

DIFFERENCES IN THE TELEVISION MEDIA'S REPRESENTATION OF
MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SPORTS

By

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ABSTRACT

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This study investigates the question of whether the television media displays men and women's sports differently. Sixty-one programs of the CBS nightly news sports' segment and ESPN's Sports Center between the dates of March 20 through May 7, 2000 were recorded and viewed. The segments were evaluated based on the following ten items: The number of men's and women's sports covered, the amount of time given to men's and women's sports, the gender of the lead story, the number of visual clips for men's and women's sports, the use of first and/or last names, sexual references to an athlete, the portrayal of a weakness or strength was exemplified in an athlete, production errors, whether the sports were gender marked, and if aggressive language was used.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

In 1428, Joan of Ark disguised herself as a man to fight for what she believed in. In 1928, Amelia Earhart was the first woman to fly across the Atlantic and in 1932, the first to fly it alone. And in 1973, Billie Jean King took on Bobby Riggs in the "Battle of the Sexes" where she defeated him on the tennis court. All three women have triumphed over the stigmatization of what a woman is capable of doing. Billie Jean King's triumph helped to open the gates for women in sports. King commented, "Nowadays people still come up to me - men more than women - and say, 'Thank you for what you did for my daughter'" (King, 1999).

A lot has changed in the last seventeen years, such as Title IX (the law forcing schools to provide equal opportunities for women's sports as that provided for men's sports) and the WNBA, but if examined closer, women's sports have only been altered, and at most baby steps taken in the long road to equality. For instance, on July 10, 1999, the U.S. soccer team won the U.S. world cup against China with a penalty kick. Proudly, the game was broadcast across the world (a major feat for women), but what was splashed across all the newspapers and television reports was the image of Brandi Chastain taking off her shirt to celebrate, revealing her sports bra underneath. The media frenzied and focused on this sole act of her shirt removal instead of on the skill, hard work and strength of the players. According to Hyman (1999), the sex appeal of women's sports is what will make women's sports more appealing for men. Taking this strategy will only hurt women's sports more. Mary Jo Kane, a professor at the University of Minnesota and director of the Research Center on Girls and Women in sports, states,

"Women will never be taken seriously as great athletes as long as we link being a female with being sexy" (Hyman, 1999).

The media is sending the message loud and clear through sport programming that women are still not equal to men, and are less valued in our society. The television media is taken as the absolute. Just as we believe that we landed on the moon because we saw it on television, even though we didn't witness it, we take the perceptions of the television media as our own. Television is the way our neighbors, states, country and world communicate with each other. It communicates facts, but also values and beliefs. These values and beliefs are reflections of what our society dictates. There is a reciprocal relational effect on society's values and beliefs and the changes in television programming. For example, if you look at the television programming from the 1950/1960's, men and women were not pictured in the same bed; instead, husbands and wives had two single beds side by side. Today, men and women are pictured having sex and exposing all body parts on the screen. This change in programming is a reciprocal change in the values our society holds in terms of expressing our sexuality. This same example of the relationship between television and societal values is evident in television programming in terms of female occupations. The mother in "Leave It To Beaver" in the 1960's, compared to "Who's the Boss" of the 1980's models the change from house wife to company executive. Therefore, examining gender bias in sports television broadcasting is a way of measuring where women stand in relationship to men in our society and how far women have come from past gender roles.

If the study done by the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles in 1989, is used as a measure of our society's views, then women still have a long road ahead. The

study examined the quality of sports programming for males compared to females as represented on television. The study found that women's sports were covered far less or not at all compared to male sports, male athletes received the lead coverage more than female athletes, men's sports were given more visuals during coverage, men's last names were used more often, and women athletes were referred more often by their sexuality, or as comical objects (Duncan, Messner, Williams, & Jensen, 1990).

Sports are a huge part of our society. Just look at the logos on t-shirts, and hats, or listen to the radio before a big football game. Going to a small town where the whole community gathers to watch football and little league games gives you an idea of how prevalent sports are in our communities. The feelings associated with them are strong. Just go into a bar when the Green Bay Packers are playing the Minnesota Vikings to find out quickly the emotion people feel for their sports teams. Sports aren't just for leisure or fun. They are a business. It is a moneymaking organization on the professional level, and a skill and character builder for the amateur. Playing sports as a child will help develop the same values that our society values in the workforce such as perseverance, competitiveness, drive, industriousness, and character (Boutilier, 1983). Sports are a path to being successful; as a result, the discrimination against women in sports is contributing to the discrimination of women in our society.

Our society has come a long way from when Billie Jean King first stepped on the court. Times are changing. Some children see a world of equality for the sexes, while there are still others clinging to beliefs of the past. In a June 2000 issue of *Sports Illustrated for Kids*, the magazine posed the question, "Should WNBA players be paid as much as NBA players?". Fifty-three percent of the responders said yes, while 47% said

no. The reality is evident; our society is still sending messages about the awarded value of men over women. Steps need to be undertaken to ensure equal opportunity for all. Changing television sports programming will aid in changing our society's beliefs about women in sports. It will help them to become strong and talented athletes as well as to lead successful careers. Billie Jean King couldn't have said it better, "Let's just be inclusive and get on with it" (Planck, 1999).

