TALKBACK



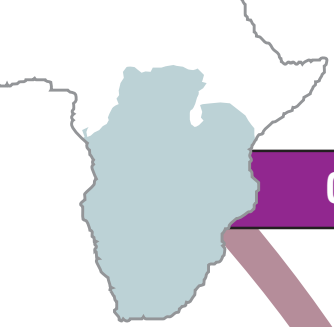
IN-HOUSE AUDIENCE RESEARCH

GENDER AND MEDIA AUDIENCE STUDY

gmas

WOMEN AND MEN RESPOND TO THE NEWS

Edited by
Colleen Lowe Morna



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TALKBACK
In-house Audience Research

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Executive summary



Launching GMAS in Namibia. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

GENDER AND MEDIA AUDIENCE STUDY
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WOMEN AND MEN RESPOND TO THE NEWS

gender links

This report summarises the findings of audience research in three media houses in Malawi, Mauritius and Namibia as part of a pilot project to develop a simple questionnaire that can be used by media houses to get practical, gender disaggregated feedback from audiences that will help them to improve their coverage, marketing and responsiveness.

BACKGROUND

The project is a follow up to the Gender and Media Audience Study (GMAS) conducted by Gender Links with universities around Southern Africa, using a questionnaire devised by experts from the Rhodes University Media Studies Department. The study covered three different geographical areas in each of 13 Southern African countries and yielded a wealth of data on audience preferences. This data is however at a country rather than at a media house level.

The study showed that in general there is very little audience research carried out by media houses, and that such research is mainly focused on advertising rather than editorial content. One of media houses that engaged with the findings (the Namibian) proposed simplifying the questionnaire so that it could be used by media houses to gather their own data. This suggestion led to the pilot project conducted with three newspapers in Southern Africa, with support from FES and the Open Society Foundation of Southern Africa.

PROCESS

The table below summarises the process as followed: (see table 1)

METHODOLOGY

The simplified questionnaire, agreed after consultations with the media houses, is attached at Annex 1.

As an incentive to participate in the research, each media house conducted a lucky draw and winners got to participate in the gender and media summit, along with representatives of the marketing departments of their media houses. The following is a summary of key facts and findings for each of the media houses that provided source material for the discussion summarised at the beginning of this section.

The preliminary findings were shared the findings at the Gender Media Diversity Summit from 7-8 September 2006 at a panel on Diversifying media markets

KEY FINDINGS

The key findings of the research in the three media houses are summarised in Table 2.

Table 1: In-house audience research process

ACTION	TIME FRAME- 2006	COMMENTS
Identify three pilot projects	May	The Namibian, Chronicle in Malawi and News on Sunday in Mauritius expressed interest in taking part in the research.
Each media house designate a contact person	May	These included editors and marketing managers.
Teleconference to discuss the questionnaire	Mid June	This agreed on the key questions to be included.
Administration of the questionnaire through a page in the newspaper; Internet	July	A cut off date was established for receiving responses.
Courier questionnaires to GL; keep copies for the draw	25 July	Partners to agree on what number of responses would constitute a meaningful sample size.
Draw in each country	Early August	Organised by the media house; inform GL to make arrangements for prize.
Analysis of findings	August	Questionnaires sent to GL to analyse
Presentation of findings	6-8 Sept	Media Diversity Summit; each media house to present findings

Table 2: Summary of key data from Talk Back Survey

	Malawi	Mauritius		Namibia	
	% Combined[1]	% Women	% Men	% Women	% Men
Perceptions of the representation of women					
Victims	66.7	80.0	76.9	75.5	76.5
Model/beauty contestant	52.0	51.3	56.9	63.0	77.5
Politician	44.0	22.5	40.0	38.0	35.0
Professional	24.0	43.6	48.4	23.8	23.8
Health worker	44.0	33.3	26.2	60.4	66.5
Citizen/member of community	28.0	42.5	36.9	48.5	49.1
Sports person	25.0	38.5	41.5	18.8	23.6
Home maker	43.6	38.5	30.8	41.4	52.8
Sex worker	41.5	7.7	9.4	26.3	32.1
Perceptions of the representation of men					
Politician	100.0	92.5	95.4	96.1	91.4
Sports presenter	92.0	71.8	83.1	82.4	85.5
Criminal	72.0	67.5	71.9	91.2	82.1
Business person	68.0	82.1	58.5	77.7	80.0
Civil servant/government official	80.0	79.5	64.6	80.0	84.3
High achiever	76.0	67.5	53.8	19.6	23.3
Professional	75.0	63.2	67.7	23.8	23.8
Are the concerns and views of men and women reflected equally					
Agree	64.0	67.5	83.1	53.3	52.1
Unsure	20.0	17.5	10.7	24.8	16.6
Disagree	16.0	15.0	6.2	21.9	31.3
Would news be more interesting if there were more stories of women doing a wider range of activities?					
Agree	83.3	82.5	56.3	58.1	56.4
Unsure	4.2	12.5	26.6	28.8	18.4
Disagree	12.5	5.0	17.2	13.3	25.2
Other ways women should be portrayed					
Professional roles	52.0	60.0	35.9	44.3	39.5
Leadership	60.0	30.8	36.5	50.5	54.1
Other ways men should be portrayed					
Parents	12	72.5	53.2	53.8	51.3
Home-makers	40.0	35.0	40.0	50.9	36.4
Sex symbols	40.9	2.5	4.6	0.9	0.9

[1]Malawi statistics are combined in this report because of the very low representation of women in the responses (4/25) which challenge the validity and reliability.

Overall these findings show that:

Women are predominantly seen as victims or beauty queens in newspapers: A large majority of respondents, both men and women, said that women are either represented as victims or beauty queens.

On the other hand more than 90% of respondents see men as politicians or community leaders in newspapers: 100% of Malawian respondents, and over 90% of Mauritian and Namibian respondents said the main role in which men are portrayed in the newspapers that they read is as politicians.

More women agreed that stories would be more interesting if women were portrayed in more diverse roles: In the Mauritian and Namibian newspapers more women (82.5%; 51.8%) than men (56.3%; 56.4%) agreed strongly that the news would be more interesting if women were portrayed in a wider diversity of roles.

A significant proportion of respondents would like to see women in non- traditional roles: 60% of all Malawian respondents stated that they would like to see women in professional roles. In Mauritius and Namibia, more women (36%; 44.3%) than men (35.9%; 39.5%) want to see women in professional roles.

A similar proportion would like to see men in non-traditional roles: In Mauritius and Namibia more than half of both women (72.5%; 53.8%) and men (53.2%; 51.3%) respondents stated that they would like to see more stories about men as parents. Similarly in Malawi, 40% of respondents would like to see men as home-makers.

WAY FORWARD

The media houses found this to be a useful exercise, both as a way of showing concern for their audiences, but also obtaining valuable feedback on what their audiences would like to read more and less of.

Each learned that there is potential to grow their audiences, especially among women, through content that appeals more to these audiences. As in the case of the regional study, audiences at micro level showed a strong preference for content that is local; has a human interest component and portrays women and men in a greater diversity of roles.

The exercise brought the regional research home and got marketing departments "thinking out of the box." The three who participated in the summit strongly recommended that all media houses periodically undertake research of this kind. This has encouraged GL to consider extending the pilot project to other media houses in its 2007-2010 strategic plan.

What media houses can do

Specific recommendations made during the audience research session at the Gender and Media Diversity Summit in September 2006 include the need for media houses to:

- Reach out and interact with audiences in more meaningful ways, including through audience research, competitions etc.
- Translate the audience research questionnaire into different languages.
- Hold workshops with audiences, especially in remote areas.
- Use major events to get audience feedback.
- Use incentives to get audiences to respond, eg SMS, new media gimmicks.
- Use websites to encourage greater interaction with audiences, eg through poll questions.
- Sustain and grow more diverse markets.
- Increase women audiences through more balanced reporting.
- Segment markets more and be responsive to particular needs; introduce new pages or programmes that respond to these needs.
- Nurture and create audiences.
- Grow audiences through challenging gender stereotypes.



Women air their views. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

Malawi - the Chronicle



Malawian women have their say. *Photo: Fletcher Gon'ga*

IN-HOUSE AUDIENCE STUDY

GENDER AND MEDIA AUDIENCE STUDY
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WOMEN AND MEN RESPOND TO THE NEWS

gender links

The Chronicle is Malawi's leading independent weekly newspaper, loved and feared for its outspoken profile. Based in the capital, Lilongwe, the Chronicle mostly covers Malawian news in the English language. The weekly strongly values its independent profile, for which it has had to pay a heavy price as Malawian authorities do not always play by press freedom rules.

