



The Representation of Female Journalists and the  
Female Voice in South African Newspapers:  
A Case Study of the *Cape Times*

A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
award of the degree of Master of Arts

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## Declaration

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## Abstract

Over the past 15 years, there has been limited research regarding gender and journalism in a South African context. Existing research implies that there is almost complete gender balance across all media. Yet, despite the gender parity in the workforce, women are underrepresented in senior and key decision-making positions, indicating that a glass ceiling still exists for female journalists in South Africa. Furthermore, newsrooms are still dominated by patriarchal practices, norms and values.

This study investigated the representation of female journalists in South African daily newspapers via one case study: the *Cape Times*. It shed light on what type of stories female journalists report on in comparison to their male colleagues and identified patterns in female reporting. The study also investigated how transformative policies may have affected newsrooms. Further, attention was paid to the female voice in the print media in terms of the use of female sources and women as the subject of news stories. The data for this study was generated through a content analysis and interview research. The content analysis was conducted on articles of the *Cape Times* newspaper and was based on three research questions regarding representation, female voice in the media and topic assignment/ contribution. As part of the interview research, in-depth informant interviews were conducted with female journalists and editors; the aim was to collect industry insight and opinions regarding the representation of female journalists and female voices in South African newspapers.

The study revealed that the assignment of stories has been characterised by constant fluctuations over the past 20 years. It became apparent that effort is put into gender balance not only when it comes to the representation of journalists, but also the assignment of beats. However, the study indicated a significant difference between the representation of female journalists and the female voice in the print media. It also highlighted issues of gender inequality in reporting. The study revealed that while South Africa's newsrooms might be progressing towards gender balance, patriarchal structures and views are still embedded in the print media. These findings are congruent with the existing academic literature. This research further revealed that structures and issues of the newsroom or the media reflect issues and structures of South African society.

Past research in a South African context has been very limited, making this study one of a few of its kind and its findings are indicative for other print media, filling a gap in the literature.

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## 1. Introduction

After South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, media transformation was one of the priorities in the country. This was due to the news media representing a powerful institution through which cultural and social meanings regarding gender as well as ethnicity are articulated and challenged (Buiten, 2013: 56). The 1998 Employment Equity Act was introduced to ensure ethnic and gender equality within South African companies. Yet, it appears as if this transformation in media was only successful with regards to ethnicity but not gender. Over ten years ago, the first woman, Ferial Haffajee, was appointed as editor for one of South Africa's large newspapers, the *Mail and Guardian* (Zuiderveld, 2014: 31). This leads to the question as to whether there have been significant changes over the past ten years of female journalist and gender representation in the press.

This thesis investigates the culture of South African newsrooms and the representation of female journalists in print media. According to the Global Media Monitoring Project (2015: 2), the global percentage of female reporters was at 37% in 2015, a number which has not increased since 2005, raising the question of whether the efforts towards gender balance and equity in the media and across newsrooms have been declining. Previous studies have shown that female journalists worldwide struggle to achieve senior positions and face obstacles based on their gender due to the characteristics of the newsroom culture (Ross, 2014: 329; North, 2014: 4; Hernandez, 1996: 12). This culture influences the print media on all levels: its hierarchies, values, norms, and especially the produced content. Therefore, it influences who reports on which type of news stories, what or whom these stories focus on, and whose voices are featured in the news. This research will focus on how this applies to South Africa and how female journalists adapt to these newsroom cultures.

There has been some research into gender and media over the past 15 years in South Africa with promising results (Feltham-King & Macleod, 2015: 13; Zuiderveld, 2014: 31; GMMP, 2015: 12). The media has been undergoing transformation for 20 years, just as the rest of post-apartheid South Africa, but the question remains: what does this imply for print media and newsrooms? More specifically, it raises the question of what this implies for female journalists. South Africa has one of the most gender progressive constitutions and employs policies that focus on gender and on promoting women's participation in leadership (Buiten, 2013: 55). However, it is worth investigating whether these gender policies affect the print media and how they influence the newsroom culture as well as the produced content. Another intriguing aspect is if and how female journalists influence the newsroom and content.

## **1.1 Problem Statement**

While gender may influence different aspects of media production and newsroom culture, this thesis focuses specifically on the representation of female journalists in daily newspapers. This refers to how they are represented in numbers in comparison to male journalists and what type of content they produce in comparison to their male colleagues. By analysing the news articles of daily newspapers, insight will be gained into the representation of female journalists and whether any patterns in female reporting can be identified. In addition, the focus will be on the female voice in the print media: how women are featured as sources or as the topic of a story, and if female journalists include more female voices than male journalists. Focusing on these two research questions will allow this thesis to assess whether there is gender balance across the sampled articles and possible implications for the newsroom, as well as if the representation of female journalists is reflected in the paper's content. As newspapers serve as a key information source to provide facts, statistics and opinion on local, national and international 'news' to citizens, it is important to comprehend how, what, and from whose perspective the news is defined and portrayed to the public. Many South Africans still have limited access to alternative news sources such as the internet or TV, while newspapers along with radio, have been the traditional means to communicate news to the public.

## **1.2 Research Purpose**

The rationale of this research is to investigate the state of the South African print media, specifically daily newspapers, in terms of gender balance and representation in the newsroom and in the produced content, as little research has been done on this topic. This study will be relevant not only for journalists, editors, and the print industry but also to readers and the public who will get a critical look at as to whether newspapers mirror the society they serve. Furthermore, the field of media studies will benefit from this research as it will provide insight into the latest developments in print media, highlight progress, transformation and possible shortcomings of the print media, and provide relevant and current data regarding women's advancement and representation in the print media. As there exists a lack of empirical research on female journalists in South Africa, this study intends on filling the gap by employing a qualitative approach that will not only deliver statistics regarding gender parity but also highlight the experiences and opinions of female journalists.

### **1.3 Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this study is to gain a better understanding of the state of South Africa's print media regarding the advancement and representation of female journalists, by conducting a content analysis of the *Cape Times* together with interview research.

The objectives of this research are:

1. To document the representation of female journalists in the *Cape Times* and assess if there is a gender balance regarding the journalists
2. To document what type of content female journalists produce
3. To document how women's voices are featured and represented in the *Cape Times*
4. To produce current and relevant data regarding South African daily newspapers
5. To gain a better understanding of the role of female journalists and if/ how they adapt to and influence the newsroom culture
6. To get a better understanding of what challenges and obstacles female journalists might face in the newsroom as well as in the field
7. To indicate potential weaknesses in the implementation of transformational gender policies in the print media
8. To lay the groundwork for future research regarding South African female journalists, gender in the newsroom, and the female voice in the print media

### **1.4 Previous Research**

Although there has been some research regarding journalism and the print media, previous research regarding female (print) journalists in a South African context is very limited. Most of the research focuses on the state of South African journalism, reporting styles, the media in transition, or investigates potential bias. Yet, when it comes to women or gender, especially in relation to print media, most research is in a Western context. Nevertheless, there are some pioneering South African studies that address topics related to female journalists or gender in the newsroom such as the influence of female journalists on the news agenda (Rodny-Gumede, 2015), gender in community newspapers (Sanger & Hadland, 2008), female journalists and affirmative action (Zuiderveld, 2014) or the female voice in the media (Rabe, 2002). However, very little of this research addresses the representation of female journalists and combines it with an investigation into the female voice in the press, making this thesis a few of many that fill that gap.

Twenty years ago, research regarding gender and media was introduced in South Africa and various studies have been conducted ever since. Some of the most fundamental include the Southern Africa Gender and Media Baseline Study from 1991 or the more recent study on the state of the newsroom by the University of Witwatersrand from 2013. However, the majority of the relevant data regarding South African female journalists and gender in the press is provided by the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP). The GMMP is the largest international study on gender in the media and is published every five years. It reports on topics such as stereotyping in news content, the portrayal of women in the media, gender bias, and female journalists' representation. South Africa joined the project in 1994 and the GMMP reports are one of the few sources for quantitative and qualitative data regarding female journalists, which is why it is used as main source of comparison throughout this thesis. International research regarding gender and media can be traced back to the 1980s. Still, most of this research is mainly in a US or UK context. This Western literature was used to help construct the frame of this study, which was then applied to a South African context.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study is significant as limited research has been done on the topic and this thesis intends to fill the gap. The *Cape Times* was selected as sample due to its historic roots and it being one of the biggest and most prestigious daily newspapers in the Cape area (Superbrands, 2007). Not only is this study a few of its kind, but it will also deliver current and relevant data in a South African context. Other than the mentioned GMMP, there is not much data available on female journalists and gender in the news. Therefore, this study will not only provide original data, but will compare this data to the data provided by the GMMP, and examine the GMMP's depiction of South African female journalists and gender in the press. At the same time, various disciplines such as media or gender studies will benefit from this in-depth study, which will generate data through a content analysis and afterwards will give female journalists a voice in this debate through interview research. Further, this study will have implications for South African society regarding women's representation and integration in public and corporate life and the media. Consequently, it intends on encouraging an open discussion within South Africa's society.

## **1.6 Scope and Limitations**

This thesis is limited in both scope and approach, as it only focuses on one newspaper, the *Cape Times*. Only one newspaper was selected as this is an in-depth study, which employs a case study approach, through which qualitative in-depth data could be generated. However, by focusing on one newspaper, this study will be limited to one geographical area. The *Cape Times* is located in Cape Town and is distributed in the Western as well as Eastern Cape. Further, this study only analyses news articles from a specific time period, from 2015 and 2016. The time frame was limited to one year as one of the aims of this research is to provide current data and therefore 2015/ 2016 was selected as adequate period. The interviews were conducted with female journalists and editors; therefore, only female voices will be featured in the thesis, as this study aims to document the experiences and opinions of female journalists, comparing it with previously generated data in order to be able to draw conclusions regarding the representation of female journalists and gender in the newsroom.

## **1.7 Thesis Structure**

This thesis is divided into six connecting chapters, following the typical process of an empirical study.

Chapter one introduces the topic and defines the research problem. It then outlines research aims and objectives and highlights the study's significance. This is followed by a discussion of the limitations of the study, the state of the literature and previous research. In addition, the chapter summarises some of the issues related to gender in the newsroom and the representation of female journalists. It then moves on to exploring previous South African studies and pointing out the existing gap in the literature.

The second chapter examines the international and national literature on female journalists and gender in the news. Starting off with the international literature, the chapter maps out the situation for female journalists in newsrooms worldwide and explores obstacles or struggles female journalists might face. In addition, it discusses gender balance in decision-making positions of the print media and what that implies for the career advancement of female journalists. It then explores the newsroom culture and takes a look at the assignment of beats. Afterwards, the international findings are applied to a South African context. Some of the previous South African studies and their findings are discussed as well as the implications for female journalists in South Africa. Further, gender parity in South Africa's newsrooms will be explored and the newsroom culture defined. Moreover, transformational and gender policies will be discussed in terms of their impact on the newsrooms. Afterwards, the impact female journalists can have on

the newsroom and the produced content is examined, followed by an illustration of issues regarding the female voice in the print media.

Chapter three mainly describes the research process and explains the employed methodologies. It specifies the techniques used in the content analysis of the *Cape Times*' articles and in the interview research. Furthermore, it elaborates the research questions and justifies the selection of the *Cape Times* as sample. Afterwards, the limitations of the study are described.

The fourth chapter presents the findings of the content analysis and the interviews. It provides statistics and data on South African female journalists generated from the content analysis and attempts to answer the research questions. It also provides some industry insight by reflecting on experiences and opinions by the interviewed female journalists.

Chapter five discusses the findings and puts them into a context. It discusses the representation of female journalists in South Africa and relates it to trends and developments in the newsroom. Further, it weighs in on gender parity in the print media and what that implies for female journalists. It then moves on to comparing the content produced by male and female journalists and elaborates patterns in women's reporting. In addition, the process of source selection is examined with the focus on female sources. Afterwards, the effects of source selections on the portrayal of women in the print media as well as the societal consequences are discussed.

The last chapter concludes the research and summarises the key findings. It re-examines the research questions and looks back at the accomplishments and the significance of the study.

## 1.8 Ethics

When conducting this research, principals of scholarly and scientific research were adhered to as this study needed to be ethical. This research and all including procedures followed the guidelines laid out in the *Guide to Research Ethics* by the Humanities Faculty of the University of Cape Town as well as the UCT's *Code for Research involving Human Participants*. Ethical considerations were necessary during this study, as the research involved human subjects (interviews). Interviewees were used as a source to generate data for this thesis. Prior to conducting the interviews, a joint statement for ethical review by the student and supervisor was submitted to the Centre for Film and Media Studies according to faculty guidelines, which was approved. In the statement, the research problem as well as the employed methodologies were explored, the purpose and conduct of the interviews explained, and the topics of confidentiality and consent were addressed.

There were three major ethical considerations while conducting this research. The first one was how to contact potential subjects and to set up the interviews. This was done via email. In the emails, it was explained that I am a registered UCT postgraduate student who is currently working on her Master's thesis and is searching for participants for interview research. This was followed by a brief explanation of the research including the aims, objectives and focus of the study. If the subjects agreed to participate, a more detailed overview of the study was sent to them along with an explanation of what the interview will entail. Further questions were answered and the interviews were arranged. All further communication occurred via email.

The second ethical consideration concerned receiving consent from the interviewees. Written consent was secured using the consent form by the Humanities Faculty and the consent form by the Centre for Film and Media Studies. The consent forms were filled out together with the interviewees prior to the interview. The participants were again informed about the researcher and about the nature and aims of the research. Any remaining questions by the interviewees were answered to ensure that they were informed about what the research and interviews entail and that they are able to give informed consent.

The third ethical consideration was about confidentiality and anonymity. It was decided that for the purpose of this research, all participants would remain anonymous throughout the thesis, meaning no names, job titles or other personal details would be revealed. The reason for this was to ensure that participants felt comfortable to talk openly about their experiences and opinions without fearing social consequences or an impact on their job.

Further, none of the interviewees were informed about the other participants' identity. This was done to prevent participants who work for another newspaper or publisher from possibly portraying other papers negatively, which would have negatively influenced and distorted the generated data.

## 2. Literature Review

Over the past 20 years, there have been various studies regarding the representation and the advancement of female journalists. The results speak for themselves: despite female journalists advancing in the print media since the 1980s, they are still underrepresented in the newsroom (Ross & Carter, 2011; Reed, 2002; Meyers & Gayle, 2015; Veidt, 2003). Statistics from 2009 imply that women accounted for 37% of the workforce in newsrooms in the US (Beam & Di Cicco, 2010: 393). As a study by the American Society of News Editors (ASNE) in 2013 showed, this number has not changed. In fact, women have been making up approximately 37% of the workforce for the past decade (Meyers & Gayle, 2015: 295). In 1995, the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) was launched to map the representation of women in the media and to create media awareness. According to the GMMP, the global percentage of female journalists rose from 25% in 1995 to 37% in 2005; however, from 2005 to 2010 the percentage of female reporters stagnated at 37% (Global Media Monitoring Project [GMMP], 1995: 24; GMMP, 2010: 2). The recently published 2015 GMMP showed again that women make up 37% of professional employees in the newsrooms, which indicates a declining effort for gender balance and equity in the newsrooms.

Considering these numbers, it does not come as a surprise that women struggle to achieve top jobs in print media and are still underrepresented in the decision-making, operational and strategic levels of media organisations (Ross, 2014: 329). While women comprised 37% of professional employees in 2009 in the US, only 34% of news supervisors were female (Beam & Di Cicco, 2010: 393; Reed, 2002: 64). In 2009, just 18% of newspaper publishers in the US were female, which represented the highest percentage ever at that time (Everbach, 2006: 477). However, this does not only apply to print media. In 2001, 20.2% of the US' news director positions were held by women (Desmond & Danilewicz: 2010: 823). This is not only the case in the United States, but appears to be a global phenomenon. According to a global survey, just 3% of media organizations worldwide were headed by a woman in 1995 (North, 2014: 4). Ever since the so-called 'gender-switch' in the 1970s, more women than men have been enrolling in college journalism programs and entering the media industry in a slightly higher number. In the US, for example, women made up 64% of enrolled students in journalism programs in 2008 (Reinardy, 2009: 42). In spite of this, the ratio of female and male journalists in the newsrooms as well as in senior positions does not reflect the ratio of female and male journalism students (Ross, 2007: 466). Most editors and managers are men; and although a lot of them are denying that it exists, up to this day a glass ceiling

apparently exists in the media industry that prevents women from advancing into key decision-making positions (Mills, 1990: 278).

