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Media and Gender: A Scholarly Agenda for the Global Alliance on Media and Gender

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Media and Gender:
A Scholarly Agenda for the Global Alliance on Media and Gender

Editor

Aimée Vega Montiel

Bios

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May Farah is an assistant professor of media studies at the American University of Beirut. Her research is focused on mediated identities, particularly the relationship between diasporic populations and national identity in a globalised media age, and media representations of gender and the other.

Margaret Gallagher is a researcher and writer specialising in gender, media and communication. She serves on the editorial boards of *International Communication Gazette, Feminist Media Studies, Media Development and Communication, Culture and Critique*. She is currently Key Expert on Media Monitoring for the European Neighbourhood Barometer project 'Opinion Polling and Media Monitoring'(EuropeAid, European Commission).

Margaretha Geertsema-Sligh, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the Eugene S. Pulliam School of Journalism at Butler University in Indianapolis and director of the university's program in Global and Historical Studies. Her research focuses on the participation and representation of women, especially from the developing world, in the news, as well as on media activism. She teaches a variety of journalism classes, including a course titled Gender and Media: Global Views.

Alton Grizzle is a happily married Christian. He works at the UNESCO HQ in Paris as Programme Specialist in Communication and Information. He manages UNESCO global actions relating to gender and media and is co-manager of UNESCO's global actions on media and information literacy (MIL). Alton has diverse education and experience in the fields of education, management, information systems and media and communication. He holds a Diploma in secondary education from the Mico University College, a Bsc in management and economics at the University of the West Indies (UWI), a Msc in Computer-based Management Information Systems from the UWI, and MA in Media and Communication from the University of Leicester, UK. Alton Grizzle is a PhD candidate at the Autonomous University of Barcelona where he is carrying out research on citizens' response to MIL competencies.

Ammu Joseph is an independent journalist and author based in Bangalore, India, writing primarily on issues relating to gender, human development and the media. She contributes to a number of mainstream publications and web-based media. Among her books are *Whose News? The Media and Women's Issues* (1994/2006) and *Making News: Women in Journalism* (2000/2005). She has contributed chapters to several other publications, both Indian and international – among them, most recently, *Missing Half the Story: Journalism as if Gender Matters* (2010) and the IFJ-WACC *Resource Kit to Strengthen Gender-Ethical Journalism* (2012). She contributed to UNESCO's *Gender Sensitive Indicators for Media* (2012). She is a founder-member of the Network of Women in Media, India.

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Karen Ross is Professor of Media at Northumbria University, UK. Her teaching and research is focused on issues of gender, media and society including aspects of social media, public and political communication. She was the PI on a major study of gender and media industries in the EU, funded by the European Institute for Gender Equality (2012-3) and is currently writing a book-length manuscript on Gender, Media and Politics for Wiley-Blackwell.

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Annabelle Sreberny is Professor of Global Media and Communications at the Centre for Media and Film Studies, SOAS, University of London and the immediate past president of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (2008-2012). Sreberny's research has focused primarily on the field of international communication and debates about globalisation with a specific focus on international news, questions of diaspora and with a strong feminist orientation (*Gender, Politics and Communication*). For over thirty years, her work on Iran has examined the nexus of politics and communications, from the process of the 1979 revolution (*Small Media, Big Revolution*) to the emergence of a contemporary dynamic Persian-language presence on the net (*Blogistan*). Her current research focuses on the BBC World Services and public diplomacy.

Aimée Vega Montiel is a researcher at the Center of Interdisciplinary Research in Sciences and Humanities, National Autonomous University of Mexico. She holds a PhD in Journalism and Communication Studies (Autonomous University of Barcelona). She is currently Vice-President of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR). Responsible for coordinating IAMCR activities linked to the UNESCO 'Global Alliance on Media and Gender' initiative. She is a specialist in feminism and communication studies and she is particularly interested in women's human rights, media and communication. She leads a research project on access and participation of women in media industries. She is currently writing a book on violence against women and girls and media.

Janet Wasko is the Knight Chair in Communication Research at University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon, USA. She is the author, co-author or editor of 19 books, including *Understanding Disney: The Manufacture of Fantasy* and *How Hollywood Works*. Her research and teaching focuses on the political economy of media, especially the political economy of film, as well as issues relating to democracy and media. She currently serves as the President of the International Association for Media and Communication Research.

Table of Contents

Guy Berger
UNESCO Foreword

Janet Wasko
Preface

Aimée Vega Montiel
Introduction. IAMCR and the scholarly agenda for the Global Alliance on Media and Gender

Margaret Gallagher
Feminist scholarship and the debates on gender and communication

I. Violence of gender, media and information

Aimée Vega Montiel
Violence against women and media: advancements and challenges of a research and political agenda

Barbara Ann Barnett
Sex trafficking in mass media: gender, power and personal economies

Peter J. Kareithi
Hegemonic masculinity in media contents

Annabelle Sreberny
Violence against women journalists

II. Women's access to media and information

Carolyn Byerly
The long struggle of women in news

Karen Ross
Women in decision-making structures in media

Marjan de Bruin
Gender and newsroom cultures

María Eugenia Chávez
Scheherezades: a thousand and one stories of women in community radio

Cecilia Castaño Collado
Women's access to ICTs in the information society

III. Gender media policy and strategies

Claudia Padovani
Gaps in media and communication governance: towards a gender-aware research and advocacy agenda

Ammu Joseph
Action, reaction, introspection, rectification

Katharine Sarikakis
Power, patriarchy, profit: barriers to gender mainstreaming in media policy

IV. Gender, education and media and information literacy

Margaretha Geertsema-Sligh
Gender mainstreaming in journalism education

Jad Melki & May Farah
Educating media professionals with a gender and critical media literacy perspective: how to battle gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the media workplace

Alton Grizzle
Enlisting media and informational literacy for gender equality and women's empowerment

UNESCO Foreword

In 1995, during the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, all governments met to discuss gender equality issues. The key potential of media to promote gender equality and diversity in all spheres was highlighted in the Declaration and Platform for Action. All stakeholders are called to join forces to combat "stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and participation in all communication systems, especially in the media". Even long before the Beijing Declaration, gender equality was enshrined in the UN Charter in 1945.

Today, there is consensus among all UN Agencies and other organizations that progress has been slow, fragmented, needs to be intensified, and lacks the strength of a global movement.

UNESCO acts across the world to ensure that women and men benefit equally from freedom of expression as a basic human right. We seek to address obstacles such as: Imbalanced access to information and knowledge, media and technology, under-representation of women in the staffing of media at all levels including executives and positions on Boards, insufficient media coverage of gender issues, the prevalence of stereotypical media content and information regarding gender, as well as violence against women journalists and women.

UNESCO's strategy is pursued through a two-fold approach: (i) gender-specific programmes, and (ii) gender mainstreaming with action in all of UNESCO's fields of competence: education, the sciences, culture, and communication and information. This includes interventions concerning policy development, awareness raising and advocacy, and research, institutional capacity building, and training.

In December 2013, UNESCO and partners gathered media organizations, media professionals, academics, policy-makers, civil society groups, and development agencies in Bangkok for a Global Forum on Media and Gender. The Forum took the 1995 Beijing Declaration as its reference point and resulted in the setting-up of a pioneering Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG). The aim of GAMAG has two main dimensions: Firstly, it will ensure constructive dialogue between media partners and civil society; secondly, it will enable all stakeholders to collectively give momentum to women's access to expression and decision-making by promoting a gender-inclusive media and communication environment.

The actions and successes of GAMAG should be evidence-based. There is a necessity to show some of the most significant scholarly contributions to knowledge and action towards expanding women's participation in all communication platforms. In addition, the publication proposes a pragmatic research agenda for the GAMAG, looking back, building on the past and looking to the future.

This volume is divided into four main sections: 1) Gender-based violence, media and information; 2) Women's access to media; 3) Gender and media policy and strategies; 4) Gender, education, and media and information literacy. The authors are all experts on the advancement of gender equality. Moreover, they have been involved in both scholarly and advocacy actions with visible impact at global, regional and national levels. UNESCO is pleased to have cooperated with the International Association of Communication Researchers in the preparation of this publication.

The potential exists for the media to make a far greater contribution to the advancement of women. Women should be empowered by enhancing their skills, knowledge and access to media and information technology. All obstacles to women's equal opportunity to exercise leadership in the media should be unearthed and removed.

UNESCO hopes that this publication will contribute to existing body of knowledge on the topic and will be useful for all stakeholders. The involvement of media and journalism education institutions must interface with that of media organizations, media professionals, policy-makers, and civil society groups for us to achieve gender equality in and through media.

Guy Berger

Director, Division of Freedom of Expression and Media Development

UNESCO

Preface

Janet Wasko

The International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) is pleased to be working with UNESCO and other organisations around the world as part of the Global Forum on Media and Gender.

The IAMCR is the leading worldwide professional organisation in the field of media and communication research. Its members promote global inclusiveness and excellence within the best traditions of critical research in the field. Above all, it represents an international community of scholars who focus on media and communication research.

The IAMCR has addressed issues pertaining to media and gender for many years. Since the early 1980s, the organisation has included an active and productive section that focuses on these issues. The Gender and Communication Section has regularly organised panels at IAMCR conferences, as well as working with the organisation's other sections and working groups to expand the scope of these concerns. Numerous publications and research projects have emerged from the section members (for instance, Carolyn Byerly's (2011) study of women in the global news industry, which involved many of the section members). The section also hosts a Facebook page that features announcements and resources relevant to research on gender and communication (https://www.facebook.com/GenderAndCommunicationSectionIamcr).

The current Gender and Communication Section's mission is:

…to foster and encourage any and all aspects of scholarship relating to the nexus of gender and communication. This Section aims to encourage the conduct and dissemination of research that uses gender as a primary thematic in work around media, culture and communication; to encourage and nurture younger scholars and those from developing countries interested in aspects of gender-media to participate in the academic community via attendance at conferences.

This Section's members are concerned to transcend the often artificial boundaries that give rise to divisions in the conduct of social science. They are committed to avoiding racial, ethnic, national, gender, ideological or philosophical descriptions. Because this Section is centrally concerned with how gender considerations and identities are reproduced and consumed through media production and consumption, members' papers yield new insights into the way similarity and difference are experienced in the everyday lives of audiences.

As an indication of the range of topics featured in the Gender and Communication Section's programme, the following panels were offered at the most recent conference in Dublin, Ireland: 'Women Journalists and Media Structures in a Time of Crisis', 'Gender, Identity, and Culture', 'Ethnography, Audiences and Gender', 'Gender, Crisis and (Sexual) Violence', 'Social Networks/ICT and Gender', and 'Audiences the Economy and Media'. The section members are not only interested in theoretical discussions, but are concerned with policy and practical applications, as indicated by panels such as: 'Improving Women's Position in Media/Society' and 'Speaking Truth to Power about Gender and Communication: International and Regional Policy Developments towards Beijing+20', a session that was organised with the Working Group on Global Media Policy.

Members of the Gender and Communication section represent some of the most active scholars in the area of women and media and feminist approaches to the study of communications. The section truly represents an international community of feminist scholars. One of the traditions of the section has been to organise a dinner or party at each IAMCR conference – an indication of the 'community' that has developed by the group.

Through the Global Alliance for Gender and Media, IAMCR is committed to working with the international community in improving conditions for the advancement of gender equality. We look forward to the Global Forum and hope that this publication will contribute to the goals of the meetings in Bangkok and beyond.

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Introduction

IAMCR and the scholarly agenda for the Global Alliance on Media and Gender

Aimée Vega Montiel

The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action proposed strategies that would enable women's human rights to find allies in media and information technologies. 'Chapter J' identified core areas for the gender and media agenda.

The Platform was a catalyst for feminist research. Since then feminist scholars from all regions of the world have acted – at times individually, at other times collectively and together with feminist activists, advocates and with women media workers - on three levels: providing knowledge, setting the public agenda on gender and communication debates and formulating policy.

At present international core initiatives are taking place to prompt review of the main advances and remaining challenges in the areas identified by the Platform. One of these initiatives is the UNESCO campaign 'Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMG)'.

IAMCR was invited to take part in this initiative. We considered this an opportunity to act collectively, by contributing as a community of scholars to the development of the debates on Media and Gender.

Some action has been taken since. The first was related to collecting thoughts and proposals from members to define priority themes that the GAMG should address. Some ideas surfaced during the Special Session on this issue was held at the 2013 IAMCR Conference in Dublin. This session was fruitful, proposing strategies on how to act collectively – and wisely – and making the knowledge scholars produce useful, particularly for debating with those actors that play a key role in this area – international organisations, governments, media organisations, advocates and NGOs.

The result, ahead of the Global Forum on Media and Gender, to be held in Bangkok, Thailand in December 2013, is this book prepared by IAMCR, with the support of UNESCO. The aim of this publication is to show some of the most significant scholarly contributions related to both knowledge and action towards expanding women's human right to communicate. It is to apply the political weight of feminist theory toward the real-life practical advancement of women in society. As a community of scholars, we expect this publication will serve to make a statement about the role UNESCO has to play to firmly advance the improvement of gender and communication at global, regional and national levels.

Three of the main topics we initially chose to address through the GAMG initiative were violence against women and media, women's access to media and gender media policy.

A fourth emerged during the discussions in Dublin: gender, media and information literacy strategies and the role of feminist media and communication scholars as educators.

Thus, this volume is divided into four main sections:

1. Violence of gender, media and information
2. Women's access to media
3. Gender media policy and strategies
4. Gender, education and media and information literacy

As experts on the issues listed in this book, and coming from different regions of the world, the authors have been involved in both scholarly and political actions that have had an impact at global, regional and national levels, on the advancement of gender equality. Their contributions will no doubt make this initiative a historical precedent for how to act together with intelligence and wisdom.

We expect this publication to constitute the contribution of the IAMCR community to the core debate fostered by UNESCO. At the same time, we hope this project promotes a feminist politics of sorority among scholars, based on respect, recognition and collective accountability.

Salud.

Feminist scholarship and the debates on gender and communication

Margaret Gallagher

Theory, research and activism

The push and pull between theorising, research and activism has always been a feature of feminist approaches to the media. Since its beginnings, a good deal of feminist scholarship has been motivated by a desire for political and social change. One of the earliest, celebrated essays in the field ended with two questions: 'How can the media be changed? How can we free women from the tyranny of media messages limiting their lives to hearth and home?' (Tuchman, 1978, p.38). If today these questions seem naïve, they are an embryonic formulation of the concerns that drive much feminist media analysis almost four decades later. Since the 1970s we have developed more sophisticated approaches to media analysis and theorising, but the fundamental issues at the heart of feminist media scholarship remain the same: power, rights, values and representation. Of course our approach to the study of these issues has vastly changed. The scope of much early research was limited to small-scale analyses of media content, employment structures and audiences. But small-scale analysis could result – at best – in no more than small-scale change. Over the past 15 years in particular, there has been a growing body of feminist work on globalisation, media policy, technology development and political economy. This work has been developed by feminist scholars whose focus is on macro-level change, who have argued that media representations and gender discourses take shape within particular socio-economic formations – buttressed and underpinned by specific political ideologies – which must themselves be analysed and understood before change can be effectively advocated.

The challenges facing feminist media scholarship today are formidable. Women's experience of inequality has changed worldwide since the 1970s. However, it remains unequivocal and substantial. Over the same period, media and communication systems have been transformed. The 'tyranny of media messages' against which pioneers of feminist criticism railed, has given way to something infinitely more complex and sophisticated. Commercial imperatives demand that the media reflect some of the changes in women's position in society. Yet media response to the critique of scholars and activists has been in many ways extrinsic rather than organic. For instance, contemporary media content frequently draws on and invokes feminism itself, and feminist vocabulary, in a conservative narrative that relies heavily on notions of women's individual choice, 'empowerment' and personal freedom. To pinpoint the paradox this presents for critical feminist practice in the 21st century, social theorist Nancy Fraser distinguishes between feminism as a social movement and feminism as discourse. The second is an offspring of the first but, Fraser argues, it has gradually 'gone rogue'. As a result, today's feminist movement is 'increasingly confronted with a strange shadowy version of itself, an uncanny double that it can neither simply embrace nor wholly disavow' (Fraser, 2013, p.224). Feminist discourse has been incorporated in various ways across all media genres – from advertising to newspapers to television. Analysing those global patterns of incorporation is central to a large body of contemporary feminist scholarship (for example Ball, 2012; Bucciferro, 2012; Mendes, 2012).

The lesson of several decades of feminist activism and scholarship is that gender justice[1] in the media – and in society as a whole – depends on wide-scale social transformation, in which women's rights – and women's right to communicate – are respected and implemented (see Gallagher, 2014, for a fuller discussion). As feminist scholar Rosalind Gill puts it, we need to think of sexism and sexist exploitation as an 'agile, dynamic, changing and diverse set of malleable representations and practices of power', and part of the project of feminist media studies must be to understand and illuminate 'the varied ways in which sexism (and its intersections with other axes of power) operates through the media' (Gill, 2011, p.62). The feminist media critique, therefore, cannot be static. Nor can it be one-dimensional. To be successful in its quest for change, it must link particular local experiences and struggles to the pursuit of global norms and ethics that promise social and gender justice. These linkages between scholarship and activism are fundamental to the wider feminist project, though opinions differ as to how fully they have been realised thus far. Carolyn Byerly argues that feminist media scholars have not sufficiently explored 'the process of struggle represented by women's media activism' (Byerly, 2012, p.15), and that this undermines the

potential contribution of scholarship to social change. On the other hand, Anita Biressi and Heather Nun (2013) conclude that feminism has reaped the benefit of the exchange of ideas, experience and expertise between women in the academy, cultural producers and political activists, and that this has 'contributed to feminism's current confidence, its variegation, its adaptability and its future prospects' (Biressi and Nunn, 2013, p.219). But whether the glass is half full or half empty, it is undeniable that scholarship and activism have intertwined and have informed each other in ways that have helped to shape contemporary debates on, and developments in, gender and communication.

In their study of women's media activism in 20 countries, Carolyn Byerly and Karen Ross (2006) identify a number of 'pathways' through which women's agency has opened up spaces for change. Among these is the pathway of the 'advocate change agent'. This is especially relevant to our discussion of scholarship in that its strategies invariably depend on the use of research. From monitoring and training, through advocacy for regulatory or policy change, to the use of cultural criticism, this path 'holds particular potential to alter women's structural relations to both media and other social institutions' (Byerly and Ross, 2006, p.187).

Signs of progress

One of the most important developments has been the use of research and media monitoring. Early monitoring initiatives by women's groups at national and local level eventually coalesced in what has become one of the most far-reaching collective enterprises of the global women's movement – the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP). The significance of the GMMP has been enormous. Every five years since 1995 it has brought together scholars and researchers, activists and lobbyists, journalists and other media professionals – some with considerable research experience, others with none. By putting simple but reliable monitoring tools in the hands of activists, and developing media literacy and advocacy skills through the monitoring process, it has been genuinely transformational. In their analysis of the ways in which transnational networks try to bring about change, Keck and Sikkink (1998) identify four commonly used strategies: information politics, symbolic politics, leverage politics and accountability politics. The GMMP combines all four (see Gallagher, 2014), but accountability politics is at the heart of the GMMP. The consistency of its findings over time, along with the regularity of the monitoring exercise, provides a powerful rationale for periodically reminding media professionals and decision-makers of policy commitments, obligations to their audiences or statements of support for gender equality – and for pressuring them to review their practices[2]. In Latin America alone there are now countless monitoring networks, linked together since 2007 in the Red Latinoamericana de Observatorios de Medios[3]. Other organisations – including Women's Media Centre in Cambodia, Women's Media Watch in Jamaica, Gender Links in South Africa and many more – combine monitoring and advocacy with a wide range of approaches, including training, policy development and media production[4].

The entangled relationships between media industry and regulatory bodies present an enormous challenge for feminist scholars and activists, who in many parts of the world consider the development and enforcement of policy standards and codes of practice to be a key strategy in achieving gender justice. Yet there are signs that even in this field sustained advocacy effort can pay off. Since 2000 a number of pieces of legislation – for example in Spain and Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico) – include provisions to restrain media content that encourages violence against women and, in an innovative departure for legislators, the concept of 'symbolic violence' has been included in Argentina's 2009 Law on Violence Against Women (Gallagher, 2011, p.459). In Southern Africa, the Southern Africa Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development, adopted by SADC Heads of State in 2008, contains a number of articles covering media, information and communication. Feminist advocates – whether of researchers (for example, in Mexico the Red por la Vida y la Libertad de las Mujeres) or of civil society (in Southern Africa the Gender Protocol Alliance) – have been pivotal in securing these advances. Nevertheless, analysis of recent policy processes shows strong resistance to calls for frameworks that recognise the significance of gender in the design and implementation of policy (see Gallagher, 2011 for a detailed discussion; also ITU/UNESCO, 2013 for data on the absence of gender in national broadband plans).

A further example of the impact of feminist scholarship can be seen in relation to the concept of freedom of expression. Historically, there has been a reluctance to acknowledge that gender is a determinant in the exercise of rights and freedoms internationally. Yet profound gender imbalances in media content and decision-making systems documented by decades of research show that women's freedom of expression is severely limited by layers of structural, economic and cultural constraints. It was in direct response to some of that research that Article 19 prepared a policy brief on gender-based censorship in 2006[5]. Within the past five years research and political debate have broadened the conventional definition of freedom of expression as a gender-neutral concept to include an understanding of the role of gender inequalities and discrimination in hindering enjoyment of freedom of expression. For example in 2010 the Special Rapporteurs on Freedom of Expression cited 'discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression' as one of the ten key challenges to freedom of expression, noting that women and other historically marginalised groups 'struggle to have their voices heard and to access information of relevance to them' (LaRue, Haraszti, Botero and Tlakula, 2010). UNESCO's 2013 report on world trends in freedom of expression pays detailed attention to the gender dimensions of media freedom, pluralism and independence. The 'intrinsic inter-relationship' between gender equality and freedom of expression is also fully acknowledged in the Council of Europe's 2013 Recommendation on Gender Equality and Media.

Future challenges

Developments like these, attributable to decades-long intellectual and political effort by feminist scholarship and activism, may seem like major victories. On the other hand the struggle for visibility, voice and influence is still a formidable one. The issues involved remain marginal not only to the agendas of most political and social movements, but also within academia, where even today there is little conversation between 'mainstream' and 'feminist' communication scholars (Gallagher, 2010). As Gillian Youngs (2006, p.57) has pointed out, the worst misunderstanding about feminist scholarship is that it is 'just about women'. In fact, by moving beyond the abstract, assumed 'gender neutrality' of much mainstream communication theory, feminist analysis aims to show the impact of communication structures and systems on social processes, and on the lives and identities of both women and men.

In her review of the development of feminist politics over the past 25 years, Nancy Fraser concludes that this is a historical moment in which feminists should 'think big'. The crisis of neoliberal capitalism, she argues, opens the way for a new generation of feminist activists and theorists to reclaim ideas that were instrumentalised under the onslaught of neoliberalism. 'Schooled in digital media and comfortable in transnational space ... the young feminists of this generation seem poised to conjure up a new synthesis of radical democracy and social justice' (Fraser, 2013, p.16). A similar sentiment is expressed by Rosalind Gill, who argues for a 'bigger, bolder conjunctural analysis' in future feminist media studies. It is time, she concludes, to get angry again (Gill, 2011, p.68). And Cynthia Carter (2013) contends that the productive use of 'collaborative anger' is fundamental to a surge in online anti-sexism activism projects over the past decade. Certainly, the advent of new media – blogs, videoblogs, podcasting, social media applications – has begun to change feminist activism in ways that are neither better nor worse than in the past, but that are undoubtedly different (Zeisler, 2013). These changes in turn pose new, different questions for feminist scholarship. And increasingly, they will call for new, different articulations between scholarship and activism as we struggle to analyse and change media structures, institutions and practices.

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1 The term 'gender justice' is used increasingly by activists and scholars concerned that terms such as 'gender inequality' and 'gender discrimination' fail to adequately convey or address the ongoing gender-based injustices which women suffer (see Goetz, 2007).

2 For further information, and all of the GMMP project reports, see www.whomakesthenews.org.

3 Not all of the observatories in this network focus specifically on gender.

4 Up-to-date examples of international and national initiatives from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe can be found in the Media & Gender Monitor, No. 24 (2013), published by the World Association for Christian Communication.

5 The concept of gender-based censorship builds on the concept of gender-based violence against women, which was defined in 1992 by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as 'violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman, or violence that affects women disproportionately' (United Nations, 2006. In-depth study on all forms of violence against women. Report of the Secretary General. A/61/122/ Add. 1. para. 33).

Violence against women and media: advancements and challenges of a research and political agenda[1]

Aimée Vega Montiel

Introduction

- In Guatemala, two women are killed every day. This country ranks third for murders of women in the world
- Bolivia has the highest rates of domestic violence in Latin America
- In Mexico, more than 1,800 women were victims of feminicide in 2011
- In the United States, one-third of women murdered each year are killed by their partners
- In South Africa, a woman is killed every 6 hours by her partner
- In India, 22 women were killed each day in 2007 in dowry-related murders
- Between 250,000 and 500,000 women and girls were raped in the Rwandan genocide in 1994
- Between 40 and 50 per cent of women in European Union countries are victims of sexual harassment in the workplace
- Women and girls are 80 per cent of the people trafficked annually. 79% are trafficked for sexual exploitation (UN, 2011; Observatorio Ciudadano Nacional del Feminicidio, 2011).

In most societies, women –regardless of race, nationality, class or age– are victims of physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence, or even of feminicide. Gender-based violence is the main obstacle to the achievement of women's and girl's human rights (Amorós, 1990; Lagarde, 1997).

As this is a structural problem, directly linked to the sustaining of patriarchy, international, regional and national organisations have called attention to the responsibility that key institutions have to eliminate gender-based violence. One of these actors are media industries. This is why analysing violence against women in both traditional and new media content as well as the prevalence of violence against women journalists have historically been at the core of the feminist scholarly agenda.

The aim of this paper is to present some of the most significant trends and challenges of feminist communication research of violence against women and to provide some keys to facing these challenges. The final purpose of this chapter is for it to serve as a statement from the IAMCR community about the role UNESCO and all organisations involved in the 'Global Alliance on Media and Gender' campaign have to play to firmly advance in the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence against women and girls

According to the 1993 UN General Assembly, violence of gender against women is defined as 'any act of gender-based violence that results in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life' (UN, 1994).

