

**Women
and media
decision-
making**

*the invisible
barriers*

**Women and media decision-making:
the invisible barriers**

Women and media decision-making: the invisible barriers



Unesco

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Preface

This book presents the outcome of five case-studies carried out within Unesco's programme on the Contribution of the Media to Promoting Equality between Women and Men and Strengthening Women's Access to and Participation in Communication. More specifically, it forms part of an action centred on the Training, Recruitment and Advancement of Women in the Communication Professions. The case-studies on professional women in broadcasting deal with five countries located in both the developing and developed world: Canada, Egypt, Ecuador, India and Nigeria.

One of the major preoccupations of Unesco's programme is to increase the access of women to decision-making positions. The obstacles to the movement of women into management and decision-making positions are particularly felt in the field of communication. A comparative analysis of the key issues, personnel policies and practices of five broadcasting organizations in different regions of the world not only furnishes a critique of current policies concerning women but offers proposals for action which could help to overcome barriers to women's access to high-level posts in the media.

The book should be of interest to both the general public and media professionals. Scholars and planners concerned with the status of women should also be interested in this subject. Above all, it is hoped that media managers responsible for policy and government services concerned with broadcasting will take into

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serious consideration the constructive proposals for improvement in a field which wields such vast influence over the minds of women and men.

The authors are responsible for the choice and the presentation of the facts contained in this book and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of Unesco and do not commit the *Organization*.

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Introduction

Margaret Gallagher

*Just as long as newspapers and magazines
are controlled by men . . . women's ideas
and deepest convictions will never
get before the public.*

Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906)

In the century since American journalist and feminist Susan B. Anthony encapsulated the problematic relationship between women and the mass media, technological development has opened up vast new publics to the potential influence of communication messages. To the newspaper and the magazine have been added the electronic mass media—films, radio and television, which make their messages available around the world to both literate and non-literate alike. There are an estimated 1,000 million radio sets in the world, an average of one for every four persons on earth. Even in the most remote regions of the globe there must now be few people unable to trace at least some piece of information they possess, or some opinion they hold, to a source in the media.

Information, we have often been told, is power. The question today is, as it was a century ago: How can women ensure that the information, images and pictures of the world received via the mass media serve their needs and interests? Can it be assumed that such needs will be recognized, understood and given due priority in media output, given that—as in other social institutions—few women are to be found near the centres of power and control in media organizations? Certainly, the evidence of research—and an enormous number of relevant studies have now been carried out in many parts of the world, particularly over the past decade—suggests not.

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Summarizing studies conducted worldwide up to 1980, Gallagher (1981, p. 71) concluded:

On film, in the press and the broadcast media, women's activities and interests typically go no further than the confines of home and family. Characterized as essentially dependent and romantic, women are rarely portrayed as rational, active or decisive. . . . Prevalent news values define most women, and most women's problems, as unnewsworthy. . . . As the 'bait' through which products are advertised, women are exploited in terms of their sexuality and physical appearance.

A later up-date of that initial survey detected no fundamental change in media representations of women between 1980 and 1985.

From the time of Susan B. Anthony until the present day the underlying assumption in the discussion of women and their relationship to the media has been that an increase in the number of women employed in media organizations will lead to change—and positive change—in media content. Anthony herself suggested no crude correspondence between gender and output. She recognized that the simple presence of women—as journalists, producers and so on—was no guarantee that media content would be qualitatively different. As long as men were *in control*, she argued, women working in the media would be constrained to reflect the priorities, ideas and values to which men attached importance. The challenge is thus not merely to ensure that the overall media workforce reflects an equitable balance of female and male employees. The ultimate goal should be equal representation of women and men *within* each occupational category, including policy- and decision-making posts.

In comparison with the volume of research into the portrayal of women in the mass media, there has been very little analysis of the extent and nature of women's participation in the media industries. One of the main reasons for this is undoubtedly the difficulty of gaining access to what most media organizations regard as confidential information. As a result of the lack of reliable data, however, there has been a tendency to resort to anecdote and to subjective assertion. Whether the perspectives on which these are based are negative ('Women don't get the same promotion opportunities as men'; 'Sexist attitudes mean that

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women get channeled into female ghettos'), or positive ('If women try hard enough any position in the organization is open to them'; 'The number of women on our staff is increasing all the time'), the absence of verifiable facts means that such claims can rarely be substantiated.

The studies included in this volume are therefore important in at least two ways. The basic statistical data which each contains provide a profile of the media workforce in Canada, Ecuador, Egypt, India and Nigeria. Even if incomplete, the picture which emerges is fascinating. It might have seemed natural to suppose that in these very different countries, whose media systems differ greatly in size and development, as well as in type of structure and in general objectives, there would have been important differences in the distribution of women and men across the various occupational categories. Differences are there, of course. But what comes through in a quite striking way are the similarities. The fact that, in every case, women are very much a minority presence in what several of the studies explicitly describe as the 'man's world' of the media; the almost complete absence of women in technical jobs and in senior media management, and their parallel presence in others, such as presentation and announcing; the segregation of programme-making areas, so that women tend to be given responsibility for educational and children's programmes but not, for example, for news and current affairs. These are some of the points that the five cases highlight, providing facts and figures which belie often unfounded but widespread impressions. S. R. Joshi commenting on the Indian findings, remarks that they illustrate how wide the gap between beliefs and reality can be. Most of the men working in senior positions in Indian television believed that women were well represented among their colleagues, and that the proportion of women being recruited and promoted to senior posts was steadily increasing. This impression was simply not, however, borne out by the data.

If they had gone no further than establishing a more reliable factual base against which subjective opinion could be checked, the studies would already have achieved something useful. However, their contribution goes beyond this. An important aspect of all five is their analyses of male and female perceptions

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of women's access to, and performance in, media management posts. Underlying these analyses is an attempt to understand why there are still so few women in the so-called decision-making posts in the media, the jobs whose occupants really do have an opportunity to influence policy and practice in relation to media content.

Again, there is perhaps a surprising degree of consistency across the studies. Although the media organizations that have been analysed subscribe, by and large, to the legislative requirements of the various countries in relation to equal pay and equal treatment of women and men, this egalitarian gloss hides a whole battery of attitudes, beliefs and even organizational procedures, which amount to indirect discrimination against women. As the author of the Egyptian study, Fawzia Fahim puts it, this form of discrimination begins in men's minds. The belief that certain types of job are unsuitable for women; the view that women expect too many concessions at work, are unreliable and given to absenteeism; the opinion that women are ineffective when it comes to taking and implementing decisions; the feeling among men that it is easier, more 'comfortable', to work with other men; a lack of sensitivity to the physical and emotional burden on women who must reconcile professional and domestic responsibilities, in a world where little or no social support is provided for the care of children. All this adds up to a situation in which women 'must be twice as good, twice as tolerant, twice as strong, and twice as clever to succeed' according to the Ecuadorian study. This sentiment, in fact, is a thread that runs through each of the cases described.

The picture which emerges from the five studies, taken as a whole, is not so much one of wilful misogyny on the part of men working in the media (indeed several of the cases show that women themselves are at times ambivalent towards the whole idea of women in power), but of a social and economic system which is firmly based on a clear division of professional and family roles. As the Nigerian study points out, so long as the fundamental assumption is that the man is the 'bread-winner', a female professional will not be perceived as being on the same footing—in terms of needs and justifiable rewards—as her male counterpart. Even if in many parts of the world (and Enoch Irukwu believes

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it to be the case in Nigeria) there has recently been a slight shift away from this basic belief, as yet social structures and organizational practices have rarely been devised to take account of new definitions.

A further contemporary problem is that, perhaps partly in response to the public debate on the issue of women's status, which has taken place over the past ten years or so, discriminatory attitudes have, as Susan Crean of Canada puts it, 'gone underground'. She maintains that probably few of the sexist stereotypes expressed crudely in the mid-1970s, when the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) carried out its first inquiry into the situation of its female employees, would be admitted openly today. This makes it even more difficult for women to know where and how they should be orienting their struggle for change.

The studies that follow are quite different in scope and in the manner of their execution. S. R. Joshi has examined the situation of women throughout the Indian television system—a vast project which has relied primarily on questionnaires, backed up by a small number of face-to-face interviews. Nelly de Camargo, on the other hand, has concentrated exclusively on radio in Ecuador and has adopted a more qualitative approach based on interviews. Enoch Irukwu has also focused mainly on radio, which is still the major mass electronic medium in Nigeria, while Fawzia Fahim has covered both radio and television in Egypt. Susan Crean's analysis of the CBC's attempt to develop an equal opportunities programme for the organization as a whole is a self-contained case-study. It describes not simply the emergence of an organizational response to the question of equal treatment, but the difficulties of pursuing a policy in this area where there are no means of ensuring that managers are held accountable for its implementation.

The thread that runs through all five studies is that of 'invisibility'. The barriers that face women aiming for jobs in media management are no longer, or very rarely, overt. There is little flagrant discrimination, in the sense of inegalitarian rules and regulations. What remains, however, are the invisible barriers—the attitudes, biases and presumptions which, curiously, even the women themselves often do not recognize as 'discrimination',

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though they clearly function in a discriminatory way. As the studies presented in this volume make clear, scaling these particular barriers will be a much more hazardous and lengthy process than the removal of the visible obstacles to equality between women and men.

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Invisible barriers: women at senior levels in Indian television

S. R. Joshi

Background to the study

In India, in recent years, considerable attention has been focused on the issue of the portrayal of women in the media. Content analysis studies have criticized the stereotyped representations of women in media output—images that depict women as inferior, emphasize their sexuality, and so on. These studies have also provoked discussion about the ways in which media content could more accurately reflect reality—for example, by portraying women as multi-dimensional beings with a positive contribution to make to society, and also by highlighting some of the problems faced by women in all social categories.

Very little attention, however, has been paid to the originators of media output. Who are these people? To what extent do their backgrounds, value systems and attitudes influence media content? In this context women's access to and participation in media work become crucial issues, which the present study takes up. The study is confined to one medium—television. It is no more than a beginning, for only continuous, detailed research in this area will help us understand the problem better.

*Women and media decision-making**Television in India*

Television was introduced to India in 1959. It is government controlled and the sole transmitting authority—Doordarshan—is responsible to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. In the early days, production and transmission of programmes were limited to Delhi. However there are now eighteen production centres and a large number of transmitting centres throughout the country. In 1985, television coverage extended to 58 per cent of the country's population.

Doordarshan's Directorate is located in Delhi, and is headed by a Director-General who reports to the Secretary for Information and Broadcasting. Each of the eighteen production centres is headed by a director, known as a Station Director. Broadly speaking, there are two categories of staff in Doordarshan. Some are government employees, known as gazetted officers (because their names are published in the *Gazette of the Government of India*). They tend to occupy senior posts in Doordarshan, and include the directors of the various departments, station directors, administrators, engineers and so on. Employees in the second category are known as staff artistes. They are initially appointed on a contract basis (though they may subsequently be admitted into regular government service), and include creative personnel such as producers, graphic artists, camera operators, announcers and presenters.

Design of the study

The study was concerned only with senior staff—primarily those responsible for policy development, administration and management, and decisions affecting programmes. Senior staff were defined as all those earning above a certain salary, and amounted to some 700 personnel in the Doordarshan Directorate and the eighteen production centres. When we use the term 'employees', therefore, we refer only to these senior-level staff and not to the whole of the Doordarshan staff.

Existing documents and staff lists were used to compile statistics on the employment of women and men. Wherever

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possible, these were supplemented by additional data, supplied directly by the Doordarshan production centres. In order to identify perceptions and attitudes to women's employment, a comprehensive questionnaire was sent to all 700 senior-level staff. Responses were received from 119 employees. Finally seventeen staff were interviewed (ten in Delhi and seven in Bombay) as were two other people, in order to delve more deeply into the question than was possible through the mailed questionnaire.

Employment of women in television

A basic aim of the study was to establish the proportion of women employed in different categories and to determine whether there had been any change in the pattern of women's employment over the years. However, the information available was rather limited, especially on an all-India basis. Moreover, the data were sometimes of different time-frames and this made any comparison or detection of trends extremely difficult.

Senior management categories

Taking first the category of gazetted officers, among whom the most senior television staff are to be found, only two large centres—Delhi and Madras—provided the relevant data. Table 1 shows the number of women and men in the various positions in each centre in 1985. It is immediately obvious that women form only a small proportion of the total.

The jobs are grouped roughly according to seniority, and there are no women at all in the top positions. The most senior woman in both centres is the Assistant Station Director.

Across all eighteen production centres in Doordarshan only one of the station directors—who play a crucial role in decision-making—is female. At higher levels, there were hardly any women at all in the organization. No woman has ever become Director-General or Secretary for Information and Broadcasting.

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TABLE 1. Distribution of women and men
in gazetted staff posts: Delhi and Madras, 1985

| Post | Delhi | | Madras | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-----|--------|-----|
| | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| Director | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Chief News Editor | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Superintending Engineer | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| Deputy Director (Programmes) | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Deputy Director (Administration) | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Station Engineer | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| News Editor | 0 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Assistant Station Director | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Assistant News Editor | 1 | 6 | 1 | 0 |
| Assistant Station Engineer | 0 | 16 | 0 | 6 |
| Audience Research Officer | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Assistant Engineer | 2 | 26 | 0 | 15 |
| Hindi Officer | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Programme Executive | 0 | 10 | 0 | 2 |
| Administrative Officer | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| All posts | 4 | 81 | 3 | 32 |
| Percentage | 5 | 95 | 9 | 91 |

Table 1 shows very few women among the engineering staff in Delhi and Madras. Additional data (Table 2) reveal an extremely lop-sided distribution among engineers in Doordarshan as a whole.

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TABLE 2. Distribution of women and men among engineering staff

| Category | Women | Men | Total |
|----------------------------|-------|-----|-------|
| Engineer-in-Chief | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Chief Engineer | 0 | 12 | 12 |
| Superintending Engineer | 1 | 94 | 95 |
| Station Engineer | 5 | 300 | 305 |
| Assistant Station Engineer | 2 | 406 | 408 |
| All categories | 8 | 813 | 821 |
| Percentage | 1 | 99 | 100 |

Production categories

Turning to the staff artistes category, 1982 is the latest year for which comprehensive data are available. Table 3 shows the distribution of women and men among senior-level staff artistes.

TABLE 3. Distribution of women and men among staff artistes: fifteen production centres, 1982

| Post | Women | Men | Total |
|---------------------------|-------|-----|-------|
| Television News | | | |
| Correspondent | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Camera Operator (Grade I) | 0 | 17 | 17 |
| Producer (Grade I) | 7 | 15 | 22 |
| Producer (Grade II) | 53 | 139 | 192 |
| News Presenter | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| Presentation Announcer | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| Graphics Supervisor | 1 | 9 | 10 |
| Reference Officer | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Film Processing Officer | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| All posts | 67 | 194 | 261 |
| Percentage | 26 | 74 | 100 |

Women and media decision-making

It is worth noting that women account for a relatively high proportion of producers. Of the Grade I producers (i.e. the senior level), about a third are women; at Grade II level 28 per cent are female. This is important because, compared with the other staff artiste categories the producers play a leading role in determining the content and format of programmes and thus can influence the portrayal of women and related subjects.

More recent data from Delhi and Madras enabled us to compare the number of staff artiste posts held by women in these two centres in 1982 and 1985. Table 4 shows that the proportion of female staff in Delhi was much lower in 1985 than it had been three years earlier. Apparently, many more men than women were recruited in the three-year period, primarily in the producer and camera-operator categories.

TABLE 4. Distribution of women and men staff artistes:
Delhi, 1982 and 1985

| Post | 1982 | | | 1985 | | |
|------------------------|-------|-----|-------|-------|-----|-------|
| | Women | Men | Total | Women | Men | Total |
| Camera | | | | | | |
| Operator I | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| Producer I | 4 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| Producer II | 10 | 17 | 27 | 14 | 25 | 39 |
| News Presenter | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Presentation | | | | | | |
| Announcer | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Graphics | | | | | | |
| Supervisor | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Reference | | | | | | |
| Officer | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Film Processing | | | | | | |
| Officer | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| All posts | 17 | 24 | 41 | 19 | 39 | 58 |
| Percentage | 41 | 59 | 100 | 33 | 67 | 100 |

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The Madras data showed a slight increase in the percentage of posts held by women (from 21 per cent in 1982 to 25 per cent in 1985). However, the numbers involved here are very small.

The overall statistical picture

Certain facts stand out clearly. In some categories—for example, engineers or camera operators—there are hardly any women. Senior positions such as Station Director and other gazetted posts showed very little representation of women.

It must, however, be stressed that about 28 per cent of producers are women. This is far from the 50 per cent ideal, but it is significant because the producer category is very important in terms of decision-making about programme content and presentation.

These figures must also be viewed in the context of the overall social and educational status of women in India. Literacy among Indian women is under 25 per cent (1981 figures), and only 23 per cent of the total work-force is female. In 1976, women accounted for just 3 per cent of central government employees, 26 per cent of schoolteachers and 18 per cent of college teachers. It is also true that very few women choose certain areas of study such as engineering or cinematography. In the light of this, it must be said that women's 28 per cent share of producers' posts is relatively high.

Behind the statistics: attitudes and perceptions

Officially, there is no discrimination on the basis of sex in India. The constitution and the government's personnel policies guarantee equality of treatment. But the formal legal position does not rule out the possibility of subtle sex bias or the existence of 'invisible barriers' in various parts of the system. The questionnaire that was sent to all senior staff in Doordarshan was designed to bring to light any gaps between official policy and de facto obstacles to the career development of women in Indian television.

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The questionnaire aimed to establish: (a) perceptions of women's access to and participation in employment in television; (b) attitudes towards women employees; (c) barriers to women's participation arising from social/domestic, organizational, attitudinal and other factors; (d) proposals for increasing the number of women employed; and (e) biographical data of respondents.

Of the 119 people who replied to the questionnaire just 19 (16 per cent) were women. Although this is probably roughly in line with their proportion of senior-level posts, the fact that in numerical terms so few respondents were women is a serious limitation of the study. Table 5 shows the distribution of respondents according to area of work.

TABLE 5. Distribution of questionnaire respondents by area of work

| Area of work | Women | Men | Total |
|-----------------|-------|-----|-------|
| Producers | 14 | 51 | 65 |
| Engineers | 0 | 34 | 34 |
| Administrators | 2 | 10 | 12 |
| Researchers | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| All respondents | 19 | 100 | 119 |
| Percentage | 16 | 84 | 100 |

The biographical details supplied by respondents revealed some interesting differences between the women and the men. Although all the respondents were over 25 years old the women were, relatively speaking, somewhat younger: a third were under 35, compared with a quarter of the men. Marital status was a more important differentiating factor: a third of the women were unmarried, compared with only a tenth of the men. And of those who *were* married, the women were much more likely to have small families: almost half of the married women had either no children or only one, against less than a third of the married men. Finally, the women were better educated: three-quarters had post-graduate qualifications, compared with just over one-

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third of the men. But most of the women (80 per cent) had confined their studies to the arts disciplines, while more than half of the men had followed courses in sciences, commerce or engineering.

