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Gender mainstreaming in the mass media: European and global gender profile

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Introduction and theoretical background

Discrimination refers to unequal behaviour regarding gender, race, ethnic origin, religion or belief, age, disability, or sexual orientation.

In all the official documents of the EU gender equality has been defined as an equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all aspects of private and public life. This policy presupposes the acceptance and valuing equally the differences between women and men and the diverse roles they play in society.

The main principle underlying gender equality is the right to be different, and the effort to change the structures that preserve the unequal relationship between the two sexes. Gender mainstreaming refers to reorganization, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy making. Gender mainstreaming policy involves both women and men and makes full use of human resources, it makes gender equality visible in the mainstream of society and it takes into account the diversity among women and men.

The vertical and horizontal distribution of women within the scientific research system at the levels of government, higher education and, as far as possible, the private sector is considered one of the appropriate measures of gender mainstreaming. Special emphasis is given on the participation of women in the development of science and technology in Europe. Another important issue of gender equality concerns the issue of balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making.

One form of serious discrimination refers to harassment, which has been defined ((EU Legislation Article 4, 27/11/1991; Lee et al, 2004; Pierce et al., 2004; Eyre, 2000; Deadrick, 1996) as unwanted conduct with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment contains a duty on employers to guarantee the personality of an employee by respecting and protecting their privacy and personality. It is suggested that this could form a basis for challenging a failure to prevent harassment on the part of an employer.

The high social impact of mass broadcasting is broadly acknowledged, and its role in preventing or reinforcing discrimination is of great importance. From that point of view the negative role of mass media in the process of implementing gender mainstreaming has been broadly research evidenced. It is argued that mass media produce and reproduce negative stereotypes, and they play a dominant role in the stereotyped socialization of youth ((Burton & Pollack, 2002; Fenton, 2000; Frankson, 2000a,b;

UNESCO, 2003; UN, http://www.un.kiev.ua/bc/tenders/99/). This study examines the role of TV broadcasting concerning Gender Mainstreaming, negative discriminations and stereotyped reproduction.

Aim and objectives

The aim of the paper is twofold: first to present the results of a research study on the gender profile as it has been broadcasted by Cyprus TV, and second to compare the broadcasting gender profile with the official European policy on gender mainstreaming.

The study presented here is a part of a longer research project funded for three years by the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation, entitled 'Gender mainstreaming in the Mass Media of Cyprus and the relationship with the perceptions of youth. Comparison with the EU policy'.

For mainstreaming to be effective it demands a suitable infrastructure of political, financial and professional support. It needs to be part of a cycle of development, which is captured in the following dynamic:

- Awareness raising and training in gender issues is needed for educational staff (both teachers and management).
- Tools and skills are needed to recognize inequalities and deal with them.
- An overall strategy to promote gender mainstreaming in schools is needed, involving all the different levels of intervention.
- A sound legislative framework
- Cooperation with counterparts in other countries through an interactive network for exchanging good practices.

In this context the longitudinal project aims at awareness raising in gender issues in the mass media, at developing tools for measuring the gender stereotypes, and at supporting an overall strategy for gender mainstreaming.

The objectives of this paper include:

- Presentation of the gender stereotypes in Cyprus TV broadcasting,
- Identification of the stereotypes in the private, the social and the public domain,
- Investigation of the gender stereotypes regarding European and non-European citizens.

Methodology

The investigation of Cypriot female and male representation is studied through randomly selected Cypriot television series. The Cypriot television series consist of self-existent, meaningful episodes and refer to the daily happenings of Cypriot society, while their script is written only by Cypriot citizens - men and women. The series assemble high rates of audience and attract a varied television public, men, women and children, from all educational and socio-economic layers, in urban and provincial regions.

Data collection - sampling

The collection, coding and final sampling of television data, goes through a 5 phase process. These phases constitute graded stages of coding and investigating the characteristics of each series (frequency, repetition, period of broadcast, duration, area of television program), which contributed to the final choice of the sample.