The Chronicle is famous for its investigative quality journalism and has played an important role in uncovering political and economic affairs in Malawi since the weekly was founded by editor Robert Jamieson in 1993. It also plays a leading role in informing the Malawian public about the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The Chronicle has a circulation of about 5000.



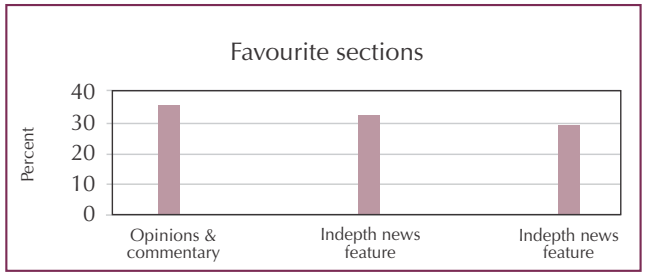
Woman broadcaster in Malawi. *Photo: Frank Windeck*

WHO RESPONDED

- Only 25 readers responded to the survey with only 4 women respondents. Thus an overwhelming 84 % of the respondents were men.
- A majority (83.3%) of the respondents were in the age group 20-35, followed by 12.5% between the ages of 36-50, and a minority of respondents was 50+ (4.2%).
- The level of education of the respondents is high, with 72% with tertiary education, 24% secondary and only 4% tertiary. This is interesting particularly since males were the dominant respondents to this questionnaire.

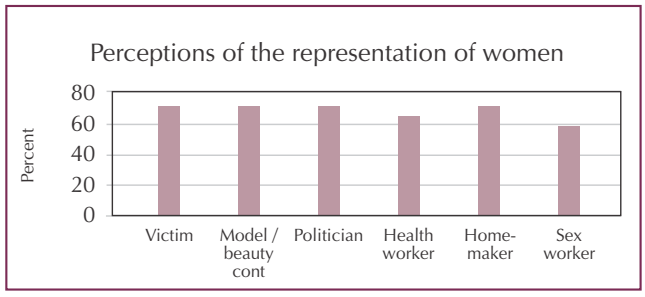
FINDINGS

Opinions and commentary is the favourite section: Some 36% of respondents cited opinion and commentary as the favourite section followed by in-depth news and features chosen as second and third with 33.3% and 29.2% respectively.

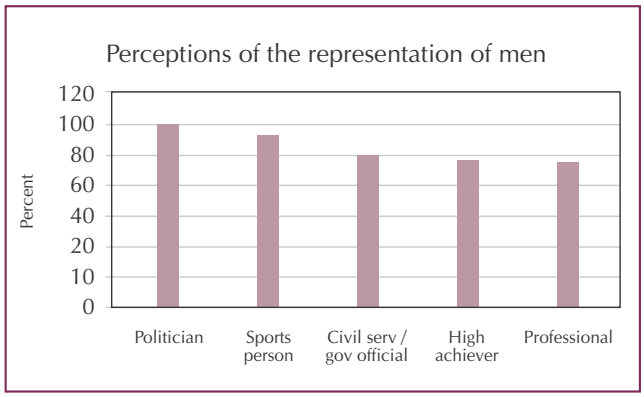


Political stories ranked as the most interesting topic : Political and 'eye on democracy' stories were chosen as the most preferred and second more preferred topic by 24% and 20% of the respondents each respectively. Focus on HIV/AIDS was chosen by 16% of the respondents as third most preferred topic.

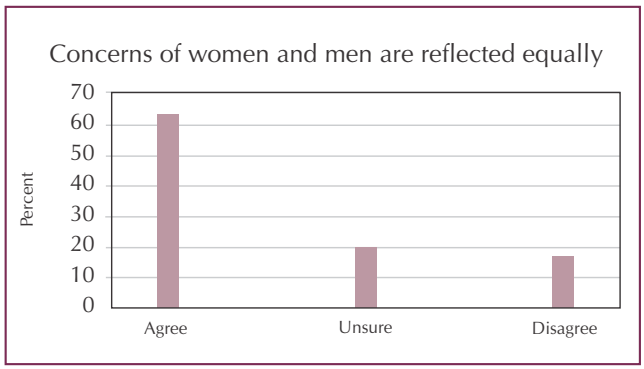
Women are represented predominantly as victims or beauty queens: Most respondents (66.7%) think that women are represented as victims in the media. Other stereotypical roles in which women are perceived to be mostly represented are as health workers, home makers and sex workers. The relatively high proportion who thought that women are represented as politicians may be a result of the high profile of women in government, i.e. the new female Attorney General.



Audiences believe that men are mainly represented as political leaders in the Chronicle: All respondents said that they see men represented foremost as politicians (100%), followed by sports person (92%), civil servant/government official (80%), high achiever (76%) and professional (75%).



A majority of respondents agree that the concerns of men and women are reflected equally: 64% of respondents stated that the views of women and men are reflected equally, while 20% were unsure and only 16% disagreed.



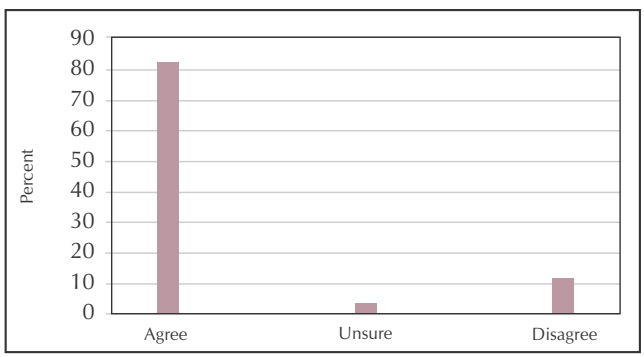
Comments from women

- Not many come forth to show it.
- It speaks truth and only the truth.
- The paper is open to all Malawians without favouring or without taking sides
- Because the stories are found in the paper concerning both.

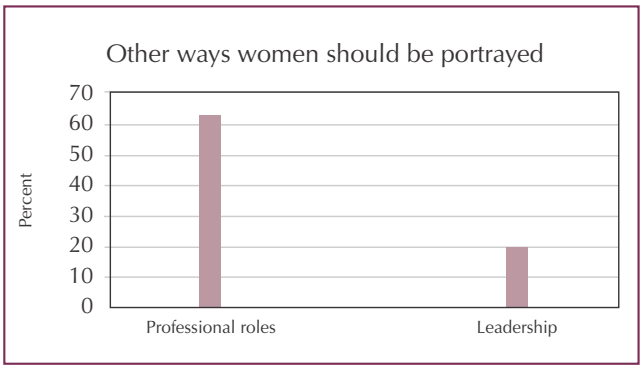
Comments from men

- Both men and women like the paper.
- Features both sexes and all are concerned i.e. sports
- Because most of articles accommodate views from both men and women
- The column on focus on HIV/AIDS and reproductive health tackles more on women hence balancing up the gender unlike other papers
- Since I have been reading the chronicle I have not seen any discrimination
- The news items are not gender biased
- Stories are not favoured to certain persons
- In most of your articles in the news are by men more than women
- The violence being inflicted on women silently (maybe the person is saying the paper is silent)
- Most stories are written by men and men are more interviewed than women
- Men are always on the spotlight
- Men do mostly dominate in news making
- Not many women access the newspaper.

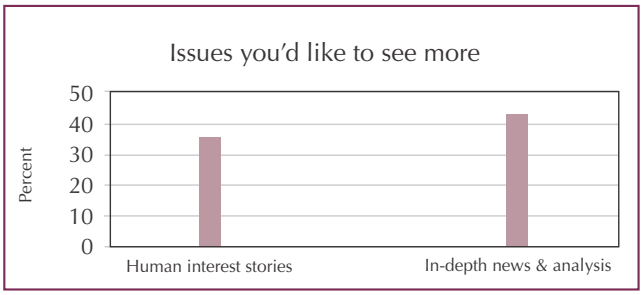
***A significant majority of respondents agree that news would be more interesting if there were more stories on women*:** News with women doing a wider range of activities would be more interesting to 83.3% of the respondents. Only 4.2% were unsure while 12.5% disagreed.



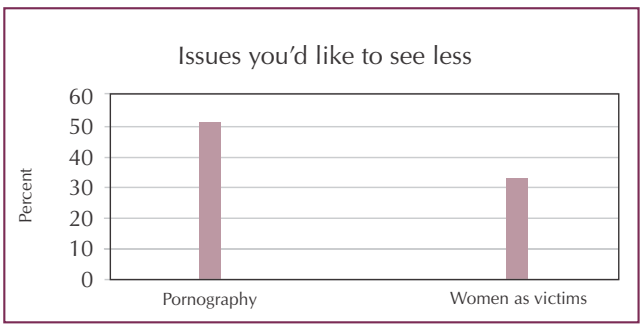
***Women should be portrayed in more professional/ leadership roles; conversely, men should be portrayed as home-makers and sex symbols*:** 52% respondents believe that women should be portrayed as professionals while 60% want to see women as leaders.



