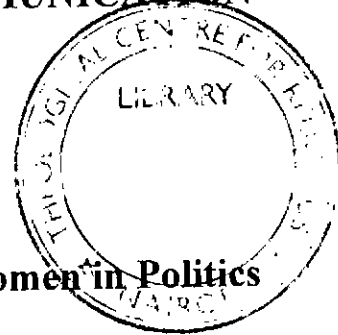


TANGAZA COLLEGE

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATION



Media's Portrayal of Chadian Women in Politics

By

Guidimbaye Rémadji Germaine

Supervisor

Dr. Zacharia W. Samita

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of a
Bachelor in Social Communication

NAIROBI 2009

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this work is my original work, achieved through my personal reading, scientific research and critical reflection. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor in Social Communication. It has never been submitted to any other College or University for academic credit. All sources of information have been acknowledged and cited in full as demanded.

NAME: Guidimbaye Remadji Germaine

SIGNATURE: 

DATE: 15th June 2009



This work has been submitted with my approval as the college supervisor

NAME: Dr. Zacharia Wanakacha Samita

SIGNATURE: 

DATE: 15th June 2009

DEDICATION

I whole-heartedly dedicate this work to all women who are undergoing pains, sufferings in public spheres in their society and their voices are hardly heard.

To all feminists who work for the improvement of women situations concerning decision making in today's society in order to bring up the respect of women in their society.

To all non-governmental organizations whose work focuses on women issues in the world.

To the Religious of Sacred Heart who are working in the lines of promoting women gender and rights in Africa, especially in Chad.

To the Catholic Church in Chad which with different services is trying to improve the role of women in Chadian society in different domains.

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General Introduction

0.1 Introduction

Worldwide, especially in Africa and in many domains, women face numerous obstacles to achieving sound and fulfilled lives. They are seen as objects for men's pleasure. In most communities, they are considered as weak beings. They are voiceless and less consulted in decision-making. They are oppressed and denied their rights, for example, the right to education. This has adversely affected the participation of women in politics. In terms of political participation, women are hardly anywhere to be seen equal to men. However, the concept of politics as it is understood in most contemporary societies derives from the exercise of power in the public realm. Therefore, individual and group involvement constitute the essence of political activity. Moreover, all over the world, the public political domain for many centuries has been and continues to be defined and controlled by men. Concerned about the absence of women from established political structures, many scholars have tried to account for this phenomenon. Many in Western societies have referred this to the forces of patriarchy, capitalism and industrialization that have kept women out of the public sphere, confining their work to the family and to the low prestige occupations.¹ Those who focused on the socialist world argue that Marx was wrong in assuming that women would achieve political equality with men when the means of production were owned collectively. As long as nations continue oppressive traditions and pursue policies aimed at keeping women primarily responsible for the family, gender equality in political and other spheres will not be achieved.²

¹ Cf. Schlegal 1977, Friedel 1975, and Leacock 1972: (<http://www.yle.fi/gender>) 11.10.2008

² Cf. Miller 1981 and Jancar 1978: (<http://www.yle.fi/gender>) 11.10.2008

In Chad, men dominate in government, the military, and public life. Political life is almost exclusively the domain of men. The pastoral economy and commercial farming are dominated by men as well. Women do the main work in the rural subsistence economy across the country, handling family responsibilities and household tasks, including child care. They also care for small livestock, tend family gardens, and are involved in the small-scale trade of agricultural surpluses. Women are not significantly organized in public associations. Men are seen to be above women. This, however, is related to conceptions about religious roles and public functions, and somehow to the ideas of inherent inferiority. There are some differences across the country's regional or ethnic groups as to roles of men and women in social and religious duties. But in practice, women are economically active and freely move about in most spheres of life, although the northern Islamic groups are more conservative than the Southerners and city people. The new constitution of 1996 accords many more rights to women, though practice lags behind.

Media has great influence on women, portraying negatively or positively their image to the society. Indeed, “the media has power to produce and construct information in a way that it promotes certain perceptions about an individual or an issue”³. Media is central and useful in influencing public behaviour, policy decisions, culture and society where it informs and educates people about important social issues. In that line, instead of focusing on those issues, media disseminate information of stereotypes and gender discrimination against women. As such, women are taken as consumers of media rather than users and initiators of media.

³ VATICAN CITY, JAN. 24, 2008 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org))

The purpose of this thesis is to look at what part gender plays in the representation of politicians in the media. It seeks to provide an overview of female and male politicians' representation. The project addresses questions such as the following: Do female politicians and male politicians get an equal treatment in the media? Are the media neutral in their portrayal of politicians regarding gender, or are they circulating gender stereotypes?

Initially, quality in the context of gendered representation may be defined as the aim to reflect diverse social reality in programme content and to contribute to a better world. The media, after all, are among the main if not the most important institutions that can change attitudes regarding gender and raise awareness about gender issues. Thus, the media currently constitute the real public space through which citizens understand political issues. If the media articulate the political issues, then the ways in which women and men are portrayed, their access to media, and their visibility as political agents in the media certainly matter.

The media represent not only a potential cure for gender inequality in society and politics but also a source of this gender "sickness". For instance, the paucity of women in decision-making roles is connected to the deficiencies in women's representation in media content, in particular female politicians. In 1995 in the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, media were requested to develop strategies to increase women's participation in decision-making through promoting a less stereotyped image of women and offering equal access to media. Media constitute a major source of the information that people use to shape their conceptions of self, others and the world. According to media interpretation, women are seen to belong to family life and men are seen as political agents in the social world. Those who depart from such roles may be stigmatized, excluded, or their actions rendered invisible. However, to change this current

gender-based division in relation to public and private life is to change media definitions that place men at the centre of political activity and marginalize women's perspectives and agenda.

This study deals with women in politics and the role of media in portraying them. Chadian women are our case study. The motivation for this topic is to bring out the major factors of culture and media underlying women's access to political activities in our society, especially in the context of African society. It proceeds to seek how media can effectively promote women's rights and access to political participation.

The work is divided into three chapters. In the first chapter, we discuss the social and cultural background of the topic and literature review. It deals with the effects of culture on women and media presentation of women in the society, in the African context. Chapter Two handles data collected during research through, among others, field research, email and phone. The information revolves more around women's access to political participation and the role of media in affecting positively or negatively women image in the society. Chapter Three focuses on the theory and strategies of media to promote women in politics.

0.2 Background of the Locality

Chad is ethnically a vast diverse African country. It gained its independence from France in 1960 after sixty years of colonial rule that did not create meaningful national cohesion. Within the country, national cultures are based on ethnoregional and religious affiliations. Many of the

cultures can be traced back to a complex of pre-colonial history of competing indigenous states and sultanates.⁴

The name Chad is linked to the great Lake Chad by the Sixteenth Century author and Imam Ibn Forut⁵. The postcolonial Chad has been marked by deep regional ethnic divisions and a violent history of struggle for power among the various elites that have divergent interests and visions of the country. Chad is a landlocked country bordered by the Sudan in East; Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon in West; the Central Africa in the South and Libya in the North. It has an area of 1,284,000 square kilometers. Most of it is desert, especially the North; semi desert in its central part and Savannah to the South. The South is characterized by lush forest and agricultural area.

The population of Chad is seven million. There are an estimated number of 180 ethnic groups, majority being Sara. More than a hundred languages are spoken in Chad. However, Sara, Arabic and French are widely spoken as national languages. The latter is used in education and administration. Arabic is used as a commercial language across the country.

Chad did not exist as a political unit before the French conquest of 1900, but was an area of important indigenous state formation. It had seen Arab immigration of groups collectively called Djoheina and Hassaouna, and Islamization since the fourteenth century. There was a conglomerate of kingdoms such as Bagirmi and the pre-Islamic state of Kanem-Bornu, sultanates such as Ouaddaï and Tama of varying size and ethnic composition.⁶ Amongst these states, war

⁴ Cf. Ramadji, National Anthem Chad, My Country, Chad, 2006 Publications

⁵ Cf. Ramadji, National Anthem Chad, My Country, Chad, 2006 Publications

⁶ Cf. Ramadji, National Anthem Chad, My Country, Chad, 2006 Publications

and raiding were frequent. The descendants of these states in the North and East are today called seminomadic pastoralists and cultivators in the Northern and Central parts of the country.

In the first decade of Chadian independence, the northerners also remained relatively excluded from national politics. Northerners have had the upper hand in Chadian politics since 1979. Before colonization, the "North-South" divide, so often referred to now, was nonexistent in Chad. In 1960, when independence was granted by France, Chad had no "national identity" recognizable to the population at large. Ethnoregional traditions formed the framework for group identification, with the "nation" only as an abstract concept⁷. Southerners who were the first to claim for independence, formed the state elite, but they did not succeed in building a representative or democratic political system. Rebellion in northern regions emerged, notably that of the FROLINAT (National Liberation Front) movement in 1966. The civil wars of the 1970s and 1980s, though resulting from exclusionist state policies, authoritarianism, and divergent views on the role of the state, fueled group tensions.⁸ However, despite these divisive conflicts and the opposition between the North and the South, there was no great desire on either side to split up the country and go it alone.

There is a basic, unsolvable contradiction between the identity and aspirations of the South and those of the North, although both regions have their internal divisions as well. In the late 1960s, when the Southerner N'Garta Tombalbaye François was president, there was an effort by his government to create cultural "unity" between the various groups of the South vis-à-vis the North. This was done by making it obligatory for all people holding public office, at some point

⁷ Cf. Ramadji, National Anthem Chad, My Country, Chad, 2006 Publications

⁸ Cf. Ramadji, National Anthem Chad, My Country, Chad, 2006 Publications

even Muslims to undergo an initiation ritual based on the Sara ethnic tradition. This cultural practice, which can also perhaps be called cultural revolution, became a violent and intimidating exercise that completely failed and even antagonized many Southerners. During the regime of Hissein Habré from 1982 to 1990, there was suppression and terror in the South, perpetrated by Northern who dominated government forces. This created the fear that Southern rights and identity would be trampled. There is often talk of a "superiority complex" of Northern people vis-à-vis the South.

One of the domains where the North-South tension is now becoming apparent is education, where the government is urged to further Islamic orientation. While Chad is still a "secular state," the rivalry between the faiths and the strengthening of Islam in public life may become another threat to long-term stability.

Group relations in Chad have suffered from the burden of longtime slave raiding and communal political violence. People with no particular affinity toward each other are bound together in a state that was largely externally created and not the outcome of local political processes. There is therefore a continuous challenge to create patterns of cooperation and a durable society in the midst of regional and ethnic antagonism. Violent insurgency and rebellion were recently the prime means used to establish political power of one group over the others. However, the long-term problems of Chad may be as serious as those of Sudan. This is because some groups do not feel deeply committed to the nation as a whole, as partners in the venture of developing an inclusive polity. The Sara, initially dominant, are now a disenchanting group because they see their rights and identity being threatened.

It is likely that ethnic relations in Chad will benefit from a decentralization of the political structure that retains unity in diversity, only when the rights and regional interests of the various ethnic groups are respected.

0.3 Political System in Chad

From the time of independence, Chad had a variety of governments. None of them was successful in establishing an inclusive system of governance for the various population groups. In 1960, Chad started out as a multiparty parliamentary republic. Two years later, the late president N'Garta Tombalbaye Francois, a Southerner, dismantled this system to install a one-party state. His authoritarian and repressive policies, combined with a compulsory cultural revolution, provoked dissatisfaction in the South and revolts in the North, including one by the National Liberation Front (FROLINAT), founded in 1966.

In a 1975 coup, Tombalbaye was killed and General Félix Malloum took over. He did not stem the tide of revolt. Ultimately, he was forced out of office in 1979 by FROLINAT, led by Goukouni Oueddei and Hissen Habré. In 1982, after three years of social unrest and armed struggle led by local warlords, President Oueddei was replaced as head of the government by his former comrade Habré, who was supported by France because of his campaign to kick the Libyans out of Chad because they were supporting Oueddei. A period of repression and abuse followed. From there, Idriss Deby took over the power by coup d'état.

Under the regime of Déby, which took over in 1990, an effort was made to set up a new type of republican government, with all the trappings of a democratic system. A two-chamber parliament consisting of the National Assembly and the Senate was set up. A High Court and a Constitutional Court were also installed. More political parties were allowed. Freedom of the press and of organization was accorded. Multiparty elections were promised. At the same time,

there was never any doubt that Déby would maintain a tight hold on the reigns of power. Suppression of occasional insurgencies and massacres by government forces of members of suspected opposition groups have marred the transition to a secure democratic political system. Nevertheless, the groundwork for democratic institutions was laid. There is still a possibility that a better system of inclusive governance may entrench itself.

In Chad's political system, force of arms in general has played a crucial role in establishing power. Violence is the chief political means to deal with Chadian politics. The only president ever voted was the first one, Tombalbaye.. Chad has never had a real national army that was independent of political struggles and insurgent movements.

0.4 Background of the Thesis

Gender issue about equality has affected and contributed in shaping the media content in our society. Indeed, “The power of media to make and unmake the image of women, to hasten or retard the progress of women in society cannot be denied or underestimated”⁹. The roles of African women have undergone a fundamental change to increase their participation in political, social and economic sectors of society but the media seem to ignore or distort these significant events of our today’s society. As an African woman, I feel very embarrassed when women are shown by the media half-dressed for advertisements and represented as incompetent and inferior to men especially in terms of making news for the society. Media influence very much real life experiences of women. The media portray women and issues affecting them in a negative manner as if women cannot be part of normal society.

⁹ Cf. Ogundipe Leslie M, *The Image of Women and the Role of Media in a New Political Culture in Nigeria*, 1980

0.5 Abstract

The researcher believes that women are amongst the most unrecognized and underutilized groups of the Chadian society and worldwide. The purpose of the research was to gather qualitative data on the views of women in politics about their leadership role in politics. The researcher wishes to encourage some amendments in politics to accommodate female leadership in political structures. This work provides information about political and cultural situation in Chad. The work is using questions and interviews to find out how women are under-represented in leadership structures and in public spheres by the society and through media.

The study was confined to women in Chad and included essentially females. They were randomly picked from town some from different parishes of the locality.

Primary data was collected by the use of questionnaires and was analyzed, interpreted using frequencies and percentages. The results of open-ended questionnaires were reported in summary form. Secondary data was by email, phone and interviews from related places.

The research findings indicated that most of the women in Chad are in touch with the media. Though educated, they are still victims of traditional culture especially in making decisions, especially within a group of men.

On the basis of the findings, the researcher concluded that women are the most affected victims of traditional practices which are the barriers to their access to politics and public spheres in Chad. Some have access to leadership and are on the forefront in the country as portrayed by the media. This is especially so by radio. However, there is still need to work hard in Chadian society to improve women's empowerment through media.