PHASE A: Record all television Cypriot series' regardless of the rate of audience. In total, 18 Cypriot series' for the broadcasting period 11/2003 - 5/2004 were coded.

PHASE B: Coding of series' per month and channel of broadcast, frequency of new episodes, repetitive episodes. The repetitive episodes as well as the limited in duration series' were removed from the process of sampling.

PHASE C: Coding of episodes and recording of elements such as: television channel, rate of audience per episode, day of broadcast, time of broadcast and duration of each episode. Calculation of the percentages of audience.

PHASE D: Record the total number of episodes in each series in combination with the average of audience for the seven-month television season.

PHASE E: Application of techniques of random sampling of episodes per series in each channel, based on the following criteria:

1. In the series that had a total number of daily episodes above 100 during the seven-month period, the episodes were selected with random sampling with frequency 1: 5 [2 television series]
2. In the series that the total number of daily episodes was 50 – 100 in the seven-month period, the episodes are selected with random sampling and frequency 1: 4 [5 series].
3. Finally, in a series that the total number of episodes was under 50, the episodes that were selected for analysis follow random sampling as well with frequency 1:3 [1 series].

The final sample consisted of 158 episodes in the 8 selected television series.

Construction of the instrument of observation- textualisation of the dialogues

An Instrument of Recording Behaviours (IRB) and Textualised Dialogues were developed for the analysis of the 158 episodes of the sample. The principal criterion for the final configuration of IRB was the ability to transfer in text the verbal and non-verbal behaviours that a television story line presents in contrast to a television picture - snapshot of advertisement. Initially, the categories of recording the elements of an advertisement, which Akie Arima (2003) uses and which are based in Kawakita's (1986) inductive method of KJ analysis were used. The KJ analysis was used to investigate sex stereotypes in Japanese television as well as in British television (Harris & Stobart, 1986). These categories concern the general characteristics of the population that takes part in the advertisement as: age, gender, clothing, nationality, space, and voice gender.

As the basis of the IRB instrument the categories of the KJ method were used, while the following were added: Duration of each scene, roles, persons' behaviour, costume style, tone of voice, camera's focalization/zoom, interaction of persons during discussions, non-verbal behaviour, subjects of discussion and textualisation of dialogues that concern the profile of the two genders. The unit of analysis and recording of data on each episode was the scene.

Data Coding

For data coding, ATLAS software was used. Initially, the recordings of observed action in each scene were completed based on an observational key by a team of four researchers. The observed action of persons per scene, verbal and non verbal, was coded in the observational key based on the following six categories, which were respectively used for both genders: behaviours, stereotypes, sentiments, roles, characterizations and self-esteem. Afterwards, the electronic form of 'observed' recordings per scene were processed in ATLAS. Thus, the following elements were shaped progressively: codes, categories, families and superfamilies of action for men and women correspondingly.

As it appears in Table 1, seventeen families arose for the behaviours of men and women, twelve for the sentiments that they possess, seven for the roles they appear to have, eight for the self-esteem they present and finally thriteen families for their characterizations.

Table 1: Families for each category of coding and analysis

| | Families in each category | | | | |
	Behaviours	Emotions	Roles	Self-image Self-esteem	Characterizations
1	Concerning Money	Pleasant emotions	Professional	Professional	Negative
2	Professional life-Action	Love	Educational-cultural	Educational – cultural	Positive
3	Politics	Self-confidence	Political	Social	For Family status or status of personal life
4	Love-Attitude to the other gender	Pathetic emotions	Erotic	Erotic	For external appearance

5	Habits in private life	Stress	Religious	Self-understanding of personality	For age
6	Attitude towards body	Fear	Social	Positive self-esteem excellence – superiority	For cognitive ability/cleverness
7	Relation with the place – house holding	Disappointment		Negative self-esteem Insecurity - Inferiority	For house holding
8	Remembrance – reflections	Hostility			Erotic
9	Social habits	Sadness			
10	Exercise of power (verbal – non verbal)	Culpable/blameworthy			
11	Negative verbal behaviour	Insecurity			
12	Antagonistic behaviour	Shame			
13	Apologetic – consensus behaviour				
14	Supporting				
15	Conspirational behaviour				
16	Mediators for conflict resolution				
17	Competing-envious behaviour				

