

The invisibility of women's sport in Catalan public television news in March 2023

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Abstract

This article investigates, from a gender perspective, the presence of women's sports on primetime television news on TV3 during the month of March 2023 as a whole, and on 8 March in particular, with the aim of quantifying the coverage of sports involving women as compared to men. It is verified that Catalan public television only devotes 14.39% of the time in its sports block to women's competitions. The research also emphasises the fact that football, both women's and men's, is the main focus of the sports section. Finally, it examines the contradiction that means that the news media fails to respect its own style book in terms of issues of equality and gender parity.

Keywords

Female sport, gender, inequality, media presence, public television.

Resum

Aquest article investiga, des de la perspectiva de gènere, la presència de l'esport femení al telenotícies de màxima audiència de TV3 durant el mes de març del 2023 en conjunt, i el 8 de març en concret, amb l'objectiu de quantificar la cobertura dels esports protagonitzats per dones en contraposició al masculí. Es comprova que la televisió pública catalana només dedica el 14,39 % del temps del bloc d'esports a les competicions femenines. La recerca també incideix en el fet que el futbol és el gran protagonista de la secció esportiva, tant femenina com masculina. Finalment, posa sobre la taula la contradicció que suposa que l'informatiu no respecti el seu propi llibre d'estil pel que fa a qüestions d'igualtat i paritat de gènere.

Paraules clau

Esport femení, gènere, desigualtat, presència mediàtica, televisió pública.

1. Introduction

The countries within the European framework recognise the need to continue reviewing and rethinking the role of women in society in order to seek a level of equality that has not yet been achieved today. In this regard, the Sustainable Development Goals defined by the United Nations in the 2030 Agenda, include as Goal number 5 achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls and “[a]pproving and strengthening appropriate policies and applicable laws to promote equality” (United Nations, 2015, p. 21).¹ Therefore, it is considered that, in many areas, women still suffer unequal treatment compared to men. This is the case in sport, a sector where the gender imbalance is more pronounced, and where women are often

belittled and silenced, not only by part of society, but also (and above all) by the media.

In Catalonia, women's sport has gained greater recognition in recent years. The progressive social support that women's sport receives tends towards consolidating a very significant change in Catalan society. In this context, it is pertinent to investigate what role the media play, and especially how the public television with the largest audience in Catalonia, TV3, participates in the discursive construction of women's sport.

First of all, it is necessary to bear in mind the guidelines that have specifically directed the news coverage of Catalan public television in matters of gender. The decalogue on gender perspective in media content of the Corporació Catalana de Mitjans Audiovisuals (CCMA) (Catalan Audiovisual Media

Corporation), included in its style book, states that a “[p]arity must be applied in all content, both for experts and protagonists” and if necessary, it must be done “by applying positive discrimination”. It is also pointed out that “content that clearly questions gender roles” and “content that addresses issues of gender equality and inequality” must be implemented. The same decalogue insists that “the fragmentation of women’s bodies in images that contribute to their objectification” must be avoided and that “sexist language” must be eliminated (CCMA, 2015).

Secondly, with regard to sports information, the style manual proposes as an objective to “reflect the country’s sporting diversity”, disseminating “sports content of minority modes or categories [...] in accordance with journalistic criteria and attending to our principles of pluralism, diversity, defence of minorities, [...] and gender parity and balance, included in our editorial principles” (CCMA, 2013).

This article evaluates the coverage of women’s sports on TV3’s evening news programme, the programme with the highest audience on TV3, taking into account these precepts and analysing its indicators of gender equality and parity.

2. Objectives

In this context, and focused on the case of Catalan public television, five objectives are established that delimit the research proposal:

O1: To examine the presence and news ranking, in terms of time and number of news items, of women’s sport as opposed to men’s (segregating news items of a non-sporting nature and mixed competitions where men and women compete), on TV3’s evening news.

O2: Identify the most commonly recurring sports disciplines in the coverage of women’s and men’s sports in TV3’s TN news programme.

O3: Analyse the news treatment of women’s sport, paying attention to multimodal discourse, classification and identification of actors and journalistic voice.

O4: To determine whether on 8 March 2023, International Women’s Day, and the previous and subsequent days, the news spaces analysed here dedicated specific news items that deal with the dissemination of women’s sport.

O5: Observe whether the recommendations on gender and sports, contained in the Catalan Audiovisual Media Corporation’s Style Book, are respected in the coverage and dissemination of women’s sports.

3. Theoretical framework

3.1 Journalistic coverage of women’s sport

Women, more and more, participate and achieve triumphs or outstanding positions in sporting competitions, set up

more female teams in more disciplines and also “play highly masculinised sports, such as football” (Marín & García, 2022, p. 317). Precisely what is popularly known as the “king of sports”, football, has monopolised and continues to monopolise the media agenda in many journalistic contexts. That is what has been termed *footballisation* or the tyranny of football (Ramon-Vegas, 2017; Rojas-Torrijos, 2012; Steen, 2012), understood as men’s football. Now, however, it is “women’s football [which] is experiencing an era of expansion in Spain” (Boronat, 2021, p. 7) and teams such as Futbol Club Barcelona have achieved such important milestones as obtaining the attendance record for a women’s football match with 91,648 spectators.² But despite these data and “the growing number of players, women’s football plays a merely marginal role in the media and in public discourse” (Pfister, 2015, p. 564). It is superimposed by gender bias: women’s football, like other sports played by women, still does not have a sufficient presence in the media.

