

**CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN MEDIA PRACTITIONERS IN KENYA**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

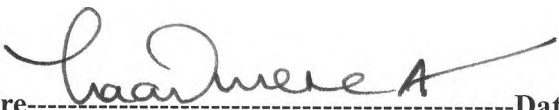
This project paper is my own original work and has not been presented to any other institution for the award of a degree.

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This research project has been submitted for the award of Master of Arts in Gender and Development studies with my approval at the University Supervisor.

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## ABSTRACT

The existence of gender inequalities has continued to undermine human and social development for many decades. Eliminating gender inequality to allow for equal opportunities in all industries including the media is one of the biggest challenges facing the world today. Although globally women media practitioners are making significant contribution as workers in the media sector, they are faced with numerous challenges while pursuing their careers in the sector. The aim of this study was to investigate the challenges facing women media practitioners in Kenya and identify ways through which these challenges can be overcome. The study intended to provide a platform to relevant stakeholders in the media industry for addressing gender issues and concerns.

The study adopted the gender theory of liberal feminism, a gender theory based on egalitarianism/equality of opportunity and freedom developed by Wollstonecraft. A conceptual framework was logically designed to describe the model of problems, causes, strategies and results of women and challenges in the media houses. The study was based on the assumption that women media practitioners in Kenya face numerous gender-related challenges in their work, which are common and can be overcome. The study was a cross-sectional descriptive survey, focusing on Kenya's four major media houses, the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), Royal Media, Standard group and Nation Media Group. The target population comprised of women media practitioners in the editorial department of the four major media houses in Kenya. Purposive sampling method was used to select the target population. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents followed by interviews to complement the questionnaire survey. Data was analyzed quantitatively

and qualitatively by descriptive statistics and presented in tables, charts, graphs and written narratives.

The study established that majority of women face gender related challenges to career advancement such as sexual harassment, lack of a clear career path; women are rarely given decision making roles; there's lack of child care policy in the media houses and there is unequal division of labour. The findings also indicated that management's commitment to gender balance and sensitively are still below average and the corporate culture does not support women's participation and career advancement.

It was concluded that sexual harassment is of serious concern, gender awareness is far from realisation and most journalists are not aware of the policies that are in place in their respective organizations. The study recommends for media owners and policy makers to develop practical approaches to address gender related issues and concerns at all levels in the media industry. Four areas for further research to establish more insights on gender disparities are recommended.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EAJA –	East African Journalist Association
FM-	Frequency Modulation
IFJ –	International Federation of Journalists
IWMF-	International Women Media Foundation.
KBC-	Kenya Broadcasting Cooperation
KTN-	Kenya Television Network
MAN-	Media Awareness Network
NTV-	Nation Television
UK-	United Kingdom
UNESCO-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

One of the big challenges facing the world today is how to eliminate gender inequality to allow for equal opportunities in all industries including the media. The existence of gender inequalities has continued to undermine human and social development. The media in Kenya is a diverse and vibrant growing industry that can influence social change in society. There are more than 90 FM stations, 14 TV stations and unconfirmed number of print newspapers and magazines in Kenya. There are four major media houses namely; Nation Media Group, Royal Media, Standard Group and Kenya Broadcasting Cooperation (KBC), which has national wide coverage. The Government owns KBC. Royal Media service is the largest private national broadcaster with countrywide coverage.

A study by the East African Journalists Association (EAJA 2008) revealed that, much remains to be done to achieve gender equality in journalism in the region. The study further observed that throughout the nine countries surveyed, including Kenya, women journalists were under-represented and portrayed in limited roles in the media sector. Women were also facing cultural and societal problems that hindered their work. The study also revealed that whereas men and women were equally represented in their workplaces, fewer women, as compared to men, were reported to be serving in senior positions. In more than half of the institutions, men occupied all senior and most middle level positions. It is obvious that a common challenge facing the media sector in Kenya is mainstreaming gender issues and concerns in its operations.

A study conducted in Kenya by EAJA (2008) revealed that women media practitioners face numerous challenges; however the study did not identify the actual challenges facing women media practitioners which inhibit gender equality. It is against this background that the researcher sought to investigate the gender-related challenges facing women media practitioners in Kenya and recommend practical interventions that will be effective in achieving gender equality in the media sector.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Globally, women media practitioners have made significant contribution as workers in human resource, marketing, journalist, news anchors, production, finance, editorial and printing. However, like in many African countries, women media practitioners in Kenya face numerous challenges while pursuing their careers in the sector. A number of these challenges are gender-related both in nature and in practice. Research has established that in various regions of the world, women are not a significant part of the media workforce. This was affirmed during the 24<sup>th</sup> Congress of the International Federation of Journalists in Seoul, Korea in 2001. The congress recommendations recognised that much remains to be done for women to achieve equality in journalism.

The East African Journalist Association study of 2008, on enhancing gender inequalities in the media, indicated that in Kenya women journalists are under-represented and portrayed in limited roles. Few women, as compared to men, were reported to be serving in senior positions. In more than half of the institutions, all senior and middle level positions are occupied by men, while only 2 out of the 14 media institutions are headed by women. This applied to the core staff which is dominated by men (62 percent). The study also observed that with the existing

inequalities between men and women, gender equality is far from being achieved. For this reason, the study sought to identify gender-related challenges facing women in the media sector that the existing inequalities and to come up with practical strategies that will bridge the gender-disparities existing in the media sector in Kenya. Consequently, this will stimulate the gender mainstreaming process in this sector.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The study attempted to answer the following questions:-

- i) What challenges face women media practitioners in Kenya?
- ii) How can these challenges be overcome?

### **1.4 Significance and Justification of the study**

This study provides crucial information on the challenges facing women media practitioners in Kenya. The recommendations derived from this study provide a platform to relevant stakeholders in the media industry for addressing gender issues and concerns. Last but not least, the study is a resource to other researchers who may venture in to a similar study.

### **1.5 Scope and limitation of the study**

The study focused on identifying the challenges facing women media practitioners in media sector in Kenya .This study was conducted in the four media houses in Kenya, Nation Media Group, Standard group, Royal Media and the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation. To collect the quantitative and qualitative data, the study utilized questionnaire and interviews.

The researcher anticipated and experienced some challenges in the bureaucratic process needed in getting appointments for the human- resource interview, other respondents took too long to respond to the questionnaire and this prolonged the period for completing the study. Some respondents were ignorant of responding to some questionnaire due to the fear of losing their jobs or being pointed at.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This section contains the literature review and theoretical framework that guided the research study.

#### **2.1 Women in the Media: International Perspective**

An international analysis of women's employment in the news media was conducted in 1995 by Margaret Gallagher for UNESCO. Gallagher's report, *An Unfinished Story: Gender Patterns in Media Employment*, found that in all regions of the world, women are not a significant part of the media workforce. In Asia women are 21 percent of the total media workforce. In Latin America they are 25 percent. In Southern Africa they are 27 percent. In Western Europe and the United States they are 35 percent. In some countries, the figures for women in the media are astonishingly low. A Nepalese journalist speaking at the U.N. Beijing plus 5 Conference in New York in June 2000 said that in her country, women are only 6 percent of media workers. According to UNESCO figures, in Japan women are only 8 percent of media employees; in India and Malawi they are 12 percent; and in Argentina and Mozambique women are 16 percent of the media workforce.

Since women are not represented in large numbers in the media in general, it is not surprising that there are even fewer women in high level positions in the media. The Radio-Television News Directors Association in the United States reports that women are 24 percent of news directors in television and 20 percent of those in radio. Similarly, the American Society of Newspaper Editors reports that women are only 34

percent of newsroom supervisors in the United States. According to the UNESCO report, in Africa women are 8 percent of broadcasting managers and 14 percent of managers in the print media. In Latin America, the figures are 21 percent for broadcasting and 16 percent for print. Furthermore, nearly two-thirds of the respondents to an IWMF survey of women journalists in Latin America in September 2000 said that qualified and capable women in the media do not have equal opportunities to advance into leadership and management positions.

A majority (nearly 60 percent) of the women journalists from around the world who responded to a 1997 IWMF survey said that not even one out of 10 decision-makers in their companies were women. These findings support Gallagher's 1995 UNESCO report which found that women lead only 3 percent (8 out of 239) of the media organizations polled and hold a mere 12 percent of the top posts in those companies. Chambers (2004:10) suggest that a 'glass ceiling' (an invisible barrier to promotion' for women) continues to be a significant factor within the media. He further says that women employees are twice as likely as men to have experienced discrimination at work. Men dominate the higher ranking job categories of 'General Management' and 'Editorial Management. He also says that even in areas such as women's magazines; where creative staff is predominantly women, men in management and editorial level continue to control the commercial aspects of the business.

A report published by the Sutton Trust focusing on the 'top 100' UK news journalists included only 18 women (Sutton Trust 2006). This trend was examined in more detail a year later: a survey conducted by the Fawcett Society 2007, found that during the summer of 2007 only 2 out of the 17 national newspapers in the UK had a female



editor, and only one had a female deputy editor. Melin-Higgins 2004, in one of the few studies directly examining the role of women in UK journalism, explains that inherent 'vertical segregation' procedures ensure that women journalists do not get promoted to managerial level in the media. Aldridge's (2001) research explains that there exists a powerful internal opposition to women occupying leading roles within regional UK newspapers. The study also observes that this trend may in fact be intensifying. Ross's survey of UK female journalists found that most respondents complained of struggling to cope with 'the near impossibility of successfully combining family and career' (2001:531- 532).

