



UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism

Katria Ayanna Peleo Alampay

In Her Eyes:

A Study on the Situation of Women Photojournalists in the Philippines in the 21st
Century

Thesis Adviser:

Professor Reynaldo Guioguo
College of Mass Communication
University of the Philippines Diliman

Date of Submission

April 2013

Permission is given for the following people to have access to this thesis

Available for the general public	Yes
Available only after consultation with author/thesis adviser	No
Available only to those bound by confidentiality agreement	No

Student's signature:

Signature of thesis adviser:

UNIVERSITY PERMISSION PAGE

I hereby grant the University of the Philippines non-exclusive worldwide, royalty-free license to reproduce, publish, and publicly distribute copies of this thesis or dissertation in whatever form subject to the provisions of applicable laws, the provisions of the UP IPR policy and any contractual obligations, as well as more specific permission marking on the Title Page.

Specifically I grant the following rights to the University:

- a) to upload a copy of the work into the theses database of the college/ school/ institute/ department and in any other databases available on the public internet;
- b) to publish the work in the college/ school/ institute/ department journal, both in print and electronic or digital format and online; and
- c) to give open access to the above-mentioned work, thus allowing “fair use” of the work in accordance with the provisions of the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines (Republic Act No. 8293), especially for teaching, scholarly and research purposes.

Katria Ayanna Peleo Alampay

April 2013

IN HER EYES:
A STUDY ON THE SITUATION OF WOMEN PHOTOJOURNALISTS IN THE
PHILIPPINES IN THE 21ST CENTURY
COLLEGE OF MASS COMMUNICATION

by
KATRIA AYANNA PELEO ALAMPAY

has been accepted for
the degree of BACHELOR OF ARTS IN JOURNALISM
by

Professor Reynaldo Guioguo

and approved for the
University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication
by

Dr. Roland B. Tolentino
Dean, College of Mass Communication

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA**PERSONAL DATA**

Name Katria Ayanna P. Alampay
Permanent Address #1C Upsilon Drive Extension, Alpha Village, Diliman,
Quezon City, Philippines
Telephone Number (+632) 931-1773 / (+63) 927-563-3767
Email Address katria.alampay@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Secondary Level Academic Excellence in Information, Communication,
Technology, Saint Pedro Poveda College, Quezon City
Primary Level Poveda Learning Center, Quezon City

ORGANIZATIONS

Vice President for Education and Research, U.P. Cineastes'
Studio

WORK EXPERIENCE

Intern (Photographer), Thomson Reuters, April-May 2012

ACHIEVEMENTS

University Scholar (2nd Sem 09-10; 2nd Sem 11-12)
Participant, Chonnam National University International
Summer Session 2012, Gwangju, South Korea, July 2012
Delegate, 3rd Global Model United Nations Conference,
Incheon, South Korea, August 2011

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Though I worked on this thesis alone, I could not have finished it without the help of the following people:

First, my beautiful family: Ama, Mommy, Micah, Alee, my cousins, my lolos and lolas, and my titos and titas, who give me unconditional love and support always.

My awesome barkada, who bring out the best in me, who are always ready to help proofread, who read my work without judgment, and always make me smile even in the middle of hell (weeks).

The brilliant professors I had the privilege of having in UP, who guided me these past four years and taught me more than just what was in the syllabus.

Sir Dennis Sabangan, who not only encouraged me and gave invaluable help during this thesis, but also was the reason I became interested in photojournalism in the first place.

My journalism batchmates and classmates, that went through this adventure, and many other adventures with me.

My friends that I met from all over the world, that believed in me even thousands of miles away.

Ate Raquel of the Journalism Department, who never failed to show patience and give assistance in times of need for all journalism students all these years.

My one and only org, the U.P. Cineastes' Studio, for giving me the opportunity to be part of something incredible.

And lastly, the women photojournalists that gave their time and knowledge to this study, who risk their lives, along with other photojournalists, to share stories with the world. Thank you for inspiring me, and others, to be hopeful, passionate, and courageous to do what we love.

*For all the women in this world,
that inspire girls to be brave.*

ABSTRACT

Alampay, K.P. (2013). *In Her Eyes: A study on the status of women photojournalists in Metro Manila*. Unpublished undergraduate thesis, University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication.

Despite the enormous impact women journalists have made and continue to make in Philippine media, photojournalism in the country has remains to be a largely a “man’s world.”

This thesis looks at the experiences of Filipino women photojournalists currently working in the Philippines within the past decade. The study analyzes the current status and situation of these women working for various local and international news agencies, as well as working as stringers and freelance photographers.

The study found that, though women are still a minority in the male-dominated field, sexual discrimination in giving assignments is no longer present. Some deterrents to women entering the field may be the hectic lifestyle as well as innate danger of the profession.

Physical challenges as well as sexual harassment are also problems that women photographers face, but in spite of this, women photojournalists in the Philippines have been able to assert themselves in the profession. Their passion not only for the craft but for the subjects they cover enables them to promote issues that may be overlooked, or give better attention to women’s issues because of the access they have as women.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Title Page	i
University Permission Page	ii
Approval Sheet	iii
Biographical Data	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Dedication	vi
Abstract	vii
Table of Contents	viii
List of Tables	xi
List of Figures	xii
I. INTRODUCTION	1
A. Background of the Study	1
B. Statement of the Problems and Objectives	2
C. Significance of the Study	4
D. Scope and Limitations	5
II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	6
A. Women and Photojournalism	6
B. Filipino Women and Media	10
C. State of Photojournalism	11

	9
III. STUDY FRAMEWORK	15
A. Theoretical Framework	15
B. Conceptual Framework	17
C. Operational Framework	18
D. Operational Definition of Terms	19
IV. METHODOLOGY	21
A. Research Design and Methods	21
B. Concepts and Indicators	21
C. Research Instruments	22
D. Units of Analysis and Sampling	24
E. Data Gathering	25
F. Data Analysis	26
V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	27
A. Results of the Newsroom Survey	27
B. Background of the Subjects	29
C. Challenges	34
D. Perceived Advantages of Being a Woman in the Field	41
E. Dealing with Fellow Photographers	50
F. Balancing Act	53
G. Traits and Advice	55
H. The Future for Women Photojournalists in the Philippines	58
VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	61

	10
VII. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	62
A. Theoretical Issues	62
B. Methodological Issues	62
C. Practical Issues	63
BIBLIOGRAPHY	66
APPENDICES	70

LIST OF TABLES

Number	Title	Page
1	List of Interviewees	25

LIST OF CHARTS

Number	Title	Page
1	Geographic Distribution of Subjects of the Study	27
2	Types of News Associations of Respondents	28
3	Number of Male and Female Photographers of Selected Philippine Newsrooms	29
4	Total Number of Photojournalists in Selected Philippine Newsrooms	30

LIST OF FIGURES

Number	Title	Page
1	Women in the field	36
2	Selected photos on population and reproductive health	43
3	Photos by women photographers of military and sports coverage	46
4	Selected Photos from covering disasters	47
5	Selected photos of women and children affected disasters	49
6	Selected unconventional or “emotional” photos	56

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

According to the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) 2011 *Global Report on the Status of Women in the Media*, in an international overview, women represent only a third or 33.3 percent of the full-time journalism workforce in the over 500 companies surveyed all over the world (IWMF, 2011, p. 6). Of the total number of surveyed reporters, 64 percent were men, and 41 percent of the newsgathering, editing and writing jobs were held by women.

In terms of the Asia and Oceania region, which included Australia, Bangladesh, China, Fiji, India, Japan, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, and South Korea, the IWMF found that men in media outnumber women 4:1 (IWMF, 2011, p. 11).

The importance of having an equal representation of both women and men and a diversity of voices and opinions in the media is that it enables the media to fulfill its democratic responsibility (UNESCO, 2012). This is why the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) annually commemorates *Women Make the News*, a global policy advocacy initiative aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in media as well as balanced reporting on both men and women (UNESCO, 2012).

Even less women are represented in the field of photojournalism, a field that began and has widely remained as a "man's world."

Tipper Gore in the foreword of *Women Photographers at National Geographic* (2000), wrote "Rarely are photographers as famous as their subjects, and often little is

known about them...photographs taken by women have a unique perspective on human interaction. What is revealed through the feminine eye is an artful unveiling of the spirit and a deeper understanding of the human experience.”

Photojournalists aim to capture “the essence of the human condition in pictures” (Calder & Garrett, 1986, p. 106). Photojournalism is valuable because it relies primarily on visuals, therefore transcending any barriers of language, and can illicit more empathy or emotion without the use of words. Photojournalists can provide viewers with the opportunity to see an event they would not regularly get to witness, and provides better understanding and authenticity to a report.

Though world has generally progressed in terms of fighting for gender equality since the birth of photography, women remain underrepresented in the field of photojournalism and journalism in general.

In the Philippines, photojournalism remains a media profession that is dominated by men. Limited studies have featured Filipino photojournalists in the 21st century, and even less or none about female Filipino photojournalists.

This study will focus on the lives of women currently working as photojournalists in the Philippines, employed by either local or international news agencies, or as freelancers or stringers.

B. Statement of the Problems and Objectives

1. Problem Statement

This study aims to explore and share the experiences and insights of women photojournalists in the Philippines. Specifically, the research intends to answer the following questions:

- What drew these women to become photojournalists?
- What are common challenges that women photojournalists face in the field?
- What are the exclusive experiences women have when working in this male-dominated profession?
- What are the perceived advantages by women photographers from being a woman?
- How much does gender play a role in the assignments delegated to female photographers?
- What deters or prevents more women from becoming photojournalists? Why do they remain underrepresented in photojournalism?
- How does the experience of a woman photographer differ in Manila and in other parts of the country?

2. Objectives of the Study

- a. To give a glimpse into the lives of these Filipino women behind the lens
- b. To assess the current situation of women photojournalists in the Philippines according to their experiences and challenges faced
- c. To discover how gender has affected (positively or negatively) the treatment of photojournalists by others in the field as well as by the subjects they cover

- d. To determine if sex discrimination occurs against women photojournalists in the 21st century

C. Significance of the Study

Steeves (1993) said, there is still a great need for more feminist scholarship and literature on women in journalism professions, not just in Asia but all over the world.

This study aims to fill the large gap of limited resources and studies on not only female photojournalists in the Philippines, but on Filipino photojournalists in this day and age in general.

The results of this study will help identify the current status of women photojournalists and reveal the treatment and experiences of women photojournalists in the Philippines. It also aims to empower women photographers, raise awareness of any issues regarding discrimination or lack of opportunity, and help equip future photojournalists with more sensitivity and consciousness with regard to gender equality.

Concretely, this study will narrate the lives of Filipino women in the field of photojournalism, whose stories and voices are not often as publicized or discussed and share their unique insights as women working in this specific career.

D. Scope and Limitations

This study limited itself to the experiences of women photojournalists active from 1990-2013 in the Philippines. The photojournalists that qualify as subjects for this study must be or have been employed either by local and international news agencies, working

in the Philippines, within the last ten years, or must currently identify themselves as professional freelance photojournalists.

This study was already limited even before data gathering, by the small available sample group of currently active women photojournalists, both in and outside of Metro Manila.

Also, so far there are no studies specifically pertaining to female photojournalists based in the Philippines in the 21st century. There are, however, various online articles about female photojournalists in the international arena, but the stories and struggles of Filipino photojournalists, men and women, have not yet been fully examined.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Women and Photojournalism

Photojournalism is still widely considered a domain of men. Men fill almost two-thirds or sixty five percent of the global production and design jobs in media, leaving women with only a third of the global share of jobs in this category such as graphic designers, photographers, illustrators and others in the creative roles of news production (IWMMF, 2011).

Typically, women that jump into traditionally masculine occupations face both greater difficulties and greater rewards (Galliano, 2003). Women can set themselves apart because they can bring a different set of experiences to their jobs as journalists (Mills, 1997). According to Mills (1997), though women and men can go through the same news-gathering process and even write their stories in similar ways, there is still the common belief that “men and women often see different things while on assignment” (p. 42). Men and women can ask different questions, notice different things, fixate on different angles.

At the end of the nineteenth century in the United States, it was the competition between newsrooms that created opportunities for women to work as journalists (Langton, 2009). Despite resistance then from male editors, women were hired and eventually received assignments previously deemed too difficult for women (Langton, 2009).

Historically, the number of women involved in photojournalism expanded around times of war, as more women were urged to take duties previously assigned to men.

World War II was a period that particularly exemplified the change in attitudes toward war documentation. During the previous world war, women war correspondents

were still unacceptable to the military and the media, though compelling photographs by women during World War I do exist. During World War II, the U.S. government realized the value of promoting the war effort through print publicity, and so began to seek more images for their reports, and the greater demand benefited women (Rosenblum, 1994).

Some women photographers throughout world history were able to document aspects of conflict that were previously unseen or unnoticed.

After WWII, “Admittedly, the number of women photographing on battle fronts was miniscule, but the barrier against their covering war had been irreplaceably breached.” (Rosenblum, 1994).

Photojournalism then became a new “alibi” for women, a way for them to “see everything, get everywhere, talk to everybody” (Sabine Weiss in Rosenblum, 1994).

According to Langton (2009), “the importance of women and minority photojournalists cannot be overstated” (p. 35). This is because a diverse group is necessary to address perspectives that are often missing in the news (Langton, 2009).

The importance of having women in journalism in general can be seen in covering issues such as politics. Mandel in Weaver (1997) said, “If you are looking at a TV set with women journalists talking about politics, with women analyzing the news and commenting on it, that sends a message that this is not hostile territory” (p. 50).

Women play an important role in bringing women’s issues and stories especially to the forefront. According to the 2010 *Global Media Monitoring Project* (GMMP), stories by female reporters contain more female news subjects¹, compared to stories done

¹ People interviewed or whom the news is about. (Global Media Monitoring Project, 2010)

by men. The report also found that stories produced by female reporters are “visibly more likely to challenge gender stereotypes” (p. 23).

As women and children “tend to be the most affected by disasters” according to the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), “highlighting examples of women leaders in communities across Asia and Africa can be very attractive stories, contributing to women’s empowerment” (United Nations, 2010)

In recent times, there has been a movement all over the world to empower more female photojournalists. Around the world there are numerous photographic associations that are exclusive for women as well as awards in order to support and promote the work of female photojournalists. Just as a medal confirms an athlete’s outstanding abilities, competitions promote excellent works by women and prizes are a “powerful reinforcement for women’s voices” (Mills, 1997).

