



Gender, Diversity & GBV
in South African TV

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Partnerships for Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls in Southern Africa Programme (PfP)

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women)



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MANAGEMENT FOREWORD

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains one of the biggest challenges and obstacles to development in South Africa with rape, domestic violence and intimate-partner violence particularly prevalent. An average of 100 rapes are recorded daily and this does not account for unreported incidents. According to South Africa's 2016 Demographic and Health Survey one in five women over the age of 18 has experienced physical violence at least once in her lifetime. The rate of femicide in South Africa is four times that of the global average, meaning everyday three women die at the hands of their intimate partners. The crisis of GBV and femicide in South Africa is well documented and reflects a society that is saturated in patriarchy, unequal gender dynamics and daily gross human rights violations against women and children. While the concept of inherited-violence from violent and discriminatory systems of colonialism and apartheid is often cited as cause and driver of GBV in South Africa, it is also understood that one sector that has some influence on societies norms and perceptions around gender relations and violence as well as general knowledge of GBV and forms of support is the media and creative sector.

In late 2017 the German Development Cooperation (GIZ) in South Africa, started a regional programme focussed on prevention, the **'Partnerships for Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls in Southern Africa Programme' (PfP)**. The main objective of the programme is to strengthen multi-stakeholder approaches that join governmental, civil society and private sector efforts to prevent violence against women and girls. Beyond South Africa, the programme works in Zambia and Lesotho with several Flagship Projects that work in different sectors and through independent initiatives implemented in each country.

The **United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women)** as well as GIZ view the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by UN Member States in September 2015 as the universal roadmap for people and planet, addressing the key challenges of the 21st century, such as poverty, inequality, and climate change. Women's empowerment is recognized as a pre-condition to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the core of the 2030 Agenda.

In line with the SDGs, the UN Women global initiative "Step it Up for Gender Equality" invites all partners to Step it Up! This includes media partners. The Step it Up Global Media Compact spearheaded by UN Women, aims to be a mutually beneficial agreement through which media partners are invited to scale up their focus on women's rights and gender equality issues through high-quality coverage and editorial decisions, complemented by gender-sensitive corporate practices.

It is in front of this background that the GIZ-PfP and UN Women South Africa have jointly started the **Media Compact Flagship Project**. The Project aims to jointly with government, civil society and industry shape and implement a process to develop, formulate and promote a National Compact (voluntary pledge) with the media and creative industries for a positive portrayal of gender relations and against gender violence. The Media Compact Flagship Project will provide a platform for media and related stakeholders to self-examine, explore and reconstruct their role in shaping societies' gender norms positively and facilitate dialogue to improve cooperation between the media and private, public and civil society actors with the common goal of achieving gender equality, women's empowerment and the end of gender-based violence.

As part of this initiative and to kick-start and facilitate a national, sector-wide dialogue the NGO Gender Links undertook extensive research on current dynamics of gender representation, stereotyping and the portrayal of gender-based violence in South African television space.

The key findings reflect the unequal gender dynamics at play within broader society. Gender stereo-types are still prevalent, women's voices are heard less and decision making still lies with men. Women comprise 77% of programme creators but just 15% of directors in entertainment, broadly, content creation remains a "man's world". A concern from a prevention perspective is the finding that in the breakdown of topic categories prevention constitutes only 5% of GBV topic coverage in the news and 29% in children's programming. This demonstrates that the focus on news values often means that news media waits for a violent incident to occur and cover it rather than to shed light on underlying causes and drivers. There needs to be a sector wide focus on how to improve ways of reporting on preventative interventions and methods. The reactionary approach of the industry stakeholders requires unpacking and interrogation.

Of course, all media stakeholders also operate within the wider socio-economic climate in South African society, where patriarchy, sexism and structural violence against women are almost a norm. The media and creative industries operate within these circumstances and are not exempt from these norms. At the same time, there is a recognition of the power the media and creative sector has to influence and shape norms and perceptions within society. Thus, journalists and creatives always have to balance the need to reflect society with the need to challenge it. We believe the right balance can only be identified through an on-going inclusive discourse, constantly interrogating and evaluating the own behavior and its impact.

Global movements like **#metoo** and local movements such as **#totalshutdown** have moved the goal post in terms of how society understands GBV and gender stereotypes in media and creative industry. Past notions of how to report on GBV and represent women are now being challenged and negotiated. The GIZ-PfP and UN Women Media Compact Flagship Project sets out to support the facilitation of this negotiation and at the same time improve cooperation between public, private and civil society actors.

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
DA	Democratic Alliance
DoPs	Directors of Photography
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GCIS	Government Communication and Information Systems
GEM	Classification Gender and Media Classification
GIZ	German Development Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)
GL	Gender Links
GMMP	Global Media Monitoring Project
GMPS	Gender and Media Progress Study
GNC	Gender Non-Confirming
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Viruses
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
NFVF	National Film and Video Foundation
OCEAN	Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism
PfP	GIZ - Partnership for Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls in Southern Africa Programme
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAGA	South Africa Guild of Actors
SANEF	South African National Editors Forum
SOGI	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities
ToR	Terms of Reference
TV	Television
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“When men or women turn to or on the media, yet fail to see women in our true diversity, there is a sense that all or some women literally don’t count. It’s crucial that the media report and reflect, not conceal and distort.”¹ - Gloria Steinman (American feminist, journalist, and social political activist).

There is urgent need to achieve greater diversity, balance and sensitivity in the coverage of gender violence in South African television. This is the key finding of the first ever gender monitoring of the audio visual media to include entertainment and children’s programming, in addition to the news, that has been the subject of much greater scrutiny over the years.

Gender Links (GL), a Southern African women’s rights organisation that promotes gender equality in and through the media, undertook the study from 25 November 2018 to 31 January 2019. The study covers three distinct periods: the Sixteen Days of Activism from 25 November (International Day of No Violence Against Women) to 10 December (Human Rights Day); the festive period (Christmas and New Year), and the post festive period from mid to end January. Overall, monitors around the country viewed and analysed 1462 news reports, children and adult TV episodes from 24 programmes on 13 channels. This amounted to just under 600 hours of TV air time.

The research (see key data at **Annex A**) found that:

- **Women are still the missing voices in the news:** Overall, women constitute 39% of TV news sources; an improvement on the 25% recorded in the 2015 Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS) conducted by GL, but still eleven percentage points short of gender parity.
- **Women’s voices peter out after the Sixteen Days and festive season:** While the proportion of women characters remained constant across the three periods monitored in entertainment and children’s programming, in the news the proportion of women dropped from 40% during the Sixteen Days to 33% during the post festive season. Qualitative monitoring found that the most in-depth and direct reporting on Gender Based Violence (GBV), including an extended interview with UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka took place during the Sixteen Days. This coverage wanes as the year progresses.
- **Women are better represented in entertainment and children’s programming, but not as voice overs:** At 48%, women are better represented as characters in entertainment than as subjects in the news. Girls and women comprise 61% of the characters in children’s programming, but only 40% of the voice overs.
- **Diversity targets on race are close to being achieved:** The 2011 census figures show blacks at 76.4%, whites at 9.1%, mixed race, Asian and other at 11.5% of South Africa’s population.² At 71% for blacks, 13% for whites, and 11% for persons of mixed race, Asian and other, TV news comes close to reflecting the demographics of South Africa. In entertainment, 87% of the characters monitored were black, 9% white and 4% of mixed race or other.
- **Older women disappear, especially in the news:** There is a marked decline in women’s representation in TV as they grow older. In TV news, girls comprise 65% of children and 52% of teenagers. Women in the age group 20 to 35 comprise 66% of subjects. But women aged 35 to 50 dip to just 36% of the total, and women over the age of 50 to just 16% of the total. This trend is also reflected in entertainment where women aged 35 to 50 and 50+ comprise 44% and 36% of those featured.
- **Women are portrayed in a more diverse set of roles in entertainment and children’s programmes than in the news:** The function of sources/ characters concerns the role of these sources/ characters, including whether they are spokespersons; subjects; experts; first- hand accounts; eye witness or popular opinion. In children’s programming female characters predominate in all categories, and in entertainment there is a 40:60 split or vice versa in almost every category. Yet in news, women sources are grossly under-represented as experts (9%) and first- hand accounts; eye witness and popular opinion categories (just 2% each).

1 <https://www.womensmediacenter.com/about/press/press-releases/womens-media-center-report-women-journalists-report-less-news-than-men-tv-g>

2 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_groups_in_South_Africa, accessed 4 April, 2019



- **Topics covered vary, with diversity as a topic low on the agenda:** Economy, sports and politics dominating the news agenda more so than in entertainment and children's programming. Crime and violence (21%) is higher in entertainment than in news (14%) and much higher than in children's programming (4%). Of concern is that gender equality as a topic constitutes just 1% news; 3% of entertainment and 1% of children's programming. GBV as a topic is 2% of news, 4% of entertainment and 2% of children's programming. Sexual orientation as a topic only featured in entertainment (3%) and disability only in children's programming (2%).
- **Women's views and voices are scarce in mainstream topics:** Men's views dominate in the politics, economics and social topic categories of TV news. Women's views are only equally heard in the gender equality topic category. In entertainment, women's views are hardly heard in any of the mainstream topic categories and comprise 37% of the gender equality topic category.
- **Women are heard more than men on GBV in the news, but not entertainment:** Women comprise 67% of sources in TV news on GBV, but only 34% of the voices on this subject in entertainment.
- **Stories on where to get support are still sparse, except in children's programming:** Only 16% of TV news stories on GBV mentioned where to go for help. On the other hand, 67% of children's stories on GBV mentioned where to go for help. This reflects greater concern with help and support for children compared to women.
- **There is very little focus on prevention:** The breakdown of GBV topic categories shows that prevention constitutes 5% of GBV coverage in the news and 29% in children's programming. This is of concern, considering the potential powerful role of TV in spearheading prevention campaigns.
- **Still strong elements of gender stereotyping, especially in entertainment:** The study found one third or more of the items monitored to be gender aware and the rest either gender blind or conveying subtle or blatant gender stereotypes. Only 2% of news and 7% of children's coverage fell in the blatant stereotype category, compared to 16% for entertainment. This is of concern given the powerful role of TV entertainment in shaping societal norms.
- **Men dominate content decision-making:** With women comprising 77% of programme creators but just 31% of executive directors and 15% of directors in entertainment, content creation remains a "man's world."

CHAPTER ONE: METHODOLOGY

This Chapter outlines the process, procedures and research methodologies adopted in undertaking the research project on analysis of diversity, stereotyping and gender-based violence (GBV) portrayal in the South African Audiovisual media. The research aimed to: Generate baseline information and raise public attention around the topic of diversity, the portrayal and reporting of gender-based violence and gender stereotyping in South African audio-visual media covering the South African public and private television media.

Context

This study is guided by the *Social Representation Theory*. Moscovici (1973) described social representation as: “systems of values, ideas and practices with a two-fold function; first, to establish an order which will enable individuals to orientate themselves in their material and social world and to master it; secondly, to enable communication to take place amongst members of a community by providing them with a code for social exchange and a code for naming and classifying unambiguously the various aspects of their world and their individual and group history”³. Research conducted by the MaLisa Foundation on the audio-visual diversity and the portrayal of women and men in German TV in 2016 found that women are underrepresented at a ratio of 1:2, while becoming less and less represented in older age groups. The same applies to women in children’s programmes where every fourth character is female. However, this research shows gender parity seems to be reached in daily soaps and telenovelas, showing the reality in the country⁴.

Sampling

Table 1.1: Programme Viewership and ratings⁵

Programme	Channel	Genre	Viewers @ Sept 2018	Ratings @ Sept 2018
Scandal	e.tv	Drama	5,480,679	
Rhythm City	e.tv	Drama	4,249,611	
Broken Vows	e.tv	Drama	1,482,287	
News Night	e.tv	News		
The Queen	Mzansi Magic	Drama	1,747,973	8.5
Our Perfect Wedding	Mzansi Magic	Maga	1,530,929	7
The Herd	Mzansi Magic	Drama	1,225,595	6.4
Isibaya	Mzansi Magic	Drama	1,104,264	5.8
Lockdown	Mzansi Magic	Drama	937,778	4.9
Isithembiso	Mzansi Magic	Drama	671,684	3.5
Utatakho	Mzansi Magic	Reality	587,285	3.1
Uyang'thada Na?	Mzansi Magic	Drama	487,743	2.6
The Throne	Mzansi Magic	Drama	458,060	2.4
The River	Mzansi Magic	Drama		
Hectic on 3	SABC	Drama		
Uzalo	SABC 1	Drama	9,289,705	
Generations - The Legacy	SABC 1	Drama	9,094,691	26
Skeem Saam	SABC 1	Drama	7,662,464	21.9

³ http://changingminds.org/explanations/theories/social_representation.htm

⁴ <https://malisastiftung.org/en/audiovisualdiversity/>

⁵ Sources:
<https://www.channel24.co.za/TV/News/top-10-most-watched-soapies-20180221>
<http://www.marklives.com/2018/10/sa-tv-ratings-dstv-primetime-top-30-for-sep-2018/>
<https://mybroadband.co.za/news/broadcasting/255533-the-most-watched-tv-shows-in-south-africa-6.html>
 Where figures are missing these were not available

Programme	Channel	Genre	Viewers @ Sept 2018	Ratings @ Sept 2018
News	SABC 1	News	4,388,209	12.5
News	SABC 1	News	4,375,594	12.5
Takalani Sesame	SABC 1	Children		
Teenagers on a Mission	SABC 1	Children		
YO TV litha Lethu	SABC 1	Children		
Muvhango	SABC 2	Drama	5,280,617	15.1
7 De Laan	SABC 2	Drama	3,077,453	8.8
Keeping Score	SABC 2	Drama	2,168,840	
News Ses/Tsw	SABC 2	News	1,185,239	3.4
News Venda/Tsonga	SABC 2	News	1,168,415	3.3
Tropika Island of Treasure	SABC 3	Children	783,033	
News	SABC 3	News	521501	1.5
Isidingo - The Need	SABC3	Drama	1128721	3.2

Monitoring covered programming from five South African public and private television stations SABC 1; SABC 2; SABC 3; e.tv and Mzansi Magic. The channels represent a mix of subscription television broadcasting services and freely accessible channels. Programmes monitored were selected based on audiences and ratings in September 2018 (where these were available) as well as advice from the reference group.