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to examine the differences in the media representation of men's and women's sports on television. Data was collected on 32 segments of the CBS 6:00 evening news sports program and 29 ESPN's Sports Center programs over the period of time between March 20, and May 7, 2000. The broadcasts were recorded and later viewed and critiqued through a series of ten criteria based off of the 1989 Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles study.

Research Hypotheses

The main objective for my research study is to determine whether sex bias still occurs in the media's representation of sports. I hypothesize the following results:

1. Men's sports will be covered more than women's sports.
2. Men's sports will be given a higher percentage of time on the air than women's sports.
3. The leading story will be a male sport more often than a female sport.
4. There will be more visual clips of men's sports than women's sports.
5. The commentators will use women's first names more often than first names of men.

6. The commentators will make sexual references about females more than males.
7. More weaknesses will be emphasized during the coverage of women's sports than men's sports.
8. There will be more production goof-ups when covering the women's sports than the male sports.
9. There will be more gender marked sports for women than in men's sports.
10. There will be more aggressive language used in men's sports than in women's sports.

Definition of Terms

For clarity of understanding, the following terms need to be defined:

Aggressive language – A word that describes power.

Gender marked sports – Using the term male or female to describe the sport to distinguish between the athletes performing.

Hegemonic masculinity – A particular variety of masculinity to which women and others (the young, homosexuals) are subordinated.

Institutionalization – The process of a well-established and structured pattern of behavior or of relationships that is accepted as a fundamental part of culture.

Leading story – The first story that sportscasters went into detail about the story in a sports news program.

Production goof-ups – Mistakes made in the reporting of sports programming such as having the wrong visual for the segment clip, saying the wrong name, mispronouncing the name, or giving false information.

Sex role/Gender role – the set of psychological traits of social expectations considered appropriate for how females and males should behave.

Sexual references – a comment that points out the sexuality of the person in terms of distinguishing looks and behaviors.

Weaknesses – A focus on the reason for an individual's failure, rather than reasons why the opponent won.

Assumptions

There are several assumptions that are apparent in this research. These are:

1. Men and women's sports are separated in competition.
2. Women's sports are new to our society compared to the length of time men's sports have been included.

Limitations

The researcher has identified several limitations. These are:

1. Aggressive behavior is an individual's own perception.
2. The six weeks of television sports programming viewed may not be an accurate representation because of the limited sports seasons it covered.
3. There are far less professional sports for women to enter compared to men, thus, it automatically puts women at a disadvantage for representation on television.
4. There is one individual recording the data which may lead to skewed results on account of the individual's interpretation of segments.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter will delineate the importance of sports in our society and the impact it has on the perpetuation of gender roles. The chapter explores the institutionalization of sport in our society and its influence on our roles as men and women. It describes how men and women are portrayed and included in this important realm of American life.

The media is also examined in its role in the perpetuation of stereotyped gender roles. The media's portrayal of the sporting women has a huge impact on the norm setting of our culture. Through the media, we learn what to value and what behaviors are acceptable. The relationship between the inequality of representation of male and female sports in the media and social gender roles is defined.

Inequalities Today

Throughout history, women have come a long way in the process of obtaining equal rights that are traditionally awarded to men. Even though women have made much progress, discrepancies are still prevalent throughout our society and sex roles still influence our occupations. In 1997, “women working full time and year round in the United States, on average, still earn only seventy-one percent of the wages earned by men,” (Clinton, 1997). Sex typing into occupations not only affects the wages women earn, but it also affects the perpetuation of women in subordinate roles. The roles of women and men and the gender definitions of their behavior as feminine or masculine are social constructions, not biological facts (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983). These socially developed sex role constructs affect the occupations that men and women choose.

“Women are still underrepresented in a range of occupations and professions, particularly those that have traditionally been occupied by men” (Medwechuk & Crossman, 1994).

There has been an increase in the number of women participating in athletics, but it is just the opposite for leadership positions. The leadership roles are decreasing. (Brylinski, 1993) According to Medwechuk and Crossman, (1994) “coaching is an occupation which is traditionally viewed as requiring one to be aggressive, competitive, and firm, rather than feminine, and yielding and is a profession often considered inappropriate for women to enter.” In a study done by Weinberg et al in 1984, it was found that male athletes did not find it appropriate for women to be coaching in a man’s domain because she lacked competitiveness and masculinity (Williams & Parkhouse, 1988). The follow up to this study conducted by Williams & Parkhouse (1988) found the same results; “both male and female high school basketball players viewed female coaches - who had identical performance records and coaching philosophies as male coaches – to be less knowledgeable, less able to motivate, less likely to achieve future success, and less desirable to play for than their male counterparts.”

A misrepresentation of females in athletic leadership positions affects more than the perpetuation of the male dominated field, it affects the participants. Not having female coaches as rolemodels for our youth will result in decreased participation among females. According to Brylinski (1993) “girls will not perceive coaching, athletic administration and possibly even participation in athletics to be viable and acceptable career choices unless they are exposed to positive female role models in those positions.”