Since 2000, Canon France and the *Association des Femmes Journalistes*, in partnership with the international festival for photojournalism *Visa Pour l’Image* has sponsored the Canon Female Photojournalist Award, an annual photography competition that awards 8,000 euros to fund projects by female photojournalists. In 2011, a European website called *Firecracker* was established to promote European women photographers and link them with a wider audience as well as give financial support to women photographers to complete photography projects through the Firecracker Photographic Grant (Laurent, 2012).

In Asia, since 2010, curator Yumi Goto has organized the *Asian Women Photographers’ Showcase* which “[recognizes] the amazing quality of work being produced by female photographers in Asia.”

When Goto first went through the entries for the first year of the showcase, she recounted in an interview, “What is most interesting to me is that if you only looked at the images, you can’t really tell if men or women produced them. Originally, I had expected to see work that appeared feminine, but in the end, I really didn’t feel any influence by gender at all. Perhaps, this means that it really doesn’t matter if the person taking the photo is a man or woman” (Holmes, 2011).

In the same interview with *Sojournposse.com*, Goto also said “In Asia, this kind of work being produced by female photographers is still not very recognized and I think it is important for us to do such a showcase. I believe you need to let people know about the amazing quality of work being produced by female photographers in Asia.”

There has been an ongoing debate whether photographs taken by men and women differ at all. There are many stereotypes for both men and women photographers, and typical associations with women as having a different style or focus in photography, but it is important to notice that despite all the talk about male versus female approaches to stories or photography, there are always photographers that defy the stereotype (Mitchell, 2009). “For all the talk of ‘male’ and ‘female’ subjects and approaches, most of the photographers we spoke with see little difference in the kinds of photos men and women take” (Kristen Lubben in Mitchell, 2009).

In a fellow undergraduate journalism thesis from the University of the Philippines, Javier (2010) noted that the respondents for their study on tabloid photojournalists were all male. Those respondents had “seemed to agree that in order to survive the profession one must possess traits which are exclusively male” (p. 97).

One source of the said study believed that the appeal of a woman photographer during coverage is different to male photographers, like having an “x-factor” because while usually being surrounded by other men, male photographers are impressed when they see a woman photographer doing the same work as them. In the thesis’ recommendations, Javier suggested “perhaps from a feminist perspective, the male dominance could be inspected, if the profession either rejects or empowers the female” (p. 97), and that the phenomenon of the rarity of female photojournalists should be studied, that the stories of women working in photojournalism would be recounted.

In the hiring process of the national newspapers and international wires in the Philippines, gender is not explicitly listed as part of the criteria for hiring photojournalists in the Philippines but rather, applicants are judged after a trial period or are trained first (Dalupang & Espenilla, 2012), however it is not specifically mentioned if gender affects how assignments are delegated, whether out of concern for the risk or because of bias.

B. Filipino Women and Media

In the Philippines, women’s impact on the media landscape was the result of many years of hard work and perseverance. Early activities in journalism were dominated by men, just as in many other areas, and there was always a movement and demand for equal rights (Rosario-Braid, 1996).

It was ironically during the repressive Martial Law years under Ferdinand E. Marcos that women journalists experienced liberation from traditional roles. Women journalists were described as more daring and independent and the emergence and the

success of the alternative press came about thanks to the efforts of women (Rosario-Braid, 1996).

Though women are still majorly underrepresented in media globally, as shown in the 2010 GMMP Report and 2011 IWMF Global Report, women presently have managed to occupy jobs all over the media industry in the Philippines—from owners and publishers to editors and reporters.

Women journalists in the Philippines can also be considered freer than in other Asian countries because they can freely choose their jobs and how they dress and act, without fear of religious or cultural scorn, and women are recognized for their role in nation-building in the 1987 Philippine Constitution (Article II, Section 14). The positive treatment of women is also reinforced by the presence of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which the Philippines ratified in 1981 (CEDAW Watch-Philippines).

C. State of Photojournalism

“I believe that photographers are journalists in the fullest sense and they’re not a service department to just illustrate the stories that other people think up. They’re people who think for themselves and come up with stories and with reasonable ways of telling stories, whether their own or other people’s stories, and I think that they’re crucial to the success of a paper” (Carroll, 2004 in Langton, 2009)

The profession of photojournalism itself is a difficult as well as thankless one, especially in the Philippines. “Through the years, great pictures have inspired people to wax lyrical about the human condition. But talk about the person who makes a living

taking those pictures, the news photographer, and it's a totally different subject matter altogether" (Rimban, 2007).

Rimban (2007) described how photojournalists in the Philippines are sometimes treated as "second-class citizens," though photojournalists have to work under the same high-pressure and sometimes even more dangerous conditions than print and broadcast journalists.

Langton (2009) said that photojournalists spend more time "in the streets" compared to regular print journalists. "They are more accustomed to creating relationships with people of all socioeconomic levels because they cannot do their reporting by phone or over the Internet" (Langton, 2009, p. 241).

Photojournalist and press photographer positions are more limited in news agencies, and yet photojournalists are always on call (McLean, 1995) and are expected to cover events and submit their photos within or even before the same deadlines as their writing counterparts.

"Unlike the reporter who can produce a news article without even leaving his or her desk, the photographer has to brave crowds, heat, rain, and even bullets to be at a news event at exactly the right place and the right time to produce anything worth using for tomorrow's paper" (Rimban, 2007).

Langton also said that photojournalists have the potential to relate to minorities more easily because of their own minority status within newsrooms (p. 242).

Photos play a big role in the appeal of publications, print and online, because readers can be drawn in by dominant elements on a page, such as images, first before reading a full article.

Many Philippine press photographers receive the lowest salaries in a news organization, while others do not receive regular compensation (Rimban, 2007). Most also forfeit all rights to the images to the newspapers, which means they get a severely limited profit from each photo.

According to Langton (2009), newspapers that are consistently strong visually have several factors in common, one of which is that “photographers are regarded as photojournalists in every sense of the word” (p.49).

The low status and compensation for Philippine photojournalists reflects what Langton (2009) stated, “Newspapers have often underappreciated the storytelling power of the image and/or been loathe to employ photographers fully as journalists” (p. 242).

Inequality among photojournalists has been examined in previous studies, but more based on whether the photographer is employed by a local or foreign news agency rather than on gender. There is a wide disparity in compensation between Filipino photojournalists that are employed to local agencies and those who belong to foreign or international news wires. Javier (2010) said that tabloid photojournalists employed to local tabloids are paid less regularly and much lower than those who are employed to larger international agencies. Photojournalists with better salaries and benefits can afford better equipment, and photojournalists with better equipment can capture better photos that require certain settings or lenses, however Dalupang asserts that this gap can be overcome by better training of local photojournalists (Dalupang & Espenilla, 2012). Photojournalists need both proper training and competition, aside from proper compensation, to motivate them. News agencies should implement strict rules and accountability measures so their photojournalists are less likely to exhibit unethical

behavior (Dalupang & Espenilla, 2012) and will then uphold the integrity of news stories and the photographs they publish.

CHAPTER III: STUDY FRAMEWORK

A. Theoretical Framework

Feminist Standpoint Theory

The standpoint theory focuses on how an individual's location within a culture shapes what the individual experiences, knows, feels, does, and understands social life as a whole (Wood, 2009). This theory can be used to enrich our understanding of why people communicate in different ways and it empowers the viewpoints of the marginalized (CommunicationStudies.com, 2011).

The standpoint theory was developed from the writings of German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, who noted that society as a whole recognized the existence of slavery but its nature was perceived differently depending on one's position as a master or slave, and Karl Marx, who emphasized that the work we do or activities we engage in shape our identities, consciousness, and knowledge (Wood, 2009).

The major contribution of standpoint theory is that it can be used to show how our different social locations (e.g. according to gender) provide the possibility of having different standpoints (Wood, 2009) which then affects how individuals develop particular perspectives, identities, skills, and understandings as a result of their standpoint within society.

This theory was used previously in American studies, such as that by Patricia Hill Collins, which showed how people of color, specifically black scholars, have special insights into Western culture because they are "outsiders within," or a minority who is a member of a majority institution (Wood, 2009).

According to the standpoint theory, marginalized groups have unique perspectives on the nature and workings of society. A standpoint is shaped by but not given by social location, just as feminism, which is relevant to issues of gender, does not necessarily arise from being female (Wood, 2009). Standpoint is an “achievement” according to standpoint theorists, because it can “only be achieved through forms of critical consciousness, reflexivity and struggle” (Hughes, 2002, p. 120).

Women, minorities and others outside of the cultural center could possess the ability to view society from perspectives that are “less distorted, less biased, and more layered” (Wood, 2009, p. 56) than those who occupy more central standpoints or the mainstream.

“Feminist standpoint epistemology requires us to place women at the center of the research process: Women’s concrete experiences provide the starting point from which to build knowledge” (Brooks, 2007, p. 56).

According to Meyers (1997), “what was significant about feminist standpoint theory was its grounding in women’s experiences of the sexual division of labor and how it could be read as an attempt to universalize these experiences to all women.” (Meyers in Hughes, 2002, p. 157)

But a limitation of this theory is that though some standpoints may be more objective than others, all human perspective is considered biased (Fleming, 2011). “All standpoint theorists stress how problematic the idea is that we can access reality directly through experience.” (Hughes, 2002).

“There is no view from ‘nowhere.’ That is there is no ‘outside’, ‘objective’ position that can be taken. All knowledge is situated in the knower. The self, or a

particular subjective position, is, therefore, the first step in formulating a feminist perspective.” (Griffiths, 1995 in Hughes, 2002)

B. Conceptual Framework

This research aims to describe the experiences of women working in a male dominated profession.

The Feminist Standpoint Theory was used by the researcher to frame the methodology of the study as well as compliment better understanding of the experiences and opinions shared to be shared by these photojournalists.

There is a need to begin with scholarly research with the lives of women, “as they themselves experience them, in order to achieve an accurate and authentic understanding of what life is like for women today.” (Brooks, 2007)

“A feminist standpoint is a way of understanding the world, a point of view of social reality, that begins with, and is developed directly from, women’s experiences. The next step is to draw on what have learned from women’s experiences, to apply that feminist standpoint, toward bettering the condition of women and creating social change.” (Brooks, 2007, p. 60)

According to Brooks (2007), the claim that women can be categorized into one singular group with uniform characteristics and a single standpoint has been discarded. Most feminist standpoint scholars now acknowledge that women occupy many different standpoints and inhabit many different realities, and therefore take differences between women seriously. (Brooks, 2007, p. 70)

“According to these feminist standpoint scholars, paying attention to the distinctive characteristics of each woman’s standpoint, and the diversity among and between women’s experiences, does not interfere with our capacity to build knowledge. In fact, it is precisely within the distinctive characteristics of a particular standpoint, or the uniqueness of a particular woman’s experience, that we can hope to find new knowledge.” (Brooks, 2007, p. 72)

C. Operational Framework

In this study, the researcher looked specifically at the experiences and insights of women photojournalists in the Philippines today.

Based on the Standpoint Theory, these women have a unique set of experiences and standpoint because of their status as a minority in the field. This research will recognize these unique experiences and look at how this affects how they do their job as well as perceive the photojournalism industry.

The subjects were asked about their backgrounds, training, years in the profession and what brought them into the field as well as what they love about their jobs. They were also asked about specific challenges they face while working as a result of their gender and how they overcome these challenges. Perceived treatment they are also asked how they perceive treatment from other photojournalists as well as by subjects is affected (positively or negatively) by their gender. In order to determine if they are being relegated to certain beats or types of subjects, the interviewees were also asked about what assignments they typically shoot, if any.

They are then also asked about their perceived advantages or benefits because of their gender. They are also asked if and how they think being a woman helps empower other women and what traits they consider important for a woman photographer to have.

Lastly, they are asked about what changes or improvements they want to see in the field of photojournalism from fellow photographers, employers or clients to gauge the current media environment for them as well as what they aspire for the field to become.

D. Operational Definition of Terms

- *Standpoint* reflects the individual's personal beliefs, insights, opinions, understandings based on their social location
- *Photographer* – person who uses a camera to record or take photographs; used in this study to denote news or press photographers, no amateur or hobbyists
- *Photojournalism* – “A field of photography specializing in taking photographs for publication in newspapers or magazines” (Ehrlich, 1984, p. 124)
- *Photojournalists* are all persons that take photos for news agencies or wires, whether regularly employed under an organization or working as a stringer
- *Documentary photographer* – “The ultimate purpose of the work and the intention of the photographer differentiate documentary style from photo reportage. The documentary photographer advocates social change” (Langton, 2009, p. 24).
- *Stringers* are journalists that are not regular employees of a news agency, but are hired per photo or story or per coverage; “A writer or photographer who is not a full-time employee, but who is paid by the job. The term comes from the days when a writer would get paid by the column inch and would measure his or her contribution

by holding a string along the story to measure its length, knot it, measure the next column or story, and so on, reporting the final length for pay.”

- *Sexism* is the “process of assigning life-roles according to gender. Although sometimes used only in reference to prejudice against females, sexism means any stereotyping resulting in arbitrary discrimination against females or males” (Henderson, 1994)
- *Sex discrimination* is “differential employment decisions based on an employee’s gender” (Henderson, 1994)

CHAPTER IV: METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design and Methods

The primary research method used in this study was qualitative, in order to collect comprehensive information on the subjects, and also because the number of possible interviewees was limited.

The research design involved collecting stories and experiences of women photojournalists through in-depth interviews with Filipino women photojournalists that are currently active or have worked as a photojournalist within the past decade.

Minimal quantitative methodology was also used to supplement the data, as a survey was also conducted across several print newsrooms in Metro Manila.

B. Concepts and Indicators

This study aims to describe and analyze the experiences of women photojournalists working in the Philippines based on their standpoints as women working in a male-dominated field. The subjects were interviewed about their lives as photojournalists, their experiences and insights, the challenges they face, and their views on if and how their gender affects their work.

The experiences that the researcher wanted to discover were the challenges, achievements, benefits, and revelations that the women photojournalists gained over the course of their career. The anecdotes, perceptions, practices and other insights obtained from the respondents were the independent variables that determined the standpoint and treatment of the women photojournalists discussed in the study.

