

"Growing up"

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## CHAPTER 9

# Media, information and communication

## Articles 29-31



Media monitoring during a training workshop at the Mauritius Broadcasting Cooperation (MBC). From right: Utam Ramchurn, Shirley Chumroo, Luxmi Gokool.

Photo: Mary Jane Piang-Nee

### KEY POINTS

- Mauritius has a SGDI score of 70% and is fifth in the region.
- Citizens gave a score of 46% for the CSC, which is 24 percentage points lower than the SGDI.
- Despite the high representation of women in media studies, women are under-represented in the media profession. The *Glass Ceilings in Southern African Newsrooms Study* showed that women constitute a quarter of the top management in Mauritius; slightly higher than the regional average of 23%.
- Women constitute just 19% of the news sources in the media monitored in the GMPS (2010), an increase of only 2% in seven years since the GMBS (2003).
- Women in the Mauritian media still carry their private identity, while the regional average is 8% for women and 4% for men, in Mauritius the percentage is 10% for women and 1% for men.
- Women predominate in the home-makers and sex workers categories at 100% and beauty/fashion at 92%. And yet there are more and more men in the model and fashion business.
- Gender Links is working with media houses on developing Centres of Excellence in gender mainstreaming in the media

**Table 9.1: Media, information and communications SGDI and CSC scores**

	SGDI	CSC
Scores	70%	46%
Ranks	5	12

Table 9.1 shows that Mauritius with a 70% SGDI score is fifth in the region on the media sector. However citizens were critical and gave a low score of 46% placing the country twelfth. The SGDI score incorporates women's participation in the media as employees, on

boards of directors and in management. It also includes the proportion of women as lecturers and students in media training institutions and the proportion of women news sources in media content.

However the CSC captures other qualitative nuances such as the sensationalism of news and gender stereotypes perpetuated in various media. Citizens' perceptions also include other forms of media, including advertising, tabloids and Information Communication Technologies ICTs, which are not necessarily captured in the SGDI.



*The Protocol calls on Member States to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all information, communication and media policies, programmes, laws and training in accordance with the Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport.*

Over the last three years, GL and GEMSA have been conducting gender and media literacy courses designed to empower citizens, especially women, to take up complaints. This reinforces the work of media regulators on policy, as illustrated in the case study:



Media Watch Organisation-GEMSA is the only organisation that has taken sexist complaints to the Association of Advertising Agencies (AAA) of Mauritius and the Independent Broadcast Authority (IBA). It would seem that the public are unaware where to take complaints as they contact MWO-GEMSA. The Mauritian chapter of GEMSA has had 12 advertisements removed from the airwaves and billboards.



An example of a recent advert concerns the "Pride Mark: Get Dressed" advert promoting "hot hot, hot, sales" from the 26 February to 14 March 2010 through a woman with green fingernails opening the zipper of her mini-shorts. In a letter to the director general, copied

to the Ministry of Women's Rights; the Attorney General's Office and the Director of the Sex Discrimination Division, MWO-GEMSA stated:

"Members of the public, both men and women, as well as young people, are distressed with such an advertisement being displayed so prominently in newspapers. There was a general consensus among those who have seen this advertisement that such a provocative image was very offensive and harmful to the image of women at large... We believe that women do not have to be objectified to promote products. We are therefore writing to you in the hope that your organisation will refrain from using such offensive advertisements to promote its products and sales events in the near future".

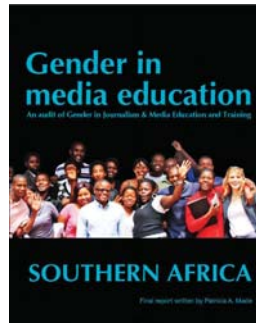
MWO-GEMSA submitted comments to the IBA on a draft for a Code of Advertising Practices requesting that advertisements do not:

- use obscene, sexist, racist images; sex, nudity and offensive language should not be used.
- Portray women as sex objects;
- Cause prejudice to human dignity, humiliate, stigmatise or undermine identifiable groups of people.
- Use children as objects; and do not place them in advertisements that have nothing to do with them.

## Gender in media training

The audit of *Gender in Media Education in Southern Africa (GIME)* is the most comprehensive study yet undertaken of the gender dimensions of journalism and media education and training in tertiary institutions in Southern Africa.

The audit of the University of Mauritius is part of a larger GIME audit conducted in 25 institutions in 13 countries including Botswana,



Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe between October 2009 and April 2010. Gender Links (GL) undertook the study through its Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC) and through a partnership between media development organisations and knowledge institutions.

