

Female Journalism and security reportage in Edo State

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MASS
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DECLARATION

This project is based on a study undertaken by me, in the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts under the supervision of Dr. Collins Kediehor.

All ideas are the products of my personal research where the views of others were used, they were duly acknowledged.

ARESE JULIAN OSAWE

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty for his guidance, strength and wisdom during the period of this study.

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work was written and submitted by me, Juliet , with Matriculation number; ART210 to the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State.

DR. COLLINS KEDIEHOR

Supervisor

DATE

DR. DANIEL EKHAREFO

Head of Department

DATE

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ABSTRACT

This study is focused on examining the female journalism and security reportage in Edo State. The objectives of the study were to examine the contributions of women to security reporting in Edo State, identify the challenges faced by female journalists in security reporting within Edo State and explore whether female journalists have influenced the perception of women in the field of security reporting in Edo State. In terms of the theoretical framework, the study was based on the feminist theory and the social role theory. A survey research design was used, and questionnaire were given to residents of Benin City. Findings of the study revealed that female journalists play a significant role in raising public awareness on security issues in Edo State. The findings also showed that female journalists have successfully challenged stereotypes in security reporting. It was concluded that female journalists in Edo State are making significant strides in security reporting. The researcher therefore recommended that media houses should create more opportunities for women to participate in security-related journalism by assigning them to such beats and supporting their training and development. It was also recommended that government and non-

governmental organisations should work with media platforms to promote awareness campaigns that encourage gender equity in journalism.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Journalism is the lifeblood of any informed society. It shapes public opinion, influences decision making, and holds people in power to account. Harcup (2015) explains that Journalism is the activity of gathering, assessing, creating, and presenting news and information to the public. It involves reporting current events, issues, and trends that are important to society. Journalists work across various platforms such as newspapers, radio, television, and digital media. Their role is to inform, educate, entertain, and sometimes to influence public opinion. Journalism is considered as a pillar of democracy because it holds those in power accountable and gives voice to the voiceless.

According to Asemah (2016), journalism can be defined as the process of gathering, assessing, creating, and presenting news and information. It is a profession that involves reporting on events, people, and issues that are of public interest. Asemah describes journalism as a means of providing news and also as a tool that informs, educates, and entertains the public. It plays a role in shaping

opinions, influencing decisions, and ensuring accountability in society. Journalism, according to Asemah, requires a commitment to truth and accuracy. Journalists are expected to gather facts, check them thoroughly, and present them in an objective and fair manner. The profession also demands a sense of responsibility, as journalists must consider the impact their stories may have on the public, individuals, and institutions.

As noted by the Code of Ethics by the Society of Professional Journalists (2014) the duty of a journalist is to “seek truth and report it”.

By the 18th and 19th centuries, newspapers began to gain more popularity and influence in Britain and America. Chambers, Steiner & Fleming (2004) point out that this was a time when journalism started to take on a more prominent role in society. With the rise of newspapers, there was a shift towards mass communication, with news reaching a wider audience. During this period, journalism played a major part in shaping public opinion during significant events like the First and Second World Wars of 1914 and 1936. Newspapers were central to spreading information about the wars, providing updates on key events, and influencing public attitudes. However, despite the

growing importance of journalism, it remained a male-dominated field with most journalists, editors, and publishers being men.

The newsroom during this era was considered a tough and masculine space, which led to the exclusion of women from most journalistic roles. Newswriting was viewed as a public and powerful activity, one that was thought to be too influential for women. Society at the time believed women should be confined to domestic and social duties. The patriarchal thinking then was that the participation of women in professions like journalism ought to be limited. As a result, the early history of journalism was basically shaped by men who were responsible for writing, editing, and publishing the news. It wasn't until later with the push for gender equality and women's rights, that women began to break into journalism and challenged the traditional gender norms that had defined the industry for centuries (Chambers, Steiner & Fleming, 2004).

Women in Journalism, like many groundbreaking organizations, was born out of serendipity—but its impact has been anything but accidental. Founded by Eve Pollard, who continues to serve as its Honorary President, the organization emerged from a pressing need to amplify women's voices in the media. Pollard reflects on its early

days, tracing its journey from an idea to a thriving force that has shaped journalism for decades. Through resilience and dedication, Women in Journalism has not only endured but has also flourished, championing gender equality and empowering female journalists across generations.

Nellie Bly was one of the most prominent female journalists of the 19th century, renowned for her groundbreaking investigative reporting and for challenging gender barriers in journalism. In 1887, she went undercover as a patient in a mental institution to expose the inhumane treatment of its residents. Later, she cemented her legacy by traveling around the world in just 72 days, surpassing the fictional journey of Jules Verne's Phileas Fogg.

By the early 20th century, women's involvement in journalism had expanded significantly, particularly in feature writing, social and cultural reporting, and lifestyle journalism. Female journalists also played a crucial role in covering World War II, breaking into traditionally male-dominated newsrooms and reshaping the industry.

As described by Okoro (2018) female journalism has become an important part of the media. Women in journalism today has made a significant difference in various areas of reporting, including security

news. For many women, the job is more than just writing the news; it's a passionate pursuit. Female journalists usually work with dedication, as they carefully track news about security issues and strive to provide accurate and clear reports. This passion also shows in how audiences appreciate their work, as people are beginning to value the unique perspectives women bring when covering national and global security matters. This dedication has made female journalism both challenging and influential (Okoro, 2018).

According to Nwabueze (2015) security reporting in journalism refers to the practice of documenting and communicating information about security incidents, threats, or vulnerabilities to inform the public and hold entities accountable. This form of reporting involves investigative journalism, where reporters delve deeply into topics such as serious crimes, political corruption, or corporate wrongdoing. As noted by the author, investigative journalism is a form of journalism in which reporters deeply investigate a single topic of interest, such as serious crimes or political corruption. Additionally, the Global Investigative Journalism Network defines security reporting as the process of documenting and notifying relevant authorities or stakeholders about threats,

cybersecurity incidents, such as data breaches or unauthorized access, which compromise the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of information systems and data.

James (2017) explains that in the past, journalism was largely controlled by men and women were assigned to "soft" news areas like fashion, lifestyle, and entertainment. Media organisations underestimated women's ability to handle serious topics such as security reporting. However, over time, journalism has evolved into a respected profession where female journalists have demonstrated their competence in covering various issues including politics, crime, conflict, and national security. Eze (2016) says that the media has helped more women join journalism by giving them a chance to report on important issues, like security and social problems. This has allowed women to speak out about things that affect society, such as violence and safety concerns. The media has given them a platform to share these issues, helping more women get involved in journalism and challenge old ideas about what roles women should have.

