

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**TELENOVELAS AND FEMALE AUDIENCE: A STUDY OF TELENOVELA  
VIEWERS IN THE TEMA MUNICIPALITY.**

**COLLINS KORLEY HLORMENYOR**

**(7151660001)**



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**(MEDIA STUDIES)**

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## **DECLARATION**

### **STUDENTS'S DECLARATION**

I, Collins Korley Hlormenyor declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....



### **SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: MR. ALBERT WORNYO

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

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## **DEDICATION**

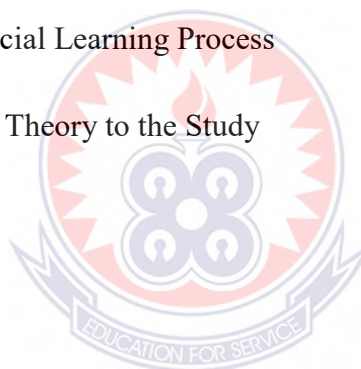
To my wonderful mother, Madam Madugu Amanatey for her total support and motivation throughout my school life and to all my siblings.



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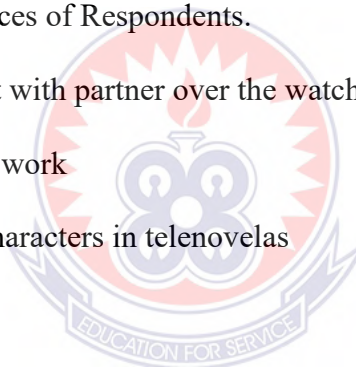


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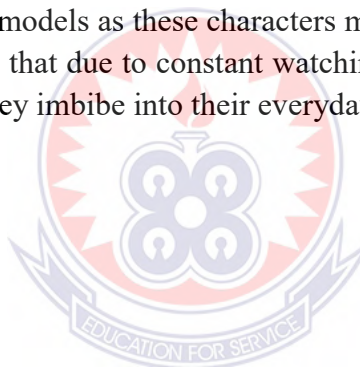
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## ABSTRACT

This study examined the telenovelas that interest women and the cultivation of these interests among female audience in BBC, a suburb of community 2 in the Tema Municipality. Also, the study examined the characters that women identify with in telenovelas and finally, examined why women identify themselves with these characters in telenovelas. Purposive sampling strategy was applied to sample 20 female audience of telenovela viewing for data collection. With the use of questionnaires, further supported by the cultivation theory and the social cognitive theory, this study established that the kind of telenovelas that women have so much interest in watching are those that have themes revolving around love, romance, relationships, etc. Again, it was established that telenovelas that have been translated into local languages (i.e with the use of voice overs) are the ones that have become popular and majority of female viewers can identify with. This is because the translated version of the telenovelas aids their understanding and helps them to better appreciate the plots of the story. In characterization of telenovelas, it was revealed that female audience recognize the role of the main characters and as such identify with them as role models as these characters mirror their own lives on the screen. The study also established that due to constant watching of telenovelas, women cultivate habits and values which they imbibe into their everyday lives.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The proliferation of the airwaves has led to many television stations springing up in recent years in Ghana. This has brought in its wake competition for audience where various programmes are telecast in order to win and maintain their viewers. One of such programmes shown by media houses is telenovelas. According to Stavans (2010), telenovela came from the Spanish word “Tele” which means distance and “Novella” which means story. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Latin America novels such as Don Quixote and Martin Fierro were printed in the newspaper each day and so many people would read them. This was done in parts because books were expensive and writers hoped that people would create chapters to organize their books for them (Stavans, 2010: 16). In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, television became the main medium of communication which replaced newspapers and gave viewers televised books.

Hardly will an evening pass without tens of thousands of viewers throughout the entire country tuning in their television sets to watch such telenovelas. These telenovelas have dominated the media landscape during the primetime programming on most television channels in Ghana because they have become the new thing to watch and „the talk of the town“. Some television stations even do voice overs in the local languages to aid the understanding of their cherished viewers. For example, United Television (UTV) is one of the „later-day“ television stations in Ghana but has become one of the famous and highly watched television stations in the country due to the use of a local language

(Akan). The use of voice overs of telenovelas in the local language (Akan) has contributed significantly to this undisputed phenomenon. There is also an overview of the previous episode before the showing of the current one. Panel discussions are also held after each episode with phone – in segments from their favourite viewers. The panelists brought to the show to do the discussion are professionals in their own rights and are able to digest the issues at hand so fully with high sense of practicality and real-life applications. Another television station called Adom TV also has become a household name due the same reason of using voice overs in the local language in telecasting their favourite Indian telenovela called Kumkum Bhagya. This clearly shows how far media houses can go to win the hearts of their audience. It is quite interesting to see the young ladies running home just to make time to watch their favourite telenovelas in the evenings. It is even more interesting to see those who are caught up in traffic watching the programme on their mobile phones because they just cannot afford to miss it for anything. For instance, a young lady once confessed to me that she spends five Ghana cedis (GHC5.00) on data bundle each day to be able to watch her favourite telenovela from her workplace.

In any commercial vehicle that one takes, that person will hear the female passengers discussing the telenovelas that were watched the previous day. The passion with which these women narrate and discuss the story is so amazing and mind boggling. Sometimes the main character's name is taken for the title because they may have particular attachment to them. For instance, a telenovela named *Wild at Heart* became popularly known among its ardent audience as *Maricruz* who is the main character in the genre. Among these telenovelas are *Road to destiny*, *Storm over paradise*, *Wild at heart*, *Second*

*chance, Passion and power', Hidden passion, Kumkum Bhagya, Curse by the Sea, Irrational Heart, Timeless love, Veera, A woman's sacrifice, Emerald Necklace, among others.*

A telenovela is a specific television genre, produced in some Latin America countries. Historically, Brazil was the first country to produce telenovelas, and it is still by far the most important producer, ahead of such countries as Mexico, Venevuela, Argentina, and Colombia (Tufte, 2000 ). According to him, generally, telenovelas vary from 180 up to 240 episodes, and even more when the ratings are successful. Telenovelas are made by Globo in a place called Projac, where six of them can be shot at the same time, in six different studios.

According to Tufte, (2000) the first telenovelas were produced in Brazil in the early 1950s and, until this day, they have been the most popular fictional television programmes in that country. He said their success has much to do with the fact that the telenovela genre has been evolving over the years in order to reflect transformations in Brazilian society. Within the present period, which has been called a “post-realist one”, telenovelas stage the broad social spectrum of Brazilian society, with its different social types (the industrial manager, the worker, the housewife, the housemaid, etc.), its conflicts, and its lifelike situations (urban violence, homosexuality, corruption and much else). Although there is room for artistic creativity and subversive agendas to occur in the production process, one must keep in mind that telenovelas are commodities produced on an industrial basis, and consequently commercial goals are ultimately determining the shape of these highly profitable products, Tufte asserted.

The reception and consumption of telenovelas by African women, particularly Ghanaian women and the role they play in feminine identity dynamics in a contemporary West African society, is the essence of this study. Telenovelas have a strong power of attraction over women that make the genre „women- audience“ genre. Mazzioti (1993) argues that telenovelas “allows for the viewers an emotional participation in a set of fictitious powers that play with elementary human questions: honour, goodness, love, badness, life, death, treason, virtue and sin, that in certain ways, has something to do with the viewers”. In other words, telenovelas are successful because they deal with social issues that Ghanaians are facing. What matters is that the social situations described in them are similar to those the public experiences in their daily life, and complex enough to fit the needs of everyone.

Werner (2006) states that

“the domestication of people by telenovelas is backed up by a very efficient strategy of communication that makes use of three types of message- oral, visual, and musical- engraved in a sophisticated structure. On the other hand, people domesticate television through a complex reception process which is both collective and active. At the end of it, women are able to intertwine some of the threads picked up in the telenovelas within their own daily social fabric to make things change, especially in the realm of gender relationships and parent-children relationships.”

The change that might come, may also have in its wake a cultural shock that needs to be filtered and gradually assimilated and accepted.

In Ghana, a study on telenovelas viewing by Adia (2014), asserts that television stations that are becoming popular are those telecasting telenovelas with local voice overs during primetime. Programme managers plan programmes that best attract viewers. Private

television stations generate revenue exclusively by selling airtime for advertisement. The value of airtime depends on the number of viewers the stations have (Aland, 2017).

Television stations can only achieve this objective when their programmes attract maximum viewership. And so in order to meet this burning competitive desire of broadcasters, they employ the use of telenovelas which is actually telecast for one hour each day. But half of that airtime period is sold out for advertisement due to their large audience. This is how many media houses generate huge revenue to run their business.

According to Werner (2006), even if his findings are conformable with most of the quantitative and qualitative results coming from other studies, there is obviously a need for further research in the field of telenovelas reception in Africa. This study therefore seeks to investigate female audience in telenovelas in Ghana.

## **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

According to Kinkade and Macy (2003), this period of globalization and knowledge-based economy has brought in its wake programmes on televisions which are aimed towards educating audience both locally and internationally. Generally, many studies have been done internationally on telenovelas and female audience.

A study conducted by Donkor (2013), asserts that teenagers are likely to learn from the characters and situations in serials and also imitate values from these serials. This observation is adequately supported by Kinkade and Macy (2003), who argue that television programmes capitalize on young people's creativity, passion and idealism, offering their valuable judgement on some of the critical issues of our time. In another study conducted by Buckingham and Braggs (2003), teenage girls feel comfortable

soliciting for information on sex, love and relationship in the media than consulting their parents. In other words, teenage girls are uncomfortable seeking or sharing information on sex, love and relationship from their parents than they do on the media. This is because the media is a free market place where there are no restrictions. Fiertzen (2004) postulates that telenovelas are to be blame for the negative influence on audience. They strive for sensation by seasoning their content with sex, nudity, promiscuity, bad language, promoting exhibitionism and contributing to new lifestyle standards that prioritize publicity, glamour, competition and individualism. However, according to Singhal and Rogers (2002) telenovelas have been used in different continents as a form of entertainment – education in promoting particular behaviours, advocating rights of specific groups and working to articulate social change.

Mensa- Bonsu (2011) also asserts that teenagers make telenovelas part of their day to day activities and not normally allow anything to engage them during the period when telenovelas are broadcast. This clearly shows how paramount telenovelas are to teenagers. Perez (2005) concludes in her study on television and reality that telenovelas and soap operas especially Mexican soaps weave cultural identity with fiction and reality to present to their viewers thereby carrying some portions of Mexican culture mixed with other elements in the soaps they produce for global consumption.

Adia (2014) studied the viewer perception and important elements in telenovelas shown in Ghana and why they have a large audience in Ghana. She came out finally with the conclusion that, people who spend a lot of time watching telenovelas are likely to pick up some behaviours from them.



Again, Wambua (2014) studied the use and gratification of Latin American telenovelas for high school students in Kenya and concluded that, teenagers are highly motivated to watch telenovelas because they provide solutions to their needs even though they know that the stories told in telenovelas may not be real. Therefore Kenyan teenagers result to telenovelas to seek information that will satisfy their needs ranging from education to entertainment to emotions to fashion needs. The literature reviewed so far showed that some studies have been carried out on telenovelas especially in Latin America and the U.S but not on why women are interested in watching telenovelas in Ghana.

The interest of women in watching telenovelas has risen drastically that a lot of people are now getting alarmed as to why this phenomenon is making women „crazy“ and glued to their television sets during the primetime of the day. Since the literature showed that the interest of women in watching telenovelas has not been investigated, this study seeks to unearth the reasons behind these telenovelas that have dominated television stations in Ghana in recent years. Additionally, most of the studies carried out on telenovelas were done using the qualitative research approach. This study employing the quantitative research approach seeks to investigate the reasons behind women’s interest in telenovelas that have dominated television stations in Ghana.

## **1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study seeks to set the tone to understand why women as audience have so much interest in this type of genre. Apart from that, it also seeks to find out the views of women about why they identify themselves with the characters in the stories.

## **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main objective of the study is to investigate the interest of female audience in telenovelas. The specific objectives are to:

1. Find out the telenovelas that interest women.
2. Find out how women identify with characters in telenovelas.
3. Examine why women identify themselves with certain characters in telenovelas.

## **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What are the telenovelas that interest women?
2. How do women identify with roles characters play in telenovelas?
3. What are the views of women for identifying themselves with certain characters in telenovelas?

## **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

When one takes a critical look at the media landscape, television has become the most appropriate and popular media that people watch and enjoy in Ghana as compared to radio and the print media (newspapers). The role and significance of television within the

Ghanaian media landscape continues to increase in spite of the numerous platforms available for the distribution of audio-visual content. This research is important for various reasons. The study will add to the literature in this area of study. It will also help broadcasters and other stakeholders within the media industry to know the kind of programmes and contents that interest female audience and how to plan to meet their preference so far as telenovelas are concerned. Marketers and advertisers who are the main sponsors of such telenovelas will also stand a big advantage in terms of promotion of their businesses and products in order to double their profit margins.

#### **1.6 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Though the focus of the study is on the interest of Ghanaian women in telenovelas, the scope of the study is limited to Tema, a suburb of Accra in the Greater-Accra Region of Ghana. Television stations have been telecasting the genre for quite some time now and for this study to cover all of them will be an insurmountable task to handle. The period of this study is the year 2016-2017. Within this period, the researcher took a critical look at terrestrial television stations in Ghana telecasting different telenovelas for the study.

#### **1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

This study is presented in six chapters. Chapter one focuses on the introduction and deals with the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions and significance of the study .

Chapter two reviews related literature on the role of the media in telenovela viewing and the interest of women in telenovelas.

Chapter three discusses the empirical and theoretical framework of the study.

Chapter four presents the methodology used in the study. It contains the research design and instruments, population, sample and sample procedure, data collection procedure and problems encountered.

In chapter five, findings, results and discussions of the study are presented.