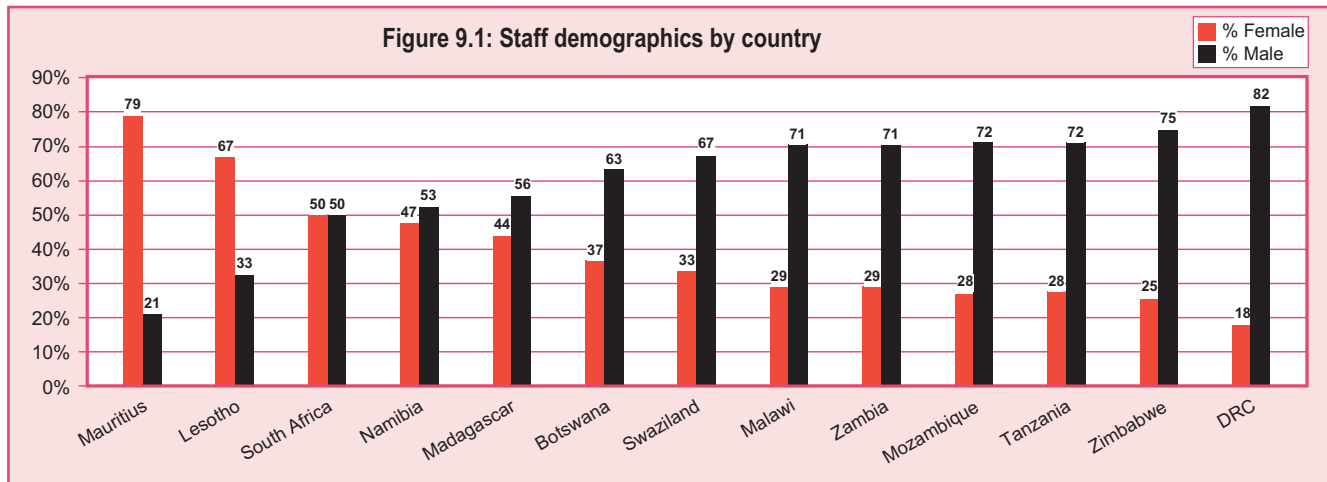


Figure 9.1 shows that at the University of Mauritius, which does not have a gender or affirmative action policy, 79% of the academic staff are women

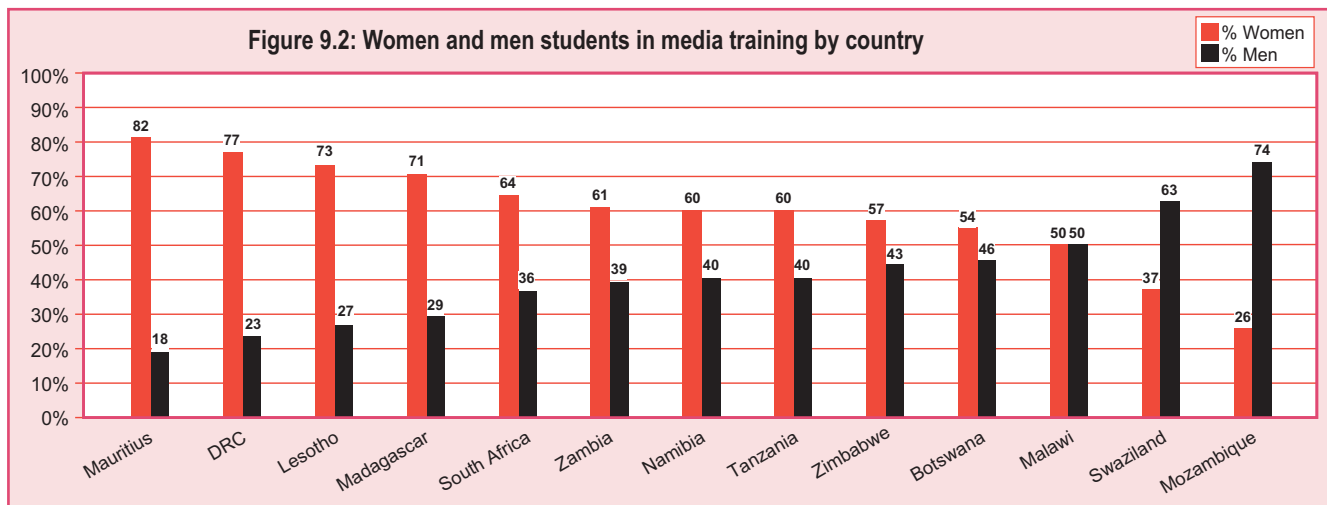


Figure 9.2 shows that ten of the countries in the sample have exceeded parity in the representation of female students. These include Mauritius (82%), DRC (77%), Lesotho (73%), Madagascar (71%), South Africa (64%), Zambia (61%), Namibia and Tanzania (60%), Zimbabwe (57%) and Botswana (54%).