Not only does the glass ceiling limit women's advancement in the media industry, it also has an effect on their salary. In an article, journalist Susanne Reed (2002: 63) opens up about her experience at CBS, when she found out that her male colleagues made 40% more money than her. She further points out that many women are not necessarily aware of this since they tend to compare themselves to other women when they should be comparing themselves to male colleagues, too. Typically, women make less money than their male colleagues; the wage gap varies depending on the country. However, female journalists face more obstacles than just the wage gap. The newsroom is still dominated by male values and practices, and its informal processes of recruitment and promotion represent a challenge for many women. Such private networks that women are rarely a part of include golf clubs or even talks by the urinals (Ross, 2014: 328). A survey shows that female journalists worldwide believe that they face obstacles their male colleagues do not, one of the biggest ones being balancing work and family (Hernandez, 1996: 12). Many media companies have a strict work/ home separation that represents a challenge, especially for women. Aside from that, they are also confronted with decisions regarding personal stability, marriage, or personal courage (Mills, 1990: 311). Another important factor is that many female journalists feel as if they are treated inferior to their male colleagues, and get frustrated if their efforts do not result in promotions or do not receive as much appreciation as their male counterparts (Elmore, 2009: 235). There have been various studies regarding harassment in the newsroom, which imply that it is particularly female journalists who experience harassment and discriminatory behaviour (Byerly & Ross, 2008: 80- 81). Sexual harassment –whether from a co-worker, supervisor or source- continues to be a plague that affects mainly women. In a study by the Quarterly, it was revealed that out of 400 interviewed American female journalists, one third had been sexually harassed (Kitch, 2015: 36).

As mentioned, journalism is a male-dominated industry characterised by its male culture, practices, norms, as well as values. This has resulted in the news being defined from a male perspective as well as being dominated by male oriented topics, bylines and sources (Liebler & Smith, 1997: 59; Correa & Harp, 2011: 302). In the US, the typical journalist is male, middle-class, liberal, Protestant, and college-educated (Craft & Wanta, 2004: 125). While some women do manage to advance into key decision-making positions, the newsrooms and print media are still largely ruled by men, which affects the way journalism is conducted on a daily basis. In male- dominated newsrooms, men tend to cover political and crime beats while women are assigned business, health and

education beats. Conversely, in a newsroom with a woman in a managerial position, there tends to be no differentiation in terms of gender when assigning beats (Craft & Wanta, 2004: 135). Due to the dominance of men in print, the newsroom is described as having a 'macho' culture and patriarchal structures. This implies the encouragement of toughness and lack of sensitivity on the one hand, and criticising journalists, mainly female ones, for being too emotional and sensitive or for acting too 'womanly', on the other (Elmore, 2007: 21-22). Most female journalists incorporate these male values and adopt these structures for the sake of their career. They often try to minimize their feminine identity in order to advance their careers (Hardin & Whiteside, 2009: 630). Many women also feel pressured to prove themselves, and integrate by becoming "one of the boys" and exhibiting toughness (Hardin & Whiteside, 2009: 637; Hanitzsch & Hanusch, 2012: 274; Hardin & Shain, 2006: 324). As various studies show, female journalists are often aware of their lesser status, whereas their male counterparts do not perceive there being any gendered discrimination against women (Elmore, 2007: 18).

As mentioned, when it comes to assigning beats there seems to be a differentiation according to gender. While most men report on 'hard news' such as politics and crime, women tend to cover 'soft news' such as education or health (Ross & Carter, 2011: 1155). Hard news includes topics such as economics, crime, public interest matters, or politics. It is regarded as the more serious and more prestigious form of journalism (North, 2014: 1). Soft news on the other hand includes features, health, human interest, trends, and personalities. It is supposed to evoke emotions and is regarded as less prestigious (North, 2014: 2). North's (2014: 12) study shows that there exists a general perception of women dominating soft news because it is seen as reflective of their interests, while men dominating hard news is seen as given. The study also implies that men are inclined to report on soft news but fear that it would not be an acceptable masculine position. This suggests that there exists a gender disparity in the allocation of stories, which has broader consequences on the structures of the newsroom (North, 2014: 14). Since hard news is regarded as more prestigious and important, the journalists reporting on it will rise up quicker in the ranks. Therefore, more women need to cover hard news in order for them to advance. Not only does this gender disparity in the story allocation represent an obstacle for female journalists advancing their careers, but it also represents a trivialisation of women (Magin & Stark, 2010: 389). However, some studies imply that women do embrace different ethical values than men and are drawn to stories with depth and emotional elements as well as stories that are relevant to their lives including topics such as social concerns or education (Beam & Di Cicco, 2010: 396; Everbach, 2006: 479). Female journalists are limited not only in terms of the topics they cover, but also in terms of which regions they report on. Previous studies

show that women are more likely to cover local stories than to report on international news (Zoch & VanSlyke Turk, 1998: 767; Geertsema, 2009: 155).

However, do these numbers and studies also reflect the situation of South African female journalists? Academics often emphasize that Western theories on gender and journalism are only applicable in a South African context to a certain extent. Nevertheless, there has been some research regarding gender and journalism over the past 15 years in South Africa. Although it is not extensive at the moment, it does give an overview about the current situation of female journalists and indicates possible problem areas. One of the first research programmes post-apartheid was the Southern Africa Gender and Media Baseline Study (GMBS) which was initiated in 1991 and resulted in the launch of the Gender and Media Southern Africa Network in 2004 (Feltham-King & Macleod, 2015: 13). The results of the 2000 GMBS show that female journalists made up 22% of print media journalists (Feltham-King & Macleod, 2015: 13). In 2005, South Africa was one of the 76 countries to participate in the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP). The study showed that female reporters made up 39%, which represented a dramatic increase over the past five years (Feltham-King & Macleod, 2015: 13). The increase continued and nowadays South Africa prides itself with having an almost complete gender balance in its newsrooms. As a 2013 study by Wits University on the state of the newsroom showed, women made up 49% of the workforce (Zuiderveld, 2014: 31). These numbers were confirmed by the 2015 GMMP, which also indicated that the proportion of female journalists is 49% (GMMP, 2015: 12). The 2015 GMMP (2015: 12) South Africa report implies that there is almost gender balance across all media; women make up 49% of print journalists, 36% of TV reporters and with 60% represent the majority of radio announcers. With these numbers, South Africa stands out and is one of the leading countries in Africa in terms of gender balance in the newsroom. According to the 2010 GMMP (2010: 10) Africa report, the percentage of female journalists in newsrooms across Africa was 39%: a number South Africa surpassed in 2005.

Despite the gender parity in the workforce, women are still underrepresented in senior and key decision-making positions. In 1997, there were only three female newspaper editors in South Africa with one of them being black (Green, 2001: 72). Ferial Haffajee was the first woman to become the editor of one of South Africa's largest daily newspapers in 2004, the *Mail and Guardian*. In 2009, women made up 35% of the senior management and 25% of the top management (Zuiderveld, 2014: 32). However, these numbers do not specify the ethnicity of these women. Before 1999, no black woman held a managerial position in media; in 1999, black women made up 6% of managerial positions (Zuiderveld, 2014: 33). Data processed by the Print and Digital Media

Transformation Task Team (PMTTT) in 2013 gives some insight into the representation of black women. Out of 12 Times Media Group publications, three had a black woman as editor; three out of 17 Independent Newspapers publications had a black female editor in 2013, while Media24 was dominated by white female editors (Zuiderveld, 2014: 32). It does not appear as if these numbers have been increasing, as the before mentioned 2013 Wits study shows that out of 43 South African editors only 12 were female (Rodny-Gumede, 2015: 209). These numbers confirm the notion that despite the gender parity in the workforce, there still exists a glass ceiling for female journalists in South Africa (Rabe, 2004: 138). Some become editors but most of the time they do not advance further.

Female South African journalists face similar obstacles to female journalists worldwide such as discrimination, patriarchal structures, or the struggle to balance work and family. Despite the gender parity, there is still no gender equity in South Africa's newsrooms. This becomes apparent when taking a closer look at salaries. According to a study from 2001, South African women earn approximately 10% less than men (Rabe, 2002: 162). Similar to the Western countries, the media in South Africa is characterised as having patriarchal structures with male-centric practices and the news being defined from a male perspective. Up to this day men, especially white men, hold the key decision-making and highest paid positions (Zuiderveld, 2014: 45). According to Rehana Rossouw (2005: 227), women largely adapt these structures and some women still think that they need to behave as "one of the boys" in order to advance with their careers. The difference to many Western countries is that patriarchal views are still strongly embedded in some parts of South Africa's society. This becomes apparent when female journalists are harassed by parliamentary members, for example (Rabe, 2002: 153). In addition, the media was a patriarchal industry during apartheid and ever since the 1990s women have been "inserted" into this largely unchanged industry whose gendered nature has remained the same (Buiten, 2013: 63). When asked during a study about their influence and position in the newsroom, the majority of female journalists said that they do not have the same influence as their male colleagues to alter the news agenda (Rodny-Gumede, 2015: 209). The same study also showed that the women usually did not raise any reservations because they did not think that their opinion would make a difference. At the same time, they expressed the wish for a greater influence over the news agenda as well as the wish to be able to bring their own angle to stories (Rodny-Gumede, 2015: 213). Similar to previous studies in the US, this study also found that South African male journalists do not perceive any gendered differences in the newsroom (Rodny-Gumede, 2015: 209). Furthermore, another study implies that some women use the example of their own success to deny any suggestions of sexism in the industry through self-

deception (Byerly & Ross, 2008: 79). According to Mildred Mulenga, bureau chief of the Pan- African News Agency, female journalists foster patriarchy by accepting their marginalisation and believing in male superiority (Byerly & Ross, 2008: 169). Like the Western newsrooms, South Africa has a strict work/ home separation, which represents a challenge for many women. With up to 10 working hours a day, no opportunities to work from home and no flexible hours, it appears as if South African newsrooms are not ready for female journalists with families (Zuiderveld, 2014: 44).

A 2015 study shows that South Africa's journalists are mostly under 40, unmarried, hold university degrees, and are represented with an equal ratio of female to male journalists (Ndlovu, 2015: 122). However, despite the gender parity there is no gender equity in South Africa's newsrooms as men constitute the majority in senior and managerial position. As Rodny-Gumede (2015: 216) argues, it seems as if "structural constraints prevent women from increasing their influence, or internalised beliefs hold women back from exercising the power they have". This is a result of the deeply embedded patriarchal structures in the media industry of South Africa. Nowadays women do have access to media jobs due to affirmative action, but it does not prevent sexism or preconceived ideas about what they should or should not do with their careers (Rodny-Gumede, 2015: 208). In addition, it is not only gender but also race and class that affect and often present a challenge in the careers of numerous South Africans. Many black women feel like their race influences their daily work experience, in the field as well as in the newsroom (Bosch, 2016: 7). Moreover, there exists a considerable gap in the media industry due to the educational system of apartheid- era South Africa. Some of the most important media- related culture capital is speaking and writing English. White journalists have mastered this culture capital over time and monopolized it, and by doing so they obtained power in the industry (Zuiderveld, 2014: 51).

Since South African newsrooms are characterised by male culture, values and norms similar to Western newsrooms, it is not surprising that the assigning of beats is similar, too: male journalists mainly cover hard news such as politics while female journalists cover soft news such as human interest stories. However, this has not been a steady development; there have been some fluctuations regarding the development of assigning beats. As Rabe (2002: 159) points out, the 1995 and 2000 GMMP indicate that female journalists mainly covered health and entertainment, while their male counterparts reported on politics. During that time, women were also assigned to local news instead of national or international news. However, later research from the 2005-2010 period showed that as the newsroom reached gender parity so did the assignment of beats. Male and female journalists equally covered culture, arts, and gender equality

reporting; women made up 40% of sports reporter and even did the majority of business and economic reporting (Rodny-Gumede, 2015: 208). Unfortunately, the 2015 GMMP indicates that this development has been reversed and that female journalists are back to mainly covering soft news such as social, human interest, and legal stories while male journalists are reporting hard news. Women's reporting on economy has decreased from 26% to 19 % while their reporting on politics has also decreased from 33% to 16% (GMMP, 2015: 8). These results imply that there is still a need in South Africa for the realisation of gender balance when it comes to assigning stories. In contrast, there have been some positive developments over the course of time; whereas female journalists used to report mainly local news, the 2015 GMMP results show that they now cover mainly national news. According to the GMMP (2015: 12) South Africa report, out of all their stories covered, 67% make up national stories, which makes them equal to their male counterparts in that sense. While soft news is generally seen as inferior to hard news, this is not necessarily how South African journalists look at it. As a study by Bosch (2016: 5-6) shows, female journalists do not see soft news as dichotomous with hard news, but rather as addressing broader social and political issues. Therefore, these topics were regarded as significant and as adding valuable content to the news.

South Africa prides itself with having one of the most gender progressive constitutions worldwide, which is also one of the reasons for the gender parity in South Africa's newsrooms. Post-apartheid policies have had a strong focus on gender and promote women's participation in decision-making and leadership (Buiten, 2013: 55). In 1998, the Employment Equity Act was introduced which aims at establishing ethnic and gender equality within companies by setting specific goals for female and black hiring. Companies report to the Department of Labour and if they do not meet the requirements, they have to pay fines (Rossouw, 2005: 223). These policies evoked a significant shift in media ownership in 2000: white editors and deputy editors were replaced with black ones at nine of South Africa's large dailies (Zuiderveld, 2014: 33). In 2003, affirmative action together with Black Economic Empowerment was introduced. Its aim is to transform the colour and gender of media employees on all levels. According to Rodny-Gumede (2015: 208), the idea behind the programme is that media content will naturally become more diverse once its producers become more representative of society as a whole. However, affirmative action did not succeed in transforming the gender of media employees on all levels since women still represent a minority in the senior and top management positions. This implies that women's position within society as well as within the working world is influenced by more than just legal regulations; it is also influenced by culture, tradition and customary law (Zuiderveld, 2014: 30).

Previous research has shown that women are more likely to leave journalism than men. According to statistics from the US, women make up 33% of the workforce in all news media but at the same time, half of all departures are women (Elmore, 2009: 232). According to Elmore (2009: 238-240), the three most common reasons for female journalists' resignations are having a new achievable full-time goal, unexpected job offers, or having children. However, multiple studies show there are various reasons for women to leave journalism such as stress, lack of opportunity for career advancement, family considerations, burnout, patriarchal newsroom culture, better salary at another job, and feeling inferior to or isolated from male colleagues (Meyers & Gayle, 2015: 295; Bulkeley, 2002: 61; Elmore, 2009: 248). This does not only apply to a US context, but is also the case in South Africa. As a 2014 study shows, many female South African journalists do not see their professional future in journalism due to the above named reasons (Zuiderveld, 2014: 48). Most of the interviewed women said they would like to leave the media field; some indicated that they were considering switching to public relations.

There have been efforts ever since the 1970s to bring greater diversity to the newsrooms in many Western countries such as the US or Great Britain by including more women and racial minorities. The reasoning was that a greater diversity would result in a more complete representation of society and more diverse content (Correa & Harp, 2011: 301). South Africa took a similar approach by introducing affirmative action to bring a greater diversity to its newsrooms. However, in both the Western countries and South Africa, creating a more diverse newsroom has only been mildly effective. Although women are part of the workforce, they still represent a minority in senior positions. That, combined with the patriarchal structure and male culture of the newsroom has not resulted in much change: women still report on soft news and men on hard news, and the way news content is produced has not altered greatly either. However, some women have managed to climb the career ladder of the print industry and there have been few studies on how female leadership influences the newsroom. One result of these studies was that while newspapers with male editors tend to cover the news with a more negative focus, papers with female editors tend to report the news in a more positive light (Craft & Wanta, 2004: 124,135; Yeboah, 2011: 471). The studies also showed that only when a paper had a high percentage of women in managerial positions, female and male journalists were assigned the topics equally and therefore covered a similar agenda (Craft & Wanta, 2004: 135). A study of the *Sarasota Herald Tribune* focused on how the newspaper's all-female management and feminine leadership influences the paper's culture. According to Craft and Wanta (2004: 487), the feminine management style included teamwork, consensus, an open door and newsroom policy, and balancing family and professional

lives as well as the equal treatment of male and female journalists in all aspects. This resulted in motivated and satisfied employees who showed collaboration and teamwork. However, the newspaper still favoured a male perspective, which indicates that the feminine leadership had no effect on the newspaper's content (Everbach, 2006: 488). What these studies indicate is that women do make an impact in the newsroom, although it might be in different ways than anticipated (Craft & Wanta, 2004: 135).

