues my male bosses have a final say and this can be very frustrating." As she does admit it can be frustrating not to be able to make a national decision, which is something she had become accustomed to in her previous job as executive producer, it is clear to see that Magape is unhappy in her new regional position.

On the issue of being blocked by the existing glass/concrete ceiling, Magopeni outlined a typical example of this impediment in South African newsrooms. She explained how her career came to a sudden halt when she had one foot inside the door of management.

> [T]he executive producer came to work on some occasions drunk and the management team decided he should go home. All the other women in the Xhosa news team were just made a mockery of, so I don't know if it's luck, but they suggested I was a good cover/stand in for him. Indeed I did a good job, then training in the EP position was suggested. However once the EP returned to work sober, he called me and told me to stop with the training. Just like that. He never explained why (Magopeni 2010).

Magopeni's case clearly explains how easy it is for men to grind women's growing careers to a halt, and in most instances this is done in both private and public sphere.

Theme 8: The power/lack of power to represent the black woman in news

In this theme arguments on how the poor representation of black women in the newsrooms has and will undoubtedly continue to result the same phenomenon with regard to the news sources. Dlamini argued that while it is most commonly discussed in media, it is in fact an issue across the board. I asked her what she makes of the fact that even during the 16 days of activism against women and child abuse, the line of stories told continues on the same track of negativity, and often no men seem to report on these women-based stories. She responded:

> [I]t's there in every industry, because the study I've just done I found that there is women issue fatigue, if I can put it like that. The men in the study, most of them were like oh gosh, are we still talking about women being under-represented? Are we still talking about women being disadvantaged? Are we still there? You know it's like can women just get over it. And I think it's the same with 16 days of activism, it's like okay we've got this thing with 16 days, so wena (isiZulu for you), you're a woman you do a couple of stories and you're a woman, ja, ja, ja let's just get this over with this thing. The men must do important stories, they must now focus on the President and whatever else. The women can take care of this 16 days thing, you know and whatever else these women are complaining about, just so we are politically correct [….] And if anyone thinks that we as a society we have evolved to a point where women are actually holding something of a credible space, particularly in the news space, you're deluding yourself, it's not happening (Dlamini 2010).

Unfortunate views, however true, and the other women interviewed do agree, with Hlophe being particularly concerned with the sense of negativity when women stories are told. She the finger to herself as a practitioner as well:

> There really aren't any woman heroes in the stories we tell. Black women are always portrayed negatively, like prostitutes or domestic violence victims. I mean I sometimes wonder; why don't they have black business woman of the week kind of special reports. I wanna do such stories, in fact I'd love to do such stories, but I fail being at the SABC there's just no platform. Instead I have to chase Minister so and so. […] how are we gonna change society's perceptions. I mean like you say, errr… like a child in Soweto gonna…, how can they aspire to be a successful business woman, cause they don't know. They're not told positive stories. Instead they hear about Khanyi Mbau being a gold digger (Hlophe 2010).

Kuboe concurred with Dlamini and Hlophe, saying the fact that the media is largely run by men is the very first point of definition of the existence of this problem:

> It's not in their best interest, I mean, coming from a patriarchal society and all, to change this status quo. The media should commit to a revised way of writing and presenting news, which includes the mainstreaming of gender in all aspects. You know … things like the language and the writing style; they have to be completely overhauled to include women. […] journalists must be retrained, part of the reason why women representation in the media remains low, is that we have to deal with our own belief systems and fears around empowering women. Both men and women in newsrooms need to look deep inside themselves, challenge their own beliefs and behaviors around sex and gender, then those stereotypes will change (Kuboe 2010).

Kuboe's suggestions make sense, however this is something that will require a lot of dedication as it will require a lot of time from both the trainees and trainers. Magape was on the same wave length, stating that good examples need to be set for younger black women aspiring to be media practitioners. Magape believed our attitudes should change for the better, and we should stand up for our rights by not allowing men to trample on us, simply "to satisfy their egos".

However, at the same time, she doubts that we have the courage and strength to stand against the patriarchal system as a collective:

> I don't think we really have what it takes but we can do more to change the status quo. We can start organisations that are hundred percent women that can challenge whatever situation we are faced with. SANEF is male dominated, the media ombudsman is a man. We must approach the Winnie Mandelas of this world to help guide us, we can approach the president, we can have petitions, and we can approach other women in the media outside SA to also bring in their input. We can have workshops and invite all women in media both print and electronic and seek a way forward (Magape 2010).

Magape's views are radical, but in sync with mine along with those of the other respondents, with Magopeni suggesting that new rules and regulations should be set up, with a reshuffle on commentators used in the news, adding more black women commentators. She further elaborated her point in this manner:

> [W]e must start getting black women to comment on issues that affect black women, and it'll make more sense. It's like getting a black person to comment on the new government, it makes more sense, because when you get other races, often it is negative comments, it's as though our government does no good, when in actual fact they've done so much. So we don't want someone who continuously wants to bash our black sisters. We need someone who identifies with their strength and can therefore speak highly of that (Magopeni 2010).

Having heard all these positive arguments made, it was disheartening to hear Dlamini speak of the negativity in the representation of black women as news sources and the lack thereof. It also pained her to raise this point, but she felt it is important enough to be emphasised:

> [I]t pains me so much that I as an experienced journalist, an experienced black female journalist, am considering leaving the industry. It pains me because I know my role and I know that this role is such an important role and you wanna play this role. I want to represent and I want to tell the stories of women, tell the stories of my people, tell stories period and be good at it. And let it be known that there are women that are doing this and are good at it. But it is just so hard, it's so hard. Maybe what I need is like you, take a bit of a breather and then go back into it (laughter), in a different disguise. But right now it's just bad, it's really bad, it really is (Dlamini 2010).

Dlamini's views are certainly hard to take in. However, as I know from experience, it can be very difficult to continue in the media industry, and indeed the raw patriarchal hegemony is capable of driving a woman out. However it does ease my concern to know that, if she should do as she indicates and leave the media, she will later do as I intend, return in a different and superior disguise. If this is how most of us who have left approach the struggle then I have no doubt that with time we will achieve our goals.

4.1.8. Structured News Source Interviews

A total of five women from different walks of life were interviewed as representatives of the news source. Two are from Soweto; a third grew up in Soweto, but later moved to the eastern suburbs of Johannesburg; another is based in the newly revamped Johannesburg CBD, and is also originally from Soweto. The last is from the Eastern Cape, briefly lived in Soweto and Alexandra townships, but now lives with her employers in Fourways.

One of the two women from Soweto is a 59-year-old retired grandmother, who is single and lives with her 16–year-old youngest daughter and her 12-year-old granddaughter.

Zandile Tshabalala's only source of income is her pension, and sometimes her elder daughter gives her money. However, she admits that her daughter always makes sure that she has everything she needs at home, including the car she drives.

The other Soweto-based woman is a married and unemployed mother of two girls, aged 12 years and 10 months. Nomaswazi Mthembu's[10] husband is self-employed with a single minibus school transportation business. Mthembu has various short-course certificate qualifications such as home nursing, nail and beauty therapy, and fashion design and sewing. With these qualifications she has tried her hand at small businesses, currently focusing on sewing. She dreams of turning this into a big business someday, focusing on curtains and linen.

Living in the eastern suburb of Alberton is Louisa Molefi, owner of a health and African spa, who is also a wife and mother of three children: Two boys aged five and two years, as well as a three-month-old baby girl. Her husband is also self-employed, with a thriving herbal factory. Molefi has a few accolades to her name, including the Shoprite/Checkers title of Business Woman of the Year 2008, in the business category. She employs 28 people in her clinics around the country and Lesotho.

The fourth woman is a 34-year-old former journalist, now a senior communications specialist in one of the country's leading airlines. Lindelwa Mthembu is a single mother of a five-year-old girl. She grew up in Soweto, but moved to the north in her early twenties, and recently moved to the newly revamped Johannesburg CBD. Mthembu worked as a broadcast journalist, starting in radio, la

[10] As there are two respondents named Mthembu, I refer to Nomaswazi Mthembu as Mthembu, N., and Lindelwa Mthembu as Mthembu, L.

er moving to television for ten years. She insists that while she loves journalism, and sometimes misses the field, she is content in the corporate world and therefore is unlikely to go back to the media industry.

The fifth interviewee is a 29-year-old domestic worker, who is also a single mother. She has two boys, aged seven and five years. She is originally from the Eastern Cape where her children live with her mother. She briefly lived with her parents in Soweto, until the age of five, when her father found another job in the Eastern Cape where the family resides to date. She has been living in Alexandra Township, north of Johannesburg, for three years, moving from one part-time job to another. At the time of this interview Mpho Mosiame was a domestic worker and had been living with her employer in Fourways, north of Johannesburg.

There were only ten questions drawn up for this structured interview. Once again I used themes linked to the research questions to get information from the women. There were only three themes in this instance, followed by corresponding questions.

Theme 1: Representation of Black Women

1) What is your view of South African news, especially television as a black woman?

2) Do you feel represented as a black woman in your occupation when you watch the news?

3) Who/what do you think is the main focus of SA news?

In this theme it was clear that the women are unhappy with the way the media represents them as members of society. All five respondents said they often felt like the news did not consider them as members of their audience. It is because of this that Mthembu, N. and Mosiame rarely watched the news. Mosiame explained that she feels as though "the news is directed at other people, perhaps those who are more educated and successful in life", something she feels she is not. Mthembu, N. says she felt her husband related better to the news subjects, as "often men are portrayed as having the upper hand, compared to women, especially black women". Hence she did not benefit in any way from watching any news bulletin. This is similar to Molefi's response that while she did watch, she felt "there is no point in watching news, whatever channel, because one never gains anything good from them". Mthembu, L. was more critical, which is to be expected, considering she is a former journalist. She argued her point in this manner:

> Story angles integrate biases in support of existing gender power relations with no deeper questioning of socially constructed roles, and as a result exclude professional black women (Mthembu, L. 2011).

Tshabalala, who is the only pensioner, said she enjoyed watching news, but "it is disheartening to see that black women, especially older black women, are a rare occurrence in news items". Therefore in her response to the second question she stated unequivocally that she did not feel represented, as the bulletins often focused on crime, politics or foreign affairs. In answering both the second and third questions, Molefi agreed with the pensioner, saying crime is always at the forefront, and "even when women are depicted in the news they're often the victim of these crimes which are often committed by macho men who believe they run the world". She said politicians and silly celebrities are always taking over the main chunk of news bulletins. Mosiame said it's comforting to see that at least the media had considered some of the black women by broadcasting in various languages, however "it becomes somewhat pointless, once you realise that the topics do not concern you". Mthembu, L. agrees with the other women, saying: "There is absolutely no true reflection of the black woman, regardless of her

occupation and age." She continues to say that media machinery remains as patriarchal and conservative as ever, with the only change being the replacement of white men by black men.

Theme 2: Recognising the Black woman's achievements and strengths

1) Where do you think the news fail black women?

2) Considering the country's demographics would you say black women as the majority of the population are being fairly represented?

3) Do you think the successes of black women are known and shown in the media?

4) Would you agree with me if I said black women are often portrayed in a negative manner, such as villains, rape or domestic abuse victims, poor and even sex objects? Elaborate.

Mthembu, N. strongly criticised the media on the first question in this theme, saying media practitioners have a tendency to completely ignore black women, unless they are living in squalor, or are charity cases or the complete opposite, celebrities. She further argued:

> [E]ven when covering the so-called celebrities, the only people in the forefront are useless people who honestly should not be celebrated such as Khanyi Mbau. What has she done really that deserves to be celebrated. There are many black women who have turned the worst situation into the best, women who have undoubtedly moved mountains and crossed the biggest rivers, yet the media shuns their achievements. It is definitely sad to sit and watch that (Mthembu, N. 2011).

Tshabalala was also disturbed by the constant media coverage of Khanyi Mbau, saying "people like her should not even make it into the news, because they add no value to the life of a young black woman who watches the news and other forms of media for inspiration". She added that the media and society needed to recognise that "black women are not fools without any aspirations, old as I am, I can think and dream big, yes, I do have a brain and we definitely can be very successful given the chance". Her views were echoed by Mthembu, L. who argued that "black women's voices as leaders are missing we're often masqueraded as victims […] when learned voices are required on issues such as science, economics and politics, mainly men are used, a conscious effort is clearly not made to discover new female expert voices". Molefi agreed with this statement: "One would swear that men make up most of the country's population, especially with regards to the tendency to undermine the black woman's intelligence." Mosiame capitalised on this point, as she argued that the image of a black woman in South African news is depressing. She elaborated:

> [S]ome of the scenarios are an old black woman waiting for hours or overnight in a queue for her government grant, a poor old woman desperately trying to feed a family of 15 on her meagre pension. Another popularly shown picture is that of a prostitute, or domestic abuse victims as well as teenage mothers, in most instances you find that the mother has either abandoned their baby or the latest case of an Eastern Cape mom who killed her newborn and lied about it (Mosiame 2011).

Mosiame's argument is accurate. Considering that such visuals constantly shown on the news, women are unlikely to be considered as an equal part of society. Indeed, if these images are not erased and replaced by positive pictures soon, even the coming generations will continue to look down on the black woman.

Theme 3: Equating the genders in news

1) What would you like to see changed in the news?

2) How do you think the black woman's representation in news media can become equitable to that of the other gender and race?

3) Better yet how do you think black women's representations could be made to equate the reality?

Like the media practitioners surveyed and interviewed earlier, these women would like to see more gender-sensitive news on their televisions. Mthembu, L. said the onus is on news practitioners "to go the extra mile when researching and looking for experts to quote, and feature black female professionals; furthermore, newsrooms must develop a conscious effort to commission stories about successful professional black women". On the same wavelength, Mosiame said it would be nice to hear stories about "a former domestic worker for example, who has gone on to become a grand businesswoman". Tshabalala said there's a desperate need for a balanced gender representation by the media, as this would promote a sense of equality in society, resulting in respect for both genders. Molefi and Mthembu, N were unanimous in saying to do this, the media would need to start paying more attention and listen to the views of ordinary black women.

4.1.9. Self-Reflexive Data

As stated earlier, I have a dual role in this study, that of the researcher and that of an informant. It has been two and a half years since I left the SABC on both freelance and full-time basis. When I left, there was no doubt in my mind that the company was run on patriarchal terms, with, additionally, a preference of women from other racial groups rather than black women. As such, men were at- the helm, making all key decisions, covering all the crucial events and stories in the news and other current affairs

programming. Across the newsroom, which included all languages, and morning, afternoon, children's and evening news, black women played the meagre roles. There were certainly equal numbers of women and men employed in that newsroom, but when translated to black women alone, the numbers dwindled.

I sit outside the SABC TV newsroom today and yet I am still often confronted by black women who remain in that office complaining about how bad the situation has become. News reports about the ongoing senior management squabbles continue to mention men still occupying positions in the upper echelons. As one of the respondents rightly put it, "The SABC has recently reshuffled its management; however, there is no difference, since the newly appointed team is still male dominated." I could not agree more with Dlamini when she says the situation has become worse, judging by her words and those of other staff members, as well as media reports on the case study. To further highlight this point is the fact that a number of news anchors, mainly black women, have disclosed to me that they were once told by the new Chief Executive of News that the SABC is actually doing them a favour by allowing them to read the news, as they are very ugly, old and useless women. Dlamini, who also confirmed this, stating it was the reason she resigned from news anchoring, says the news chief also ordered them to take a 60% salary cut, in consideration of his earlier words. It is very disappointing that many of these women allowed their male boss to insult them in such a manner, and did as he ordered them to do. On the other hand it is also understandable, on the grounds that they are afraid of the consequences should they not do as ordered.

What I can read from incidents such as the one above is that black women in that newsroom fear the authority of the men in charge. What I have also witnessed is that very rarely do black women in the SABC TV newsroom take a stand and dare challenge a senior who is a man or of another race. I can recall an instance where I challenged an Afrikaner woman bulletin editor for editing my story from a strong one and a half minute piece, about an HIV-positive woman who had taken in 8 Aids orphans into her Soweto

home, to a somewhat apologetic 30-second piece, which simply highlighted the fact that all persons involved were victims of Aids and are HIV positive. I had intended for the story to highlight the fact that this woman was a heroine, but my editor failed to do this. My decision to challenge her lead to the complete removal of the story from the news bulletin, and I was dragged to a disciplinary hearing, where I again made it clear that as a reporter I do not simply report on what my superiors order, instead of telling the story as it is. While I managed to carve a position of good standing in the newsroom for a while, it was soon gone as I lost my two jobs while I was away on maternity leave. The job of news anchor went to a coloured woman and a black man took over that of special report/documentary producer.