Work experience of women and men

The first part of the questionnaire was primarily designed to investigate the individual work experience of senior-level television employees, and to highlight any important differences between women and men. The vast majority (around 90 per cent) said that they regularly had to work beyond office hours. However, men reported more frequent after-hours work: three-quarters (compared with just under half the women) said this was necessary at least three days a week. On the other hand, women were much more likely to take work home (almost two-thirds, compared with 41 per cent of men), and to do so frequently: half (compared with 28 per cent of the men) took work home at least three days a week. This is a first indication of one of the most important differences between women and men: the relative impact of domestic responsibilities on their professional lives.

The questionnaire presented twenty-eight statements, related to various aspects of work in Doordarshan, with which respondents were asked to 'agree' or 'disagree'. Table 6 lists these statements and shows the number of women and men who agreed with each. Although the number of female respondents is small, percentages have been calculated and are listed to enable immediate comparison of the women's responses with those of the men.

The responses indicate that in some respects there is a clear difference between women and men. The most important of these is the fact that women considered social and domestic responsibilities difficult to reconcile with their careers. Attention is especially drawn to statements 2, 3 and 17. Another difference relates to male and female employees' perceptions of the participation of women in the organization (in particular, statements 25, 26 and 28). More men thought that the proportion of women staff members had significantly increased, and believed that the

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TABLE 6. Responses to statements relating to work experience
(percentages in brackets)

| Statement | Agree | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | Women (N = 19) | Men (N = 100) |
| 1. My domestic responsibilities make any extra office work very difficult. | 8 (42) | 39 |
| 2. My domestic responsibilities prevent me from taking certain jobs, e.g. shift duties in the evening. | 9 (47) | 27 |
| 3. I am willing to go on transfer. | 5 (26) | 46 |
| 4. I am willing to go on transfer only if it is on promotion. | 6 (32) | 35 |
| 5. My spouse [wife/husband] will take strong objection if I am transferred. | 8 (42) | 36 |
| 6. I will not accept promotion with transfer if my spouse objects. | 6 (32) | 24 |
| 7. My family members will take strong objection if I am transferred. | 8 (42) | 42 |
| 8. I do not like to be transferred mainly because of economic considerations. | 10 (53) | 61 |
| 9. I like to work in a situation where I do my own work rather than supervise others. | 11 (58) | 59 |
| 10. I like to work in a situation where I can get work done through others like an executive. | 10 (53) | 49 |
| 11. My views are quite easily accepted by my subordinates. | 18 (95) | 87 |
| 12. My views are quite easily accepted by my superiors. | 14 (74) | 76 |
| 13. My views are quite easily accepted by my colleagues. | 13 (68) | 91 |
| 14. I would like my work to be assessed by some other method than annual confidential reports. | 18 (95) | 92 |
| 15. I will get faster promotion if merit is taken into account rather than seniority. | 17 (89) | 94 |
| 16. I get adequate opportunities to express my views, suggestions, etc. | 12 (63) | 65 |

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| Statement | Agree | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | Women (N = 19) | Men (N = 100) |
| 17. I find it difficult to take up duties which require staying out, going out-station, etc. | 9 (47) | 29 |
| 18. My views, suggestions, etc., are generally accepted within the organization. | 17 (89) | 85 |
| 19. I normally refrain from expressing my views because I feel they will not be accepted. | 3 (16) | 19 |
| 20. I have found it easier to work under women officers. | 1 (5) | 18 |
| 21. I have found women officers less considerate than men officers. | 10 (53) | 27 |
| 22. There should be reservation of jobs for women. | 4 (21) | 21 |
| 23. The present method of assigning jobs takes into account my likes and dislikes. | 8 (42) | 31 |
| 24. The present method of assessing my work does proper justice to my abilities. | 8 (42) | 32 |
| 25. Special efforts should be made to employ more women in Doordarshan. | 8 (42) | 30 |
| 26. The proportion of women employees at decision-making level has increased significantly. | 5 (26) | 46 |
| 27. There are less women employees in television because of discrimination against them. | 0 | 7 |
| 28. There are less women employees in television because very few qualified women are available. | 5 (26) | 53 |

comparatively small number of female employees was due to the fact that relatively few qualified women were available. More women wanted special efforts to increase the number of women employees. However, it is noteworthy that no woman and only seven men considered discrimination to be a reason for the lower proportion of women among staff members.

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Not much difference was observed in perceptions of their own effectiveness, their job satisfaction, or their relationships with colleagues or subordinates. Statements 23 and 25 indicate greater satisfaction on the part of women as far as organizational procedures are concerned. However, a point of some significance is that while quite a large number of women considered women executives to be less considerate, more men said they found it easier to work under women officers (statements 20 and 21).

Attitudes to women executives

Another set of statements investigated attitudes to women—as colleagues, and as employees in general; the statements also looked at the perceived effects of an increase in the number of women employed at Doordarshan.

TABLE 7. Attitudes to women working in television
(percentages in brackets)

| Statement | Agree | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | Women (N = 19) | Men (N = 100) |
| 1. My work is facilitated when I work with subordinates of my own sex. | 3 (16) | 25 |
| 2. My work style is the same with male and female subordinates. | 19 (100) | 87 |
| 3. My work is hampered when working with female superiors. | 2 (11) | 22 |
| 4. My job would have been easier if I had belonged to the opposite sex. | 4 (21) | 16 |
| 5. I find it difficult to admonish or scold a subordinate belonging to the opposite sex. | 1 (5) | 47 |
| 6. It becomes much more difficult for me to say 'no' to the boss if the boss belongs to the opposite sex. | 0 | 14 |
| 7. Subordinates of the opposite sex understand me better. | 2 (11) | 23 |
| 8. When the boss is of the opposite sex, I am not properly understood. | 2 (11) | 15 |

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| Statement | Agree | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | Women (N = 19) | Men (N = 100) |
| 9. Work is better coordinated when I work with colleagues of my own sex. | 3 (16) | 41 |
| 10. My work is increased when colleagues of the opposite sex work with me. | 2 (11) | 38 |
| 11. Other things being equal I would employ a man rather than a woman. | 5 (26) | 44 |
| 12. Female officers are more autocratic, dictatorial than male officers. | 4 (21) | 33 |
| 13. Female officers' decisions are usually not their own. | 2 (11) | 42 |
| 14. Female officers' decisions are less likely to be implemented. | 3 (16) | 30 |
| 15. Female officers are slow at decision-making. | 0 | 42 |
| 16. Efficiency of the organization will suffer if there are more female officers. | 1 (5) | 50 |
| 17. Programme quality will improve if more women producers are employed. | 10 (53) | 18 |
| 18. There will be more democratic functioning if more women are employed. | 9 (47) | 27 |
| 19. The image of Doordarshan will improve if more women are employed. | 5 (26) | 20 |
| 20. Unless special efforts are made the proportion of women employees at higher level will not improve. | 10 (53) | 53 |
| 21. Male officers are better informed about rules, regulations, procedures, etc., than female officers. | 8 (42) | 56 |
| 22. Women often take advantage of man's soft corner, chivalry, etc. | 7 (37) | 77 |
| 23. Women are generally exploited by men. | 7 (37) | 30 |
| 24. Men are generally exploited by women. | 2 (11) | 43 |
| 25. With a higher proportion of women in creative and decision-making positions, programmes will show a more balanced perspective than at present. | 12 (63) | 32 |

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The responses in Table 7 show clear differences between women's and men's perceptions of the effectiveness of female executives. A large number of men considered women officers to be more autocratic, slow at reaching decisions, incapable of independent decision-making, and unlikely to have their decisions implemented; men also believed that organizational efficiency would suffer if there were more women executives (statements 12 to 16). Male officers were considered, particularly by men but also by a considerable number of women, to be more knowledgeable about rules and regulations (statement 21). On the other hand (statement 18) women tended to believe that an increase in the number of women employees would result in a more democratic system.

A very large number of male employees felt that women take advantage of men's 'chivalry', and quite a few women also believed this. The same number of women said that female workers are generally exploited by men (and just under a third of the men agreed with this). But one of the most unexpected findings was the high proportion of men (43 per cent) who stated the opposite: that male workers are generally exploited by women. This view, however, was not shared by many of the female respondents (statements 22 to 24).

In relation to programme content it is worth noting (statements 17 and 25) that a much larger number of women thought this would be affected by an increase in the proportion of female employees. Programme quality would improve, they believed, and a more balanced perspective would emerge from the overall programme output.

Finally, responses to a number of statements (for example, 2, 5, 9, 10 and 11) indicate that many men seem to prefer working with male colleagues. They say that this makes for better co-ordination, and that the amount of work they have to do increases when they are working with women. Apparently, some men are not comfortable in their professional relationships with women: they find it difficult to admonish or criticize junior female colleagues, and in some cases they are conscious of a change in working style. All things being equal, then, a high percentage of men (44 per cent) say they would employ a man rather than a woman.

*Invisible barriers: women at senior levels in Indian television**Perceived obstacles, appropriate jobs*

A third set of statements concerned perceived obstacles to the appointment of women to managerial positions in television. Nine obstacles were listed and the respondents were asked to select the four which they considered most important. Again there were some significant differences in the perceptions of women and men (Table 8).

TABLE 8. Perceived obstacles to appointment of women at senior levels (percentages in brackets)

| Perceived importance | | | Agree | |
|----------------------|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | | | Women (N = 19) | Men (N = 100) |
| Women | Men | Obstacle | | |
| 1 | 2 | Social and domestic reasons | 17 (89) | 75 |
| 2 | 3 | Lack of trained women | 12 (63) | 68 |
| 3 | 9 | Selection committees consist mainly of men | 11 (58) | 5 |
| 4 | 5 | Not many women enter this profession in the first place | 10 (52) | 52 |
| 5 | 7 | Men employees do not take very kindly to it | 6 (32) | 8 |
| 6 | 6 | Women are not willing to take up jobs of this type | 5 (26) | 29 |
| 6 | 1 | Women expect too many concessions, special treatment after they are employed | 5 (26) | 77 |
| 8 | 7 | It is a man's world | 4 (21) | 8 |
| 8 | 4 | Women take leave too often | 4 (21) | 58 |

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There was agreement about the importance of social and domestic factors, and both sexes regarded lack of training as a serious obstacle for women. But men considered the main problem to be women's expectation of concessions and special treatment (a view shared by very few women). On the other hand, women believed the predominantly male composition of selection committees to be an important obstacle, though hardly any men singled this out. Women were also somewhat more inclined to believe that men did not take kindly to the appointment of women at senior levels.

Perceptions, primarily among women, of the selection process as an obstacle—in terms of both mechanical (i.e. composition) and attitudinal (i.e. men not 'taking kindly') factors—relate to another group of questionnaire responses. Fifteen television jobs were listed and respondents were asked to indicate those which

TABLE 9. Suitability of jobs for women in television (percentages in brackets)

| Job | Considered unsuitable | |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| | Women (N = 19) | Men (N = 100) |
| Camera Operator | 9 (47) | 76 |
| Shift Engineer | 9 (47) | 59 |
| Agriculture Programme Producer | 2 (11) | 54 |
| Director General, Doordarshan | 0 | 38 |
| Producer (News) | 3 (16) | 32 |
| Secretary, Information and Broadcasting | 2 (11) | 30 |
| Station Director | 1 (5) | 27 |
| In-Charge of Commercials | 3 (16) | 17 |
| Controller of Programmes | 0 | 17 |
| Producer (Plays) | 1 (5) | 13 |
| Programme Executive | 0 | 10 |
| Women's Programme Producer | 0 | 5 |
| Production Assistant | 0 | 4 |
| News-reader | 0 | 3 |
| Programme Announcer | 0 | 2 |

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they considered particularly unsuitable for women. Table 9 shows the responses, in ascending order of suitability as perceived by men. In other words Camera Operator was the job that most men considered unsuitable for women, while Programme Announcer was considered unsuitable by the fewest men.

In the view of both sexes the 'least suitable' jobs for women were the technical ones—Camera Operator and Shift Engineer—although relatively fewer women than men considered these unsuitable. Similarly, women were less likely than men to regard certain production specialisms—agriculture and news—as unsuitable. However, attention is specially drawn to higher management positions such as Controller of Programmes, Station Director, Director-General and Secretary for Information and Broadcasting. Hardly any women considered these 'unsuitable' jobs, but quite a few men obviously found it difficult to accept the idea of women in such posts.

Advantages and disadvantages of women as television employees

The questionnaire also gave people an opportunity to state freely (that is, without having to choose between pre-set responses) their views about the advantages and disadvantages of employing women in television. Again, the opinions expressed reveal some important differences in the attitudes of women and men.

Taking first the 'benefits' side, female respondents tended to stress the fact that women were more conscientious, hard-working, honest and responsible. These points were also made by many of the male respondents. However, men also emphasized that women employees were systematic, disciplined and obedient or polite in their approach to work, and that this would result in better working relationships. While some of the women did mention the more systematic and disciplined work approach of their sex, it was not specifically set in the context of 'obedience' or absence of 'insubordination'. Many men said that women could bring a different perspective to programme-making, especially in relation to women's and children's programmes (an area not stressed by the female respondents). Women did talk about women having a more developed aesthetic sense, more creativity and being better

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at public relations, and one or two said that women brought glamour to the organization.

However, it tended to be the men who emphasized 'glamour' as one of the advantages of employing women. Of the ten male administrators, one referred to women employees as 'window decorations' and another said that good-looking people were always welcome. But it was the engineers (of whom there were thirty-four) who made some of the most revealing comments. For example, 'men employees will work overtime and put in more work' when there is a 'screen beauty' around; and 'men feel elated to be working with selected beauties', although this may lead to the 'exploitation of male officers', and so on.

Turning to the 'disadvantages' of employing women, the most frequently mentioned problem—by both women and men—was the impact of social or domestic responsibilities. These were said, by both sexes, to make it difficult for women to do shift work or to accept a job with unpredictable hours, to go out-of-station for any length of time, to accept transfers and so on. Other problems emphasized by women were their unsuitability for physically strenuous work (also stressed by almost all of the—exclusively male—engineers), and the prejudices of men. One woman mentioned health problems and one referred to the 'buttering, fluttering nature' of women. Men, on the other hand, stressed the view that women were too often on leave, expected special treatment, were unable to initiate independent projects, and could not take decisions, especially harsh decisions. Some men also said that if more women were employed, groupism and favouritism would increase.

By and large, these views reflect the points which emerged from the earlier sections of the questionnaire. They were further reinforced by the in-depth personal interviews. These were carried out with seventeen Doordarshan staff, ten in Bombay and seven in Delhi. In each case, the Head of the Centre (Station Manager) was interviewed. Both of these were men. Five Deputy Directors (of whom two were women) and ten producers (six female, four male) were also interviewed. Thus altogether eight of the Doordarshan interviewees were women, and nine were men. In addition, two interviews were conducted with women not on the staff of

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Doordarshan. One was a free-lancer, with experience of working for Doordarshan; the other was a feminist activist.

There was almost unanimous agreement that women are more hard-working and serious, that they are more creative and sensitive, and indeed that they prefer creative jobs to administration, which is seen as involving more tension and responsibility. The administrative path in television is also likely to require transfer, which creates special difficulties for women. Almost all felt that certain types of programme—for example, cultural magazines, women's and children's programmes—are more suited to women producers, who will handle them with a greater sense of responsibility. One person said that 'women are more down-to-earth and have a humane approach', which was seen as an advantage.

Many mentioned the impact of social and domestic duties on women's career development. For example, it was pointed out that a woman's chance of promotion will be less if she is unable to accept a transfer. The social structure was also cited as a reason for the relatively few women in this field, since women lack professional training, are encouraged into early marriage and so on. However, there was a general feeling that in the coming few years there would be a substantial increase in women's employment. Many pointed out that in higher-level administrative posts, the people now employed were those who had already gained considerable professional experience and had years of service. Since not many women had been recruited, say twenty years ago, this explained the relatively small number of women employees currently at top levels. It was only in the last ten years that many women had entered this field as productive participants, so an increase of women in the top jobs would be seen only in the future. One interviewee said that what was involved was very basic social change, which would not happen overnight: it was going to be a slow process.

On the negative side, one female interviewee said that although professional media women were very conscientious, women working at lower levels had no professional ethics. Another response was that most women in television came from upper-middle-class backgrounds and therefore had no commitment to work, either at community or at national level.

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Some said that because women are not the sole contributors to the family budget, they do not take their work seriously. However, this was not a commonly held view, and many stated that women were very committed to their work. In fact, three out of the six women interviewed in Bombay said that women had to work twice as hard as men to prove their mettle, and so had to set higher standards. This point was also made by both of the interviewees who were outside the Doordarshan structure. To compete with men, they said, women have to be more than equal. A position which would be filled by any man of average ability would go to a woman only if she was extraordinarily able.

Overall, then, the interview data confirmed many of the findings of the questionnaires. Most of the women interviewed preferred to develop their careers within the creative field rather than to move into administration. Women talked of some of the social and domestic responsibilities that they invariably have to carry. And while women were, on the whole, quite contented with their work, some did mention lack of sensitivity to their problems. Some also said that women have to work much harder to prove that they are equal. One point which emerged quite clearly was that women thought that the organization type-cast them; and indeed the men did seem to believe that women actually preferred to work only in certain areas. Although most men did not suggest that women employees were a liability, they did regard women as 'suitable' for only certain types of work.

Attitudes and invisible barriers

Finally, what conclusions can be drawn on the basis of these attitudes, beliefs and opinions which have been expressed by the women and men working in Indian television? The question to be asked in relation to attitudes and opinions is not so much whether they reflect 'reality', whatever that may be. The important question is what effect these attitudes and perceptions—in the present case, concerning the strengths and weaknesses of male and female employees—will have on the behaviour of the men and women concerned.

For example, some significant points emerged from responses

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to the attitude statements listed in Tables 6 and 7. Although neither women nor men considered 'discrimination' an important reason for the low proportion of women among television employees, almost half of the female respondents felt that special efforts should be made to increase the participation of women. But almost half of the men believed that women's share of television jobs had *already* increased. Men considered women to be not only more autocratic but incapable of independent decision-making and of implementing their decisions. A large number of men considered women to be taking advantage of men's chivalry. Men felt that their work-load increased while working with women. And many men would rather employ a man than a woman, other things being equal.

Now, if these are the views men hold about women, how could they not operate as 'invisible barriers'? Moreover, if men believe that the main obstacle in the way of women's career development is their tendency to expect special treatment (Table 8), could not this belief in itself be an invisible obstacle? And if men regard certain senior management jobs as 'unsuitable' for women (Table 9), how could this not be another invisible hurdle? Similarly, if women consider women executives to be less considerate, or if they see the composition of selection committees as an important obstacle, or feel that social and domestic responsibilities are fundamental barriers how can these factors be ignored? Again, the truth or reality behind these beliefs is a separate question. That such views exist is a fact to be reckoned with and to be taken into account in any future plans.