One way female journalists could have an impact in the newsroom is by how they produce content. One factor would be source selection and including female voices. Journalists use sources to influence and shape their agenda by using politicians, authority, or elite as spokespersons. Through the selection of sources, journalists imply whose voice has legitimacy and who possesses important information that is worthy of being cited in the news (Ross, 2007: 454; Zoch & VanSlyke Turk, 1998: 765). Research shows that male sources are used more often than females, and while men are quoted as experts, women are mainly cited as victims (Desmond & Danilewicz, 2009: 827; Zoch & VanSlyke Turk, 1998: 762; Liebler & Smith, 1997: 59). This again appears to be a global phenomenon. In the US, women constituted 24% of the sources in 2010 and 36% in 2015 (GMMP, 2015: 6). Female voices in the media accounted for 19% in Kenya in 2010 (GMMP, 2010: 2). According to the 2015 GMMP, female sources constitute 24% of media sources worldwide, a number that has not changed the past five years (GMMP, 2015: 1). In South Africa, female sources constituted 29% of media sources in 2015, surpassing not only the African average of 20% but also the global average (GMMP, 2015: 9; GMMP, 2010: 3). The global average of female sources remaining low is alarming as an overwhelming majority of male sources indicates women losing their voices. According to Rabe (2002: 153), there was an absence of both white and black women's voices in the media during apartheid. Up to this day, black women are poorly represented in the news; when they are the subject of a story or are quoted, it is usually in relation to topics such as poverty, underdevelopment, violence against women or oppressive traditions. However, South Africa shows slight improvement regarding female sources when comparing with the global average. The only topic where female outnumber male sources in South Africa is in health and science, where women make up 62% of the sources (GMMP, 2015: 9). The interesting question is whether female journalists include more female sources than their male counterparts. Although female reporters are more likely to consider women as experts and show a tendency to cite women as sources, it does not appear as if they differentiate much from their male colleagues (Liebler & Smith, 1997: 61; Yeboah, 2011: 470). In 2005, 28% of female South African journalists used female experts while 19% of male journalists did (Feltham-King & Macleod, 2015: 13). These results imply that journalists' gender does not

influence the selection of news sources in terms of gender. This is interesting because as mentioned before women are said to cover mainly human interest stories which involve a large volume of sources (Ross, 2007: 462). In the selection of sources, female journalists show a tendency to cite middle management sources while men are more likely to cite top managers (Zoch & VanSlyke Turk, 1998: 772).

As discussed above, adding more female journalists to the newsroom does not result in an increase of female experts cited in the news. The same applies to news content, which does not change simply by changing the gender balance in the newsroom (Rodny-Gumede, 2015: 207; Bosch, 2016: 3). There are various reasons for this, including the idea that media production is a collective activity influenced by organizational values, personal beliefs, and occupational behaviour (Meyers & Gayle, 2015: 97; De Bruin, 2000: 219). At the same time, news production is dependent on media routines which journalists learn to internalize and view potential news according to these routines. Therefore, media routines have a bigger influence on journalists as well as the news content than individual characteristics like gender (Cassidy, 2008: 107). Since print media is dominated by males and patriarchal structures, it is characterised by male values, culture, and norms. As Beam and Di Cicco (2010: 403) show, this masculine bias cannot be corrected by simply bringing women into the newsroom and putting some of them in senior positions. While South Africa has gender parity in its newsrooms, the news content is still not necessarily more gender sensitive or has changed largely; it is still produced according to masculine news values (Bosch, 2016: 4). The main reason being that although female journalists do bring new perspectives and angles into the newsroom, they tend to fall in line with the traditional masculine values and norms (Cassidy, 2008: 115). Some of the female journalists argue that they are exercising their role as “objective” observer and therefore their gendered preferences should not show (Bosch, 2016: 4). A similar mindset persists in the US; however, scholars have argued that the journalism cornerstone of ‘objectivity’ masculinizes journalism instead of being gender neutral (Hardin & Shain, 2006: 324).

This study will fill multiple gaps in the literature. Firstly, it will assess whether there is a gender balance among journalists in South African newsroom. Secondly, it will highlight what type of content female journalists produce and thirdly, how women’s voices are featured in the print media. In order to address those gaps, this study will employ a content analysis and interview research, conducting an in-depth study.

### 3. Methodology

The purpose of this study is to investigate the representation of female journalists in South African daily newspapers. The aim is to shed light on what type of stories female journalists report on in comparison to their male colleagues and if patterns in female reporting can be identified. Further, attention will be paid to the female voice in the print media in terms of the use of female sources and women as the subject of a story. In order to achieve that, a content analysis was conducted on articles of the *Cape Times* newspaper. During the content analysis, the occurrence of previously specified features in news articles were counted in order to be able draw conclusions regarding the reporting of female journalists in South Africa. Content analysis was selected as the appropriate research method because in order to be able to infer about the type of articles female journalists write and how they are represented in comparison to their male colleagues, one would have to first analyse the content of the newspaper. Due to this research being exploratory and descriptive, with a small number of samples, it qualifies as a qualitative study as Reagan (2006: 74-75) suggests.

During this study, the existing literature on gender and media was reviewed and used as a theoretical foundation. This served as a theoretical framework for the present study, following the pattern of existing studies in the field, which do not generally draw upon large, 'grand' overarching theories. While broadly speaking, this study can be located within the broad paradigm of feminism theories; and the findings of the study make a contribution to existent theories of feminism in a South African context, the researcher found that feminism and its associated theories are too broad to be used as overarching theoretical framework for this study. Instead, the thesis is theoretically situated within the area of news production, drawing on theories of the sociology of the newsroom, particularly Reese's (2001) hierarchy of influences, to explore women journalists' production choices.

### 3.1 Research Questions

In order to determine the representation of female South African journalists and the kind of stories they cover, three research questions were developed, on which the content analysis is based. The research questions relate to representation, female voice in the media and topic assignment and contribution. Articles from the *Cape Times*, one of Cape Town's most read daily newspapers with a circulation number of 32,371 during the first quarter of 2015 (Manson, 2015), were examined according to these research questions.

#### RQ1: Representation

Are male and female journalists equally represented? Is there a balance of articles by male and female journalists?

- Is there an equal amount of articles contributed by male and female journalists across the sample?
- What percentage of articles are written by female journalists in each edition of the newspaper?

#### RQ2: Topic Assignment and Contribution

Do male and female journalists both report equally on soft and hard news? Or are there any patterns or trends in the assigning of beats? What type of stories do female journalists write?

- Do male and female journalists report equally on soft and hard news?
- Do female journalists mainly report on soft news?
- Do the articles written by female journalists show any preferences in topic selection?
- Does hard news dominate the news coverage?
- Do female journalists cover mainly local, regional, national, or international news?

#### RQ3: Female voice in the print media

Are there any patterns in source selection? Are women's voices featured equally to men's voices in print media?

- Are women quoted as frequently as experts and sources as men?
- Are women mainly quoted as victims, citizens, witnesses, and poor?
- Are women the topic/ subject of the news as often as men?
- Do female journalists use more female sources than male journalists?

### **3.2 Content Analysis**

A content analysis is the systematic sampling, coding, and analysing of media texts (Treadwell, 2014: 215). It is mostly used in social sciences and humanities but can be used in numerous fields and is a popular method for mass media research due to the efficient way in which it investigates the content of media (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 150; Krippendorff, 2004: 44). Content analysis aims at the quantification of manifest and salient features of media texts, through which statistics can be produced that can then be used to make broader conclusions about the politics and the processes of representation (Deacon, Pickering, Golding & Murdock, 2002: 116). It is systematic meaning that the sample selection, evaluation process, coding, and analysis must all be systematic and conducted according to set rules (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 151). At the same time, a content analysis must be objective; no personal bias should enter into the findings. Most of the time, content analysis is used as a quantitative method. However, according to Krippendorff (2004: 89), a content analysis can be qualitative as the approach and the method are not incompatible. He argues that quantification is not an essential criterion for a content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004: 87).

There are five purposes to conduct a content analysis: to describe communication content, test hypotheses of message characteristics, assess the image of particular groups in society, establish a starting point for studies of media effects, or to compare media content to the "real world" (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 152- 153). This study is motivated by two purposes; describing communication content and assessing the image of particular groups in society. According to Wimmer & Dominick (2006: 154), the steps of a content analysis are: formulate a research question or/ and hypothesis, define the universe, select a sample, select and define a unit of analysis, construct coding categories, establish a quantification system, conduct a pilot study, coding the content, analyse data, and interpret results. An important aspect of content analysis is to construct a representative sample. In relation to representativeness two aspects are important: the sampling period and extent of the sample (Deacon et al. 2002: 119-120). In terms of the sampling period, one needs to decide how far forwards or backwards to extend the sampling period and whether the sampling will be retrospective or prospective. In order to determine the size of the sample it is also important to consider how extensively one will sample across the elements of the selected universe (Deacon et al. 2002: 120).

Reliability is one of the defining aspects of content analysis; in order for it to be objective a content analysis must be reliable (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 166). A study is reliable if it is replicable, meaning that when another researcher repeats the analysis the same results are found (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 166). In order to achieve reliability it is important to clearly define the coding categories. Conducting a pilot study is also recommended. In the context of this research, a pilot study was conducted in February 2016 to test the coding categories. Validity is another important aspect of content analysis, meaning that an instrument actually measures what it sets out to measure (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 170). This is another reason why the coding categories must be clearly defined and mutually exclusive; if they overlap, the results will have little validity (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 170).

Being an extremely directive method, content analysis can only answer previously formulated questions or prove/ disprove hypotheses (Deacon et al. 2002: 117). A content analysis can only count the frequency of the specified features but not based on that conclude the wider social impact. Rather, the findings have to be placed into a theoretical framework that addresses the relationship of the analysed texts to their context of consumption and production in order to be able to explain their social significance (Hansen, Cottle, Negrine & Newbold, 1998: 96, 123). In the analysis stage of a content analysis the previously fragmented, counted, and constituent parts are re-assembled to investigate in which context they occur, with which implications, and for what purpose (Hansen et al. 1998: 98).

One advantage of content analysis is that it is very efficient in analysing and outlining key characteristics across large bodies of media text. Due to that, it offers great potential to generalize (Hesmondhalgh, 2006: 120). At the same time, content analysis is very efficient in investigating bias. Another advantage of content analysis is that it is an unobtrusive technique (Krippendorff, 2004: 40). However, content analysis is manifest, meaning it can only count what is observable and tangible (Treadwell, 2014: 216). Therefore, one of the disadvantages of content analysis is that it is not suitable for exposing rhetorical or aesthetic nuances within texts or the latent meanings of texts (Deacon et al. 2002: 117). At the same time, the results of a content analysis are always confined to the definitions used throughout the analysis and the framework of the categories (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 154). Although one of the main characteristics of content analysis is objectivity, it is not objective in a value-free sense as the researcher chooses the units of analysis as well as the coding categories (Hansen et al. 1998: 94).

### 3.3 Sampling

The units of analysis of this content analysis are articles obtained from the *Cape Times*. In order to collect articles for the analysis, whole editions of the *Cape Times* were used. However, not all sections of the newspaper were included. Daily supplements such as the business report were excluded as well as articles from the sports, opinion, and arts sections and advertising content. The reason for this choice was that this study is focused on news values and the production of news and one could assume that the named sections are less driven by journalistic practices and news values than the main news section. Articles that were contributed by external agencies such as Reuters, for example, or that did not indicate the name of the author, were eliminated from the analysis as well, leaving a number of 223 articles for the content analysis.

The sampling period spans from February 2015 until February 2016, meaning the sampling was conducted in a retrospective manner. Every month, one edition of the *Cape Times* was randomly selected for analysis, making a total of 13 editions worth of articles that were examined for the purpose of this study. The samples were retrieved from the weekday editions of the *Cape Times*. The selection of these editions was conducted through systematic random sampling. A sampling pattern was constructed to ensure the randomness of the sample. The sampling followed the weekday pattern. As a starting point Monday was selected for February, followed by Tuesday for March, Wednesday for April and so on. To ensure that the samples would not all be selected from the same time of the month (beginning of the month, for example) a sampling pattern was developed for that aspect, too. Every month was divided into four weeks and each month one sample was selected from a different week. As a starting point for February the fourth week was selected, for March the first week, for April the second week and then continuing numerically. This way a random sample was created without any bias from the researcher. At the same time, the sampling pattern made the selection easier and less time intensive than a completely random sampling process.

### 3.4 Coding Categories

Before beginning with the analysis, a coding frame consisting of a coding schedule and a coding manual were developed. While the coding schedule is a sheet where values for each variable are entered, the coding manual (see Appendix 1) contains the codes for all the variables listed on the coding sheet as well as the coding guidelines as recommended by Deacon et al. (2002: 124) and Treadwell (2014: 219). For the purpose of this study, 17 coding categories were developed, which were divided into two groups: ID variables and content variables. The ID variables consist of eight categories: newspaper name, journalist gender, journalist race, date, page, size, place in paper, and type of article. These categories help to identify the type of articles featured in the newspaper as well as to collect data regarding the journalists. The content variables consist of nine categories, namely headline, topic, soft/ hard news, scope, topic/ focus gender, voice, source gender, and positive/ negative focus. As the name indicates those variables focus on the content of the articles and will give insight into journalistic practices and news values. This includes which stories are apparently worth reporting, whether the focus is on local or national stories, if most of the stories are about politics and crimes, or whether social issues and human interest stories also play a role. What type of sources are cited in the articles, are they mainly experts or also regular citizens, victims or NGOs, and are men and women equally quoted? By combining the two variable categories, insight may be gained as to how many articles are contributed by female journalists, what topics they mainly report on, and what type of articles they write.

*ID variables-* The first step was to identify the gender and race of the author of each article. In some cases it was obvious judging by the journalist's name; however, in most cases the gender and race of the author was determined by either consulting the newspaper's website or social media page or by looking up the photograph of the journalist online. The size of an article was judged by the number of columns, length of the columns, and use of pictures in the article. The 'type of article' and 'place in paper' variables were coded according to standard newspaper categories. The date and page were copied from the edition of the newspaper onto the coding sheet (see Appendix 2).

*Content variables-* After the form was analysed, a more in-depth analysis of the content was conducted. The first content variable is the topic variable, which consists of 15 standard categories such as crime, politics, health, or education, for example. The hard news/ soft news differentiation was a second important variable in this content analysis as one of the research questions is whether women mainly report on soft news. The differentiation between soft and hard news was according to the literature's definition: hard news includes serious topics such as politics, economics and crime whereas soft

news includes the less prestigious topics such as education, health or human interest stories (North, 2014: 2). Thirdly, the 'scope' variable differentiates whether an article reports on a local, regional, national or international story. The scope of a story was determined by closely reading it and identifying the location. Fourthly, an article was coded as having a negative focus if the story was reporting on something negative such as crime, riots, social issues, inequalities, corruption, health issues or bad economy trends, for example. On the contrary, an article was coded as having a positive focus if it was reporting on something good that happened or highlighted an achievement, event, success or a positive trend. However, it was not always clear whether a story has a negative or positive focus, some were even neutral. Those articles were coded as 'unidentifiable'. Two variables give not only insight into journalistic practices and news values but also how the female voice is represented in the print media, the 'voice' and the 'source's gender' variables. As a fifth variable, 'voice' establishes which voices are heard and who is quoted in an article. On the one side there are experts, corporate institutions, and state actors such as politicians, district attorneys, majors or the police, and on the other side, are the poor, witnesses, or the regular wo/man on the street. This fifth variable seeks to investigate whose voices are mostly featured in news articles and therefore influence public opinion. The sixth variable, the 'source's gender', seeks to determine the gender of every featured voice in an article in order to determine whether there is an equal representation of male and female voices or if any patterns in source selection can be identified. The gender of a source was identified via his or her name or through online research and could be identified in most cases. However, some sources' gender could not be identified if the name did not indicate it and the person was neither well- known nor had a job of public interest; therefore the online research was unsuccessful in determining the gender in those cases. Further explanations can be obtained from the codebook in Appendix 1.

As the coding was conducted solely by the researcher no intercoder reliability tests were needed.

### 3.5 Cape Times

As mentioned above, the units of analysis of the content studies are articles from the *Cape Times*. The *Cape Times* is one of the biggest daily newspapers in Cape Town. It is an English-language, broadsheet newspaper owned by Independent Media South Africa. Most of its readers come from the Cape Peninsula but the paper is distributed in the entire Western Cape as well as in the Eastern Cape. Central principals of the *Cape Times* brand are honesty and accessibility (Superbrands, 2007). The paper seeks to inform its readers in a way that will empower them to make informed decisions (Superbrands, 2007). Its target groups are the middle classes of Cape Town and it has a mainly white and coloured readership (Media Club South Africa, 2010). According to the Independent Media website, its target groups are furthermore LSM 9 and LSM 10 achievers and decision makers (Independent Media, 2016). LSM stands for living standard measure and is a segmentation tool which breaks the population into sub-groups (SAARF, 2012: 5). People in the LSM 9 group are well-educated and have a matric or higher education, they have full ownership of durables, access to internet and a wide range of commercial radio and TV, with an average household income between R 17988 and R 21328 (SAARF, 2012: 61). The characteristics of the LSM 10 group are similar to LSM 9, with a higher average household income between R 26706 and R 32521 (SAARF, 2012: 62).