Traditionally, journalism in the area of security reporting was seen as a male-dominated field. Men were usually the ones reporting

from war zones, political crises, and crime scenes. Women were rarely given the opportunity to cover such stories because of the belief that security reporting was too demanding or dangerous for them. This perception made it difficult for women to gain recognition in the field (Ojo, 2015). But, as society continues to modernise, women are gradually making their mark in journalism in security reporting. They have shown they can handle challenging and risky reports just as effectively as their male counterparts. Female journalists have also introduced fresh ideas and have contributed to promoting the involvement of more women in journalism (Obi, 2014).

Two well-known female journalists who have made significant contributions to security journalism are Christiane Amanpour and Lyse Doucet. According to the CNN, Christiane Amanpour is an international correspondent that has reported extensively on global security issues including conflicts in the Middle East and Africa. She has covered wars, peace processes, and humanitarian crises, while putting herself at great personal risk to bring critical information to the world (Amanpour, 2011). Similarly, Lyse Doucet, who is a senior BBC correspondent has reported from conflict zones around the globe including Afghanistan and Iraq. Doucet's coverage has

highlighted the impact of conflict on women and children, and has brought attention to the often-overlooked aspects of security issues (Doucet, 2019). Both women have used their platforms to provide in-depth analysis of security challenges, helping the public understand the complexity of global conflicts and the human cost of violence. Through their work, they have set a powerful example of how female journalists can contribute meaningfully to the field of security journalism.

Emeka (2013) holds that one of the most important contributions women have made to journalism is their ability to focus on stories that are usually ignored. They draw attention to issues such as the effects of conflict on women and children, human rights abuses, gender-based violence, and the struggles of communities during crises. By doing this, female journalists have reshaped the way security issues are reported and have inspired more women to join the field. Additionally, Adeola (2012) argues that digital media has played a major role in transforming journalism. Platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube have made it easier for female journalists to share news and quickly spread information. This change has opened new doors for women in journalism, allowing them to connect

directly with audiences, share their insights, and actively participate in discussions about security and other important issues.

Despite their contributions, female journalists still face numerous challenges when it comes to security reporting. According to James (2017), gender bias remains a major problem, as many people still believe that certain areas of journalism are more suitable for men. This stereotype leads to doubts about the skills of female journalists, forcing them to work even harder to gain respect. Discrimination is also an issue, as women are often denied the opportunity to cover significant events or take on leadership roles. They also face challenges such as unequal pay, harassment, and a lack of institutional support. As James explains, female journalists are trying to bridge this gap, but they continue to face resistance from audiences and organisations that undervalue their efforts. This issue affects how much women are seen and respected in journalism and slows down the progress toward achieving gender equality in the field.

It is clear that women are playing an essential role in shaping the future of journalism by bringing fresh ideas and perspectives to audiences. As journalism continues to grow and change, it is

important to recognise the role of women in security reporting, the challenges they face, and the impact they have made in the profession. Therefore, this study aims to investigate Female Journalism and security reportage in Edo State

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Female journalism in the area of security reporting is a growing field in Edo State, but women remain underrepresented. Despite their contributions to the profession, female journalists in Edo State face various challenges, including gender bias, stereotypes, and discrimination. Many media organisations within the state still favour male journalists for security-related assignments and this seems to have limited the opportunities available to women. This unequal treatment makes it difficult for female journalists to gain recognition and respect in the field of security reporting.

As noted by Asemah (2016) a major challenge affecting journalism in Edo State is the lack of attention given to issues affecting women during security crises. News coverage tend to focus more on general events, while overlooking the experiences and struggles of women and children during conflicts or emergencies. This inadequate representation further highlights the imbalance in

security reporting within the state. As these challenges persist, this study aims to investigate Female Journalism and security reportage in Edo State.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine the contributions of women to security reporting in Edo State.
2. Identify the challenges faced by female journalists in security reporting within Edo State.
3. Explore whether female journalists have influenced the perception of women in the field of security reporting in Edo State.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the contributions of women journalists to security reporting in Edo State?
2. What challenges do female journalists face in security reporting within Edo State?
3. How have female journalists influenced the perception of women in security reporting in Edo State?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is important to various stakeholders. First, it will showcase the valuable contributions of women to security reporting in Edo State, demonstrating how their involvement can encourage more women to pursue careers in this field. It will also highlight the difficulties they face, which can help guide the creation of strategies and policies aimed at supporting and promoting female journalists in security reporting.

For journalists, this research will emphasize the need for inclusivity and diversity in reporting security issues. It will reveal areas where female journalists face challenges, helping to improve their working conditions and career prospects. For media organisations, the study will serve as a reminder of the importance of promoting gender equality by offering equal opportunities for women in security reporting. This can lead to a more balanced and fair approach to covering security-related matters in Edo State.

Additionally, the research will assist government agencies and policymakers in understanding how female journalists contribute to raising awareness about security issues, especially those affecting

women and children. This could influence policies aimed at supporting gender-sensitive reporting and enhancing women's participation in the media. Finally, this study will provide valuable insights for future research on gender equality in journalism and media. It will serve as a foundation for further exploration into how female journalists in Edo State influence public perceptions of security issues and contribute to improved media coverage.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The focus of this study is on journalists in Edo State and their roles in reporting security-related issues. It aims to examine how women contribute to security reporting, the challenges they encounter, and their impact on media coverage of security matters. The research is limited to journalists working at ITV and EBS in Benin City, Edo State. It will explore their experiences, perspectives, and how they perceive their roles in security reporting. The study will not cover journalists outside these two media organisations.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

- **Journalism:** This is the activity of gathering, assessing, creating, and presenting news and information to residents of Edo State. It involves reporting current events, issues, and trends that are

important to residents in the State.

- **Female Journalism:** Female journalism refers to the participation of female journalists in gathering, analyzing, and presenting news about security matters to the public, especially in Edo State.
- **Reporting:** It involves the process of giving account of news events through the media to those within Edo State.
- **Security Reporting:** This involves the coverage of topics such as crime rates, terrorism, political unrest, community safety, and responses to emergencies within Edo State.
- **Edo State:** In this study, Edo State serves as the geographical focus with emphasis on female journalists working in media organisations such as ITV and EBS in Benin City.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Female Journalism

According to Asemah (2016), female journalism refers to the practice of journalism by women, focusing on issues that affect women or providing a female perspective on various topics. It is a significant part of the media industry that promotes gender diversity and ensures that women's voices and experiences are represented in news coverage and storytelling. Nwabueze (2015) explains that female journalism includes women working in various forms of media such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and digital platforms. Unlike traditional journalism that has been mostly male-dominated, female journalism emphasizes giving women a platform to share their viewpoints and highlight gender-related issues that may be underreported.

