



Discussing gender at Swazi TV.

Photo: Saeanna Chingamuka

GENDER IN THE MEDIA

The 2003 GMBS revealed that women comprised 17% of news sources in the region and 17% in Swaziland. Women were portrayed in a limited range of roles, most often as sex objects or as victims of violence. Women were more likely to be seen than heard. The GMBS also revealed that women were more likely to be identified by personal tag more than men. They were most likely to be referred to as wives, mothers and daughters, titles which link more with their private roles and femininity.

This chapter will explore how much progress has been made since the GMBS. The chapter analyses whether women and men are equitably represented in the news. It looks at the sex; topics; age; function and occupation of sources and images in news stories. A further question of enquiry is the proportion of women and men sources who are identified by a personal tag (i.e. mother; father; wife; husband; etc.).

Gender blindness

Gender gaps in the editorial content of the media concern what is and what is not included in the news and as news. The sins of omission or “gender blindness” are reflected in multiple ways in which women's views are ignored.

Sources by sex overall

This is the single most important measure with regard to gender and the media as well as the extent to which society gives voice to women.

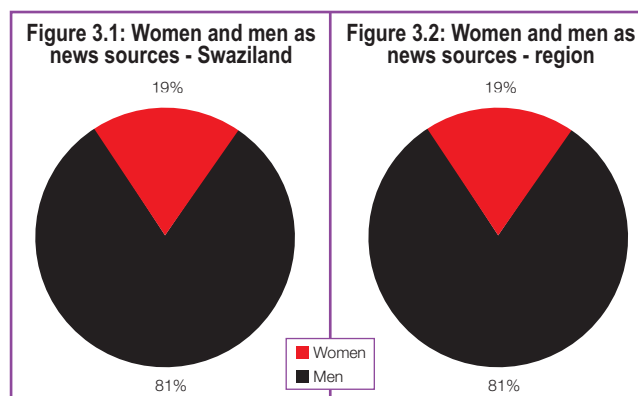


Figure 3.1 shows that women as news sources in Swaziland constitute just 19% of the total, which is the same as in the region. Men on the other hand continue to dominate media space. Thus although women constitute more than half of the population, they comprise less than a fifth of sources. The regional average of 19% is lower than the findings in the Global Media Monitoring project (GMMP) which found that across the globe women constitute 24% of media sources (19% for the whole of Africa, which is the same as the Southern African Findings of the GMPS).

The low proportion of women sources in Swaziland is closely related to the lack of diversity in voices. For example single source stories dominated coverage during the period under review. Where only one source is quoted in a story, this is mostly likely to be a man.

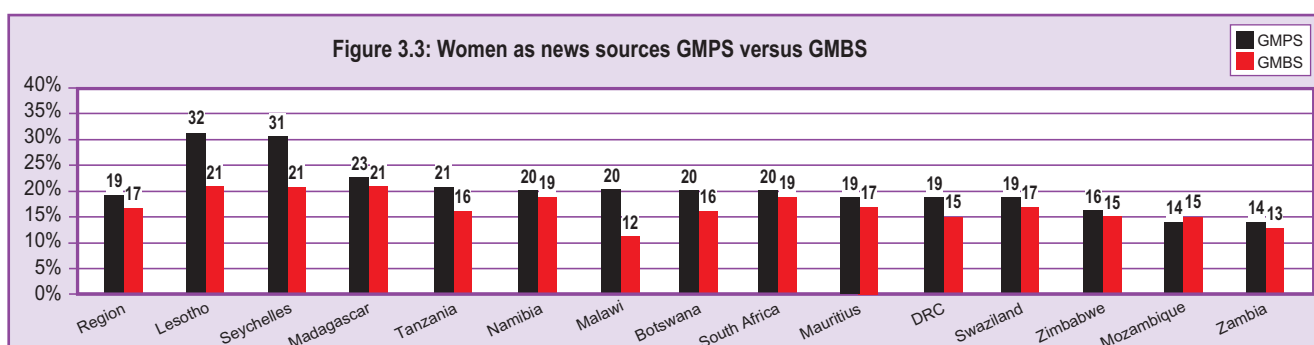


Figure 3.3 compares performance by country between the 2003 GMBS and the 2010 GMPS. There has been a marginal increase of 2 percentage points in the proportion of women sources since the 2003 GBMS, which revealed that women made up 17% of news sources at the time. This lack of movement was also observed in the region where the increase was also 2%. Although only Mozambique recorded a decline in women sources, the increases are all fairly small except Seychelles moving from 25% to 31% and Lesotho from 21% to 32%, Malawi going up from 12% to 20% and Tanzania from 16% to 21%.

Sources by sex per media house

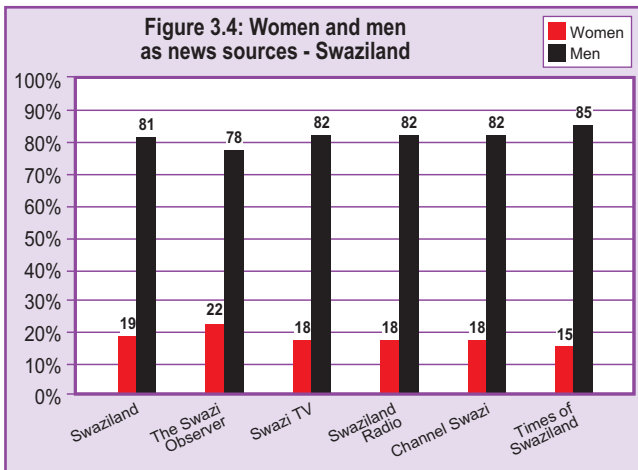


Figure 3.4 shows that there are however variations across media with regards to women's access to the news media. *The Swazi Observer* has the highest proportion at 22%, followed by *Swazi TV*, *Swaziland Radio* and *Channel Swazi* all at 18%. *Times of Swaziland* has the lowest proportion at 15%. The qualitative monitoring revealed examples of missed opportunities where women could have accessed.

Missed opportunities in news

For example, the article "HIV/AIDS curriculum devised" published by *Swazi Observer* on 29 October 2009. The article is about a HIV/AIDS curriculum being devised. The article raises an important issue that affects both men and women, but does not give women a chance to voice their views. HIV and AIDS impacts differently on women and men and therefore interventions should reflect such differences. The only source in the article is the male UNDP Deputy Resident Coordinator. The story is gender blind in that it ignores the differential impact of HIV and AIDS on female and male students.

HIV/AIDS CURRICULUM DEVISED

Stories by Njabulo Dlamini
Mbabane

THE University of Swaziland (UNISWA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are jointly working on infusing HIV and AIDS into the curriculum of the tertiary institution.

This is in a bid to ensure safe sex practices amongst the learners as well as equip them with skills in fighting the pandemic as one method of prevention.

"We're looking at strategies of taking forward the study of 2004 which found that students were having unsafe sex at the tertiary institutions. Our objective is infusing the HIV and AIDS curricula into the syllabus of UNISWA as one way of assisting the institution overcome such challenges (unsafe sex amongst students)," said UNDP Deputy Resident Coordinator Neil Boyer.