The *Cape Times* was launched in 1876. It was the first daily morning newspaper in southern Africa and was modelled after the Times of London (Independent Media, 2013). It was one of the leading newspapers in the Cape colony. As one of the English newspapers, it was regarded as representing more liberal views, especially regarding topics such as slavery, the work of missionaries or tensions between Dutch farmers and Xhosas (MDDA, 2009: 32). During the apartheid era, it was the English newspapers that were more critical of the government than the Afrikaans papers. They were regarded as rebellious and unpatriotic by the apartheid government (Fourie, 2007: 44). Shortly after publication, the *Cape Times* joined forces with the Argus Group and was published by Argus Newspapers, which was established in 1889 (Fourie, 2007: 65). The Argus Group rose to be one of the dominant newspaper publishing groups. In 1990, it sold 90% of the daily newspapers and had total control of the English-speaking market in KwaZulu Natal and the Western Cape (Fourie, 2007: 140). In 1994, the Argus Group was sold to Independent News, a worldwide operating Irish media organisation. One of Independent's goal was to improve the quality of South African English-language journalism (Fourie, 2007: 65). Under Independent News, an improvement of the *Cape*

*Times* took place: it was redesigned, repositioned, and finally relaunched (Fourie, 2007: 155).

The paper, as well as the group, which had a year-on-year growth in 1999 and was the most important publisher of English newspapers, continued to be successful. It was only in 2011 that circulation numbers of newspapers started to drop across South Africa. The *Cape Times*' circulation went down by 1,8% that year, but it was still more successful than rival papers such as the *Cape Argus* (Independent News, 2011: 11). In 2013, the South African operations of Independent News were bought by the Sekunjalo Investment Group and renamed Independent Media. Since the takeover by Sekunjalo, the *Cape Times* has been afflicted by controversies such as accusations of pro-ANC bias, for example. However, after an initial drop in readership, the *Cape Times*' readership grew by 17 % between June 2014 and June 2015 (Independent Media, 2015). In an article published on the Independent website, Independent's executive for marketing and communication stated: "We are delighted that the *Cape Times* has succeeded in standing its ground as the leading English newspaper in Cape Town. [...] the areas of growth are exactly in those targeted by the new editorial focus of the publication."

From the time of the Cape colony until present, the *Cape Times*' competition has been the *Cape Argus*. Both were initially published by the Argus group and are now published by Independent Media. The *Cape Argus* was always slightly more successful in terms of circulations and readership than the *Cape Times*. However, in 2000, the *Cape Times* surpassed the *Cape Argus*' readership as the AMPS statistics show (Fourie, 2007: 57). According to the South African Audience Research Foundation, in June 2015 the readership of the *Cape Times* was 234,000 which represents 0.6% of total adults (SAARF, 2015). This represents an increase from the June 2014 statistics, where the *Cape Times* had 200,000 readers and 0.5% of total adults (SAARF, 2015). In the first quarter of 2015, the *Cape Times*' circulation was 32,371 (Manson, 2015). Surpassing again its competitor *Cape Argus*' circulation of 30,393, it maintained its position as the leading English newspaper in the Cape region.

*The Cape Times* was selected as the universe from which a sample was drawn for various reasons. Firstly, accessibility was important as this study is based in Cape Town, South Africa. The Western Cape is the province with the third highest newspaper circulation in South Africa: in 2009 it accounted for 13,8% of the newspaper titles circulating in the country (MDDA, 2009: 85). Another reason was the focus on English newspapers as English is the predominant language of print media in South Africa (MDDA, 2009: 80). As noted, the *Cape Times* is the leading English daily newspaper in Cape Town. The paper was also chosen because of its historic significance, being the

first daily morning newspaper of southern Africa and its opposed position during apartheid. Most importantly however, were the circulation numbers and audience reach, according to which the *Cape Times* is one of the most read daily newspapers in the Cape region.

### **3.6 Case Study**

Since this content analysis is based on one newspaper, it is a case study. Its findings will be indicative for other print media. A case study is a qualitative research method, which systematically investigates a problem, event, or organization (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 136). According to Tellis (1997: 2), a case study focuses on one issue, which is essential to understanding the system that is being examined. As in this case, the focus is on the type of articles female print journalists write and how they are represented in comparison to their male colleagues in order to be able to infer about South Africa's newsroom culture. Qualitative case studies were widely used especially in sociology and anthropology during the late 19th and early 20th century before being replaced by quantitative methodologies, yet they have been rediscovered in the 1960s/1970s (Hamel, Dufour & Fortin, 1993: 15-16). The key features of a case study are its depth and it being descriptive. A case study entails collecting various kinds of information, making it an in-depth and powerful investigation, which acts as a detailed and complete presentation of the investigated subject (Hamel et al. 1993: 3, 41). Wimmer and Dominick (2006: 137) list four defining characteristics of a case study; it is descriptive, particularistic, inductive, and heuristic. Just as the content analysis, a case study aims to prove/ disprove previously formulated hypotheses. To achieve that, it makes use of various methods such as interviews, observation or, as in this case, a content analysis (Hamel et al. 1993: 3). One advantage of a case study is that it can simultaneously consider multiple factors (Chaiklin, 2000: 47). Yet, case studies have also been criticised for their results not always being widely applicable in real life as well as the lack of representativeness, lack of rigor, and potential bias (Tellis, 1997: 2, Hamel et al. 1993: 27). However, Hamel et al. (1993: 32) argue that although the case study certainly has its drawbacks, the above named criticism is often poorly founded. As mentioned, a case study is a descriptive study. The details in the description are what defines the representatives of the case and therefore ensure that the study is representative of society (Hamel et al. 1993: 45).

### 3.7 Interviews

The main data for this study was generated from the content analysis. However, for the purpose of triangulation, interviews were conducted with female journalists and editors. Triangulation is the combination of methods while analysing the same dimension of a research question (Jick, 1979: 602). By generating different kinds of data on the same research problem, the accuracy of the research can be improved (Jick, 1979: 602). In this case, content analysis research was combined with fieldwork (interviews). Academics such as Fiske and Campbell, for example have argued that for the validation process of a study, more than one methodology should be employed (Jick, 1979: 602). Advantages of triangulation include not only a higher accuracy, but also a more contextual and complete portrayal of the research problem (Jick, 1979: 603). At the same time, by employing more than one method, unique or unseen variances might be uncovered, that would have not been found by utilising only one method (Jick, 1979: 603). One disadvantage of triangulation is that the replication of the study becomes exceptionally difficult (Jick, 1979: 609). However, the effectiveness of triangulation relies on the assumption that the different methods do not share the same weaknesses and each one's strength will compensate for the other's weakness (Jick, 1979: 604). In the case of this study, one way in which the interviews compensate for the content analysis' weaknesses is by explaining the data generated from the content analysis in a sense that the interviews discuss the findings' social significance and put them into a broader context, which is something that cannot be achieved by solely employing content analysis. Further, the interviews answer questions such as what motivates text, topic or source selection, which is also something content analysis cannot answer. In addition, the interviews explore newsroom culture and highlight the link between media and society.

The interview is a qualitative research method. It can be described as an interaction between researcher and interviewee with the purpose of the interviewee providing answers for a specific topic (Treadwell, 2014: 196; Gillham, 2000: 1). Ideally, the researcher creates an environment in which the participant feels encouraged to express experiences, opinions or interests freely. In-depth interviews are usually one-on-one interviews with smaller samples. Through qualitative interviews, the researcher attempts to understand the world and the experience of others from the interviewee's point of view (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 18; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009: 1). By employing in-depth interviews, knowledge about social worlds can be generated as interviewer and interviewee construct and create narrative versions of such during an interview (Miller & Glassner, 1997: 99). However, an interview is not an equal conversation as the

interviewer has more control over the interview and the subject (Lindlof, 1995: 164). At the same time, the interview is a very adaptable tool as interviews can be conducted almost anywhere (in a lab, on the streets, at the beach) over any period of time (for 30 minutes, weeks or years) (Lindlof, 1995: 169). Similar to the content analysis, the interviews are used as a qualitative research tool in this study with the aim to understand specific circumstances: in this case, the representation of female journalists and the female voice in the print media. Interviews are an efficient way to collect data (Lindlof, 1995: 169). Through encouraging subjects to talk about their lives, empirical data about the social world can be obtained (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997: 113). Due to its efficiency in data generation, the interview is one of the most extensively employed methods in social sciences (Baker, 1997: 130). It has been used throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century in disciplines such as psychology, education, sociology, media studies or health sciences. The two most prominent pioneers of interview studies are Sigmund Freud and Jean Piaget (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009: 10).

According to Lindlof (1995: 170-174), there are five genres of interviews including informant interviews, respondent interviews, narrative interviews, ethnographic interviews and focus group interviews. The interviews conducted for this study fall into the informant interview category, which focus on specific people (informants) whose knowledge, opinions or experience make them more valuable than other people for the purpose of the research (Lindlof, 1995: 171). These interviews usually deal more intensively with people's experiences or opinions. Some core questions are developed so that when using various informants, the results can be cross-referenced and compared (Lindlof, 1995: 171). In addition, there exist three types of interviews: the unstructured, the semi-structured, and the fully structured interview. An unstructured interview usually has no pre-determined set of questions and is characterised by open-ended questions; the goal is to understand a phenomenon on the interviewee's terms (Treadwell, 2014: 196). The structured interview is characterised by strict protocols, which guide all aspects of the interview; questions are developed and their format and order determined beforehand (Treadwell, 2014: 197). If there is a need for further information or clarification, the researcher is required to use prompts (Deacon et al. 2002: 69). The semi-structured interview on the contrary, while having a structure, is a more open and active interviewing style (Deacon et al. 2002: 65). The researcher designs an interview guide beforehand, which contains the issues to be covered in the interview and which allows him to control the discussion while still leaving room to move (Deacon et al. 2002: 65). This room implies that interviewers have the freedom to decide during the interview how and when the questions will be asked or to even leave out some of the questions in order to make room for follow-up question or to give the interviewee more

time to fully answer more important questions (Treadwell, 2014: 196, 197). Semi-structured interviews have a wide applicability and are generally used for questions that require in-depth answers (Gillham, 2000: 7, 19), as it is the case with this study. Semi-structured interviews, such as the ones conducted for this research, are often conducted face-to-face. Face-to-face interviews are the most successful if the subjects are given enough time to explain their views and are in a comfortable environment. If interviewees can express their opinions and thoughts on their own terms, more sensitive and complex personal or social issues can be explored which means more data can be generated (Deacon et al. 2002: 68). Another advantage of face-to-face interactions is that through the personal persuasiveness of the researcher, the motivation of the interviewee to fully participate in the study might be enhanced (Deacon et al. 2002: 67).

When choosing a time and location for the interview, it is important to bear in mind that these settings may influence the nature of the interview just as during experimental research, the laboratory settings can influence the results (Treadwell, 2014: 197). It is a common assumption that people feel comfortable and therefore talk more freely in 'their territory', which is why a space such as an office is suitable (Gillham, 2000: 8). On the one hand, the seclusion of the office might remove peer pressure and make interviewees open up; on the other hand, they might feel constraint as to what they can tell you in their work environment (Treadwell, 2014: 197). Another important factor is how to record the data of the interview. While taking notes may be the standard way, video/ audio recordings allow the researcher to focus on the interaction (Treadwell, 2014: 198). However, in this case the interviewer has the ethical obligation to inform the subject that the interview will be recorded, as it was done in this study. When it comes to the order in which the questions will occur during the interview, there are two main sequences: the funnel and the inverted funnel sequence. For the interviews of this study, the latter was employed. The inverted funnel sequence begins with specific questions that are easy to answer in order to give the interviewee confidence about addressing more general questions (Treadwell, 2014: 198). With either sequence method, personal or sensitive questions will be inserted in the middle of the interview in-between other questions, implying that these questions are just regular questions, without added emphasis (Treadwell, 2014: 198). As mentioned, an interview is not an equal conversation as it is characterised by a power asymmetry between the interviewer and the interviewee. The interview is a one-way dialogue, meaning it is a one-directional questioning by the interviewer and an instrumental dialogue, which aims at the collection of data for research purposes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009: 33). At the same time, the interviewer has the monopoly of interpretation of what has been said during the interview (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009: 33). Despite the power asymmetry, it is important that the interviewer

and the subject achieve rapport, meaning that both recognize and respect the other's perspective and share a communication style. Rapport is a social accomplishment and the researcher needs to inform the subject thoroughly about the nature of the research, about the researcher personally and professionally as well as respond to questions or qualms of the subject (Lindlof, 1995: 180).

Like any other methodology, in-depth interviews have strengths and weaknesses. First of all, an interview is not a natural conversation; therefore the interviewer does not study human interaction in its natural setting (Treadwell, 2014: 200). Secondly, in-depth interviews are usually one-on-one, which means that the interviewer only gets a sense of the views of one person and not of how another person might disagree or agree with the voiced experiences and opinions (Treadwell, 2014: 199). Further, the data gained from an interview is always conditional and situational (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 38). However, the biggest disadvantage of interviews is potential interviewer bias. This might not be intentional, but enthusiasm or fears of the interviewer, for example, can influence the way questions are asked or the way responses are interpreted (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 18). At the same time, a researcher might try to encourage certain types of responses from the interviewee, record the answers inaccurately, or falsify the interview results, which would be another form of bias (Deacon et al. 2002: 68). Another disadvantage of interviews is that the process is very time consuming. Besides the interview itself, the researcher needs to invest time to develop and set up the interview, travel to and from the interview location, transcribe the interview and analyse it afterwards (Gillham, 2000: 9). However, other questioning methods such as a questionnaire provide thin data, which does not help in exploring or understanding subjects' responses (Gillham, 2000: 10). One advantage of interviews is that they are ideal for insight research and to generate in-depth data (Gillham, 2000: 16). The richness of the material gained from an interview enables a researcher to understand what is reflected (Gillham, 2000: 10). Furthermore, more detailed and accurate responses can be gained through interviews (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 135). In addition, knowledge about social worlds can be generated during the process of an interview.

An important aspect of interview research is ethics as interviews include possible moral or ethical issues. One example would be that the human interaction taking place during the interview will have an influence on the interviewee (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009: 62). In terms of research, it is important to inform the subject about the research beforehand and to obtain their informed consent (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009: 63). During this study, informed consent was obtained using the UCT Humanities consent form, as well as the consent form by the Centre for Film and Media Studies. Further ethical responsibilities

by the researcher are to secure the interviewee's confidentiality and to report the gained knowledge as verified and secured as possible (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009: 63). As mentioned above, if the interview is being recorded the interviewer has the ethical obligation to inform the interviewee.

For the purpose of this study in-depth interviews with female print journalists and editors were conducted. This served multiple purposes. For one, interview research was conducted to triangulate the results of the content analysis of articles of the *Cape Times*. Secondly, real-life data and experiences were generated through the interviews. The aim was to collect industry insight and the opinions of these women in regards to the representation of female journalists in daily newspapers, what type of stories they write, and their use of sources. More importantly, by combining the data from the content analysis with the one from the interviews, an "explanation" of the findings of the content analysis could be provided. Another reason was to feature the voices of female journalists, whose work and status is being examined in this study, and to let them reflect and express their opinion on the found data, giving them a voice in this debate.

The interviews were conducted in July and August 2016. They were one-on-one in-depth interviews, which were executed via email or face-to-face. The interviews fall under the informant interview category as interviewees were selected because of their knowledge and experience which made them vital for this study. The informants provided industry insight but at the same time, the interviews were of a deeper nature, exploring sensitive topics and personal experiences. The interviews were semi-structured: beforehand an interview guide was developed, which contains the main questions, but the order and wording of these questions were decided during the interviews; some questions were added, some were dropped, and follow-up questions were inserted. The interviewees were female print journalists and editors of all races, ages and of different newspapers, although the majority were from the Cape Town area. The face-to-face interviews lasted 30 to 60 minutes on average. Potential subjects were contacted via email, which included a summary of the research and the request for an interview. Preferably, the interviews were conducted face-to-face, but if the interviewee was unavailable for a meeting, it was conducted via email. The face-to-face interviews took place at the interviewee's office in most cases. At the interview, the research as well as the aim of the interviews was explained and any remaining questions by the subjects answered, written consent was secured. All face-to-face interviews were audio recorded after permission was granted by the participant. Afterwards, the interviews were partially transcribed. If participants were not available, they were sent a set of questions via email. There were two sets of questions, one for the female journalists and one for the editors. The sets were similar

to the original interview guide, only more detailed. However, the sets were not like questionnaires as they featured open questions and asked participants for opinions and experiences. After receiving the answers, follow-up questions were sent to subjects in most cases.

For the purpose of this research, all participants will remain anonymous throughout the thesis, which means that no names, job titles or other personal information will be revealed. This was done in order for all interviewees to feel comfortable about being open and expressing their honest opinion. At the same time, it protects them from possible conflict occurring with their work or social life due to the interview. The subjects were informed about this at the interview and it was included in the consent forms.