**TABLE 9.2: SUMMARY OF KEY QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS FOR MAURITIAN MEDIA HOUSES**

CATEGORY	% MAURITIUS		% REGION	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Percentage of employees by sex	33	67	41	59
<b>OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS</b>				
Non-permanent	52	48	36	64
Unskilled	30	70	29	71
Semi-skilled	35	65	55	45
Skilled technical	22	78	45	55
Professionally qualified	40	60	31	69
Senior management	22	78	28	72
Top management	25	75	23	77
Board of directors	36	64	28	72
<b>CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT</b>				
Freelance	53	47	43	57
Part-time	40	60	35	65
Full-time, fixed term contract	31	69	37	63
Full-time open-ended contract	26	74	42	58
<b>DEPARTMENTS</b>				
<i>Percentage of women and men in:</i>				
Finance & administration	46	54	54	46
Editorial	39	61	42	58
Advertising/Marketing	38	62	57	43
Human resources	32	68	44	56
Production	23	77	30	70
Technical/IT	16	84	16	84
Design	13	87	31	69
Printing & distribution	6	94	24	76
<b>BEATS</b>				
<i>Top three beats covered by women</i>				
Religion	62	38	52	48
Human Rights	58	42	42	58
Media	58	42	42	58
<i>Top three beats covered by men</i>				
Political reporting	20	80	25	75
Labour	21	79	36	64
Courts	27	73	37	63
<b>POLICIES</b>				
			<b>Region</b>	
Existence of a gender policy	33		16	
Existence of a sexual harassment policy	56		28	
Need for or improving existing gender policies	78		68	

## Giving equal representation to women and men by 2015



*The Protocol urges Member States to take measures to promote the equal representation of women in the ownership of, and decision-making structures of the media in accordance with Article 12.1 that provides for equal representation of women in decision-making positions by 2015.*

Despite the high representation of women in media studies, women are under-represented in the media profession. The *Glass Ceilings in Southern African Newsrooms Study* showed that women constitute a quarter of the top management in Mauritius; slightly higher than the regional average of 23%. In Mauritius women constitute 36% of the Boards of Directors, which is higher than the regional average of 28%. But there are only 22% women in senior management in Mauritius. This is lower than the regional average of 28% for women.

Table 9.2 shows that Mauritius media has a high proportion of women in non-permanent employment

(52% as compared to 36% in the region). However, Mauritius is like the rest of the region in that women comprise 30% of unskilled staff, compared to 29% in the region.

The skilled technical category is generally a male preserve: in Mauritius women comprise 22% of this category; much lower than the regional average of 45%.

However, at 40%, Mauritius has more women in the professionally qualified category than the regional figure of 31%.

## Gender in media content



*The Protocol calls on Member States to encourage the media to give equal voice to women and men in all areas of coverage, including increasing the number of programmes for, by and about women on gender specific topics and that challenge gender stereotypes. The Protocol urges member states to take measures to discourage the media from:*

- *Promoting pornography and violence against all persons, especially women and children;*
- *Depicting women as helpless victims of violence and abuse;*
- *Degrading or exploiting women, especially in the area of entertainment and advertising, and undermining their role and position in society; and*
- *Reinforcing gender oppression and stereotypes.*

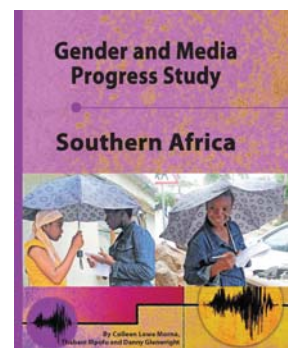
### Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS) 2010

The GMPS, coming exactly seven years after the original Gender and Media Baseline (GMBS) study, compared the performance of media in SADC countries against their performance in the GMBS; the two MAP HIV and AIDS and Gender Baseline studies and draw parallels with the Glass Ceiling study.

The key findings of the research can be summarised as follows:

- **Women's views and voices are grossly under-represented in the Mauritian media:** If unknown sources are excluded, women constitute just 19% of the news sources in the media monitored in this study, an increase of only 2% in seven years since the GMBS.