Superfamilies refer to behaviours that concern public life, private life and interpersonal relations. The sentiments were organised into negative and positive. The roles were categorized into those that concern the public and private life of the two genders. Self-esteem, which is defined by the characterizations that the persons attribute to them were grouped in those that concern public life, private life, in characterizations that show negative (inferiority) self-esteem and positive (supremacy) self-esteem. Finally, the characterizations and the aggressive determinations that are attributed to persons by others shaped the superfamilies: characterizations that concern the private and public life, negative and positive characterizations of personality and declarative characterizations of origin.

Results

Results analysis is based both on quantitative measurements and on qualitative differentiations that appear between the two genders. The total numbers of codes that are presented per category for men and women on the one hand, and the frequency with which each code is repeated on the other hand constitute the two basic criteria for the quantitative analysis of the data. At the same time, however, the types of codes that are incorporated in each category constitute an important element of study on the final configuration of the profile of the genders.

The frequencies of the superfamily 'the public life' of men (351) and women (187) – relating to money, professional life, politics – give an explicit precedence to the male gender. Specifically, in a total of 538 codes of behaviour in the public life superfamily, 65.2% refer to men, while 34.7% to women. This result is enhanced by the qualitative differentiations of the codes that appear in this category.

Differentiation also appears in the basic behaviours of men and women in their professional life, their relation to money and politics. It is realized that regarding their relationship with money, men deal, make transactions and discuss profits, while women ask for money, furniture, cars and travels from men. Simultaneously, the discussions women make about money, concern their guarantee for reasons of consumption. Conversely, men never go shopping, but their economic action is related to investments and is closely consistent with their professional life. Men are those who support their families financially or offer money to their girlfriends. These results are also strengthened by the results in the categories of professional roles and characterizations that concern the economic and professional status of men and women. The word 'professional' is attributed only to men, while the word 'unemployed' is used with a negative tinge for men, however not for women. This point legalises to a large extent the stereotype of the non working housewife who is incurious or even incompetent for business action. It simultaneously strengthens the importance that a successful professional career and an important economic status of life play in men's life.

In the professional life category, the total number of codes (men = 142 women = 110) initially does not show important differentiations between genders. However, the total number of females that appear in the role of employees, in contrast to the total number of male employees that is presented in the 158 episodes differentiates the picture considerably. In the total of 47 Cypriot women, 27 do not work (57.4 %), while only 11 appear to have a constant job. From them, only 4 are presented in scenes in their work place, while for the remainder of them it is simply reported that they are working. Respectively, in men the percentage of workers is proportionally much higher (78.6%). The cases of unemployed men are such cases as men released from the army, former prisoners or men in the margin that do not match with the 'classic' professional status of the Cypriot employee.

Simultaneously, the codes that refer to the professional life of Cypriot women differ from those of men. From the total of the female workers, only in 4 cases women are presented in action in their work place. However, even in these cases the scenes and the plot of the script present women to be unreliable professionals (e.g. a professor who faces serious problems of indiscipline on behalf of her students who speak ironically to her in a constant disparaging tone, a military doctor gullible and ignorant on issues of medicine and a tv hostess-student who is a crank and considers herself beautiful, a super-model and clever while the plot presents her to be dumb and soubrettish). In most of the cases the codes that refer to women's professional life refer to the hiring of cleaners in their houses or discussions about the professional career of their children or for the career they consider following, but they never decide to do so.