Violence against women has its origins in the patriarchal structure that oppresses women (Amorós, 1990). It is the manifestation of the historically unequal power relations between men and women which have resulted in the domination and discrimination of women in society.

As an institutional response, global, regional and national organisations have taken significant steps towards state action to eliminate violence against women.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is the international bill of rights for women. This is the first international instrument to define violence against women and to set an agenda for national action to end such discrimination.

The Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women, Belem do Parà, was founded in 1994 by the Organization of American States (OAS). This regional body recognises all kinds of violence against women as a violation of women's human rights.

These instruments have impacted favourably on the improvement of laws, regulations and policies to stop violence against women and girls in several countries, including Brazil, Spain, the USA, India, Mexico, Italy and the Philippines.

The definitions of violence of gender used by these instruments are based on the theoretical framework of feminist scholars. This issue became increasingly prominent in the literature in the 1960s, coinciding with the emergence of the second wave of feminism. In their analysis and conceptualisation of patriarchy, feminists first launched in the 1960s and 1970s the debate about sexual violence, as an attempt to define violence against women as a political problem, linked to their gender condition. In the 1980s scholars moved to the concept of domestic violence to emphasise gender inequality between women and men in the domestic sphere as the place where violence of gender is institutionalised.

The most important development of feminist theory was to move towards a holistic perspective that unites all forms of violence against women and looks at the specific contexts in which gender-based violence is perpetrated. This advancement is reflected in the definition of both types –physical, sexual, psychological, economic, feminicide– and modalities –institutional, community, work, school– of violence against women and girls.

At this point, we would say that scholarly developments have made a key contribution to the advancement of women's human rights, evidenced by the political dimension of feminist theory.

Media and violence against women and girls: a feminist scholar agenda

Both the CEDAW and Belem Do Parà call to the responsibility of the media in the elimination of violence against women and girls. In 1995 the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) called explicitly on governments to 'take effective measures or institute such measures (emphasis mine), including appropriate legislation against pornography and the project of violence against women and children in the media' (UN, 1995, p.102).

The BPfA called on both the media and advertising industries to:

- Establish, consistent with freedom of expression, professional guidelines and codes of conduct that address violent, degrading or pornographic materials concerning women in the media, including advertising
- Disseminate information aimed at eliminating spousal and child abuse and all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence

At the national level, laws regarding violence against women and girls in countries such as Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Spain and India list specific actions related to media industries. However, while the BPfA listed the actions which would achieve gender equality and stop gender-based violence, there is no single formal policy on gender and communication in most countries in the world.

All these mandates have been followed by extensive research developed by feminist scholars regarding media's role in the reproduction of violence against women. This is why gender-based violence in media content has become one of the core issues of the research agenda.

The representation of sexual violence in media content was one of the first issues taken up by feminist communication studies. Feminist critics showed how through the commodification of women's bodies, media content –news, films, magazines– contributed to the 'normalisation' of sexual assault, rape and other forms of sexual violence and how they reinforced gender inequalities.

This first stage was followed by analysis of other specific forms of violence against women. Coverage of domestic violence in the news media attracted special attention as its rise was alarming.

Based on a holistic perspective, current research includes the analysis of different forms and modalities of gender-based violence in media discourse (Vega Montiel, 2010).

Findings from numerous studies have demonstrated the ways in which media content reinforces violence against women and girls (Benedict, 1992; Cuklanz, 2000; Laguna, 2004; Diez, 2002; Vega Montiel, 2007).

These studies show that:

- Media content reproduces sexist stereotypes that associate male identity with violence, domination, independence, aggression and power, while women are depicted as emotional, vulnerable and sensitive, and dependent upon male actions (Elasmar, Hasegawa and Brain, 1999; McGhee and Frueh, 1980; Thompson and Zerbinos, 1995).
- Women are usually stereotyped as sexual objects or even as mere body parts. Some examples show that: female nudity in magazine advertisements increased significantly around the world between 1983 and 1993 (Reicht et al., 1999); teen female TV characters used to be hyper-gendered (Holdden, 2012). In consequence, female sexuality is represented not as the sexual liberation of women but as the availability of women for male consumption.
- Only 24% of news subjects are women, 76% are men. Representation of gender in news is associated with relations of domination and subordination: whereas men are represented as sportsmen, politicians and businessmen, women are represented as vox populi –that is to say, they use to be associated to the lack of status and power (WACC, 2010).
- News reports of violence of gender tend to represent women as victims –associated to their lack of power– or, conversely, as those responsible for the violence of which they are victims. Usually, aggressors are not part of news reports (Diez, 2002; Vega Montiel, 2007).
- Popular music is a powerful vehicle for the reproduction of violence of gender. That is the case with rock and pop music, country, rap and, most recently, reggaeton.

Feminist research has also shown how the Internet and ICTs are now part of the gender-based violence environment.

A central problem associated with digital communication is the growing circulation of pornography. Statistics show that there are 4.2 million web pages that offer pornography – 12% of the total number of websites in the world; 100,000 of them offer child pornography. The online pornography industry makes 97.06 billion dollars per year, a much higher profit than Microsoft, Google, Yahoo, Amazon, Netflix and Apple combined (Feminist Peace Network, 2006).

Video games are now part of the digital gender-based environment. Some of the most popular ones show assaults on women, rape, prostitution and murder. Some examples are Grand Theft Auto and Benki Kuosuko (Maltzahn, 2006).

Linked to pornography is the sexual trafficking of women, girls and boys that has been enhanced through the Internet. What some scholars call 'virtual traffic' refers to the implications of the Internet and other ICTs on sex trafficking (Maltzahn, 2006). Sex trafficking operates mainly in countries with a lack of Internet regulation and policy and a high percentage of poor women (UN, 2005).

At this point, we would say that 'reducing women to sexual objects and making them available for consumption through communication and information technologies seems to be one of the most dramatic expressions of the digital age' (Vega Montiel, 2013, p.21).

A final but no less important dimension of the gender-based violence and media relationship is the increase in violence against women journalists. Forms include sexual, physical, psychological, economic and feminicide. This occurs in conflict and post-conflict countries where the human rights of female journalists have become more vulnerable. This happens with the consent of states and in an environment in which news media do not ensure secure conditions for women journalists to develop their work. For this reason, just this year UNESCO and the International News Safety Institute (INSI) launched the Global Survey on Violence against Female Journalists. This effort goes together with other INSI actions, such as publications and training programmes aimed at female media workers.

In this context, we must also mention violence against women working in community media. Community media are crucial to ensuring women's human right to communicate. In particular, community radio is a vehicle for the empowerment of women and the expansion of notions and debates on women's human rights in rural communities. However, for decades most women in developing countries have been forced to operate their radio stations under conditions of scarcity as there has not been any official regulation of community media. This circumstance goes together with a context of violence of gender that prevails in rural communities, putting these women in a vulnerable position.

As in other areas, feminist communication scholars have been involved, together with activists, feminist advocates and women media workers, in important projects that have impacted at the global, regional and national levels. Examples are: the Who Makes the News? Global Media Monitoring Project, promoted by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) and coordinated by scholars such as Margaret

Gallagher; the Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media from the International Women's Media Foundation, led by Carolyn Byerly; and Advancing Gender Equality in Decision-making in Media Organisations from the European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE), coordinated by Karen Ross, Claudia Padovani and Erzsébet Barát.

Conclusion

The analysis above suggests that, far from contributing to the discussion and understanding on the structural conditions of violence against women and girls, traditional and new media normalise it. By doing so, media promote gender-based violence (Meyers, 1997). This is why media are currently part of the problem rather than the solution to stopping violence against women.

Violence against women and girls is a public issue, as is the debate about the responsibility of media industries with respect to this issue. The growth of gender-based violence shows its mechanisms are more sophisticated than they were in the past, as are the forms of representing it in media content.

Through the examples provided, my objective was to demonstrate that scholars have developed enough theoretical and methodological keys to show that media do not improve women's human rights. As well, we have shown that feminist scholars have historically acted together with activists and advocates in setting the agenda on gender and communication and formulating policy.

What's next? My proposal here is to work together on a collective strategy, under the IAMCR umbrella, to put into global focus the responsibility that communication industries have in eliminating violence against women and girls. This is crucial to promoting public discussion to achieve public visibility and awareness.

The 'Global Alliance for Media and Gender' is a historical opportunity for scholars to act on a coordinated strategy, together with global, regional and national organisations, NGOs, feminist advocates, media owners and media workers, to make media industries firmly contribute to stopping violence of gender.

I think that to achieve this goal, the IAMCR would first lead on the production of a global comparative report on media and violence of gender against women and girls, with a cross-national and cross-regional perspective, emphasising advances and challenges. This report would include an analysis of different dimensions of the problem: existing legislation, policy, regulation, self-regulation and co-regulation forms, content of media and ICTs, security conditions for women workers in media industries, media literacy programs.

Secondly, and based on the data derived from the report, the IAMCR would, together with UNESCO and the organisations involved, be able to influence decision-makers in the field of regulation and policy.

The final purpose would be to call for the adoption of measures and legislation to stop gender violence in media. Media are still part of the problem but they can become part of the solution. They can contribute to preventing violence against women.

If the right to communicate states that all human beings have the right to express themselves, to be projected with dignity and to receive information based on social justice, then I firmly believe that communication is an essential human right for women's full citizenship. And only this will make possible world peace and human rights towards which the IAMCR has been working.

Salud.

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Sex trafficking in mass media: gender, power and personal economies

Barbara Ann Barnett

Overview

Trafficking for sexual exploitation is an activity that reduces humans to commodities. It has been characterised as a 'modern form of slavery that is one of the fastest growing forms of crime throughout the world' (Wilson, Walsh and Kleaker, 2008, p.145). Trafficking for sexual exploitation involves the sale of one person to another, but it is more than an economic exchange. Trafficking also is a massive indicator of inequities—inequities between women and men and inequities among women, whose status and empowerment can be differently affected by education, income, race, age and geography.

Trafficking: Definitions and scope of problem

Trafficking for sexual exploitation is brutal enterprise but 'massively profitable and (a) constantly expanding international industry' (Jeffreys, 2008, para.1). It is the third largest source of profits for organised crime, following the sale of drugs and guns (United Nations, n.d.), and remains a particularly attractive enterprise because 'it is low in risk and high in payoffs' (Stoecker, 2005, p.14).

Human trafficking has two additional advantages over drugs and weapons trafficking. One is that there is an almost limitless supply of the 'product'; sadly, it is unlikely that there will be a shortage of impoverished and desperate people in the world in the foreseeable future (Holmes, 2010, p.10).

Human trafficking involves deception, coercion, movement and exploitation of people across national borders (Ebbe, 2008; Haque, 2006). Although the scope of human trafficking is difficult to quantify because victims are physically confined and afraid to report the crime, and also because it is difficult to verify statistical information that has been gathered (Kempadoo, Sanghera and Pattanaik, 2005), non-governmental agencies speculate millions of people are trafficked each year into '3-D' jobs—work that is dirty, dangerous and difficult (Ebbe, 2008). The majority of people trafficked for sexual exploitation are women, and although boys and young men also may be trafficked to work in prostitution, they are more likely to work at hard labour or in the military (Repetskaia, 2005).

The United Nations defines trafficking as the 'acquisition of people by improper means such as force, fraud, and deception, with the aim of exploiting them' (UN, 2011) and further characterises trafficking as an exchange 'in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person is induced to perform such an act under the age of 18 years' (UN, n.d.). A more expansive definition of trafficking is offered in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. The Palermo Protocol, adopted in 2000 and implemented in 2003 as part of a comprehensive global effort to crack down on organised crime and help women who have been trafficked, acknowledged that trafficking is, indeed, a mechanism for sexual exploitation. However, the document also noted it is the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation' (Protocol, 2000). Consent, the Protocol says, is irrelevant in exploitive circumstances, and implicit in this document is the reality of gender disadvantage.

Feminist scholars and women's advocates argue that the circumstances that make possible the sale of one human being by another have their roots in cultural, political and economic systems that privilege male power and pleasure. Lack of legal rights and legal protections diminish women's security and increase their economic vulnerability, as do sociocultural norms that limit women's roles in their communities (Limoncelli, 2010; Kangaspunta, Clark, Dixon and Dottridge, 2008). 'Women are vulnerable to trafficking because they are frequently excluded from mainstream economic and social systems, such as employment, higher education, and legal as well as political parity' (Kangaspunta, Clark, Dixon and Dottridge, 2008, p.72). Women can be 'pushed' into trafficking by poverty, lack of education or sexual abuse or 'pulled' from their homes by the promise of higher wages, secure jobs and a better quality of life (Othman, 2006). Some are sold by relatives or kidnapped (De mir and Finckenauer, 2010; Omorodion, 2009; Seol, 2004), while others are made vulnerable by war and displacement (Simié, 2010).

Prostitution: helpful or harmful to women?

While trafficking for sexual exploitation has been condemned widely because of the force and duplicity involved, feminist scholars and women's advocates differ on the activity central to trafficking for sexual exploitation: prostitution.

Some scholars (Zheng, 2010; Agustin, 2007) distinguish between sex trafficking and prostitution, observing that trafficking involves forced movement of women across borders for sexual exploitation but suggesting that some women choose, without coercion, to migrate, and sex work may or may not be part of their work once they leave their home country. These advocates and scholars suggest the sale of sex is primarily an economic transaction—the exchange of money for time, an exchange that ultimately can prove physically and emotionally empowering to women (Andrijasevic, 2010; Ditmore, Levy and Willman, 2010; Zheng, 2010). To define prostitution as sexual exploitation positions women solely as powerless victims manipulated by others, they suggest.

Women exercise agency even in opting to migrate on someone else's terms in hopes of improving their own lives, because they are in situations that offer them few, if any options, given their lack of education, their debt, and/or their inability to financially support their children. (Dewey, 2010, p.113)

Indeed, some research suggests that sex work itself is not traumatizing when it is chosen labour (Romans, Potter, Martin and Herbison, 2001). One study found that Iranian women knew they were moving abroad to work in the sex industry and spoke of their migration as a way to gain monetary independence (Shahrokhi, 2010), while another study found that women who migrated to Cyprus did so voluntarily, anticipating they would work as prostitutes (Guven-Lisaniler, Rodríguez and Ugural, 2005). Women who left Thailand for marriage in Denmark said they did so to support their families, to attain personal freedom and to fulfil dreams of love and motherhood (Plumbech, 2010).

Conversely, other women's advocates and scholars suggest any distinction between forced and unforced sex is arbitrary and ignores the larger inequality of gendered socioeconomic systems and repressive cultural norms that makes women's bodies sites of profit. In this argument, the issue is not whether women choose to enter prostitution or whether they are forced into trafficking; the issue is the injustice of institutional and individual viewpoints that normalise men's control of women's bodies. Ditmore (2005) argued that trafficking and prostitution are essentially the same—that consent is irrelevant when women have few opportunities for economic and personal security. Koken (2010) questioned whether the exchange of sex for money can ever be considered a free choice in a patriarchal system where women have few rights and few opportunities. This perspective suggests that prostitution is far from empowering and is a choice out of no choice (Bindel, 2006), made by women who find themselves caught between starvation and survival. Prostitution is not 'like other work' (Jeffreys, 2008, para.1) since few other jobs carry such high risks of rape, beatings and disease. 'Given the fact that prostitution reduces women to bought objects, there can be no distinction between "forced" and "free choice" prostitution since it will always and necessarily be degrading and damaging to women' (Andrijasevic, 2010, pp.14-15). Characterization of prostitution as work 'may serve sex entrepreneurs' quest to gain legitimacy, but it does nothing to ameliorate the economic vulnerability that draws, then traps, women in a cycle of prostitution' (Sullivan, 2005, p.7). Farley (2009) furthers states that:

Trafficking expands and markets women's sexual exploitation and their subordination to men... Theoretical distinctions between prostitution and trafficking simply do not exist in the real world. Men's demand for trafficked women cannot be distinguished from the demand for prostitution (pp.311,314).

Bindel (2006) has suggested debates about prostitution create a hierarchy of 'good' prostitutes who do not choose to work in the sex industry and 'bad' prostitutes who choose sex work. Aradau (2008) observed that 'trafficked women are to be protected at the expense of 'dirty whores' who are to be policed and punished' (Aradau, 2008, p.31).

Media images of trafficking

These images of good and bad prostitutes are evident in mass media stories about sex trafficking.

Trafficking for exploitation has been a topic of Western journalism for more than a century, yet, in spite of this long history of reportage, contemporary media accounts present trafficking as though it was 'sensational and new' (Saunders and Soderlund, 2003, para.32). Scholars have suggested that contemporary media accounts of trafficking parallel press accounts of 'white slavery' published in the 19th and 20th centuries, in which magazines in England and the United States published investigative stories on the kidnapping and sale of young white women by mysterious criminals, typically 'foreigners' from developing nations (Saunders and Soderlund, 2003). Such accounts supported racist and sexist notions about white privilege and women's proper domestic 'place' in society (Doezema, 2000).

Stories about white slavery ultimately vanished, but in the 1980s journalists began to report more frequently on the phenomenon of trafficking and the metaphor of slavery appeared again. Modern stories were often sensationalised exposés rather than explanatory articles about the depth and causes of the trafficking (Soderlund, 2005), and today, as in previous centuries, 'narratives of risky, naïve and desperate females exploited by shadowy international criminal networks' (Harrington, 2010, p.185) dominate. Yet, while contemporary media stories on trafficking mirror the structure and tone of 19th and 20th century articles on white slavery, there is one significant difference: The site of vulnerability has changed. 'Modern accounts of "trafficking in women" vie with "white slavery" stories in their use of sensational descriptions and emotive language, though the "victims" are no longer white, Western European or American women, but women from the third-world or the former Eastern bloc' (Doezema, 2000, p.31). In contemporary discourse, the innocent white women of 19th and 20th century narratives in US and British magazines have been replaced by poor, uneducated women of the global South (Zheng, 2010). While women who are tricked or forced into trafficking can indeed be considered victims, some critics have argued that today's media reports on trafficked women serve to reinforce stereotypes of developing country residents as passive, manipulated and 'less-than' their Western counterparts. Some scholars also suggest that presenting women as victims borders on essentialism, an 'assumption of sameness' that ignores the 'material conditions and needs of non-Western, non-white, lesbian, and poor women around the globe' (Lazar, 2005, p.16), and positions white, Western, heterosexual women as the model to which all women aspire. Current media stories have tended to focus on deceived victims from developing nations and noble rescuers from industrialised countries (Doezema, 2000; Mohanty, 1991; Ricchiardi, 2003; Soderlund, 2005; Yea, 2010), but 'offer neither true analysis of the problem nor a discussion of the sources of the problem, its consequences, or the state's obligations' (Lasocik, 2010, p.31).

Studies of media suggest a superficial and limited coverage of trafficking. Arthurs (2006), in an examination of British documentaries, suggests that these films celebrate women's economic success and their ability to shake off repressive sexual rules, ignoring the dangers of prostitution. She also notes that economic pressures on media to produce profit have led to a decline in public affairs reporting that might actually shed light on trafficking. One study of Serbian media found that journalistic stories were dominated by sensational accounts of crimes, with no articles or editorials supporting the trafficked women themselves (Dekic, 2003), and a separate study found that media stories on trafficking were replete with traditional masculine and feminine stereotypes (Denton, 2010). Vijeyarasa (2010, p.590) found in her study in Vietnam that government frames of prostitution 'negatively influenced attitudes toward sex workers and victims of trafficking for sex exploitation alike'. Barnett (2013) examined a decade of magazine coverage of trafficking and found that stories focused on the sale of sex, not the purchase of sex, thereby making women both villains and victims in trafficking and ignoring the larger systems of gender inequality that make trafficking profitable.

Yet media do more than report on trafficking; in some cases, they are complicit in creating and supporting trafficking, scholars contend. Media create a desire for consumer goods, by conveying 'an imagery of luxury and affluence to the people of the South, which beckons them sometimes with disastrous results, as those who encounter discrimination, racism, and exploitation frequently testify' (Skrobanek, Boonpakdee and Jantateero, 1997, p.13). Coy, Wakeling and Garner (2011) suggested that popular culture images have glamorised prostitution, making it seem a form of entertainment and leisure rather than abuse, while Holmes (2010) has argued that unsympathetic and incomplete media stories themselves may be a form of exploitation. 'Along with the dissemination of necessary information about the problem, mass media are also a powerful tool in spreading undesirable stereotypes of sexual exploitation and trafficking in persons, speculating on piquant details and the image of a woman as a sexual commodity' (Tiuriukanova, 2005, p.111). Crawford (2010, p.121) also has argued that trafficking has been the subject of media interest, in part, because of the 'titillation value' of stories that reference sexual activity. Arthurs' (2006, p.127) work supports this notion, and she suggests there is a 'docu-porn' mentality in presenting media images of trafficked women: 'Sensationalism is the product of a fascination with stories of sexual transgression, in which the moral righteousness of exposing wrongdoing is entwined with an often unacknowledged pleasure of vicarious participation'.

For future discussion

Of all the limitations on women's work, prostitution is one employment opportunity that women are not denied. Media reports have tended to focus on individuals' dramatic stories (both the rescued and the rescuers), have ignored gender inequities that make the sale of sex profitable and have failed to report on the historical, cultural and socioeconomic forces that encourage trafficking for sexual exploitation. Additionally, media have created categories of good prostitutes (those forced to have sex) and bad prostitutes (those who choose to have sex) without exploring the economic realities of women's lives. These categories are not helpful and detract from necessary discussions about how to provide educational and economic opportunities for women. Stories about trafficking should document the factors that push women into trafficking and pull them from their home countries, and journalists should consider whether any story that portrays prostitution as a form of sexual playfulness is indeed an accurate portrayal. Journalistic stories, which typically report on what is new and exclude any historical context, need to explore systems of colonisation that have produced inequalities in the global economic structures, which make trafficking not only possible but profitable. And, finally, media stories can explain trafficking as a consequence of globalisation, not a problem that impedes businesses' economic growth.

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Hegemonic masculinity in media contents

Peter J. Kareithi

Introduction

The concept of hegemonic masculinity was formulated two and a half decades ago by Australian sociologist Raewyn Connell (1987) to refer to those traits that various cultures ascribe to 'real men' and which not only set out such 'real men' from women and all other men, but also justify all men to generally be in a position of domination over women. On local and regional levels, hegemonic masculinity manifests itself in varying forms, and is constantly evolving, leading researchers to conceive the idea of multiple hegemonic masculinities.

On a global scale, hegemonic masculinity is a representation of society's ideal of how male behaviour should be. In reality, its function is to legitimate the social ascendancy of men over women in all aspects of life, which is evident in many societies all over the world. In addition, hegemonic masculinity also emphasises superiority of 'manly' men over the 'not-so-manly' men. This social ascendancy is often portrayed through religious practices, the mass media, business and even through government policies and practices.

Hegemonic masculinity is not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense. Only a minority of men might enact it. But it is certainly normative in that it embodies the currently most honoured way of being a man, it requires all other men to position themselves in relation to it and it ideologically legitimates the global subordination of women to men. (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p.832)

A common misunderstanding of hegemonic masculinity is when the concept is used to refer to boys or men behaving badly, or to refer to the 'alpha male'. While in some contexts the concept refers to men's engaging in toxic practices – including physical violence – such practices are not always the defining characteristics. Cultural ideals of masculinity need not conform to the personalities of actual men or the realities of everyday achievements of men.

In trying to clarify the meaning of this term against other commonly used languages such as hyper- and hypo-masculinity, Christine Beasley (2008) stressed it is worth noting that the latter terms refer not so much to political legitimation as to the degree of particular characteristics that at any one time may be associated with normative manliness. 'Thus it is possible for an individual or group to exhibit what is deemed hyper-masculinity but not to be constituted as an ideal, not to mobilize legitimation. For example, biker-gang members in Australia epitomize a hyper-masculinity but they do not widely mobilize political legitimation and hence do not invoke sub-, let alone supra-, hegemonic status' (Beasley, 2008, p.101).

Trujillo (1991) expanded the definition of hegemonic masculinity by identifying five major features that defined when masculinity was hegemonic in US media culture. These are: (l) 'when power is defined in terms of physical force and control' (particularly in the representation of the body), (2) 'when it is defined through occupational achievement in an industrial, capitalistic society', (3) when it is represented in terms of familial patriarchy, (4) when it is 'symbolized by the daring, romantic frontiersman of yesteryear and of the present-day outdoorsman', and (5) 'when heterosexually defined' and centred on the representation of the phallus (Trujillo, 1991, pp.291-2).

Harry Brod (1987) argues that pervasive images of masculinity hold that 'real men' are physically strong, aggressive and in control of their work. Yet the structural dichotomy between manual and mental labour means that no one's world fulfils all these conditions. Manual labourers work for others at the low end of the class spectrum while management sits at a desk. Consequently, while the insecurities generated by these contradictions are personally dissatisfying to men, these insecurities also impel them to cling all the more tightly to sources of masculine identity validation offered by the image system. 'For working-class males, who have less access to more abstract forms of masculinity-validating power (economic power, workplace authority etc.), the physical body and its potential for violence provide a concrete means of achieving and asserting manhood' (Brod, 1987, p.14).

Representations of hegemonic masculinities in the media

One key source of construction of hegemonic masculinity is the American movie industry, which feeds the global culture with an endless stream of violent male icons. Tens of millions of people, disproportionately young males, flock to theatres worldwide or rent videos of what Katz (2011, pp.261-262) calls the 'action-adventure' films of male icons such as Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sylvester Stallone, Jean-Claude Van Damme, Bruce Willis, Christian Bale and Matt Damon. Local or regional equivalents of the male icons created by Hollywood now dominate local and regional film and television industries in other parts of the world – from India's Bollywood to Nigeria's Nollywood. Adding to this inventory of images are the music video industry and the widespread practice in advertising to stress gender difference, implicitly and even explicitly reaffirming the 'natural' dissimilarities of males and females. And then there are the inescapable military and sports symbolisms proliferate in all forms of media including video games, all enhancing the association of muscularity with 'ideal masculinity'. Gray and Ginsberg (2007, p.19) state that:

Women's rise in power has created a crisis in masculinity all over the world. In particular, in cultures in which the traditional male role as bread-winner and protector has declined and in which machine has replaced muscle, the pursuit of muscularity has become one of the few ways left for men to exhibit their masculine selves.