Table 1.2 Research sample

GENRE	TELEVISION CHANNELS				
	SABC 1	SABC 2	SABC 3	e.tv	MZANSI MAGIC
NEWS					
5 News Programmes	IsiZulu/ Xhosa News	SeTswana/ Sesotho News XiTsonga / Venda	News at 9	News at 8	
ENTERTAINMENT					
11 Programmes	Generations – The Legacy Skeen Saam Uzalo	7 De Laan Muvhango	Isidingo – The Need	Rhythm City Scandal	Isibaya Isithembiso The Queen
CHILDREN					
7 Programmes	Daily Thetha Kids News and Current Affairs Mvubu and Friends Ntunjambili Teenagers on a mission		Hectic on 3	Cool Catz	

As reflected in Table 1.2, the study covered 23 programmes; five news; 11 entertainment and seven children's. Nine programmes were selected from SABC 1, four from SABC 2, three from SABC 3, four from e.tv and three from Mzansi Magic. Four of the five television stations covered programmes from all three genres. Mzansi Magic included only entertainment programmes (dramas or soap operas).

Monitoring Schedule

Table 1.3: Items monitored across the time periods

Channel/ programme	No of items monitored Sixteen Days of Activism (25 November to 10 December)	No of items monitored during the Festive Period (20 December -2 January)	No of items monitored post Festive Period (3 – 28 January)	Total
e.tv	73	27	21	121
Mzansi Magic	20	26	33	79
SABC 1	243	235	116	594
SABC 2	138	88	97	323
SABC 3	105	123	109	337
Total	579	499	376	1454

Table 1.3 shows that the research covered 1454 items: 579 during the Sixteen Days of Activism on Violence Against women; 499 during the Festive Season; and 376 during the Post Festive season. The number of stories for news is higher because each short story constitutes an item.

Research questions

The research sought to investigate the following:

- Whose views and voices are heard? On what?
- The content creators - are these balance in terms of sex?
- What stereotypes are either challenged or reinforced through the media we consume? Are these stereotypes subtle or blatant?
- GBV – what is covered? By whom? And how?
- GEM classification: How can be content be classified? Gender aware? Gender blind?

Research methods

Quantitative: GL developed three online coding instruments covering News, Entertainment Programmes and Children’s Programming; adapted from the Gender and Media Progress Study, and desk top research of the different genres. These are described in greater detail in **Annex A**.

Qualitative: The research made use of a variety of qualitative methods to amplify the findings. These included:

- *In-depth interviews* with content developers (see **Annex C**).
- *Classification of all items into four categories* using GL’s Gender and Media (GEM) classification (see box) and further analysis of compelling examples. Excerpts of the case studies are found at relevant points in the analysis. The full set of case studies and analysis can found on the following link (where the case studies are also available to media trainers <http://genderlinks.org.za/what-we-do/media/gender-andmedia-diversity-centre-gmdc/media-alerts-and-highlights/>).

GL's Gender and Media Classification

Gender blind: Content told from a narrow range of viewpoints, missing analysis or insights on different implications for women and men.

Subtle stereotypes: News articles or stories that reinforce traditional roles of women and men (e.g. a successful woman who is 'nevertheless a good wife'); or stories that convey stereotyped beliefs, such as that women are emotionally fragile or men are inherently strong.

Blatant stereotypes: Language or visual images that denigrate women; trivialise women's achievements; sensationalise, glorify or justify male violence; or that ridicule men in 'nontraditional' roles (e.g. male caregivers).

Gender aware: Content that supports the principles of: fairness; balance; getting all sides of the story; challenging assumptions and prompting debate; fresh ideas and perspectives; doing no harm; respecting the human dignity and rights of sources.

- *Focus group discussions*, divided by age and by sex, were held on Friday 22 March 2019 to get audience responses to a cross section of case studies.

Table 1.4: Focus group participants

Race	Male (8 – 16 years)	Female (8 – 16 years)	Male (over 17 years)	Female (over 17 years)	Total
Black	6	5	10	7	22

A total of 22 respondents participated in the focus groups, 10 men and 12 women (see **Annex D** for full list of participants). Each focus group watched a set of pre-selected case studies covering the three genres. Boys and girls under 16 watched the children's programmes; those over 16 watched news and entertainment case studies. Participants responded to questions about their responses to what they saw individually (in writing) and then in a group discussion.

Limitations to the study

- **Changes in programmes shown during the festive period:** some of the children's programmes did not air; alternatives had to be found.
- **Running stories:** Each episode was monitored individually. This has the limitation that it does not take into account possible changes in behavior over time in a running story. Such a study would require a much longer monitoring period.
- **Language:** Programmes covered 8 out of 11 South African languages (English, IsiZulu, Xhosa, Tsonga, Venda, Sesotho, and SeTswana and Afrikaans).
- **Focus Groups:** Volunteers from the white/mixed race/Asian communities invited to participate in the focus groups unfortunately did not come on the day, deliberately chosen over a holiday so as not to conflict with work schedules. While the focus groups represent a good age/class mix, and strong representation from the majority black population (including 25% from the diaspora) they did not represent the full demographics of South Africa.



CHAPTER TWO: GENDER IN TV NEWS CONTENT

This chapter covers the findings on gender, representation and diversity in South African Television news in the 790 news items monitored on the selected e.tv and South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) channels from 25 November 2018 - 28 January 2019. It reviews the progress in Television news in representing a diverse range of voices, topics, races and ages with a particular focus on coverage of Gender Based Violence (GBV), including intensity of coverage, topics covered, people who speak on GBV and in what capacity they speak.

Background

The Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS) conducted by GL in 14 Southern African countries in 2015 revealed that women constitute 20% news sources⁶. The study found that in South Africa, the proportion of women sources has remained stagnant at 20% since 2010 and increased only by one percentage point from 19% since 2003. The study found that at 25%, women sources in TV news are slightly higher than the overall average.

In a similar study conducted in 2015, the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), which has been carried out since 1995, notes that globally women make up only 24% of the persons heard, read about or seen in newspaper, television and radio news, exactly as they did in 2010⁷. In South Africa, this one-day monitoring revealed that women make up 24% of those who appear in the news. For television news, women comprised just 12% of all sources on the one day monitored.

As the #MeToo and #TimesUp campaigns gained momentum globally, the #TotalShutDown campaign in South Africa culminated in the delivery of a memorandum with 24 demands for the 24 years of democracy to ensure an end to GBV. In response, President Cyril Ramaphosa called for a National Summit on GBV and femicide in November 2018. Campaigners demanded that there be a sustained media campaign for 365 days by all departments led by the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS).



According to UN Women, “the media plays a significant role in perpetuating and challenging social norms that condone discrimination or violence against women. It can objectify women but also showcase strong women leaders and protagonists who can become role models for their audience.⁸” One of the most critical areas of this research included the assessment of the coverage of GBV in the South Africa news media. The study sought to determine

- How gender violence is reported on in news media and who is quoted in news segments on incidences of gender-based violence and
- What types of GBV are reported.

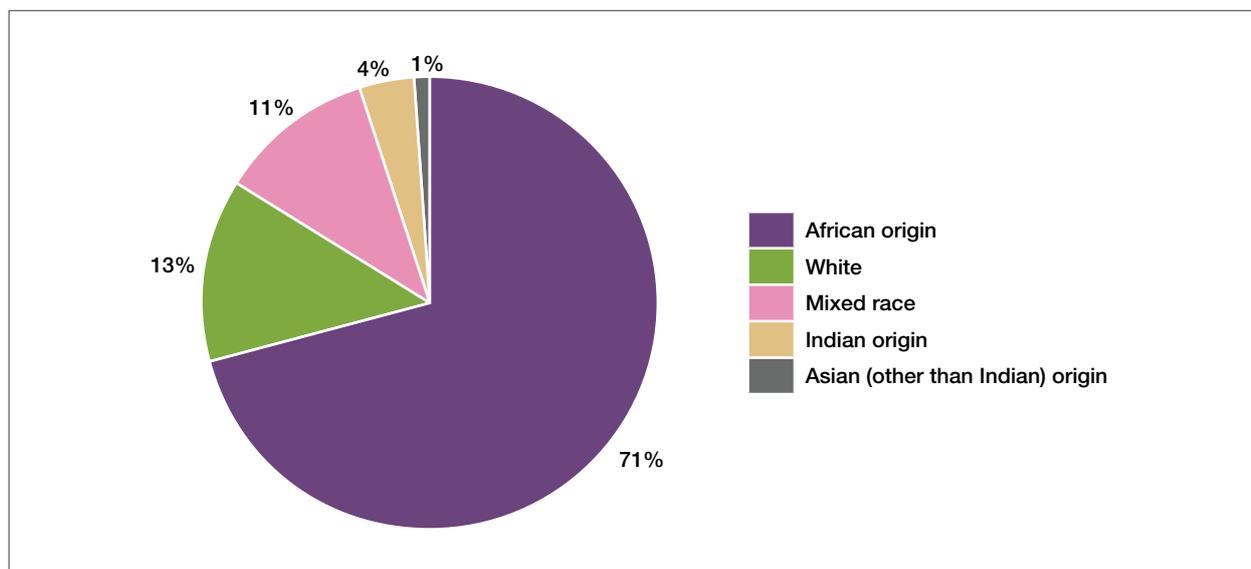
6 Ndlovu, S. and Nyamweda, T. 2015. *Whose News? Whose Views?: Gender and Media Progress Study 2015*. Johannesburg. Gender Links

7 World Association of Christian Communicators. 2015. *Who makes the news: Global Media Monitoring Project 2015?*

8 (<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/csw/feature-stories#sthash.SC9S44u9.dpuf>)

Who speaks in the news?

Figure 2.1: Race of sources



Race	e.tv	SABC 1	SABC 2	SABC 3
African origin	82.5%	76.3 %	76%	67.2%
White	5%	12.4%	14.7%	14.5%
Mixed race	10%	9.3%	5.9%	11.6%
Asian		1%	2.8%	5.7%
Indian	2.5%	1%	0.6%	1%

Figure 2.1 shows that TV news is “getting it right” on reflecting racial diversity in South Africa. Persons of African origin comprised 71% of news sources; compared to 13% for white people and 11% for those of mixed race. These findings are broadly in line with the Statistics South Africa census findings of 2011 which show that the “the black African population group has the highest proportion of over 70% in all provinces.”⁹ e.tv reflected the highest proportion of those of African origin (82.5%) and SABC 3 the lowest (67.2%).

Fig 2.2 Sex of sources - Overall

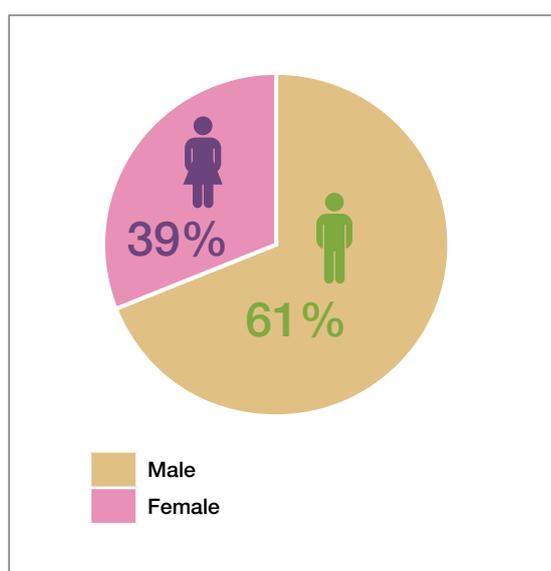
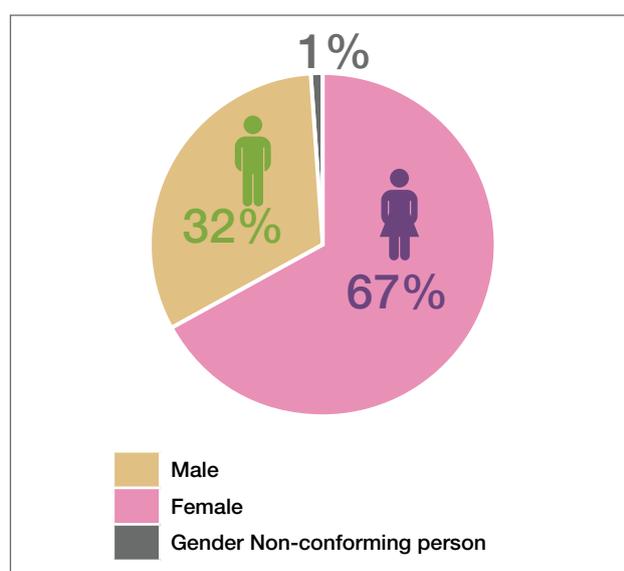


Fig 2.3: Sources in GBV stories



9 Statistics South Africa. Census 2011 Statistical release – P0301.4 / Statistics South Africa. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa.

