

MEDIA AND GENDER

Media stands as an important tool in the society, especially in the twenty first century. It takes the important role of providing frameworks, providing entertainment, and reporting current events (Hermes, 190). Through this, the media can stand as an essential player in the elevation of gender equality, both in the representation all sexes and within an organization. Getting the right balance between journalism and gender equality has been an important are of focus in the recent past. How journalists as well as other actors can contribute in ensuring gender equality presents as an important theme. People in the media should work towards identifying challenges, advancing on gender equity, and contributing to policy formulation as well as debates. However, at times, the media does less in confronting gender distortions in unions, newsrooms and other platforms directly related to it.

Impact of media on gender

Fair portrayal of gender ought to be one of the principles of the media as it is ethical and professional. The media needs to portray both male and female in an honest, fair, and accurate manner (Hermes, 190). However, the media all over the world does the contrary. Unbalanced portrayal of gender is a common in the media world over. According to the global media monitoring association, women feature more in stories that portray them as victims. Additionally, the media identifies women according to their family status more often than it relates the same with men. Reviews also show that women are less likely to feature in major headlines. The media also regards men as experts more than it regards females with the same qualities. Certain groups of women, like older women, the poor, or those who belong to minority groups, are given even less attention (Hermes, 192).

The media has also led to stereotyping through its every day content. The media considers women as careers and homemakers of the family solely. To the media, women are dependent on their husbands or men for various things or for attention. Tom (5) states that stories presented by female journalists are more probable to address the stereotypes than those that male reporters file (Tom, 5). As such, there exists a link between the developments in the representation of females and the participation of female journalists. Countries that have higher representation of women in the journalism industry normally have more proactive female journalists than those that do not have the same level of representation.

The media has also cause stereotyping on male figures in the society largely. The media normally characterizes men as powerful and dominant and gives little or room at all for alternate masculinity visions. The media also tends to demean the ability of men to take up domestic roles, care, or oppose violence. Such depictions can affect perceptions in relation to what the society may expect from women and men. These depictions are also important to the subjects, men, as they may influence their own perceptions. In short, the media has a big

impact in promoting a biased vision of the roles and responsibilities of both sexes in the society. The media needs to pay more attention in addressing and identifying the various imbalances as well as gaps that are currently present in its field. The European commission gives several recommendations regarding this issue. This commission recommends that the media to set gender parity expectations on radio and television panels and create thematic databases that dwell on gender issues. In addition to that, the commission advocates for conscious effort in portraying men and women in non-stereotypical aspects (Morna, Mpofu, and Glenwright, 8).

The media carries a very important role of ensuring that their action and manner of carrying out activities promotes democracy. Tom (15), in his article on global monitoring of the media, questions the democracy, inclusion, and participation level of the media from a gender standpoint. His findings of a research he takes on an 'ordinary' news day to depict the representation on depiction of both females and males in the industry shows an interesting trend by the media. The media seems to represent men more in news, leading to an imbalance in the representation of gender across the world. This brings about questions on the level of inclusion and participation (Tom, 15). Unequal participation and representation implies that the media does not represent the views of women in a democratic manner. The European Commission's report also contains important information on the gaps existing between the realities of men's and women's lives and how the media portrays them. The commission proposes several measures that may promote balance and reduce stereotyped perspectives in the media. According to the commission, increasing access to decision-making and expression for women in all areas of the media will contribute to increased democracy.

The media has an important role of influencing the involvement of women in decision-making processes and activities aimed at setting agendas. Community media, in most cases, increases the gender balance in the media. It promotes the perception of all genders as partakers of journalism material and not merely as consumers. Initiatives such as community media encourage the involvement of women in making critical and technical decisions. They also have the capacity to promote balance and reduce the stereotypes that the media has already instilled in the society. In Fiji, community media initiatives enabled women to take part in a video project that presented them as active citizens who have a significant role to play in the community and in their families. Airing of the recorded imaged improved the perception of government bureaucrats towards women (Morna, Mpofu, and Glenwright, 10).

The media brings out educational differences that exist between both genders in the society. Comparison of educational performance between boys and girls has been a common practice almost everywhere in the world. Researchers also base some of their studies on educational attainments on gender. As such, the media normally airs these studies and the gender depictions in terms of education to the society (Roger, 345). For instance, the media may compare the trend of performance between boys and girls and underlying issues. In most cases, boys

appear to be having better results or outcomes in education than girls. In some places, the media tends to imply that girls cannot outshine boys in terms of education. As a result, feminists have started advocating for fair portrayals of both boys and girls in education systems to make sure that both genders compete without negative effects from the media.

The media has contributed to the education of women on their rights largely. Over the recent past, the level of awareness among women concerning their rights has increased ensuring that men do not exploit them. The media has promoted such awareness programs to a large extent owing to its ability to reach masses all over the globe. Programs that address the issues that women go through on a daily basis have contributed to awareness among women greatly. Sharing on issues concerning gender has also been on the rise because of the media. Martin (12) sheds the light on the input of feminists and how the media has enabled them to table and spread their agenda. The media has also been on the frontline in ensuring that women assume entrepreneurship roles as much as men do (Martin, 12).

Over the recent past, and as technology innovations diffuse in all corners of the world, the issue of sexualization in the media has risen. Evidently, today's media content stands out with major differences to content aired and promoted in traditionally reserved periods. Young people can access questionable content more easily today compared to how previous generations. This has been one of the major topics of debate between feminists and the media. The media tries to limit access to immoral content as much as possible, but of course with serious hitches. With the increased access of the internet, it remains hard to cap the type of content young people can access and internalize (Roger, 345).

Conclusion

The media has functions as a source of entertainment, information, and framework key to in today's society. This makes it a powerful tool that can influence the perceptions of the society concerning gender. It is responsible for most of the roles and responsibilities ascribed to both genders in the society. With such an important role, one would expect the media to be fair, honest, and democratic to both men and women. However, that is not always the case and the media portrays women and men differently. It is common for men to receive wider attention than women in the media receive. This has forced many female journalists to advocate for equality of women in the media. Feminists have also been on the frontline advocating for equality and fairness. It is also important that the media, in general, incorporates them.