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## REVISITING THE GENDER STEREOTYPES IN SPORTS JOURNALISM

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*The article deals with such notions as gender and gender stereotypes from the point of view of sport topic in modern mass media. The gender stereotypes in sports activity are studied in detail. The problems of equal rights between male and female kinds of sport are analyzed. The peculiarities of gender stereotypes in sports journalism are defined. The transformation of public opinion as to active participation of women in different kinds of sports is shown; the available potential and competitiveness of women journalists in sports media are proved.*

**Key words:** gender, stereotype, gender stereotype, social role, mass media, sports journalism.

**I**ntroduction. The conception of gender approach to the development of civil society acquires special urgency on the millennia boundary, which satisfies the needs of quality changes in real social-sex relations and the requirements, according to which the modern society is creating, modeling and designing its future [1].

The theme of stereotypes as one of the most interesting and urgent spheres in society functioning was studied by such outstanding scientists as A. Bodalyev, who studied the communication psychology on the background of stereotypical thinking and a personality in modern society; by U. Lippman, who made a great contribution to the developing of this theme by his works, which concern stereotypes and mass consciousness; V. Trusov, L. Strickland research the influence of stereotypes in social psychology in their works.

As to Ukrainian scientists, the fundamental research of gender system in Ukraine, gender stereotypes and gender roles is carried out by such authors as T. Vynohradova, I. Holovashko, I. Zhrebkina [4], N Lavrynenko [5], T. Melnyk [4], V. Semenov etc.

The works of such Ukrainian researches as N. Sydorenko [5], N. Ostapenko [5], O. Poda [6], R. Kushnir [7], T. Zemlyakova [8] are devoted to the issue of gender specifics in mass media texts, the peculiarities of depiction of female and male images and the ascription to them social roles. The gender problems in literary and documentary texts, media texts in particular, were researched by V. Ahyeyeva [9], O. Kis', V. Slinchuk [10], L. Stavyt'ska [11] etc. However, it should be mentioned that gender stereotypes in sports journalism were not researched by the scientists.

The purpose of the article is to identify the peculiarities of gender stereotypes in sports journalism. Thus, it conditioned the following tasks: to research sports activity and the problem of equality of rights between male and female kinds of sports; to consider the peculiarities of gender stereotypes in sports journalism; to define the expediency of sports journalism division.

Research methods. The main research methods are theoretical, comparative, methodological. The theoretical analysis allowed grounding of peculiarities of female and male kinds of sports and their influence on highlighting of sport topics in the periodicals. The comparative analysis of female and male kinds of sports activity is used; the expediency of division of sports journalism into male and female is grounded.

The usage of the abovementioned methods helps us to understand how the gender asymmetry emerged in the sphere of physical training and sports, how the conflicts can be solved during sports contests.

While researching gender stereotypes of modern sports periodicals, we consider it is necessary to remind that the Law of Ukraine «On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men»

stipulates the main aim – to achieve «parity between women and men in all spheres of society activity» due to legal guaranteeing equal rights and opportunities, elimination of sex discrimination, removing disbalance in this direction.

**Results and discussion.** The mass media in the modern society are the authority, which decides what is worth public's attention and what is not, to whom the word will be given and to whom will be not, what events will be highlighted and how. Thus, the mass media have significant opportunities to influence the consciousness of people, define for them certain values, norms and patterns. The stereotypical highlighting of social roles and images of females and males are inherent for most Ukrainian mass media. They preserve the tendency to describe men through their achievements, and women – through their appearance and relations with men.

Thus, for example, the authors of the articles about famous sportswomen mention their marital status, quantity of children and appearance. They are called «charming», «attractive», «beautiful». But it is difficult to imagine such expressions regarding men. On the contrary, they are called «strong», «clever», «professional». The articles about outstanding sportsmen tell about their professional qualities, success in sport activity. Females and males are set against each other. The journalists use such journalese as «strong sex», «the strong half of the mankind», «fair sex», «the weak half of the mankind» for this purpose.

Unfortunately, the essential role in preserving and increasing of gender stereotypes belong to the mass media, which due to their publications, overall tones if not contribute, but often even discriminate professional and social-political authority.