The Importance of Sports

So why the focus of sports as a judgment of inequalities of gender in our society?

Sport in our society is an institution, which reflects the beliefs and values of our system.

Specifically, sports epitomize the behaviors that are desirable in the workforce.

Institutionalization of sport in our society "Gender forms one of the world's most

identifiable social categories, spanning times and cultures. Additionally, each culture

deems certain traits and behaviors *masculine* or *feminine*" (Twenge, 1999, p. 485). Sport

has become an institution in our society that has helped to further define our roles of

masculinity and femininity. In traditional cultures and in our society's past, sports were

used as a socializing agent to teach masculine traits to boys (Boutilier & SanGiovanni,

1983). Sport was also used to teach working-class boys to be more self-disciplined and

responsive to authority (Griffin, 1998). "It is in sport that they (boys) learn to compete, to

control, to take risks, to be strong, and to achieve mastery over self and others. It is in

sport that they begin to understand why and how they are to become men." (Boutilier &

SanGiovanni, 1983, p.101).

This original message that sport was developed to teach is still conveyed through

sports today. "Directly and indirectly, sports sends messages to participants about

masculinity and femininity and sexuality and it provides a context for acting consistently

with those messages" (Griffin, 1998, p.22). According to Kane and Greendorfer (1994,

p.3) "Sport is an expression of the sociocultural system in which it occurs." "It is a

microcosm of society, reflecting the basic values, beliefs, rules and ideas of the larger

system" (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983 p. 98).

More than any other social institution, sport seems to perpetuate male superiority

and female inferiority (Kane & Greendorfer, 1994). The aggressiveness and

competitiveness that are fostered in sport participation are considered appropriate for males and inappropriate for females (MacNeill, 1988). Today, women are included in sports, but inequalities still prevail. Since title IX, there has been ever-increasing numbers of women athletes, but there is still a stigma about what sports are appropriate for women. "Women are channeled into expressive, aesthetically pleasing sports such as gymnastics, dance and figure skating." In contrast, "boys are channeled into instrumental activities that teach qualities such as competitiveness, teamwork and cooperation to aid their integration into the labor force" (MacNeill, 1988, p.275). Sports are viewed positively for women if they continue to foster traits that are desirable to men and that continue the traditional sex role. The acceptable goal of women's sport is not the development of strength or fitness, but the development of women's sexual attractiveness (Theberge, 1985). The evidence of this statement is apparent in the fact that there is greater social approval for women's sports that develop grace, balance, and flexibility versus strength, endurance and physical contact (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983).

Not only was sport developed and intended for men, but it is mainly controlled by men, even when the sport has a large female following. "Men dominate the administration and organization of sports, and in the past few years there has been a decline in the proportion of women's leadership positions in sports" (Bryson, 1987, p. 182). This is true at the highest level; the Olympics. The first woman elected to the International Olympic Committee was in 1981, and in 1984 there were still only three women members compared to the 86 male members (Bryson, 1987). This system of male ownership is replicated in every sport.

The benefits of sport participation The importance of women and men participating in sports is found in our society's workforce. The qualities formulated by participating in sports are the same qualities that have been found to make a person successful in the workplace and the business world (Knoppers, 1987). "Studies of women who reach executive levels in male-dominated fields suggest that one factor these achieving women tended to have in common is a love of sports as children (Birrell, 1983, p. 77). As women break into sport, they too can break into other untraditional occupations that carry the same qualities associated with masculinity. "Sports could show that women are capable of physical work in occupations such as fire fighting, law enforcement, construction and the military (Griffin, 1998, p.82).

Sport participants benefit by developing characteristics such as perseverance, competitiveness, drive, industriousness, and character (Birrell, 1983). According to sports psychologist Jay Coakley, sports help women to develop assertiveness and autonomy. It also helps them to be viewed as more competent and dependable (Griffin, 1998). Sports for women is "a source of self-esteem, personal autonomy and social influence," (Boutilier & San Giovanni, 1983, p. 123) and "can be utilized as a means for lessening feelings of inferiority" (Robbins, 1983, p. 5). The development of these crucial characteristics in women could help them to break into the higher positions in the workforce.

Although inequalities between genders in sports still exist, there is a change perception and acceptance of women in sports. The new generation sees the change from how it used to be to how it is now. The younger generation is not stigmatized as much into certain sports based on their gender. In a study conducted by Archer and McDonald

(1990) the children felt the older generation might not approve of girls playing football, but they believed they could play what they want. As a result of the younger generation feeling it is more socially acceptable to have gender roles less defined in sports, participation has increased. A further implication of the changing of gender roles, is that "sport participation has become more compatible with femininity as a result of the increased involvement of women in professional and international sports," (pg. 238). The changing of these gender perceptions and the increase in women participating in sports has also influenced the career world. According to Medwechuk and Crossman, the involvement of women in sports is related to the "ever-evolving acceptance of women as equal and competent members of the workforce" (1994, p 168). This association between sports, society and the workforce, further demonstrates the influence of sports in our society and how it defines our gender roles.