Breaking down barriers: the future for women in television

More than half of both the women and men who returned the questionnaire agreed that, unless special efforts were made, the proportion of women employed at senior levels in Indian television would not increase (Table 7). Somewhat paradoxically, however, *less than half* of both men and women agreed that special

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efforts *should* be made to employ more women (Table 6). In particular, it seems, there is agreement that in the recruitment process no 'favours' should be done to women applicants: four-fifths of both the women and the men were opposed to the idea of 'reserving' jobs for women (Table 6). What, then, can be done to increase women's share of senior jobs? Various suggestions were made by the questionnaire respondents.

Efforts to increase the proportion of women employees

Apart from the need to improve and extend the training available to women, few concrete proposals were made by the male respondents. Training in media skills and office administration, reservation of places in training institutes, and improvement of the general education system were the most frequent measures suggested. Less tangible suggestions were that men should avoid male-chauvinist attitudes when selecting staff, that women should take the initiative in improving sex equality, that more opportunities and encouragement should be given to female staff. One or two mentioned additional financial support and the provision of accommodation in cases of transfer. Several of the men recommended reserving jobs for women. Two specific suggestions were that more women should be included in selection committees, and that a committee be appointed to study the entire problem.

Many of the women emphasized the need for training, as did the men; but the women also called for retraining when women's careers are interrupted due to domestic responsibilities. Women included in their suggestions the establishment of broadly conceived educational programmes. These should be intended, on the one hand, for women, to help allay their fears about working in new areas, and to make them aware of various job opportunities, and, on the other hand, for men, to encourage them to treat women as equals in the home, and to educate employers to avoid type-casting of women. Another area for effort, according to the women, is that of child-care: facilities such as crèches should be provided, and other measures pertaining to women's role as mothers should be improved. Equal representation of women on

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selection committees was a further suggestion. Reservation of jobs for women, and making jobs for women non-transferable were also proposed, though in each case only by one woman.

Recommendations arising from the study

In the light of these proposals, and of the findings of the study as a whole, a number of recommendations can be put forward. These are not presented as panaceas but as starting points, clues to which were provided in the research data. The recommendations cover long-term proposals, relating to broader aspects of the problem; and short-term measures aimed at solving specific difficulties.

Long-term proposals

1. The problem of women's employment in television should be seen as part of the larger issue of the status of women. Energy should be directed towards improving the social, educational and economic status of women in general. This will also help improve the situation of women in broadcasting organizations.
2. Efforts should be made to increase the social awareness—of both men and women—of the issue of sex equality. The implications of inequalities in the media—in terms of content and employment—should be spelt out.
3. A lobby or pressure group of media personnel should be created. The initiative for this has to come from women employees.
4. Facilities for training, refresher courses, and orientation programmes for women should be improved.
5. Structural changes in the organization to take account of the special needs of women are necessary. Efforts should be made to find out what changes are required. Brainstorming, discussions, seminars, expert committees, and dialogue with different groups are among the possible methods of approach.
6. Orientation of employees is necessary so as to develop healthy attitudes towards women and the issue of sex equality.

*Women and media decision-making**Short-term measures*

1. Lack of trained women is a genuine problem. The reasons for this should be determined and women should be encouraged to train and take up employment in diversified fields. This will also help to break down stereotypes.
2. There should be refresher courses for women whose careers are interrupted by social/domestic responsibilities.
3. Special training/orientation for women in administrative matters—rules, regulations, procedures—may be required.
4. Women should be represented on selection/promotion committees. Selection and promotion should not only be fair, they should also be seen to be fair.
5. Maternity leave is not a favour, it is a woman's right. It should not be a barrier to her professional growth, either directly or indirectly.
6. If child-care is assumed to be the responsibility of women, adequate facilities such as crèches, child-care centres, and so on, should be provided by the organizations.
7. Many men believe that women are suited to, or that they prefer, certain jobs, while many women believe that the organization type-casts them. The issue should be studied in depth and corrective measures taken accordingly.
8. For social and domestic reasons women find themselves in a predicament when promotion is linked with transfers. Either they cannot take the promotion or they tend to take only those jobs which do not involve transfers thus restricting their scope. The organization has to show enough imagination and flexibility to take this into account, in such a way that women are not penalized.
9. A common belief among men is that women take leave too often. Women have denied this. They maintain that they take leave to care for children or because of other domestic responsibilities; they declare themselves to be honest, serious, hard-working and not given to absenteeism. Men concede the latter points but the first point is still held against women. The issue should be studied in depth and the facts should be determined. Men need to be made aware of women's dual role.

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10. A committee should be appointed to study the entire issue of women in broadcasting. It should examine the problem in its totality and suggest detailed guidelines to improve the status of women.

Lessons from the research

The extent to which impressions may diverge from facts was one of the most telling lessons learned from the research. Most male respondents had the impression that the proportion of women in senior television jobs was already quite high. In any case, they were convinced that it had increased considerably over the years. The facts available did not support this impression. There were very few women in higher managerial positions. Only in certain categories such as production assistants and producers were women, relatively speaking, well represented. Other categories, including engineers and camera operators, had practically no women at all. So much for impressions.

False impressions could be corrected by facts. But that was only a beginning. The reasons for the unequal distribution of women and men had to be determined. Even more important was to understand what people meant when they talked about the absence of—and need for—a ‘women’s dimension’ in television. Was the presence of women important only in a symbolic sense, to fulfil some inherent desire for an equitable distribution of women and men in all spheres of activity? Was it, therefore, simply a matter of insisting that women had a right to more jobs, or was it a belief that more women in higher jobs could introduce a new perspective? I think it was the latter. I think the issue was that sensitivity and perceptiveness were found to be lacking. And that the presence of more women would begin to change this.

Lack of trained women is a genuine problem which has to be faced. But more trained women alone will not be sufficient. One of the most important invisible barriers observed was the stereotyping or type-casting of women in terms of the jobs they could and could not do. Both women and men held these stereotyped views. Moreover women did not appear to be discontented with their present organizational lot. The fact that a very small number

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of women responded to the questionnaire, in a study which was of primary interest to them, was in itself revealing. Women did not seem to be concerned over the issue. Apathy on the part of women and lack of enlightenment on the part of men were serious problems.

It became clear, of course, that the obstacles lay not in rules but somewhere else. There was no rule which discriminated on the basis of sex. But this was not to say that the rules favoured both sexes equally. For example, the rules did not take into account the special needs or problems of women. Maternity leave is recognized as a right. Looking after children was assumed to be a woman's responsibility. That a woman's social and domestic responsibilities were greater than those of a man was a fact accepted without question. But rules, organizational work-styles and individual personalities lacked the imagination, flexibility and predisposition necessary to respond to these conditions. Taken together they all—consciously or unconsciously—worked against women. It was this invisible barrier that was the most crucial of all.

The issue of women in television cannot be isolated from the larger issue of the socio-economic status of women in general. Many of the problems are not specific to the field of broadcasting, nor are they confined to any particular country or part of the world. In a study involving thirty organizations in nine European countries, Gallagher (1984) found that women accounted for less than a third (30 per cent) of the television workforce. In programme production, most of the women were carrying out junior, production-assistant type work, whereas the majority of men were in the higher-level jobs of Producer or Director. Many of the occupational patterns and attitudes described in the Indian situation are identical to those found in this earlier European study.

Looking at the problem from another angle, it must be emphasized that in India only 25 per cent of women are literate (compared with a male literacy rate of 47 per cent) and that women constitute only 23 per cent of the nation's paid labour force. Women are in a minority in almost all the professions. Some of the figures have already been quoted. To these we could add that in 1976 only 10 per cent of science-and-technology employees were female. Such figures indicate that inequality exists in many other areas

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and is a broader, more general problem than that of discrimination against women in a specific area such as broadcasting. This is not to suggest that a start could not be made to tackle the problem in broadcasting or indeed in any other individual field. It is, however, meant to emphasize that the issue cannot be looked at in isolation. It must be examined, understood and attacked in its totality.

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Women in media management and decision-making: a study of radio in Ecuador

Nelly de Camargo

The social context

Working women in Latin America

In Latin America the situation of women working in executive or decision-making positions in the media varies little from that in other parts of the world. A consistent picture emerges from many studies which have been summarized by researchers such as Busby (1974) and Janus (1976). The structure and content of the mass media reflect and reinforce a social status quo in which women are regarded as second-class citizens.

Men occupy the most important positions throughout the mass media of Latin America—newspapers, magazines, radio, television, advertising organizations, and so on. This 'importance' derives not only from their place in the organizational hierarchies, but also from the status attached to their assigned activities: employment, economics, science, history, philosophy. Women's assignments, on the other hand, are generally limited to areas of activity associated with their domestic role or their sexuality: social events, children, health, and the like.

To a great extent Latin American women tend to accommodate to the existing order, particularly in the less industrially developed countries where the traditional values of agrarian society maintain a strong grip on the definition of acceptable roles for women and

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men, and where heavy sanctions are imposed on those who break the rules.

In these societies, even if they are visibly in the process of change, conflicting pressures mean that women are obliged to work, but also to behave as if they were still economically dependent. Most of them cannot spend any of their wages without their husbands' permission. They are obliged to work twice as hard as before since a man will never admit publicly that his wife's contribution to the family budget is necessary, nor will he help her in her domestic 'obligations' (cooking, cleaning, ironing, child-care). Moreover, in paid employment women are obliged to accept part-time work, less important assignments, and lower pay than any man would accept for the same job, because convention maintains that their primary role is to take care of their homes, husbands and children. This leads to the assumption that they may be absent from work frequently and for prolonged periods, for all kinds of reasons related to their family responsibilities.

Ironically, in many such societies working women are actually the family's only source of income, with very little contribution coming from their partners. But they are expected to remain silent about this, just as they are expected to do about other inequalities and iniquities. Traditional cultural values play such a strong part in socialization that even university-educated executive women hesitate, when interviewed, to take an open position on issues raised by the sex-role question. They do not want to be regarded as 'feminists', mocked by their male colleagues, ostracized by their friends or, in some cases, subjected to heavier punishment by their own partners at home.

Working women in Ecuador

A report published by the Centro Ecuatoriano para la Promoción y Acción de la Mujer (CEPAM) in 1983 shows that 60 per cent of Ecuadorian women are rural workers. With the introduction of new methods of farm administration, thousands of families have had to leave their land, migrating either to less fertile areas or to the urban periphery. When these areas are unable to yield enough to support the family, migration into the cities is the next step.

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Even though the industrial sector of the country is growing, the role of the female industrial worker is considered less important than that of her male counterpart. Poorly qualified and unskilled, she is held back not only by traditional attitudes but by the education system, which provides little technical training for women.

Despite the existence of a National Labour Code that recognizes the principle of equal pay for equal work, the wage structure discriminates against women. CEPAM regards this as an inevitable reflection of tradition and culture, in which the woman's wage is considered as 'complementary' to that of the main provider who is, of course, the man.

Although women are formally part of the central trade unions, no consistent actions have yet been developed to solve the problems of working women. Their participation in the unions is feeble, partly because of their double burden (paid work and unpaid domestic work) and partly—and more important—because of '*machismo*, which is also noticeable among union leaders' (CEPAM, 1983).

Women in the Ecuadorian media

In Ecuador, as in any Latin American developing country, women working in radio and television are quite different from their sisters in the rural areas and on the urban periphery. They are urban women, who have always lived in the city.

Media work calls for certain kinds of ability and technical training not available to women in the two strata already described. This study is therefore concerned with how women came to be media workers: their career progression since leaving school, their qualifications, age, marital status and domestic commitments. It is also concerned with the female media employee's perception of herself and of her working relationships; her expectations and plans; her attitude to the organization for which she works and to her male colleagues; and how she judges herself in individual and social terms.

Human beings are greatly influenced by their perception of how others assess their performance. So our study, although about women, is also concerned with men's opinions.

*Women in media management and decision-making in Ecuador**Design of the study*

One of the most difficult tasks for any researcher in Latin America is to collect sound, already existing data. In the case of mass media organizations this is even more of a problem. Most of the quantitative information is considered 'classified' and is not disclosed. The reliability of qualitative data depends always on double-checking.

For the present study a sample of fourteen radio stations was selected. These are mostly privately owned; only one station belongs to the state and another to the Catholic Church. Five of them are local stations, and seven have regional coverage. Two broadcast nationally.

Within these fourteen stations, structured interviews were carried out with directors, managers and other categories of staff. Additional structured interviews, followed by in-depth inquiries, were conducted with a further fifty-seven media workers, of whom thirty were from the sample radio stations and twenty-seven were from other media. Most of the latter were chosen because they are respected professionals, women who for a long time have been fighting for their place in the sun—daily battles fought in the fear of losing their jobs, and interrupted from time to time by pregnancy, illness and, of course, unemployment.

All in-depth interviews were recorded. General data for each station were also obtained and written up. The qualitative nature of the study is reflected in the presentation of the data. The overall pattern is clear. Important characteristics stand out strongly, with small and insignificant variations. So there is no attempt to present highly quantitative findings or to use tests of statistical significance.

Although based on a sample of radio stations, the data can also be regarded as broadly representative of the situation in television.

Where are the women?

In this sample of fourteen radio stations, 90 per cent of the total workforce is male (Table 1). Four stations have no women among their personnel. No test of statistical significance is needed to prove the hypothesis that the media world is a man's world.

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TABLE 1. Men and women in radio

| Position | Men | Women | Total |
|--------------------|-----------|----------|-------|
| President | 13 | 1 | 14 |
| General Director | 14 | — | 14 |
| Executive Director | 11 | 3 | 14 |
| Manager | 13 | 1 | 14 |
| Artistic Director | 4 | — | 4 |
| Actor | 12 | 7 | 19 |
| Announcer | 63 | 6 | 69 |
| Record librarian | 21 | 3 | 24 |
| Sound mixer | 63 | 1 | 64 |
| Editor | 4 | — | 4 |
| Reporter | 39 | 4 | 43 |
| Journalist | 19 | 4 | 23 |
| Engineer | 14 | — | 14 |
| TOTAL | 290 (90%) | 30 (10%) | 320 |

Each of these organizations is headed by a President and, in all but one case, this is a man. The single exception is a member of the family who owns the station in question. Unlike the male presidents, all of whom have university degrees, this woman has received only a high-school education. At the next level of management (General Director) there are no women at all.

Women really begin to appear only at the third management level (Executive Director). Even here they fill only a fifth of the existing positions. All of these women have university degrees though their male counterparts have only a high-school education. There are no women among the four art directors.

Then come the operational levels: actors, announcers, record librarians, sound mixers and editors, reporters, journalists and engineers. Across all of these categories, the percentage of women remains at 10 per cent of the total. All workers at the operational level have elementary or high-school education, with the exception of journalists, where more than half (of both men and women) have a university degree. So do the engineers, but none of these are women.

*Women in media management and decision-making in Ecuador**Personnel policy*

In none of the organizations was there a set of official criteria which could be used in assessing staff, or in selecting individuals for promotion. However, the heads of human resources or personnel departments listed some items to be observed: job performance; interest in the development of the enterprise; help to the management in moments of crisis; appropriateness of training for the job held; years of service; educational qualifications.

When recruiting new employees, men are normally preferred. Other considerations are length and scope of professional experience, and previous performance in the same function at another station. There are some units with no women at all. In others, where there are just a few women, managers were asked how these women came to fill such positions. The explanations usually referred to a family link between these women and senior managers in the organizations.

For most categories of media work, there is no specialized training in Ecuador. People are attracted to the job and become professionals through on-the-job experience. Although most managers responded positively when asked about the usefulness of higher education or further training, it seems that in reality few organizational resources are devoted to this. One of the directors was quite explicit, saying that 'those opportunities are rare and only exceptionally given'.

Pregnancy and child-care seem to be crucial problems in the lives of working women. Data showed that in 1985, five women needed to take maternity leave, as permitted by law. After the birth of their children, however, only one of them returned to work; the other four were dismissed. In their interviews, the senior managers stressed that the policy of their organization was as 'stipulated by the law'. But employees' replies gave the issue a little more nuance: 'Women are afraid of becoming pregnant; they are pressured to leave, and usually not re-contracted.' There are exceptions, of course, one of them being the state-controlled organization.

Data on job recruitment and dismissal in these organizations during 1985 (Table 2) shows that women are significantly disad-

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TABLE 2. Men and women recruited to and dismissed from radio in 1985

| Position | Recruited | | Discharged | |
|--------------------|-----------|--------|------------|--------|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| President | 2 | — | 1 | 1 |
| Executive Director | 1 | — | — | — |
| Record librarian | — | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Announcer | 6 | — | 2 | 2 |
| Sound mixer | 12 | — | 10 | — |
| Journalist | 1 | — | — | — |
| Reporter | 2 | 1 | — | — |
| Secretary | — | — | — | 4 |
| TOTAL | 24 | 2 | 14 | 9 |

vantaged. They account for less than 10 per cent of recruits but for 40 per cent of those dismissed. This finding is not unusual in Latin America. Statistics in other economic areas show that women are the first to be laid off when any cuts in personnel are required. This is despite the fact that, according to the data, women are more likely than men to have officially recognized qualifications for the job: men are more frequently appointed on the basis of a 'generous' interpretation of their abilities.

The interviews tried to establish the reasons for this situation. Answers generally indicated that 'even though there is a law on the subject as well as a Ministry of Labour and Social Assistance, these institutions are sometimes not sufficiently effective. They cannot always monitor each organization and its respect for maternity and other social issues.'

Characteristics of media women

Aged between 18 and 45 (with only one exception), 75 per cent of the sample are single. The other 25 per cent have children and domestic obligations: cleaning, decorating, cooking, and so on (none reported having a servant). Their weekends are spent helping with the children's homework, and preparing food for the

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following week. Most describe themselves as 'columnists'—writing news and commenting on city events, the social scene, cultural or women's affairs, health and social problems.

The main areas of work for which women media executives are responsible include: the day-to-day supervision of personnel and of commercial operations; development of the organization's advertising; marketing operations and quality control of commercials; production, co-production and direction of programmes; supervision of documentation work for the news programmes (Table 3).

TABLE 3. Positions occupied by women in the Ecuadorian media

| Position | Number |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| President | 1 |
| Management (sub) | 4 |
| Accounting | 12 |
| Secretary | 19 |
| Announcer | 6 |
| Sound | 1 |
| Producer/Editor | 3 |
| Record librarian | 3 |
| Reporter | 4 |
| Journalist | 1 |
| Journalist (unionized) | 3 |
| TOTAL | 57 ¹ |

1. This total is different from that of Table 1 because two new categories linked to secretarial work have been added. Most women working in the media (63 per cent) actually do secretarial work—accounting and typing.

Some of these women write for the newspapers, generally on the subjects already mentioned (culture, religion, health, etc.). A few are exclusively involved with planning, organization and supervision of media activities. None takes ultimate decisions.