Finally, chapter six deals the summary of the research findings, conclusions reached and implications of the study, the recommendations and areas for further research.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter reviews related literature that includes articles related to the study of why females are the main audience of telenovelas, how they identify with characters in telenovelas and why they identify themselves with certain characters in telenovelas.

The chapter is categorized under the following sub-headings: the role of the media and the interest of female audience in telenovelas

#### **2.1 THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA**

According to Wood (1994) the media plays very important roles and functions in society as sources of information, education, entertainment and transmission of culture. As gatekeepers of information and images the media to a large extent regulate what we see, hear and know by deciding what programmes to air, what news stories to feature, what images to show, how to represent issues and events, and how to depict women and men in general. By selectively regulating what we see, the media influences how we perceive gender issues.

The media is seen as the most powerful medium that influences and changes our behaviour, attitude and perceptions about what we see, hear or feel. Programmes that are shown on television always have impact on the lives of the audience either positively or negatively. Audiences learn what they see on television and attach meaning to it. According to McAnany and La Pastina (1994), audiences are active with the tendency to draw meanings from telenovela content. Also, audience apply content and meaning from

these telenovelas to their lives by imitating what the characters do on television by relating them to their relationships, dressing and others. The mass media plays significant roles both explicitly and implicitly in conveying stimulating thought and discussion, and informing and developing ideation behaviour.

According to Allison (2002) in this age of information and technological advancement, the internet, radio, television, movies and printed word reach all of us and each attempts to perfect its mode of communications to become more effective as a medium. The role of the various media however, has gone far beyond just the supply of information to giving them the power to create reality. He adds that media is shaped by existing social reality; therefore by gradually shaping public opinion, personal beliefs and even people's self-perceptions, media influences the process of socialization and shapes ideology and thinking. Allison posits that the power of constructing media reality rests in the hands of a few conglomerates and individuals whose biases and profit motives work in the creation of a reality which is often distorted. One such important media is the television (the focus of this study) which continues to play a very significant role in the development of many countries the world over.

The country is full of numerous television stations; be it state-owned or private-owned. Ghana television is the only state-owned television station while the rest are either state-private partnership or private-owned television stations. Among such stations are TV3, UTV, TV AFRICA, METRO TV, VIASAT1, NET 2 and many others across the country. Telenovela has gone viral, infesting the programme line-ups of all the accessible television stations operating in Ghana. According to Bellos (2007), telenovela is possibly the most successful drama format in the history of television and also a huge

commercial force. From Sunday to Saturday each week, at least one of the most accessible stations (TV3, GTV, VIASAT 1, METRO TV, TV AFRICA, and UTV) busily serves their audiences a telenovela almost concurrently. Due to the economic benefits of telenovelas, they are mostly shown primetime in order to obtain the largest possible audience (Bellos, 2007). With some stations, a telenovela paves the way for major news bulleting and others take over immediately after the news.

According to Google search scholar (11<sup>th</sup> April, 2014), telenovela emerged in Ghana in the mid-nineties; specifically in 1996 when the first telenovela titled Esaura (1996) was shown in Ghana on the national broadcaster, Ghana Television (GTV). This was a Brazilian telenovela. Later in the early 2000s, another telenovela from Mexico named Esmeralda (1997) was shown in Ghana. This telenovela was produced and released by Televisa in 1997, and it was aired on TV3. Prior to the introduction of Esmeralda, Ghanaians had a taste of Mexican soap operas like Acapulco Bay (1995) and Maria de Los Angeles (1997), which were shown by TV3 in 1998. Subsequently La Usurpadora (1998) was shown, which was again aired by TV3. According to a news desk research conducted by Chronicle (2007), these telenovelas made audience fell in love with telenovelas and got so addicted to them, to the extent that they could not miss an episode. The attraction and addiction was so intense that people had to carry their TV sets to other localities where there was electricity; because during this era, the country experienced one of its major energy crises (popularly known as dumsor dumsor). These telenovelas served as discussions for audiences as families had to assemble around their television sets and watch. It is often a sight as ardent viewers had to rush home after work, so as to catch an episode of their favourite telenovela.

Since the introduction of telenovelas, new ones have emerged. Some of these are *Untamed Beauties* (2007-2008), *Jewel in the Palace* (2003-2004), *The Woman of my Life* (1998-1999), *Sweet Fat Valentina* (2002-2003), *Lorenzo's Wife* (2003), *The Two Faces of Anna* (2006-2007), *The Revenge* (2002-2003), *When You Are Mine* (2005-2006), *Joana the Virgin* (2002), *Rosalinda* (1999), *Rebecca* (2003), *In the name of Love* (2008-2009), *The Gardener's Daughter* (2003-2004), *Passion of Hawks* (2003-2004), *Teresa* (2010-2011), *Storm Over Paradise* (2007-2008), *Cursed by the Sea* (2009-2010), *Second Chance* (2005-2006) etc.

The multiplicity of telenovelas on different channels is an indication that telenovelas are the most popular programmes television stations in Ghana buy from outside the country and it is also the most popular ones, which easily get the attention of Ghanaians. Telenovelas carry different storylines which talk about romance, secret relationships, realities of life, extra-marital affairs and genuine love which tends to appeal to our emotion and give us the visual connection of love and the realities of our lives by comparing what we watch to our real life situation. They also expose realities of life and also connect people from different class. According to Podalsky (2003), telenovelas have the interests of both the rich and poor.

Similarly, according to a survey conducted by Ampofo (2009), telenovelas have influenced people in many ways. His finding shows that, education in terms of fashion, vocabulary, language, cultural exposure, and the shaping of life of individuals are the moral lessons audience gain from watching telenovela. In another study, Atuahene (2009), surveyed forty young people at Madina Estate, Accra, to find out the impact of



telenovelas on the youth. The study indicated that telenovelas introduced the respondents to new fashion trends, helped them to deal with their relationships, and helped them to improve their communication skills.

Telenovela is possibly the most successful drama format in the history of television and also a huge commercial force (Bellos 2007). As a result of the influence telenovelas have on Ghanaians, and its commercial purposes, most television stations telecast them to make their stations popular and increase their market share. Recently, there have been telenovelas like *The Clone* (2010), *The Secretary* (2011-2012), *The Storm* (2005-2006), *Triumph of Love* (2010-2011), *The One Who Couldn't Love* (2011-2012), *Maid in Manhattan* (2011-2012), *Emerald Necklace* (2006), *Fierce Angel* (2010), *Wild at Heart* (2013), *Crown of Tears* (2012-2013), and *What Life Took from Me* (2013-2014).

According to Google search scholar (11th April, 2014), United Television is the television station with the largest number of viewers in the cities that have the biggest television market share, that is, Accra and Kumasi respectively. It also states that United Television is gradually stealing the little market in Cape Coast too. It states that these developments can be attributed to the telenovelas shown on United Television. These telenovelas are *Wild at Heart* popularly called *Maricruz*, *Crown of Tears* and *What Life Took from Me*.

## **2.2 FEMALE INTEREST IN TELENOVELAS**

According to Morley (1996) the history of studies of the media audience can be seen as a series of oscillations between perspectives which have stressed the power of the message

over its audiences and perspectives which have stressed the barriers “protecting” the audience from the potential effects of the message. Morley (1996) further recounts that during the late 1980s, a new strand of work developed in audience studies, focusing on the domestic context of television’s reception within households, often using a broadly ethnographic methodology and characteristically focusing on gender differences within the household or family in television viewing habits.

Condry (1989) notes that there are different kinds of programmes available on television and also there are so many kinds of audience categories cutting across age, sex, and race. To accept any programme by population is an almost impossible task. Condry (1989) makes reference to a study which was carried out by Nielson (1988) on the Top fifteen (15) regularly watched television programmes in November 1987, in the United States. The study showed that situation comedies, suspense and mystery dramas, and feature dramas had for some time been the most popular programme types on television, whereas news and informational programmes had been the least popular. Much of the programme preference was obvious. Children preferred cartoons and later situational comedies. Men preferred adventure, sports and mystery, while women preferred human drama especially the kind displayed in soap operas (telenovelas) and situation comedies. The conclusion of the study by Nielson (1988) also confirms the assertion that telenovelas are the most popular programme among women when it comes to television programming and viewership.

Another study carried out by Hummel (2002), on the relationship between gender and television viewing styles shows that watching television means something different to women than to men, not because of their biological makeup but due to the gendered roles

they play in the family. Gendered viewing styles and tastes were found to reflect the division of work and unequal power relations in patriarchal Britain in the late 1970's and early 1980's. The study revealed that women rejected television programmes relating to masculine world of viewership. These masculine-dominated television programmes includes news items, current affairs, and action movies. The women, on the other hand actively chose programmes such as entertainment and fiction, especially soap operas (telenovelas) representing their own world of viewership. Even though they found their own preferences interesting they said they were less important to masculine tastes. Also, they could relate to a feminine realm of fictional programmes that were connected with personal and emotional concerns of family life, or else offered a fantasy alternative to their own daily experiences (Moore, 1993 cited in Hummel 2002). News stories were described as male-oriented, boring and were believed to have a depressing effect. Also, women found it hard to argue for their own choice of television programmes in the presence of their husbands as they perceive their own preferences as "more interesting and relevant to them", but second in rank to the real and masculine world (Hobson, 1980, cited in Hummel 2002).

In a related study by Aslama and Jääsaari (1999), women were found to have interest in specific television programmes, which attracted them in terms of content, style and approach. They found a connection between the television programmes and their own realities in everyday life. These programmes seemed to be predominantly fiction or entertainment oriented. Women are often targeted with and offered "feminine genres" and that is one reason why they tend to watching them. Although there has been little comprehensive research on gendered audiences in Africa, studies throughout Europe can

be said to show a fairly predictable pattern of gender differences. While there is not much difference in time spent watching television by both sexes, women tend to prefer drama including serials and soap operas (telenovelas), talk shows and certain comedy programmes. Men on the other hand prefer sports, action-oriented series and information programmes including news and current affairs. These patterns have been confirmed for several countries like Sweden (Abrahamson, 1990 cited in Aslama and Jääsaari 1999) and the United Kingdom (Livingstone, 1994 cited in Jääsaari 1999). They are also applicable to Finland (Jääsaari & Sarkkiren, 1995; 1998 as cited Hummel 2002). This study focuses on women resident within the Tema Municipality of the Greater- Accra Region of Ghana in order to discover if their interests in telenovelas are peculiar or identical to those established for Europe and elsewhere.

In finding a related study on why young women enjoy watching telenovelas, Danso (2007) came out with findings that the introduction of telenovelas have contributed to the change in culture which is affecting the moral values of the youth. His research was based on the fact that the ways and values of the Ghanaian youth are tarnished because of the increase of telenovelas in the country.

Catrall (2009) in assessing the impact of fictional love stories on the youths' intimate relationship found out that twenty-eight percent (28%) of the respondents watch telenovelas because the stories are interesting. Forty-five percent (45%) watch it because the stories are romantic in nature. Twenty percent (20%) of the respondents watch because of the portrayal of love in a certain way and seven percent (7%) watch it because the stories are informative.

She further came out saying sixty-six percent (66%) of the respondents imitate the characters in the stories in their sexual behaviour, eating, walking, and talking, dressing, etc. And only thirty-four percent (34%) of the respondents said they do not imitate the characters. This study establishes and confirms the assertion by other studies that women watch telenovelas for various reasons such as love, romance, entertainment, etc. Also they imitate the characters in the telenovelas in terms of fashion, eating habit, walking, communication, and sexual behaviour. This imitation of characters in telenovelas has strong influence over their life style and increases their taste for better choices in life.

Camella (2001) in a study on the parasocial relationships among female college student soap opera viewers indicates that people imagine themselves being in action or where there is a state of mutual understanding and they are affected by what happens to fictional characters and talk as if they are real expressing strong emotional discovery.

Major media television personalities seem to be a normal consequence of television viewing. Although people may not consider themselves to be having a relationship with these characters, many of the studies done indicate that there is almost always some form of relationship existing in almost all regular soap opera viewers (Rubin & Perse, 1987, p.251).

According to Patil (2014) there is also the perception that women may be experiencing a strong force of generational gap in family lives, in relationships (marital) and in recreation, for which the young women turn to the telenovelas as “gap fillers”. In other words, partners may not be communicating enough in their relationship for the other party to have that sense of belongingness in the home and as such turns to watching of telenovelas as an immediate resort.

The term generation gap is often a cultural, social or economic conflict between the generations. It is understood to be due to differences in values, beliefs and customs or because of conflict of interest between the younger and the older generation. Patil points out that, recreation is very essential for every individual. It pleases the mind and gives more energy to take active participation in other vigorous activities for maximal performance. Today, a lot of changes have taken place in terms of recreational needs and so the young women turn to watching telenovelas which the media (television) is strongly and viciously telecasting to them on daily basis.

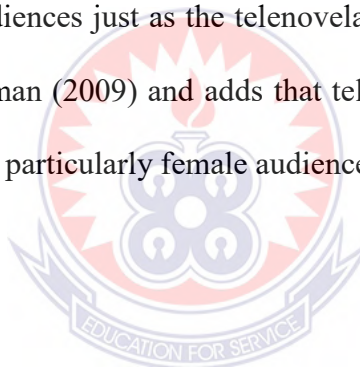
Thus, generation gap refers to the difference, gap or conflict between adolescent children and their parents regarding values, attitudes and behaviour patterns. The problem of generation gap is universal. It has existed more or less in almost all societies at all times. It is because the parents are traditional and conservative, whereas the youth are modern and rebellious.

According to Mazzioti (1993), telenovelas “allow for viewers an emotional participation in a set of fictitious powers that play with elementary human questions: honour, goodness, love, hatred, badness, life, death, treason, virtue and sin, that in certain ways, has something to do with the viewers.” In other words, telenovelas are successful because they deal with social issues that Ghanaian women are facing in their everyday life. Telenovelas in a way, provide answers to the numerous issues that go on in their minds unanswered. They wish to express them just for someone to hear them out but they live in worlds apart with those who must hear them (husbands). What matters, is the social situation described in them are similar to those the public experiences in their daily life, and complex enough to fit the needs of everyone.