Further inequality experienced by some female journalists was highlighted in a pilot study conducted by Women in Journalism (2007). Their report, entitled 'The Lady Vanishes - suggests that even when women establish successful careers in journalism, they are likely to experience discrimination in the form of ageism as they get older. In the survey of 100 women, 71% described themselves as 'very' or 'quite' anxious about anticipated difficulties with continuing to work at their current job level until they were, due to discriminatory beliefs held within the culture of journalism (2007:1). It seems that a woman in her fifties or sixties does not fit with beliefs about the 'ideal' journalist, and consequently older women are often 'marginalized and ridiculed'; a problem not experienced to the same extent by men of a similar age (Women in Journalism 2007:1).

A global survey taken every five years since 1995 indicates that by 2005 57% of all television news presenters were women, yet only 29% of news items were written by female reporters. Meanwhile only 32% of "hard" news was written or covered by

women. Women are more often found reporting on “soft” subjects, such as social issues, the family, or arts and “living” (up to 40% women) ( Gallagher, 2005). While statistics show that more and more women are training and entering the field, the number of women producers, executives, chief editors, and publishers remain shockingly low. In Canada for instance only 8% of the editors-in-chief and 12% of publishers are women.

The Media Awareness Network (MAN, 2010) notes that even though women working in the media have made some inroads those who matters in the world of media continue to be men. The forum noted that men continue to occupy approximately 75 per cent of the positions of power in the mass media and the prospects become much bleaker for women as they climb the corporate ladder.

Similarly another study conducted by the Annenberg Public Policy Centre at the University of Pennsylvania in 2001, found that only 13 per cent of the top executives of American media, telecommunications and e-companies were female (MAN, 2010). The percentage was not concentrated at the top: women constitute only 9 per cent of the boards of directors for these companies, and they hold only 3 per cent of the most powerful positions (MAN, 2010).

## **2.2 Regional perspective of women involvement n media**

A study by Gender links conducted in 14 Southern African countries titled: *Glass ceiling: Women and men in Southern Africa media 2010* revealed that: Men are the predominant employees in South African media houses, women constitute about a quarter of the media house boards and less than a quarter of top management, men get

better working deals. They are more likely to be employed in open-ended full time contracts, Men dominate the editorial, production and technical departments, women are more in the support departments, Gender-division of labour in beats is pronounced, Men dominate the 'hard beats', Sexual harassment is common amongst others.

East African Journalist Association (2008) carried out a survey on Enhancing Gender Equality in the Media in Eastern Africa. The study revealed that throughout the nine countries surveyed, women journalists are under-represented and portrayed in limited roles in the media. Further revelations are that women face cultural and societal problems that hinder their work. Married women journalists state that their husbands are discontented in their professional tasks. The situation is even more difficult in countries where press freedom is gagged. More often than not, women will be most affected due to family and societal pressures. There is low education level among the female journalists compared to their male counterparts.

### **2.3 Kenyan Perspective**

The East African Journalist Association (2008) survey on "Enhancing Gender Equality in the Media in Eastern Africa" in Kenya focused on both sexes. The study revealed that majority of those interviewed had university education. However, there were disparities in such areas as career advancement, conditions of work and work environment. Seventy one percent (71%) of the respondents said there was equal pay for men and women where they worked, while twenty nine percent (29%) said no. Half of the number said there is paid maternity leave provided at their workplaces while another half said no. Majority said there is paid paternity leave provided. Some

of those who said No said there was no such policy at their workplaces despite the existence of such a law in Kenya.

The study also revealed that whereas men and women were equally represented in their workplaces, fewer women, as compared to men, were reported to be serving in senior positions. In more than half of the institutions, all senior and middle level positions are occupied by men, while only two out of the 14 media institutions are headed by women. Some respondents said they been treated unfairly because of their gender. Indeed, one said her boss wanted sexual favours; another one said she was unfairly treated through unequal pay, while three reported discrimination in duties assignment.

The study further revealed that, gender issues were not given prominence in the media in Kenya. Forty two percent ( 42%) of those interviewed said they covered all kinds of issues, while twenty one percent (21%) covered politics, twenty percent (20%) percent covered business and development issues, and only eight percent covered gender issues, with the remaining nine percent (9%) covering health, science and other issues. The studies reviewed reveal that the challenges facing women media practitioners are many. The study in Kenya by EAJA was did not identify the challenges facing media practitioners, that inhibit gender equality. However it revealed that women media practitioners face numerous challenges. The researcher in this study seeks get an in depth analysis of gender related challenges women media practitioners face.

## 2.4 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the study is the gender theory of liberal feminism, a gender theory based on egalitarianism/equality of opportunity and freedom. The theory, as noted in Encyclopaedia Britannica (1993), dates back to Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, published in England in 1792. Wollstonecraft commented on society's view of the woman and encouraged women to use their voices in making decisions, separate from decisions previously made for her. Wollstonecraft "denied that women are, by nature, more pleasure seeking and pleasure giving than men. She reasoned that if they were confined to the same cages that trap women, men would develop the same flawed characters. What Wollstonecraft wanted for women was personhood. She argues that our society holds the false belief that women are, by nature, less intellectually and physically capable than men.

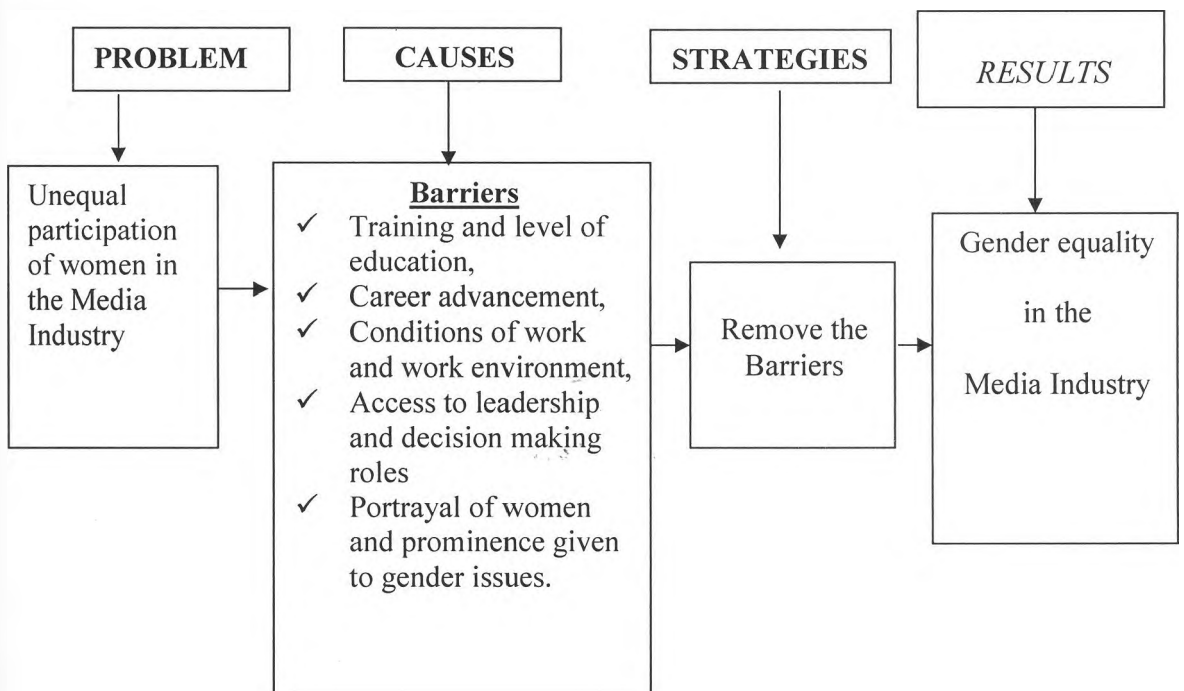
The theory affirms that all people are created equal; women are essentially the same as men. She focuses on women's ability to show and maintain their equality through their own actions and choices. She also argues that to achieve equality, all barriers that limit women's advancement should be removed. She points out that education/empowerment is a means of change. The theory states that one of the effective strategies of liberating women is by the state developing and implementing legislative measures that enhance equality through the law. The theory also seeks social change that will create a social system that gives opportunities and advantages to people on the basis of their ability (meritocracy), where social rank is based on merit.

## Relevance of theory to the study

The theory points out on the need to first establish the problem, then the need to identify the causes of the problem which in this study, are the challenges facing women media practitioners in Kenya. Finally, the theory emphasis on developing practical strategies to overcome the challenges, which exclude women from participating fully in the media industry. Such challenges or barriers may exist in such areas as training and level of education, career advancement, conditions of work and work environment, access to leadership and decision making roles and portrayal of women and prominence given to gender issues etc. These barriers impact negatively on women in the media sector as observed by the study.

## 2.5 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: A Conceptual Model of the Study



## 2.6 Assumptions

The following was assumed by the study:

- Women media practitioners in Kenya face numerous gender-related challenges in their work.
- The challenges facing Women media practitioners in Kenya are common and can be overcome.

## 2.7 Definition of Key Terms

**Affirmative Action:** Action taken on a temporary basis in favour of a disadvantaged group so as to enhance equity

**Differential roles:** Responsibilities, activities of males and females. They are what a society or culture prescribes as proper roles, behaviours, personal identities, and relationships.

**Feminism:** A school of thought whose beliefs, values and attitudes reflect high regard for women as human beings (Matlin, 1987).

**Gender:** This refers to the socially constructed roles and responsibilities assigned to men and women by society.

**Gender discrimination:** Refers to unequal or preferential treatment to individuals or groups based on their gender that results into reduced access to or control of resources and opportunities.

**Gender Disparity:** Inequality caused by gender

**Gender Equality:** In this context defined as the equal treatment of women and men including equal pay for equal work, promotions, equal access to decision making bodies, among other conditions, so that they can enjoy the benefits of development inclusion

**Gender mainstreaming:** This is the consistent integration of gender concerns in to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans, programs, activities and projects at all levels.