C. Research Instruments

Standard guide questions used during the in-depth interviews conducted as well as for the online questionnaires were as follows:

- How long have you been a photojournalist?
- How and why did you become a photojournalist? What were the things that made you want to be a photojournalist?
- What training or courses have you taken related to photography or photojournalism?
- What are the usual assignments or beats given to you (if any)?
- What subjects do you typically cover?
- What are the challenges or negative experiences you have faced because of being a woman in the field?
- How did you overcome these challenges?
- In what way did you ever feel that you were treated differently by fellow photographers or employers because of your gender?
- In what way did you ever feel you were treated differently by subjects because of your gender?
- What are the advantages or benefits that you have experienced because you are a woman photojournalist? How has being a woman helped you with your work?
- What differences do you see between what male and female photojournalists experience in the Philippines (if any)?
- How do you think you being a female photographer helps empower women?

- What traits do you think are important for a female photojournalist to have?
- What sort of changes do you want in the field (from employers or clients or other photojournalists)?
- What professional photojournalism/photography organizations are you a part of?
- Does your organization have any projects or initiatives to help women photojournalists in the country? Does your organization think this is necessary?
- Why do you think there are not that many women photojournalists today? What are possible deterrents?
- How did having a family affect your job now?
- What was a "big" story that you covered in your area or a story that had a big impact on you? And why was it significant?

And for the subjects that are working outside of Metro Manila, the following questions were added:

- Do you think it is harder for women outside of Manila to get into photojournalism compared to those in Manila?
- How do you think the experience, perception and treatment of women photojournalists is different for those working in Visayas/Mindanao compared to working in Manila, if at all?
- What are the advantages for you in being a photojournalist in Mindanao compared to in other areas of the country?

D. Units of Analysis and Sampling

Women photojournalists currently or recently active in the Philippines were the primary sources as well as subjects of this study. These women must have either been currently employed as photographers by local or international news organizations, or work as freelance photographers but consider themselves photojournalists. The ideal sample for this study was to have representatives for each major Philippine region—Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao, and the National Capital Region (NCR).

The bulk of the data for this research was obtained through interviews. Nonprobability purposive sampling was used in the selection of photojournalists, because a specific group was the focus. Nonprobability sampling, unlike probability sampling, does not involve random selection (Trochim, 2006). Purposive sampling means that one samples with a purpose in mind, in this case, the female photojournalists were the targeted sample because it was their views and voices that were the main subject of this research. This can also be considered expert sampling, because only professional photojournalists were sampled, and are assumed to possess a certain amount of experience and expertise.

However, the researcher was aware that the selected population sample of photojournalists, though not chosen randomly, does not reflect the same ideals and beliefs as the entire photojournalist population in the Philippines.

Meanwhile, qualitative data from the interviews was supplemented by minimal quantitative data from surveys of selected newsrooms in Metro Manila. Convenience purposive sampling was done.

E. Data Gathering

Due to the fact that there are only a few known women photojournalists that are currently active, the women working for newspapers and wires were each reached out to individually.

The freelance photojournalists were confirmed to consider themselves as professional photojournalists because of their membership to the Philippine Center for Photojournalists (PCP), now the Photojournalists' Center of the Philippines.

In the interest of gathering a more diverse sample, women photojournalists from Visayas and Mindanao were also contacted, though even amongst themselves, they knew very few other female photojournalists in their region.

In-depth interviews were set and conducted with the photojournalists depending on the subjects' convenience. However, due to certain factors such as pregnancy, busy schedules, or distance, some subjects were not available for face-to-face interviews and so were sent online questionnaires which they could answer online or through email. This limited the depth of some answers because follow-up questions could not always be asked.

Table 1. *List of Interviewees*

Name	Media Institution	Position	No. of years in profession
Baldicantos, Cheryl	Manila Bulletin (Visayas)	Staff Photographer	5
Bondoc, Joan S.	Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI)	Photographer	20+
Carballo, Angelica	InterAksyon.com	Contributor, freelance photographer	3
Cruz-Sy, Maria Virginia "Gigie"	abs-cbnnews, GMA News, Newsbreak	Contributor, documentary	5

		photographer	
Dimatatac, Aileen Camille	InterAksyon.com	Contributor, freelance photographer	6
Hernandez, Jacqueline	Manila Bulletin	Staff Photographer	12
More, Ruby Thursday	MindaNews	Photographer	4
Panlilio, Cai	Philippine Daily Inquirer (Mindanao)	Photo-Correspondent	4 1/2
Ravelo-Gagalac, Cheryl	Reuters News	Photographer	10
Reyes, Candice Anne L.	(formerly Manila Bulletin)	Freelance Photographer	6
Reyes, Hannah	European Pressphoto Agency (EPA)	Stringer, freelance photographer	3

To supplement the research, the researcher also conducted a survey with selected newsrooms in Metro Manila to determine the number of women photojournalists they have employed. Because of convenience as well as the general perception that Metro Manila is the most advanced area in the country, this was chosen as the sampling area for the survey.

Books, journal articles, news reports, online resources, and other reading literature were also used as secondary sources.

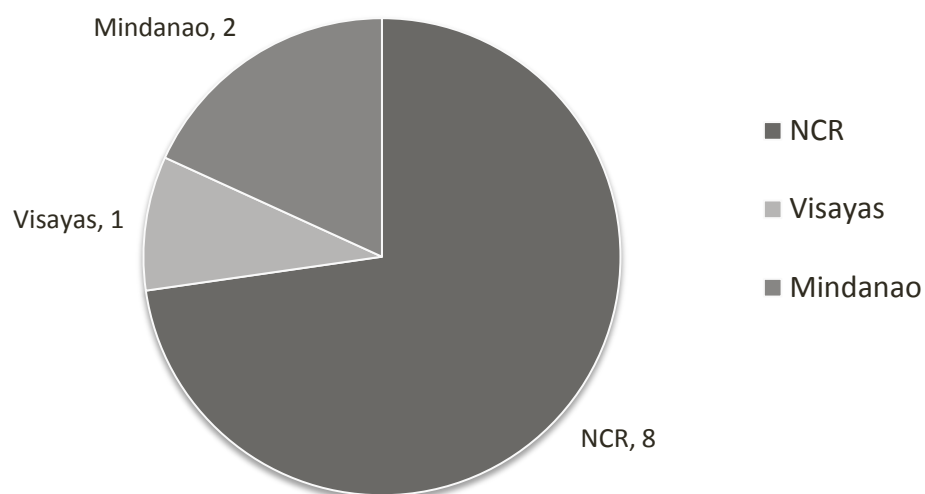
F. Data Analysis

Data gathered was organized according to general theme or topic. The researcher understands that information collected from individual women photojournalists does not reflect the conditions and standpoints of *all* Filipino women photojournalists. Similar individual experiences were sorted and contrasting statements were brought up. Specific anecdotes of some photojournalists were also cited to present unique experiences that face certain photojournalists, also to avoid generalizations.

CHAPTER V: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

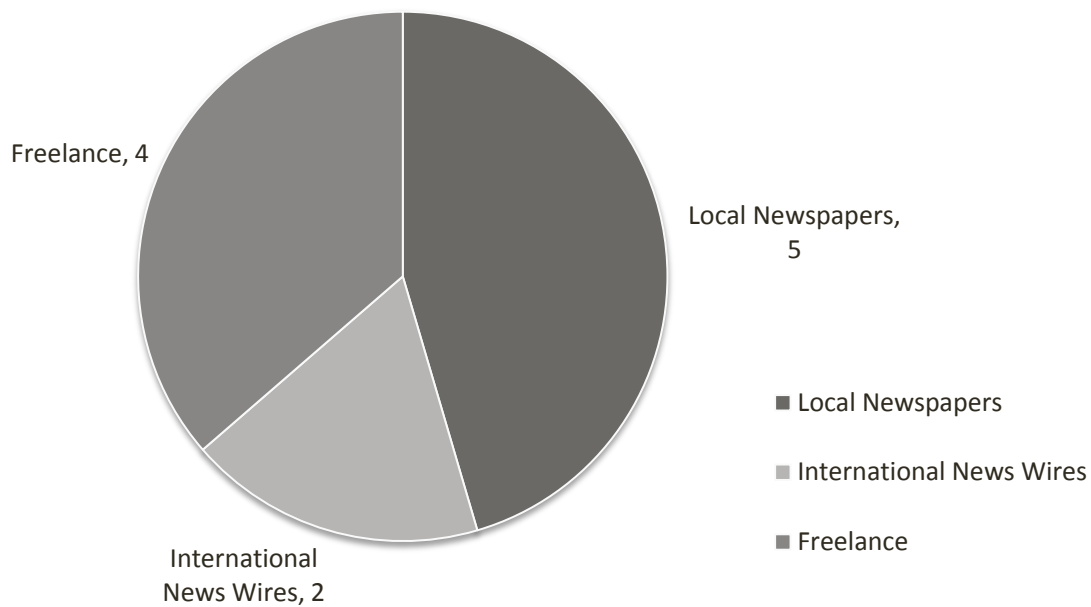
A total of eleven photojournalists in the Philippines were interviewed for this study. Eight were women photojournalists based in the National Capital Region (NCR) in Luzon, one in Visayas, and two in Mindanao.

Chart 1. *Geographic Distribution of Subjects of the Study*



Five of the respondents are currently employed to local broadsheets, two work for international news wires, and four work primarily as freelance photographers.

Chart 2. *Types of News Associations of Respondents*



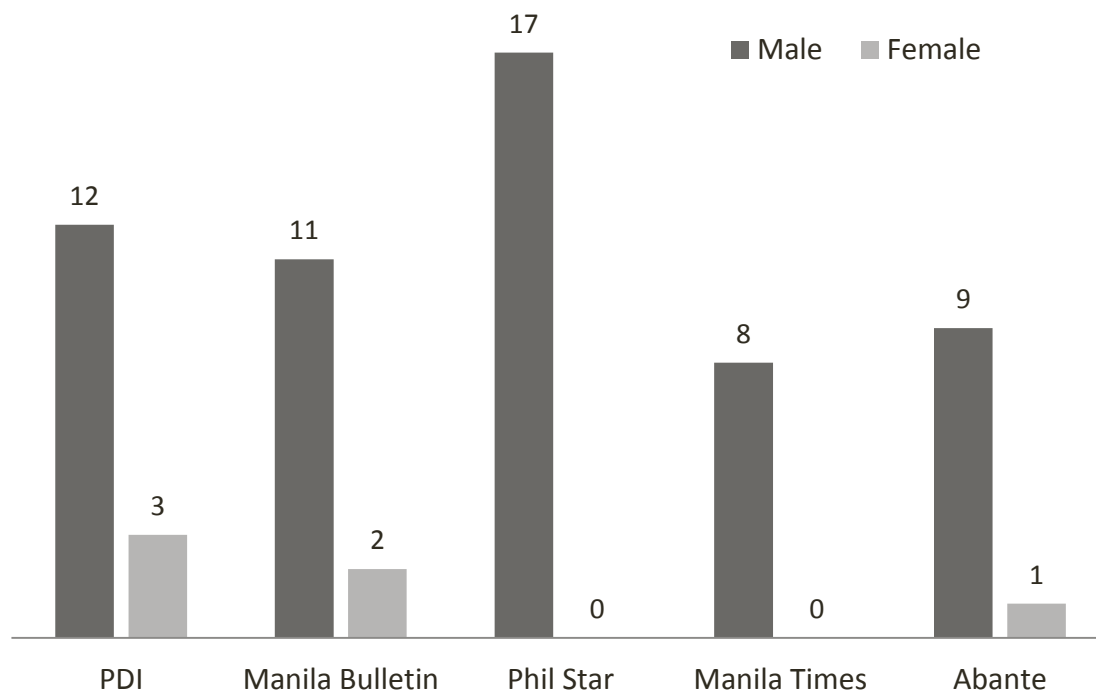
A. Results of the Newsroom Survey

The survey of selected Metro Manila newsrooms was done to establish the assertion that women are a minority among working photojournalists in the Philippines.

Based on the small-scale newsroom survey of five newsrooms, all based in Metro Manila, the number of female photojournalists is very small compared to the number of male photojournalists.

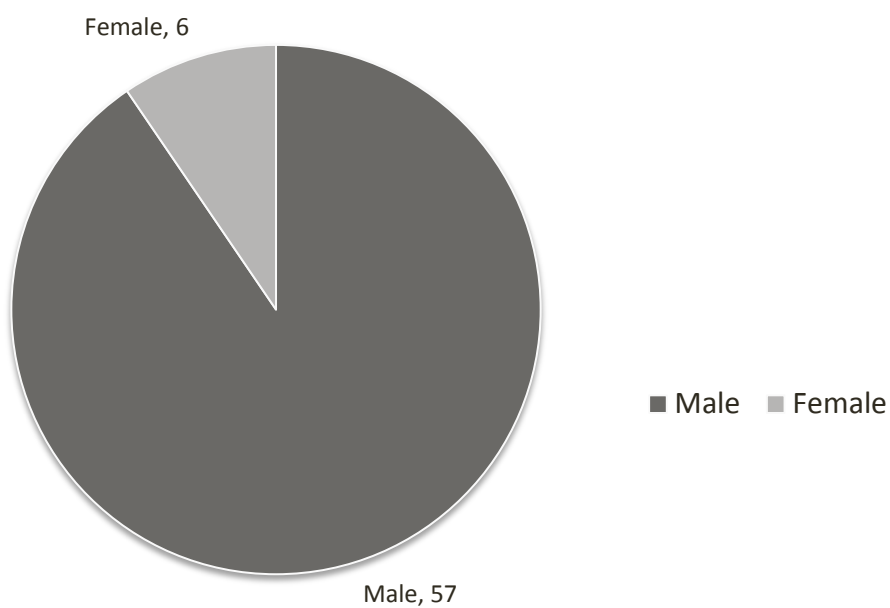
Among the three largest national daily newspapers, though the Philippine Star has the most number of total photographers employed, but they have no female photographers.

Chart 3. *Number of Male and Female Photographers of Selected Philippine Newsrooms (as of March 2013)*



From the total aggregate number of photographers for all the surveyed newsrooms, there are only 6 women out of 63 total photojournalists in 5 newsrooms, or roughly only 1 in every 10 photojournalists is a woman.