My taking a stand against my Afrikaner bulletin editor, who was later accompanied by my black male national news editor and the white (English) news executive producer in the disciplinary hearing, became a rather shocking and popularly known episode among the men and especially black women in our newsroom. I am of the view that this was so simply because most black women in that newsroom were just too afraid to do what I had done. Therefore my move was rather taboo to them. I also believe that many women became afraid of making their points of view known because they were indeed older, as the Chief of News bluntly put it, or too young to face up to the senior, older male managers. Some, possibly most, women are not well educated in this industry and therefore fear that they may lose their jobs – so where would they go, should this happen? This takes us back to Ndungu's argument that some women are left with no option but to rely on other people for financial support.

In my experience, as demonstrated above with an incident resulting in a disciplinary hearing, the story in question was a positive report on a woman. This was not an isolated incident. Often such stories would be pushed to the bottom of the day's news diary and in the end they would make the bulletin by a few seconds while the so-called "strong" political/governmental stories would take the lead. It has happened, and continues to

happen, that the political reporter team at the SABC TV newsroom consists of mainly men and just one black woman. Even though there is a woman in this team, she is often pushed to the "weakest political story" available, such as the appointment of a woman political leader or the funeral of a woman politician such as Bertha Gxowa, Manto Tshabalala Msimang or Stella Sigcau. On the other hand, the men will travel the world with the President or Deputy President, and cover the ANC or COSATU National Executive Committee (NEC) meetings. Once again, what is considered a "weak political story" features a woman, while a congress where mostly men will be making decisions is considered the strong story of the day.

What I find most disturbing about my illustrations above, is that while the media are meant to be the public's mouth piece, the voice of the voiceless, in South Africa, as in most parts of the world, it is definitely the voice/mouth piece of those with power. By what I have experienced at the SABC TV newsroom, and as a viewer, men are definitely in charge of society and once again the constructs of patriarchy live on, through the media.

4.2. Conclusion

Listening to the respondents made it clear that many black women in this industry are well aware of what is happening with regard to them, such as the continued marginalisation by the media's misogynistic hegemony. However, having said that, the views expressed above have also displayed a clear sense of fear when it comes to taking a stand against the system. The women have also indicated that the media are a clear-cut "boys club", and hence fitting in as a woman, particularly a black woman, both as a practitioner and as a source, is difficult. The voices of the sources confirm the findings from data given by the media employees. Indeed women audiences do not identify with the news as they often feel either misrepresented or completely ignored as a source of news and part of society, therefore making it more difficult for them to take a stand.

Sadly this is a difficulty that will continue to prevail. However, with the kind of spirit that has been displayed by the women practising in the media, the fight will be won, regardless of how long it will take. Indeed this is comforting to know as a black woman who has moved from being a media practitioner to being a source within a feminist media scholarship.

Chapter 5 Analysis and Interpretation

5.1. Introduction

This chapter looks back at Chapter 4 for information provided by the respondents, in order to answer the research questions. It does this by utilising thematic content analysis, specifically on the survey and interview sections. The focus group and self-reflexive data are analysed without the use of themes. The analysis of the data collected in the first phase has already been delivered in Chapter 4 and therefore this chapter starts with discussing the new data only, which includes the survey questionnaires of the two additional respondents, Magopeni and Hlophe, then later analyses the lengthy one-on-one interviews with five media practitioners. The discussion of the structured short interviews with the news sources follows.

5.2 Analysis and Interpretation of the Survey Questionnaire

Theme A: Working Conditions

Most of the women surveyed in the first phase were in sync with each other on several issues, including that of working conditions. However, that is not the case with the two women newly included in the study, as they seem to be on opposing ends of opinion on most issues. Magopeni was clearly unhappy working in her position as translator/writer at the SABC. She stated that her job was not interesting at all, and had failed to be as involving and intellectually rewarding as it had been made to sound upon her appointment. Clearly, Magopeni felt deceived and mislead. She further argues that her direct superior, the executive producer, insisted that there was no need for her to move on to doing the "more serious and challenging duties" leading to executive producer training. He instead limited her to translating and writing. Although Magopeni had stayed

at the SABC for two and a half years, this is what she experienced soon after her appointment. Therefore it is clear that she had hit the glass/concrete ceiling immediately upon her arrival, without being given even a small chance to demonstrate her talents, capabilities, skills and knowledge.

Although Hlophe is also being obstructed from reaching higher, she seems somewhat oblivious to that. She claims she is "ok" with her current position, because it is the most senior in the camera department. However, she fails to mention that there are people senior to her, such as the camera pool manager and supervisors, who are in turn at a much lower rank than that of national news editor. It is true that Hlophe qualifies her argument, saying that her job is the most senior level that is flexible enough for one to remain in the field. However, having worked closely with the camera operators myself, I can argue that her view is misguided, because the supervisor and manager are not barred from working in the field; in fact, they are encouraged to do so, as it allows them to remain in contact with and aware of what is required of a camera operator outside of the office.

Hlophe further states that she is not sure how long she intends to stay at the SABC. Certainly, these are words commonly spoken by individuals who do not have aspirations to grow further in a company, or people who feel there is no room for growth in that particular firm, and therefore see moving on as a better option. Undeniably it is how I, in particular, felt at the time of my departure, and, as is demonstrated by some of the women considering resignation as an option, room for growth at the SABC is almost non-existent when you are a black woman.

It is very disturbing to find that there are still women who are completely blinded to a blatantly patriarchal hierarchy that exists in South African newsrooms and the news they produce. Despite her experience of over 15 years, Hlophe still speaks in the same vein as Miya, a junior reporter with only four years' experience. She lightly raises the point that

her views, along with those of other black women, are often overlooked in meetings, and the fact that she is not entirely happy, but she is seemingly more concerned about management's poor decision–making, particularly when preparing for big events. Such words are a clear indication that this woman is either afraid to confront the situation and therefore would rather stay away from even discussing it, or she is simply oblivious to it, and more aware of petty issues which are likely to be associated with lack of experience. Furthermore, she concurs with Miya's views quoted in Chapter 4 that respect is earned, saying that women should be respected, but respect is mutual. Such thinking displays what Dlamini refers to in her interview when she says "the patriarchal system has messed up our minds". Clearly such thinking is not logical for any woman opposed to women oppression. However, if the brain has been largely consumed by particular structural notions, then undoubtedly that person is bound think irrationally on any level opposed to that structure.

On the same issue, Magopeni describes the working conditions at the SABC as "very patronising, the tone of male colleagues and the way they would respond to my suggestions". This is once again in complete contrast to Hlophe's views above, and indeed more in sync with the situation as I and most of the women in this study know it. These views are evidently not far-fetched considering the findings by various studies, such as the SANEF series (2006 & 2007), indicating the existence of patriarchal hegemony and the glass (or concrete) ceilings. Another contrasting factor between these two women is that while Hlophe feels management should properly plan for "event" stories, Magopeni is of the view that the running of the news desk is in dire need of change, in the news-gathering process and putting emphasis on "non-event- related" news.

Theme B: Black Women Representation in the newsroom and news

Magopeni's view that the news-gathering process should steer away from event-driven news stories concurs with many of the women's opinions on the issue of the representation of black women in the news. Magopeni is concerned that the only themes ever featured in the news related to women, are abuse, rape and domestic violence. She links this problem to what she describes as poor quality and experience within the newsroom. This is a point commonly shared throughout the feminist media scholarship; however, it is often not explained why there is a feeling that such news items are negative. Therefore in attempting to explain this notion, I would say that I believe there is absolutely nothing wrong with reporting the ills committed against women either at home, in the streets or even in the office. However, the stories reported need not be framed in a way that is more likely to promote a man's "strength" in comparison to the woman's "weakness" by ridiculing her, or making it sound as if she was "asking for it", because this will in all probability lead to more violence committed against women, in the name of proving a twisted man's machismo.

A perfect example for the above argument is the Jacob Zuma rape trial. Khwezi the survivor of the alleged rape was constantly flaunted as a joke in news items around the country, regardless of the reporter's gender. While in some instances it was intentional, in others it certainly wasn't, however in *chasing the most sensational headline and visuals* the journalists lost all sense of sensitivity. Had the media been more sinsitised about gender sensitivity, indeed they would have not capitalised on the ongoing protests against Khwezi, outside the court calling her names, suggesting that she *had asked for it*.

In fact the media was fascinated by the actions outside the court, to a point that it actually became the highlight of the story in almost every news item, in turn more members of the public became consumed and also started calling the woman a liar. When Julius Malema announced that the woman *had asked for it*, considering Zuma's testimony that she had been wearing a 'Kanga' that became the leading story, with just a fraction of it being dedicated to the "one in nine campaign" protesters against such discrimination. To date,

exiled in another country, Khwezi is refered to by many as the girl who falsely accused President Zuma of rape, when it has not been proven as such. Frankly the media has done nothing to fix this misconception created mainly by their reports.

Gadzekpo (2009: 71) argues a similar stance, that while increasingly issues such as gender-based violence are being "outed" from the private sphere into the media, patriarchal framing of stories, ill-considered language and non-contextualised reporting undermine such stories. Certainly, though a newsroom may be filled with women, as Magopeni says, if they do not know how to protect and cannot represent their gender, and stand against masculine oppression, then indeed the woman who sits at home hoping to see representative news items which would in turn change people's mindsets into acknowledging her as an equal part of society may as well be viewed as deluded.

In the subject of newsroom representation, Hlophe chimes with Magopeni's argument that although the numbers of women practitioners in the newsroom has increased to the same level as those of men, on the specialised desks, such as the politics desk, men still dominate. Her view is on point, considering that there is only one woman on that desk. This has been the case for five years and clearly it is a non-issue for the management, as they continue employing men to fill vacant positions. For example, when the other woman on the desk left the SABC over five years ago, her position was advertised without specifying the need for a woman journalist. And indeed, a man was employed. Two years later another man was employed. Magopeni says sexism is more an issue of knowledge superiority, with men tending "to think they own knowledge and experience even when the reality is different". Considering the occupation of the politics desk, this is true. This example alone is evidence that the SABC TV newsroom structure has misogynistic tendencies, and therefore refuses to see black women as equals.

Such attitudes are the reason Magopeni says she would never return to the SABC. Having said this she agrees with Hlophe in that neither has any intentions of leaving the industry. This clearly shows the sense of dedication to this industry by these women, especially considering all the chauvinistic attitudes they have, and continue to, come across in their careers. Magopeni's opinion that men "need to start realising that women cannot just be relegated to editing magazines, because they can do more than that" is precisely to the point in this regard. A number of the women surveyed here have shown determination to go beyond their current positions, which is why they need to voice their opinions in such a study.

Theme C: Remuneration Discrepancies

The tendency to disrespect women is made evident in this theme, as none of the women surveyed in this study showed the slightest satisfaction with their salaries. In fact this is another issue Hlophe feels strongly about, saying she was overlooked for a salary increase because of her gender. The fact that she has repeatedly raised this as a concern to her superiors and been ignored, is a strong indication that those in charge do not have a care for her and her concerns. I struggle to understand why she would say the conditions under which she works are fair. Once more this brings to light the argument that ignorance, or simply fear of challenging the masculine system that runs the industry, obstruct women's ability to act to their own advantage.

In Magopeni's case, she seems somewhat confused about how she views herself as a black woman in this industry. She appears radical in most instances, yet there are times she seemingly succumbs to patriarchy, such as by accepting a drop in salary on her appointment, simply because she wanted to get into the SABC.

While it can be argued that Magopeni was sufficiently driven to allow this, I find it is evidence of absolute blindness to the fact that she was being used as "just another woman" on the team. Indeed, my argument is backed up by her statement that she was misled into believing that her job would involve more serious and challenging duties, but in practice was instead reduced to just translating and writing. The fact that Magopeni failed to think critically here and in other instances mentioned by herself in the interview is one of many and clear effects of the so-called "feminisation of the media". This is a process that confuses women into believing that they have stood their ground against patriarchy, when in actual fact they have instead fallen, and continue to fall, into the very enemy's trap. I say this because the actions and beliefs of feminisation promote the theory that "numerical presence is better than nothing", which means as long as women are there in numbers one need not necessarily bothers about how they got there, or what kind of obstacles they are faced with along the way. It is on this basis that women such as Magopeni, Hlophe and Mbalo, among others, view it as reasonable to accept employment on low salary scales and with poor working conditions, in the hope that it will get better.

Such reasoning is also lined with the successful constructs of patriarchal thinking by women, which leads me to the findings by Gross (1990). In Prekel (1995: 6) Gross argues, with specific reference to black women managers that poor salaries are actually not amongst the major stressors:

> [E]xpected stressors such as organisational and work-family role conflict, marginality, pay dissatisfaction, lack of mobility, inferior education and poor interpersonal relations appeared to be less of a problem for this group of woman managers than expected.

Magopeni's acceptance of poor working conditions through her two and a half year's stay at the SABC and a lower salary, as well as the acceptance demonstrated by Magape in believing that her demotion to regional assignments editor is much better than her senior

position national executive producer role, are classic examples of the patriarchal successes in this regard.

5.3. Analysis and Interpretation of the Focus Group

When the women met for the focus group meeting, there was a feeling of gratitude towards each other for participating in the study. Everyone seemed eager to get started and participate in the research. As the discussions began and continued for hours it was evident that all those present had one goal, which was to topple the patriarchal system running the media, and hence running the lives of black women. Despite a little hesitation from some, it was clear that the women wanted to be the voice of reason for the black women who cry for help from Soweto and Gugulethu. The energy brought by the women highlighted a sense that they were aiming to show the black women of South Africa that indeed fear does have a voice.

It was interesting to see that while most black women, including some of these women in the SABC TV newsroom, are afraid to fight for their rights, during the discussions the members of the group were most certainly not afraid to stand for their right to be part of this research. They questioned how the paper would be utilised, and just how they would be protected in a case of anonymity. Some of them even questioned whether I could have possibly been conducting the study on behalf of the SABC. Once all questions had been answered, and all women were assured of their anonymity should they require it, and that of course the discussion was being conducted as part of my study through my BA (Hons) and MA Media Studies degrees, all involved were comfortable to suggest questions for the survey and interviews.

The questions picked by these women were very interesting, as many brought up the issue of the "glass ceiling" and salary inconsistencies. The idea of clustering the

questions to better define the line of questioning behind each question posed in the questionnaire found favour. Three themes/clusters were agreed upon, with each containing up to five questions. We were unanimous on giving a period of up to two weeks to complete the questionnaire, so that the respondents would have enough time to think about their answers. The team was also of the view that each woman concerned deserved the right to pull out of the interview should they no longer feel comfortable with it when the time comes. While as the researcher I was uncomfortable with this, it was however the women's right to do so.

5.4. Analysis and Interpretation of the One-on-One interviews

Gadzekpo (2009:71) argues that

> [E]ven as we interrogate female voices, the African feminist research agenda must also re-examine the concepts behind women's spaces and the content of women's alternative media to determine their relevance and impact on their audiences and whether and in what ways they reinforce or contradict the broader feminist agenda (Ibid).

Finding an alternative to the currently existing media format has been my ultimate goal. This, however, is proving a struggle, as to do it, we as feminist media scholars, as well as feminist media practitioners, need to come together and form a strong movement that will not hesitate and crumble on the path towards its aim of toppling the patriarchal and misogynistic system in charge of the media. This will certainly broaden women's horizons, at the same time creating an equal stand for them as part of society. It was indeed comforting to learn that the women selected for the interviews followed a similar line of thought.

Theme 1: Unhappiness/happiness at work

There have been a few significant changes with three of the women since they were surveyed in 2009. While some have shown change in tone, others have restructured or had their careers rearranged by others. In that first phase survey questionnaire Kuboe stated her contentment with her job as executive producer for Morning Live at the SABC; however, in the interview conducted one and a half years later, she expressed her unhappiness, pointing to financial and administrative challenges as reason. Already this indicates a growing presence of women's struggles to fit in as equals in the industry.

Dlamini is the only woman interviewed who was previously unhappy and continued to feel that way, adding that the situation has become worse. As stated earlier, her response showed that she was ready to give up the fight and seek employment in another industry, which was indeed something she spoke of later in the interview. I must reiterate that, while I may have done this myself, I do however believe that it is the wrong way of fighting the system. As Magape correctly stated in her interview, we "allow ourselves to be pushed out by the men". This is yet another typical example of a "feminised labour" line of thinking, because we tend to trust that resigning will cause the men strain as they will lose talent. There is no denying that they will lose talent, but it would be the talent that they do not want as part of the team. It certainly does not bother them when we do resign, instead they celebrate – as demonstrated with the opening in the politics desk: when a woman left, they filled her position with two men.

Nonetheless, there are women who are somewhat happy at the SABC, such as Hlophe, who is on the borderline between happy and unhappy. She stated that she enjoyed doing her job, but the fact that she intends moving on to becoming her own boss is an obvious indication that her future does not rest at the SABC. Magape's failure to give a clear

response in this regard, responding to the question instead with the fact that she had been redeployed, leaves me with the belief that she is unhappy but does not want to show it. She pretended instead that she was better off in this position, as she claimed later that "it is an improvement".