Gender balance in TV news sources has improved, but still not reached parity. Figure 2.2 shows that women constituted 39% of news sources in TV news, a 14 percentage point increase from the 25% recorded in the 2015 GMPS but still eleven percentage points short of the parity target. Figure 2.3 shows that women comprise 67% or the majority of GBV news sources, compared to 63% in the 2015 GMPS. Gender Non-Conforming Persons (GNC) constituted 1% of sources on GBV. As illustrated in the two case studies, having a diversity of sources, especially in coverage of GBV, is critical:

Diverse sources make for more sensitive coverage of GBV

Two case studies from the monitoring, one in which the reporter consulted one male source only, and another in which the reporter consulted a diversity of sources, illustrate why sources matter.

On 14 January 2019 the SABC 3 News at 9 bulletin reported a story about the police believing they had arrested a serial killer and rapist who had been terrorising residents of eMbalenhle in Mpumalanga for the past four years. The story relies on one source - the police officer. A woman standing next to the police officer is not identified and says nothing. More on this case study can be accessed on this link: <http://genderlinks.org.za/barometernewsletter/gender-based-violence/suspected-mpumalanga-serial-killer-nabbed/>

In contrast, a story aired on the same channel on 27 December 2018 shows three men appearing in the Taung Magistrate's court in North West accused of raping a 12-year-old girl. In keeping with ethical principles, the girl (who is a minor) is not shown. Instead, the reporter spoke to a variety of women and men including the girl's mother and a male community leader expressing outrage and advocating that the man to take a stand in ending GBV.

Women and men in the focus group discussion commended the sensitive handling of the story especially showing the offenders but not the victim. A male respondent said the media must expose the criminals and also the punishment given to those who perpetrate violence to send out a strong deterrent message. Another male respondent concurred: "We live in a broken society. It is disgusting to be seeing cases of this nature. We need to know more about this. It tells us that women are not safe and are vulnerable." All male respondents said this kind of behaviour must not be allowed to be normalised. A female respondent said, "Honestly it's sad it's hurtful, for me I would say it's hurtful for that innocent 12 year old youth, she would have committed suicide but she saw that her family was standing beside her." More on this case study can be accessed from <http://genderlinks.org.za/countryevents/gender-and-media-diversity-centre/three-accused-of-raping-a-12-year-old-girl/>

"It is so hard to find female sources who are willing to speak. They are usually reluctant while male sources are always willing to. I'm not exactly sure what makes women less willing to be on the forefront, but it happens quite a lot".

- Ziyanda Ngcobo, Television/radio journalist

Sources during different time periods

Figure 2.4 Proportion of women sources over time

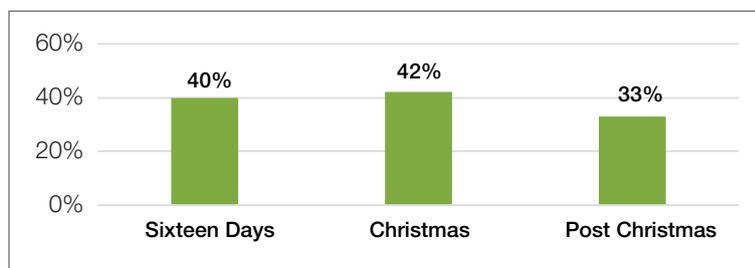


Figure 2.4 shows that women news sources dropped from 40% during the Sixteen Days of Activism on Gender Violence (when gender issues get more play in the media) and 42% during the festive period (when there are several light stories such as babies born on Christmas and New Year's Day) to 33% during the post festive period (when it's back to business as usual)! Activists have long been

advocating that the Sixteen Days of Activism be extended to 365 Days of Action so that the kind of media attention given to GBV during the Sixteen Days is extended all year. The case study that follows is an example of the in-depth coverage on GBV during the Sixteen Days:

More of the Sixteen Day coverage of GBV is needed!

A story on SABC 3, News at 9 on 4 December 2018 (during the Sixteen Days of Activism) offered rare insight into this scourge. The TV news story featured UN Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka speaking to SABC in an extended interview on GBV. The story highlights the need for collaborative efforts by the governments, organisations, businesses and individuals in creating awareness to end GBV. The story includes relevant visuals (see <http://genderlinks.org.za/programme-web-menu/16-day-of-activism-against-gender-basedviolence/>). Commending this news item, a woman focus group respondent noted, “we usually just see short pieces which are rushed through.” Another female respondent commented on the role played by the audio visual media in explaining complex topics such as GBV as many people cannot read. A male respondent noted that more in-depth reporting on GBV in a society where the scourge is so normalised would go a long way in changing public attitudes and mindsets.

Age of news sources

Figure 2.5: Sources by sex by age

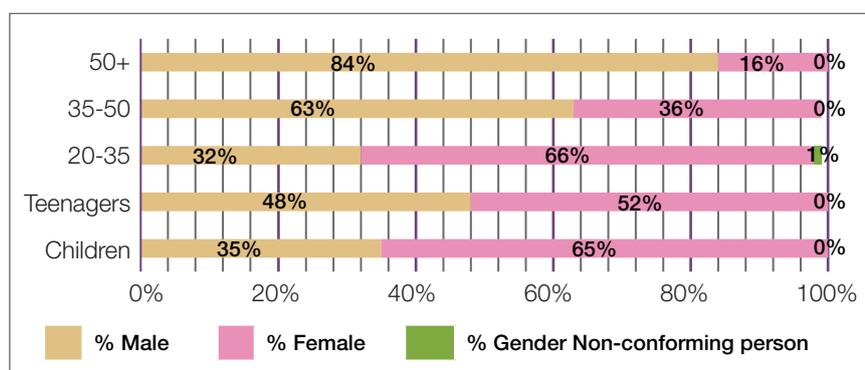


Figure 2.5 shows that while young women predominate in TV news coverage, women over the age of 50 virtually disappear. Women between the ages of 20-35 years constituted 66% of sources; female teenagers 48% and girl children 65% of sources in the study. On the other hand women over the age of 50 constituted a mere 16% of sources. According to Edstrom “when turning older, both men and

women become almost invisible, even though older men are more visible than older women. Older persons rarely reach the news and they are more likely to be found in advertising and feature material.¹⁰”

Function of sources

Figure 2.6: Function of women and men sources

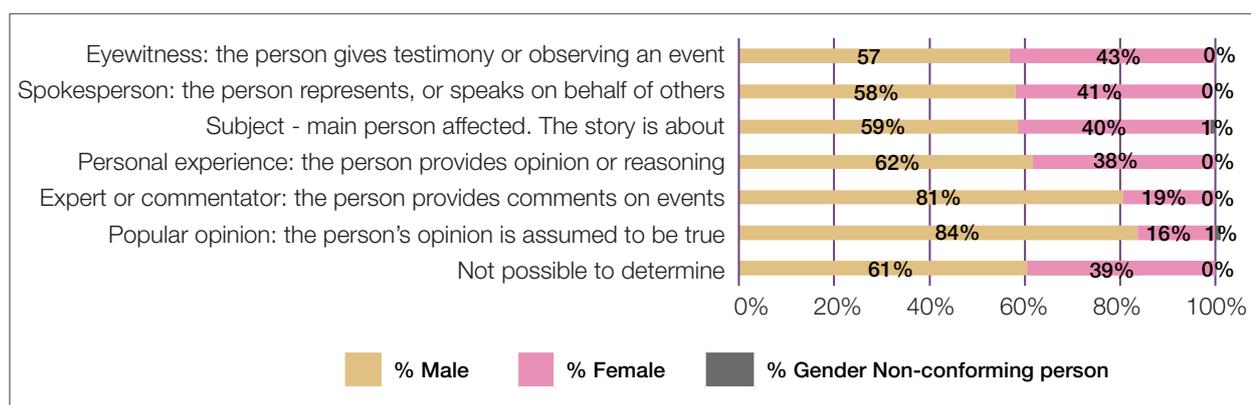
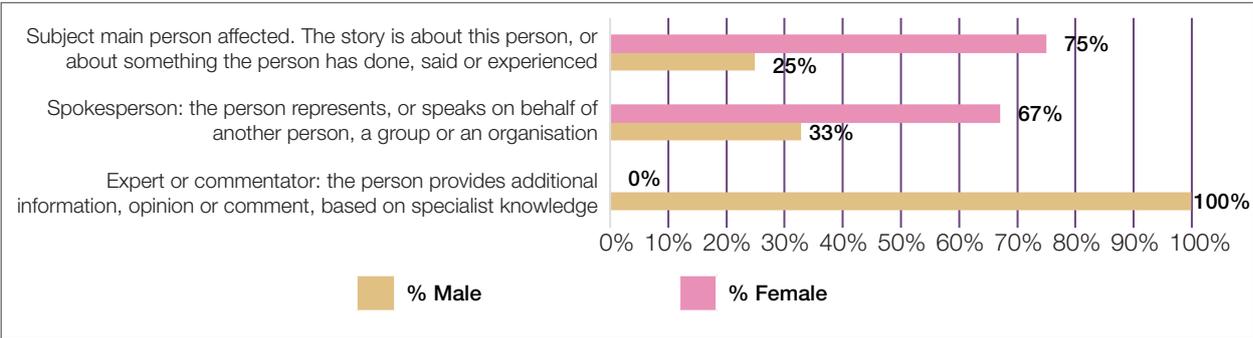


Figure 2.6 shows that women comprise 16% of those who offer popular opinions in TV news, and 19% of experts or commentators. This reflects the gender disparities that still exist in accessing different types of news sources. Women, who are well represented in public relations, fare better as spokespersons (41%) and eye witnesses (43%). But the fact that this is not 50% (as demographics would suggest) reflects gender bias in accessing women as sources.

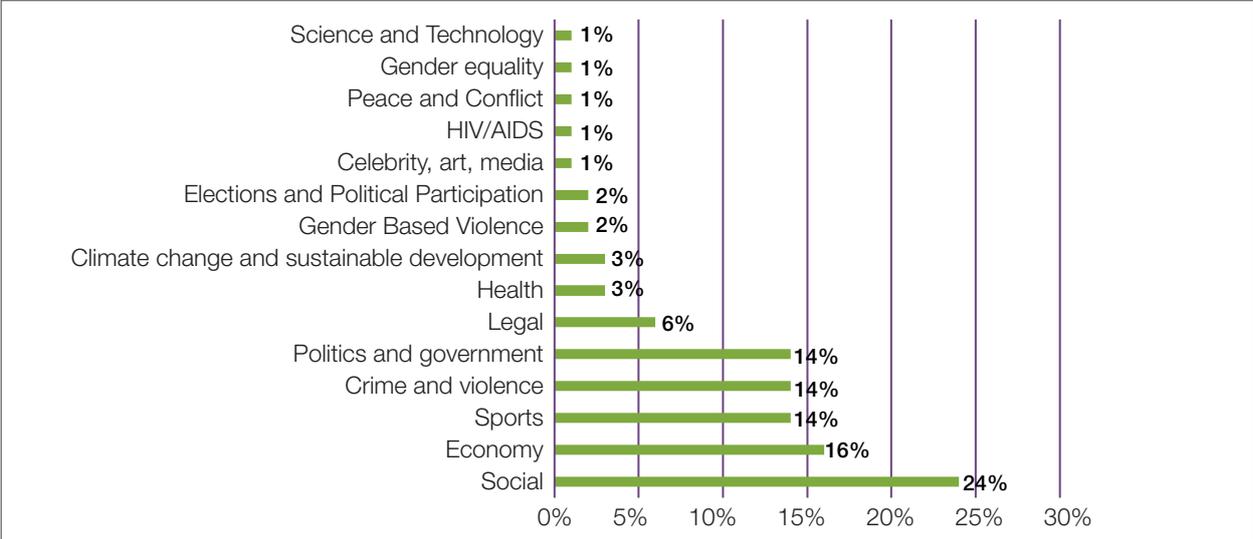
¹⁰ Edström, M. 2018. Visibility patterns of gendered ageism in the media buzz: a study of the representation of gender and age over three decades, *Feminist Media Studies*, 18:1, 77-93, DOI: 10.1080/14680777.2018.1409989

Figure 2.7: Function of GBV sources by sex



These biases also reflect in the sources accessed on GBV. While women constitute the majority of spokespersons and subjects in this topic category, Figure 2.7 shows that men constituted all the expert commentators consulted on the topic. Considering the disproportionate effect of GBV on women, there is still a long way to go in ensuring gender balance in the different types of sources consulted, especially expert commentators.

Figure 2.8: Topics Overall



GBV as a topic in the news

Figure 2.8 on topics covered in the news shows that despite being one of the most critical social issues of our time, gender equality accounted for just 1% of coverage. Despite being the gravest and most flagrant violation of human rights post-apartheid GBV accounted for just 2% of TV news coverage.

GBV subtopics

Studies on the cause, extent and responses to GBV carried out by GL in seven Southern African countries including South Africa show that the highest forms of GBV are those least reported to the police (emotional, psychological and economic abuse). These silent forms of GBV, while less obvious than sexual and physical assault, have the effect of eroding women’s agency. They are also more complex to report on.