He said they had not received feedback on what has happened five years down the line from 2004 when the study was carried out.

"We would be involved in campaigns promoting prevention as the definite method of fighting the pandemic and whether there are programmes that have taken effect since 2004".

Boyer was speaking when presenting results of a research study titled 'HIV/AIDS and culture' conducted by two local consultants and the same number of foreign based ones.

The UNDP Deputy Resident Coordinator said it was important to undertake research so that whenever policies are put up they are informed by results of the study undertaken.

"Research promotes evidence based policies and this is what we're flagging to government, civil society and the private sector as well," he said.

He was in the company of one of the local researchers Rudolph Maziya.

Swaziland's report won under Special Recognition for the inclusiveness of the process in addressing responses to HIV and AIDS.

Besides Swaziland other winners were:

- * Excellence in Innovation in Measurement Bosnia and Herzegovina for the report titled 'Social Inclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina'
- * Excellence in Participation and Inclusiveness in Report Preparation Colombia Sub-National HDR 2008
- * Excellence in Policy Analysis Bolivia 2008
- * Excellence in Influencing National Policy Debate Turkey 2008 - 'Youth in Turkey'



Rudolph Maziya addressing members of the press during the presentation of the report. Looking on is UNDP Deputy Director Neil Boyer. (Pic: Simon Shabangu)

Sources by sex by media owner

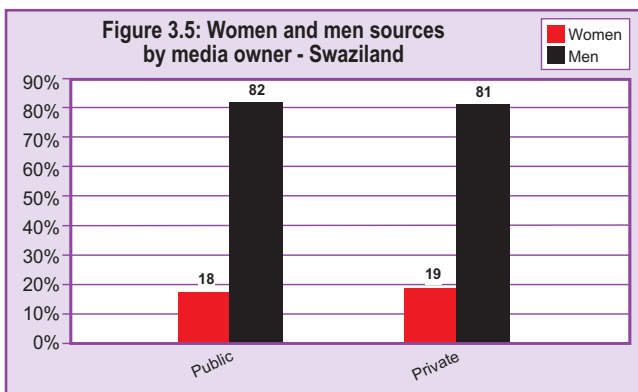
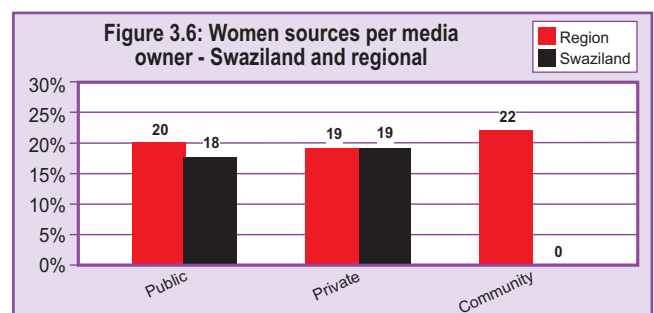


Figure 3.5 shows that there is very little difference in the proportions of women sources in private and



public media in Swaziland. Private media are just 1% higher than public media which had 18% women sources. There were no community media surveyed during the period.

Figure 3.6 shows that proportions of women sources in private media in the region are the same as in Swaziland both recording 19%. Public media in the region however, access more women sources that Swazi media which had 18% compared to the region's 20%.

Most of the female sources in media in the region are in community media. Community media has often been defines as media by the community and for the community, hence the higher proportion of women sources.

Who speaks on what?

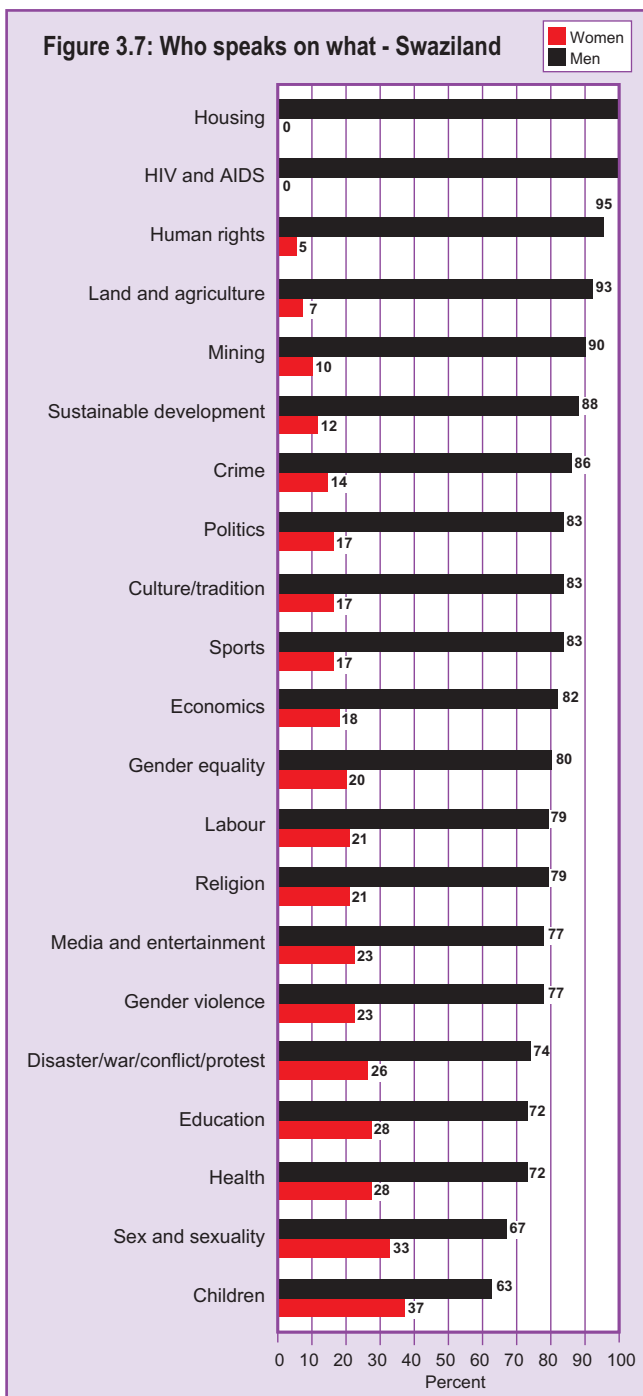


Figure 3.7 is a gender breakdown of sources by topic in Swaziland and figure 3.8 is similar statistics for the region.

Figure 3.7 shows that gender stereotyping is evident in the way that media assigns topics to women and men in news in Swaziland. Men's voices continue to dominate in what is considered hard or serious news with women constantly speaking on topics that emphasise their femininity. For example, the highest proportion of women sources in Swazi media is when they speak on children, 38%, followed by sex and sexuality, 33% and health at 28%. Men on the other hand are authorities on land and agriculture, 93%, mining 90% and sustainable development at 88%.

Although gender stereotyping is still evident, media in Swaziland are beginning to include a lot of male voices on topics like HIV and AIDS and human rights. For example men make up 95% of those who speak on human rights.