0.6 Statement of the Problem

The study seeks to address the apparent subservient position of women in politics and society. Women are endowed with diverse gifts which could be responsibly utilized in today's society. Their role in leadership structures does not seem to come out lucidly. Men are often in the public domain and limelight, resolving diverse life problems confronting the family, clan, community and society. Women generally appear as subordinates, with little no say altogether on pertinent issues facing society. What explains this apparent disparity? Culturally, some people have taken a stance that, "It would be difficult for men and women to work together in leadership positions." Is this stance predominant? Have men internalized prejudices against women? In many societies, it is probably true that women are regarded to be householders and objects for their husbands. They are confined usually to the kitchen and generally lack education on their freedom and rights. Could this explain their generally aforementioned subservient position? Education is very critical in cultivating positive values that may shape development trends in the society and fight against poverty. The impact of traditional culture often bears heavily on women in the society. Most leadership opportunities usually go to men. In part, this could be because of their critical future responsibility in the society. What are their status in the process of making decisions, even those concerning about their own lives? If women were to be given equal recognition in their society, would their involvement in politics differ because they have comparative lower education levels?

The researcher feels that women are undermined in leadership, especially in politics through media coverage about politicians. Need arises to particularly investigate this apparent phenomenon, establish factors underlying media coverage that affect women in politics and public spheres. It seeks to examine the role of media in promoting women gender.

0.7 Objectives of the Project

The objectives of this research project:

1. Examine the representation of women in politics and society in general.
2. Discuss the role women play in politics.
3. Establish the role women play in media.
4. Identify how media portray women in politics.
5. Recommend ways to inspire media's portrayal of women in politics positively.

0.8 Hypothesis

1. Women are under represented in politics and in society in general.
2. Women play a crucial role in accomplishing political work.
3. Women have positive roles to play in the media.
4. Media have in general negatively covered women in political issues.
5. The government and stakeholders have a big role in empowering women through media agenda setting.

0.9 Significance of the Project

This study will complement the existing literature about gender stereotypes in media. It will contribute to efforts made by scholars, gender activists and organizations working for women such as those on women's rights and violence against women towards the fight for women empowerment, recognition and dignity. It will also give another perspective about women covered in politics and especially will encourage Chadian women who will want to embrace politics and be exposed to public spheres when dealing with decision making. This study will also serve to further research in related areas of study.

0.10 Scope of the Study

The study deals with how media portrays women in politics. In particular, the study examines the under-representation of women in politics as well as their negative portrayal in the media and society. The study looks at the representation of women in public spheres in order to determine gender inequality. It also discusses stereotypes and portrayal of women as objects for commercial purposes.

0.11 Limitations

The researcher encountered some challenges in the field research. One such challenge was to get respondents to fill the questionnaires and give them back right away. We lost many respondents who complained that they could not get time to sit and fill the questionnaires. Some respondents who were to be interviewed face to face were reluctant, afraid to be quoted in case of political victimization. But we assured them of anonymity and confidentiality of their information. The research was faced with time constraints. There were also difficulties in getting information about women in politics portrayed by the media. All in all, these limitations were overcome.

0.12 Definitions of Terms

Media: a means of communication such as radio, television, newspapers, magazines, Internet, phones that reach or influence people widely. This refers to the tools used to store or deliver information or data.

Portrayal: it is an act or process of depicting a representation or description by picture of a person's appearance and character. This is a process of dramatically representing the character by speech, action and gesture of a person through media.

Women: these are the adult female human beings who are considered to belong to a specified occupation or group. They are also considered to be servant or subordinate, wives or householders. They are associated with qualities such tenderness or maternalism.

Politics: "Politics" comes from the Greek word "polis" which means State or City from which the adjectives "Politikos" which describes anything concerning the State or city affairs¹⁰. However, politics are activities or affairs which are engaged by a government, a politician or a political party as well as people. It is a process by which groups of people make decisions. The term politics is generally applied to behaviour within civil governments but it has also been observed in all human group interactions. It consists of social relations involving authority or power.

¹⁰ wikipedia, free encyclopedia

Chapter One: Women and the Media

I.1 Sociological Analysis of the Topic

I.1.0 Introduction

Worldwide, women are considered by the society to be inferior, largely as a result of the effect of culture. In African cultural context, the conception about women as inferior to men is too much accentuated. On the other hand, media also contribute greatly to this influence by the way women are portrayed in their societies. Media have power to not only set agenda but also be influenced by the norms and the culture of the societies which affirm that women are meant to be subservient. That is why women are generally practically absent in critical decision making processes, particularly in society's public spheres. This chapter deals with culture and the portrayal of women through media. It does so by looking at the context of Chadian women in politics and the media.

I.1.1 Culture

The term culture is derived from the Latin *cultivare* which means to till the land.¹¹ Generally, culture refers to patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activities significance and importance. In anthropology, culture includes patterns of behavior and thinking that people living in social groups learn, create and share. Culture distinguishes one human group from others. It also distinguishes human beings from animals. A people's culture comprise their beliefs, behavioral patterns, language, rituals, art and technology, styles of dress, ways of

¹¹ Cf. Harper Douglas Edition, *Online Etymology Dictionary*, 2001

producing and cooking food and religion. Culture is also the most important concept in anthropology. It is the study of all aspects of human life in the past and in the present. Anthropologists commonly use the term culture to refer to a society or group in which many or all people live and think in similar ways. They also refer to culture to the universal human capacity to classify, codify and communicate their experiences materially and symbolically.¹² Therefore, any group of people which shares a common culture, common rules of behavior and a basic form of social organization constitutes a society. Thus, culture and society are somewhat interchangeable. The ability of people to have culture comes in large part from their physical features, for example, having big and complex brains. Culture is defined as all the ways of life including arts, beliefs, and institutions of a population that is transmitted from generation to generation. It has been called the way of life for entire society.¹³ It is the way people deal with things and relate to each other in their society. Culture is internally affected by both forces encouraging change and forces resisting change. These forces are related to both social and natural events. They are involved in perpetuating cultural ideas and practices within the current structure which themselves are subject to change.¹⁴ Social conflict and the development of technologies can produce changes within a society by altering social dynamics and promoting new cultural models or enabling generative actions.

For example, feminism in the United States of America (USA) involved new practices that produced a shift in gender relations, altering both gender and economic structures.¹⁵ Culture also

¹² Cf. J. Goodall, *The Chimpanzees of Gombe: Patterns of Behavior*, 1986, 130

¹³ Cf. Raymond Williams; *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, 1976, New York, 87-93

¹⁴ Cf. D. O'Neil, *Process of Change*, London, 2006

¹⁵ Cf. H. Pringle, *The Slow Birth of Agriculture*, New York 1998

deals with imbalances of power distribution among females and males. It is based on symbols of sharing and learning to understand ideas, objects, feelings and behaviors. It also understands the ability to communicate symbols by using language.

Culture is socially inherited where people adjust to change in the world around them. People in the society organize themselves in relation to one another for work and other duties and structure their interactions.¹⁶

People are not born with culture but they have to learn it. For instance, people must learn to speak and understand a language and abide by the norms of a society. For example, in all human societies, children learn culture from adults as a process of cultural transmission. People continue to learn throughout their lifetime. Thus, most societies respect their elders, who have learned for an entire lifetime. People living together in a society share culture. All the people of a society collectively create and maintain culture. Societies preserve culture for much longer than the life of any one person. They preserve it in form of knowledge such as scientific discoveries in objects such as works of art, and in traditions.

People commonly in the society organize themselves in relation to the structure of their interaction, according to bonds by kinship and marriage, work duties and economic position, and political position. Important factors in family, work, and political relations include age and gender, especially roles associated with men and women.

However, groups of people living in small societies with shared aim in the villages of Chad have no formal leadership. All people have input in making group decisions. Most decision-making

¹⁶ Cf. Encarta Encyclopedia 2002

process in clans occurs within households. Occasionally, most or all members of lineages or clans convene to make important village decisions. Such relate to dealing with neighboring clans. Descent groups may also regulate access to crucial resources such as favored hunting areas, and choices on where people could live.

In African societies, most men are socialized into positions of leadership. They are known as rulers of the society. In the past, leaders were the first in the societies to have defined positions of permanent leadership. This still persists in some African societies under national governments.

Today, states have distinct social and economic classes. Higher classes have greater political influence or power than do lower classes.

Subjective truth forms our perception of reality when regarding people, cultures, religion, or any other differentiating factor. This is through the male gender-perception of women. Possibly, structures which govern our perspective and control how we perceive the other are an integral part of every culture, gender, religion, and community. In fact, they are directly responsible for our ability to believe the seemingly unbelievable about others. For example, men have subjected women to a 'reality' that tells them they are inferior of mind and body, they are unable to engage in the kinds of activities that men can , and that their contributions to the world can only be in motherhood and as wives. This, of course, is a subjective truth turned reality for the males of the culture. It is only recently that women have had enough of a voice to be able to start changing that subjective reality to demonstrate that such reality is not the case. David M. Butterfly depicts

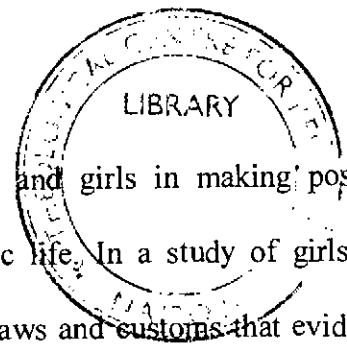
the kind of influence that the archetypal structures of community perception (this is gender perception of women through men) has over a woman's life¹⁷.

1.1.2 Gender Socialization

Socialization seen as appropriate to feminine behaviour makes women less able to pursue traditionally defined political activities. Many women are meant by the society to understand that motherhood is the primary role of women, that domestic role is preferable to public jobs for a woman. They are also made to believe that traits associated with political efficacy including ambition, aggression, competitiveness, authority are not feminine. Men become well prepared for political activities. For women who achieve positions of power, the expectations of appropriate feminine behaviour conflicts with qualities required to carry on their responsibilities in politics. However, current stereotypes in general suggest that feminine women are passive, dependent, domestic, engaged in meeting private familial needs. On the other hand, women who go into politics are often active, autonomous, public oriented, engaged in meeting collective and not personal needs. In spite of this, women are hard working creatures. They work double in a day. This could interfere with most of their public services. The most difficult problem is that not only have women to deal with a double workday, but they also often do not have power over when to be available and when the family obligations will interfere with their political pursuits. It is proper to posit that in so far as political participation requires time, resources, and control over them, capitalist and masculinist conditions make women's participation in politics very difficult.

¹⁷ Cf. Encarta Encyclopedia 2002

I.1.3 *Traditional Culture vis-à-vis Women in the Society*



The traditional cultures pose enormous challenges to women and girls in making positive changes about their lives through active participation in public life. In a study of girls and education in Nairobi, Banda found out that man has instituted laws and customs that evidently create and index status of discrepancy between men and women¹⁸. In this case, gender is seen as a natural difference. For Banda, laws and customs create and enforce some set of social distinction between women and men in varied societies. Men benefit more from the set of laws and customs because they are the ones in control to set them. According to a FAWE document¹⁹ entitled “Girls Education: An Agenda for Change”, in Africa or elsewhere, education has underlined differences rather than similarities between men and women. However, this difference starts from home, from communities and villages where girls’ education is seen as different from that one of boys. In fact, societies believe that men are more intelligent, responsible, capable and more important than women in a society. Moreover, women in the community have a big part or role to play. In the community or in the family, women are economically active. They are more stable than men in spite of their immense labour. Traditionally, women are supposed to produce food. They nurture or cater for children at home. They care about the health of the family, collecting firewood and fetching water. In one word, they are householders. They do not make decisions in the family or in the community. Traditionally, culture taught women to be serviceable and submissive to men. They are thought to be in a position of inferiority.

¹⁸ Cf. C. Banda, *Gender and Education, A Justification Sensitivity in Education*, Nairobi CUEA, 1997

¹⁹ Cf. FAWE: *Forum for African Women Educationist*, Magazine, 1998, 3

In Chadian society, girls and women do the main work in the rural subsistence economy across the country, handling family responsibilities and household tasks including child care. They care also for livestock, tend family gardens and they are involved in small scale trade of agricultural surpluses. Women are not significantly organized in public services or associations. They are mainly involved in commerce countrywide.

I.2 Literature Review

I.2.1 Media presentation of women

I.2.1.0 Introduction

The media play a vital role in disseminating information. Hence, the use of the term, “fourth estate,” in referring to the press, radio and TV in the political order. They are all-pervasive and their function is very subtle. The impact of the media on our lives is a fact which does not have to be laboured any longer, and all those involved in this complex web dedicated to the spread of information strive to perfect their modes of communications to make them more effective. However, the roles of media are now differentiated so as to go far beyond the mere supply of information. This is because of the outreach and technological sophistication. In fact, this gives the media the power to “create” the reality which is shaped by the entire network of existing social relationships. Therefore, by the gradual shaping of public opinion, personal beliefs and even the way people perceive themselves, the media influence the way in which society develops.

Moreover, this power is concentrated in the hands of a few people whose biases and profit motives operate to bring forward a reality which is often distorted. This is where women's presentation in the media is biased and distorted. Their images are used for advertising the media's products. The power of the media in distorting women's images has influenced women's perception in the society. The media reinforce the lack of women's participation in public spheres in the society though they create a significant awareness about women's issues.

1.2.1.1 Women and the Media

Africa is home to many cultures, traditions and beliefs. On this account, the role of the media as a social constructor and representative of people share responsibility for promoting harmony among cultures and social processes. Media has greater propensity to either exaggerate the culture or to harmonize it for societal benefit. According to Anbarasan (1995), the status of women is undergoing perceptible change. This is partly due to the media's highlighting awareness to fight discrimination²⁰ and by focusing on women's issues. Moreover, today through the media, the role of women in family life has undergone significant changes, though there is still need to improve female images. On the other hand, we cannot deny that through the media, educated housewives or working women have acquired a respectable place in today's society, notwithstanding that they are many times misrepresented in the media. Today, women are increasingly aware that they are really misrepresented by the media and a number of them are trying to fight against the inequality and for their rights in the society. For example, "magazines

²⁰ Cf. P. Abarassan, Publication, New Delhi, 1995

especially women's magazines, carry a lot of information on personal, family and social issues”²¹ concerning women’s struggles.

The lack of the presence of women in media is not of their choice, but on account of the social and religious taboos which operated as legal sanctions. However, it operates today as such in many regions and communities since the constitution and laws are often silent on these issues. Even in those regions and communities where the social and religious taboos can no longer be enforced, poverty, illiteracy, discrimination and male domination keep a vast majority of women away from the print media, even as readers²². According to African culture or belief, women are not allowed to associate with men, especially in public. Also Sawant (1998) noticed that as regards the electronic media, even where the community radio and television are available, either they are crowded out by men, or on account of social inhibitions, women are unable to view or listen. This is the case in Chad where along streets, one can easily notice that electronic media available for public is predominantly surrounded by men and boys who have the privilege to view or listen because women and girls are not supposed to stand in public with men.