In the Spanish context, research on journalistic coverage of sports confirms this bias, widespread among the different media - from television news to the specialised press - and sustained over the years. Thus, Núñez and Gordillo (2011) warned a decade ago that 90.9% of the sports that appeared on television news in the sports section focused on men, and the presence of women on screen was anecdotal. These data are similar to those provided by the research of Hernández Sánchez, Galán Arribas and Herrero Gutiérrez (2018), years later, where it was determined that women’s sport in the specific section of TVE1’s news is less than 3%. The report of the Catalan Audiovisual Council (CAC, 2022) on women in sports programming, finds that 10.4% of the sports information on TV3 is dedicated to women’s sports, swimming being the sports discipline with the highest proportion of time spent followed by water polo, tennis, ‘hockey and basketball.

3.2 Women and public space, through sport

This unstoppable rise of women in sport progresses “in parallel with the progressive evolution of their presence in the public space” (Donoso Pérez et al., 2023, p. 559) and, it is from this milestone that the media coverage of women’s sport can also be read as a clear indicator of the changes taking place in a society that aims for gender equality.

From the perspective of feminist criticism, authors such as Celia Amorós (1994, p. 23) highlight that “the private fact and the public fact constitute what we could call a structural invariant that articulates societies by hierarchising the spaces” and by distributing them respectively between men and women, an endemic dichotomous configuration is historically consolidated where the space public is masculine because “the most socially valued activities, those with the most prestige, are carried out by the barons in practically all known societies”.

As we have seen in reviewing previous research in our environment on sports journalistic coverage, in quantitative terms, women have been underrepresented, giving rise to the impression that sportswomen do not exist or have little weight

in contrast to men (Ramon-Vegas et al., 2020). Besides, patterns of exclusion or segregation by gender are reproduced in the sports field that affect both coverage and journalistic treatment. Thus, for example, corroborates it the study by Calvo Ortega and Gutiérrez San Miguel (2016) by observing that male sportspeople in any circumstance are a reason enough for a news item, while the appearance of women is more frequent when it comes to accentuating some non-sporting aspect and is, on the other hand, limited to when they win a top-level championship. This “persistence of gender imbalances in sports coverage is particularly problematic, as it can create barriers to promoting female role models in society, especially among young people” (Rojas-Torrijos and Ramon, 2021, p. 237).

3.3 Challenges for female sportspeople: self-perception and lack of role models

The lack of journalistic support and dissemination of women's sports, together with the media's overexposure and popularisation of men's sports, means that female sportspeople perceive themselves as being invisible as collected by Martínez-Abajo et al. (2020) and/or objectified by a press that puts more emphasis on their bodies than on their sporting prowess. An initial **consequence** of this self-perception is the difficulty in establishing themselves as role models for girls and teenagers.

There are several studies that claim the lack of female sporting role models for girls and teenagers to the media that favour their integration in sporting practice (Gómez-Colell, 2015; Gómez-Colell et al., 2017; López Díez, 2011; Sainz de Baranda Andújar, 2014; Sanz Garrido, 2020). Many agree in recalling the influence exerted on public opinion when journalistic information mostly shows men's sports, which can generate the idea that “only sports played by men are important” (López Díez, 2011, p.14).

3.4 Androcentrism and sports commentary: from sexist language to the lack of voice

When exploring the role of the media in the sporting field from a gender perspective, it is also necessary to bear in mind language, “the fundamental instrument for the journalistic profession” (Vega, 2012, p. 7). As authors such as Bernárdez Rodal (2015, p. 117) point out, the language that is used informatively “is patriarchal and sexist, at the same time as it transmits information, it legitimises sexism” and sport is no exception.

Thus, a widespread practice in sports news is to take it “for granted that when talking about the World Handball Championship, by default, it is male”, so that in the distinction “between ‘sport’ and ‘women's sport’ “is applying an androcentric approach that takes as a rule that the sport played by men subordinates that played by women, considering the latter an exception to the norm” (López Díez, 2011, p.49). There is also a significant tendency to define female sportspeople with diminutives or adjectives that make it difficult to value their participation in competitions and tournaments (López

Díez, 2017) or to show them emphasising emotions as signs of weakness or dependence, so it is also essential to review the images of the media construction of sports.

And in the same way, it is important to note that, even when sportswomen are the focus of newsworthy events, they are not necessarily given a voice. Their relegation as protagonists and speakers is aligned with the image that is often projected of women journalists and their weight in newsrooms, especially in the field of sport. As the study by Bandrés-Goldáraz and Serrano González (2021, p. 125) points out, the labour situation of female journalists “is far from that proposed by the equality labour laws currently present in the Spanish and European legal system” and this is detrimental to journalism with a gender perspective. For these authors, as well as for Salido Fernández (2022, p.2), a greater female presence in news production would reduce gender biases and stereotypes that male journalists “are more likely to reinforce”.