**Gender responsiveness:** Action taken to correct gender imbalances

**Journalism:** It is the communication of information regarding the events of the day through print or media.

**Media:** Means of mass communication considered as a whole, including television, radio, magazines and newspapers, together with the people involved in their production.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This section describes the research design, the target population, sample size, sampling technique, data collection methods, data analysis and the ethical considerations.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study was a cross-sectional descriptive survey. Cross-sectional survey provides a “snapshot” of the frequency and characteristics of a ‘problem’ in a population at a particular point in time. It is mandatory while conducting a cross-sectional survey to have representative samples of the population for validity. To fulfil this requirement, the researchers sample was taken from the whole population which was women media practitioners in the four major media houses in Kenya. The data collected described the challenges they face by providing an in-depth analysis of the sampled population. This design also allowed the researcher to look at numerous issues at once and collect information on various issues related to the objective of the study. Finally, the researcher chose this design because it is relatively inexpensive and took up a less time to conduct. Quantitative and Qualitative data was collected for this study.

#### **3.2 Study Area**

The study was conducted in Kenya’s four major media houses, the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), Royal Media, Standard group and Nation Media Group. The researcher chose this media houses because they hold the highest population, they have extensive coverage comprising television stations, newspapers

and radio stations. The sample size from these media houses is sufficient and representative enough to give information for this study.

### **3.3 Target Population**

The target population comprised of women media practitioners in the editorial department of the four major media houses in Kenya. The researcher chose this population as representatives of the rest in other departments, since they are the actual media practitioners. This population comprised of managing editors, editors and sub editors, producers, presenters and other journalists. Secondly the study population mentioned is in line with the objectives and topic of this study.

### **3.4 Sample size and Sampling Procedures**

The researcher carried out a situation analysis in each media house by, requesting the human resource manager to provide information on the number of women and men in the media houses in the editorial department, positions held by women in the media houses and other related issues. This information aimed at establishing the number of women media practitioners in the editorial department of the four major media houses. The analysis was used to guide the researcher on the suitable sample size.

The sample was 30% of the one hundred and fifty one, the number of media women practitioners as observed in the situation analysis. Purposive sampling was used to select the sample size for the study. The researcher used this sampling procedure because she had a purpose in mind which is to investigate the challenges facing media women practitioners in Kenya. The researcher also had a predefined group; women media practitioners in the editorial sector of four the major media houses in Kenya.

### **3.5 Data Collection Methods and Research Instruments**

#### **Self-administered Questionnaire**

Questionnaire contained both closed and open-ended questions. The open-ended question allowed the respondent to freely express their opinion in regards to the issue in question. A questionnaire as a data collection instrument enables the researcher to collect a lot of information from many respondents over a very short time and it is easy to administer. The questionnaire was followed by an interview to authenticate the information provided in the questionnaire.

#### **3.6 Data Analysis**

Data collected in this study was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. For quantitative data analysis, tally sheets were used to generate frequency counts out of which percentages were calculated. As regards qualitative data analysis, the pieces of information collected transcribed into written texts by combining the notes taken into coherent discourse. The data was then examined for completeness and relevance in order to ascertain its usefulness, adequacy and credibility in answering the research questions. The data was presented in tables, charts, graphs and written narratives.

#### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

Before carrying out the study, the researcher obtained authority to conduct research from the University of Nairobi and the Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology. Thereafter, the researcher sought permission from the respective media houses to meet the participants. With the help of media officials the researcher administered the questionnaires to the sample population of this study.

The study also involved human subjects hence; the researcher ensured that the privacy of the individuals was maintained. Respondents voluntarily choose to participate in this study. The respondents were provided with adequate information pertaining to the study, procedure that will be followed, objectives of the study, and benefits of taking part in the study, manner in which the findings would be disseminated. These enabled participants to make informed decisions on whether to participate or not. Anonymity (identity of individual) was protected by avoiding use of names on the questionnaires. In regards to the analysis, the researcher ensured that the analysis was done objectively, no fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, was applied in this study. The study results will be shared with all interested respondents and media houses.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This Chapter presents the research findings generated from the questionnaires and interviews.

The research findings of the descriptive statistics address each research questions. It should also be noted the sample size as described in chapter three was, thirty percent (30%) of the target population. In certain circumstances, the reported results are based on fewer cases due to the fact that some respondents did not answer all the questions. In other words, the results indicate the percentage of the actual respondents to a particular question.

The findings of the study are presented in form of narratives, tables, charts and graphs.

#### 4.1 Profile of the respondents

This section sought to find out general information on the level of education, professional training in media and how these affected women media practitioners. The findings are illustrated in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1: Training and level of Education**

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Alternatives</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
	Level of qualification	Post graduate degrees	2
		Degree	40
		Diploma	58
	Professional Training in Media	Trained	99%
		Not Trained	1%

As observed in the table above fifty eight percent (58%) were diploma holders in either mass communication or journalism. Forty percent (40%) of the respondents had university degrees and two percent (2%) held postgraduate degrees. This shows that women in general have quite a considerable professional service and have gained the requisite experiences necessary to understand media concepts.

The reason could be that media owners want professionally run media houses that promote, respect and adhere to the fundamental principles and global standards of journalism practice. One of the media houses was reported to employ only journalism graduates for its editorial department.

Fifty percent (50%) of the respondents felt that their level of education affected their work in the media while the rest felt that the level of education does not in any way affect their work. The study also observed that ninety nine percent(99%) of the respondents felt that their professional training in the media did indeed influence their work in regard to the code of ethics, exposure to institutions, efficiency in production and presentation, skills utilization and balancing of stories. There were indications

that some tasks were difficult to execute without media training. However, one percent (1%) felt that their professional training which was not in media did not affect their work at all.

A respondent interviewed noted that she had risen to a top position in leadership because of her interest to learn more. She had a postgraduate degree in journalism and in addition she had trained in reporting on environment and science, parliament proceedings and aviation (this took her to Libya). She had skills in news beats and immense exposure having served in two mainstream media houses.

As Mbeke and Okello-Orlale (2010) point out, Kenya's media is one of the most respected, thriving, sophisticated and innovative in Africa according to a policy briefing by the BBC World Service Trust. This is obviously a strong endorsement that the Kenyan media reflects an ideal that ought to be the basis for measuring performance. As such, quality training and education standards are an important aspect in the media industry.

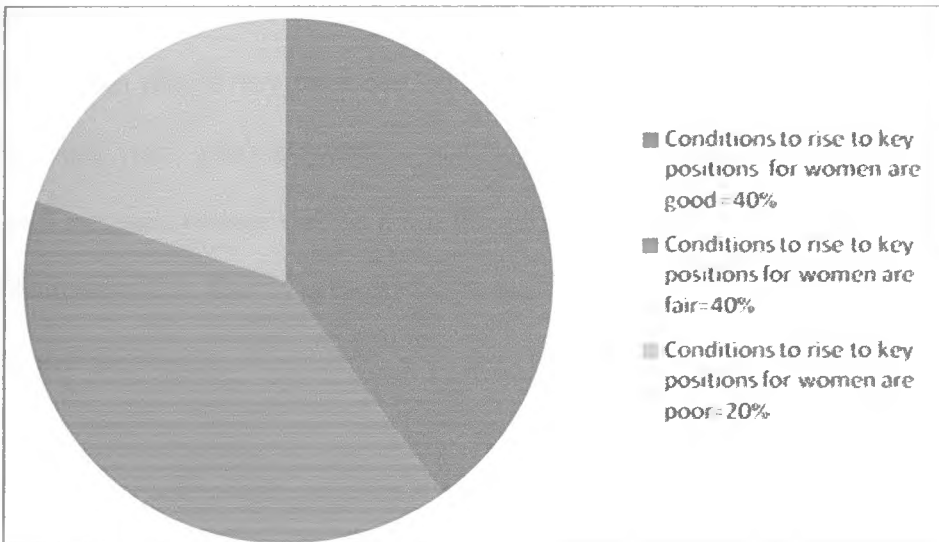
#### **4.2 Career Advancement, Conditions of Work and Work Environment**

Under this section, the researcher investigated women's position in the organizations, conditions under which women rise to senior positions; whether there exist any gender disparities in relation to career advancement; corporate culture in relation to women's participation and advancement; and challenges that women media practitioners experience in relation to career advancement. The research findings from such investigations are reported in the following subsections.

#### 4.2.1 Conditions under which women rise to key positions

This was examined by providing a number of statements to the respondents for rating themselves against their ability and prevailing conditions to rise to key positions, whether excellent, good, fair or poor as shown in figure 4.1 below.

**Figure 4.1: Conditions under which women rise to key positions**



From figure 4.1 above, Forty percent (40%) of the respondents felt that the conditions under which women rise to top positions were conducive. A respondent in charge of a radio station indicated that it was purely on merit that she got that position and she was a living example of hard work. She explained that fear was a factor that excluded women from this positions; women felt that men would intimidate them with their patriarchy attitude. However, twenty percent (20%) of the respondents felt that the conditions under which women rise to key positions were not at all conducive. They indicated that there were very few women in top positions and most of those in top positions were not qualified. Six respondents said that in the media house they belonged to, there were no women as managing editors and another one said that in



the media house she worked for they had recently hired a woman as a managing editor. It was observed though comments collected in the questionnaires that, women were overworked and overlooked during promotions. Other comments indicated that, relationships with relevant parties determined who got which position and that, women have to work twice as hard as men to get recognized.