### **3.8 Limitations**

Not much research has previously been conducted on this topic in a South African context. There have been various content analyses on South African newspapers; however, only a limited number of those investigate the female voice in the print media and even less focus on the coverage by female journalists. This study is one of the few of its kind. Therefore, it has some limitations such as that the study was conducted on a small scale. Since the samples were only acquired from one source over the duration of one year, the study has a limited validity. The focus on only one newspaper makes it difficult to generalize the findings for all of South Africa's female journalists across different classes, races, and geographical locations. By using the *Cape Times* as sample for the content analysis, the study is limited to an English readership in the Cape region. However, these limitations can be rectified by future research. Further research on female journalists and content analyses across multiple South African newspapers from different regions and in different languages will be needed in order to be able to draw a conclusion regarding the representation of female journalists in all of South Africa. In this instance, focusing on the *Cape Times* as a case study, while not a representative sample of all South African mainstream print newspapers, does give an indication of the current state of affairs with respect to print media. The current research can serve as a pilot project and provide markers for further research in this area.

## 4. Findings: Content Analysis

A content analysis of editions of the *Cape Times* was conducted in order to investigate the representation of female journalists in South African daily newspapers. 13 editions spanning from February 2015 to February 2016 were selected, amounting to a total of 223 analysed articles. The focus of the content analysis was on the type of articles female print journalists write and how they are represented in comparison to their male colleagues, in order to be able to infer about South Africa's newsroom culture. It was based on three research questions regarding representation, female voice in the media and topic assignment/ contribution. This chapter outlines the main findings of the content analysis.

### 4.1 Representation

With regards to representation, the main questions were whether there is a balance of articles by male and female journalists, and what percentage of articles are written by female journalists in each edition. The first step was to divide the journalists into groups according to the gender (male/ female) and ethnicity of the author of each article. The ethnicity groups consist of black, white, coloured, and Indian, which are the old ethnic categories of apartheid South Africa but which are still relevant today. After four decades of apartheid's racial segregation, its legacy remains powerful. Posel (2001: 56) argues that the notion that South African society consists of the four races 'African', 'Indians', 'coloureds' and 'whites' is still strongly embedded in society and forms an aspects of society's 'common sense' and everyday experiences. In addition, racial terms continue to be used to construct social realities and race is still linked to social status, class and physical appearance (Posel, 2001: 62). Further, these racial categories that were employed for racial discrimination and privilege during apartheid are now being used to implement racial redress as seen in the Employment Equity Act, for example, and continue to be centre of political and ethical arguments (Posel, 2001: 56).

After the coding of the articles, two dominant journalist groups emerged, coloured female and black male journalists, who contributed the majority of the analysed articles (see table 1). With 31%, coloured women constitute the majority of the journalists, followed by black men (26%) and white women (15%). The minority of the journalists consists of black (6%) and Indian women (1%) and white men (4%), suggesting a pattern or dominance of journalists of certain racial and gender combinations in South African newsrooms. In the case of the *Cape Times*, coloured women and black men.

% Articles written by	Female	Male
Coloured	<b>31%</b>	11%
White	15%	4%
Black	6%	<b>26%</b>
Indian	1%	0%
Unknown Race	1%	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>46%</b>

Table 1

The results also show that female journalists contributed the majority of the analysed articles, with 54% of the articles being written by women. Male journalists wrote about 46% of the analysed articles, slightly fewer than their female counterparts, creating an image of an equal contribution of articles by male and female journalists. Surprisingly, unlike previous research indicates, there is not only a balance of articles by male and female journalists, but also the overall majority of articles are by women. However, there is a difference between the percentage of total articles by female journalists and the percentage of articles written by female journalists in each edition. Unlike the overall percentage, the number of articles written by female journalists varies from edition to edition. While some editions show an equal number of articles written by male and female journalists, some editions are dominated by articles by female journalists such as March 2015 (58% of articles by female journalists), May 2015 (61% of articles by women) and July 2015 (69% of articles by female journalists) editions. Again, these editions show the same pattern as the overall results, with the majority of the reporting being done by coloured women, followed by white women and a minority of articles, or in some editions, none by black women (March 2015 and July 2015 editions, for example). However, some of the analysed editions are dominated by male reporting such as the November 2015 (56% of articles by male journalists) and December 2015 (59% of articles by men) editions. The male reporting in these editions is dominated by black men, followed by coloured men and a minority of articles or in some editions none by white men (November 2015 edition, for example). This racial makeup in male reporting again correlates with the overall results. Nonetheless, the overall results of all analysed articles show a balance of articles by male and female journalists, providing insight into the South African newsroom culture.

## 4.2 Topic Assignment/ Contribution

With regards to the topic assignment/ contribution, the main question was what type of articles female journalists write. The focus was on whether female journalists show any preferences in topic selection, whether they equally report on soft and hard news, and whether they cover mainly local, regional, national, or international news. Attention was also paid to whether both male and female journalists report equally on soft and hard news as well as if they cover mainly positive or negative stories.

As the results show, soft news dominated the analysed editions of the *Cape Times* and both male and female journalists equally reported on soft and hard news (see table 2). However, when taking a closer look it became evident that female journalists wrote more soft news (35%) than hard news articles (21%), while their male colleagues covered more hard news (24%) than soft news (21%) stories. The majority of the front page stories were contributed by male journalists (57%). Further, the majority of the analysed articles rather focused on negative stories (50%) than positive news (37%), with a few categorised as unidentifiable (13%). Differences in male and female reporting can be observed again. While the reporting by female journalists shows a balance between positive (23%) and negative (24%) stories, male journalists rather covered negative (26%) than positive (14%) news.

	Soft News	%	Hard News	%
Female Journalist	77	<b>35%</b>	46	21%
Male Journalist	46	21%	54	<b>24%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>45%</b>

Table 2

The results indicate that the most common topics of the analysed articles were politics, education, other and general crime (see table 3). Yet again, differences in female and male reporting can be found. Despite the named topics being frequently covered by both genders, each gender group showed different topic preferences. The most frequently covered topics by female journalists were politics (9%) and health (6%). Other topics which were more frequently covered by female than male journalists include arts/ culture, human interest, environment and economy/ employment (see table 3). Although most of the sample's environment articles are by one female environmental writer, who writes a majority of the *Cape Times'* environment articles, thus influencing the results. The most frequently covered topics by male journalists were politics (11%) and education (6%).

The sample was collected during the time of student protests at universities across South Africa and the Rhodes Must Fall movement at the University of Cape Town, which is why the number of education stories is so high, influencing the results of the content analysis. Most of these articles focused on the violence of the protests, the legal consequences as well as the leading figures of the protests. Other topics that were more frequently covered by male than female journalists include murder/ death, sports-related, and general crime (see table 3).

	General Crime	Murder /Death	Politics	Economy / Employment	Education	Human Interest	Health/ Well-Being	Environment
Female #	8	6	19	10	7	11	13	12
Female %	4%	3%	<b>9%</b>	4%	3%	5%	<b>6%</b>	5%
Male #	12	10	24	1	15	5	1	3
Male %	5%	4%	<b>11%</b>	0,4%	<b>7%</b>	2%	0,4%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>4,4%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>6,4%</b>	<b>6%</b>

	Social Problems	Arts/ Culture	Sports- Related	Legal	Other
Female #	5	10	2	10	11
Female %	2%	4%	0,9%	4%	5%
Male #	7	2	9	7	8
Male %	3%	0,9%	4%	3%	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4,9%</b>	<b>4,9%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>9%</b>

Table 3

The majority of the analysed articles were local news stories (60%). Both male (28%) and female (32%) journalists reported on mainly local news, followed by national news. Few articles covered regional or international news (see table 4).

These results indicate that female South African journalists write mainly local, soft news stories that cover topics such as health, arts/ culture, human interest, or environment and that can be either positive or negative stories. However, they also report on national news and hard news topics such as politics or economy/ employment.

	Local	Regional	National	International
Female %	<b>32%</b>	5%	11%	6%
Male %	<b>28%</b>	4%	10%	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>10%</b>

Table 4

### 4.3 Female Voice in the Print Media

In terms of the female voice in the print media, the focus was on how female voices are featured in articles, as sources or as the focus of a story, and if they are featured equally to men's voices. The main questions were whether women are as frequently quoted as men and as what type of sources they are quoted. Are they cited as experts or as witnesses, unemployed/ the poor? Further, it was of interest whether female journalists use more female sources than male journalists do and if there are any patterns in source selection. Another aspect was whether women are the topic/ focus of a story as often as men.

As the results show, the majority of the 357 quoted sources were men (see table 5). At 67%, more than double of the cited sources are male. This suggests that female sources (33%) are a minority across the sample and possibly in the South African print media.

Women were most frequently quoted as state actors (9,2%), corporate/ private institution (7,3%) and as citizens (7,3%). State actors (35,2%), corporate/ private institutions (21,5%) and citizens (20,4%) represent the most frequently cited sources across the sample and across both genders. However, men dominated all of these source categories. As corporate/ private institutions, men were quoted twice as much as women and as state actors, men were quoted even three times more than women (see table 5). In addition, men were cited four times more as experts than women. The only categories where male and female informants were equally quoted include: NGOs/ civic groups, media, wo/man on the street, and the poor/ unemployed (see table 5). Although women constituted a minority of the informants, they were cited across all source categories. This indicates that women are not only quoted and portrayed as "inferior" sources. They

are indeed quoted as witnesses or the poor/ unemployed; however, they are more frequently cited as state actors, corporate/ private institutions or NGOs/ civic groups.

	State Actor	Expert	Media	NGO/ Civic Group	Citizen	Wo/man on the street	Witness	Unemployed /Poor	Corporate /Private Institution	Total
Female #	33	5	1	14	26	2	5	5	26	117
Female %	<b>9,2%</b>	1,4%	0,3%	4%	<b>7,3%</b>	0,6%	1,4%	1,4%	<b>7,3%</b>	<b>33%</b>
Male #	93	20	1	14	47	2	8	4	51	240
Male %	<b>26%</b>	5,6%	0,3%	4%	<b>13,1%</b>	0,6%	2,2%	1,1%	<b>14,2%</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,2%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>0,6%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>20,4%</b>	<b>1,2%</b>	<b>3,6%</b>	<b>2,5%</b>	<b>21,5%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 5

The results indicate that female journalists are not more likely to use female sources than male journalists are. Of the 62 female informants, 53% were cited by female journalists. Therefore, there is almost a balance in the use of female sources by female and male reporters. Throughout the analysed articles, it was unlikely for women to quote only female sources, but rather they mixed male with female informants.

With regards to the topic/ story focus, it became evident that the focus of the majority of the analysed articles was of generic nature (68%), meaning the stories focused on companies, the government, laws, a civic group, state actors or a group of people, for example, instead of individual people. However, the stories that focused on individuals were predominately about men. Men (24%) were three times more likely to be the topic/ focus of a news story than women (8%). The statistics regarding use of male/ female sources and the topic/ story focus show similarities; both indicate the dominance of the male over the female voice.

These findings indicate that there is a significant difference between the representation of female journalists and the female voice in the print media. While female journalists are well represented in numbers, it is still predominantly male voices that are featured in the print news.

## 5. Findings: Interviews

For the purpose of this research, interviews were conducted with female South African journalists and editors during July and August 2016. These interviews were in-depth interviews, which were conducted face-to-face or via email. The interviews were semi-structured and the participants served as informants, providing insight into the print media industry in South Africa. During the interviews, participants reflected on their opinions and personal experiences as journalists. They answered questions regarding the newsroom, the representation of female journalists, the type of articles female journalist write, and the glass ceiling. The interview structure followed a similar structure to the content analysis, the main topics being representation, topic assignment/contribution, female voice in the print media and additionally, newsroom culture.

### 5.1 Representation

All interviewees agreed that there is a gender balance in South Africa's newsrooms regarding journalists. The interviewees reflected on their current and previous newsroom experiences and said that women were well represented. None of them experienced any discrimination based on their gender.

One participant said: *"In my newsroom women are well represented. I don't think that this is an industry that women struggle to get into,"* (Interview 3, 2016 July 27).

*"In my experience there is no bias in terms of gender, it's more about what you can bring to the table,"* another participant said (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

However, while there may be a gender balance among journalists in general, the interviewees mentioned that there are some areas where there is a lack of female journalists. Such instances included the sports section according to one interviewee; another one mentioned that women are not as well represented in political and economy reporting.

Most of the interviewees agreed that although female journalists are now well represented in South Africa, this was not always the case. They said that it is the result of the transformation of the media, which has been taking place for the past 15 years.

One participant said: *"I think all the big names in journalism used to be men, you were just used to read pieces by men. Today you still have many strong men in the industry but you also have very strong women coming through. So I do think that women are, now more than ever, starting to stand out,"* (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

However, the interviewees disagreed on what caused the gender balance in the newsrooms. Yet, most participants said that they think that affirmative action and black economic empowerment (BEE) policies do play a role. According to some of the interviewees, media organisations have been making an effort to implement affirmative action/ BEE, which is one of the reasons why recruitment policies have shifted, leading to a greater gender and racial diversity in the newsrooms. One interviewee pointed out that there is a conscious effort in her newsroom to be representative of society.

*“I think that media has been told one-sided all these years, through the white men’s view. Whereas now with BEE and the media organisations embracing BEE, we get to tell another side of the story which has been neglected for all the years,”* she said (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

The results of the content analysis suggest a pattern or dominance of journalists of certain racial and gender combinations in South African newsrooms. Namely, the dominant journalists groups include black men, coloured women and white women, who contributed the majority of the analysed articles. All interviewees confirmed that these are the ‘typical’ journalists of the democratic South Africa.

One participant said: *“That observation is correct. In my experience, if I go to a story and there is 50 journalists half will be coloured women and then black men,”* (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

When participants reflected on their own newsrooms, they confirmed this pattern and also confirmed that there is a lack of black female and white male journalists. Most of the interviewees mentioned that they have very few or even no black female journalists in their newsroom.

Although one interviewee, who was not from the Western Cape, stated that the racial makeup of her newsroom differed from the findings of this study. She argued that it is difficult to pinpoint who the ‘typical’ journalists of South Africa are, due to ethnic diversity of the country.

The participant explained: *“I think it [ethnicity] differs from publication to publication. I think it all depends on your audience and the news content,”* (Interview 10, 2016 August 16).

## 5.2 Topic Assignment/ Contribution

As the results of the content analysis indicated, although male and female journalists both reported on soft and hard news, female journalists tended to write more soft news stories than their male counterparts. Most of the interviewees confirmed this, but emphasized that they do report on hard news as well. When asked why there still exists this male- female distinction in soft and hard news reporting, the interviewees voiced different assumptions. However, they all emphasized that it is not a problem of the newsroom in general, as none of them felt as if women are forced to or prevented from reporting on a topic because of their gender. They also said that it is very unlikely for a female journalist to be 'put in a box' by her editor or to be pressured to report on certain topics.

One interviewee recalled: *"When I started off in the newsroom I was never told 'You can't do that story' or even suggested that the story is for a man,"* (Interview 4, 2016 July 28).

All interviewees agreed that journalists are driven by their interests, therefore their selection of stories they cover is influenced by that interest. According to the participants, journalists tend to cover what draws them, what they have a passion and drive for. One interviewee expressed that there is a gravitation towards topics in her newsroom when it comes to who covers what kind of news stories, which naturally developed over time (Interview 2, 2016 July 06). All participants emphasized that the stories they write and the topics they report on reflect their personal interests.

One interviewee expressed that she has a passion for education and human-interest stories and prefers these to hard news topics such as politics.

She explained: *"I for example have little desire to write about business and politics, I love the human interaction. I am a news reporter so I have options; if I have to write about either the Brexit or a mother in Karoo who has five children and needs to look for money to cook food, I will probably gravitate towards the mother. Those stories need to be told and I think sometimes women are best at telling those stories,"* (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

At the same time, the participants pointed out that there are female journalists who specialise in male dominated spheres of journalism such as politics, business, or investigative journalism and are very successful at it. The interviewees of this study worked in different spheres of journalism, some were general news reporters and others were specialised beat reporters and focused on one topic such as health or politics. According to one interviewee's opinion, female journalists tend to write more positive

stories than their male colleagues, confirming the findings of the content analysis (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

When asked if they feel as if there is a gender disparity in the allocation of news stories, all interviewees answered that they do not feel so in general, as journalists are assigned stories according to interest and capacity. The interviewees stressed that in their experience, editors do not compare male and female journalists based on their gender and assign the news stories according to that. One interviewee voiced the assumption that male journalists might be more confident, 'hungry', and assertive in her opinion, which is why they report on more hard news and breaking stories (Interview 4, 2016 July 28). However, the participants admitted that there appears to be some sort of gender disparity when it comes to the allocation of certain types of stories. Such topics include on the one hand, sexual assault or other sensitive topics, which are primarily assigned to female journalists because editors feel that survivors of rape or domestic violence, for example, would not feel comfortable being interviewed by a male journalist. On the other hand, some of the interviewees felt that breaking stories were rather assigned to male than to female journalists.