Lippmann (1922) in Asemah (2016) suggests that the media helps shape public perception by creating "pictures in our heads." This idea applies to female journalism, as how women are portrayed and the issues concerning them are influenced by how journalists present these topics. Female journalism plays a vital role in reshaping

societal views about gender, challenging stereotypes, and advocating for women's rights. According to McQuail (2010), the history of female journalism can be traced back to the struggle for women's participation in the media industry, which was once restricted due to societal norms and discrimination. Over time, women have broken barriers to establish themselves as credible journalists, editors, and even media owners.

Gordon (2015) highlights several important functions of female journalism in society. They serve as a source of information and also empower women by giving them a voice in various social, political, and economic issues. Additionally, female journalism provides a platform for public discourse where women's opinions, struggles, and achievements can be discussed and appreciated. Agba (2012) outlined the following major functions of female journalism:

- I. Information Dissemination: Female journalism provides accurate and timely information about women's issues, including health, education, politics, and gender equality. This helps in promoting awareness and encouraging informed decision-making among women and society at large.
- II. Public Forum: It serves as a platform where women can freely

express their opinions, share experiences, and engage in discussions about issues that affect them. This function encourages democratic participation by allowing women's voices to be heard.

III. Agenda Setting: Female journalists can influence what issues are considered important in society by choosing which stories to cover and how to present them. By highlighting issues like gender-based violence, female education, and women's health, they can draw attention to matters that may otherwise be overlooked.

IV. Socialization: Female journalism helps in socializing individuals, especially young women and girls, by presenting positive role models and sharing stories that promote gender equality. It also helps in challenging cultural norms that limit women's participation in various fields.

V. Watchdog Function: Female journalists play a crucial role in holding power structures accountable, most especially when it comes to issues affecting women. Investigative reporting can expose injustices, discrimination, and policies that harm women's rights.

VI. Empowerment and Advocacy: Female journalism contributes to empowering women by providing them with a voice and advocating for their rights. It also encourages more women to pursue careers in

journalism and leadership roles within the media industry.

VII. Education: Female journalism plays an educational role by providing valuable information on topics related to women's health, safety, empowerment, and legal rights. This helps raise awareness and promotes positive change in society.

2.2.1 Conceptualization of Security Reporting

Security reporting is the process of gathering, analyzing, and sharing information about issues related to safety, crime, conflicts, and other security matters through the mass media. According to Okoro (2018), it involves investigating and reporting on topics like crime rates, terrorism, political unrest, community safety, and emergency responses. The goal is to inform the public and authorities about security threats and measures being taken to address them.

James (2017) explains that security reporting covers various aspects of safety concerns, both locally and internationally. It includes reporting on issues like armed robbery, kidnapping, communal clashes, insurgency, and other forms of violence. In Nigeria, for instance, reports on communal violence or attacks by criminal groups are often covered by the media to raise awareness and

promote public safety. This type of journalism requires reporters to have a deep understanding of security issues, including the language, procedures, and techniques used by security agencies to effectively report such matters.

Asemah (2019) points out that security reporting demands special skills and sensitivity. It's not just about presenting facts but also about doing so accurately, responsibly, and ethically. Poorly written security reports can cause panic, spread misinformation, or even worsen security situations. Therefore, reporters must handle sensitive information carefully and verify their sources before publishing. Today, many media organizations recognize the importance of security reporting due to its impact on public perception and safety. As Okoro (2018) notes, security reporting plays a crucial role in keeping people informed about potential dangers and encouraging them to take necessary precautions. It also helps shape public opinion and influences policy decisions by providing accurate and timely information.

As security challenges continue to rise, security reporting has become a major aspect of journalism. It plays a vital role in informing the public about various safety issues. With the increase in crimes,

terrorism, communal conflicts, political violence, and other security threats, the need for accurate and timely reporting has grown significantly. To meet this demand, many media outlets have established specialized crime and security desks that focus solely on reporting security-related issues. These desks are responsible for gathering reliable information, conducting thorough investigations, and providing detailed reports on ongoing security concerns. Additionally, some media organizations have launched entire publications or dedicated segments on television, radio, and online platforms to address security matters effectively. By doing so, they help the public stay aware of potential dangers, understand the efforts of security agencies, and make informed decisions about their safety. Furthermore, security reporting plays a key role in influencing government policies, promoting accountability, and encouraging dialogue on how to improve safety measures in society, (Nwabueze, 2015).

2.2.2 Sources of Security Reporting

For security journalists, knowing where to gather information is just as important as understanding what to report. Asemah (2016) highlighted the following as essential sources that can help security

reporters effectively cover security-related issues:

I. Personal Observation: One of the most valuable sources for security stories is direct observation. A security reporter should be alert to unusual occurrences or suspicious activities, such as protests, clashes, or heightened security measures. Observing these situations closely can lead to in-depth reports that bring hidden issues to public attention and prompt authorities to take action.

II. Security Agencies and Officials: Information from police officers, military personnel, intelligence agencies, security experts, community vigilantes, and even government officials plays a significant role in security reporting. Interviews and press releases from these sources provide firsthand insights into ongoing security operations, crime investigations, and strategies for combating security threats.

III. Regulatory and Governing Bodies: Agencies like the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), the Department of State Services (DSS), the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), and international organizations such as Interpol are important sources of security-related information. Journalists can visit their offices, check their press releases, and build good relationships with their spokespersons to stay updated on security matters.

IV. Security and Human Rights Organizations: Organizations that focus on security and human rights, such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and local NGOs, can provide valuable information on human rights abuses, conflicts, and efforts to maintain peace. Their reports, findings, and press conferences are essential resources for investigative journalism.

V. Inside Sources: Sometimes, reliable information comes from insiders within security agencies, community groups, or government bodies. These sources can provide confidential details that are not publicly available, especially when covering sensitive security issues, corruption, or misconduct.

VI. Government Ministries and Agencies: Familiarizing oneself with the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior, and other government agencies related to security can open up new sources of information. These bodies provide updates on policies, reforms, and official statements related to national security.

VII. Eyewitnesses and Victims: People who have witnessed or experienced security incidents are often valuable sources of information. Interviews with victims of violence, survivors of attacks, or community members affected by security challenges can offer

unique perspectives and enhance the accuracy of reports.

VIII. The Mass Media and the Internet: Other media outlets, official websites of security agencies, social media platforms, and online news portals are useful sources of information. They provide breaking news, expert opinions, and real-time updates on security situations, allowing journalists to stay informed and gather fresh reports.

