

## COMMUNICATION STUDIES. СОЦІАЛЬНІ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ

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### MAINSTREAMING OF GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN JOURNALISM EDUCATION

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**Abstract.** *The article deals with a problem of gender mainstreaming in the journalist training process. New journalism, free of gender stereotypes, has to begin with the training of journalists free of gender stereotypes. One of the gender mainstreaming methods is gender awareness raising, aimed at increasing general gender sensitivity and improving knowledge of gender equality. The purpose of the article is to analyse the ways of rising gender awareness in the domestic system of journalism education. In Ukraine, the introduction of a gender perspective into education is gaining momentum. The results of an empirical study on gender awareness of first and second-year students of specialty “Journalism” (Faculty of Humanities and Pedagogy, National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine) are given. The results of the student survey revealed the insufficient understanding of gender issues and the rigidity of gender-based images of men and women, indicating a need for raising gender awareness among students. It would be possible with mainstreaming of a gender perspective into journalism education at the institutional level, integrating special courses or modules on gender in journalist training programs.*

**Keywords:** *gender mainstreaming, gender perspective, gender awareness, journalism education.*

**Introduction.** As defined in the UN Economic and Social Council Resolution, mainstreaming of gender perspective is “the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality” [11].

According to UNESCO experts, “education is at the core of any attempt to foster gender equality as an integrated component of the whole 2030 Agenda, so as to make young women and men aware, capable of identifying unequal practices, and adequately equipped to contribute to making their future professions and working

environments more gender-sensitive and gender-responsive” [9, p. 26]. Today serious commitment is to be expected from educational institutions, so as to provide a next generation of professionals with the knowledge and understanding that will make a difference.

This point of view is underpinned by a conviction that “professional journalistic standards are essential to bring out the potential of media systems to foster democracy, dialogue, sustainable development and gender equality” [11, p. 1].

However, as M. Geertsema-Sligh notes, in a time of swift technological changes in the news media, much of journalism education is focused on preparing students for careers in a new media landscape instead of focusing on gender or other diversity issues. Good journalism is inclusive and offers a variety of perspectives [8]. And it seems that the place to start changing the news industry is by changing journalism education.

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### Recent researches and publications.

According to researchers, journalism and its relationship to gender can be investigated systematically as a multidimensional object [10]. In Ukraine, the problems of gender equality are studied by T. Galaida, I. Goyan, S. Storozhuk, O. Uvarova, O. Yarosh, gender stereotypes in the language of the media are explored by Yu. Honchar, N. Kostytsia, T. Kravets, M. Majerchuk, T. Martsenyuk, L. Matsko, O. Plakhotnik, O. Prykhodko, Ja. Puzyrenko, O. Sinchak, O. Slinchuk, C. Shturkhetsky and others. However, the problem of introduction gender perspective into domestic journalism education and training gender-competent journalists remain insufficiently developed.

**The purpose** of the article is to analyse the ways of rising gender awareness in the domestic system of journalism education.

**Methods.** Among methods and techniques of audience research with gender perspective recommended are quantitative techniques (surveys, audience measurements, studies of digital media etc.) and qualitative ones (interviews, focus and discussion group, participatory observation etc.) [9, p. 76]. Such methods as survey, analysis of scientific sources, generalization and systematization were used in this research.

**Results.** V. Shynkaruk notes that in the context of Ukraine's integration into the world community, society's need for highly qualified journalists with high humanitarian culture and special knowledge, creative thinking, motivated for sustainable professional development, able to correctly and objectively handle and interpret information increases [4, p. 117]. It is very important to understand that journalism, free of gender stereotypes, has to begin with the training of journalists, free of gender stereotypes. It is necessary to start forming a clearer understanding of the gender issues and the importance of the role of the media in their solution to journalists of tomorrow [3].

As emphasized by M. Geertsema-Sligh, one of the most cutting edge ways to include gender into journalism itself and into journalism education is the approach of gender mainstreaming. The challenge is to integrate gender awareness training into all

types and aspects of media training. In fact, in most parts of the world gender mainstreaming is not required and remains unknown in journalism education [8].

UNITWIN highlights "the necessity to mainstream – at the institutional level of universities, faculties, departments and formal degrees – the notion that a course on gender, media and ICTs must be an integral part of media, communication and journalism programs. More broadly, mainstreaming gender awareness across the university ensures new educational gender-sensitive modules are made within a context that guarantees sustainability and institutional support" [9, p. 30].

Therefore, in 2013, a new course "Journalism and Gender" was included into the UNESCO Model curricula for journalism education [5]. According to the authors, this course is about how strategic gender analysis can be enlisted in journalistic production. It describes and analyses how gender inequalities are culturally produced, and reproduced by media organizations, providing an opportunity for students to critically interrogate and challenge their own stereotypical assumptions [7, p. 129].

Today gender is a live issue in media topics [1; 6]. In Ukraine, the introduction of a gender perspective into journalistic education is gaining momentum. In 2015, Ukraine launched the Project "Gender Mainstreaming in Higher Educational Institutions of Ukraine", in which 16 universities from 6 different regions of the country are involved. The main objective of this project is to promote the achievement of gender equality and the implementation of gender-sensitive approaches in Ukrainian universities through a gender audit procedure.

