

Media Coverage of Female Track Athletes in Botswana: A Content Analysis of Two Newspapers from 2015-2019

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to measure the **newspaper coverage** of eight elite **female track athletes** in the *Daily News* and *Mmegi* newspapers in **Botswana**. Content analysis was used to analyze **363 articles** and **463 images** for investigation. The results of this study are consistent with previous research on the media's under-representation of women in sports, in both text and image quantity.

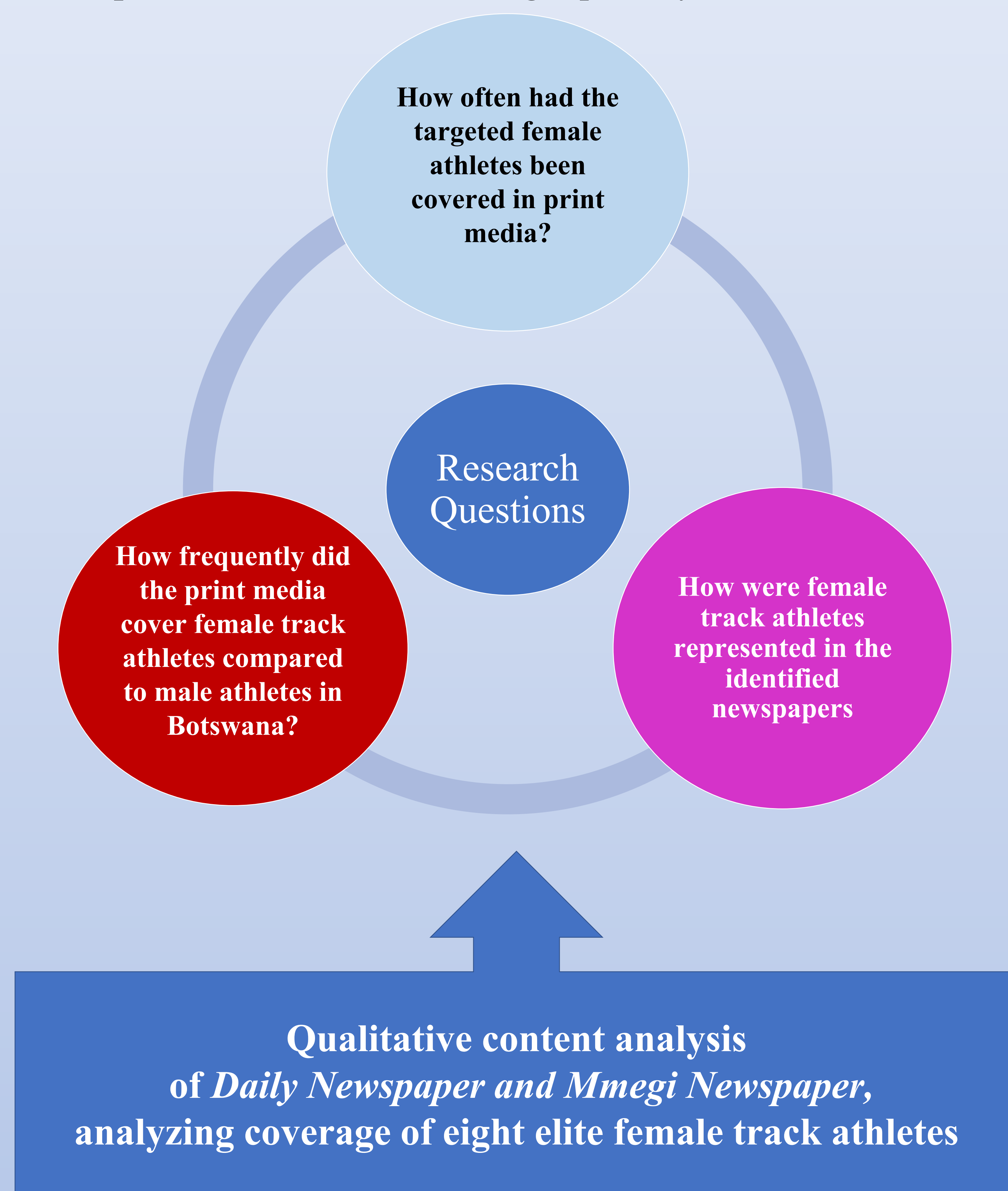
Keywords: Women's Sport, Media Coverage, Gender, Botswana, Female Athletes

Introduction

Gender equality constitutes only 0.6% of all topics covered in Botswana (Mpofu, 2010). There is much lower involvement of women in leadership and managerial positions in Botswana **sport**, with an average of 19.5% (Tselaele (2017).

Literature Review

- Several previous studies showed that the coverage of sportsmen and women in media is **inequitable** (Bruce, 2015).
- Sportswomen reflect 10% of print media coverage and below 5% in broadcast media (Bruce et al., 2010).
- Researchers following **liberal feminism** argue that women equally deserve what male athletes get in media coverage and visibility (Bruce et al., 2010).



Results and Discussion

- Of the 463 images in the *Daily News* and *Mmegi* Newspapers from 2015-2019, 15.1% of articles covered female track athletes and 64.5% male track athletes, and images of eight females track athlete at 22.2% and male images at 67.0 % (Table 1)
- No article was found which was objectifying or sexualizing women
- There was, compensatory rhetoric which framed female athletes' achievements as inferior and trivialized their athletic prowess, strength, and speed.
- Previous studies show that women's sport is significantly under-reported and trivialized in media
- Relevant investigations of coverage of women and sport in the media in African countries are very limited.

Table 1. Total Gender Distribution in the Total Number of Articles and Images 2015-2019

Gender	Number of articles (%)	Number of images (%)
Female	55 (15.1)	103 (22.2)
Male	234 (64.5)	310 (67.0)
Mixed	74 (20.4)	50 (10.8)
Total	363 (100)	463 (100)

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