Most of the women interviewed worked at a variety of different jobs before becoming media professionals. All of them describe their life trajectory as being 'very dynamic'. The great majority did secretarial work after leaving school. Some of them, however,

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started their working life in the media, moving from one job to another, developing their abilities in line with the organization's needs. The ones who are now executives have a long story to tell, having climbed many steps to reach their present position.

Perceptions and opinions

Speaking of their relationship to their male colleagues, all of these women declare that '*machismo* is the greatest obstacle to the development of a woman's personality'. 'However bright the professional woman may be, her male colleagues will regard her as inferior.' 'Even when the man is professionally junior to the woman, he does not regard her as his superior.'

Some answers try to indicate the kinds of behaviour which women think help to minimize this problem: 'You have to be self-reliant and be totally in command of your job.' 'You must stimulate in colleagues a positive attitude.' 'You must promote harmony and supportive relationships among all.' Others describe the special or individual qualities that help them to get, and remain, where they are: 'The difficulty was to overcome timidity'; 'You need sensitivity and spontaneity'; 'Sensitivity helps you to climb.'

In short, in the perceptions of these women they are only where they are by a kind of male dispensation, won daily, not just through their professional competence but also their skills of persuasion which have been humbly learned in the course of the long history of the human race.

As to their perceptions of their own job performance, the women find it necessary to emphasize their strengths, in the face of men's stereotyped view of women's work. This means that they 'must employ all their energy and strength in many kinds of work throughout the day'. It involves 'showing that, as a woman, I'm capable of doing what is expected [because] since we are women, they do not consider us [as good as men]'. This stereotyped evaluation is applied almost universally to women although in certain cases it is more difficult to uphold: 'Since I am young, they know I can do it.'

Asked how they perceive their 'weaknesses', some women tend to accept these as inherent in the condition of being female:

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'Weakness is seen almost as a quality in the woman'; 'A woman suffers because she has to leave her home'; and for some it is hard 'to lose all weekends and parties' because of work. But some tend to see 'weakness' as a positive thing, stimulating a search for 'knowledge and opportunities to learn', or developing inner strength through 'the desire to overcome these weaknesses'.

In relation to their priorities as workers, women declare that in any case the priorities are established by men even when decisions should be taken by the woman. This leads to a passive response which goes no further than to try 'to follow orders to the best of my ability'. Others accept, in a spirit of self-defeat, that 'women have no priority . . . even when we deserve it'.

Obstacles to career development

Organizational priorities and individual aspirations

Regarding the recruitment process within media organizations, the executive women (the most senior in the sample) declared that there was no personnel policy. A few criteria did exist but the decisions, these women stressed, were not in their hands. However, women working at lower levels agreed that the organization should try to get 'the right people in the right places'.

Speaking of the possibilities for development and promotion within their organizations, some women emphasized actions to be taken by the respondent herself; others mentioned policies and procedures that should be developed by management. In the first group, typical comments were: 'I let people know what I think'; 'I feel very positive; as time goes by, there is a closer and more confident relationship between me and the bosses'; 'I wish I had been trained to fit in with the organization's policies'. In the second category the statements were sharper and more critical: 'Discrimination is responsible for the enormous imbalance between competence and experience, and salaries and hierarchical position'; 'Promotion and salaries should be related to length and scope of professional experience'; 'There is no explicit policy [and this means] authoritarianism'.

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In conclusion, most of the women in this sample of media workers see the lack of an explicit personnel policy development as a symptom of arbitrary authoritarianism. The bosses—the men—will decide who is going to be promoted, how much a person is going to earn, how long he or she will remain in the same position, whether he or she will remain at all. This sort of system, where merit is measured by personal criteria and instinct, helps to reinforce the insecurity of workers. For women this is just one more handicap to add to other experiences of inequality.

The aspirations and future plans of these women are linked mostly to *career*: 'get a better job', 'become a producer'; *professional development*: 'training to up-grade my skills', 'more study', 'specialized courses'; *self-reliance and recognition*: 'to work independently', 'to get personal satisfaction', 'to be recognized as a good professional'; and *political/ethical goals*: 'to do significant work', 'to help my people and my city'.

No one mentioned reaching a decision-making position or getting to the top, even though they recognize that this is the only key to their security.

Attitudes to women executives

The opinions of women about female executives in the media centre around two poles. The first consists of a highly positive and appreciative group who believe that: 'Executive women are entitled to admiration'; 'They are fertile seeds in a macho world'; 'Those women have intuition, ability, sensitivity and they are qualified: it's wonderful'; 'Women are making progress here, as in the whole of Latin America'; 'The ones I know are incisive and courageous . . . they are aggressive, capable; they are good!'

At the other extreme are those who dislike women in power: 'Unfortunately, I do not know anyone [good]'; 'They cannot make decisions'; 'I do not know a true executive woman'; 'Women are not fit to lead'; 'Women do not command respect . . . it is a joke'; 'I do not believe in women [doing that]'.

Relationships between the executive woman and other women working in the media are also mixed. Sometimes the woman manager is described as being sympathetic, agreeable, careful in

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her dealings with other women. But she can also be accused of authoritarianism, being over-demanding or superior in manner and imposing on her female colleagues.

In terms of preference for working with women or men, some women fall into the traditional mould of submission to men and competition with other women: 'It is easier to work with men'; 'Women gossip too much'; 'With men we must maintain a certain reserve and distance'. But the great majority believe in 'equal respect', saying there is 'no difference' between working with women and working with men. A final group prefers to work with women, because 'there is more solidarity' and 'we can talk with confidence'.

Beneath these statements there seems to be a feeling that certain things can be entrusted to a woman, others to a man. The long process of socialization again shows its strength. Even though at an intellectual level women recognize the qualities of other women, they were taught at an emotional level to rely and to depend on men. At the first difficulty, or reprimand by the female boss, resentment surges dangerously. The same does not happen with the male boss: it is his traditional role to command, to approve, to reprimand, to punish. And, of course, to judge performance and promote or dismiss staff.

This cultural dimension becomes clearer in the views expressed by women on promotion criteria. The boss, they said, should 'analyse and check ability and qualification', 'the merits of a person', 'individual qualities and perspectives' and 'attitudes'. Promotion should be 'through competition and merit', should be awarded 'with justice, considering the length of service'.

In other words, promotion should be based on professional criteria. Many women workers do not like, indeed fear, the idea of being submitted to the subjective male appraisal of their boss, who may have a tendency to 'forget the professional, and evaluate the female'. This tendency among male bosses creates more insecurity and competition among women. The contest has in fact already been lost by older women, whose fears may seriously damage the relationships between women in the working team or production group.

In their own way, male media workers also fear this 'competition'. Several mentioned 'the process used by women in order to

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promote themselves'. Distrust underlies many of the stereotyped attitudes expressed in statements by men, talking about women media workers.

I had a few women reporters, but all of them were awful! Women have no initiative. They are slow, have no sharpness. They don't fit into journalism and, particularly in politics, they are terrible [Radio Manager].

I don't know a single [woman photographer] who is capable. They are timid, uninformed about the event to be covered. When I assign them to cover police, political incidents, and similar events, they ask 'for the love of God' not to be sent, and will do anything to exchange the task with a male colleague, saying that 'these are subjects for men and not for ladies' [Newspaper editor].

I don't like to work with women in radio. They are quite irresponsible. They don't come to work regularly, and don't finish their tasks. They are unpopular with the listeners, particularly the women. . . . I have two daughters working with me. They tried the radio, but didn't succeed. Today, both are doing administrative work and doing it well. . . . It seems to me that their boy-friends dislike the whole thing, and I believe both will leave the organization [Director of radio station].

Radio is for men, because women have problems with working hours and radio is on twenty-four hours a day. They won't accept unpredictable working hours: They only want to do programmes for women. . . . And they do it so badly that they go home in the evenings with no regret. They have no persistence; they give up easily . . . it is a pity [Radio announcer].

When most of my women students enrol in the university they already have the idea that 'women are talented only in the areas of health, children, social events, cooking and such matters'. . . . Only exceptionally are they interested in economics, politics and so on. They say they are uninformed about those subjects. . . . Some believe that such subjects are for men, and they even add 'for old men' [Journalism teacher].

Women are good in the domestic sphere—taking care of the house, children, husband, the family, the home. When they leave this area, they become 'difficult', and normally forget their major responsibility: the home [Newspaper reader].

I've found women quite timid. There was one who came by, after three weeks' work, and told me: 'The subject [international] is difficult and

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dangerous; it's not for me. I am a woman with children and a family to care for. This editorial may cost me my life and I'm too young to die.' After that she took over the social column. Today she is one of the most sought-after journalists by the political and institutional jet set of Quito. . . . It was a pity, because she was such a wonderful writer! [Newspaper editor, international politics].

Pregnancy and child-care

Pregnancy, maternity and child-care are real concrete issues. Some of our interviewees did not want to talk about the subject. The great majority think that 'women have their rights and should use them', though they add 'carefully, of course'. 'Pregnancy and maternity affect the output of the woman worker. So does breast-feeding. But the worst thing is that women's minds and hearts become divided'; 'They worry because of having to feed and look after their children'; 'Generally it works against the interests of the organization'. On the positive side, women workers consider that maternity 'brings security to the woman'; that 'breast-feeding is healthy for the children, and for the mother as well' and that bearing children 'increases the woman's confidence'.

Child-care is a problem for women workers everywhere. In countries where specialized nurseries for small children are few or non-existent, and—where they do exist—are too expensive for many working women, children must be looked after at home by grandmothers, maids, aunts, neighbours and, sometimes, by older children.

When this help fails, women express their concern about the interference of child-care in their professional lives: the effect, they say, 'is evident'. It is 'impossible not to let it interfere even though it stops production'. 'It is awful.'

Perhaps that is the reason why only 25 per cent of the women in our sample had children. Normally when women become mothers they leave their job, or work part-time in any kind of job with convenient hours. It is only much later, when the children are at school, that they come back to work. Sometimes this is ten or fifteen years later. Often they never return.

To reconcile professional and domestic life is a major challenge

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for any woman worker. It requires the woman not only to be well balanced but also to be able to plan flexibly in both areas, and have the skill to sift and channel the information needed to maintain operational control of two institutions: home and job.

The conflicts and stress involved are well reflected in what these media women had to say about the ways in which they cope. 'I'm very organized'; 'I don't care about the house'; 'I concentrate only on my job'; 'It is quite difficult to be two people'; 'I do my best, but if failure is to occur, it will be at home'; 'I only think about the house after 6 p.m.'; 'It is very difficult . . . it's crazy'.

This issue is perhaps the one that needs most attention from government, unions and institutions interested in the country's development, if that development is really to include women in the labour force, especially women with young children. Women will never be the professionals for which their ability, aspirations, intelligence and training equip them, unless society finds ways of developing a working environment which takes account of the many tasks—consuming both time and emotional energy—which the woman worker at present performs unnoticed. By the same token, women must always insist that their rights, as recognized by law, are translated into practical measures and services.

Perceptions of professional media women

Media women believe that although some people regard them as 'capable and dedicated' and as 'professionals', society in general tends to see them as 'immature', 'fragile', 'incapable of taking command', 'lacking authority' and 'superficial'.

These words, used by the women themselves to describe how they think they and their work are looked on by society, illustrate the social and professional conflict which they experience. In and through their work they must maintain a delicate balance, trying to change the traditional social pattern in which it is assumed that women will submit to a higher (male) authority.

This conflict is also evident in the way they describe their male colleagues' attitudes to themselves, as professional media women. These attitudes—in the women's perception—range from sup-

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portive to downright negative. Some men are said to believe that 'women should be given more preparation—"grooming"—for key positions'; or that 'a trained woman should have the chance to succeed, if that is what she wants'. Others apparently take a more detached position, their evaluation of the woman's work depending 'on the area and the function performed'; and some seem reluctant to give praise, finding 'her work acceptable, but never outstanding'. Finally, however, there are men (in the lower social strata, according to some) who 'believe only in domestic work for women'. Some women are optimistic, believing that 'in time, men will see women differently'. But for the moment 'a woman must be twice as good, twice as tolerant, twice as strong, and twice as clever to succeed'.

In fact the women see themselves as highly committed and involved in their own work, which they describe enthusiastically: 'I strain every nerve'; 'I give my best'. They speak of their 'devotion' to the job, and want to 'achieve the maximum in it'. Now and again, they sum up by saying, 'I am a professional'.

Being a 'professional' means various things: 'I carry out my work with integrity, and with a sense of responsibility'; 'I define my tasks properly and organize my work well'; 'I take account of the organization's priorities in my work'; 'I love my work'; 'I feel fulfilled'; 'All my energy goes into my work'; 'My work is my life'; 'I'm happy: this is what I always wanted'.

The statements eloquently describe the level of involvement of these women in their work. It is their 'salvation': the only way to lessen their experience of dependence. This dependence becomes more visible when they talk about the importance of their work to their families. The women say their financial contribution is 'important, basic; it brings dignity and respect inside the family'; 'I am a contributor, not a consumer' (in relation to the family budget); 'It is essential: I have to work every day'.

In varying degrees and different ways, the women's earnings do add to their families' budget. Having achieved economic status within the family, a woman's role is gradually refined. To a certain extent this helps to loosen some of the more oppressive bonds of tradition. Conduct once forbidden is now permitted or, at least, tolerated. However, these subtle changes do not go unnoticed in

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the unyielding macho society. And at this point, the circle may tighten again. Women workers report how difficult it is to deal with husbands whose male identity and role is threatened by their partners' new alternatives.

Finally, how do these women perceive their professional role in relation to the situation of women in Ecuadorian society? In the first place, the social situation of the Ecuadorian woman is rather complex: 'she has internalized the submission pattern and accommodated to it; so any change is quite difficult'.

Traditionally, the mass media have done little to provoke new thinking or to provide new definitions of women's social role:

Women are seen as protagonists only in the women's column or the women's page. The rest of the paper's content simply marginalizes them. If they do not belong to the jet-set, they are not regarded as newsworthy. They have only second-class jobs, and are expected to conform to the second-class position which has been assigned to them. They are only 'women', whose status—in news terms—comes well below other generic groupings such as 'workers', 'population', 'mankind', and so on.

What, if anything, can women working in the media do to challenge these conventions? The media woman is to some extent constrained by the ambiguity of her situation as a professional:

Her role embraces a contradiction. On the one hand she experiences the oppression common to all women; on the other she experiences the apparent privilege of being admitted to the men's world and, consequently, to power. Perhaps this explains the silence of women journalists and their reluctance to innovate: they must accept and faithfully reproduce the dominant rules.

One of the women did describe a more optimistic scenario. Her magazine aims to align itself with women 'in the fight for their freedom, which has to be defined from a Latin American perspective. This means that men must also take part and help. We do not forget the millennial oppression [of women] . . . [but consider it] important to build the conditions for dialogue'.

In the end, this is the only way of ensuring success for plans and projects aimed at improving the situation of women.

The future for women

In Ecuador, according to the CEPAM report mentioned above, discrimination against women is not simply a matter of law, earnings and poor working conditions. It is a deeply-rooted cultural pattern which affects every aspect of women's being. It is not, therefore, something which any single set of measures will change. What is needed is a comprehensive and fundamental effort to free women from the ideological straitjacket in which they are held. As a group, women are the main target of proponents of the dominant ideology. Ironically, this is perpetuated by women themselves, who are 'the transmitters of ideas and values'—a conservative force in society. Deeply implicated in the propagation of existing beliefs and attitudes are the main agents of socialization: the family (where girls learn to serve the 'men of the house'); the education system (where concepts of 'femininity' and 'masculinity' are transmitted to children through textbooks, and are later reinforced by encouraging girls and boys to study different subjects); and of course the mass media (whose contents reflect and perpetuate the differences in treatment, value and status which women and men are allotted in society).

Certainly, the women media workers interviewed in this study seem to agree that, from the moment she is born, a girl is taught 'to become a woman'. From the very beginning, women learn to compete for men's attention and approval. A woman is taught not only to obey men. She is taught to believe that women should, indeed must, do so. And that she should oppose anyone who dares to behave otherwise.

By now there is a large body of literature on the subject. But it seems that the only solution is another type of education—developed by men and women, for men and women. This, combined with government efforts to stimulate and implement projects aimed at improving women's status and conditions, and alongside the growth of women's consciousness of their rights, offers the best chance of bringing real change.

Fundamental change in the situation of women will require very many measures ranging from educational to legal and covering every aspect of life, including the bearing and raising of children

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with all the implications thereof. But this effort can only succeed with the direct and firm support of men. For they are the mirrors which reflect women's behaviour positively or negatively. They can thus stimulate or inhibit the development of women's role as partners in building up society.

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Women in Nigerian broadcasting: a study of their access to decision-making positions

Enoh Irukwu

The social and historical context

Women in Nigerian society

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic, multilingual society, rich in mineral resources, with a vast land mass. It has a recorded population of 80 million, but unofficially this is now estimated at 100 million. It is also estimated that women account for more than 50 per cent of the population. Nigeria has a strong rural tradition and a rich cultural heritage. Its difficult terrain poses considerable communication problems.

Located near the equator, Nigeria has a mixed climate and geographical features which include dense forest, savannah and desert. These elements have influenced the lives, attitudes, habits and culture of the indigenous people. It has been said that proximity to the equator has influenced the Nigerian life-style. The extended family is a strong and living force in this environment. Nigeria is very much a male-dominated society, but one in which the male looks upon the female as the symbolic 'mother' and accords her the appropriate respect.

Nigeria became independent in 1960. Since then there has been phenomenal change and development in practically every field. Programmes have been launched to fight illiteracy, poverty and disease. Anti-colonial feelings have been turned into positive

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dynamism which has generated progressive social reforms. For example although in traditional society, cultural and religious traditions combined to put women at a slight disadvantage in terms of work, home-life and public or political influence, the situation today is different.

Today, women in small trade and farming form the backbone of the economy. Education at the primary level has been made compulsory and more girls now benefit from it. The female population in institutions of higher learning has increased by about 50 per cent in the last decade and parents no longer give preference to the education of their sons. With more formal qualifications to their credit, women have begun to break into the professions, rising to executive and managerial positions. Men and women receive equal pay for equal work. Women are seen as having a contribution to make to the modernization of Nigerian society. Indeed, their integration and further development is regarded as part of that process of modernization. Consequently, although there have so far been few female social and political leaders, within the last decade women have achieved greater prominence in all fields.

This seems to paint a glorious picture of the Nigerian woman of today. But in practice women are still handicapped in different ways and to varying degrees, at work and in social life. Two professionals—one male and one female—who have similar qualifications may not necessarily have equal opportunities for upward movement. One—the male—will invariably move up faster, as he is primarily seen as the breadwinner and head of the family. It is therefore accepted that he has more responsibilities than the woman, who may be a wife and is therefore assumed to be cared for and looked after. There is today a slight shift from this belief, particularly as women have proved their mettle and carry a fair share of the domestic financial burden. The country is aware of the great loss of 'manpower' if the larger half of the population is not integrated and utilized to the full.

It is against the background of this bustling nation that the situation of women in broadcasting will be examined. As communicators, working with others to bring about the changes called for by a society in the process of modernization, women have

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played a prominent part in the field of broadcasting over the past three decades.