2.3 Factors to Look Out for in Security Reporting

Security reporting involves covering sensitive and often dangerous topics, requiring journalists to be cautious, accurate, and ethical. According to Nwabueze (2015), there are several key factors that security reporters should focus on to ensure responsible and effective reporting:

I. Understanding Security Issues and Audience: Security reporters need to have a strong understanding of various security problems, such as terrorism, crime, political violence, communal conflicts, and disaster management. They should also understand the concerns and interests of their audience. For example, if a community is affected by communal clashes, reporting on that issue would be more relevant to them. Knowing what the audience cares about helps

journalists choose important stories and provide useful information that can guide or protect people.

II. Reliable Sources of Information: One of the most important things in security reporting is getting accurate information from trustworthy sources. Journalists should build good relationships with security agencies, eyewitnesses, victims, government officials, and non-governmental organizations. It's important to cross-check facts from different sources before publishing any report. This ensures accuracy and prevents the spread of false information that could cause confusion or fear. Relying on a single source can be risky, so confirming details from multiple sources is essential.

III. Safety and Risk Management: Reporting on security issues means working in dangerous situations. Journalists need to put their safety first by planning their coverage carefully. This includes using protective gear when necessary, keeping in touch with their news organizations, and avoiding risky areas unless properly prepared. Preparing for worst-case scenarios, such as attacks or natural disasters, and having emergency contacts ready can be lifesaving. Safety training is also very helpful for journalists working in risky environments.

IV. Verification and Accuracy: Misinformation in security reporting can cause unnecessary panic and make situations worse. That's why journalists must double-check facts and confirm them with multiple reliable sources before publishing any report. Publishing incorrect information not only harms the credibility of the journalist but also affects the public's trust in the media. Being accurate is a responsibility that every security reporter must take seriously.

V. Ethical Considerations: Reporting on security issues is not just about gathering facts; it's also about doing so responsibly. Journalists must balance the public's right to know with ethical reporting. They should avoid sensationalism or exaggerating facts just to attract attention. Respecting the privacy of victims and their families is crucial. Journalists should also be aware of how their reports might affect ongoing investigations or put individuals in danger. Ethical reporting ensures that information is shared responsibly and respectfully.

VI. Government Policies and Security Agencies: Security journalists should be familiar with the laws, regulations, and guidelines related to national security. They need to understand the roles and duties of security agencies like the police, military, and intelligence services.

Knowing these rules helps journalists provide accurate reports and avoid conflicts with authorities. It also ensures that their reports are legally sound and not putting them or their news organization at risk of legal issues.

VII. Crisis and Conflict Reporting: During crises like terrorist attacks, communal clashes, or natural disasters, quick and accurate reporting is very important. Journalists should be careful with their choice of words to avoid causing unnecessary panic. Instead, they should provide factual and helpful information that can guide people on what to do and where to get help. Sensational headlines and unverified reports can make bad situations even worse.

VIII. Technological Tools and Cybersecurity: As technology advances, so do the threats that journalists need to report on. Cybercrimes like hacking, cyber fraud, and online terrorism are becoming more common. Security journalists should stay informed about these threats and use secure communication tools to protect their sources and themselves. Knowing how to safely collect and share information is an important skill in modern security reporting.

2.4 The Role of Female Journalists in Security Reporting

Female journalists have become increasingly important in the field of security reporting, bringing fresh perspectives and breaking gender barriers in a field once dominated by men. Their involvement is making security journalism more inclusive and encouraging more women to pursue careers in this challenging area. According to Asemah (2016), one significant contribution of female journalists in security reporting is their ability to shed light on issues that affect women and children during conflicts or crises. In many cases, the experiences of women and children are overlooked or underreported. Female journalists focus on these neglected stories, highlight the challenges faced by vulnerable groups during wars, natural disasters, terrorism, and communal conflicts. They help create awareness and push for more inclusive policies that consider the safety and welfare of everyone affected by insecurity by drawing attention to these issues.

Gibbs and Warhover (2013) argue that female journalists have a unique ability to report sensitive security issues in a more relatable and compassionate manner. They are skilled at connecting with victims of violence, most especially women and children, and sharing

their stories with empathy and accuracy. Their approach helps humanize security reporting, making it not just about statistics and events but also about real people who are affected by these crises. This ability to capture personal experiences can inspire positive changes, such as better protection measures for vulnerable populations. Boyle (2016) also points out that female journalists have played a key role in increasing attention to underreported security topics, such as gender-based violence during conflicts, trafficking, domestic abuse, and the exploitation of women and children. They strive to bring these issues to the forefront, encouraging policymakers, security agencies, and the public to take these problems seriously. Their work helps ensure that the voices of affected individuals are heard and that their stories are not ignored.

Additionally, female journalists bring diversity and fresh viewpoints to security reporting, which helps provide more balanced and comprehensive coverage. Their perspectives often include angles that may be overlooked by their male counterparts, resulting in more well-rounded reporting. This diversity promotes news coverage and shows that journalism is a profession where people of all genders can thrive. Nwabueze (2015) maintains that female journalists also

serve as role models for young women who aspire to work in security reporting or other fields traditionally dominated by men. Seeing women confidently and professionally reporting on dangerous and complex security issues sends a powerful message that women are capable of succeeding in any career they choose, regardless of the challenges. By proving their competence in security journalism, female reporters help challenge outdated beliefs about what women can or cannot do.

Their achievements in this field motivate young women to pursue their ambitions, even when they face opposition or criticism. Female journalists demonstrate that talent, skill, and dedication matter far more than gender, and their success paves the way for a more inclusive and welcoming environment for women in the workplace. Furthermore, their presence encourages more women to take an interest in security-related topics, whether as journalists, researchers, or advocates for change, (Okoro, 2018).

2.5 Challenges Faced by Female Journalists in Security Reporting

Female journalists in security reporting face numerous challenges that make their work more difficult compared to their male colleagues. These challenges as noted by Frank (2013) include

gender bias, harassment, unequal opportunities, safety risks, and balancing work with personal life.

I. Gender Bias: Security reporting is seen as a male-dominated field, with many people believing that women are not suited for covering dangerous or complex security issues. This bias forces female journalists to work harder to prove their credibility and competence, especially when reporting on topics like terrorism, armed conflicts, and crime, which are often considered to be “men’s work.”

II. Harassment and Discrimination: Harassment is a major issue faced by female journalists in security reporting. This can range from inappropriate comments by colleagues to hostile behavior from security agents, interviewees, or even online attacks. Such negative experiences can create a toxic work environment, making it harder for women to focus on their work and feel respected in their roles.