In Ukraine, 73 higher educational institutions train journalists, including the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine (NULES). One of the important initial stages of a gender audit is to determine the level of gender awareness. In 2019 we conducted a primary study among students of Faculty of Humanities and Pedagogy (specialty "Journalism"), based one of the methods proposed in the "Gender Media

Practices: A Manual on Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination for Students of Higher Educational Institutions" [2].

*The topic "Truth about gender in Ukraine".*

At the first stage, 46 first and second-year students (20 male and 26 female) participated in the survey "What do we know about gender: myths and facts". Participants were asked to express their agreement or disagreement with 7 statements using responses "Agree", "Disagree", "Don't know":

1. *Gender focuses on women's issues.* In fact, gender is equally oriented to all people, regardless of belonging to gender. However, 68% of male students and 56% of female students agree with this statement.

2. *Only feminists are engaged in gender.* The global movement for gender equality is represented by the community, regardless of belonging to gender. More than half of male students (52%) consider gender a feminist affair compared to 39% of female.

3. *Ukrainian women are well-respected and without gender.* But the attitude towards Ukrainian women is restricted by their specific roles (mother, wife) and is mainly declarative. This statement caused the widest gap in opinions among the respondents. 87% of male students believe that the status of Ukrainian women is quite decent and only 5% of female students agree with them.

4. *Gender in Ukraine is beneficial only*

*to America and Europe.* Just over half of all students (54% of male students and 50% of female students) were skeptical about this statement and believe that Ukrainians themselves agree or disagree with the proposals and ideas which come from abroad.

5. *Gender supports unnatural acts and encroaches on our spirituality.* Gender is not relevant to unnatural acts and doesn't negate the principles of humanism and human rights. 65% of male students and 50% of female students have questioned this statement.

6. *Gender makes women unfeminine, and men – unmasculine.* Gender stereotypes contribute to maintaining gender inequality. Students opinions on this issue are rather similar: 72% of male students and 70% of female students disagree with that.

7. *Gender is something very specific.* Actually, gender could be applied to all areas of life – everywhere, where there is a separation between men and women, there is a gender. This statement creates confusion for the respondents: 7% of male students and 14% of female students response "Don't know", 60% of male students and 49% of female students have questioned the universal character of gender issues.

**Table 1**

**The results of the survey "What do we know about gender: myths and facts" of first- and second-year students, NULES of Ukraine (%)**

Statement	Agree		Disagree		Don't know	
	male	female	male	female	male	female
1. Gender focuses on women's issues.	68	56	28	37	4	7
2. Only feminists are engaged in gender.	52	39	43	52	5	9
3. Ukrainian women are well-respected and without gender.	87	5	13	95	0	0
4. Gender in Ukraine is beneficial only to America and Europe.	42	38	54	50	4	12
5. Gender supports unnatural acts and encroaches on our spirituality.	27	30	65	60	8	10
6. Gender makes women unfeminine, and men – unmasculine.	28	25	72	70	0	5
7. Gender is something very specific.	60	49	33	37	7	14

**Conclusion and Prospects.** The survey results showed that the majority of first- and second-year students do not have a clear

understanding of gender issues. On the one hand, female students are more frequency uncertain in their answers (this is evidenced

by responses "Don't know"), on the other, they are more aware of the gender problems than male students.

In the second stage, the training seminars were held for students of these groups. 4 teachers (1 male and 3 female) were involved in work. Purpose: to promote awareness among participants about a large number of myths about gender issues and risks of ignoring the gender problems in Ukraine, to provide information for the debunking of such myths. Participants were invited to comment responses, argue and illustrate their points of view. This form of constructive discussion has

been very productive. Both male and female students engaged in collaborative dialogue, learn to express opinions and listen to each other. This kind of work seems rather promising for the promotion of gender literacy among young journalists.

Even this small research indicates a need for raising students' gender awareness, that would be possible with mainstreaming of a gender perspective into journalism education at the institutional level, integrating special courses on gender or modules in journalism training programs.

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## УРАХУВАННЯ ГЕНДЕРНОЇ ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ В ЖУРНАЛІСТСЬКІЙ ОСВІТІ

О. Ю. Балалаєва

**Анотація.** Стаття присвячена проблемі інтеграції гендерної перспективи до процесу підготовки журналістів. Нова журналістика, вільна від гендерних стереотипів, повинна починатися з навчання журналістів, вільних від гендерних стереотипів. Одним із методів гендерного мейнстримінгу є підвищення гендерної обізнаності, спрямоване на збільшення гендерної чутливості та вдосконалення й поглиблення знань про гендерну рівність. Метою статті є проаналізувати шляхи підвищення гендерної обізнаності у вітчизняній системі журналістської освіти. В Україні впровадження гендерної перспективи в освіту набирає темп. Наведено результати емпіричного дослідження щодо гендерної обізнаності студентів першого та другого курсів спеціальності «Журналістика» гуманітарно-педагогічного факультету Національного університету біоресурсів і природокористування України. Результати опитування студентів виявили недостатньо чітке розуміння ними гендерних питань та ригідність уявлень про чоловіків і жінок, що свідчить про необхідність підвищення гендерної обізнаності серед студентів, що можливо шляхом поступового впровадження гендерної перспективи до журналістської освіти на інституційному рівні, інтеграції окремих курсів або модулів із гендерних питань у програми підготовки журналістів.

**Ключові слова:** гендерний мейнстримінг, гендерна перспектива, гендерна обізнаність, журналістська освіта.