Furthermore Magape's reaction is worrying, considering how she expressed her happiness in the survey, and then later, after the redeployment, completely avoided the question. It is hard to believe that a person occupying a senior position would be happy with a sudden decision to redeploy her to a position in a much lower rank, in a region further from her residence, thus forcing her to relocate. Had she been redeployed as national assignments editor it would be a position closer to her former job of executive producer as it would still be on a national level, therefore on a similar salary scale. In that case her reaction would be more justified.

Theme 2: Lack of Respect

Another pattern occurring in the interviews was that of the disturbing lack of respect for black women as both practitioners and sources. Magopeni's argument that management continuously ignored the ongoing patronising of black women in the newsroom and news bulletins is worrying, however not surprising. Her case is clear, not only because it is what I witnessed while working there, but because it is obvious to me as a viewer and as a researcher informed by other views collected in the study, from both other practising journalists and viewers.

Dlamini voiced strong support for this argument, pointing out that being a young and black woman seems like the worst a person could be when it comes to respect. The fact that in the face of such a hindrance a woman has to work several times as hard as her

male counterparts is the reason why there clearly needs to be a stronger feminist movement on a womanist scale, and ideologies to protect women on all levels, and eradicate stubborn chauvinistic structures.

What was probably the most interesting notion brought up in this interview process was that of Africanism as working alongside patriarchy brought up by Magopeni, in her argument that Africanism has a lot to do with a lack of respect for black women. Indeed this is relevant, especially considering that African patriarchy instills into the African man's mind the traditional notion that that women should be obedient: they should never walk ahead of a man, speak loudly or be argumentative, they should always serve men on their knees, never look a man in the eye, and must bend their knees whenever shaking men's hand. Undoubtedly with such thoughts lingering in the man's mind, Magopeni has every right to assume that a woman is therefore seen as childlike by African men.

In the same vein as argued above, the very Africanism by which black women suffer personal discrimination is also the reason they face an even bigger struggle, of racism, ageism and indeed "genderism", better explained as gender inequity. It was at this point in the discussion that Dlamini expressed her thoughts of leaving the industry to seek an equal opportunity elsewhere, expressing a lack of confidence in the situation improving. As previously stated, it is a shattering thought that the future of black women journalists is that bleak. However, women need to realise that we will not find a solution overnight. It will certainly take a very long time, and therefore require a lot of patience and commitment. Without this, indeed, the numbers of skilled women journalists will continue to dwindle, thus resulting in a weaker opposition to the system that constantly marginalises black women.

Theme 3: Imbalanced Salary Scale

In the previous chapter I argue that equal pay is a human right confiscated by the system, as lower pay further pushes women to the margins, because earning less than their male counterparts automatically leads to a sense of being intimidated. All the women interviewed and surveyed are unhappy with their salaries, specifically Hlophe, who states that she was overlooked for a salary increase because of her gender. Consequently it is correct to reason that they are being intimidated to make them realise that the men are in charge and therefore, as women, they belong on the sidelines and in the bottom ranks.

Theme 4: The Pretty Black Face, the Perfect Token

Black women's tokenism is increasingly becoming a leading trend in the media, as even the women become open to being used in this manner. Magopeni unashamedly states her openness to this trend, defending her stance as not being in line with that of the women who just sit there for the sake of being on television or seeing their names printed on executive office doors. Her argument that she has a plan: while the system uses her as a face, she uses her position to gain the necessary skills and education, paid for by her management, to utilise in empowering black women in future. While this argument may be valid, depending on whether she does live up to her promise, it is indeed bordering on submitting to patriarchy, as many of us have learned and acquired skills well enough from the industry without being used in such a manner. There are women, including, Dlamini and myself, amongst others included and not included in the study, who have tirelessly worked long hours to achieve this. These women have gone beyond the call of duty in learning how to handle the camera, learning visual editing, and stepping in to act as assignment editors and output copy editors whenever the superiors in those positions were unavailable.

Similarly, some of us have continued our studies, either while still practicing under the hostile conditions, without giving in to being tokenised,[11] or by leaving the industry briefly to further our education with the intention of returning to do as Magopeni plans: empower the black woman in both aspects of news practitioner and source. That being the case, I completely understand the anger Kuboe displays in reaction to Magopeni's position. Kuboe argues that women "must be appointed based on their ability and commitment to reversing the gender imbalances in their area of competence". Her view is very much to the point, considering there is a severe shortage of women who are thinking and acting in accordance with gender equity, especially with regards to black women.

Magape's statement that she would rather resign than be used as a token is very powerful and defiant, yet considering her harsh criticism of mine and Motloung's resignation from the media industry, her defiance is questionable. After all, she did say that resigning is giving in to the men's rule, as we allow them to push us out of the industry. I explore this view further in the analysis of Theme 6.

Having fallen into the same trap herself, Magopeni strongly condemned women who allow themselves to be used simply because they want to be famous, saying these are the very attitudes that will bring the black woman under complete control of the patriarchal system. This is rightfully argued, considering Dlamini's concerns that some are just not going to fight because they are not prepared to sacrifice, which is exactly what is needed to fight a battle of this kind. Her reference to the liberation struggle, with sacrifices made by those involved in the forefront, is in sync with my argument that to succeed in our fight against narrow-mindedness and gender discrimination we will need a strong spirit of activism among the women; a spirit similar to that of women such as Lilian Ngoyi and Winnie Madikizela Mandela when they marched against pass laws in the fifties.

[11] Tokenised is a word I use to denote the tokenism of women by the media.

Women like Hlophe will need to look deep inside themselves for such a spirit, before they can claim to be ready to fight. She is noticeable because of the point she raised that she had not been considered for a salary increase because of her gender, and therefore felt used in the cause of the department having a woman camera operator. However, while she commendably tried to discuss the matter with her superiors many times, it is disturbing to see that she has not challenged the fact that she is being used as a token.

It is therefore justified that I repeat here the argument I make in Chapter 4 that for the system to change, women must change themselves. Also relevant is my contention that feminism has too many faces and divisions, a fact that would mitigate against the potential of success, while under the more united umbrella of womanism there is a bigger chance of achieving the movement's goals.

Theme 5: The Patriarchal Mind

The tendency by some of the women to lurk on the lines of defeat by patriarchy is indeed concerning. This is not the kind of spirit that can lead a conscious fight for the black women's liberation. My view is that when women appear unsure and irrational in their stance against the misogynistic ways of running the media, it is more than a probability that their minds have been consumed by the constructs of patriarchy. Magape's thinking, for example, it has indeed been hampered by patriarchal constructs, especially considering her acceptance of her demotion while at the same time trying to convince others as well as herself that it is the best outcome. It is true that she stands in denial, because it does not make sense to be accepting of a demotion, especially when it brings with it a forced move of residence along with a lower salary scale. I believe her argument to support this decision is too vague and weak to be taken seriously and honestly.

Dlamini appears well aware of such thinking, as she uses her perfectly suitable analogy of a chained elephant that becomes too familiar with the chain situation that it does not even realise when it is unchained. In Magopeni and Kuboe's views, however, men with patriarchal minds are the biggest problem, as they keep overriding women's decisions and suggestions on all levels. Without a doubt this is being done to suppress women's success, as it ensures that they are silenced, even while occupying high-ranking positions, such as in Kuboe's case.

Another interesting approach in this line of thinking is "the pull her down syndrome" mentioned by Hlophe. This is another example of women refusing to recognise themselves as a unity, similar to the situation with the many faces and divisions of the feminist movement, which is separated by class and race. Certainly if these behaviours continue to exist without being challenged, then the black women's struggle is far from liberation.

Theme 6: Defeated by Patriarchy

With reference to my argument in Theme 4, Magape does have a point when she argues that abandoning the industry does not help improve the situation; instead we simply allow patriarchy to defeat us. However, it is important to highlight here that, while we may have left the industry, both Motloung and myself indicate in the survey and other parts of this thesis that we do intend to return under a different guise; once I have completed my studies and once Motloung is ready to assume the task of teaching young and upcoming journalists. Therefore, with this consideration in mind, it is wrong of Magape to assume we have simply thrown in the towel and given up the fight.

It has also been noticeable that some women practitioners do however tend to give up the fight and instead become members of the "boys' club" once they realise that they can no longer push ahead with the battle. This leads to Dlamini's arguments that in most instances the prominent "women of the boys' club" tend to start looking down on other women or look for beneficial relationships, before considering empowering another black woman.

Kuboe and Hlophe are sympathetic of such women, saying it is not their fault, but that of the companies that employ them. However Kuboe's view that these women will achieve their main focus of changing mindsets to favour women once companies implement clear gender equity levels does not add up, considering they have already acted against other women.

Theme 7: The evolving sense of fear and the glass/concrete ceiling

It is expected that some people develop a sense of fear about what lies ahead, especially when facing a bigger opponent in a struggle, such as that of freedom. There is nothing wrong with feeling this way. However, it is indeed worrying if the fear is of the very enemy being challenged, as the chances of that fight being a success are therefore very bleak. This is exactly my concern about most of the women in the media, as displayed by some of those interviewed here, that the powerful male structure does intimidate them. I welcome Magopeni's honest disclosure that she was one of those women at some point, afraid to challenge authority, looking down on herself, believing she was not capable of a senior position.

Magopeni's belief that she was not good enough to be an editor is unfortunately common among many black women, and it comes as a result of patriarchy. Many women have

been brainwashed into believing that they are not and can never be equal to men, in every aspect, including by performance and intellectually. What is most disturbing is the point raised by Dlamini that so many of these women have dreams, yet because of this fear, they let them waste away. It is sad that some of the women believe these patriarchal social constructs to the extent of giving up on their dreams to satisfy the male ego. Hlophe's views that sometimes it is just too hard a fight to face proves my argument earlier that "often women give up, when they feel defeated", whereas so much can be done to avoid the feeling of defeat, such as uniting with other women in the same predicament.

Magape expresses a problem, similar to that of Kuboe, of not being able to make the final decision with regard to work matters, which is frustrating for both women. It is not a surprise that these women are unable to make the final decisions, as it is exactly what the system wants: to put women in managerial positions, but block them from reaching the heights of the decision-making level as this would shatter the glass/concrete ceiling that has been created.

Theme 8: The power/lack of power to represent the black woman in news

"Woman issue fatigue" is how one respondent, Dlamini, explained the reason behind the poor representation of women in news as sources. It is a well-rounded term, considering the attitudes in most newsrooms towards stories that involve women. For example, when a woman has been raped or beaten up in a domestic violence incident, these are the questions commonly asked in the newsroom diary planning meetings:

1) Why was she beaten up?
2) Did she say or do anything to upset him?

3) Was he not retaliating perhaps?
4) Did she cheat or steal from him?
5) What if she was threatening to take the kids and run?

In the instance of a rape these are the questions and statements likely to be asked and made:

1) Was it really a rape, and not consensual sex?
2) What if she was leading him on?
3) What was she wearing anyway?
4) Didn't she realise what kind of a man he was?
5) Oh she asked for it, looking like that!

With such words dominating the news meetings it is unlikely that the stories covered will have a positive spin on the woman's part, as her plea is not being heard or understood, and therefore relayed to the audience in as serious a manner as it should. Hlophe, as with many other women included and not included in this study, argues the fact that women heroes barely exist according to the news. This is a true statement as even when women are being "sheroic", as in the earlier mentioned the case of Caster Semenya. It is often much easier for the media to find a negative aspect of the "shero", and capitalise on that. Indeed in the news it is often said "bad news is good news". However, at times "good news is just that, good news".

Kuboe suggests that journalists must be retrained to deal with their own belief systems and fears around empowering women. My view is that there should not be any fear of empowering women in the first place, because it has been shown many a time that they can be just as good as men, if not better, in anything they set out to do. However, considering that there are those who do have doubts about women being in charge, then

perhaps Kuboe is right that both men and women need to look deep inside themselves and challenge their stereotype-driven mindsets. It is, however, important to realise that in doing this, along with other actions to sensitise the industry about gender equity, will take a very long time, and therefore require patience and energy.

Magopeni states that black women need to be more visible as reporters and commentators, especially on issues affecting them. She's correct to make this argument, because these are the people more in sync with those matters affecting them, and therefore would make more sensible comments than a man might. This is precisely why Dlamini says it pains her to talk about considering leaving the industry, because then an experienced woman journalist, well skilled to tell black women's stories properly, would be lost, seriously affecting the efforts to make the black woman's presence felt in the media.

With that in mind, Magape is therefore correct to doubt the courage and strength we have as women to stand against the patriarchal system as a collective. It's true that, as displayed above, most of us do have our weaknesses and fears. However we also have a lot of strengths, which Magape may not be aware of. Therefore while I do understand and share her concerns, I am very optimistic that the attitudes demonstrated by the women of this industry show a sense of determination, and therefore hope for the black woman's struggle against chauvinistic media structures.

5.5. Analysis and Interpretation of the Short Structured Interviews

The views of the five women interviewed in this section are not very different from those raised above by the practitioners, with regards to the representation of the black woman as a news maker/source/subject. It was clear that none of them are happy with the current state of news when it comes to addressing them as black women.

Theme 1: Representation of Black Women

The fact that five women from different walks of life interviewed at different times and places came to one conclusion – that the news do not consider them as part of society – is a clear indication that the problem is much bigger than many believe. It was disturbing to hear that while Tshabalala likes watching news she get discouraged by the fact that her peers are rarely mentioned in the bulletins. She should be depressed, the more so because when her peers are mentioned they are often depicted in a negative manner as poor, waiting for hours to receive their pension grants, or awaiting handouts from other community members; otherwise they are shown as alleged witches whose homes have been burnt down as a result.

This failure by the media to make these women feel comfortable as a part of society that actually counts, has led to them giving up on watching, as Mthembu, N. and Molefi state they see no point in watching the news. Mthembu, N. goes on to say maybe her husband identifies more with the news, as it seems stories are more focused on men. This aligns with Magopeni's argument that too many commentators and sources are men. When it comes specifically to journalists, where there are equal numbers of men and women reporters, only a fraction of those are black, and even fewer do stories sensitive to black women. As a result these women are constantly left without any news that they can identify with.

This argument chimes with Mthembu, L.'s views that there is absolutely no true reflection of the black woman, regardless of her occupation and age, because the media machinery remains as patriarchal and conservative as ever, with the only change being the replacement of white men by black men. With that in mind, some may argue that in fact the situation has become worse, because since it is men of the same race as the

women fighting for recognition, one would at least expect the level of discrimination to have dropped. It remains unchanged, and therefore feels worse.

Theme 2: Recognising the Black woman's achievements and strengths

Mthembu, N.'s tone in discussing this theme indicated anger towards the media, which shows that the women who sit at home and watch the news are not as stupid and oblivious to what is being delivered as those running the media would like to believe. This therefore is reason enough for the movement opposing this discrimination to fight harder, as there are clearly women in need of this achievement.

Mthembu, N. states that there is a tendency to ignore black women unless they live in squalor, or they are charity cases, or the complete opposite, playing on the appeal of celebrities. She adds that even in this regard, the often featured celebrities are not the kind that motivate, but the kind that is upsetting. The mentioning of Khanyi Mbau's name made it clear she was frustrated by how the black woman was being portrayed. Mbau is often linked to controversy such as chasing and being in relationships with rich married men who are much older than her, as well as drinking and partying wildly. Certainly no parent would want this kind of behavior being set as an example to or influence on their children; therefore watching news with such content would not count as an option.

Also criticising the media's obsession with Mbau, Tshabalala highlighted my argument above that the media need to recognise that "black women are not fools without any aspirations". Once again, as Magopeni called for earlier, black women's voices should be heard in the form of journalists and commentators. Mthembu, L. questioned why women were often masqueraded as victims, and mainly men appeared as learned experts on issues such as science, economics and politics. Her argument later that a conscious effort

was clearly not being made to discover new female expert voices is on point, considering that this continues to happen, 16 years into democracy.

Thus, Molefi's contention that it would appear that men make up most of the population is not far-fetched either, as they undoubtedly take the leading roles in the daily news bulletins, often with a positive and powerful portrayal. Mosiame's argument that women's images are constantly depressing is accurate, considering with visuals such as those associated with stories of poverty or abuse constantly being shown on the news, women are unlikely to be considered as an equal part of society. As argued previously, unless these images are erased and replaced by positive pictures soon, black women will continue to be ridiculed and not taken seriously even in the coming generations.

Theme 3: Equating the genders in news

The views raised in this theme make it clear that without speaking to the black women themselves, as suggested by Mthembu, N. and Molefi, the media will never know exactly what it is that these women want. Similarly to the practitioners, they would like to see more gender-sensitive news stories. In proving once again that black women viewers are clever, they are calling for proper training of journalists, saying they must take it upon themselves to research stories thoroughly and feature black female professionals, as well as stories about successful professional black women.