III. Limited Opportunities: Female journalists struggle to access high-profile assignments in security reporting. Critical stories involving conflict zones, investigative reporting, or political violence are usually assigned to their male colleagues. This unequal treatment limits their professional growth and denies them the chance to showcase their talent and build successful careers in security journalism.

IV. Unequal Pay: Gender pay gaps are also common in security reporting, where female journalists are sometimes paid less than their male counterparts, even when they do the same work or have equal qualifications and experience. This unfair treatment discourages many women from pursuing or continuing careers in security reporting.

V. Balancing Work and Family: Security reporting involves unpredictable schedules, including covering crises, conducting investigations, and traveling to risky areas. This demanding nature of the job makes it challenging for female journalists to balance their work and family responsibilities, especially in societies where women are expected to handle most of the caregiving roles.

VI. Bias from Authorities and Sources: Some security agents, government officials, and sources may be reluctant to cooperate with female journalists or may question their ability to report accurately on sensitive security matters. This bias can affect the quality of interviews and limit female reporters' access to critical information.

VII. Safety Concerns: Covering security-related events such as riots, protests, terrorist attacks, or areas with high crime rates poses significant safety risks for female journalists. In addition to the

general dangers faced by all journalists, women may also face gender-specific threats, including harassment, sexual assault, or targeted violence.

VIII. Underrepresentation in Decision-Making: Women are often underrepresented in leadership positions within news organizations, especially when it comes to security reporting. This lack of representation makes it difficult for female journalists to have their voices heard and their concerns addressed.

IX. Psychological Stress: Reporting on traumatic events such as violence, war, and natural disasters can take a heavy emotional toll on female journalists. Without proper mental health support and counseling, the psychological stress can affect their well-being and professional performance.

2.6 Empirical Review

Reuters Institute (2024) examined "Women and Leadership in the News Media 2024: Evidence from 12 Markets." This study aimed to examine the representation of women in top editorial positions across major news organizations in 12 countries. It focused on gender disparities in leadership roles and progress toward gender equality in media management. Using content analysis of 240 leading online and

offline news outlets, the researchers identified the gender of top editors and compared their presence across various media organizations. The findings revealed that men overwhelmingly held top editorial positions, with women occupying only a small percentage of leadership roles across all surveyed markets, indicating a global issue of gender imbalance in media leadership. The study concluded that although some progress had been made, more inclusive policies, mentorship programs, and organizational reforms were necessary to improve women's representation in top editorial positions.

North, L. (2016), carried out a study titled "The Gender of Journalism: The Structure and Status of Women in News Media." This research aimed to explore the structural barriers and challenges faced by female journalists in achieving equality within newsrooms. The study employed qualitative interviews and surveys conducted with female journalists across various news organizations. Findings showed that women in journalism usually encountered gender-based discrimination, unequal pay, limited access to high-profile assignments, and a lack of mentorship opportunities. Additionally, cultural and organizational biases were identified as significant

obstacles preventing women from advancing in their careers. The study concluded that addressing these issues required systemic changes, including implementing policies promoting diversity, mentorship programs, and equal opportunities for women to take on leadership roles within the news media industry.

Abba, Abbasani, and Msughterani (2021) carried out a study titled Comparative Content Analysis of Press Coverage of Kidnapping Cases in Nigeria. They examined how major newspapers in Nigeria, like Daily Trust and The Guardian, report on kidnapping cases. The theoretical framework adopted was the agenda setting theory, while the methodology was content analysis. The study revealed that kidnapping is a widespread problem in Nigeria, mainly caused by ongoing conflicts and insecurity. However, the findings noted that media reports lack the depth needed to promote effective responses from the government and the public. The findings showed that newspapers typically presented kidnapping incidents as regular news stories without detailed analysis or suggestions for solutions. Additionally, the tone of most reports was neutral, focusing more on the conflict surrounding the incidents rather than the actual kidnapping cases. It was concluded that while the media raises public

awareness about kidnapping, it falls short in providing constructive information that could encourage meaningful responses from the authorities and the public.

The studies by Reuters Institute (2024), North (2016), and Abba, Abbasaniel, and Msughteraniel (2021) share some similarities with the objectives of this study. Both the Reuters Institute and North's studies aimed to examine gender disparities in media leadership and journalism, while highlighting the underrepresentation of women and the challenges they face in advancing their careers. These studies align with the objectives of this research, most especially the aim to identify the challenges faced by female journalists in security reporting within Edo State. North's study which focuses on structural barriers and gender-based discrimination, is closely related to understanding the difficulties female journalists encounter when reporting on security issues. Furthermore, the emphasis on mentorship programs and inclusive policies in the Reuters Institute study relates to the objective of exploring how female journalists contribute to the field of security reporting and influence public perception.

However, there are also notable differences between the

previous studies and the current research. While the Reuters Institute and North's studies mainly focused on gender inequality in media leadership and newsroom culture, this research targets female journalists' contributions to security reporting in Edo State. Additionally, the study by Abba, Abbasani, and Msughterani (2021) focused on content analysis of press coverage of kidnapping cases, which is related to security reporting but not directly about the role of female journalists. This study is distinct because it aims to examine how female journalists have influenced public perception of women in security reporting, a topic not addressed by the previous studies. In all, while the existing studies provide valuable information into gender disparities in journalism, this research aims to fill the gap by focusing on female journalists' roles and experiences in security reporting within Edo State.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the Feminist Media Theory and the Social Role Theory as its theoretical framework.

2.7.1 Feminist Media Theory

Feminist Media Theory emerged in the 1970s through the works of various scholars who aimed to explore how gender influences media practices and how women are portrayed and treated in the media industry. The theory examines how women have been underrepresented, misrepresented, or excluded from many areas of the media, including security reporting. It also looks at how the media can either uphold or challenge traditional gender roles and stereotypes, calling for a fair and equal representation of women in all aspects of media.

Key Principles of Feminist Media Theory include:

1. **Representation of Women:** The theory highlights how women are usually underrepresented or portrayed inaccurately in media, especially in male-dominated fields like security reporting. Women are depicted in traditional roles, which can undermine their credibility and professionalism.
2. **Challenging Gender Norms:** Feminist Media Theory aims to break down stereotypes about women and promote diverse and realistic portrayals of women in various fields, including security journalism.
3. **Empowerment through Media:** The theory argues that media can be a powerful tool for empowering women by providing them with

platforms to share their experiences and showcase their contributions, thereby promoting gender equality.

4. Critique of Media Structures: It also criticizes media organizations for being male-dominated and not providing equal opportunities for women, especially in areas like conflict or security reporting.