4. Methodological design

To examine the news output of the public channel TV3, an ad hoc model of content analysis has been designed that includes the presence and ranking of information, journalistic treatment, classification and key discursive aspects (Igartua, 2006; Krippendorff, 1990). For data collection, a tested and validated ad hoc model is used (Holsti *intercoder* reliability method >90%) in previous applications,³ which guarantees the acquisition of empirical, objective and reliable data in order to draw conclusions based on the trust and validity of the same (Colle, 2011; Humanes & Igartua, 2004).

The instruments for the collection and analysis of the data include a first identification table where, fundamentally, data are collected on presence, the gender of the professionals who present the sports section (identified by the name that appears marked), and the hierarchy of the news items. The news pieces are classified according to what they cover: women's sport; men's sport; mixed sport (mixed competitions or competitions where there are both female and male categories); or non-sporting news (sporting news items that do not deal specifically with its playing or competition, for example, court cases affecting a sporting body, club meetings, etc.).

The second analytical grid, one table for each news item, is organised into four blocks: analysis of journalistic discourse, analysis of statements by sportspeople, coaches, etc., analysis of images and analysis of non-sporting references to the personal lives of sportspeople. A section for news items identified as mixed is also added.

4.1 Case study. Selection of the sample and the time period being analysed

This research has been proposed from the point of view of analysing public televisions, specifically Televisió pública de Catalunya (TV3), understood as an institution that offers

a public service to society, which can and must be audited. The Audiovisual Communication Law of Catalonia also talks about the missions of the audiovisual public service under the jurisdiction of the Generalitat and, given that the Catalan Audiovisual Media Corporation is under legislative control, Article 26 of the law also affects the contents of the public television. Section 'H' of the aforementioned article states that the "active promotion of equality between women and men, which includes equal treatment and opportunities, respect for diversity and difference, the integration of the gender perspective, the promotion of positive actions and the use of non-sexist language" (*Law 22/2005, of 29 December, on audiovisual communication in Catalonia, 2012*).

In addition, the CAC, the Generalitat de Catalunya and the Catalan Audiovisual Media Corporation (2020) promoted the #ThoEstasPerdent campaign, together with a report to which TV3 adhered, which contained ten commitments made in reference to media coverage. It was inferred as "giving more visibility to women's sport", devoting more "time and media space to presenting the results and milestones achieved by women in the various competitions" (p. 3). It was also proposed to incorporate "the gender perspective in all aspects of the treatment of news and information", "[r]eflect an image of female sportspeople that is diverse, non-stereotyped and that serves to create female role models and referents of personal, professional and social success", or to highlight "the unequal conditions that exist today between men's and women's sport" (p. 3).

The time period that has been analysed is the month of March 2023, as a representative period that is in the middle of the television season, and for the relevance of the celebration of International Women's Day on 8M (8 March). The thirty-one days of the TV3 broadcast of *TN vespre* (the evening news programme from Monday to Friday) and the weekend programme *TN vespre cap de setmana* (Saturdays and Sundays) were viewed, to select the complete sports sections, which add up to a total of 3 hours, 49 minutes and 49 seconds that was

analysed. The choice of the evening edition is justified for being the news programme with the highest share in the traditional primetime slot, which means it has a significant impact on Catalan society. The cumulative audience percentage in this time slot is the highest of the day, exceeding 66% (General Framework for Media in Spain 2023, 2023, p. 38). According to data published by Barlovento, on most days in March 2023, *TN Vespre* is the programme with the highest screen share on TV3 (Barlovento Comunicación, 2023).

5. Results

5.1 Journalistic coverage of sport according to gender categories

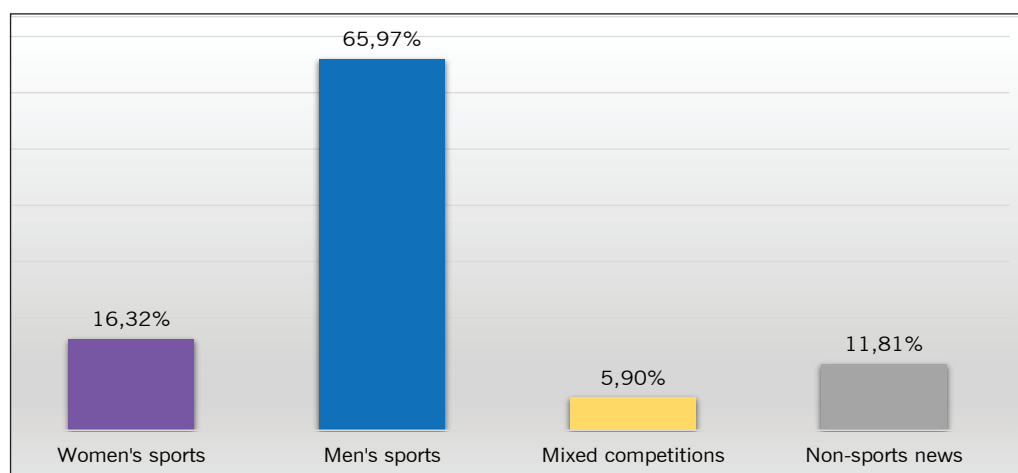
When analysing the sports news broadcast by TV3 on the *TN vespre* news programme, we find that 65.97% of the total (N=288), that is, 190, are dedicated to men's sports, and only 47, which would correspond to 16.32%, to women's sports. Non-sports news accounts for 11.81% (a total of 34 news items) while the remaining 5.90%, 17 news items, is dedicated to mixed competitions [see Figure 1].