This portrays the norms of culture influence. However, today “media has largely come to be confined to the women in the middle and the higher classes, whether in the rural or urban areas, and more particularly in the urban areas, whether as passive consumers or as active players in our society”²³. But we need to underline that most of the time, women are portrayed by the media as passive consumers in the societies.

²¹ Cf. [http// www.media-awareness](http://www.media-awareness), by Anush Chopra, 2008

²² Cf. <http://www.media-awareness> 14.12.08

²³ Cf. [http// www.media-awareness](http://www.media-awareness), by Anush Chopra, 2008

1.2.1.2 *Portrayal of Women in the Media*

Over the years, especially during the last decade, Africa has developed a fairly extensive communication infrastructure. Portrayal of women in media has drawn the attention of media critics. This aroused awareness especially where our society is going through a period of social change. Often, women have been portrayed by media as men would like to see them, for example, as beautiful creatures, submissive mothers of their children, efficient house keepers. This is the effect of the culture that the society has about women and considers them to be. However, they are presented as nothing else that can influence their society positively in terms of participating in social, economic or political change. Therefore, the positive sides of women's progress and their contribution for national development have not been adequately and explicitly discussed in the media. The emphasis on stories about women, about their struggle for recognition is only the surface trimming. The actual message to audience still is that society opposes the liberation of women²⁴. Up to today it is still difficult to convince the society about women as equal to men.

Besides this, R. Akhileshwari (1988, 7) has a scathing attack on the negative aspects of the portrayal of women in Indian mass media. Thus for instance, the image of the educated woman is typecast as arrogant, insensitive, self-centered and strong willed, among others. Further, the economically independent woman is shown as domineering, hard, ruthless and the cause of all the suffering around her. Perhaps the most damaging portrayal of women is in advertisements and commercials²⁵. Women's issues are reflected poorly in the media. For example, African

²⁴ http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/issues/stereotyping/women_and_girls/ 14.12.08

²⁵ R. Akhileshwari, *Portrayal of Women in Print Media*, New Dehli, 1988, 7

television programmes on women are generally based on the lives and cultures of urban society. Most of the time women are covered as source of advertisement. Very few and very poor programmes are concerned with the challenges of women in rural areas. The main reason behind this is that the commercial nature, commercial sponsors and advertisers do not prefer women's issue programmes. They think such programmes are not very popular and/ or are liked by few members of the audience²⁶.

In his publication "how media threatens Indian Women", P. Kumar (1995, 23) felt that media reflect events taking place in society and provide a platform for dialogue and debate on issues which can generate social changes. While electronic media carry more immediate weight on focusing attention on various issues, print media has more persistent and lasting effect. It is felt that the way women are being projected in the print and electronic media is a reflection on the whole society²⁷. Print media dwells too much on the image of women which creates a negative perception about women and its effect affects the entire society's perception about women.

In the coverage on women's issues, about half are related to sex, prostitution, glamour, entertainment and crime. "Women's visibility in the news is still dominated by sensational stories of glamour, sex, domestic violence and other forms of violence. Thus, stories where, for instance, women are coping with adversity or building their lives are largely missing"²⁸. A case in point is Chad, where issues affecting women, their vast experiences in public services and

²⁶Dhar and Pattnaik (1996)" Portrayal of Distorted Image of Women by India Media", *Communicator*, no. 3, 11-13

²⁷ Cf. P. Kumar, *How Media Threats Indian Women*, IMC Publication, 1995 , 23

²⁸ <http://www.media-awareness>. By Anusha Chopra, 2008

their lives are hardly heard in the mainstream media though they work hard for the development and peace in the country.

Likewise, very few informative pieces or feature columns are published for women, informing them about their legal rights, or about their potential for political activity. When women appear in the news, they are mostly projected as passive victims or passive reactors to public events in news media. They hardly appear as speakers or participants in public event. Let us consider in Kenya Martha Karua, Minister for Justice and prospective candidate for presidential elections in 2012. Whenever she appears in the media, her image presented by press is that of a woman who is harsh, clashing with everybody and unable to govern her society. We can notice that the media often portray her as a woman of chaos or a problematic woman for her country. The same is with the first Lady, Mrs. Lucy Kibaki. Most coverage focuses on her combative nature rather than her contribution to society.

Women are likely to be covered by the media when in terms of beauty but when a woman attains a sterling recognition in a professional field: she gets limited coverage. For this, the difference of judgment in women's issues is quite marked in media. It could be the same of the daily newspapers where women's news and their development are rarely covered. Preferred reporting focuses on rape, atrocities, crime, sexual harassment and abuse of women prominently in their columns. For example, one notes that in Sunday and Saturday newspapers, special glossy editions on women's leisure, fashion, beauty and other luxurious news items with erotic

photographs are issued from regularly by daily newspapers²⁹ than other issues pertaining to their social, economic or political development.

Television affects the way women are projected through advertisements in order to make money. And this shows the oppressions of women by men. A social activist comments, "No matter how television producers justify their stand, the fact remains that media influences women the most. All of us have a social responsibility. Since serial makers are ignoring theirs, it is up to the common people to raise their voice against the negative portrayal of women in the so-called family dramas."³⁰ Indeed, stereotype in the media is very much accentuated.

Women are shown as sex objects by the media. Advertisements use the images of women to sell products. Pornographic and violent depictions of women sell films. Media enterprises, rather than promoting social welfare, often are catering for popular tastes in order to make money. Advertisements featuring women in the African society nowadays are often showing women as submissive wives, happily using the products being sold. The aim, without doubting is to show stereotypical direction. For this, we can notice that in media, there is too much focus on housewives and too little attention given to working women.

There is lack of gender sensitivity in media policies and programmes but there is increased promotion of consumerism of media by women. The image of women carried in the media, especially in advertisement very often suggests that what or how women look far transcends what they have to say. Women are seen in the media naturally as docile and weak, in need of

²⁹ Dhar and Pattnaik (1996) "Portrayal of Distorted Image of Women by India Media", Communicator no3, 11-13

³⁰ Cf. <http://www.media-awareness> 14.12.08

care and protection by men. They are covered by media mainly as crying mothers and victims. They are hardly asked about their opinions on critical issues. In our society today, media tend to focus on powerful people, political leaders, the rich and the famous, who live in towns and cities, targeting more the male society. In so doing, they often reinforce stereotypes.

Women professionals continue to be under-represented in news coverage, and are often stereotypically portrayed when they are included. Although there has been an increase in the number of women professionals over the past 20 years, most mainstream press coverage continues to rely on men as experts in the fields of business, politics and economics. For example, in Chad, a research carried by United Nations established that women in public services constitute a total of 25% for the whole country. Women in the news are more likely to be featured in stories about accidents, natural disasters, or domestic violence than in stories about their professional abilities or expertise.

Women in politics are similarly sidelined. Canadian journalist Jenn Goddu studied newspaper and magazine coverage of three women's lobby groups over a 15-year period. She concluded that journalists tended to focus on the domestic aspects of the politically active woman's life rather than her position on the issues.³¹

A Quebec political analyst, Denis Monière uncovered similar patterns. In 1998, Monière having analyzed 83 late evening newscasts on three national networks, observed that women's views were solicited mainly in the framework of "average citizens" and rarely as experts, and that

³¹ Cf. www.waccglobal.org 14.12.2008

political or economic success stories were overwhelmingly masculine.³² The situation has not changed today.

Inadequate women's coverage seems to be a worldwide phenomenon. Professor Caryl Rivers notes that politically active women are often disparaged and stereotyped by the media.³³ For example, when Hillary Clinton was still first lady, she was referred to as a "witch" or "witchlike" many times in the press. The question to ask is if there any times that the press ever call presidents warlocks.

Lack of gender sensitivity in the media is evidenced in the failure to eliminate gender-based stereotyping. In today's society, the media do not strive to provide a balanced portrayal of women's diverse lives and their contributions to society in a changing world. They often reinforce stereotyped images of women and their roles in society. This creates a common practice in the societies to assess the professional success of a woman through questions and claims about her being related to a good mother and a wife. Media undermine the efforts of activists who aim to establish gender equality in all areas of society. Most of the time, in the media, there is an absence of the image of an active, assertive workingwoman, of a successful businesswoman, or a positive image of a woman politician. Women are always portrayed as victims of poverty, social injustice, domestic violence, and organized crime.

Misogyny in the form of rude jokes, mockery or open verbal aggression have become an accepted way of a systematic backlash against women activists working for women's political

³² Cf. Quebec National Assembly 1998, Publication

³³ Cf. www.waccglobal.org 14.12.2008

empowerment or individual human rights³⁴. Media, especially magazines are known for the portrayal of women as sex objects, consumers and slaves. Women journals are mostly elitist and sexist. They are not in a position to advocate the cause of women and rejuvenate our socio-political, economic and cultural orders. The media create an impression for the society to believe that the outside world belongs to men and the issues which arise there do not affect women except indirectly through the men related to them. Ferguson (1983), notes that women's magazines collectively comprise a social institution which serve to foster and maintain a cult of femininity³⁵. In promoting femininity, magazines are not merely reflecting the female role in society. Rather, they are also supplying one source of definitions of and socialization into that role. They portray what the society considers women to be.

The print media mould the opinion, thinking and attitudes of women. Women's image has gone through several unjust projections at the hands of the media. In a study conducted on 'reading habits and perception of portrayal of women' by Nidhi Mittal (1999), she established that the respondents themselves felt that there was need to change women's portrayal in magazines as they were shown more in subdued roles³⁶. This can be possible only if women together are sensitized to refuse to be used for advertisements.

Further, indecent posters and boardings displayed everywhere are the crude reminders of distorted images and attitudes to women. The advertising world continues to use women to peddle its products and to present women as sexual objects. The image of the educated woman is

³⁴ Cf. <http://www.media.ba/mediacentre>

³⁵ Cf. M. Ferguson.; *'Women Magazine and The Cult of Femininity'*, 1983.

³⁶ Mittal, Nidhi; "Reading Habits and Perceptions of Portrayal of women in Magazines: an Urban View", Long essay, 1999

typecast as insensitive, self-centered and uncaring. The economically independent woman is shown as domineering and ruthless. The woman is considered ideal only when she is in her nurturing roles and as a supportive supplement to man.³⁷

1.2.1.3 Effects of Media Portrayal of Women in the Society

Media perpetuate inequalities in our society today. Women and girls are more undernourished and uncared for than men and boys. This is because media provide the necessary ideology for this society. Media create a distorted self-image to our society. Thus, media do not only influence the social image of women but also their self-image. Most women are themselves uncritical consumers of anti-women media. Media affect their socialization process. They even influences their choices regarding what they consume and wear, how they behave, what they learn, and what they ultimately become. Therefore, media are not helping women and society to redefine their own and men's roles. Instead, it has also ignored, even trivialized whatever attempts women have made to redefine their roles, to create alternative behaviour patterns and life styles. This has really discouraged the emergence of a new woman and a new man for a new relationship between women and men in their society. Such treatment of the media towards women, instead of reducing the isolation, increases it further. Likewise, instead of empowering women, it weakens them. Women remain unheard, unrepresented and more 'uncommunicable' than before. The media succeeds in depoliticising women's miseries and issues.

³⁷ Cf. <http://www.media.ba/mediacentre> 15.12.08

Media also reinforces biases of women in development plans. It has been many times stated that media reinforces the conservative view of women and ignores their economic participation and contribution, especially that of rural women³⁸. This means that media, instead of challenging the view that women are inferior, subservient, and unimportant, reinforces it. Indeed, it establishes man as the active force, the doer, the one who matters. The needs, concerns and problems women face are not articulated publicly. No public thinking and debates are initiated on women's real concerns. However, lack of articulation about women concerns and interests makes women to remain neglected by their society. Media should have a sense of social responsibility to promote particularly the well being of women.

1.2.1.4 Society's Attitude Towards Women

Women's position in the society is unequal to that of men. Society is structured in such a way to benefit men to the political, social and economic detriment of women. In today's African situation where basic human rights are violated, African women are indeed denied their dignity. African women are the first victims of an ongoing situation of violence. They suffer the most as a result of wars. Moreover, in the African society, women are generally banished from the public spheres of power. When they are urged to participate in the political life of their countries through civil and political authority, for instance, they often become indebted to the "chief" to whom they owe their "promotion". The society hardly accepts women to do work that men do,

³⁸ http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/issues/stereotyping/women_and_girls/ 14.12.08

especially when it comes to dealing with public issues. For example, here in Nairobi when the big buses had just arrived for public transport, there were some women drivers. Passengers entering such buses would be amused that it was a woman driving! Some of those who noticed earlier would either not board at all the bus or would alight prematurely wondering and/or being afraid of having an accident on the road. They did not believe in women as drivers of big buses. The society creates certain attitudes and beliefs towards women that they are not supposed to work hard. Women enjoy most of the privileges of citizenship, at least in many of the developed countries. However, inequalities still remain, for example, in professional education, especially in the accepted view of woman's sexual role and in the restrictions of domestic life.

1.2.1.5 Traditional Ideas About Women

Traditionally, men are considered to be political, religious, and military leaders. Women are, on the contrary, supposed to be kept in subordination. Aristotle's system of thought rested on the principle of duality in which one element is superior to another. By this conception, male is superior to female. According to Aristotle, the male principle is associated with activity and perfection while female is conceived to be passive and deprived³⁹. Aristotle's argument shows that nature always sought to create the most perfect thing which was the most completely formed creature, the male.

In the early Christian era, women were excluded from public life and were made subordinate to men. For example, Aristotle, in *Politics*, argued that women were inferior to men and must be

³⁹ Cf. Marilyn Boxer & Jean H. Quataert, *Women in the World. 1500 to the Present*, 1987, New York.

ruled by men. St. Paul is viewed to have told Christian wives to obey their husbands and not to speak in church⁴⁰.

Throughout most of the second millennium, in most societies, women were deprived of property, education, and legal status. They were considered as responsible to their husbands, if married, or of their fathers or other male relatives⁴¹. When women gain the right to enter into a profession, it is still hard for them to compete with men in equal footing because they are presumed to be in charge of domestic work. This means that women's work remains invisible and most of the time unpaid. Women are seen as the primary workers as householders and careers by their society while men are free for political discourse. Women have an important economic role in the society in spite of the patriarchal character of the political system that defines women as dependent and rightless.