These gaps are more glaring in the region where men speak less on social issues and predominate as sources in sport (88%), Economics (86%) and land and agriculture at 84%. Whilst women are underrepresented across all topics, they are more accessed on gender equality (43%), gender violence (41%) and health at 33%. Gender equality is generally viewed as a women's 'issue' with less men speaking on it. Likewise gender violence is a women's issue.

The topics assigned to women and men sources continue to portray patriarchal attitudes with associate women with soft issues and men the more 'challenging' issues that require a lot of brain power.

Sources by sex and age

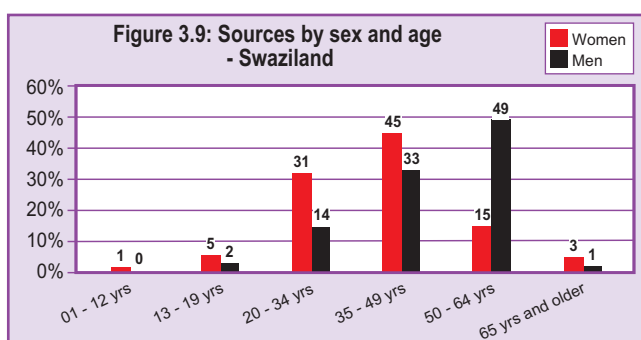


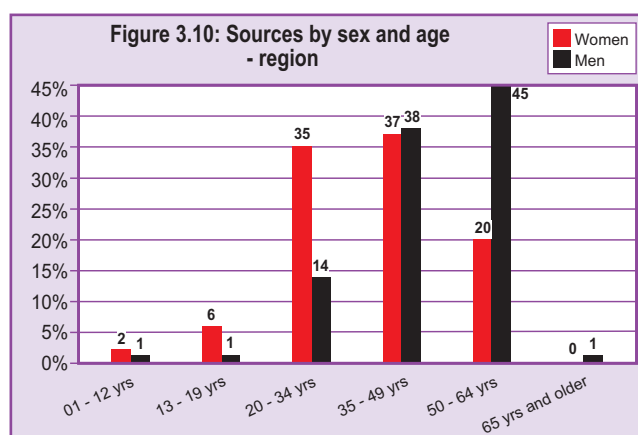
Figure 3.9 concerns the representation of women and men in different age categories in Swaziland and figure 3.10 the comparative figures for the

region. The voices of children and older people are virtually absent as media sources in Swaziland. There were no boys in the 0-12 years age category who were used as news sources whilst girls made up only 1% of sources. Similarly older people are accessed less. Women in the 65 years and older group make up 3% of sources whilst men make up only 1% of sources.

Women are heard more when they are between the ages of 35-49 years. This is the category where most professional people and executives fall under. Women in this group make up 45% of all women sources followed by the 20-34 age bracket with 31% representation. The proportions of women sources start to dwindle when they reach 50.

Unlike women who disappear from the media as they grow older, older men are regarded as the voices of authority. They constitute the highest number of male sources at 49%. Most of the men who fall within this category are business people, politicians and other men in positions of authority.

The picture witnessed in Swaziland is the same in the region with 65 years and older contributing the lowest number of sources. This is the same for both women and men. Women in this category are less than 1% with men contributing only 1%.



The highest proportions of women sources are in the 35-49 age bracket with 37% followed by the 20-34 age bracket with 35%. However as women reach 50 years of age, they appear less in the news media. Men on the other hand predominate as sources when they reach 50. Men in the 50-64 age bracket make up 45% of male sources in the region. This is slightly lower than the country average of 49%.

Subtle stereotypes

Stereotypes are expressed in both subtle and blatant ways. Subtle forms include the numerous stories that emphasise the domestic and traditional roles of women in a way that makes this seem normal. This type of stereotypes is very hard to identify as they portray women and men in roles that society deems natural.

women sources in Swaziland. Print has 19% women sources compared to radio and television which have 18%. The higher proportions in print could be attributed to the bigger space allocated to news stories compared to radio and television which normally have very short news reports. As such priority in these mediums is given to men.

The differences across mediums are however more marked in the region where women are more likely to appear as sources on television that they would on radio and print. For example TV has the highest proportions with 25%. This is higher than Swaziland's 18%. Radio in the region comes second with 20% women sources, which is 2% higher than in Swaziland. Print news is the only category where Swaziland had higher proportions of women sources than the region.

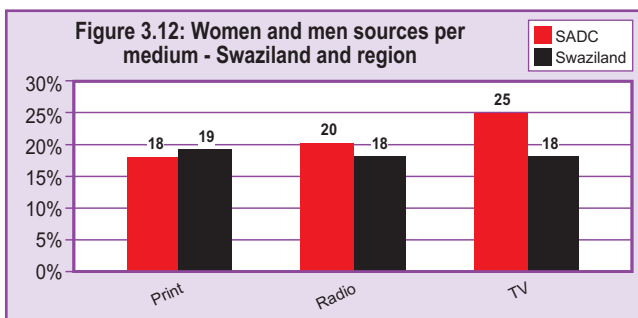
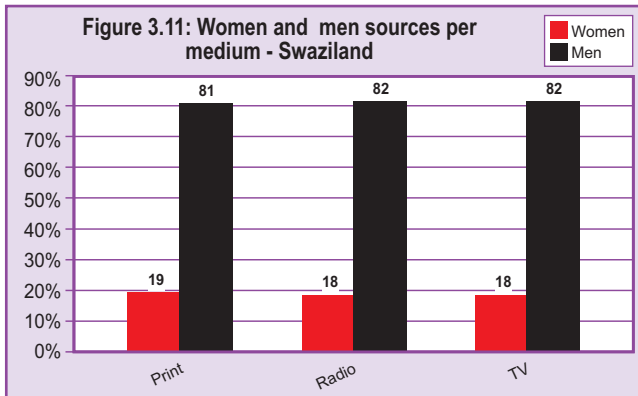


Figure 3.11 shows that there is little difference in the way that print, radio and television access

Seen but not heard?



Challenging the gender division of labour

Photo: UNDP

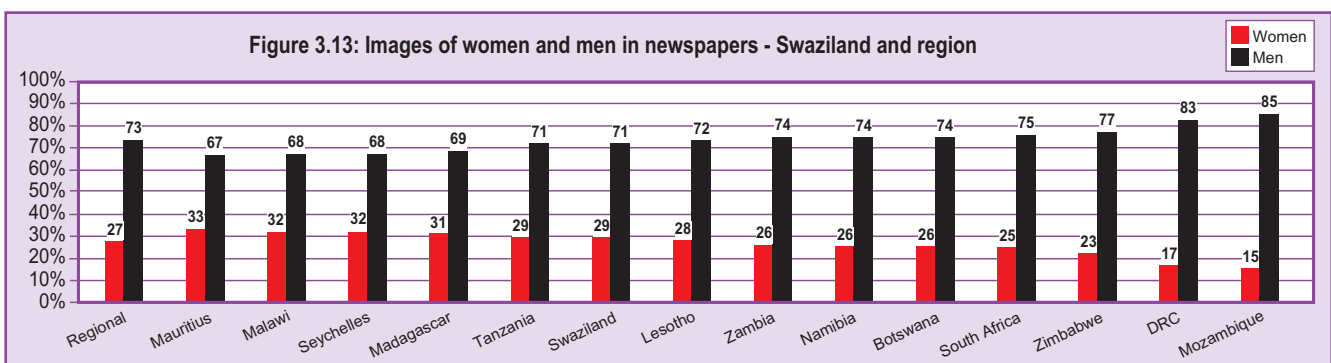


Figure 3.13 on the proportion of women and men images in the print media shows that women are more likely to be seen than heard. At 29%, the proportion of women images, Swaziland is higher than the proportion of women as news sources (19%). The regional average of women images is 27%, compared to 19% as news sources. The inescapable conclusion is that women are more likely to be seen than heard in the media.