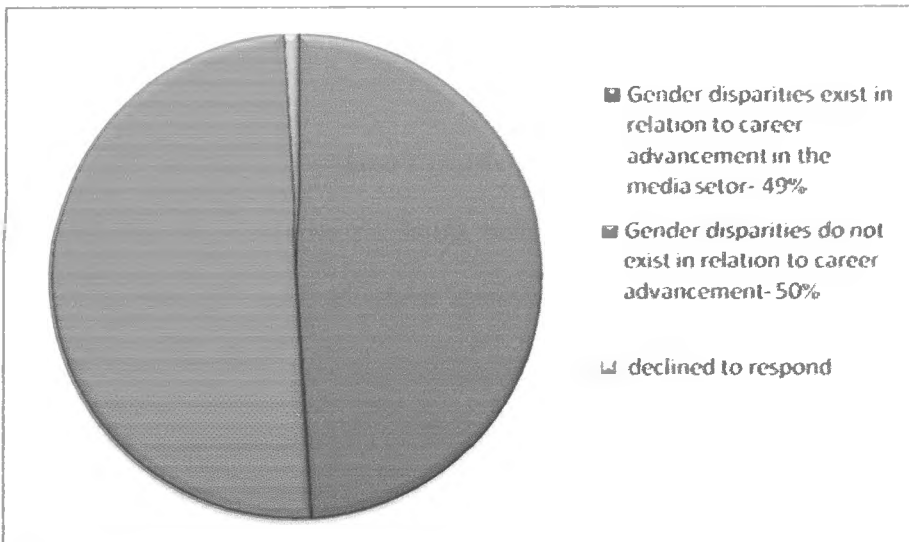
Finally, Forty percent (40%) of the respondents indicated that the conditions under which women rise to key positions were fairly conducive; indicating that in other departments' not editorial women had some leadership positions, competition between men and women was on merit though men are perceived to be more skilled and competent than women in the media houses. Others said promotions were done in a free and fair way.

These findings are in agreement with the Irex Africa Report (2009) "advocating on behalf of women in Somali media". Through promoted public debates, panel discussions, and lobbying meetings with government officials and media managers, a series of trainings for female media practitioners was done to advance their professional development. Reflecting on the victories and ongoing challenges confronting Somaliland women in the media, Nafisa says, "As a Somali woman, becoming a media practitioner wasn't easy. Most people I knew were against my goal of becoming a journalist. I didn't know where to start; all I knew was that I had the dream of becoming a journalist. I am now a professional and skilled journalist..." (Irex Africa Report, 2009).

### 4.3 Gender disparities in relation to career advancement

The study further investigated whether there were any gender disparities in relation to career advancement among women media practitioners. Figure 4.2 presents the results from this investigation.

**Figure 4.2: Gender disparities in relation to career advancement**



As observed from the chart above, fifty percent (50%) indicated that gender disparities in career advancement do not exist in the media sector. They gave the following reasons: gender was not an issue in career advancement, career advancement was done on merit, merit was determined by level of experience and level of education, People are treated equally and given equal opportunities in their workplace.

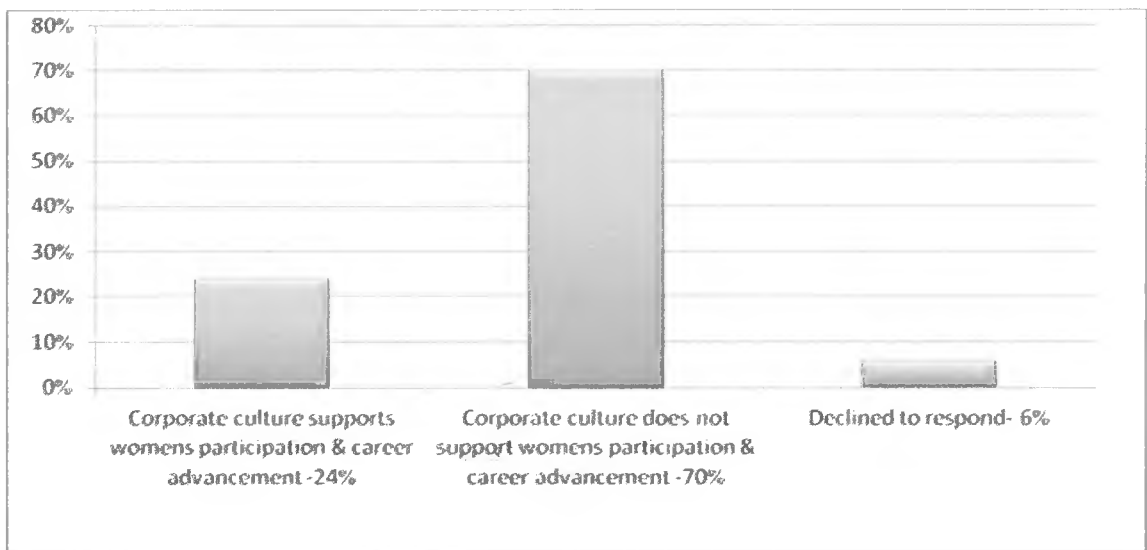
Contrary, forty nine percent (49%) of the respondents indicated that there exist gender disparities in career advancement within the media sector. The reasons given included: the corporate world considers men more aggressive, they had not been

promoted for a long time despite their hard work, women were not able to balance family and work and while on maternity leave men would be left advancing their career, most decision making positions were held by men, women work was not recognized in the media houses as for men, it was easier for men to advance faster as compared to women.

The findings reveal that the media industry needs to address gender related concerns highlighted.

#### 4.4 Corporate culture and women's participation and advancement

Further analysis on the challenges facing women media practitioners was conducted in order to assess the extent to which corporate culture across the media fraternity supports women participation and advancement. Figure 4.2 below represents the findings based on general analysis of the media houses.



**Figure 4.2: Corporate culture support of women's participation and advancement**

From figure 4.2 above seventy percent (70%) of the respondents said that the corporate culture does not support women's participation and career advancement.

They gave the following reasons: Women are rarely promoted; men dominate top positions, patriarchy exists, in that leadership positions belong to men, there is discrimination of women. Women are viewed as the weaker sex.

Twenty four percent (24%) of the respondents said that indeed the corporate culture did support women's participation and advancement. The reasons given included: women are given a fair chance as their male counterparts. Women managers make decisions, opportunities for training are equally distributed, they have flexi working hours and there are a number of women in senior positions. Some said theoretically the corporate culture was supportive but practically it was not.

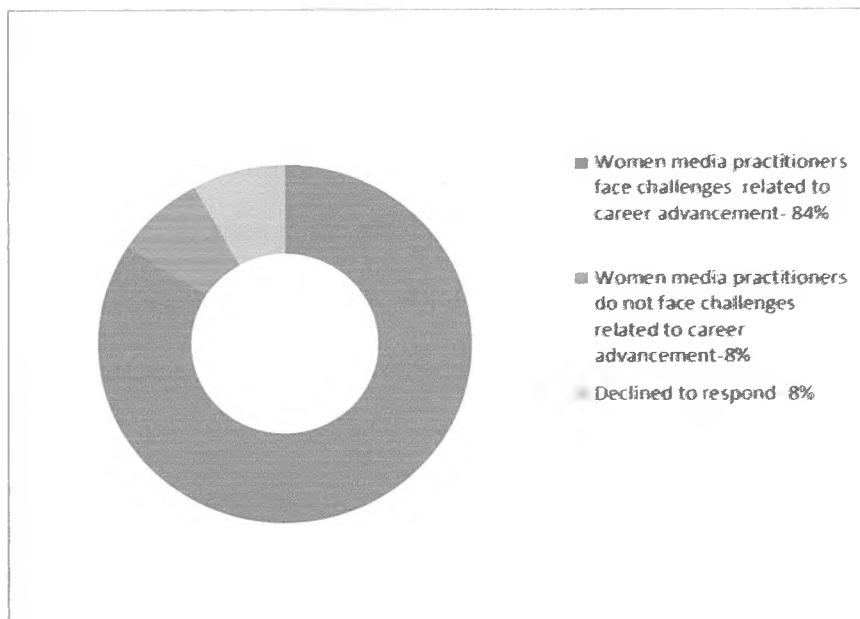
As observed from the study findings lack of support from the corporate culture leads to slower career progression for women, discrimination, unequal distribution of labour and above all lack of a support system to curb the gender inequalities. The corporate culture is critical in promoting women to reaching senior positions in media organizations.

Similar evidence has been given by Nzomo (2003a), who argues that the apparent top-level leadership absence by women needs to be understood within the structural impediments that women globally and at the national level continue to face as they seek to participate in all areas of leadership. Nzomo (2003a) notes that studies on women's participation in leadership and public decision making globally continue to indicate that the playing field has always been tilted heavily in favour of men, more so in countries such as Kenya that are highly patriarchal. As one respondent noted in this

study, more often, management priorities on women leadership tend to only focus on the weaknesses and hardly on the strengths and achievements of women.

#### **4.4.1 Women media practitioners face challenges in relation to career advancement**

The study sought whether women media practitioners experienced challenges in relation to career advancement. The study findings are illustrated in figure 4.4 below.



**Figure 4.4: Women media practitioners' challenges in relation to career advancement**

Eighty four percent (84%) of the respondents said women media practitioners face numerous challenges in relation to career advancement. Eight percent (8%) of the respondents declined to respond.

Eight percent (8%) indicated that women media practitioners did not face challenges in relation to career, reiterating that career advancement was purely on merit.