There are many examples of exceptional women who can challenge patriarchal structures in their lives. For example, a German abbess, Hildegard of Bingen defied the authority of male Church leaders⁴² by challenging the patriarchal ideas inherent in Christianity. In fact, such women who lobby for improvement of women's education are usually not covered in the media. According to male society, women are just considered to be passive and to be not heard. For instance, "With reference to nature in the species as a whole, the female is not something manqué but is according to the plan of the nature".⁴³

⁴⁰ Jane de Gay, *Feminism*, Publication 2002

⁴¹ Cf. By Jane de Gay (Microsoft Encarta Premium Suite 2003)

⁴² Cf. By Jane de Gay (Microsoft Encarta Premium Suite 2003)

⁴³ Cf. *Ibid*, 8-9

1.2.1.6 *Women in Decision Making*

There is an African depiction of the process of decision making where the role of the woman as mother is omnipresent, in contrast to the Western traditions of relationships of power. An African mother exercises her power through her motherly attributes. Indeed, "The home work dichotomy splits male and female on opposite sides of the economic system, locating men on the side of production, women as managers of the consumer support system"⁴⁴. Of course the society splits male and female from political, social and economic system where men are located on the side of power system.

In spite of movements towards democratization in most countries, women are largely underrepresented at most levels of government, especially in ministerial and other executive bodies. They have made little progress in attaining political power in legislative bodies. Women's positions in decision-making whether at social, economic or political levels are insufficient in their societies. Women around the world are meeting the challenges of leadership, and contributing to change in their communities, countries and in the international arena in very real ways. They have held public offices at various levels of government, have initiated and led grass-roots organizations, and are present in virtually every professional field and in the private sector. Nevertheless, their voices are rarely heard in making decisions.

Progress is being made towards the equality of women and men in decision-making at all levels, but the pace is apparently slow. Women continue to remain under-represented at all levels of decision-making. Their achievements also remain often invisible and unacknowledged, their

⁴⁴ Cf. Burkhardt Walter, *Woman, New Dimension*, 1977, New York, 71

voices unheard. For this, there is much more to do in order to not only accelerate the inclusion of women into formal decision-making bodies, but also to increase their impact in decision-making. Women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy, but also a necessary condition for women's interest to be taken into account. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved. In political aspects, women continue to be seriously underrepresented as candidates for public office. The traditional working patterns of political parties and government structures continue to be barriers to women's participation in public life. This makes women to get discouraged from seeking political office by discriminatory attitudes and practices towards them. Women in politics and decision-making positions in governments and legislative bodies are not considered as capable human beings to lead a country or a society. Socialization and negative stereotyping of women and men, including stereotyping through the media, reinforces the tendency for political decision-making to remain the domain of men.

1.2.1.7 Women and Religions

For women, religion plays an important role. Most women are affected by the attitude of different faiths towards women, directly or through their traditional influence on society. Women's rights are often violated in the name of some religions. Women are often victims of the practice of some religions. While most religions teach equality of women and men before God, they ascribe different roles to women and men on earth. Religiously motivated gender stereotypes have conferred upon men a sense of superiority which has led to discriminatory

treatment of women by men and even violence at their hands. Equality of women and men is not a doctrine that is central to the faith but discrimination against women often continues to reign. For example, it is a well-known fact that, the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches do not ordain women to priesthood. Unlike the Roman Catholic Church and Orthodox, many Protestant churches now ordain women as priests. The Muslim faith obliges women to use headscarves as requirement for the religion. This is a very sensitive question towards Muslim women in their society. Indeed:

The most horrifying and obvious examples of discrimination committed in the name of religion should not divert attention from more subtle and less spectacular forms of intolerance and discrimination which are just as effective in achieving the subjection of women, such as the refusal to adopt positive measures in favour of women, for example in parliamentary elections, and the refusal to initiate a public dialogue on sex equality⁴⁵.

For example, for the Muslim faith, women cannot usually become prayer leaders or members of the clergy. For them divorce is possible but it cannot be initiated by the woman because she is not allowed to take decisions concerning her life.

1.2.1.8 Women and Leadership

In our African society, social structures lock women out from leadership. This is because of socio-cultural aspects which determine the boundaries of individual behaviour. Traditional religious belief systems play an important role in perpetuating images of women that deny them leadership positions. Women are shown as not equal to men, as evil and not to be trusted.

⁴⁵ <http://www.wikipedia.org>

Structural separation of the public and private relegate women to the private sphere. This affects women's political participation because women are presumed to be in the informal sector. Women are always expected in the service sector and when they break away, they are pushed down by lack of support and trust in them. Women are often kept in occupation such as day care, nursing and waitressing. They are not exposed to the politics and other sections of the country. Gendered divisions of labour affect women's political participation. This also is because women receive different education from men. For this, they do not easily get to positions such as political leadership because political advancement requires appropriate political, leadership, educational and occupational experience from which many women by virtue of being mothers are already barred from. Women are likely to be less educated and have fewer resources. In the past years, women could not join politics; they did not even have the right to vote. As late as 1995, women were not allowed to vote in countries such as Bahrain, Brunei, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates⁴⁶.

The male society believed that politics belonged very often to the man's world, exclusively so much dominated by the male conception. Women are forced to follow the procedures made and controlled by male society. As Peterson Spike and Sisson Runyan put it, "Behaviour traits deemed suitable and essential for political success are stereotypically masculine that is; ambition, leadership, rationality, competitiveness, authority, toughness"⁴⁷. Everything is organized by men in terms of structures. Very often, the workplace and political office remain a 'male terrain' in which women feel resistance and resentment of their unwanted presence. The culture and processes of the formal political, in terms of being educated, trained, especially parties, are major

⁴⁶ Cf. V.S .Peterson, *Global Gender Issues*, Oxford: Westview Press, 1999, 85

⁴⁷ Cf. V.S Peterson, *Global Gender Issues*, Oxford: Westview Press, 1999, 84

barriers to women's equal participation in politics as leaders because they lack equal education with men.

1.2.1.9 Women and Politics

Women do not lack motivation or interest for political action. Their under-representation to politics is due to gender-differentiated patterns pervasive in today's world. Gender socialization, situational constraints, and structural obstacles interact in favoring men and discriminating against women as candidates for and effective holders of political office.⁴⁸

By 1945, most adult women were able to vote and participate more in public life in most countries. But in most African countries, the colonial masters did not involve women in politics at any critical level. In Europe for example, particularly in France, Italy and the Netherlands, women played key roles in resistance movements. Women moved into jobs which were considered to be for men. This helped women to be more exposed. It brought them to develop self-confidence and a sense of self-worth.

After the war, women did not revert to their simple confined jobs. The war time cut the monotony of domestic work which women never fully identified with. In countries such as Germany, although women were employed during the war when there was a shortage of labour spot, as soon as men were available, women lost their jobs⁴⁹. Nevertheless, women's experiences during the war had a long-term impact. Women had shown their capabilities and had begun to

⁴⁸ Cf. V.S Peterson, *Global Gender Issues*, Oxford: Westview Press, 1999, 84.

⁴⁹ Cf. V.S Peterson, *Global Gender Issues*, Oxford: Westview Press, 1999, 84

explore a world beyond the domestic sphere. Prejudice against women who were active in political activity still remained strong. Moreover, after the war in 1945, many changes took place in different countries towards women's rights, especially regarding constitutions. For example, issues on granting women equal civil, economic and political rights, equality between sexes were raised in many countries. In fact, many constitutions stated clearly that men and women were to enjoy equal rights and that no one was to be prejudiced or privileged because of their sex. Thus, the reality remains in written form.

Despite all these changes in legislation, opposition and prejudices against women working or becoming involved in political activity remain strong. There is a strong belief that a working wife reflects badly on her husband, by revealing his inability to support her. This affects women to be still less involved in politics because the definition of politics is still so much oriented by the male. This is also because women have so much on their hands. With the domestic work and sometimes part-time or full-time employment, they lack adequate time to participate in politics. Women have also not benefited from the same educational opportunities as men. In spite of this, many women in the world hold power in politics throughout the history. Looking at some examples of women individually leading their countries, we have Queen Elisabeth 1 of England in the 16th Century, the time when England first rose in power. Golda Mier after holding various posts as Minister of Labour and Minister of Foreign Affairs eventually became Prime Minister of Israel. Corazon Aquino elected President of the Phillipines in 1986, carried her country through turbulent situations of natural disasters and economic difficulties. Indira Gandhi was a formidable Prime Minister of India. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro was President of Nicaragua in 1990-1996. Tansu Ciller served as Prime Minister of Turkey from 1993-1996. Margaret Thatcher also known as the Iron Lady served as Prime Minister in Britain in 1970-1990, Especioza

Kazibwe served as Vice President in Uganda around 1995 to 1998. Helen Johnson is the current president of Liberia.

Chadian women have had trouble penetrating the patriarchal decision-making structures and processes of the state and the party. Chadian women's struggle for participation in politics has its own constraints. Some of these are specific to gender while the others are related to the realities of politics in Chad. Chadian women who want to join politics must always get influence in parties and must attain some kind of education and exposure. Despite the rising awareness about politics by the media, Chadian women have been locked out of participation in politics because of constraints which include gender role stereotypes, male resistance to women's participation, limited resources with which to participate, political structures and processes that hinder women from easy participation in political activities.

1.2.1.10 Coverage of Women in Politics

Female candidates and politicians are challenged by their gender. They strive to be seen and heard not only by potential voters and political colleagues, but also by the media. If male politicians find it hard to get the media to cooperate, female politicians find it even harder. The coverage of women campaigns is very different from that of the male counterparts. The media cover women politicians differently from men by showing women as centre of attraction than making news. While both male and female candidates suffer the same difficulties in getting their messages out, female candidates are covered often by reporters who use specific terminology in their articles when writing or broadcasting on female candidates. For example, in Kenya, Martha Karua, presidential candidate for 2012, is always covered by the media very different by showing

her as a tough woman and portrayed as a woman without a female heart for her society. The way media frames female candidates influences directly their campaigns and the public's perception of them. Thus, media holds the means by which so many populations view candidates. Accordingly, they play a role in how the public forms opinions. Media can either make or break any candidate, but a female candidate has additional luggage that the media refuses to let her dispose of. This is because of gender stereotypes that the media perpetuates about women in their societies. Reporters are more likely to focus on male candidate issues than those of female candidates. For example, during presidential campaigns in the USA, Hillary Rodham Clinton, the Democratic candidate was covered as a "weaker candidate", especially when was "angry, exasperated and emotional" ⁵⁰ during campaigns, but has managed to stay either tied for the lead or slightly behind. The media is tenacious in finding that sensational news story that will sell papers or boost ratings.

“Media characterize female candidates by their appearance and use gender specific terms to portray and describe female politicians”⁵¹. For example, during an interview in UN Millennium Campaign office, Sylvia Mwachuli, Communication Director, said most of the time in covering women in politics, media tend to focus on the hand bags they carry, shoes, earrings or dress they wear. In general, journalists focus on male candidate's positions on the issues, while some focus more on female candidates' personal characteristics. Female candidates are often thought to be the victim of a double standard, with the press paying more attention to their clothes and

⁵⁰ http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/issues/stereotyping/women_and_girls/ by Professor Caryl Rivers

⁵¹ http://www.e-scoala.ro/referate/engleza_women_politics.html

personal traits than to their qualifications and their lives. However, the media quite possibly is a major barrier to the growth of women to politics and other higher offices. The media's coverage of women candidates and politicians is partially symptomatic of society's overall regard of women in general. At both the conscious and subconscious levels, the media lower the images of women and their self-esteem and affect behavior at every age and stage of life. This makes many women not to speak out because of shame, fear, and a feeling that they are somehow responsible for their victimization in their society. As Jean Berthke argued, media should break the silence of traditional, political thought on questions of the historic oppression of women and their absence from the realm of public speech.⁵²

1.2.1.11 Role of Education in Empowering Women

Women's status in the family, society, and politics had long been a subject of polemics. In the eighteenth century, those who favored improving the status of women insisted primarily on women's right to an education rather than on the right to vote. Socially, women are different from men, destined to play domestic roles inside the family rather than public, political ones. Among the many writers of the Enlightenment, Jean-Jacques Rousseau published the most influential works on the subject of women's role in society. In his book *Emile*, he described his vision of an ideal education for women. Women should take an active role in the family, Rousseau insisted, by breast-feeding and educating their children, but they should not venture to take active positions outside the home. He advocated greater independence and autonomy for male children and emphasized the importance of mothers in bringing up children⁵³.

This way of doing demonstrates the deep prejudice against women's separate political activity which denies them equal rights to education. But many women objected to his insistence that women did not need serious intellectual preparation for life. Some women took their pleas for

⁵² Cf. Jean Berthke Elstain, *Public Man, Private Woman*, 1981, London, 202

⁵³ <http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/chapsa.html>

education into the press. However, education has a big role in propelling women into the political sphere. This is important not only for making women successful in their activities, but also for giving them the opportunity to be agents of social and economic change, and so help to build a better society. Education is a powerful tool for women to enter professional and political life on an equal foot with men. This can encourage women to get engaged in political processes at all levels and will empower their efforts to “vote, run and lead”. Although women had not gained the right to vote or hold office, especially in France until 1944, they had certainly made their presence known during the Revolution; it had forced them to become more aware of their status in the society⁵⁴. From there, the request to offer women better education and protection of their property rights aroused in the government.

However, any educated person would therefore immediately recognize when a woman was an abstract quality or idea and when she was simply a woman of her times or a particular noted woman. Women made good symbols because they could not hold office or participate officially in politics. That is to say, it was impossible to confuse a depiction of "liberty" with any particular political leader or official, who was by definition male. This was caused by the oppression of women through education. Women's status was considered to be inferior because of their lack of education which can empower them. Women's oppression can only be overcome through an equality of education and rights predicated on a single model of supra-sexual humanity.

⁵⁴ <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/proj/wew/pavia.html>

I.3 Contextualization of the Topic

Chadian women have truly come a long way in penetrating through the political dominated male world. Chad's political history has not recorded great women who went through many difficult and humiliating conditions to fight for equality and participation in politics. Some of these difficulties include the fear of being beaten by male and the lack of funds for women politicians.

Since Chad's independence from the French rule in 1960, female representation in Parliament has been dismal. Chad counts in total 155 Members of Parliament (MPs). There are only 8 women out of the 155. There has also been very low female representation in decision-making positions within government. This might be the fear of male to empower women because it is very difficult for Chadian male to accept women to be leaders or to take over a speech. As a male sub-county Executive Committee member in Uganda from his fear to see women being empowered by the President, said during a press release, "Men will no longer be talking in 20 years. Museveni, has given too much power to women"⁵⁵. This could be also the fear of male Chadians to empower women and encourage good coverage of few who are already in the field. This may still fall short of the United Nations target of achieving 30% representation of women in politics and also of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Fourth World Conference for Women in 1995⁵⁶, where it was agreed by all governments that there should be equal participation of women and men in decision-making bodies. The gender imbalance in Chad's political playing field has widened so much, since the male political ideology continues to define the standards of

⁵⁵ Cf. Caroline Sweetman, *Gender, Development and Citizenship*, 2004, London, 8.