Thus, men have developed muscles not for their usefulness, but for their representation of masculinity.

By helping to differentiate masculinity from femininity, images of masculine aggression and violence – including violence against women – afford young males across class, race and geographical boundaries a degree of self-respect and 'security' within the more socially valued masculine role. In addition, as microeconomic shifts have contributed to a decline in both employment and real wages for working-class males in many economies, images of violent masculinity in the symbolic realm of media and advertising function, in part, to bolster masculine identifies that have increasingly less foundation in the material world (Katz, 2011, p.263).

In many parts of the world, magazine and television advertisements aimed at men are rife with advertisements featuring violent male icons, such as football players, big-fisted boxers, military figures and leather-clad bikers. Men's sports magazines and televised sporting events carry millions of dollars' worth of military advertisements. And the past 20 years has seen a mushrooming of advertisements for products designed to help men develop muscular physiques - from weight training machines to nutritional supplements and services to enhance their muscles or their penis sizes. These advertisements exploit men's feeling of not being big, strong or violent enough by promising to provide them with the products that will enhance these qualities.

Young males confronted with generational crises everywhere find themselves on the receiving end of music videos produced by numerous male artists who perform working-class or urban 'rebel' masculinity that embodies all sorts of violent angers and resentments and seek validation in the defiance of mainstream social conventions. The subcultures associated with some of these genres of music – from country music to rock, heavy metal, punk and hip-hop – embrace blatant form of misogyny and some of them are associated with an ethos of rape and other forms of intimate violence against women. Still, advertisers worldwide have sought to use this 'young-men-with-in-your-face-attitude' in marketing of products to young males. Though the examples vary from one country to another, these young artists are often displayed with angry expressions on their faces, wearing attires emblazoned with writings and/or other graphic depictions representing an overtly violent, aggressive and nihilistic demeanour (Katz, 2011, p.263). The increasing global popularity of skateboarding, snowboarding, motocross racing and extreme sports culture has contributed to this growing reservoir of images of youthful rebel masculinity that is then packaged and sold to consumers.

Military and sports have always been a staple source of the symbolic image system of violent masculinity. Uniformed soldiers and players as well as their weapons and gear appear frequently in media content from computer games and magazines to movies and television, and in advertisements of all sorts. Advertisers, for instance, often use these signifiers in numerous creative ways to make their products appear manly. The images are characterised by exciting outdoor action scenes with references to 'leadership', 'respect' and 'pride'. But for many young males, what these images are really selling to them is a certain vision of masculinity – adventurous, aggressive and violent – that provides men of all classes a standard of 'real manhood' against which to judge themselves.

Globalisation of masculinity stereotypes

Theorists (Beasley, 2008; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005) posit that hegemonic masculinities can be analysed at three levels:

1. Local: constructed in the arenas of face-to-face interaction of families, organisations and immediate communities, as typically found in ethnographic and life-history research;
2. Regional: constructed at the level of the culture or the nation-state, as typically found in discursive, political and demographic research; and
3. Global: constructed in transnational arenas such as world politics and transnational business and media, as studied in the emerging research on masculinities and globalisation.

There are links between these levels that can be important in gender politics. Global institutions pressure regional and local gender orders; while regional gender orders provide cultural materials adopted or reworked in global arenas and provide models of masculinity that may be important in local gender dynamics. Cornell (2005, p.832) argues that although local models of hegemonic masculinity may differ from each other, they generally overlap. As media conglomerates spread their tentacles in a technologically connected world, the world film-viewing audience is fast becoming more homogeneous. Where audiences appear to prefer locally made fare, the global media corporations have tended to globalise their production. Companies long associated with Hollywood now produce films jointly with local companies in China, France, India and Mexico. India's acclaimed domestic film industry – 'Bollywood' – now has close ties to global media giants. In Africa, the Nigerian film industry, fondly known as 'Nollywood', now floods the whole continent with its wares.

New technologies have also allowed greater freedom for the media to create highly seductive images that transfix audience attention while avoiding critical interrogation. Social media and other internet-based technologies have increased the media's powers of replication, amplification and extension of stereotypes of masculinity across the globe. And as media consolidation shapes the uniformity of tastes in some forms of media, it is becoming increasingly clear that some of the once local models of hegemonic masculinity in specific regions of the world have achieved ascendancy on a global scale.

Combating dominant masculinities

Some researchers, such as Brown (2012) and Knight (2013), have questioned the wisdom of the long-term use of masculinity as the underlying basis of appeals for military service at a time when women's role in the military is expanding worldwide. In advertising and recruiting materials, Brown advises that militaries rely less heavily on traditional iconography of a man's army (emphasis mine) and pay greater attention to international events, references to duty or citizenship and the increasing role of technology. Both stress the need to de-emphasise use of combat imagery that denotes a 'masculine realm of challenge, excitement, and brotherhood' in recognition that wars have expanded the military roles of women (Brown, 2012, p.17).

Other areas of actions that need to be explored by various actors include:

- Public policy:

There is still much that governments can do about regulating the amount of violence to which young people, and especially young males, are exposed by better regulating the marketing, broadcasting and/or exhibition of such material to young audiences.

Governments should be encouraged to formulate national policies that encourage sporting institutions to be more egalitarian along gender lines.

- Scholarly research:
- Research work is needed to examine non-fiction, non-entertainment portrayals of men – such as those found in news coverage. Katz (2011) argues that this is especially important given that the criteria for 'acceptable' masculinities is likely different in fiction and non-fiction representations of men.
- There is a need to identify institutions in society, other than media, where men and boys compete with and put down one another by feminising each other and to design intervention tools.
- Curriculum development:
- Encouraging institutions of higher learning to intensify interdisciplinary studies in cultural, social, historical, political, psychological, economic and artistic analysis that interrogates the constructions of masculinity in different communities at various times in history.
- Encouraging media educators to develop curricula to instruct future media practitioners – reporters, sportswriters and sportscasters – to avoid language and other symbolisms that maintain the status quo and instead to strive to 'de-masculinise' sports and military culture.
- Media industries self-evaluation and improvement:
- Encourage media organisations to initiate or support programs to sensitise current media practitioners – working journalists, sportswriters and sportscasters, producers and directors etc. – in recognising and avoiding language, symbols and other representations that perpetuate hegemonic masculinity, especially in writing and talking about sports, war and military matters.
- Community and non-governmental organisation activism:
- Encourage and empower local, national, regional and international media associations to lobby governments and media industries for the formulation of policies and production of media contents that de-emphasise representations of dominant masculinities within their jurisdictions.
- Empower organisations to design and deliver community and adult education programs in modes of conflict resolution other than use of violence.

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Violence against women journalists

Annabelle Sreberny

Violence against women journalists is sadly an important issue that is rarely openly confronted. There are at least four different ways in which violence against women journalists occurs. One is during the course of reporting dangerous events such as wars and conflict zones where a woman journalist, much like a male journalist, simply finds herself in a dangerous context. A second form is sexual violence which, while meted out on occasion to male journalists, is preponderantly acted out against women. A third is state-sponsored violence in the form of arbitrary arrest, imprisonment and torture of journalists, amongst whom number many women. And a fourth form includes trolling and other forms of sexualised hate speech that women encounter on the internet.

Violence in the real world

Journalism can be a dangerous profession. In order to cover breaking stories, journalists put themselves in contexts of war, conflict and natural disasters, while in order to report on corruption, human rights abuses and political chicanery, journalists often incur the wrath of the most powerful in society. Journalism historically was a male profession and women have often encountered sexism from their colleagues as well as from outsiders (Tumber, 2006).

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) documents attacks on journalists that include targeted killings, physical attacks, censorship tactics, confiscation of equipment and anti-press legislation. 1,005 journalists have been killed around the world since 1992 (CPJ, n.d.). Already some 31 journalists have been killed in 2013. Statistics on the CPJ website suggest that 3% of those (6% since 1992) have been women (CPJ, 2013). The International Media Safety Institute (INSI) seems to have collapsed, although its 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones' or 'safety guidelines' was adopted in November 2000, by a range of television companies, including APTN and Reuters TV.

Many journalists were killed in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Syrian conflict has recently seen the deaths of two women journalists. Maria Colvin of the British Sunday Times was killed in Homs, Syria in February 2012 when a makeshift press centre was struck by a shell; she had already lost one eye covering the Sri Lankan civil war a decade earlier. Yara Abbas, a correspondent for the pro-government TV channel Al-Ikhbariya, was killed when her crew's vehicle came under rebel sniper fire in May 2013 in Al-Qusayr, Syria , according to official Syrian news sources.

Violence against women who are journalists

Since women journalists often find themselves in locations that are in socio-political turmoil, they are sadly sometimes the specific focus of violence. Recent cases of such violence have occurred in political mobilisations in Egypt, especially in Tahrir Square. CBS News' Lara Logan was attacked during the 2011 revolution, saying 'men in the crowd had raped me with their hands'. The Egyptian journalist Mona Eltahawy was assaulted by Egyptian security forces in November 2011, as was a France 3 TV reporter Caroline Sinz. Natasha Smith was gang raped in June 2012 and a Dutch reporter was raped in July 2013 (Daily Mail, 2012). While a young female photojournalist was gang-raped in Mumbai in August 2013 in the second of such violent attacks on women.

Sadly, this is not a new subject. In 2005 the International News Safety Institute in Brussels conducted a survey of female war reporters. It found that of the 29 respondents who took part, over half reported sexual harassment on the job while two said they had experienced sexual abuse. But the survey also found out that women often do not report such violence and are loathe to talk about it for fear that it would affect gender equality and their ability to be sent on important assignments (Matloff, 2007).

Indeed, it took nine years before Colombian journalist Jineth Bedoya spoke publicly about the brutal rape she had endured while reporting on right-wing paramilitaries in May 2000. On assignment for the Bogotá daily El Espectador, Bedoya was abducted, bound, blindfolded and taken to a house in the central city of Villavicencio, where she was savagely beaten and raped by multiple attackers (For more examples, see Ronderos, 2012).

In a 2011 report, CPJ interviewed more than four dozen journalists who said that they had been victimised on past assignments. Most reported victims were women, although some were men. Journalists have reported assaults that range from groping to rape by multiple attackers (Wolfe, 2011).

State violence against journalists who are women

Sometimes it is the state apparatus itself that tries to intimidate women through various forms of violence. The Islamic Republic of Iran has arrested and imprisoned many women journalists and bloggers. Mona Eltahawy had both arms broken by the Egyptian military police as she covered the ongoing political crisis in Tahrir Square in November 2011.

Reeyot Alemu, columnist for the Ethiopian newspaper Feteh, was sentenced to 14 years in prison in September 2011, accused by the government of conspiracy to commit terrorist acts and participation in a terrorist organisation. Alemu has been one of the few women reporters writing critically about the political climate in Ethiopia and she was one of three winners of the 2012 Courage in Journalism Awards (International Women's Media Foundation, 2013).

Khadija Ismayilova, reporter for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Azerbaijani service, and another winner of the 2012 Courage in Journalism Awards, has investigated and exposed corruption and power abuse at the highest levels in Azerbaijan. In May of 2012, she received a suspicious package with an anonymous letter, including photographs from surveillance cameras installed in her apartment, portraying her in an intimate sexual relation with her boyfriend. Despite these threats of defamation Ismayilova has refused to stop working and has publicly denounced her accusers.

The three winners of the International Women's Media Foundation 2013 awards are Najiba Ayubi, of the Killid Group in Afghanistan who reports on politics and women's rights and has sustained anonymous threats and attacks from government entities for over a decade; Nour Kelze, a photojournalist for Reuters who has been shot at often and hospitalised twice for wounds sustained while covering the Syrian story and targeted in pro-Assad propaganda; and Bopha Phorn, reporter for The Cambodia Daily in Cambodia, whose coverage of crime, land rights abuses and environmental exploitation issues nearly got her killed in April 2012, when her car came under heavy fire during a reporting trip in the Cambodian jungle (International Women's Media Foundation, 2013).

It is estimated that 21 journalists have been killed since Russian President Vladimir Putin came to power in March 2000 and in the majority of cases, no one has been convicted and sentenced for the murders. The high profile murder in 2006 of Novaya Gazeta journalist Anna Politkovskaya, known for her critical reporting on the conflict in Chechnya in which she sought to expose human rights abuses, triggered some public outcry. In 2007, the World Association of Newspapers passed a resolution, calling on the authorities in Russia to 'investigate journalist deaths more vigorously'. The same year, the International News Safety Institute said more journalists had died violent deaths in Russia in the previous 10 years than anywhere in the world apart from Iraq.

It has to be said that on occasion male journalists are also at risk from sexual assault, usually as state-sponsored violence. This has happened in Iranian prisons, where such violence has been used to intimidate reporters into silence. There are also the cases of Mumtaz Sher and Umar Cheema in Pakistan.

In October 2011 the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to renowned Yemeni press freedom activist Tawakul Karman, Chairwoman of Women Journalists Without Chains, along with two other female leaders. CPJ wrote that the prize recognized 'her relentless battle for a free press in Yemen but also highlights the free flow of information as vital for peaceful and democratic societies… and we hope that this prize helps to shed light on the targeting of journalists which continues to plague the Arab world' (CPJ, 2011).

Internet trolling/violence against women commentators

New forms of aggression and violence against women have emerged in Internet practices.

Some egregious examples of this occurred in Britain in summer 2013 as various female journalists were targeted. In July, Labour MP Stella Creasy and Caroline Criado-Perez, a feminist campaigner, received threats of rape on Twitter after they had campaigned to keep a woman represented on one of Britain's banknotes (Jones, 2013).

Also in July, Guardian columnist Hadley Freeman was sent a tweet at 5.50pm from an anonymous user, @98JU98U989, which claimed that a bomb had been placed outside her home and would be detonated at 10.47 pm. She reported this to the Metropolitan Police who said they were launching an investigation as the threat was an arrestable offence but also advised her not to stay at home overnight. Several other women – including Grace Dent of the Independent; Catherine Mayer, Europe editor of Time magazine; Sara Lang, a social media manager at American non-profit AARP; and Anna Leszkiewicz, editor of Cherwell, Oxford University's independent student newspaper – subsequently received identical threats (Batty, 2013).

A useful development from these frightening threats was that Twitter apologised and has now agreed to include harassment in the definition of behaviour it considers abuse, and has confirmed that an in-tweet 'report abuse' button - available on the Twitter app for iPhones - would be added to the Twitter website and to platforms used on other mobile devices in order to report abusive comments (Reuters, 2013).

Training, risk assessment

In a male-dominated profession, and working in some of the most violent, unstable and patriarchal societies, the dangers to women journalists might always be present. There are no sections on sexual harassment and assault in the leading handbooks on journalistic safety, by the Committee to Protect Journalists and the International Federation of Journalists. CPJ provides general tips from safety experts who have trained soldiers and journalists, arguing that while not every assault can be prevented, anticipation and sound judgment go a long way toward minimising risk (CPJ, 2012), and it also includes material by Judith Matloff (2011) designed specifically for women journalists.

The BBC, a pioneer in trauma awareness, is one of the few major news organisations that offers special safety instruction for women, taught by women. The Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma is a leader in recognising the trauma that journalists can endure and provides support for post-traumatic stress for journalists. So the issue is only slowly coming into focus across media organisations and more and better awareness training and safety procedures are needed for both female and male journalists.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women did hold a session on the safety of women journalists in March 2013 that included Irima Bokova, Director General UNESCO; Pamela Falk, CBS correspondent and President of the UN Correspondents Association; Elana Newman, of the Dart Centre; and Larren Wolfe, Director, Women under Siege at the Women's Media Centre. However, few specific recommendations seem to have made it on to the agreed conclusions of the CSW other than general concern to combat all forms of violence against women and girls (Commission on the Status of Women, 2013).

Sadly, journalism is often a dangerous profession conducted in the most risky of contexts and the risks for women journalists are even higher. More acknowledgement of this issue is slowly happening but there is little policy or academic research and a lack of joined-up thinking. The Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma (Dart, 2013) provides very important support for journalists after a traumatic event; a similar platform regarding preparatory training for journalists could be as useful. The profession everywhere needs better training in safety and violence against women and greater media organizational responsibility should an event happen, while there also needs to be better governmental and police follow-up when incidents occur and wherever the location. Women journalists can offer a different news agenda and different insights on regular news stories – but they have to be able to work safely.

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The long struggle of women in news

Carolyn M. Byerly

Women's ability to participate in their societies is bound up in their right to communicate publicly. Obtaining the right to communicate has been pursued on a number of fronts by feminists seeking women's advancement, one of those being greater access to journalism and other media professions. This essay asks to what extent women's entrée to the first of these – journalism – has been successful by looking at women's participation in newsrooms (i.e. as reporters, editors and managers) and in governance (i.e. policy-making roles) of news companies, as revealed in recent research. The discussion is presented within a feminist political economy framework of analysis which will help to reveal the gendered relations of power at work in news making.

Who/what is a journalist/journalism?

It bears noting at the outset that examining women's public communication through their roles in traditional journalism may seem problematic. After all, news industries are going through profound transformations the world over as a result of digital convergence (i.e. the integration of online, cable, broadcast and other formats), concentration of ownership (i.e. the diminishing number of news outlets and jobs), the rise of online reporting through internet news sites and blogging. Thus, where does one look for women journalists?

Researchers still assess women's employment in the traditional journalism venues of newspapers, television and radio for two reasons. The first is that these appear to still be the largest employers of journalists. The second is that these companies, for better or worse, remain the guardians of the profession as it has been traditionally practiced. Journalists themselves acknowledge that the definition of the profession is evolving with new technologies and kinds of people professing to be journalists; in addition, the practice of journalism differs somewhat from nation to nation. Even so, there is a thread of agreement that journalism as a practice involves the gathering and reporting of information by individuals who have been professionally trained, adhere to standards and/or professional codes of ethics and are accountable for what they publish or broadcast (Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2012).

Women's difficult ascent into journalism

Women see journalism as a route toward empowerment. Their enrolment in university journalism programmes today surpasses men's in many nations. In my own nation, the United States, for example, women are two-thirds of those enrolled in undergraduate journalism programs (Becker et al., 2010). The same is true in other developed nations like Norway (Ovrebo, 2013), as well as in developing nations like in Brazil and Chile (Higgins, Correa, Flores and Meraz, 2008, pp.240-245). These figures change, however, when looking at the actual numbers who find jobs in the field. The Global Report on the Status of Women in News Media, a 59-nation study of women's employment in 522 newsrooms, found that overall women held only a third of the jobs in reporting and a fourth of the jobs in top management (Byerly, 2011). Women also held only about a fourth of the jobs in governance (i.e. boards of directors) globally. The same study also found that women have access to few technical jobs (e.g. camera work, lighting and sound) associated with producing news.

There were some variations by region, however, and these are worth considering. In some nations of Eastern and Nordic Europe, for example, women were at parity with or even surpassed men in the companies studied. In Finland, where women account for 70 per cent of those in the journalism field nationwide, the nine companies surveyed showed women nearly equal to men in number. Women's occupational roles, however, showed a substantial difference in power between men and women, with women bunched up in the reporting ranks but stuck at the glass ceiling of middle management. As a result, women were only about a third of those in higher-ranking management jobs and in governance (Savolainen and Zilliacus-Tikkanen, 2013, p.55). There was a similar phenomenon at the nine Swedish companies surveyed, with women nearly at parity with men in reporting roles, but noticeably fewer (30-40 per cent) in management and governance (Edstrom, 2013)

Considering these findings, Finnish authors Savolainen and Zilliacus-Tikkanen (2013) and Swedish author Edstrom (2013) made almost identical remarks. They said that in spite of a national consensus for gender equality and ample laws supporting it (e.g. through generous parental leave policies and community-based child care), men continue to dominate in positions of authority in news organisations. Edstrom added, however, that some Swedish newsrooms have taken steps to involve women journalists in 'redefining news' so that it increases gender balance in content and expands the number of female sources. She said that some of the newsrooms said they are working 'in conscious ways' making it clear that news comes about through 'a matter of choices' (Edstrom, 2013, p.88). The success of these efforts will undoubtedly be the subject of future Swedish research.

In contrast to women journalists' situation in the Nordic nations, women's high standing in some Eastern European newsrooms comes about through historical circumstances that are not without an aspect of inequality. Under communism, women and men were both educated and moved into the workforce, in most cases with this state-sponsored egalitarianism framed as 'women's emancipation' (Nastasia and Nastasia, 2013, p.28). This 'emancipation' has left women still to carry the triple burden of household, workplace and civic responsibilities (Nastasia and Nastasia, 2013, p.28). In the 10 Bulgarian companies surveyed for the Global Report (Byerly, 2011), there were more women than men both overall as well as in several occupational categories. Most noticeably, women filled two-thirds and three-fourths of the positions in reporting and management, respectively; and about half in both senior and top management. But women were just over a third of those in governance (Byerly, 2011, p.31). In nearby Estonia, Global Report findings from 10 companies surveyed showed nearly equal numbers of men and women overall, with women above or near parity with men in most occupational roles except for senior management and governance. The last of these, governance, found women with only 17 per cent of the seats (Nastasia, Pilvre and Tampere, 2013, p.41).

Byerly's (2011) Global Report findings were, in most cases, similar to those of the only other large-scale global study of women's employment in media, which had been conducted by Gallagher (1995) a decade and a half earlier. Surveying 143 companies in 39 nations, Gallagher (1995, p.11) found there to be a hierarchy of progress, with the Baltic States at the top, followed by Central, Eastern and Nordic Europe. Also similar to Gallagher, Byerly found women slower to gain ground in the newsrooms of Asia. In Japan, for example, where media companies are considered to be 'prestigious, elite corporations', the Global Report found that women filled only 17 per cent of the 13,000 jobs at the eight news companies surveyed. While this was a slight improvement over the 9.2 per cent of women employed at Japanese news companies found by Gallagher, Ishiyama (2013, p.409) points out the obvious 'astonishing gender gap [remaining] in Japanese journalism'. To understand Japanese women journalists' challenges requires a foray both into Japanese history and occupational patterns. A nation with strongly entrenched gender roles, Japan's post-World War II industrialisation privileged men in the paid sector with women remaining at home to raise families and care for the elderly. Moreover, men assumed what Ishiyama calls a 'corporate warrior' approach to their work, pledging fidelity to an employer for life (and opening almost no positions for newcomers to the professions). These factors, together with what she characterises as an 'androcentric workplace' have served to stymie women's entrance into newsrooms (Ishiyama, 2013, p.410).

Struggle and its future

Women's advancement in journalism sits uneasily alongside the enduring barriers they continue to encounter in the field, evidence of a gendered dialectical process. Even in nations where they have progressed strongly into reporting and even lower level management, women remain cut out of the key decision-making levels of top management and governance where company policies are made and where, as gender-conscious participants, they might advocate expanding the number of women staffing newsrooms and give more encouragement to gender balance in news content.

The collective lesson from these fragments is that in most nations, the issue for women journalists is not so much a total exclusion from the news profession but rather marginalisation and lack of mobility. As in other social institutions in most of the world's nations, women experience marginalisation and lack of access to higher decision-making levels because of broader patterns of gendered relations characterised by men's greater power that has been long institutionalised. The news industry remains a collection of enterprises largely funded and run by men, and men also control the policy and financial apparatuses that enable their domination in that industry. News enterprises all over the world have to one degree or another become part of global industries marked by both horizontal and vertical integration. In many cases, companies forming conglomerates are overseen by interlocking boards of directors. These complex profit-driven structures exist with the protection of national and international law, and they produce enormous revenues. They are overwhelmingly under the control of men, as research shows (Byerly, 2014).

Two lessons as to women's future engagement with their rightful places in news organisations (and the profession they enable) emerge from the feminist research to date. The first is that women enjoy greater progress in the news profession in general when there are national laws in place that provide the statutory basis for gender equality and structural supports for the raising of children. The Nordic nations are particularly strong examples of this, as we have seen. Thus, both professional associations and feminist popular movements should continue to advocate for these state-level policies. The second lesson, though less obvious, is that women should enter media policymaking in a more determined way to advocate for their own interests. Gallagher (2011) and Byerly (2014) are among those who have commented on feminists' slowness to address macro-level issues that shape the structure of media industries and their operations. In the broader political economy of neoliberalism that has emerged since the 1970s, men's power has been consolidated in both the financial and political realms, serving to further marginalise women. If women are to gain the voice they seek through journalistic practice, the challenge is for them – for us – to seek organised ways to more actively engage the policies that allow this consolidation.

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Women in decision-making structures in media

Karen Ross

Introduction

As with so many other aspects of social, cultural and economic life in the 21st century, women's occupation of decision-making positions in media industries is low relative to their proportion in the sector's labour force. Despite increasing numbers of women graduating from professional and vocational programmes and entering the industry, most research suggests that they get stuck at middle management and rarely achieve the really top jobs. Given the dominance of US scholarship in this field, the research on which this short paper is based aimed to explore women's penetration of top level management across a range of large media organisations, both public sector and privately-owned in the EU and Croatia. The work was funded by the European Institute for Gender Equality and the idea for it arose from the decision of the Council of the European Union's Presidency in the first half of 2013 (Ireland) to prioritise Area J of the Beijing Platform for Action. Area J has two aspects, one relating to the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through media and new communication technologies, and the other to promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media. Whilst the project addressed both these elements, this paper is focused exclusively on the first element[1].

Women in decision-making in media organisations: policy context

The small number of women occupying senior positions in media organisations has been a cause for concern for several decades. Professional bodies such as the International (and European) Federation of Journalists and Women In Journalism, NGOs such as the European Women's Lobby and the various Working Groups of the European Commission and the Council of Europe have undertaken a number of studies over the past few years to explore this issue and have suggested a range of practical measures to improve and enhance women's career opportunities within the media sector[2]. Actions to support the recruitment and promotion of more women into senior roles within the media industry have been complemented by similar efforts to enable more women to take their seats around the boardroom table. The most recent initiative came in November 2012, when the European Commission formally proposed legislation to accelerate the number of women in the boardroom. The proposed Directive set out the objective of a 40% presence of the under-represented sex among non-executive directors of publicly-listed companies by 2020, and by 2018 for publicly-funded organisations.