Werner (2006) stated that

“the domestication of people by telenovelas is backed by a very efficient strategy of communication that makes use of three types of message- oral, visual, and musical- engraved in a sophisticated structure. On the other hand, people domesticate television through a complex reception process which is both collective and active. At the end of it all, women are able to intertwine some of the threads picked up in the telenovelas within their own daily social fabric to make things change, especially in the realm of gender relationships and parent- children relationships.”

In Ghana, Opoku-Agyeman (2009) reports that Ghanaian women are usually heavy viewers of soap opera or telenovela and marketers have taken a cue from this trend to advertise mainly women’s products during its broadcasts. These advertisements influenced the women audiences just as the telenovela. Again, Adia (2014) confirms the assertion of Opoku-Agyeman (2009) and adds that telenovelas are significant argents of socialization of audiences, particularly female audiences who are heavy viewers.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

Waisbord (n.d.) notes that, “theory refers to sets of concepts and propositions that articulate relations among variables to explain and predict situations and results. Theories explain the nature and causes of a given problem and provide guidelines for practical interventions” (p.1).

The study considers the cultivation theory of mass communication and the social learning theory as the major theories that underpin the research.

#### **3.1 CULTIVATION THEORY**

Cultivation theory explains the way by which people’s conceptions of social reality are influenced according to exposure to television. “The cultivation hypothesis states that the more television people watch, the more likely they are to hold a view of reality that is closer to television's depiction of reality. This is characterized by the work of George Gerbner and his colleagues (Gerbner et al., 1979)” (Zaharopoulos, 2001).

According to Chang and Reber (2000), “cultivation theory claims that television promotes us to believe a view of real life that is inaccurate.” In other words, there is a „world“ created by the media (television) for their audience to believe and accept it as true but that „world“ is but a mirage. This happens because of continuous and constant exposure to the media „world“.



„Cultivation Theory, put simply, states that the more a person is exposed to a message provided by the media, the more likely that person is to believe the message is real“ (Moon & Blaney, 2007).

Cultivation Theory is often applied to people’s perceptions of reality. For example, a person who watches a lot of crime shows on television will eventually believe that there is a lot of violent crime in the city in which he lives. This skewed world is called a “mediated reality” (Wilcox et al, 2003, p.214). The theory also states that viewers who watch more television will be more influenced than those who watch less and that “the cumulative effect of television is to create a synthetic world that heavy viewers come to see as reality” (Chang & Reber, 2000).

Television has become a major part of our life. We spend more time watching television than at any other activities except sleep and occupational duties (Comstock, Chaffee, & Kautzman, 1978; Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). The quantity of time people use watching television is surprising. On average, persons in the developed world watch about 21 hours per week, which translates into nine years in front of the tube in a regular lifetime (Shrum, Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2003). An adult of American watches 3 to 4 hour of television per day (Comstock et al., 1978; Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Singer, 1983). Also, children spend more time watching television than at any other waking activity. Kids and young people (ages 2–17) view television about 19 hours and 40 minutes per week (Abelman & Atkin, 2000; AC Nielsen Company, 2000). “By the time the average person reaches the age of 70, he or she will have spent the equivalent of 7 to 10 years watching television (Strasburger, 1993). This high volume of television

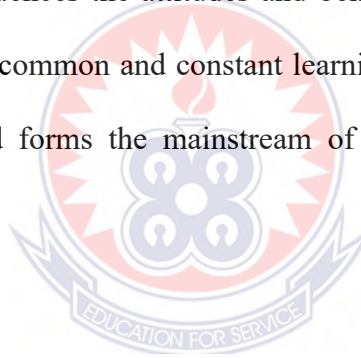
represents a major source of information and entertainment for all Americans” (Brock, Hammermeister, Page, & Winterstein, 2005).

Television deeply comes into our life. Our life has dramatically changed with television. As television went into each household, there were many positive and negative phenomenon. In the modern world, we cannot imagine without television. We can get many information and enjoyment from television. If we got rid of it right now, our life would be inconvenienced and bored. We would not able to hear forecast prediction and our society news. Also, we would not know how we spend our much free time for entertainment. Like this, Information gleaned from television is an important part of our knowledge of how individuals act, behave, look, and feel (Bandura, 1994; Gerbner, 1969; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1994). Although television has positive aspects, it has negative effects for our life at the same time. Watching television affects people by taking time away from other activities, such as social interaction, sport, and reading (Dietz, 1990). Also, it causes much violence, sexuality problems in our real society as portraying more excessive world in television. This is confirmed from scholars who have researched to find out the relationship between those who watch television extreme amount and who watch rarely.

Shanahan and Morgan (1999) also explained that the very notion of “cultivation” builds on the assumption that the major impacts of television materialize by means of the way it exposes people to the same images and metaphors over and over again. Moreover, the cultivation metaphor, according to them, is best understood as providing a way to talk about “influence” without talking about “effects”. That is the cultivation means that deeply held cultural perspectives and assumptions will not be efficiently nurtured (or

gradually-even glacially-shifted) as a result of a single one-dose message blast, much as an unweeded crop will do poorly. In other words, the effects of television exposure is not achieved by watching one particular programme just once but it must be a continuous dose of messages that has a gradual influence on the individual.

Cultivation theory is related to many mass communication professionals such as advertisers, journalists, and broadcasters because they need to know how programmes that they broadcast influence their viewers and listeners in the long run. It also helps media practitioners like programme managers, producers and advertisers, to recognize how they make the advertising, programmes or articles based on this information. Especially, television influences the attitudes and beliefs of our reality. “Television has become the world’s most common and constant learning environment and the wholesale distributor of images and forms the mainstream of our popular culture” (Morgan & Signorielli, 1990).



### **3.1.1 Understanding Cultivation Analysis Theory**

According to Baran and Davis (2011), there are two methods by which the cultivation of views in television viewers happen. One of the methods is described as mainstreaming, where especially for heavy viewers, views from television content tend to dominate all their other sources of information and ideas. Therefore, the audiences that heavily consume the television content all begin to buy into the idea, and tend to begin holding a worldview of that scenario. For example, if television contents continue to create the impression that Zika Virus is a deadly disease, people begin to buy into the idea and it evokes fear in them. The people bought into the idea that the zika virus is a deadly

disease even when the disease has not gotten to their environment and they have not seen the physical manifestation of the disease.

Resonance is the second means through which Baran and Davis (2011) say cultivation reveals itself. Here, television consumers tend to see a direct correlation between the happenings in their society and what they see on television. They get a dual dose of cultivation because what they see on television is not different from their everyday experiences.

As it has been indicated, the Cultivation Theory seeks to put in perspective the role the media plays in shaping the perception people hold about the everyday happenings around them in the society. The theory draws a correlation on what the media portrays and the actual situation on the ground. According to Baran and Davis (2011), researchers usually use a four step model to demonstrate that viewing television can be very effective in influencing cultures.

They first undertake an analysis of television content in order to assess the most recurring patterns when it comes to the images, themes and values portrayed. A set of questions is then crafted about viewers' social realities in a questionnaire. The third step is to undertake a survey in which questions formulated in the second step are posed. The final step is to do a comparative analysis of the light and heavy television viewers. The resulting relationship between the amount of viewing and the tendency to respond to these questions in terms of the dominant and repetitive facts, values and ideologies of the world of television, illuminates the contribution of television to the viewers' social realities (Morgan & Signorielli, 2003).

### **3.1.2 Relevance of the Theory to the study**

Communications professionals including media managers, journalists, advertisers, public relation practitioners, communication lecturers among others can make use of the Cultivation Analysis Theory to enhance their work. This is because the theory can be helpful in predicting the behaviour pattern of television audiences. The Cultivation Theory can be helpful to the work of mass communication professionals such as advertisers, journalists, and broadcasters because they need to know how television content influences viewers (Moon & Blaney, 2007).

From the analysis of the theory, it is easy to predict that the attitudes and beliefs of audiences are shaped to a large extent by what they see on television. Therefore, it can easily be hypothesized that persons who watch fashion shows on television will most likely be highly excited about good fashion. Those who pay keen attention to health programmes on television would most likely be influenced to get more interested in staying healthy. Advertisers can analyse this and take a decision on what kinds of adverts to place at which times on television at specific times that would deliver the best possible returns. Television influences the attitudes and beliefs of our reality. Television has become the world's most common and constant learning environment and the wholesale distributor of images and it forms the mainstream of our popular culture (Morgan, et. al., 2009).

Researchers have employed the theory in investigating the impact of television content on issues beyond violence and crime around which the theory was first built, according to Baran and Davis (2011). They have used it in the examination of people's perception of affluence, divorce, sexual preferences, stereotypes, materialism among others.

Telenovelas are created to keep the audience in suspense and to lead them on to watch persistently till the end. In fact, its failure or success as well as ratings are determined by how it keeps viewers wanting more after every episode. This inadvertently results in the spending of hours by followers on a series over the course of months and sometimes years. A long time enough for the audience to pick up attitudes, conducts and behaviours from the plot or characters.

Weddings and marriage ceremonies in telenovelas and soap operas have become a benchmark for many, especially young women who strive to achieve the bliss of a grand wedding with perhaps no regard for financial constraints attached. The concept of love and marriage is redefined in purity, seen as effortless and always coming with happy endings. When indeed, this is far from reality where marriage comes with troubling times and making tough decisions.

Even the type of man or woman, the physique, complexion, mannerism, etc viewers tend to seek is influenced by what they watch, believing they deserve a certain kind of partner simply because they identify with a character in a telenovela or soap opera (Davies, et. al., 2004).

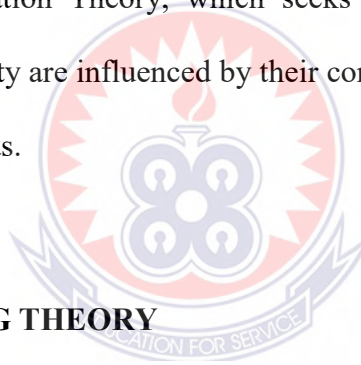
What constitutes happiness in the view of the audience of telenovelas has come to be affected by such storylines. In these telenovelas, very often great wealth is inherited by extremely poor persons out of the blue and their lives change all of a sudden from paupers to happy billionaires. This could leave many young people to yearn for inheritance and not ingenuity, and hard work to progress in life.

The exposure to telenovelas has to some extent created a dependency syndrome among many young females in communities in Tema. Some depict women as beneficiaries of

men's wealth, with ladies often clamoring for a wealthy character as a means of achieving financial freedom. This could lead to the obliteration of the fact that in reality a lady does not need a man to be wealthy and powerful.

Some levels of violence has also come to be acknowledged as "deserving" among the audience of telenovelas, particularly against antagonists who interfere in the lives of the cherished characters of viewers. For example, it is acceptable for a lady or man that wants to break up two „love birds“ to get shot or assaulted as punishment for his or her actions. Therefore giving the impression to viewers that it is acceptable to assault anyone who attempts to "disrupt love" (Gerbner, et al., 1980).

These makes the Cultivation Theory, which seeks to explain how female audience conceptions of social reality are influenced by their continuous exposure to television and more especially telenovelas.



### **3.2 SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY**

The Social Learning Theory also known as the Social Cognitive Theory was first proposed by Bandura (1977). It notes that in any society, new patterns of behaviour can be acquired by individuals through both direct experiences or by observing the behavior of others. The more basic form of learning, rooted in direct experience, is largely governed by the rewarding and punishing consequences that follow any given action (Bandura, 1977). The social Learning Theory says that people can acquire symbolic representations of behaviours and these "pictures in their heads" provides them with information on which to base their own behaviour (Baran & Davis, 2011). The Social Learning Theory is based on the idea that people learn from interactions with others in a

social context. Separately, by observing the behaviours, people develop similar behaviours (Berge & Smith, 2009).

This is the way the theory works; people take and undertake various activities on daily basis. Some of the actions they undertake bring about successes and others bring about failures. As time goes on, they continue to repeat the actions that brought about successes and discarding what brought about failures. Those actions that led to their successes after sometime virtually become daily habits that people in the society pick up. Through a process of differential reinforcement, successful modes of behaviour are eventually selected from exploratory activities while ineffectual ones are discarded (Bandura, 1977).

Thus in an unconscious manner, successful ways of behaviour becomes entrenched whilst unsuccessful ones are discarded. The theory notes that the role of the environment is crucial in influencing the decisions people make on various issues. People tend to adopt new behaviours when they find themselves in the right environments that promote that kind of behaviours. On the other hand, when behaviours or specific ways of lives are rewarded negatively or punished, people tend to abandon that kind of behaviour.

The media is considered a crucial tool in shaping the behaviour and way of life of people. The kind of content the media churns out would more often than not play that role the Social Learning Theory describes as being an encourager or discourager of specific behaviours. Baran and Davis (2011) note that people's behaviour can be influenced solely by what the media churns out and what they are exposed to. This could happen even if the media content is produced and broadcasted or published without the objectives of changing behaviour. So, the point is that the media is capable of changing behaviour or people's way of life whether the media content was deliberately



orchestrated to do so or otherwise. Cognitive, biological and other personal factors and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants that influence the social learning processes in any given community (Bandura, 1999).