Chart 4. *Total Number of Photojournalists in Selected Philippine Newsrooms*



B. Background of the Subjects

Six of the subjects of the study said that they were already actively involved or interested in photography or photojournalism while in college, while the rest did not specifically mention their college experiences.

The fields of study of the undergraduate courses specified among the respondents ranged from mass communication, fine arts, Philippine studies, speech communication, and creative writing. Four of the respondents, Candice Reyes, Aileen Dimatatac, Ruby Thursday More, and Cheryl Baldicantos, completed Photojournalism or Multimedia Journalism diploma courses at the Konrad Adenauer Asian Center for Journalism at the Ateneo de Manila University.

The youngest subject of this study, Hannah Reyes, just graduated in 2011 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in speech communication. She first became an intern for the European Press photo Agency (EPA) under chief photographer Dennis Sabangan, after taking his Photojournalism class under the Department of Journalism at the College of Mass Communication in the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman for one semester. She initially “just wanted to be in an office where there would be photography and I could hear their stories after coverage. That was enough for me: to get to know and get to talk to the photographers” (H. Reyes, in the *Philippine Star*, August 20, 2010). After her internship, she was taken in as a stringer for the agency.

The other wire photographer in this study, Cheryl Ravelo, was a news intern at The Manila Times while she was news editor of her college paper. With two weeks left in her internship, she was not yet satisfied with the work that she had done and approached renowned photographer Albert Garcia with some sample photos. He gave her a camera and asked to her to take a daily life picture, and the next day, her photo was published.

“It was the most gratifying feeling and I thought it [was] the right job for me, so after graduation, although I tried news writing for a month and advertising for a

day, [that experience] reinforced my feeling where I should really settle, [as] a photojournalist.” (C. Ravelo, email interview, March 9, 2013).

Out of the four UP Diliman alumnae featured in this study, three of them joined and worked for the Philippine Collegian, the official student publication of UP Diliman.

Joan Bondoc, who is regarded as the first Filipino woman photojournalist, started taking photos for the Philippine Collegian at UP Diliman in 1988. Though she did not finish her degree, she continued taking photos when she joined The Daily Globe around 1989. Bondoc said it is easier now for younger women to get into photojournalism. According to her, "*Nahawi ko ang daan. Hindi nila dinaanan ang dinaanan ko.*" ["I paved the way. They did not go through what I went through."]

Jacqueline Hernandez of Manila Bulletin and Candice Reyes also worked for the Collegian, though almost two decades later.

Hernandez was a photographer for the paper and a student activist until graduating UP Diliman in 2003 with a Fine Arts degree. Right out of college she worked as a photojournalist in Saipan for six years, then in Guam for four, before returning to the Philippines.

Candice Reyes originally started as a staff writer, but decided to try photography because of her friends and family members that are photography enthusiasts. She was photo editor of The Philippine Collegian from 2008 until 2009. She graduated with a major in Philippine Studies and a minor in Film and Audio-Visual Communication, because of her interest in photography as well as filmmaking. Even as a student, she submitted photos to the Associated Press (AP) and after graduating, became a staff photographer at the Manila Bulletin for two years.

Meanwhile, two of the interviewees found their way into professional photojournalism because of their work with non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Aileen Dimatatac was a Mass Communication graduate from Adamson University and was a media officer for the environmental advocacy NGO Greenpeace until early 2013. Because of the nature of her work with Greenpeace, she said she saw the importance of "bearing witness." She believed the best way of telling stories was through images.

Gigie Cruz-Sy used to also work with an environmental NGO. As a development worker, she said she found it "necessary to visually document compelling stories that others don't cover [or] don't have the chance to cover" in order to communicate important issues in society.

Cai Panlilio said, "I have always wanted to be involved in media work - to be able to tell people's stories so that others may learn from their experiences." Though her first love was working in television, she developed a fascination with the camera because she wanted to "be able to capture events of people's lives through the lens." Panlilio said that she originally wanted to be a camerawoman, but in those days cameras were "beta cams" which had to be hoisted over the shoulder and were "too heavy for a woman to carry."

Instead, the cameramen that she worked with taught her the basics of videography and framing subjects. But she eventually realized that she didn't need to capture people's emotions through just asking how they were feeling. When it was common for a news team to be composed of a female reporter, a male cameraman, and a male driver, Panlilio said "I just felt that I wanted to be able to do what the men could do."

More also had early aspirations to be a journalist as a child, but was more inclined to writing until her husband, a journalist, encouraged her to try photography. After resigning from her job working with NGOs and foreign-funded development projects in 2008, she tagged along with the MindaNews team covering the conflict in Central Mindanao and contributed photos to MindaNews. She became a freelance photojournalist since then, but became a regular photojournalists of MindaNews last year.

Angelica Carballo and Cheryl Baldicantos went into photojournalism after working as news writers. Angelica Carballo said she found it necessary to learn photography over the course of her job and her husband, a photographer, was able to teach her.

On the other hand, Baldicantos did not want to have an 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. job, and resented the “drained feeling” she had whenever she wrote, and so decided to try her hand in photography. Currently the lone female photojournalist in her newsroom, she said of photography, “I loved it. I still love it.”

C. Challenges

1. Physical Danger and Limitations

The physical aspect of being a photojournalist is a definite concern faced by women photojournalists, and also a possible deterrent for other girls to enter the profession.

First, there is the inherently dangerous nature of the career. Photojournalists are constantly exposed to dangerous situations or go out to cover perilous areas, such as

those stricken by fire or after natural disasters. They are also given low hazard pay and health benefits.

If a situation is dangerous, it is equally dangerous regardless of sex. Security is one of the biggest issues women photojournalists face in the field, according to Cruz-Sy.

Bondoc, one of the earliest women to enter photojournalism, admitted that as a young female photographer, she had been very afraid, especially due to the risks of the times and the subjects she covered. Her parents hadn't understood why she needed to go out and cover dangerous situations, such as the 1989 *coup d'etat* attempt on President Corazon Aquino.

Even when she was a new photographer, Bondoc was aware that "*Hindi naman kikilananin ng bala ang press ID namin,*" [*The bullets won't recognize our press IDs*"].

Hannah Reyes said the lifestyle and the danger could dissuade other girls or their parents from pursuing photojournalism, "The fact that you have to go to work in a bullet proof vest and Kevlar helmet sometimes will dissuade parents in general."

Second, many of the photojournalists interviewed for this study cited physicality as a common challenge for them in the field.

The photographers interviewed said that as women who generally have shorter heights or smaller frames and builds compared to their male counterparts, they said this could be a physical vulnerability in a highly physical industry. The interviewees agreed that usually this poses a problem when they are expected to either compete or keep up with their larger stronger male counterparts.

Baldicantos said, “As a female photojournalist, I am anatomically weaker than the males. Thus, when it comes to climbing and working my way in to a crowd, I think I may be a bit behind.”

Panlilio shared a similar sentiment, “I admit that I am often vulnerable when it comes to dealing with physical challenges like walking up and down a rugged terrain.”

Bondoc said that no matter how high or far the subject is, if that’s where you need to shoot them, male or female, you have to go there. “*Tapos kapag umakyat (yung subject) hanggang 4th or 5th floor, kailangan makitakbo ka sa mga photogs.*” [If the subject goes up to the 4th or 5th floor, you have to run and climb with the other photographers.”]

It is also the practice of professional photographers to bring two, or three, large and heavy cameras with several different lenses of varying lengths on coverage.

Figure 1. Women in the Field



L-R: Hannah Reyes (circled) carrying gear at the FFA Qualifiers, July 2011 (taken with permission from theyellowadventures.blogspot.com; Joan Bondoc (center) during coverage, photo by Rem Zamora.

Dimatatac said that lacking physical strength can make it difficult because, she said, "you're not physically equipped," to cope with the sheer weight and size of gear and equipment.

According to Panlilio, "Whenever I carry my gear and go around the city, I am often mistaken for a wedding photographer or a hobbyist. When I say that I am a photojournalist, the most common reaction that I get is 'Isn't your gear too heavy for you?' or '*Kawawa ka naman, ang bigat ng dala mo*' (in the vernacular)." ["That must be hard for you, your gear is very heavy."]

It is often important for women working in a male-dominated field such as photojournalism to avoid showing weakness to colleagues as well as to stand up for oneself. Cruz-Sy said that there are times when you need to act strong so that the male photographers "will not push you around during coverage."

2. *Harassment*

According to the interviews, being women also made them easy targets for physical or sexual abuse.

Hernandez experienced one incident while working overseas when an American photojournalist pulled on her hair to get her out of the way.

Hannah Reyes remembered that as an "easy target," she experienced threats of rape or robbery when out on coverage, especially in depressed areas. She said to "just be smart, know when to pull out."

One of the freelance photographers interviewed said that she encountered at least two instances of being groped during crowded coverage with lots of other photographers.

Bondoc encountered instances of harassment from other photographers when she was younger, such as while she was working in the darkroom developing her photos. When she felt strangers' hands touching her back in the dark room, she said she would make a lot of noise and shout "*Anong ginagawa mo?*" ["What are you doing?"]. Her advice to other women was, "*Pag pumayag ka kase, gagawin nila sayo...Wag mo hahayaan gawin sa inyo ang hindi mo gusto.*" ["If you let them, they will do it. Don't let anyone do things to you that you do not want."]

Sexual harassment is not only limited to physical acts. Sexual harassment is defined by the United Nations (UN) as:

"Any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another. Sexual harassment may occur when it interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. It can include a one-off incident or a series of incidents. Sexual harassment may be deliberate, unsolicited and coercive." (UN High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2005)

Several of the interviewees mentioned encountering offensive jokes being made or inappropriate comments.

Hernandez remembered times when male photographers would be discussing an inappropriate topic, and one photographer would say "*Hoy, may babae dito!*" ["Hey, there are women here!"] Then look at her jokingly say "*Ay, hindi pala.*" ["Oh wait, never mind."] Implying she is either no longer seen as a woman.

Carballo also said that gender-insensitive comments and jokes are “very common” in the field, but she just ignores them.

Candice Reyes shared one incident she experienced during an out-of-town coverage for the 2010 elections, when a male photographer called to her and said she should sit on his lap.

“*Alam ko joke lang yun pero pagka seryoso ka, nakakaoffend din.*” [“I knew it was a joke, but if you take it seriously, it was still offensive.”]

Reyes confronted the other photographer about the incident personally later, because “*Ayaw mo masungitan sayo maga kasama mo.*” [“You don’t want your colleagues to see you as mean.”] but she still wanted to express that what he did was wrong. She also then reported the incident to her boss, a man, who told her that she doesn’t have to take it, but that it’s part of the job and there are really people like that in the field.

3. Location

The subjects based outside of Metro Manila were asked about their perceived differences between working in the capital and working in another province.

More, a Davao-based photojournalist, said that photojournalists working in the regions can sometimes be given less priority compared to reporters that report on “national” beats. “Generally, photojournalists, journalists, and reporters working in the regions, and especially those in Mindanao are oftentimes regarded as “second-class.” In many coverages, those coming from Manila are given better space and treatment and are always prioritized. In several coverages, spaces have been allotted and labeled as for

"national" and "local" media with the "national" media getting the better space.” (R. More, online interview, Apr. 2, 2013)

However, More said, this does not have to be a deterrent to aspiring photojournalists, because “The internet has proven to be a great venue for showing one's work as well as learning on how to be better at it. In terms of employment though (like being a regular photojournalist), I think there are still more opportunities in Manila than in the provinces.”

Baldicantos, who works in Cebu, said “Undeniably, there is still the 'imperial manila' mentality where people there actually think of all those outside the cluster of cities as provinces...I don't think it really matters if you are male or female as long as you are outside Manila.”

Panlilio, who is based in Mindanao, said “The issue of not having many female photojournalists in the province is probably because the pay is low or because when women think about media work, they usually think about being in front of the camera and not behind it.”

But Panlilio also said, when asked if there are advantages to working in Mindanao, “I don't see any advantage to being a photojournalist in Mindanao. Whether you're a photojournalist in Manila, in Cebu or elsewhere, the responsibility of being able to tell a story does not change. For me, each place has its own story to tell, photographs to show. It's as simple as that.”

D. Perceived Advantages of Being a Woman in the Field

The photojournalists were also asked about their perceived advantages from being a woman in the field.

1. Size

Despite their physical vulnerabilities, many women photojournalists have been able to also use their smaller stature as an advantage when covering in the field.

“Being female is not really a disadvantage,” despite physical weakness, according to Baldicantos. “I basically use my being [a female] in kindly asking all the other photographers if they can reserve me a space or things like that. In the field, we all have to use what we are given--be that equipment or gender.”

Candice Reyes said being more petite can help her weave her way to the front of a crowd during a tight coverage.

Hernandez also brought up “*barragan*” or when there is a barrage of photographers competing for a shot at the same time. She said, “*Minsan naiipit ka, natatamaan yung parts mo hindi dapat natatamaan [laughs] ...pero kung maliksi ka naman, makapasok ka naman sa harap. Diskarte lang.*” [“Sometimes you get squished, and parts of you that aren’t supposed to get hit, get hit...but if you’re nimble, you can get through to the front. It just takes skill.”] (J. Hernandez, interview, March 11, 2013).

She also said that though physical limitations can be restrictive, you have to find a way. It can also be a benefit, Hernandez said, being unable to climb as high as the other male photographers, because then your angle will be different. “*Silang lahat nasa taas, ikaw nasa baba*” [“They’re all up there, and you’re shooting on the ground”].

2. Assignments

One of the objectives this study set out to achieve was to determine if sex discrimination occurs when assignments are given to women photojournalists in the Philippines today.

Based on the interviews with the subjects, it appears that women photojournalists are not being confined to only lifestyle, fashion or entertainment stories, also known as the “lipstick beat.”

Baldicantos said, “What employers are looking for is the skill of the photographer regardless of his or her gender.”

“Photojournalism is a male-dominated craft, but it does not mean that women do not get the same opportunities as men do” (C. Panlilio, online interview, March 23, 2013)

“Women aren’t being boxed in,” Dimatatac said “Women can *give* something to photography.”

The photographers that had worked or currently work at local newspapers based in Manila have been assigned to beats according to the shift of the day that they take.

Both Candice Reyes and Hernandez said they had experienced all the shifts and so covered a wide range of subjects and beats while working at Manila Bulletin.