A further breakdown of the GBV topic category in the monitoring shows that rape (42%) and sexual harrassment (21%) are the most covered subtopics. One effect is that rape is seen as synonymous with GBV, and the way it is covered leads to the view among audiences (as one member of the focus group put it) that: “Oh, okay another story.” A female respondent noted that domestic violence is seldom covered in the media: “This is ignored even at the police station when the victim is sent back home to fix the dispute but this then leads to women getting killed because they will have stayed in the abusive relationships.”

Only 5% of GBV stories covered prevention campaigns, and only 16% gave information on where to get advice, support and help. A female respondent noted that “the media need to show information on how we can report this kind of abuse, because you can find that people are being abused but they don’t know where to report or how to handle the issue. Police must make sure that the perpetrators are being arrested.” Another female respondent expressed frustration with stories that are not followed up: “They tell us about the crime but not what is in being done.”

Who speaks on what?

Figure 2.9: Topics and source percentage

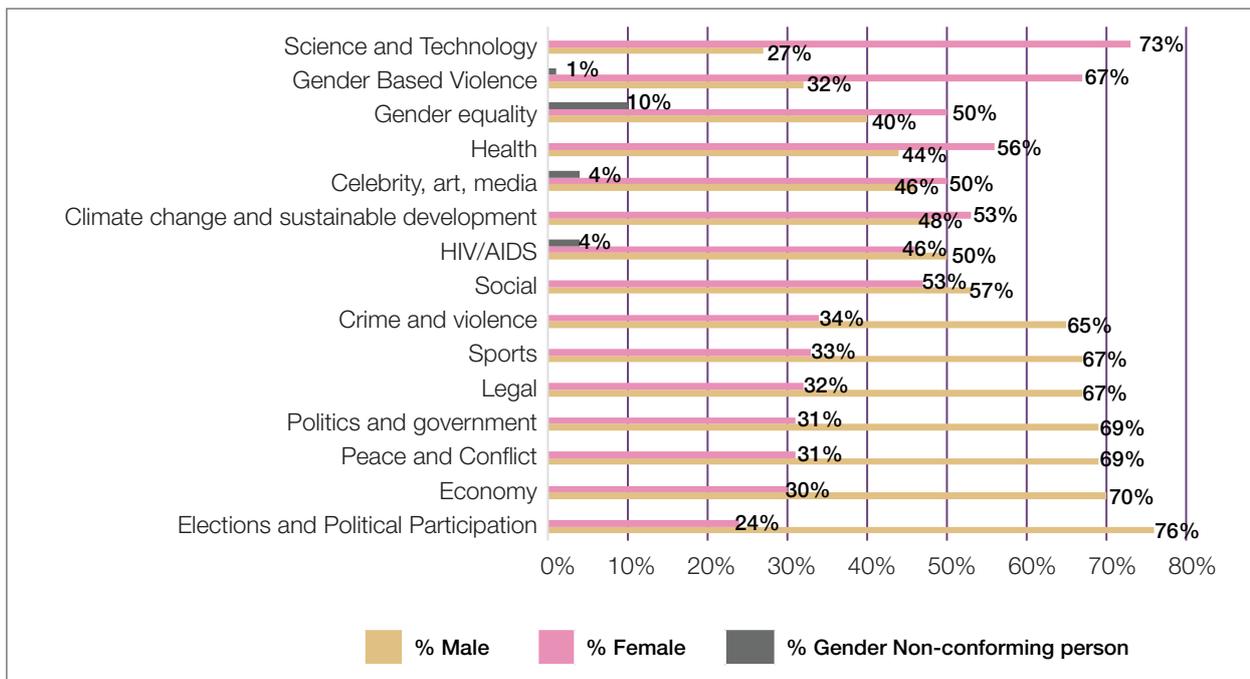


Figure 2.9 shows that men’s voices dominate in nine out of 15 news topics including politics, economy and sports. Women’s views only predominated in six out of 15 news categories including gender equality, GBV, health, celebrity, art and media, climate change and development. Science and technology is the only surprise gender bender with a high of 73% women sources. This is likely due to the small number of stories in this category during this particular monitoring¹¹. Portraying women in non-traditional roles is a powerful way of challenging gender stereotypes.

"I experienced abuse also from male audiences. Male audience members automatically question your authority as a female host, they tend to complain about us women more. It means during audience feedback sessions, the females in the room deal with harsher criticism. The managers and audience utter sentiments that they would never utter to man. This compromises the quality of your work and makes men safer choices as decision makers. They usually make those decisions at a table with men only."

- Anonymous, Broadcaster

Sport as a way of challenging gender stereotypes

A story on the Banyana Banyana versus Winnie Mandela and Albertina Sisulu Tournament on SABC 2 on 15 January 2019 including interviews with two women and two men is a powerful reminder of the role of sports in challenging gender stereotypes. More on this case study can be accessed on this link: <http://genderlinks.org.za/country-events/gender-andmedia-diversity-centre/sabc-2-banyana-banyana-15-01-2019/>

On 4 December 2018 e.tv News at 8 carried a news analysis on Ada Hagerberg being asked by a male host to twerk as she is honoured with an award for being the best female soccer player. e.tv challenged this stereotypical behaviour, profiled the success of the player and focused on her award speech. Read more on this story on this link <http://genderlinks.org.za/barometer-newsletter/gender-based-violence/e.tv-news-9-sportsnews-comment-analysis-04-12-2018/>

¹¹ This finding is made up of only 10 news sources 8 of which were women

Gender division of labour in news rooms

Figure 2.10 Topic by sex of reporter

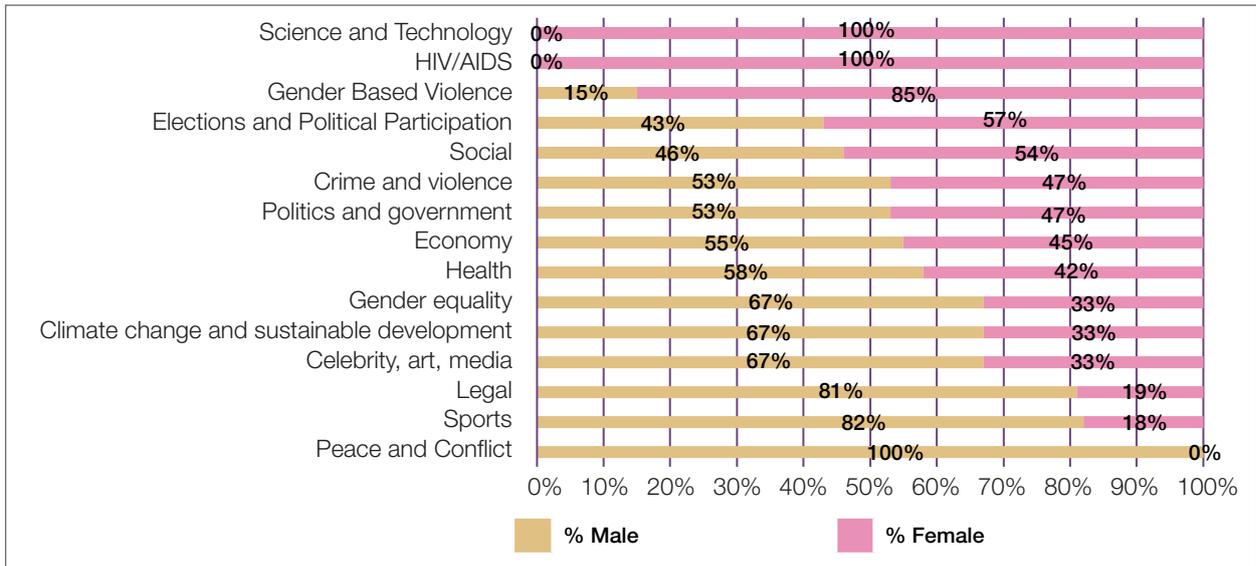


Figure 2.10 illustrates the stories covered by women and men journalists across all topics. It shows that men outnumber women reporters in all topics except for science and technology (100%) HIV and AIDS (100%), and GBV (85%). As reflected in Figure 2.9 these are also topic categories in which there is a higher proportion of women sources. But there are interesting gender benders. For example, a higher proportion of male journalists (67%) reported on gender equality than women (this could also reflect the very low number of stories in the category). There were almost equal numbers of men and women reporters on the politics, social, crime and violence beats, in which women's views and voices are not equally reflected. These findings suggest that while women journalists are slightly more likely than men to consult female sources, the issue is more complex than just the sex of the reporter. At the heart of editorial content lie news values, policies and practice.

Gender and Media Classification

Figure 2.11: GEM classification

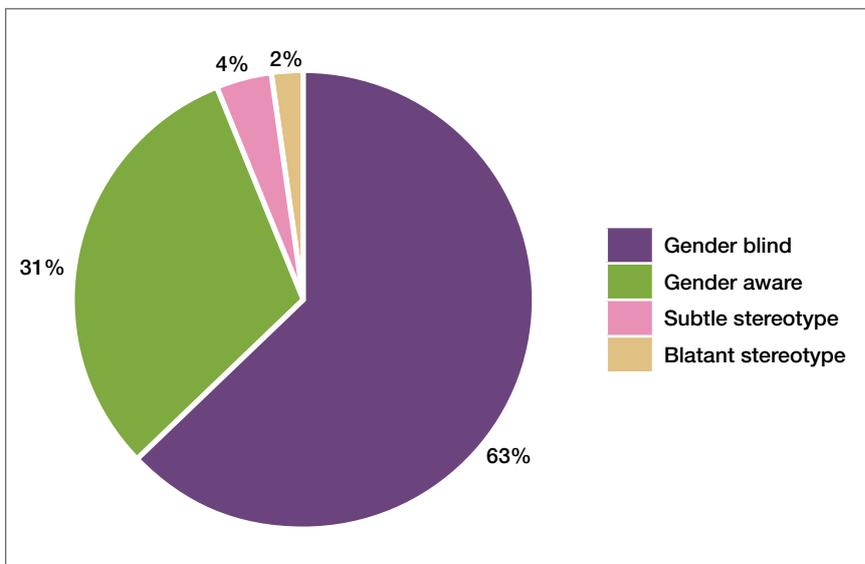


Figure 2.11 summarises the findings on TV news stories overall according to GL's Gender and Media (GEM) classification. Over half of the stories (63%) were classified as gender blind, (in other words they missed the opportunity to explore gender dimensions); 4% as conveying subtle stereotypes and only 2% as conveying blatant stereotypes. However, it is pause for thought that less than one third (31%) of the stories were classified as gender aware, in other words reflecting gender balance in sources and context and or challenging gender stereotypes.



Case study: Missed opportunities to speak on GBV

Gender blindness or “sins of omission” is most common shortfall of all news reporting. An example is the news story aired on SABC 2 SeTswana News on 26 November 2018. The story concerned a police officer who had attended court while in possession of a gun and murdered his wife and her brother inside court. This brazen case of femicide is reported as an event rather an opportunity for in-depth analysis on femicide, in this case committed by a police officer. For more on this story follow this link <http://genderlinks.org.za/countryevents/gender-and-media-diversity-centre/promoting-equality-of-voice-across-topics-sabc-2tsonga-venda-news->

Conclusions

Consistent with the findings in GL's 2015 GMPS study, this chapter shows that there have been improvements in TV news coverage in South Africa, both with regard to a higher proportion of women sources and the quality of coverage, especially during the Sixteen Days of Activism. The biggest challenge in news is not so much the sins of commission - subtle or even blatant stereotypes - but rather of omission: gender blind coverage. The chapter cites examples of missed opportunities, especially to provide greater depth, context and analysis on GBV. Conversely there are many examples of multi-source, contextual and sensitive coverage of GBV which – as focus group participants confirmed – enhance understanding and prompt solutions.

Similarly, stories that challenge gender stereotypes make a powerful statement about women's agency and rights, critical to ending GBV. While gender balance in newsrooms is important to enhancing women's voice and choice in the media, many other steps are needed. Editorial policies need to address the quantity and quality of gender and GBV coverage, including more stories on prevention and where to go for help. They need to centre on those most affected, and seek commentary from those who offer help and support. Stories that go beyond the bizarre and sensational, and call out GBV for what it is – a gross human rights violation – have a major role to play in meeting the 24 demands of the #TotalShutdown campaign.

CHAPTER THREE: GENDER IN ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA

This chapter covers gender portrayal and diversity of cultures, voices, topics, races and ages in entertainment content on e.tv, Mzansi Magic and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) 1, SABC 2 and SABC 3. The analysis is based on 11 programmes monitored across the five stations (a total of 556 entertainment items) between 25 November 2018 and 28 January 2019. The chapter assesses coverage on GBV, intersectionality, stereotyping, the portrayal and roles of women, men and Gender Non- Conforming (GNC) persons in the programmes.

Background

Research shows that few women hold positions of power and importance on screen (Smith, Choueti and Pieper, 2016).¹² A report by the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in the Media found that the percentage of female characters in top grossing films has not meaningfully changed in roughly half a century and that women are often stereotyped and sexualised when they are depicted in popular content.¹³

The *Report on Gender Equality for Directors in the European Film Industry*¹⁴ found that inequality is being perpetuated by a combination of factors, including the competitive habits of the marketplace, contemporary industry structures, the impact of new technologies and false assumptions about women's abilities and business risk. The report lists the barriers:

- Gender bias in the industry;
- The struggle for funding;
- Risk aversion on the part of investors;
- Lower share of broadcasting funds for female directors;
- Low representation of women on commissioning and funding panels.