⁵⁶ UN 4th Forum on Women in Beijing, 1995

evaluation of women's political performance and participation. Women MPs play second fiddle and none of them chairs a parliamentary committee during Parliament.

Many challenges hinder women from being frontrunners in politics. One of the major problems that women face in politics is the lack of funds to conduct elections. Due to the feminization of poverty, many women interested in politics are faced with financial constraints which bar them from contesting, compared to their male counterparts. Therefore, their political potential goes unnoticed.

The political parties' structures are also male-dominated, thus are discriminative against women. It therefore becomes challenging for women to voice themselves or to take leading positions. Most of these parties only nominate men to winnable positions during elections. It is also evident that very few women politicians, not to say any, are seen hitting the campaign trails. If present, they are rarely heard on the podium because the campaign rallies are often male-dominated. It is paradoxical that women form the majority of Chadian voters.

Certain cultural aspects also block women, portrayed as not possessing strong leadership qualities. Many Chadian communities believe strongly that only men should lead and not women. Combining politics and "child-rearing", family life has also proved to be challenging. For many women, it is hard to balance both private and public life, which in most cases have interfered with many marriages because husbands believe that women's participation in politics can fit only women who are not married. This is a very strong negative conception that male Chadian society has about women in politics. This presents a barrier to women's motivation to enter into politics.

Media coverage on the successes of women politicians and potential contenders is limited compared to their male counterparts. Journalists and media owners do not see beyond what women are able to influence their society. Yet women have a lot to give and to contribute in political issues.

The success of women in politics in Rwanda, Liberia, Sweden and South Africa, for example, shows that there are many strategies women can use to gain power. Thus, women in Chad should feel challenged and call for affirmative action to increase their participation in decision-making bodies. They should unite and actively participate in nation-building activities, of course through the media collaboration.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the researcher affirms that media can be utilized for projecting the true and positive image of woman and wipe out her traditional passive image that has been imprinted on the mind of the society as a whole, including the women themselves. However, the potential of media as a powerful instrument of social change has first to be used to restore at least 50% of the humanity to its proper level. Change has to be brought about not only in the status of women but in the attitude of the society towards them. Priority has, therefore, necessarily to be directed to changing the image of women, from a passive onlooker and recipient, to that of a positive doer and achiever through media coverage and of course through the society's conception of women.

Chapter Two: Data Analysis

II.0 Introduction

This chapter scientifically analyses how media is used to portray women and influence their appearance. The investigation explored media exposure of women in political decision-making process. The chapter discusses the study findings of the field research conducted in Chad, especially in N'djamena, the capital of Chad and in Sarh, South of Chad. However, the search focused on the portrayal of women in politics by the media. The chapter presents various opinions from the respondents on the image of women in the media. The data is presented in a descriptive way with the help of frequency distribution tables, charts and percentages. The chapter also presents sampling criteria, data collection and analysis.

II.1 Methodology of the Research

The survey was conducted by self-administered questionnaires to selected women respondents in Chad. The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The qualitative method was used in order to complement and clarify the findings of the survey. On the quantitative method, the researcher carried out in-depth interviews with seventeen people and a focus group discussion (FGD) which comprised four people. This was done in order to get deeper insight of the issue. The researcher collected the data with the help of questionnaires written in French and designed for women in the study area. The researcher used both open-ended and closed questions which allowed the respondents to give their own opinions that suited

them best, to harmonize the responses in order to allow for easy data analysis. A significant amount of data was collected through in-depth interviews and participant observation. The interviews were administered to randomly selected women. The researcher used the quantitative findings to authenticate her hypotheses on women in politics and the media.

II.2 Sample Criteria

The research used stratified sampling. The research investigation was carried out on lower and upper middle class professionals working either for government services or private sectors in Chad. Respondents were in the age bracket of 18-37 plus. The majority were employed. Questionnaires were administered to 170 respondents, randomly chosen in urban offices. Only 61 were filled and returned; the other 109 were never recovered. Of the returned questionnaires, 58 were valid for analysis.

II.3 Data Collection

Data was collected through questionnaires and interviews. My key informants were women, whose image suffers abuse by the media. As already indicated, I administered questionnaires 170 questionnaires. Out of 170, 61 were collected back, 58 of them being valid.

II.4 Analysis

A total of 57 women responded to the questionnaires. A large proportion (35.1%) of the respondents was aged above 37. They are more exposed, since most of them are employed and married as the Table b below indicates. These were followed by those aged 26-30 with a percentage of 28.1%. Least of the respondents were aged between 31-36 (17.5%).

Table a

DEFINITION BY AGE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25	11	19,3	19,3	19,3
	26-30	16	28,1	28,1	47,4
	31-36	10	17,5	17,5	64,9
	ABOVE 37	20	35,1	35,1	100,0
Total		57	100,0	100,0	

Table b

DEFINITION BY AGE * DEFINITION BY OCCUPATION Crosstabulation

Count		DEFINITION BY OCCUPATION					
		LOOKING FOR JOB	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	HOUSE WIFE	OTHERS	Total
DEFINITION BY AGE	18-25	2		4	5		11
	26-30	7	7	1		1	16
	31-36	1	7		2		10
	ABOVE 37		15	3	1	1	20
Total		10	29	8	8	2	57

Majority affirmed their access to radio and listen to it. Only one admitted that even though she had access to it, she did not listen to it. Her reason was that she lacked time for listening to it due to the heavy workload. The table below illustrates this fact.

Table c

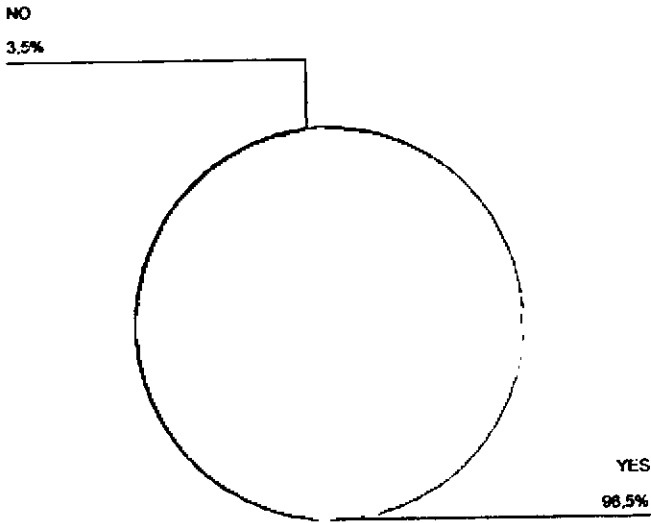
DEFINITION BY ACCESS TO RADIO * DEFINITION BY LISTENING TO RADIO Crosstabulation

Count

	DEFINITION BY LISTENING TO RADIO		Total
	YES	NO	
DEFINITION BY ACCESS TO RADIO YES	56	1	57
Total	56	1	57

As TV is concerned, 96.5% admitted that they watched it. This implies that they have access to it. Only 3.5% said they do not watch

Pie Chart a



This can be confirmed by the fact that even though 22 of them did not own TV, they were still able to watch it. The 2 respondents could not watch because, as the crosstabulation below indicates, they did not have it.

Table d

**DEFINITION BY OWNERSHIP OF TV * DEFINITION BY
WATCHING OF TV Crosstabulation**

Count		DEFINITION BY WATCHING OF TV		
		YES	NO	Total
DEFINITION BY OWNERSHIP OF TV	YES	33		33
	NO	22	2	24
Total		55	2	57

On the readership of newspapers, majority of them indicated that they do indeed read newspapers. A cross-tabulation between the age and readership shows that the reading culture in all ages was considerable. This is probably because a majority of the respondents had reached secondary school level.

Table e

**DEFINITION BY AGE * DEFINITION BY READERSHIP OF MAGAZINES AND
NEWS PAPERS Crosstabulation**

Count		DEFINITION BY READERSHIP OF MAGAZINES AND NEWS PAPERS			
		YES	NO	3	Total
DEFINITION BY AGE	18-25	10	1		11
	26-30	14	2		16
	31-36	8	2		10
	ABOVE 37	18	1	1	20
Total		50	6	1	57

On whether media focuses on women or not, 47.4% intimated that the media did not focus on women. This is probably because they felt that women's activities are rarely covered since they are not involved fully in the government activities which are male-dominated. This is also influenced by the main popular media which is owned by the government. Closely following, 43.9% were of the view that media focused on women. Most likely, this is because of the few women who were in fact put in the lime light. A dismal 8.8% of respondents confessed their ignorance on this issue.

Table f

DEFINITION BY MEDIA FOCUS ON WOMEN

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	YES	25	43,9	43,9	43,9
	NO	27	47,4	47,4	91,2
	OTHERS	5	8,8	8,8	100,0
	Total	57	100,0	100,0	

A follow up question served to confirm this stance when 71.6% affirmed that media portrayed women well and only 24.6% felt that it portrays them badly.

On whether women are involved in politics or not, the research found out that women are involved in politics and are portrayed well by the media. Despite this fact, in-depth interviews demonstrated that very few of them are actively involved in politics. Among the women politicians included Fatima Nchombi, Minister for Public Service, eight other women as Members of Parliament (MPs), Djiraibe Delphine and Jacqueline Moudeina both active lawyers, among others. These women are rarely in the limelight of media though they are popular. This

may have influenced the women to conclude that women are portrayed well, even though many other issues concerning women are hardly underlined in this male dominated country.

Table g

DEFINITION BY HOW MEDIA COVER'S WOMEN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VERY WELL	9	15,8	17,0	17,0
	WELL	31	54,4	58,5	75,5
	BADLY	13	22,8	24,5	100,0
	Total	53	93,0	100,0	
Missing	System	4	7,0		
Total		57	100,0		

The respondents agreed that culture has a great impact on the perception of women as leaders. About 89% concurred that culture has a great influence on portrayal of women. From the interview, majority of the interviewees commented that women had domestic duties given to them by nature, to nurture their children and not to waste time in politics. According to them, politics was meant for men.

Among the 10.5% who denied cultural influence were the liberal ones who felt no gender should be superior. This is because of their exposure to education. A cross-tabulation (Table h) between the belief that culture influenced portrayal of women and level of education revealed that this small percentage had reached the university level of education.

Table h**DEFINITION BY CULTURAL INFLUENCE ON PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VERY MUCH	25	43,9	43,9	43,9
	MUCH	26	45,6	45,6	89,5
	LITTLE	6	10,5	10,5	100,0
	Total	57	100,0	100,0	

Table i**DEFINITION BY CULTURAL INFLUENCE ON PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP * DEFINITION BY UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE ED.****Crosstabulation**

		DEFINITION BY UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE ED		Total
		YES	NO	
DEFINITION BY CULTURAL INFLUENCE ON PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP	VERY MUCH	16	9	25
	MUCH	16	10	26
	LITTLE	2	4	6
Total		34	23	57

Despite the cultural influence, a majority of the respondents (82.5%) felt that media should often be focusing on women. Some conservative 17.5% ones felt it would be disrespectful to women

to be objectified in media. For them, being covered in media was equivalent to objectifying oneself.

Table j

DEFINITION BY HOW OFTEN SHOULD MEDIA PORTRAY WOMEN

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VERY OFTEN	16	28,1	28,1	28,1
	OFTEN	31	54,4	54,4	82,5
	VERY LITTLE	10	17,5	17,5	100,0
	Total	57	100,0	100,0	

A majority felt that media should portray women positively because they held the opinion that time was ripe for women voices to be heard, unlike in the past when they were only to be seen and not to be heard. The respondents agreed that culture had a hand in the way media portrayed women. Being a male dominated culture, women voices were rarely heard and their images rarely seen. Majority (98.2%) had consensus on this fact.

Table k**DEFINITION BY CULTURAL INFLUENCE ON MEDIA PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	YES	43	75,4	76,8	76,8
	NO	13	22,8	23,2	100,0
	Total	56	98,2	100,0	
Missing	System	1	1,8		
Total		57	100,0		

Most of the respondents held that culture has indeed contributed to respect or disrespect of women's viewpoints in society. A majority (54.4%) held that women's viewpoints are respected in the society while 42.6% held that they are not respected. This opinion may have been due to cultural influence which held that women had no right to stand in front of men to talk. There is an Arabic phrase among Chadians that qualifies women as *mara saki*, that is, simple woman. Treated as simple women, they do not have to speak in public, especially to a group of men. This is due to a culture that discourages women from holding a public view in a male society.

Table l**DEFINITION BY RESPECT OF WOMEN'S VIEWPOINTS IN SOCEITY**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	YES	31	54,4	57,4	57,4
	NO	23	40,4	42,6	100,0
	Total	54	94,7	100,0	
Missing	System	3	5,3		
Total		57	100,0		

II.5. Media Use and Needs Assessment

The media serve as a watchdog over government activities. For this, radio becomes the best to reach a large audience than other media. It has the ability to inform and educate people on political issues. The field research established that radio was the most popular medium. Statistics indicated that 56 respondents had access to radio, most of them having personal radio. Radio is the most important technological component for development. It plays an obvious role in political events. Only 33 respondents had access to television. About 22 respondents had personal TV.

Radio was popular because of the following reasons:

- It is cheap, portable and capable of being run on torch batteries.
- It does not require the audience to be literate to gain from its service. As long as the audience understood the language of broadcast, they could access the services of the radio as opposed to newspapers.
- It reaches far; it can reach up to rural areas and people access it easily.
- It has a larger capacity to cover breaking news than newspapers and TV. The respondents even affirmed that they could get easily breaking news through radio than TV.
- It is a crucially important medium of developing countries to run large scale communication campaigns on education and politics.
- It has an important role in communicating the needs of individuals and communities on a daily basis.
- It promotes social interaction by bringing people closer together, stimulating communication and enhancing the value of local knowledge.

- It educates citizens about their civic rights and responsibilities and mobilizes them to become engaged in politics.
- It is an instrument through which people could be exposed to new ways of thinking and taught new attitudes in order to stimulate economic and political development.

II.6 Media Theories

II.6.0 Introduction

The media play a crucial role in forming and reflecting public opinion. They communicate the world to individuals and reproduce the self-image of society or individuals. However, the media may weaken or delimit the individual's capacity to act autonomously. The consequences and ramifications of the mass media relate not merely to the way newsworthy events are perceived, but also to a multitude of cultural influences that operate through the media. Therefore, the media has a strong social and cultural impact upon society.

By definition, media are channels of communication that serve many diverse functions. These include offering a variety of entertainment with either mass or specialized appeal; communicating news and information; or displaying advertising messages. The media carry the advertisers' messages and serve as the vital link between the seller of a product or service and the consumer⁵⁷. By this definition, we refer media theory to a model that explains the

⁵⁷ [http://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=media theory](http://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=media+theory)

relationship between media and social reality or a specific area of the academia. Let us examine a few of the theories considered to be relevant to our present study.