- **Variations between media houses:** There are differences in women sources between the individual media houses with the MBC Television at 28%, Week End and Le Mauricien at 14% and Radio Plus at 15%. Women's voices on MBC radio (22%) is less than on the MBC television.



- **Women do not talk on all topics in Mauritius:** Although women are more vocal on gender equality at 86%, children at 67% and gender violence at 46%, on certain subjects, such as economics, sports or

housing women make up less than 15% of sources and yet all these subjects concern women as well. They are used very little for politics stories making up only 9% of the sources.

- **Women in the Mauritian media still carry their private identity:** Women are much more likely to be identified as a wife, daughter or mother than a man is likely to be identified as a husband, son or father. While the regional average is 8% for women and 4% for men, in Mauritius the percentage is 10% for women and 1% for men.
- **Gender:** Women predominate in the home-makers and sex workers categories at 100% and beauty/

fashion at 92%. And yet there are more and more men in the model and fashion business.

- **Equality in women and men presenters but not reporters:** There are more men reporters than women reporters in the Mauritian Media with an average percentage of 29% (this is comparable with the regional average of 28%). There is a vast difference between media houses with Radio Plus having more women than men (66% vs. 34%). The MBC Television has nearly the same percentage of female and male presenters with 51% female and 49% male.
- **There are interesting gender benders in beats:** There has been a change since the GMBS.

**Table 9.3: Summary of key findings**

GENERAL MEDIA PRACTICE	GMBS MAURITIUS	GMPS MAURITIUS	GMPS REGIONAL	GMMP GLOBAL
Topics	%	%	%	%
Economics	N/A	12	12	17
Gender equality	N/A	1	1	N/A
Gender violence	N/A	1	1	N/A
Politics	N/A	12	19	28
Sports	N/A	27	18	N/A
<b>Geographic scope of stories</b>	%	%	%	%
International	N/A	28	22	26
SADC	N/A	5	8	N/A
National	N/A	40	42	N/A
Local/community	N/A	0	18	N/A
Province	N/A	27	10	N/A
<b>Type of sources</b>	%	%	%	%
Primary sources	N/A	59	69	N/A
<b>Anonymity</b>	%	%	%	%
Anonymous sources	N/A	31	18	N/A
<b>Diversity of sources</b>	%	%	%	%
Single source	N/A	75	67	N/A
GENDER AND THE MEDIA	GMBS MAURITIUS	GMPS MAURITIUS	GMPS REGIONAL	GMMP GLOBAL
<b>Who speaks</b>	% women	% women	% women	% women
Overall	17	19	19	24
Private media	N/A	18	19	N/A
Public media	N/A	28	20	N/A
Community	N/A	17	22	N/A
<b>Who speaks on which topic</b>	% women	% women	% women	% women
Economics	4	13	15	21
Education	N/A	24	24	N/A
Gender Equality	43	86	43	N/A
Gender Violence	42	46	41	N/A
Political Stories	11	9	13	18
Sports	9	14	12	N/A
<b>Gender of sources by medium</b>	% women	% women	% women	% women
Print	N/A	18	18	24
Radio	N/A	18	20	19
Television	N/A	28	25	26