Older women disappear

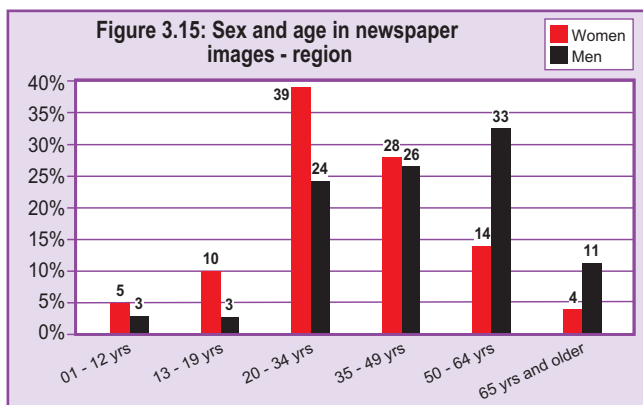
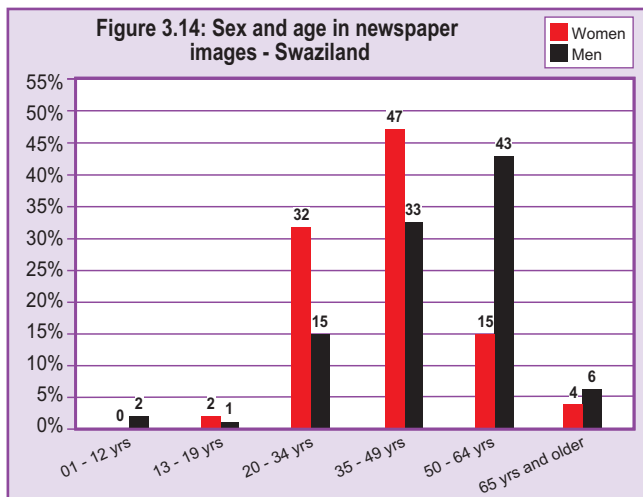


Figure 3.14 (Swaziland) and figure 3.15 (region) show that images of older women are significantly lower than those of younger women. Very young (1-12 years) and old women appear less compared to women in the 20-34 age bracket and those in the 35-49 age bracket. In Swaziland there are no girls under the age of 12 in images. Boys in this group make up 2% of images. The 13-19 age bracket has 10% women and 3% men.

The proportions for women suddenly shoot up they get to the 20-34 category where they represent 39% of all images of women. This is when most women are at the prime of their beauty and youth. Most of these appear in certain occupational categories that emphasise on their outer beauty.

The numbers however drop sharply when women get to 50-64 years accounting for only 14% of women in images. This is at a point when most women are becoming 'less attractive' by media standards. However men predominate in this category making up 33% of men in images. For men physical beauty is not linked to age as it is for

women. The men appearing in these images are the men being used as sources. The same cannot be said about women who are more likely to be seen than heard in news media.

Likewise in SADC, younger and older women appear less in newspaper images although the proportions differ with Swaziland. Like in Swaziland women under the age of 12 appear less images, making up just 5% of women in images in the region.

The proportions of older women (65 yrs and older) are the same as in Swaziland with 4% representation. Men are better represented at 11% which is higher than Swaziland's 6%.

Unlike in Swaziland where women in the 35-49 age bracket constitute the highest proportion of women in images, the 20-34 age group predominates in the region with 39%. However the reasons for the predominance of these two groups in the country and region do not differ as they centre on women's physical appearance more than their intellectual capacity.

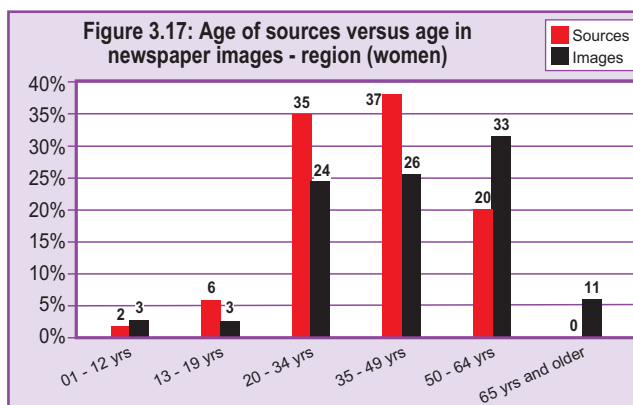
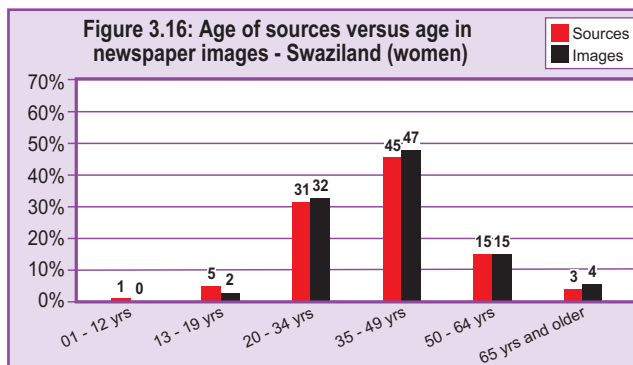


Figure 3.6 compares women sources in different age groups in Swaziland, with women images, while figure 3.17 does the same for the region. Age is clearly a factor in the way that news media give space to women and men in images and as sources.