II.6.1 *Socialization Theory*

The term socialization is used by sociologists, social psychologists and educationalists to refer to the process of learning one's culture and how to live within it. For the individual, it provides the skills and habits necessary for acting and participating within their society.⁵⁸ However, Clausen claims that theories of socialization are to be found in Plato, Montaigne and Rousseau. He identifies a dictionary entry from 1828 that defines 'socialize' as 'to render social, to make fit for living in society'⁵⁹.

Socialization prepares the individual for the roles he/she is to play. It provides the person with the necessary repertoire of habits, beliefs and values, the appropriate patterns of emotional response and the modes of perception, the requisite skills and knowledge. Chinoy argued that, by communicating the contents of culture from one generation to the other, socialization provides for its persistence and continuity⁶⁰. From the beginning of the world existence, male society is thought to believe that female society is inferior and unequal to men. Women are considered to be not better than slaves or children. No wonder everything is dictated to them. For example, in Jewish tradition, it is forbidden for a rabbi to speak to a woman in public. Women are portrayed in a negative way according to their beliefs. However, Chadian men influenced strongly by

⁵⁸ Cf. Clausen 1968: [http://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=media theory](http://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=media+theory)

⁵⁹ Cf. Clausen 1968: [http://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=media theory](http://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=media+theory)

⁶⁰ Cf. Ely ,Chinoy,; *Society An Introduction To Sociology*, New York, Random House, 1961: 75

culture, believe that women are meant to be householders; they should shun public spheres of life. That is why media, influenced by the culture, hardly cover women activities as relevant for the society. Media rarely focus on women involved in politics as news makers. Rather, they distort the image of women as objects.

Reacting to the functionalist notion of socialization, an English sociologist Graham White, wrote in 1977, "... it is no longer enough to focus on the malleability and passivity of the individual in the face of all powerful social influences. Without some idea about the individual's own activity in shaping his social experience our perspective of socialization becomes distorted"⁶¹. Thus, through a critique of functionalist ideas about socialization an increasing acceptance of a variety of gender roles and tolerance of variations in the ways people express their social identity have been validated.

Socialization Theory implicates the social movement theorist in various asymmetrical power relations. It argues for the recognition of a social movement as always an analytical construction that refers to the complex interactions between political and social contexts and processes of collective identity that result in a particular form of collective action⁶². Sandoval's central claim of cultural topography is that woman is equal to man.⁶³ Here, he explains that the goal is to prove that differences between women and men are exaggerated and should be reduced to a common denominator of sameness. Cases in point include, asking a woman to be part of the category of

⁶¹ M. White,; *How the Other Third Lives Third World Stories, Poems, Songs, Prayers and Essays From Asia, Africa And Latin America*, New York, 1977, 5

⁶² <http://ic.ucsc.edu.rlipsch/QES>

⁶³ M, Sandoval; *On The Move A History Of The Hispanic Church In The United State*, New York, Orbis Books, 2nd Edition, 2000, 48

male, talking about equal rights and equal pay. Looking at the Chadian society, through personal experience, women are treated unequally. From morning to evening, they are seen working with very little time to rest. Professional and business women in particular have double work: at home and in the offices or business premises. Their work is hardly recognized by the media or by the society because of their low social status and the impact of culture. Moreover, they are not recognized in collective activity even if their number outstrips that of men. They are generally marginalized in many domains and are considered as subject to men in their society. This is reinforced by media's portrayal of women.

Socialization functions are treated as a lifelong process. Through media, people are constantly seeking information that could help them to fit in with other people. Today, the media are important in creating a community, even nationhood and perhaps, with global communication, a fellowship of humankind. Through media, educated women of the Chadian society could stand and fight for their rights against some beliefs and practices of their traditional society blocking their development. Their reaction against such beliefs and practices is prompted by opinions they hear from other societies, through modern mass media. Our questionnaires asked them to state three problems that women were facing. Majority of them cited cultural barriers, discrimination, violence against women and lack of education.

Media help Chadian women to openly discuss emancipation, especially in relation to women. Indeed, "The mass media have a large role in initiating children into the society. This socialization process is essential to perpetuating cultural values, but some people worry that it

can be negative if the media report and portray undesirable behavior and attitudes such as violence⁶⁴.

Many women in Chad complain that the media adversely affect them today because of the way they are portrayed even with regard to making news. The media inclines them to acquiring the values of the West at the expense of their traditional culture or cultural values. Indeed, our findings showed that a majority of the respondents interviewed agreed that media has a very powerful influence on educating the society about events around them. But the way media exposes women is unfair and disrespectful of their dignity. However, by socializing through media, women in Chad have been exposed to diverse views on and learned about the adverse effects on their rights. Exposure to modern media makes them to come up with their own understanding of being involved in public spheres, especially in politics. They go beyond traditional beliefs which appear to be barriers to their human and intellectual development. Media as a means of information, education, development and entertainment should help women in Chad to socialize positively with their society. In this way, they will be able to make news instead of portraying them as the less important in the society. Media have a great role to play in shaping the society. For example, at a certain moment here in Nairobi the “Mugiki” were on a spree to undress women with short skirts or tight trousers. The media decided to cover those women naked on the streets as news for the entire society. This should be questioned. Was the media forming or deforming the society with negative coverage of women about their dignity? Is the media coverage fair to women? Thus, media should promote things that can help to regain African values through equal coverage of women and men in their society and in public spheres.

⁶⁴ John Vivian, *The Mass Communication, 4th edition*, Winona State University, New York, 1997

II.6.2 *Cultivation Theory*

This theory was an approach developed by Professor George Gerber. He began the cultural indicators' research project in the mid-1960s to study how media, especially TV may influence viewers' ideas of what the everyday world is like. The cultivation theorists argue that media have long-term effects which are subtle, gradual, indirect but cumulatively profound and significant.⁶⁵ For Gerber, the mass media cultivate attitudes and values which are already present in a culture. The media maintain and propagate values among people.

Many critical theorists select different communication topics to determine which are heavily influenced by Marxist interpretation of society or what is suspicious of any analysis that ignores power relationships⁶⁶. Critical theorists such as Stuart Hall take Marx' epitaph as a mission statement for their work arguing that, "the philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it"⁶⁷. The change which Stuart and many other critical theorists want to achieve is to empower people who are on the periphery of society, people who have little to say concerning their lives, those who are scrambling just to survive. Media are considered to be ideological; they exploit the poor. In today's society, women are generally the poor, because they are marginalized by their society. In the Chadian society, women are exposed to hard work and they are not fully and explicitly involved in the critical processes of decision-making. For example, they do not directly participate in key decisions of their families or of their own lives, whether in private or public services. They do not have much power over the

⁶⁵ [http// www.aber.ac.uk/media/document/short/cultiv.html](http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/document/short/cultiv.html)

⁶⁶ [http// www.aber.ac.uk/media/document/short/cultiv.html](http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/document/short/cultiv.html)

⁶⁷ E. Griffin, *First Look at Communication Theory*, 4th Edition, Wheaton College

prevailing domains in their community. This is because of the effects of traditional culture which socializes women to be submissive to their husbands. It is impolite for them to question these icons of authority in society. Instead, they are supposed to just accept what they decide for them. This may be seen as having helped from time immemorial to enhance social structure and order. However, it is detrimental today. There is dire need to empower women in the Chadian society.

From the researcher's questionnaires, respondents were to suggest what could be done to ameliorate women's authority. In the majority, they cited empowering women in Chad through education which may stop the complex of inferiority in order to promote equality between men and women. This was seen to be the best way to encourage them in making decisions for their own lives and in public services. They believed that empowering women would bring change and a wide vision in their society. Women are marginalized and sidelined in decision-making mechanisms. Besides lack of education, their rights were not respected. This may be caused by the way media portray them even in a position of high office.

Media often shapes how people are socially perceived by not only reflecting the values of the society, but also by shaping them. However, women's growing influence in public affairs or life and in decision-making is not reflected in the media. In the case of Chad the presence of women in politics or public spheres is very low. Thus, this could not stop the media from covering positively their activities in the society. They work hard for the development of the country but the media do not give positive attention to encourage them in their fight for peace and justice in their country. For example, recently in a national newspaper in Chad, the Minister of Public Service who is a woman has been portrayed as a "fish with spoiled head" in the office. This means, according to the media, she is not responsible enough to hold such government position, besides being a political leader in the country. Thus, she is struggling silently to get around thirty

thousand young people without job opportunities to be integrated in the government service. This is because politics in Chad has always tended to be portrayed as a theatre for male actors. So, media in Chad should develop professional guidelines that may help to eliminate blatant sexism from news. This is a call for media's contribution to help the government to come up with an affirmative action for women in politics, because the coverage of women in politics often ends up in accentuating women's role as outsiders⁶⁸. Most of the time, women in politics are only shown in the media when they are accompanying their senior male counterparts. This is not because women are timid, ignorant or silent. Rather, it is the perception of the media that women look good when they are accompanying or behind their male counterparts. Hardly are they ever shown as capable of having an opportunity to outshine their bosses. This happens even if they are more authoritative or knowledgeable than their male colleagues. Such media coverage undermines women's genuine authority in the decision-making process in their society. This should be stopped in order to reinforce women's participation in politics and public spheres. Media as chronicler of events, an informer, an entertainer and educator of the society should focus on its role in order to serve as a tool for social change rather than perpetuating inequalities in the society by portraying women image as objects.

II.6.3 Use and Gratification Theory

This theory reminds us that people use media for diverse purposes. People choose media that meet their needs and interests. As media users become increasingly confronted with choices, this approach should direct our attention to the audience. Lull's TV research found out that families

⁶⁸ Maria Nzomo, *Perspectives on Gender Discourse*, Nairobi, 2003

used TV to facilitate communication, build relationships and intimacy, and to also structure the day.⁶⁹ Uses and gratifications refer here particularly to information, personal identity, social interaction and entertainment. Audiences are not passive but selective in the media. They use media to affirm moral, spiritual and cultural values, in order to share experiences with others, to find models to imitate, to gain identity and information about the world. In using media for information, our intention is to find out about society and the world in order to satisfy our curiosity. This gives us a sense of learning about the world. But from the respondents, the researcher established that many affirmed that the use of media distorts the image of women rather than informing and encouraging them of leading their society as men are in control. The influence of women in public affairs and in decision making that is growing today is not reflected as such in the media. So media should cultivate a spirit of unity, equality and promote women as agents for social change.

II.6.4 Agenda Setting

Agenda setting is a system of the internal decision making process of relaying or withholding information from the media to the masses. Media has a function in relation to the process by which we learn how to become members of society⁷⁰. Media is very powerful in controlling and shaping people's knowledge and understanding about a society. The media defines people's sense of the social reality in today's society. Media set the agenda for the society. For this, media has a great role to play in order to change the perception of women in their coverage as news or

⁶⁹ <http://www.peoi.org/Courses/Coursesen/mass/mass2.html>

⁷⁰ Authur Asa Berger, *Essentials of Mass Communication Theory*, 1995

advertisements. This is a call for media to find out better ways in portraying women as agents for development rather than objects. Media has great influence and power to set agenda in such a way that women can be morally well portrayed as equal to men. If only media refrained from portraying women as objects for men society, men would see women as equals to them, with the same dignity. Therefore, there should be an agency which can ensure some ethics in all kinds of coverage.

II.6.5 Gate-keeping Theory

In human communication, in particular in journalism, gate-keeping is the process through which ideas and information are filtered for publication⁷¹. Gate-keeping occurs at all levels of the media structure from a reporter deciding which sources are chosen to include in a story to editors deciding which stories are to be printed, or even covered. Media owners or practitioners decide on what can be shown, listened or written about in a form they want the society to know about. However, Gate-keeping Theory shows us that the information the society gets is somebody's view of what is important and attracts the attention of the audience. This can be important or not, with regard to the way women are portrayed which is out of the content of news. For this, if the media can only focus on their role to inform the society about what is happening in the world, women would have good image in their coverage about their participation in public spheres in their societies.

⁷¹ Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

II.6.6 Media and Socialization

Socialization is a process of adapting to a social group and developing a sense of belonging to a larger social world through learning and internalizing the values, beliefs, and norms of one's culture. This is also known as enculturation. People learn to behave socially in appropriate and acceptable ways.

For this, the media are a powerful agent in today's society. They have taken the place of other collective agents, such as the family. People spend much more time with media than with their neighbors. The media literally mediate people's relationships. The media are part of people's routine relations with family and friends. The media affect how people learn about their world and interaction with one another.

People are dependent on the media for what they know and how they relate to the world of politics. Therefore, politicians rely on media to communicate their message. The media have an impact on society not only through the content of the message but also through the process. The media shape reality and influence behavior. They contribute to people's perceptions of reality and behavior. In today's society, the media are a powerful tool in changing attitudes. People do not want to be seen as out of step with current trends, for example, portraying women as the weaker sex and as attractive objects in advertising.

The media, however, educate and shape public relations and advocate for a particular viewpoint. The media not only are a tool to impart knowledge, but also part of larger efforts to promote actions having social utility. Media should assist organizations in achieving credibility and respect among public opinion leaders, men and women. In this way, media should assist leaders in shaping debates about controversial issues, and gaining equal support for particular viewpoints

between men and women. Television and radio, for instance, are powerful in their appeal to mass audiences because they reach people regardless of age, sex, or educational levels. Therefore, they should be able to convey public messages in greater detail about gender equality in decision-making because they are considered to be more efficient. Other agents of socialization have less meaning in today's society because the media has taken over. People, especially young people, get their role models through the media, and they can even be more conscious of the place of media figures in their lives than that of their neighbors or relatives. Women and men are shaped and molded by the media, to think and act in conformity with what they see and here on the screen, on the radio, and in the newspaper columns.

Chapter Three: Communication Strategies

III.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines a communication strategy that will address the problem that has been investigated and discussed by the researcher in this study. From the research findings, it has been established that women in Chad are in contact with media but they especially have access to and own radio more than TV, magazines and other means of media. They use radio because it is easier and cheaper to get from it information, entertainment and education than other media. However, this part will suggest a communication strategy that can generate confidence and trust for women to talk about the issues that affect them and give them voice in political and public service in Chad in order to participate in the decision making process.

III.1 Communication objectives

The objectives of the communication strategy are:

- 1) To raise awareness and presence of women in political participation and in pro-active decision making in Chad.
- 2) To create knowledge among women about political issues by tackling issues that affect them.
- 3) To help the young generation to discuss or debate issues that will affect them in terms of collaborating and respecting each one's dignity such as female and male working together.
- 4) To give another image about women in politics as covered by media.

- 5) To help women to stand and take action concerning their public image.
- 6) To break the barriers of culture oppressing women in the decision making process.
- 7) To cover women's political activities and their role in leadership.