For wire agencies, who usually cover stories that can be relevant to a wider international audience, such as health, business, international affairs, sports, but the wire reporters also occasionally cover local events like rallies and demonstrations.

Most of the interviewees agreed that being female had advantages, especially when covering certain subjects. Though women are no longer confined to the lipstick beat, many of them did say that they have experienced being chosen specifically for

certain stories, not because they are safer or less dangerous, but because as women they have better access when covering sensitive issues with female subjects.

First, female subjects tend to open up more to women. Most of the women photojournalists said that it easier for them as women to engage subjects in conversation.

Based on her experiences with an advocacy-oriented NGO, Dimatatac also said usually women photographers are preferred for long photo stories. Personally, Dimatatac takes time to talk to subjects, trade stories. Men, in her opinion, don't open up as easily.

Being a woman photographer has enabled them to empower women by being able to do more substantial and in-depth stories on women's issues. Having access to shoot in maternity wards and also a better understanding of pregnancy and motherhood is an asset when covering stories on universal topics like reproductive health or population, which are relevant for both international and local news outlets.

Figure 2: *Selected photos on population and reproductive health*





Top row: Photos from the maternity ward of Fabella Hospital, Cheryl Ravelo, Reuters (2011); Bottom row (L-R): Front page of Manila Bulletin with a picture of a family with 16 children, Jacq Hernandez (2011); Breastfeeding mothers in a maternity ward, Angel Carballo

Being less threatening has also helped them in covering more sensitive or private subjects, for example Muslim women.

Panlilio remembered covering a refugee camp in Munai, Lanao del Norte. “The refugees were mostly Muslim women and children who sought refuge in the municipal hall... It was not difficult to get their approval because according to the guide, I was a female and that made them comfortable.” (online interview, March 23, 2013)

The other photographer in this study that is based in Mindanao, More, also shared, “In doing stories especially in Moro communities, the women open up easily. They find it easier to communicate/relate with me so they become comfortable and I get good photos and angles.”

The women photojournalists have also not been locked out of traditionally male topics, and several of the interviewees cited being specifically chosen to shoot areas that are male-dominated.

Cruz-Sy said, “Some male subjects...are more responsive to women photojournalists when interviewed during coverage.”

Hannah Reyes said her boss would often send her to cover military assignments or stories involving soldiers because as a girl, she would be seen as less threatening. “Because their treatment of me would be kinder, gentler...The equipment is very daunting and if you’re male too, that adds another wall. So I feel their [the subjects] treatment to me is a little less guarded.” (H. Reyes, interview, February 5, 2013)

Figure 3: *Photos by women photographers of military and sports coverage*



Top-Bottom: Portraits of Members of the Philippine Volcanoes by Hannah Reyes; Military Graduation by Candice Reyes (2011).

And none of the women photographers interviewed have been exempt from covering dangerous events, such as disasters, demolitions, rallies, and fires.

Figure 4: *Selected photos from covering disasters*



Clockwise (from upper left): Photo during a typhoon at Manila Bay, INQUIRER/Joan Bondoc, Inquirer (May 2011); A firefighter during a fire in a slum area in Quezon City, REUTERS/Cheryl Ravelo; Photo after a fire by Cheryl Baldicantos; Photo of a demolition by Candice Reyes

Panlilio, who is based in Mindanao, recalled a very difficult experience for her, both professionally and on a personal level, during Typhoon Sendong:

“I felt scared because I suddenly realized that I did not know how to take a photograph wherein people were hysterical. I took some photos but decided not

to send them to my editors. I was thinking that the survivors do not need to see any more morbid photos on [the] internet... There were other ways to show the tragedy. My telephoto lens was a big help because I was able to take photographs of people without having to be intrusive. I think that in situations like these, photographers need to keep their distance from their subjects because they are dealing with a lot of emotions. More than anything, respect your subject's space and feelings.”

More, who is another photojournalist based in Mindanao, also covered Sendong's effect on women and children.

“It is a story that focused on women and children and although it still showed the devastation and difficulty brought by the disaster, it highlighted their resilience and strength and their efforts to recover.” (R. More, online interview, April 2, 2013).

Figure 5: Selected photos of women and children affected disasters



First row: *Aftermath of Typhoon Washi* by Cheryl Baldicantos; *published photo in the Philippine Daily Inquirer during Typhoon Pablo relief operations* by Cai Panlilio; *Second row: Photos from slideshow of women and children affected by floods* by Ruby More; *Third row: Photos of evacuees* by EPA/Hannah Reyes

E. Dealing with Fellow Photographers

Though opportunities to enter photojournalism are open to women in the Philippines, men still dominate the profession. Because of this, women photojournalists have had to deal with, or have gotten used to, working surrounded by men in a “man’s world.”

Bondoc, who entered the field as the only female photojournalist more than 20 years ago, said, "*Hindi sila sanay na may babae sa mundo ng lalaki.*" ["They [men] are not used to a woman in a man's world."] She encountered one male photographer who told her, “*Joan, anong ginagawa mo dito sa mundo ng mga lalaki? Hindi ito para sa iyo.*” [“Joan, what are you doing here in the world of men? This is not for you.”]

According to Dimatatac there are male photographers that feel like "alpha males" who were sexist and look down on women, but these men were “rare.” But Dimatatac said even when "you" feel you are being discriminated against; you just have to keep going.”

More said, “I don't know though how other editors--especially men--feel about having women photojournalists in their organizations. Although I have observed that in the mainstream media, the numbers are quite increasing compared, say, five or ten years ago. But I think there still exists that notion in them that male photographers are better than women.”

According to Chase (1988), there is a specific problem a professional woman faces, as she must embody a conventional image of a woman in order to secure her place in the professional world as a woman, however there is also “invisible work” to maintain a delicate balance, wherein she must “demonstrate that she is not in any way obsessed

with the fact of being a woman, yet be womanly in a recognizable way” (Chase, 1988, pp. 284-5).

This was seen in the answers of some respondents about figuring out how to interact or “*pakikisama*” with the male photographers.

Bondoc recounted how she had difficulty at first trying to figure out how to treat herself as a woman but get along with men, not only in the field but after hours when other photographers would go out for drinks.

“Litong lito ako kung paano ko ititreat and sarili ko na kasama yung mga lalaking photogs...Kung iyaya nila akong uminom, sasama ba akong uminom...Hindi ko naman kaya.” [“I was very confused with how to treat myself [as a woman] when I was with the male photographers...Like, if they invite me to go drinking with them, will I go with them? But I didn’t think I could handle that.”]

(Bondoc, interview, January 29, 2013)

Bondoc said a senior photographer, Ed Santiago, then told her, *“Iha, pag hindi mo kaya, matutoto kang humindi.”* [“Dear, if you can’t handle it, learn to say no.”] So in the future, when she was uncomfortable with going out with the photographers after work, she would refuse and say she had other things to do.

Bondoc also remembered being constantly assessed and tested by the senior photographers, *“dahil bago ka sa field, naranasan ang parang pumapasok sa sorority o fraternity, na neophyte ka... Titignan nila kung kaya mo talaga.”* [“Because you’re new, it’s like entering a sorority or fraternity, like you’re a neophyte. They’ll see if you can really take it.”]

Bondoc said honestly that for around a year, she cried after work due to the stress of the job, “*Iyak ako ng iyak kase di ko makaya yung kultura n pinasok ko.*” [“I kept crying because I couldn’t take the culture that I had entered.”] She said she had been disappointed by how “ungentlemanly” other photographers were and missed the camaraderie of her college newspaper. But after working for more than two decades, she has become one of the most senior photographers in the field, highly respected by many Filipino journalists, men and women.

When Ravelo first became a photojournalist, she remembered only three or four other women photojournalists. And as the youngest, she said the pressure of having to prove herself and earning the respect of her senior colleagues was a challenge.

It is hard to do their jobs when faced with situations that are uncomfortable or violating, but the women photojournalists said to just be assertive.

There is a distinction between being their individual personal experiences and the overall treatment of women photographers by male photographers.

Some interviewees said that they do not experience any particular “special treatment” on a daily basis when covering, while some said they did receive special treatment on occasion.

Hannah Reyes, who was only 19 when she had first begun shooting for news, said it was hard to “fit in.” However, she said eventually the treatment of the other photojournalists to her became more of mentoring.

Cheryl Baldicantos, the sole woman photographer in Cebu, also said she has not felt she has been treated differently by fellow photographers.

“After all, it's still the same job and I'm still the same competitor from another paper. I am glad to say though that here in Cebu, we all respect each other in the field. We are all friends. Thus, you can't see photographers purposely elbowing each other or barring each other from a shot.” (C. Baldicantos, online interview, March 9, 2013)

More, who also works outside of Manila, in Davao, also said she has been treated “as an equal.”

Even when I was starting, I never felt any discrimination from them because I was new or female...In coverages, especially during times when we scramble for space like presidential visits, the photojournalists and cameramen (especially the ones from Davao) always give me space.” She added in parentheses, “the Pinoy gentleman in them working, perhaps?” (R. More, online interview, April 2, 2013).

Though none of these women have yet to reach a chief photographer position, several of them are elected officials of professional photojournalism organizations, such as the PCP, of which Bondoc is a founding member, Cruz-Sy is current Vice President, and Candice Reyes is Secretary.

F. Balancing Act

Photojournalism is a profession that can have a lot of “perks” such as travel, and gaining access to lives of people from all walks of life.

However, with it comes with a price. As a time-consuming profession, work can affect a photographer's personal and family life.

“An assignment can devour your life” (Newman, 2000).

Hannah Reyes said, “The lifestyle is not easy at all, it’s day in day out.”

According to Dimatatac, single photographers can generally dare to take more risks in certain scenarios, and have different considerations when covering.

Motherhood is a unique consideration that some women photojournalists have compared to male ones. One potent factor that could deter women from pursuing photojournalism is the supposedly conflicting demands between marriage or motherhood and career.

Five of the eleven respondents are mothers, and several mentioned this and how it affected their work.

According to Bondoc, the only time she felt she received special treatment from fellow photographers was when she was pregnant, because her colleagues were more patient with her.

Being pregnant was factor that affected how the women functioned and did their jobs because of concerns like mobility, balance, and a more careful nature, though all of them continued to work until the later months of their pregnancies.

“For example, when Habagat [southwest monsoon] happened last August 2012. I really wanted to cover the story, go out and cover the big flood in Metro Manila and Luzon, but being almost 2 months pregnant, I had to seriously consider my and the baby’s safety. This happened during my entire pregnancy, there [were] times that I had to let go of opportunities because my physical condition [would not] allow me to do strenuous activities.” (Cruz-Sy, online interview, 2013)

In order to deal with this, she said “you need to be very good with time management” and to plan coverage ahead. She added, “You also need to accept within yourself that you have limitations and simply make the best out of your condition.”

Panlilio cited one of her biggest challenges as a female photojournalist is juggling time with work and her son. “The only time I found a comment quite offending was when a male colleague asked me ‘What's up, would you rather be a full-time mom or a working journalist?’ I had to explain to him that I had to tend to my child's needs because I am a single mother most of the time” (C. Panlilio, online interview, March 23, 2013).

G. Traits and Advice

According to Horton (1990) in the *Associated Press Photojournalism Stylebook*, “Covering news assignments calls for a case of curiosity. Sensitivity. Some thinking. And instinct. Make that a lot of curiosity, thought, sensitivity and instinct.” (p. 47)

Bondoc said that she does not really see any significant general advantages or differences with being a female photojournalist compared to being a male one, but she did say that she believes women can be more diplomatic and pay more attention to emotion.

Though all women approach a story in different ways, and take pictures of certain subjects for different reasons, attention to emotion and sensitivity were commonly perceived assets of women according to many of the interviewees.

Figure 6: *Selected unconventional or “emotional” photos*



Clockwise, from upper left: (L-R): “Laundry is seen being dried out in a classroom that was turned into an evacuation center in Navotas” EPA/HANNAH REYES (30 September 2011); “A Grateful Kiss” (Winner of Catholic Mass Media Awards Best News Photo), Candice Reyes (2011); Extreme close-up of a boy during a feeding program, Candice Reyes (2011)

Bondoc said new photographers need to be very hardworking and persistent. They should not get offended when their work is criticized, but rather, see this as constructive.

“Pag sinabing pangit ang litrato mo, kinabukasan gumawa ka ng magandang litrato...Kasi sa akin, pag sinasabi sa akin ‘pangit ang litrato mo,’ kinabukasan nasa isip ko ‘ipapakita ko sayo, mayroon akong magandang litrato ilalabas ngayon.’” [“If they tell you your picture is bad, tomorrow take a good picture. Because for me, when they tell me ‘your photo is bad,’ the next day what is on my mind it ‘I’ll show you, I’ll take a really good picture today.’”]

Bondoc also hoped that while one should look out for oneself, one should also not lose compassion for fellow photographers. “*Wag mawala sa kanila ang malasakit sa kapwa photog.*” [“Don’t lose compassion for their fellow photographers.”]

As an over 20-year veteran of the profession, Bondoc final advice was, “*dapat everyday naeexcite ka sa trabaho...everyday iisipin mo, ‘sana may magandang litrato’...wag kang mapagod.*” [“Every day you should be excited to work...every day you should be thinking, ‘I hope there will be a good photo’...don’t get tired.”]

The second-longest in the profession in this study, Ravelo, said that “When you shoot for a decade, you somehow develop the sense of what is a picture and what is not but you still have to consider the story behind the event you are covering and you just let your instinct help you illustrate the story in photos.”

Traits needed to be a photojournalist according to the other photographers include resilience, patience, passion, quick-thinking.

When asked if she thinks it is harder for women to enter the profession, More said, “Not really. Although it can be quite physically demanding—think of the heat, dust, smell,[and] heavy gears that women photojournalists had to battle everyday...not too many girls would like that—[but] the skills, intelligence, and passion required are the same.”

Preparedness and willingness to do any work that needs to be done is also a common piece of advice. Photojournalists are naturally exposed to distressing scenes and have to sort through graphic images, and so cannot be squeamish about assignments. Baldicantos also jokingly said that women in the field need to always be ready and bring

a *sarong* in case one needs privacy, because “you never know where the next comfort room will be” during an out-of-town coverage.