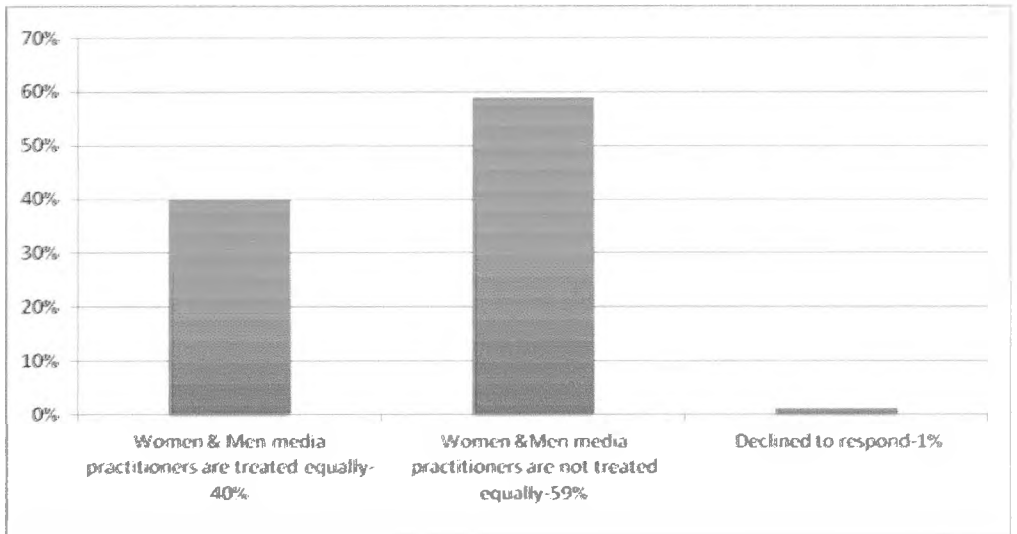
Those that indicated they were challenges gave the following reasons: the management does not understand certain key issues like their family concerns for instance a sick child, house help issues among others. Some men feel that women cannot be in top positions above them and undermine them. To rise steadily in certain positions women have to impress the male bosses beyond their official work. Women are considered less skilful compared to men. There's lack of performance appraisals across the board. There exists a notion that every woman in a leadership position was favoured. Advancing in academics, having a family and working is difficult to manage. Women who were are assertive, were considered rude and intimidated. Sexual favours in exchange of positions or promotions were common. There exists a glass ceiling for women in the media, with some departments traditionally preserved for men. Women managers' were mainly in *human resource, advertising or magazine* editors. Women's work is not recognized in equal measures with men.

The research findings complement Isanovi's (2006) study titled "Stereotyping: representation of women in print media in south east Europe". Study revealed that women remain underrepresented in the media industry, and absent in decision-making bodies and leadership positions. By silencing certain groups in society, and marginalizing female voices within the public space makes it impossible for these voices to be heard and valued, and prevents readers and viewers from viewing women as people with ideas and expertise.

As observed in these findings, these are factors contributing to the absence of women in decision- making and leadership positions and as such the valuable contribution they would make is curtailed.

## 4.5 Work environment

This aspect was investigated by asking questions on several gender related issues across the media industry. The first question was whether women and men were treated equally in the media sector. Figure 4.5 below illustrates the findings.



**Figure 4.5: Women’s working environment in the media**

From the findings observed on the graph above, Forty percent (40%) indicated that women and men received equal treatment in the media sector. They gave the following reasons: there is equal opportunity for training, professional growth, recruitment was conducted fairly. Fifty nine percent (59%) indicated that women and men did not receive equal treatment. They gave the following reasons: men have better opportunities for growth, men are promoted easily than women, men are appreciated better than women, and that men are given the hard beats to handle while women are mostly left with the soft beats. Some positions are entirely left for men only irrespective of if women qualify.

This is a clear indication that gender inequality in the media sector is of concern. Opportunities for women in media employment have increased but their work

environment in the media is still less attractive than men's as observed in the study findings.

The table 4.2 below gives information on additional questions under the work environment aspect. This include: Kind of language used, level of sexual harassment, how accommodative the media sector is to women, places where media decisions are made and consideration of family life by the sector. The findings are shown in the table below.

**Table 4.2: Work-related aspects facing women in the media**

	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
a) Sexist language is not tolerated.	70%	30%
b) There is a high level of sexual harassment.	12.5%	86.5%
c) Most of the decisions are made at the pub or other social places where men predominate.	20%	70%
d) Women are not made to feel welcome	30%	70%
e) Men are not made to feel welcome.	-	100%
f) The organisation is sensitive to and tries to accommodate family life and responsibilities by women and men.	50%	49%

The study findings in table 4.2 indicate that seventy percent (70%) of the respondents said that sexist language is not allowed in the media houses. However twelve and half percent (12.5%) agreed that there is a high level of sexual harassment.

Fifty percent (50%) noted that the organization is sensitive to and tries to accommodate family life responsibilities by women and men. Seventy percent (70%) reported that most of the decisions are made at the pub or other social places where



men predominate. From the findings, it is clear that gender disparities exist. All respondents indicated that the environment was accommodative for men.

As observed sexual harassment is of serious concern. A managing editor during an interview indicated she in her tenure handled several sexual harassment matters reported to her by her junior staff and which she says were always unpleasant experiences.

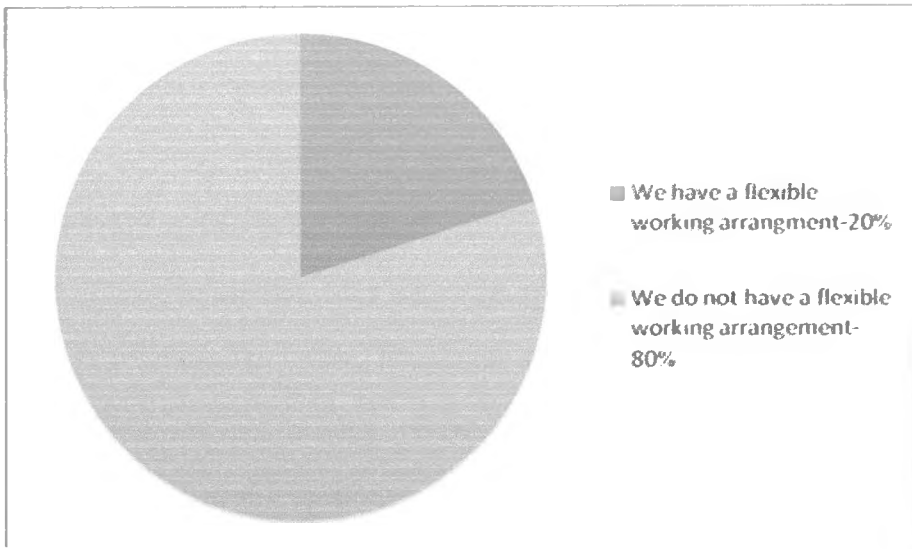
These findings agree with a study by Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA, 2010) on 'Enhancing Gender Equality in the Media in Eastern Africa.' The study found that women journalists face numerous problems in their push for professional rights and to report on gender issues. Some of the media institutions violate rights of women journalists such as presenting them as sexual objects; sexual harassment, intimidation, abuse, undervaluing or ignoring their work, successes, efforts, rights and by symbolically destroying or frustrating them.....”(EAJA, 2010).

Similar cases as these in Kenya are reported by the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) (2011) in Sri Lanka sought opinions specifically regarding harassment of a sexual nature. Every media practitioner interviewed was of the opinion that sexual harassment was prevalent in the industry. They reported hearing of instances where female journalists had been sexually harassed, either by male colleagues or by men they had met while at work.

#### **4.5.1 Nature of working arrangements**

With regard to the nature of working arrangements provided at the work place, eighty percent (80%) of the respondents in this group reported that they don't have a flexible

working arrangement. Only twenty percent (20%) agreed they had a flexible working arrangement as indicated in figure 4.6 below.



**Figure 4.6: Nature of working arrangements**

The reasons given for having flexible working arrangements were: working hours are the same for men and women. Women are given maternity leave. Work schedule determines your working time. Reasons given for having no flexible working arrangements were: Working hours is too long. Some departments are understaffed so flexi time is unheard of. Flex time is not officially recognised though people manoeuvre. Nursing mothers have the same schedule as men. The management does not understand issues of a sick child, house help issues, all which contribute to the performance of women.

It would be argued that majority of Kenyan career women give priority to their families, not because they lack commitment to professional growth but because they have been socialized that a good woman thinks of her family first (Kanake, 1995; Onsongo, 2005; Maathai, 2006). In a study of senior university women in Kenya,

Kamau (2007) found that many women would rather wait until their children have matured before they consider making major career moves such as taking doctoral studies. Therefore, a flexible working time is important for a media practitioner as this will allow balance of career, family and personal life.

#### **4.6 Leadership and Decision Making**

The study sought to determine the leadership and decision-making process, frequency of assigning leadership roles, promotion conditions, gender disparities in the leadership and decision-making processes, promotion techniques, and how it influences women in the media industry. The following subsections present study findings on these issues.

##### **4.6.1 Leadership role**

Analysis was carried out to determine the number of respondents in leadership positions. Seventy percent (70%) had no leadership role. Thirty percent (30%) of the respondents reported to be involved in leadership roles at various levels such as editors, radio presenters, producers and team leaders of journalists. The influence on women's participation in leadership positions could be exemplified by responses from the informants of this study. It was evident that men were found to have phenomenal influence of control and power in the media. They are the main leaders making decisions on both media policy and organizational change; while majority of women role is secondary. It was noted that some women are already in few top positions as leaders.

This low representation could be attributed to the fact that cultural and traditional patriarchal biases are prevalent. This though was not obviously expressed in the study. This low representation in the media can also be equated in other key sectors. Currently, the Kenyan parliament has only about ten percent (10%) women representation, trailing far behind the global average of 18.8 % women representation in parliaments. It has been argued that Kenya has some unique aspects that continue to keep the numbers of women in key leadership positions low, such as lack of an affirmative action law, and the gender insensitive male political culture, which continues to dominate key social and political institutions. This issue requires further interrogation (Johannes, 2010).