### **3.2.1 Methods of the Social Learning Process**

Bandura (1977) outlines a number of processes through which social learning happens. The first is described as observational learning. In this type of learning, members of the society can learn new behaviours just by watching the activity happen. Consumers of representations can acquire new patterns of behaviour by simply watching these representations (Bandura, 1977). For example, people can easily assume they can go on set and act in movies. This conviction could be just that the result of them watching actors and actresses acting in movies on television. They may not have done it ever in their lives, and may not even have the skills to do so. But it is easy to assume that they are capable of performing that act by watching actors and actresses on television doing it. The other process of learning is what is inspired by inhibitory effects. Now, the likelihood of people exhibiting a particular behaviour can be highly reduced once they seen others being punished for the said activity. So, in a society, people would desist from committing murder or engaging in armed robbery because they have seen others who engage in this and get imprisoned or lynched by members of the community. Indeed, those who desist from engaging in the act may not necessarily have been personally punished for engaging in the said behaviour. Once the lesson is learnt, people tend to choose the alternative behaviour so they never have to get into trouble.

Then there is the third learning process inspired by Bandura (1977) describes as Disinhibitory behaviour. This learning process describes how the media in particular depicts images to the viewing public. Here, the way the media depicts a prohibited behaviour can end up encouraging members of the public to adopt it instead of discouraging people from it. For example, people watch a movie in which the hero was shot in the heart three times but survived it without dying. Normally, depiction of such an occurrence of someone being shot and the accompanying pain should discourage others from engaging in such behaviour. But the media depiction of the hero who still manages to survive this and is hailed ends up not inhibiting people from engaging in such behaviour, but rather encourages them to.

Also, there is the learning process described as Imitative Learning. This is where people acquire new behaviour in an attempt to mimic others. In the attempt to mimic others, a lot of communication, social interaction and the modulation of one's emotions happen which help with the social development process (Dawley, 2007). Under such scenario, all the necessary ingredients that help encourage the learning process meet at the same time, creating a ripe environment for social learning to take place. Imitative behaviour occurs when observers were motivated to learn, when the elements of behaviours to be learnt were present, when observers performed the given behaviours and when observers were positively reinforced for imitating those behaviours (Dawley, 2007). This means that people learn behaviours when they see it unfold, and this ends up being reinforced and thus learnt.

### 3.2.2 Application of the Theory to the Study

The culture of soap operas and telenovelas gained prominence in Ghana with the proliferation of private-owned television stations in the mid-nineties. Specifically in 1996, the first telenovela titled *Esaura* (1996) was shown in Ghana on the national broadcaster, Ghana Television (GTV). This was a Brazilian telenovela. Later in the early 2000s, another telenovela from Mexico named *Esmeralda* (1997) was shown in Ghana. This telenovela was produced and released by Televisa in 1997, and it was aired on TV3. Prior to the introduction of *Esmeralda*, Ghanaians had a taste of Mexican soap operas like *Acapulco Bay* (1995) and *Maria de Los Angeles* (1997), which were shown by TV3 in 1998.

This is how come many young Ghanaians began to identify or idolize characters in these telenovelas. For example, a character called *Ridge*, known for his playboy antics was adored among men, keen to gain notoriety as “ladies men”. Such was the impact of *Acapulco bay* on the lives of many young women that fashion in the country began following the costumes of the characters.

An infamous *Acapulco skirt* was a must have for most young women eager to be noticed in the fashion world. The telenovela *Rosalinda* which also became another fashion inspiring novella with many, following the hairstyle of the main character that always had a flower embedded in her hair (Dawley, 2007). These telenovelas have distinctive plots based on affection, love, beauty, cruelty, revenge, sacrifice and it was common place to find society advising based on the consequences of the actions of some of these characters in the series.

The daily routines of audience have in some instances been altered by the urge to keep up to date with these telenovelas. For example, between 2006 and 2007 some people reportedly carried small television sets with them to places where they could find source of electricity just to watch their telenovela *Acapulco bay* at the time when the country was going through an energy crisis popularly called „dumso dumso“. The talk of the day in offices, the market place, the street, homes was centered on what happened and predictions of the next moves of characters in subsequent episodes. And one not being involved in such passionate and sometimes noise-making discussions could easily mark one as being antisocial in the eyes of the others.

Another phenomenon that has made telenovelas the most preferred choice over other television programmes is the use of voice overs in the local language (Akan). In recent times the proliferation of local language television stations has taken telenovelas to whole new dimension. These translated voice overs have widened the viewership to include the large population of Ghanaians that are mostly illiterate or semi-literate. This phenomenon started with *Wild at Heart* aired by an Akan- speaking television station UTV; this was widely called „*Maricruz*“ as the name of the main character. It was reported that market women paused trading activities just to follow this telenovela. This same telenovela also introduced the infamous „*Maricruz*“ skirt which became a must have fashion material for many female viewers.

The latest of these Akan-translated telenovelas is *Kumkum Bhagya* and *Veera* aired by Adom TV. The influence on behaviour and attitudes has been so great a chief in the country donated two cattle to Adom TV for showing a telenovela that is positively shaping lives in his community (Gerbner, 1979; Dawley, 2007). Interview s with the

Chief revealed he actually believed the Indians in the movie were speaking in the local language Akan, oblivious of the fact that it was a mere translation.

Leading to the adoption of attitudes from telenovelas, most especially the romance and love centered storylines is the youth, the category within which members of BBC (a suburb of Tema community Two) falls. Here the social learning theory is especially applicable considering how various aspects of people's lives, e.g. fashion, understanding of love and romance and punishment for crime are absorbed by viewers of telenovelas.

By simply watching and admiring the beauty and style of a particular character, a learning process occurs where the viewer now mimics (Bandura, 1977). For example, Adom TV organized a party dubbed "Kumkum Bhagya" (<http://ghana-news.adomonline.com/entertainment/2016/February-20th/photos-kumkum-bhagya-fans-thrilled-at-barbeque-party.php>) and attendees were to pick a favourite character, dress and act like them. Many attested at the party to the fact that they have tried to live in such a way to depict what they believed were the positive attributes of the character they picked as espoused by Baran and Davis, 2011. Based on the social learning theory, this study sought to find out how telenovelas of the contemporary times are influenced on the lives of female audience in the Tema Municipality.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODOLOGY

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methods employed for the successful conduct of this study. The method consists of the research design and population, sampling frame and techniques, data collection procedures, instrumentation with its validity and reliability, technique for data analysis and ethical considerations.

#### 4.1 Research Approach

The research paradigm used for the conduct of this study is the quantitative research paradigm. This is because the quantitative research paradigm as opined by Creswell (2014) is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The survey approach was used to obtain the necessary information for this study. Survey was used because according to Babbie (1992) that survey is particularly suited to the field of mass public opinion. A survey is also a self-report measurement technique used to ask people about themselves, their attitude or behaviour towards an object, and demographics. According to Peersman (2014), survey research is the method of collecting and analysing data via highly structured and often very detailed interviews or questionnaires in order to obtain information from large numbers of respondents presumed to be representatives of a specific population. Survey method can produce reliable and useful information, especially for collecting information on audiences. There are two types of survey research designs and they are analytical and descriptive survey. Analytical survey

describes and explains why situations exist while descriptive survey tries to describe or document current conditions or attitudes that are to explain what exist at the moment. The study used the analytical survey because it attempts to explain why a situation exists and also allowed for the examination of the interrelationships among the variables. Survey research is mostly used in studies that have individual people as a unit of analysis. Since the study of telenovelas and television viewership involves the measurement of attitude and orientation it is prudent to use survey method.

Also, this perspective is relevant because this study is interested in exploring and understanding a phenomenon, which means that it investigates the phenomenon of female audience in telenovelas and identity construction by such females.

#### **4.2 Research Design**

According to Diehl, Christiaans & Kumar (2009) a research design is the structural plan for conducting a test of the research's hypothesis or research question. It also specifies the process of data collection and analysis. In this study, the quantitative research was used in carrying out the research.

Quantitative research design is the use of research approaches whose data collection procedure and findings may be expressed numerically. According to Reinard (2001), quantitative research allows researchers to explain communication behaviour by looking at the processes that allow researchers to predict future behaviour. It is suitable for this study and would reflect how the investigator would be able to collect data from a large number of people with the intention of projecting it to a wider population and also use statistical models to explain the outcomes of the study.

### **4.3 Population**

According to Eloranta (2015), a research population is generally a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of a scientific query. It is for the benefit of the population that researches are done. However, due to the large sizes of populations, researchers often cannot test every individual in the population because it is too expensive and time-consuming. This is the reason why researchers rely on sampling techniques.

The target population of this investigation is all female audience participants of telenovela viewing at BBC (a suburb of community two) in the Tema Municipality. The researcher conducted a quantitative and detailed interview with non-representative sample of twenty (20) female telenovela viewers. This is so because it offered the investigator ample time to engage in more detailed interviews and observation.

This area of study has five main open viewing centres in all. Among these five viewing centres are two provision stores and three drinking spots in the area. These are popular drinking spots in the area where people go to relax and drink after a hard day's work. This relaxation does not take the form of drinking alone but also watching their favourite telenovelas on big flat screen television and talking about the characters. Each of these viewing centres has roughly about fifteen people gathering to watch telenovelas during the primetime. But regular among them were six female audiences who the investigator used for the study.



#### 4.4 Sampling Strategy and Size

According to Palys (2008), the adoption of the sampling strategy of a study is dependent upon the nature of one's research objectives. By the objectives of the study, the purposive sampling strategy, which according to Palys (2008) is virtually similar to quantitative research, is used. A definition of purposive sampling by Oliver (2006) is "a form of sampling in which decisions concerning the individuals to be involved in the sample are taken by the investigator, based upon a variety of criteria which may include expert knowledge of the investigative issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the investigation."

The sampling size of the study is twenty (20) female audiences in groups of five (5). The participants were selected from the five identified open viewing centres mentioned above. Each of these viewing centres has roughly about fifteen people gathering to watch telenovelas during the primetime on daily basis. But regular among them were six female audiences who the investigator used for the study. They were also selected based on their willingness to participate in the research and their expression of emotions as the scenes unfolded. This was observed during the investigator's regular visits to these viewing centres on daily basis. The ages of the female audiences were also considered. The survey, which took two weeks to conduct, used a 23-item questionnaire administered to 30 respondents. Out of the total number of questionnaires administered, 20 were retrieved. This was because some of them travelled during the Christmas festivities which made it impossible for the questionnaires to be retrieved.

#### **4.5 Instruments of Data Collection**

In a survey approach to research and particularly the quantitative design, there are so many techniques in collecting data. Data can be collected with the use of varied instruments and techniques: interviews, standardized questionnaires etc. The data collection instrument which was used in collecting information towards answering the objectives of this study was the questionnaire. Questionnaire has a great value in quantitative studies of this nature as they help researchers in eliciting responses that bother on the feelings, beliefs, experiences, perceptions, or attitudes of some sampled individuals. In questionnaire design, the research information is attained from respondent normally from a related interest area and from the natural setting of the respondents. Also, the purpose is to reflect what the research is about and also it provides a relatively cheap, quick and efficient way to gather large amount of data. Again, the goal in questionnaires design is to avoid biases in answers. The questionnaires were made up of closed-ended questions and open-ended questions. With closed-ended questions, respondents selected an answer from a list provided by the researcher. The closed-ended questions provided greater uniformity of response, which made answers easy to quantify or analyse.

The questionnaire also had evaluative items or variables that are both nominal and ordinal levels of measurement. Nominal variables are variables that have two or more categories, but they do not have an intrinsic order whilst ordinal variables are variables that have two or more ordered categories which can be ranked, it mostly involves using a rating scale to measure attitudes or emotions. Both nominal and ordinal levels of measurement were used in the study.

#### **4.6 Data Analysis**

After completing all the coding activities, the data was entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The coded content was quantitatively analysed for trends, patterns, relationships, similarities and differences. This was carried out through the formation of various frequency distribution tables, bar charts and pie charts based on the objectives of the study for easy analysis and interpretation. Whereas the pie charts provided uni-variate analysis in response to certain objectives of the study, the frequency distribution tables and bar charts provided a mix of both uni-variate and bi-variate (cross-tabulation) analysis. Statistical differences and analysis were described beneath each of the tables, bars, and charts, in simple percentages and sometimes in frequency counts.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

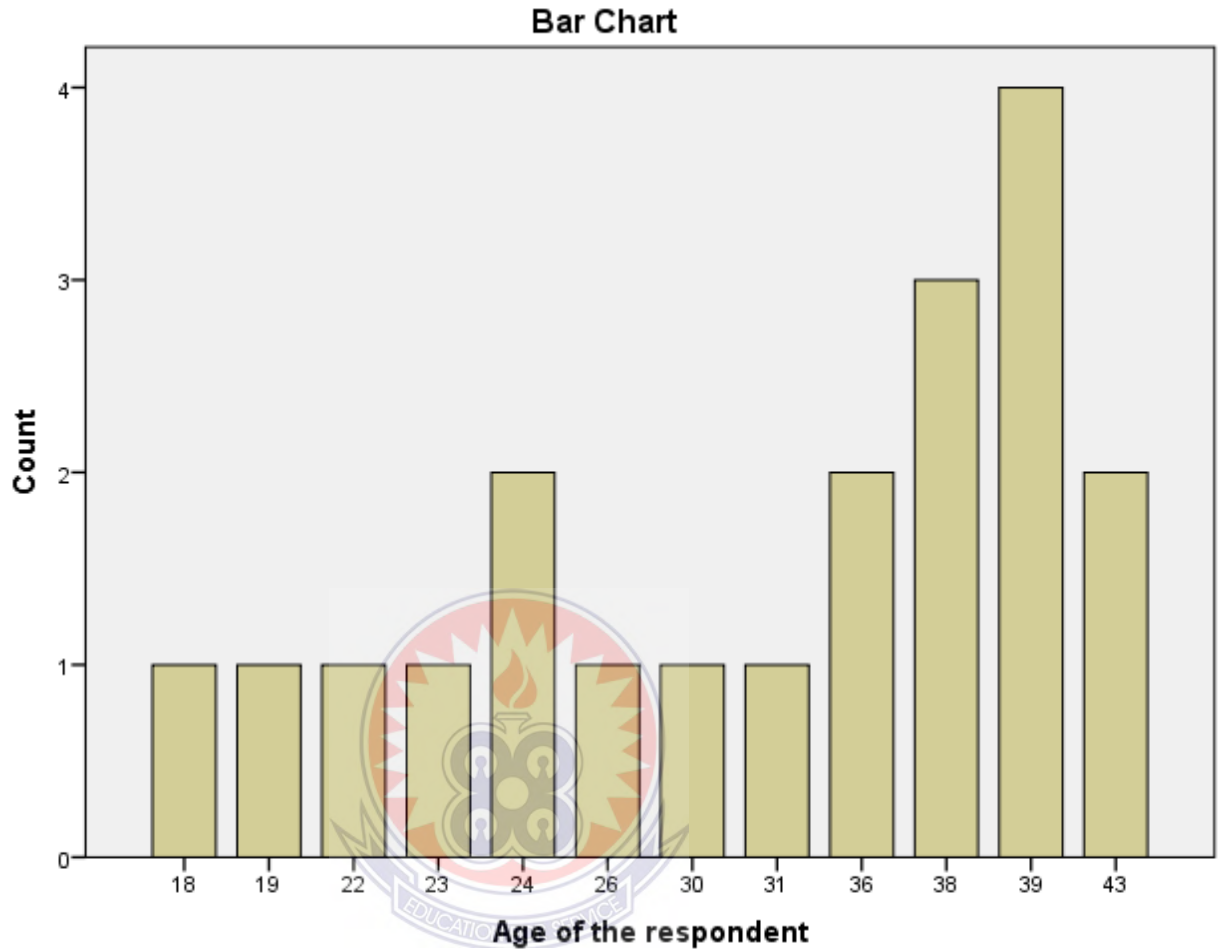
#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the research work. The study aimed at finding out what telenovelas interest women most, what characters they identify with in telenovelas and why they identify themselves with certain characters in the telenovelas. The data and interpretations of the findings in response to the stated objectives for the study are presented in this section. The uni-variate and bi-variate analysis of the findings are presented in the form of frequency tables, bar charts and pie charts. After analyzing the data, the major findings in terms of age, years of formal education and occupation (demographic data) have been reported and discussions were conducted accordingly.