<b>Who is seen</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	
Images in newspapers	N/A	33	27	N/A	
<b>Ages - sources</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	
35 - 49 years	N/A	24	37	N/A	
50 - 64 years	N/A	14	20	N/A	
65 years or older	N/A	11	0.5	N/A	
<b>Ages - images</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	
35 - 49 years	N/A	19	28	N/A	
50 - 64 years	N/A	8	14	N/A	
65 years or older	N/A	31	4	N/A	
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	
Beauty contestant	88	92	73	N/A	
Business person	7	14	15	14	
Government official	N/A	12	27	17	
Health worker	26	13	63	31	
Homemakers	61	100	63	72	
Politicians	8	8	11	17	
Sex worker	100	100	62	39	
Sportsperson	5	13	8	11	
<b>Personal identity</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	
Women	15	20	10	N/A	
Men	3	6	5	N/A	
<b>GENDER IN NEWSROOMS</b>	<b>GMBS MAURITIUS</b>	<b>GMPS MAURITIUS</b>	<b>GMPS REGIONAL</b>	<b>GMMP GLOBAL</b>	
<b>Who does what</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	
All reporters	36	29	29	N/A	
TV reporters	36	51	42	44	
TV presenters	49	64	58	52	
Radio reporters	38	51	30	37	
Print reporters	24	30	25	33	
<b>Who reports on what</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	
Economics	10	35	28	40	
Gender Equality	N/A	60	32	N/A	
Gender Violence	23	21	38	N/A	
Political stories	25	33	24	33	
Sports	22	11	18	N/A	
<b>Sources and sex of reporter</b>		<b>%W</b>	<b>%M</b>	<b>%W</b>	<b>%M</b>
Female sources by sex of reporter	N/A	28	16	31	15
<b>GENDER VIOLENCE AND THE MEDIA</b>	<b>GMBS MAURITIUS</b>	<b>GMPS MAURITIUS</b>	<b>GMPS REGIONAL</b>	<b>GMMP GLOBAL</b>	
GBV stories compared to total	N/A	2	4	N/A	
Advocacy and protest stories	N/A	4	11	N/A	
<b>Who speaks on GBV</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	
% of women in stories on and mentioned in GBV	N/A	37	27	N/A	
<b>Function of GBV sources</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	
Victim/survivor	N/A	26	19	N/A	
Alleged perpetrator/perpetrator	N/A	22	11	N/A	
<b>Who reports on GBV</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	
Percentage of women reporters	N/A	44	35	N/A	
<b>GENDER, HIV AND AIDS AND THE MEDIA</b>	<b>2006 STUDY MAURITIUS</b>	<b>GMPS MAURITIUS</b>	<b>GMPS REGIONAL</b>	<b>GMMP GLOBAL</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	
HIV and AIDS coverage compared to total	1	2	2	N/A	



<b>Subtopics</b>	%	%	%	%
Prevention	50	24	26	N/A
General	32	38	37	N/A
Treatment	4	21	12	N/A
Care, support and rights	9	7	14	N/A
Impact	0	10	12	N/A
<b>Geographical scope</b>	%	%	%	%
International	14	14	12	N/A
Regional	12	13	8	N/A
National	74	60	56	N/A
Local	0	13	15	N/A
<b>Function of sources</b>	%	%	%	%
Official and UN Agencies	42	7	19	N/A
Civil society and NGOs	40	12	18	N/A
Experts	9	8	17	N/A
Traditional and religious leaders	2	0	2	N/A
Person with AIDS	5	10	7	N/A
Person affected	2	63	36	N/A
<b>Sources</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>
Who speaks on HIV and AIDS	29	17	20	N/A
<b>Reporters</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>
Who reports on HIV and AIDS	68	44	37	N/A

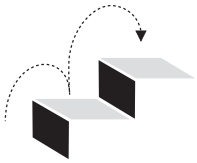
## Gender-based violence (GBV)



*The Protocol calls on Member States to take appropriate measures to encourage the media to play a constructive role in the eradication of gender based violence by adopting guidelines which ensure gender sensitive coverage.*

### Key findings of the GMPS include:

- **Gender based violence and stories that mentioned GBV accounted for 2%:** GBV is a major problem in Mauritius and Mauritians count on the media for accurate news with statistics. The percentage is low because there were not many cases of GBV during this period except for a major one - a rape and femicide.
- **More men than women speak on GBV:** Women speak at 37% while men speak at 63%.
- **Mauritian media gives voices to people who are more affected by GBV:** Survivors of GBV talk at 26% compared to the region at only 19%.
- **Femicide is covered by the Mauritian media:** Femicide which is a subject not often heard of is covered by 8% in the Mauritian media compared to 4% in the region.
- **Coverage of rape is high:** Rape receives 19% of the coverage compared to the region at 11%. There has been little coverage on men killed in abusive situation at 1% while femicide makes up 8%.
- **More men than women report on GBV:** Although women report on GBV at 44% compared to men at 56%, there is a big difference between media houses with Le Mauricien and Le Dimanche having men reporting on GBV at 100% while at Week End, MBC Radio and Radio Plus women report on GBV at 100%.



## Next steps

- Continue to deepen engagement with media decision makers - taking cue from media houses that are doing well because of strong partnerships.
- Deepen and sustain media activism by civil society organisations that has seen many sexist adverts removed.
- The government should mainstream gender in all information, communication and media related laws.
- Statutory regulatory authorities and self-regulatory authorities to should use whatever leverage they have at their disposal to ensure gender accountability by media institutions, media houses and other bodies.
- Government should pledge to ensure that gender will be mainstreamed in media training institutions that are funded through public funds.



Loga Virahsammy being interviewed after a meeting with the Local Government Minister, Herve Aimee, Mauritius.

*Photo: Gender Links*