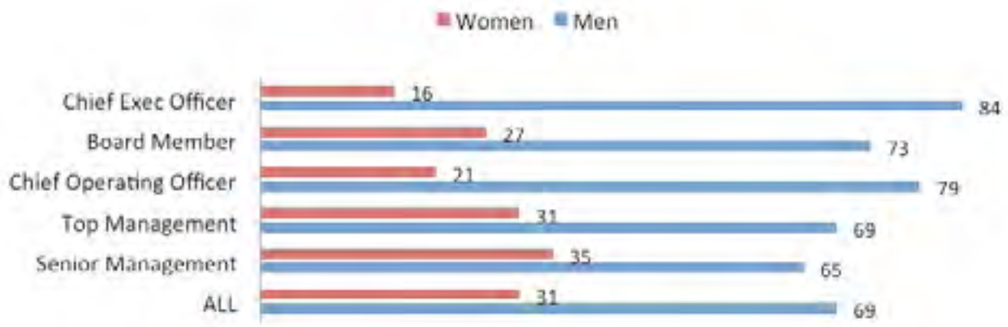
Research design and methods

The research aimed to explore the extent to which women are employed in decision-making positions in large-scale media organisations across Europe, including on boards, how senior women actually experience their media workplace and what kinds of gender-equality and/or women-focused policies are in place in those organisations. Once the resulting data had been analysed, the project intended to develop a set of indicators which would be adopted by the Council of the European Commission – see later. A total of 99 organisations were researched across the European Union Member States and Croatia, comprising 39[3] public sector organisations, 56 privately-funded companies and 4 companies with mixed-funding. The criteria for selecting the latter included size of organisation (in terms of workforce), popularity of service/product (for example, audience ratings for TV and radio; circulation for newspapers), and importance (for example, in terms of opinion-forming). In most countries, decisions had to be made using several criteria, for example, when a newspaper had a high circulation but a small workforce, or where several TV stations all claimed to be the 'most popular' but where verifiable data on ratings was impossible to obtain. Within the sample for any one country, the public service broadcaster was always included and then up to three private organisations, depending on media density. In most countries, the private media selected comprised at least one newspaper and at least one TV station: radio stations were included in countries where radio was particularly popular, or in high media density countries, or where the public service broadcaster split TV and radio into two separate operational structures.

Findings

The data collected in this study illustrate a number of key themes which impact and influence the extent to which the BPfA hopes for increasing the number of women in decision-making positions in media industries have been or can be achieved. Whilst this is a small-scale survey with 99 organisations in the sample, they comprise all the public service broadcasters (39 separate organisations) in EU-27+HR: the 56 private organisations constitute some of the major European media corporations, most of which have international parent companies. The four organisations with mixed funding (public and private) are also major media players. So although no claims are being made about the representativeness of the sample (at least in terms of the private media sector), the findings are nonetheless important as they are indicative of the EU media sector in general terms and give confidence to the robustness of the indicators which draw on the results. The most disturbing finding, as illustrated in the Figure below, is the low number of women who occupy senior decision-making positions or have seats on boards: 1,037 positions out of a total 3,376 counted (30%) were held by women.

Figure: Percentage of women and men in decision-making positions and on boards in 99 major media organisations across EU27 + Croatia



Women occupy around one-third of all positions we counted in public service broadcasting organisations and around one-quarter of positions in the private sector: public service broadcasting sector organisations and those with mixed funding were much more likely to appoint women into senior roles (59%) than private organisations (41%). The data collected shows that in some countries, women are present in relatively high numbers at both strategic and operational levels in relation to the EU-27 average. There could be any number of reasons for these counter-trends – both 'positive' and 'negative'. One 'positive' reason could be because organisations have proactively worked to promote opportunities for women through both equality codes and positive action strategies but also by making recruitment, selection and promotion processes entirely transparent and based on merit and competence rather than internal networks and nepotism. One less positive reason could be the operation of what has been described as the velvet ghetto, that the gradual incursion of women into traditionally male professions such as journalism has the effect of reducing the status of those professions and thus the salaries offered[4].

> ***'If the selection [of candidates] is based almost exclusively on a political relation, women are generally disadvantaged as far as top positions are concerned; when selection is based on résumés and the quality of work, the issue changes completely.***
>
> **(Maria, public service broadcaster)**

As far as gender equality plans, diversity policies and codes are concerned, just under half the organisations in the survey have some kind of equality policy which at least mentions gender, although less than one in five organisations have a policy which is explicitly focused on gender. A similar number have formal mechanisms in place to monitor their gender and/or equality policies and nine organisations have an Equality or Diversity Department. In terms of practical measures, the most frequently mentioned measure related to sexual harassment and fewer than 25% of organisations mentioned this, followed by a dignity at work policy (19%) and a maternity leave policy (17%). Only six organisations support structured training programmes for women, although slightly more (nine per cent) provide equality awareness training for staff. In terms of sectoral differences, public service broadcasters were significantly more likely to have developed formal gender and equality structures than the private sector organisations.

Women in decision-making in major media organisations – three indicators

The indicators set out below measure the involvement of women (and men) in the decision-making structures of major media organisations across the EU Member States and Croatia, as well as the inclusion of women on the boards of those organisations and the existence of codes and measures aimed at encouraging women's career development.

Indicator 1

This indicator tracks the proportion of women and men in executive decision-making posts across a range of management and operational functions, including: Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer (e.g. Director-General, Editor-in-Chief), Top and Senior Level operational management.

Indicator 2

This indicator provides information on the proportion of women and men on the important decision-making boards which govern media organisations, including the most senior external oversight committees (either of the organisation or its parent company), responsible for the strategic direction of each media organisation, for example the Board of Governors or the Board of Trustees.

Indicator 3

This indicator is concerned with the existence of policies, including those relating to: gender equality, equal opportunities/diversity; sexual harassment or dignity at work; parental leave; mechanisms for implementing and monitoring gender equality such as committees and officers; and practical measures aimed at supporting women's career development such as leadership/management training for women; equality awareness training for staff; flexible working arrangements.

Conclusions

Women continue to be under-represented in the decision-making structures of major media organisations, both at operational levels as senior managers and at strategic levels, as CEOs and board members. Importantly, the results of this study suggest that there is no clear link between the existence of gender or diversity or equality policies in organisations and high numbers of women in decision-making positions: sometimes the two things went together and sometimes not. This is largely because, unless policies are actively monitored, workforce analyses undertaken and action plans developed, then policies remain at the level of paper but not of practice. The testimonies of many of the senior women who were interviewed made clear that the cultural context, at different levels of an organisation, has a significant impact on women's career prospects. In other words, a supportive working environment which recognises the value of women's contribution and which acknowledges their different caring and family responsibilities is as important as the existence of formal equality policies. However, the most obvious manifestation of an organisation's commitment to gender equality is the development of a formal equality policy framework which includes mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and action. This is important both in structural terms but also to provide a clear signal to all employees that equality issues are taken seriously. This is part of the cultural context of any organisation, which is crucial in determining both its operational ethos but also, as importantly, what come to be seen as its behavioural norms.

> ***'If you are surrounded by men, you tend to take their standards, rules and agendas for granted. And believe me, they would be different in mixed teams.' (Katharina, private newspaper) 'If a woman is really determined to cross the border into 'male' areas… she must adjust at least partly to the rules of the "men's club.***
>
> **(Erzebet, private newspaper)**

We are very pleased that that the Council of the European Union adopted the indicators we developed in June 2013[5] although what will happen next is hard to predict. Women are mostly overlooked for promotion for reasons other than their competence, including their gender (discrimination on grounds of sex) and their (in)flexibility to take on new opportunities because of their domestic and/or family responsibilities (discrimination on grounds of family or caring role). Sometimes women do choose to prioritise family over career but this is often because workplace cultures make it impossible to achieve a work-life balance which benefits both the individual and the employer. Much of the literature on gender and media makes clear, as did the senior women media professionals interviewed for this study, that the cultural context in which women (and men) work is both part of the problem but could also be a large part of the solution, so that encouraging senior managers to take gender equality seriously is good for employees and, as recent studies on boardroom performance show, good for business.[6]

1 The data presented here were collected in 2012/2013 as part of the Study on Area J of the Beijing Platform for Action: Women and the Media in the European Union carried out for the European Institute for Gender Equality under contract EIGE/2012/OPER/07. The views presented here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or position of the European Institute for Gender Equality.

2 See for example, EFJ, IFJ, EWL; European Commission Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, 2010. Opinion on "Breaking gender stereotypes in the media", Brussels: European Commission.; The Council of Europe's latest report, Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men, 2011. Women and Journalists First. Geneva: CDEG.

3 There are 39 public sector organisations here because some countries disaggregate TV from radio and also because Belgium has two public sector organisations who broadcast in French and Flemish respectively.

4 See Gorpe, S., Petersone, B. and Walker, G., 2012. Feminisation of the Public Relations/Communications Profession in Europe: Initial Findings: Where Are Women in Public Relations Academia and in the Professional World?. EUPRERA conference, Istanbul, Turkey September 2012.

5 See Council of the European Union Conclusions of 20-21 June 2013 on Advancing Women's Roles in Decision-making in the Media [online] Available at: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/137546.pdf>.

6 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2011. Women on Boards. London: BiS.; Committee for Economic Development, 2012. Fulfilling the Promise: How More Women on Corporate Boards Would Make America and American Companies More Competitive. Washington DC: CED.; McKinsey & Company, 2012. Women Matter 2012: Making the Breakthrough, McKinsey & Co. Available at: <http://www.mckinsey.com/client_service/organization/latest_thinking/women_matter> [Accessed 15 November 2012]

Gender and newsroom cultures

Marjan de Bruin

Introduction

The theme of this chapter, gender and newsroom cultures, represents a field of inquiry that has been the topic of academic interrogation for several decades. Specific references to 'gender,' however, only started to occur in the 1980s. Prior to that, descriptions of newsroom practices mostly referred to 'men' or did not pay any attention to the sex and gender of newsroom workers at all.

During this time academic interests shifted from a mainly descriptive level – taking stock of women's portrayal in media (through a stream of content analyses) and recording women's newsroom presence (through a steady series of employment figures) – to a more analytical level of trying to understand the newsroom dynamics and identifying strategies for change. This process is still ongoing but seems to face the same challenges that were around decades ago: 'Disappointingly, despite women's greater presence in newsrooms, the landscape of news has changed very little over the past decade' (Ross and Carter, 2011, p. 1161). Women 'still tend to lag behind in terms of career progression and salary […] there are still very few women in senior positions within news organizations' (Ross and Carter, 2011, p. 1161).

Time to step back and raise some questions: What evidence have we collected? How have we used it? What assumptions have we been making? Which blinkers have we perhaps worn? Has our terminology been clear? Part of the answers to these questions can be found by analysing the major debates and research – which is what I will try to do in the first part of this chapter.

This chapter starts with a description of the conceptual development of studies of newsroom practices over the last 60 years as they have been demonstrated in academic publications; it excludes personal testimonies by early female pioneers. It will try to identify the assumptions, sometimes implicit, that underlie the concepts researchers have worked with.

My concluding remarks will try to spot where the challenges ahead of us lie, and whether region-specific social, cultural and political contexts may present us with such different realities and concerns that priority setting for newsrooms and gender cannot be generalised.

'Gender-neutral' newsrooms

When studies on newsrooms started to be published with some regularity, in the early 1950s and throughout the 1960s, the possible differences between men and women in newsroom production were not recognised as issues deserving any attention – if they were noticed at all. Most research was focused on individual behaviour of newsroom workers and the interpersonal or group dynamics between them, without disaggregating data with regards to sex. White's (1950) classic gatekeepers' study on 'Mr. Gates', for instance, identified the influence of personal and idiosyncratic biases in news selection, but it took more than 40 years before the female equivalent of the study – Ms. Gates – was conducted (Bleske, 1991). When Breed (1955) described how social control in the newsroom could work as a possible force in conforming to corporate norms, there was no recognition of the fact that, compared to men, pressures on women would most likely have been of a different nature and quality. Gieber's (1956) study on decision-making in news selection was based on interviewing 16 individual 'desk men' without mentioning anywhere that this one-sided sample composition may have been a limitation. Newsroom workers and professionals were treated as 'sex neutral' while 'gender' had yet to emerge in media studies – or in any other discipline for that matter – as a useful concept.

Although in the late 1950s and 1960s analyses of newsroom practices and media organisations in the USA and Europe began to include issues of power and control as influential factors (Pool and Schulman, 1959; Flegel and Chaffee, 1971), the idea that male and female experiences of power and control may be vastly different had not entered the discussion. A search for 'women and news' in JSTOR, EBSCOHOST: Academic Search Complete, EBSCOHOST: MasterFILE Premier, SagePub for the 1960-1970 period hardly leads to any substantial publication.

During these decades, the organisational context of newsroom work seemed to be perceived as 'neutral' space: power disparities between professionals were seen as a structural 'given' – the logical result of different positions in an organisational hierarchy.

The actual complexity of newsroom dynamics, however, began to be recognised in the early 1970s, when media organisation starts to be perceived as a domain in which occupational behaviour, professional beliefs and organisational values merge, opening the door to potential tensions and conflicts (Tunstall, 1971; Epstein, 1973; Sigal, 1973; Sigelman, 1973). Gender, however, is left out of the equation.

At a different level, and with a different scope, Stuart Hall's (1973) critical thinking, new to media and communication studies, was adding a new dimension by pointing out the ideological common ground of, and the institutional connections between, media organisations and structures of power – working 'under the condition of democratic capitalism' (Elliot, 1977, p.164).

Gender recognised

Feminist media criticism had already identified other 'structures of power' by pointing at the potentially negative effects of gender stereotyping in media content – especially popular culture – which would enforce and normalize male-focused cultural values. In the US, their fight against objectionable media content started to get attention in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when feminist activists and like-minded female media workers invaded the office of the editor and publisher of Ladies Home Journal, confronted the editors of other women magazines with their complaints and challenged employment barriers through legal action (Beasley and Gibbons, 1975).

In the English-speaking Caribbean media activism started a little later. Most English-speaking countries gained their independence during the 1960s and 1970s and national political priorities and energies were primarily focused on development. In addition, until the late 1980s, the Caribbean media landscape was not heavily populated. Many media were government-owned and substantial media expansion would only start to take place in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Prior to 1994, 'hardly anything was documented systematically on the position of women in Caribbean media, their influence or lack of influence, their power or lack of power' (De Bruin, 1994, p.6). The little information that was available at that time was either not known or not easily accessible from within the Caribbean – a well-known phenomenon in externally funded regions where contracts for researchers from outside the region are part and parcel of the grants package.

The 1994 study on Women and Caribbean Media was one of the first, in the Caribbean region, to spot the trends: 'Although the increasing numbers of women in media organizations is closing the numerical gap between male and female, the changes follow a well known pattern: most women are concentrated in the lower echelons. They seem to be moving gradually into leading positions, but they are still under-represented in middle management and especially in senior management' (De Bruin, 1994, p.70). After 2002 no other systematic studies on gender patterns in employment in Caribbean media were undertaken, but anecdotal evidence suggests no groundbreaking changes.

The portrayal of women in the Caribbean media, however, has since the early 1980s been a topic of attention at several regional and national meetings throughout the region – perhaps too often with promises and recommendations that did not get follow-up or implementation (De Bruin, 1994, pp.12,13).

Internationally, however, trivialisation and sex-role stereotyping in media content had been placed high on the political agenda. The 1975 Mexico Conference for the First UN Decade for Women defined this as one of its major concerns, together with women's underrepresentation in the news as well as in decision-making positions in media organisations (UNESCO, 1980).

This political and global recognition may have encouraged the productive response of academics, mostly women, many of them self-defined feminist scholars, in the more well-resourced regions of the world, turning out a stream of – usually small – studies (small scale surveys, case studies, qualitative work), published in the late 1970s and 1980s, on 'familiar' questions but now from a 'differentiated' perspective. The variation of topics, adding to basic knowledge on everyday professional life of women in media, or women in journalism, showed how much had to be caught up with: women's positions and occupational roles in media organisations; their role as professionals in news production; whether 'sex' made a difference in the final product (Merritt and Gross, 1978); whether they would different 'gatekeepers' selecting different aspects; whether their job satisfaction would be determined by different factors (Barrett, 1984); whether they would experience specific career barriers (Ferri and Keller, 1986); whether they would respond differently to news stories of women (Scott Whitlow, 1977); whether they would, in managerial positions, set different goals and achievement orientations (Sohn, 1984); and so on.

In the early 1980s Gallagher (1981, p.106) captured the then key questions: 'What is the impact of the images of women found in the world's media on the formation of attitudes and perception in both women and men? And, what is the impact of media women themselves on the production of these images?' 'She found evidence of the impact of media imagery of women to be 'fairly well established'; for instance, 'sex-stereotyped content leads children to describe women's roles in traditional ways' (Gallagher, 1981, p.107). It was a position that, years later, would be considered to be much more controversial, when audience studies suggested that media impact on kids had everything to do with parental guidance and direction. For the proposition that an increasing number of media women would be able to change media content, Gallagher (1981, p.108) 'found little evidence'.

The major themes that emerged in the early 1990s suggested a few crucial areas in need of understanding and change: the portrayal of women in media content; women's limited share of media ownership and control, and imbalanced gender patterns in media employment. The stream of mainly descriptive 'number' studies, coming from local and regional initiatives, produced data scattered across countries and continents, making it difficult to draw comparisons. It was a strategic step forward when Gallagher and Von Euler (1995), working with not easily comparable data and with certain regions over-represented (e.g. Europe) and others totally absent, managed to put together a global standard reference book. It then became also empirically obvious that in most cases women formed only a minority in the media workforce (especially news organisations); they were a minor fraction in middle management and seriously under-represented at senior levels of decision-making.

The 'body count approach' (De Bruin, 1998) of descriptive research, used for establishing gender employment patterns (see Burks and Stone, 1993; De Bruin, 1994; Gallagher and Quindoza-Santiago, 1994; Jimenez-David, 1996; Mills, 1997; Weaver, 1997; Weaver and Wilhoit, 1996; Robinson and Saint-Jean, 1998) conceptualised – often implicitly – 'gender' in media organisations as a 'fixed attribute' within the organisation – in line with how organisational studies in general, at the time, neglected gender aspects (Alvesson and Billing, 1997; Halford et al., 1997; Martin and Collinson, 1999).

Although providing badly needed baseline information, 'the body count' had a major limitation: by treating gender as a fixed organisational attribute, the 'relational quality' of gender – constructed through interpersonal processes and wider social expectations – was ruled out. There was little or no attention to the interactions between gender and other variables that determined newsroom culture and behaviour. Van Zoonen (1994, p.55) had found only 'very few studies' that examined the interaction of gender with organisational variables and Carter et al. (1998, p.3) added that the politics of gender in media organisations, that is, 'how gender relationships shape (journalism's) forms, practices, institutions and audiences […] deserve more critical attention than they have typically received to date'.

The field, however, over the last ten, fifteen years, has tried to catch up with these gaps. Starting in the late 1990s and continuing through the first decade of the new century it has convincingly gone 'beyond the body count' by defining and exploring 'the gendered substructures in media organizations' (Allan, 1998; Carter, 1998; Kitzinger, 1998: Skidmore, 1998; Steiner, 1998; Van Zoonen, 1998; Djerf-Pierre, 2005; Ross, 2004; Melin-Higgins, 2004; Opoku-Mensah, 2004; Joseph, 2004).

The emphasis on 'gendered substructures', embedded in newsroom practices (e.g. male preferences setting the agenda for news selection; the typical male/female division of labour in the beat allocation), offered a 'mer à boire' when choosing starting points for analysis. Common agreement seemed to have been that 'male dominance in the newsroom' allowed male values and judgment to determine – and bias – professional output. Some authors pointed at the macho norms for professional news gathering (Skidmore, 1998), others suggested that journalism and femininity – read professionalism and gender – did not go together or described subtle processes 'such as the selective privileging of "masculine" over "feminine" discourses and ways of knowing' (Kitzinger, 1998, p.187). A similar mechanism, but then relating to media theories, was introduced by Rush (2011, p. 271), who referred to 'the male-implanted hypotheses such as agenda-setting or media-dependency'.

The debates on the 'gendered' substructures have not been without conceptual challenges. Publications refer to 'gender orientation in journalism' or 'gendered professionalism' (Van Zoonen, 1998, pp.35,36); 'gendered professional practices in the newsroom' (Skidmore, 1998, p.208); 'gendered substructures' (Allan, 1998; Carter, 1998; Kitzinger, 1998; Steiner, 1998); 'gendered media elites' (Djerf-Pierre, 2005); 'gendered newsrooms' (Hardin and Whiteside, 2009); 'gendered narratives' in which 'gender' is not always clearly defined and mostly used interchangeably with 'women' or 'women and men.' De Bruin (2000a, p.229) suggested that the shifting balances between organisational and journalistic interests may be leading to 'merging identities' in which what journalists present to be a unique professional ideology 'may very well be a proxy for organizational values with which they identify – organizational identity in disguise'.

Where in earlier studies the emphasis had been more on employment figures, tasks and job descriptions, this new approach recognised how 'cultural interpretations of every day work, actions and language, as feminine or masculine' contributed to structuring relations in the newsroom (De Bruin, 2004, p.1).

Where have we reached and which questions do we face?

The Global Media Monitoring Project 2010 indicates that, after fifteen years of monitoring twice each decade, 'despite a slow but overall steady increase in women's presence in the news over the past 10 years, the world depicted in the news remains predominantly male' (WACC, 2010, p.vii). Women's 'inclusion in the media agenda as news subjects, newsmakers and new producers is still significantly below that of men'(Ross and Carter, 2011, p.1149). The suggestion that new, social media may offer new opportunities for agency, away from old structures, does not find general agreement. A change of medium does not necessarily alter suppressing gender relations and still needs to be interrogated using the familiar questions (Byerly and Ross, 2006; Ross, 2010).

The Caribbean data from the Global Media Monitoring Project are not essentially different: women are still underrepresented in the news, and 'imbalanced representations of women and men in the media perpetuate stereotypes […] form the basis of gender-based discrimination in every day situations' (WACC, 2010, p.4).

These observations leave us puzzled, after decades of study and activism. How adequate have our strategies been? What was missing in our analysis? Should we have another look at the perspective or conceptual framework(s) that we are using? The complexity of the newsroom, with many determining factors shaping journalistic behaviour, does not make it easy to identify single points of entry for change.

If we focus on '"masculine" norms and values of journalistic practice' which 'masquerade as professional routine to which all journalists are expected to subscribe' (Ross and Carter, 2011, p.1149), we leave out the many other factors that determine journalistic routines. Earlier scholars pointed at a dominating organisational interest, stating that occupational ideals serve what suits the organisational structure (Elliot, 1977); professionalism serves organizational interest (Tuchman, 1978) and a certain organizational space will allow professional behaviour (Beam, 1990) – all suggesting that professional routines could be seen as organisational imperatives in disguise (De Bruin, 2000a). Organisational imperatives by themselves could be 'fed' by 'masculine' norms and values.

In addition, the descriptions of practices and discourses in research reports do not seem to have led to new coherent conceptual frameworks. Some fundamental conceptual questions are still up for debate – a debate that may have to be held at the regional level, with region-specific social, cultural and political contexts presenting specific realities and concerns determining our priorities.

A good example may be the Caribbean where in many of the English-speaking countries 'accepted' gender norms are strongly hetero-normative with a heavy emphasis on 'macho behaviour' for men and little tolerance for deviations. Jamaica, over the last few years, has seen extremes of life threatening sanctions by out of control crowds to visible variations of this standard norm for men. Those who do not fit the stereotypical – and suppressing – gender norms for male and female behaviour have become a public category: 'the gays'. Media portrayal of this group has been unacceptably rigid, sensational, offensive and dangerous; including in one broad sweep all persons that would identify, openly or not, as for instance, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Against this background, 'gender justice' in media – related to portrayal or otherwise – cannot be equated with gender justice concerning women only.

This confronts us with a major challenge – signalled in earlier literature (Creedon, 1993, Rakow, 1992; Valdivia, 1995) but still unresolved – to think 'beyond binary contradictions and Into Multicultural Spectrums' (Valdivia, 1995, p.7). Especially when 'media portrayal of gender [...] should be of concern to anyone intent to see the emergence of less discriminatory, more inclusive and equitable societies' (WACC, 2010, p.x).

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Scheherezades: a thousand and one stories of women in community radio

María Eugenia Chávez

Community radios are rich with stories of women. All of these tales could fill hours and hours of broadcasts and women's voices would be the conduit for bringing these talking stories to life. Thus, it would be a radio broadcast story about women and radio. Just imagine. I am imagining it as I write this. I can hear the strong, precise words of Doreen in Nairobi, her steady voice telling us about the work of Pamoja FM with youth in the settlements of Kibera, one of the poorest places lacking services in a site considered to be Africa's New York. On the other hand, from Fiji comes Sharon's soft voice telling stories of young women who travel from one island to the next with a suitcase containing a small radio transmitter and who help island women launch their voices over the radio to share how they are participating in democratising their communities or how they address water issues.

Listening to and reading about the role that women play with radio stations would lead us to publish book after book, all of which would captivate us with the richness of their stories, the diversity of voices, the creation of spoken landscapes that would help us leap from Africa to the Fiji Islands, to Kathmandu in Nepal or Matagalpa in Nicaragua, or even to the Alps in Europe. Collecting stories about community radio broadcasting in which women are the protagonists is a pending task that those of us working in this field should no longer dodge or delay further. I am absolutely sure that this will be an interesting, enjoyable way to learn about the influence women play in community-based media, 'to get to the meat of things', as we say in my country. Better yet, we could gather this information through the voices of the protagonists themselves and the sounds in their local contexts. We need to tell these stories in the way that radio broadcasters do: with the mike out and ready to produce radio. Although it may seem like a titanic task, this process will help us to take one another into account as female community radio broadcasters, to get to know one another, to identify who we are and where we are coming from and to learn about the situations and problems we face as we exercise our freedom of expression. It will also help us to take account of and have evidence of how much we help other women to have access to information.