Development of broadcasting in Nigeria

Broadcasting came to Nigeria in 1933 during the colonial era. It began as a wired service known as the Radio Distribution Service (RDS). RDS relayed programmes from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) at certain times of the day. The Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation (NBC)—formerly the Nigerian Broadcasting Service—was established in 1957, three years before independence. Its mandate was to provide as a public service, in the interest of the Federation, independent and impartial broadcasting services; and at the same time to give adequate expression to the culture, characteristics, affairs and opinions of the people in each of the nineteen states in the Federal territory.

A television service—now known as NTV—was inaugurated in 1962. Television is still a medium for the élite. Television sets, which are not manufactured locally, are still too expensive for low-income groups. Electricity has yet to reach every village and hamlet. Programme reception is therefore mainly limited to urban dwellers and a few wealthy people in rural areas who can afford sets. Unconfirmed reports put the number of sets available in the country at 5 million, and viewers at 20 million—about 20 per cent of the total population.

Towards the end of 1978, a restructuring of Nigerian broadcasting began. The NBC was replaced by the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN), a statutory corporation whose members are appointed by the Federal Government. The FRCN has radio stations in every state, each of which also has its own station run by a board appointed by the state government. The Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) was established in 1977 to plan and co-ordinate the entire television network. The NTA is controlled by the Federal Government and, through NTV, operates stations in each state. However, several states also have their own television stations.

Thus the Nigerian broadcasting system is characterized by its large number of outlets—forty-five radio stations and about

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twenty-five television stations in 1983—controlled partly by the Federal Government and partly by the state authorities. An important point is that whereas the federally operated stations (i.e. those of the FRCN and the NTA) can broadcast nationwide, broadcasting by the state stations must by law be confined within the state boundaries. Programmes from the state stations are therefore more locally oriented, and are broadcast in the appropriate indigenous languages.

Women and the growth of Nigerian broadcasting

It was more than twenty years before women were employed in broadcasting in Nigeria. When it did happen—in the early 1950s, in radio—it began as an experiment. All the women who were first appointed came straight from school, with a basic qualification of the Cambridge School Certificate, or at best the Higher School Certificate. The very first employees were taken into the Engineering Division as junior technical officers. One woman was later taken on as an announcer, and was eventually followed by another.

The experiment started with five women, two of whom are still in broadcasting, holding senior management positions today. These women were the pioneers, and have had to battle their way up the ladder. An interesting point about these early women broadcasters is their roots.

The first generation of broadcasters came from the rural areas. They had been brought up in a rural setting with indigenous communication threads around them. As children, they played moonlight games, were told folk-tales by moonlight, knew the beats, rhythms and messages of the drums, heard the town crier and knew the customs, taboos and code of conduct of their village and environment. As young people, they communicated through song and dance, enjoyed story-telling about the prowess of heroes and heroines, used body language and silent communication.

These were the young enthusiastic people first recruited into Nigerian broadcasting. They came with inborn and inbred communication abilities ready to be tapped and nurtured. They came without formal training in broadcasting, which was completely new to them. They trained on the job first and later in established stations and institutions of higher learning. Today the opposite

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is the case; staff recruited now have usually had a basic formal education with diplomas or degrees in the arts, mass communication, and so on.

Experience has shown that a combination of both is desirable, especially as emphasis on rural development is a top priority and broadcasting to the grassroots and rural population is more successful with a good knowledge of the appropriate setting. The lack of this knowledge has been a handicap for some of the new generation of broadcasters, who design programmes for a rural population they scarcely understand.

The expansion of broadcasting in the 1960s and 1970s led to the establishment of more training institutions and polytechnics, and many more women seized the opportunity to study mass communication. Before this, very few women braved it into the arts, broadcasting and mass communication. There had existed the erroneous impression that women in the arts, theatre, broadcasting and mass media were too assertive and wayward, not the right material for marriage, home-making and motherhood. To the African mentality, this was abhorrent, and parents were known to have dissuaded their daughters from pursuing careers in the media. This attitude contributed to the small number of women in the early days of broadcasting, and may also have resulted in the slow pace of their advancement to managerial positions.

However, such ideas have changed with time. Increased numbers of trained women, the example of the pioneers and the impact of the media have convinced people and converted them. Unfortunately, at a time when many more women are being attracted to the media—particularly broadcasting—the return of a military government has brought a re-ordering of priorities and broadcasting has come under stricter scrutiny. The government has reviewed the duplication of broadcasting facilities and number of stations, particularly in relation to the costs involved. The result has been a reduction in numbers, a merging of stations and a more prudent structure which would provide similar, necessary services at lower cost. This step has led to a cut in staff strength. It is hoped, however, that better quality broadcasting may emerge as a result, and that the future may offer more challenges and openings.

How have these developments affected women in broadcasting?

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In some ways adversely. Job openings are not easy to come by. Women do not compete for positions on an equal footing with men: they are always handicapped in one way or another. There is the question of attitudes of some superiors who feel that a woman's place is in the home, playing her 'natural' role instead of vying for positions with men. Not many women have the opportunity to train, though today the situation is far better than in previous years. The possibilities are wider; many more institutions offer courses. Scholarships, sponsorships and on-the-job training are available to women. Whereas previously women were numbered in tens, now they are in their hundreds in different stations. In a university class of thirty, between five and eight are now women. This number sometimes drops by graduation, as some may have dropped out owing to family, domestic or other pressures. A new dimension, however, is the increased number of mothers and wives returning to schools and colleges for continuing education or retraining.

In NBC/FRCN over the past five to eight years, emphasis has been on the recruitment of graduate-level producers. Announcers are still recruited at School Certificate level. News staff are generally graduates or have a diploma in journalism, while technical staff are recruited from School Certificate to graduate level. Administration and accounts are basically the same; some recruits have professional certificates. Among the many entrants are women who are fully qualified.

Women in broadcasting today

The employment of women in broadcasting started in the early 1950s, the first intake consisting of announcers and junior technical staff recruited to radio. Later, some women became broadcasting officers. By 1957 there were producers, announcers and later producer/translators in the External Service. By 1960, for the first time, a Nigerian woman headed a unit for women and children's programmes. At that time special programmes in two half-hour spots were broadcast to women in English, with additional spots in three major Nigerian languages—Ibo, Hausa

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and Yoruba. Fifteen-minute programmes were broadcast weekly to children, also in English and the three main languages. This arrangement continues today, but the number of broadcasts has now doubled.

An education service, broadcasting to primary and secondary schools and to teacher-training colleges was established in 1962. At its inception two of the three staff were women, and women still form the bulk of its officers. This may be because teaching has been a 'traditionally accepted' area for women. The education service is staffed by qualified and experienced teachers who translate this experience into specially designed programmes. It is the only area where women hold 55 per cent of the total positions. However, there are no women in management today as the senior ones have retired from public service.

By 1965, the number of senior women in radio had increased, with a woman heading Presentation (announcing). In later years we were to have women as Head of Programmes, Head of Talks, Head of Features and, finally, in 1971 a woman was appointed Controller of National Programmes, taking charge of the national station in Lagos. This meant supervising a staff of 105 in 10 different units, co-ordinating programmes of national interest with other stations in the network, and overseeing all aspects of the station's work—administration, technical and programmes. By 1976/77, a woman was appointed Director of Training and Manpower Development for the first time. These historical breakthroughs have opened the way for women in other broadcasting organizations in the country.

Women in the Federal radio system

In 1985/86 the FRCN had six females controllers and two female programme managers. Women occupied the posts of Assistant Director of Programmes and Chief Internal Auditor. In an acting capacity, they were also performing the duties of Chief Accountant and Zonal Director. The latter is one of the most senior positions, carrying responsibility for a number of radio stations in the states, as well as management of the zonal headquarters (there are four zones, or sub-areas, within FRCN).

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Compared with the number of men in senior posts, women managers are still quite rare. But the representation of women—as a proportion of both the overall staff and the management in NBC/FRCN—has increased noticeably since the early 1970s (see Table 1).

TABLE 1. Women employees and managers in NBC and FRCN 1972/85

| Year | System | Total staff | Women staff | % | Total management | Women managers | % |
|------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|----|------------------|----------------|----|
| 1972 | NBC | 1 958 | 224 | 11 | 26 | 1 | 4 |
| 1975 | NBC | 2 106 | 213 | 10 | 31 | 2 | 6 |
| 1981 | FRCN (Lagos zone) | 1 090 | 216 | 20 | 32 | 7 | 22 |
| 1985 | FRCN (Lagos zone) | 629 | 127 | 20 | 16 | 4 | 25 |

Over the years five other women have occupied senior management positions but have now left for various reasons. The posts have all subsequently been taken over by men.

It should be noted that many women occupy other supervisory positions as editors, assistant chief accountants, principal producers, principal announcers, principal technical officers (of which there have been only two in the Corporation) and senior producers. Women are also working as announcers, librarians, writers, right down to cleaners and telephonists.

One major point is that women have displayed a high level of expertise, excellence and professionalism in whatever job they have found themselves. It is on record that in the history of broadcasting women have performed satisfactorily. They therefore deserve a better deal and a faster rate of advancement. The woman who has so far risen highest has spent a total of thirty-two years in broadcasting—fourteen of these in senior management. Male

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counterparts with fewer qualifications and less experience have nevertheless advanced faster. This disparity does not arise from lack of expertise on the part of the individual woman, but from other factors that militate against women in general.

Women in state radio stations

So far, I have described the situation within the federally controlled FRCN (formerly NBC). This was the first broadcasting body in the country, so all other stations grew from and modelled their structure, programmes and operations on it.

To complete the picture of women in Nigerian radio, an overview of eight state radio stations will add to the information already presented. The hierarchy is similar in each of these stations.

At the top there is a Chief Executive, followed by a Deputy. No woman has so far held either of these posts. At the next level—Director—there have been two women. One of these, the Director of Administration at the Lagos state radio station, has recently retired. The other is Director of Programmes at the Oyo station. At the fourth level—Manager—there are two women; and seven of the eight stations surveyed have at least one woman on the fifth rung of the management ladder, at the level of Controller.

The general pattern is thus similar to that described for FRCN. The state stations, like the Federal system, have been under increasing financial strain. Consequently, many of the states have combined their radio and television into one entity. This has led, as it did at the Federal level, to a reduction in staff strength and a decrease in staff mobility in the various state radio stations.

Women in television

The situation of women working in television is similar to that in radio. For the past twenty-five years, women have been employed in television as announcers, producers, presenters and directors. So far, however, not one has headed any of the twenty-five stations, though women do occupy senior management positions. Within the NTA, for example, the following three senior posts are held by

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women: Director of Programmes, Programme Co-ordinator, and Secretary to the Board. In addition, there are seven women managers and seven controllers, as well as a chief presenter.

In the past five years, many more women have been employed in television. Here too, however, the current re-organization exercise has led to some retrenchment.

The barriers: visible and invisible

Employment policies and practices

Women found suitable at interviews are employed in the same way as men. They are recruited purely on merit and performance. In general, the same rules apply to both male and female staff. They receive equal pay for equal work. Compulsory and voluntary retirement ages are the same for women and men. There is no discrimination in work load. Expertise is the determining factor in assigning producers to specific tasks. The time has passed when female producers were only employed in the unit making programmes for women and children. Today both men and women work in the unit and share responsibility for production of the programmes. Announcers, studio managers and technicians have career patterns which emphasize training from point of entry. Their upward movement depends on the successful completion of prescribed courses at the trainee, junior, intermediate and senior levels. At this level, there is no discrimination: all employees undergo some training. Women and men alike head shifts.

At the same time, there are areas which women see as discriminatory. A typical example is in the area of benefits, where there are both advantages and disadvantages. For example, on the plus side a woman at any level can take three months' maternity leave on full pay—six weeks before and six weeks after delivery—and can return to work. A major area of contention, however, is the 'leave allowance': a man is entitled to full pay, but a woman is only given half her normal salary. The reason is the assumption that the woman will be looked after by her husband. Another area of contention is taxation: the working woman technically pays

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more tax, as she cannot claim exemptions for any of the children if her husband is doing so. Housing allowances also need review. A spinster who receives a housing allowance ceases to do so if she marries someone in the same establishment, or who is also working for the government. The woman is officially absorbed into the man and the couple are treated as one. In other words the law implies that husband and wife are one—but the one is the husband.

Such disparities have been taken up by women's councils and professional bodies, and the government has promised a reappraisal. It is worthy of note that some men, realizing that the total family income is depleted by these differences, are joining women to press for full rewards. However, another school of thought holds that women already receive too much and should not be asking for more.

These points apply generally to women in the civil service. Because all radio and television stations are owned, funded and controlled by government—whether at Federal or state level—any changes that are made in civil service working conditions automatically apply to the broadcasting system.

Attitudes to women managers

Once they get into management, women's problems begin. They become isolated since there are so few of them. Competition becomes fiercer and they have to compete with other colleagues for the very few openings. If a woman is lucky enough to obtain a senior job, she has to work hard to prove that she got it on merit and deserves to keep it. Because they are so few and far between, society has yet fully to accept women in top management positions as a matter of routine. A woman in a senior management position has several problems: proving her worth, ensuring support from other women workers, not being regarded as a rare bird—or as a man—and being able to run her home successfully, while at the same time doing a demanding job.

These difficulties face women in general and are not peculiar to women in the broadcast media. However, what is burdensome is the high visibility of media employment which creates particular problems both at work and at home.

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Interviews with a cross-section of ten broadcasting staff indicated no special preference for either male or female managers. The general reaction was: 'Our main interest is to have a good and knowledgeable manager—male or female, it does not matter.' However, additional interviews with five male staff in senior management revealed some interesting features. They were questioned about their women colleagues, and about their reactions to women as bosses, peers and subordinates. Here are some of the points they made:

I don't see anything wrong with them except frequency of maternity leave. This causes job disruption and creates problems for management. No problem with the higher grades—they are required to be in their departments to advise and direct—so their presence is needed all the time. It is demanding and requires extra hours. This is not good for women who have young children [Manager, Administration].

In programme production we've always had women. Maternity and ante-natal periods create problems, otherwise they cope. Our work requires more intellect than physique. However we don't want a preponderance of women. Generally, women are less sympathetic than men if the majority is female: women bosses tend to be harsh. Women are more sympathetic to male staff. Women are more emotional than men, and allowance has to be made for this. They can't keep their domestic problems to themselves [Assistant Director].

On the whole, women are hard-working. Continuity of performance is about eighty per cent. They can be depended upon for higher output. Seventy per cent can take challenges at short notice. One or two need a greater push to achieve results. Generally, women in management have performed as creditably and in some cases better than men. Their degree of motivation is high. A few have been too assertive—gone to the other extreme. Ninety per cent [are] as successful as their male colleagues. Their rapport with men is better. They do not introduce innovations with male-dominated echelons either from fear or for some other reason [Manager, Programmes].

Seventy-five per cent are hardworking. Indiscipline among the other twenty-five per cent. Some rely on the 'godfather'. I respect some [Contract Officer, Religion].

The emphasis in these responses is on the fact that women work well, but it is feared that they may not be able to sustain this

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because of maternity leave, and other absences from work. This will pose a problem for their advancement. It means that at management level they would need to have completed their child-bearing, if they are to be physically present when needed. Women managers are seen as more sympathetic to male staff and as being harsh on women. They are also seen as emotional.

These issues, mentioned in the interviews, constitute the core problem areas. I suggest that only the women themselves will eventually work out a solution. They may be helped by present-day pressures and demands: the high cost of living, and a growing commitment to work and career could gradually produce a suitable climate for the advancement of women into management and policy-making positions.

The attitudes of male senior managers, established through these interviews, may be compared with the perspectives of women working in the media. During a workshop for media women, twenty participants responded to a questionnaire. Most were graduates, and all had received some training either on the job or in institutions of higher learning, or both. In general, the women were happy in their work. However, their responses show that there is evidently discrimination in some work situations. This varies in intensity depending on the area concerned, but almost half of the respondents recorded some form of discrimination. This included unequal treatment in appointment to senior positions, in selection for management training and for training overseas, and in obtaining permission to attend conferences or to go on study tours. Hostility from male colleagues was also mentioned, as was the reluctance of husbands to allow their wives to work in the media.

In discussions during the workshop, a number of additional points were raised. Some of the participants, particularly those with young families, expressed anxiety over the pressure and demands of their work. The main problem was how to combine work and home successfully and in the process do justice to both. They wanted to make faster progress at work and to enjoy the benefits, while running their homes and bringing up their children successfully. This is a major problem which organizations, women's councils and governments should face. A first step would be to provide crèches near work locations, to which all staff could have

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access, and to make special provision for women with children to have flexible working hours. Another possibility would be to introduce a system which allowed child-rearing women to have time off work for a specified period and to return with no loss of status or benefits. Such systems should be examined and established, if found suitable.

What keeps women out of paid employment is the family—child-bearing and -rearing, especially if there is no reliable home help. This point was also stressed in the interviews with male senior managers, who said they were apprehensive about having too many women workers because they would disrupt work with their absence during pregnancy and maternity leave. Most African women wish to have children. However, now added to this is the desire for a steady source of income which would allow them some independence, since they also contribute to the family budget and carry their share of extended family commitments. It is therefore necessary that women should be enabled to combine their work and family roles. The work location could be home-based or outside, but the important thing is to create an atmosphere in which women can participate and contribute to improving their status and their home life. In our environment a happy secure home is a top priority. Without this women are made to feel inadequate, in spite of all the modern developments. Education and communication are gradually bringing changes, but the changes should help to improve the state of affairs and not create added frustrations.

Looking to the future

Several conclusions may be reached about the present situation.

The number of women employees in broadcasting organizations in Nigeria is increasing, but the pace is slow since positions are few. The level of education is improving and many more women are now taking specialized courses at institutions of higher learning both in Nigeria and abroad. Today there are more women graduates in broadcasting than there were five or ten years ago. On-the-job training has increased and serves as a good complement to formal

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professional training. Women benefit from both. Although many more women are training in mass communication, the total number working in media organizations is very small. Membership of the Association of Media Women is between 300 and 400 for the whole country. Membership of women in the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) is below 100. Altogether there are less than 2,000 trained media women practitioners in Nigeria, an infinitesimal number in relation to the total. In the technical areas, the highest level achieved by any women so far has been the grade of Principal, which is not even a junior management position. Whereas in the areas of programme production and presentation women are well represented among both applicants and employees, this is not the case in the technical services. In the entire country there have never been more than five women occupying technical posts in broadcasting. We need women as electricians and electrical engineers, as well as technicians. Moreover, if the few women in senior management today move out or retire there will be no ready successors. The positions will invariably go to the men who are next in rank and greater in numbers.

Such problems could be tackled by the implementation of the following recommendations:

Emphasis should be placed on training for all positions, so as to bridge the seniority gap and provide for the succession of women into management.

In the lower ranks preference should be given to training for women to provide a stronger and wider base for future upward movement.

A five- to ten-year concentrated programme is needed, as there are still areas such as the technical ones where the number of women is particularly insignificant.