*"The flipside of that is when news editors think men will be able to handle a breaking news story far better. But, this is not true,"* (Interview 1, 2016 July 04). One interviewee claimed.

Another participant said: *"I think that if there is for example a crime or protest story our news editor will think first of giving it to the men. Although we can do it. But if I don't pitch it and the news editor has to assign it, she will probably assign it to the guy. That is unfair. I don't know what their reasons are. Maybe they think it's too dangerous,"* (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

According to one interviewee, this also affects spheres of tradition and culture.

*"If I want to go and cover a protest or initiation school stories (abakhwetha), [I can't] as us females are not allowed to do these stories,"* the interviewee explained (Interview 11, 2016 August 17).

As the results of the content analysis showed, slightly more of the front page news stories were written by male than female journalists. When confronted with this statistic, the interviewees gave various reasons. The most common explanation was that due to the increasing pressure on the newsrooms, there is a desire to have exclusive and breaking front page stories about topics such as politics, economy or death/ murder. At the same time, soft news barely makes it to the front page, so if female journalists cover more soft

news while their male colleagues report on hard news, it results in male dominated front pages.

*“Hard news like politics, the economy and investigative journalism makes the front page. Very few female journalists cover those topics,”* one interviewee claimed (Interview 7, 2016 August 15).

However, one interviewee stressed that in her newsroom there is not only an effort for gender balance on the front page, but also an effort to include soft news on the front page.

*“We don’t like there to only be hard news on the front page so people pick up the paper and go ‘oh gosh that many people died’. And us women we definitely write the more positive stories,”* she said (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

### **5.3 Female Voice in the Print Media**

During the content analysis, it was observed that the majority of the analysed news articles had a generic topic/ story focus, followed by stories that focused on male individuals, yet the minority of the articles had women as the subject/ focus of the story. All participants agreed that there are very few news stories that focus on women or that feature women as the subject of a story. Yet, all interviewees argued that this is again not a problem of the newsroom itself and how news are being produced, but of society as newspapers act as mirrors of society, reporting on what is happening in the country. The main argument provided by the interviewees was that men still dominate important positions in business, politics, and public life in South Africa, which is why more news stories focus on men than on women. However, all participants said that there is a conscious effort across newsrooms to profile women.

*“We can’t write what we want to, we have to write what’s there. And a lot of spheres of South Africa are very much male dominated, still,”* one interviewee explained (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

When asked why there is not more of an effort by journalists to include female subjects or women’s perspective in news stories, the replies by the interviewees differed. One participant said that in her opinion, there is not a strong feminist culture in South Africa’s newsrooms and journalists’ story telling. She felt as if the media perpetuates the patriarchal structure of society (Interview 4, 2016 July 28). According to another interviewee’s opinion, women have become a topic in and of themselves.

The interviewee explained: *“In our effort to highlight issues affecting women, we as a country have forgotten that women are not a separate category. Every single story has a gender component, but that does not make it a “gender” or “women’s” story,”* (Interview 1, 2016 July 04).

Further, the results of the content analysis indicate that men were quoted three times more as sources than women. In addition, although women were cited across all source categories, men dominated all of those categories. Only as NGOs/ civic groups, media, wo/man on the street and the poor/ unemployed were men and women quoted equally. None of the interviewees were surprised by these results and confirmed them. The interviewees explained that when looking for informants, they have to quote the ‘most relevant’ person, a voice of authority, and men tend to hold these positions. Although all interviewees mentioned that if a woman holds such a position, they will quote her, but usually it is men who are in position of power, authority, leadership, and responsibility in society, which is what is reflected in the news. On the other hand, the NGO sector is traditionally dominated by women. At the same time, some of the interviewees claimed that because there are more male experts and spokespersons, they come to mind more easily when looking for an informant. Most of the participants argued that the work in a newsroom is dominated by deadlines and pressure, which is why they have no extra time to look for additional female sources.

*“If I am looking for an analyst and I phone the university, their press officer will supply a list of experts and most of them will be men. Take a look at business conferences, take a look at scientific conferences or when there is a gathering of the top minds in a particular field and it is heavily dominated by men,”* one interviewee claimed (Interview 3, 2016 July 27).

All participants agreed that if a journalist wants to feature fresh, different, and more female voices, the journalist needs to put in a conscious effort to do that. According to some of the interviewees, it takes dedication and awareness to seek out female sources, not because they are in short supply but because they are not automatically considered as adding an extra and worthwhile voice.

Therefore, the majority of the interviewees blamed society rather than journalistic practices for the lack of female voices in the news. A number of interviewees further claimed that society values men’s opinion more which is reflected in the newsroom.

One interviewee claimed: *“If society was switched differently or equal, if every spokesperson were a women, we wouldn’t be having this conversation, but men are the face of the majority of businesses,”* (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

*“We [society] are very patriarchal and we [society] think men are better. Feminism has a long way to go in South Africa!”* another participant declared (Interview 7, 2016 August 15).

However, one of the interviewees put the blame on the journalists, arguing that journalists should actively seek out female experts, spokespersons, and informants, as there is a wealth of knowledgeable female sources.

*“It sometimes takes effort to seek out female experts, but it is our duty. You can’t always just pick the lowest hanging fruit,”* she argued (Interview 1, 2016 July 04).

When asked how important it is to them to include female voices in their news stories, the majority of the interviewees admitted that it is not a priority for them. They also admitted that they do not consciously try to balance male and female voices or do not go out of their way to include female voices. The interviewees emphasized that it is more important to them to talk to the ‘relevant person’.

*“For example if I write a story about a new drug, I want to talk to the principal investigator and the scientist who is leading the research and I don’t care if that person is white or black or male or female, I want the voice of authority on that story. Or if I am doing a story on mental health and teachers, for example, to me I don’t care if it’s a female teacher talking to me about her experiences with mental health issues or a man. It’s about who is going to tell me an interesting and compelling story and who is going to be open to talking to me,”* one participant said (Interview 3, 2016 July 27).

One interviewee even admitted that although she personally has a strong feminist agenda, including female voices in her news articles is not a priority. The interviewee explained that this is due to the topics she writes about, where the stories and subjects are very male dominated and usually do not feature women. Inserting women into these types of stories would be artificial, she justified (Interview 4, 2016 July 28).

Only two participants expressed that they seek out both types of voices in their news articles. One explained that she actively focuses on including a variety of voices in her stories.

*“For me gender, like race, is a cross-cutting lens through which every story should be viewed. When planning each story I draw up a list of preferred sources to comment on it and I do my best to get a gender and racial mix,”* the interviewee declared (Interview 1, 2016 July 04).

*“To me it is very important to include female sources, because even the population is slightly more females and males. When you do not include women in your story, it is like you are excluding the majority of the population and actually are continuing to silence female voices as if they are not involved,”* the other interviewee stated (Interview 10, 2016 August 16).

The findings of the content analysis indicated that despite female journalists being well represented in numbers, predominantly male voices are featured in the print news. The interviews confirmed this. The participants explored why it is mainly male voices that are featured in the news and admitted not to prioritise the inclusion of female voices.

#### **5.4 Newsroom Culture**

When asked if they felt as if there is a hierarchy in the newsrooms, all interviewees responded that they do not think that male journalists are more highly regarded or that there is any discrimination based on gender or race. Only one participant recalled having a bad experience in the newsroom, but emphasized that this was the only time she experienced it throughout her career.

*“I had one brief period when I had a manager who was misogynistic, racist and very difficult to deal with but that was one in a handful. So yeah they exist, but I don’t think that’s unique to the media and it would be strange if you didn’t find it in the media, which is a microcosm of society,”* the interviewee explained (Interview 3, 2016 July 27).

However, some of the participants expressed that there are certain instances in the newsroom where male and female journalists are not equal. One interviewee felt as if male journalists’ opinions are valued more than female ones, especially when it comes to making decisions regarding a news story (Interview 4, 2016 July 28). Another participant felt as if there is some unfairness regarding the assignment of stories, because it seems as if male journalists are favoured when it comes to crime or protest stories (Interview 2, 2016 July 06). One interviewee explained that in newsrooms with a high number of male journalists, she had experienced the “boys club phenomenon” where men form a type of unofficial club or clique.

*“The results of the “boys club phenomenon” range from explicit prejudice (“she is overemotional because she is a female”) to implicit (boys all heading out for a drink together). But ultimately, it is not about race or gender – it is about power, and race and gender are used as proxies in the power struggles,”* she explained (Interview 1, 2016 July 04).

The majority of the interviewees stated that they never had to minimize their female identity or pretend to be 'one of the boys' for the sake of their career. Some mentioned that when they are out in the field or at a press conference where there are other media personnel, sometimes a type of machismo takes hold. Yet, they said it never affected the newsroom, which was described as a safe and equal space.

*"I think that is what I am trying to bring across strongly, that I am not a man. I never allow myself to feel second or never allow there to be hierarchy in my mind. In my mind we are all equal, in my mind I fight for what I believe, for my story,"* one interviewee declared (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

Another participant reflected: *"If I go out on a story in a township or protest, for example I do not dress in a way that is going to flaunt my sexuality because I do not want to draw attention to myself. I guess if I was a man I would not really have to worry about drawing attention, but that is a social thing and not because I am a journalist,"* (Interview 8, 2016 August 15).

However, all of the interviewees expressed that they felt as if they have to work harder and need to prove themselves more than their male counterparts. Some also mentioned that they need to fight harder for a story than their male colleagues.

One participant recalled: *"I often have felt that I have to really prove myself, I can't just be. I often felt that I have to work harder to prove myself in that space and that the dog work is kind of mine to do,"* (Interview 4, 2016 July 28).

Yet, one interviewee admitted that there have been instances in her career where she felt like an 'old boys club' existed, and that this club would generally be allocated certain stories (Interview 5, 2016 August 01). Hence, she had to try to fit into this club in order to be able to cover these certain stories.

Previous research indicates that despite the gender balance among journalists in the newsrooms, a glass ceiling still exists for female journalists in South Africa. Most of the interviewees of this research agreed that a glass ceiling exists and that it is more difficult for women to climb the career ladder. They also emphasized that female journalists need to prove themselves more. The interviewees named various reasons for the existence of the glass ceiling. Yet, it became apparent that there is a distinction in the opinion regarding the glass ceiling between the interviewees who are in their 20s/ 30s and the interviewees in their 40s/ 50s.

Most of the interviewees who were in their 40s/ 50s expressed that they were convinced that there is a glass ceiling for female journalists in South Africa. The interviewees of this age group named various reasons for that, but there were two main arguments. The first being that the print media remains an industry in which it is difficult to balance a career with motherhood and a family, according to the participants. The interviewees stressed that there are structural issues that get in the way for many female journalists and make it difficult for them to have a family and to progress with their career.

*“The reality for many women is that your career takes off right about the time when you are having kids, which makes it difficult. Especially in South Africa which is still very much a society where the primary caregiver is considered to be the mother,”* one participant reflected (Interview 3, 2016 July 27).

The second reason named by the interviewees was that there is generally a clear career path for male journalists that is being pursued, which it makes it easier for them to rise up in the ranks. For female journalists such a clear and upwards career path does not exist.

*“If you are a man you start off doing crime and then you morph into politics and then you morph into a management position and then you morph into a deputy editor and then you morph into the editor,”* the participant explained. *“A female journalist might do more features, some politics, more human-interest stories. There is definitely not an upwards career path that is clear and that you pursue,”* she continued (Interview 4, 2016 July 28).

One interviewee named race as a significant factor, which enabled some female journalists to climb up the ladder and to become editor in recent years. She claimed that as the media has been transforming over the past 10 years, it has become important to have black persons with authority in the industry.

The participant argued: *“I think that a lot of the female journalists that became editor were there at the right time, because they were black, that helped. If they were a white man they wouldn’t have gotten that position, I don’t think so,”* (Interview 4, 2016 July 28).

The interviewees who were part of the 20s/ 30s age group on the other hand, were more optimistic. Although they did acknowledge that a glass ceiling exists, they credited the transformation of the print media for enabling women to rise in the ranks.

*“I am very optimistic. I am a new generation, a new breed brought in. The wheel of transformation is slow but it’s happening,”* one participant declared (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

The interviewees of this age group recognized that it might take female journalists longer to climb the career ladder due to various reasons, such as family considerations. Yet, they emphasized that there are a number of female journalists who have progressed and achieved a great deal. Further, they pointed out that there are women in positions of power and authority in their companies. One of the participants is determined to become the editor of the newspaper she currently works at and is confident that her gender will not make it more difficult for her.

*“I don’t feel because I am a woman I am going to struggle to become editor. I feel like my company is very fair and I don’t feel like my gender is going to discriminate against me here,”* the interviewee said (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

When asked if they see their future in the newspaper industry, the participants responded differently. One interviewee said she would like to be the editor of her current newspaper in five years from now. The interviewee was just not sure if there will still be print newspapers by then due to digital technologies and the transformation of the media.

*“But whatever that future is, I want to be on top of that new business structure,”* the interviewee declared (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

Another participant is currently toying with an exit from her current position; she is considering changing the direction of the type of journalism she does or exiting the media completely to pursue a career in research. She argued that she is unsure about whether she wants to work as a journalist for the rest of her life and would like to pursue a more intellectually stimulating career.

*“I am at a point of my career where I have a window to consider another career. I think the South African media is a very difficult place to be a reporter, so if you want a better salary or validation you need to move into management and not everybody wants that,”* the participant explained (Interview 3, 2016 July 27).

One interviewee mentioned that she moved from print to broadcast journalism. Another participant revealed that she had already left journalism and is conducting research in a field not related to journalism. She stated personal and financial reasons.

The interviewee explained: *“I am tired of battling financially and journalism is really hard, lonely work. And the pressure of being so in the public all the time, and people sue you, it’s relentless. I am not interested in interviewing politicians anymore,”* (Interview 4, 2016 July 28).

As previous research has shown, women are more likely to leave journalism than men (Elmore, 2009: 232; Meyers & Gayle, 2015: 295; Bulkeley, 2002: 61; Zuiderveld, 2014: 48). The interviewees of this research indicated something similar on the one hand, with at least half of them considering an exit from journalism. On the other hand, various interviewees stated that they want to stay in journalism with some declaring that they are determined to climb the career ladder. This demonstrates not only the challenges as well as the diversity of the journalism field but also how female journalists have adapted to it.

## 6. Discussion

The findings of the content analysis of 223 articles taken from 2015/ 2016 editions of the *Cape Times* are instructive as some aspects concur with previous research, while some aspects differ from the results of previous studies. This indicates that the representation of female journalists and the female voice in the media are continuously transforming.

As mentioned before, since 2000 there has been a steady increase of female print journalists across South Africa's newsrooms. As previous studies have shown, in 2000 women constituted 22% of print journalists, in 2005 39% and in 2013/ 2015 49% (Feltham-King & Macleod, 2015: 13; Zuiderveld, 2014: 31; GMMP, 2015: 12). The results of this study, which reflect on 2015/ 2016, confirm this trend. With 54% of the analysed news articles being by female journalists, not only was there a gender balance but also, articles by women constituted a slight majority. This indicates a development towards gender balance over the past 15 years, which seems to be achieved, at least in the case of the *Cape Times*. With these numbers, South Africa not only surpasses the African average of 39% female print journalists, but also some Western countries such as the US where women make up 40% of print journalists (GMMP, 2010: 12; GMMP, 2015: 8). This again indicates that South Africa's newsrooms might be on the right path to gender balance and possibly gender equity. However, this study was only conducted on one newspaper in the Cape region; therefore, further studies including newspapers from different regions across the country need to be conducted in order to get a full overview of the state of the newsrooms. In addition, when taking a closer look at the analysed editions, it is apparent that articles by female journalists only constituted the overall majority. Some editions were still dominated by articles by male journalists, reporting on the classic hard news with a mainly negative focus. This indicates that while South Africa's newsrooms might be developing towards gender balance, patriarchal structures and views are still embedded in the print media.

The results of the interviews confirmed the increase of female print journalists in South African newsrooms, similar to the findings of the content analysis. Generally, there was a perception among the interviewees that female journalists are well represented and equal to male journalists. The interviewees of this study worked at different newsrooms, for different publications, yet they all emphasized that there is a gender balance in their newsrooms. When reflecting on previous newsrooms, most participants expressed that there has always been a number of female journalists working in the newsrooms. However, they admitted that female journalists are now better represented across all ethnicities and are more successful. The success took form of on two different levels: firstly when it comes to career advancement, indicating that there are a number of

women who now manage to climb the career ladder and become editor, for example. The second level encompasses the journalistic work in general; while women still report on soft news stories, they also equally report on hard news, this too was confirmed by the results of the content analysis. Further, nowadays there are more female journalists emerging who specialise in previously male dominated areas such as political, financial or investigative journalism and who succeed to make a name for themselves in these fields.