If we start by recognising that community radios exist in 120 countries around the world and that women participate in every one of them, situating the gender and development social agenda in their programming, then we can begin to grasp the dimension of the efforts needed to systematise information that will help us build a stage for enacting the topic of 'women & gender in community radio'. Addressing this topic appears to be an immeasurable task but not an impossible one. Progress will depend upon the attention that governments, non-governmental organisations, researchers and international organisations decide to and are capable of dedicating to these issues. Seeking to sound out this issue and most definitely running the risk of putting many governments on the spot, international bodies like UNESCO, through the International Programme for the Development of Communication, could request available information from many different governments about the participation of women in community radio.

Some information about women's participation is very likely to be available in states in which legislation recognises a citizen's right to operate his or her own communication media, in countries where community radios exist grounded in a community's rights to exercise freedom of expression.

The information that the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) has concerning its members is not conclusive and has not been verified or updated. However, we can use the lists of voting members by continent, which include the names of the people who run each radio station or production group. We share some figures here seeking to establish a single indicator from the many that community radios should set in order to monitor gender mainstreaming. This indicator is numerical and only shows how many community broadcasting entities are run by women, according to this international network's membership roll.

AMARC states that it brings together a network of more than 4,000 community radio stations, federations and allies of community radio in over 130 countries. The following data only considers voting members. We have counted a total of 1,780, 397 of which are run by women; this means that approximately one in five radios is run by a woman.

In Africa, 117 of 511 members are represented by women (W), corresponding to the overall correlation of 1 woman for every 5 men running a community radio station. In general, female to male representation varies from country to country, however, proportional representation is noted in the Ivory Coast with 20 women (W) from a total of 75 members, Ghana has 8 (W) of 19 members; Kenya 4 (W) of 8; and Mali has 10 (W) of 39. In Mali, two of the radio stations are collectives composed entirely of women; these entities belong to a network entitled La Voix de la Femme, which is also present in Burundi.

In Latin America, this gender correlation declines to 1 (W) in every 4, meaning that there are more women running radios in Africa. The figures indicate that Nicaragua is the country with the greatest parity in the relation of men and women running community radio stations with 10 (W) out of 17. Argentina is next with 12 (W) of its 26 members, followed by Peru with 10 (W) of 33. With 114 members, Bolivia is the country with the greatest overall number of AMARC members in the region, however, only 16 are run by women. In Chile, we have Radio Tierra, the historical broadcasting entity of feminist organisation La Morada; La Radioneta, which is run by a feminist woman, broadcasts from Valparaiso in Chile as well. In Nicaragua, Radio Vos belongs to the Matagalpa Women's Collective, a group of women that have been working on women's rights issues since 1986, promoting sexual and reproductive health and counselling on human rights issues. Radio Vos is clearly the voice of this women's collective – it is a feminist, political communications project.

In North America, there is one woman for every man running a community radio in the United States and Canada. AMARC has 201 member radio stations in these two countries, 55 of which are run by women. WINGS (the Women's International News Gathering Service), with its weekly news service that feeds many other broadcasting entities, has played an important role in Canada.

In Asia, AMARC has 207 member community radio stations but only 24 are run by women, that is to say, approximately 1 (W) out of every 9 stations. However, this is the region that demonstrates the greatest amount of activity with respect to women's capacity building and this was the first region to discuss, develop and write up gender policies for the broadcasting entities; these policies, with their contextual differences, have been adopted in other regions or countries, such as Mexico, a country that has greatly furthered the adoption of gender policies in the network's internal regulations.

In Europe, the relation returns to 1 (W) for every 4 members. The United Kingdom demonstrates the greatest parity with 9 (W) of 16 members, followed by Switzerland with 2 (W) of 4 and Spain with 5 (W) out of 16. Although France has 114 members overall, only 18 are run by women. Radio Lora in Switzerland is one of the most consolidated feminist projects in the region.

The North Africa-Middle East region registers 2 (W) of 14 members, for a 1 (W) to 7 relation. This is a new region and the community radio stations are very recent, however, there are very interesting experiences in this region, such as Ammannet, an internet radio station that has worked especially with rural women in Jordan.

In Oceania, there are 38 (W) of a total of 85 members and the 4 existing radio stations in Fiji are women's projects that are well-positioned not only on the islands but also throughout the region.

These numbers do not say much about the daily reality of women in these community radios. I began by saying that we should tell their stories, gather their voices, recreate their resoundingly colourful contexts and describe the concrete actions that they are carrying out to improve women's lives.

To this end, we need to systematise the experiences that the women of AMARC have accumulated over the past two decades. Each woman holds a part of the story, each one has made a contribution from the place where she participates, each one adds her experience and work to enrich a global network that seeks to influence public policy on our right to exercise freedom of expression.

Gender and feminist mainstreaming in AMARC's actions is a necessity and a strategy that will surely contribute to greater empowerment of women and other sexual identities at community radios and across the network.

We also need to be involved and take ownership in actions regarding the defence of the right to communication, the demand for the radio spectrum, our call to modify national laws that establish or strengthen legal frameworks that protect plurality and diversity in communication, the need to exercise solidarity when women and men community communicators face emergencies, in addition to networking and cooperation with other social movements.

New information and communication technologies present a new challenge with regard to achieving their use by women. In this sense, they represent a huge need for training and development but they also open up possibilities for communication that did not exist before. By promoting their use – and by training women – we can strengthen women's capacities and promote processes for interactive communication in which women from community radios become part of a whole and can contribute to the work of their female colleagues in other countries and regions of the world.

One path for making progress towards greater women's leadership is the creation of strategies that include affirmative action. This strategy, debated in many different arenas, becomes necessary in spaces in which women are at a disadvantage and do not have the necessary tools to position themselves to participate in decision-making. I am referring to the need to carry out actions so that women community radio broadcasters can become active decision-makers at their radio stations, in their communities, within the national and regional networks and in the international arena.

Economic issues are a breaking point for women's participation in communities where community radios exist. Although it depends upon the regulatory framework in each country, in most cases community radios are sustained through the voluntary efforts of their members and collaborators. This means that women once again deposit their labour power for free in a labour space, leading them to have an additional burden. Hence, in addition to the need to change laws so that community radios can survive with different sources of financing, we also need to garner greater economic support through national and international organisations that support and foster community radio. While the lack of money does not have to be an obstacle to building a movement in which the sum of political will, active membership and commitment to the struggle for the rights of those who have the least is critical, financial resources are the fuel to keep the motor of our actions running strong.

Women's access to ICTs in the information society

Cecilia Castaño Collado

ICTs and the information society

In contemporary life information has become a primary good, essential for daily activity in what is called the Information Society (IS). Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are also key drivers for knowledge, productivity and power. Academic literature highlights the positive effects of being able to use computers and the internet, as it helps individuals improve their social relations, language and mathematics skills, academic records and success in finding a job. Concern exists also about the rise of digital divisions as a barrier to the development of an equitable IS. If factors exist that slow the incorporation of these innovations by the public, economic, social and individual welfare will be negatively affected (Brynin, Raban and Soffer, 2004; van Dijk, 2005; Korup and Szydlik, 2005; Hilbert, 2011).

The concept of the digital divide (OECD, 2001) is key to understanding the social justice implications of unequal access to ICTs. The gap between individuals – but also households and geographic areas – that take advantage by accessing and using the internet and those who are in a position of relative disadvantage, is related to the knowledge divide: as the diffusion of ICTs spreads over the whole population, groups with higher socioeconomic and education levels tend to benefit from information at a faster rate than those at lower levels; so, the divide or gap between them tends to increase rather that decrease (Rogers, 2003). The core question related to access to digital networks is who gets empowered and who is informationally marginalised by the use of these new tools (Hilbert, 2011).

As a research topic, the digital divide is multidimensional and covers a wide range of issues (van Dijk and Hacker, 2003; OECD, 2007; Dutton and Helsper, 2007; Castaño, 2008). Policy is interested in the magnitude of the digital divide and, more importantly, its evolution – whether it is closing or widening over time – and at what speed this is happening. The early approaches focused on ICT connectivity, with emphasis on improving infrastructure and physical access; but, while the most obvious access divide appears to be closing, other more subtle inequalities are emerging. These relate to the speed, availability and quality of access – speed and bandwidth; mobile internet, abilities and skills to use the internet effectively, and the way internet use affects access to goods and services (Liff and Shepherd, 2004). The digital divide is also dynamic in itself, with the internet continuously being reconfigured with new applications, new devices and opportunities for access. The delays in adoption and the inequalities in use are associated with patterns of advantage/disadvantage between social groups and may significantly exacerbate current social inequalities (Bimber, 2000; Rogers, 2003; van Dijk, 2005; Hilbert, 2011).

The gender digital divide

The analysis of gender differences and discrimination with regards to the diffusion of ICTs is strategic not only for reasons of equality and social justice; as women represent more than half of the world's population (therefore, they are not a disadvantaged collective), their access and whole incorporation into the IS is important for economic growth and social welfare.

The concept of gender is key to understanding differences and inequalities between female and male users concerning ICTs. Gender is a social construct that assigns different roles and patterns of behaviour to women and men; these roles influence wishes and expectations in the choice of studies or career, employment, leisure and time management. Gender differences are also determinant in terms of responsibilities, barriers and opportunities for both sexes over the life course. Differences in internet use between men and women therefore cannot be considered a mere result of the free choice of the individuals, but rather depend on a whole set of expectations and social restrictions – maternity and care, gender prejudices and stereotypes, among others (Castaño and Webster, 2011).

The concept of the gender digital divide refers, then, to the structure of opportunities, cultural attitudes and skills related to the use of ICTs. These factors are influenced by age, education, employment and economic resources, as well as by other complex situations that arise as the different stages in the life course flow, the effects of domestic responsibilities or the use of time come into play (Helsper, 2010; Castaño and Webster, 2011). Kennedy, Wellman and Klement (2003) statistically demonstrate the influence that women's limited availability of time has on their access to the internet. Hargittai and Shafer (2006) insist upon the impact that differences in the availability of leisure time have on the intensity of use. Studies by the OECD consider that the incorporation of women into the internet community in smaller numbers is related to their lower rate of activity and employment, and that they are involved in greater number in activities and professions (education, health, social services) that rely less on computers (OECD, 2007). Another important factor is the lower level of computer and internet skills among female users compared to male counterparts, which makes it hard for them to obtain the maximum benefit from ICTs (Castaño, Martín and Martínez Cantos, 2011; Martínez Cantos, 2013).

Old and new gender digital divides

The gender digital divide represents, on the one hand, the continuity of old inequalities between men and women and, on the other hand, the emergence of new and specific forms of inequality. Literature on this topic (DiMaggio and Hargittai, 2001; Castaño, 2008; Korupp and Szydlik, 2005) distinguishes between two main dimensions of the gender divide. The first digital divide refers principally to the differences between men and women in terms of access to computers and to the internet. Literature and empirical research show that while these gender gaps are narrowing, gender differences are emerging with regards to perceived performance, usage patterns and related interests. In this line, the second digital divide focuses on the different usage patterns of ICTs as well as the differences in digital skills and performance

The map of uses of women and men makes clear that the sexual divisions of labour that exist in society are transferred to virtual reality (Kennedy, Wellman and Klement, 2003; Sáinz and González, 2008; OECD, 2007). According to data from the OECD and Eurostat, in most countries women score almost like men in uses related to communication; on the other hand, men far outnumber women in most actual applications in technology and leisure activities (software, music, movies, games, sports) while women outnumber men in information searches about health, education and training, activities for family and care (OECD, 2007; Observatorio e-Igualdad, 2011). Hilbert (2011) confirms a similar pattern of behaviour for 12 Latin American countries with data from the Observatory for the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean (OSILAC).

Another gender gap exists with regards to computer and internet skills. Using data from the Eurostat Community Survey of ICT Use in Households and by Individuals (2007-2011) the Observatorio e-Igualdad (2011) examines the list of computer and internet tasks performed by internet users in the 27 European Union countries, including the Nordic countries. It shows that differences between men and women are small when it comes to more simple and frequent tasks (copying folders, cutting and pasting in a document, using search engines, sending emails with files) while women lag behind when it comes to more complex skills (sharing peer to peer, downloading software, creating web pages). Their analysis shows that age or education do not reduce the size of the gender skills gap as could be expected (Castaño, Martín and Martínez, 2011).

Martínez Cantos (2013), using data from this same source for 2006-2011, performs cluster analysis to compare men and women with equal conditions of age, education and employment. His results confirm the persistence of gender gaps in the adoption of new mobile devices, in the performance of certain specialised tasks and in internet usage patterns. And this happens even in countries with the highest levels of ICT penetration, also for the young population groups, at higher levels of education and in populations with white-collar jobs.

Future outlooks

The outlook of women with regards to ICT and IS has a positive and a negative side. The positive one is that the number of female internet users is constantly increasing worldwide. The use of ICTs improves the position of women in the labour market. Telework and self-employment on the internet are attractive alternatives for women to combine employment with family responsibilities.

The negative side is that, despite the increased number of users, the second gender digital divide persists and women are relegated to certain economic activities and occupations, while men dominate the strategic areas of education, research and employment related to ICTs. But computer and internet skill are key for women in order to get better jobs, as well as for self-employment and entrepreneurship.

Although women progressively make use of all the ICT devices and internet services, it seems that men always get the newest and more innovative devices and services in advance and in greater numbers than women. By the time women gain mass access to the new devices and uses, the technological boundaries have shifted, to a new area, which men already dominate.

Concern about the participation of women in ICTs exists among public authorities in the United States, the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean with regards to the gender digital gaps and to the stagnation, and even the reduction, in the percentage of women who undertake computer and engineering degrees. The gender digital divide is also present in the small proportion of women who work in the ICT field, as creators, innovators or in relevant positions (Cohoon and Aspray, 2008; EC, 2008; Peña, Goñi and Sabanes, 2012; Castaño, 2010).

Actions

Digital divisions look like technological divisions, but are in fact social divisions. So, the policies for gender digital inclusion shouldn't concentrate only on providing access, but on increasing women's skills and abilities to allow appropriation – taking, seizing and shaping – of ICTs for their personal and professional development. This is a complex social process involving education, work and leisure, and many other domains, that cannot be left to market forces alone. Public authorities must lead the way, launching programmes and initiatives and coordinating other public and private actors, in order to overcome former and new digital gaps and to accomplish a complete inclusion of women in the IS.

Gender digital inclusion public policies must be based on the following principles:

1. Digital gaps between men and women are not the results of natural processes or personal choice, but are socially constructed, and as such must and can be addressed through specific policies.
2. A comprehensive approach is one that:

- considers the different facets of the gender digital divide (access, uses, skills and abilities) and articulates interventions in the different fields of education, work and leisure;
- is aware of women's availability and uses of time and the different stages of the life course, in order to facilitate specific inclusive measures designed for specific groups of women;
- recognises that the content of policies has to be addressed not only to the women final receivers, but also to the structures and systems – knowledge generation about gender and ICTs; exchange, communication and diffusion of policies; stakeholders and social partners.

3. Gender equality in the IS: integrating gender equality measures in general ICT, IS and innovation policies.
4. ICTs for gender equality: integrating the advantages and utilities of ICTs in the development of equality policies.
5. Influence public and private stakeholders in order to make policies sustainable.
6. Policies necessarily must have a clear target of combating gender discrimination.

A first distribution of roles and responsibilities between the different actors involved in gender digital inclusion can be as follows:

- Supranational authorities and international organisations
- Setting goals and standards for policies of gender inclusion in the IS
- Setting standards for gender indicators of IS
- Coordination of data gathering and elaboration of international reports that allow for accurate description of the gender divide and evaluation of progress
- National governments
- Planning of infrastructure and services for access with the aim of social and digital inclusion – broadband in rural areas, fair fares and the possibility of free access, availability at public schools and libraries
- National Actions Plans for gender equality and inclusion in the IS
- Objectives of gender inclusion in ICTs and IS policies
- Gathering and processing information, evaluation of policies
- The central role of regional and local governments is bringing policies close to citizens at
- the regional level: designing, carrying out and funding programmes
- the local level: keep close to the most excluded and marginalised through public connection centres
- specific programmes adapted to local group characteristics and needs
- The education system

At the national level, national education plans must change, if necessary, to include ICT skills in primary, secondary and higher education curricula with 'hybrid' ICT courses incorporated into all curricula offered, including ICT training in non-technological subjects (history, geography etc.).

- At the regional and local level
- Programmes for making parents, teachers and career guidance counsellors aware of ICTs as an important and viable opportunity for girls
- Improving the quality of ICT teaching, to ensure that women students know about the continually evolving nature of the IS and that they need to carry on improving their skill base for life
- Gender-aware pedagogy for teaching ICTs
- Research organisations and academic associations can contribute to the general awareness about gender digital divides and opportunities by
- improving gender ICT knowledge through research, academic publications and diffusion to the general public
- cooperating with government at every level in designing plans for gender equality in the IS, and in evaluation of plans and actions
- launching specific programs in cooperation with educational institutions to bring more girls and young women to ICTs
- Civil society: NGOs, women's organisations, political parties and social partners play an essential role in
- enhancing the outlook of women as final beneficiaries of gender ICT policies
- developing micro-interventions based on the detected ICT needs of specific groups of women – housewives, immigrants, those returning to employment after parental leave
- launching specific programmes for improving employability and entrepreneurship among women through use of ICTs
- Equality agencies should design straightforward policies in order to enhance
- use and appropriation of ICTs by women
- women's participation in public affairs
- involving women's organisations with government ICT agencies to facilitate the shaping of IS policies to women's specific needs

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Gaps in media and communication governance: towards a gender-aware research and advocacy agenda

Claudia Padovani

Gender aware communication scholarship has been slow to engage with the domain of media and communication policy: though preoccupations about women's equal access to media content, employment and decision-making, about their fair representation in the media and about the constraints to women's communication rights in the evolving digital context are clearly dependent on policy determinations, the broader policy context of gender inequalities in the media has seldom been investigated. The situation is gradually changing, with contributions exploring different aspects of the policy dimensions characterising the nexus between gender and media (Jorge, 2000; Jensen, 2005; Sarikakis and Shade, 2008; Sarikakis and Nguyen, 2009; Gallagher, 2011, 2014; Byerly, 2011; Padovani and Pavan, 2013; EIGE, 2013). Yet much remains to be done in terms of conceptual clarification, the elaboration of analytical frameworks adequately grounded in feminist theory, efforts to reduce existing fragmentation in research programmes, the conduct of cross-cultural and comparative investigations.

As a group of committed scholars within the IAMCR, we feel it is appropriate to devote specific attention to these aspects at a particular moment in time. Over the next two years a series of international events, processes and debates relevant to the nexus between women and media and gendered relations, will take place: the UNESCO promoted *Global Forum on Media and Gender*; the celebration of the *UN Beijing + 20 conference* and of the *UN promoted World Summit on the Information Society +10 summit*[1]; the final phase of the Millennium Development Goals[2]. The year 2015 promises to bring renewed and heightened attention to the many concerns women and men have about their rights to communication in digital and knowledge societies. It therefore seems timely to develop a theoretically sound and comprehensive research agenda, and to contribute to those debates by setting the stage for much needed investigations and reflections aimed at informing future media policies and, more broadly, the governance of global communications, with an explicit and forward looking gender orientation.

For some decades now we have been persuaded by Wildavsky's (1979) suggested role of policy analysts as those who 'speak truth to power'. More recently, Peter Haas (1992) developed the concept of epistemic communities as networks of professionals with recognized knowledge and skills in a particular area, who share sets of beliefs that provide a value-based foundation, useful to guide decision-makers towards the adoption of appropriate norms and institutions, by framing and institutionalizing specific issue-areas. As an epistemic community, IAMCR aims at operating as a source for policy innovation; hence at the IAMCR 2013 conference in Dublin a multi-vocal conversation was initiated to address and frame gender gaps in media policy as an issue area. A panel titled 'Speaking truth to power about gender and communication: International and regional policy developments towards Beijing+20' was organised; scholars from different regional and cultural contexts, and with different research interests and methodological approaches – including Carolyn Byerly, Karen Ross, Aimée Vega Montiel, Peter Kareithi and Susan Abbott– contributed their views; and written versions of their contributions have been collected in an issue of Feminist Media Studies (forthcoming 2/2014). That conversation helped clarify if and how far institutional and media actors are indeed promoting meaningful changes towards more gender-aware media policies and practices in different world regions, suggesting at the same time how the scholarly community can contribute to make those changes happen.

The rest of this article focuses on the latter aspect: on what ground an epistemic community like IAMCR can become a more relevant stakeholder, in cooperation with other entities, particularly UNESCO, in framing and fostering a set of guiding principles for media and communication that reflects well established principles of equality and non-discrimination, while realising the objectives of increased women's participation and empowerment in and through the media, balanced and non-stereotyped representation of women, freedom of expression for women and full enjoyment of their communication rights.

Towards a gender-focused research and advocacy agenda

In general terms the panel recognised the need to consolidate the knowledge that has been produced so far, through academic research as well as through the many analyses conducted by international organisations and local and national entities, including media unions and media monitoring organisations; and the need to reduce knowledge fragmentation, particularly across regions, by fostering the networking of knowledge and practices related to gender-aware media governance. Furthermore, there is a shared feeling that scholars can contribute to highlighting persistent gaps and inequalities as well as to identifying new and open issues, particularly those deriving from evolving media and communication environments, which need to be framed, investigated and included in the agenda also as reflections of existing geo-cultural diversities.

To these ends, I address four specific aspects that I consider relevant to understanding, analysing and fostering gender-aware policy developments: a. Conceptualising communication governance from a gender perspective; b. Interrogating the findings from explorations in gender and media; c. Recognising existing contributions by the scholarly community beyond research; d. Setting the bases for structuring a policy and gender-aware research and advocacy framework.

a. Conceptualising communication governance from a gender perspective

In the first place it is crucial to define the boundaries of gender and media as an issue area by offering a definition of the complex, multi-level, multi-actor domain under discussion. We argue gender-sensitive communication governance can fruitfully be conceived as emerging from

the multiplicity of networks of interdependent, but operationally autonomous actors, which produce relevant knowledge and cultural practices; develop frames that imbue public discourse and orientate policy agendas; articulate principles and visions towards normative frameworks and policy responses to shortcomings and imbalances characterising the interlinkages between women, men, communication processes and mediating technologies. (Raboy and Padovani, 2010; Padovani and Pavan, 2011).

Given the above definition, the policy dimension of gender and media is to be approached across a multiplicity of aspects and policy-relevant practices: the plurality of the actors involved, not only policy-makers and regulators but also media professionals and their unions, media organisations and their management, civic organisations concerned with communication as a fundamental process in human societies and media academics; the cognitive dimension of producing policy-relevant knowledge through different forms of communication and media channels and sectors, including public service, commercial and community; the framing of problematic issues and the translation of those frames into principles and normative references, also through monitoring existing media content and routines; the policy frameworks elaborated in response to specific conditions in national and regional context, and their relevance to internationally agreed standards of behaviour, for instance: pluralism, access to the media, protection of privacy, cultural and linguistic heritage and gender equality policies and practices.

Given this comprehensive definition of communication governance, scholarly efforts as well as advocacy interventions aimed at promoting gender equality in and through the media may take different orientations and operate at different levels, through a plurality of entry points that would shed light on specific aspects, from the definition of agreed-upon rules (as in the Beijing Platform for Action Section J) to the social recognition of norms and their cultural adaptation and actual implementation (i.e. how are the principles expressed in Section J translated in local context and realised across a diverse media environment?).

When it comes to developing a research and advocacy agenda, such a constructivist conceptualisation of the policy domain should engage with feminist theory. In this respect I refer to Ann Tickner's (2002) analyses of world politics, where she outlines that theories and analyses that incorporate gender aspects in the study of (international) politics should satisfy three criteria: they should discuss historical variability, thus the very possibility of change; they should allow for the possibility of talking about the social construction of meanings; they should permit theorising about power in ways that uncover hidden power relations. Tickner thus indicates a path for investigating the gendered dimension in/of media policies that acknowledges the possibility for change while stressing the fact that change is not just about actors' behaviour, but also about social meanings that are often proposed (and imposed) by media industries. This implies that in organising conceptual and analytical frameworks to fill in existing knowledge gaps in media policies and communication governance with a gender perspective, we should consider ideational and cognitive factors, and the deriving policy frameworks, as the outcome of interactions and negotiations, often hidden or non-visible, where gendered and unequal power relations are inevitably at work.

b. Interrogate findings from explorations in gender and media

Secondly, we can reflect and build on existing research findings. To provide just a few examples, I refer to a recent European project and resulting report (EIGE, 2013) focused on advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations. An overview of policy provisions at the level of the European Union shows, for instance, that provisions adopted to promote gender equity and overcome stereotypical and degrading representations of women by different entities from within the Union - the Commission, the Council and European Parliament – are often different in tone and wording, thus expressing different underlying interests; they are mostly 'soft provisions' leaving it to media actors to develop their own principles, guidelines and internal policies. Also, the focus of resulting normative frameworks changes over time, for instance showing more attention to issues of women's access to decision-making positions in media industries in the 1990s than in early 2000s, while returning to portrayals, images and stereotypes as a main focus precisely at the time when the Union is fostering women's participation in decision-making bodies and boards (Council, 2012). From the analyses it also appears that European policy-making relating to the media and audiovisual industries has been characterised over time by a lack of attention to gender equality issues and a seeming lack of commitment in pursuing gender-sensitive outcomes.

The same Report also accounts for the internal policies, codes and implementation of monitoring mechanisms that have been adopted by 99 media organisations across the 28 European countries: fewer than 1 in 7 such organisations have specific gender-related equality plans; in general they reflect the general non-discriminatory principle included in the Audiovisual Media Service Directive of 2010, but no proactive intervention specifically on gender is found; few organisations have formal mechanisms for monitoring their equality policies, including dedicated overview committees for equality issues, or equality/diversity departments or staff with a specific remit for equality. Without such monitoring mechanisms, organisations are unable to evaluate their own performance against the very guidance they have initiated. Furthermore, the existence of national laws, media organisations' equality plans and codes of conduct do not, in themselves, bring about change and the actual presence and relevance of women in managerial roles remains much lower than that of men.