III.2 Target Audience

This communication strategy targets women aged from 18 years and above because they are in a position to understand better what concerns or affects them. They are able to make decisions and even participate in the decision making process. The message will address directly women and will involve them in programme production. And we will also find an indirect way to address the government, the "opinion leaders" and the media about women's issues.

The approach of the communication strategy will play the role of catalyst where male and female will come together and discuss the political environment in their country. For this, they will be covered equally with same respect of dignity. The message will also target the Chadian society about its conception to consider girls and women as householders, careers and passive to influence the decision-making process.

III.3 The Medium

From the research findings, the researcher found out that radio as medium is the most preferred. Indeed, majority of our respondents have access to and own it. This is because radio is very easily accessed, even by rural women. Further, it also has a very broad coverage as compared to other forms of the media. Moreover, radio does not require one to be literate in order to listen to

it. For this reason, the researcher would like to use radio for disseminating information and educating the target audience about women's issues. This will occasion women to speak out their feelings about politics in Chad and their presence in participating in political issues.

III.4 Techniques and Communication Methods

According to our research findings, radio is a good medium through which to implement our communication strategy in order to pass on our messages to our target audience. Radio is 'a blind medium'. It requires a use of words that can paint images in the mind of the listener⁷². For this, the researcher hopes through radio to give another image of women covered by the media. It makes the male world believe that another image of women is possible. This will involve the audience in sharing their experiences and concerns about women being underrepresented in politics and negatively portrayed by the media. To achieve this aim, the research will consider some elements of a radio production such as language, content of the programme, time of broadcast, programme pace and the format of the programme in order to achieve our communication objectives and to articulate the project.

⁷² Mathias G. Chiwanda, *Radio Coverage of Election And Its Influence On The Voter*, Long Essay, Nairobi, 2007

III.4.1 *Radio programme elements*

The programme will contain the following elements:

1) Content of the programme: There will be a political oriented talk show. This will cover political activities of women and their presence in public service that will influence decision-making process in Chad. The talk show will be discussing issues that affect women, especially their personalities and their authority to make news. This will help women articulate their aspirations and dreams in order to influence decision making process and to make news to the society instead of being portrayed as objects. The programme will also give opportunity to male politicians to understand and consider females in the process of making decisions because women have much to give to the society. It will influence other media in the country to search for positive image of women in making news rather than ignoring their positive activities in their society.

2) Language of the programme: French, Arabic and Sara. These are national languages used in Chad. Every citizen is in a position to understand them.

3) Broadcast time: The programme will be broadcast at lunch time. Most of the people, including students, are at home. This is the time that the radio is on everywhere for news. Even those who are still at work take a break to listen to the information through radio, including those driving. They use radio for information because it is affordable and easy to carry. Our time of broadcast will be from 1:30pm to 2:15pm. This will be a forty-five minute programme. It will be aired

once every weekend on Saturday. This will be the best time to reach the target audience without complication.

4) The name of the programme: Stand Up and Act.

5) The format of the programme: The talk show will focus on political issues covered by the media and women in politics. This will educate the target audience about sharing power among the male and female in society. The intention of the programme is to facilitate collaboration between men and women working together and help the Chadian men to avoid the term *mara saked*, namely, simple woman, used to qualify women as simple human beings who cannot do something good for society. The talk show will carry interviews with women in politics and in public spheres to share their feelings. Discussion will revolve around how they exercise their power as leaders or people holding high positions in public spheres. The other audiences will be interviewed to share their opinions about women in politics and their expectations. This will create human interest and involve audience participation.

6) The purpose of the programme: the primordial purpose is to inform and educate Chadian society about politics and women involved in politics. It will educate male society about women's rights and their presence in the decision making process. It is to motivate women to stand up and take action for their rights. It will help men to consider women responsibilities and

possibilities to hold the same rights in their country. It will give another image of women portrayed negatively in other media.

7) Music: The western world believes that Africans were born with music. It is in their blood. So, the music here will help the audience to relax in order to enjoy the talk show. Generally, in Africa, music is used as an effective means to communicate messages. Concerning this programme, the music will be used appropriately to reinforce the topic. It will be used for the transition and break in order to entertain the audience. That is where Use and Gratification Theory comes in underlining that people use media to meet their needs and interests such as information, education and entertainment.

III.5 Justification of the Strategy

The communication strategy may be worthy to implement our project. It will respond to the needs of our respondents who have stated that media hardly covers their activities. The coverage of political issues and activities leaves women behind without mentioning their participation being among the key actors. This communication strategy will create a forum to air the talents of women being leaders in the country and concerns about their participation in the decision making process without fear. This will focus on women's rights and equal participation in politics. The target audience will be educated on the perception of women in politics and will trust women as leaders. They will be enabled to consider decisions of women. This will advance another image of women through radio as an effective tool of communication. About 22.8 percent of the respondents indicated that media does not efficiently cover their activities in the field. We hope

that the communication strategy suggested will help to cover political issues on women and expose them on the forefront in order to address problems affecting them. During a focus group interview of five people, we discovered that the respondents rely much on the radio for information than other media. This programme will be best suited for education as a radio programme. It will allow the listeners to call in and express their opinions about the topic that the presenter will be dealing with the programme. With these elements, we are confident to go beyond the perception of women as passive and householders. It will make a difference among other media houses about portrayal of women.

III.6 The Communication Project Implementation

The project will be implemented in the following way:

- 1) Radio will be used as medium to implement this communication strategy. We will explore the Radio Catholic in Ndjamena, the capital of Chad in order to air the programme.

- 2) According to the findings of our research, the respondents need to be educated about politics and women as political leaders and the role of media in covering them. These issues will be addressed and spread out throughout a year, that is for 12 months. Every three months during the period of the programme, there will a continuous evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of the programme on the target audience by going out to see if people's perception of women has changed. This will be depending mostly on the feedback of the audience.

3) The schedule of the programme will be in the following structure:

- January: Role of Women in the Society
- February: Women, Culture and Religion: Their Effects on Working Women
- March: Women's Experiences at Work and at Home
- April: Perception of Male World on Women as Leaders
- May: Women in Politics: Challenges in Democratic Process in Chad
- June: Women's Performance in Political Parliamentary Contexts of Chad
- July: Defining Women's Political Participation in Chad
- August: Media Portrayal of Women Politicians
- September: Defining Equal Power Sharing Among Women and Men in Chad
- October: Women on Decision Making Process
- November: Can Women Bring a Difference in Political Leadership in Chad?
- December: Role of Media in Promoting Women in the Society.

4) For the sources of our programme, we shall consider constitutional lawyers, human rights organizations such as League Nationale de Droit de l'Homme and Anti-clivage among others. Political parties, lecturers in literature, religious leaders, political leaders, media practitioners and media owners will also be relevant. We shall also consider women themselves in different organizations such as private or government sectors.

5) For the success of our programme, we will ensure that the audience participation is active. This will be done through phone calls in, text messages and even vox pop. This will give an opportunity to listeners to express their views, opinions and contribute on the

subject of discussion. We will encourage our audience to participate freely and also to respect each other's views and opinions. This will be the best way to create a spirit of democracy among the audience participation.

III.7 Advocating for Women

The low representation of women in politics in Chad has received by far the least attention. Many women have expressed their dissatisfaction of it. In essence, the under-representation of women in the ongoing government of Chad as well as the reactions to it, are unfairly reported by the media with regard to women's participation in politics though they are minority in Chad. Gender biases disseminated by the media are significant because they have electoral consequences. At a time when politics is thoroughly mediated, voters respond to candidates largely in accordance with information received from mass media. As John Corner (2003, 75) suggests, the media have become the public sphere in which the identity of the politician as a "person of qualities" is constructed, and the strength of these media performative criteria are often such as to disqualify certain candidates either from becoming public political figures at all or at least from competing for high office⁷³.

Women received less issue-related coverage. They are more likely to be discussed in terms of their roles as mothers and their marital status. This can affect their viability with voters. Men are better represented than women in all media genres. Female participation in the media programmes deals always with "soft issues" such as human relations, family, social and health

⁷³ <http://www.media-awareness>

issues. Hardly is there something dealing with “hard issues” such as politics. Women are more often seen in roles with low status, for example, as ordinary citizens and victims than as politicians or experts. Men still comprised the majority of politicians and experts in the world. The participation of women in public decision-making is rarely reflected in media. A member of the Screening Gender project writes:

By and large, media images still reflect stereotypical reflections of gender roles. A male politician is first and foremost perceived as a politician. A female politician however is first and foremost seen as a woman, a wife and a mother. Her profession is rarely separated from her gender. By approaching a female politician as a woman, a mother or a wife, her social status tends to be diminished.”⁷⁴

For this, aggressive female candidates appear in the media as unfeminine hence unacceptable in their society.

The media and journalists are actively circulating conventional stereotypes about women, showing that women are meant to be mothers and wives instead of reflecting the varied role of women in politics. To be sure, “the media use female politicians to report on ‘soft’ issues such as education and culture, while using male politicians to talk about ‘hard’ issues such as economics, foreign politics”⁷⁵. This shows the imbalance in the coverage given to male and female politicians.

Regarding this reality, journalists need to move away from the binary oppositions in order to use multiple approaches imaginatively in covering social life. News coverage including increased attention to human interest stories and personalization may allow a growing visibility of women

⁷⁴ Dijck Van, *Changing Images A Long Road*, Vol.57 No3, London, 2002

⁷⁵ <http://www.media-awareness>

as political actors and a growing recognition of “feminine” issues in the public sphere⁷⁶. For this to work out, women themselves need to overcome fear, being free from male-domination and manipulation. They should have a sense of justice and confidence in their ability to assess their situation, make judgment and assert their opinions. Chadian society needs to have a collective strength with a sense of history that acknowledges the differences among women and men working corporately towards women-oriented political agenda. This will be possible through access to information, with education in the political processes and its interactions in order to empower women politically and economically. Such efforts will help to enhance the agenda for women in society.

II.7.1 Strategies in Advocating for Women

From the research, we found out that media contribute a lot in promoting gender imbalances. For this, there is an urgent call for media to portray women in politics positively in order to have equal coverage between women and men for social change in the country. These are following strategies:

1. Existing concepts for power and politics should be carefully reviewed from a gender conscious perspective. Viable alternatives should be presented by women in politics. Media should support and encourage women present in politics with positive coverage about their activities than their appearances.

⁷⁶ Sreberny & van Zoonen 2000; van Zoonen 2005

2. Media should carry out research on women and politics in Chad which will serve as a basis for the development of the women's agenda.
3. Different media should help women to mobilize public opinion to protest against the misuse of religion, especially Islam to suppress their fundamental rights in Chad.
4. Existing laws should be reviewed and amended. New ones should be formulated which will positively have impact on women and the girl-child.
5. Media should develop genuine participation of women in politics.
6. Government and private stations should come up with educational programmes emphasizing on equal political socialization for both women and men through formal and informal education, including leadership development.
7. Media campaigns with education programmes should emphasize gender equality and non-stereotyped gender roles of women and men within the family, community and country.
8. Journalists in Chad should collaborate with women in public spheres and should be lobbied to support women in decision-making.
9. Print and broadcast media should be employed to empower grassroots women and to assist them in personalizing issues.
10. Media should help women in reconciling family and public life. This means that a redistribution of roles and parenting responsibilities within the family should be promoted so that women may participate in public spheres and activities in order to reconcile family and professional life.

11. Family law should be reformed towards a common civil code upholding the dignity of women as equal partners with men in the family.

12. A wide range of means should be used to promote awareness of women's human rights and the importance of their full and equal participation in government, administration, the law, trade unions and employer groups and community groups.

13. Discrimination against women should be eliminated through educational media programs. Indeed, “strengthening equality is to build awareness of the need for diversity in media content and to stimulate new approaches to media portrayal of women and men in public life by producing and disseminating an audio-visual training toolkit that can be included in journalism training”⁷⁷.

III.7.2 The Purpose of Advocating for Women

The purpose of advocating for women is to have a society:

- Of equality for both women and men where there is happiness, compassion, dignity and mutual respect.
- Which facilitates an environment that nurtures gender-sensitive laws, policies and programmes
- Where women and men recognize and acknowledge each other's needs and responsibilities.

⁷⁷ <http://www.yle.fi/gender>

- With an environment which is free and fearless and provides access to education, literacy and equal opportunity for all.
- That is transparent and accountable in the socio-economic and political system.
- Of gender equality that provides equal representation for women, with the continuing support of just gender-balanced socio-political order.
- Of participatory democracy for all based on equitable distribution of resources.
- Where political culture is based on economic independence and free choice.
- Of men and women motivated and committed to work for social transformation.
- Free from any kind of structural violence against women, such as physical and mental abuses, discrimination, conflict and poverty, among others.

III.7.3 Researcher's Dream

Having an experience with women during the field work research, the researcher's dream was to work hard with women in order to encourage and affirm them in their services. The dream aims at:

1. Working together with women in order to organize and establish networks among women in Chad, to achieve unity and consensus on common causes, and to exercise influence on decision-making processes as pressure groups.
2. Organizing network among women at all levels from the grassroots to the national levels.

3. Coming up with solidarity of women's groups which can be strengthened at national level, particularly those with programmes for women in politics, to establish mutual support and venues for the exchange of experiences.
4. Coming up with an ensemble of media which can focus and strengthen women involved in politics and public spheres. This will be done by encouraging an establishment of a national programme "Women in Politics" in Chadian society.
5. Sensitizing the media existing in the country to consecrate enough time on women in different stations in order to feature programmes and activities of national affiliates to women in public spheres.
6. Improving women coverage through educational programmes.
7. Creating awareness and raising education for equality. Media practitioners should make efforts to raise women's political awareness through education and training, publications and the use of all forms of media.
8. Providing opportunities in all forms of media to young people to discuss or debate the theme of leadership and power-sharing in order to prepare themselves for their future leadership roles in their country in terms of equality between men and women.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Concluding Remarks

The media can be used for projecting the true and positive image of women. They may also correct negative aspects of the traditional image that has been imprinted on the mind of the society as a whole, including even women themselves. Media are a potentially powerful instrument of social change and transformation; they can be used to restore humanity to its proper pedestal. Social change has to be directed not only to the status of women but also to the attitude of the society towards them. Therefore, priority has to be given to changing the image of women: from that of passive onlookers and recipients, to that of positive doers and achievers.

Media help their listeners, readers and viewers to socialize in the various ages and stages of the demanding but rewarding state of womanhood. They define norms for what people should think, say, do, wear, cook, read, explore, ignore or care about. The media are still a message in themselves. That message continues to be that women are uniquely different: they require separate treatment and instruction in ways that men do not. Media mould the opinion, thinking and the attitudes of the women. Indeed at times, the position of women portrayed in articles and stories is similar to their position in the society.