In this point it is worth commenting on the results that refer to the educational status of the two genders. In total of 69 men and 54 women, 13 men (18.8%) and only 8 women

(14.8%) are presented in roles that indicate an educational background. These proportions shape a picture of Cypriot society where education does not have any value and probably can be characterized as demerit when compared with the precedence that the money and 'good' professional position have. Even if the percentage difference for the two genders is relatively small, the fact that feminine behaviours of reading, dealing with political and social life, being informed by newspapers and television news and expressing concerns of finding a job are absent, leads to the conclusion that in this aspect discriminations are suffered against the female gender. Not only is the picture of an unemployed and/or uncultivated housewife with limited range of interests added to the female gender, but also the insignificance that education has for women.

Finally, dealing with politics and having political concerns and action as politicised citizens of Cyprus is excessively limited for both Cypriot men and women. With the exception of one series, where two men are presented to have opposite political convictions and discussions about political contradictions, in all the other cases men seldom express political concerns. Simply, they are presented in scenes to be holding a newspaper or watching the news on the television without, however, proceeding in annotations. In women, this action can also be categorized in the non-observed behaviours. A scene is presented in which a female student is reading a newspaper laid down in a swimming-pool bed and wearing a swimming-suit costume (a scene which wants to stress the different educative level she has from her uncultivated boyfriend). Also, in just one case a politicised man appears to have a discussion about the elections in a bar with a female worker in the bar. In no case is a woman presented to have an individual politicised action or political and social concerns. This allows us to classify these behaviours in the non-observed behaviours of women.

Consequently, regarding public life, it is realised that not only does public life constitute a field of action of men, but also, even the limited space that is lent to the female gender is presented as 'alien' for women: professional life, pecuniary transactions and political concerns appear not to match with the female exemplar. This differentiation between the two profiles appears so frequently that probably a stereotypical picture for feminine behaviour is shaped.

This stereotypical picture is strengthened by the codes that shape the superfamily of behaviours in private life. In this case as well, the pattern of analysis is repeated. The total number of codes of behaviour for men and women (men = 785 women = 631) shows that men have precedence in the behaviours that concern their private life. It should be noted that the high frequencies in this category are also ought to the fact that the planning, the shooting and the plot of most episodes are limited in closed internal rooms of houses and concern situations between friends and members of a family. Nevertheless, the attitudes in this case also differ, as the behaviours presented by the two sexes in their private life show.

Women deal primarily with the household and their body (the need to maintain themselves as young and elegant); they pass their private moments mainly by watching television and waiting for phone-calls. Men appear to have an interest in being handsome and in dealing with their body only when they are in love or when they have a date with a woman. It is important to be mentioned here that men are seldom presented as

uncertain with their body, their weight or their appearance. In their private moments they watch television, eat, send messages, travel, smoke, listen to music, sing and play musical instruments. The mentioned behaviours - that are the most frequent in the total of episodes - show initially a limited range of interests for both men and women.

The behaviours that shape the interpersonal relations in both genders supplement the jigsaw of their picture. The scenes present high frequencies in the codes that shape the superfamily of the interpersonal relations both for men and women (men = 1940 women = 1836). Interpersonal relations are 'set up' mainly in behaviours that concern the exercise of power, or are conspiratorial, competitive, envious and negative verbal behaviours. These behaviours appear to be the habits men and women have in their social expressions of life. Simultaneously, both men and women apologise, reinforce, encourage and mediate in conflict situations. In the family of social habits, it is important to report the qualitative differentiations that set up the choices of the two genders in their contacts with others. Men, apart from the discussions about women, have hobbies and other interests. Women's main interests, on the contrary, are gossip, men and marriage. Even their personal interests when they are with friends are shaped around men (e.g. they discuss fashion in order to wear the most fashionable clothes to attract men, age and how they can appear younger, their body and how they can maintain themselves elegantly in order to attract men).

It is worth commenting on the behaviours that concern the exercise of power and negative verbal behaviour which are categorised in the family of interpersonal relations. While women, as results show, appear to act restrictively in a mainly private space, their verbal and corporal exercising of power is realised in their home and it concerns the persons in their close familial environment. Women as spouses, mothers and later mothers-in-law present the type of a grumbler and oppressive woman as far as their love companions, their children and their grooms is concerned. For men, the corresponding behaviours are presented both in their private and public life, and are mainly associated with other men.