It is necessary to mention that males and females are not represented equally in the Ukrainian media space. The Ukrainian media space is represented through male presence and male names, evaluated by male intelligence, blessed by male authority either in the spheres, where the gender asymmetry really exists and where the both sexes strive for balance, for example in sports, or the spheres where women traditionally prevailed, for example, in housekeeping and consuming.

The creative self-fulfillment of women, particularly in journalism, is also not on the highest level. Although women compose the largest part of journalists, they take less part in forming editorial policy. The gender transformations also touched the elite sphere of journalism, which is sports journalism. The quantity of women engaged in sports journalism is gradually increasing every year.

Not only scientists, but also journalists-practitioners show their interest in gender issues. They want to find out if the division in male and female sports journalism really exists, if the rights of women sports journalists are limited. The poll of prominent women journalists of Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Bilorus' and Russia that journalism can be only journalism; there can be no division in male and female profession: «Remember, there are no females, no males here. We are equal. We get up at 6 a.m. and shoot for 12-14 hours, etc.» (Halyna Polyevaya, 58, the outstanding sports journalist in *Kazakhstan, Berdikulov prize winner*), «I totally disagree that journalism must be divided in male and female. You must write interesting article disregarding the sex» (*Ljudmyla Radchenko, 84, leading figure in Ukrainian sports journalism*), «I think it is a disgrace to divide journalism in male and female. The division in males and females can be at home and in the bed. There is no such division at work. Journalism is only journalism» (*Nataliya Kaluhina, 54, sport observer of radio station «Ekho Moskwy» («Эхо Москвы»*)).

There is another aspect of this issue: to what extend do the readers take a woman journalist as a sport observer, reporter, and commentator. Everything depends on her professionalism in this case. Unfortunately, there is such a tendency in the society that sports journalism is rather a male profession, and it is desirable for males to write about European and world football, hockey and basketball championships. As the majority of women have never played football, basketball and have never boxed... And what family can bear the long absence of the beloved, wife and mother...

There is one more important issue of female and male journalism. It is proved that if a male and a female are given an assignment to write an article on one and the same topic and one and the same object, they will write two different articles: «It does not concern survey article, it concerns interview more. Male interviews are somewhat harsh and even somewhat dry, while female interviews are full of images. Female journalists try to get something personal, something concealed from the sportsmen, to find out more about the life beyond sport. That is why, it seems to me, the articles are more emotional» (*Olena Pavlova, 32, sports journalist of the newspapers «Komanda», «Segodnya»*).

In connection with that we have a question, if journalism is divided in female and male kinds of sports, and if the journalists are allowed to cover them.

Nevertheless, such tendency is preserved in many editorial offices. If a woman sports journalist wants to write about figure skating or calisthenics, then there is no problem. If she wants to write about «sancta sanctorum», for example about football, then men sports journalists, the heads of editorial offices are not pleased. Women can be subjected to internal check as to their professionalism and subject knowledge. Indeed, women's football and hockey reviews are a little bit different. There is less attention paid to technical moments, tactics and strategy, about which males usually write. Females try to get from the event something, which a fan will not pay attention at once, i.e. images, emotions, details.

There is another issue: male journalists are less interested in exact-coordination kinds of sports. Probably it is the matter of psychology. It is easier to perceive competitive sports than to value and perceive the exactness of the movement. But, on the other side, we can name some prominent journalists, who were good at such kinds of sports. The most famous Kyiv journalist Farid Dosayev commented artistic gymnastics on Central TV in 70<sup>th</sup> of XX; Serhiy Kononykhin is a famous commentator of figure skating; Heorhiy Sarkisyan is a commentator of artistic gymnastics, etc. But the interest to this kind of sport is lower nowadays than it was in the Soviet time, when it was always supported: «In 90<sup>th</sup>, football, in most countries of CIS, became a big «washing machine» and as a result it gained money. Naturally, it has gained high rating due to its coverage. Thus, the journalists who wrote about individual sports appeared in the shadow» (*Nataliya Kalugina, «Ekho Moskwy»*).