Respondents would like to see more in-depth news and analysis: In-depth news and analysis (44%) and human interest stories (36%) are issues that respondents would like to see more of.



They would like to see less pornography: 52% of respondents disliked pornography and 33% said they would like to less issues that depict women as victims.



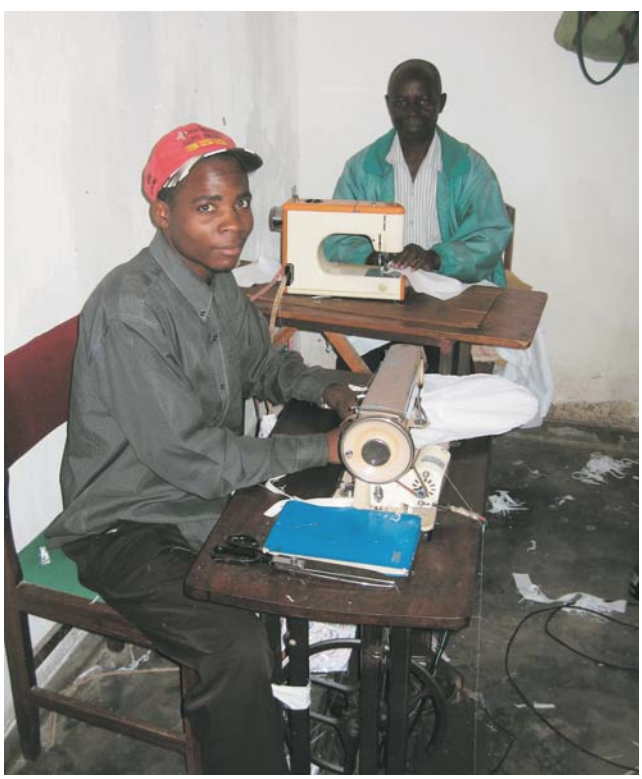
Other comments

Women
- They should keep the fire on.
- Keep it up (good work)
- It is a nice newspaper with good stories.
- Continue writing transparent stories.

Men
- Issues should be reported to their conclusion.
- Focus on 'life in prisons' sometimes.
- Wishing the paper a better future to even forge ahead.
- Start at least 3 productions per week and a weekend chronicle.
- Stories about discrimination against women.
- Increase coverage on health with women's focus.
- More about politicians and government officials.

Conclusion and recommendations

The fact that the newspaper is seen as fair in its coverage of women and men, is politically relevant and provides good contextual articles is a plus. However, the low level of responses generally, and especially by women, should be a concern. These partly reflect the low level of newspaper readership and influence in Malawi. The country GMAS showed that despite the existence of a number of print media in Malawi, no woman cited newspapers as her main source of news and only 1% men cited newspapers as a main source of news. This is the lowest such finding for any country in the study. Clearly newspapers need to work hard to increase their market share as well as increase their female audiences.



Men in nontraditional jobs. *Photo: Fletcher Gon'ga*

Mauritius



Sobhanund Seeparsad. Editor, News on Sunday. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

IN-HOUSE AUDIENCE STUDY

GENDER AND MEDIA AUDIENCE STUDY
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WOMEN AND MEN RESPOND TO THE NEWS

gender links

News on Sunday is the only English speaking newspaper in Mauritius. It has a circulation of 15,000 but is read by 60,000. Most of the readers are young, as only young readers in Mauritius are sufficiently familiar with English to be able to read an English newspaper. The paper aims to improve the facility of young readers in the islands official language, despite the fact that in every day practise French and Creole are far more widely spoken. It is a serious newspaper with an intellectual bent.



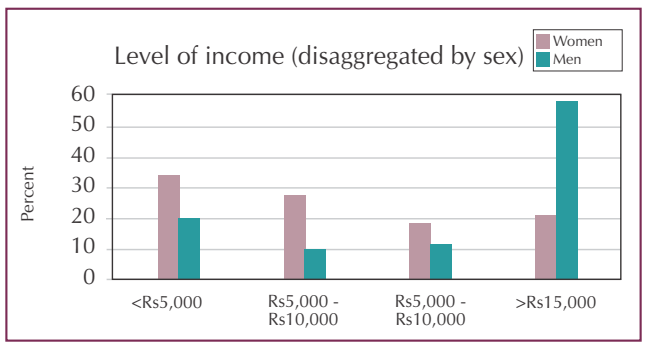
Rishi Ramnuth, News on Sunday and Colleen Lowe Morna, Gender Links.

WHO RESPONDED

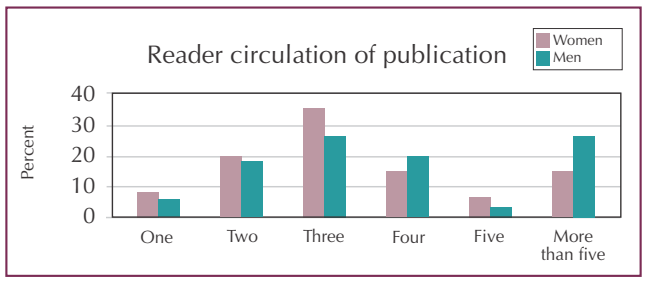
- There were more male than female respondents (62% male compared to 38% female).
- 44.6% of respondents came from rural areas compared to 42.6% from urban areas.
- The respondents were fairly spread out between age groups with the highest proportion of respondents in 20-35 age group (27.9%) followed by younger than 20 (29.9%), 36-50, (26%) and age group 50+ (19.2). More young Mauritians are fluent in English (the paper is one of the few English papers on the island).
- More female respondents were in the youth age groups of younger than 20 (37.5%) and 20-35 (35%) than in the older age groups of 36-50 (15%).

FINDINGS

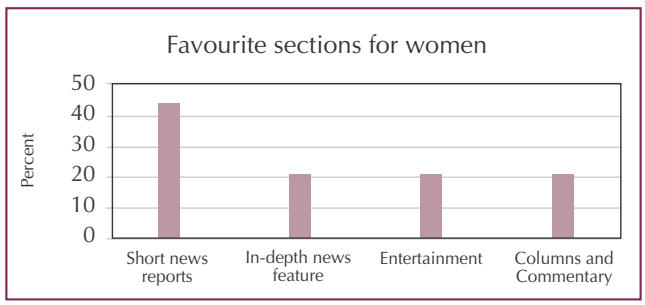
***There were sharp contrasts in income levels between men and women respondents*:** The majority of women (34.5%) earn less than Rs5000 compared to 21.1% men while a substantial majority of men (56.1%) earn more than Rs15000 in comparison to 20.7% of women. There were also more women in the Rs5000-10000 group (27.6%) and Rs10000 group (17.2%) compared to 10.5% and 12.3% of men respectively.



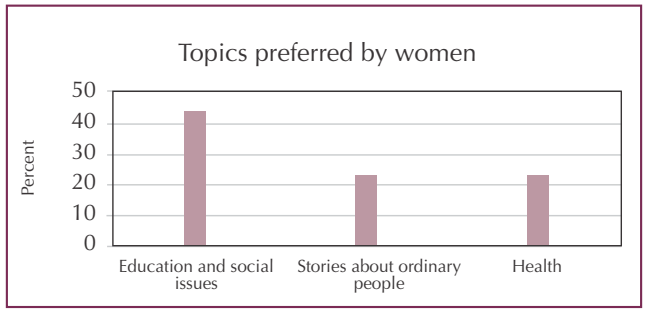
Most respondents shared their paper with more than three people: On average, men shared their newspaper with 4 other people, with over 25% sharing with more than five people; while women (over 30%) shared theirs with at least 3 other people.



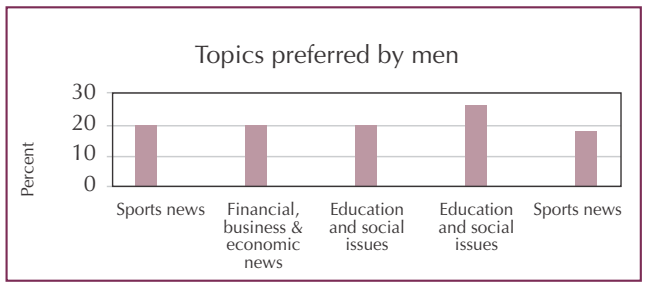
Both men and women chose short news reports as their favourite genre, with 42.5% of women choosing this as the first choice. Men chose sports while women chose in-depth features and entertainment, columns and commentary as their second and third choices.