In South Africa, research by the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF) on 55 films produced between 2000 and 2007¹⁵ found that only six were directed by females compared to 49 directed by men. Furthermore, only three directors of photography (DOPs) were female, while 48 were male. However, there is a dearth of comprehensive data and analysis demonstrating the actual nature and extent of the problems facing women in the film industry.¹⁶

In discharging its mandate "to provide, and encourage the provision of opportunities for persons, especially from disadvantaged communities, to get involved in the film and video industry"¹⁷ the NFVF introduced a Female Filmmaker Slate project in 2014. The programme is an attempt by the Foundation to correct the disparity between men and women in the film industry. The project, three years after inception, has yielded 26 short films written and directed by women that have been broadcast on SABC 1, as licensed by the South African Broadcasting Service (SABC).

According to Helena Spring, producer of *Keeping Up with the Kandasamys*, South Africa has complex gender issues arising from challenging conditions, such as lack of opportunity and education, domestic violence, poverty, and cultural and traditional limitations around a woman's role and sexuality. "There are extremely serious issues at stake, such as the high level of rape of women in this country, which is a significant symptom of women's subjugation in our society. So it is critical that female perspectives are communicated, be it through the eyes of a character or the storyteller. Film and television has the ability to embody dreams and aspirations, to create role models and smash stereotypes – music, art, film and television have at times been the catalysts that have brought about bigger societal change than politics or legislation."¹⁸

12 <http://nfvf.co.za/home/22/files/2018/Research/Gender%20Matters%20in%20the%20SAFI%20Report.pdf>

13 <http://nfvf.co.za/home/22/files/2018/Research/Gender%20Matters%20in%20the%20SAFI%20Report.pdf>

14 <https://www.ewawomen.com/gender-inequality-in-the-film-industry-2/>

15 Excerpt from the Report: Gender Matters in the South African Film Industry by the National Film and Video Foundation in partnership with Sisters Working in Film and TV.

16 Ibid

17 Section 3b of the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF) Act, 1997.

18 Haynes, 2017

Who are the characters?

Figure 3.1: Characters by race

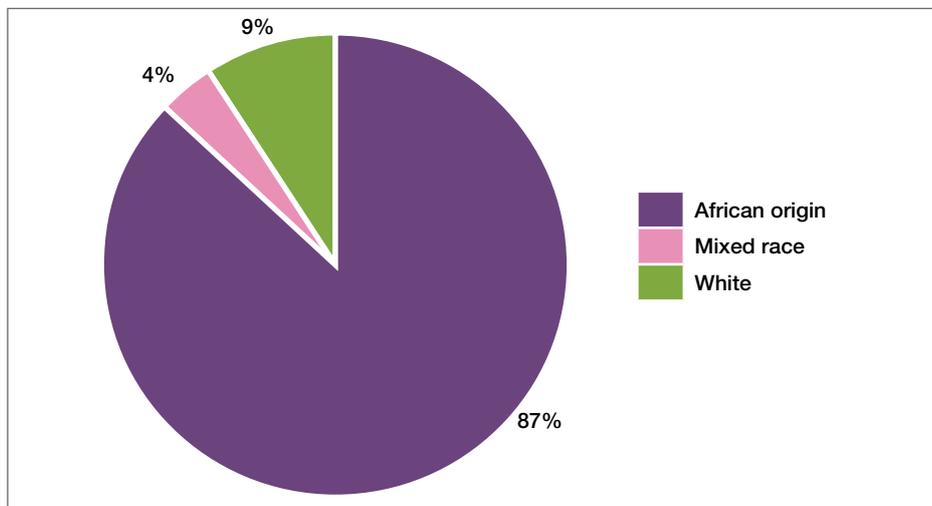


Figure 3.1 shows that 87% of the characters in the entertainment programmes monitored were of African origin; 9% white and 4% of mixed race. This is broadly in line with the South African demographics. Content producers interviewed noted that the SABC has guiding principles around race and language in all their programmes. Broadcasters have a language ratio to adhere to for every script, depending on the channel.

Figure 3.2: Characters by sex

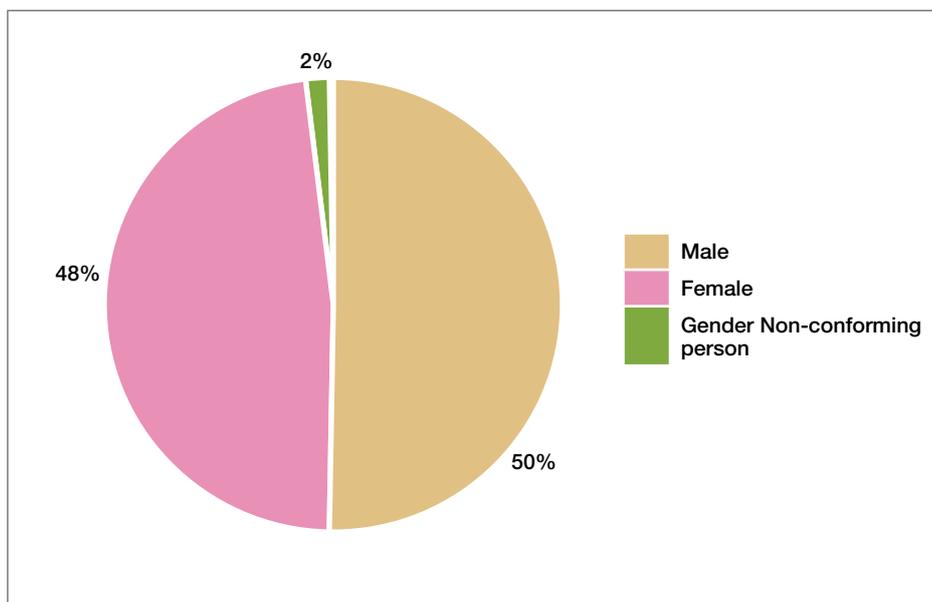


Fig 3.2 shows a nearly equal representation of male and female characters in entertainment programmes, with 2% categorised as Gender Non-Conforming. This is in line with the findings of the Malisa Foundation that found that while women are underrepresented at a ratio of 2:1 in the German audio visual media, the exception is in Telenovelas and daily soaps with 51% women and 49% men¹⁹. The 48% women in entertainment programming remained constant across the three time periods monitored. As

might be expected, entertainment programming is not as sensitive to the Sixteen Days of Activism as the news agenda.

Content developers shared that when creating a drama series (which is approximately 13 episodes), starts with a two day workshop where they will beat out an episode. So the Writers are given an episode each and beats are outlined in the workshop. Writers write action and dialogue around the beat. So that is basically in order to keep the storyline and you have one person who understands what the golden thread that goes through the storyline. So when you are working on an episode you will know the storyline, for example you will have an A, B, C storyline. This is the most effective model because you want to wrap up the storylines and yet still want to keep people coming back and that's why we also include a C storyline which is multi-episodic instead of just episodic."

¹⁹ <https://malisastiftung.org/en/audiovisualdiversity/>

The Head Writer is responsible for considering issues of gender, race, class and other dynamics. They added “there is a challenge in the way writers take ownership of stories. Writing should be inclusive. Stories should include multiple angles and multiple perspectives. There is an opportunity to tell the female’s story. The female has a voice.” They further emphasised the importance of researching the characters one is writing about in order to fully understand where they are coming from and what makes them complex. The Head Writer is ultimately responsive for all the final decision regarding the Script, and may consult the Executive Producer as necessary.

While 48% females are ‘seen’ in television soaps and dramas, how are they portrayed? Personality psychologists identify five dimensions of personality, often referred to as the “Big 5” personality traits: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (OCEAN).²⁰

Figure 3.3: Sex of character and portrayal

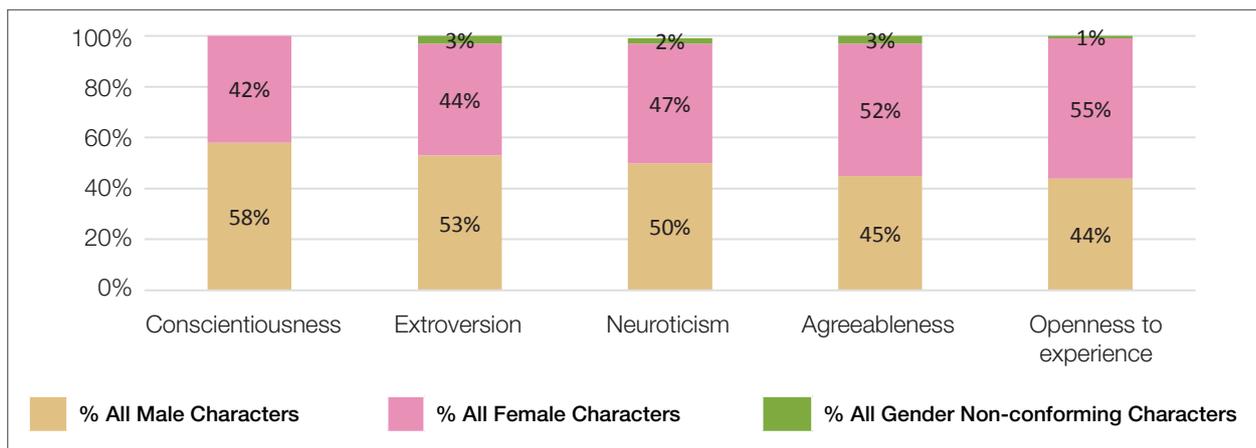


Fig 3.3 shows that at 55%, female characters are portrayed as more open, adventurous, and more curious than male characters. However, the perception of men in the focus group discussion was that women are most often portrayed as “weak”, “needy” and dependent on men to make decisions. As one male focus group participant put it: “Women are portrayed as weak and vulnerable in all these soaps, needing men to come and stamp authority and provide direction.”

“As an actress, your appearance matters more than talent. I started to get more opportunities when I replaced my afro with a weave and wore more revealing clothing. This then means that on set, you open yourself up to be treated as a ‘piece of meat’, this affects your ability to act. Something as little as male sound guys feeling you up while hooking up your mikes. Also, there are very few roles that holistically reflect the experience of women in everyday life. Most of the time, female characters are written on a surface level, with no options for a myriad of lived experiences. This means a lot of representations of women are flat and not rich”.

- Anonymous, Television Actress

Power plays in soap operas

An episode of Uzalo aired on SABC 1 on 29 November is an example of the common stereotype in soap operas of a woman “begging” and reduced to her physical needs in the presence of “powerful” men. Nkunzi and his brother Qhabanga are busy discussing their hijacking business when Hlengiwe (Nkunzi’s second wife) enters the office and says that her hormones are everywhere and she needs her husband to make her feel better. Nkunzi then tells her that he is too busy to deal with her hormones and when she exits the room, he sighs and says “women”. Qhabanga then responds with “that’s polygamy for you”. More on this case study can be accessed from: <http://genderlinks.org.za/classification/themes/sabc1-uzalo-29-11-2018/>

Reflecting on how characters are created in soap operas, one of the content producers noted: “You will always have your base characters which are stereotypical, that are evil or good and they do not change much. So you have the

²⁰ <https://www.verywellmind.com/the-big-five-personality-dimensions-2795422>

bad character and then you have the altruistic character who is always good, no matter what happens. It plays those stereotypes over and over. It is the secondary characters around these characters who give the nuances because these characters come in on a call-by-call basis and they can add a bit of colour to what is happening in the broader spectrum of the story.” When asked if there are gender dimensions to these stereotypes, the content developers noted that writers are starting to develop more complex characters that can have more than one trait or way of being that is not necessarily dependent on their gender.

Age of characters

Figure 3.4: Characters by sex and age

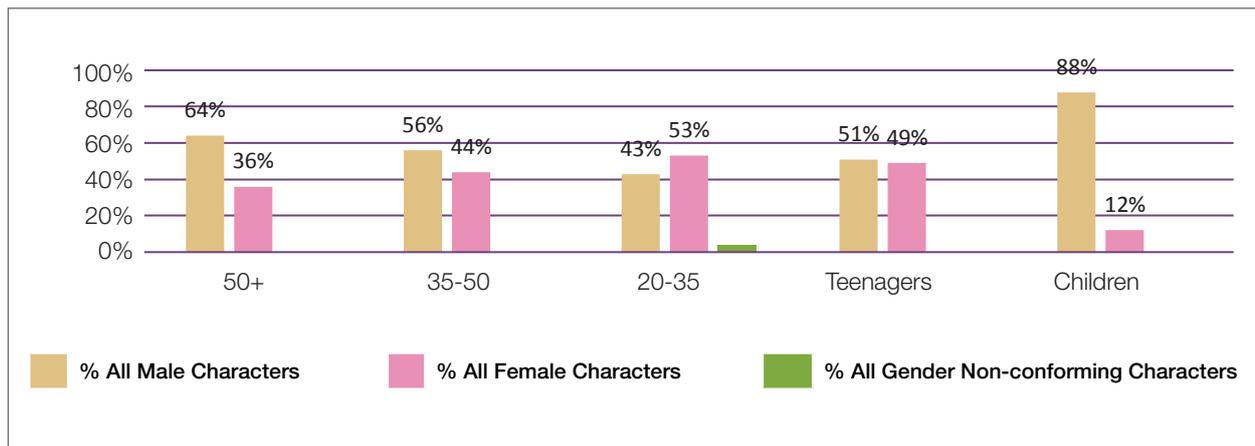


Figure 3.4 confirms the findings of the MaLisa Foundation research that “the older the women are, the more they disappear from the screen.” The research found roughly equal numbers of male and female teenagers and a higher percentage of women (53%) than men in the 20-35 year age bracket. From the age of 35 onwards, the proportion of women characters in TV entertainment drops down to 36% for the over 50 age bracket. Curiously girls constituted only 12% of the children in adult entertainment. This could be due to the relatively low number of children in adult entertainment programming.