The fact that even a domestic worker is interested in seeing stories on successful business women is another obvious indication that these women truly do care about what the media is feeding the public as representation of a black woman. Therefore paying more attention and listening clearly to the views of black women on the ground would be a good starting point for the media. At the same time, it would be advisable also for

feminist media scholarship to focus more on doing the same, when conducting research concerning these women, rather than simply monitoring and studying media patterns alone, as this does not necessarily address what the black woman wants.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

6.1. Reflecting on the Previous Chapters

This study, including both the first and second phases, was aimed at exploring the conditions under which black women journalists work in South African newsrooms, and, at the same time, it aimed to study how black women are covered in the news. The findings have answered the following research questions:

1. How does gender affect the working conditions of professional black women in South African newsrooms?

2. Does the professional representation of black women indicate implementation of the womanisation of the news and media?

Both questions were clearly answered in the various illustrations made by the respondents and myself as we explained our experiences as employees of the SABC TV newsroom. The views of the (potential) news sources among black women, heard in Chapter 4, addressed the second question, as they clarified the current position of the news when it comes to representing black women in general.

With regard to the first question, the findings made it apparent that the black women in the SABC TV newsroom work in a very hostile environment, as many complain about being disrespected and sidelined simply because of their gender and race. In answering the second question, most of the women agreed that the poor and untrue reflection of black news is a clear demonstration of the lack of womanisation.

The illusion of equality created through the numerical representation in the newsrooms, which includes coloured and Indian women classified as black, was noted, as most of the

women raised concerns about the poor portrayal of black women which comes as a result of the way the newsroom is structured. The tendency to employ black women in the lowest positions and on poor salaries in the newsrooms is disturbing, as it drives many women away, thus further minimising the chances of improving the representation of this group in both the news and newsrooms.

Some of the women, representing both the practitioners and sources, agreed with Kuboe who argued that "journalists must be retrained […] part of the reason why women representation in the media remains low, is that we have to deal with our own belief systems and fears around empowering women". Lindelwa Mthembu also points in the same direction, saying journalists must be retrained "to sensitise them to gender, race and class stereotyping".

While some women in this study, such as Kuboe, would strongly disagree with me, I do however strongly believe that black women in middle management are partly to blame for the poor representation of black women. Despite the fact that these women are often blocked from making important departmental decisions and suggestions at meetings, I do believe that going beyond the call of duty by staying on to work later hours, once the misogynists have left for the day, and do more research, and compile, edit and line up stories for the following morning's news bulletins, such as on Kuboe's show, will work in theirs and other women's favour. It need not be the managers themselves who work the late hours, as they may have families to get home to. However, considering the industry has so many young black women in junior positions, the likes of Kuboe who do have the unfettered power to reschedule employee shifts (as this is considered a women's job) can therefore take advantage of that. Additionally, her show line up is done ahead of the waking times of those in charge.

Therefore, considering the arguments I make above, more often than not, these women tend to stand back and turn a blind eye to the little power that they actually do have and

can hence use against the oppressive structure. It is most disturbing when some women in the industry become oblivious to obvious oppression, such as being undermined by being suddenly demoted, as has happened with Magape. The fact that she claims to be in a better position, which is in comparison lower than her previous senior position, which came with a higher salary and for which she was based in her own residential region, is indeed as I have argued, an indication that she is completely in denial or thinking with a patriarchally influenced mind.

Considering Magape's case, it is important to refer back to one of the solutions in the first phase of this study, which is educating the black woman. Indeed there is a need to train and educate women about the ills committed by the patriarchal system, including the social constructs it has created; there is a need to sensitise women to the less obvious traps the system has set to destabilise those who do stand up against the structure, as well as a need to make the women aware that it is essential to stand firm and walk a few steps ahead of the system by doing more than that which the authorities have lined up for, and expect of, them. However, in doing all this, the women must realise that their oppression could be used as a tool to retaliate. For instance, no matter how well the women improve in steps taken to empower themselves they should remain humble and as submissive as the men expect of them, in order to deceive the system into believing that they have defeated the women. On the same wavelength it is important that women stay in contact with each other for constant support and motivation to press ahead with the struggle to womanise the media.

With both research questions answered, it is evident that the South African media's patriarchal and racist structure remains firm, and still a long way from changing towards accommodating black women. Certainly the segregation of these women as both practitioners and sources is by no means being relegated by its founders. This brings to light an argument by Gasa (2007: 227) that "while there may be similarities in patriarchal

practices, it is also true that patriarchy takes different forms. There may be numerous ways in which patriarchy is manifested."

In the media, patriarchy has taken the form of marginalising the black woman by making her feel objectified, in a sense of being used as just the "pretty black face" of the news, "the pretty woman" who has taken her position as the youngest wife of the president, or simply a "sex object" who poses half naked in various magazines, newspapers and is also known for her nickname "gold digger" because she marries older men for money.

The respondents have all highlighted such discrimination and representation, therefore in seeking solutions it is important to do as Kuboe suggests: stop operating in silos, because that way there will be no success. Therefore, as I have suggested throughout the study, a strong womanist movement which will oversee all the elements listed above as possible solutions to the ongoing problems faced by the black women in the media is vital. Hlophe suggested a lighter kind of movement, saying it should be something along the lines of a non-governmental organisation where women journalists can gather, share experiences and sympathise with one another. She believes this would in turn help women understand their obstacles in the industry and then take a stand in the cause.

Hlophe's idea is much softer than my vision; however, if this is the way to ease some women into the radical movement I am suggesting, then certainly let us welcome that idea and work with it towards building a stronger resistance. In the meantime a smaller-scale effort to sneak positive stories into news bulletins, such as on Kuboe's show, can be made. Without a doubt, working a little bit longer every day to find these stories -- for example, of women doctors who also work around the clock to save lives of both men and women, and those women who also stay awake at night, such as Molefi, to keep their businesses afloat, in order to grow and employ more men and women. These kinds of stories are absolutely a rarity on our screens, and they need to be told, as they are happening in abundance.

Having said that, it is important that feminist media scholars conduct more studies of this kind to seek better and quicker solutions to the problems raised in this study, as it is clear that chauvinism, misogyny and racism have evolved into a cancerous epidemic that needs to be controlled. Therefore researchers, including me, should place themselves in the home, professional and social environments of these women to seek out exactly what it is that the black woman of the new South Africa embodies. It is here that we should seek to show, through our actions as black women journalists, what exactly was intended and meant when women such as Bertha Gxowa, Lillian Ngoyi and Winnie Madikizela Mandela, among thousands, sang and chanted: "Wathint' abafazi, wathint' imbokodo" (You strike a woman, you strike a rock).

Bibliography

ABANTU for Development. 2004. *The Women's Manifesto for Ghana.* Accra, Ghana: Coalition on the Women's Manifesto.

Allan, G. and Skinner, C. 1991. *Handbook for Research Students in the Social Sciences.* London: Routledge.

Baard, F. 1986. *My Spirit is not Banned*. Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House.

Babbie, E. 1989. *The Practice of Social Research*. 5th ed. Belmont: Wadsworth, Inc.

Baker, T.L. 1988. *Doing Social Research*. USA: McGraw-Hill.

Berger, I. 2007. "Generations of struggle: Trade unions and the roots of feminism, 1930-60" in Nomboniso Gasa (ed.), *Women in South African History: Basus'iimbokodo, bawel'imilambo/They remove boulders and cross rivers.* Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Blin, M. 2008. "Globalisation, women and the labour market in Southern Africa" in Ruiters, M. (ed.), *Gender Instruments in Africa: Consolidating gains in the Southern African Development Community.* Midrand: Institute for Global Dialogue, 113 – 129.

Brown, K. 2004. "Herstories: celebrating pioneering women in South African journalism". Interviewed by Sarah Ranchod in the *Rhodes Journalism Review* 24: 67 – 72.

Buiten, D. 2007. "Silences stifling transformation: Misogyny and gender-based violence in the media" in *Agenda* No 71: Agenda Writing Programme: 115 – 121.

Byerly, C. and Ross, K. 2006. *Women and Media: A critical introduction*. USA: Blackwell Publishing.

Casale, D. 2004. "What has the feminisation of the labour market 'bought' women in South Africa? Trends in labour force participation, employment and earnings, 1995 – 2001" in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary Economics* 15: 251 – 275.

Curphey, S. 2003. "Women push for media coverage in Southern Africa" in 15 September 2003 Women's enews.

Dabbous-Sensenig, D. 2000. "Media vs. society in Lebanon: Schizophrenia in an age of globalisation" in *Media Development,* Volume XLVII, No. 3: 14 –17.

De Bruin, M. 2004. "Organisational, professional, and gender identities – Overlapping, coinciding and contradicting realities in Caribbean media practices" in De Bruin, M. and Ross, K. (eds), *Gender and Newsroom Cultures: Identities at work.* Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press, Inc.

De Vaus, D. 2002. *Surveys in Social Research.* 5th ed. Australia: Allen & Unwin.

Duncan, J. 2003. "Towards a women's media movement" in *Rhodes Journalism Review* 26: 22 –23.

Du Plooy, G.M. 1995. *Introduction to Communication: Course Book 2 – Communication Research.* Kenwyn: Juta .

Ezzy, D. 2002. *Qualitative Analysis: Practice and innovation*. London: Routledge.

Feagin, J.R. et al. 1991. *A Case of the Case Study*. USA: University of North Carolina Press.

Froehlich, R. 2007 "Three steps forward and two back? Women journalists in the Western World between progress, standstill, and retreat" in Creedon, P.J. & Cramer, J. (eds), *Women in Mass Communication.* Third Edition. Thousand Oaks – London – New Dehli: Sage.

Gadzekpo, A. 2009. "Missing links: African media studies and feminist concerns" in *Journal of African Media Studies* Volume 1 No.1: 69 – 80.

Gallagher, M. 2001. “Reporting on gender in journalism: ‘Why do so few women reach the top?’”in Froehlich, R. and Lafky, S.A. (eds), *Gender and Journalism in Industrialised Nations.* Boston, Massachusetts: The Edwin Mellen Press.

Gallagher, M. 2002. *Women, Media and Democratic Society: In pursuit of rights and freedoms.* United Nations/EGM Media 2002.

Gasa, N. 2007. “Feminisms, motherisms, patriarchies and women’s voices in the 1950’s” in Nomboniso Gasa (ed.), *Women in South African History: Basus’iimbokodo, bawel’imilambo/They remove boulders and cross rivers*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Gender Links & MISA. 2003. *Women and Men Make the News: Gender and media baseline study.* Cape Town: Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) and Gender Links.

Gqola , P.D. 2001. “Ufanele uqavile: Black women, feminism and post coloniality in Africa”, in *Agenda No 50: African Feminisms One*: 11 – 22.

Gqola, P.D. 2007. “How the ‘cult of femininity’ and violent masculinities support endemic gender-based violence in contemporary South Africa”, in *African Identities* Volume 5 no 1. London: Routledge, 111 – 124.

Greenstein, R. et al. 2003. “Research methods manual”. Johannesburg: Wits University. Unpublished.

Gross, L. 1990. “Stress and coping amongst Black women managers: A preliminary investigation”. Johannesburg: Wits University. Unpublished.

Gunter, B. 2000. *Media Research Methods: Measuring audience, reactions and impact.* London: Sage.

Hooks, B. 2000. *Feminist Theory: From margin to centre.* 2nd ed. London: Pluto Press.

Kolawole, M.M. 2002. “Transcending incongruities: rethinking feminisms and the dynamics of identity in Africa” in *Agenda No 54: African Feminisms Two*: 92 – 97.

Krippendorff, K. 2004. *Content Analysis: An introduction to its methodology.* London: Sage.

Kvale, S. 1996. *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing.* London: Sage.

Kvale, S. and Brinkmann, S. 2009. *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Second Edition. London: Sage.

Lavie, A. 2004. "Whose news: Does gender determine editorial product?" in *European Journal of Communication 18(1)* March: 5 – 29.

Lewis-Beck, M. et al. 2004. *The Sage Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods* Volume 1. London: Sage

Lowe-Morna, C. 2001. *Whose News? Whose Views?* South Africa: Gender Links.

Lowe-Morna, C. 2002. "Promoting gender equality in and through the media. A Southern Africa case study." Presented at United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) Expert Group Meeting on "Participation and access of women to the media, and the impact of media on, and its use as an instrument for, the advancement and empowerment of women", Beirut, Lebanon, 12 – 15 November 2002.

Luimes-Sindane, W. 2006. "Women making headlines: Influences of women editors on newsroom socialisation and the news agenda". Johannesburg: Wits University.

Made, P.A. and Lowe Morna, C. 2009. *Glass Ceilings: Women and men in Southern Africa media*. Johannesburg: Gender Links.

Mabokela, R.O. and Magubane, Z. 2005. *Hear Our Voices: Race, gender and the status of black South African women in the academy*. Pretoria: Unisa Press.

Mangena, O. 2003. "Feminism (singular), African feminisms (plural) and the African Diaspora", in Moolan, J. and Kuumba, B.M. (eds), *Agenda* no 58: African Feminisms Three.

May, T. 1998. *Qualitative Research in Action*. London: Sage.

Narasimhan, S. 2001. “Media Don’t Portray the Realities of Women’s Lives”, in *Nieman Reports* 55(4), 88 – 90.

Okunna, C. S. 2002. “Gender and communication in Nigeria: is this the twenty-first century?”, paper delivered at International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) biennial conference, Barcelona, Spain, July 2002.

Ongunyemi, C.O. 1985/1986. “Womanism. The dynamics of the contemporary female novel in English” in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society II.*

October, A. 2004. “Media(ting) gender: Pro- or regression of the seco” in *Stellenbosch Media Forum 2004.*

Oxford, 2001. *Paperback Oxford English Dictionary.* Soanes, C. (ed.), New York: Oxford University.

Prekel, T. 1995. “Success stories: Black women managers in South Africa (before 1990)”. A report delivered at the EWMD NETWORK Annual Conference in Philadelphia, June 8 – 11.

Rabe, L. 2006. “Glass ceiling, concrete ceiling: After 12 years of a new South Africa, for many senior women journalists in the country’s newsrooms it’s still a matter of ‘same old’” in *Rhodes Journalism Review* 6: 20 – 21.

Ramphele, M. 1997. *Across Boundaries: The journey of a South African woman leader.* New York: Feminist Press.

Rossouw, R. 2005. “The media and transformation” in Hadland, A. (ed.), *Changing the Fourth Estate: Essays on South African journalism*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Ryan, K.M. 2009. “The performative journalist: Job satisfaction, temporary workers and American television news ” in *Sage Online Journalism October 2009 vol. 10* no. 5: 647 – 664.

Sisulu, W. 2001. “I will go singing: Walter Sisulu speaks of his life and struggle for freedom in South Africa” (in conversation with GM. Houser and H. Shore). Cape Town: Robben Island Museum.

Smith, G. 2000. “From suffering in silence, to drawing strength from the margins” in *Agenda* No 46, *The Politics of Writing*: 34 – 41.

Stewart, D.W, Shamdasani, P.N. and Rook, D.W. 2006. *Focus Groups: Theory and practice.* 2nd edition. Applied Social Research Methods Series Volume 20. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Van Zoonen, L. 1998. *The Media in Question: Popular cultures and public interests.* London: Sage.

Vochocova, L. 2008. *Women in Newsrooms: Idle hopes for the conquest of the masculine fortress*. Prague: Charles University.

Vokwana, T. 2005. “Review of *Hear Our Voices: Race, gender and the status of black South African Women in the Academy*”, *Feminist Africa 4: Women Mobilised*: 166 – 173.

Wackwits, L.A and Rackow, L. 2007. “The global context of women in communication” in Creedon, P.J. and Cramer, J. (eds), *Women in Mass Communication.* Third Edition, Thousand Oaks, London, New Dehli: Sage.

Walker, A. 1983. *In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens: Womanist prose* . London: Women’s Press.

Wells, M.K. 2007. *Grandwriting Beyond Basics Book 3: Successful program evaluation.* Portland: Portland State University Continuing Education Press.

World Association for Christian Communication. 1995. Global Media Monitoring Project, London: WACC.

World Association for Christian Communication. 2000. Global Media Monitoring Project, London: WACC.

World Association for Christian Communication. 2005. Global Media Monitoring Project, London: WACC.

Yin, R.K. 1994. *Case Study Research: Design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Zimu, N. 2009. "The working conditions of professional black women in South African Newsrooms". Wits University. Unpublished.