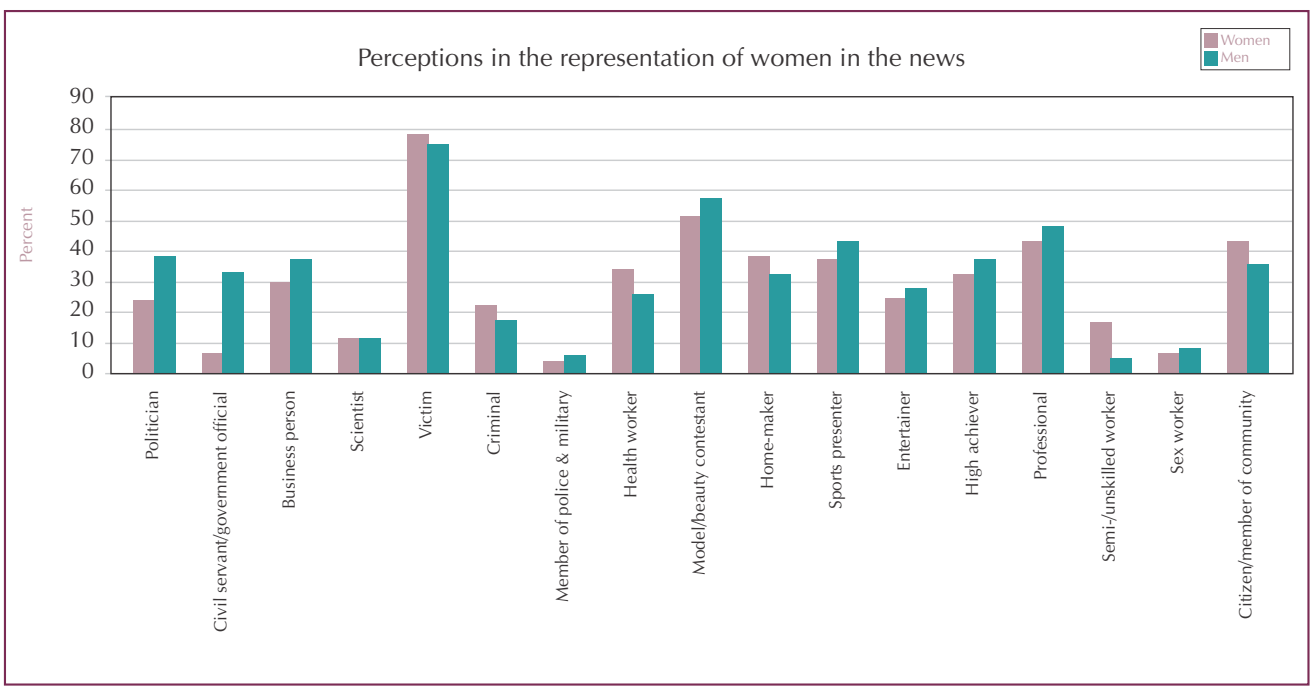
Women prefer to read about social issues: 45% of women preferred topics around education and social issues; followed by stories of ordinary people and health topics, which were chosen by 25% of women respectively.



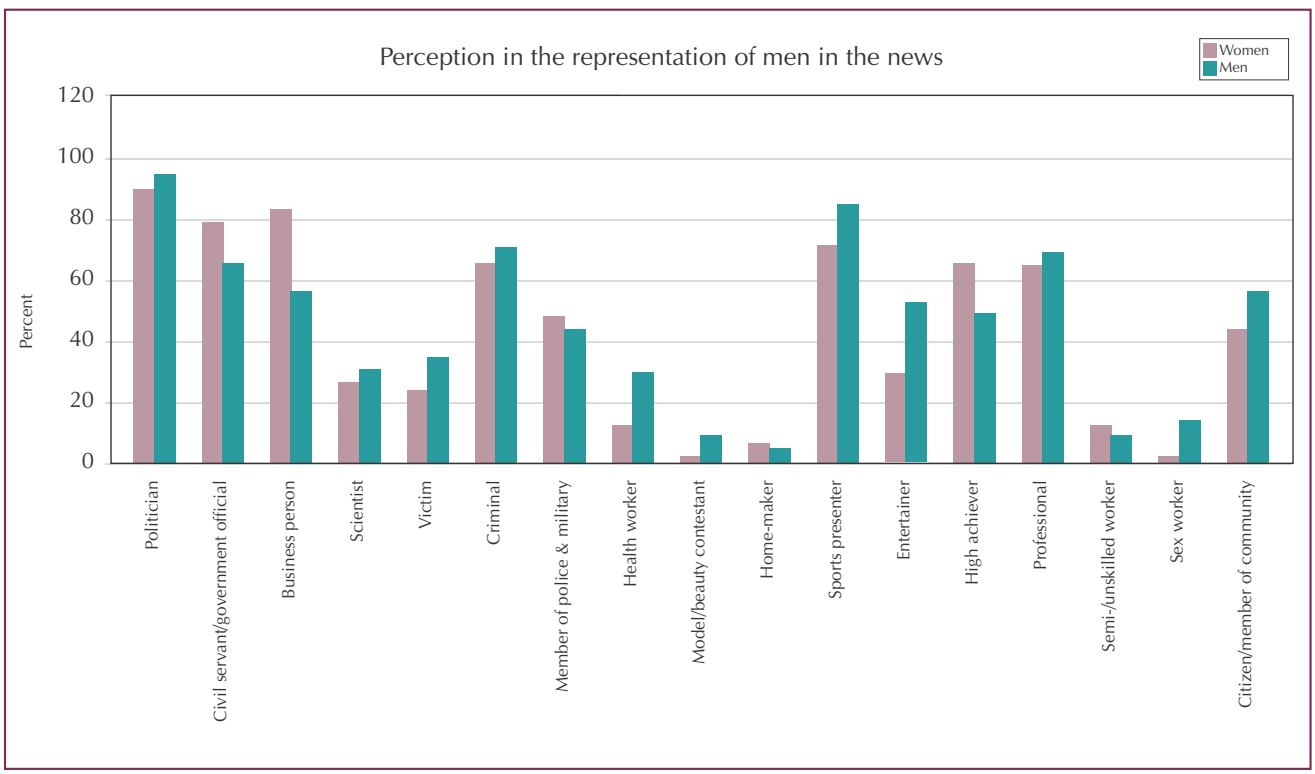
On the other hand, men choose topics dealing with sports and business: Men on the other hand showed strong preferences for news on sports, financial, business and economic issues.



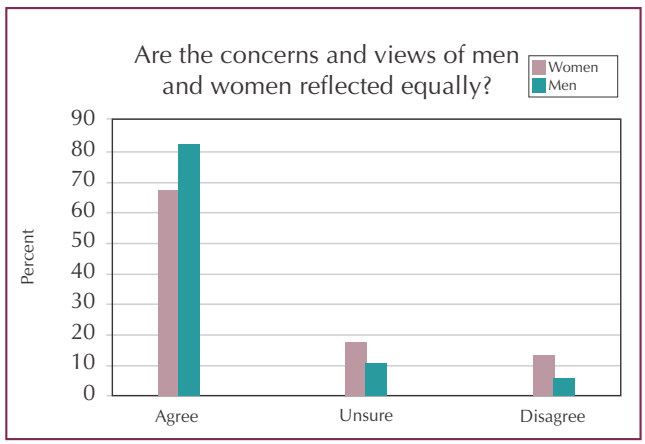
***Both men and women agree that women are primarily represented as victims and beauty queens*:** A significant proportion of women (80%) and men (76.9%) think that women are represented as victims followed as model/beauty contestant 51.3% and 56.9% respectively.



***Conversely there is a consensus that men are primarily represented as leaders/professionals*:** The majority of both women (92.5%) and men (95.4%) think that men are represented as politicians. Women also see men represented as mostly business person (82.1%) and men also see themselves represented as sports presenter (83.1%) and criminal (71.9%). These findings illustrate that readers identify male representation in the news as leaders of communities and or lawbreakers.