Referring to the North American context, Byerly (forthcoming 2014) argues that 'for women, media conglomeration also signals the consolidation of men's economic and political power, and the further marginalisation of women's' in that it 'reinforces existing structural blocks to women's voices in public discourse and the social and political participation that flows from that discourse.' Women have traditionally owned or controlled few newspapers, radio or television stations anywhere, but there is some evidence that in the US, women held a larger share of the controlling interest in boards in the 1970s before neoliberalism took hold than they do at present. Looking at the global context, Byerly recalls that media companies in many nations are concentrated, and this has had a range of impacts on women, including fewer employment opportunities and a narrowing of viewpoints in the news, as well as segregation in managerial roles. According to a study sponsored by the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) (Byerly, 2011), which surveyed 522 companies in 59 nations across all regions of the world to determine the level of women's participation in governance, management, newsgathering, production and administrative roles, overall women occupy only a fourth of the governance and top management positions. Similar results derive from the above-mentioned European report (EIGE, 2013; Ross, 2014).

Latin America does not look better in this global picture. As Aimée Vega Montiel (forthcoming 2014) notices across the continent, non-homogeneous histories and communication systems and policies are found; at the same time something that seems to be a shared history is the lack of 'plans of action based on the BPfA. Placing the Platform in the public debate has been a strategy followed by feminists, but not by institutional actors. Hence, there is an inadequate implementation of gender policies in all sectors, including the media: there is not a formal 'gender sensitive' media policy operating at a legislative level; what can be found are just some general principles or weak recommendations that have poor effect on the operations of media industries.' In Vega Montiel's terms, in Latin America, in spite of current progressive developments in countries such as Argentina, Ecuador and Mexico, there is not only a misconception of what gender equality is, but also a culture of prejudice about feminism and women's human rights.

Nevertheless, good practices have also been mapped out and investigated through research projects and should be made known, as models and possible benchmarks for further collective efforts, at the national and regional levels, in order to promote initiatives and mechanisms that realise the potential of gender equality.

Examples can found in the European context: for instance the BBC's Gender Equality Scheme adopted in 2007; innovative strategies initiated by the Corporación de Radio y Televisión Española (RTVE), including advertising campaigns; raising awareness of discrimination and violence against women; use of non-sexist language; the Austrian public service broadcaster Österreichische Rundfunk (ORF) gender equality plan aimed at raising the overall representation of women to 45% of the workforce.

Also, well known experiences that have engaged women and women's groups worldwide are worth mentioning, as possible anticipations of alternative media landscapes and normative frameworks. The latest effort is represented by the UNESCO proposal for a Global Alliance for Media and Gender, but we should also recall longer-term initiatives, promoted by civil society organisations involved in fostering gender-respective normative frameworks for the media: the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) promoted the Global Media Monitoring Project[3]; the Association for Progressive Communication (APC) and its Women's Networking Support Programme[4]; the collaboration among GenderLinks, MISA and other southern African groups, which led to the 15-nation South African Development Community (SADC) protocol on gender and development, which incorporates two articles that ensure 'gender is mainstreamed in all information, communication and media policies, programmes, laws and training, in accordance with the Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport'.

Scholarly analysis (Padovani and Pavan, 2012) also shows that such initiatives are not always coherent and networked undertakings: density of interaction amongst players in the domain is rather low, and the normative frameworks promoted do not always reflect widely-shared sets of principles (beside Section J of the BPfA, which remains the core normative reference). Often, initiatives from the ground up tend to focus on the problematic side of the nexus between gender and media, on denouncing inequalities and the lack of equal access, voice and representation; seldom do they make efforts to elaborate innovative and alternative normative frames to address challenges deriving from a transformed media environment.

We therefore see how findings from wide cross-national and comparative research projects offer insights on the common and persistent problems that prevent gender equality in the media and women's access to decision-making, as well as on the linkages between such constraints and policy frameworks, interventions and orientations. More such investigations are needed with a clear comparative and cross-national and cross-cultural approach, based on rigorous analytical schemes and methodologies; and more effort is required to making the knowledge we produce better known, accessible and understandable, particularly in dialogue with the many entities that operate and have a stake in this area (for example, media organisations, professionals, advocates, citizen and consumer associations) and to translate research findings and analyses into policy-relevant inputs and 'usable knowledge'.

c. Recognise existing contributions by the scholarly community beyond research

A third element worth mentioning here are those resources that have been created, often in connection to or as outcomes of research projects and international collaborations (both academic and non-academic), precisely with the aim of translating scientific knowledge into more accessible, operational and policy-relevant knowledge platforms and tools.

To mention but a few, we should recall the recently adopted Gender Sensitive Indicators for the Media (GSIM) elaborated by UNESCO and the recently published Learning Resource Kit for Gender-Ethical Journalism and Media House Policy[5], resulting from a collaboration between WACC and the International Federation of Journalists.

With a more explicit orientation to providing policy-relevant resources to media actors, decision-makers and advocates, two thematic sections devoted to Gender and Media have been created in the context of the Global Media Policy project and platform[6]. One section relates to Gender-oriented Communication Governance (GoC_Gov) understood as the set of transnational governing arrangements that promote a social agenda for change based on gender equity[7]; a second thematic section is titled Gender and Media in Europe[8] and focuses specifically on the European region. Both sections of the database include profiles of people, organisational actors, policy documents and resources – news portals, archives, publications, training courses etc. – composing the broad landscape of media policy that resonates with, reflects on, addresses and pursues gender equity in and through the media.

Also worth mentioning is the Women & Media in Europe web-based platform[9], one of the outcomes of the European research project on 'Women in Media Industries' (EIGE, 2013). This is a digital platform publicly accessible to anyone interested in gender equity and media, particularly in the European region. It is mentioned here as it reflects the desire, stemming from a research collaboration, to maintain and support a regional network of scholars. It operates as a collaborative space where researchers, but also educators and media professionals, may share information, discuss policy developments and contribute their knowledge and understanding towards meeting the goals of the Beijing Platform for Action.

These are just a few examples showing that mapping, sharing knowledge and making these and other existing resources widely known and usable is a challenge but also a potentially powerful resource: they also constitute examples of the contribution research activities can bring towards more inclusive and gender-aware policy orientation.

d. Setting the bases for structuring a policy and gender aware research and advocacy framework

To conclude, I would like to outline the basics of a research framework and agenda, to orientate future efforts in enriching and translating relevant scholarly knowledge into transformative practices on the ground.

I suggest it is important to maintain a focus on the normative dimension of gender and media, where norms are to be understood as 'shared standards of behaviour for actors with a given identity' (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998): to develop a better understanding of the current normative bases concerning 'women and men in the media' and their application; to reflect on normative developments that may be needed in an increasingly digitized and interconnected media environment, beyond principles of access and participation; and to explore the challenges and opportunities to develop stronger, more coherent and productive connections between global, regional and local/national norm-relevant frameworks in this area.

Also, a focus on existing regulatory frameworks is needed: an updated assessment of how much and what has been done in response to the Beijing PfA in this specific area across the world, at the national and regional level, would offer the basis for coordinated interventions. This would include full appreciation of existing (and missing) gender equality plans addressing media roles in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and in-depth exploration of media policies in order to identify and understand cultural, social and economic challenges and constraints.

Thirdly, the structural and cultural contexts within which the media operate and media policies are adopted are to be investigated with a specific focus on gender implications. Media concentration may have different impacts on men and women in their professional and personal lives; cultural features of specific regions and countries influence policy orientations; and socio-economic conditions, particularly in a time of multiple crises affect and reflect, and often explode, gender inequalities, including in the media and communication sector.

Furthermore, media organisations' internal policies and practices need to be more thoroughly investigated, through nation-based as well as cross-country comparative analyses, with the aim of not only confirming existing knowledge about inequalities in women's access to media professions and particularly to decision-making and managerial positions, but also to gain a more qualitative understanding of how a media sector undergoing profound transformations – globalisation, digitalisation and crisis – is responding to the challenges of gender equality. This invites analyses of codes and plans as well as investigation of media organisations' working routines and practices such as training, monitoring and content creation.

We should also develop a better understanding of civic organisations' roles and contribution in monitoring media content and activities as well as governing arrangements; in developing tool kits and informational and educational activities, particularly in creating competences for leadership and skills for women in the media; in experimenting with more sustainable practices of transnational networking, also through digital media, making their own knowledge and resources available across regional and geo-cultural spaces. Particularly important would be to focus on and foster networking initiatives, such as multi-stakeholder dialogues, to develop channels of interaction, information sharing and cooperation between media professionals, consumer associations, advocacy groups, educators.

Finally, we should be aware and creative in relation to the many roles academia can play in its contribution to gender-sensible media policies: through research activities, the production and sharing of knowledge; through the creation of knowledge resources and engagement with normative discussions, including through the use of digital platforms and technologies. Furthermore, more systematic efforts should be made to appreciate and respond to the new responsibilities of higher education institutions in a global society, by fostering critical understanding, promoting awareness and developing adequate competencies for students who are to contribute to transforming media policy environments in the future.

As an academic community that produces and shares scientific knowledge, and an international NGO that has always been concerned with communication rights and challenges worldwide, IAMCR certainly has a role to play in all this, and wishes to join forces with UNESCO and other entities in identifying possible directions for mastering our understanding of the different policy dimensions involved in the realisation of gender equality in and through the media.

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1 We recall that all final documents, adopted by governments and the civil society sector at WSIS, included sections specifically devoted to the challenges posed by information and communication societies to women and girls. In particular:

Official WSIS Declaration of Principles, Preamble no. 12: 'We affirm that development of ICTs provides enormous opportunities for women, who should be an integral part of, and key actors in, the Information Society. We are committed to ensuring that the Information Society enables women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis on equality in all spheres of society and in all decision-making processes. To this end, we should mainstream a gender equality perspective and use ICTs as a tool to that end.'

Civil Society Declaration 'Shaping Information Society for Human Needs', Core principles: '...it is essential that the development of information and communication societies be grounded in core principles that reflect a full awareness of the challenges to be met and the responsibility of different stakeholders. This includes the full recognition of the need to address gender concerns and to make a fundamental commitment to gender equality, non-discrimination and women's empowerment, and recognise these as non-negotiable and essential prerequisites to an equitable and people-centred development within information and communication societies.'; also recalled in par 2.1.3 on Gender Justice: '...Proactive policies and programmes across all sectors must be developed for women as active and primary agents of change in owning, designing, using and adapting ICT. To empower girls and women throughout their life cycle, as shapers and leaders of society, gender responsive educational programmes and appropriate learning environments need to be promoted. Gender analysis and the development of both quantitative and qualitative indicators in measuring gender equality through an extensive and integrated national system of monitoring and evaluation are "musts".'

2 Of the 8 Goals identified by the international community in the year 2000, Millennium Development Goal 3 focuses on gender equality and women's empowerment in different areas, such as education, non-agricultural employment, political representation, sexual and reproductive health.

3 GMMP Reports available at: http://www.whomakesthenews.org.

4 APC WNSP available at: http://www.apc.org/en/about/programmes/womens-networking-support-programme-apc-wnsp.

5 Available at: http://www.whomakesthenews.org.

6 Mapping Global Media Policy is an independent project initiated by the Global Media Policy Working Group of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR). It is hosted and supported by an academic consortium led by Media@McGill, a research and public outreach hub based at McGill University (Canada), and includes University of Padova (Italy), Center for Media and Communication Studies (CMCS) at Central European University (Hungary) and the University of Cardiff.

7 Available at: http://www.globalmediapolicy.net/node/849.

8 Available at: http://www.globalmediapolicy.net/node/6305.

9 Available at: http://womenandmedia.eu.

Action, reaction, introspection, rectification

Ammu Joseph

The notorious, brutal gang-rape of a young woman in New Delhi, India in December 2012 received immediate and copious media coverage, sparked off nationwide protests, attracted international attention and led to speedy official action to improve the legislative response to crimes involving sexual assault[1].

The gang-rape of a teenaged tribal girl by three police constables in the toilet of a rural police station in Maharashtra, India in 1978 went unnoticed by the media and the public until four lawyers came across the infamous 1979 judgement of the Supreme Court of India in the case and wrote a critical open letter to the Chief Justice[2]. Their letter, widely circulated throughout the country (by snail mail), prompted a nationwide campaign which eventually resulted in amendments to the law relating to rape.

The two landmark gang-rapes are separated by over three decades and the legislative action they prompted by exactly 30 years. Much has happened and changed in the interim and yet much seems to have remained the same. In fact, judging by the relentless reports on rapes and gang-rapes from across India since December 2012, sexual violence against women appears to have intensified, if not increased.

The campaign against rape that began in 1980 is generally regarded as the catalyst which sparked off the contemporary women's movement in India. Media coverage of rape and the campaign against it during the early 1980s was among the five topics included in the comprehensive and systematic gender analysis of Indian media content that resulted in the 1994 book Whose News: The Media and Women's Issues (Joseph and Sharma, 1994).

When Kalpana Sharma and I revisited media coverage of sexual violence in India for the second edition of the book in the mid-2000s, we found that rape was back on the media agenda – a quarter of a century after it became a legitimate subject for media attention – thanks to a number of high-profile cases in the political and commercial capitals of the country, Delhi and Mumbai (Joseph and Sharma, 2006). Our review revealed that media coverage of rape in the new millennium was 'something of a mixed bag, ranging from the serious, concerned and gender-sensitive through glib, superficial and celebrity-oriented to sensational, irresponsible and intrusive'.

That assessment is still applicable today, just under a decade later, although heightened competition in the burgeoning news media space has added new dimensions to the coverage. Privately-owned Indian television news channels – with their characteristic high-pitched reporting and confrontational panel discussions that invariably generate more heat than light – now play a dominant role in setting the public agenda. This has had an impact on the style and substance of news coverage in large sections of the print media as well.

For example, in the wake of the December 2012 gang-rape, sections of the Indian media spearheaded a vociferous crusade calling for capital punishment in cases of sexual assault, despite considerable, considered opposition from women's organisations and other groups and individuals committed to human rights. A major daily broadsheet newspaper went so far as to publish a quarter page advertisement asking readers to cast their votes in response to the following, evidently problematic, multiple-choice question (Joseph, 2012a):

What's the punishment for a man who takes away a woman's life, while she's still alive?

A. Life Imprisonment
B. Death Sentence
C. Bobbitization
D. Chemical Castration

There is little doubt that the relentless, emotive, campaign-style coverage and impassioned, impatient television debates contributed to the apparent manufacture of consent among the vocal, media-consuming public about the desirability of the death penalty for rape, if only in high-profile cases.

Interestingly, a little over a decade ago, the media had responded quite differently to the repeated proposal by a veteran Indian politician and erstwhile cabinet minister that the death penalty was fit punishment for rape (Joseph and Sharma, 2006, p.104). At that time most news reports and opinion articles gave considerable play to the objections raised by women activists and lawyers, who opposed the proposal on the ground that it was not only wrong in principle but also unlikely to work in practice, especially in terms of reducing the incidence of sexual assault or increasing the conviction rate in rape cases or both.

Today the media often determine, directly or indirectly, which cases 'outrage the nation' and which sink without a trace in public consciousness. In fact, media coverage of rape (and many other forms of violence against women) generally conforms to a predictable, episodic pattern: long spells of routine reports regularly, if randomly, culled from police hand-outs, broken by brief periods of intensive and extensive coverage catalysed by one or more cases that happen to grab the imagination of the media and the public – usually in that order (Joseph and Sharma, 2006, p.101).

The rape cases most likely to become causes celebres today are exceptionally violent crimes committed in one of the metropolitan cities (especially Delhi and Mumbai with their high density of nationally influential media establishments), involving victims from the urban middle or upper classes and perpetrators from the socio-economic underclasses. As commentators have pointed out time and again, both the media and their target audiences tend to get particularly agitated when crimes, including sexual assault, affect 'people like us', while equally horrific crimes against the poor, the powerless and the distant tend to receive less media and public attention.

Ironically, media fury over selected cases does not necessarily result in sensitive, responsible coverage. In the case of another gang-rape that grabbed media and public attention in India in 2013, despite widespread public shock and anger over the audacious crime, some of the reporting – while largely sympathetic – was unacceptably intrusive (Sharma, 2013)[3].

The intense competition between multiple forms of media as well as multiple players within each media sector, and the resulting need to be one up on other publications and channels, have undoubtedly led to the blurring of lines between the legitimate pursuit of news and views in the public interest and attempts to attract audiences with so-called scoops or exclusives (often before information is verified). As a result, a certain amount of sensationalism and insensitivity – even dramatisation – mark some of the coverage, especially but not only on television. In addition, the legal and professional tenets mandating the protection of the privacy of survivors of sexual crimes are all too frequently flouted[4].

At the same time, of the many prevalent forms of violence against women, rape is one that does get covered by the media, almost always with outrage on behalf of and sympathy for the victim, and often with due seriousness. And, to give the devil its due, sections of the media have at various times demonstrated a sense of responsibility in highlighting the injustice often suffered by victims/survivors of rape in addition to the trauma of sexual assault.

The good news is that, while there are alarming levels of over-confidence – bordering on arrogance – and intolerance of criticism among many media professionals today, there is also a parallel, healthy trend within sections of the profession towards self-examination, self-evaluation and self-correction. The growing number of journalists critiquing different aspects of media practice, using platforms such as the mediawatch website, The Hoot, is one indication of this[5]. Debates such as the one concerning media coverage of the August 2013 gang-rape in Mumbai are encouraging signs of professional engagement with the issue (see, for example, NWMI, 2013a). Statements and petitions calling attention to inappropriate coverage also help raise consciousness and sometimes lead to apologies or corrections or both (see, for example, NWMI, 2013b).

At another level, when Mumbai-based members of the Network of Women in Media, India (NWMI), called the attention of newspaper editors to certain reports on the August 2013 gang-rape in the city, which included information that could reveal the identity of the survivor, and requested that such details be removed at least from their online editions, the editors concerned responded promptly and positively.

This favourable response was possibly influenced by earlier efforts to improve media coverage of sexual assault. For example, after a complaint of gang-rape by an international student in Mumbai in 2009 generated controversial coverage in some newspapers, NWMI members initiated a dialogue with the editors of three city dailies whose coverage of the case had been the most problematic. Two of them cooperated, facilitating informal, in-house interactions on issues concerning coverage of sexual crimes against women.

A large number of the editorial staff of both newspapers, including senior editors, reporters and sub-editors/copy editors, participated in the separate sessions anchored by two members of the NWMI, both experienced journalists. In the lively discussion that followed the opening presentation on the rationale for the initiative and the problems with the style and substance of the coverage given to that particular case, journalists working with the newspapers raised many questions about the practical difficulties and ethical dilemmas faced while covering such controversial and potentially sensational issues in an intensely

competitive media environment. According to the NWMI members who conducted the sessions, 'in some ways, they seemed relieved to actually have an opportunity to raise such questions' (Joseph, 2012b, p.125).

The sessions certainly indicated the need for more sustained efforts to raise awareness among journalists about the complex professional and ethical issues involved in covering crimes against women, particularly those involving sexual violence. The efficacy of such efforts was demonstrated when another case involving the kidnap and sexual assault of minor girls, including the 13-year-old daughter of an actor (whose temporary abduction had been earlier covered by the media), was handled with far more sensitivity by the staff of one of the newspapers concerned. According to senior reporters of the paper, when sexual assault of a minor was added to the kidnap charge, they were more mindful of the need to be careful about identifying details and took the initiative to remove the name of the actor-father from the copy filed by a junior reporter.

These experiences were subsequently incorporated into a chapter on reporting sexual violence in the 2010 book Missing Half the Story: Journalism as if Gender Matters, a collaborative venture of five women journalists (all NWMI members) (Khan, 2010, pp.83-118). The idea behind the book was to provide practical guidance on how to integrate gender concerns into media coverage of a wide range of subject areas, including politics, economics, conflicts and disasters (Sharma, 2010).

The tricky reporting of the August 2013 gang-rape in Mumbai reaffirmed that such attempts to sensitise media professionals and evolve self-regulatory guidelines and codes to improve standards and ethics have to be on-going and institutionalised. Since that particular case also raised questions about the safety of journalists on work assignments, members of the NWMI in Mumbai initiated a discussion on issues concerning both safety and ethics, and submitted the main conclusions and suggestions to the Press Council of India (NWMI, 2013c).

A reassuring sign of the seriousness and responsibility with which sections of the media are now responding to the need for improvements in reporting violence against women is the training workshop for young journalists on the theme "Women and Safety: How can the Media tell that Story Better?" organised by Time Out India in Mumbai in October 2013, to coincide with an edition focussing on women's safety in the city (Khan, 2013, personal communication, 4 October; Time Out Mumbai, 2013).

It is obviously best if guidelines and codes for media practice evolve organically out of such discussions and programmes, with journalists themselves participating in the process of creating them. Of course, any effort of this kind would serve its purpose only if the resulting guidelines were then disseminated to and taken seriously by institutions of media education and training, professional associations, networks, clubs and unions and, of course, media houses themselves (print, broadcast and online). This may well be the most effective way to ensure that all journalists in all media are aware of ethical principles and standards in covering various events and issues, including gender-related ones, and try to comply with them. Such awareness and attempts are clearly important to ensure that victims/survivors of rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence, and their families, feel confident about seeking justice without fearing further, media-induced trauma.

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4 Section 228A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) treats publication of the name of the raped woman or any other detail that may reveal the identity of a raped woman as a cognisable offence punishable with imprisonment of up to two years and fine; Indian courts, including the Supreme Court of India, have also recognised the importance of non-disclosure of the name of the rape victim. According to the Norms of Journalistic Conduct of the Press Council of India (2005), 'While reporting crime involving rape, abduction or kidnap of women/females or sexual assault on children, or raising doubts and questions touching the chastity, personal character and privacy of women, the names, photographs of the victims or other particulars leading to their identity shall not be published'; the Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards of the News Broadcasters' Association specifies that '…[n]ews channels will ensure that no woman or juvenile, who is a victim of sexual violence, aggression, trauma, or has been a witness to the same, is shown on television without due effort taken to conceal the identity. In reporting all cases of sexual assault, or instances where the personal character or privacy of women are concerned, their names, pictures and other details will not be broadcast/divulged. Similarly, the identity of victims of child abuse and juvenile delinquents will not be revealed, and their pictures will be morphed to conceal their identity.'

5 The Hoot – Watching the Media in the Subcontinent (www.thehoot.org)

Power, patriarchy, profit: barriers to gender mainstreaming in media policy

Katharine Sarikakis

Gender mainstreaming as a public policy goal and tool

'Gender mainstreaming' emerges in national, supranational and international processes of governance of public policy with the aim of mainstreaming considerations about gender inequality across a range of policy areas. It is closely associated with international efforts by the United Nations system to promote gender awareness and fight discrimination and violence against women and girls. The political aims of gender mainstreaming are to free women from 'symbolic annihilation', which takes place through the silencing of women's voices and absence of women from public life and their repression in the private sphere. In the domain of media and culture, the purpose of gender mainstreaming has been seen as integral in bringing about substantial structural change across the axes of employment and production of information and cultural content, literacy and access to this content by women, and the qualitative change of content from patriarchal and sexist to emancipatory and diverse.

Historically, gender mainstreaming (GM) developed as both a policy for gender equality and as a strategy for policy design. Therefore, it has been approached both as an end in itself and as the means to an end. The concept of GM emerged in the same historical period within which the debate around the role of the media and global information flows was taken up by the UN system with the 1981 MacBride report[1]. Although it does not derive from the report, which was criticised for its lack of attention to the reinforcement and impact of social inequalities between women and men, it is a close contemporary, having its roots in the international feminist social movements (Walby, 2005). The policy concept of 'gender mainstreaming' was debated in the Third Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985, but was officially included as a formal policy orientation a whole decade later, at the Fourth Conference on Women in Beijing, in 1995. The process of recognising its importance in the governance of international organisations, and particularly those that advocate it as a policy measure in national and other public policy areas is long-standing and is still ongoing. For example, only recently (July 2013) saw the passing of ECOSOC resolution E/2013/L.14 on mainstreaming gender into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system.

Gender mainstreaming has attracted both support and criticism. At the policy level, it has been adopted by various national legislatures around the world as well as by the European Union and continues to be seen as a key element to be pursued in the design of public policy. A transformational agenda would disrupt institutionalised sexism and power relations and would redistribute power (Rees, 2005; Rittendorf and Gatrell, 2012). However, the impact of gender mainstreaming is debated in terms of its short- and long-term effectiveness in challenging and overturning patriarchal structures and replacing them with gender-balanced decision-making. It has been criticised as a vague and confusing term and its effectiveness is contested on the following grounds:

1. The complexity of the term causes confusion, thereby neutralising its potential.
2. Its definition is ambiguous: is it a policy, a strategy or both? At the same time it is argued that issues of sameness and difference among women are not adequately accounted for.
3. Critics point out that different interpretations result in implementations of gender mainstreaming that suit organisational cultures, hence undermining its original purpose.
4. There is concern about the effacement of 'women' as the subject and the replacement of the term by the more 'generic' term 'gender' and for not addressing needs particular to women (Sarikakis and Nguyen, 2009).

'Regardless of whether it adopts a sameness/equal opportunities or a difference/positive action strategy, gender mainstreaming has been from the outset associated with a woman-centred approach (i.e. an assumption that it is women who experience inequality, and that we must address such inequalities)' (Rittenhofer and Gatrell, 2012, pp.208). Nevertheless, the difficulty in implementing a programme of gender mainstreaming is also due to the fact that in some institutional cultures it is considered either too radical or simply an equal opportunities policy. Generally, GM is implanted unevenly, while an evaluation of its effectiveness is absent in most countries (EIGE, 2011).

Media industries and women: an uncomfortable dependence

In the media industries, gender mainstreaming is fragmented, patchy and fragile. It is not possible to talk about gender mainstreaming as a policy implemented by the media or indeed required from the media by public authorities. The only known examples of gender-aware approaches to media governance are in public service media or media with strong public service remit. The reasons are multiple but culminate in the impact of the combination of deeply engrained patriarchal beliefs and attitudes to gender roles in media organisations and society, and the dominance of private media whose function is determined by profit-making goals. Adopting gender mainstreaming goals and practices requires resources and monitoring systems for implementation on behalf of media industries. It also requires (and assumes) concerted will and effort to engage in culture change. Especially in today's media, where sexualisation seems intensified in informational, entertainment and advertising content, gender equity is more difficult to be pursued on an everyday basis. There are business models of mainstream media based precisely on the perpetuation of objectification (such as 'lads magazines', music videos, aspects of the fashion industry and advertising). For these media industries, gender mainstreaming would constitute a conflict. In everyday media, the female body continues to be a revenue source, while gendered roles of male experts (e.g. politics, science) and females in social and entertainment roles (soft news, fashion etc.) present a well-established practice that is hard to change.