More training in broadcast management is advocated, to give a more professional bias than is possible through general management training.

A continuous and extended programme of exchange within regions would open the doors to the acquisition of new ideas, skills and the adaptation of already tested programmes and techniques. Technical training should be given to women in order to break the male monopoly and provide women with the opportunity to

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contribute to the development, and subsequently the management, of broadcast technology.

Training should be broadened to cover all media areas, so that women who cannot leave home can nevertheless practise their profession, and be in a position to advance and participate in development issues, programmes and efforts.

The future holds brighter prospects. With a higher level of education, on-the-job training and more opportunities for self-development, many more women will find their way into broadcasting. But many obstacles still have to be overcome. Attitudes will have to change. The scope of media activities must be widened and areas as yet untouched in this country must be explored so that young women who cannot go out to work because of domestic or family pressures can still practise their professions from home. With a large rural population, a significant sector keeping women in purdah, and the constraints imposed by culture and tradition, Nigeria definitely needs more women in the media. However, it is not simply a question of having large numbers of women. What matters is the positions these women occupy. Until many more are in policy-making positions, until there are scores of women in senior management and in other positions of authority, progress will continue to be slow and visible change will remain elusive.

Women in broadcasting have complex problems. Their jobs give them added responsibilities and bring them greater exposure, sometimes to their detriment. Because they meet and interact with many people they are seen as unusual—a group who display the confident and even arrogant approach that their work sometimes demands. This generates fear and envy among their peers, both men and women. For media women to maintain their positions and acquit themselves creditably they have to work extremely hard no matter what their area of specialization. Self-development, the acquisition of more and better skills to help broaden their career prospects, are generally among their principal aims.

Broadcasting offers challenges and opportunities, particularly in a developing country. It attracts the interest of governments who want to maximize its contribution to their development programmes. At the same time, its novelty and the opportunities it

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offers attract young men and women who want to develop their talents and play a role in society.

As radio and television have gradually become more available and more acceptable to all social groups, attitudes to work in the media have changed. This phenomenon is most welcome at this stage of Nigeria's development. The cultural heritage shows that women have always played a prominent role in economic, social and communal activities. From polygamous units women have worked to ensure the education of their children, so that they could enjoy better opportunities and fuller lives than their mothers'. The generation of people now working in broadcasting come from this background. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that today's young media women, with their improved training and qualifications, are in a better position to design programmes of benefit to various sections of the population, particularly those in the rural areas, and women in purdah.

It is only women who have access to women in purdah. To enable this group to benefit and participate, women broadcasters need to use the positions, expertise and facilities at their disposal to initiate changes. The introduction of video technology could enhance their work and influence. We therefore urge the establishment of a mobile tape library for women in purdah and in the rural community. Videotapes of existing and specially produced programmes might be distributed to homes or community centres for individual or collective viewing and listening. Some could be loaned to women's groups who could organize discussions after the programmes and supply feed-back to the producers and originators. Information about health, farming, education and general subjects could be disseminated this way to support government and other development projects. This proposal needs to be developed, costed and presented in greater detail.

There is so much to be done, and so many untapped media resources that can help in our march towards a better society. The enthusiasm is there. The new thirst for education, literacy, improved health care and home life have combined to create new aspirations and needs in broadcasting. This trend, I believe, is irreversible. It will influence management policies in staff recruitment, deployment and promotion, as well as in the dissemination

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of information; and it will affect job opportunities. Those who have the necessary skills and ability will be called upon to face these challenges in the immediate future—be they men or women.

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Professional women in Egyptian radio and television

Fawzia Fahim

Historical background

The Egyptian broadcasting system

Broadcasting in Egypt is a state-operated system under the control of the Minister of Information who is responsible for information policy and is accountable to the Egyptian parliament. The system is financed partly by government and partly by advertising, which is permitted on both radio and television. The organization responsible for administrative policy in broadcasting is the Radio and Television Union, whose President holds the rank of Minister and is also the Head of its Board of Trustees. The Board has twenty-two members, all public figures, and has overall responsibility for the policies which the Radio and Television Union implements through its five main sectors. These are Radio, Television, Engineering, Financial, and General Secretariat. Each sector is headed by a President with the rank of Deputy Minister.

Radio started in a small way in 1926, when a private commercial station was set up. In 1934 the government established an official radio service and in Egypt today there are seven radio networks. One of these is an overseas or external service. The remaining six are the Main Radio Network, which provides the national radio service, and separate networks for local, cultural, religious, commercial and Arab services. Domestic transmissions are in Arabic

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except for a service, broadcast over the cultural network, for foreigners living in Egypt.

Television transmissions began in 1960. There are now two channels. Channel 1 is locally oriented and almost 90 per cent of the programmes broadcast are domestic productions. Channel 2 is more international and almost half of its programmes are imported from abroad.

Women in the early development of Egyptian broadcasting

Although it was a man's voice that was first heard on official Egyptian radio, a female announcer was also employed in the launch year of 1934. From the beginning, radio was considered a fine art. Consequently, a woman's voice was considered necessary, according to Ali Khalil, the first Director of Egyptian radio. In an interview for this study Mr Khalil said that Egypt's first female announcer 'had a very beautiful voice, and was good-looking too. She mastered three languages, Arabic, English and French. She was a news announcer, and was capable of reading the news bulletin in each of the three languages consecutively.' But soon after her appointment she got married and left the job.

Although early on female university graduates were heard on radio as speakers and experts (and many of these still take part in radio and television programmes), until the 1940s few women had regular jobs in radio. Those who were employed held very junior positions or did secretarial work, although two women appointed as announcers at this time did go on to become presidents of the Radio and Television Sectors in the late 1970s.

However, in 1950/51 there was a significant influx of women into radio. This coincided with a contemporary trend in Egypt encouraging women to take up paid employment. More than fifty women (and forty men) who passed an examination for announcers were appointed—mainly as newsreaders, programme staff, editors and translators. It is worth noting that most of these women who began their careers in radio in the 1950s now hold senior positions and decision-making posts in the Radio and Television Union. Among these are the Deputy President of the Radio Sector, the consultant to the President of the Radio Sector,

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the head of the Overseas Network, and the head of the News Network. This latter is especially interesting as it is the first time that a woman has been given responsibility for news. For a long time it was believed that this was a difficult job, suitable only for men.

When television began in 1960, some of the radio staff—mainly those who were physically attractive—were selected to work as television announcers and programme presenters. Many of these women now hold senior posts in television. For example, the current President of the television sector was originally employed in radio. And two former radio announcers, both women, now head the two television channels. The Head of the Radio and Television Training Institute is also a woman. However, the very top jobs in Egyptian radio and television have usually been held by men.

Since the establishment of the Radio and Television Union in 1970, its Board of Trustees has had eight presidents, none of whom has been female. The five sectors—Radio, Television, Engineering, Financial and General Secretariat—have also usually been headed by men.

Radio, which has had eight presidents since its establishment, has only once—from 1975 to 1981—been headed by a woman. In television, the ratio is much better. It has been headed three times by a man and three times by a woman, of whom the third is still in office. Both the Engineering and Financial sectors have always been presided over by men. The General Secretariat has only once been headed by a woman, for less than a year in 1977.

At present, the Egyptian Radio and Television Union is run by six men and one woman. The woman in top-level management is Samia Sadek, the President of the Television Sector.

Egyptian broadcasting today

Management and decision-making structure

Top management is roughly similar—in terms of level and status—in both radio and television. There are two main categories of decision-making position: planning and administrative posts, and

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senior executive posts. It is not easy to make a sharp distinction between administrative and executive work, because many top managers who began their careers behind the microphone or in front of the camera are keen on keeping the visibility gained through their executive work. For example, the head of the Main Radio Network continues to present her radio programmes as well as carrying out her administrative duties. The head of television Channel 1 still presents her well-known educational programme *Light* every week on Channel 2.

The management and decision-making posts with which this

TABLE 1. Management structure in Egyptian radio and television

| Post | Financial grade |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <i>Radio</i> | |
| President | First Deputy Minister |
| Vice-president | Deputy Minister |
| Consultant | Deputy Minister |
| Head of Network | Deputy Minister |
| Deputy Head of Network | Deputy Minister |
| Radio Service Director | General Director |
| Programme Director | General Director |
| Department Director ¹ | General Director |
| Senior Announcer and Programme Presenter | Deputy Minister or General Director |
| <i>Television</i> | |
| President | First Deputy Minister |
| Deputy President | Deputy Minister |
| Head of Television Channel | Deputy Minister |
| Deputy Head of channel | Deputy Minister |
| Consultant | Deputy Minister |
| Department Head | Deputy Minister |
| Programme Director | General Director |
| Department Director ¹ | General Director |
| Senior Announcer and Programme Presenter | Deputy Minister or General Director |

1. Departments include news, cultural programmes, women's programmes, variety programmes, children's programmes, evaluation, etc.

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study is concerned begin from highest to lowest at the grade of First Deputy Minister and end at that of General Director. Table 1 shows the management structure in radio and television.

Women in radio and television

The entire work force of the Egyptian Radio and Television Union, including all sectors, numbered 15,381 in 1984.¹ Of these 32 per cent are women. Table 2 shows their distribution.

TABLE 2. Distribution of women in Egyptian broadcasting

| Sector | Total staff | Total women | Percentage of women |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Radio | 3 482 | 1 606 | 46 |
| Television | 4 163 | 1 605 | 38 |
| Engineering | 5 777 | 755 | 13 |
| Economic | 420 | 156 | 37 |
| General Secretariat and Presidency | 1 398 | 713 | 51 |
| Radio and Television Magazine | 141 | 37 | 26 |
| TOTAL | 15 381 | 4 872 | 32 |

Of particular note is the low percentage (13 per cent) of women in the Engineering sector, which is responsible for the operation and maintenance of radio and television studios. Of those women who are employed, most are engineers. The highest managerial level attained by women in this sector is general director. Interviewed about the reasons for the small number of women in Engineering, the President of the sector commented:

For a long time it has been thought that communication engineering was a hard job for women. This is still believed in most countries, even

1. Personnel Analysis Report of Radio and Television Union Economic Sector, 1984. (Unpublished.)

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developed countries. But in trial and practice women have proved very efficient in studio work. Transmission stations are still the realm of men, because they are usually constructed in remote areas.

When asked whether a woman could occupy the post of President of the Engineering sector, the current president replied:

Rapid development in telecommunication methods and the application of telecommunications to management, might enable a woman to take up this job and carry it on from her home. It is a hard job, and it is not easy for a woman to travel, at a moment's notice, to receiving and transmitting stations all over the country.

The distribution of women in the hierarchy of the Radio and Television Union, including all sectors, is shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3. Distribution of women in the broadcasting hierarchy

| Financial grade | Total in grade | Women in grade | Percentage of women in grade |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Minister | 1 | — | — |
| First Deputy Minister | 6 | 2 | (33) |
| Deputy Minister | 58 | 17 | 29 |
| General Director | 170 | 44 | 26 |
| First Grade | 1 956 | 488 | 25 |
| Second Grade | 3 910 | 1 092 | 28 |
| Third Grade | 4 434 | 1 593 | 36 |
| Fourth Grade | 2 740 | 1 087 | 40 |
| Fifth Grade | 435 | 42 | 10 |
| Sixth Grade | 334 | 7 | 2 |
| Freelancer | 694 | 309 | 44 |
| Temporary | 643 | 291 | 45 |
| TOTAL | 15 381 | 4 872 | 32 |

Management and decision-making positions account for 1.5 per cent of all posts in the Radio and Television. Women occupy 26 per cent of these management positions—a percentage somewhat lower than their representation in the total workforce (32 per

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cent). The women and men in top management are between 40 and 60 years of age.¹

So far we have provided a general picture of the comparative situation of women and men across all five main sectors of the Egyptian Radio and Television Union. We shall now concentrate on the situation of women in the radio and television sectors, especially women in management and decision-making posts. Such posts account for 2.2 per cent of all radio jobs and 1.3 per cent of jobs in television and, as Table 4 shows, women are relatively well represented in them.

TABLE 4. Women in radio and television management

| Sector | Total management jobs | Women in management | Percentage of women |
|------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Radio | 78 | 25 | 32 |
| Television | 55 | 24 | 44 |

Excluding secretarial work and junior administrative jobs which are mostly done by women, the presence of men and women in specialized radio and television work is roughly illustrated in Table 5.

TABLE 5. Distribution of men and women in radio and television

| Job | Radio | Television |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Announcer | Equal men/women | Mostly women |
| Programme presenter | Equal men/women | Mostly women |
| Scriptwriter | Mostly men | Mostly men |
| Producer | Mostly men | Mostly men |
| Editor | Equal men/women | Equal men/women |
| Reporter | Mostly men | Mostly men |
| Translator | Equal men/women | Equal men/women |

1. The age of retirement in the Egyptian Government service is 60.

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It is important to note that the number of women announcers and programme presenters exceeds the number of men, especially in television where it is thought that physical appearance is important. This is less necessary in radio where a good voice and intelligence are considered necessary.

The dominance of men in scriptwriting and production in both radio and television means that women are inadequately portrayed in radio and television drama and in advertisements. For example, a content analysis¹ of Egyptian radio and television found that in television drama women were numerically under-represented; were shown as being mainly preoccupied with love and marriage, and as emotional, weak, and dependent; they were seldom portrayed as productive members of society. In radio drama, women were portrayed in a more positive and less sexual way, though they were apparently preoccupied with housework; and here too they were numerically under-represented. More women scriptwriters and producers, and greater access of women to high-level managerial posts, should improve this situation.

Women in broadcast management

To investigate the situation in more detail, almost fifty interviews were carried out. Most of those interviewed were women in senior management, who were questioned about their background, responsibilities, relationships, priorities and aspirations. Similar interviews were conducted with a smaller group of male senior managers. More limited interviews with women and men in lower-level supervisory positions (those poised for promotion into management grades) sought to identify any organizational or personal factors which might inhibit the movement of women into senior management. Because of the small number of women in Engineering, the President of this Sector was interviewed. Finally, interviews were carried out with the Minister of Information and the President of the Board of Trustees, who share the main

1. Carried out by the author in 1980.

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responsibility for selection and promotion of staff into senior management in broadcasting.

Career development

The women and men who were interviewed have almost the same qualifications as far as education, training and languages are concerned. They are also of similar age. All of them have university degrees and a few have post-graduate diplomas in mass communication. Very few are preparing for a Master's degree (three out of the whole sample). Their first language is Arabic, and most of them can conduct professional activities in English. Several have also mastered French and a very few (two out of the whole sample) speak German as well as English and French.

All have had in-service training, organized by the Radio and Television Training Institute of the Radio and Television Union. Training ranges from general orientation to specialized courses in various radio and television skills (announcing, programme presentation, scriptwriting, production, audience research, media management, advertising, news, and so on). A few of the interviewees have attended training courses abroad, and very few have visited foreign radio and television stations. All of them stressed the importance of training in all fields of the broadcasting profession and asked for refresher courses to update their knowledge of rapidly developing radio and television techniques. High-level training courses in media management were also seen as a priority.

Career paths for men and women in management and decision-making posts are almost identical, based mainly on long experience, starting on the first step of the ladder and gradually working upwards.

All interviewees expressed satisfaction with the positions they had attained. Neither women nor men admitted fear of competition from the opposite sex. However, some of the younger men and women in supervisory positions said they preferred not to have a woman as a boss.

A major obstacle to women's career development was said—by both men and women in senior management—to be the propensity of young women to be absent from work on maternity leave or for

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family reasons. It must be remembered here that difficult conditions of life, bad transportation, shortage of day-care centres for children, and the demands of housework and cooking, make things particularly difficult for young married working women.

The Consultant to the President of the Radio Sector believes that, if involved in programme presentation, young women will make a special effort to avoid absenteeism: 'Once those young people are tied to a radio or a television programme they are keen to remain, because absence here means absence from the microphone or the television screen and that means losing their audience.'

The family-work conflict is clearly described by a television presenter of women's programmes on Channel 2: 'Let me put it frankly, when I was married all my care was for my family; job responsibility came last. Now that I am divorced, my career is my first priority. It is my whole life. It gives me satisfaction.'

Barriers to women's access to management posts

All interviewees agreed that there was no discrimination against women in Egypt in general or specifically in radio and television. Equality between men and women, including equal pay for equal work, is guaranteed by the Egyptian constitution and Egyptian law.

Women in management and decision-making posts in both radio and television in Egypt are all over 40 years of age. This means that the burden of family commitments has lightened considerably: their children have grown up; most of them have finished their education and have started work; many are married and have their own homes.

All those interviewed agreed that family commitments, and above all bringing up children, is a major obstacle in the career path of women workers. Child-rearing, the General Director of children's programmes on the Main Radio Network pointed out, is something which 'the oriental man considers the responsibility of the mother in the first place'. It is true that nowadays women are given up to two years' unpaid maternity leave to raise their children, but that period of absence gives their male counterparts more work experience and better opportunities for future promotion.

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The situation of working mothers was easier in the past when grandmothers, mostly housewives, were available to look after their grandchildren. Servants and nursemaids were more widely available at that time too.

When asked to arrange job responsibility, domestic responsibility, family responsibility in priority order, some of the women—like the President of Television and the Deputy President of Radio—put job responsibility first. The General Director of women's programmes on Channel 1 television put it this way: 'My job comes first. I cannot cancel my programme, but I can cancel one of my meals.'

However, most of the women stressed that all three responsibilities have equal priority. 'That is why women are so overburdened in life; but they have stronger nerves', said the head of the Overseas Radio network.

Of course all the men said that the job is their main priority, followed by family responsibilities. However, they admit to no domestic commitments, which they see as the responsibility of their wives. All the same, someone said quietly, 'They are ashamed to admit that they give a hand sometimes with domestic chores, but they do! Especially young husbands.' The Deputy President of the Television sector, an engineer, said, 'My wife does not work, but any housework involving mechanical gadgets is my responsibility because of my specialist skills.'

When asked about the difference between men's and women's performance at work and their relative availability for assignments, all the male senior managers rated men more highly than women. The President of the Radio sector said:

Before marriage a woman is available for assignments just as much as a man is, except for exceptional circumstances such as very late night shifts, or news reporting from the battlefield. But once she is married and has children the situation changes. However, that does not mean that we have no very efficient women in high-level posts in radio.

When the President of the Board of Trustees of the Radio and Television Union was asked about the possibility of his post being filled by a woman (something which has not happened so far), he joked with pride: 'Do you think a woman could work as hard as

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I do?' Of the difference between men's and women's performance in high-level posts he said:

In my experience, women are more sentimental and subjective. It is true that women can be more innovative than men, but management needs objectivity, toughness and endurance. There are exceptions among women, and as you know there is no discrimination at all against women in the entire Radio and Television Union. But believe me, when the wife or the mother is permanently at home, peace and calm are always there too.

The Minister of Information, stressed that there is no discrimination of any kind against women in the selection for managerial posts in radio and television, or indeed in any sector of the Radio and Television Union, or in the State Information Service as a whole.