***Both women and men agree that concerns and views of women and men are reflected equally*:** A majority of women and men agree that the concerns and views of men and women are reflected equally but women are less likely to be of this view than men (67.5% and 83.1% respectively)



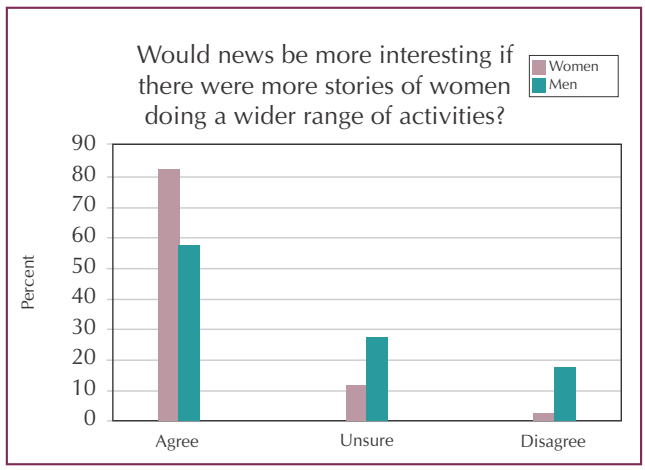
Comments from women

- In news on Sunday there are more articles on men than on woman.
- Only men express their opinions on violent crimes or other issues while views of women are very rare and if in any case a woman is seen, it is concerning beauty.
- Generally more males or male orientated news.
- Women are mainly victims while men are shown in various facets
- Stories covered allow opinions to be voiced from both sides
- Men and women have the same possibility; many articles are shared between men and women
- The articles are balanced
- I feel that in this paper everybody gets the right for expression
- I can see gender equality in news on Sunday.

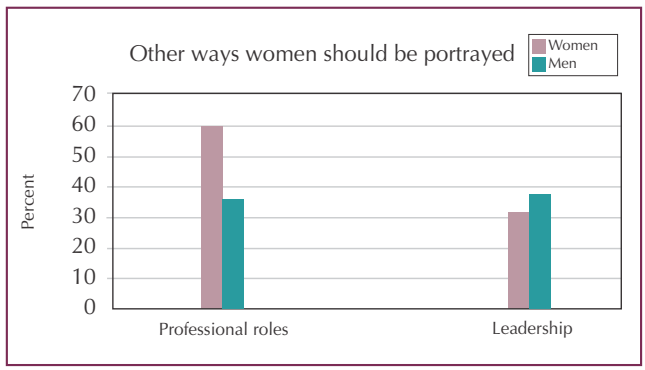
Comments from men

- Everybody has equal rights
- At present I agree, but it was not as such in the past - what about the future?
- Both sexes, speak their mind openly
- Because men and women nowadays have equal rights in Mauritius.
- This paper is not biased regarding the gender issue
- Sometimes women are given more importance
- Virtually all the papers in the news on Sunday when I turn I do see the picture of a woman
- Only high calibre / professional women are interviewed and are arrogant but old
- It's sometime contradictory

***Women and men want to see women in more diverse roles*:** A majority of women (82.5%) and men (56.3%) agree that the news would be more interesting if there were more stories of women doing a wider range of activities.



***Both women and men agree that women should be portrayed in more professional roles*:** More women (60%) than men (35.9%) would like to see women in professional roles such as gender activists, politicians and achievers.



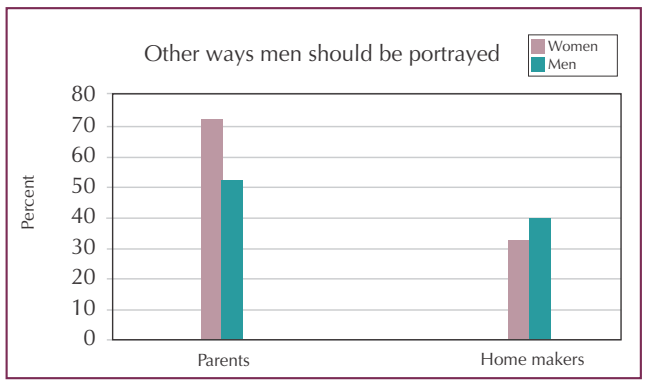
Comments from women on other ways women should be portrayed

- Achievers
- There must also be article on woman as manager or owner of enterprise (firm)
- Interviews of women who stay at home - how they cope with this routine
- Women in the field of social work
- Gender activists
- More importance should be given to ordinary women not only those who achieved a great post but also labourers, fisher women
- Public life
- As police women
- I would like to see women to have more interest in sports and politics
- Devotees, parents, grandparents
- Information technology
- Role models (in a positive way) for youngsters - strong will power
- Women from abroad living in Mauritius
- Teachers
- Women as moralist - as good mothers
- Sports
- The person behind men's achievements
- Is the role of a caring women mean mothers

Comments from men on other ways women should be portrayed

- Difficulties faced by them in a man dominated society / there home life - workplace / solutions to that problem
- Women in entrepreneurship
- Motherhood and capacity to stand their husbands who are dominating them.
- How to maintain a happy family and discouraging divorce
- I would like to see women expressing their views on choosing a life partner and relate their experiences on marriage and love life
- Social involvement e.g. for sick and poor
- Volunteer in society
- More women should be in parliament. I would like to see women challenge their rights and give reports of their rights.
- Roles of mother, sister and wife
- Team leaders in both public and private enterprises
- Women as criminologists, women in police force
- As housewife, sex symbols, models
- Use women as beauty figure to enforce the perception such as models / paragon in an idealistic approach
- Opinion makers in rural areas
- Family life and cuisine
- Professionalism and well orientated
- Consolidating moral and cultural values
- Spiritual - role models
- Experts
- Achiever

***Similarly both women and men would like to see men portrayed as parents and home-makers*:** With more women (72.5%) than men (52.3%) would like to see men as parents while more men (40%) than women (35%) would like to see men as home-makers.



Women's comments on other ways men should be portrayed

- Men as social worker
- First as a good father, second as a model husband
- As scientists
- Citizen
- Experts and scientists
- Good fathers
- Guides
- Hard workers, researchers
- Husband / father / social worker

Men's comments on other ways men should be portrayed

- Arts and culture, farming, experts, opinion maker
- Father giving good advices to the youngsters of Mauritius
- Scientist, professional and social worker
- Baby sitters
- Men's contribution and help to combat poverty and eliminate discrimination
- New successful business entrepreneur
- Educationalists
- Engaged in civic activism
- Farming / agri-businessmen
- Parents
- Peace maker
- Priests, men performing jobs which are rare
- Roles of father, teacher and husband
- Social involvement and human rights, e.g. for less fortunate.
- Volunteer
- Well presented

Women would like to see more social issues featured in the news: Asked what they would like to see more of in the news, responses of women ranged from HIV and AIDS, more articles on Mauritian women, local news, entertainment and culture.

Men would like to see more political and sports news: Including a mixture of issues ranging from politics, sports, education and entertainment.

***There are similarities in the issues women and men would like to see less of*:** In the case of women, fewer stories on politics, poverty stories, sports, crime. In the case of men, fewer stories on politics and government scandals, but mostly men would like to less of gender violence, rape and pornographic issues.



Mauritius women are interested in social issues. Photo: Rishi Ramnuth

Other comments

Women

- A good English newspaper
- Add more pages
- Different business development tips
- English language entertainment to be indicated.
- Good job. Keep it up
- I like the paper but sometimes find it difficult to read as the English is poor
- More articles on people especially interviews would be nice
- More feature on how can we live together
- News on Sunday can add information on small enterprises where common people can get access
- Quiz questions (general knowledge)
- Students who are willing to write articles about their school activities, school life should be allowed to do so. There should be a student corner section.
- Thank you for being here
- The news on Sunday paper is very well balanced
- The photos are not well printed. They are a bit blurred
- To the team of news on Sunday, good reading material. Good job!!!
- Well. News on Sunday is a good newspaper to read. I would like to congratulate all those who prepare this newspaper for us each Friday we got it with fluent English to read
- There must be articles that can help a student for his/her general knowledge and for his/her general paper

Men

- Paper lacks in-depth interviews.
- News on Sunday doing a good job carry on
- I like to read newspaper because it enrich my English vocabulary
- It's a good newspaper and long live news on Sunday
- When the paper was just released it was more independent than it is at present
- Print more views. News on Sunday is very excellent to read.
- If there can be a few more advertisements on vacancies it will be good for unemployed
- Newspapers should not favour any political party it should be open
- Adding of some more pages to the newspaper
- For the sake of H.S.C student I wish you could publish at least one general essay on your and our newspaper news on Sunday each week
- Make your paper cheaper so as to hit more readers
- Yes to give students opportunity to buy their newspaper at 0.5 price or at a discounted price since this will help them to improve their English.
- It is the only local newspaper where you can enhance your English vocabulary and language. Well done, keep it up.
- It is so nice to read this newspaper and help students for their English language. Also to discover new things. The survey is well done and hope readers will be in the same line to give their opinion.
- 'Pics of the week' are sometimes not well printed; you need great improvement

Conclusions

The relatively high rate of responses from women and men made it possible for the paper to make a comparative analysis of male and female readers. The paper found that male readers have higher incomes than women, but that women readers are active and critical. This gender gap is a market opportunity.

