

Gender and mass media research paper sample

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



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Introduction

Mass media is a fundamental element of the contemporary world. People rely on mass media for entertainment and news. The mass media play a crucial role through transmitting information and providing all forms of entertainment to cosmic audiences. The technologies of mass media have greatly become a pivotal component of family life in the society. Technology immerses the domestic life of people making communication and information technologies to become a crucial element of household and family culture. While the domain of families includes more complex and sophisticated information and media technologies, the probability of entertainment and communication for families is far-reaching and numerous. Although mass media is a channel of communication, information and entertainment, it greatly influences gender identity and gender stereotypes. Although physical appearance and chromosomal makeup helps in achievement of gender identity, psychosocial influences enhance it. According to Muramatsu (2002), girl-oriented media affects female school students through justifying and strengthening conventional concepts regarding being woman. The media presents conservative gender ideologies.

While it is possible that achievement and growth values acquired by girl-oriented novels readers can be absorbed into conventional values of women, women can form different types of femininity while reading such novels.

People use elements of mass media to relate to themselves. Some genres of media texts with examples of female-oriented novels and family dramas create audiences with common discourses. People use what they read and see from mass media as platform of judgment (Muramatsu, 2002).

Diversification of mass media triggers audience segmentation. It leads to creation of huge numbers or limited groups that most people identify with, with respect to their interests and age. For instance, female-oriented dramas construct the discourse that a woman's place is in homes. Such dramas attract many female viewers (Muramatsu, 2002).

The familiar atmosphere offers members with prospects, choices and challenges concerning accumulation, acquisition and utilization of mass media technologies (O'Keeffe, 2009). A family ascertains the suitability of particular technologies for girls and boys. They also form blueprints of use, dominance and consumption of certain technologies. This aspect creates proficiency and competency gap amid individuals besides restricting experiences and prospects and robbing persons the opportunities linked with their consumption and utilization of mass media technologies. Moreover, the family environment also give other more advantages in a world that is increasingly becoming technologically reliant and driven (O'Keeffe, 2009). According to O'Keeffe (2009), technocultural capital is a form of cultural capital that exists in an embodied structure in the dispositions and attitudes of people towards technologies, and in the abilities, knowledge and

competencies of the people who embody it. When a family is able to employ the linguistic ability, then such a family effectively dominates the technological field. The family setting is a good place that enhances better comprehension of procedures that contributes to technocultural capital acquisition. This is because most of media consumption takes place in the family setting and reinforced by the links that offers definition of a family, its values and myths that maintains it and the contradictions and conflicts that threatens it. As a result, families and individuals make decisions founded on their own acuity of values and needs. They also make decisions founded on unconscious blueprints, which direct their interactions and actions. O’Keeffe (2009) asserts there is probability of seeing the context of a family as a place where objectification and appropriation domesticates technology. The intricacy of a family setting gets compounded because of its inhabitation by a wide assortment of mass media technologies which every individual in a family must master and access (O’Keeffe, 2009). Moreover, the complexity of family setting is because of family members of different genders and generations. Parental consumption and utilization of mass media technologies constitutes a major principal source of technocultural capital that consequently transfers to their children during formative period. Attitudes of parents towards technocultural capital are paramount because they reflect habits of their offspring.

According to O’Keeffe (2009), gender influences consumption and use of mass media technologies in a family realm. Gender also affects technocultural capital level as well as power levels and influences in a family. Women and men in the modern society hold divergent experiences in almost

all facets of their lives. In this view, experiences with regard to technology are also dissimilar. Men and boys like learning about tool and machines, and they adopt a technological worldview while women shows less interest in technological matters. When females believe and accept that given technologies are not fit for them, chances are that these women would prefer certain work, career or educational options and leave others. Gender differences therefore instigate certain educational and career choices (O'Keeffe, 2009).