Posts as high as the President of Radio, the President of Television and the General Secretary have been occupied by women several times. About half of all General Directors and Deputy Ministers are women. Apart from that, when appointing Information Attachés and Counsellors in the Egyptian embassies, I have never differentiated between men and women. I have selected twenty-five women for such posts, and some of them came from radio and television. Women are a vital element in radio and television broadcasting. They are more attractive and more persuasive than men. The listener or the viewer gets tired of a man's voice and face after a time, but he never gets tired of a woman's.

When asked about the possibility of women being appointed to the posts of President of the Radio and Television Union and of the State Information Service, neither of which has until now been filled by a woman, he said: 'These are primarily political posts and very demanding jobs. They require experience in high-level planning, organization, financial management, administration and control, rather than experience in the mass media.' As for the post of Minister of Information, he smiled: 'She is welcome if she could bear the responsibility.'

It is interesting to note here that the men's concept of management was more traditional than women's. Most of the men interviewed believed in management by direction and control,

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while women believed in management by integration and self-control—that is, working with people, not through them.

Tackling invisible discrimination

On the basis of this study and from personal observation and experience, the conclusion would be that there is no overt discrimination against women either in radio and television jobs in general or in management and decision-making posts. But it must also be said that there is hidden discrimination. This form of discrimination begins in men's minds. It becomes visible in the opinions they express when comparing women's and men's ability and performance. In their view, men are superior. This view is strengthened by the customs and traditions prevailing in Egyptian society and is reinforced by the kind of images of women in radio and television revealed by the already-mentioned content analysis. Furthermore, difficult living conditions, inadequate transportation, responsibility for housework and child-care all contribute to the problems of working women and may be a further obstacle in the way of women's promotion to senior jobs in the future.

It might therefore be appropriate to consider some ways of tackling these problems. For example, communication training aimed at changing attitudes, sharing information and experiences—as well as developing skills—in this particular field needs to be developed and supported. A second type of training—at both national and international levels—should be courses in script-writing and programme production specifically for women, who currently hold few posts in these areas. Given the popularity and influence of radio and television drama in Egypt, women script-writers and producers could help to highlight specific problems which need to be solved to enable women's full integration in society.

The mass media could play an important role in re-shaping policies, challenging stereotypes and changing preconceived ideas about family roles in Egypt. The welfare of society as a whole would benefit if there were greater sharing of family responsibilities between women and men. This could be the theme of a seminar on the Image of Women in Egyptian Mass Media, which

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could be organized by the Egyptian Radio and Television Training Institute with the help of Unesco. Moreover, another case-study, of young women entering media work, would help to elaborate and extend the findings of this present research. It would enable us to identify more precisely the difficulties encountered by young women communicators in achieving success in their chosen profession.

This study has identified at least some of the problems that exist. It has also highlighted the fact that there is not always a great deal of sensitivity to the difficulties faced by working women. While carrying out the interviews which formed part of the research, I was asked by the President of the Board of Trustees of the Egyptian Radio and Television Union whether I would prefer a male or a female boss. My answer was: 'A woman would understand more about other women's circumstances.'

Women in broadcast management: a case-study of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Programme of Equal Opportunity

Susan M. Crean

*Whatever women do, they must do
it twice as well as men to be
thought of as half so good.
Luckily, it's not difficult.*

Charlotte Whitten, Mayor of Ottawa
and the first Canadian woman mayor

Women and Canadian broadcasting

The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, later renamed the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), was created in 1932. The CBC was established as a Crown Corporation, and like the BBC in the United Kingdom, was intended to function at arm's length from government. The Canadian broadcasting system as a whole is characterized by its mix of ownership: both private and public sectors operate within a single system.

In the early days the CBC was responsible for issuing broadcasting licences and therefore for defining overall broadcasting policy. However, in 1958 the CBC ceased to be the regulating body for the industry, and a separate entity—now the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (the CRTC)—was set up. Gradually, the balance between public and private sectors in broadcasting has shifted. With the introduction of a second and private television network in the 1960s (CTV), the development of cable television in the 1970s, and the appearance of Pay-TV in the 1980s, the number of channels has mushroomed, so that the CBC today is a minority presence.

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The CBC's radio service offers programmes via four networks (AM and FM stereo, in English and French). Its national television service has two networks—one English, one French. The CBC also operates a separate radio and television service to the communities in the north of the country.

As it has developed, women have been a part of Canadian broadcasting. In radio they were originally permitted on-air only as performing artists in radio dramas, soap operas and live variety shows, never as announcers, news reporters or programme hosts. For many years conventional wisdom held that the timbre of the female voice registered badly over the air and that, furthermore, it was not 'authoritative'. It was not until the 1970s that women made their debut as radio journalists.

But if women were excluded from early radio journalism they quickly found a niche in day-time programming, for which 90 per cent of the audience was female. At the CBC a women's programme department was established in the 1930s. Thus from the earliest period women had a role to play not only on-air but in production, or programming planning, as it was called then.

The introduction of television actually represented a setback for Canadian women journalists. With a couple of pioneering exceptions, women were not invited to participate in the development of television news and current affairs during the 1950s. Behind the camera, writing and producing the news programmes, there were no women at all.

At the same time, television now competed with radio which, to survive, had to readapt itself. Soap operas, variety programmes and drama disappeared completely from the schedule of private radio. With them went the voices of women. In their place came music shows, hosted by disc-jockeys (DJs). Through the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, DJs were invariably male. When the voices of women finally did start to reappear on private radio, it was not in the radio mainstream, but on the relatively new FM band, on programmes broadcast throughout the night.

Today women are an everyday presence on Canadian private radio. But it is far from an equal presence. The same generalization is true for public radio, though the figures are much better, and even truer for television (Table 1).

*Women in broadcast management in Canada***TABLE 1. Presence and role of female radio announcers on English language radio, 1984**

| Presence | % | Roles | % |
|---------------|-----|---------------------|----|
| CBC | 16 | Weather and traffic | 22 |
| Private radio | 10 | Interview/opinion | 21 |
| Private FM | 20 | News-reading | 14 |
| Private AM | 4.5 | Introducing music | 8 |
| | | Chatter | 8 |
| | | Sports reading | 3 |
| TOTAL | 12 | | |

Source: ERIN Research.

Women and the CBC

CBC and equal opportunity

The portrayal of women in Canadian broadcasting has been studied quite separately from the issue of women's participation in the media profession itself. The two issues are not, of course, unrelated. There is evidence in the history of the CBC that there is indeed a connection between the involvement of women in programming and their presence in management. The CBC, specifically CBC English-language radio, has a very unusual record regarding the participation of women and has a tradition of women in senior management that goes back to the 1940s. Today the English-language radio network is headed by Margaret Lyons, one of two women appointed to the rank of Vice-president in 1983.

After the Second World War the department of Talks and Public Affairs had more women than men in programming planning. Although this was largely due to the artificial absence of men who were overseas, the male-female balance did not change much in the ensuing years. Most of the women were, significantly, unmarried as the Corporation had a policy of not employing married women as permanent staff. Married women who worked for the CBC during this period had no pension or sick leave. Another personnel

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policy which lasted into the 1960s, and adversely affected the careers of many women, was the prohibition against married couples working for the Corporation. When two co-workers married, one was expected to resign forthwith. One usually did—the wife.

Everything changed in the 1960s when television got into its stride and all the public attention, money and kudos was lavished on the new medium of the age. Radio began to experience a new kind of corporate neglect. Moreover, some people sensed that the new leadership in television despised women and did not see any place for them in senior positions. A large group of senior radio women left the CBC in frustration in 1965, convinced that the 'lid was on the advancement of women'. Most of them went on to second or third careers.

However, the legacy of the women in CBC radio remains to the present day and, along the way, reached into television. Programmes like the long-running and immensely popular *Trans-Canada Matinée*, which pioneered a solid current-affairs approach to women's programming on radio, and *Take 30* which later transferred this idea to television, often functioned as training grounds for women, greenhouses for female talent which might otherwise never have had an opportunity. A long list of extremely gifted and, by now, very senior women broadcasters and producers got their start or their first significant break here. Though we do not have the facts and figures from historical research, it does seem clear that CBC radio functioned as an oasis of opportunity for women in an otherwise arid broadcasting environment. It is equally evident that this was not the result of any conscious corporate policy, but of the efforts of the women themselves, with a little help (or at least non-intervention) from their male colleagues. It is also true that none of this would ever have happened in the private sector, which lags to this day at a noticeable distance. This obviously has a great deal to do with the CBC's public mandate and its obligation to produce a diversity of original programming.

*Women in broadcast management in Canada**The MacIver Report*

In 1967, a Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada was established by the Federal Government under the chairmanship of Florence Bird—a writer and veteran commentator for CBC radio. In 1970, the Commission submitted its report which documented the inferior position of Canadian women in the workforce. Crown corporations, including the CBC, were criticized for their poor record and exhorted to ‘encourage women to move out of traditional female occupations, emphasizing in all recruiting programmes that all occupations are equally open to men and women’.

Alert to the opportunities that might open up if the recommendations of the Royal Commission were implemented, the CBC’s female staff waited and watched—and waited. In 1971 they began meeting to study their position and to put pressure on management to take action. As a result of their collective effort, the president of the CBC announced in 1974 the formation of a Task Force, to be headed by Kay MacIver (then director of radio for the English-language network in Quebec), which was asked to determine if inequities existed within the CBC and ‘to examine the dimensions and the parameters of any problem discovered in order to recommend remedial mechanisms’.

The MacIver report, published in 1975, was unequivocal in its conclusions. The group had been able to meet and talk to about a third of the female staff and found widespread dissatisfaction, a feeling that women were second-class citizens.

While due in part to frustration common to both sexes, this general discontent is fundamentally caused by their being women in a man’s world. For the CBC is a man’s world, in that men are in the majority, and hold most of the decision-making power. Men’s decisions determine the careers and the working environment of the female minority and these decisions are based on attitudes that are often quite unlike the attitudes of the women involved. Women’s dissatisfaction with this situation is intensified by the fact that they see little prospect of change.

The portrait of the status of women at the CBC drawn by MacIver and her committee was sobering. They found, for example, that two-thirds of the men in CBC’s workforce were over 35 and

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married whereas an equivalent proportion of the female workforce was under 35 and single. This meant that the majority of men had formed their attitudes towards women during the 1940s and 1950s, whereas the women mostly came of age during the 1960s and thus were affected by a completely different ethos and understanding of sex-roles and attitudes. However, the primary factor was numbers. On staff there were three men to one woman. Moreover, this percentage lagged behind the average national representation of women in the Canadian workforce by an apparently widening margin.

Furthermore, the research showed that two-thirds of CBC's women worked in clerical, administrative and support service jobs. Most jobs, in fact, were found to be segregated by sex with the result that women had access only to 24 per cent of the jobs in the corporation while men had access to 92 per cent. Along with this came a salary gap of 27 per cent (on average the percentages ranged from 22 to 49). Other facts were unearthed: women were three times less likely than men to receive training and more likely to seek outside training on their own initiative; women had four times fewer advancement options and were three times less likely to attain positions of power.

The Task Force then turned to examining the causes. From interviews with personnel officers across the system, the group selected the four most common stereotypes or generalizations about women and thoroughly investigated each. These stereotypes were:

Women are not career-oriented; they do not expect to get ahead; they are not mobile and do not need the money.

Women are not suited to many kinds of job because they lack the education or experience and cannot do strenuous physical work.

Women are better suited to certain jobs requiring, for example, manual dexterity, and they have a higher tolerance for repetitive and detailed work than men.

Women are overly emotional and generally troublesome.

Using a variety of techniques including an attitude survey, the Task Force tried to match the stereotypes with the facts and with the opinions of real women. They found that in only one case was there any validity to the men's arguments: women were not qualified

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in technical and engineering fields, though in most others their qualifications, if anything, exceeded those of men. The Task Force judged the remaining generalizations to contain very little truth, if any at all. CBC women, they found, were just as ambitious as men, and 80 per cent of them worked out of necessity. In no way could women as a group be deemed better suited to clerical jobs than men; nor could their behaviour be designated as any more emotional or troublesome than that of some men. Along the way, the Task Force also discovered that women were absent only 1 per cent more often than men (and in more demanding positions in management and programme production absenteeism was lower among women than men). As for physical strength, the Task Force reiterated what can only be called common sense, that while women are on average physically weaker than men, some women are stronger and perfectly capable of undertaking physically arduous tasks.

The report summed up:

Much of CBC men's stereotypes of women either has little relevance to 'doing the job' or is simply untrue. We have considered the elements composing many men's idea of the 'typical' woman at some length, because within the CBC it is the men who do most of the hiring, promoting and transferring. Their decisions have resulted in the present pattern of occupational segregation and the consequent unequal distribution of corporate wealth.

Its examination of CBC's employment practices led the Task Force to conclude:

The majority of jobs at present are closed to women. In the case of some specialized categories, this is because few women have the requisite education, but for the most part, their restriction to a relatively narrow range of functions is a result of employment and advancement decisions made on the basis of a set of assumptions about women that are demonstrably untrue of the majority. . . . The Task Force therefore concludes that *women in the Corporation are treated inequitably as a group*. It follows that *individual women are frequently victims of discrimination* since the decision-makers often make judgements about the capability of an individual woman on the basis of characteristics they associate with women generally, and act on those assumptions to

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deny women access to many categories of work. We also conclude that by denying women access to the full range of jobs, *the Corporation also loses in a number of ways*. The pool of candidates for any job is considerably reduced by excluding one or the other sex, and the best candidate may be in the excluded group. Valuable abilities simply go to waste, and the different perspective that women can bring to many positions, particularly programme production, is frequently lost. Talented women may become frustrated and leave. . . . Some women whose abilities might be valuable to the Corporation may see most of the more challenging jobs occupied by men and never even apply.

- The main conclusion of the MacIver Task Force was the recognition that a very major problem existed at the Corporation, and that the position of women was unfairly affected by both systemic and attitudinal discrimination. The Task Force recommended action: a long-term policy to rectify organizational practices and regulations, the adoption of an equal-opportunity hiring and promotion police, the establishment of an Office of Equal Opportunity; in short, an overall policy of affirmative action for women.

The Office of Equal Opportunity

An Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) was set up at CBC's Ottawa Head Office late in 1975. Its director reported to the Vice President of Human Resources and Administration and it was expected to 'ensure all CBC employees enjoy equality of opportunity without regard to sex, religion, age, marital status or national origin, in all areas of employment within the Corporation'.

The OEO, with a team of five officers, selected two primary goals: (a) to increase the representation of women within the CBC so as to approximate more closely the proportion of women in the general Canadian labour force; and (b) to increase the number of women in management, production and other key positions so as to parallel more closely the proportion of women on staff.

The personnel practices and the policies of the Corporation were examined and subsequently modified. In 1977 a policy on Equal Opportunity of Employment in the CBC was written and entered into the company policy book. The OEO was identified as a body which would provide 'guidance on the appropriate

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actions and corrective measures deemed necessary to ensure fair treatment and equality of opportunity for all employees. Human Resources (HR) directors and managers across the system are to be responsible at all times for ensuring that the policy is implemented and for enlisting the co-operation of all managers.' This was followed in 1979 by a proposal from the OEO to the Joint Management Committee for an affirmative action approach (replacing the old 'equal opportunity' philosophy), which would imply preferential measures. The basic principle underlying the programme was that the goal of breaking down job segregation by sex would be taken into account in all hiring, promotion and transfers, and that where imbalances persisted special efforts would be made to improve the situation directly.

The first step was the incorporation by the Executive Vice President, for the first time ever, of an equal-opportunity objective among his annual operating objectives. It read: 'to improve opportunities for the employment and advancement of women in the CBC workforce so as to measurably increase the number of women in the CBC labour force in 1980/81, particularly in management and production positions'.

In 1983 the Federal Government appointed a Royal Commission, headed by Judge Rosalie Abella, 'to explore the most efficient means of promoting equality in employment for four groups: women, native peoples, disabled persons and visible minorities'. In its submission to the Abella Commission, the CBC summarized the key initiatives taken by the OEO in its first seven years as:

- Equalization of compensation schemes such as life insurance and pension plans.

- Establishment and communication both internally and externally, of an equal opportunity policy.

- Revision of maternity/paternity benefits.

- Study of child-care issue.

- Elimination of sex stereotyping and sexist language from all recruitment and orientation materials, application for employment forms, internal and external advertising, and position titles.

- A comprehensive programme of career awareness seminars for women, designed as a first step in the development and the better utilization of the Corporation's female staff.

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A programme of 'sensitization' seminars and briefing sessions for managers and other staff on the role of women in the CBC today. The adoption and distribution of Treasury Board's 1983 guidelines for sex-stereotyping in communications.

The 1983 recommendation to senior management that the corporation adopt a mandatory affirmative action programme with numerical goals and time-tables for the advancement of women. Estimating the success of its equal opportunity programme, the CBC summarized:

If we take all these activities together, we can state without reservation that the impact has been significant. A dramatic change in the CBC climate (particularly in English-speaking Canada) might be cited as one of the most important changes stimulated by the affirmative action programme for women. Tangible results are also evident though progress, as in all social change, has not been particularly rapid. . . . Priority effort has been placed on increasing the number of women in management positions; growth in this category has been significant with the proportion of women in 'management' jobs increasing from 7.5 per cent in 1975 to 18.5 per cent in 1983.

Nonetheless, the problem of job segregation and the underrepresentation of women in management (as well as in production cadres, technical and engineering fields and senior officers in the staff/service departments) persists. Part of the problem is lack of accountability:

We have not been able to ensure accountability for the results across the system and implementation has been sporadic, and dependent on the goodwill of managers. We have *encouraged* people to implement special measures but we have not *required* them to do so. There have been few rewards for those line managers who have actively and aggressively worked to improve the status of women in their department and few, if any, repercussions for those who have made no effort at all to contribute positively to change. *It is this overall affirmative, but non-coercive, approach which the CBC has now decided to modify.*

Defining its overall success as 'limited' and 'slow', the CBC stated to the Abella Commission that

it is clear from our experience that social change does not take place simply as a recognition of the problem. It requires strong, persistent and often extraordinary measures. What is needed is a systematic

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approach which will ensure that *all* managers join in the effort and where performance in reaching affirmative action goals is measured through a standard performance appraisal system.

The brief called for a *mandatory* affirmative action policy and programme to be undertaken in conjunction with all the other OEO and HR measures.

It was precisely at this juncture, when the CBC was poised to take the second significant step on the road to equality, that the scenario was abruptly interrupted. Two things occurred to distract management's attention. First, following the appointment of a new president, a massive internal re-organization was undertaken which threw many programmes and positions into limbo. Second, shortly after the election of a new Conservative government in September 1984, the CBC was subject to a \$75 million budget cut leading to a prolonged period of 'down-sizing', which had to be repeated with a second round of cuts in 1986. The CBC workforce is still in upheaval but from the figures it seems that, statistically speaking, women survived the first round of lay-offs and maintained their percentage in management ranks—though they, like the men, lost in actual numbers (See Table 2).