H. The Future for Women Photojournalists in the Philippines

“Taking photographs is a means of understanding which cannot be separated from other means of visual expression. It is a way of shouting, of freeing oneself, not of proving or asserting one’s own originality. It is a way of life.” (Henri Cartier-Bresson in Folts, Lovell, & Zwahlen Jr., 2006)

One recommendation that was commonly stressed by the photographers is the importance of elevating photojournalism as a profession and increasing professionalism in the industry.

One way to do this is to increase salaries of photojournalists—male or female. Another is to improve ethics trainings for photojournalists, especially those that did not study them when they began.

As said in Rimban’s 2007 article, photojournalists are still generally regarded as “second-class citizens” and so are taken for granted, despite the high value of having photos and visuals in newspapers.

Dimatatac said that the Philippines is lucky enough to be a country where women photojournalists are generally treated fairly in the workplace and are given more respect, compared to experiences of other women photographers she knows in other Asian countries.

Photojournalism, like the rest of journalism, is essentially very competitive, because news outlets always want to “out-scoop” the other or beat another, journalists by nature are competitive. The same goes for photojournalists.

But among the women photojournalists in the Philippines, they do not see each other as “threats.” In fact, most of the respondents said they wish more women would become photojournalists.

Carballo said, “I think women photojournalists are now more aggressive in the sense that we now see the need to organize and support each other's works and endeavors.”

For Candice Reyes, the word collective signifies having one united direction for the women. She said that with more and more women entering the profession, more attention can be given to the issues of women, from the perspective of women.

Several of the interviewees of this study, such as Candice Reyes, Cruz-Sy, and Baldicantos are also among a group of women photojournalists and documentary photographers that are part of the Tala² Photo Collective, which is “a new organization which is actually composed of women photojournalists and documentary photographers all over the country” (C. Baldicantos, online interview, March 9, 2013)

Candice Reyes, who is also the current secretart of the PCP, which is composed of majority male members, said, “*Marami nang women photographers actually... one of our goals is makapaglabas ng mga stories na focused on women's issues...it's one way to empower women photojournalists, hindi lang dito kundi sa Asia, malabas ang stories natin around the globe.*” (C. Reyes, interview, February 25, 2013). [“Actually, there are many women photojournalists already...one of our goals is to release stories that are

² The word ‘tala’ is the Tagalog word for ‘star.’

focused on women's issues...it's one way to empower women photojournalists, not just here but in Asia, so our stories will be seen around the globe.”]

However, though numbers of women photojournalist have grown, the number of younger or newer female photographers is still very small, Hernandez said she has yet to see the “next generation” of women photographers.

Ravelo said, “I just hope to see more women explore this field because until now, just a handful remains.”

More said “Photography and photojournalism has always been male-dominated and so issues on women have barely been covered. With more women getting into it, stories on women--their struggles, efforts and contributions to the world--now have the chance to be told which I hope will also inspire other women in bringing about positive change in themselves, families and communities.”

Dimatatac said “*May future ang babae sa photojournalism...wag lang sila matakot*” [Women have a future in photojournalism...as long as they are not afraid”].

CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Women photojournalists in the Philippines are truly still a minority in the male-dominated field. However, over the years the number of women photographers has grown and they have been able to assert themselves in the profession. Their passion not only for the craft but for the subjects they cover enables them to promote issues that may be overlooked, or give better attention to women's issues because of the access they have as women.

Though often faced with physical difficulty or vulnerability, many women photographers have learned to turn these into advantages when covering.

For the women interviewed, sex discrimination no longer exists when being delegated assignments or getting hired, as women have experienced being assigned to various beats for both national and local issues, and not limited to just lifestyle or entertainment beats.

However there still are other challenges present because of their gender. Sexual harassment is still present among photojournalists, and is one of the dangers they face, aside from the innate dangerous nature of the profession.

Women may be deterred by the tough fast paced lifestyle of photojournalism, as well as face the unique concern with having to balance motherhood and the profession.

Women photojournalists have managed to maintain a strong sense of camaraderie in the highly-competitive field of photojournalism, and a group of them have formed a collective as an initiative to support each other and further promote the stories they do.

CHAPTER VII: IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Theoretical Issues

This research was based primarily on feminist standpoint epistemology, and so all data collected was from the subjects themselves, to give value to their individual standpoints. The study does not aim to generalize the working conditions and experiences of all women photojournalists, but rather, bring attention to the women that are featured.

Future studies on women photojournalists can and should be done but perhaps with a different theory or other feminist theories to look at these women working in a male-dominated field.

B. Methodological Issues

There are still other female photographers that were not included in this study both because of time constraints as well as the difficulty in finding respondents working outside of major cities.

Greater time should have been allocated for data gathering, especially given the demanding and hectic daily schedule of photographers, which restrained the number of respondents as well as possibly the quality of the answers.

Being based in Manila also limited the range of photojournalists accessible. If future studies were to be made and more time and resources were available, face-to-face interviews with all the subjects would be preferred, as well as more time should be allotted to find women photojournalists in other parts of the country.

More in-depth studies can be done in the future about Filipino photojournalists in general, as well as how working for smaller or community-based newspapers can affect working conditions compared to those working in large cities.

C. Practical Issues

First and foremost, this research aimed to lessen the gap in studies on photojournalists in the Philippines. No past studies involving Filipino women photojournalists had been found previously.

Photojournalism has been changed dramatically thanks to the rise of digital photography. Digital photography has made photography more accessible and available to all. Aside from digital cameras, mobile phones with built-in cameras have given ordinary citizens the power to document and cover events from angles not attainable by regular journalists. Social media and smartphone applications that allow “sharing” of images online have made the reach of photographs wider than ever. Even highly respected news agencies and photographers have made use of creative photography apps like Instagram to add a new dimension to press photography.

This study can aid aspiring female photojournalists and young photographers better understand what women photojournalists experience.

Aside from more future studies on photojournalists, the researcher recommends that a wider and more comprehensive newsroom census be undertaken, similar to those done by organizations in the U.S., in order to fully understand what positions in media women now occupy. Such a census would also help provide other key data such as the

demographic of news producers and various newsroom positions, to better study news making in the country.

After this study, the researcher also believes that better and more regular gender sensitivity training should be provided by news agencies in the Philippines. It is possible that in the workplace, “The behaviors associated with sexism are so deeply ingrained into our minds that sexist behaviors are generally unconscious (Henderson, 1994, p. 48).”

Also, the establishment and support for women’s groups and award-giving bodies locally, as there are internationally, could help promote and raise awareness of women photographers. This would not be to exclude other photojournalists, but to showcase women’s work.

Photography festivals and organizations for women photographers are more prevalent in the United States and in Europe, with a few in Africa and in Asia, but organizations that aim to promote women photographers are yet to be as established in the Philippines as in other countries. It is encouraging that the women have formed their own group, the Tala Collective and hopefully they will be able to sustain enough support to truly advance women’s stories.

Such an organization is important because as a collective they can exchange their ideas, suggestions for photos, and insights for a more critical discourse and form a unified front as women photojournalists. They can also be a support group, help each other, mentor and relate to each other.

Photojournalism is a high-pressure, high danger job and having a support group could help them as individuals deal with the issues. It also shows that they are not alone, especially when there are so few of them.

The best photos stand the test of time because they “comment on the times in which they were taken” (Calder & Garrett, 1986, p. 106). It is important to take notice of both men’s and women’s voices, and yet we must also be able to see the photograph beyond the photographer.

In an ideal future, if more people were aware of women as photojournalists and women working in the field were more common, these women would no longer be distinguished as “women photojournalists” and simply be photojournalists.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brooks, A. (2007). *Feminist Standpoint Epistemology: Building Knowledge and Empowerment Through Women's Lived Experience*. In S. N. Hesse-Biber, & P. L. Leavy, *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*. SAGE Publications.
- Calder, J., & Garrett, J. (1986). *The New 35mm Photographer's Handbook*. London: Pan Books Ltd.
- CEDAW Watch-Philippines. (n.d.). Retrieved Oct 02, 2012, from CEDAW WATCH Philippines: <http://www.cedaw-watch.org>
- Chase, S. E. (1988). Making Sense of "The Woman Who Becomes A Man". In A. D. Todd, & S. Fisher (Eds.), *Gender and Discourse: The Power of Talk* (pp. 275-295). Norwood: Ablex.
- Dalupang, J., & Espenilla, R. (2012). *Behind the lens: An exploratory study on the level of training of photojournalists from leading national broadsheets and wire agencies*. Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis, University of the Philippines, College of Mass Communication.
- Ehrlich, R. (1984). Photojournalism. In R. Ehrlich, *Dictionary of Photography* (p. 124). London: Longman Group.
- Fernandez, D. G. (1987). Women & Media in the Asian Context. In F. O. Nicolas, J. de Leon, & M. J. Luna (Ed.), *Asian Sub-Regional Conference on Women and Media* (pp. vi-vii). Quezon City: People in Communication, Inc.
- Fleming, C. (. (2011). *Standpoint Theory*. Retrieved Oct 2, 2012, from Communication Studies: <http://communicationstudies.com/communication-theories/standpoint-theory>

- Folts, J. A., Lovell, R. P., & Zwahlen Jr., F. C. (2006). *Handbook of Photography* (6th ed.). Canada: Thomson Delmar Learning.
- Galliano, G. (2003). *Gender: Crossing Boundaries*. Canada: Wadsworth.
- Global Media Monitoring Project. (2010). *Who Makes The News?* London: World Association for Christian Communication.
- Henderson, G. (1994). *Cultural Diversity in the Workplace: Issues and Strategies*. Westport.
- Holmes, Z. (2011, January 12). *Spotlight: Interview with photography curator and editor Yumi Goto*. Retrieved March 12, 2013, from Sojournposse:
<http://www.sojournposse.com/?tag=asian-women-photographers-showcase>
- Horton, B. (1990). *The Associated Press Photojournalism Stylebook*. New York: Addison-Wesley.
- Hughes, C. (2002). *Key Concepts in Feminist Theory and Research*. London: SAGE Publications.
- IWMF. (2011). *Global Report on the Status of Women in the Media*.
- Javier, K. (2010). *Looking through their lens: perceiving the lives of tabloid photojournalists*. Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis. University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication.
- Langton, L. (2009). *Photojournalism and Today's News: Creating Visual Reality*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Laurent, O. (2012, Jan 27). *New photographic grant launched for women photographers*. Retrieved September 29, 2012, from British Journal of Photography:

- <http://www.bjp-online.com/british-journal-of-photography/news/2141912/photographic-grant-launched-women-photographers>
- Marcus, A. (1974). *The Photojournalist: Mary Ellen Mark & Annie Leibovitz (The Woman's Perspective)*. Los Angeles: Alskog .
- McLean, C. (1995). *Careers for Shutterbugs*. Chicago: NTC Publishing Group.
- Mills, K. (1997). What Difference Do Women Journalists Make? In P. Norris (Ed.), *Women, Media, and Politics* (pp. 41-55). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mitchell, K. (2009, January). *Do Men and Women Take Different Photos?* Retrieved September 2012, from Popular Photography Magazine:
<http://ilab.usc.edu/publications/doc/Mitchell09pp.pdf>
- Newman, C. (2000). *Women Photographers at National Geographic*. Washington D.C.: National Geographic Society.
- Ortiga, K. (2010, August 20). *The great yellow adventures*. Retrieved March 20, 2013, from The Philippine Star: Young Star: <http://www.philstar.com/young-star/604028/great-yellow-adventures>
- Rimban, L. (2007, March 7). *The Other Journalist: The life and (hard) times of the news photographer*. Retrieved September 17, 2012, from Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility: <http://www.cmfr-phil.org/2007/03/07/the-other-journalist/>
- Rosario-Braid, F. (1996). Filipino Women in Communications: Breaking New Ground. In D. Allen, R. R. Rush, & S. J. Kaufman (Eds.), *Women Transforming Communications* (pp. 280-289). California: Sage Publications.
- Rosenblum, N. (1994). *A History of Women Photographers*. Paris: Abbeville Press.

- Steeves, H. L. (1993). *Gender and Mass Communication in a Global Context*. In P. J. Creedon, *Women in Mass Communication* (2nd ed., pp. 32-60). California: Sage Publications.
- Trochim, W. M. (2006). *Nonprobability Sampling*. Retrieved Oct 02, 2012, from Social Research Methods: <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/sampron.php>
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR]. (2005, April). *UNHCR's Policy on Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Abuse of Authority*. Retrieved February 2013, from UN Women Watch: [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/UN_system_policies/\(UNHCR\)policy_on_harassment.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/UN_system_policies/(UNHCR)policy_on_harassment.pdf)
- UNESCO. (2012, March 8). *Gender - Women Make the News 2012*. Retrieved Oct 2, 2012, from UNESCO Communication and Information: <http://unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/crosscutting-priorities/gender/women-make-the-news>
- United Nations. (2010). *Guide for journalists covering disaster risk reduction*. Retrieved April 1, 2013, from UNISDR: http://www.unisdr.org/files/20108_mediabook.pdf
- Weaver, D. (1997). *Women as Journalists*. In P. Norris (Ed.), *Women, Media, and Politics* (pp. 21-40). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Wood, J. T. (2009). *Gendered Lives: Communication, Gender, and Culture* (8th ed.). Boston: Wadsworth.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEWS

ONLINE INTERVIEW WITH ANGELICA CARBALLO-PAGO**DATE:** 3/5/2013**Name:** Angelica Carballo**Age:** 26**Current Title/Current Employer & Number of Years Working for this Employer:**

Freelance (InterAksyon.com, Women's Feature Service)

Number of Years Working as a Photojournalist:

3

How and why did you become a photojournalist?

I am a writer, and I found it necessary to learn photography along the way. I am lucky that I have a husband who taught me how to do photography. I also enrolled in workshops and masterclass to improve my skills. But most of what I know I learned from my husband.

What are the usual assignments/beats given to you (if any) or what subjects do you typically cover?

I used to cover police beats in Manila and Quezon City, rallies and mobilizations, press conferences, etc. Right now, I do stories for several NGOs and most of these are documentation of their success stories. But I also initiate my own assignments, like those that involve maternal and child health, specifically breastfeeding, undocumented PWDs (persons with disabilities), gender-based violence, etc.

What are the challenges or negative experiences you face because of being a woman in the field?

"When I was still working in a newspaper, there was this unflattering photo of me taken by a fellow photographer who works in the same paper as I am. I wrote a letter of complaint to our editor about it, he apologized. Luckily our paths never crossed again since I left the newspaper and transferred to an NGO.