In terms of broadcast time, the percentages are similar. Out of the total broadcast time of the sports section (N=03:49:49), 62.87% is allocated to men's sports, 17.88% to women's sports, 14.39% to non-sporting news and 4.86% to mixed competitions. The figure of 140+ minutes dedicated to men's sport contrasts clearly with just over 40 minutes for women's sport in TV3's evening news in March [see Figure 2].

5.2 Distribution by sports disciplines

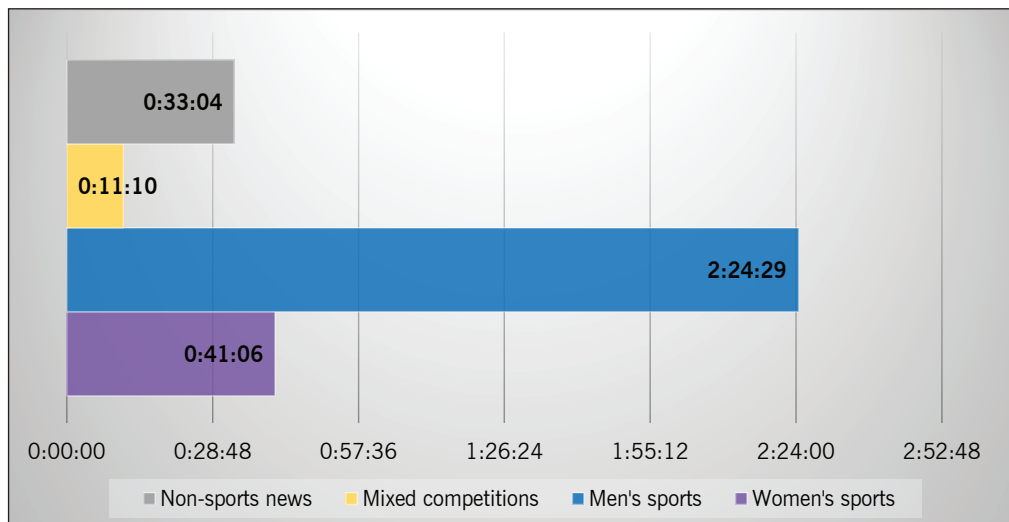
If we analyse the global data by sports discipline, football far surpasses the rest of the sports in the news coverage on *TN vespre*. Out of the total news items (N=288) analysed, 56.60% are dedicated to 'the king of sports' (163), many more than the 37 items that deal with the second most prominent discipline,

Figure 1. Total number of news items by gender



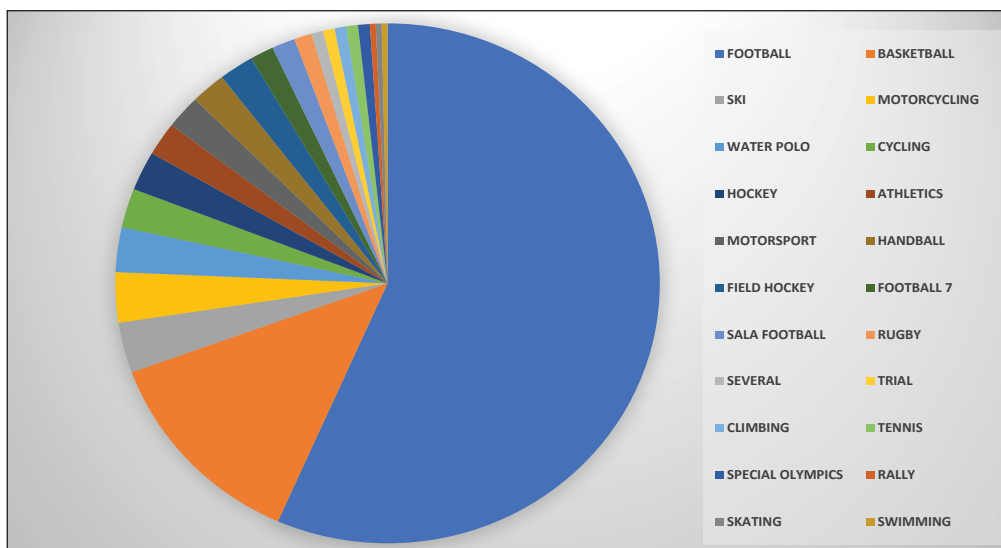
Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 2. Total news time dedicated to sport



Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 3. Total news items by type of sporting discipline



Source: Own elaboration.