In the episodes, in the category of interpersonal relations, the cases of sexual harassment of women on behalf of men are added. In these cases, the codes that were used is 'forces' (exercise of power) or 'flirts' (erotic life), even though the visual image and the script, that is the visual culture of the episode, made the sexual harassment of women clear. In most cases, the harassment appears in private places, mainly on behalf of married men to single or married women. As it seems in the following results, the sexual harassment of Cypriot and foreign women constitutes an attitude of Cypriot men.

What appear to constitute central and nodal points for the life of Cypriots are love, marriage and relations with the other gender. They constitute the basic theme of the script in most tv series. For women however, the plot of the episodes itself presents exemplars of women whose unique life objective is marriage and whose daily behaviour concerns interests that are related with their erotic life and their attitude towards the other sex. In diagrams 3 and 4, it appears those women's habits concern also situations of hysteria mainly when they divorce or split up with their boyfriends or have problems in their personal life. These attitudes do not characterize the male profile. Both genders present a sentimental world which is possessed by negative sentiments of fear,

animosity, sorrow and stress. This result declares that the Cypriot woman, who dedicates most of her daily time to her private life, experiences a personal-home life that is possessed by negative sentiments, particularly hostile ones (W = 132) towards the persons of her close familiar environment.

Table 2: Number and frequencies of codes presented in emotional life of men and women

Super Families	Families	Men		Women	
		Number of Codes	Frequency of codes	Number of Codes	Frequency of codes
POSITIVE EMOTIONS [22- 19] M= 111 W= 90	Positive	10	86	8	53
	Love	4	2	3	3
	Self-confidence	5	12	5	10
	Pathetic	3	11	3	24
NEGATIVE EMOTIONS [37- 32] M= 346 W= 305	Stress	9	77	9	78
	Fear	3	78	3	33
	Disappointment	4	32	3	21
	Hostility	8	127	7	132
	Sadness	9	19	7	28
	Culpable	3	5	1	1
	Insecurity	2	6	1	7
	Shame	1	2	1	5

The profile of the two genders is supplemented to a large extent not only by the data that is presented and analyzed in ATLAS, but also by a list of behaviours and actions that are absent from the life and action of the Cypriot man and woman. Regarding the erotic personal life compared with the social one of the two genders, it is realised that the Cypriot woman appears to be isolated by the wider social environment, enslaved and absolutely dependent on the 'companion of her life'. Her profile is also characterized by a passive attitude as far as cheating from her companion, endurance and subjugated behaviour in her destiny is concerned, as she never asks for a divorce no matter what happens, while for the cases of infidelity by her companion she always blames another woman and in particular a foreigner.

The analysis of the episodes also raises important results for the foreigners - women and men - that reside in Cyprus. In total, 7 foreign women and 8 foreign men or foreigners from mixed marriages are presented in the episodes

The professional status of foreigners that reside in Cyprus, women from the Eastern countries of Europe and former communistic states, refers to 'cabaret women', who have evening and part-time work in Cyprus, without any educational background for saving money. The culture of mass media presents them with the tendency to face intense discriminations. This results from the following two fundamental points:

1. They are presented with a totally different prestige compared to that of the western European woman, who is shown to have the profile of an economically independent woman-businesswoman.
2. These women are even distinguished in comparison to the men who belong to the same nation with them, as the above point does not appear to go for the man of Russian origin. It is about an extreme adversative exemplar, a wealthy doctor, who,

based on the script, is considered to be a good groom by the parents of a Cypriot girl. Consequently, the Russian woman is deprived respect and she is presented as having doubtful morals compared to the Russian man, who is a reputable doctor and a coveted groom.