Results from a study on remote control indicated that while most mothers use remote control devices, they have trouble in understanding the complex features of the devices. More boys than girls use remote control more often than girls do. Females in most families are fans of radio and they particularly use them while performing their kitchen chores and other household chores. Women use radio during the day as an accessory to household duties and tasks (O'Keeffe, 2009). Certain places within a family setting structured and perceived as female and male, structures the types of mass media technologies put in such places. This aspect strengthens a gendered habitus that relates to technology, and molds accumulation and acquisition of technocultural capital. As a result, women do not experience complexities when operating domestic technologies.

Kaler (2009) asserts that gender is a well-known category in modern sociology. He refers gender to a type of knowledge in form of concepts in continuous links with practices at all social life levels. Gender is dependable to epistemological orientations that include critical realism and social construction that focuses on people as agents who experience and create

the social world. Kaler adapts the description of gender as knowledge regarding difference particularly knowledge vis-à-vis biological disparities between women and men (Kaler, 2009). Description of gender via knowledge does not refer to physiological or medical knowledge concerning the configurations and properties of the human bodies. Instead, this definition refers to the significance of the differences between women and men with respect to desirable behaviors. Gender refers to knowledge regarding sexual differences. The differences between genders get enhancements from people themselves as well as from other aspects such as the media. The media promotes gender stereotypes and gender roles. For instance, the media depicts women as conventional homemakers, and it constantly molds this concept and maintains it the society. The media shows girls engaging in recreation with dolls while boys link to cars and actions figures.

According to Kaler (2009), the media is always keen to report of features that are gender linked. Men like taking risks to demonstrate their masculinity. The media is very keen in understanding and reporting some of the strategies and actions that men engage to demonstrate their masculinity. According to Kaler (2009), men go to extremes of even saying there are HIV positive to promote their sexual prowess and masculinity. However, the media from their source promote such sentiments. In this view, the media is an active source of gender stereotypes. However, gender stereotypes rarely offer correct information regarding people. For instance, Kaler (2009) shows how the media depicts men as risk takers and as people who go to extremes of even saying there are HIV positive to promote their sexual prowess and masculinity. Gender stereotypes refer to the simplistic

generalizations concerning gender differences, roles and attributes.

Stereotypes can be negative or positive. In realm of reproduction and sexuality, the media places men as victimizers and women as the victimized.

The gender roles and attitudes portrayed in the media molds children to their respective genders from childhood to adulthood (Muramatsu, 2002).

The media portrays men as the strongest gender that supports their families while some commercials show women in the kitchen or doing laundry as homemakers. Particularly, television consumption makes the youth to view females and males along stereotypical lines. Increased levels of television viewing link to traditional expectations of gender-linked actions, traits and occupations. Mass media influences or strengthens dysfunctional unrealistic belief concerning genders. The mass media shows images that have effects on the viewers. On the other hand, the mass media portray images that create popular values and reflect these values to the audiences. It reflects the values of the entire human populace besides trying to appeal to the most broad-based audience to make them seek for the most general values.

The media uses a lot of time, money and energy to discover what people believe, like and think. The media supports reality about genders and at the same distorts this reality (Muramatsu, 2002). While the media reflects the values that exist in the public, they also reflect values that do not exist in the same public. While there lacks a direct connection between mass media contents and what people think about themselves in relation to the mass media contents, the images hold a significant effect on the two genders and what they think about themselves. According to Muramatsu (2002), most

soap operas and family dramas portray women as happy and reliable mothers at home. The images show that women could be happy when they stay home and that they face intricacies when they go outside their homes into the society. In most family shows, most women are homemakers or they engage in family businesses.

Conclusion

Mass media entails diversified technologies of media intended to get in touch with a huge audience through mass communication. The media acts as a channel of information and entertainment to a immeasurable audience. While the media enhances gender identity, it promotes gender stereotypes. The media setting faced by people in the modern world portrays both negative and positive aspects of the two genders. There is a gender gap within the content of the media and stereotyped expressions. More women read more information about gender in the media while males only concentrate on male-oriented media. Therefore, mass media is a channel of communication, information and entertainment, and it greatly influences gender identity and stereotypes.

References

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