These findings are closely related to those reported by EAJA, 2010, which indicated that few women journalists are in the decision-making mechanisms in the local media since local broadcast media managers and newspaper owners are reluctant to include women in the higher decision making levels. Although not dissimilar from statistics in other regions of the world, the figures on gender bias in mainstream media in Eastern Africa are disturbing.

The findings of this study thus reveal that decision-making among women media practitioners in Kenya is still a work in progress and sheds light for organizational changes to support woman participation in leadership.

#### **4.6.2 Frequency of assigned leadership roles**

On frequency with which respondents are assigned leadership roles in their organization fifty two percent (52%) of the respondents said they were rarely assigned

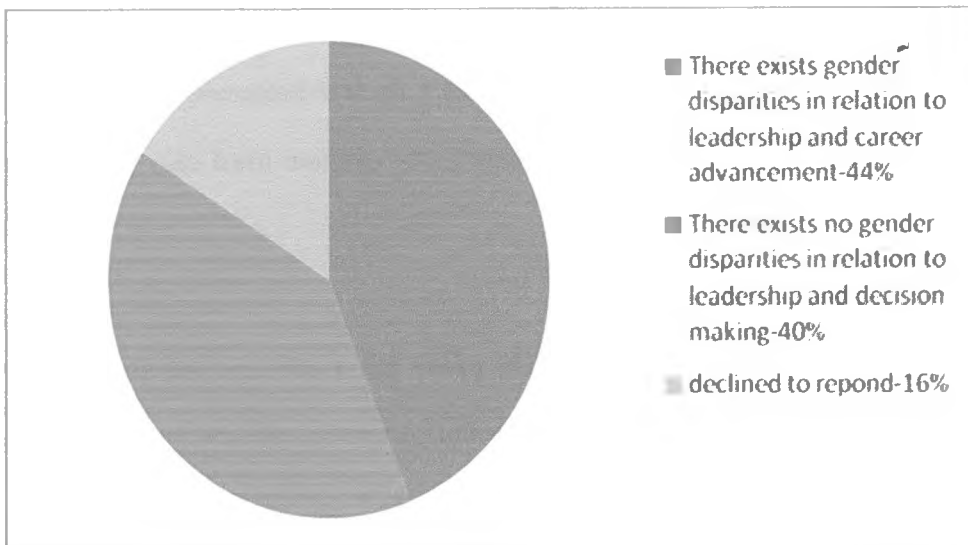
leadership roles. Twenty eight percent (28%) reported they make decisions quite often while twenty percent (20%) said they do not make decisions at all.

The fact that majority of women are not actively involved in decision-making is a fundamental expression of the power divide experienced in the family, where the man is the “natural” head of the house hold. A respondent reported during an interview that by virtue of being a woman, some men felt she could not handle certain tasks which she proved wrong. She said that nothing is for men only.

Women’s failure to be assigned leadership roles can be attributed to several factors though not explicitly expressed by the respondents of this study. Press media owners, mostly men, are reluctant to appoint women in such positions, fearing that family and maternity responsibilities could affect their performances. There is no law that is excluding women, but practically, hidden obstacles exist whether for the appointment of women in decision making positions or for their recruitment.

#### **4.6.3 Gender disparities in relation to leadership and decision making process**

The aspect of gender disparity was again determined by asking the respondents if there existed gender disparities in leadership and decision making process in their organization. Forty four percent (44%) agreed that there exist gender disparities in relation to leadership and decision making, while forty percent (40%) opposed this notion as indicated in figure 4.7.



**Figure 4.7: Gender disparities in leadership and decision making process**

The reasons given by the respondents for the presence of gender disparity in leadership roles and decision-making included: It is deemed that women cannot handle particular posts, men are the key decision makers and taken seriously than women. Despite women having equal qualifications, men are given the leadership and decision making roles. The management feels women cannot hosts particular shows every day. One respondent explained this by saying that there are less than five women in editorial out of twenty. Men say women are puppets hence have no confidence in them.

On the contrary, those who said there were no gender disparities indicated that: One's ability to perform is what matters for men or women and appointments are done purely on merit. Sixteen percent (16%) of the respondents declined to respond to this question.

As observed during the study, the editorial department for example, one media house editorial department recorded seventy two percent (72%) men and twenty eight

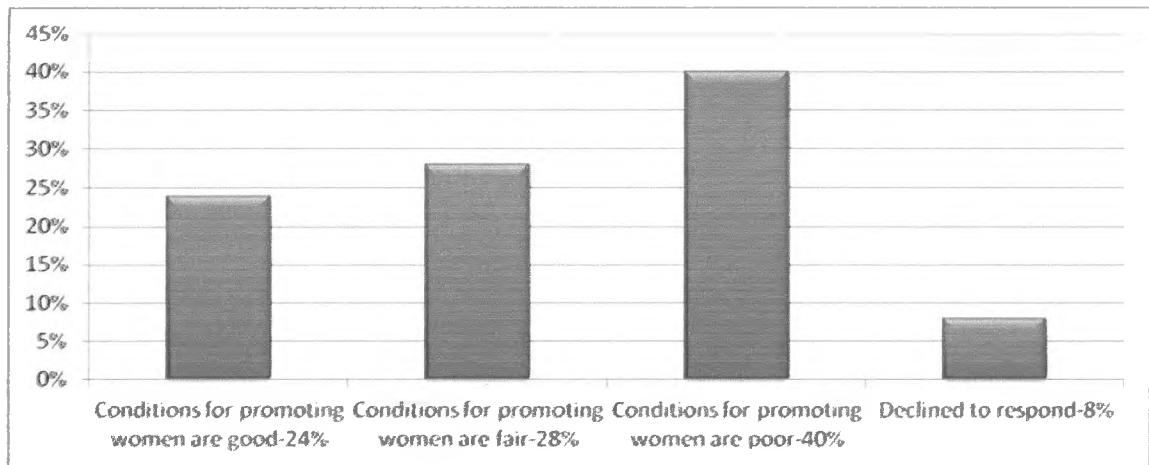
percent (28%) women, while the design department had hundred percent (100%) men with no woman representative at all. Since men dominate in the top decision-making positions, they also form majority membership in most decision-making committees at the higher level.

A recent study by the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) (2011) in Sri Lanka concluded that an increase in female numbers only provides a descriptive indicator of the female participation in Sri Lankan media. Though it is important to have more females in the media industry, it doesn't however make much sense, unless the females also begin to share the important positions and decision making opportunities with their male partners. In this context, it is very encouraging to hear some women practitioners who were interviewed say that there is a notable presence of females in positions such as desk heads, Deputy Editors and Editors which was not the case many years ago. However, unfortunately not everyone interviewed subscribes to this opinion. Many point out that while the number of female media practitioners has risen over the years, this increase is not reflected at the managerial and decision making level. While there are more females at positions such as desk heads at present, the progress to the managerial and decision making level has been very slow and this is seen as very unfortunate by those who are at the decision making level, such as Editors, Deputy Editors, desk heads at present, as well as those who are not.

#### **4.7 Conditions under which women rise/get promoted**

To determine the conditions under which women rise/get promoted, the respondents were requested to indicate reasons for their options. They were provided with a list of

rate scale of good, fair and poor and further asked to explain why. The findings are summarized in figure 4.8 below.



**Figure 4.8: Conditions under which women rise/get promoted**

Forty percent (40%) said the conditions for promotion are poor, stating that sexual favors influence promotion, there are few women in high positions, women efforts were not recognized and there is no clear path for promotion. Since there are few women in these positions, to get to a leadership position one has to influence their way in there and that many women managers have questionable qualifications. Twenty eight percent (28%) reported the conditions for promotion were fair. Twenty four percent (24%) said the conditions were good, with a view that it is all about ability, equal opportunities and merit.

#### **4.8 Portrayal and Giving Prominence to Gender Issues**

The causal relationships among various factors contributing to gender issues were presented in Table 4.3 below.



**Table 4.3: Portrayal and Giving Prominence to Gender Issues**

	<b>Agree %</b>	<b>Disagree%</b>
a) Women managers are more respected by women than men.	12	88
b) Women managers are more respected by men than women.	48	52
c) Men managers are more respected by women than men.	52	48
d) Men managers are more respected by men than women.	40	52

Eighty eight percent (88%) of the respondents indicated that women managers were not respected more by women than men. Twelve percent (12%) indicated that women managers were more respected by women. Moreover, the study findings revealed that women managers are more respected by men than women at forty eight (48%). However fifty two percent (52%) still opposed this fact. Similarly, when asked whether men managers are more respected by women than men, fifty two percent (52%) agreed while forty eight percent (48%) disagreed. On the same note fifty two percent (52%) reported that men managers were not respected by men than women; as compared to forty percent (40%) who were in agreement.