This picture is also enhanced by stereotypical expressions for foreigners living in Cyprus. These stereotypical expressions are reported in the dialogues of the episodes. It seems that a shaped stereotypical perception for foreigners who live and work in Cyprus exists, which also presents some racist elements. This picture is differentiated depending on the origin of the women. Thus, the profile of west-European female refers to an independent woman, who is far away from the profile of the traditional housewife and the adherent spouse. All the statements that were grouped in the category 'stereotypes' are negatively loaded, even those that concern the characteristics of beauty and politeness of Russian women, as they are presented as 'arms' in order to ensure a relation with a Cypriot man who will ensure their economic settlement. In addition, intense racial discriminations against the coloured men and women that live and work in Cyprus are realised.

Discussion

Concerning the EE´s policy on gender mainstreaming Cypriot broadcasting is totally negative, since televised stereotypes reproduce observed behaviours and generalise non approved gender discrimination.

In the overall results of the random sample of television series, the profile of the two genders, as a cultural construction, is presented as differentiated with a heap of negative stereotypes. The differentiations are located in all the expressions of life and action of individuals: the private and public life, interpersonal relations, the development of self-esteem and the sentimental world. Agreeing with the relative bibliography, it is confirmed that the culture of mass media is a mass culture that is constructed for the market and is based on the exaggeration and the dividing vignettes of genders. With the use of special conventions, television tries, and succeeds in creating a decisive important classification of television spectators in male and female individuals.

The diversity of the noted behaviours and choices in combination with the frequency with which they are presented shape an explicit stereotypical profile for the two genders, which is repeated in all the television series of the sample.

The woman's profile is constructed with the general principle of the restrictive action of persons in the private sphere and in the interpersonal relations they knit with persons of their narrow familial environment. Concretely, women deal only with gossip, love and other 'light subjects', such as fashion, what's on in the neighbourhood, or suspicions of spouse or companion. They never read a newspaper nor discuss about political, social and wider economic subjects. Even as workers, they are unreliable professionals. They are sensitive, sentimentally vulnerable and dependent on men. Their aim of life is to get married. They are often abandoned by men, react hysterically and they are afraid whether they will not manage to get married. Also, in their erotic relations they live with uncertainty. They are overprotective mothers, jealous and competitive towards other

women, with a permanent anxiety to be beautiful and slim in order to attract men. Foreigners are objects for erotic satisfaction.

Respectively, men's profile is mainly constructed with the principle of freedom of will and independence. Men, in contrast with women, are presented as free beings, meaning that they are self-actualised and present elements of personal life and of choices that are independent from the female gender. Concretely, they are the chiefs and masters; they are ready for extramarital relations, fortune hunters of Cypriot women and ready to spend everything for the beautiful European foreigners. They attract women despite their age and their exterior appearance is not a criterion for women in order to choose them. Their power and value is straightforwardly related to their economic situation rather than their professional position. The economic wealth constitutes their main characteristic to such an extent that it composes their masculinity. They attract women with their money and are depicted as lovers even when they are old. They are faithless and chase money through gambling. All men are closely connected to their mother. It is necessary for them to have an erotic relation and they continue to seek for it even after they are married. They present their wealth and their material belongings (houses, cars) in order to show who they are. Superior education is not a qualification compared to wealth.

Composing the above distributive characteristics, it appears that profiles of both men and women present stereotypical expressions, particularly depreciatory for men and women. However, as far as the female profile is concerned the basic discrimination lies in the fact that the woman does not have her own 'centre'; she constructs and readjusts her identity, from her youth to her old age only in relation to her children and spouse and reconstructs herself permanently in order to serve the altered requirements these relations have. Also, her appearance as an individual without self-existence constitutes the more important element that differentiates women from men.

The role of the foreign European is presented as disadvantageous and differentiated, considered as a desirable and easy spoil for the whole male population. The discriminations between genders as they were spotted are strengthened by the profile of foreign men and women. The place of origin constitutes the basic criterion for the determination of the personality of others. Characteristics such as personal choices, educational level and personality are not considered as criteria for the construction of feminine existence.

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