Websites:

Anyawu, C. 2001. "In Nigerian newspapers, women are seen, not heard; even influential women journalists stay away from coverage of women's issues". Retrieved 14 June 2011 from the World Wide Web: www.nieman.havard.edu/reports/articles/101544/In-Nigerian-Newspapers-Women-Are-Seen-Not-Heard.aspx

Department of Labour, 1998. Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998. Retrieved 14 June 2011 from the World Wide Web: http://www.labour.gov.za

Dube, J. 2004. "The right to write". Retrieved 5 April 2009 from the World Wide Web: http:/www.sabceducation.co.za/VCMStaticProdStage/CORPORATE.

Hafajee, F. 2006. "Is she man enough?" Address at the meeting of the International Women's Media Foundation. Retrieved April 14, 2009 from World Wide Web: http://www.sanef.org.za

Lowe Morna, C. 2007. "In South Africa, women still are underdogs in the media". Retrieved 22 August 2009 from the World Wide Web: http://www.afrol.com

Media Monitoring Africa, 2009. "Women? What women?! Media contributes to the disempowerment of women". Retrieved 19 October 2009 from the World Wide Web: http://www.mediamonitoringafrica.org/index.php/resources/entry

Morgan, D.L. and Spanish, M.T. 1984. "Focus groups: A new tool for qualitative research", in *Qualitative Sociology* 7. Retrieved 15 April 2009 from the World Wide Web: http://www.springerlink.com.

Ndungu, K. 2010."Women shut out of the labour market", in *Pambazuka News: Pan-African Voices for Freedom and Justice*, Issue 479. Retrieved 27 May 2011 from the World Wide Web: http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/features/64055

Ryan, V. 2001 – 2005. "How to carry out a questionnaire". Retrieved 14 April 2009 from the World Wide Web: http://www.technologystudent.com/designpro/quest1.htm

SANEF. 2006. “Studying employment patterns in the media: The Glass Ceiling”. Retrieved 16 April 2009 from the World Wide Web: http://www.sanef.org.za.

SANEF. 2007. “The Glass Ceiling Two: An audit of women and men in South African newsrooms”. Retrieved 12 May 2010 from the World Wide Web: http://www.sanef.org.za

SANEF & Gender Links. 2007. “The Glass Ceiling Two: An audit of women and men in South African newsrooms”. Retrieved 22 April 2009 from the World Wide Web: http://www.genderlinks.org.za

Appendices

Appendix: 1.1

TABLES OF RESEARCH FINDINGS (2009/2011)

Table 1: Current SABC TV Newsrooms Employees responding to questionnaire

	Respondent Name	Portia Kobue	Puleng Magape	Anonymous/ Nonhlanhla Dlamini	Mpho Matjila-Nkosi	Zama Mbalo	Ntombi Miya	Nompumelelo Hlophe
Cluster 1: Position Held	Response to question 1	Executive Producer	Executive Producer	Producer and Anchor	Producer and Presenter	TV News Camera Person	TV News Reporter	specialist cameraperson/editor

	Response to question 2	Middle Management	Middle Management	General	It's hard to tell here. More attention is paid to those holding executive producer and bulletin editor positions	Senior Camera Person	Junior	Senior
	Response to question 3	Yes. I have sound news judgment, competent and passionate about news.	Yes. This is growth	No. I think my experience should have put me in a higher position by now	I'm unhappy in my position. I believe I have more to offer, in terms of skills and my experience in broadcasting. There's no prospect for growth in my current position. There is just no challenge	Yes. When my contract was renewed in November 2008, they gave me a permanent contract at senior level, with more benefits than before	Yes, but I think I should be in a higher position. I think my university qualification, experience and skills are overlooked	Yes, I think I deserve to be in this position, firstly because I have been in the industry for a number of years, also the experience, as well as the qualifications

					at this level			
	Response to question 4	2 years	2 years	3 years	3 years	1 year at the end of October(2008)	2 years	15 years
	Response to Question 5	Yes. I love the fact that I can make split second decisions. I find it empowering and exhilarating.	Yes. I own and take responsibility for whatever goes on air in my bulletin and that gives me pleasure	I enjoy what I do, but the conditions under which I work steal some of the joy I get from performing my tasks	No I don't. The scope of the show has changed.	Yes. My job gives me authority in telling stories through my lens	Yes. Getting the opportunity to help people is priceless	From what is offered by the company, I am ok, as it is the most senior position whilst you still are able to go out on the field
Cluster 2: Experience and Duration	Response to question 1	16 years in total. 14 years in radio, as a journalist, writer, sub-editor, news editor, producer and presenter. Another 2	24 years in total. Both in radio and television. I've worked my way up from, radio journalist, writer, presenter and bulletin editor, to	9 years. Both radio and television	More than 10 years. Both in radio and TV	7 years	4 years	15 years. TV Camera

		years in TV	televisions assignment editor, planning editor and now Executive producer. I have worked for BOP Radio and TV, SABC and e-TV					
	Response to question 2	2 years	11 years in total. Left after 9 years in 2003, to return in 2007, making it a current 2 years.	7 years	3 years	5 years	4 years	About 15 years but this include internship
	Response to question 3	Yes, but I'm unhappy about how the corporation is	Yes	No	No	No. Sometimes I feel I could do stories in a way that will relate to	You just learn to take it in stride and deal.	I wouldn't say 100%, there are some changes that can be made to improve the

		run				society. But to the editorial team I am just a button pusher		end product, like getting more decisive editors and also the type of stories that are covered. It should not only be government stories, a bit more human stories
	Response to question 4	Another 2 years, and then move on elsewhere	Not long. I want to have my own communicat ions business	Till early next year(2010), long enough for me to finish my studies	I wish to leave the SABC by the end of the year(2009) and work for them on a freelance basis. I can get more done with the extra time on my hands. I love what I do, but its not worth my	I would like to work her for 5 years as a permanent employee. I am only about to finish a year, as such	I would like to spend another 5 years here	I am not sure as to how long I still plan to be there for

					while to wake up to an environment where there is little room for growth and no acknowledgement for one's skills and abilities			
Cluster 3: Working Conditions	Response to question 1	There is a lot of sexism and gender discrimination. Male bosses are not supportive and are not aware of gender equity issues. To them gender mainstreaming is just a term and they	Women are not given a chance to explore and they are always criticized when things are not ok, instead of being mentored	Difficult, at times even hostile	Men occupy most senior positions. At decision making level, there is no woman present. Women are mostly confined to field reporting, writing and reading the news	There is no difference. No specific story for a man or a woman	In the jo'burg newsroom there are more women than men, strong women who do not put themselves down.	I would not say there is a difference in terms of male / female working conditions

		don't know how to the challenges around it						
	Response to question 2	Get more women in top management positions. Design a gender mainstreaming guidelines for the newsroom and ensure the news bulletins carry gender sensitive language	Equal treatment of male and female editors	Equitable pay, and at least as much respect as is given to our male counterparts	The entire structure at management level.	The style of appointing managers. They appoint them through nepotism. They don't appoint people according to experience and skills	The tendency towards favoritism	I would change the management to have people who are more decisive and who have vision
	Response to question 3	Yes. There is a lot of interference by government in news, some managers are	Not really, apart from the long and early morning hours	Constantly having to prove my worth, fighting harder to get any kind of recognition	Yes. I was moved from this position and told to work on another bulletin that goes out at	There are people who still think being a camera person is a men's job. I always get	Not much	Poor planning, for instance there are annual events but no planning takes place till a day before

		afraid to challenge this and force us to accede to government's demands.		for work done, fighting to have "serious stories" assigned to me, being treated as though you are greedy when you ask for more pay, etc	5am without consultation. I was told that should I not want to do the 2am shift, I could leave	comments like "is that camera not heavy" and "are you a camera person, despite my holding the camera". Some comments are bad, some of excitement, curious and happy. I don't like them nonetheless.		
	Response to question 4	Yes and no. Some acknowledge my position and competence. Other try to undermine	Yes	No	No. At this level, all you do is take instruction. Often there is no room to make editorial	Oh yes. Because they know, I know what I am doing	Respect is earned. Junior must respect senior, vice versa	Yes, the respect is there but it is also mutual

		my position. There's a lot of talk about me getting the job because I am liked by a certain manager.			contributions or even suggestions			
Cluster 4: Black Women Representation	Response to question 1	In my unit of ten I have nine black women and one man. However, there is very low representation of women or women's issues in the news, because there is no plan, most journalists are not gender	I would say its about 50/50 percentage of women and men in editorial positions	Well represented in the African language bulletins, not so for English bulletins	Black women as newsmakers at the SABC are often portrayed as victims or as poor. We do not tell enough stories that portray women in a position of strength. Men still dominate as news sources. We are not	I think it is a balanced 50/50% through technical, aministration, journalists and managers	While SABC has large number of black females in the newsroom, very few are in management	I would say it is evenly balanced, even though specialized desks like politics are still male dominated

		educated. When reporters cover stories, mostly the story will carry male voices as experts, there is no effort to find women experts. It happens by chance.			sourcing enough women to comment or speak on issues. In terms of representation in the newsroom, I would say there are not enough black women especially at editorial and executive levels. Men are mostly the decision makers			
	Response to question 2	No. Gender equality needs to be taken seriously as stated in the constitution.	Yes. For a long time women were marginalized and used only as tokens, but	No. The SA demographics demand that black women, as the largest part of the	No	Yes very much. It's about time women get recognized. We have been	No. It's a tragedy and needs to be remedied in all haste	Only if specialized and senior positions could be considered for women

		This will empower women, to equally participate in whatever sector of the economy.	that has since improved	population be represented accordingly		marginalized for a very long time		
	Response to question 3	Yes. After a meeting one day, I mentioned I was going home to sleep, as I start work at 4am. A male colleague indicated that he would like to join me. Upon my objection, as I felt it was sexual harassment he said he was simply	No	Almost daily. I constantly have to fend off subtle (and not so subtle) remarks about how "lightweight" I am for serious broadcasts, simply because of my race, age and mostly, gender	I can't say for sure	Not at all. SABC is one organization that is very cautious when it comes to those things, especially among its employees and managers	No	Yes, I was overlooked for salary increment because of my gender

		complementing me						
Cluster 5: Employment and Salary Scale	Response to question 1	Permanent	Permanent	Permanent	Permanent	Permanent	Permanent	I am a permanent employee
	Response to question 2	Yes	Yes	I would like to freelance, as there are more opportunities in hat	No	Oh yes	Yes	Yes
	Response to question 3	No	Not quiet	No	No	Yes	Not really	No
	Response to question 4	I'm not privy to other people's salaries, but I believe with the hours that I put in, from 4am – 1pm, I deserve more money	I deserve more, considering that my workload is more	I have gathered that males doing the same job I do are paid much more	I know that some of my counterparts are on a higher salary scale. A view commonly held here at the SABC is that coloured and Indian	I think I do deserve it, because it's the same as what my other colleagues get	I wouldn't compare with others, what needs to change is the industry as a whole. Big bosses must pay their news	I don't think it's what I deserve I think it can still be improved considering the workload that comes with it as well as long working hours. I am not sure

					people, irrespective of their gender generally earn more. Black women often have to work twice as hard, and still earn less		staff better	what my colleagues are getting but I know that I am still on the same salary with a double workload
	Response to question 5	N/A	I don't really know what my colleagues are worth, I can only speculate	From casual chats with colleagues and PR personnel	Information comes from those handling monthly claims. There is a lot of corridor talk here at the SABC. While the sources of information may be faceless, the information turns out to be true most	I've done research, and my colleagues and I always share such information to avoid exploitation	N/A	

					of the time			
Cluster 6: Future plans in the Industry	Response to question 1	Yes. I have other talents and interest I want to invest in. I am also thinking of starting my own production company	I might leave the SABC, but not the industry completely	As much as it pains me to say, the SABC has dampened the enthusiasm I have always had for my field. Recently, I've seriously considered leaving for better pay and genuine respect for my work	No. But I do wish to change from permanent to part-time. There are more opportunities to freelancers, than permanent employees, at the SABC	Not at all	Yes. I would like to start writing more, and working in such a stressful job wears me out	No, I have no intentions of leaving the profession but maybe to move to a different department but still in the news division
	Response to question 2	Acknowledgement, appraisal for my input and a salary which is commensurate with my	Better incentives	Better pay, more opportunities and genuine respect	Better pay and change in management	There is a need to tell more stories about ordinary South Africans especially rural	Definitely more pay	A better salary and more decisive bosses

		work				women, which I would like to do		
	Response to question 3	Yes. I love and enjoy informing people through my work	Yes. I love journalism	Yes. I love this field	Yes. This is my passion and I know I'm good at my work	I won't leave. I'm passionate about this profession	I would go into the training and developmen t sector to share my knowledge and experience with up and coming journalists	Yes
Cluster 7: Pride in Journalism	Response to question 1	Yes. Because in a nascent democracy, informing people is important and I am glad to be part of it	Very much so. Yes I am. Women are now given opportunitie s to be leaders in the newsroom	When I see women that are making it against all the odds, I am proud. When I hear of all their daily struggles, I am saddened	I am proud of the women in the industry. There are many remarkable women journalists and many of them are faceless. Their work	Es, too much. It makes me powerful, as I use my lens as a weapon to reach worldwide audience. The fact that I am a rural	Yes. It is an industry that gives you a chance to prove yourself according to your strengths and allows you to work on your	Yes, because it is starting to acknowledge and reward women

					sometimes goes unnoticed and still they press on. There are many women who also continue to fight for gender equity in newsrooms and for equal coverage of gender related stories as well as the use of women as sources	woman, makes me hold my head up high, when I carry my camera	weaknesses	
	Response to question 2	Yes. If we are to empower especially the next generations,	Yes. It's a noble profession with scopes for growth and its	Yes. It is still a worthwhile pursuit	No. One has to work more than 10 years in the industry before your	Yes I will. You can control everybody, from President to	Yes. For the ideological reasons, such as changing the world, etc	Yes, I think it a fulfilling job and there is a room for growth as a woman in the

		we need powerful women who can carry the torch. The more informed and educated women are, the less challenges around gender discriminatio n	exciting		work can be taken seriously	the domestic worker, because everyone will hear your voice, via electronic and print media		industry
	Response to question 3	I would entrench the culture of putting people first, not profits or personal agendas	Women should be treated as equals. They should not be used as tokens to fill posts for gender equality. They should be given chances to	Create more equitable opportunities for all, regardless of gender, age, etc. All journalists would be judged on the basis of their abilities	The perceptions held about women journalists and their abilities. I would arrange for newsrooms to be trained on gender issues,	I think the media world is still controlled by white people, and those with money. I would like to see more young black women and rural women	None	To reward journalists financially as to encourage journalist to remain in the profession

			become GCEO's of news, it's always been a position for men and that must change		including how it relates to every day news. I would place more women in decision making positions as to accommodate the female voice of perspective at this level	become part of the industry		

Table 2: Former SABC TV newsroom Employees responding to questionnaire

	Respondent Name	Nokwazi Zimu	Anonymous/Lerato Motloung	Phathiswa Magopeni
Cluster 1: Position Held	Response to question 1	Senior Reporter, Anchor, Presenter and Producer	Producer, Overnight Editor and Executive Producer	Bulletin Writer/Translator
	Response to question 2	Junior Management	Junior to Middle Management	
	Response to question 3	Partly yes, partly no. My three-way promotion to presenter, producer and anchor was long overdue. While I was excited about it, I came to realize after returning from my maternity leave that all three positions had been snatched away from me. I later resigned to join morning live as freelance anchor. But then I resigned after permanent anchors of the show persuaded the then acting head of news to reduce my rate, as they would not tolerate being paid along with a junior, with reference to me. This after I had trained	Yes. In actual fact I could have held a more senior position, because of my experience and qualifications	NO. My appointment required more involvement in the processing of stories, but my EP felt it was not necessary. My responsibilities were reduced to just translating and voicing stories

	Respondent Name	Nokwazi Zimu	Anonymous/Lerato Motloung	Phathiswa Magopeni
		the white female anchor to read news on radio, prior to our employment at the SABC		
	Response to question 4	Senior Reporter - 1½ years Producer - 8 months Anchor/Presenter – 10 months Permanent and 8 months freelance	Producer – 1 year Overnight Editor – 1 year Executive Producer – 2 years	2 ½ years
	Response to question 5	Without a doubt. I've always loved telling stories, more so, when helping to change lives while doing it	I enjoyed my job, as it involved a lot of editorial input and travel	No. Not engaging
Cluster 2: Experience and Duration	Response to question 1	A full 13 years at my exit. Both on radio and television. I'd worked as a radio journalist, talk show producer and host, news anchor, bulletin and afternoon desk editor. On television I worked as a journalist, presenter, producer, anchor and limited stint as trainee weekend	I felt the SABC is too government orientated, event driven rather than delivering news that the majority of South Africans are interested in and that would make a difference in their lives	I did not have to make any effort. It became a passive process. Even when I highlighted problems with stories they were ignored. It was very frustrating