The Feminist Media Theory is relevant to this study as it addresses the issue of gender inequality in media, particularly in the field of security reporting. Female journalists in security reporting face various challenges related to representation, credibility, and opportunities. This theory helps explain those challenges and supports the study's objective of exploring how female journalists challenge traditional gender roles and push for equal opportunities and accurate representation in security reporting.

2.7.2 Social Role Theory

The Social Role Theory was developed by Alice Eagly in 1987. It holds that gender differences are largely shaped by the social roles men and women are expected to fulfill within society. These roles are influenced by cultural beliefs and societal expectations. According to the theory, people tend to adopt behaviors and practices that align with the roles society expects them to perform based on their

gender.

Key Principles of Social Role Theory include:

1. Gender Roles are Socially Constructed: Gender behaviors are not biologically determined; instead, they are learned and reinforced through socialization.
2. Gendered Expectations Influence Behavior: People act in ways that align with societal expectations for their gender, which can influence how female journalists are perceived and treated in the field of security reporting.
3. Roles are Context-Dependent: The roles assigned to individuals can differ across various cultural, social, and professional settings. For example, women in security reporting may face unique challenges depending on the region or community they operate within.
4. Reinforcement of Stereotypes: When individuals conform to expected gender roles, these roles become further reinforced, making it harder for women to break into male-dominated fields like security reporting.

The Social Role Theory is relevant to this study because it helps

explain how societal expectations and cultural norms shape the roles that women are expected to play in security journalism. In many societies, security reporting is often seen as a risky, challenging, and male-dominated field, which makes it difficult for female journalists to be taken seriously or given equal opportunities. This theory shows that gender roles are not natural but are created and reinforced by society through socialization. As a result, female journalists may face discrimination, limited access to leadership positions, and unequal recognition for their contributions in security reporting. They are assigned 'softer' news beats, while important security issues are considered the domain of their male colleagues. Despite these barriers, many female journalists are working hard to break these stereotypes and prove their competence in the field. By highlighting their struggles and successes, the Social Role Theory helps us understand how female journalists are challenging traditional gender norms and gradually reshaping their roles within security reporting. This theory supports the idea that changing societal attitudes and providing equal opportunities can help women excel in this field and contribute significantly to balanced and accurate security reporting.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive survey research design, which is a method used to collect information from a large group of people through tools like questionnaire. This design is useful for understanding people's attitudes, opinions, and behaviours on a specific topic because it allows the researcher to gather detailed information from many individuals in a structured and unbiased way. By using this approach, the researcher can reach a different participants, making the findings more accurate and reliable. Additionally, the survey design is practical for collecting data from a sample of the population that accurately represents the whole group, making it easier to draw conclusions that can be applied to the larger population. This design was suitable for the study because it allowed the researcher to collect a wide range of views on security reporting from participants in a straightforward and organised manner.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population for this study includes staff members of the Edo Broadcasting Service (EBS) and Independent Television (ITV) who

are involved in security reporting. According to information obtained from the Front Desk of the organizations, the total population is 206, with EBS having 155 staff members and ITV having 51.

3.3 Sample Size

Given the small population size, the researcher selected 50% of the population, making a total sample size of 103 participants. This decision follows Udoakah's (2006) suggestion that when dealing with a small population, a proportionate sample size should be selected to ensure adequate representation. He noted that using a reasonable percentage, like 50%, provides a good balance between accuracy and practicality, especially when the population size is manageable.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

The researcher used a simple random sampling technique to select participants for the study. This method was chosen because it gives everyone in the population an equal chance of being selected, ensuring fair and unbiased representation.

3.5 Instrument of Data Collection

The researcher used a questionnaire as the main instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: the demographic section and the security reporting section. The

demographic section gathered information about participants' age, gender, and work experience. The security reporting section contained 18 items designed to collect information about their experiences, challenges, and opinions related to security reporting. The questionnaire used a Likert scale format, where participants indicated their level of agreement with statements by choosing from options like strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

3.6 Validity of the Instrument

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, it underwent a face validity test. The researcher presented it to the research supervisor and two lecturers from the Department of Mass Communication for their review. Their suggestions were considered, and necessary adjustments were made before distributing the questionnaire to the participants.

3.7 Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the questionnaire was tested through a pilot study. The researcher distributed 20 copies of the questionnaire to staff members of EBS and ITV who were not part of the main study. Their responses were used to check whether the instrument was reliable and suitable for the study.

3.8 Method of Data Collection

The researcher and a personal assistant personally distributed the questionnaires to the respondents at their workplaces. This approach allowed the researcher to explain the purpose of the study, address any concerns the participants had, and ensure a high response rate.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The collected data was analysed using frequency tables and simple percentages to present the findings clearly. Each table was explained to make the results easy to understand. The formula for calculating simple percentages was:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Respondents}}{\text{Total of Respondents}} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the results of the survey. A total of 103 copied of questionnaire were handed out, and the responses are shown in tables and explained using simple percentages and frequency counts. Out of the 103 given out, 100 were returned, but 3 were not filled in correctly. This means the response rate was 97%, and the analysis was based on the 100 correctly completed questionnaires.

4.1 Data presentation

SECTION A

This section covers the demography of respondents in the study

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by Gender

Gender	No of respondents	Percentage
Male	40	40%
Female	60	60%
Total	100	100%

Source: field survey 2025

Table 1 shows that out of the total participants, 60 were female making up 60% of the sample size. This indicates that there were more female respondents than male in the study.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by Age

Age	No of respondents	Percentage
18 - 25	8	8%
26 - 30	20	20%
31 -35	22	22%
36 and above	40	40%
Total	100	100%

Source: field survey 2025

Table 2 shows the age distribution of the respondents. The highest number which was 40 respondents (40%), were aged 36 and above. The data indicates that the majority of the respondents were adults aged 36 and above, while the youngest age group had the fewest participants.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by Marital Status

Marital Status	No of respondents	Percentage
Single	58	58%
Married	40	40%
Divorced	2	2%
Total	100	100%

Source: field survey 2025

Table 3 show that majority of the respondents (58%) were single. This implies that most of the people who took part in the study were single, with a smaller proportion being married and divorced.

Table 4: Distribution by Station

Station	Respondents	Percentage
EBS	52	52%
ITV	48	48%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey 2025

Table 4 shows that most of the respondents (52%) were from EBS, while the others were from ITV. This indicates that the respondents were fairly evenly split between the two stations, with EBS having a slightly higher representation.

SECTION B

This section covers questions that provided data concerning the study from the respondents.