Older women in soap operas

The relationship in the TV series *Isibaya* between Lillian, an older business owner and Saddam, her younger bodyguard, reflects the stereotypes surrounding older women in soap operas. Initially the relationship is flirtatious. The official Mzansi Magic page refers to the pair as “our favourite and unlikely couple” while other characters referred to the relationship as “not right”. It is rare that older women are portrayed in authoritative roles. Lillian’s relatively powerful position is undermined by the way her relationship with Saddam is treated. The show does, however, “normalize” the relationship later in the series. More on this case study can be accessed from: <http://genderlinks.org.za/classification/mzansi-magicsibaya-14-01-2019/>

An episode of *Scandal* on e.tv on 23 January 2019, Zinzile, a homemaker and older mother is forbidden from pursuing an education by her husband, and ridiculed by her family for being too old. The series misses an opportunity to address power dynamics within more traditional families, as well as women’s financial dependence on men. *Scandal* might have explored how these many external factors disempower women by taking away their independence and freedom of choice. More information on this case study can be accessed from: <http://genderlinks.org.za/what-we-do/media/gender-and-media-diversity-centregmdc/media-alerts-and-highlights/>

GBV as a topic

The GBV Indicators project research conducted by GL and the South African Medical Research Council in 2011 shows that in Gauteng alone over half of the women (51%) have experienced some form of violence in their lifetime and 76% of men in the province admitted to perpetrating violence against women.

Figure 3.5: Topics covered in programming

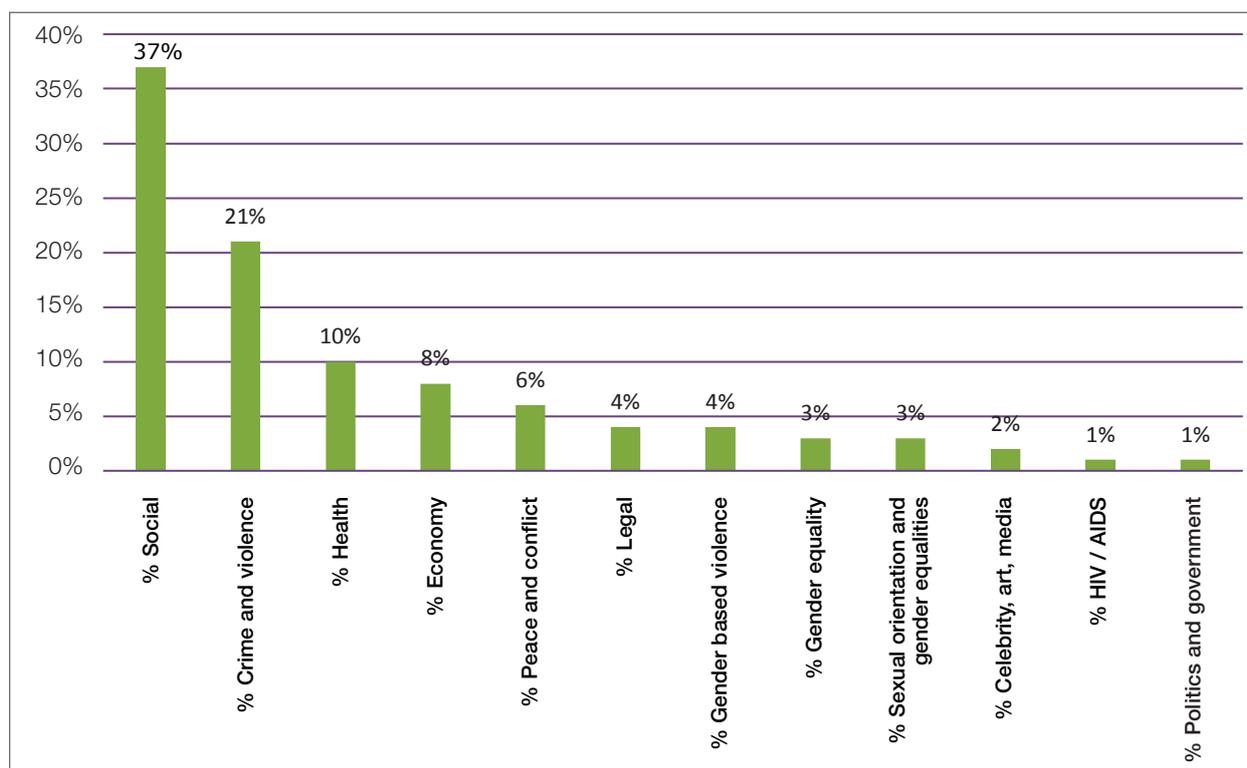


Figure 3.5 shows the distribution of topics in the content monitored: 37% social; 21% crime and violence; gender equality (3%) sexual orientation and diversity (3%) and GBV at 4% of the total. Content producers noted that a key factor in entertainment is to provide lighthearted entertainment to attract high ratings and viewership. Violent scenes must be “as saucy as possible” in terms of what is shown and what is not: “...as a writer you want the scene to have maximum impact because you want the audience to know the gravity of the situation. You want people to understand that this is a reality of everyday life but you want it to be done ethically.” The examples that follow show creative ways in which content producers have used entertainment TV to challenge various aspects of GBV.

How soap operas can help to challenge GBV

A scene from *The Queen* which aired on Mzansi Magic on 21 January 2019 depicts intimate partner violence in a way that depicts every day realities, but is also ethical. Thabiso and Goodness are in a relationship but Goodness leaves him. After refusing to continue the relationship multiple times and rejecting Thabiso’s proposal, Thabiso rapes Goodness. The resulting storyline follows Goodness as she attempts to tell her family that Thabiso has raped her. Her family does not believe her. When they confront him he denies the allegations and states that he could not have raped Goodness as they were in a relationship and he is a likeable man.

Eventually another character Kea explains that “no means no” and forcing yourself on someone is still rape, regardless of your prior relationship. This storyline sparked conversation about intimate partner violence on social media and shed light on an issue that affects thousands of South African women every day.

The contribution of such programming to challenging social norms is borne out by comments made by members of the reference group after watching an excerpt. None of the male participants condoned Thabiso’s actions. But some alleged that men also suffer from abuse by women. They maintained that this is never played out in soap operas. Such debates play an important role in changing attitudes and mindsets. More information on this case study can be accessed from: <http://genderlinks.org.za/country-events/gender-andmedia-diversity-centre/mzansi-magic-the-queen-21-01-2019/>

Another example of a progressive story line is an episode in *Isidingo* on December 21 in which a group of women unite and march against the mayor of a fictional town accused of sexual assault. Lungi, the accuser, shares her personal experience to propel a movement against GBV. The women are portrayed as strong, united and fearless. Lungi dismisses Sechaba’s argument and stands up to him pointing out that he had touched her inappropriately the

day before. She states that the march will not be called off and “the time for talking is over”. The scene sends home the message that action speaks louder than words. However when Lungi is accused of exaggerating the assault, the episode misses the opportunity to call out the trauma women often face when they speak out. More on this case study can be accessed from: <http://genderlinks.org.za/barometer-newsletter/genderbased-violence/isidingo-the-need-ep-201-21-12-2018/>

Another episode of Isibaya aired on Mzansi Magic on 28 December 2018 also tackled the issue of GBV. In the story, Mabuyi shot her rapist, Zembe. He is in hospital while she is in prison for her crime. Dabula, a village negotiates with Zembe to admit to raping Mabuyi so that she can go free. The dialogue addresses prevalent stereotypes such as “she wanted it”. Dabula forces the truth out of Zembe by threatening his life, emphasising that rape is a heinous and unacceptable crime. Many people including men show support towards the survivor. More information on this case study can be accessed from: <http://genderlinks.org.za/barometer-newsletter/gender-based-violence/mzansi-magicisibaya-28-12-2018/>

People behind content creation

While women constitute 77% of programme creators in entertainment, they comprise only 31% of executive producers and 15% of directors of the programmes. Content developers interviewed noted that the job is not family friendly. It demands long periods of time away from the home as shooting and filming are done up to three months in advance.

They added that the Director’s space is still very much a ‘boys club’. A female producer remarked that women are expected to juggle their personal lives more than men, especially when it comes to having children and providing care. This makes it more challenging for women to rise to the top in this male dominated industry: “Women need to make difficult decisions. However, there is also a responsibility on the industry to accommodate women, and currently the industry does not accommodate do so.”

“When you ask men to suggest another writer or creative on a project, they will invariably suggest another male 99% of the time. If the man is white, most times, they then suggest a white male. It has been my experience that most white male writers don’t know any black writers and don’t have experience working with them, particularly not women. This then solidifies the ‘boys club’ as the white males reference, hire and work mostly with other white males.”

- Emma Lungiswa de Wet, Script writer for series and film

Gender and media classification

Figure 3.6: Gem classification

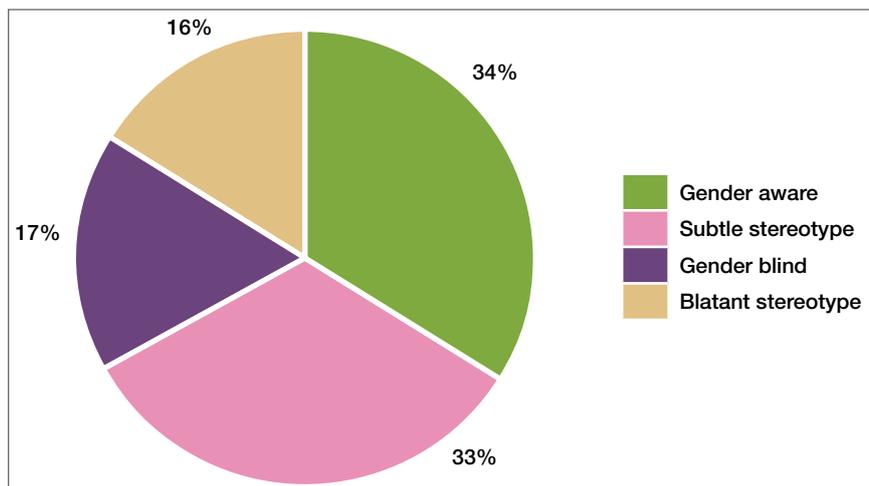


Figure 3.6 shows that in TV entertainment there is a roughly even split between gender aware content (34%) and subtle stereotypes (33%) with 17% of the content classified as “gender blind”. A particularly worrying finding – given the influence of entertainment media – is the classification of 16% of the content as conveying blatant stereotypes.

Conclusion

This chapter shows that in entertainment programming women and men feature almost equally. These programmes also include GNC characters. But women continue to be portrayed in the traditional stereotypical roles that can evolve over time as the series unfolds. Older women disappear from entertainment programming or are not expected to be in powerful positions or to have physical needs. This chapter also shows that entertainment programming is a male dominated arena at senior decision-making level. But as the dominant force in the creation of content, women have some latitude to “change the narrative” for good. Several examples attest to the power of entertainment TV to challenge the social norms that fuel and condone gender violence.

CHAPTER FOUR: GENDER IN CHILDREN'S TV PROGRAMMES

This chapter analyses diversity, stereotypes and Gender Based Violence in seven locally produced children's programmes from e.tv, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) 1 and SABC 3. Researchers monitored 204 programmes and 1123 characters in the programmes *Cool Cats*, *Daily Thetha*, *Kids News & Current Affairs*, *Hectic on 3*, *Teenagers on a Mission*, *Ntunjambili*, *Mvubu* and *Friends*. This chapter also includes perspectives of children and teenagers who participated in the focus group discussions and viewed case studies drawn from the monitoring.

Background and context

The study *Gender in Children's Television World Wide* found that male characters outnumber female characters in children's television, in both domestic and imported productions, on public and commercial television.