One of the urgent issues of sports journalism consists in that if there is any sign of gender discrimination in the profession. Sometimes it happens so that a sports editorial office does not want to hire a woman, but it agrees to her for practice training. The management believes that a family is a priority for a woman. She is more emotional than a man. Moreover «male teams, which select journalists for shooting, prefer men. It can be understood, because the representatives of the strong sex feel themselves free in male company and think about the task and are not distracted by women. But from the point of view of professionalism it should not be so (Olena Pavlova, newspapers «Komanda», «Segodnya»); «You know, the sportsmen have such a sign, as «a woman on the board». All the teams have this sign, that a woman nearby the team before the game is a n omen of a loss. It is forbidden to enter the locker room and women are not admitted to the charter flights. What a woman will do in the locker room before the play? For example, she can take pictures of athletic apparel before the game. But no, we cannot even dream about this. I do not know if there are women flight attendants on charter flights, and if there are, then where is the logic? And will they refuse to fly if the second pilot is a woman (it can happen). Not every team can afford charter flight, they can fly economy class, and there women can be the half of a plane. All these are superstitions, but nevertheless the team, the coaches and the management put absolute trust in them. It is offensive, but there is nothing to be done». (*Dinara Baykadamova, 27, photojournalist/ journalist of republican Internet-portal sports.kz (Kazakhstan)*).

It was mentioned that women are not appointed to the executive positions in sport journalism. It is explained by the fact that periodicals are focused mostly on several leading kinds of sports. They are football, basketball, box, hockey in Ukraine and to great extend they are male. Still, women football and box are not very popular in Ukraine. That is why, if the editorial office puts great stake at these kinds of sports, it is thought that a woman cannot do well as man. Women, unlike man, have to prove their competence in the abovementioned kinds of sports. At the same time, it is believed that men have this competence almost from the cradle (Olena Pavlova, the newspapers «Komanda», «Segodnya» («Команда», «Сегодня»)). There are few women sports journalists in principle, and a lot of work should be done to get the executive position. And every girl has to prove her competence For example, a press attaché of the majority of club is a male. Probably, as sportsmen are males, the press attaché is also a male. It is easier for them to work together (*Dinara Baykadamova, (Kazakhstan)*).

Nevertheless, the situation is changing. All women journalists agree that the younger the staff and management are, the less attention is paid to the fact if you are a man or a women. If the management is of advanced age, then it is more difficult to move up the career ladder. It is said that it is considered not respectable.

To change such situation cardinally, the attitude of the professionals towards the sports journalism should be changed. As women journalists state: «There few woman really interested in sports. The males are often more obsessed by their favourite kind of sport. And moreover if they are ex-sportsmen in addition, then they can know the composition of some club of 1967 by heart, even though they were not born at that time» (*Dinara Baykadamova, Kazakhstan*); «Some of them have chosen this path to build their private life, to get married successfully. I am not against such alliances, but sometimes the ladies behave themselves too impudent. That is one more reason for forming of some stereotype. Sometimes you do an interview with a sportsman and he starts to tell you Sunday-school truth, saying that you are a girl and what for to burden you with extra and complicated information. Of course, the opinion changes later, bit still the fact remains» (*Olena Pavlova, the newspapers «Komanda», «Segodnya» («Команда», «Сегодня»)*). Women sports journalists should «Learn! Women journalists should prove that they are not worse than men. And to be so, they have to learn team composition, to get ready for the interview, to study the rules of different kinds of sports. They have to give no quarter to men, to shoot better, to ask interesting questions. Then such a woman journalist will be remembered, she will be respected».

Also it is necessary to organize seminars, meetings, trainings for sports journalists to see different examples, to exchange experience and upgrade skills. Unfortunately, there is practically no such activity.

Thus, the most important is to love and be interested in what you are writing. It is necessary to write in such a way, that it will be close to every reader regardless gender identity.

**Conclusions.** Summing up, we should state that gender identity, political culture, female and male cooperation in forming democratic, civilized Ukrainian society are becoming indispensable features of nowadays. The reflection of these problems and perspectives of observing equality in all spheres are taking place in the information space.