The finding that the paper is shared with at least four to five other people is a significant one. Generally, the paper is seen as fair in its coverage of the views of women and men but readers suggest a number of ways in which coverage could be made more interesting through challenging gender stereotypes.

The general comments suggest that the paper is fulfilling an important role as the only English speaking newspaper in assisting young people to practise use of the language. There are useful suggestions with regard to increasing the length of the newspaper and providing spaces for essays and other features that would make it more interactive.

The newspaper's management indicated that it would continue to run such surveys periodically as they provide valuable feedback from readers.

The Namibian



Staff of the Namibian and gender activists after an in-house workshop. *Photo: Carmen Honey*

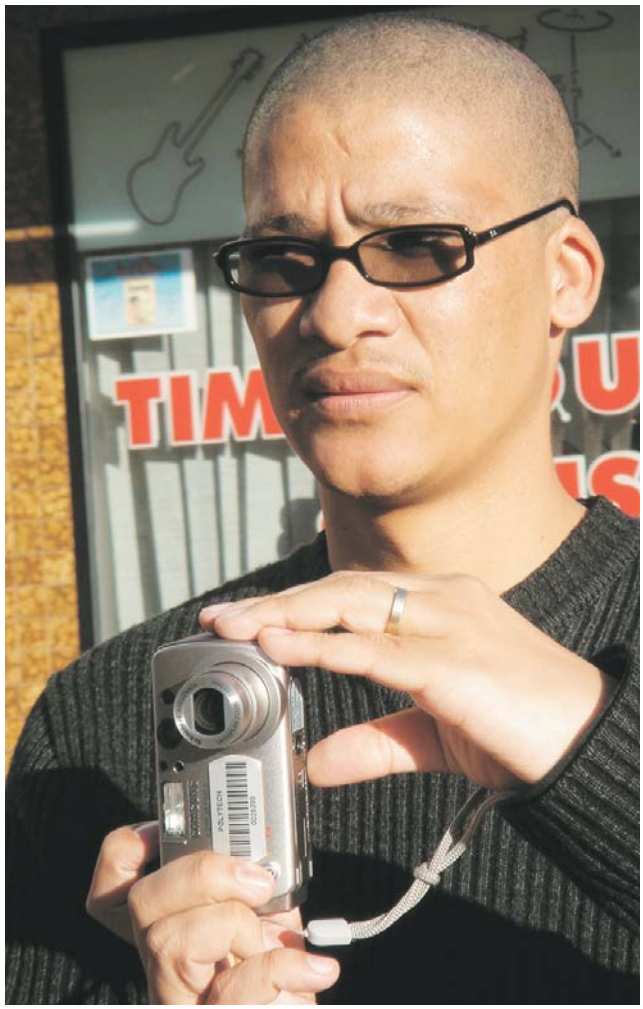
IN-HOUSE AUDIENCE STUDY

GENDER AND MEDIA AUDIENCE STUDY
gmas
WOMEN AND MEN RESPOND TO THE NEWS

gender links

The Namibian, which celebrated it's 21st birthday on 30 August 2006, is the widest circulation independent newspaper in Namibia. Growing from a small weekly newspaper, launched with donor funding by a handful of activists to expose the evils of colonialism, it has grown into a self-sufficient and Namibia's largest-selling daily. (http://community.namibian.com.na/webx?14@.ee6c484).

The Namibian has a woman editor, Gwen Lister. When presented with the findings of the audience study at national level, Lister proposed that the questionnaire be adapted to be administered by media houses themselves. The Namibian offered to be part of the first phase of the in-house audience research.



Snapshot of Namibian readers. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

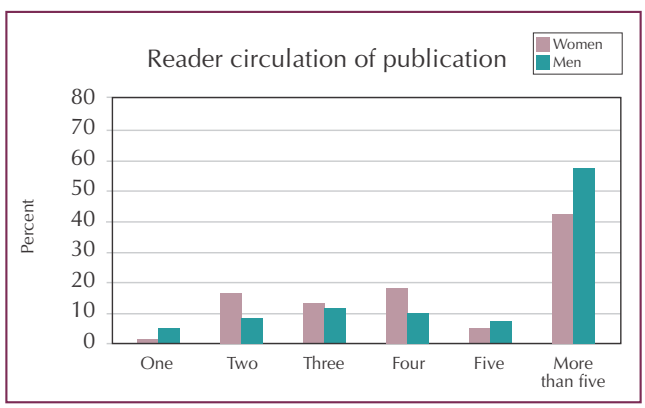
WHO RESPONDED

- There were more male than female respondents with 60.9% men and 39.1% women. A large majority of the respondents were urban (78.1%) followed by 14.16% rural.
- A significant proportion of the respondents were in the 20 and 30 age group, (59.9%) followed by the 36-50 age group pf (19.9%), however there were no major differences in the ages of women and men who responded.
- The majority of respondents were black (90.8%) followed by a tiny proportion of coloured (5.2%) and white (4.1%) respondents. There were no major gender differences between the various race groups identified.
- The majority of respondents (59.5%) earn less than N$2500 per month. Interestingly, women constituted a slightly higher proportion of those in the higher income bracket of N$ 5001 – 10000 (9.6% women and 7.6% men) and over N$10 000 (14.4% women and 11.6% men).

FINDINGS

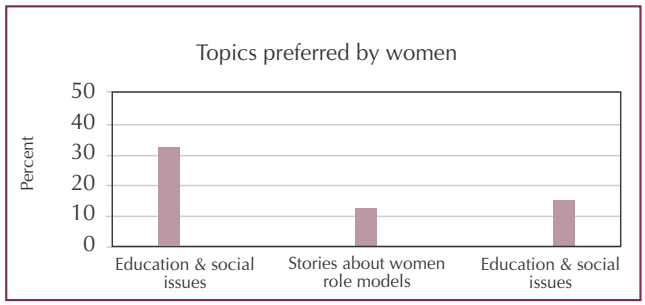
A large majority of respondents share their newspaper with more than 5 people: A large proportion of both men (57.3%) and women (42.5%) reported that more than five other people read their newspaper.

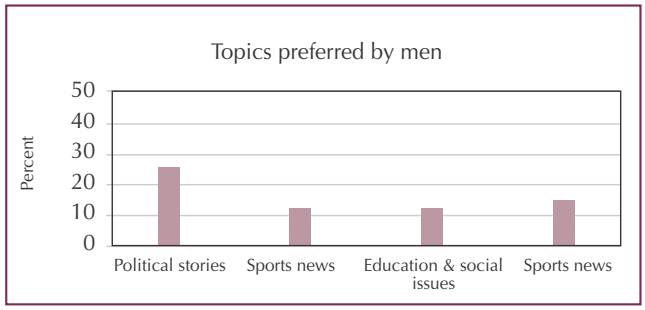
Both women and men selected the front pages of a newspaper as their favourite genre: 41% of women and 37.6% of men selected the front page as their first choice. Short news and reports came in as a second and third choice for women (12.5% each). Men chose in-depth news features and sport as their third choice.



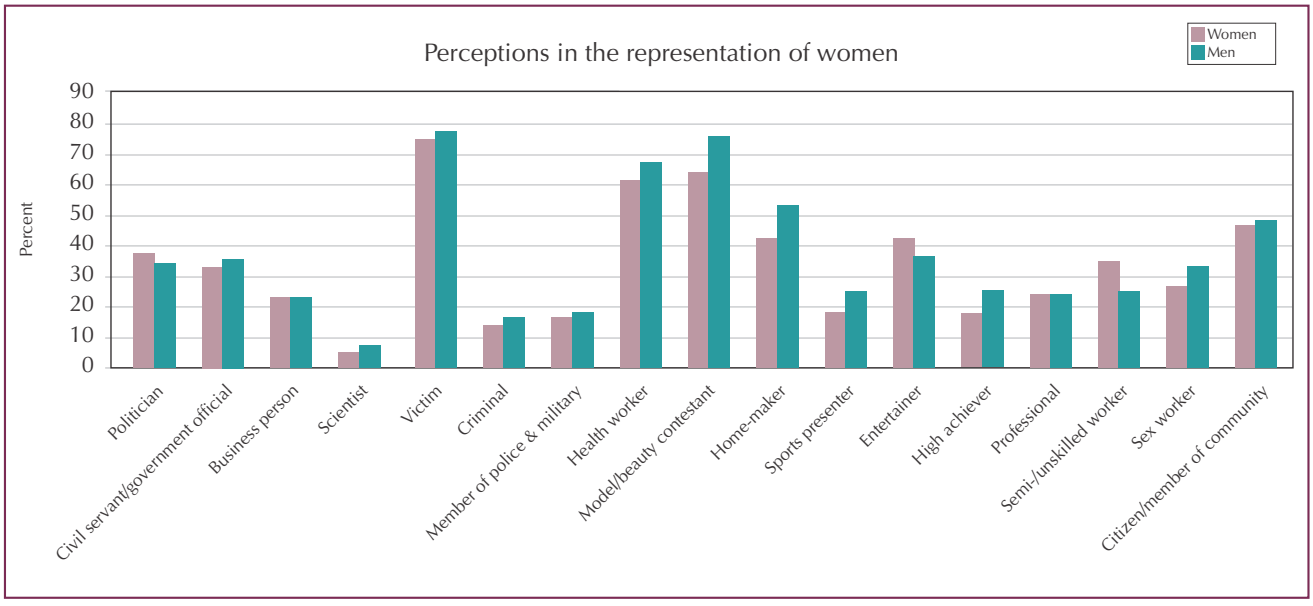
There are strong gender differences in topic preferences: Education and social issues featured as the first and third choices of the most preferred topics chosen by 32% and 15.5 % of women equally. In comparison to this, the findings show that 26.2% of men prefer political stories, followed by sports news.