Television Media's Impact

A television society No one can argue the huge impact television has on our society today. Television links our communities, our states, our country and our world. What is displayed on television is a representation of our culture and our society. Television is the medium we use to communicate what is socially valued behavior (McMillian & Moriarty, 1980).

Television, as a way of communicating our social values and behaviors, in turn, communicates our sex roles. "Children are continuously exposed to models of sex-typed behavior in the home, in schools, and in televised representations of society" (Bussey & Bandura, 1984, pg. 1293). "Television helps to produce a crucial categorization of its viewers into masculine and feminine subjects (Craig, 1992, pg. 188). "The media transmits stereotypical gender images that shape role expectations and, in turn, inform

behavior and identity” (Craig, 1992, pg. 169). As the media presents to the viewers what is “normal,” the perpetuation of the definition of hegemonic masculinity is conveyed as natural (Craig, 1992).

Today’s youth, who have grown up with the television as their source of entertainment and education, are greatly influenced by what they view. The children of today spend a large part of their time in front of the television. In a study by Miller, O’Connor and Sirignano (1995) most of the parents reported that viewing television was the most frequent out-of-school activity. According to Moriarty, McCabe and Prpich, “throughout elementary, secondary and post-secondary education, approximately one-quarter to one-third of the youths waking hours are spent watching television programming,” with more than half of the viewing occurring in the evening (1977, pg. 1).

In addition, television has become the vein of the economic security of professional sports. Sports rely on advertisements to pay the high salaries of the players. The list of advertisers associated with sports is never ending including a wide range of products such as *Nike*, *Adidas*, *Gatorade*, *Bud Light*, and *Mc Donald’s*. The relationship between the media and sports has been increasing dramatically. Sports are becoming dependent on the media for survival. “The media-dependent sports industry now produces its schedules, structures its formats and sometimes even changes the rules of the games in order to deliver the largest audiences to advertisers” (Craig, 1992, pg. 169).

Television’s effect In study after study, there has been evidence that television is a significant variable in the escalation of aggression and violence in North American society. Television violence and the behavior demonstrated by young viewers, has been proved as a causal relationship in the increase in violence in children. Studies have also

found that the greater the similarity between the youth watching the television and the person on the television, the more likely the child will imitate the portrayed image (McMillan & Moriarty, 1980). Studies in social learning and imitation have supported the fact that children tend to imitate the behavior of models if they see that the behavior is more rewarding (Bussey & Bandura, 1984). These studies only reinforce the fact that television greatly influences our youth's perceptions of the world and the formation of their values and beliefs of what is "normal."

Inequality of Sports Media

With sports being traditionally male oriented, the roots of sports programming is also male oriented. Even though women have been allowed to participate, there is lower quality and lower representation of women's sports in the media. In summary, women's sports are basically ignored by the media (Duncan, et al., 1990). In 1984, only 1.3 percent of the newspaper was devoted to women's sports even though the sports pages are the most widely read section of major metropolitan papers (Duncan et al., 1990, Craig, 1992). There were also five times as many males as females whose results were reported and twelve times as many male photos than female photos in the paper (Duncan et al., 1990). In a study done by the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles in 1989, (Duncan et al., 1990) they found that out of forty-two evening sports broadcasts, twenty-one contained no coverage of women's sports. They also found that males received the lead coverage forty times compared to women, who had the lead coverage only twice. Lastly, out of the 264 minutes recorded, ninety-two percent was devoted to men's sports. In Feature articles in Sports Illustrated from 1954 to 1987, male athletes received ninety-one percent of the total coverage given to athletes (Greendorfer, 1994).

Not only are women's sports being ignored in the media, but when they are displayed, they are trivialized. According to Theberge, (1985, pg. 182) "the media coverage of women's sport in North America often serves to denigrate and trivialize women's sporting experience." The media trivializes women's sports by focusing on their feminine qualities instead of their athletic performance (Duncan et al., 1990). For example the image portrayed around the Sports Illustrated swim suit edition is one of sexual appeal, not strength, yet women hold the most world records in long distance swimming (Craig, 1992). The media also focuses on issues such as motherhood and the female athlete's physical attractiveness (Bryson, 1987). The Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles Study found evidence to support the trivialization of women's sport. They found that women's first names were used more often than their first and last names compared to men's whose first and last names were used. They also found that women appeared more often in comical images or sexual objects compared to men.

Examples of this trivialization of women in sports are evident in the coverage of Chris Evert and Florence Griffith Joyner. As powerful athletes, they were denied the serious coverage that male athletes take for granted. When Chris Evert announced her retirement in 1980, she made the cover of sports illustrated, but instead of focusing on her amazing career, they announced her retirement with the caption reading, "I'm going to be a full time wife." In Joyner's case, the media focused on her feminine characteristics denying the power her body held. The media constantly remarked about her nails, her make-up and her one-legged running suits (Greendorfer, 1994).