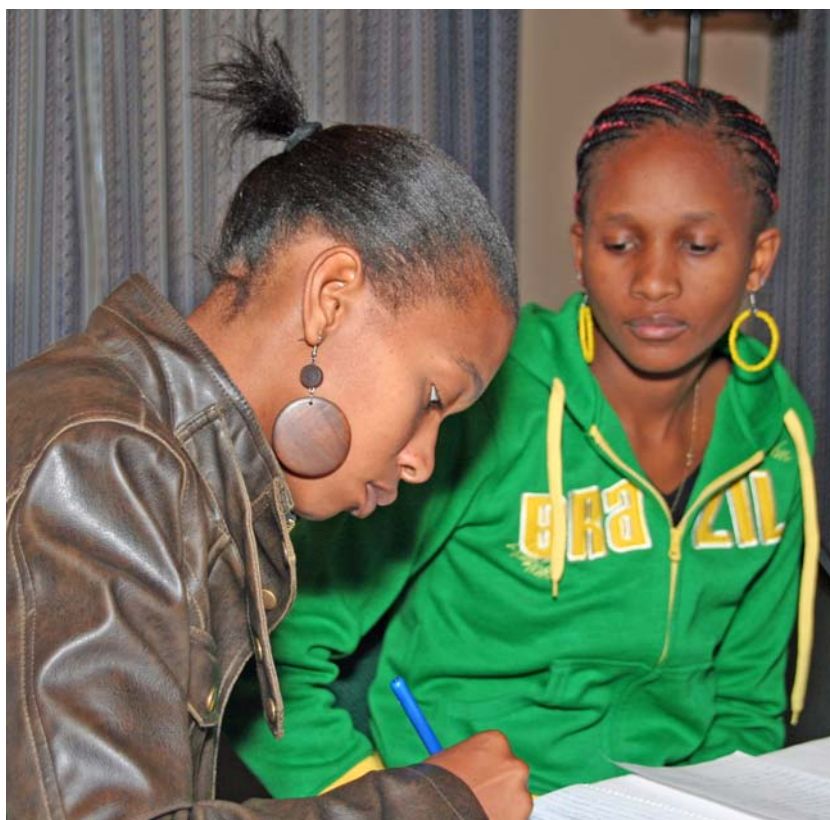
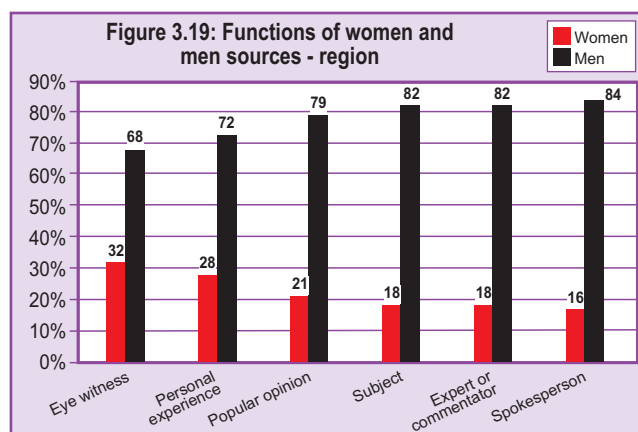
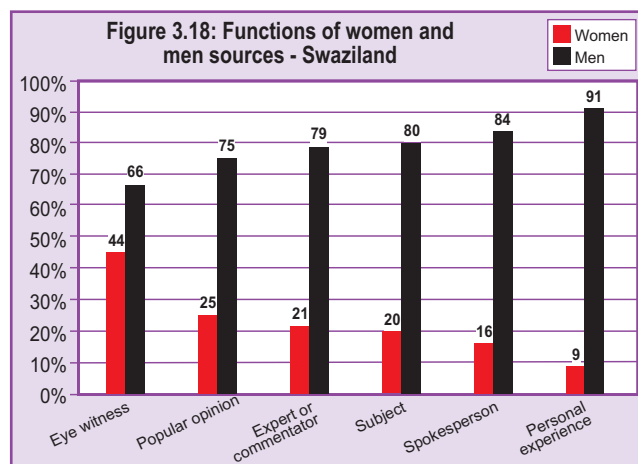
The proportions of women of different age groups in images and as sources are almost the same. For example women between the ages of 20-34 years make up 31% of women sources and 32% of women in images. Similarly women in the 35-49 age group make up 45% of women sources and 47% of women in images. Older women appear less in images as well as speak less in news stories.

The above pattern shows that women of certain ages are more likely to appear in images just as they would be heard as news sources.

In the region, it is easier to determine the critical ages for women as sources and women appearing in images. For example women between the ages of 20-34 years and 35-49 years are the highly accessed ones as news sources whilst older ones do not speak that much with just 1% representation.

Function

Figure 3.18 disaggregates function of sources by sex in Swaziland and figure 3.19 does the same for the region. The graphs shows that both in Swaziland (44%) and the region (32%) women are best represented as eye witnesses. In Swaziland this followed by popular opinion at 25% and personal experience in the region with 28%.



Two journalists working on a story in Swaziland

Photo: Trevor Davies

Men on the other hand appear more as spokespersons, subjects and expert/or commentators. Men continue to be the voices of authority from whose point of view news is mainly told from. Notably male subjects make up 80% of subjects accessed in news in Swaziland, hence the question in the GMBS 'Whose news, whose views?'

The overreliance on men for official comment could partly be attributed to the patriarchal nature of Swazi society. The country, which is one of Africa's last few remaining monarchs, still regards women as children and they are not involved in important decision making processes. This is despite the fact that there are women government ministers and parliamentarians among other "challenging" functions.