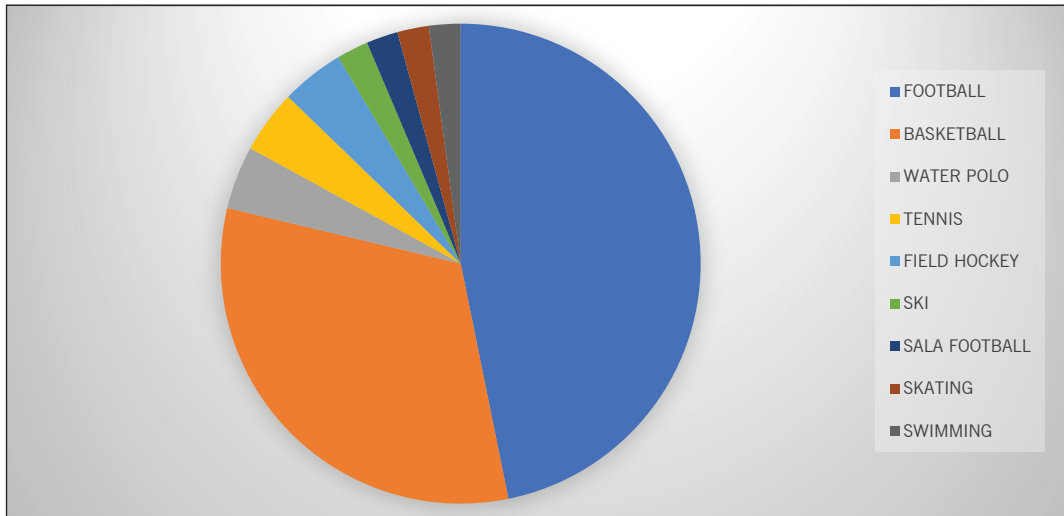
basketball (12.85%) and at a great distance from those that would be in the following positions [see Figure 3]. Here, the range drops to 9 units for skiing and motorcycling (3.13%), 8 for water polo (2.78%) and 7 for hockey and cycling (2.43%), followed by athletics, handball, motoring and field hockey with 6 (2.08%). The rest of the sports that appear in the news no longer exceed 2% with 4 (futsal and 7-a-side football) or 3 news items (rugby) each, while trials, climbing, tennis or swimming, the skating and the rally have a practically anecdotal presence. This is also the case of the *Special Olympics*⁴ with 2 news items (0.69%).

If we look only at the news items dedicated to women's sports (N=47), although football continues to focus the attention of sports news (46.81%), its predominance is not so overwhelming. To begin with, the distance to the second sporting discipline with

the most news coverage is smaller: while 22 news items are devoted to football, 15 are devoted to basketball (31.91%). And it also highlights the lesser diversification of the other sporting disciplines in more modest coverage ranges. Only water polo, tennis and field hockey appear here with 2 news items each (4.26%) and skiing, futsal, skating and swimming with just one (2.13%) [see Figure 4].

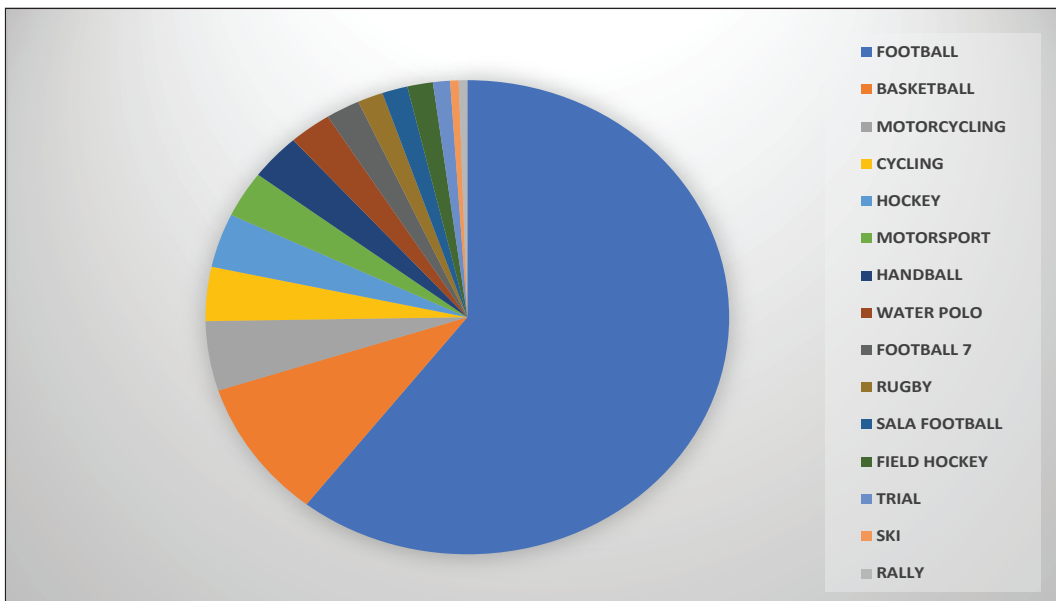
On the other hand, for the news items dedicated to men's sports, the tendency to privilege football is accentuated. Of the 190 news in total, 115, i.e. 60.53%, are about football. And the distances between basketball, as the second discipline with the most presence in the news, with 18 news items (9.47%), or the sports that occupy the following positions, is reduced. Thus, motorcycling (4.74%), cycling and hockey (3.68%) appear in this range of 7 to 9 news items. They are followed by water