The report comments that: "Children's television provides kids with stories, with material for their fantasy and offers images about the world. In this process television also gives them an idea of what it means to be a girl or boy, a woman and a man. While it is firstly the daily experiences in their immediate social environment which influence their world view, the media – and in this case particularly the leading medium television – offer important additional images and perspectives. Children deeply incorporate these images into their inner pictures, especially where the representation of gender is concerned (Götz et al., 2005). But what do these images of boys/men and girls/women look like? How is femininity and masculinity being constructed in the media texts for children?"²¹

Sex of characters

Figure 4.1 : Sex of all characters

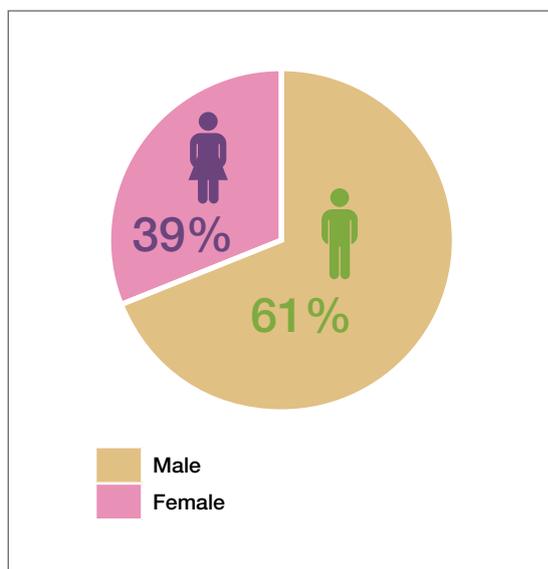
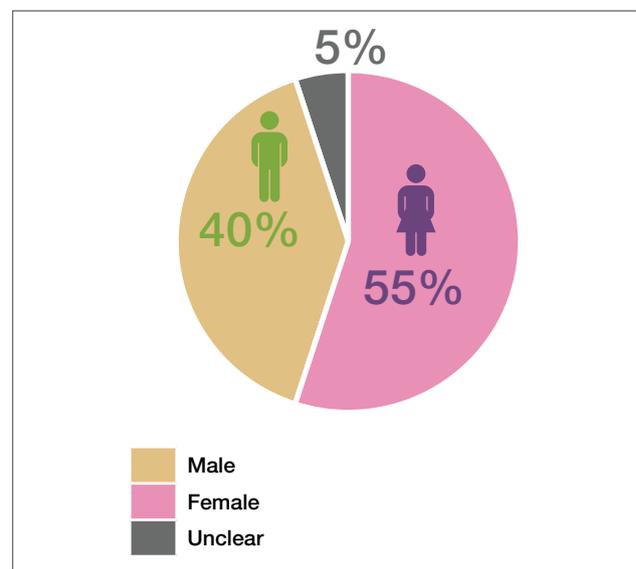


Fig 4.2 : Sex of voice overs



Unlike the findings in the global report, female characters predominate in children's TV, but not as voice overs, where male voices predominate. Figure 4.1 shows that in South African TV female characters (61%) outnumber male characters (39%) in children's programmes. The proportion of women characters was consistent throughout the monitoring period. Women characters made up 60% to 61% of sources during the Sixteen Days of Activism; the festive period and the Post-Christmas period. In contrast, Figure 4.2 shows that male voices comprise 55% of voice overs compared to 40% for women voice overs and 5% unclear. Voice overs are often interpreted as the "voice of authority".

21 https://www.prixjeunesse.de/images/PDF/GenderInChildrensTVWorldwide_2008.pdf

Figure 4.3: Sex of characters by roles played

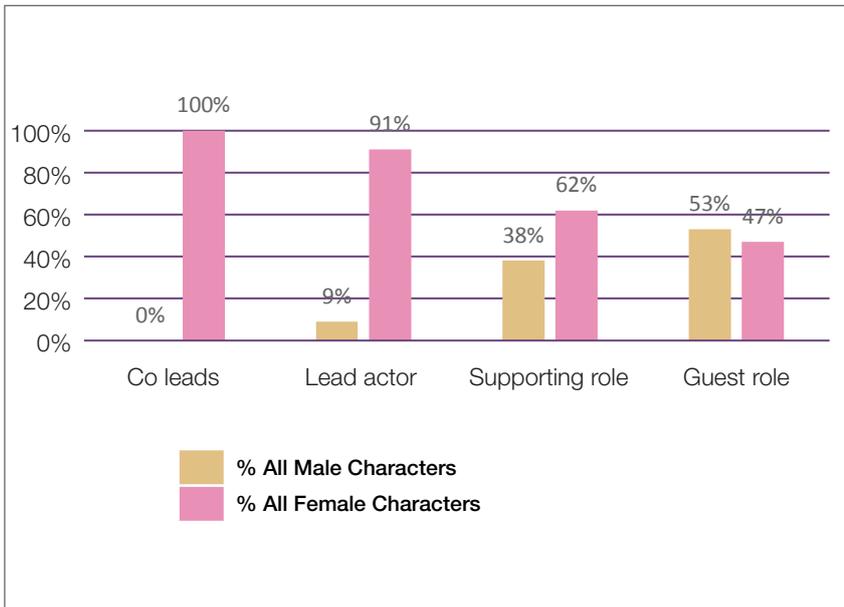


Figure 4.3 shows that female characters dominate in all roles except as guests. They constituted 100% of co-leads; 91% of leads actors; 62% of support roles and 53% of guest roles.

It is important that children’s programming have diverse characters but it is equally important that these characters have diverse characteristics. Figure 4.4 shows that female characters were both more likely to be cast as protagonists (64%) and as villains (59%) as men. This reinforces societal stereotypes of women as either very good or very evil.

Subtle gender stereotypes also creep into the different personality traits ascribed to male and female characters. The research classified characters according to five dominant personality traits: openness, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (OCEAN). Figure 4.5 shows that male characters constituted 100% of the “open to experience” or adventure category, with female characters (79%) predominating in the “agreeableness” category. Female characters (67%) also predominate in the conscientiousness and (59%) in the extroversion category.

Figure 4.4: Sex of characters and nature

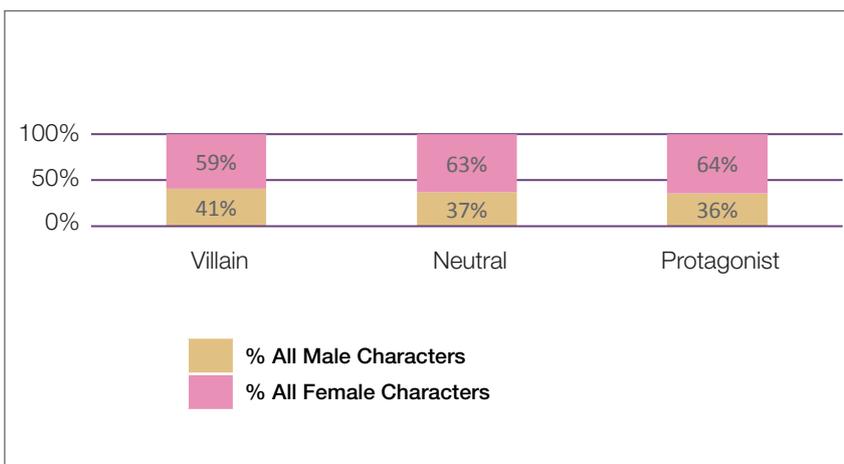
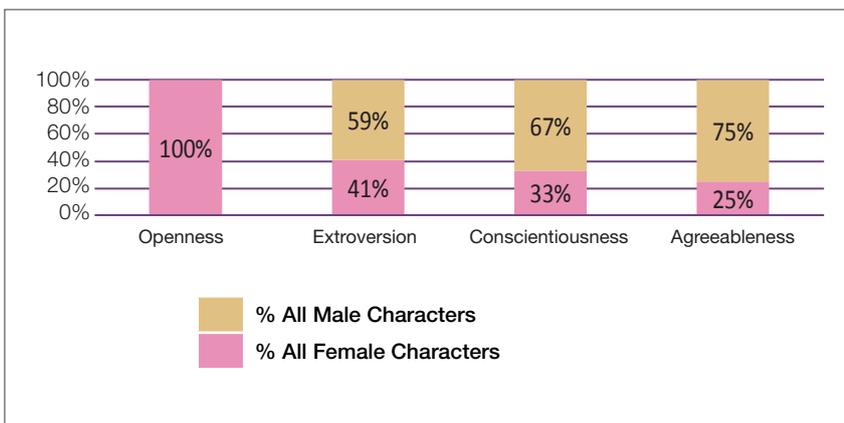


Fig 4.5: Sex of character and personality



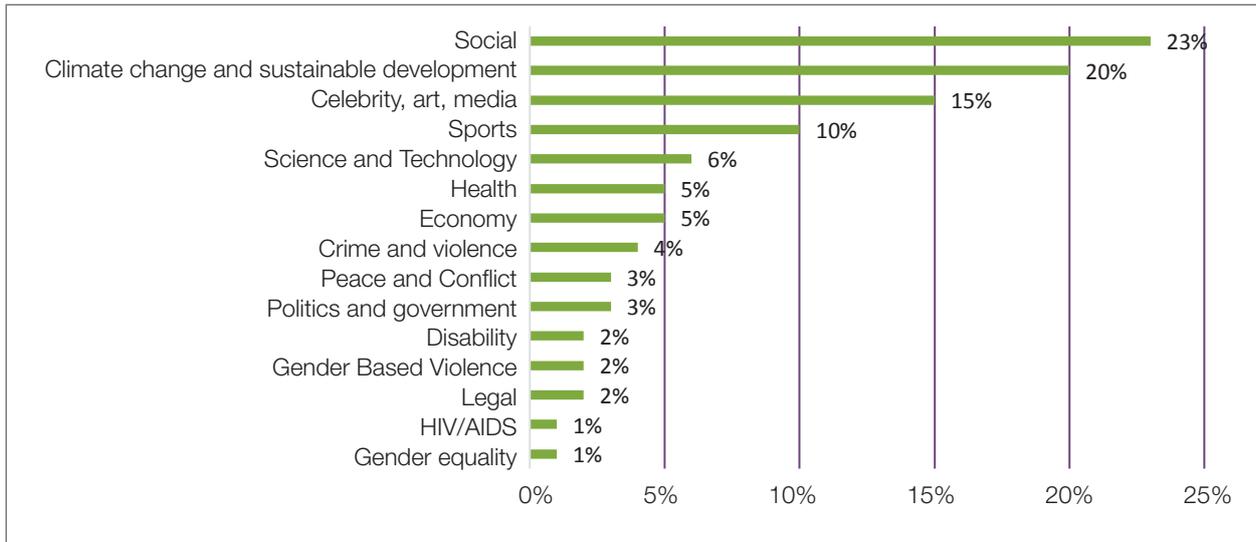
Commenting on the characters in the programmes they viewed, focus groups participants said they found the female characters to be “submissive” and “pretty” compared to the more “dominant” male characters such as the ones on e.tv’s Cool Cats in which “the male characters intimidate each other to be more of a man while the girls just go with whatever the boy cat says.” A female respondent noted that female characters are portrayed as followers or have to conform to male norms in order to fit in. For example Smarty from Cool Cats tries to fit in with male characters by dressing like them. But, as seen in the example that follows, the programme also challenges gender stereotypes.

Boys and girls can be afraid!

An episode of Cool Cats on e.tv on 22 December 2018 begins with Smarty Cat reading facts about animals and wanting to meet an amazing animal. The scene shows both boys and girls being afraid and not ashamed of being the size of an ant and of the creepy sounds they were hearing. To read more on this episode follow this link. <http://genderlinks.org.za/barometer-newsletter/gender-based-violence/e.tv-cool-cats-20-222018/>

Topics in children's programmes

Figure 4.6: Topics overall covered in programming



The monitoring tool used a standard set of topics across the three genres. Figure 4.6 shows that social topics (23%) received greatest attention in children's programming followed by climate change and sustainable development (20%). As in the case of TV news, GBV (2%) and gender equality (1%) are among the least covered topics in children's programmes. GBV was only mentioned during the Sixteen Days of Activism. This shows that there is little effort to educate children on these pertinent topics at an early age. Unlike the TV news in which sexual assault is the dominant sub-theme, prevention (29%) is the highest GBV subtopic. Rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment and support are covered at equal proportions (14%). Unlike TV news two thirds of GBV stories in children's programming gave advice on where to go for help. This is welcome and shows the greater concern for violence against children compared to violence against women.

People who produce content

The study found that women comprise 74% of those who create children's programming and 55% of executive producers while men comprise 64% of directors; 56% of presenters and 52% of production teams.



Gender and Media Classification

Figure 4.7: Gender and Media Classification

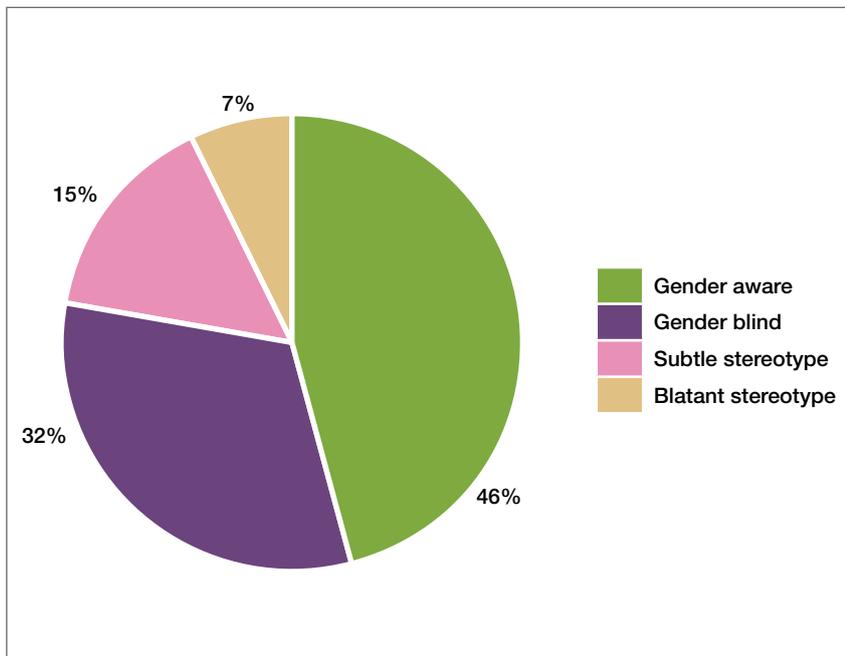


Figure 4.7 shows that unlike TV news, gender aware content (46%) is higher than gender-blind content (32%) in children's programming. But with content conveying subtle stereotypes at 32% and blatant stereotypes at 7%, there is considerable scope for improving the gender responsiveness of children's programming, particularly given its vital importance in shaping young minds.