TABLE 2. Percentage of women in CBC (corporate) management

| Year | % | Year | % |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1974 | 7.5 | 1980 | 15.2 |
| 1975 | 9.1 | 1983 | 18.5 |
| 1976 | 10.3 | 1984 | 19.2 |
| 1978 | 16.0 | 1985 | 21.0 |

Source: OEO and CBC English Services Division.

*Women and media decision-making**Participation of women in CBC English network management*

Management at the CBC is divided between the two networks, radio and television, and covers the following categories or 'occupational ensembles': design and staging, engineering/technology, finance, general management services, human resources, management information systems, legal, location management and regional directors, media services, programming, resource co-ordination-production, internal audit.

The percentage of women in CBC corporate management has almost tripled since 1974 (Table 2). Through this period the representation of women has been consistently higher in the English-language networks than the French, and higher in radio management than television (Tables 3 and 4).

TABLE 3. Percentage of women in CBC management

| Year | Services division | |
|------|-------------------|--------|
| | English | French |
| 1975 | 11.5 | 7.7 |
| 1977 | 12.5 | 8.5 |
| 1980 | 18.5 | 10.8 |

TABLE 4. Percentage breakdown of men and women in management, English-language networks, 1986

| Network | Number | % |
|-------------------|--------|----|
| <i>Television</i> | | |
| Men | 166 | 72 |
| Women | 65 | 28 |
| <i>Radio</i> | | |
| Men | 33 | 61 |
| Women | 21 | 39 |

Source: Network Human Resources, Toronto.

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Salary gaps persist in management as elsewhere (Table 5) but have been slowly diminishing so that women's salaries reached an average of 86 per cent of men's salaries in 1985.

TABLE 5. Average salaries of men and women in corporate management (Canadian dollars)

| Year | Men | Women | Women's percentage |
|------|--------|--------|--------------------|
| 1980 | 31,710 | 26,065 | 82 |
| 1984 | 44,620 | 38,075 | 85 |
| 1985 | 46,345 | 39,960 | 86 |

Source: Network Human Resources, Toronto.

The turnover rate of women in the total CBC employee population is considerably higher than it is for men, as is their appointment rate (Table 6). Without a further breakdown of these figures indicating where in the workforce the turnover is happening, and in which occupations, they are somewhat difficult to quantify. Certainly, some inequity exists but it is impossible to ascertain why this is so.

TABLE 6. Turnover and appointment rates, CBC corporate management, 1984/85 (percentages)

| | Turnover | Appointment |
|-------|----------|-------------|
| Men | 3 | 2.4 |
| Women | 4 | 5.2 |

Source: Network Human Resources, Toronto.

It is, however, plain to see that women in management continue to congregate in the lower echelons, MS (management scale) I through MS III (Table 7). However, the percentages have dim-

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inished slightly, from 89 per cent in those three categories in 1977 to 79 per cent in 1982 in English Services Division (ESD) management.

TABLE 7. Breakdown of female staff in English-language network management

| Management scale | 1977 | 1978 | 1982 |
|------------------|------|------|------|
| MS IX | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| MS VIII | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| MS VII | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| MS VI | 2 | 2 | 5 |
| MS V | 2 | 6 | 12 |
| MS IV | 5 | 6 | 14 |
| MS III | 21 | 19 | 43 |
| MS II | 47 | 54 | 80 |
| MS I | 29 | 32 | 42 |
| | 89% | 85% | 79% |

Source: OEO.

The vast majority of women in English-language network management are in the programming, design and staging, resource co-ordination and media services areas. There appear to be no women at all in the management of engineering/technical or finance. The pattern is familiar. Women are apparently being channelled first into more 'typically female' management fields, following the 'caring and nurturing' stereotype.

After ten years, the Office of Equal Opportunity was closed down in 1985—ostensibly a casualty of the budgetary cuts, but just as much the victim of corporate priorities. There were definite problems with the programme as it stood, and in 1983 the OEO and senior corporate management had already come to an agreement that some fundamental changes in policy would be necessary. For a time it looked, on paper at least, as if high-level corporate commitment to equal employment was about to become a reality. However, it never materialized in practice. By March 1984 the OEO

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staff had dwindled to two, and nothing happened for another year until the Director of the OEO herself was laid off in March 1985.

Throughout most of the OEO's existence, the Director had been the most senior-ranking woman in Head Office management, a fact which many considered illustrative of the lack of power and prestige of the office and the programme within the Head Office environment. Furthermore, as was often pointed out, the programme and the OEO itself were instituted as temporary measures and even within the Human Resources department the real political, as opposed to rhetorical, commitment had been questioned. Critics contended that the OEO should have reported to the Executive Vice President.

The work of the OEO was further complicated by the fact that its attention and mandate covered only permanent employees of the Corporation while a great many people, especially in creative fields of production, work on a contract (freelance) basis. With its data base so constrained, its programmes and thus the effectiveness of its work were seriously limited.

In May 1984 CBC president Pierre Juneau told the parliamentary committee of Culture and Communications that the CBC 'intends to adopt a target system which would apply to every area of the Corporation. Managers would be accountable for their success in implementing or reaching those targets'. Two years later that mandatory affirmative action has not been taken, though an entirely new policy and programme for equal employment is now in the process of being formulated.

Bill C-62 and equal opportunity

In March 1985, the Federal Government responded to the recommendations of the Abella Commission by announcing the implementation of an employment equity programme. Bill C-62 was introduced in June 1985 and was expected to be enacted by autumn 1986. Under its provisions the CBC (as well as other Crown corporations and federally regulated employers) were required to submit to the Treasury Board a comprehensive workforce profile with an employment equity action plan by March 1987, and thereafter are required to make an annual progress report.

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In anticipation of this the CBC set up an Employment Equity Steering Committee

to provide guidance to corporate Human Resources in the development and implementation of the Employment Equity programme. The Committee will ensure that business and human resource plans take employment equity objectives into account and that the requirements set out in the Employment Equity Act and the regulations of Treasury Board are met.

The major part of the Committee's work is to develop a framework for workforce and employment systems analysis, and a means of monitoring and evaluating progress.

Bill C-62, however, has been controversial. The main bone of contention is the absence of any enforcement mechanism in the draft legislation—a provision Judge Abella specifically and clearly recommended was absolutely essential. As it stands (April 1986), the legislation provides a penalty (C\$50,000) for the failure by a corporation to report to Treasury Board as required, but no penalties in the event that it fails to carry out a programme of employment equity, or fails to live up to the targets, plans and goals in the action plan filed with the government.

At this point, therefore, the prognosis is not good. Given that the Federal Government has declined to provide the legislation with teeth, and that the 1983 decision of senior CBC management to move to mandatory affirmative action has been abandoned, it may be that the Corporation will end up taking a giant step backward with the blessing of the Conservative Government.

Invisible barriers

The CBC's experience with equal opportunity demonstrates the tremendous difficulties involved in addressing discrimination in large institutions. From the beginning, the approach of the OEO was twofold, involving both procedural adjustments and attempts to modify attitudes through awareness seminars and internal communication. By far the most difficult to change, obviously, are attitudes. Moreover, in a working environment where overt sexism

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is no longer professionally acceptable, a good deal of it has gone 'underground'. It can be said, for instance, that very few of the stereotypes expressed so frequently and crudely to the MacIver Task Force would be expressed overtly today. The sins of discrimination in the mid-1980s are more likely to be sins of omission than commission; that is, in the realm of opportunities not offered and promotions not given.

Women now have a fifty-year history of broadcasting in Canada. As producers and journalists, women have risen to positions of responsibility and influence in some number, though they are still quite rare at the senior management level where responsibility comes with authority attached. In the other two main areas of activity in the media—the technical and the business/administrative side—women are scarcely accepted as participants yet and are a very long way from parity, let alone equality.

Attitudes and CBC senior management

In its submission to the Abella Commission the CBC reported in answer to a request to rank a list of conditions which 'currently serve as inhibitors to achieving equal employment opportunity'. These were: (a) lack of commitment to OEO goals on the part of some decision-makers; (b) difficulty of some people to recognize female talent and qualifications; (c) occupational bias of some individuals making the selection decisions; (d) absence of participation in relevant 'old boy' network; (e) insufficient number of staffing opportunities; (f) self-imposed occupational bias or stereotype; and (g) shortage of women with the appropriate qualifications.

Item (b), 'difficulty of some people to recognize female talent and qualifications' was not among those suggested by the Abella Commission in the questionnaire, but was added by those OEO officers who prepared the brief. Two other conditions suggested by the Commission were not included by the CBC in its list of the chief remaining obstacles. These were, first, the failure of corporations to provide adequate schedule flexibility for women with family responsibilities, and, second, the existence of objective hiring criteria such as height or weight requirements.

This indicates that the major obstacles to women's advancement

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in CBC management are of the invisible variety, having to do with attitudes, biases and presumptions about women by those in senior management making key personnel decisions. There may now be a few women in their midst but senior management still operates today, as it did in Kay MacIver's day, as a 'man's world'.

The syndrome was eloquently described by one very successful young television producer.

I used to think the biggest step in my career would be moving from secretarial ranks into production, into jobs normally held by men. Now I realize that was only the first step. You have to fight the whole way along, because you don't get promoted the way men do. If a man and a woman of roughly equal skills are given a tough assignment, and supposing both do a good job of it, the senior editors will say of the man, 'Wow, this guy's got potential; he's going to go far.' Of the women, they'll say, 'Wow, she did a terrific job, we never thought she could do that.' They see it as the top of my ability and the bottom of his. So it never occurs to them to push us up or give us challenges, or to expect more than we are giving them now.

The view from the male side looks surprisingly similar, if you can find an executive who will be candid about it. One news executive recalling the rank sexism that used to greet young women trying to get into television a decade ago said: 'Some cupcake would walk into my office and I'd sit there staring into her eyes for hours, and the news would just have to carry on. . . . You just don't have time for that sort of thing now, it's too serious a business.' However, on reflection, he admits, 'Well, it is still true that an attractive intelligent girl is going to get more of an executive's time than an intelligent homely girl. And if it's a choice between an attractive intelligent woman and a good-looking intelligent man, the woman will get the edge, but the man will get the job.'

Another senior broadcasting executive and former head of CBC's English Services says the major change he has seen in his male colleagues in CBC senior management over the last six to eight years is that now they are comfortable enough with female colleagues not to notice they are women. Consciously or unconsciously they were afraid (and still are) of having women around because they feared having to alter their behaviour, and worried about

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whether or not they would end up having to work for a woman. 'It's just easier to be good old boys together. After a tough negotiating meeting, it is easy for two men to suddenly decide to go out for a steak and beer to talk tactics. Many men think that this would be tricky with a woman, although in practice it works out exactly the same.' However, one thing has not changed. These men are still not comfortable with attractive and/or aggressive women. 'That gets in the way of men evaluating women, particularly young women. If they are attractive or difficult [i.e. professionally demanding], a whole new set of factors is introduced to the evaluation equation, and a lot of men in senior and middle management are not good at discerning it.'

Another invisible barrier can be detected in the way men habitually neglect to think of women when it comes to filling vacant positions in senior management—and positions at the MS VI level and above are not posted at CBC. One woman who has been there to see this happening reported, 'They suggest who they want for the position and I always chimed in with the names of some women. If I hadn't been there, those names would never have been considered. They just don't think of women.' It is called the old boys' network, and it still works extremely effectively in the promotion of men and the exclusion of women. Consequently, a good deal of the success of women in CBC network management has to be credited to the informal actions of women like the Regional Director quoted above. Affirmative action in the interest of getting a fair representation of women applicants for management positions has won the endorsement of even the sceptics. Margaret Lyons, for example, who is opposed to affirmative action on the creative side of broadcasting, does believe it is necessary in management, 'otherwise it will just take too long'.

What happens during the recruitment process is, of course, another story. One senior woman radio manager recounts her experience of a selection board, on which the other two members were men:

There was one woman candidate who was clearly better than the rest. When the board was over I asked the other two for their reactions and both of them had chosen men as front-runners. It was *so* obvious that

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I wanted to blow up. Instead I went through a laborious process to bring them around, in the end they agreed—I don't think it was just because I was the boss.

However all things *not* being equal, that may be exactly what it will take to move the mountain and clear the path for women: more women bosses.

It seems then, that for many women career advancement, particularly the critical step into management, has a great deal to do with the luck of the draw—not just with the individuals on the recruitment committee and their ability to assess candidates of both sexes fairly, but to a significant degree with the luck the candidate has with colleagues and superiors. More than one nascent career in broadcasting has been thwarted because a woman was employed for all the wrong reasons by a male who was unable to separate sexual appreciation from professional judgement. More than one young woman has found male colleagues unwilling or unable to accept her in a responsible position. 'There are still men at the CBC', one female anchor of a network television news programme says, 'who see me to this day as a secretary who went too far. Once a copy clerk, always a copy clerk, seems to be the attitude.' And it has also happened to women that when a job opportunity did come knocking it came with a request for sexual favours. Even if the proposition was not overt, even if it was unintended, all it takes is sexual innuendo for a woman's confidence in the offer to be completely destroyed.

The women who have prevailed in broadcast management, who are now emerging at the middle to senior levels, have either avoided such circumstances or survived them somehow. They have succeeded in presenting themselves and in being accepted as thorough-going professionals. For them, the problem lies in *not* being hired for all the wrong reasons. For when all is said and done, one of the active ingredients in discrimination is a lack of imagination on the part of managers guarding the status quo.

*Women in broadcast management in Canada**The situation in the CBC today*

Several recent circumstances have prejudiced the gains made over ten years by the OEO and the Corporation's equal opportunity programme. The first is the general economic conditions in broadcasting which went through an extraordinary period of expansion in the 1960s, a slowdown in the 1970s, and is now in the trough of a cycle. Similarly, the issue of employment equity has caught the organization at a low point, financially and politically, and the serious, successive cutbacks have put enormous pressure on the CBC's entire workforce. In other words, a generation of CBC women have reached the management entry level in record numbers just when openings are abnormally constricted, and the potential for change in the organization disproportionately small. People are retired and their posts go with them as the CBC attempts to absorb cutbacks. Those who are left naturally tend to hold on to their positions longer, again limiting the opportunities.

Researchers have theorized that although the initial entry of women into a previous all-male occupation may be shocking, it can be accommodated—to a level of about 20 per cent—because this does not imply fundamental alterations to the job or the environment. The second stage, moving that 20 per cent towards true parity may, in fact, be the more revolutionary stage. One senior television executive, who experienced being the 'first' woman into several positions, has this to say:

The research on women in the corporate world indicates that when participation reaches 15 or 20 per cent, the resistance from men hardens. Being the first was not terrible because I was such an oddity no one felt his job was threatened or feared that I was going to have an effect on the business. The problem now is that real equality is no small thing. I can't emphasize enough how revolutionary it is. It may not seem so because it has been on the news so much, because people are sick of talking about it and think it has happened. Well, it hasn't happened and it is not going to happen unless there is leadership at the top.

From the figures in Table 7 it appears that the major block to advancement in management for women exists at middle-management level—the big hurdle being from MS V to MS VI and VII. On the positive side, however, there are indications that

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the general mix of backgrounds among people moving into management is becoming more diverse. At the same time the requirements for particular jobs are becoming more flexible. These changes in climate, if true, will help the cause of women in management, as well as the cause of the other target groups of the government's equal-employment legislation.

The experience of the CBC with equal opportunity over ten years is instructive on one very important point. It demonstrates what the Corporation itself told the Abella Commission, that the key to the success of such a programme is the commitment of senior corporate management to the policy and, most important, the leadership of its senior officers.

Social barriers

Motherhood remains one of the most significant factors differentiating the careers of men and women in broadcast management, as it does everywhere else. Women in the CBC do not feel that working conditions on this score have improved substantially, even though the Corporation has instituted decent maternity/paternity policies. But the most difficult part comes after childbirth, during the intense parental period when most women do most of the work. For women in journalism or in management (jobs which respect no regular hours, holidays or weekends) it is like having two twenty-four-hour on-call jobs. Childcare and/or daycare is especially hard to arrange and very expensive. As yet neither the CBC nor the unions have proposed a solution to the problem, so it remains something women managers have to work out privately.

It would also seem that many women in broadcast management and journalism are delaying having children, and some are not having them at all. The statistics show that in English-language network managements, no maternity leave was taken during 1985; four women were expected to take it during 1986. But once children are on the scene, many women are determined not to let parental demands interfere, or be *seen* to interfere, with their professional lives for fear it will be assumed that their attention (and therefore performance) is being compromised. One anchorwoman and senior CBC journalist said:

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I think women are penalized by that and still feel constrained. Men are not ashamed to say they have a sick child or have to go home because their wives will be angry if they are late another night. It has almost become chic for men to use their children as a way to get out of here.

The blurring of sex roles may be making things easier at home, but there is little evidence that it is improving the situation for women at work. Even if the father is at home full-time (which seems to be happening more, though not for extended periods), male colleagues will assume that once she becomes a mother, a woman is not as available for assignment and is not generally as mobile as before. This has certainly been seen as a factor in the slow-down of a woman's career. It has also been known to affect her opportunities for training, though there are at present no statistics to illustrate this point.

Women and ambition

As anyone who has tried to recruit good women to management knows, it is a very difficult task. Not only because women often lack confidence in their own ability, but because they have an aversion to management. Says one woman who went into television management from production and has learned to like it, 'Women don't understand much about management; there is a mystery about it that often turns them away, which I suspect has been there to turn them away.' There is a culture about management—redolent with acronyms and cigar smoke and overlong, late-night meetings—which repels women. It is a Catch-22 situation, which many do recognize: women are avoiding management because they genuinely do not want to participate until the environment changes, and the environment will not change until more women move into senior management and bring about that change.

Other women are of the opinion that life is too short to spend in the ranks of any management, feminized or not. There is logic on their side in this, for even among men in broadcasting management has a bad name. However, the CBC has not had to implement an affirmative action programme to encourage men to take the leap into management. And this suggests there are perks that come with the positions that appeal far more strongly to men than to women.

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These may be concerned with titles and male notions of ambition.

For generations women have been loath to admit they have ambition, and ambitious women have been labelled as pushy and aggressive. That seems to be changing; and for women as well as men coming into the business now, it is customary to 'career-plan' and to promote oneself actively. This would have been a very risky thing for a woman to try a decade ago, when the Svengali complex was thriving, and men liked to think of themselves as the creators of women's careers. The older generation of women, those now in their forties, typically took the approach that if they worked hard (and the vast majority of women are aware that they work harder and are more reliable than their male colleagues) eventually their work would be recognized and rewarded. It took many years to realize that the passive approach was the long route and quite likely to lead nowhere.

Women in the CBC have begun to challenge and advance themselves. That they need more encouragement to do so is self-evident. That men will have to start paying a price is also obvious, for equality of employment implies that the affirmative action which has always existed for white, able-bodied males will have to end. And because employment equality will not happen on its own, out of fraternal goodwill, it will have to be made mandatory.

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