#### 5.1 Background of Respondents

This study was conducted bearing in mind the importance of divergent views and taking into consideration the different age groups of participants so as to get the ideas of telenovela viewers from varied age groups. For the purpose of this study the ages between 18- 43 were used to enable the researcher derive varied responses from these age groups of female audience in Tema. The choice for the target age group was to ensure that the chosen respondents were mature and discerning enough to answer questions on the kind of programmes they watched. The results are as shown in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: Bar graph showing the age of respondents.**

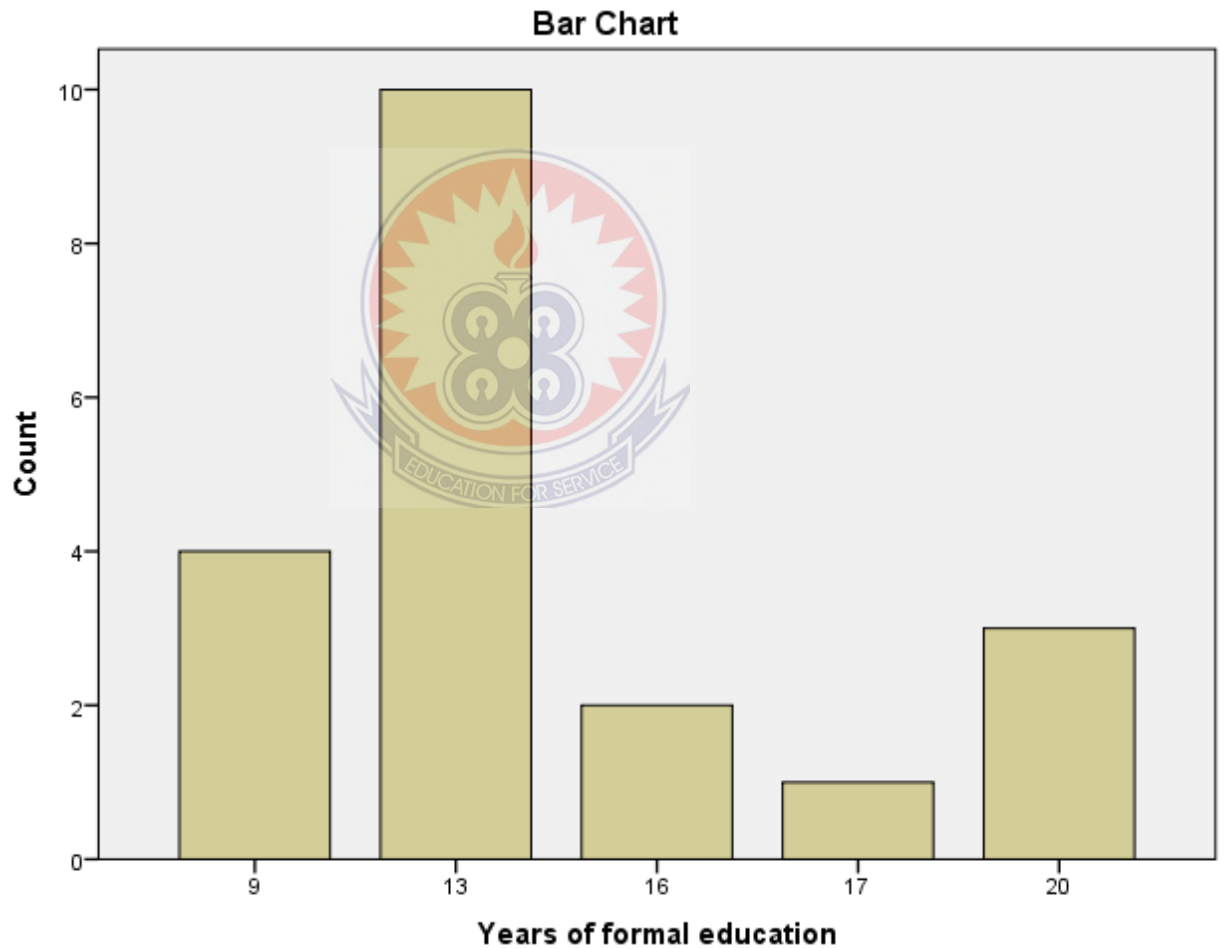


**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

Women between the ages of 18 and 42 were sampled in all. Out of this, the youngest respondent was 18 years and the oldest was 43 years as indicated. It is clearly shown that majority of the respondents were of youthful age and constituted the dominate group of telenovela audience in the BBC suburb of Tema Community 2 because most of the respondents were between 18 and 31 years of age.

With regard to educational background, the lowest form of formal education among the respondents is Junior High School and the highest form of formal education is University education. The majority of the respondents who watch telenovelas were those who attended Senior High School. The number of respondents dwindled as one moves to those respondents from the tertiary levels as shown in Figure 2 below:

**Figure 2: Bar graph showing the years of formal education of respondents.**



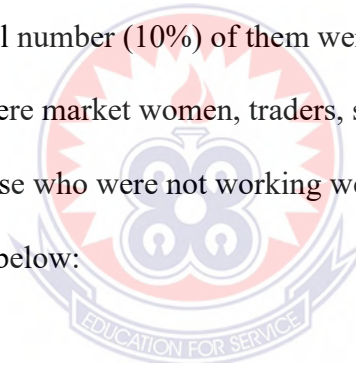
**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

**Table 5.1.1: Occupation of the respondents \* Telenovelas  
Crosstabulation**

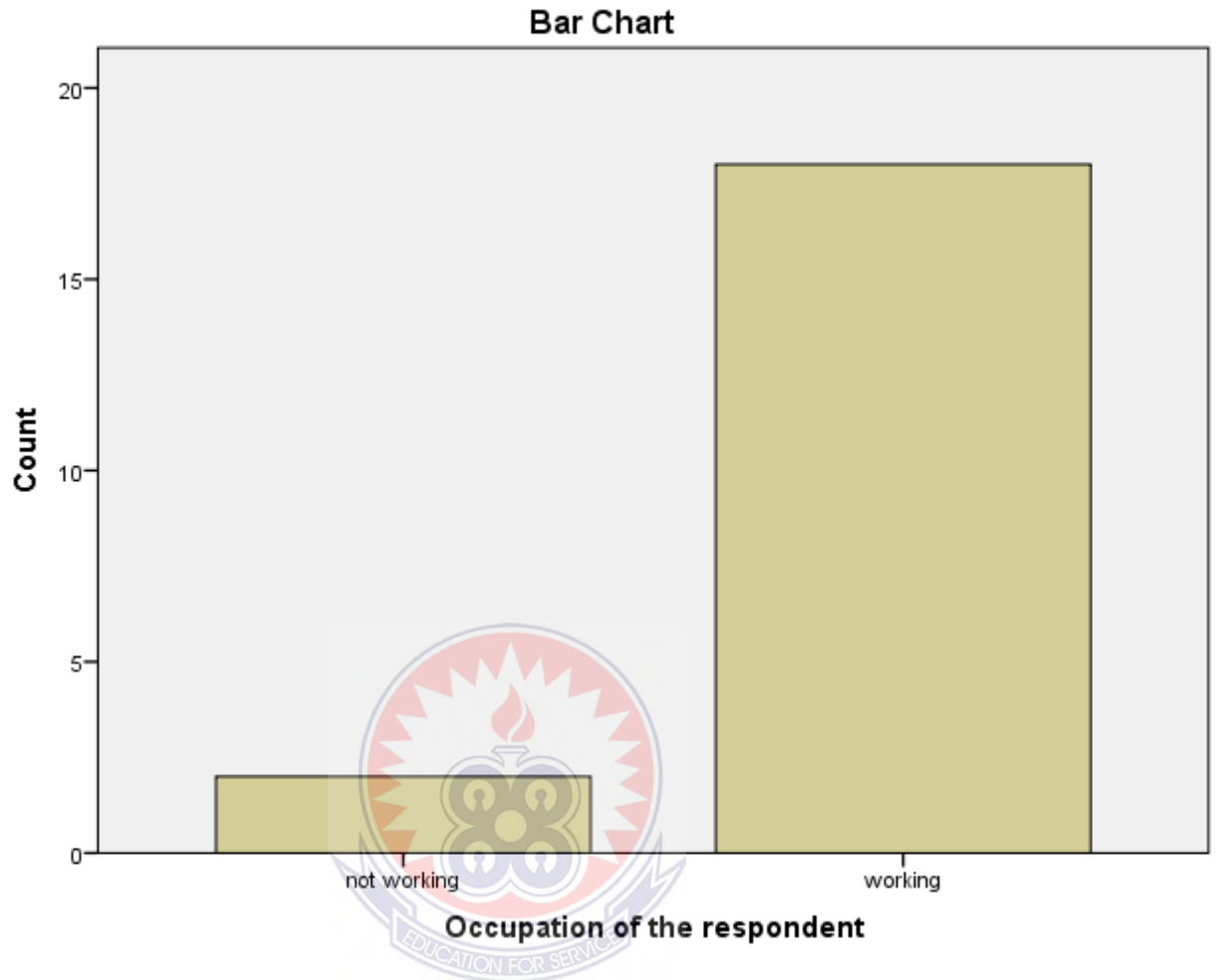
Occupation of the respondents	Telenovelas	Total
	Not working	2
Working	18	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

From the table above on occupation, a very high majority of respondents (90%) were working while a very small number (10%) of them were not working. This is because most of the respondents were market women, traders, seamstresses teachers, bankers and other professions. And those who were not working were the secondary school leavers. This is shown in Figure 3 below:



**Figure 3: Bar graph showing the occupation of respondents.**



**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

## **5.2 Findings from questionnaire administered**

This study gathered diverse views on the kind of telenovelas that interest women, the characters that women identify with in watching telenovelas as well as the reasons for identifying themselves with certain characters in telenovelas. Below, the findings are discussed.



Since one of the objectives of the study was to find out the telenovelas that interest women, only women who watched telenovelas were surveyed. And all the respondents surveyed watched at least one telenovela. This was to understand the basis by which they choose to watch a particular kind of telenovela and not others. A set of questions were administered to respondents and from the responses given themes were generated to establish the basis for watching their favourite telenovelas. According to the literature available on the topic and the theories which underpin the study, some themes were coded for discussion in this chapter. With the help of the theories used in the study (the cultivation theory and the social cognitive theory), the researcher analysed and interpreted the data to answer the research questions posed by the study.

The analysis was done using the research questions as subheads. The questions that guided the study were as follows:

RQ1. What are the telenovelas that interest women?

RQ2. How do women identify with roles characters play in telenovelas?

RQ3. What are the views of women for identifying with certain characters in telenovelas?

### **5.2.1 RQ1. What are the telenovelas that interest women?**

In order to determine the specific telenovela that interests women, the respondents were given the opportunity to indicate their favourite telenovelas. All the respondents watched at least one of the telenovelas. The specific telenovelas are *Kumkum Bhagya*, *Road to Destiny*, *Second Chance*, *Passion & Power* and *Timeless Love*.

From the analysis made, twelve (12) respondents watched *Kumkum Bhagya* representing 37.5% of the total number of respondent involved in the study. This means *Kumkum*

*Bhagya* is the most cherished telenovela among the respondents. This is followed by *Timeless Love* with seven (7) respondents representing 21.9% of the total number of respondents sampled. The next most cherished telenovela from the results is *Passion and Power* and *Road to Destiny* with five (5) respondents each representing 15.6% of the total number of respondents sampled respectively. The least cherished telenovela is *Second Chance* with three (3) respondent representing 9.4% of the total number of respondents as shown in Table 5.1.2 below.