	Respondent Name	Nokwazi Zimu	Anonymous/Lerato Motloung	Phathiswa Magopeni
		assignments editor		
	Response to question 2	2 year and 5 months	Just under 5 years	2yrs 6mnths
	Response to question 3	I was for the first 5 months. I soon realized it is not any different from where I'd come from, e-TV. Ageism, sexism and racism were just as alive and well. Again I was limited to stories within the so-called "social cluster" beat. Instead of more serious beat, such as finance and politics.	Sometimes, often not	No
	Response to question 4	Honestly. I had planned to retire there. I've always envisioned myself having my own talk show, to compete with the Christian Amanpour and Oprah Winfreys of this world, and where else but the SABC is a perfect place to do	I had not given myself any timeframes, however, my standard has always been 5 years at the most at any company	I had hoped to stay as long as possible. I thought I had valuable contribution to make

	Respondent Name	Nokwazi Zimu	Anonymous/Lerato Motloung	Phathiswa Magopeni
		that?		
Cluster 3: Working Conditions	Response to question 1	Being head hunted, I was fortunate enough to be able to get my views acknowledged and respected by middle management. However, the moment bulletin meeting included senior management, those ideas would be tossed out the window, making space for more masculine stories, coming from men about men. At the time, only one woman held a middle management position in my unit. Her word was absolutely not serious according to her male counterparts and bosses. She was only acting anyway, so soon she was replaced by a man who had no broadcast experience at all. He failed in less than five months on the job and resigned.	Senior Management in the SABC newsroom is predominantly male, I can think of only one woman at that level, and that alone makes the newsroom not worker friendly to women. I have seen a number of women who find their job descriptions and areas changed should they go on maternity leave	The environment was very patronising, the tone of my male colleagues and the way they would respond to my suggestions

	Respondent Name	Nokwazi Zimu	Anonymous/Lerato Motloung	Phathiswa Magopeni
	Response to question 2	Appoint people according to experience, skill or qualification, not gender or race. While at it, ensure that all women, black especially deserving of the positions at the top are placed	I would promote women to senior level. A lot of people get fooled into thinking the position of Executive Producer is a senior position, it is middle management, and with the structure of the SABC newsroom, it does not hold any measurable responsibilities	The way the news desk is run, news gathering process and put emphasis on non-event related news
	Response to question 3	Yes. My anchor and presenter jobs were given to a coloured woman, who looked older than me, while I was on maternity leave. My producer post was filled by an older man, who despite being at the SABC newsroom for 20 odd years, he still had no clue what news is all about. My scripts would be changed, simply because an Afrikaans woman felt my writing was not of proper English, considering it is indeed not	Not really. I found that if you did your job and operated under the radar you are generally left to your own devices	Yes. I was approached by the Assignments desk to attend diary meetings and be trained as a standby EP, the incumbent refused to do that and made it known that he did not appreciate what was being done

	Respondent Name	Nokwazi Zimu	Anonymous/Lerato Motloung	Phathiswa Magopeni
		my first language		
	Response to question 4	Not from most senior management colleagues. Always from middle management and junior colleagues. To-date the youngsters continue to seek advice from me	Yes and no. Junior colleagues know that EP positions do not mean much and senior colleagues can be condescending at the best of times	No
Cluster 4: Black women representation	Response to question 1	The black women representation in the newsroom is made to look good, through the non-African black women, such as coloured and Indian. Nonetheless, they all still hold junior to middle level positions, with the most junior often assigned to the African women. There's very minimal representation of black women as sources. If available, often these women are referred to as victims or poor, less as successful and	It's fairly representative in the indigenous language groups, but in English it is lacking for both men and women	There was a fair representation of black women in the news room, the problem I had was quality and experience. My sense was that the only time you would see themes involving women were abuse, rape and domestic violence related stories. Very few stories portrayed women in a positive, constructive light

	Respondent Name	Nokwazi Zimu	Anonymous/Lerato Motloung	Phathiswa Magopeni
		heroic		
	Response to question 2	No. Until there is balanced representation in the newsroom, the news will always be imbalanced, poorly representing black women	It could improve. There are a lot of good women journalists who can work in the SABC TV newsroom	I was not happy. I believe there's a lot that women are doing and that's not being given attention by the media
	Response to question 3	Yes. I have been directly told by my editor in chief that I was too young to cover a prominent, criminal court case. However, I did put on a fight, eventually winning the story, which had been preferably covered by a male colleague	No	I treated what would have been seen as sexism, as more about knowledge superiority. Males tend to think they own knowledge and experience even when the reality is different
Cluster 5: Employment and salary scale	Response to question 1	First of a permanent basis, and the resigned to be freelance	Permanently	Permanently
	Response to question 2	My experience and the fact that I was approached by the SABC. At the time yes, because I had planned to retire at the corporation	I've always preferred it that way. It gives a sense of security	Yes

	Respondent Name	Nokwazi Zimu	Anonymous/Lerato Motloung	Phathiswa Magopeni
	Response to question 3	At the time of appointment yes, but after learning about gender salary gaps, no	No. I queried it and was put on what they called a retention allowance, which was reviewable every six months, in a way this did not address my salary problems	No
	Response to question 4	Through speaking to colleagues I learnt there were huge salary gaps between myself and my male counterparts. Some of whom told me themselves. Ironically they were of the view that their salaries were too little. What of mine?	Unfortunately or fortunately I did not know how my other colleagues were remunerated so it didn't bother me. I was more interested in what I was earning	I thought that I deserved more. I actually took a salary cut because I wanted to join the SABC and that was OK with me
	Response to question 5	Corridor talks and confirmation by disgruntled male colleagues	N/A	What puzzled me was that an HR officer who handled my appointment told me that they had made a better offer but the EP was opposed to it
Cluster 6: Future plans in the industry	Response to question 1	I was unhappy with the glass ceiling I suddenly hit, after a	New challenges and better pay	I'm very happy that I made the decision to leave the

	Respondent Name	Nokwazi Zimu	Anonymous/Lerato Motloung	Phathiswa Magopeni
		short lived promotion		SABC. I'm seeing real progress in my career and significant recognition of my experience in my current position
	Response to question 2	Indirectly. I've started a media company, yet to make clients	I'm still in communications, but not journalism. I had no intention of leaving but better salary prospects lured me away	I'm still in the industry and I have no intention to leave
	Response to question 3	Room to grow, with no invisible ceilings and being trusted enough to do my job well as hard as my male colleague and lighter skinned colleagues, instead of twice as hard	Recognition, both in terms of salary and position	N/A
	Response to question 4	Yes. I love telling stories. I would love to go back some day, possibly as GCEO, or any much, much higher position, where I can make drastic changes, relating to	Haven't made up my mind about that. My long term goal has always been to teach eventually, so I may decide to go into communications and	NO. Until there's real improvement in work ethic and environment

	Respondent Name	Nokwazi Zimu	Anonymous/Lerato Motloung	Phathiswa Magopeni
		gender and racial inequity and equity	journalism lecturing	
Cluster 7: Pride in Journalism	Response to question 1	I am proud of the black women who continue to fight for recognition and against discrimination. But am certainly not proud of the industry itself, particularly the way it treats these women	No. Women still need to be empowered in the industry	Yes. But I think there's a lot that still needs to be done to improve the situation. As it is a male-dominated industry, men need to start realising that women cannot just be relegated to editing magazines. Women can do more than that
	Response to question 2	Yes. It is the best way to experience life at all levels and most importantly because I believe that if steered in the right direction they will be the voice for those who have been silenced	I would. It's an interesting profession which opens people's minds to how the world operates and hopefully there will be some change	Yes. It's a very interesting field with lots of things to learn. It broadens one's horizon
	Response to question 3	End gender, age and racial discrimination	I would make it more accessible and accommodative to women	Recognise that no single gender can claim to own knowledge

Appendix: 1.2.

Survey and Interviews Voices: Media Practitioners

Name	*Position at SABC 2009*	*Current Status*
Nokwazi Zimu	Resigned Anchor/Reporter/Producer	Resigned
Puleng Magape	Executive Producer	Assignments Editor
Portia Kuboe	Executive Producer	Unchanged
Phathiswa Magopeni	Resigned Writer/Translator	Unchanged
Anon/Lerato Motloung	Resigned Middle Manager	Unchanged
Anon/Nonhlanhla Dlamini	Anchor/Producer	Reporter/Producer
Mpho Matjila-Nkosi	Presenter/Producer	Unchanged
Nompumelelo Hlophe	Specialist Snr Camera	Unchanged
Zama Mbalo	Senior Camera Person	Unchanged
Nozintombi Miya	Junior Reporter	Reporter (Mid. level)

Interview Voices: News Sources

Name	*Occupation*
Lindelwa Mthembu	Airline Communications Executive
Nomaswazi Mthembu	Unemployed
Louisa Molefi	Businesswoman
Mpho Mosiamo	Domestic Worker
Zandile Tshabalala	Pensioner

Appendix: 1. 3

The One-on-One Media Practitioner Interviews

Interview 1: Puleng Magape

Zimu: In last year's survey you were Executive Producer and you were quiet happy with your position, is that still so?

Magape: No. I am no longer an Executive Producer for World Today, I have been redeployed to SABC in Pretoria.

Zimu: Oh is that so? But isn't that a lower rank position? How do you feel about that?

Magape: My present position is Assignment Editor in an input job not output anymore. Errr… I can say there's an improvement in that I am doing something that I am more passionate about which is interacting with journalists.

Zimu: Do you have influence to propel the news in a pro-woman, better yet a pro-black woman approach in this position?

Magape: Yes I do have an influence in that I decide what must be in the news diary of the day in my region.

Zimu: I ask this because, as you know this is the group that makes up about 50 percent of the country's population, yet they remain at the bottom of the ladder when it comes to professional representation, let alone proper representation by the media, including news media. What are your views on this?

Magape: Of course, Yes, I agree. Women are still at the bottom of the ladder, but being an Assignment Editor makes me the kind of woman that decides and can for a change be on top of men when it comes to final decision making with stories from my region.

Zimu: So many studies have been and continue to be conducted regarding this very issue, amongst those conducting such studies is SANEF, yet nothing has improved. The representation of black women by the media still remains low, possibly less than 10 percent, and that of black women in the newsrooms, has increased, but only to a certain level. Very few hold higher echelons. Now, what/where or how do you think the media is failing at improving the representation of black women on both levels?

Magape: Hmmmm. Err, I would say… I think the media is still failing to elevate women to more senior positions for an example SABC has always had a man as head of TV news for as long as I can remember.

Zimu: What about black women in higher management positions? Do you think they may have turned a blind eye to the situation? Or perhaps they just do not have a say, in this sense let's use the term, "window dressing". Could they be just that?

Magape: I think women are submissive and just allow the situation to be, though I realize they do not have a say at times.

Zimu: What about women such as yourself, in middle management positions? Do you really have the final say of what goes in your news bulletins, or do you at the end of the day have to go by what some man, who is your senior orders from some part of the newsroom?

Magape: At regional level I do have a final say but unfortunately when it comes to national issues my male bosses have a final say and this can be very frustrating.

Zimu: What do you make of black women that allow themselves to be used as tokens to fulfill employment equity regulations in the industry, you know such as your so called "window dressings", simply because they want to reach the top?

Magape: I did not allow myself to be just a window dresser that's why I quit at my previous employment because I felt like a token, a black woman adding to a BEE quota of that company. Therefore I don't agree with women who allow to be used as window dressers it befits […sound is inaudible… I think she meant defeats] the purpose of women empowerment.

Zimu: On that note, let's move on to the black women who are the faces of the media, it seems like there's a split between those who like being just that, and there are those who don't like it, as you know I didn't particularly like it, having quit three jobs in that genre. I know there've been a large number of anchors/presenters who were open to being insulted by an SABC TV News senior manager, calling them old and being done a favour by being placed on air, therefore they deserve salary cuts of up to 60%. No one challenged him at that point I am told, and as most of South Africa knows, many accepted the salary cuts and remained "the faces". What do you make of such attitudes, in the event that we (black women that is) are crying for recognition in the industry, at the same time we bow down to what the men at the helm are telling us?

Magape: I would never bow to being just a face, if my male colleagues do not see my value; they'd rather do without me. I would opt to be off-air but not quit.

Zimu: Does this mean this is something you could call self-sabotage, on our part?

Magape: YES I think we do sabotage ourselves by exposing ourselves to people who don't value us and who belittle our integrity.

Zimu: In that case then, what example are we setting to the many black women students in this industry? More so, what example do we set for the women who look to us, cry to us for help, you know… the black women filling the townships of South Africa, those in the factories and working in the madam's kitchens?

Magape: The examples we should set to those students who aspire to be in the media, is that of changing attitudes, standing for our rights and not allowing men to trample on us and satisfy their egos. To stand your ground when you know you're right. To consult relevant bodies that could help you when you feel oppressed in the name of women empowerment.

Zimu: So what do you make of those like myself and others who have instead thrown in the towel, and quit the industry for better opportunities elsewhere. Oh and do bear in mind that many of us are working on strategies to come back and positively make a difference in the industry?

Magape: I honestly feel you have allowed the men to push you out and not challenge the situation which is something that always makes them to look down upon us. I have been faced with so many challenges in

my 25 years of being in the media, I was once exposed to a male editor who didn't want me to present news with my beautiful natural short hair, I didn't quit, I fought and I won. When I was at my previous position as EP I had serious challenges, I was not technically knowledgeable, my bosses didn't train me, and I was always ridiculed when I had technical glitches on my show, It was tough and stressful, I didn't quit, I challenged them through my union MWASA and guess what! I won. When it comes to being redeployed to my present position after the channel decided to do away with my show-World Today, I had a say as to what and where I want to be, they wanted to impose me at some news programs, I refused, I stood my ground because I knew my rights as a person that was head-hunted for that show and got this position, I didn't quit and I am happy. The lesson is never to quit no matter what.

Zimu: To end do the black women in this industry have what it takes, to tackle the issue of poor representation in and by the media? Do we have that spirit of activism, such as the women who fought against pass laws in the fifties?

Magape: Ummm… I don't think we really have what it takes but we can do more to change the status quo. We can start organizations that are hundred percent women that can challenge whatever situation we are faced with. SANEF is male dominated the media ombudsman is a man. We must approach the Winnie Mandela's of this world to help guide us, we can approach the president, we can have petitions, and we can approach other women in the media outside SA to also bring in their input. We can have workshops and invite all women in media both print and electronic and seek a way forward.

Interview 2: Portia Kuboe

Zimu: In last year's survey you were Executive Producer and happy with your position, is that still so? Please explain your answer.

Kuboe: Ha, ha… No I am unhappy. The financial and administrative challenges at the SABC make it difficult to operate competently.

Zimu: You were unhappy with being forced by managers to bow down to what politicians want in the news. Is this still so?

Kuboe: Yes, the situation is still the same.

Zimu: So how does this affect you as a decision-maker?

Kuboe: Sigh! Well… In principle, the decisions are made by my superiors, although it's not always the case, but… you know… it makes me insecure and I feel dis-empowered and therefore demoralized.

Zimu: Do you feel you have enough influence to propel the news in a pro-woman, better yet a pro-black woman approach in this position?

Kuboe: Yes, this is something I have done successfully in determining the news agenda, and it's one of my passions.

Zimu: I'm asking you this because, while this group forms about 50 percent of the country's population, it is very clear that they remain at the bottom of the ladder when it comes to representation, let alone proper representation in the media, including news media. What are your views on this fact?

Kuboe: It is a very serious challenge, one that I think people in senior positions, where policy decisions are made, do not even make an effort to address. The SABC has just made senior appointments in the TV news division, and they have replaced men with other men. Most of the newspaper editors in this country are men. There are many such examples, which indicate that women will have to take charge of their own advancement.

Zimu: So you're comfortable with the idea of driving the news media, or media as a whole towards a pro-black woman representation agenda?

Kuboe: I am absolutely determined to drive that agenda-it is important, I mean…err… if this country is going to transform. Gender equality is necessary to address economic imbalances, as well as some of our most challenging societal problems like HIV/AIDS, rape etc….

Zimu: So many studies similar to mine, addressing issues of poor representation of black women by and in the media have been conducted, amongst these is the country's biggest media organization, SANEF. But still there just doesn't seem to be much improvement on both the professional representation and that of black women as the audience. What/where and how do you think the media is failing at improving the representation of black women?

Kuboe: You know… the media is largely run by men. It's not in their best interest, I mean… coming from a patriarchal society and all, to change this status quo. The media should commit to a revised way of writing and presenting news, which includes the mainstreaming of gender in all aspects. You know… things like the language and the writing style, they have to be completely overhauled to include women. Actually Nokwazi… I think journalists must be retrained, yes, I mean… part of the reason why women representation in the media remains low, is that we have to deal with our own belief systems and fears around empowering women. Both men and women in newsrooms need to look deep inside themselves, challenge their own beliefs and behaviors around sex and gender, then those stereotypes will change. It's um… you know… it's a long and difficult process that needs commitment and self-introspection on the part of both men and women of the media.