The impact this type of programming has on the population is evident. In a study conducted by Lee Becker and Pamela Creedon, they found that "audiences perceive

women's sports as inferior and less exciting" (Creedon, 1994, pg. 13). "This underrepresentation often creates the impression that females are nonexistent in the sporting world, a portrayal that is particularly ironic given the significant increases in their active sport participation since Title IX" (Greendorfer, 1994, pg. 34).

Conclusion

Sports are one of the highest rankings of television programming that children view, with baseball and basketball being among the most popular (McMillan & Moriarty, 1980). Sports play a huge role in reflecting our societal values, beliefs and roles and teaching them to our children through the television medium. Because of the importance of television in our children's lives, and how children tend to model their behavior after same-sex models more than an opposite-sex model (Bussey & Bandura, 1984) it is important to have women in sports accurately represented. The television tells the audience whom and what is valued in our society (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983). "The way in which television covers, or fails to cover, women engaged in athletics affects the way in which female athletes are perceived and also tells us something about the status of women in our society" (Duncan et al., 1990, p. 249).

If we are a society where everyone is treated equally and we all have equal opportunity, then we must start first by educating our young, and providing them with this message. "The more females are perceived to be enjoying themselves and to be valued in their roles as athletes, the more likely it is that younger females will follow in their footsteps. When we do not see women in certain roles, the exclusion of women from these roles is perpetuated" (Birrell, 1983, pg. 77). The first step in helping all our youth to have equal opportunities is for our society to give them this message through sports programming by providing images of powerful male and female athletes. Only then can

we dream of a future society where men and women are given equal training and opportunities to be successful in the job world.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter will describe how the information was obtained and how the television programs were selected. In addition, this chapter will describe the instrumentation used as well as the method of data collection. Lastly, this chapter will discuss the limitations to the method of research.

Description of Selection of Television Programs

This study is based on the study done by The Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles in 1989. This study looked at six weeks of the 11:00pm sports programming on KNBC in Los Angeles as well as televised coverage of men's and women's NCAA basketball tournaments on CBS and ESPN, and the four final days of televised coverage on CBS and USA Networks of the U.S. open tennis tournament in 1989. In order to base my study off of the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles' study for comparison of improvement in the year 2000, I randomly picked CBS as my local nightly news program and ESPN as my source for national coverage.

I chose the 6:00 evening news instead of the 10:00 o'clock news (11:00 in Los Angeles) because studies have shown that 77% of children and youth tend to watch television in the evening (McMillan & Moriarty, 1980). The ESPN Sports Center is a program that is replicated several specific times during a day. Because the program does not change within a twenty-four hour period, I taped the 12:00am program and viewed approximately thirty minutes of airtime (equal to about three-fourths of the program).

I taped thirty-two evening sports programs on CBS and 29 ESPN broadcasts over the period of March 20 through May 7 (Appendix A). Although I did not replicate the

Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles study precisely, I felt that seven weeks covering 72 programs was enough time to compare the statistics from the past study to look for improvement over the last eleven years in the television broadcasting of sports.

Instrumentation

Since I was replicating the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles study, I used the same criteria to evaluate the sports television programming. I looked at the following criteria:

1. Comparison of the number of Men's sports covered to the number of women's sports covered.
2. Men's and Women's sports percentage of time on the air.
3. Whether the leading story was a man's sport or a female sport.
4. The number of visual clips for men's and women's sports.
5. The commentators use of first and last names in men and woman athletes.
6. The commentator's use of sexual references about females and male athletes.
7. The weaknesses of athletes that were emphasized during the coverage of women's and men's sports.
8. Production goof-ups when covering women's and men's sports.
9. The prevalence of gender marked sports for women and men's sports.
10. The use of aggressive language in men's and women's sports.

The reliability and validity can only be calculated for criteria numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9. The criteria numbers 6, 7, 8, and 10 cannot be evaluated for reliability due to human error in judgment.

Data Collection

Data was collected by the researcher solely. I taped, watched and evaluated the programs myself. Each television sports program for either CBS or ESPN was recorded on a separate grid. The ten criteria were listed on the side (Appendix B). As I watched the sports programming, I put tally marks under the criteria that applied.

Methodological Limitations

The limitations to this data collection were the following:

1. Since I was the sole collector of the data, my beliefs, values and my suggested hypotheses may skew my perceptions.
2. There were only six weeks of sports television programming recorded. This does not provide an accurate perception of the sports programming for the year.
3. CBS and Sports Center may not be representative of the total television broadcasting.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

Introduction

This chapter contains the findings and results of the television sports programs viewed on ESPN and CBS. The Computer User Support Services Department at the University of Wisconsin-Stout performed the data analysis. The means, standard deviations and t-tests were calculated for the nominal data.

The data analysis consisted of totaling the raw data for each of the ten criteria, calculating it separately for men and women. Four of the criterion factors did not have sufficient data to be statistically significant. These four criteria are the following: Sexual references, weaknesses emphasized, number of production errors, and use of aggressive language. Although there was not enough data for empirical summarization of findings, descriptive findings will be explored. For the analysis of vocalized gender marked sports, there was an insufficient amount of data pairs to calculate t-tests, but the percentages were calculated.