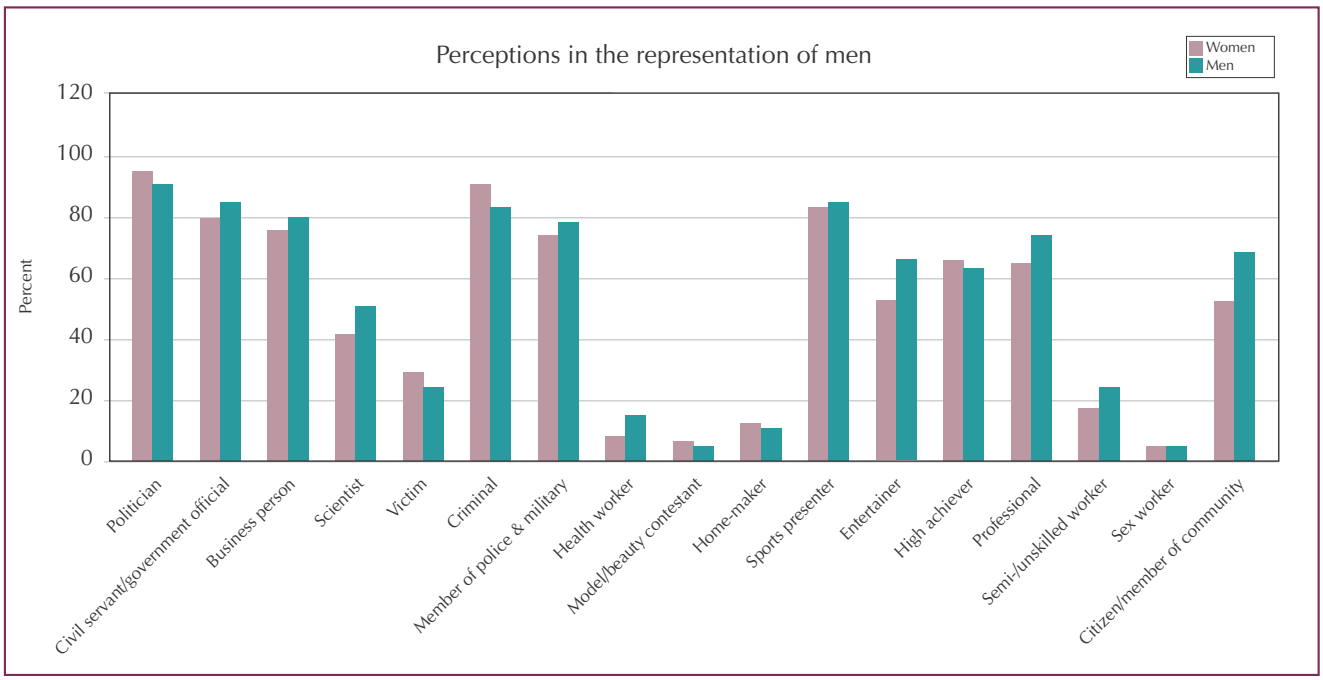


Women and men concur about the way women are represented in the news: Women think that women are represented mostly as victims (75.5%) followed by model/beauty contestant (63%). Men think that women are represented mostly as model/beauty contestants (77.5%) followed by victims (76.5). These findings show that both men and women perceive the news as primarily reflecting stereotypical representation of women.

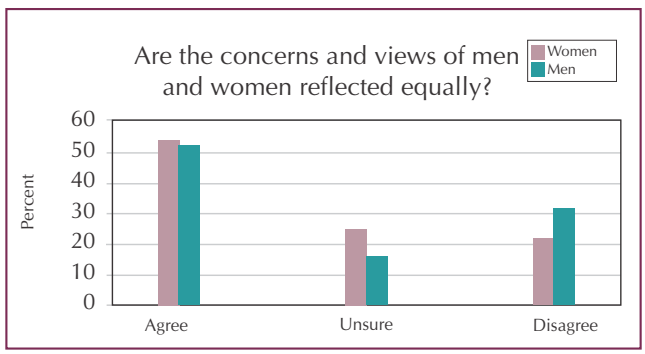


Women and men concur about the way men are

represented in the news: The majority of both women (96.1%) and men (91.2%) think that men are represented as politicians. Women also see men represented mostly as criminals (91.2%), sports person (82.4%), civil servant/government official (80%) and business person (77.7%). Readers perceive male representation in the news as either being a leader/professional or a criminal.



Both women and men agree that concerns and views of women and men are reflected equally: Women (53.3%) and men (52.1%) agreed that the concerns of women and men are reflected equally in the news. However, more women (24.8%) were unsure compared to 16.6% of the men. More men (31.3%) disagreed with the statement compared to 21.9% of women.



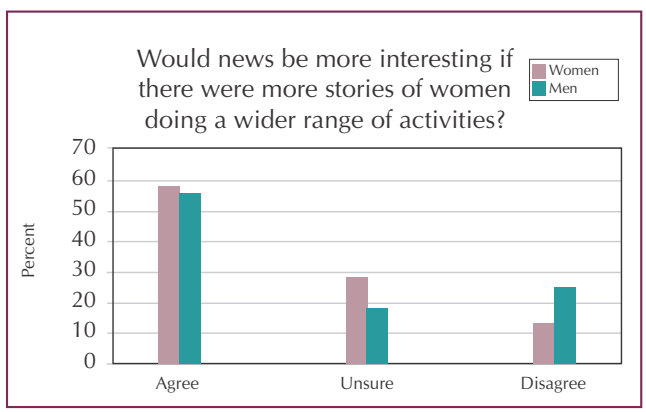
Comments from women

- They tell it as it is, “whichever gender does whatever".
- They do not discriminate against women and men, and they treat them equally.
- I have seen complains from both parties being reported.
- It also depends on the relevance to a specific issue at a specific time and gender sometimes take a back seat. But in general concerns and views of both genders are reflected equally.
- Namibian is not sexist at all
- Stories / articles as written do not reflect any gender bias. If I had to say I detect a tiny bias then it is towards women’s concerns, but not overly so.
- The Namibian promotes gender equality

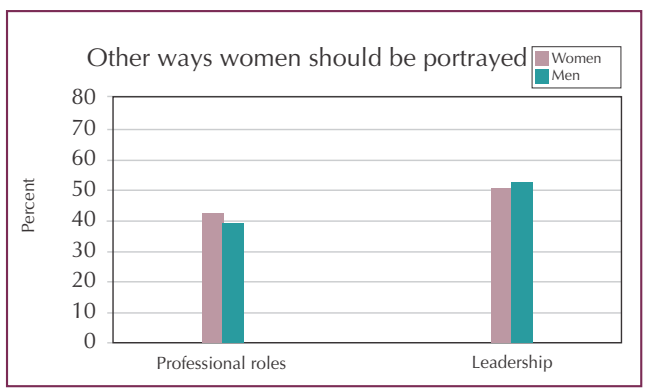
Comments from men

- According to my opinion, the Namibian newspaper is one of the newspapers applying gender equality in their report recently. Keep it up!
- As their saying goes 'they tell it as it is' on both men and women in whatever issue.
- This newspaper is not discriminate when it comes to gender related issues. So views and concerns are equally treated between men and women.
- In most cases men regarded always as criminal
- In most cases you find only men who occupy seats in parliament but not women and when it comes to soccer only men are shown on the Namibian but women they do play soccer but they are not shown at all. Only women are not shown as selling fruit in the street
- Disagree, in most cases the concerns and views of women are not reflected in this media due to the reason that women are regarded are empty vessels
- I am really not sure because sometimes some stories are too one sided, heard it from this person and make conclusion without hearing from the other party.
- I disagree because in this paper sometimes you only find issues about men, especially crimes.
- I disagree because Namibia is male dominated society.