The gender specifics influenced such sphere of human's activity as professional sports, where we can see the manifestation of female and male differences and also male dominance over females. The desire of females for competing with males in all kinds of sports aroused success, which is characterized as a special phenomenon, where practice leaves behind theory and public opinion is behind the reality.

Thus, we can state, firstly, the change of public opinion as to active female participation in different kinds of sports; secondly, the tendency as to popularization of female sports; thirdly, the available potential and competitiveness of females on world sports arena.

The gender transformations seriously influenced sports journalism. Though there is still a tendency that sports journalism is, nevertheless, a male profession, and executive positions are taken by men. As the poll showed, if you are a professional and you take your profession seriously, and then the attitude to you will be correspondent in most cases.

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### До питання про гендерні стереотипи в спортивній журналістиці

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*У статті розглянуто такі поняття, як гендер і гендерні стереотипи з погляду спортивної тематики в сучасних засобах масової інформації. Ґрунтовно досліджено гендерні стереотипи в спортивній діяльності. Проаналізовано проблеми рівноправності між чоловічими та жіночими видами спорту. Визначено особливості гендерних стереотипів у спортивній журналістиці. Показано зміну громадської думки щодо активної участі жінок у різних видах спорту; доведено наявний потенціал і конкурентоспроможність журналісток в спортивних медіа.*

**Ключові слова:** гендер, стереотип, гендерні стереотипи, суспільна роль, ЗМІ, спортивна журналістика.

### К вопросу о гендерных стереотипах в спортивной журналистике

**Волобуева Анастасия**

*В статье рассмотрены такие понятия, как гендер, стереотип, гендерные стереотипы с точки зрения спортивной тематики в современных средствах массовой информации. Основательно исследованы гендерные стереотипы в спортивной деятельности. Проанализированы проблемы равноправия между мужскими и женскими видами спорта. Определены особенности гендерных стереотипов в спортивной журналистике. Показано изменение общественного мнения относительно активного участия женщин в различных видах спорта; доказано имеющийся потенциал и конкурентоспособность журналисток в спортивных медиа.*

**Ключевые слова:** гендер, стереотип, гендерные стереотипы, общественная роль, СМИ, спортивная журналистика.

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## CONTENT EMPHASIS IN MODERN PARTY PRESS

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*Along with this traditional segment of political influence in recent years parties and non-governmental organizations in Ukraine have widely implemented multi-media into their communication arsenal, however printed media prevail being approved tools in putting forward party's ideas guidance and conducting party or inter-party discussions; nurturing political culture of its subscribers or random readers. The objective of the research paper is to inquire into the contextual accents of the contemporary party press in Ukraine, define the subject matter blocks of the publications in the leading printed media of this domain. The subject of the paper are the following newspapers Solidarnist, Svoboda, Udar, Nasha Ukraina, Natsia ta derzhava, Narodna and other. Thus, a significant part of the party periodicals operating on the constant basis in Ukraine does not constrict the content of their articles to the limit of the party leader's activity; the important topics include society and economic, informative and military, historical and patriotic, as well as cultural and educational headings.*

**Key words:** modern party press, political influence, subject matter blocks, content.

**I**ntroduction. Political parties functioning and activity are regulated by the Law of Ukraine «On political parties in Ukraine» which was ratified in 2001 and later amended. Of significant importance is Article 2 which defines the notion of a political party – that is «a legally registered voluntary association of citizens adhering national social development programme, aimed at assisting in the formation and expression of citizens' political will, participating in elections and other political events» [1]. Political parties have both guarantees (article 4) and restrictions on the formation and operation (article 5).

In Ukraine political parties have been guaranteed the freedom of opposition, including an opportunity to make public and defend the party stand with regard to state and public life; participate in the discussions of acts of the authorities, make public and motivate its criticism, using government-run and nongovernmental media in keeping with legally established procedures (article 12).

Thus, every political party can reveal in the press, on the radio or in the Internet publishers its national program of social progress, possible ways for national development, means for supporting women and the young associations, civil unions under the following the constitutional principles.