The issue of gender mainstreaming in media employment policies should present no apparent scepticism, yet the media are not progressing fast enough here either. In the few cases where this has been pursued systematically, the results have not been impressive. Again, the main reason seems to be the persistence of patriarchal norms in everyday journalistic cultures and employment cultures, whereby, even in cases of increased numbers of women in the newsroom or media organisations more generally, gender roles are reinforced by employment roles. The context of these persisting structural and cultural inflexibilities is multi-fold, but the social roles and demands on women in their lives outside work determine to a great extent both objective and subjective positioning and capacities of progressing in employment environments that are not women-friendly.

Studies of media GM implementation are far too few. One such study investigated the Inter Press Service and their GM strategy in international news (Geertsema-Sligh, 2009). In this case, the news agency had taken active measures to increase the percentage of female workers and engaged in a process of culture changing. The outcomes demonstrate the difficulty in changing attitudes to gender: stories about politics and the economy were written by men while women remained concentrated in the 'soft' news stories; the overwhelming majority of sources remained men; women as sources remained concentrated in social and care related topics while the stories addressed largely men's concerns. From this detailed case study, we learn that company conscious pursuit of and commitment to the gender 'project' is core in the implementation of GM, but at the same time that knowledge of how to integrate gender and personal commitment to do so vary among individuals. This is due to professional and cultural beliefs about gender roles and/or about the need (or not) to cover gender, especially after it is perceived to 'have been dealt with'. Finally, financial limitations are a core obstacle to pursuing GM and the conflict between journalism as a public service and private companies' goal of profit-making.

Gender mainstreaming, therefore, is a matter of public policy, which however depends on intangible factors such as cultural beliefs and professional and organisational cultures for its success. Moreover, because the process is a long-term one, it requires resources and constant vigilance, proactive measures of informing, training and supporting media workers on the 'how to' and the 'why' of GM. Finally, the lawmaker has had difficulties in pursuing legislation for media content, in particular, in the liberalised environment of private media companies, due to two reasons: first, technology resists nationally bound legislation and second, resistance from the media industries is based on the sensitive matter of press freedom. Proposals for gender mainstreaming are met largely with scepticism, if not hostility, because anything other than self-regulation and industry codes are considered interference with freedom of expression.

The difficulty in pursuing gender mainstreaming strategic planning or policy in the media is also due to the lack of gender mainstreaming in the policy designed for media by national or supranational legislatures. Additionally, at the international level of multi-stakeholder summits and other forms of setting policy principles, gender is at best an afterthought. International organisations or fora do not routinely include gender considerations in their policy principles design, with the exception of organisations which include a mandate for social equality, such as the Council of Europe. Historically, and through the major changes in media liberalisation policies since the late 1980s, the state and supranational organisations have failed to consider and systematically interrogate the impact of the changing media and communication landscapes and the governance thereof for gender in society. During enormous regulatory and structural changes, in terms of media ownership and concentration, of technological design, of self-regulation and standards, of conditions for freedom of expression and of employment, to name a few, women's role and position

has been neglected. Today, after two decades of significant gender campaigning in public policy, the domain of so-called 'information communication technology' has been the only space where policies have considered gender. Yet, these policies have either not yielded the results they claimed they would or were arguably derived from an instrumentalist and short-term point of view, which limited itself to access, trivial computing skills and consumption. Throughout major changes in media regulation, there has been no gender mainstreaming in the design of policies or in their assessment. This would have been seen in a range of policies related to the media and their roles, the short- and long-term impact on the portrayal of women, their inclusion in decision-making and fair employment, their role in media policy. For example, gender mainstreaming would have allowed for the design of policies and the collection of data regarding the impact of concentration of media ownership or the role of content quotas for 'domestic' productions and the support of independent culture makers, technological design to encourage non-gendered communications and so on.

The lack of gender mainstreaming policy in the media is the outcome of regulatory bodies and the state based historically on patriarchal cultures, the dominance of profit-oriented media systems over public service media and media with public service remit and ingrained cultural beliefs of gender superiority/inferiority. In this power triangle, women's position in the media is a consideration that largely comes as an 'add-on', is an afterthought or serves as rhetoric. There is significant divide, still, over the role and potential of gender mainstreaming in policies generally and media in particular, on the basis of whether this subsumes the struggle for gender equity, in other words, by 'being everywhere' it is nowhere. At the same time, there is considerable disagreement over the role and place of 'affirmative' or similar actions with regards to quotas for women's participation in decision-making levels at media organisations and major corporations as well as the state.

Recommendations

Gender mainstreaming is, depending on the context, both a policy and a strategy for improving women and girls' position in society. It is a mistake to assume no need for gender integration into everyday working practice, decision-making and content production and consumption of the media, if some measures have been taken. The project of gender equality is a constant one.

Governments must pursue GM legislation more rigorously. International organisations should encourage their members to develop GM policies in culture and media.

Governments and media industries should dedicate resources in training, hiring, supporting existing, new and developing media workers and pursue such organisational values that are fully expressed through commitment to gender equity.

Governments and media industries should protect media workers from precarity in employment. This affects women disproportionally and creates an anxious and uncertain labour force that is preoccupied with financial survival rather than with professional and knowledge development.

The media industry should develop strategies that bring on board people from a wide social spectrum so that voices from experiences of difference to the 'norm' can be heard. Its code of conduct and self-regulatory bodies should pay attention to GM goals.

Knowledge and expertise on gender should become available to people.

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1 The New World Information and Communication Order criticised western media for world information imbalances between the global North and global South and proposed an agenda for a new media 'order'. It was part of a larger and long-standing debate about power imbalances expressed also through the communication systems of the world.

Gender mainstreaming in journalism education

Margaretha Geertsema-Sligh

Introduction

In a time of swift technological changes in the news media, much of journalism education is focused on preparing students for careers in a new media landscape instead of focusing on gender or other diversity issues. For example, Pavlik (2013, p.213) argued in a recent article that a curriculum that 'emphasized innovation and digital media entrepreneurship is one of the keys to a robust professional future for the field and students seeking a media career'. Even so, Pavlik (2013, p.217) recognised that most programmes in media education are holding on to an outdated professional model of journalism and mass communication, which he described as 'a nostalgic journey to the past,' and 'a view aligned to the mostly white, male and gray-bearded titans of old-school media'. Pavlik (2013) did state, though, that entrepreneurial journalism education, as compared to traditional journalism education, provides the opportunity for more diversity in news content.

Concern about a singular focus on innovation and entrepreneurship in journalism education is not new. Ten years ago, Gutierrez pointed out that media educators are more tuned into technological innovations in the curriculum than demographic diversity: 'In short, while technological diversity is seen as an opportunity, demographic diversity is seen as a problem' (Baldasty et al., 2003, p.19). According to Gutierrez, media corporations and journalism organisations are eager to invest money into technological changes, but 'journalism educators have had to be pressured by advocacy groups, government agencies, and professional associations of gay/lesbian, women and journalists of color to deal' with diversity in the curriculum (Baldasty et al., 2003, p.19).

There is no doubt, however, that journalism education should be more than an exercise in acquiring much-needed new technological skills. As pointed out by Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) in their discussion of the elements of journalism, one expectation of journalists in a democracy is to give voice to the voiceless. Good journalism is inclusive and offers a variety of perspectives. And it seems that the place to start changing the news industry is by changing journalism education. Indeed, Josephi (2009, p.47) described journalism education as an 'agent of change'. Brown (Made, 2010, p.5) correctly wrote that 'if we are going to transform gender relations in the media, we need to start with the journalists of tomorrow'. One of the most cutting edge ways to include gender into journalism itself and into journalism education is the approach of gender mainstreaming.

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming, according to Morley (2007, p.609), is the 'linguistic antithesis of gender marginalisation … Over 100 countries worldwide have embraced GM in their state machineries. GM is a strategy that claims to make women's and men's experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes'. It is unclear exactly when and how the term gender mainstreaming was coined, but scholars agree that it came about through the work of the UN global women's conferences. Unterhalter and North (2010) stated that the term originated in the 1980s as a result of the work of women's groups during the UN Decade for Women (1976-1985), but True and Mintrom (2001) wrote that gender mainstreaming emerged in the early 1990s. Unterhalter and North (2010, p.389) explained:

The key idea was that women's needs and interests were generally overlooked and made marginal in the development of economic and social policy, and that clear institutional strategies were needed to bring a realization of gender equality into the mainstream of social development, decision-making, and grassroots work.

A definition of gender mainstreaming that is often cited is one adopted by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Gender mainstreaming was defined as:

the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (UN, 1997, p.28)

Similarly, Frankson (2000, p.24) defined gender mainstreaming as 'integrating a gender equality perspective into all the mainstream activities of government, at the policy, programme and project levels'.

However, gender mainstreaming is also a contested concept and process. Daly (2005, p.433) argued that gender mainstreaming is 'underdeveloped as a concept'. In a study of eight European countries, Daly (2005) found that gender mainstreaming was applied in different ways in different countries. Some argue that gender mainstreaming is in essence a liberal strategy of 'adding women', while others see it as a 'radical strategy for achieving gender equality that involves traditional state efforts to address gender imbalances by developing specific policies for women' (True and Mintrom, 2001, p.33). A study by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) reported that 'progress in implementing gender mainstreaming has been rather slow and ad hoc in practice, and issues of capacity and knowledge gaps remain largely unresolved across the EU' (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2013, p.8). As such, it is still unclear whether gender mainstreaming as a strategy has been a failure, success or a combination of both (Tiessen, 2007).

Gender mainstreaming in journalism

The policy of gender mainstreaming has been applied to the practice of journalism, most notably by the Inter Press Service news agency. From 1994 to 1999, IPS launched and implemented a gender mainstreaming policy, which considered both organisational structure and news content (Made, 2000; Made and Samhungu, 2001). IPS examined gender roles and responsibilities within the organisation through an analysis of the gender, age, position and salary of employees, and a gender-sensitive employment policy was created. News coverage focused on gender mainstreaming and the inclusion of a gender perspective. Made (2000, p.31) defined gender mainstreaming in this context as 'integrating the concepts of gender, equality, and women's rights into all our editorial coverage, and ensuring that these influence our news agenda'. The IPS Gender Policy (1998, p.1) stated the following:

IPS accepts that research shows undeniably that no news subject [topic] is gender free and that adequate discussion of any development issue and process must include a gender dimension ... IPS believes that the role of the media is to promote understanding of changes in the social, political, economic and cultural status quo in order to facilitate and support men's and women's equal participation in these processes'.

Geertsema (2009, p.75) found in her study of the IPS gender mainstreaming project that its implementation was limited, but that it was 'quite remarkable that any news organization, and in particular a global news agency, would make this attempt'.

Gender mainstreaming in journalism education

To mainstream gender in journalism, it seems logical that gender should be mainstreamed in journalism education first. The most prolific work in this field is done by Gender Links, a media and gender activism organisation based in Johannesburg, South Africa (see Geertsema, 2010 for a study of Gender Links).

Gender Links has applied the concepts of gender mainstreaming not only to journalism, but also to journalism education. Morna and Shilongo (2004, p.133) wrote that 'improved media training is essential to remove gender biases that prevail... The challenge... is to integrate gender awareness training into all types and aspects of media training'. In 2010, Gender Links completed a study in Southern Africa called 'Gender in Media Education: An Audit of Gender in Journalism & Media Education and Training', with the final report written by Patricia A. Made. This report clearly sets out what gender mainstreaming in journalism education would look like.

The Gender in Media Education (GIME) research studied 25 institutions in 13 countries from October 2009 to April 2010. Key findings included that only a few institutions have policies to achieve gender equality, males make up the majority of academic staff while females make up the majority of students, gender remains largely absent from curricula, attention to gender topics depends on the knowledge of individual instructors, gender was missing from course materials and gender was also missing from assessments of student and faculty work. As for research on gender, media and diversity issues, the report stated that

these topics have 'not become an area of serious academic research and scholarship' (Made, 2010, p.13).

Made (2010) also reported on a mainstreaming project that Gender Links and the Department of Media Technology at the Polytechnic of Namibia (PON) in Namibia implemented from 2001 to 2004. Made (2010, p.71) concluded while 'there is still strong gender awareness and gender champions at PON, gender is not systematically mainstreamed in the curriculum'. This shows the challenge of implementing gender mainstreaming in media education.

In fact, in most parts of the world gender mainstreaming is not required and remains unknown in journalism education. In Latin America, for example, there is no formal policy on gender mainstreaming in journalism education. Feminist scholars and activists, however, do offer general training in gender and media in Mexico, for example through the National Council for Gender Equality in Media. In the United States, gender mainstreaming is mostly an unknown in journalism education. A search of the database of Journalism and Mass Communication Educator, the premier US publication for all things related to journalism education, shows no articles on gender mainstreaming. That, however, does not mean that similar ideas have not been considered. For years, the Poynter Institute in St. Petersburg, Florida, offered a course titled 'Diversity Across the Curriculum'. In the course, participants were shown how to incorporate issues of diversity into all courses of a journalism curriculum, what can in essence be called the mainstreaming of diversity issues.

Conclusion

While gender mainstreaming is seen as the 'most "modern" approach to gender equality' (Daly, 2005, p.433) in gender and development circles, its implementation in journalism education and elsewhere is still a work in progress. In fact, except for the Department of Media Technology at the Polytechnic of Namibia, not much information is available about the implementation of gender mainstreaming in journalism education. The concepts behind gender mainstreaming may, however, be fruitful in future projects to incorporate gender and diversity issues more fully into journalism education.

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Educating media professionals with a gender and critical media literacy perspective: how to battle gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the media workplace

Jad Melki & May Farah

While journalism and journalism schools were long the almost exclusive domain of male professionals, over the past few decades the latter has increasingly become dominated by female students, but not, as would be anticipated, the former. What explains the reversal in gender proportions as we move from university classrooms into the workplace and up the corporate ladder? At most colleges around the world women make up the vast majority of journalism and communication students, but once they hit the workplace their numbers plummet and continue to dwindle until they become a tiny minority in the upper echelons of corporate media (Byerly, 2011). Even in countries with high levels of gender equality, the patterns of professional inequality persist (see, for example, Djerf-Pierre, 2007).

In the journalism field specifically, the repercussions of this disparity go beyond gender representation and counting numbers of males and females in the workforce. Lower representation at decision-making and governance levels has direct consequences on the content produced, the issues covered, the voices represented and the manners in which women – and men – are portrayed (Byerly and Ross, 2006; White, 2009; North, 2009; Djerf-Pierre, 2007). Moreover, the low number of women among hiring managers and committees ensures that voices that may challenge discriminatory hiring practices remain weak and timid, if not silent (Byerly, 2006; Djankov et al., 2003). But even when women make it into the media workforce, a host of obstacles that discourage their continuity at work await them, and many seem to quit early in their careers. As for the few who last, a discriminatory climate keeps them outside of positions of power and impedes them from moving beyond the glass ceiling[1].

This chapter outlines these obstacles and the prevalent discriminatory climate in the new media industry, and demonstrates how a combination of institutionalised gender discrimination, entrenched sexual harassment, rooted cultural sexism and the lack of laws, policies and enforcement mechanisms that protect and empower women to stay and advance in their careers all lead to reproducing this gender inequality and discriminatory climate that keeps many women out of the media workforce, discourages their advancement to higher positions, pushes women's issues out of the public sphere and normalises stereotypical media portrayal of women and men. The chapter then discusses whether more proactive educational policies at the university level, and changes in policies at the legislative and institutional levels, may help alleviate this situation and contribute to better preparing women (and men) to deal with the dominant discriminatory culture in the workplace, manoeuvre their career advancement and try to alter these practices. In addition, the chapter suggests that injecting critical media literacy and gender studies into journalism and media studies curricula may help better prepare students for a workplace rife with gender and other discriminatory practices.

The chapter uses as its case study Lebanon, where surveys, observations and in-depth interviews with journalists and media managers have been conducted to address this matter. Despite the focus on this small country, research demonstrates that Lebanon is not unique when it comes to gender inequality in the media workplace (Byerly, 2011) and many of the findings may be generalised globally (see also White, 2009).

Lebanon has historically been one of the most liberal and progressive countries in the Arab world, with a relatively free media climate and a culture and legal environment largely conducive to gender equality (Melki, Dabbous, Nasser and Mallat, 2012). Lebanese women have legal access to virtually all occupations and professions and enjoy equal constitutional rights with men. Nevertheless, women remain underrepresented in most industries and positions of power, especially within political offices and the news industry, and continue to face a host of discriminatory laws and practices, especially those governing marriage, divorce, inheritance and child custody, bolstered by a confessional sectarian political system that reproduces persistent conservative patriarchal social mores (Shehadeh, 1998; Khalaf, 2010).

Representation of women in the news industry

When it comes to media education in Lebanon, women comprise two-thirds of journalism and communication university students. In some specialties, such as print journalism and public relations, they significantly exceed that ratio to reach four-fifths and eight-ninths, respectively (Melki, 2009). However, they make up less than one-third of the news industry's workforce. Furthermore, the disparity becomes greatest in higher corporate positions, where women make up only 22% of top management and barely 15% of governance (Melki and Mallat, 2013). While these numbers clearly demonstrate gender disparity in the news industry, they barely scratch the surface.

The survey (mentioned above) of 250 female journalists and news personnel from 60 randomly selected news institutions operating in Lebanon draws a revealing picture of the make-up of this workforce. The vast majority of these women are 34 years old or younger (75%), not married (71%) and have no children (74%). Additionally, the majority (67%) have worked less than 10 years in the news industry, while 15% have worked 10-15 years and 18% have spent more than 15 years in this career. Interestingly, almost all (92%) hold college degrees and the majority even have some postgraduate studies or degrees (55%). This suggests that only a few of the women who make it into the news media workplace last in this career while most leave, especially those who start families, despite having strong educational credentials.

As for their primary job, the majority of surveyed women are reporters (60%) and a significant minority are editors (32%), producers (15%), and web editors (11%), but only a small minority are middle managers (6%), senior managers (5%) or board members (1%). Most (67%) have no employees reporting to them while 18% have five or fewer employees under their management and 14% run a staff of six or more personnel. Moreover, only 33% have female supervisors. This distribution of female journalists and news personnel in the workforce is consistent with previous studies of the Lebanese news industry (Melki and Mallat, 2013) and also reflects global trends in this realm (Byerly, 2011).

More importantly, this inequity, especially at senior management and governance levels, means women are not involved in policy-setting and managerial decision-making, although they are directly affected by such policies and decisions. This becomes evident when comparing the gender make-up of newsrooms headed by female managers to those led by male managers. For example, al-Jadeed TV's news director is one of the very few female news executives in mainstream Arab TV. Al-Jadeed's newsroom management positions are predominantly occupied by female journalists. Almost all newscast producers and executive producers are women, including al-Jadeed's deputy news director and its programming manager. Another example is the online news outlet Now Lebanon, which has an Arabic division led by a male managing editor and an English division led by a female managing editor. The former is mainly made up of male reporters and editors (about three-fourths male) and the latter is mainly staffed with women (about three-fourths female), which better compares to the gender ratios present in journalism and media schools in Lebanon. The differences, however, extend beyond gender proportions to newsroom cultures. Researchers observing these newsrooms noticed significant differences in the responses and tones of female journalists employed in such newsrooms, particularly in regards to news coverage priorities, sexual harassment and a strong sense of empowerment and confidence not common in newsrooms led and dominated by men.

The preceding suggests that strong social and institutional factors preclude many women from entering the journalism and media field, discourage them from enduring in this line of work and prevent them from advancing in their careers. The next few paragraphs will discuss some of these factors, namely: the prevalence of gender discrimination and sexual harassment that creates a work environment hostile to women and obstacles to their advancement; the lack of laws, codes of professional conduct and enforcement mechanisms that protect and empower women; and the archaic institutional policies that together with a patriarchal cultural mentality continue to expect women to fulfil a major domestic role while holding down a full-time job.

Gender discrimination, sexual harassment, archaic laws and discriminatory policies

Gender discrimination and sexual harassment remain overlooked taboos, especially in the news media workplace (Alabaster, 2012; Kim and Kleiner, 1999), and remain absent from most Arab university curricula

(Dabbous-Sensenig, 2002). The issue of sexual harassment, however, has recently generated increased public debate, thanks to amplified media coverage of attacks on female journalists in countries experiencing an Arab uprising and the growing number of women who are speaking out, despite this being a major taboo in the Arab world (Saud, 2012; Gatten, 2012; Lil Nasher, 2012; Sidahmed, 2012). The survey of journalists and news personnel conducted for this study shows that sexual harassment and gender discrimination together create a hostile environment that pushes women out of the industry.

In fact, the majority of surveyed participants believe that gender discrimination is a problem (73%) for female journalists in Lebanon and that it negatively affects their own outlook for advancement (80%). Even more agree that sexual harassment is a problem (87%) and that it negatively affects their outlook for career advancement (82%). Although a minority say they had considered leaving their jobs or the profession due to gender discrimination (10%) or sexual harassment (10%), one can only speculate about the number of women who have already left their job due to these issues, or those who never made it into a job they qualified for because of discriminatory practices or because they were asked to perform sexual favours during their job interview. This latter issue seems to be a widespread practice in the industry despite the lack of scientific evidence to gauge its prevalence. Nevertheless, anecdotal testimony suggests this occurs frequently and strongly contributes to repelling women from the news field. A panel of female journalists appearing on a Lebanese TV show expressed this latter experience in shocking detail (Ahmar Bel Khat el Areed, 2013).

But how many working female journalists and news personnel experience sexual harassment? Although most women underreport such experiences, the survey showed that the majority of women (more than 1 in every 2 women) have encountered at least one kind of sexual harassment at least once in their careers. The most common kind of sexual harassment faced was verbal sexual harassment (60% experienced it at least once), followed by non-verbal sexual harassment (48%), physical sexual harassment (26%), threatening sexual harassment (10%) and environmental sexual harassment (10%)[2]. In addition 10% reported experiencing at least once physical assault of a non-sexual nature. This means the least prevalent kind of sexual harassment is at least as prevalent as physical assault and violence against journalists, a matter which gets significant news coverage every year and which has several international organisations monitoring it (The Australian Human Rights Commission, 2012; Weaver, 1992; White, 2009).

Nevertheless, sexual harassment remains an under-covered story and news institutions largely ignore it. In fact, the majority of participants noted that their companies had no sexual harassment policies (72%), and only few agreed that their companies deal effectively with complaints about sexual harassment (38%) and gender discrimination (32%).

This problem is compounded by a legal system that does not recognise gender discrimination and sexual harassment as matters that merit specific laws. The Lebanese penal code does not specifically criminalise sexual harassment or even gender discrimination in the workplace. The only mention either receives is the right of victims to resign without providing the standard two to four weeks' notice (Gatten, 2012). Likewise, the press syndicate's code of professional conduct does not include any gender provisions, is void of any stipulations or regulations regarding sexual harassment and conflates vague references to gender discrimination with general discrimination categories.

Even law enforcement and security personnel, who are supposed to protect citizens from such harm, are in fact part of the problem. The majority of women who reported experiencing sexual harassment ranked law enforcement personnel and politicians as the number one source of such violations. As one reporter notes, 'I can't emphasize enough how many times I've been harassed by public officials, and members of the Lebanese police, security and armed forces. But who am I supposed to report it to? The same entities that are supposed to protect you from such harassment are the ones who engage in and perpetuate it. If you try to report it to local authorities, they either ignore you or laugh it off, or even worse, say that you must have invited it upon yourself.' Reports of Lebanese police officers harassing – and at least in one reported incident raping – women in their custody further discourage reporting such incidents (Nazzal, 2012).

While laws and codes of professional conduct offer no protection on the outside, institutional policies and practices provide less help on the inside. Only 69% of surveyed participants said their companies offered maternity leave[3], while 13% said they offered child-care assistance and 8% said they provided paternity leave. In addition, only 57% said their companies had in place gender equality policies. This corroborates the argument made above that discriminatory practices push married women with children out of the industry, especially when taking into consideration the tough schedules and work demands of a journalist or news professional. Combine these institutional policies with an enduring culture that continues to expect professional women to be fully and solely in charge of domestic duties, especially child-rearing and the picture is more complete. While this study did not directly tackle this cultural matter, participants' responses demonstrate that they feel they are at a disadvantage compared to men. A significant percentage of the surveyed participants agree that had they been men, they would have had more opportunities (48%), would have been making more money (37%) and would have been taken more seriously by their superiors (22%).

In sum, a combination of factors contributes to keeping women, especially married and older women, out of the journalism field, especially at higher management levels. These factors include a work environment hostile to women (sexual harassment and gender discrimination practices), institutional policies and a culture hostile to women with families.

The preceding suggests strong social and institutional factors preclude many women from entering the journalism and media field, discourage them from enduring in this career and prevent them from advancing in their positions. These factors include a work environment hostile to women rampant with gender discrimination practices and sexual harassment; the lack of laws, codes of professional conduct and enforcement mechanisms that protect and empower women; and archaic institutional policies that together with a patriarchal cultural mentality continue to impose high expectations in the domestic realm.

Recommendations

Based on this enduring situation, this chapter recommends the following:

1. Preparing and equipping journalism and media students for the realities of the profession. This may be achieved through including critical media literacy and gender studies in the curriculum. Such curricula not only inform students about the history of gender discrimination, current discriminatory practices and how to deal with problems such as sexual harassment, but also instil in students a strong sense of critical thinking that pushes them toward changing the status quo. This extends beyond tackling gender representation in the workforce to cover gender depiction in the media.
2. Working toward developing and enforcing institutional policies that discourage gender discrimination and sexual harassment and provide a work environment more conducive to women with families. Almost all surveyed journalists supported having their companies adopt specific codes of conduct for sexual harassment (97%) and gender equality (96%).
3. Working toward developing legal codes that specifically criminalise gender discrimination and sexual harassment and adding explicit language in the codes of professional conduct championed by press and media syndicates that address these matters. Almost all surveyed journalists supported having specific laws in the Lebanese penal code that refer explicitly to gender equality (97%) and sexual harassment (99%).
4. Forming a professional group devoted to promoting and advancing gender equity in newsrooms. Such a group could be a sub-division within an existing structure (such as the press syndicate) that would be charged with supporting women's advancement in the profession and serve as a site for professional and legal guidance.