Figure 4. Total women’s sports news items by sports discipline



Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 5. Total men’s sports news items by sport discipline



Source: Own elaboration.

polo, with 5 news items (2.63%) and seven-a-side football with 4 (2.11%). And below this 2%, but maintaining a greater diversity than that of women’s sports, we find rugby, indoor football/futsal and field hockey with 3 (1.58%), trial riding with 2 (1.05%) and eventually some skiing and rally car news items (0.53%) [see Figure 5].

With respect to the other two categories, it should be noted that the news items of a non-sporting nature (N=34) are mostly related to football (76.47%). Again, basketball comes in second, but with only 4 news items (11.76%) while the remaining 4 are spread across several sports covered together, plus the eventual appearance of water polo and athletics (2.94%). [see Figure 6].

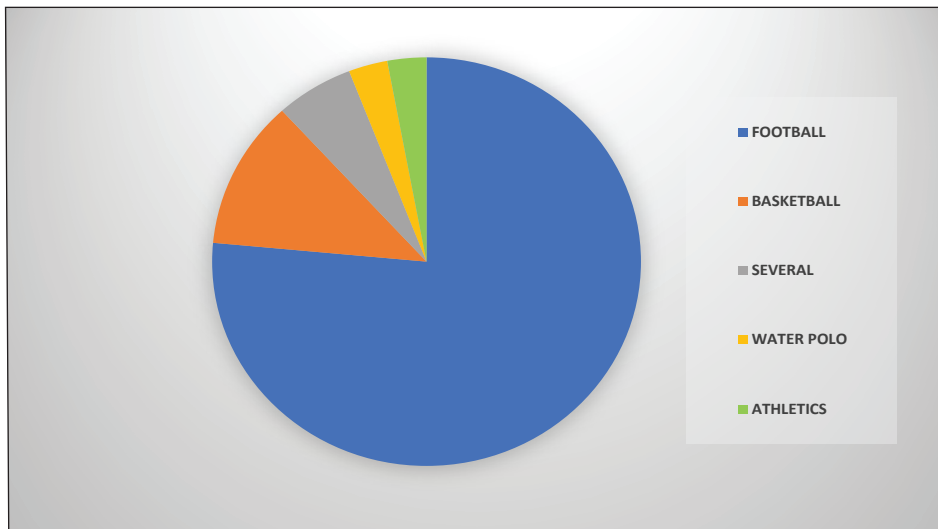
As for the mixed competitions, the coverage is significantly

less, with a total of 17 news items. Skiing leads this category with 7 news items (41.18%), followed by athletics with 5 (29.41%) and already with smaller records, climbing and *Special Olympics* with 2 each and the eventual presence of field hockey [see Figure 7].

5.3 Relevance of women’s sports news items

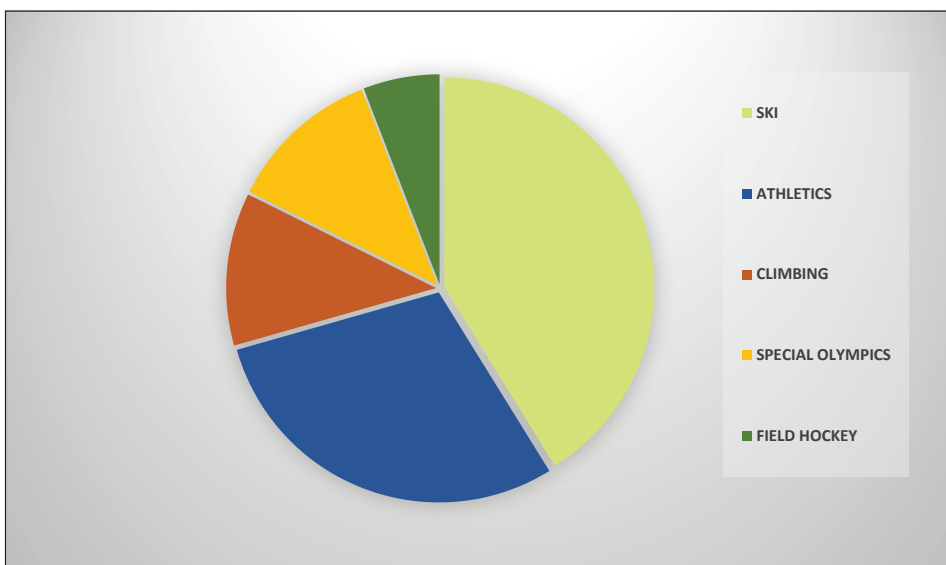
By analysing the openings of the sports section in the TN news programme broadcast on the evenings of the month of March 2023, we can see how men’s sports take centre stage in this opening on 18 of the 31 days (58.06%), non-sports news only does so on 7 occasions (22.58%), and women’s sport opens the block on 6 occasions (19.35%).