Zimu: What about black women in higher management positions? Do you think they may have turned a blind eye to the situation, in the sense that they have become afraid to challenge those men in charge, or that they may have just succumbed to becoming "one of the boys, in a skirt"? Or perhaps that they just do not have a say, in this sense let's use the term, "window dressing". Could they be just that?

Kuboe: I think when companies and organizations implement clear policies on gender equality at different levels, followed by clear guidelines, linked to performance and outcomes, there will be a change.

Zimu: I stress this point so much because I once spoke to a woman who admitted that her appointment to a senior position was indeed window dressing in line with government's affirmative action. She was however comfortable with this, as she felt it would be her way of getting to the top. While this may be a clever move on her part, I was bothered because I think it is rather selfish. Hence I ask, what then is the point of celebrating historical achievements, such as women's day? I mean… What does today's black woman have to do with the successes of those who fought so hard for black women to be recognized as

equal citizens of this country during the struggle for liberation? Women such as Bertha Gxowa, Lillian Ngoyi and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela.

Kuboe: You see? That is why we need very stringent policies, including how we appoint these women to those positions. Seriously… they must be appointed based on their ability and commitment to reversing the gender imbalances in their area of competence. This should include addressing women's' challenges in the workplace, ranging from their role as mothers, health challenges, etc….

Zimu: Alright, now let's move on to the black women who are the faces of the media, while some are not excited by that idea of being the face, including myself, there are those who are absolutely delighted by it. Many black women have openly accepted being insulted as they were told that they are being done a favour in their positions as the news readers, hence SABC news management felt the need to cut their salaries by up to 60%. Instead of protesting by opting to go off air, these women accepted the salary cuts and remained "the faces". What do you make of such attitudes, in the event that we (as black women in the media) are crying for recognition at the same time we succumb to what the men at the helm are telling us?

Kuboe: When competent, powerful and resourceful women are elevated to positions of authority, they will accept nothing less than their worth. But we also have to take into consideration that these women have their own personal challenges, which will not make it easy for them to just walk out of a job. In fact, a couple of women have left the SABC as a result of these issues.

Zimu: Having said that, could you look at this and say self-sabotage, on our side as black women in the industry?

Kuboe: You know sometimes, actually often, um… I think women have been operating as silos, you know… being overwhelmed with all these challenges, and have not found a way of coming together to address these issues as a collective-that needs to start happening.

Zimu: To end, do the black women in this industry have what it takes, to tackle the issue of poor representation in and by the media? Do we have that spirit of activism that women like Bertha Gxowa,

Lillian Ngoyi and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela had when marching to the union buildings, against pass laws?

Kuboe: I actually think a lot of women have that drive-but they lack support, they just need to be supported, you know… by government and other institutions, including a serious look at introducing life skills at primary schools to educate and empower women.

Interview 3: Anonymous reporter/producer. alias. Nonhlanhla Dlamini

Zimu: In the survey last year you expressed your dislike of your job as an anchor/producer, saying the conditions under which you worked were the reason. How are things now?

Dlamini: It's pretty much the same position, except I'm not doing the anchoring stuff. Is it more suitable? No. But you do what you gotta do. Errr… the organization as a whole has gone from bad to worse, so… because of that any ambitions to get a higher position or get higher pay are just not going to happen in the near future. So from that perspective things haven't changed much. If anything, they've gone from bad to worse.

Zimu: Now you also had issues with respect, where do you stand in this current position about that?

Dlamini: I still have issues with respect. There is just very little respect for a young black woman. In this industry, in my organization, it's just not there. And I think I would be very ambitious if I thought things would've changed in a year. It's still the same, you still have to work extra hard, you still have to prove yourself worthy of any position that you get, more than a man would. Errr… and it's all the same thing where every time you… let's say you pitching a story idea, you still have to work extra hard to get your managers to buy into that story because what do you know? With your ten years' experience, what do you know still? You know, so respect, I've given up on trying to get anybody to respect me, I let my work speak for itself. So when I do get a chance to do a good story I work extra hard on it, because I know that as soon as they see that, when they see the work it will alter any opinion they had of me for the better.

Zimu: You know speaking of the lack of respect for young black women in general, not just in your organization. I watched the news and I was horrified by what I saw, the entire media gallery were men in ties. Not a single woman. What interpretation do you take out of this, is it also a cultural thing?

Dlamini: Yes, and sadly so. I've heard a few people claim that the presidential call excludes women journalists/interviewers. I think there's a patriarchal tendency of not tolerating a black woman who does not go down on her knees and serve the man who stands above her. Men are just threatened by that. It's always been like that, it is still like that. And the more emancipated were become as women, the more bold we become, the more threatening we are.

Zimu: What concerns me though is that many of us who have left dread even the thought of returning to the industry, and many who are still practicing are seriously considering leaving. Why do you think that is?

Dlamini: In my case and the many others like me, some of whom I've spoken to we're on our way out because we just can't take it anymore. You look at what you put in and what you get out and it's not commensurate. You look at it and you think, why am I taking all this crap, when there are other industries that will appreciate my skills, that would respect me as a person, that would respect me as a woman, that would respect the brain and talent that I bring to the industry. So I'd rather go and study something else, and if I don't need to study something else, it's like if there's a communications thing coming up, I'd rather take that for whatever reason. Advertising, whatever else is there, we are seriously looking and it's sad, because we love what we do. We love journalism, but the way it's been crafted it's just not worth the sacrifice anymore. So I shatter to think what the future of black women in journalism is going to be like. I, I don't have the confidence that it's going to get better.

Zimu: I like what you say, however what is the future of black women of South Africa in general going to be like without the most powerful people that could possibly represent their views being available to do that for them?

Dlamini: You know Nokwazi. This is why it pains me so much that I as an experience journalist, an experienced black female journalist am considering leaving the industry. It pains me because I know my role and I know that this role is such an important role and you wanna play this role. I want to represent and I want to tell the stories of women, tell the stories of my people, tell stories period and be good at it.

And let it be known that there are women that are doing this and are good at it. But it is just so hard, it's so hard. Maybe what I need is like you, take a bit of a breather and then go back into it (laughter), in a different disguise. But right now it's just bad, it's really bad, it really is.

Zimu: You know, you sit at home and say okay, let me give men a chance maybe they are not so bad, but then you switch on the news, night after night and realize that actually there isn't a single women's story, let alone a positive one told by a man, especially since it's the 16 days of activism against women and child abuse. Oh wait I'm lying I've seen one on e-TV, but the guy is gay, so really, can men get themselves to tell stories about women, let alone black women? So if we do sit back obviously again women, black women at the most will continue to be ignored. Would you agree?

Dlamini: Oh I do, I agree with you. You know I think, I've just done, as you know I've just completed my MBA study on women in business and it's the same kind of thing. It's the same thing I think in every industry, not just journalism, but it's most pronounced with us because you see it on TV and you hear it on radio. But it's there in every industry, because the study I've just done I found that there is women issue fatigue, if I can put it like that. The men in the study, most of them were like oh gosh, are we still talking about women being under-represented? Are still talking about women being disadvantaged? Are we still there? You know it's like can women just get over it. And I think it's the same with 16 days of activism, it's like okay we've got this thing with 16 days, so wena (isiZulu for you), you're a woman you do a couple of stories and you're a woman, ja, ja, ja let's just get this over with this thing. The men must do important stories, they must now focus on the President and whatever else. The women can take care of this 16 days thing, you know and whatever else these women are complaining about, just so we are politically correct, ja, ja, ja, do that. That's where we're at as a society, that's where we at. And if you think, if anyone thinks that we as a society we have evolved to a point where women are actually holding something of a credible space, particularly in the news space, you're deluding yourself, it's not happening.

Zimu: It's not obviously. Now you feel women in vernacular groups are better represented but I feel while this may be so in numbers, it isn't the case in senior positions. Many of them have been occupying these junior and face of the news posts for as long as I can remember, for example uSis Noxolo Grootboom. Someone I spoke to hinted some of them just do not aspire to grow further, I ask you now do

you think it could be a case of self-doubt, like oh I can't apply for that position, I'm just not capable, I'm afraid I may not have enough brains and capability to handle that job?

Dlamini: I tell you what, from speaking to some of these women, like aboSis Noxolo, it's not that. These are women with aspirations; these are women that want to get far. They would love that top job, they would love to do more than what they are doing now. Problem is, they've found that it's just not worth the fight, because you've got to fight so hard to get out of that box, that pretty face box, that all you do is read from and you're being done a favour actually by being put on the screen for millions of people to watch. You not really working, they'll be doing you a favour basically (laughter), but fact is, it's just too much of a hassle to fight the system. The system is so strong, it's so big and so male that for them it's just not worth it.

Zimu: I read earlier that men in charge say something like "we put women in the frontlines of war zones, so that there's something attractive, pretty faces for men to enjoy while they watch the news". So women are being used to attract the right market for the owners of the industry. What do you make of this?

Dlamini: Oh my word, you are joking! (Zimu interjects… Nope it's true) Wow hey, Wow. I'm trying to picture all the women in the front line now, and I'm starting to think that wow if they're aware of this, and if the women like… (removed names) who sits in certain higher chairs, that you and I know are not as sharp as the public assumes, because we've worked with them, then that statement is painfully most probably true.

Zimu: We've mentioned names I'd rather keep out of my study, but the fact that there are so many of these women currently being celebrated by many young women, even older women who sit at home and watch in admiration thinking these women are flying the flag high and well for us, when in actual fact they are the weakest black women in the industry, who are indeed being used as tokens, considering they do not have the mind of an activist, the strength of a woman that flies the flag for all in her group. Doesn't that frustrate you?

Dlamini: That I think is one of the saddest things in our society because not only do you have these women that have studied, you've got women that are talented, you've got women that are a resource for any organization. In my study I tried to looked at whether or not these women are just availing themselves to be a resource, and I found that actually they do, they are there. It's just that they get overlooked,

because they don't suit your typical leadership role, you know leadership is still perceived as a male domain, so if you gonna run a newsroom, you can't be some woman who runs to the bathroom if somebody speaks harshly to her or something like that. So there's still that thing that women are not quiet made of the right kind of material to run things and because of that any woman who wants to prove otherwise has got her work cut out for her and I think a lot of our sisters just think you know what actually let me just get my pay cheque at the end of the month, let me feed my children, I'm okay in my own little space. Even though given the chance they could be a greater resource.

Zimu: But by thinking in such a manner are we not killing ourselves? I mean who then who then will change the industry?? What is the point of even doing studies like this? Do you ever think about what I'm saying?

Dlamini: I went through that, I went through that, where I was like so what is the point, what is the point because, first I thought it was the men, I thought men have done this to us, the men are blocking opportunities, the men are disrespecting us, the men are this, the men are doing that. But in reality the system has messed us up so much. Patriarchy has messed us up so much, so much and as a gender that it's like the elephant with a chain. Chain an elephant, it can only move so far, even when you take off that chain the elephant will still move only to that level, because still in its mind it is a captive. And so I think what has happened with us is, because we have been told and treated like we are second best in society, sometimes, well the very very last of the pile as a black woman. Because of that, we have entrenched that into ourselves to the point where we just don't bother shaking it off anymore. It's like yeah well I'm not going to bother anymore and meanwhile if we were just to bend together and pull each other up. If we could do that on a greater scale, I'm not talking about your BWA, your Business Women's Association which talks about mentoring and all of that nonsense. None of that is true. I'm talking about actually really pulling women up and supporting them when they do get to top positions, then we might get something. But we're also to blame here, really we are.

Zimu: I like that you bring up an issue of pulling together. Do you or have you ever noticed something I have in this industry that often women at the top positions or those well on their way there, regardless of the route they use to get there tend to shy away from matters of this kind. They tend to stand on their own, keeping away from what they often term "office bickering"? It's almost like a case of I've made it to the

top, I don't want any woman spoiling that for me. You know like some would say, us black women just don't support each other?

Dlamini: I think it's a combination of issues. I think on the one hand you've got women that feel they've worked so hard to build themselves up as brands and you know the most respected women in society and they want to remain the only respected women in society. So they get very territorial around the top bras. But I think you also get these women that talk the talk but don't walk the walk. So in other words they talk about how they are mentoring and they are so concerned about the people that come behind them. They so want to empower other women and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Meanwhile it is who is this person? What can they do for my profile? So if I am a Jane Raphaeli let's say, and I want to mentor somebody, I'm not going to mentor uNokwazi that is, who is she in society? uDumengani (isiZulu for what's her claim to fame)? But I will mentor uBasetsane Khumalo, because she's going to talk about me, she's gonna go all over and talk about me on Top Billing, about how great I am and I find that there's a lot of that, where even women high up in business, they're not gonna attend to any Tom, Dick and Harry. They're not going to pay attention to the women that actually need mentoring, but they will latch on to somebody that they think is going to up their profile and that is where the problem really is.

Zimu: What do you make of the continued overriding of decision taken or made by our so-called black women managers in the industry. I mean one of the ladies I'm going to interview indicated this as one of her biggest frustrations in the survey questionnaire. And I know for a fact she's not the only one. I've been witness to several cases of this kind, where us as their juniors would end up saying "ag this woman is useless man, she doesn't deserve the position, when in actual fact, the men at the top even her juniors refuse to hear her?

Dlamini: Nokwazi. The thing is this. If you are going to fight that, which I think we all should, but we don't. If we're going to fight that, we need to be prepared to sacrifice. Now I'm looking at any struggle that ever meant anything in the world, including the struggle for our liberation in this country. There was an element of sacrifice in it and that's why it was successful, lana (isiZulu for here), the problem here is, we are not prepared to sacrifice anything for gender equity, for just to be taken seriously as women. We're not prepared to sacrifice anything, so you take a woman like that who will stay on in that position and regardless of everything she stays on and you know what's going to happen. She stays on and these men in charge will continue doing the same thing over and over again.

Interview 4: Nompumelelo Hlophe

Zimu: Now, you say you are happy with your current position, as it is the most senior in your department. That's good, however do you not aspire to move further into management? Surely management doesn't ground you, you could still go out in the field if you wanted?

Hlophe: Of course I want to be a manager one day, but not right now. I mean I still enjoy the running around in the field, and as I said this is the most senior position. Errr, so maybe in a couple of years I'll look at management.

Zimu: You've just mentioned before recording that another black woman was complaining to you about being overlooked. Having worked there myself I know this, does it concern you at all that for most black women, some have left, others remain the growth for us seems to be middle management. Is this something you've ever wondered about?

Hlophe: I've never really thought about it, but you can't not see it. I've never thought about it in that sense, maybe because I haven't errr… what's the word? It's something that's not really in my mind, once the time comes when I want to be in a managerial position, maybe then I'll think about it more often. Errr, but at the moment it's something that I see really, but it's not in my thoughts all the time. It is a concern obviously when black women are over looked, like everywhere else.

Zimu: Speaking of being overlooked. You also mentioned in the questionnaire that you were overlooked for a salary increase because of your gender. As a matter of fact it's a global problem that women just don't earn as much as their male counterparts. How do you feel about this trend?

Hlophe: Yeah, It's sad, it's sad, because we supposed to be equal. We do the same job and I think we are even more dedicated. I mean for instance myself no Zama(the senior camera person respondent). Errr… before I was in the presidential call, before I even went to New York, they knew they could count on me. Every time there was a breaking story, guess who they called? And guess who picked up? You know… same thing uhmm, okay I'm not in the same pool as Zama, but they know they can count on Zama, any time. Do you get what I mean? Uhmm… but when it comes to being promoted, when it comes to being rewarded financially or otherwise, it doesn't happen, it's like… it doesn't exist. Yeah

Zimu: Does this, does this bring it back to respect again? Do you look at it and say hey they know I can do my job and I do it more and better than my male counterparts, the previous interviewee said she find that she has to work twice if not three times as hard as the men, however when in meetings, whenever she bring up a suggestion, it is simply ignored, overlooked if you like… (Respondent interjects…)

Hlophe: (interjection) … Hmmm or someone else brings up the same point as their own now, and then (Zimu interjects…)

Zimu: (interjection) …then they're more interested. (respondent interjects… yes) same thing with the pay, this respondent said as the Chief Executive of News once said, she feels… it's almost as if they're doing her a favour. Is that what you feel as well when you sit back and look at the situation, that these people act as if, yeah, that they're doing you a favour?

Hlophe: Errr… I'm not sure what exactly I would attribute that to. In a way I feel they judge you by who you are. Errrr… we interact with the people who are decision makers and by looking at you they would think, oh she doesn't deserve, she doesn't, um… why does she need so much? She doesn't have any kids, she doesn't support home, umm, so why? From my past experience I had someone who was in HR that I was close to and my bosses, they knew my background, so I thought maybe the reason I was overlooked was because of that. So it's hard to say that it's because I'm a woman, cause we all do complain about salaries or is it really because they think you just don't need the money. I'm not sure what it is.