For the remaining five criteria; number of sports covered, number of minutes on the air, leading story, number of visual clips, and use of names, there was enough data to be considered statistically significant. All five t-tests, revealed a difference between the television media's representation of men and women's sports. These t-tests were found to be statistically significant at the .001 level.

As shown in Table 3, the domain means ranged from 1.02890 to 4.31445 for women and 95.68555 to 98.97110 for men. These mean scores were obtained by calculating the percentage for both men and women in each domain and then averaging

the percentages. Domain 1 is the number of sports covered, domain 2 is the amount of time, domain 3 is the number of visual clips, domain 4 is both or last names used and 5 is the use of any name.

Table 1

T-tests of Percentage of Women minus Men

Domain	Women		Men		t value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	4.31445	9.17415	95.68555	9.17415	-26.817
2	1.02890	3.48401	98.97110	3.48401	-75.694
3	1.91628	5.77037	98.08372	5.77037	-44.874
4	1.03553	3.26229	98.96447	3.26229	-80.827
5	1.10015	3.13033	98.89985	3.13033	-84.123

Note. *** $p < .001$

Time Collected

The television sports broadcasts were analyzed over a seven-week period from March to May. The results of the frequency of days for each month along with the percent of programs analyzed during that month are presented in the following table:

Table 2

Month	Frequency	Percent
March	13	21.3
April	37	60.7
May	11	18.0

As depicted in the graph, a significant amount of the data was collected in April. This knowledge is relevant when considering what sports are in season at the time of data collection. The actual days data was collected and whether it was CBS or ESPN is represented in a chart in Appendix A.