Conclusion

This chapter shows that compared to TV news, there is greater visibility of female characters in children's programming (although not in voice overs). Women also predominate in the creation of content and at executive decision-making level, though not as directors or in production. Gender equality and GBV as topics are not widely covered but where GBV is mentioned there is more likely to be reference on where to go for help in children's programming than in adult news. Gender stereotypes are more subtle than in the news, reflected not so much in roles played as in personality traits. Of the three genres studied, gender awareness is highest in children's programming. But with gender blind programming, subtle and more blatant stereotypes constituting over half (56%) of content, there is considerable scope for using children's programming to create greater awareness and challenge gender stereotypes.



CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study finds that while women and girls are relatively well represented numerically in entertainment and children's programming, they continue to be under-represented in TV news and to be portrayed in limiting roles across all three genres. Gender Non-Conforming (GNC) persons are virtually absent in all three areas, with a greater representation in entertainment (3%) than in news and children's programming. Gender equality and GBV represent a tiny fraction of content in all three cases.

The South African government has developed progressive legislation and regulatory frameworks²² to promote the participation of women and advocate for gender sensitivity in media content. The South Africa Beijing +20 reports the emergence of new voices including women directors and writers making names locally and internationally.²³ The interim task team formed following the President's summit on GBV includes as communications sub-committee led by GCIS and GL with prevention of GBV at its core.

Key recommendations include:

- **Policy formulation and standard setting:** These gains at national level should be strengthened by policies and measures at institutional level. Media houses need to come up with their own targets to promote equal representation of women, men and GNC persons in their institutional structures, content and programming.
- **Diversification of sources and programming:** Just as South African TV has made rapid strides in reflecting racial and ethnic diversity in its content, the same needs to be achieved for sex and gender identities. Creative ways of covering and challenging gender roles, norms and GBV will go a long way towards promoting gender equality.
- **Collaboration with relevant institutions:** The media across all genres should strengthen collaboration with government departments, civil society organisations, and activists towards challenging gender stereotypes and raising awareness on GBV. Media houses covered in this monitoring are encouraged to engage with GL on the specific findings for their media houses and use these to inform internal policies and procedures.
- **In-depth reporting and content creation:** Audience fatigue on GBV can be challenged with new and innovative approaches that centre personal experiences and triumphs, shifting the narrative from victims to survivors.
- **Audience research and focus group discussions** would help to challenge concerns about ratings that sometimes stand in the way of progressive content.
- **Capacity building:** Targeted gender and diversity training for decision-makers, reporters and content creators is essential for building the awareness.
- **Self-monitoring:** The monitoring tool and reports created for this research can be used for setting benchmarks and self-monitoring progress.
- **Affirming good practise:** Integrating gender into prestigious media and entertainment awards would provide a positive incentive to improve practise.
- **Peer learning and sharing:** The Partnerships for Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls Programme (P4P) should continue to create opportunities for peer learning and sharing on what works to promote gender equality and end GBV.

²² These include the Films and Publication Act, 1996 and the National Film and Video Foundation Act of 1997; the South African Broadcasting Act of 1999; Media Diversity and Development Agency (MDDA) Act 2004

²³ <http://www.women.gov.za/images/Final-Draft-2-National-Beijing-20-Report--26022015-3.pdf>

ANNEX A: KEY DATA FROM THE MONITORING OF SOUTH AFRICAN TV 25 NOVEMBER, 2018 TO 31 JANUARY 2019

PARAMETER	NEWS	ENTERTAINMENT	CHILDREN
Channels	4	5	4
Programmes	5	11	8
No of news items ²⁴ monitored	798	556	108
Sources and characters by sex	%F	%F	%F
Women sources in the news and characters in entertainment and children's programmes	39%	48%	61%
Women voice overs			40%
Sources and characters by sex during different periods			
Women Sources in the news, characters in entertainment and children's programmes, 16 Days	40%	47%	61%
Women sources the news, characters in entertainment and children's programmes, festive	42%	47%	61%
Women sources the news, characters in entertainment and children's programmes, post festive	33%	49%	
Race of sources (news), characters (entertainment and children's programmes)			
African origin	71%	87%	
White	13%	9%	
Mixed race, Indian and Asian origin	16%	4%	
Female sources by age	%F	%F	%F
Children	65%	12%	63%
Teenagers	52%	49%	55%
20-35	66%	53%	
35-50	36%	44%	
50+	16%	36%	
Function of sources/Character	%F	%F	%F
Spokesperson: the person represents, or speaks on behalf of another person, or an organisation	58%	42%	79%
Subject – main person affected; about this person, or something the person has done, said.	22%	56%	63%
Expert or commentator	9%	56%	38%
Personal experience: the opinion is not necessarily meant to reflect the views of a wider group.	2%	50%	78%
Eye witness: the person gives testimony or comment, based on direct observation.	2%	62%	67%

²⁴ Items refers to what was monitored which includes news stories and episodes
Sections on race children's programming could not be drawn for programmes which had non- human characters

PARAMETER	NEWS	ENTERTAINMENT	CHILDREN
Popular opinion: the person's opinion is assumed to reflect that of the 'ordinary citizen'.	2%	42%	50%
Overall topics covered²⁵			
Gender equality	1%	3%	1%
Gender Based Violence	2%	4%	
Sexual orientation and gender identities		3%	
HIV/AIDS	1%	1%	1%
Social	24%	37%	25%
Economy	16%	8%	5%
Sports	14%		10%
Crime and violence	14%	21%	4%
Politics and government, elections, peace and conflict	17%	7%	6%
Legal	6%	4%	2%
Health	3%	10%	5%
Climate change and sustainable development	3%		20%
Celebrity, art, media	1%	2%	15%
Science and Technology	1%		6%
Who speaks on what			
Politics	31%	1%	
Economy	30%	8%	
Social	47%	37%	61%
Gender Equality			
HIV and AIDS	46%	1%	
Gender Based Violence			
Who speaks on Gender Based Violence(W)	67%	34%	
GBV topic compared to total	0.5%		2%
Stories with information on where to get GBV support	16%		67%
Type of GBV covered			
Rape	42%		14%
Sexual Harassment	21%		14%
GBV based on family culture, interpersonal relations	16%		0%
Domestic violence	11%		14%
Prevention campaigns	5%		29%
GBV and HIV and AIDS	5%		14%
Function of GBV sources			
Spokesperson: the person represents, or an organisation	71%		
Subject – main person affected; about this person, or something the person has done, said.	24%		
Expert or commentator	6%		
Gender and Media Classification			
Gender Aware	30%	34%	46%
Gender Blind	63%	17%	32%
Subtle stereotypes	4%	33%	15%
Blatant stereotypes	2%	16%	7%

²⁵ This consists all topics that were covered in the news and in entertainment and children's programmes
Some childrens programmes could not be classified by race where non-human characters where shown

PARAMETER	NEWS	ENTERTAINMENT	CHILDREN
People who produce the news/programmes	%F	%F	%F
Women reporters	40%		
Proportion of women presenters overall	63%	54%	46%
Women programme creators		77%	25%
Women Executive producers		31%	43%
Women Directors		15%	33%

Source: Gender Links



ANNEX B: MONITORING MODALITIES PER GENRE

Television News

- Monitoring was done on the main news bulletin of the day every other day to avoid the same news stories.
- News was chosen from main evening bulletins from each channel. These are broadcasted between 6 pm and 8 pm every day which is considered prime time viewing.
- Of these bulletins all news covered in the bulletin was monitored to allow comparison between GBV topics covered versus other news topics.
- All stories in main news bulletins were coded and different categories were determined including the following:
 - Channel o Genre of the item
 - Scope (for news only)
 - People in the news including, the main subject
 - People who report and present the news
 - Topics and subtopics reflected in the content
 - Gender Based Violence directly or indirectly referenced
 - If topic is on Gender Based Violence what type of Gender Based Violence is it, who is the victim, who is the perpetrator
 - Is Gender Based Violence Gender Based Violence in the story - treated as a societal problem or an isolated phenomenon
 - Length of the story

Entertainment programmes (drama/soap operas) and Children's Programming

- Monitoring was done every day for each episode to follow the storyline of the Programme
- Dramas chosen were at different times of the day
- Only one episode for the day was monitored
- Several Programmes were chosen from one channel based on their popularity.
- The whole episode is coded; different categories include:
 - Channel.
 - Genre.
 - People in the programme including, the main subject/actor, their role, speaking time, their screen time (how many times they appear on screen), how many women and men are featured on screen in the episode?
 - How many times do female characters speak?
 - People who produce the creative programming – who created the drama? Who is the Producer? What topics and subtopics are reflected in the episode? Who do women talk about? What do men talk about?
 - How is GBV covered? Is GBV directly or indirectly referenced in the episode? Who talks on GBV and what is their role in the drama? If topic on Gender Based Violence is raised what type of GBV is it, who is the victim, who is the perpetrator? Are women portrayed as the victims or survivors? Is GBV in the episode treated as a societal problem or an isolated phenomenon?

ANNEX C: CONTENT DEVELOPERS AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

Name	Sex	Age	Category	Organisation
Justin Strydom	M	41 - 50	Entertainment (Producer & Actor)	Tung n Cheek
Lizette Khan	F	41 -50	Entertainment (Producer & Radio Presenter)	Writers Guild of South Africa
Lesoko Seabe	F	26 – 40	Entertainment(Actress)	South Africa Guild of Actors

1. What is the role of the script writer? Do they have a social responsibility? Do they have any obligation to challenge societal norms (race, gender, sexual diversity, disability)? How do you strike the balance between presenting what is, and what could be?
2. What is the process behind developing a script? Does it differ in the different production houses? What are the power relations/dynamics. Please give examples.
3. How far in advance do scripts get written? How much do they change and in response to what factors? Has gender ever been one such factor in your experience?
4. To what extent is the writer aware of audience responses? How do these impact on the script? Are there differences in the responses of women and men, boys and girls? How are these taken into account?
5. Are there guidelines (official and unofficial) around diversity in the development of story ideas? How are issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and disability, sexual diversity, addressed in these guidelines?
6. Are there any ethical guidelines for script writing? Do these include gender dimensions? Please give examples.
7. What external factors drive choice of content (ratings etc.). Are these objective or subjective? Can they be shaped in any way? Please give examples.
8. Do different periods in the year make a difference e.g. Women's Month, Sixteen Days etc.? Please give examples.
9. What internal factors drive the choice of content? What are the gender dynamics, if any? For example, is there a difference between male and female "gate keepers" in facilitating or promoting certain types of content? Please give examples.
10. How do you write female characters in South African television shows (what kinds of qualities and attributes do you think they should possess)? Please give examples.
11. How do you write male characters in South African television shows (what kinds of qualities and attributes do you think they should possess)? Please give examples.
12. How do you write gender non-conforming characters in South African television shows (what kinds of qualities and attributes do you think they should possess)? Please give examples.
13. Do you address plotlines to do with gender-based violence on your shows? If yes, how do you tackle these issues? Please give examples.
14. Again, if yes to the above question, was there any public response to this plotline that you were aware of? Please give examples.
15. Do you address plotlines to do with gender-stereotypes on your shows? If yes, how do you tackle these issues? Please give examples.

16. Again, if yes to the above question, was there any public response to this plotline that you were aware of? Please give examples.
17. Do you think your writer's rooms represent a diverse number of South African voices? Please give examples.
18. What is the general ratio of men to women and gender non-conforming people, in the writer's rooms? Please give examples.
19. What issues surrounding gender and gender based violence do you think should be addressed in South African television shows? Please give examples.
20. Have you noticed any changes in the way characters are being written now, as opposed to five years ago? Please give examples.



ANNEX D: LIST OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

NAME	SEX	AGE			PLACE
		Younger than 18 Yrs	19 -40 Yrs	41 – 65+ Yrs	
CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMES					
Kuzivakwashe Chigorimbo	F	✓			Meyerton
Girly Itumeng Mnyandu	F	✓			Orange Farm
Maita Nhika	F	✓			Orange Farm
Lindokuhle Grace Selubane	F	✓			Orange Farm
Miley Nhika	F	✓			Germiston
Babalo Jack	M	✓			Orange Farm
Lindsay Knothani	M	✓			Germiston
Bongani Mthetwa	M	✓			Soweto
Sfiso Mthetwa	M	✓			Orange Farm
Gosesiame Malume	M	✓			Orange Farm
ENTERTAINMENT AND NEWS					
Xolisa Beja	F		✓		Orange Farm
Sheron Makhado	F		✓		Orange Farm
Shalom Nhika	F		✓		Germiston
Kelly Van Heaven	F		✓		Orange Farm
Rejoice Chikwanha	F			✓	Castleview
Rudo Chigorimbo	F			✓	Meyerton
Rose Thamane	F			✓	Orange Farm
Linngav Knothoni	M		✓		Orange Farm
Reuben Madzima	M		✓		Orange Farm
Thulani Calvin Motsoeneng	M			✓	Orange Farm
Meshack Msibi	M			✓	Orange Farm
Nhlanhla Nxumalo	M			✓	Orange Farm
Karabo Rabjanyane	M			✓	Soweto

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