Zimu: Have you ever tried bringing this up with your superiors?

Hlophe: Oh yes, I have with my previous boss, plus I was lucky enough to have known someone in HR at the time. So asked and that person just said but your name was never brought up in those discussions. So you just feel like what's the point really. And in the end you feel like you are just being used.

Zimu: I was reading through some literature earlier, and stumbled upon some words by one of the world's biggest media moguls. This person said something like "we put women on the front line, so that we can get the male viewer we want". This basically says we use women in war zones so because they are pretty and that helps us get the men to watch. Do you ever feel like that? That the SABC may be liking the idea of having a woman carrying a camera because she just looks pretty doing it?

Hlophe: Yes, yes, sometimes it feels like that, especially when you asked for things, or asking for recognition and it's like no, no, no. Everywhere you turn it's a no, everywhere you go it's a no, everywhere you knock it's a no. But ummm… they're quick to say "oh we have women, we have women in the department". I mean for a very long time I was used as a face and yes I have felt like that a lot.

Zimu: You know what kills me? It's that I left the SABC with somewhat that mentality of "what's the point of sticking it out" as well. After leaving the SABC I worked for a production company outside the SABC, it was worse, that I got so annoyed to a point of saying "I'm done". As I speak to so many women, including you, and everyone comes to the same conclusion… "what's the point" "it's a fight not worth fighting". Then I turn around and look at it, and ask are then self-sabotaging as black women journalists?

Hlophe: …yeah, we don't wanna fight. You know it drains you, it drains you to a level where you feel what's the point. It drains you so much, that if you continue thinking about it you won't have any energy left. So your health is much better without this fight, or else you collapse. So you give in eventually. I mean when I went to study, just before I left I was told "don't think you gonna come back and ask for a raise, just because you have a master's now." I mean really when someone tells you that… so since I got back with my masters I never asked for a raise.

Zimu: But then why don't we study. I mean I'm studying, a lot of youngsters are studying towards a career in this industry. The sad thing is that universities are actually flooded with media students, but you just don't see them become big names in the industry as time goes on, actually you rarely see them practicing as journalists, they eventually opt for careers in other fields.

Hlophe: Yeah, they end up either working for government communications, PR or things like that, otherwise stuck here like us.

Zimu: Clearly there's a problem, why don't we ever say "I want to go beyond this point of going out and reporting on stories and then come back to the office and file" Why do we tend to look down on ourselves. Why don't we even attempt applying for those higher position jobs when they're advertised? Now I'm asking this, because I spoke to someone else recently who said she just got promoted to middle manager, a very good step, although still middle management. However the point is that she hadn't even

applied for the job, she was persuaded by her superiors to apply, (well that's another case on its own) nonetheless, she had not even imagined that she could stand a chance, because she's a black woman. Now why… (Respondent interjects)

Hlophe: That's how it's been. There's just never really been a face that you can relate to. It has always been… but having said that we are also hypocritical because I had never seen a black woman or a woman as a matter of fact doing that job, it just, it just happened. So I'm not sure what it is really.

Zimu: Is it patriarchal constructs maybe that propel us to that line of thought?

Hlophe: Yes, yes, yes. It's like it forces you to believe that, that position belongs to a man, errrr… or a white woman. That would be the day actually when we see a black woman as CEO or Head of News or whatever, that would be the day. It has always been otherwise…

Zimu: I want to be that one day in the near future. Is there something wrong with a black woman thinking like that? Do you look at me right now as I say this and say in your mind "Damn she's crazy. Driven but crazy, cause she's just not going to make it?"

Hlophe: No, why is she not good enough? Why is she not good enough? because as far as I'm concerned she can do even a better job. I know she's driven, so when she wants to do, errr… when she does something she does it to her best ability. I know, I know she's capable. I know there are a lot of other women who are capable but as you are saying what is it that makes us apply for those positions.

Zimu: Or what about supporting someone who does apply for them?

Hlophe: (laughter…) … but who has applied for them, no one has applied for those positions, no black woman, unless it's kept a secret.

Zimu: So what do you make of the women who are unashamedly the so called window dressers? I mean I've recently spoken to someone who admitted that she knew she was being used as a token of employment equity/affirmative action. However she didn't mind that, because she feels she can use this

as a stepping ladder for herself. I feel like she's being rather selfish, in that she's looking at herself alone and forgetting about the rest of the black women affected by this in the industry. Your views?

Hlophe: The fact that we don't even have something like a social clubs as black women in the media. Maybe if we can start by doing something like that, then we can be able to address such challenges and issues that we face as black women in the media. Then we can be supportive of each other. Then we can be able to discuss our ambitions as women. Do you get what I mean? Maybe that's where we can start.

Zimu: You spoke about your concerns for the news covered, always leaning towards government, instead of human interest. Now having said that, there rarely are women stories, or rather there rarely are positive stories on black women. What do you think about this?

Hlophe: There really aren't any woman heroes in the stories we tell. Black women are always portrayed negatively, like prostitutes or domestic violence victims. I mean I sometimes wonder; why don't they have black business woman of the week kind of special reports. I wanna do such stories, in fact I'd love to do such stories, but I fail being at the SABC there's just no platform. Instead I have to chase Minister so and so. (Laughter…) How are we gonna change society's perceptions. I mean like you say, errr… like a child in Soweto gonna aspire to be a successful business woman, cause they don't know. They're not told positive stories. Instead they hear about Khanyi Mbau being a gold digger.

Zimu: Yes there are so many successful black women, even in the cases of domestic abuse, why not speak positively in that story where a woman who turns to self defence, possibly landing the man in hospital. Should this happen, reporters, even black women are likely to speak about the woman beating a man to a pulp, "claiming" self-defense, and I emphasise "claiming", because that's just how it is done. Why not report that this woman was brave enough to turn the tables on a man who had intended to harm her. I'm not promoting violence, but it just sounds as though the media would rather see and portray a black woman as weak, she's just not allowed to be strong and victorious. What do you think?

Hlophe: I couldn't agree more Nokwazi. You know it's a bad mentality, it's almost like we strive to focus on the negative. Look at something away from black women for example the world cup. All reports in this aspect were negative, but look what a success it was. The same with women, never seen in the positive sense, yet they are stars in what they do.

Zimu: To close you're clearly not entirely happy in your job (respondent interjection… Of course), so are you considering a shift at any point in time.

Hlophe: Oh all the time. You have no idea. I just wouldn't leave the industry though. I've always dreamt of making my very own documentaries. Just travel around the world and document beautiful stories. My problem is just funding. But once I've got enough I'm there.

Zimu: I like that. I've thought about starting a black women's network/channel/broadcaster. You know what I mean? Why not start that as black women in the media, so we can have the platform we seek without success in the industry? Again one would think, it's more than funding, we are just afraid. Would you agree?

Hlophe: Yeah absolutely. I mean it's the fear of the unknown. I personally am not sure what I'm afraid of. There's nothing to be afraid of. I mean other people survive.

Interview 5: Phathiswa Magopeni

Zimu: You're now out of the SABC, looking back at the position you held, bulletin writer/translator. Do you think you could have ever made it to management?

Magopeni: The thing about SABC is that, I have a new term that I've adopted, there was "competitive energy" but it was bad energy, bad energy and environment. People just… in fact I got the sense that the Executive Producer didn't know how to deal with talent, ja, he just had no way of dealing with talent. I've recently learnt that being in a management position for to succeed you have to surround yourself with people of quality. That's the problem I had with the SABC. They just couldn't handle it, they just didn't know what to do with talent.

Zimu: Now I like that you touch on inability to utilise talent. In fact this is not just an SABC issue, many other media companies, especially broadcast. However back to the SABC, would you define this as self-sabotage in their case?

Magopeni: They are, they are… if you look at people who left e-TV for SABC. I mean those are the people e-TV recognized as their core talent, from Njanji Chauke, Ayesha Ismail and Nokwazi Tshabalala (myself before I married), all those people where are they now, where are those people now? What did they do with them? What did they do with those people? What did they do with that talent? So it's… it's just like self-sabotage, just like self-sabotage, because you able to attract talent, but you don't utilize that talent once you get it or you don't know what to do with it. It's a self-sabotaging exercise.

Zimu: Do you perhaps look at management also and think they probably just don't care because they don't have senior management that aspires to be more than that, more than the positions they hold, or they don't have people who worked very hard to get to where they are or they don't have people who actually know what they are doing in those positions.

Magopeni: Ja, it's a combination of things. One, as a person I don't believe in management, I believe in leadership. Now the people you see in those positions are the people, who saw being a manager as having authority, and it was more about authority, it's about power, and it's more about serving the people. It's about the talent that you have, to achieve more, because your success depends on those people. And for me it was about "we have this new person who's now in competition with the manager" and this is a person who's supposed to be lecturing me for his success. But he was like "oh I have these people around me, but I don't know how to maximize the talent". That's the impression I got. It's like the people in management positions there (SABC), it's like they just found themselves there and were kind of stuck, didn't know what to do in them.

Zimu: You indicated in the questionnaire that making a suggestion was like wasting your time, as it was constantly overlooked and ignored. Now is this something that applied to you alone or was this common with other black women in that newsroom?

Magopeni: Oh yes, but not if you suck up to them. You would only succeed if you suck up to them. Once you raise an issue they would see it as something that needs correction. It's like it's something that a personal challenge to them, because I'm a man and I'm in this position, so no one can tell me anything. And again this African thing, that if you are a man you are not supposed to be challenged by a woman, even worse that this woman happens to be younger than you. So it cascaded to a level where you are seen as a child in this position. As a woman this person just doesn't hear what you say. He doesn't recognize the value of having you in his team, just because you are a woman.

Zimu: Speaking of Africanism, did this only become a problem with African men, or did you also have problems with people of other races simply because of your Africanism?

Magopeni: Not really, except for when I tried to take the matter up with senior management, specifically Amrit(Head of News). Amrit was dismissive, he was like so what's your issue, it's what Masakhane(Executive Producer) was supposed to do, so what's the problem. It actually got to a point where I was told that I would no longer write any ANC related, any Mbeki related stories, because my point was that I would not change facts. If a person is wearing pink shoes I won't say the shoes are green. But when I tried explaining this to Amrit, he was like you do as your manager says, regardless of what is wrong or right. It was a matter of take it or leave it. That's when I resigned. In fact I resigned twice. The first time they convinced me to stay, but when the problems persisted I went back to Amrit and said I'm withdrawing my withdrawal to resign with immediate effect. And that was it.

Zimu: It's worrying that senior management knew about the patronizing as you put it, of the black women in the newsroom, and did nothing about it?

Magopeni: Yes. I remember at some point the bulletin producer tried to take my side, but he was dismissed with questions and comments that maybe there is something sexual going on between him and me. All this simply because he took time to listen and understand and try to make my point heard and considered. That was it, and I'm glad I'm out of there. I mean how does one equate my being supported by this person, to my having an affair with him?

Zimu: You mentioned also that you were once suggested by another manager for Executive Producer training, but you soon pulled out. What happened, was it related to your gender?

Magopeni: Yes the Executive Producer came to work on some occasions drunk and the management team decided he should go home. All the other women in the Xhosa news team were just made a mockery of, so I don't know if it's luck, but they suggested I was a good cover/stand in for him. Indeed I did a good job, then training in the EP position was suggested. However once the EP returned to work sober, he called me and told me to stop with the training. Just like that. He never explained why, but when I hear from my "so-called" lover later also covering for his colleague, he claimed they really didn't need a back-

up EP, because uNoxolo(News reader/writer) would do the job. But I wondered what about when she's reading the news, it just didn't make sense, so it was pretty clear that this was an orchestrated thing.

Zimu: Speaking of Noxolo, she's been "the face" of the Xhosa news for a while, and she's really no more than just that and writing or rather translating stories. As a person who has worked closely with her and others like her in your team, do you think she/they may have given into that, being just "the face". I mean I look at the SABC news, it seems that's exactly what black women are good for, they spread right through as the faces and often no more than that. I find also that even women with brains just succumb to this notion of being "the face".

Magopeni: Yeah I see that a lot, before being national news editor here, I was hired as output editor in another department and definitely people just sit there, it's not just black women actually, it's women in general. People become relaxed and complacent. It's like I'm happy where I am, I don't see why I should put in more effort. It's like I'm leaving my dream, but your output certainly doesn't show that. But with uNoxolo, I think there's an educational issue, she's insecure and so she always saw someone who comes from outside as a threat, that's why she ganged up with the men against me, she didn't have even matric. They called me a professor, saying they didn't need a professor. (Laughter…) I am not a professor (laughter…) I'm very far from that and I will never be one. Zodwa(another news reader) on the other hand had college education, but somehow she just did not like anything challenging. Ja, she's a typical example of what you're saying. Zodwa got a job at government communications, but she felt that she's going to lose presence. And 2, it was too much for her to go to GCIS, because she worked Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday and she still needs the space in between even though she does nothing other what she does. She had the offer and she could have left if she wanted to, but she didn't. And mind you she was open about it, she was open about it.

Zimu: Does it make you angry that black women in that newsrooms preferred being the faces at a much lower rate than going off air at a possibly higher rate, just because they could not bear losing the popularity/presence with the audience? One insider tells me when management slashed salaries by 60% they were given a choice to either go off air, as they were being done a favour anyway by being kept as news readers, or they could take other jobs such as producing, writing, editing or reporting?

Magopeni: This thing of us black women saying I'd rather be famous than making something better of ourselves is sad, because we are undermining our potential, we are undermining our potential. I started

out here (present employer) as a Xhosa news translator, and a reader. Just before getting married I was already contemplating dropping news reading because I felt I wasn't learning anything more. There was nothing new for me to learn, so I observed and approached then news editor Joe Thloloe, telling him I want to do more, not just read news. I told him I know of someone that can replace me, and he thought I would change my mind, want to go back to news reading but I didn't. That was the end of it, I never looked back.

Zimu: When you look at something like this do you ever think, should we really be blaming media moguls bosses when they don't give us that platform?

Magopeni: I think it's about self-drive. Ha, ha, ha!! (Laughter) I mean if nothing drives you, I believe you will stay where you are. In the case of these women I just think they've reached a point where they say it doesn't matter, we know what the reaction of our directors is going to be. You we tend to look down on ourselves as women, I remember when I was requested by my superiors to apply for this position, they said they were aware that I was not even considering applying, which was true. So that just tells you how we always assume the worst of ourselves before even trying out.

Zimu: Thank you for bringing your appointment up. The channel you work for, having worked here myself before, and both of us having worked at the SABC, we are surely well aware that it is more white than black. Do you ever think, as an article by Sandile Memela stated, there may now be black editors in South Africa, but the authority still lies in the hands of those who controlled the industry during apartheid. In my interpretation this without a doubt means racism and patriarchy is still alive and well in our industry. How do you see it?

Magopeni: Oh of course it still continues, however I must say there seems to be a change of heart and a change of mind. I mean started working in August 2009, and immediately I was taken around the UK, USA networks and SA universities for exposure and training. I could sense however, that it's an orchestrated process, you had some people in management pushing that I receive more training. So you can see that it's about fast tracking the process, yes it's about meeting the employment target, employment equity target. But still you do see that there is still commitment to help you and nature you.

Zimu: Having touched on quality earlier. Now that you are in this position, are you ever concerned that most of your counterparts are actually elevated to positions with the right qualification and experience, let alone the ability to perform?

Magopeni: Absolutely, yes, there's a lack of as Naledi Pandor put it, there's a lack of "knowledge economy". We don't look at that when people are appointed, we look at numbers of the right race and gender, mind you my newsroom as is with most newsrooms including your case study, our former employer, they are juniorised. There's absolutely no experience and that is a major problem. We are struggling.

Zimu: What do you make of the salary gaps between men and women and between black women and those of other races?

Magopeni: You know what? I have consciously decided not to engage myself in that conversation. Uhmmm… because for now I just want to focus on what I'm doing and make sure that I'm able to do it outside, in an outside industry if I get to that point. So I still want to equip myself well. But I am very conscious of that, that a person is an editor, but does nothing, all they do is take a hefty cheque home, while there's a junior who does all the work and earns nothing compared to that one. I am very conscious of that, I just don't want it to get to me now.

Zimu: Finally as a black woman news editor on television how do you ensure in your position that the black woman in Soweto or Alex or Kwa-Mashu gets the kind of news coverage she deserves?

Magopeni: Set up new rules and regulations for starters, the commentators, there are hardly any black women commentators in the news. That's a start for me, we must start getting black women to comment on issues that affect black women, and it'll make more sense. It's like getting a black person to comment on the new government, it makes more sense, because when you get other races, often it is negative comments, it's as though our government does no good, when in actual fact they've done so much. So we don't want someone who continuously wants to bash our black sisters. We need someone who identifies with their strength and can therefore speak highly of that.