Often, the portrayal of woman in the media is quite degrading, depicting her as commercial commodity. The public should be motivated and sensitized to the issue of criminalization, politicization and commercialization of women vis-à-vis their projection in the media in a

healthier manner⁷⁸. Media's coverage of violence against women should not be exaggerated: it traumatizes and makes one to think of women as those born in and for violence.

Information from media about women reinforces the stereotypes and traditional roles of women in society. To enhance the status and position of women in society, information or messages about women should portray them in career-oriented contexts, in leading roles and in a holistic image, truly representative of African culture. Media affects women and relates to all their issues. By reinforcing stereotypes and constantly glorifying motherhood and sub-servient wifehood, the media make it difficult for women to break out of these prescribed roles, norms and behaviour patterns. In so doing, media trivialize the few statements about equal participation of women contained in the Constitution.

Journalists should redress the enormous harm done by existing portrayals and images in the media. Women themselves must resist being sold to the media. The gender bias simply "invisibilizes" women. As women struggle against sex oppression, they should also struggle for equal space in the media and make media work for them and not against them.

The media should review their coverage and bring about social justice towards women by improving the social outlook of women. Media messages should not exacerbate gender discrimination. They should encourage women to speak up, speak out or take up leadership roles. The mass media could exercise significant influence in helping to remove prejudices about women and promoting processes as equal partners.

⁷⁸ http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/issues/stereotyping/women_and_girls/

Clearly, the media do not provide a balanced picture of women's diverse lives and contributions to society in a changing world. There is much to be done with regard to the participation, portrayal and access of women to the media and its impact as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women.

For media to promote balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in their multiple roles, it is important that the government, media and NGOs should collaborate and forge joint strategies to promote gender equality and gender justice in the society. This presupposes gender sensitivity among media owners and managers. Media should foster a broad ethical content and moralizing impulse in the society. For the society to gain the benefits of the media products, media must nurture and transmit humane values of civilization. They must take upon themselves the proactive role of protectors and promoters of human rights, gender justice and democratic order.

This study sought to look at what part gender plays in the representation of politicians in the media. It provides an overview of female and male politicians' representation. The project addresses some critical questions: Do female and male politicians get equal treatment in the media? Are the media neutral in their portrayal of politicians regarding gender, or are they circulating gender stereotypes?

Initially, quality in the context of gendered representation may be defined as the aim to reflect diverse forms of social reality in programme content and to contribute to a better world. The media, after all, are among the main if not the most important institutions that can raise awareness and change attitudes regarding gender issues. Thus, the media currently constitute the real public space through which citizens understand social and political issues. If the media

articulate the political issues, then the ways in which women and men are portrayed, their access to media, and their visibility as political agents in the media can certainly matter.

The general observation is that media represent not only a potential cure for gender inequality in society and politics but also a source of this gender “sickness”. For instance, the paucity of women in decision-making roles is connected to the deficiencies in women’s representation in media content, in particular female politicians. In the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, media were requested to develop strategies to increase women’s participation in decision-making through promoting a less stereotyped image of women, offering equal access to media. The media constitute major sources of the information that people use to shape their conceptions of self, others and the world. According to media interpretation, women are seen to belong to family life and men are seen as political actors in the social world. Those who depart from such roles may be stigmatised, excluded or their actions rendered invisible. However, to change the current gender-based division in relation to private and public is to change media definitions that place men at the centre of political activity and marginalize women’s perspectives and agenda.

The project hopes to build awareness on the need for diversity in media content. It also seeks to stimulate new approaches to media portrayal of women and men in public life. This is by producing and disseminating an equal representation of women and men in the media.

Social Impact of Women Portrayal

Chadian media have consistently ignored the voices of women in issues of national interest. The media continuously marginalised women as both newsmakers and as sources of news.

Research in the field has ably demonstrated this point. There is hardly any significant progress in terms of gender-inclusiveness made by mainstream media in Chad. Often, the coverage of national issues concerns predominantly men. For example, during Members of Parliament's (MPs) meeting, even if a woman contributes to an issue, the reporters usually highlight only men's opinions as if women do not exist in that meeting. Women in the media are identified as wives, daughters or mothers while men are newsmakers. The voices of women politicians are hardly heard in equal breath as that of men.

While the role of the media in influencing policies and attitudes towards equality between men and women must not be underestimated, the media in Chad is still far from achieving this ideal. Chad is still perpetuating gender stereotypes. Women have very little to do with the media; they have consistently been denied the chance to actively participate in the shaping of the news agenda. The voices of women are missing in the media in order to be considered in decision-making process in the country.

The media are constrained by their own inability to bring in gender analysis in news reporting. Instead, the mainstream media is keen to capture the rhetoric of mostly male politicians on a daily basis without making an effort to analyse national issues from a gendered perspective. By doing this, analysis would help the media to scrutinise policies and everyday events on how they impact on both women and men. Men's voices dominated in the hard news such as concerning

economics, politics and sport. Male voices dominate even in agriculture, yet women perform most of the work.

The gender stereotyping has perpetuated the continued projection of negative and degrading images of women in the media. As a result, women and their issues continue to be trivialised; their contributions at the national level continue to be downplayed and ignored. Women's voice especially at the decision-making, policy level and their presence in issues related to the domestic sphere reinforces the skewed relations between women and men in society. For this, women's voices, at decision-making levels do not carry weight. In terms of the social positioning of women and men, men are most accessed by the media than women. Men are accessed more for hard news beats than women. Due to the current restrictive legislative environment, most media are located in central places in towns where urban dwellers are most accessible.

The media in Chad is limited in coverage. The absence of women's voices in the media also touches on the employment patterns in the media industry and the subsequent gender stereotyped duties that media houses assign to media workers. It has been a predominant tradition that men dominate in hard news beats; they are predominant in both the sources and as writers of hard news. On the other hand, women are virtually invisible in the soft genres that usually have little impact on power dynamics, governance and other hard news beats.

Women are not configured as part of the news-making process but rather as passive consumers of male ideology being peddled as news. Media reports about women are often biased. They only make news when they are caught up in scandals or unusual events. Hardly are they sources of news when it comes to issues of national importance such as politics and economics.

However, despite these challenges, actions should be established in order to take up the challenge of lobbying the media towards a culture of gender-sensitivity in news reporting. Instead of allowing media to perpetuate gender stereotypes to the exclusion of women, media can be urged to become an essential tool for promoting equality as well as the advancement of women's rights.

Recommendations

Women's equal participation in decision making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account. Achieving the goal of equal participation of women and men in decision making will provide a balance than more accurately reflects the composition of society and is needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning⁷⁹.

1. Action should be adopted to achieve equality for women and men in politics and ensure their equal representation in the government. This should begin from the grassroots education of the girl-child. Equal political opportunities for both women and men should be considered through affirmative action. The media could take this up in their portrayal of women. Families should also be encouraged to underline this in the way they socialize their children in their upbringing.

⁷⁹ UN 4th Forum on Women in Beijing, 1995

2. Laws based on the recognition of human dignity regardless of sex should be formulated. There will be a wake-up call for the government to review draconian laws in order to promote emancipation of women in the country. Also, laws should be formulated to promote or allow equal opportunities for both girls and women for property ownership and inheritance. Special committees need to be set to look into this. They could involve female law experts, for instance Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA).
3. Media should be used to increase the visibility of women and communicate their ideas, portraying them positively in the society. Media owners should encourage some programmes that highlight gender issues in order to empower women's voices by creating a platform for them in the media. There is need also to raise eyebrows on programmes and advertisements that deliberately reinforce negative presentation of women.
4. Misconceptions in religious teachings about women in shaping their image and reinforcing their unequal status in the society should be addressed.⁸⁰ Through religious forums, women should play a major role in order to remove discrimination about them.
5. Specific laws and programmes should be developed to deal with all forms of violence against women. Women should be encouraged to train for self-defence techniques in order to change cultural beliefs about them as weak creatures. Talk-shows focusing on some of the predominant issues would help.

⁸⁰ *UN 4th Forum on Women in Beijing, 1995*

6. Government and NGOs should combat negative portrayals of women and increase their presence in the media. Women's voices should be heard through government and NGOs support. The government could formulate policies on given minimum percentage of women in the government in all ministries. Indeed, the government and other stakeholders should work towards mainstreaming gender perspectives in policies and programmes in order to increase women's participation in the media.
7. Media should promote a balanced and non-stereotyped representation of women in the media. The focus of media should be directed more on issues that women can contribute to the society rather than exposing them as sexual objects. Need arises to really question the continued use of women especially in advertisements as objects.

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TANGAZA COLLEGE
The Catholic University of Eastern Africa
Social Communication

Questionnaire

Dear friend

I, Germaine Rémadji, a student in the Institute of Social Communication at Tangaza College of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), request assistance in getting information about women in politics and how the media is portraying them for study research. You can do so by answering the following questions. We thank you for your availability and generosity for accepting to participate in this research study that we are conducting.

This research is aimed to investigate on the role of women in politics and to understand the root causes of media vis a vis women holding leadership. Your kind and honest response will be appreciated. Everything you write is confidential, what you will tell us will help us to successfully carry out this research.

1. Age: Tick only one answer

18 – 25 26 – 30 31 – 36 37- Plus

2. With whom do you live? (Tick one answer)

Alone with parents with friends with family

Others (specify).....

3. I attended and completed: (Tick one answer: yes or No)

a) Primary school: Yes No

b) Secondary school: Yes No

c) University or institute: Yes No

3. What do you do?

a) I am looking for job:

b) I am employee:

c) I am unemployed:

e) House wife

Others: (specify).....

4. Do you listen to the Radio?

Yes

No

5. Do you have access to the Radio?

Yes

No

6. Do you have your own Radio? (Tick one answer)

Yes

No

7. Do you watch TV? (Tick one answer)

Yes

No

8. do you have your own TV?

Yes

No

Others (specify).....

9. Do you read news papers and magazines?

Yes

No

Other (specify).....

10. Do media focus on women?

Yes

No

11. How do media portray women?

Very well

well

bad

very bad

12. Do women participate in politics?

Yes

No

13. How do media cover political activities of women?

Very well

Well

Badly

Very bad

14. How does culture influence the media portrayal of women?

Very much

Much

little

Very little

15. In your own view, how often should women be portrayed in media?

Very often

Often

Very little

never

16. State three problems women are facing

1.....

2.....

3.....

17. Suggest three things that can be applied to improve women empowerment

1.....

2.....

3.....

18. What can be done to boost up women's participation in politics without bias?

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

19. How the Radio can be used to portray women positively?

1.....

2.....

3.....

20. Your dream for Chadian women in politics

1.....

2.....

3.....

Appendix 2

Motherhood



Feminism and the Women's Movement



Phyllis Schlafly spearheaded a nationwide campaign to stop the Equal Rights Amendment in January 1977.



Kate Millet, left, author of the best-selling feminist tract *Sexual Politics*, listens as writer Gloria Steinem speaks at a news conference given by women's liberation

activists in New York City on Dec. 17, 1970.



Veteran activist - Goldie Chu - demonstrates at a pro-ERA rally

Rise of Women's Sports



Connecticut's Diana Taurasi drives to the basket as Virginia Tech's Kerri Garden, right, defends in the first half of the Big East Women's Basketball Championship semifinal on March 10, 2003.



Jackie Joyner-Kersey jumps during the qualifying round of the women's long jump at the 5th World Track and Field Championships.

Women in Politics



U.S. Senator (D-NY) and former first lady Hillary Clinton addresses the first graduating class of CUNY Honors College.



Bailey Hutchinson.



Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez became the first Puerto Rican woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as well as the first Hispanic woman to serve as chair or ranking member of a full committee in the history of the U.S. House of Representatives.

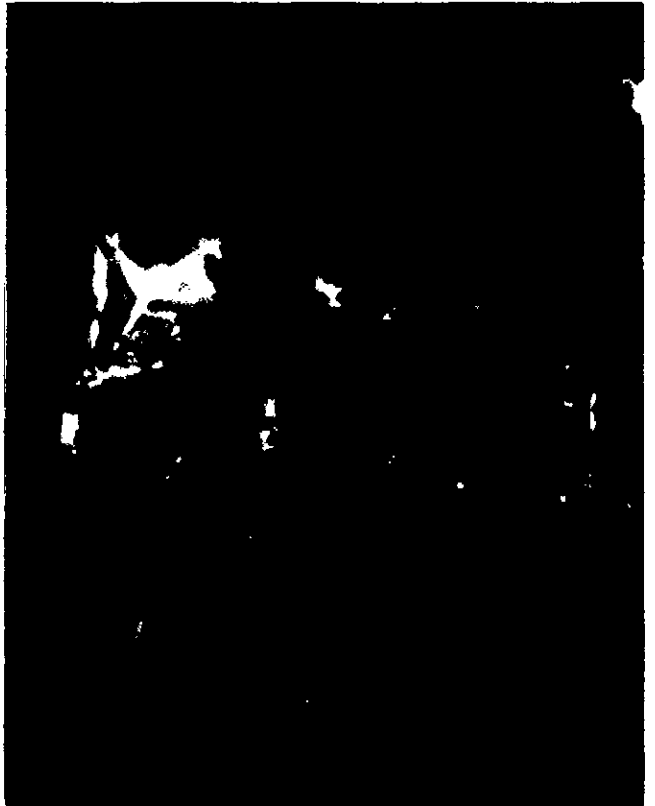
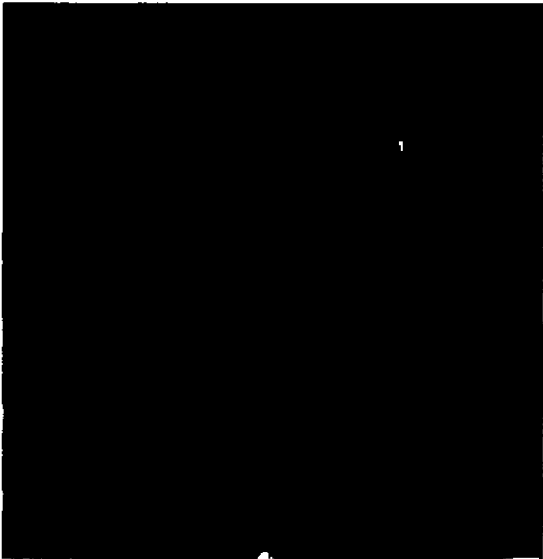


Una Clarke: the first Caribbean-American woman to serve on the New York City Council.



U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer, (D-CA), center, is flanked by fellow women senators from far left, Debbie Stabenow (D-MI); Mary Landrieu (D-LA); Barbara Mikulski (D-MD); Boxer; Dianne Feinstein (D-CA); and Patty Murray (D-WA); as they hold hands during a fund-raiser for Boxer's re-election campaign Wednesday, April 23, 2003, in San Francisco.

Media's Portrayal of Women



Media's Portrayal of Women