There were also gender-insensitive comments and jokes these are very common in the field. "

How did you overcome these challenges?

I just ignored them.

Did you ever feel that you were treated differently by fellow photographers or employers because of your gender?

Yes

Did you ever feel you were treated differently by subjects because of your gender?

no, if anything they were more receptive, i think.

What are the advantages/benefits that you have experienced because you are a woman photojournalist?

Well, in my experience, the subjects are more receptive and welcoming to women photographers. Especially when shooting sensitive subjects.

How do you think being a woman photographer helps empower women?

Photography has almost always been dominated by men. It is very refreshing to see women in that field and to be able to prove that we can also do what men do.

What traits do you think are important for a female photojournalist to have?

resilience, patience, critical thinking,

What sort of changes do you want in the field (from employers or clients or other photojournalists?)

I think most of the issues we women face in this field is the same in other professions. If anything, we want to see less gender-based comments from our peers.

Are you a member of any professional photojournalist groups (international or local)? Please name them

Tala Photo Collective

Any other comments you may have on the current status of women photojournalists in the Philippines:

I think women photojournalists are now more aggressive in the sense that we now see the need to organize and support each other's works and endeavors. As an individual, we are now more fearless in covering and pursuing the stories we want to do. I think we are more empowered now.

Do you think it is harder for women to get into photojournalism as a career? Why or why not?

I think men and women photographers both have their own sets of issues. I think it depends more on how you dedicate yourself to your job. As a woman, the difficulties are

1. Motherhood issues
2. Biological issues (it is difficult to move when one has dysmenorrhea, monthly periods)
3. Gender-based comments

EMAIL INTERVIEW WITH CHERYL RAVELO-GAGALAC (REUTERS)

DATE: 3/9/2013

Full Name: Cheryl Ravelo-Gagalac

Age: 31

Current Title/Current Employer & Number of Years Working for this employer:

Photographer/Reuters/10 years

Years worked as photojournalist: 11 years

How and why did you become a photojournalist?

I was the News Editor of our paper, The Paulinian, so when I had my internship I applied at The Manila Times news department. For a couple of days I was editing news stories but I can only do this in the afternoon. I was on schedule to finished my internship in 2 weeks, and with how things are going in news department I will not make it, so the next day, I went to the Photo department, I brought my sample photos. I met one of the best in the field, Albert Garcia, known for his internationally acclaimed picture of a vehicle escaping the Mt. Pinatubo eruption. He gave me a camera and asked to take a daily life picture. The next day my picture was published. It was the most gratifying feeling and I thought it is the right job for me, so after graduation although I tried news writing for a month and Advertising for a day, it reinforced my feeling where I should really settle, be a Photojournalist.

What were the things that made you want to be a photojournalist?

I get excited seeing my pictures landing on the front page of newspaper or magazine, it's like winning the lottery because the challenge is to make my pictures stand out among other photographers covering the same event. I love and very passionate in taking pictures be it news, feature, business or sports.

What are the usual assignments/beats given to you (if any) or what subjects do you typically cover?

NEWS, FEATURE and BUSINESS

What factors do you consider first when taking a photo?

When you shoot for a decade, you somehow develop the sense of what is a picture and what is not but you still have to consider the story behind the event you are covering and you just let your instinct help you illustrate the story in photos.

What are the challenges or negative experiences you face because of being a woman in the field? You can cite specific instances.

When I started, I think there are only three or four female photojournalist in the field and I'm the youngest, so the thought of proving myself and earning the respect of senior colleagues is a challenge.

How did you overcome these challenges?

I just did my job 100% every coverage, and overtime I think I earned it.

Did you ever feel that you were treated differently by fellow photographers or employers because of your gender?

More than anything, I think they are just concerned, at first my boss did not want me to go to any dangerous coverage like rally dispersal or demolition. But one day I stepped up and volunteered, and I think they sensed I'm ready so I got the coverage.

Did you ever feel you were treated differently by subjects because of your gender?

Yes in a positive way, they are more open and cooperative. At first it's like a shock factor to them since it's not everyday that they encountered female photographer. Along the way, you get a sense they are thinking, Can she pull this off? Then when you are done with the shoot and showed them what you got, they just say wow.

What are the advantages/benefits that you have experienced because you are a woman photojournalist?

Sometimes especially if most of your colleagues are your friends, they let you get in front or give you space when you are late.

How has being a woman helped you with your work?

For so many years until now actually, it is still a male dominated career, so being a woman you shoot differently, so somehow it's a contribution to present issues and news in a female point of view. Like when I did a feature in maternal health, it's something the male photographers have done over the years and yet when I did it, it's like new again since I was able to bring a female/mother perspective.

How do you think you or women photographers in general empower women?

Being in a male dominated field, it is somehow empowering when you get to make your "mark" and make them see it's an equal field or even be better among them.

What traits do you think are important for a female photojournalist to have?

Passion, determination and don't be choosy in given assignments.

What sort of changes do you want in the field, from employers or clients or other photojournalists?

In my experience none, because I think employers, clients, other media or anyone for that matter will treat not because of your gender but with what you can contribute, how you present yourself and what have you done over the years in service.

What professional photojournalism/photography organizations are you a part of?

none

Any other comments you may have on the current status of women photojournalists in the Philippines:

I just hope to see more women explore this field because until now, just a handful remains.

EMAIL INTERVIEW WITH GIGIE CRUZ-SY

DATE: 3/11/2013

Full Name: Maria Virginia "Gigie" Cruz-Sy

Age: 38

Current Title/Current Employer & Number of Years Working for this Employer: (If you are working as a freelance photographer/stringer, please specify which news outlets or organizations you most regularly contribute to): Freelance, contributes to abs-cbnnews online, occasionally to GMA News, Newsbreak Magazine

There are times that I am commissioned by development organizations/NGOs to cover stories related to their campaigns/ document their projects.

Years worked as photojournalist:

5 years; from 2008-2012 contributed to online news agencies but at the same time works for an environmental NGO.

I have been a freelance photographer since March 2012 ("full time,"- no other part time job-)

How and why did you become a photojournalist? What were the things that made you want to be a photojournalist?

I used to work with an environmental NGO and as a development worker, I find it necessary to visually document compelling stories that others don't cover/don't have the chance to cover so we can communicate important issues we face in our society.

In 2004, while working for an environmental NGO, I got the chance to attend a workshop organized by PCP, Inc. on Professional Photojournalism and this motivated me to take more photos and do more documentary projects to effectively present different stories in our society.

What are the usual assignments/beats given to you (if any) or what subjects do you typically cover?

As a contributor, I usually have the option to cover stories I find important, I then submit my photos to editors for publishing. There are times however, when some editors would ask you if you can cover stories for them. The stories I often cover are related to environmental campaigns and other development issues.

Honestly, I would say my status is quite complicated. I consider myself more of a documentary photographer since I am not really a typical press photographer who covers general and spot news in a daily basis.

What are the challenges or negative experiences you face because of being a woman in the field? You can cite specific instances.

I think one of the biggest challenges we experience, as a woman in the field is security. This is something one should consider particularly when covering stories in far-flung areas. Sometimes, you need to ask someone to accompany you to places you are unfamiliar with. There are also times when you need to act strong so men photographers will not push you around during coverage. You've got to show them that you are as serious as they are in doing your job.

Being a mother, it is also not that easy just to leave your kid for longer coverage. Now that I am pregnant, I find it difficult to cover stories since my condition limits me.

For example, when Habagat happened last August 2012. I really wanted to cover the story, go out and cover the big flood in Metro Manila and Luzon, but being almost 2 months pregnant, I had to seriously consider my and the baby's safety. This also happened during my entire pregnancy, there are times that I had to let go of opportunities because my physical condition won't allow me to do strenuous activities.

How did you overcome these challenges?

In terms of security, I try to find someone who can accompany me if I do coverage outside Manila. I also make sure that I have the right contacts in the area by doing proper/ample research before the coverage. It is important to be aware of things to expect in the places you visit. Research also provides you a deeper understanding of the issue you're going to cover.

I think respect plays a big role so men photographers would not push you around. If you practice courtesy towards your fellow photojournalists, they give back the same treatment to you. Though you would still encounter some who are not as courteous as others.

In terms of motherhood, you need to be very good in time management. You need to plan your coverage ahead. You also need to accept within yourself that you have limitations and simply make the best out of your condition. For example, if I don't get the chance to shoot, I see to it that I work on other stuff like organizing my image files and reading on photojournalism stuff to keep myself abreast of the current trends. I also had the chance to finish a multimedia story that I have started documenting last year. I grabbed the opportunity to learn other programs like working on Adobe Premiere CS6. I think this helps me develop my skills too.

I also see to it that I keep in touch with fellow photojournalists by helping organize activities for PCP for example.

Did you ever feel that you were treated differently by fellow photographers or employers because of your gender?

No

Did you ever feel you were treated differently by subjects because of your gender?

I think being a woman photojournalist has its perks. I find it easier for subjects to agree when asked by a woman photojournalist. I think it is easier for them to trust us.

What are the advantages/benefits that you have experienced because you are a woman photojournalist? How has being a woman helped you with your work?

Our "sensitivity" also allows us to cover stories in a different perspective particularly when stories involve women subjects since it is easier for us to relate with their stories.

Access is easier when covering sensitive issues involving women subjects. Some male subjects I think are more responsive to women photojournalists when interviewed during coverage.

What differences do you see between what male and female photojournalists experience in the Philippines (if any)?

Women photojournalists tend to help each other rather than compete with each other.

How do you think you being a female photographer helps empower women?

I think it empowers women because we have a unique way of presenting stories focusing on different women issues. I believe there are stories that only women can conceptualize and cover due to the sensitivity of the issue.

It also sends a message that women can do what men can.

What traits do you think are important for a female photojournalist to have?

Patient, courteous/respectful, hardworking, good research skills, good networking skills

What sort of changes do you want in the field (from employers or clients or other photojournalists)?

More coordinated effort among women photojournalists. We're hoping to have a group of women photographers sharing ideas and experiences to help each other strengthen our skills and address issues affecting us in the field of photojournalism/photography.

What professional photojournalism/photography organizations are you a part of?

Photojournalists' Center of the Philippines (formerly known as Philippine Center for Photojournalism)

Does your organization have any projects or initiatives to help women photojournalists in the country? Does your organization think this is necessary?

PCP aims to professionalize photojournalism in general, which also involves women photojournalists. The organization encourages women photojournalist to be involved in decision-making processes and organizing projects and activities to strengthen the profession.

Any other comments you may have on the current status of women photojournalists in the Philippines:

Compared few years ago, I think the number of women photojournalists are gradually increasing. This is a good sign that women are starting to recognize that they can make a difference in the field of photojournalism.

ONLINE INTERVIEW WITH CHERYL BALDICANTOS (VISAYAS)

DATE: 3/9/2013

Full Name: Cheryl Baldicantos

Age: 26

Current Title and Employer & Number of Years Working for this Employer:

staff photographer of Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp. for around 4 years now

Years worked as photojournalist:

5

How did you start as a photojournalist?

"I have always wanted to have a career where I don't get to go to office at 8am and punch out at 5pm every day. I wanted travel and exciting things every day at the palm of my hand.

Way back college, I used to be a writer for the local paper here. However, I didn't like the drained feeling every time I wrote. Thus, I tried my hand in photography. I loved it. I still love it. "

What are the usual assignments/beats given to you (if any) or what subjects do you typically cover?

"The good thing about being the only staff photographer for the paper here is that I get to cover anything under the sun. Today, I got cut answering your questions early morning because I got a call that DENR 7 will be releasing turned over green sea turtles back to the sea. That's one on environment.

I also do business, sports, hard news, etc. Like I've said, anything. "

What are the challenges or negative experiences you face in the field because of being a woman?

"Ah, the inevitable question! :)"

I think no matter what job we are in, we will always encounter challenges. It's what makes it more interesting.

As a female photojournalist, I am anatomically weaker than the males. Thus, when it comes to climbing and working my way in to a crowd, I think I may be a bit behind.

However, being female is not really a disadvantage despite that. I basically use my being one in kindly asking all the other photographers if they can reserve me a space or things like that. In the field, we all have to use what we are given--be that equipment or gender.

Did you ever feel that you were treated differently by fellow photographers or employers because of your gender? In what way?

I haven't felt being treated differently. After all, it's still the same job and I'm still the same competitor from another paper. I am glad to say though that here in Cebu, we all respect each other in the field. We are all friends. Thus, you can't see photographers purposely elbowing each other or barring each other from a shot.

Did you ever feel you were treated differently by subjects because of your gender? In what way?

This, I often feel. Subjects look at me like I am incapable or like I am someone fragile especially in hard news. Sometimes, people even ask why I like lugging such heavy cameras.

Do you think it is harder for women to get into photojournalism than for men? Why or why not?

Since we are in a patriarchal society, I think every field career is difficult for women to get into. Think of architects, engineers and such. However, the world is rapidly changing as I am answering now. I believe we are now in an era where women are slowly holding unlikely jobs in the society. Now, women's skills are given attention.

Do you think it is harder for women outside of Manila to get into photojournalism compared to those in Manila?

I haven't asked women photographer friends there about this but I actually don't think there is any difference. Photography is an art form. What employers are looking for is the skill of the photographer regardless of his or her gender.

How do you think the experience, perception and treatment of women photojournalists is different for those working in Visayas compared to working in Manila, if at all?

Undeniably, there is still the 'imperial manila' mentality where people there actually think of all those outside the cluster of cities as provinces. However, in this one, I don't think it really matters if you are male or female as long as you are outside Manila.

How do you think you being a female photographer helps empower women?

I am still in the hopes of empowering other women now.

Obviously, me taking on a job mostly populated with the opposite sex is itself the empowering bit.

From your experience, what traits do you think are important for a female photojournalist to have?

"Women should always have the habit of carrying sarongs in out-of-town coverages. You'll never know where the next comfort room will be.

Kidding aside, I think it's just the same with what all photojournalists should have, i.e., fast thinking, alertness, and all those qualities."

What sort of changes do you want in the field (from employers or clients or other photojournalists?)

If I dreams can come true, I would want subjects to think of women photographers as actually more-than-capable beings.

What professional photojournalism/photography organizations are you a part of?

Press Photographers of the Phils.; Tala Collective

Does your organization have any projects or initiatives to help women photojournalists in the country? Does your organization think this is necessary?