Table 5: Female journalists in Edo State play a critical role in promoting public awareness of security issues

Variables	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	40	40%
Agree	52	52%
Neutral	8	8%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%

Total	100	100%
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Source: field survey 2025

Table 5 shows the respondents' views on the role of female journalists in Edo State in promoting public awareness of security issues. A large majority agreed with the statement (92%). This indicates that most respondents believe female journalists play a vital role in raising awareness about security matters in the state.

Table 6: Female journalists provide valuable insights into security-related issues in Edo State.

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	52	52%
Agree	42	42%
Neutral	6	6%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Source: field survey 2025

Table 6 indicates that 52% of the respondents strongly agreed that female journalists provide valuable insights into security-related issues in Edo State. This shows that there is strong support for the view that female journalists play an important role in providing

meaningful perspectives on security matters in the state.

Table 7: Women in security reporting offer unique perspectives that enhance the quality of news coverage in Edo State

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	53	53%
Agree	39	39%
Neutral	8	8%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Sources: Field Survey 2025

Table 7 highlights the respondents' views on whether women in security reporting offer unique perspectives that improve the quality of news coverage in Edo State. A majority of respondents agreed with this idea, with 53% strongly agreeing. This shows that most participants believe that women bring important and distinctive contributions to security-related news reporting in the state

Table 8: The contributions of female journalists to security reporting are widely recognized in Edo State

Variable	Number of	Percentage
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	respondents	
Strongly Agree	17	17%
Agree	48	48%
Neutral	10	10%
Disagree	25	25%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Source: field survey 2025

Table 8 shows that a larger percentage of the respondents affirmed (48%) that the contributions of female journalists to security reporting are widely recognised in Edo State. This indicates that the majority believe female journalists' efforts in security reporting are recognised.

Table 9: Female journalists face discrimination in accessing security-related news coverage

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	32	32%
Agree	46	46%
Neutral	11	11%
Disagree	9	9%
Strongly Disagree	2	2%

Total	100	100%
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Source: field survey 2025

Table 9 presents the respondents' opinions on whether female journalists face discrimination when trying to access security-related news coverage. A greater percentage of the respondents agreed (46%) with the statement. This shows that most participants believe female journalists do experience some level of discrimination in the field of security reporting in Edo State.

Table 10:. Safety concerns hinder female journalists from reporting on security issues effectively.

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	31	31%
Agree	39	39%
Neutral	15	15%
Disagree	11	11%
Strongly Disagree	4	4%
Total	100	100%

Source: field survey 2025

Table 10 indicates that a combined 70% of the respondents agreed

that safety concerns prevent female journalists from effectively reporting on security issues. These results reveal that the majority of respondents believe safety concerns significantly impact the ability of female journalists to cover security-related stories in Edo State.

Table 11: Female journalists have limited access to resources needed for effective security reporting.

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	29	29%
Agree	40	40%
Neutral	17	17%
Disagree	8	8%
Strongly Disagree	6	6%
Total	100	100%

Source: field survey 2025

Table 11 shows the respondents views on whether female journalists have limited access to the resources needed for effective security reporting. A total of 40% agreed with the statement. This indicates that most participants believe female journalists are lacking the necessary resources to report on security issues effectively in Edo State.

Table 12: Cultural and societal expectations affect the participation of women in security reporting

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly	30	30%

Agree		
Agree	61	61%
Neutral	15	5%
Disagree	4	4%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Source: field survey 2025

Table 12 posits that a majority of the respondents (61%) agreed that cultural and societal expectations affect the participation of women in security reporting. This implies that most participants believe that cultural and societal norms influence and limit the involvement of women in reporting on security issues in Edo State.

Table 13: The work of female journalists has improved public perception of women in security reporting

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	25	25%
Agree	34	34%
Neutral	13	13%
Disagree	21	21%
Strongly Disagree	7	7%
Total	100	100%

Source: field survey 2025

Table 13 shows respondents' opinions on whether the work of female journalists has improved public perception of women in security reporting. A combined 59% agreed with the statement. This indicates that more than half of the respondents see female journalists as positively influencing public perception.

Table 14: Female journalists are seen as credible sources of information on security matters.

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	42	42%
Agree	45	45%
Neutral	8	8%
Disagree	5	5%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field survey 2025

Table 14 shows that a combined 97% respondents believe female journalists are considered credible sources of information on security matters. These findings show that most people trust the credibility of female journalists when it comes to reporting on security issues in Edo State.

Table 15: Society now acknowledges the contributions of women to security reporting.

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	53	53%
Agree	42	42%
Neutral	2	2%
Disagree	3	3%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Source: field survey 2025

Table 15 presents the respondents' views on whether society now acknowledges the contributions of women to security reporting. A combined total of 95% agreed with the statement. This shows that there is a strong perception among participants that society increasingly recognises and appreciates the role of women in security

journalism in Edo State.

Table 16: Female journalists have successfully challenged stereotypes in security reporting.

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	17	17%
Agree	72	72%
Neutral	11	11%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Source: field survey 2025

Table 16 shows that 72% of the respondents agreed that journalists have successfully challenged stereotypes in security reporting. This shows that the majority of participants believe female journalists are making significant progress in breaking traditional stereotypes within the field of security reporting in Edo State..

4.2 Discussion of Findings

Research question one: What are the contributions of women

journalists to security reporting in Edo State?

Tables 5, 6, 7, and 8 address the contribution of female journalists in security reporting within Edo State. The results reveal that most respondents acknowledge the importance of female journalists in raising public awareness, providing perspectives, and contributing meaningfully to security-related news coverage. However, while there is a strong agreement on their relevance and input, opinions are slightly divided on how widely their contributions are recognised.

In Table 5, a total of 92% of respondents agreed that female journalists in Edo State play a critical role in promoting public awareness of security issues, 40% strongly agreed, and 52% agreed. Only 8% remained neutral, and none disagreed. This highlights a strong belief in the influence of female journalists in informing the public on security matters. Table 6 supports this view, as 94% of respondents affirmed that female journalists provide valuable insights into security-related issues as 52% strongly agreed and 42% agreed. Only 6% were neutral. This shows that female journalists are not just involved in security reporting, but are seen as offering in-depth and meaningful contributions. Similarly, Table 7 shows that all respondents acknowledged the unique perspectives women bring to

security reporting. A majority (53%) strongly agreed and 39% agreed, while 8% remained neutral. This promotes the idea that female journalists contribute to improving the quality of news coverage on security through diverse and often underrepresented viewpoints. However, Table 8 presents a slightly different picture regarding public recognition of these contributions. While a combined 65% (17% strongly agreed and 48% agreed) believed that the contributions of female journalists are widely recognised, 25% disagreed and 10% remained neutral. This shows that although many appreciate the work female journalists do in security reporting, there is still a perception that their efforts may not always receive the recognition they deserve.