Occupation

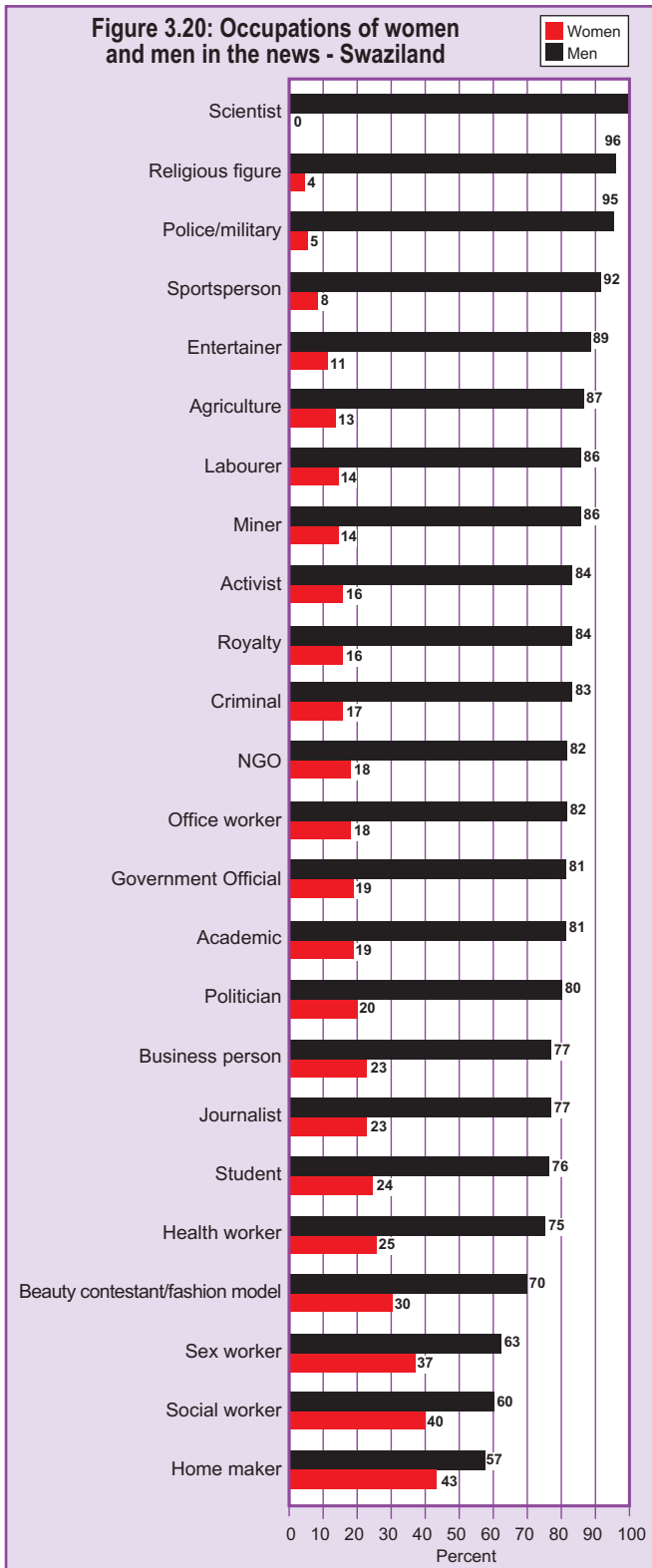
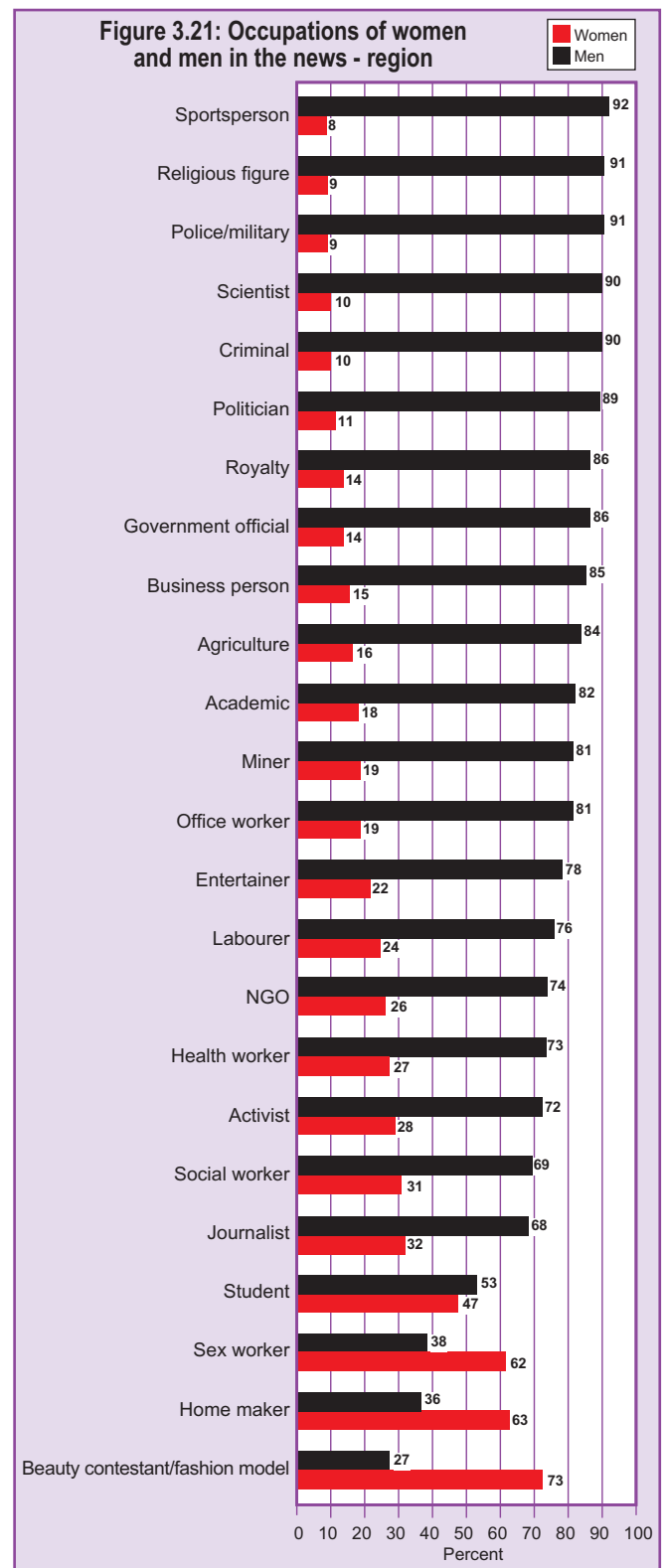


Figure 3.20 concerns the occupational categories of women and men sources in Swaziland. Figure 3.21 provides comparative data for the region. The graphs show that both in Swaziland and the region, women continue to be portrayed in a narrow range



of roles. The gender division of labour in sourcing is still evident in the occupations given to women and men in news in Swaziland.

Whilst women are underrepresented in all the occupations, they predominate as homemakers, 43% in Swaziland and 63% in the region. Men

predominate as scientist (100%), religious figure (96%) and police/military at 95% in Swazi media. Spokesperson comes in third at 92%. There is however a slight deviation from the norm with men appearing more as entertainers than women.

In SADC, men appear more as sportsperson (92%) followed by religious figure at 91% and police/military at 91%. Women on the other hand appear more as beauty contestant/fashion at 73%, homemaker 63% and sex workers at 62%.

It is however encouraging to see men in Swaziland appearing in roles such as health workers, 27%, social workers, 69%, and office workers with 81%. This is a slight move from the past where women have tended to dominate in these positions.

Women as sex objects



The qualitative monitoring revealed examples of women being portrayed as sex objects. For example, the article "Meet Mvasi's Sexiest Babe" published by *The Weekend Observer* on 31 October-01 November 2009. It is an interview with Siviwe Motsa, a Bachelor of Commerce student at the University of Swaziland. She is described as the "varsity's sexiest babe". The stereotypical headline emphasises Motsa's physical attributes over her intellectual capabilities. This is in sharp contrast to the question and answer interview in which Motsa portrays herself as a hard working young woman with ambitions and aspirations. In fact, Motsa does not even believe in beauty contests. Yet the article describes her as "bootylicious; booty with a brain" etc. The language is denigrating and the author's perspective overshadows that of the interviewee.