Tala Collective is a new organization which is actually composed of women photojournalists and documentary photographers all over the country.

ONLINE INTERVIEW WITH CAI PANLILIO (INQUIRER MINDANAO)

DATE: 3/23/2013

Full Name: Cai Panlilio

Age: 36

Current Title/Current Employer & Number of Years Working for this Employer

Photo-Correspondent, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 4 1/2 years

Years worked as photojournalist:

4 1/2 years

How did you start as a photojournalist?

"I have always wanted to be involved in media work - to be able to tell people's stories so that others may learn from their experiences. Though my first love is television, I developed a fascination with the camera because I want to be able to capture events of people's lives through the lens.

At first, I wanted to become a 'cameraman/woman' (as it's called in tv) but during my time, the cameras were too heavy for a woman to carry. If I remember correctly, the cameras were called 'beta cams' which had to be hoisted over the shoulder. The cameramen whom I worked with were kind enough to teach me the basic rules of videography so I was able to learn how to frame/compose subjects. I realized then that I could capture a person's emotions through the lens even without asking him/her how they were feeling about something. I also had this feeling that I wanted to do what the men could do. Before, it was typical to have a news team that composed of a female reporter, a male cameraman and a male driver. I just felt that I wanted to be able to do what the men could do.

I could not afford to get an SLR at that time so I concentrated on writing scripts for TV then. I got my first DSLR in 2008 and the only thing I knew about operating it was on AUTO mode. I had to learn by taking a basic photography course and by trial-and-error. It was then easier to get into the local print media because I already had several years of media work in Manila."

What are the usual assignments/beats given to you (if any) or what subjects do you typically cover?

There are no specific beats that I cover. For the local newspaper (Sunstar), I cover any event from rallies, homicide, kidnapping, disaster, etc. It's the same thing with PDI.

What are the challenges or negative experiences you face in the field because of being a woman?

Whenever I carry my gear and go around the city, I am often mistaken for a wedding photographer or a hobbyist. When I say that I am a photojournalist, the most common reaction that I get is "Isn't your gear too heavy for you?" or "Kawawa ka naman, ang bigat ng dala mo" (in the vernacular). I am not offended by these statements because people in Cagayan are used to seeing male photojournalists ro [sic]

I would have to say that my challenge as a female photojournalist is more of being able to juggle my time with work and my kid. For now, I describe myself as a full-time mother and a part-time journalist because I opt to prioritize my child's needs over my work.

The only time I found a comment quite offending was when a male colleague asked me "What's up, would you rather be a full-time mom or a working journalist?" I had to explain to him that I had to tend to my child's needs because I am a single mother most of the time (my husband being assigned somewhere else).

How did you overcome these challenges?

I managed to work on a schedule that suits my needs. Whenever my son spends a whole day in school, I go out to work. I also inform my bureau chief and editor of my son's exam schedule just so they will know that I won't be able to accomplish my task as a photojournalist. I also take advantage of weekends, holidays and summer breaks.

Did you ever feel that you were treated differently by fellow photographers or employers because of your gender? In what way?

"I cannot recall any instance wherein I was discriminated for a story because of my gender. I have been given the same treatment by my editors and colleagues as with any male photojournalist.

I guess having veteran male photojournalists as my mentors in the field has helped because they have always told me that I should not look / treat myself differently because I am a woman.

If any, I would have to say that the treatment is often advantageous because most of the time, I am given special treatment for simply being the only female among a group of photographers. For instance, when we try to capture an event that is happening fast, a male photographer would offer me a spot so I could take my shot.

I have always thought that whether you have boobs or not, what matters is that you are able to convey a message through the photographs you take."

Did you ever feel you were treated differently by subjects because of your gender? In what way?

From my experience, subjects easily get comfortable with me taking a shot simply because I am a woman.

What are the advantages/benefits that you have experienced because you are a woman photojournalist?

One of my first out-of-town coverages for PDI was in a refugee camp in Munai, Lanao del Norte (My reporter/writer was also a female). The refugees were mostly Muslim women and children who sought refuge in the municipal hall. I was tasked to take some pictures of the refugees but our guide had to seek permission first before I took some photographs. It was not difficult to get their approval because according to the guide, I was a female and that made them comfortable.

Do you think it is harder for women to get into photojournalism than for men? Why or why not?

No. In fact I think that women have an advantage over men because we tend to be less confrontational or aggressive when pursuing our stories. This does not however mean that we are less prepared than men to be as forceful as necessary in order to get the photograph that we need / want.

Women are generally viewed to be more sensitive, emotional, and physically vulnerable. Except for the physical vulnerability (I admit that I am often vulnerable when it comes to dealing with physical challenges like walking up and down a rugged terrain), these give me an edge in stories dealing with subjects (especially women and children) that require a non-threatening presence.

Do you think it is harder for women outside of Manila to get into photojournalism compared to those in Manila?

Not really. The issue of not having many female photojournalists in the province is probably because the pay is low or because when women think about media work, they usually think about being in front of the camera and not behind it.

How do you think the experience, perception and treatment of women photojournalists is different for those working in Mindanao compared to working in Manila, if at all?

I guess photographers/journalists in Mindanao get more exposure when it comes to dealing with subjects who are victims of war, and lately, disasters as compared to photographers/journalists who are working in Manila.

How do you think you being a female photographer helps empower women?

I have to admit that photojournalism is a male-dominated craft, but it does not mean that women do not get the same opportunities as men do. I often focus on women / children as subjects of my photographs, and through the images that I take, I am able to share their story. Images should not portray women (or children) as victims. Women should be affirmed through the images that photographers take.

From your experience, what traits do you think are important for a female photojournalist to have?

There are no required special traits that women need to get into photojournalism. In my case, it helped that I consider myself as 'one of the boys' and not seeking special treatment (like being prioritized) during coverages.

What sort of changes do you want in the field (from employers or clients or other photojournalists?)

It would be helpful if there are more workshops offered for women photojournalists or an avenue where we can share common experiences and gain inspiration from other women in the field.

What are the advantages for you in being a photojournalist in Mindanao compared to in other areas of the country?

I don't see any advantage to being a photojournalist in Mindanao. Whether you're a photojournalist in Manila, in Cebu or elsewhere, the responsibility of being able to tell a story does not change. For me, each place has its own story to tell, photographs to show. It's as simple as that.

What training or classes have you had for photojournalism or photography, if any?

I just took one basic photography course (with Mr. Jo Avila). If I remember correctly, it was a 5-week workshop. I was not part of any media outlet then. I just wanted to learn about the 'how tops' in using a digital camera. When I became part of PDI, I met some veteran photojournalists who gave me a lot of advices. Until now, I am still learning and consulting with them.

You mentioned that you have a son and so I was wondering if and how being a mother has affected how you work? How do you balance working as a photojournalist with having a family? If you were already working as a photojournalist before you had a child, how have your priorities or considerations changed?

Though I love being a photojournalist, I always put my son's needs and interest before my work. I have to admit that at times, it can get frustrating especially when there's an opportunity for a good story. I have to take a pass whenever my son has exams coming up. Also, he has been in and out of the hospital for the past two years because he is severely asthmatic. This has been a major drawback because there were a couple of times that I've had to turn down a coverage because I was in the hospital with him.

Before I got married and had a son, I used to stay for an entire week in ABS-CBN and ABC 5 and not worry about anything else except my deadlines. Things are different now, of course. I take advantage of days when my son has classes the whole day. Whenever he has half-day classes, I stay at home to prepare for subject reviews. Weekends are also allotted for work, however, I allot Sundays for family quality time. I also keep my cellphone accessible, even during sleep hours, as I have learned from the bombings and earthquakes in CDO last year.

Allow me to point out that I do not have regrets whatsoever with the priorities that I have chosen. It also helps a lot that my PDI bureau chief and Sunstar editor are understanding of my situation.

Could you give me a sample of one of the biggest stories you have covered in your area, or one that had the biggest impact on you? And explain why it was a big story and how you got the shot?

The 2010 Sendong tragedy made an impact not only in my career, but in my life as a whole. Personally, I was not prepared for such coverage. I was not only a witness to the disaster but I was a part of it.

I did not realize the severity of the situation until I came across a scenario in a barangay hall when a dump truck started piling bodies into the hallway. It was my first time to encounter more than a dozen dead bodies at such close range. There was also a commotion because survivors were crowding into the cramped space, desperately trying to identify the bodies. I felt scared because I suddenly realized that I did not know how to take a photograph wherein people were hysterical. I took some photos but decided not to send them to my editors. I was thinking that the survivors do not need to see any more morbid photos on print / internet. (there were already hundreds of photos posted on Facebook by the users). There were other ways to show the tragedy. My telephoto lens was a big help because I was able to take photographs of people without having to be intrusive. I think that in situations like these, photographers need to keep their distance from their subjects because they are dealing with a lot of emotions. More than anything, respect your subject's space and feelings.

The coverage was difficult in the sense that I was struggling between doing my work as a journalist and helping family and friends who were severely affected by the disaster. I lost a cousin and a friend, whose bodies until now, have not been recovered. I was pressed for story and photo deadlines and at that time I felt I had no choice but to include them in my story. It was overwhelming because I found it difficult to ask questions. In my mind, I could not help but think that if I were placed in their position and a reporter / photojournalist was asking me for an interview, I would feel outraged having to deal with all the emotions and an interview at the same time.

ONLINE INTERVIEW WITH RUBY THURSDAY MORE

DATE: 4/2/2013

FULL NAME: Ruby Thursday More

AGE: 30

Current Title/Current Employer & Number of Years Working for this Employer

Photojournalist/MindaNews/4 yrs

Years worked as photojournalist:

4 years

How did you start as a photojournalist?

I really wanted to be a journalist ever since I was a kid. I was more inclined to writing than photography. But after graduating from college, I found myself working in NGOs and foreign-funded development projects. Keith, my then boyfriend (and husband now), who has been working as a journalist for over a decade now, encouraged me to try photography. After resigning from my job in 2008, I tagged along with the MindaNews team covering the conflict in Central Mindanao. This was shortly after the aborted signing of the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD). I contributed photos to MindaNews that time. I kinda liked the job so I decided to pursue it and worked as a freelance photojournalist. Last year, I became a regular photojournalist of MindaNews.

What are the usual assignments/beats given to you (if any) or what subjects do you typically cover?

In MindaNews, we have no specific beats. But so far, I have covered issues on human rights, environment, disasters, poverty, conflict, among others. I also cover agriculture and business stories and do a lot of street photography.

What are the challenges or negative experiences you face in the field because of being a woman?

So far, I have no negative experiences. Although physically, I find it a bit challenging because I have to carry heavy gears most of the time.

Did you ever feel that you were treated differently by fellow photographers or employers because of your gender? In what way?

No. In fact, the male photojournalists, journalists and reporters in Davao treat me as an equal. Even when I was starting, I never felt any discrimination from them because I was new or female.

Did you ever feel you were treated differently by subjects because of your gender? In what way?

No.

What are the advantages/benefits that you have experienced because you are a woman photojournalist?

In coverages, especially during times when we scramble for space like presidential visits, the photojournalists and cameramen (especially the ones from Davao) always give me space (the Pinoy gentleman in them working, perhaps?)

In doing stories especially in Moro communities, the women open up easily. They find it easier to communicate/relate with me so they become comfortable and I get good photos and angles.

Do you think it is harder for women to get into photojournalism than for men? Why or why not?

Not really. Although it can be quite physically demanding (think of the heat, dust, smell, heavy gears that women photojournalists had to battle everyday...not too many girls would like that hehe), the skills, intelligence, and passion required are the same.

I don't know though how other editors (especially men) feel about having women photojournalists in their organizations. Although I have observed that in the mainstream media, the numbers are quite increasing compared, say, five or ten years ago. But I think there still exists that notion in them that male photographers are better than women.

Do you think it is harder for women outside of Manila to get into photojournalism compared to those in Manila?

Not really. The internet has proven to be a great venue for showing one's work as well as learning on how to be better at it. In terms of employment though (like being a regular photojournalist), I think there are still more opportunities in Manila than in the provinces.

How do you think the experience, perception and treatment of women photojournalists is different for those working in Mindanao compared to working in Manila, if at all?

Generally, photojournalists, journalists, and reporters working in the regions, and especially those in Mindanao are oftentimes regarded as "second-class." In many

coverages, those coming from Manila are given better space and treatment and are always prioritized. In several coverages, spaces have been allotted and labeled as for "national" and "local" media with the "national" media getting the better space.

How do you think you being a female photographer helps empower women?

Photography and photojournalism has always been male-dominated and so issues on women have barely been covered. With more women getting into it, stories on women--their struggles, efforts and contributions to the world--now have the chance to be told which I hope will also inspire other women in bringing about positive change in themselves, families and communities.

From your experience, what traits do you think are important for a female photojournalist to have?

Patience. Passion. Curiosity. The willingness to get out of one's comfort zone because in this profession, bawal ang maarte :)

What sort of changes do you want in the field (from employers or clients or other photojournalists?)

Better pay. In the field of photography, photojournalists are the most underpaid and vulnerable. We go to dangerous places and exposed to different hazards--sickness, vulnerability especially during times of disasters, etc--most of the time without health and accident insurance, yet our salaries can barely pay for our needs and that of our family.

What professional photojournalism/photography organizations are you a part of?

TALA Photo Collective

Does your organization have any projects or initiatives to help women photojournalists in the country? Does your organization think this is necessary?

Yes

What are the advantages for you in being a photojournalist in Mindanao compared to in other areas of the country?

We have access to really good stories. Mindanao is rife with stories both positive and negative. But oftentimes, I cannot pursue the stories I want to do for lack of funds. MindaNews has very limited funding, and sometimes, I use my own money to fund the stories that I really want.

What training or classes have you had for photojournalism or photography, if any?

When I was still starting as a photographer, I read books on photography and get tutorials from Keith. In 2009, I enrolled in the Asian Center for Journalism's Diploma in Photojournalism through a scholarship grant. To further improve, I still continue reading/browsing photography books and look at works of photographers published online. I also read/watch tutorials online for the technical side of photography.

What was a "big" story that you covered in your area or a story that had a big impact on you? And why was it significant?

I think one of my "favorites" is the one I did during Sendong. It is a story that focused on women and children and although it still showed the devastation and difficulty brought by the disaster, it highlighted their resilience and strength and their efforts to recover.