The findings show strong support for the role and value of female journalists in security reporting in Edo State. These results align with studies such as that of Okon (2017), who argued that female journalists, through their distinct approach and attention to detail, promote public understanding of complex societal issues like security.

Research Question Two: What challenges do female journalists face in security reporting within Edo State?

Tables 9, 10, 11, and 12 focus on the challenges faced by female journalists in security reporting in Edo State. These include discrimination, safety concerns, limited access to resources, and societal expectations. The findings reveal that female journalists encounter various obstacles that can hinder their effectiveness and participation in covering security-related issues.

Table 9 highlights respondents' views on whether female journalists face discrimination when trying to access security-related news. A total of 78% agreed, where 32% strongly agreed and 46% agreed, while 11% were neutral. Only a small number disagreed (9%) and strongly disagreed (2%). This indicates that a significant majority of respondents believe female journalists experience some form of discrimination in the course of security reporting. Similarly, Table 10 shows that safety concerns are a major barrier. A combined 70% of respondents (31% strongly agreed and 39% agreed) believed safety issues prevent female journalists from effectively covering security matters. While 15% remained neutral, 15% disagreed to varying degrees. These figures show that concerns about personal safety may limit the freedom and ability of women to engage fully in security journalism. Table 11 addresses whether female journalists

have access to the resources needed for effective reporting. Here, 69% of respondents agreed; 29% strongly agreed and 40% agreed, while 17% were neutral. A smaller group, 14%, disagreed. This finding indicate that a majority of participants believe that female journalists are often under-resourced, which could affect the quality and depth of their security-related reporting. In Table 12, cultural and societal expectations were explored as potential barriers. A significant 91% of respondents (30% strongly agreed and 61% agreed) believed that these factors affect women's participation in security reporting. Only 5% were neutral and 4% disagreed, with no strong disagreement recorded. This shows that deeply rooted social and cultural norms continue to influence the involvement of women in certain areas of journalism, including security reporting.

Together, these findings demonstrate that while female journalists are seen as capable and valuable contributors to security journalism, they continue to face systemic and societal challenges. These results are in line with Byerly and Ross (2006), who noted that gendered obstacles in the media industry usually prevent women from accessing high-risk or specialised beats such as crime and security.

Research Question Three: How have female journalists influenced the perception of women in security reporting in Edo State?

Tables 13, 14, 15, and 16 provided answers to the question on the impact of female journalists on public perception of women in security reporting in Edo State. The findings reveal a clear pattern of positive opinion from the respondents. The data shows that female journalists are not only gaining recognition but are also seen as credible and influential voices in the field of security reporting; a sector traditionally dominated by men. Their presence and work appear to shift public attitudes, challenge existing stereotypes, and promote societal appreciation of women's roles in sensitive reporting areas such as security. These results highlight a growing trust and respect for female journalists among the public, as it showcases their contributions to accurate and balanced security news coverage in the region.

Table 13 reveals that 59% of respondents believe the work of female journalists has improved public perception of women in security reporting. The responses show that 25% of respondents strongly agreed, and 34% agreed, making a total of 59% who believe that female journalists have enhanced the public's perception of

women in security reporting. Meanwhile, 30% remained neutral, and 11% disagreed. This finding indicates that more than half of the respondents recognise the positive influence of female journalists on how women are viewed in the field of security journalism. In Table 14, an overwhelming 42% of the respondents strongly agreed, while 45% agreed, summing up to 87% who see female journalists as credible and reliable in reporting security issues. Only 8% remained neutral, and a minimal 5% disagreed. This implies that the credibility of female journalists in security matters is widely accepted by the public. Table 15 shows that 53% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 42% agreed, totaling 95% believe that society now recognises women's efforts in security journalism. Only 2% remained neutral, and 3% disagreed. This shows a strong and growing societal appreciation for the contributions of women in security-related reporting. Lastly, Table 16 shows that 89% believe female journalists have successfully challenged stereotypes in security reporting, reflecting a strong perception that they are breaking traditional barriers and redefining gender roles in the media industry. These findings collectively suggest a positive shift in both public opinion and societal acceptance of female journalists in the realm of security reporting.

These findings align with the argument by North (2016), who observed that as women gain visibility in journalism, most especially in male-dominated beats like security, public perception begins to shift, and their credibility and impact become more widely recognized.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

This chapter focuses on the primary objective of the study, which was to investigate the female journalism and security reportage in Edo State. The researcher employed the survey research method and administered 103 questionnaire to staff members of ITV and EBS. Out of these, 100 were successfully retrieved and formed the basis for the findings discussed below.

- I. Majority of the respondents (92%) believe female journalists play a significant role in raising public awareness on security issues in Edo State.
- II. All (100%) of the respondents believe female journalists bring unique perspectives to security reportage.
- III. A combined 59% of respondents believe that the work of female journalists has improved public perception of women in security reporting.
- IV. Majority of the respondents (97%) regard female journalists as credible sources of information on security issues.
- V. A significant 95% of respondents acknowledge that society is

beginning to recognise the contributions of female journalists to security reporting.

- VI. Eighty nine percentage (89%) agree that female journalists have successfully challenged stereotypes in security reporting.

5.2 Conclusion

Having done this investigation so far, it can be concluded that female journalists in Edo State are making significant strides in security reporting. They are not only being perceived as credible and professional but are also contributing to a shift in societal views regarding women in journalism. The high level of agreement among respondents shows growing acceptance and support for women taking up roles in security journalism, an area traditionally seen as masculine. Furthermore, the data indicates that these female professionals are actively reshaping media narratives by challenging gender stereotypes and influencing public perception positively.

5.3 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings the following recommendations were given:

1. Media houses should create more opportunities for women to participate in security-related journalism by assigning them to

such beats and supporting their training and development.

2. Profiles of successful female journalists in security reporting should be highlighted to inspire other women and change public stereotypes about gender roles in journalism.
3. Media houses should encourage reporting practices that avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes and instead promote inclusive and balanced perspectives in all beats, including security.
4. Government and non-governmental organisations should work with media platforms to promote awareness campaigns that encourage gender equity in journalism.

5.4 Limitation of the Study

In the course of data collection, 103 questionnaires were administered to respondents, but only 100 were properly completed and retrieved for analysis. The remaining three were either not returned or filled incorrectly. The researcher acknowledges that this slight shortfall might have affected the accuracy and dependability of the study's findings to a small extent. The discarded forms contained missing or inconsistent data, which, if included, could have impacted the statistical interpretations and the overall generalisation of the results.