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1 The term 'glass ceiling' was coined in a 1986 Wall Street Journal report on corporate women by Hymowitz and Schellhardt. It generally refers to the unofficial barriers women face as they climb the corporate (or other professional) ladder. So, while there may not be any legal or professional obstacles preventing women from being promoted to managerial levels and beyond, there are cultural and societal impediments, which have come to be referred to as the glass ceiling. Women can see the upper echelons, but they can't reach them. The term has since been applied to obstacles in other fields faced by different groups.

2 Adopted from Brown & Flatow (1997), sexual harassment categories are defined accordingly: verbal sexual harassment includes sexual comments, name-calling, jokes or stories of a sexual nature; nonverbal sexual harassment includes staring, winking and body gestures; threatening sexual harassment includes offering rewards or threats in return for sexual favours; environmental sexual harassment includes suggestive cartoons, calendars and nude photos; and physical sexual harassment includes unwelcome touching, physical contact and cornering.

3 Lebanese companies are only required to offer seven weeks of paid maternity leave (Alabaster, 2012).

Enlisting media and informational literacy for gender equality and women's empowerment

Alton Grizzle

ABSTRACT

The importance of affording media and information literacy (MIL) competencies to women/girls and men/boys globally has received increasing attention and has been renewed over the past decade. MIL has been positioned as a basis for the ethical use of information, freedom of expression and freedom of information. It has been proposed as a tool to stimulate personal, social, economic, cultural and political development, and to enhance education. This contribution explores how MIL could be enlisted to promote gender equality in and through media. The concept of MIL is discussed from UNESCO's standpoint, drawing on what many experts call converging literacies. The contribution considers various applications of MIL to development. It presents a cursory look at what gender equality is by purporting gender as identity and as development, and highlighting UNESCO's definition of gender equality. It proposes how gender-sensitive MIL in respect to delivery and use of these competencies could enhance gender equality in and through media. The contribution ends with suggestions as to what gender-specific MIL programmes should entail and questions which should be addressed through empirical research.

KEY WORDS: *Media and information literacy, UNESCO, gender equality, media, ethical use of information, freedom of expression, freedom of information.*

The need to ensure media and information literacy for all citizens globally has received increasing attention and has been renewed over the past decade. International institutions such as UNESCO, the European Commission, the World Bank, the Arab League, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have drawn attention to the need to promote public policies oriented to the development of media literacy and information literacy in all citizens (Frau-Meigs and Torrent, 2009).

Many countries, governments, donors, international development agencies and institutions are advocating, developing, and supporting activities, and in some cases national programmes, to achieve this goal (See Pérez Tornero and Pi, 2010; Frau-Meigs and Torrent, 2009; Horton J., 2007; and Grizzle and Torras Calvo, 2013).

Three research questions are considered in this analysis:

1. What is Media and Information Literacy?
2. What are gender and gender-based approaches to development and how are they connected to media and information literacy?
3. How might media and information literacy empower citizens to advocate for gender equality in all aspect of development including in and through the media?

Media and Information Literacy: A Necessary Convergence

Media and information literacy is a term coined by UNESCO to encapsulate two converging fields of study, information literacy and media literacy (Grizzle and Wilson 2011). A pure definitional approach to explain what information literacy (IL) and media literacy (ML) are could lead to confusion. As Virkus (2011) notes, "Since [the] 1970s many definitions of IL have been offered and several overviews and analysis of the concept have been published" (p.17). She cited Herring (2006, par.8) who points to a plethora of definitions of IL as a clear indication of the lack of agreement on what the concept means.

Consider the following definitions of IL below:

"Information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and to have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information. Information literacy, on the other hand, is an intellectual framework for understanding, finding, evaluating, and using information - activities which may be accomplished in part by fluency with information technology, in part by sound investigative methods, but most important, through critical discernment and reasoning. Information literacy initiates, sustains, and extends lifelong learning through abilities which may use technologies but are ultimately independent of them.[1]"

"IL is a new liberal art that extends from knowing how to use computers and access information to critical reflection on the nature of information itself, its technical infrastructure, and its social, cultural and even philosophical context and impact.[2]"

Both definitions are related but start from different vantage points. The definitions below for ML could bring even more confusion in the minds of the non-expert reader.

"Within North America, media literacy is seen to consist of a series of communication competencies, including the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information in a variety of forms, including print and non-print messages. Media literacy empowers people to be both critical thinkers and creative producers of an increasingly wide range of messages using image, language, and sound.[3]"

This widely accepted definition of ML shares much commonality with the previous definitions of IL. It is on the basis of these terminological debates, and driven by the explosion of technology, that experts have argued that ML, IL and other related literacies are converging (See New London Group, 1996; Jenkins, 2006, Livingstone et al, 2008; Koltay, 2011 Koltay 2012, and Southard, 2011; See also Grizzle and Torros 2013). Beyond terminologies and the diverse accents given to various social, political and economic aspects of MIL, scholars and practitioners alike are turning to competency-based approaches to explain MIL. They attest to the multidimensionality of knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to deal with information, media, and technology – that these are similar in many sense, different in some and interrelated in all aspects. They give attention to the "critical – evaluative dimensions" which is necessary for all citizens to treat with authenticity of information, source reliability, misinformation, privacy, effective research, flood of messages through all forms of media and ethical use of media and information. Finally, they emphasize the new forms of participation, dialogue and citizens' engagement ushered by new technologies and that can only be amplified and effectively appropriated through MIL (cf. Parola and Ranieri, 2010).

MIL, understood as a composite concept, encompasses competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) that enable citizens to[4]:

- Recognise and articulate a need for information and media
- Understand the role and functions of media and other information providers, including those on the Internet, in democratic societies
- Understand the conditions under which those functions can be fulfilled
- Locate and access relevant information
- Critically evaluate information and the content of media and other information providers, including those on the Internet, in terms of authority, credibility and current purpose, opportunities and potential risks
- Extract and organise information and media content
- Synthesise or operate on the ideas abstracted from content
- Ethically and responsibly use information and communicate one's understanding or newly created knowledge to an audience or readership in an appropriate form and medium
- Be able to apply ICT skills in order to process information and produce user-generated content
- Engage with media and other information providers for self-expression, freedom of expression, intercultural dialogue, democratic participation, gender equality and advocating against all forms of inequalities.

The Scope of MIL and development

MIL has been positioned as an empowerment tool to enhance education and to stimulate personal, social, economic, cultural and political development (Hobbs, 1998; Hobbs et al, 2011; Matinsson, 2009; Carlsson, 2006; Tufte and Enghel, 2009; Horton, 2007; Catts, 2005; Torras Calvo, 2009; Perez Tornero and Varis, 2010, Lau and Cortes, 2009 in Frau-Meigs and Torent 2009 and other authors).

Kamerer (2013) noted that one of the most frequent applications of media literacy to research is in relation to how "the media form images of health and body image" (p. 16). He cited many media literacy in health education research. Irving, DuPen and Berel (1998) gave short one-off training to high school girls on how attractiveness is represented by media. The study showed that students who were exposed to the study "were less likely to internalize a thin beauty standard" and showed lower perceived realism of the types of beauty images portrayed by the media (p.16; See also Wade, Davidson, and O' Dea, 2003; Watson and Vaughn, 2006; and Austin and Johnston, 1997 for similar studies relating to media literacy and health[5]).

On the side of information literacy many researchers have assessed the difference in information seeking behaviours of women and men in a personal and development context. Halder et al 2010, found that men "seem to reflect a broader range and more diversity when searching for information" than women (p. 245). The findings of the study also support other research conclusions that women "have a tendency to go to the root of a particular problem with persistence and depth" (p. 246; See also Steinerová and Šušol, 2007; Lim and Kwon, 2010). Other authors have explored information literacy and health (Seattle and King 1995; Hill, 2010; and Ku et al., 2007); information literacy and learning outcomes (Saunders, 2011; Lloyd, 2010; Torras Calva et al., 2009; and Lupton, 2008); information literacy, gender studies and politics (Broidy 2007, la Fond 2009; Weeg, 1997; and Kirk et al., 1994); and how women could be empowered through information literacy in a general sense (Farmer, 1997).

Other research where media literacy is enlisted as an empowerment tool relates to: conflict and violence, Scharrer (2009); media literacy and peace, Galan (2010); how children use new media in Egypt, Tayi (2010) and the examination of informal learning through an expanded empowerment model on aspects of media literacy such as comprehending news, creating a news broadcast and exploring pop culture, Hobbs, Cohn-Geltner and Landis (2012).

The question that needs to be posed at this point is what exactly empowerment of citizens through MIL is. The concept of empowerment is very hackneyed in the development field. It is so overused that it is often cynically perceived as devoid of meaning. However empowerment is central to development, it is both a means and an end. Some authors conceive the term as a liberating idea where individuals and groups possess the power over their lives; a form of self-determinism. Other actors see empowerment as an extension of agency, an individual's or group's ability and freedom to decide on and make purposeful choices to fulfill their desired goal (See, Lawson 2011; Ibrahim and Alkire 2007 and Moser 2013[6]).

The "World Development Report 2001: Attacking Poverty" frames empowerment by placing individuals as part of social, institutional and political structures and norms with which they must interact to have choices, use these choices and achieve desired goals[7].

Like empowerment, MIL is both an outcome and a process, and is concerned with individuals and communities alike. The next section explores gender and gender-based approaches to development before contextualizing MIL as an empowerment tool to promote gender equality.

Gender and gender-based approaches to development

According to a thematic consultation, Addressing Inequalities - Post 2015 Development Agenda, "Gender-based discrimination and the denial of the rights of women and girls remain the single most widespread drivers of inequalities in today's world[8]."

The proliferation of media, the explosion of new technologies and the emergence of social media in many parts of the world have provided multiple sources for access to gender-related information and knowledge. While inequalities and gender stereotypes exist in social structures and the minds of people, media and other information providers, including those on the Internet, have the potential to propagate and perpetuate or to ameliorate these imbalances. Imparting MIL competencies to women/girls and men/boys will enable them to be critical about and challenge these stereotypes.

In illuminating how MIL could support gender equality, it is necessary to first consider what gender is. Some theories posit "an essential gender identity", construing women and men as innately and essentially different while others assume gender as a sociological and cultural concept (cf. Van Zoonen, 1995).

According to the UNESCO Priority Gender Equality Action Plan (2014-2021), "gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. It implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is a human rights principle, a precondition for sustainable, people-centered development, and it is a goal in and of itself. UNESCO's vision of gender equality is in line with relevant international instruments such as the *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)* and the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. It is

also informed by the reflections concerning the post-2015 development framework[9].”

The concept of gender covers four different dimensions, which contribute to its complexity and why it generates so much debate. Gender is conceived as a sociological concept, a development approach, an operational strategy as well as an analytical method all at the same time. Gender as a sociological concept includes women and men, changes constantly and thus has no static definitions. Essentially, it is concerned with the social relations between men and women, who are based on values and norms learnt through culture and relate femininity and masculinity[10].

Gender is also a development approach[11], similar to the human rights approach to development, namely the Gender and Development Approach (GAD). In the context of MIL with a focus on the empowerment of women and men, it is necessary to distinguish between GAD and the Women in Development Approach[12] (WID). The latter acknowledges women’s productive and reproductive roles and attempts to expand their livelihood. It focuses only on women and is primarily concerned with establishing small micro-enterprises operated by women in their traditional roles and responsibilities. Therefore women are integrated into existing social and economic structures and processes, and in so doing, seen as stakeholders and beneficiaries of development. While WID has helped to draw attention to and recognize women’s contribution, particularly to the agricultural economy, it “ignores the unequal power relations between men and women and the subordinate role of women, assuming that these will change automatically as women become fully-fledged economic partners[13].” Consequently it falls short in addressing inequalities, questioning the workings of institutions and pushing for the rethinking of certain development models (cf. Grizzle and Torras Calvo, 2013).

The GAD approach on the other hand emphasises realities about the status of women vis-a-vis men that are accepted globally and aims to advocate for:

- a redefinition of traditional roles and responsibilities attributed to women and men;
- an increase in and broader debate on access to and control over resources and how these and other inequalities retard development – with a focus on solutions;
- equal participation in decision making for men and women as well as the appreciation and social and economic recognitions of their contribution in public and private spheres;
- the involvement of men in the quest to transform social relations that lead to inequality.

Aligning the GAD approach to gender-specific MIL policies and programmes demonstrates that:

- women and men do not have the same access to information, media and new technological platforms – in terms of use, operation and ownership – and that this should be changed;
- at the national level more attention should be given to the disadvantaged group to ensure that women and men have the same access to MIL competencies – as one way to change the imbalance noted above;
- men and women should participate equally in developing and implementing MIL policies and programmes.

What evidences are there about the involvement of men and women in knowledge societies and in the media? In a study carried out by Huyer and Hafkin (2007) who set out to assess gender trends in ICTs access and use, they found that comprehensive disaggregated ICT data did not exist in a large number of countries. Even where data were found, these were from isolated pockets of individual countries. Based on the available data, the researchers were able to conclude that women’s participation in the information/knowledge society lagged behind that of men, especially in the poor countries of the world. For instance, less than 50% of Internet users were women in the vast majority of the countries reviewed. They pointed out that inequalities in use could hamper women’s social and economic development even in countries where there is wide-scale penetration of ICTs. Among others, factors that impacted ICT use by gender include age, urban/rural location and what the researchers call ICT literacy. UNESCO places ICT literacy in the broader context of MIL as described above.

In developing countries, women are considerably more affected by obstacles to the access and beneficial use of ICTs. Socially and culturally constructed gender roles and relationships remain a cross-cutting element in shaping (or in this case, limiting) the capacity of women and men to participate on equal terms in the information society. For this reason, gender perspectives should be fully integrated into ICT-related research, policies, strategies and actions to ensure that women/girls and men/boys benefit equally from ICTs and their applications[14].

Gallagher (1980) and Fejes (1992) reviewed several seminal studies carried out by other researchers on stereotypes and found that women are underrepresented in the media, in staffing as well as in content[15]. Drawing on the summaries of Gallagher and Fejes, Van Zoonen (1995) vividly illustrated a dichotomy of gender representation in the media as seen in the list below:

Women	Men
Underrepresented	Overrepresented
Family context	Work context
Low-status jobs	High-status positions
No authority	Authority
No power	Power
Related to others	Individual
Passive	Active
Emotional	Rational
Dependent	Independent
Submissive	Resistant
Indecisive	Resolute

Fifteen years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a global study carried out by the World Association of Christian Communication’s Global Media Monitoring Project[16] showed little changes in these realities. Only 24% of people seen or heard about in the news are women. Almost 48% of all stories reinforce stereotypical representations of men and women(cf. Grizzle and Torras Calvo, 2013).

How might media and information literacy empower citizens to advocate for gender equality in all aspects of development including in and through the media?

Gender-sensitive MIL in respect to delivery and use of MIL competencies could enhance gender equality in and through media. As Richards (2009) notes, “Youth media organizations that focus on girls have seen positive effects of gender-specific media [and information] literacy training – it changes girls’ relationships to themselves, their bodies and each other. However, these organizations’ effects are limited unless the field as a whole takes to heart the impact of media [and other information providers] on girls.” (p.1)

Table 1 MIL for Gender Equality

MIL Competencies	**Enlisting MIL as an empowerment tool for gender equality** will enable all citizens women/girls and men/boys to:
Recognise and articulate a need for information and media	Recognise that there should be information about women/girls and men/boys in the media, books and in history Identify the absence of certain types of information about women. For instance, information about powerful women in history or present day women leaders. Call for sex-disaggregated data in reports about development such as unemployment, access to Internet and mobile phones etc.
Understand the role and functions of media and other information providers in democratic societies	Understand and recognise the power and role of media and other information providers, including those on the Internet, to offer counterbalances or to reinforce gender inequalities. Call on the media and other information providers to make gender inequalities transparent and understandable to the public. Push for diversity in the media and other information providers.
Understand the conditions under which those functions can be fulfilled	Advocate for freedom of expression, freedom of the press and their right to freely express themselves without fear of discrimination on the basis of gender.
Locate and access relevant information	Search for and retrieve gender-related information and knowledge. Use access to information laws to obtain government held information about equal treatment of women and their empowerment. Actively participate in the information life cycle - relating to all forms of development - collecting, processing and disseminating, and for women to participate in the process in separate groups as may be necessary.
Critically, evaluate information and the content of media and other information providers, including those on the Internet in terms of authority, credibility and current purpose and potential risks	Deconstruct media messages and analyse information to reveal links between sexism, gender stereotypes, and the promulgation of masculinistic male-centric status quo[17]. Be more critical of information online and for women and girls to monitor their behaviour online and that of others thereby becoming less vulnerable to potential risks.
Extract and organise information and media content	Based on their own experiences, local realities and research, gather relevant information that points to factors that hinder their empowerment and equality, and to use this information to open dialogue with relevant stakeholders and seek redress.
Synthesise or operate on the ideas abstracted from content	
Ethically and responsibly use information and communicate one's understanding or newly created knowledge to an audience or readership in an appropriate form and medium	While recognising and demanding their right to freely express themselves, accept that with rights comes certain responsibilities; for instance the responsibility not to knowingly disseminate false information or information that instigates hatred and discrimination of another individual or group based on gender etc.
Be able to apply ICT skills in order to process information and produce user-generated content	Acquire agency in producing their own information and media content (on or offline) based on MIL competencies they acquire - content about women, that more closely resembles the realities of women and girls, and that challenges gender stereotypes which have become the norm. Develop and disseminate social marketing and advocacy content relating to gender equality and based on their own research and community realities.
Engage with media and other information providers, including those on the Internet, for self-expression, freedom of expression, intercultural dialogue, democratic participation, gender equality and advocating against all forms of inequalities	Access and participate in mainstream media (public or private), community media, and the Internet as viable information sources and effective advocates of gender equality in and through media and women's participation in democratic processes and cultural expressions etc.

Gender-specific MIL Programmes

The hundreds of global youth media organizations and library programmes reaching out to youth provide great potential to mainstream gender-sensitive MIL and enable more girls and boys to advocate for gender equality in and through media.

Most gender-specific media literacy programmes target youth and are, in essence, youth media initiatives. With reference to information literacy, these programmes are largely academic and therefore involve mostly adults. Day (2005) points out that, "the importance of information literacy for teens in an ever-increasingly digital age has gained the attention of librarians and other professionals. She further noted however that "existing research is heavily skewed towards the educational field, with public libraries playing second fiddle to school and university libraries in assuming responsibility for teens' information literacy."

Youth media programmes such as TVbyGIRLS, Reel Grrls, Beyondmedia Education and the Arab Women Media Centre offer gender-focused media literacy education (Richards Bullen, 2009; See also Lapayese, 2012). Through these programmes, young girls receive training to develop their critical thinking by analyzing commercials, public service announcements and television shows, and to express themselves through creative and collaborative image, media and film productions.

UNESCO launched, in 2014, a self-paced online course targeting girls and boys aged 15 to 25. The course focuses on MIL as a tool to promote gender equality and covers related topics including intercultural dialogue[18]. From my research this gender-specific initiative, developed in conjunction with Athabasca University, is the only one of its kind that considers the whole range of MIL competencies described earlier.

The Gender and Media South African Network and Gender Links developed a seminal resource, *Watching the Watchdogs: a gender and media literacy toolkit for South Africa*, which formed the basis of a successful

programme in the region. According to Davidson (2006) in her assessment of the initiative, the toolkit offers a "standardized yet flexible approach to gender and media literacy training, it creates a systematic approach to training that can be adapted to any community or organization in the region" (p. 9)

Femina[19], an organization based in Tanzania, empowers youth and encourages discussion on the gender-related topics of economic empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and citizen engagement. Femina connects with young Tanzanians via its popular magazines and television shows, among other methods, to communicate information about these three themes. Using media to reach ten million youth in the area, the organization improves access to information to young men and women to help overcome gender inequality with respect to health as well as economic and democratic participation.

Gender-specific media and information literacy has also made its way into religion.

In Australia the See Me Media Literacy[20] Project involves the preparation of an interactive online media literacy curriculum resource aimed at addressing young people's interaction with media portrayal of body image and gender roles. Through exposing young women and young men to media literacy competencies, the project raised awareness of narrow gender stereotypes in media and helped young people reject such stereotypes while offering counter narratives. The inclusion of girls and boys, as well as those from different religious backgrounds (Christianity and Islam) offers useful insights to a more sustainable approach to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.

Laypese (2012), describes an 18-month exploratory study that investigated how Catholic youths, particularly girls, respond to the teaching and learning of gender-specific media education (media and information literacy). The research focused on teachers' perceptions and how they "understand the influence of gender-specific MIL on the educational experience of female Catholic students" (p.213). The methodology included a training programme first for teachers who then delivered training to young girls, periodic interviews, and classroom observation.

While the results of this research might have benefited from deep interviews with the young girls involved in the study, the findings are still of relevance. As Mayes (2006) notes, applying the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis approach to learning treats participants (in this case Catholic girls) as experts of their of experience and illuminates how they makes sense of their own experiences rather than focusing on an objective account as was the case in the Catholic youth study which focused only on the teachers' account.

Laypese noted that the eleven teachers involved in the study "were clear that the lessons on media education [media and information literacy], influenced the overall classroom learning experience… through the development of critical thinking skills and research aptitudes, and the reconfiguring of the teacher-student relationship" (p. 215). In an interview, one teacher concluded that based on her observation of the young girls:

> "I finally can hear these girls talk in a passionate way. Once they get that thinking at a higher level can go beyond subjects like history, it's like a light switch goes on. The way these girls can question media images and messages really empowers them to question other things they read in their textbooks and that they deal with in life as females" (ibid, p. 217)

On the side of information literacy, most gender-specific initiatives exist at the academic or higher education level. Virkus (2003), in an analysis of information literacy in Europe, quipped, "Information literacy development has been derived from user education and library instruction in the school context." She cited several examples of related programmes of the 1980's and 1990's in countries such as the United Kingdom, Spain, Slovenia, Sweden and the Netherlands. Many cases at the higher education level were also described. None of them hand any gender-specific dimensions. Virkus presentation of information literacy in Europe ten years later seem to suggest that information literacy has largely remained at the higher education level[21].

One study examined the IL competencies of female students at four rural secondary schools in Bangladesh[22]. The researchers concluded that the majority of the female students lacked knowledge about the library and information resources available to them, such as the library catalogue, and how to best use these resources. As a result, a course on IL was developed and delivered by the Centre for Information Studies, Bangladesh (CIS, B) and United Nations Information Center (UNIC) - Dhaka. This training increased the female students' awareness of different information sources.

As Cartridge and Bruce et al., notes, "the majority of information literacy (IL) research has been conducted within the confines of educational or workplace settings. Little to no research has explored IL in community contexts." (2008: p.110; See also Bruce, 1997 and Lloyd, 2005).

The authors call for *community information literacy (CIL)* which they defined as "the application of information literacy in community contexts (ibid, p. 111). However they focus more on a research agenda for CIL. This could imply the implementation of concrete CIL projects in communities, with research components embedded, and addressing development issues such as gender equality. However, these dimensions were not explicitly explored by them. The authors did flag the need for consideration of how appropriate strategies can lead to "high levels of IL, within a hi-tech context, across communities..." and how to "bring the informational needs and context to disempowered communities to the fore." (p. 121)

Present information literacy and gender programmes are related to associations or networks of female experts and researchers; for instance, the Association of College & Research Libraries Women & Gender Studies Section[23]. The Global Framework and Action Plan of the Global Alliance for Partnerships on MIL[24] provides some useful suggestions as what needs to be done to bring MIL to disenfranchised groups (See also Horton, 2007 with a specific focus on information literacy and Grizzle and Torras Calvo, 2013 for a broader MIL context).

Herein lies the opportunity to expand CIL to develop more community-based research and projects on MIL and gender as well as other development opportunities and challenges – contributing to fostering gender-sensitive MIL for all.

Conclusion and suggestions as to questions that should be addressed through empirical research

Enlisting MIL as a tool for advancing gender equality opens up a flood of opportunities for pragmatic development programmes as well as academic research necessary to furnish the evidence needed to drive public policies and resources allocation. Effective gender-specific MIL programmes should:

- Involve women/girls and men/boys
- Look beyond just the media or the Internet and consider books, political and education processes, interpersonal relations, religious beliefs and cultural practices
- Consider the whole range of MIL competencies
- Combine innovative and concrete empowerment projects with research
- Facilitate national, regional and international networking to create an MIL and gender movement
- Include both theory and practice
- Be linked to policy debates and formulation concerning women and media as well as MIL.

Focus not only on the potential negatives of media, technology and the flood of information they mediate but more on the opportunities they provide to give impetus to gender equality.

There is consensus among MIL experts that more research needs to be done to affirm the impact of MIL on societies (Frau-Meigs, 2006; Buckingham, 1998; Casey et al., 2008; and Dovy and Kennedy, 2006 as cited in Grizzle and Torras Calvo, 2013).

Questions for empirical research:

1. Are citizens' attitudes towards participation/engagement in democratic discourses and governance processes, on such issues as gender equality, freedom of expression and diversity in media, different consequent to MIL competencies?

2. How do citizens respond to personal research needs in light of MIL competencies and do they become more critical of information and media content about women?

3. Are citizens' responses to MIL reflected in particular attitudes toward the role of women in cultural expressions and the promotion of peace?

4. Can MIL help to reduce the vulnerability of women in cyberspace?

5. Do gender-specific MIL initiatives that consider the whole range of MIL competencies result in greater empowerment or agency for women and men of all ages?

6. Can a media and information literate society help to accelerate achievement of the national gender equality objectives?

7. What new theoretical or analytic frameworks are required to assess MIL, as well as to monitor the efficiency of national and international public policies in this area?

8. Are national MIL policies gender-sensitive?

9. To what extent do MIL policies and strategies formulation and implementation which ensure the involvement of women and girls result in greater impact at the community, national, regional and international levels.

10. Are gender equality activists more effective when they are media and information literate?

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