Progress over time

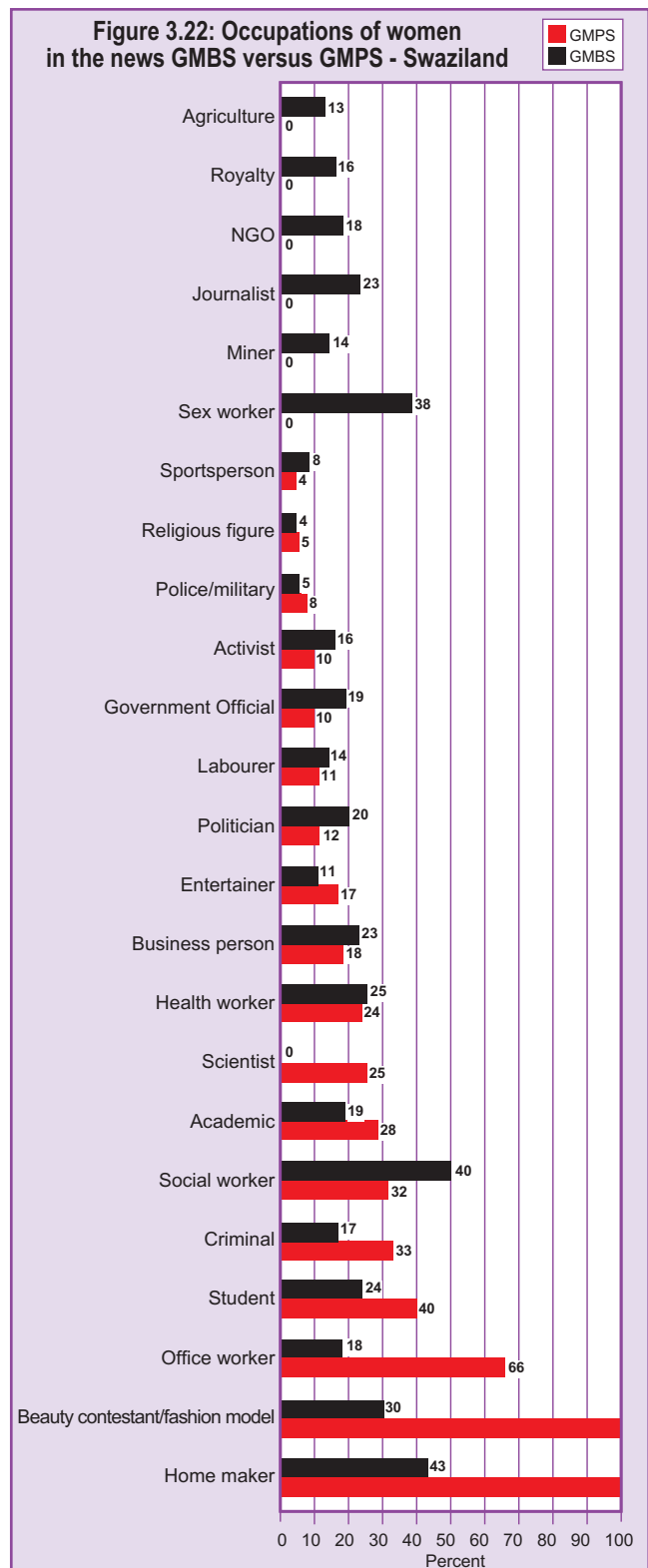


Figure 3.22 shows that compared to the GMBS, women are being portrayed in a greater diversity of roles. In Swaziland for example, in the GMBS there were no men portrayed as homemakers and beauty contestants, something which sort of defined these as occupations for women only. In

the GMPS, the proportion of women in these categories has shifted significantly. They now make up 43% of homemakers and 30% of beauty constants/fashion models. This shows that more and more men are being portrayed in these roles unlike in the past.

The other positive development has been the increase in the proportions of women appearing as miners, in agriculture, royalty, sportspersons, government official, politicians and business people. In the GMBS, women were absent or underrepresented in these categories.

Subtle stereotypes still abound

For example, the story "Umkhokheli" Hlobisile congratulated in Parly published by *Swazi Observer* on 22 October 2009. The story is about a male Minister, Patrick Mamba, who congratulates his colleague the Minister of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs, Hlobisile Ndlovu on her intended marriage to a South African Pastor, Sam Fidelis. He comments that it's laudable and that her marrying was an "achievement" and something that was not an easy feat in "getting the love of your life, especially one that is a pastor." The message received mixed reaction from other members - some felt the standing order privilege was abused. Some members of the house however thought the message was in order.

This report is an example of a subtle gender stereotype. While the story is presented as a simple event report, it does carry subtle messages of defining a woman's place in society. It is actually surprising that a government minister's engagement can be a subject for discussion in parliament and the media. This is part of larger efforts, consciously or otherwise, by media and society at large to define a woman's place. While Hlobisile is a minister, media do not miss out on an opportunity to go into her personal life.

Another example of subtle stereotype is the article "Dead gogos are still getting grants: MPs" published by Times of Swaziland on 3 November 2009. The article portrays old women as helpless and in need of government grants. The article highlights a ministry's Portfolio Committee debate about dead people who are still being considered for government grants. Women political leaders in the ministry's portfolio committee participated in the debate and highlighted corruption by officials who administer government funds. However, the language used in the article denotes subtle stereotypes. There is an unstated assumption that old women are the ones

who only receive government grants. This subtle stereotype is reinforced by the headline which is deceiving and portrays women in a negative picture. Gogos (grandmothers) is a word used to refer to old women. However, the story is talking about elderly people who include men and women. Although women are typically the majority of grant recipients, the headline creates the impression that only older women are on welfare. Thus women are presented as the only ones who are helpless and need government assistance.

'Umkhokheli' Hlobisile congratulated in Parly

By Njabulo Dlamini
Lobamba

MINISTER of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs Hlobisile Ndlovu has been congratulated for his recent engagement to SA Pastor Sam Fidelis.

Minister of Labour and Social Security Magobetane Patrick Mamba passed the congratulatory message to his colleague in the House of Assembly yesterday.

He said it was laudable that the Minister would soon assume an additional title of being a pastor's wife (*Umkhokheli*).

"We congratulate the Minister on her achievement; it is really not an easy task getting the love of your life, especially one who is a pastor. We wish the minister all the best in her endeavours," said the labour and social security minister when standing on a motion of privilege.

However, his comments were dismissed as trash by other MPs such as Gundwane Gamedze from Siphofaneni.

MP Gamedze said if the labour and social security minister was keen in

passing words of congratulation to his colleague, he should do so privately rather than in Parliament.

Motshane MP

Robert Magongo also con-



Minister of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs Hlobisile Ndlovu.

demned the minister, noting he was abusing Standing Order 58 – a motion of privilege by a member of the august chambers.

"I feel the Standing Order is being abused, Mr Speaker and in any event this won't last long (*batavuphindze behlukane most*), he said, to the bewilderment of the house.

His utterances also did not go down well with the Sports Minister who reacted with scorn at this.

But Speaker Prince Guduza said the MPs who condemned the labour and social security minister were out of order.

"In passing a congratulatory message to his colleague, the labour minister was very much in order because in these chambers we either approve of something or frown upon it; this is how business of the house is conducted. As for those who hold a differing view, it's their choice," he said.

The Sports Culture and Youth Affairs Minister never uttered anything in relation to the issue.

She is reportedly set to go down the aisle with the SA pastor soon.