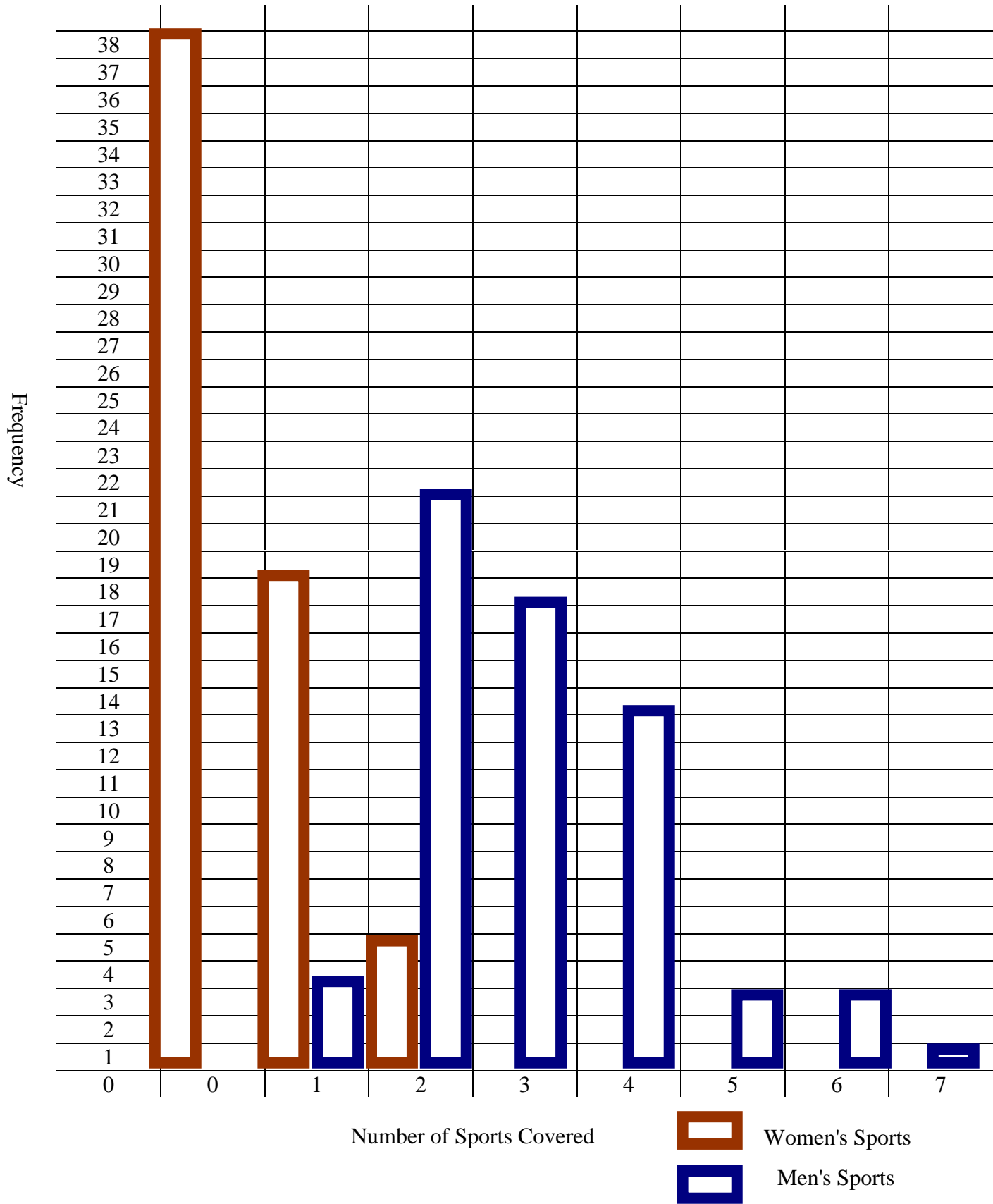
Station

Two different television sports broadcasts were recorded for data in comparing the representation of women's sports to men's sports. ESPN was viewed 29 times accounting for 47.5% of the data. CBS was viewed 32 times accounting for 52.5% of the data. The total number of programs viewed for analysis was 61.

Number of Sports Covered

The results of this study found that there were more male sports covered than female sports. For each sports segment, the number of female sports covered ranged from zero to two, while men's ranged from one to seven. (See Figure 1) For the females, the majority of number of sports covered in a segment was zero, with an average percentile score of 11.59. In comparison, the males majority of number of sports covered in a segment fall between two and four different types of sports, with an average percentile score of 88.41.

Figure 1 Number of Sports Covered for Men and Women



Number of Minutes on the Air

When comparing the sports coverage of women's sports to men's sports, the amount of time given to gender reveals much about the importance of each sport. The mean, standard deviation and t-value were calculated in order to compare the minutes of airtime for each gender. The findings of the study reveal that an average of 1.03% of the total minutes of sports air broadcasts for both CBS and ESPN were devoted to women's sports compared to an average of 98.97% of the air time minutes devoted to men's sports. ESPN fared better than the local news station coverage on CBS in percentage of viewing time for men and women. ESPN devoted an average of 14.98% of airtime to women's sports while CBS devoted an average of only 7.93%. Women's sports were not mentioned at all in a sports segment 62.3% of the time.

Leading Story

Out of the sixty-one sports programs viewed, only once (1.6% of the time) did a sports segment use women's sports as the leading story. Men's sports were the leading story 55 times (90.2% of the time). The remaining five segments were either gender neutral or missing information which accounted for the last 8.2%.

Number of Visual Clips

The percentage of visual clips that were for women's sports was 9.48%, while men accounted for the remaining 90.52% of clips shown. Sixty-seven percent of the time, the sports segments contained no visual clips of women, while men's sports always had at least one clip shown during a sports segment with an average of 9.20 clips per segment.

Use of Names

The use of men's and women's names by commentators was found to be relatively close in comparison. Sports broadcast commentators used women's first names 6.2% of the time compared to using men's first names slightly less at 5.3% of the time.

Vocalization of Gender Marked Sports

Out of the twenty-three sports segments that contained women's sports, women's sports were gender marked vocally by the sports commentator 24 times (1.04%), while men's sports were gender marked 5 times (.08%) in the sixty-one sports segments that contained men's sports.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion, Conclusions, Recommendations

Introduction

The results document the differences in the television media's portrayal between men and women's sports. Several gender differences were found regarding the television coverage of men and women's sports. The findings of the study reveal that an average of only 1.03% of the total minutes of sports air broadcasts for both CBS and ESPN were devoted to women's sports compared to an average of 98.97% of the air time minutes devoted to men's sports. It was also found that women's sports were not even mentioned in a sports segment 62.3% of the time. For each sports segment, the number of female sports covered ranged from zero to two, while men's ranged from one to seven. Out of the sixty-one sports programs viewed, only once (1.6% of the time) did a sports segment use women's sports as the leading story. Men's sports were the leading story 55 times (90.2% of the time). The percentage of visual clips that were for women's sports was 9.48%, while men accounted for the remaining 90.52% of clips shown. Sixty-seven percent of the time, the sports segments contained no visual clips of women, while men's sports always had at least one clip shown during a sports segment with an average of 9.20 clips per segment. Sports broadcast commentators used women's first names 6.2% of the time compared to using men's first names slightly less at 5.3% of the time. Out of the twenty-three sports segments that contained women's sports, women's sports were gender marked vocally by the sports commentator 24 times (1.04%), while men's sports were gender marked 5 times (.08%) in the sixty-one sports segments that contained men's sports.

The differences in the sexual references, weaknesses emphasized, number of production goof-ups and aggressive language analyzed between men and women for the television sports broadcasts can only be interpreted in a practical sense. There was no statistical analysis performed to determine the significance of the results. Instead, a qualitative description will be given.

Out of the 61 programs viewed, ten programs contained reference to the sexuality of the athlete. Only one of the sexual references involved a female athlete, the other four involved male athletes. Two of these comments revolved around the news story of Mark Chmura from the Green Bay Packers who was being charged with sexual assault of his babysitter at a party. Some of the other comments were about male athlete's looks such as comments on their hair, making fun of their clothing, commenting on oblique muscles, the attraction of females to him, and being rated as one of the fifty most beautiful people. A comment on ESPN about a male soccer player taking off his shirt also made reference to Brandi Chastain when the sportscaster commented, "Put on your sports bra." This same story was covered by CBS in which the sportscaster commented, "she got endorsements, he got a \$12,000 fine and six months suspension."