**Table 5.1.2 Telenovelas that interest women.**

Telenovela	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
<b>Kumkum Bhagya</b>	12	37.5%	63.2%
<b>Road to Destiny</b>	5	15.6%	26.3%
<b>Second Chance</b>	3	9.4%	15.8%
<b>Timeless Love</b>	7	21.9%	36.8%
<b>Passion and Power</b>	5	15.6%	26.3%
<b>Total</b>	32	100.0%	168.4%

**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

For instance, the telenovelas that were telecast with voice overs in the local language (Akan) had the highest viewership as compared to the English ones. This was because the female audience's level of understanding of the plots was better enhanced in the use of the local language (Akan) than the others as was seen with *Kumkum Bhagya* which was originally an Indian telenovela but was translated to the local language. This assertion is confirmed by Adia (2014), "television stations that are becoming popular are those

telecasting telenovelas with voice overs”. The translated form of telenovelas in the local language has actually made audience to believe that the characters were indeed speaking their language and for that matter creating a worldview that although possibly inaccurate, becomes the reality. This finding is also in line with the cultivation theory as explained by Baran and Davies (2011). According to Moon and Blaney (2007), „Cultivation Theory, put simply, states that the more a person is exposed to a message provided by the media, the more likely that person is to believe the message is real“.

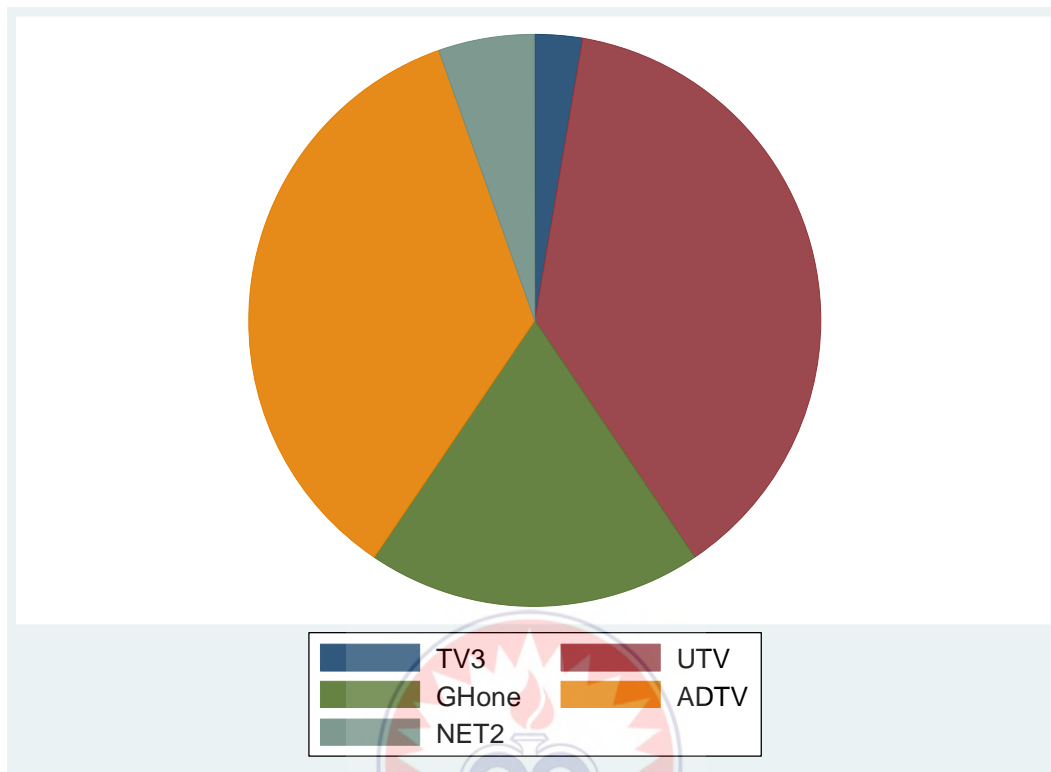
In an attempt to match the favourite choice of telenovelas of the respondents to the television stations that broadcast such telenovelas, the respondents were given the opportunity to choose the television stations that telecast their favourite telenovelas. All respondents watched at least one television station. From the data, UTV was the most viewed/cherished television station with 14 respondents representing 70% of the total number. The second most viewed/cherished station was ADOM TV with 13 respondents representing 65% of the total number surveyed. Even though Kumkum Bhagya which was shown by ADOM TV had the highest percentage of viewership of 37.5%, the station became the second highest in terms of choice ranking after UTV. The next was GHONE with 35% followed by NET2 with 10% and lastly TV3 with 5% as shown in Table 5.1.2 and Figure 4 below:

**Table 5.1.2 Television stations telecasting telenovelas in order of preference.**

<b>TV stations</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cum.</b>
<b>UTV</b>			
Do not watch	6	30.00	30.00
Watch	14	70.00	100.00
Total	20	100.00	
<b>ADOM TV</b>			
Do not watch	7	35.00	35.00
Watch	13	65.00	100.00
Total	20	100.00	
<b>GHONE</b>			
Do not watch	13	65.00	65.00
Watch	7	35.00	100.00
Total	20	100.00	
<b>NET2</b>			
Do not watch	18	90.00	90.00
Watch	2	10.00	100.00
Total	20	100.00	
<b>TV3</b>			
Do not watch	19	95.00	95.00
Watch	1	5.00	100.00
Total	20	100.00	

**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

**Figure 4: Pie chart showing television stations broadcasting telenovelas.**



**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

In the same vein, the television stations which also broadcast in the local language (Akan) or showed telenovelas with voice overs were the most popular and had the highest audience in the Ghanaian media landscape. So Adom TV and UTV came tops in this regard primarily because of the language of broadcast, the recaps and the discussions after each episode. This is also supported by Adia (2014) and Davies et.al (2004) on the fact that television stations that are becoming popular are those that are broadcasting in the local dialects and as such the audiences believe in their programmes (especially telenovelas) and for that matter female audiences are patronizing such television stations more than others.

Another interesting discovery was that the greatest viewership was with the secondary school leavers unlike those who had a tertiary education. The number of respondents was highest at the younger age and the number dwindled as one moved up the age ladder. This means that the younger the female audiences were, the more they watched these telenovelas. And the older the female audiences were, the less they watched these telenovelas. In other words, the youth forms the majority of telenovela viewership in Ghana. The older female audience's interest dwindles along the line. This may be attributed to the burdens of family life, child care, household chores and work. This is related to the assertion of Patil (2014) that there is also the perception that women may be experiencing a strong force of generational gap in family lives, in relationships (marital) and in recreation, for which the young women turn to the telenovelas as "gap fillers".

With regard to why women prefer such telenovelas the respondents were given the opportunity to choose reasons for their choice in order of preference. The reasons were coded in the following themes and used for the discussion: relationship, entertainment, home management, fashion and cultural practices. The data showed clearly that entertainment is the topmost reason for which women watch telenovelas with seventeen (17) responses representing 85% of the respondents surveyed. The next to entertainment is relationship with fourteen (14) responses representing 70% of the total number of respondents surveyed. Again, home management followed with another fourteen (14) responses representing 70% of the total number of respondents involved in the survey. And fashion having the same ranking of fourteen (14) responses representing 70% of the total number of respondents surveyed for this study. On the other hand, cultural practice was at the bottom of the table with eight (8) responses only representing 40% of the

respondents as shown in Table 5.1.3. This indicates that many women do not see cultural practices as one of the reasons for watching telenovelas. This is contrary to the findings made by Danso (2007) which came out that the introduction of telenovelas have contributed to the change in culture which is affecting the moral values of the youth. His research was based on the fact that the ways and values of the Ghanaian youth are tarnished because of the increase of telenovelas in the country.

**Table 5.1.3 Reasons for the most cherished telenovela**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cum.</b>
<b>ENTERTAINMENT</b>			
NO	3	15.00	15.00
YES	17	85.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.00</b>	
<b>RELATIONSHIP</b>			
NO	6	30.00	30.00
YES	14	70.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.00</b>	
<b>HOME MANAGEMENTT</b>			
NO	6	30.00	30.00
YES	14	70.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.00</b>	
<b>FASHION</b>			
NO	6	30.00	30.00
YES	14	70.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.00</b>	
<b>CULTURE</b>			
NO	12	60.00	60.00
YES	8	40.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.00</b>	

**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

More so, it was revealed that entertainment, relationship, home management and fashion were the four (4) top reasons for watching telenovelas of their choice. This was because even though majority settled for entertainment as the topmost reason for watching telenovelas, they also indicated that a lot of learning takes place in that space of entertainment while they are restfully watching the genre to refresh the body and the mind. According to a survey conducted by Ampofo (2009), telenovelas have influenced people in many ways. His finding shows that, education in terms of fashion, vocabulary, language, cultural exposure, and the shaping of life of individuals are the moral lessons audience gain from watching telenovela. Another study by Atuahene (2009), surveyed forty (40) young people at Madina Estate, Accra, to find out the impact of telenovelas on the youth. The study indicated that telenovelas introduced the respondents to new fashion trends, helped them to deal with their relationships, and helped them to improve their communication skills.

The female audiences pick vital lessons on relationships, home management and fashion from telenovelas because the plots of these telenovelas had to do mainly with love affairs (romance) and domestic portrayals. Telenovelas carry different story lines which talk about romance, secret relationships, realities of life, extra marital affairs and genuine love which tends to appeal to our emotion and give us the visual connection of love and the realities of our lives by comparing what we watch to our real life situation. This is the application of the social learning theory (Berge & Smith, 2009).

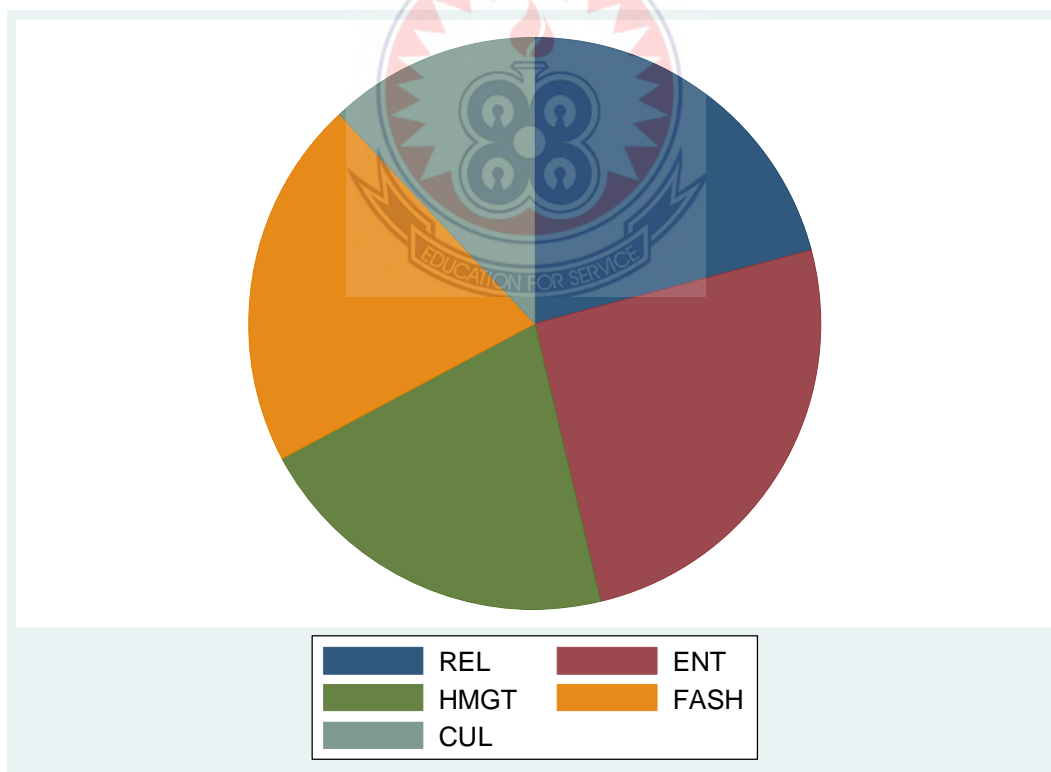
This assertion of entertainment being the number one reason for female viewers of telenovelas is further supported by the findings of a related study carried out by Aslama and Jääsaari (1999), which established that women were found to have interest in specific



television programmes, which attracted them in terms of content, style and approach. They found a connection between the television programmes and their own realities in everyday life. These programmes seemed to be predominantly fiction or entertainment oriented. Women are often targeted with and offered “feminine genres” and that is one reason why they tend to watching them.

The data from Table 5.1.3 above show that almost all (85%) of the respondents found telenovelas as entertaining. This was closely followed by relationship, home management, and fashion each representing 70% as shown in Figure 5 below:

**Figure 5: Pie chart showing reasons for watching telenovelas.**



**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

### 5.2.2 RQ2. How do women identify with roles characters play in telenovelas?

According to Morley (1996) the history of studies of the media audience can be seen as a series of oscillations between perspectives which have stressed the power of the message over its audiences and perspectives which have stressed the barriers “protecting” the audience from the potential effects of the message.

The second research question sought to interrogate the roles characters play in telenovelas. This research question was addressed through the responses obtained from questionnaire administered for the survey and the following findings and discussion were reached.

When respondents were asked to name their favourite characters and the roles they play in the telenovelas for which they identified with them, almost all respondents mentioned the main characters as their favourite. The names of the main characters mentioned are Pragma, Abhi and Ramvi (as found in *Kumkum Bhagya* aired by Adom TV), Arturo Montenegro, Eladio Gomez Luna, Consuelo Martinez (as found in *Passion & Power* aired by UTV), Renata,(as found in *Timeless Love* aired by GHONE) Luisa Fernanda, Carlos (as found in *Road to Destiny* aired by UTV), Maricruz Olivares (as found in *Wild at Heart* aired by UTV), Maria (as found in *Simply Maria* aired by UTV) and Elizabeth (as found in *Second Chance* aired by Net 2) This is because the entire storyline revolves around the lead character unlike the minor ones which play a particular role at once and that may be all in the entire story.