Figure 6. Total non-sports news items by sports discipline



Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 7. Total news items on mixed competitions by sport discipline



Source: Own elaboration.

This data can be analysed more clearly when we look at the sports disciplines that focus the opening news items segregated by gender [see Figure 8]. More than half have devoted themselves to men's football (51.61%), not counting that non-sports news (19.35%) is also related to this discipline. Football is also the most prominent discipline for women, but with 5 opening news items (16.13%) compared to 16 for men. What is indisputable is that football is the preferred opening in the sports section on the TN news programme (on 27 of the 31 days, 87.09%). To a much lesser extent, men's motorcycling (6.45%) or women's water polo (3.23%) and non-sporting news related to basketball appear in the sports opening on the TN news programme.

The table 1 shows the order of appearance of the news items

from day to day according to the four pre-established categories. Of the total number of women's sports items news identified (N=47), the majority are broadcast in the second block of the sports section (63.83%) and only the remaining 17 (36.17%) appear in the first block. We can also observe how out of the 31 days analysed, women's sport appears on 25 days, and if on 6 occasions it did so as the opening news item (19.35%), on 7 it did so as the closing news item (22.58%).

As it can be seen in Table 1 that of the days analysed (N=31), women's sport appears at least once on 25 occasions (80.65%), and does not appear on 6 days (19.35%). The days with the most presence of women's sports are 25 and 31 March with four news items each. On 25 March, the two featured

be noted that on the days before and after 8 March, there is no news about women's sports. On 7 March, there are three reports on football and three on basketball, and on 9 March, football takes a total of 8 news items and water polo closes the sports section of the news programme.

5.4 Inclusive and non-sexist language

Although in the discourse that was analysed during the news broadcast, neither references to the physical beauty of the sportspeople nor transfers of merit from the sportspeople to another person were detected, but some sexist expressions were observed that should be highlighted.

On the one hand, the news programmes of 6 and 7 March 2023 use expressions like *the first female referee* and *female referee*. The recommendations of the Consejo Nacional de Deportes [National Sports Council] (CGD) state that it is advisable to "avoid the use of the word *women* before the professional title [...] because it is redundant and, moreover, it is not used in the case of men" (López Díez, 2011, p. 50).

Along these lines, the use of what could be called a qualifying adjunct has been identified as indisputably sexist. In 38.30% of the cases, in the sports news items focused on women, it has been detected that the adjective "women's" is added to the term sport: *the Barça women's team*, *the women's league*, and *now in women's basketball*, etc. In no case has it been detected that any competition or sport represented by men has been identified as "men's": *the Girona men's team*, *the men's first league*, etc.. In the case of mixed competitions, the qualifying adjunct is correctly used to differentiate both competitions, using terms in the same news item as *men's competition – women's competition*, *female squad – male squad*, *women's final – men's final*. It would be something advisable to use the same system in all cases, both in women's and men's sports, or to avoid it at all times, since again, it is extremely redundant when in the images you can already clearly identify male or female sportspeople, and in the journalistic account, they are identified as *the sportsmen*, *the female players*, *the male runner*, etc.

On the other hand, on 16 March, a news item was broadcast about the skier Mikaela Shiffrin. The reporter sent to the ski slopes of Grandvalira describes the sportswoman as 'photogenic, approachable and very professional', a remarkably sexist expression, which is completed in the subsequent androcentric comparison 'Shiffrin could come to be in skiing what Leo Messi is in football'.

5.5 Journalistic voice and statements

The sports section of the weekly TN edition is presented by journalist María Fernández Vidal (23 of the 31 days analysed), while the TN weekend edition falls to Artur Peguera Anura (8 remaining days, 25.81%).

But of the total news items analysed (N=288), 44.44% are announced by a journalistic voice other than the one presenting

the sports section. In these cases, 128 news items to be specific, the voice that narrates the news event (on camera or voiceover) is mostly male (90.63%). If we separate the women's sports news items, only 25% are presented by a woman, while in men's sports the percentage of the female journalistic voice (9.68%) is even lower in comparison to the male voice (90.32%).

Regarding the leading voices included in statements or in the coverage of press conferences (in a total of 17 of the 47 reports on women's sports), coaches (64.71%) predominate over sportswomen (47.06%). In women's sport, relatives of the sportspeople, or other people such as club presidents or specialists (medical, legal, etc.) have not been interviewed or given statements. In contrast to the 49 men's sports news where statements were included or press conferences were covered, sportspeople were given a voice on 25 occasions (51.02%), almost as much as coaches (24 times, 48.98%) and other people were added, especially club presidents, in 7 reports, but in no case, relatives or specialists.

Together with the voice, we close this section with a short note on the relevance of the images used in the news coverage of sport, or the percentage of news items illustrated with images that do not correspond to the facts is similar in women's and men's sports (12-13%). In most cases, the exclusion of images is justified by the lack of rights to exploit the images of matches or competitions. Or in short news items or an events agenda, in the use of photographs or graphics.