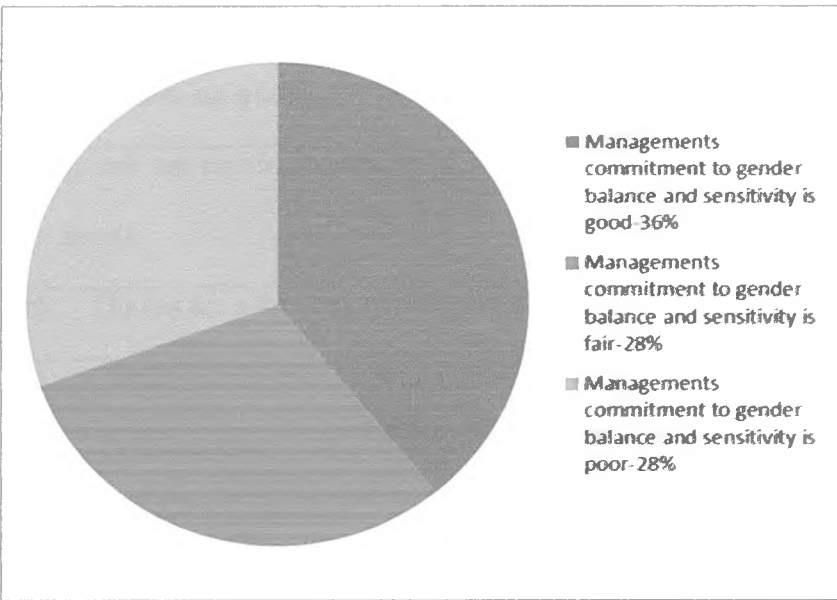
The respondents' varying attitudes as noted above imply complex prospects for future uptake of gender issues not only in the media fraternity, but other organizations. It is observed that women managers are not respected more by women. It is therefore important for women media practitioners and men proponents to strengthen campaigns in giving prominence when it comes to gender issues. This is especially critical in order to change the mindsets of individuals with negative attitudes towards women's leadership.

In regards to influencing the society on how to view men and women, to promote gender equality, it is observed that the media sector is the most pervasive and the most powerful.

In support, Wood observes three themes describe how media represent gender. First, women are underrepresented, which falsely implies that men are the cultural standard and women are unimportant or invisible. Second, men and women are portrayed in stereotypical ways that reflect and sustain socially endorsed views of gender. Third, depictions of relationships between men and women emphasize traditional roles and normalize violence against women (Wood, 2010).

#### 4.8.1 Commitment of management to gender balance and sensitivity

The commitment of management to gender balance and sensitivity was also found to be among the determinants in identifying ways of overcoming challenges facing women media practitioners. The study findings are analyzed in figure 4.9 below.



**Figure 4.9: Commitment of management to gender balance and sensitivity**

Based on the results presented in figure 4.9 above; thirty six percent (36%) strongly believed that the media management is committed to gender balance and sensitivity. However, twenty eight percent (28%) indicated a relatively fair commitment to gender balance and sensitivity. Twenty eight percent (28%) reported that there was no commitment to gender balance or sensitivity by the management in the media sector.

#### **4.9 Views on quotas for increasing women’s representation in the media**

With respect to general opinions of the respondents regarding quotas for increasing women’s representation in the media; forty seven percent (47%) said that quotas are unfair, and women must compete with men on the same terms. On the other hand, twenty four percent (24%) felt that quotas are a fair way of addressing the current imbalance. Sixteen percent (16%) reported that quotas are a fair way of addressing the current imbalance but should only be for a limited time.

Table 4.4 below illustrate the findings.

**Table 4.4: Views on quotas for increasing women’s representation in the media**

a) Quotas are unfair; women must compete with men on the same terms.	48%
b) Quotas are a fair way of addressing the current imbalance.	24%
c) Quotas should only be for a limited time.	
d) Both b and c.	16%
e) None of the above.	4%

There is need to increase of women effective women participation and career advancement in the media sector.

Women bring a different perspective in leadership. An editor with the mainstream media while being interviewed indicated that women editors want harmony in content while male editors want harsh content. “Women write positive stories; they avoid stories that would create conflict between two people or two groups. Women create co-existence and as such change the traditional way of handling content in the media sector”.

#### 4.10 Policies and practices in promoting gender balance and sensitivity

The study further sought to find out the policies and practices that women felt would promote gender balance and sensitivity in the media industry. The findings of this study as shown in table 4.5 below.

**Table 4.5: Policies and practices in promoting gender balance and sensitivity**

a) Affirmative action policy	36%
b) Flexi time	36%
c) Child care policy and facilities	52%
d) Sexual harassment policy	36%
e) Maternity leave	28%
f) Paternity leave	0%
g) A gender forum where gender issues are openly discussed	36%
h) An overall gender policy	56%
i) Other	

The findings revealed that child care policy and facilities were highly recommended best practice, at fifty two percent (52%). This they said would ensure that women attended to their young ones during breaks and still attend to their daily work.

Fifty six percent (56%) expressed the need for an overall gender policy addressing all gender disparities which must e implemented. Thirty six percent (36%) proposing for gender forums where gender issues are openly discussed within the media sector. This would ensure the board, management and other media workers. Thirty six percent (36%) indicated that a sexual harassment policy and affirmative action policy should be developed as a critical policy intervention strategy to attaining gender equality. Thirty six percent (36%) were supportive of the flexi time policy while twenty eight percent (28%) indicated that maternity leave was significant to create a suitable environment for women to participate in family roles as well as their career.

Observations made from table 4.5 above, child care policy and facilities was rated highest requirement at fifty two percent (52%) by the respondents, an indicator that workplace family policies are required for both men and women in order to help overcome the problems of workers with family responsibilities in better balancing work–family issues. Childcare arrangements, especially for children under three years old, are still limited and have not been a priority in many parts of the world, Kenya included. There is a special need for childcare in the media industry since initiatives in India and South Africa have shown positive results.

With regard to the sexual harassment policy, in an interview carried out during the study, one respondent suggested that the media houses should put in place an external body to deal with this issue rather than the human resource since they felt that this department was compromised and deliver sound judgment.

#### 4.10.1 Policy awareness

After assessing the policies and practices in promoting gender balance and sensitivity, the researcher further investigated whether respondent were aware of any policies that existed in the in respective media houses. Fifty percent (50%) said they were not aware of any gender policy. Only six percent (6%) reported to have knowledge on the existing gender policy as shown in figure 4.6 below.

**Table 4.6: Policies and awareness**

	YES	NO
a) A gender policy	6%	50%
b) A sexual harassment policy	28%	40%

From the observations made on table above, forty percent (40%) were not aware that a sexual harassment policy existed compared to twenty eight percent (28%) who said they were conversant with the policy. This means that for most of the respondents in the current study, the concept of gender and sexual harassment as a policy issue is quite unfamiliar. Hence they were not in a position to have a strong opinion about it. Ideally, the fact that few women are aware of the policies is expected to be a motivation for them to disseminate their scholarly output to address the challenges and support fellow women. However, the findings from this study indicate that fewer women are actively engaged in leadership roles where such issues are discussed as seen earlier. The study revealed that having policies do not automatically translate to participation given that women's role in leadership was relatively low as compared to men. In addition the fact that a significant number did not know of their existence means that implementation has failed.

#### **4.11 Overcoming the Challenge: The Way Forward**

Respondents were asked to give their opinions on the best way forward to overcoming challenges facing women media practitioners. Majority indicated the need to increase the number of women in decision-making positions through a comprehensive gender policy. It was clear that even those who were aware of existing policies reported that implementation of the existing policies is still a work in progress. Other strong suggestions included; stop harassing women their workplace; equal opportunities for women and men; a policy that takes cognisance of family responsibilities for women; sensitize people realise that women in leadership positions are not a liability. As one respondent pointed out “cease the patriarchal nature of thinking of women incapable of performing some chores” undoubtedly explains how culture still plays part in the media and women roles. Moreover, a good number expressed the need for concerted efforts to balance gender at the management level by allowing competition for top positions.

Sexual harassment as a critical issue of concern needs to be addressed immediately. Suggestions raised were as follows: that the top management needs to be sensitive on matters of sexual harassment by involving an alternative institution/ referral rather than human resource in dealing with harassment issues. Putting in place a non-discriminative open hiring system, to resolve the challenge that often could be behind the low representation across departments as seen earlier is important.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents summary of study findings, conclusions drawn, recommendations based on the conclusions and suggestions for further research.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Findings

The study had two objectives; to determine the challenges facing women media practitioners in Kenya; and identify how these challenges can be overcome.

The study established that:

##### General findings

- i. **Men are predominant employees in the media houses in Kenya.** A quick survey revealed that men are more than women at the ratio of 2.5:1 in all the media houses. Men dominate the editorial, production and technical departments. Women in management in the respective media houses are at thirty percent (30%). Women in Boards of the media houses are at twenty percent (20%).
- ii. **Women face gender related challenges in the media sector.** Fifty nine percent (59%) of the respondents indicated that women and men are not treated equally stating that the men received more privileges in the media sector. Eighty four percent (84%) of the respondents indicated that women face gender related challenges to their career advancement in media. Across the board, numerous genders related challenges were exemplified by the respondents.



- iii. **Gender awareness in the media not known.** Respondents felt that it was important to have in house trainings to create gender awareness in the media houses and to create a forum for discussion of gender related concerns in the media house. Gender remains a relatively new concept in the media sector.

### **Specific Findings**

- i. **Sexual harassment is of serious concern.** Eighty six point five percent (86.5%) of the respondents indicated that there is sexual harassment in their workplace. This was explained to be prevalent during promotions to leadership and decision making positions, with women indicating that sometimes to attain such positions they had to give in to sexual favours.
- ii. **Women media practitioners are rarely given decision making roles.** Men colleagues make most decisions in the media. Increasing women in decision making positions would change the patriarchal attitude rooted in the media houses. Women reporters bring a new perspective to the media creation.
- iii. **Child care policy and facilities.** Respondents felt that child care was not a priority for the media houses and this indeed affects many women who have to balance family and work. Fifty two percent (52%) felt it should be made a priority because when women were nursing at home, men were left to advance in their career.
- iv. **Journalist not aware of organizational policies in place in their respective organizations.** While the human resource department stated that Gender policy and sexual harassment policies were in place, most respondents had no idea of their existence or content. Only six percent (6%) knew of an existing

gender policy while only twenty eight percent (28%) had knowledge of an existing sexual harassment policy in all the media houses.