While researching the authors of the analysed articles online, two groups of journalists emerged: the 'old' and the 'new' journalists. Journalists of the 'old' group were predominantly white males between their forties and sixties as well as white women and black men who were older than 40 years. Journalists belonging to the 'new' group were predominantly black men and coloured women in their twenties and thirties as well as white women in general. The distinct characteristics of the two groups are age and ethnicity, which is what divides the two groups. The 'older' group include the type of journalists that are generally regarded as the typical apartheid era journalists (white and male) and the 'new' group representing the new type of journalists of South Africa, who are mainly young black men, coloured women, and white women. However, post-apartheid policies have focused on transforming not only the race but also the gender of media employees (Rodny-Gumede 2015: 208). As this study shows, this transformation was successful on the journalist-level, since the mentioned 'new' journalists are predominantly young, black or coloured journalists of both genders; it also explains the distinction between these two groups. The results of this study indicate a large number of female journalists as well as gender balance across the sample. This could possibly be on account of the mentioned transformative policies such as affirmative action or Black Economic Empowerment (Rodny-Gumede 2015: 208).

The interviews confirmed these findings of the content analysis and most participants expressed that the 'typical' journalists of the democratic South Africa are mainly black men, coloured women and white women. The interviewees voiced that the media has been transforming for the past 15 years and post- apartheid policies such as affirmative action or BEE have played a role to a certain extent. With the realization that newsrooms need to be more representative of society came a shift in employment policies, which led to a greater ethnic and gender diversity across newsrooms, according to the interviewees. Yet, what became apparent during the content analysis was that there is a lack of black female and white male journalists, which was confirmed during the interviews. The participants listed various reasons for that. With regards to white male journalists, the common perception among the interviewees was either that fewer white

male journalists are recruited today due to the new employment policies or that there are less white male journalists because they would rather pursue more financially stable careers and tend to hold senior or management positions. A general consensus among all interviewees acknowledged a lack of black female journalists but voiced uncertainty about what the reasons could be. A few participants argued that since there is a high demand for black women with tertiary qualifications due to BEE and journalism is not a lucrative career, many opt for other careers. Other interviewees indicated that it might have cultural or socialisation reasons, arguing that black females are the group that suffers most from a patriarchal system.

One interviewee explained: *"I think it has something to do with history, where the role of the women is still very much in the household. Whether that's changed a lot I am not too sure,"* (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

Another participant, a black female journalist, reflected on her personal experiences and argued that society can be hostile towards black female journalists and that she has had bad experiences with informants, experts, state representatives, or citizens in general while carrying out her work (Interview 6, 2016 August 03). All of these different arguments by the interviewees indicate that there are more layers than just employment and newsroom practices when it comes to the representation of journalists of different ethnicities and gender, but that there exist wider social, economic and cultural implications.

It is not only the employment of journalists but also the content produced by journalists that is influenced by different layers. According to Reese's hierarchy of influences theory, journalists are influenced and constrained by different macro and micro levels such as media routines, ideological, individual, organizational and extra- media levels (Reese, 2001: 178). Influences of the individual level include a journalist's training, attitude and background (Reese, 2001: 179). Journalists are not free to act according to their beliefs but are constraint by norms, procedures and rules, which are embedded in the media, forming the media routines (Reese, 2001: 180). Organizational influences relate to a company's goals, policies and structures. Through editorial policy, the organization is able to shape the framing and prioritising of news stories and to determine which stories are considered 'newsworthy' (Reese, 2001: 181). Extra- media levels are influences from outside a media organization, which shape the news content such as advertisers, the government, interest groups or influential news sources (Reese, 2001: 181). The produced news content as well as the recruitment of journalists is influenced by these levels. Further, Reese (2001: 183) argues that journalists' attitudes, organizational

policies, media routines, and the recruitment of journalists support maintaining the status quo.

However, the mentioned gender balance only applies to journalist positions and not senior or managerial positions because previous research, such as data processed by the Print and Digital Media Transformation Task Team (PMTTT) in 2013, suggests that women are still underrepresented in decision-making positions, implying a glass ceiling (Zuiderveld, 2014: 32; Rodny-Gumede, 2015: 209; Rabe, 2004: 138).

The interviewees pointed out that this is due to a legacy that was left behind by older men, which still exists in the print media and which needs to transform. One of the interviewees pointed out that the new journalists that are being employed now are a new 'breed' of journalists, with a lot of women coming in (Interview 2, 2016 July 06). However, editors tend to be older in general, which is why these positions are still largely held by men. This indicates that change is happening, but it takes time.

*"I think that men are more in management and editorial positions, some are in video and photography and therefore, leaving the women to do most of the writing,"* one interviewee declared (Interview 10, 2016 August 16).

An intriguing finding from the interviews was the differing opinions between the interviewees in their 20s/ 30s and the interviewees in their 40s/ 50s regarding the glass ceiling. The participants of the older age group were convinced of the existence of a glass ceiling. While the younger age group acknowledged the existence of the glass ceiling, they were more optimistic and hinted that women have started to break through this glass ceiling. They justified this opinion by reflecting on their own newsroom, stating that there are women in positions of power and authority such as the news editor or the group executive, for example. Throughout the interviews, motherhood and family remained an important topic. Some of the interviewees stated that motherhood is one of the main reasons that prevents or delays female journalists in South Africa from advancing their careers.

*"You have to take into account the very long hours editors have to work. That is a big sacrifice for women with families. I have once asked one of my female editors if we could have both a high-flying career and a family. She was stumped (she has no children),"* one participant revealed (Interview 7, 2016 August 15).

One interviewee reflected on her experiences as a reporter and a single mother and recalled that she had to bring her children along to work even when she was out in the field. She remembers taking her children to parliament or to townships while working on a story and emphasized that this was largely tolerated her newsroom (Interview 4, 2016 July 28). According to another participant, it is more accepted for female journalists to take care of their children than for their male colleagues.

*“My husband is also a journalist and we often talk about that it is much more accepted in my newsroom if I take some time off for the children than for him. Even though he is an emancipated, very involved father,”* the participant explained (Interview 3, 2016 July 27).

According to interviewees, there are structural challenges for women, which make it difficult for them to progress with their career and requires them to prove themselves more. What was interesting is that all interviewees pointed out that this does not only apply to the print media but for working women in general. This indicates that it is to a certain extent but not only media practices and newsroom culture that prevent women from advancing their careers, but that there are greater influences at play, including culture and socialisation.

One aspect of this study that differs from previous research is the type of news articles female journalists write. As research shows, between 1995 and 2000 women mainly covered local news and topics such as health and entertainment (Rabe, 2002: 159). However, as the number of female journalists increased between 2005 and 2010, male and female journalists reported equally on soft and hard news (Rodny-Gumede, 2015: 208). Yet, research from 2015 indicated that this development has been reversed and that female journalists were back to reporting mainly on soft news, and at the same time they mainly covered national not local news (GMMP, 2015: 12-13). These findings do not correlate with results of this research, in terms of the topic reporters cover and the scope. As the results of the content analysis of the sample show, female journalists mainly report on local news. They also covered a small amount of national news and rarely international or regional news, but the majority of the covered news were local stories. There could be various reasons for this change in women’s reporting. For one, the sample was taken from the *Cape Times*, which mainly focuses on local news as the majority of analysed news stories by both male and female journalists were local stories. At the same time, it could also indicate a step backwards in the development of female journalist reporting.

Unlike the results from the 2015 GMMP South Africa report, the results of this study indicated that both male and female journalists report equally on soft and hard news, the most frequent topic being politics. However, when taking a closer look it seems that female journalists covered more soft than hard news and vice versa for their male colleagues, which could be interpreted as a step backwards, as findings from 2005- 2010 showed gender parity in the assignment of topics (Rodny-Gumede, 2015: 208). The most frequent topics covered by female reporters in this study were health and politics; other topics that were more frequently covered by female than male journalists include arts/ culture, human interest, environment, and economy/ employment. These findings differ from and simultaneously concur with previous findings. As with research conducted between 2005 and 2010, this study showed that women do the majority of the economy/ employment reporting (Rodny-Gumede, 2015: 208). At the same time, health was the second most frequent topic covered by female journalists as it was between 1995 and 2000 (Rabe, 2002: 159). Yet, while female journalists do cover more soft than hard news, there is not such a strong differentiation between male and female journalists regarding the topic allocation as the 2015 GMMP indicates (GMMP, 2015: 12-13). The results of this study show that while men mainly cover hard news such as crime, politics, or murder/ death, they also report on soft news such as education. What becomes apparent is that the assignment of stories has been characterised by constant fluctuations over the past 20 years. The patterns in topic assignment occur to be constantly developing. It seems as if effort is put into gender balance not only for the representation of journalists but also the assignment of beats, as women conduct the bulk of the politics and economy reporting. Yet, it appears as if journalists are stuck in patriarchal structures, where women remain in the soft news and men in the hard news sphere and gender parity is yet to be achieved.

During the interviews, all participants emphasized that the types of news stories a journalist reports on reflects his or her interests, implying that if female journalists report more on soft news than male journalists, it is because they are more interested in these topics. One participant pointed out that in her experience, citizens respond better and the environment caters more to female journalists reporting on human-interest stories or community news than crime or finance, for example (Interview 6, 2016 August 03). Another interviewee explained that women are interested in issues that reflect challenges that women face broadly in society, hence their interest in soft news topics (Interview 5, 2016 August 01). Yet, another participant argued that women's interests are due to socialisation. Further, she argued that women are already interested in certain topics before coming to the newsroom.

The interviewee explained: *“I think if women grow up thinking “I don’t have agency, I can’t speak to a politician because it is such a male world”, then young journalists won’t be interested in that because they will be scared. If they don’t get actively encouraged and pushed then we will just maintain the status quo,”* (Interview 4, 2016 July 28).

Therefore, the question remains whether female journalists tend to cover more soft news than their male colleagues because they are generally interested in these topics, or because they are socialised into thinking that these topics are appropriate for women to be interested in and to report on. The same applies to crime and breaking stories, which tend to be covered more by male journalists; where the question remains whether men are assigned these stories because they are dangerous and stressful and men are better suited for it, or because they are the more prestigious stories and, due to patriarchal structures of society, it seems more appropriate for men to cover these stories. Yet, it seems that multiple factors are at play in the topic assignment, such as socialisation, patriarchal structures, and culture as well as Reese’s media routines, individual, organizational, ideological and extra-media influences (Reese, 2001: 178). However, there are also exceptions, as many interviewees mentioned that there are female journalists who specialise and succeed in previously male dominated domains. One of the interviewees of this study revealed that she has always been interested in politics; therefore, she went into political reporting (Interview 4, 2016 July 28). This indicates that the type of news topics journalists report on further depends on a journalist’s personality and drive.

Another focus of this study is the female voice in the print media, meaning how women are featured in the news as subjects and as sources. The results of women as subject of a news story are unfavourable, merely eight per cent of the 223 articles focused on women, while men were three times more the focus of a story. These numbers are even lower than the ones of the 2015 GMMP South Africa report, which indicated that stories with women as focus made up 12% of news nationwide (GMMP, 2015: 6). The GMMP also states that women were mainly the focus of crime and violence stories, where they were portrayed as victims (GMMP, 2015: 6). While women are featured as the focus of crime stories, the results of this study showed, unlike the GMMP, that women were mostly the focus of health, education, politics, and human-interest stories. In terms of politics, the two most common female subjects were two prominent Western Cape politicians, Cape Town mayor Patricia De Lille and Premier of the Western Cape Helen Zille. In education stories, women were featured as teachers, social workers or as politicians (Minister of Education, the mayoral committee), in health stories they were featured as doctors or experts, while in human interest stories they were mainly

portrayed as either victims or survivors. Yet, women were underrepresented in categories such as corporate/ business, police, and politicians, for example, despite women pursuing these careers. This indicates that daily newspapers in South Africa do not necessarily mirror the society that they are serving, and also somewhat misrepresent South African women (GMMP, 2015: 10). The results of this study further indicate that there were no news stories that covered gender (in)equality issues or women's rights. As mentioned at the start of this study, the news continues to be defined from a male perspective with male oriented topics and sources (Liebler & Smith, 1997: 59; Craft & Wanta, 2004: 125). By changing the gender balance in the newsrooms, the content does not automatically change as female journalists fall in line with the traditional norms and values (Rodny-Gumede, 2015: 207; Cassidy, 2008: 115). This became evident during this study, with the majority of the articles being written by female journalists, yet women as the topic/ focus of a story still constituted the minority.

During the interviews, many of the participants put the blame for the lack of female news subjects on society by stating that in South Africa, men still dominate positions of power and authority, which is why there are more stories that focus on men. However, the issue runs deeper. Some of the interviewees admitted that there is less of an appetite in the newsroom for stories that focus on women. Further, they revealed that there is a perception that stories that focus on gender or women's issues are not newsworthy because there are so many of them, indicating a possible 'normalisation' of these issues.

*"For example a woman being raped won't make into mainstream press unless it is brutal and graphic or involves someone famous,"* one participant said (Interview 5, 2016 August 01).

Another interviewee reflected on her experiences in the newsroom and stated that stories that focus on women receive very little enthusiasm at diary meetings unless it is a prominent female (Interview 6, 2016 August 03). However, some of the participants argued that the low number of stories with a female subject is related to social power structures, meaning how society views women, what agency and voice women have. At the same time, these social power structures also explain why there are more stories about men as it is part of the male narrative of patriarchy, which the news perpetuates, according to some of the interviewees. Therefore, it becomes apparent that it is due to both journalistic practices and society that only few stories focus on women. The conclusion reached by participants during interviews, and which seems to be the case, is that gender inequality still exists in reporting.

The results regarding the use of female sources were similar to previous research such as the GMMP and only show slight improvements. Through the selection of sources, journalists shape the news and demonstrate who possess information or knowledge that is worth being quoted in the news, which is why it is important to investigate how women are represented as sources (Ross, 2007:454; Zoch & VanSlyke Turk, 1998: 765). Research has shown that during apartheid, there was a lack of women's voices in the news and while this is changing now, the change is happening slowly (Rabe 2002: 153). As the 2015 GMMP indicates, women made up 30% of the sources in the South African print media, while in the USA they constituted 36% (GMMP, 2015: 9; GMMP, 2015: 6). At the same time, the number of female sources across the African continent was even lower, with women making up 20% of the sources (GMMP, 2010: 3). These numbers are alarming because they indicate that women make up only a small portion of sources and their voices are not featured according to their numbers as they make up half of the population, which could lead to the misconception that women's voices are not as important or not as qualified. The results of this study showed a slight increase of female sources with them constituting 33%. This indicates a gradual increase in the use of female sources in the news over the past 10 years in South Africa; in 2005 women made up 28% of sources and in 2015 30% (GMMP, 2005: 5; GMMP, 2015: 9). However, despite the increase, men still constitute the majority of the sources and in this study were quoted more than twice as much as women. Yet, it can be observed that the way in which women are used as sources and how they are portrayed in the news has transformed. Whereas previous research indicated that women were predominantly quoted as victims, poor or homemakers in relation to topics such as poverty, crime, oppression or violence against women, the results of this research differ significantly from these findings (GMMP, 2015: 6,11; GMMP, 2005: 5). Women were now primarily quoted as state actors (politicians, police, mayoral committee...), citizens or as part of a corporate/ private institution (spokesperson, employee...). Therefore, they are no longer only portrayed as "inferior" sources but portrayed more realistically and in diverse roles. Further, in the past women were mostly quoted providing eyewitness accounts and personal experiences. This has changed, with women mainly quoted as state actors, citizens and representatives of corporate/ private institutions they now provide knowledge and information. Yet, despite these positive transformations, men still dominate the categories of informants in which women are mostly cited under, and women are rarely quoted as experts. This again demonstrates how women are underrepresented and silenced in the media (GMMP, 2015: 9).

Similar to the topic focus, the majority of the interviewees blamed the dominance of male sources on society. The interviewees acknowledged that gender inequality is still predominant in South Africa and justified their source selection by stating that the majority of relevant sources (spokespersons, politicians, businessmen, experts) are male and therefore there are not as many women to quote. Further, some of the interviewees pointed out that it is mainly men who are at the helm of businesses or in positions of power, which is reflected in the news.

One interviewee explained: *“If that’s where it starts, then you are going to have all these other questions, like why aren’t women quoted, why are there no female experts, because it all starts at the top. And the top influences everything else obviously. It influences what we report on, who we quote, how people perceive the business and the women who reads this article which feeds into that she feels as if she comes second,”* (Interview 2, 2016 July 06).