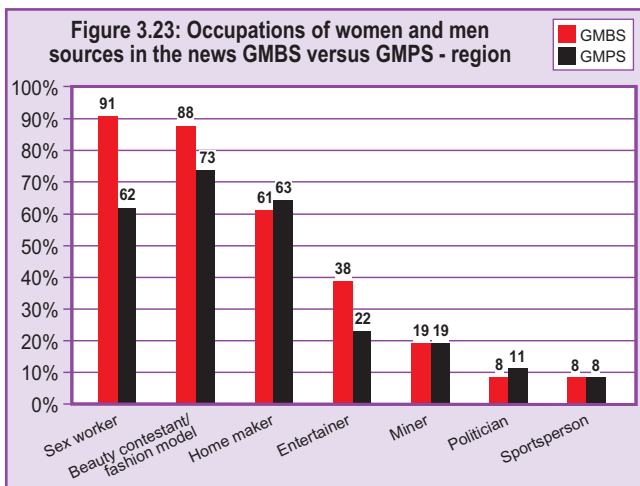


Figure 3.23 shows that across the region women are not quite as dominant in the categories of sex worker, beauty contest and entertainer. The proportion of women politicians in the media increased from 8% to 11%. Their proportion as homemakers has also gone up from 61% in the GMBS to 63% in this study.

They have been constant as miners at 19% and sportspersons at 8%. The overall conclusion in

Swaziland and the region is that while there are some gender benders, the traditional roles of women and men in society are changing very slowly.

Personal tags

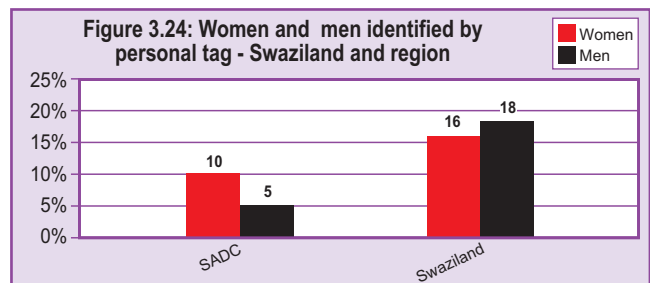


Figure 3.24 shows that 16% of women sources in Swaziland compared to 10% in SADC region are identified by personal tag such as mother, daughter or wife. Only 5% of men in the region and 18% in Swaziland are identified as husband or father.

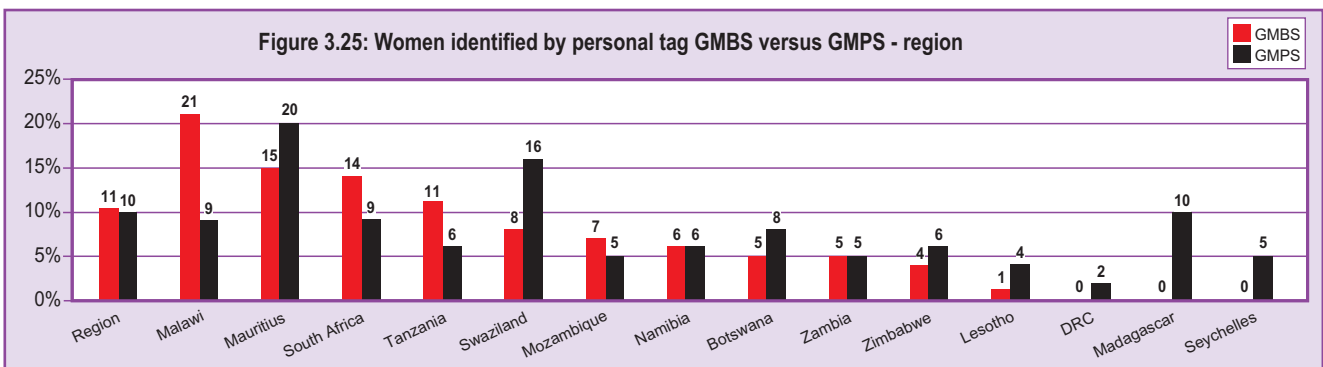


Figure 3.25 shows that regionally there has been a drop in the proportion of women identified by personal tags from 11% in the GMBS to 10% in the GMPS. In some cases this drop has been quite dramatic (for example from 21% to 9% in Malawi). In the case of Swaziland there has been an increase in the proportion of women identified by personal tag from 8% to 16%. Swaziland has the second highest proportion of women identified by personal tags after Mauritius at 20%. DRC at 2% has the lowest proportion.



Teetee Zwane, editor of the Business Desk at the Swazi Observer, speaks on the importance of having gender mainstreamed into all coverage. Photo: Bheki Maseko

Gender aware reporting



The media has a huge role to play in challenging gender stereotypes through the examples it portrays of women and men in non-traditional roles. An example of a gender-aware story that celebrates women breaking into roles previously regarded as the territory of men is “A Woman in a man's world” published by The Swazi Observer on 24 October 2009. It is about a woman who has ventured into dairy and pig-farming, a field in which men historically predominate. This story details Regina Thandi Sibandze's success in the industry. The reporter is fair and writes an accurate and balanced story using words such as: “has defied”, “determination”, “zeal” and “successfully”, which showcase Sibandze as a talented entrepreneur. Images of Sibandze with her dairy cows and pigs compliment the story and challenge stereotypes. The writer also focused only on the Sibandze and her business without including irrelevant issues about her personal life or marriage.

Conclusions

Most participants highlighted the need to raise the gender awareness of most women in Swaziland so as to ensure that they come out and express their views. Because of socialisation, most of them tend to shy away from the media even when their comments are sought on issues that affect them. Aleck Lushaba, Editor of *Weekend Observer* noted that women are generally wary in their dealings with the media often preferring to have men speak on their behalf.



Aleck Lushaba (right) Editor of the *Weekend Observer* participates in a group discussion during the GMPS consultative workshop. Photo: Sikhonzile Ndlovu

Hleziphi Vilane of Swaziland Redcross noted that stereotypical representations of women in media are one area that needs to be improved on. She says women are often portrayed as sexual objects or people with loose morals. She cited the concept of 'Bomakhwameni' (women in relationships with married men) as a common one. Men's morals are rarely questioned by media.

Group discussions revealed that women do not get the same treatment as men in media content. For example women in influential positions or decision making positions are still not given a voice. Media would rather focus on their dressing and private lives instead of giving them their space in the evolving Swazi society.

Another example given was how poverty has been given a female face whilst men speak on it. What is also missing from coverage is consumers' perspective or the voices of ordinary men and women. News is still heavily told from the point of view of experts and spokespersons who happen to be mostly men. This is a trend that Swazi media has to exorcise itself of. Calsile Masilela also noted that even when one wants diversity of voices, they are constantly have to follow protocol and seek the views of spokespersons. She noted that government ministries and NGOs are still a long way from mainstreaming gender as they have specific people that are responsible for speaking to the media.

Andrew Moyo, a theatre artist, said that there is need to include women's voices in other cross cutting issues and not just limit their voices to gender equality and health issues as is currently the case in the country.

Thulisile Mkhabela, a member of the community representing disabled people, highlighted that

disabled people are short changed by media as they are often spoken for. She said they are not given the platform to articulate their issues. They have been rendered voiceless and invisible as senior government people and NGO representatives speak on their behalf. She said these types of sources do not always tell the truth.