- v. **Gender division of labour.** It was indicated that some positions, duties were specifically allocated to men in the media houses. It is assumed that women cannot do some duties effectively.
- vi. **Corporate culture does not support women's participation and career advancement.** Seventy percent (70%) alluded to the statement. Some reasons they gave were: rarely promoted; men dominated top positions, patriarchy existed, leadership positions belong to men, and there is discrimination of women. Women are viewed as the weaker sex. Twenty eight percent (28%) indicated that the management was not committed to gender balance and sensitively.

### 5.3 Conclusions

Women face gender related challenges in the media sector. Societal understandings of effective leadership are very gendered and skewed against women. Patriarchy could be blamed for this, it is implicated that women cannot do some duties effectively, an assumption drawn from the findings that some positions and duties were specifically allocated to men in the media houses. This seems to work against women's empowerment. It is a factor for lack of support for women media practitioners and their involvement in leadership and decision-making.

Women face a "dead end" glass ceiling in career advancement in the media sector. Men are taken more seriously; there are no policies to advance women. Men are encouraged to take up senior positions in a way that women are not. Unequal division

of labour is prevalent in the media houses which have contributed to lack of self-esteem, confidence, lack of motivation and ambition to aspire for leadership roles.

Increasing the number of women in the media in leadership positions is very critical. There is need to understand of the role of women in the media, and provision of a clear career path in the media house for them.

Despite the existence of a gender policy in place in each media house, there is indication of little or no formal advocacy initiatives to ensure opportunities in employment, training and advancement are given to both women and men equally.

Adequate institutional facilitating conditions for instance; strong corporate cultures, form the key obstacles of promoting gender equality in the media industry.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Recommendations made in this section have been derived from the conclusions about the study findings as presented in the previous section and focus on the direct interventions. It is the view of the researcher that the recommended solutions could foster gender equality in the media houses that were involved in the study as well as in other institutions and organizations in Kenya and beyond.

The following recommendations were made based on the findings and the conclusions of the study:

- (i) The principle of gender equality and development needs to be emphasized as a basic requirement for the equal enjoyment of rights and freedoms of women and men in all sectors. Moreover, the need to develop practical approaches to overcome these gender related issues and concerns must be addressed at all

levels in the media industry. Affirmative action policies and programs should be designed to ensure that qualified women have equal access to opportunity and are given a fair chance to contribute their talents and abilities. This will be a solution for a limited period to addressing discrimination and creating equal opportunities.

- (ii) Key stakeholders such as women's advocacy groups, media professional organizations, college and university journalism departments should prioritize these concerns and develop clear and practical plans to address the gender disparities in the media houses. Media houses should hold forums with all its workers to sensitize them and to have their input on reviewing the existing policies if there are issues which have not been addressed. Strategies should be developed to ensure monitored implementation of the gender policy and sexual harassment policy is adhered to in all the media houses.
- (iii) Strengthening the corporate culture and management to develop a strong gender sensitization and mainstreaming training of media houses to ensure equal participation in decision-making process is very critical. The management should facilitate leadership training for women's empowerment. . The management should spear head the development of gender responsive policies will ensure that hiring/recruitment, promotion, division of labour is cleared of any discrimination. This in return will see more qualified women compete for the positions and more women in leadership positions.
- (iv) The media industry needs to create an enabling work environment for women that will provide them with morale to compete with their male counterparts for higher positions.

- (v) Overall, the Kenyan Government must steer its mandate of women empowerment and gender mainstreaming into all Government policies, plans and programs to ensure that the needs and interests of women are addressed in line with the constitutional provisions. This will go a long way in ensuring that women will be represented in all decision-making positions in various sectors including the media sector.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

The scope and limitations of this study as noted in Chapter One of this study provides several opportunities for further research using other research tools in a wider scope. The researcher highly recommends key areas as follow up to the current study. The following suggestions were made after research findings and discussions:

- (i) A Similar study within government institutions and higher learning institutions including private universities and other public tertiary learning institutes within Kenya and beyond are recommended for comparative results.
- (ii) A study to investigate sexual harassment and women's promotion.
- (iii) Among other findings, this study established that corporate culture does not support women's participation and career advancement. It can be of great value to establish how organizational structure and culture influences women in leadership positions.
- (iv) Specific case studies are recommended for institutional establishment of training needs to enhance effective women's participation in leadership and decision making roles.

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## APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MEDIA PRACTITIONERS

Dear Respondent,

Thank you for accepting to answer these questions. This questionnaire is to help the researcher gather some information on your experiences as a woman in the media industry. You do not need to write your name anywhere on this sheet. The information you give will be treated confidentially. Please answer all the questions in the spaces provided.

### SECTION A: TRAINING AND LEVEL OF EDUCATION

- Kindly indicate the following:
  - Level of Education \_\_\_\_\_
  - Professional Training in Media \_\_\_\_\_
- Does your level of education affect your work in media?
  - Yes (     ) No (     )

Briefly explain

\_\_\_\_\_

- Does your Professional Training in Media have any influence your work?
  - Yes (     ) No (     )

Briefly explain

\_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION B: CAREER ADVANCEMENT, CONDITIONS OF WORK AND**

**WORK ENVIRONMENT**

i. Kindly indicate the following:

o Position in Your Organization \_\_\_\_\_

ii. How would you describe the conditions under which women rise of women to key positions in your organization?

Excellent ( ) Good ( ) Fair ( ) Poor ( )

Briefly explain

\_\_\_\_\_

iii. Are there gender disparities in relation to career advancement in your organization?

Yes ( ) No ( )

Briefly explain \_\_\_\_\_

iv. Is the corporate culture supportive of women's participation and advancement

Yes ( ) No ( )

Briefly explain-----

v). Are there other challenges you or other women media practitioners experience in relation to career advancement in your organization?

Yes ( ) No ( )

Briefly explain \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond to the statements below concerning the work environment.

	Agree	Disagree
a) Women and men are treated equally.		
b) Sexist language is not tolerated.		
c) There is a high level of sexual harassment.		
d) Most of the decisions get taken at the pub where men predominate.		
e) Women are not made to feel welcome		
f) Men are not made to feel welcome.		
g) The organisation is sensitive to and tries to accommodate family life and responsibilities by women and men.		

vi). Are there flexible working arrangements in your organisation?

Yes ( ) No ( )

Briefly explain -----

**SECTION C: LEADERSHIP AND DECISION MAKING**

i. Kindly indicate the following:

- o Your Role/duties in your Organization \_\_\_\_\_
- o Leadership position \_\_\_\_\_

ii. How often are you assigned leadership roles in your organization?

Quite often ( ) Rarely ( ) Not at all ( )

iii. How often do you make decisions in your organization?

Quite often ( ) Rarely ( ) Not at all ( )

iv. Have you experienced/ noticed gender disparities in relation to leadership and decision making in your organization?

Yes ( ) No ( )

Briefly explain-----

v. How would you describe the conditions under which women rise/get promoted in your organization?

Excellent ( ) Good ( ) Fair ( ) Poor ( )

Briefly explain

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vi. Are there gender disparities in relation to decision making in your organization?

Yes ( ) No ( )

Briefly explain

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**SECTION D: PORTRAYAL AND GIVING PROMINENCE TO GENDER**

**ISSUES**

What is your response to the following statements with regard to how male and female managers are regarded by their colleagues in the media house:

	Agree	Disagree
a) Women managers are more respected by women than men.		
b) Women managers are more respected by men than women.		
c) Women managers are respected by women and men.		
d) Men managers are more respected by women than men.		
e) Men managers are more respected by men than women.		
f) Men managers are respected by women and men.		

ii). How would you rate the commitment of management to gender balance and sensitivity in the media house:

- i) Excellent ii) Good iii) Fair iv) Poor

What is your view on quotas for increasing women’s representation in the media

(choose one answer only):

a) Quotas are unfair; women must compete with men on the same terms.	
b) Quotas are a fair way of addressing the current imbalance.	
c) Quotas should only be for a limited time.	
d) Both b and c.	
e) None of the above.	

What policies and practices need to be put in place in your media house to promote gender balance and sensitivity? Choose the three you regard as most important:

a) Affirmative action policy	
b) Flexi time	
c) Child care policy and facilities	
d) Sexual harassment policy	
e) Maternity leave	
f) Paternity leave	
g) A gender forum where gender issues are openly discussed	
h) An overall gender policy	
i) Other	

1. Are you aware of the following in your media house

	YES	NO
a) A gender policy		
b) A sexual harassment policy		
c) Any other policy that addresses gender issues.		

**SECTION E: WAY FORWARD**

How do you think the challenges facing women media practitioners in Kenya can be overcome? -----



## APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- Interviewee records the following:
  - Level of Education \_\_\_\_\_
  - Professional Training in Media \_\_\_\_\_
  - Your Role/duties in your Organization \_\_\_\_\_
  - Leadership position \_\_\_\_\_
  - Current Position in Organization \_\_\_\_\_

### Questions

1. Briefly tell me about your background.
2. What have been some of the key challenges you have faced and how have you dealt with them?
3. What have some of the highlights of your career?
4. Do the women and men in the media sector treat you differently?
5. Do women and men in the media get equal opportunities to develop their career?
6. Does training and level of education affect career advancement in the media sector?
7. How have you tried to make your media house more gender aware/sensitive?
8. Do more women in media change the way content is handled?
9. What strategies can be used to ensure that there are more women represented in decision-making positions in the media sector?
10. What is your definition of gender equality in the media sector?