*“We still have a long way to go when it comes to recognising the role that women play in society and often being pitted against men puts us at a disadvantage. Perhaps our level of achievement should never be measured against men. Maybe we need to define our own ruled,”* another participant reflected (Interview 9, 2016 August 16).

The majority of the interviewees stated that when selecting sources, they want the person in charge for comments, which happens to be a man in most cases. Therefore, journalists would need to put in a conscious effort into finding different voices. According to the interviewees, this does not happen in most cases due to various reasons which include: the nature of journalistic work which is driven by deadlines, the perception that society does not value female voices, and most importantly the lack of an conscious emphasis to feature diverse voices by the print media. However, one interviewee blamed the journalists for not including more female voices. The participant argued that training institutions and media companies need to encourage journalists more to actively seek out sources of all ethnicities and gender (Interview 1, 2016 July 04). The notion that this issue is related to society becomes apparent when reflecting on one interviewee’s experience in the finance sector, who claimed that female experts (analysts, economists) are reluctant to talk to her and to give contextual information because of company policies and because of the fear of being victimised in their company (Interview 6, 2016 August 03).

One way journalists have an impact on the news as well as the newsroom is through their production of content, one aspect being source selection. Yet, past research has demonstrated that although female journalists include female sources, they do not tend to cite more women than their male colleagues (Liebler & Smith, 1997: 61; Yeboah, 2011: 470). The results of this study confirm that. Out of the 67 female sources, 53% were quoted by female journalists, which indicates that female and male journalists equally quote women. In addition, this study showed that female journalists were unlikely to cite only women; rather, they combined female and male sources; thus, it appears that a journalist's gender does not influence the source selection and confirming that female journalists tend to fall in line with the patriarchal structures, values, and norms of the newsroom. The interviews of this study confirmed this, with most participants revealing that inclusion female voices is not a priority for them. There are various reasons that could explain why female journalists do not strive to include more female sources, which were also stated by the interviewees above. For one, news production is influenced by organizational values as well as media routines and characterised by daily deadlines (Cassidy, 2008: 107). Based on the interviews of this study, it appears as if emphasizing gender balance and including female voices are not usually priorities in newsrooms. One of such media routines is journalists seeking out the most 'relevant' person or a well-known expert, who appear to be mostly male as men dominate public life, according to the interviewees. However, this aspect requires some research on its own, and the question remains whether the underrepresentation of female informants is justifiable, as there exist many female experts, politicians, activists, spokespersons, and businesswomen in South Africa.

The interview research conducted as part of this study gave some significant insight into the newsroom culture of South Africa's newspapers. It became apparent that female journalists felt more or less equal to their male colleagues when it came to major aspects such as employment, story assignment or hierarchy. Yet, the interviewees mentioned that there are still a few instances where male journalists have an advantage (the assignment of breaking stories, the value of opinion, for example). This indicates that although there may be gender balance, gender parity is still developing in South Africa's newsrooms. Further, despite feeling equal in the newsroom, the interviewees stated that when they are in the field or at press conferences, a type of machismo sometimes is present, indicating that patriarchal views and values are still embedded in the media industry. In addition, the results of the interviews indicate that female journalists adapt to those male values and practices. An example for this would be source selection, where, as seen in this study, female journalists show the same patterns in source selection as their male colleagues and do not try to incorporate more female voices. In terms of equity

in the newsroom, the interviewees argued that this has improved significantly over the past decade; however, sometimes there is still a 'boys club' at play and ways in which this undermines equity in a very subtle and nuanced way. This leads to the conclusion that newsrooms reflect South Africa's unequal society and it affects all aspects of it: the hierarchies in print media, the source selection and the assignment of news stories.

## **7. Conclusion**

### **7.1 Key Findings**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the state of South African daily newspapers regarding gender balance and representation in the newsroom as well as in the produced content. The focus was on how female journalists are represented and what type of stories they report on in comparison to their male colleagues, as well as if any patterns in female reporting could be identified. The study was based on three research questions regarding representation, female voice in the media, and topic assignment/ contribution. The research question regarding representation revealed whether male and female journalists are equally represented and what percentage of articles are contributed by female journalists. In terms of topic assignment/ contribution, the aim was to reveal whether male and female journalists report equally on soft and hard news and what type of content female journalists produce. The research question regarding the female voice in the print media addressed various aspects such as whether women's voices are featured equally to men's voices in news stories or whether there are any patterns in source selection.

With regards to representation, the results of this study showed that there was not only a gender balance across the sample but actually a slight majority of articles written by female journalists. This indicated a gender balance in South African newsrooms. The interviewees of this study confirmed this by stating that women are well represented across newsrooms and that none had experienced any discrimination because of their gender throughout their careers. However, the interviewees also voiced a lack of female journalists in certain areas of journalism such as sports or politics, for example. One aspect of the media transformation of the past 15 years includes the increasing number of female journalists. Some interviewees said it was a natural development; others credited affirmative action and Black Economic Empowerment for a better representation of female journalists of all ethnicities. During this study, three groups of dominant journalists emerged, who contributed the majority of the news articles: coloured women, black men, and white women. The interviewees confirmed these results. As mentioned during the findings section, although articles by female journalists did constitute the overall majority, the percentage of articles written by male and female journalists varied in each edition.

This study showed that male and female journalists reported equally on soft and hard news, the most frequent topics were politics, education, and general crime. However, when taking a closer look it became apparent that female journalists covered more soft than hard news and vice versa for their male colleagues. The interviewees of this study similarly stated that they covered soft as well as hard news. Further, they argued that journalists are driven by their interests which reflects in the stories they report on, implying that women are generally more interested in soft news topics. They stated that no journalist is forced to or prevented from reporting on a story based on their gender. In addition, the interviewees explained that there is no gender disparity in the assignment of stories in general, only regarding a few certain topics (crime, sensitive topics). This study also indicated that female journalists write a balance of positive and negative stories, while their male counterparts write mainly negative news stories. Further, the majority of the sample were local news stories, followed by national news. In terms of female pattern in reporting, it can be concluded that based on this sample, female journalists mainly write local soft news or politics and economy/ employment stories, which can be either positive or negative.

The most common source-type cited in the analysed articles were state actors, citizens, and corporate/ private institutions. Women were quoted across all source categories, indicating that they are no longer quoted as and portrayed as 'inferior' sources. However, men dominated all source categories and were quoted up to four times more than women. At the same time, men were three times more likely to be the focus of a news article. This, the interviewees claimed, is not a problem of the newsroom or journalistic practices, but of society as the news mirrors society. In addition, the interviewees stated that men dominate positions of power, authority, and leadership in society, which is why they are the topic and source more frequently. Yet, this seems to have an effect on the newsroom and therefore media routines, as some interviewees mentioned that there is less of an appetite for stories that focus on women. Further, female journalists were not more likely to cite female sources. This was confirmed by most of the interviewees who stated that including female voices was not a priority, rather that the priority lies in getting statements from the 'relevant person'. Still, most of the interviewees came to the conclusion that gender inequality exists in news reporting. It became apparent that the selection of informants and story subjects is influenced by multiple factors such as newsroom culture, media routines, social power structures, socialisation, patriarchal structures and culture. This led to the conclusion that newspapers are still characterised by a dominance of male over female voices as well as the fact that there is a significant difference between the representation of female journalists and the female voice in the print media.

This study indicated that while there may be a gender balance in South African newsrooms, there is no gender parity yet as female journalists are not completely equal to their male counterparts, especially when it comes to the assignment of stories and the advancement of their careers. According to the interviewees, a glass ceiling and structural challenges continue to exist, making it more difficult for female journalists to advance their careers, although there are some female journalists who have climbed the career ladder. Further, it became apparent that the younger interviewees, who argued that female journalists are now breaking through the glass ceiling, were more optimistic which indicates a change in the mentality of younger generations of journalists. Yet, it became apparent that the print media continues to be characterised by male values, norms and practices, which female journalists adapt to. This showed during the selection of sources, where female journalists continued the male pattern instead of including more female voices and a balance of voices.

## **7.2 Accomplishments**

In the beginning, this research set out to achieve a set of aims. This included to document the representation of female journalists at the *Cape Times* and to assess whether there is a gender balance among journalists. With regards to representation, the results of the content analysis showed that 54% of articles were written by female journalists. Further, during an interview with one of the participants, who was a journalist at the *Cape Times*, the interviewee stated that there was an equal number of male and female journalists in her newsroom. Similarly, the other interviewees stated that women are well represented in their newsrooms, indicating a gender balance. Therefore, this aim was successfully accomplished.

The second aim was to document what type of content female journalists produce. This was achieved through the content analysis, which showed that female journalists tend to report on local news stories, which could be either positive or negative and mainly soft news topics such as health, environment, or human-interest stories as well as certain hard news topics such as politics and economy/ employment.

Another goal was to document how women's voices are featured in the content of daily newspapers, which was accomplished through the content analysis and the interviews. As the results of the content analysis indicated, women are underrepresented as both subjects of a story and as quoted sources. While women are featured as knowledgeable informants, male informants were quoted two to four times more, depending on the source category. Also, men were the subject of news stories three times more than

women. The interviewees justified that this is due to South Africa's society and named social power structures, patriarchy and culture as reasons.

Further, one of the aims was to produce current and relevant data regarding South African daily newspapers, which was achieved through a content analysis of news articles from 2015/ 2016. As well as through qualitative interview research conducted during 2016 with female journalists and editors.

The next aim was to gain a better understanding of the role of female journalists and how they adapt to the newsroom culture. It became apparent during this research, that while women are well represented and female journalists have become an established part of the newsroom, they might not have influenced the newsroom in a way one might expect (change in leadership, change in covered stories, different hierarchies, for example). Although one might assume that female journalists have an impact on the news content, as this sample indicated very balanced stories, meaning no dominance of one specific topic or classic negative, hard news stories written by male journalists, but instead a variety of topics, a slight majority of soft news as well as a balance of positive and negative stories. However, it appears as if the print industry itself, including its values, norms and practices have not developed further and female journalists adapt to them, as seen during the process of source selection. Although this aim was achieved, more research on this specific topic of newsroom culture and female journalists' influence on it should be conducted.

Another goal was to gain a better understanding of what challenges and obstacles female journalists might face in the newsroom as well as in the field, which was accomplished during the interview research. It became apparent that none of the interviewees had experienced any discrimination based on their gender and that all interviewees felt treated fairly in the newsroom. Yet, it became apparent that female journalists are not completely equal to their male counterparts and still struggle to achieve senior positions. Further, motherhood and the struggle to balance it with a journalistic career remained an important topic. Outside the newsroom, the interviewees faced some challenges such as machoism or sources looking down at them because of them being female.

The final aim was to lay the groundwork for future research regarding South African female journalists, gender in the newsroom and the female voice in the print media, which was achieved through the generated data from the content analysis in combination with industry insight from female journalists generated through the interview research.

### **7.3 Significance**

This research was significant for various reasons. For one, little academic research on this topic has been done in a South African context and this study contributes to the gap in the literature. Secondly, not only is this study one of a few of its kind but it also combined two research methods and approaches: a content analysis, a quantitative approach, and interview research, a qualitative approach. The employment of a mixed methods approach allowed for triangulation of the results. In addition, through the interviews, female journalists were given a voice in this debate, aside from the reader gaining an insight into the print industry. Further, the study provided relevant and especially current data from 2015/ 2016. Due to the fact that this research filled the existing gap in research and addressed a variety of issues, it lays the groundwork for future research. At the same time, this study not only reflected on the representation of female print journalists but had implications for South African society, especially regarding women's representation and integration in public and corporate life, social power structures, patriarchy and culture, and is encouraging further research in these areas. Although this research has its limitations, it highlights the current state of South African newsrooms with regards to gender and furthermore, addresses issues of career advancement, issues of society and transformative policies. Further, this study connects and is interesting for various disciplines such as media studies, sociology or gender studies.

### **7.4 Limitations**

This study was limited in both scope and approach. It was conducted on a small scale and employed a case study approach, which is why the data from the content analysis was only generated from one newspaper. By only focusing on the *Cape Times*, this study was limited to an English readership and one geographical area, the Cape region. Due to that geographical limitation, this research is not a representative sample of all South African mainstream newspapers. However, these limitations can be rectified by future research. The focus on only one geographical region affected the results of this study. This became apparent when taking a look at the ethnicity of the journalists of the sample. According to the data, the majority of the journalists were coloured women, black men, and white women, with a lack of black female and white male journalists. Most participants of the interview research confirmed these findings. However, some of the interviewees who were from different regions such as Gauteng, for example voiced different opinions. They confirmed that the majority of journalists are black men and white women and that there is a lack of white male journalists. However, they did not

experience a lack of black female journalists, rather those constituted the majority of journalists while there was a lack of coloured journalists in the interviewees' experience.

Further, the sample was acquired for only a limited period, over the duration of one year as one of the aims of this research was to produce current data. Lastly, only eleven interviews were conducted as part of the interview research. However, these were in-depth informant interviews, which were not only time intensive but also covered a wide field of topics and addressed a variety of issues. As no new results could be found after conducting eleven interviews, this was determined as an adequate number of interviews.

### **7.5 Recommendations for Future Research**

As mentioned, the most significant limitation of this study was that the samples of the content analysis were only generated from one newspaper. Therefore, future studies should sample articles from various newspapers across South Africa for the duration of at least one year to gain a better understanding of the representation of female journalists in South African newspapers. It would be important to not only include English newspapers, but also newspapers in other South African languages such as *Die Burger* or *Isolezwe*, for example, to cover all ethnicities and classes of South African society across different regions. During this study, interview research has proven as an efficient tool in combination with content analysis to 'explain' the generated data, get a better understanding of the representation of female journalists as well as to get a broader picture regarding newsroom culture and societal influences. Therefore, employing interview research for future studies is recommended but as with the sample of the content analysis, the interview research should be conducted with female journalists from multiple regions of South Africa, across different age groups and ethnicities. It could also be interesting to include interviews with male journalists to gain insight from their perspective on various issues related to the representation of female journalists such as career advancement or newsroom culture, for example. Further, more research on how women's voices are featured and represented in newspapers, and how that relates to society and culture needs to be conducted in a South African context. In addition, theories from sociology and gender studies could be implemented to explore and explain the link between culture, social structures and media routines.

## Appendix 1: Codebook

### Overview of variables

#### ID Variables

V1	Newspaper
V2	Journalist Gender
V3	Journalist Race
V4	Season/ Date
V5	Page
V6	Place in Paper
V7	Type of Article
V8	Size/ Length

#### Content Variables

V9	Headline
V10	Topic
V11	Soft /Hard News
V12	Scope
V13	Topic/ Focus Gender
V14	Voice
V15	Source Gender
V16	Positive/ Negative Focus

## I. ID Variables

Variables		Categories	
V1	Newspaper	1	The Cape Times
V2	Journalist Gender	3	Male
		4	Female
		5	Unknown
V3	Journalist Race	6	Black
		7	White
		8	Coloured
		9	Unknown
		67	Indian
V4	Season/Date	10	<text variable> / [8 digits]
V5	Page	11	[digits]
V6	Place in Paper	12	Front Page
		13	Section Cover
		14	Inside Page
V7	Type of Article	15	News Report
		16	Editorial
		17	Feature Article
		18	Opinion
		19	Other
V8	Size/ Length	20	<text variable>

## II. Content Variables

Variables		Categories	
V9	Headline	21	<text variable>
V10	Topic	22	General Crime
		23	Sexual Crime
		24	Murder/ Death
		26	Politics
		27	Economy/Employment
		28	Education
		29	Human Interest
		30	Health/ Well-Being
		31	Environment
		32	Social Problems
		33	Arts/ Culture
		34	Sports- Related
		66	Legal
		36	Other
V11	Soft/ Hard News	37	Hard News
		38	Soft News
		39	Unidentifiable
V12	Scope	40	Local
		41	Regional
		42	National
		43	International
V13	Topic/ Focus Gender	44	Male
		45	Female
		46	Generic
V14	Voice	47	State Actors
		48	Experts
		49	Media
		50	NGOs/ Civic Groups
		51	Citizens
		52	Wo/man on the street
		53	Witness
		54	Unemployed/ Poor
		64	Cooperate/ private institutions
V15	Source Gender	55	Male
		56	Female
		57	Generic

V16	Positive/Negative Focus	58	Positive
		59	Negative
		60	Unidentifiable

### Appendix 2: Code Sheet

Row	Newspaper	Journalist Gender	Journalist Race	Season/ Date	Page	Place in Paper	Type of Article	Size/ Length	Headline	Topic	Soft News/ Hard News	Scope	Topic/ Focus Gender	Voice	Source Gender	Positive/ Negative Focus
1																
2																
3																
4																
5																
6																
7																
8																
9																
10																
11																

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