In critiquing the weaknesses emphasized in the sports broadcasts, the researcher did not find any weaknesses emphasized for women's sports. There were such few times that women's sports were covered that when they did cover them, they focused on either the positive aspects of the athletes, or neutral issues. The men's sports did contain some weaknesses emphasized, but an actual count would not be accurate due to the count being based on the judgment of the researcher alone.

There were three production errors reported by the researcher, although due to the subjectability of the researcher, there could have been more overlooked. All of these production errors occurred during male sports segments, but because of the low number of women's sports covered, accurate data cannot be summarized.

The use of aggressive language was too subjective for one researcher to determine the validity of whether the language used was aggressive or not. From the small sample of women's sports televised, the researcher did find aggressive language used by some sports commentators.

Discussion

The results tend to show that discrimination in the broadcasting of men and women's sports still exists. Although Title IX has allowed for the opportunity for women to engage in sports as well as men, women are still largely underrepresented in the professional arena.

The results also show that certain sports, many of which are only played professionally by men (such as baseball, football and hockey), are the most highly viewed sports on sports segments. In order to equal out the viewing time of men's and women's sports, the media needs to cover a broader base of sports including tennis, golf, track and field, gymnastics, volleyball, and swimming to name a few. There are plenty of women engaging in sports, the media only needs to broaden its approach in reporting on them.

The lack of reporting by the media is sending a message to our society, in particular, our impressionable youth, that women's sports are not as significant as men's sports. Through lack of sports covered, less amount of time given, the leading story

almost always being given to males and more visual clips of male sports than women's, it is sending a message that women are not equal.

The media is a direct reflection of the society we live in. Whether it is media that influences society or society that influences the media, there is a relationship that reveals what the values and beliefs are in our communities. The lack of attention paid to women's sports may be related to the business of marketing and commercials, but if the public gave higher value to women's sports, the broadcasters would cover them more. The lack of attention to women's sports is a complex interwoven problem in which one answer is not the solution, but it will take initiative on the part of the media as well as the public to put forth the effort to make changes. The media needs to start by covering more sports already existing and not getting coverage, while the public (women athletes especially) need to start vocalizing their need to be recognized.

Although the results of this study give women's sports a bleak image, gains have been made. This study found that the ratio of the use of first names to that of first and/or last names was relatively close for both males and females. This is in contrast to the study done by the Amateur Athletic foundation where they found that commentators were far more likely to refer to women athletes by their first names while men were referred to by their first and/or last names. This signifies the increased respect given to women athletes. Sexual references were also equaled out by the commentators, with having more sexual references to men than to women. This also provides preliminary evidence that women are being taken more seriously as athletes.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the television sports programming representation of men and women's sports. In summary, this study found that discrepancies still exist in the reporting of men and women's sports. These findings suggest that women are still not treated equally to men in our society. With sports playing a large role in youth's development and adult's social and potentially their occupational life, it is imperative that women not only be included in sports, but given credit for them as well.

This study serves as a benchmark among other studies, which examine the inequalities between men and women. It is the hopes of the researcher that the next study will find further gains in the equalization of the sexes.

Recommendations

Because of the short time period of the data collection, and the seasonal reporting of sports, further data needs to be gathered. Although this was a sample of the media's sports broadcasts; the data may look different at various times of the year. The time selected did not contain any major sports season finals in which further attention would be given. This allowed for a better representation of more sports, but it also results in limited accurate information. Ideally, a sample from a full year needs to be taken in order to accommodate for all of the sports seasons.

A limitation of this study was the inaccuracy of the taping device. Some sports segments were cut off when the tape ran out, as well as days that were not taped due to time changes and other unknown reasons. This resulted in random data, but because not every day was recorded in a seven-week period, the data could be altered.

Another study could be conducted selecting another local station. Although CBS is similar to other local news stations, unknown circumstances could affect the results of the data gathered.

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APPENDIX A
DATES OF PROGRAMS ANALYZED

March	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
CBS	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	
ESPN								X	X	X			
April	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
CBS				X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
ESPN				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
CBS	X			X	X	X	X	X				X	X
ESPN			X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	
	27	28	29	30									
CBS	X	X											
ESPN		X	X	X									
May	1	2	3	4	5	6	7						
CBS	X		X	X	X								
ESPN	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						

APPENDIX B

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

DATE: _____

CBS ESPN

Criteria	Women	Men
# of sports covered		
# of minutes on air		
Leading story		
# of visual clips		
Use of first and last name/only first name		
Sexual references		
Weaknesses emphasized		
# of production goof-ups		
Gender marked sports		
Use of aggressive language		

DATE: _____

CBS ESPN

Criteria	Women	Men
# of sports covered		
# of minutes on air		
Leading story		
# of visual clips		
Use of first and last name/only first name		
Sexual references		
Weaknesses emphasized		
# of production goof-ups		
Gender marked sports		
Use of aggressive language		