They mostly use the name of the lead character as the title for such telenovelas. For example, a telenovela titled *Wild at Heart* aired by UTV became widely known as

„*Maricruz*“ as was the name of the main character. This same telenovela also introduced the infamous „*Maricruz*“ skirt which became a must have fashion item to its viewers.

According to Patil (2014) there is also the perception that women may be experiencing a strong force of generational gap in family lives, in relationships (marital) and in recreation, for which the young women turn to the telenovelas as “gap fillers”. In other words, partners may not be communicating enough in their relationship for the other party to have that sense of belongingness in the home and as such turns to watching of telenovelas as an immediate resort.

From the data presented on favourite characters of telenovela viewers in Table 5.1.4, all the respondents confirmed Pragya and Abhi as their favourite characters in *Kumkum Bhagya* (which also happens to be the most watched telenovela in this study) representing 100% of respondents surveyed. The next favourite characters are Eladio Gomez Luna and Arturo Montenegro from the popular telenovela *Passion & Power* which was aired by UTV with nineteen (19) responses representing 95% of the total number of respondents surveyed. This is closely followed by Renata and Heronimon from *Timeless Love* with eighteen (18) responses representing 90% of the respondents. Luisa Fernanda and Carlos from *Road to Destiny* had thirteen (13) responses representing 65% of the respondents.

**Table 5.1.4 Favourite Characters of Telenovela Viewers**

NAMES OF CHARACTERS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Pragya & Abhi	20	100
Eladio & Arturo	19	95
Renata & Heronimon	18	90
Luisa Fernanda & Carlos	13	65
Elizabeth & Pedro Hoze	5	25
Ramvi & Luis	3	15

Upon finding out on the reasons for naming the characters as their favourite, the respondents gave the following responses: sacrifice, love, determination and caring as captured in Table 5.1.5. The data showed that all (100%) of the respondents said they had identify with the main characters because of love and sacrifice. This means that the main characters demonstrate true love and sacrifice. Eighty-five percent (85%) of the respondents said because of the determination of the main characters and 80% of them also said they were caring to their partners, families and friends.

For instance, Renata loves her husband Heronimon so much that she had to sacrifice her freedom, comfort and wealth to be able to live with him in a village. Here, many women believe that their partners are not deserving of their love and therefore they are sacrificing everything in their relationships. This assertion is confirmed by the second method of cultivation called resonance according to Baran & Davis (2011). Here, television consumers tend to see a direct correlation between the happenings in their society and what they see on television. They get a dual dose of cultivation because what they see on television is not different from their everyday experiences.

The respondents also agreed that hard work is a hallmark to success in every endeavour of life. They are therefore determined to work hard in their chosen career or business to be more independent of their partners. This is because in *Passion & Power* Eladio Gomez Luna and Arturo Montenegro were two strong business tycoons who were competing over the love of their life Julia through wealth. These two men were nobody but with hard work and determination they were able to build an empire for themselves and to keep the family name. The data in Table 5.1.6 indicates clearly how hard work was chosen as one of the reasons for watching their favourite telenovela. This is confirmed by what the Social Learning Theory says that people can acquire symbolic representations of behaviours and these “pictures in their heads” provides them with information on which to base their own behaviour (Baran & Davis, 2011). The Social Learning Theory is based on the idea that people learn from interactions with others in a social context. Separately, by observing the behaviours, people develop similar behaviours (Berge & Smith, 2009).

### **5.2.3 RQ3. What are the views of women for identifying with certain characters in telenovelas?**

On why women identify themselves with certain characters in telenovelas, the respondents were asked to name the characters they identify with in the telenovelas and why. Almost all the respondents said they identify with the main characters in each telenovela. This is so because the entire story was about main characters and as such they were easily remembered and identify with so easily unlike the minor characters. Also, the stories have a strong emotional attachment that plays out on the female audience. This

coincides with the assertion by Mazzioti (1993), that telenovelas “allow for viewers an emotional participation in a set of fictitious powers that play with elementary human questions: honour, goodness, love, hatred, badness, life, death, treason, virtue and sin, that in certain ways, has something to do with the viewers.”

The main characters had to go through sacrifice, love, forgiveness and determination in the face of an uncaring, cheating and unfaithful partner. The data showed that all (100%) of the respondents said they had identified with the main characters because of love and sacrifice. Eighty-five percent (85%) of the respondents said because of the determination of the main characters and 80% of them also said they were caring to their partners, families and friends as indicated in Table 5.1.5 below:

**Table 5.1.5. Reasons for women identifying themselves with certain characters.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cum.</b>
<b>SACRIFICE</b>			
<b>YES</b>	20	100.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	
<b>LOVE</b>			
<b>YES</b>	20	100.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	
<b>DETERMINATION</b>			
<b>NO</b>	3	15.00	15.00
<b>YES</b>	17	85.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	
<b>CARING</b>			
<b>NO</b>	4	20.00	20.00
<b>YES</b>	16	80.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	

**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

An overwhelming number of respondents said the characters were real and they have the same experiences in their own life and relationship. This was done by imitating their favourite characters in the terms of romance, fashion, communication and life styles as asserted by the cultivation theory (Reber & Chang, 2001). This same conclusion was reached concerning the fairness of the media in female character portrayals. A lot of the respondents (75%) said that they believed in the fairness of the media and hence the characters as well. This again confirmed the cultivation theory that the more people were exposed to television (telenovelas), the more they come to believe it to be true and real to their life (Bandura, 1994; Gerbner, 1969; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1994).

It was revealed that all respondents (100%) said they identified with the main characters due to the strong sacrifice, love and determination on their part to overcome insurmountable challenges in life and relationship. This brought about an emotional attachment to their audience. This is further agreed by Rubin and Perse (1987), that major media television personalities seem to be a normal consequence of television viewing and although people may not consider themselves to be having a relationship with these characters, many of the studies done indicate that there is almost always some form of relationship existing in almost all regular soap opera viewers.

The social cognitive theorists posit that television viewers learn or adopt behaviours through imitating inhibition and disinhibition effects. Hence, as much as these female audiences watch telenovelas, they begin to cultivate the inhibitory practices seen. Women will for example, emulate the roles/acts from the episodes which are deemed positive and avoid the negative roles/acts through constant observation of positive and negative

reinforcement. Wambua (2014) affirms that telenovelas have a definite end, which is amplified by the poetic justice or how the storylines end.

Adia (2014) and Wambua (2014) aver that young women cultivate most telenovela values and practices from the telenovelas they watch. This is attributed to the fact that women generally tend to prefer telenovelas because they appeal to their emotions. Most females interviewed in the aforementioned studies stated they pick some vital lessons from telenovelas. It was revealed that female audiences tend to seek information on socialization, love relationships, romance and family values from the telenovelas they watch. In the same vein, respondents for this study confirmed soliciting solutions to their love relationships, fashion trends, sacrifice, cultural/moral values, determination to succeed in life in spite of challenges, communication, etc.

Catrall (2009) in assessing the impact of fictional love stories on the youths' intimate relationships found out that sixty-six percent (66%) of the respondents imitate the characters in the stories in their sexual behaviour, eating, walking, and talking, dressing, etc. And only thirty-four percent (34%) of the respondents said they do not imitate the characters. This study establishes and confirms the assertion by other studies that women watch telenovelas for various reasons such as love, romance, entertainment, etc. Also they imitate the characters in the telenovelas in terms of fashion, eating habit, walking, communication, and sexual behaviour. This imitation of characters in telenovelas has strong influence over their life style and increases their taste for better choices in life.

Also, Camella (2001) in a study on the parasocial relationships among female college student soap opera viewers indicates that people imagine themselves being in action or where there is a state of mutual understanding and they are affected by what happens to



fictional characters and talk as if they are real expressing strong emotional discovery. Again, most females interviewed in the aforementioned studies stated they imitate and are influenced by telenovelas. It was revealed that female audiences tend to have strong positive influences from the telenovelas they watch. In the same vein, respondents for this study also affirmed that positive influence is paramount among ardent telenovela viewers. They also indicated that lessons on home management, fashion, communication, hardworking, etc were among their priorities for watching telenovelas.

The respondents were given the chance to indicate whether or not the characters have had any influence in their relationship. An overwhelming majority of respondents indicated that it had a positive influence in their relationship. Ninety percent (90%) of the respondents said yes and only 2% of them said no to positive influence. Home management also was overwhelmingly chosen with 90% of respondents affirming it as one of the ways by which characters had an influence in their relationship and only 2% of the respondents answered no. Since many of the respondents were either married or dating they found the roles of characters useful and applicable to their own love life. Fashion came second with 65% of the respondents affirming it as compared to 35% answering no. This means that more than half (65%) of the respondents watched telenovelas to improve their fashion lifestyle. Some even go to the extent of taking pictures of a particular dress that a character is wearing and sending it to their designer to sew it for them. Half (50%) of them also chose communication as another influence in their relationship. They said it helps them to learn how to express themselves better to their partners, socialize well with friends and customers and finally boost their confidence as they try to argue about their favourite characters. Hardworking was the

least chosen with 45% of respondents. This means that the respondents did not consider it as one of the major influences. This is shown in Table 5.1.6 below:

**Table 5.1.6 How women are influenced by characters they identify with in telenovelas.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cum.</b>
<b>POSITIVE INFLUENCE</b>			
<b>NO</b>	2	10.00	10.00
<b>YES</b>	18	90.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	
<b>HOME MANAGEMENT</b>			
<b>NO</b>	2	10.00	10.00
<b>YES</b>	18	90.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	
<b>FASHION</b>			
<b>NO</b>	7	35.00	35.00
<b>YES</b>	13	65.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>			
<b>NO</b>	10	50.00	50.00
<b>YES</b>	10	50.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	
<b>HARDWORKING</b>			
<b>NO</b>	11	55.00	55.00
<b>YES</b>	9	45.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	

**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

It is clear from the foregoing that the female ardent audiences of telenovelas have had personal experiences as they identify with characters and therefore the enthusiasm to behave like them.

On the experiences, 80% of the respondents said they had personal experiences in the area of disappointment, broken-heart, determination, forgiveness and caring. Only 20% of the respondents said that they have not experienced such characters at all in their relationship as indicated in Table 5.1.7 below:

**Table 5.1.7 The Experiences of Respondents.**

<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cum.</b>
<b>NO</b>	4	20.00	20.00
<b>YES</b>	16	80.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	

**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

From the data provided in the table above, the twenty percent (20%) of the respondents who claimed they did not have any experiences so far as telenovela viewing is concerned may be having unresolved marital issues which they were running from.

For example, one respondent interviewed said that she does not believe in telenovelas because if one is not careful it can create problems in one's marriage. But when she was asked if she experiences them in reality, she responded in the affirmative. This very respondent is living with a cheating husband for which reason seeing the scenes unfold almost in that same light makes her want to cry. Another respondent said she never feel any influence in her relationship with the husband being it positive or negative.

Adia (2014) posits that the effects of these programmes depending on the class of people involved. She further explained that the plots in most telenovelas help people in the low class to have a positive outlook and reflection on their outlook, it also helps in the construction and reconstruction of viewers personal identity, for adolescents these genres provide values, images, rituals, symbols and models that serve as reference points for their personal and group perceptions. In other words, telenovelas help viewers to know more about themselves and each other as social beings.

Perez (2005) opines that telenovelas present the opportunity for people to negotiate new meanings and make sense of reality as it helps viewers tolerate to social situations. Telenovelas are changing, as are the people who watch them and the way they deal with the beliefs and cultural values telenovelas reproduce. Here, the respondents revealed that they are able to relate well with their partners, families and friends without any disagreement. They have also improved their way of communicating by which they negotiate with and persuade their partners on matters concerning their relationships without having any conflict. They even make their partners to watch the telenovelas with them.

Almost all of the respondents (80%) said they had no disagreement at all with their partners over the watching of telenovelas. This is because the telenovelas were shown mostly in the evening where they might have finished with their household chores and resting for the day. Another reason may be that many male partners were watching the telenovelas with them. Only 20% of respondents answered yes. This means that many women are in control when it comes to television programme choice at home. This also means that more women are becoming aware of “the power” they have in the home. This

development can be attributed to the education women are getting through telenovela viewing. This is shown in Table 5.1.8 below:

**Table 5.1.8 Disagreement with partner over the watching of Telenovelas**

<b>DISAGREEMENT WITH PARTNER</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cum.</b>
<b>NO</b>	16	80.00	80.00
<b>YES</b>	4	20.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	

**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

In the same way, respondents confirmed that due to proper education, socialization and home management learnt through cultivation of telenovela practices, they have no conflict with their work either at home or outside the home.

The respondents were given the chance to answer yes or no to the question of telenovela watching conflicting with their work. Seventy percent (70%) of the respondents said that watching of telenovelas did not conflict with their work at all. And thirty percent (30%) of the respondents were not in agreement to the question posed as indicated in Table 5.1.9. According to Patil (2014) there is also the perception that women may be experiencing a strong force of generational gap in family lives, in relationships (marital) and in recreation, for which the young women turn to the telenovelas as “gap fillers”. In other words, partners may not be communicating enough in their relationship for the other party to have that sense of belongingness in the home and as such turns to watching of telenovelas as an immediate resort.