Women and men want to see women in more diverse roles: A majority of women (58.1%) and men (56.4%) in Namibia agree that the news would be much more interesting if there were more stories of women doing a wider range of activities. However more men in comparison to women disagree with the statement (25.22% and 13.3% respectively).



These include professional roles: A relatively high proportion of both women and men (45.9%) think that women should be portrayed in professional roles such as entrepreneurs, pilots, journalist and editors and in leadership. More women (44.3%) than men (39.5%) would like to see women in professional roles while more men (54.1%) would like to see women in a leadership position. Similarly both women and men would like to see men portrayed as parents and home-makers.



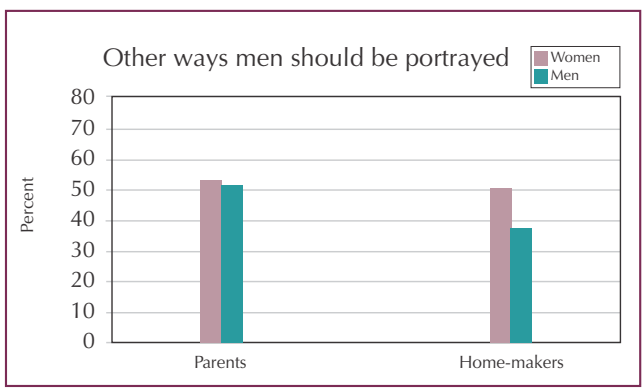
Women's comments on other ways women should be portrayed

- Actress, lawyers, journalists and editors.
- Also general things women face daily, a separate column where ordinary women can relate to on our level and feel acknowledged for the lives that we live.
- Caregivers
- Entrepreneurs
- Expose prostitution at all levels.
- Farming and sport.
- I want to see Namibian women as professional pilots and engineers
- I would like to see women more representing our country on the outside, being ambassadors. I would also like women to be more entrepreneurs. I at least want
- Parents, educators, honorary awards
- People from grassroots level, how they do things to survive the everyday life
- Pilots, taxi drivers and domestic workers.
- President and educationists.
- Survivors, non-traditional roles such as electricians, builders, butchers, bakers
- The "ordinary" Namibian woman with her day to day challenges. All of them are heroines in a way.
- Women as pastors, society's role models, e.g. pilots, real estates, doctors, MD's women in the rural area running projects.

Men's comments on other ways women should be portrayed

- As computer experts because this is the era of computer technology and women need to improve their expertise in this regard
- As pastors, as domestic, as models, as parents, and as care givers.
- Building construction and I want that to be implemented by your newspaper as it is a good media for people and public at large.
- Community guiders and advisors. Entrepreneurs
- Horse riding because only men are seen in the newspaper doing this and movie players. Governs or counsellors, building constructor and motor mechanical
- Leadership, politics.
- Militants, mothers.
- Mothers left behind because of AIDS and their role in society.
- On the one hand, I would like to see women presented more often as members of military forces and business people on high levels as men.
- Professional roles that include drivers, taxi drivers, long distance taxi drivers and heavy vehicle drivers

Men in non-traditional roles: A high percentage of women (53.8%) than (51.3%) would like to see men as parents and markedly more women (50.9%) than men (36.4%) would like to see men as home-makers. Apart from being home-makers, women want to see men as mentors, educators, and good role models at home.



Women's comments on other ways men should be portrayed

- Apart from being parents they have to be mentors and educators towards their children, but not to leave the responsibility with their female counterparts.
- Apart from being parents, I want to see them playing a role as care givers, mentors and educators to their children, to set a good example in our society.
- As roles that they slow down their criminal activities in society and start to be good examples.
- As victims of violence, financial or emotional by the hands of females.
- Business, professional roles, farming.
- Despite them being parents they have to play a role of being mentors and educators of their children and not only to leave that responsibility to their female counterparts.
- Good examples at home
- I would like to see married man show love to their wives, respecting them and letting them to be part of all decisions they make concerning their families. To see men presented as husbands to one wife with one family not scattered children from different women.
- I would like to see men involved in church activities not only being pastors or father of the church. I also want men to do the most of the work when it comes to household.
- Men need to be reflected as doing "softer" roles as well as like taking care of babies to make sure that news about these roles change.
- On our suffering masses and the shinning of our capital.
- Taking the lead against victimization of women and children.
- Want to be shown men who are taking care of their kids or bring them up as single fathers to encourage men who are careless or other younger men in our society.

Men's comments on other ways men should be portrayed

- Adventure lovers.
- As law abiding and responsible citizens
- Doing house work as well as cooking for the family so that equal rights can be seen.
- Gay men.
- I think so far everything has been covered and numbered correctly.
- I want to see men working hard for their families, and being tomorrow's leaders for our country.
- I would like to see how many men out there are doing works formerly, known as work for women e.g. Looking after kids while the wife is at work
- I would like to see men also presenting men at the women's rights act.(more men)
- I would like to see men presented more often as health workers and treating women and children like they treat themselves.
- Leadership, doctors.
- Male models

There are differences in what women and men would like to see more of in newspapers: Women would like to see more stories on women and children's rights, crime prevention stories, youth, HIV and AIDS, education and entertainment. On the other hand, men would like to see more stories on government and private corruption, local stories affecting Namibia, development, and sport. However there are stories that both women and men would like to see featured more in news; HIV and AIDS, education and the youth.

There are similar views on the issues both women and men would like to see less of: These include: crime stories, domestic violence, vacancies announcements, they also want to see less of international news and more local news.

Other comments

Women

- Congratulation to the Namibian and keep up good work
- Despite criticism from some members of the society I think the Namibian is the best in advertising keep up the good work / job and congratulations.
- How about employing journalists who can cover news from all sections of the population including rural areas.
- I love your reporting in general. I will continue to be an informed Namibian because of your newspaper, keep up the good work!. it is good to know that the Namibian is an independent free newspaper that is not influenced by politics. continue to report and we will keep on buying
- It would be best if the Oshiwambo section was in the Oshikwanyama dialect as Oshindonya is difficult and majority can read Oshikwanyama.
- Please continue exposing corrupt practices at all levels.
- The price is high and I want it to be changed.

Men

- I am a die hard "Namibian" fan. When I am in Namibia I buy everyday Namibian newspaper. The other things I am active in map peer education programme in south Africa at my university which focus on gender based violence and it will mean a lot if a can be a lucky winner to attend a summit as it can empower me a lot like a "Namibian" on gender issue
- I would like to read more of Gwen Listener's political perspective. It should be published at least 3 times a week. Say Monday, Wednesday and Friday
- Please sorry to say this, what you have to add is the Christian stories, even to advertise or to give testimony about Christianity or encouragement for a person to be saved.
- Please stay like you are. The best newspaper to read.
- Q of aids and HIV, why only it receives funding I would say its passive development. Two steps back one forward approach. What about education and poverty eradication which is causes it.
- The availability to the rural. I suggest you discuss with government for every school in rural area to receive a copy of the Namibian everyday or at least a Friday issue. I know it will help a lot. I'm one of people grow up there and know scarce it is to get a copy
- There are lots of people who also want to add some "stories" in your daily newspaper but they do not know how?.
- Yes, improve the picture in the Namibian to be seen clearly, and they need to be coloured. It will also be good if the Namibian can be covered by plastic so that people may not be able to read them especially while in sale.

Conclusions and recommendations

In the national study, Namibia was the only country in which a higher proportion of women than men said that they relied on newspapers as their main source of news. The fact that a higher proportion of men responded to the Namibian questionnaire does not necessarily mean that the paper has more men readers, as any reader was free to respond. However, it suggests that the Namibian could do more to get women readers to be more responsive.

The generally positive comments and high number of repeat reads of the same newspaper both for women and men reflects the popularity of the newspaper. The fact that it carries coverage in the vernacular is especially significant. The paper is generally seen as fair in its coverage of women and men. However, there is scope for increasing the range of roles in which women and men are featured in coverage.

The papers investigative reporting is seen as a major strength by both women and men. But readers, especially women, would value greater coverage of social issues and both women and men are keen on more coverage from the rural areas

The Gender and Media Audience Study (GMAS) launched in 2005 provided the first data in Southern Africa on how audiences, women and men, respond to the news. Now individual media houses are running their own gender-aware audience studies. This report documents the findings of the Chronicle in Malawi, News on Sunday in Mauritius and the Namibian in Namibia.

gender links

OSISA
Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa

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