

A Three Step Approach Analysis of the Portrayal of Images of Women in Three Ghanaian Newspapers: Newsone, Ebony and the Mirror

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Abstract : Media portrayal of women in traditional stereotypical roles such as mothers, or seductress has been the norm for years. However, the changing socioeconomic and political environment and advancement of women in today's society have given rise to questions on the appropriate portrayal of women in the media today. The purpose of the study is to analyze the portrayal of women in Ghanaian newspapers and find women's perception on the issue. The study uses a three step approach in gathering data for analysis. Using the stratified sampling method, it analyzes front page images of women from 210 issues of the selected newspapers. Further, it administers questionnaires to 100 female students to find out how they relate to the images of women in the selected newspapers. Finally, editors of the newspapers are interviewed to find their rational for portraying women as seen on their front pages. The findings suggest that the newspapers portray women for varied reasons such as promoting sales and influencing the public agenda. Further, the female students claim that in spite of women's vast contribution to the growth of society, the media continue to marginalize them. They add that such portrayals promote and reinforce social construct, however, refuse to see themselves through the male gaze concept. The study concludes that the stereotyped portrayal of women is likely to continue if the government, regulatory bodies, the media and society do not make a conscious effort to address this problem.

Keywords : women, newspaper, portrayal, social construct

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