**Table 5.1.9 Conflict with work**

<b>CONFLICT WITH WORK</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cum.</b>
<b>NO</b>	14	70.00	70.00
<b>YES</b>	6	30.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	

**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

### **ARE CHARACTERS IN TELENVELAS REAL?**

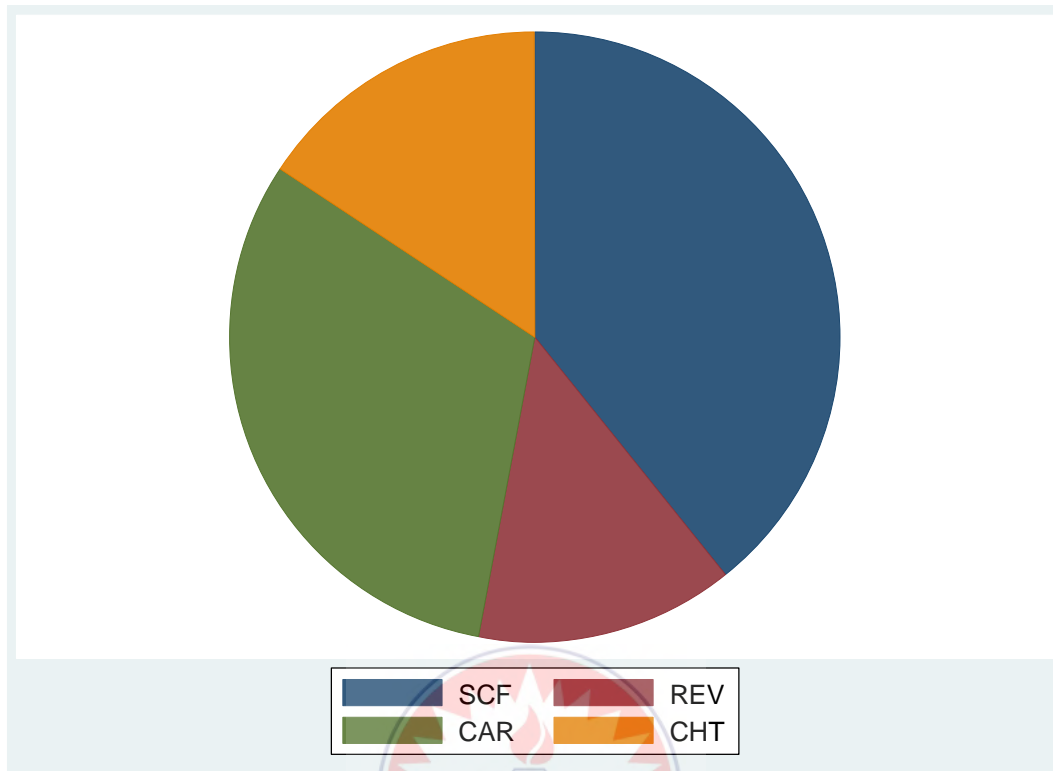
Again, in order to find out if the characters in the telenovelas are real and if they experience such roles played by the characters in their own life, the respondents were given the opportunity to state yes or no and to explain their experiences if yes. This was to ascertain and measure the degree of acceptability and imitation of roles characters play in their social reality. An overwhelming 75% of the respondents said such characters were real and therefore they believed and imitate them in their lives as realities as shown in Table 5.1.10 below:

**Table 5.1.10 Reality of characters in telenovelas**

<b>REAL</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cum.</b>
<b>NO</b>	5	25.00	25.00
<b>YES</b>	15	75.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	20	100.00	

**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

**Figure 6: Pie chart showing roles of characters in telenovelas.**



**SOURCE: SURVEY DATA, 2017.**

**KEY: SCF – SACRIFICE**

**CAR- CARING**

**REV- REVENGE**

**CHT- CHEATING**

Characterization is very important in story writing and film production because it is the characters that live the story. In other words, they make the story come alive to the audience and for that matter, the way and manner in which they are portrayed is quite important in order to send the right message to the viewing audience.

From the data presented in Figure 6 above, the responses demonstrated that a majority of respondents said that most of their favourite characters are seen as sacrifice lambs who play the victims roles in the stories. They suffer pain, injustice, stereotype and powerlessness in their quest to love. This represents 45% of the respondents with 9 responses in all. Again, 25% of the respondents aver that the characters are portrayed as caring in most telenovelas watched. They also have revenge and cheating scoring 15% each from the respondents surveyed. This clearly confirms the fact that many female audiences of telenovelas do not consider revenge and cheating in relationships as part of a women's attribute in a male-dominated society such as Ghana but the males do without any problem. This is confirmed by Hodson's study which came out with the findings that most women found it hard to argue for their own choice of television programmes in the presence of their husbands as they perceive their own preferences as "more interesting and relevant to them", but second in rank to the real and masculine world (Hobson, 1980, cited in Hummel 2002). For example in Ghana a wife cannot go out of her way to cheat on her husband simply because the man is cheating on her with a different woman. She will rather wait and see the outcome. The same cannot be said about the man if the table turns the other way round; the man will quickly ask for divorce. Another study carried out by Hummel (2002), on the relationship between gender and television viewing styles shows that watching television means something different to women than to men, not because of their biological makeup but due to the gendered roles they play in the family. Gendered viewing styles and tastes were found to reflect the division of work and unequal power relations in patriarchal Britain in the late 1970's and early 1980's.



## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSIONS, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.0 Introduction

This chapter captures the conclusions and summary of this study based on the findings of the study. The chapter also discusses the limitations of the study, and gives recommendations for researchers.

#### 6.1 Summary

This study examined the telenovelas that interest women and the cultivation of these interests among female audience in BBC, a suburb of community 2 in the Tema Municipality. Also, the study examined the characters that women identify with in telenovelas and finally, examined why women identify themselves with certain characters in telenovelas. The following were noted per the data collected.

Through the data analysis, it was established that telenovelas that are translated into the local languages are the ones that attract ardent female audience sampled. This is because they offer their viewers a deeper understanding of the plot of the story. Again, it was revealed that television stations that broadcast telenovelas in the local languages are the most viewed TV stations in Ghana. In this regard Adom TV and UTV were the most viewed TV stations in Ghana.

It was established that entertainment is the topmost priority for female audience in telenovela viewing. This according to the respondents makes it possible for them to relax

and refresh their body and mind after a hard day's work. This was closely followed by relationship/love, which has always been the theme for many telenovelas aired in Ghana.

It was confirmed that respondents mentioned names of lead characters in telenovelas as their favourite because they associate and identify with them as role models. Names like *Maricruz, Maria, Lagata, Luisa Fernanda* were mentioned in this regard. They believed in their favourite characters and want to act or behave like them. They also draw inspirations from these characters in an attempt to idolize them.

It was vividly established that ardent female audience acknowledged the genre as a huge source of information on latest fashion trends and other lifestyle issues. Respondents surveyed confirmed that they depend seriously on telenovelas to get updates on fashion trends so as to bring themselves up to speed on the fashion trends as demonstrated by characters. Education on romance/relationships gives them hope in their decision making process in life.

Another interesting fact that was established is that the highest viewership was the youth from secondary schools. The younger audiences were much involved in watching telenovelas more than the older folks. This may attributed to the burdens of family life, home management, work and other household chores.

Sacrifice, love, determination and care are the views of women for identifying with the main characters in telenovelas. Respondents affirmed that the main characters in telenovelas always had to endure some form of sacrifice to be able to succeed in his/her pursuit in life. Through these characters the audience mirrored their lives being played out on the screens. The episodes allow for female viewers to be able to reflect on situations as they see their favourite actors/actresses play out those situations.

## 6.2 Conclusions

The narrative on telenovelas in Ghana has for many years been on audience perceptions of those that have been on the Ghanaian media landscape in the past. This study established that female audiences were interested in watching telenovelas that revolves around love and romance. Again, it is concluded that telenovelas that are translated into the local languages (with voice overs) are the ones that caught the attention and interest of majority of women.

It is also established clearly that telenovela audiences have many reasons for watching the genre but typical among them are entertainment, fashion, determination, sacrifice and communication. This is because they make the audience relax after the day's work. In the same space of entertainment, audiences are educated through the characters that play such roles in the telenovelas. Fashion trends are also learnt from the genre in order to keep themselves abreast of fashion trends in Ghana.

It is again concluded that through constant viewing of telenovelas majority of women cultivate telenovela values and incorporate these behaviours seen into their lives. Women established that relationships, home management, caring for family and building self-confidence through communication and socialization among each other. Female audience concluded that these behaviours are cultivated because they take cues from them and imitate them in their day to day lives. Although most of these values and practices are alien to the Ghanaian culture, they believe that they are ways of adjusting to the ever evolving world trends since telenovelas are considered as urban or popular culture.

The study further established that telenovelas carry different storylines which talk about romance, secret relationships, realities of life, extra marital affairs and genuine love

which tends to appeal to our emotion and give us the visual connection of love and the realities of our lives by comparing what we watch to our real life situation.

### **6.3 Limitations**

The study was limited because it was restricted to the female audience in BBC, a suburb of Tema Community 2 and therefore limited the responses and ideas of respondents from other communities.

Another limitation was the number of respondents surveyed (20) was not representative enough to capture the views and ideas of many respondents on the topic under study.

### **6.4 Future Research**

Future research can expand the population to include other municipalities or cities to compare the cultivation of telenovela viewership among female audience in Ghana.

Also, future research can take a look at telenovela viewership and its effect on the work ethics of women.

Another future research can be done on telenovelas and male audience since their male counterparts are getting hooked up in watching the genre.

In addition to the above, future research can be done to include telenovela viewership and its effects on religion in Ghana.

Finally, new study could also be carried on how telenovela viewing affects academic performance among basic and senior high school students in the country.

## 6.5 Recommendations

From the findings reported in this study, it would be seen that in spite of the marginalization of women by the male-dominated society in Ghana, the more socio-economically viable women are as a result of education, the better their „will power“ in choosing and watching telenovelas of their choice without any hindrance.

Donkor (2013) suggests foreign content has taken over a large percentage of the media landscape in Ghana and even though attempts have been made at reversing the trend, much has not been achieved in that regard. This is as a result of the reproduction of some of the foreign serials, though in local settings and with local actors and actresses. There is the need to monitor the importation of telenovelas into the country. Again, there is the need to regulate how these programmes are aired so as not to kill the local drama and serials.

Broadcasters and television programme managers should endeavour to put up programmes that will be tailor-made to suit their female viewers. This is because a lot of them get information from the telenovelas that they watch as indicated by the study. Also, producers of telenovelas should find out the specific needs of women and integrate them in their television programming.

This study also recommends that producers and media houses should be motivated to produce telenovelas that contain and promote Ghanaian culture and values as well as tell the Ghanaian story instead of promoting the purchase of foreign content which could cause us to lose our own culture and stories. Other important national issues such as health, sanitation, patriotism, etc. should be embedded into the predominate theme of love and romance.

Finally, with the advent of translation of telenovelas from their source language into the target languages (the local languages), it is recommended that media houses who seek to broadcast translated version of foreign telenovelas ensure that proper translations are done to achieve better understanding of content and not misinterpreted.



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## APPENDIX 1

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SURVEY ON TELENOVELAS AND FEMALE

### AUDIENCE: A STUDY OF THE TEMA MUNICIPALITY.

I am a student of Communication and Media studies department of the University of Education, Winneba. I am undertaking a survey on Telenovelas and Female Audience: A study of Telenovela Viewers in Tema Municipality. This is part of my course requirement. You have been selected to help complete this questionnaire after a random selection process. I would be very pleased if you could take a few minutes to answer the following questions. Your answers would be treated with the uttermost confidentiality.

#### Demographic Characteristics

1. Name of respondent:
2. Age: Years of formal education:
3. Marital status: No. of children:
4. Occupation: Mobile No:



#### QUESTIONS ON TELENOVELAS THAT INTEREST WOMEN

1. What are the telenovelas that you like so much (interest)?
  - a. Kumkum Bhagya [ ]
  - b. Road to destiny [ ]
  - c. Passion & Power [ ]
  - d. Second Chance [ ]
  - e. Timeless Love [ ]
2. How long have you been watching telenovelas? [ ]

3. How long do you watch each day? [ ]
4. Which television stations show those telenovelas?
  - a. TV3 [ ]
  - b. UTV [ ]
  - c. GHONE [ ]
  - d. ADOM TV [ ]
  - e. NET 2 [ ]
5. Why do you like such telenovelas so much?
  - a. Relationship [ ]
  - b. Entertainment [ ]
  - c. Home management [ ]
  - d. Fashion [ ]
  - e. Different culture [ ]
6. Which time do you often watch such telenovelas? [ ]



QUESTIONS ON CHARACTERS THAT WOMEN IDENTIFY WITH IN  
TELENOVELAS.

7. What characters do you identify with in the movies?
  - a. Renata & Heronimon
  - b. Pragya, Abhi & Ramvi
  - c. Eladio Gomez & Arturo Montenegro

- d. Pedro & Pedro Hozee
  - e. Luisa Fernanda & Carlos
8. How do you see yourself in such telenovelas?
- a. Revenge [ ]
  - b. Love [ ]
  - c. Forgiveness [ ]
  - d. Pretense [ ]
  - e. Determination [ ]

9. Why do you identify with such characters?

- a. Revenge [ ]
- b. Love [ ]
- c. Forgiveness [ ]
- d. Pretense [ ]
- e. Determination [ ]



QUESTIONS ON WHY WOMEN IDENTIFY THEMSELVES WITH  
CERTAIN CHARACTERS IN TELENOVELAS

10. How are such characters portrayed in the movies?
- a. Sacrifice [ ]
  - b. Revenger [ ]
  - c. Caring [ ]
  - d. Cheating [ ]
  - e. Trustworthy [ ]

11. Are the characters in the telenovelas real? [yes] or [ no ]

12. Do you see/ experience such characters in your own everyday life? [yes] or [no]

13. If yes, explain your everyday experiences.

a. Determination [ ]

b. Disappointment [ ]

c. Broken-heart [ ]

d. Caring [ ]

e. Forgiveness [ ]

14. Does the watching of telenovelas conflict with your work? [yes] or [no]

15. If yes, how does it conflict with your work?

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.



16. Do you have any disagreement with your partner over the watching of telenovelas? [yes] or [no]

17. If yes, what form of disagreement do you often have?

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.



18. How do you respond to such characters in your relationship?
- a. Positive influence [  ]
  - b. Fashion [  ]
  - c. Communication [  ]
  - d. Home management [  ]
  - e. Hardworking [  ]
19. Is the media fair in the way they represent female characters in telenovelas?
- [yes] or [ no ]