5.6 Analysis of non-sporting references

In women's sports news items, only once is reference made to the sportsperson's private life. On the news programme of 11 March 2023, it is reported that the Barça CBS player, Itziar Llobet, is beginning her maternity leave. Even so, we highlight another news item (29 March 2023) where the couple and the sexual orientation of female sportspeople are referred to through the images, precisely to cover what the female news presenter describes as imaginative solutions in front of reinforcing the training of the staff with the partners of the sportspeople. In the images of the couples, men and women and the sportspeople they accompany are identified.

5.7 Analysis of competitions involving men and women and mixed sports

Of the 17 news items identified as mixed sports, more than half show female and male sportspeople together. Of the rest, on 3 occasions only women appear, on 4 there are only men, but the exclusive references to one or another gender are equal (17.65%) and contrast with the predominance of both genders in 41.18% of mixed sports news items. Given the small number of mixed sports news, if we analyse the role as the centre of the newsworthy event, the variation between women (11.76%) and men (17.65%) is not significant, and it is hardly indicative that in when giving a voice to sportspeople in 3 of the four occasions they are women.

6. Discussion of results, limitations and new lines of research and conclusions

6.1 Discussion of the results in relation to each of the objectives

This research has been structured based on five objectives which, together, analyse the degree of visibility that Catalan public television gives to women's sport in its most popular news programme.

Regarding Objective 1, although the presence of women's sport is higher than that recorded in previous studies, the percentage is still low (16.3%) and very unequal compared to men's sport, to which almost 66% of the news items on TV3's evening news is devoted. Also, the time spent on men's sports is almost four times that spent on women's sports. Mixed competitions are relegated to 5.9%, being a time that minimises the possibility of seeing men and women competing together. And while it is true that non-sporting news items have a greater presence (11.8%), this time is used to talk about information that also marks gender differences (such as those noted around the Negreira case, or when the singer Rosalía is shown covering the Barça anthem).

We can also affirm that the TN programme does not usually give much news relevance to women's sport, since it only opens the sports section on 19.35% of the occasions and relegates 63.83% of the news items focusing on women in the second part of its sports block. In the same way that the viewer perceives the first news item as the most important one, by leaving women's sports in the second block, the interpretation can be induced as something less significant (secondary or even complementary).

In addressing Objective 2, it has become clear that football has not only taken over men's sport and the majority of non-sporting news, but has also conquered the women's sports space. This *footballisation* (Ramon-Vegas, 2017; Rojas-Torrijos, 2012; Steen, 2012) has therefore been extended to women's sports where, although basketball accounts for 31.91%, football is almost 15 points higher at 46.81%. In men's news, six out of ten news items are dedicated to football, to the detriment of the rest of the sports that do not reach 10% of the news items in any case (not even popular disciplines such as motor sports).

This over-representation of football generates, however, a more acute invisibility of minority female sports, reducing their diversity and coverage. Thus, the sportswomen who "make an effort, train and obtain exemplary results", and although these results are significant, they are ignored and "if the media ignores them, these positive values are not references for the rest of the women, especially in childhood and youth" (López Díez, 2011, p.14).

Mixed sport is relegated to four disciplines, skiing, athletics, climbing and field hockey, in addition to a deference to the *Special Olympics*, reporting in general about the event and not showing any competition or discipline specifically. Here the most plausible explanation is that TV3 covers events or

competitions that take place in Catalan territory and/or those where sportspeople or teams from Catalonia compete. Even so, the reduced coverage of these types of sports means that it is very unrepresentative of the total of existing mixed competitions, which exponentially serves makes these practices less visible.

Regarding professional practice, from the association of journalists for equality, when they advocate for feminist journalism or with a gender perspective, researchers Elena Bandrés and Carmen Serrano (2021) note that "the media have historically contributed to concealing women's work" (p. 130). In this regard, when addressing Objective 3, despite bearing in mind that the presenter of the weekday sports section is a woman, we observe that when this figure is not the one who narrates the news piece, the journalistic voice that presents the item is a man in more than 90% of cases. We consider this data as a warning sign to implement measures that do not silence a more diverse voice for women also as journalists and reporters.

Regarding Objective 4, focused on the agenda of 8 March 2023, International Women's Day, and the days before and after, we emphasise that the news outlet only produced one news item dedicated to women's sports. The news piece, broadcast on the same day (8 March), at the end of the sports section, is an interview with the Spanish futsal coach, the Catalan Clàudia Pons, defined by the presenter as 'a true role model in coaching this sport, and this is how she was recognised last year, with the award for the best coach in the world'. The news revolves around the lack of female coaches in general and the fact that she is the only one who trains a futsal national team, going back to its beginnings. It is positive news to make women visible in highly masculinised environments, but unique on a date as significant as 8 March, International Women's Day. Therefore, we see a missed opportunity to report on more female sportspeople and teams, which would make known other possible role models for the new generations or, on the contrary, make more emphasis on the challenges still pending in the field of sports for women, with statistical data, which make the case of this coach so significant.

Ultimately, Objective 5 leads us to review the monitoring of the recommendations of the style book of the Catalan Audiovisual Media Corporation and its decalogue on gender, and we note that they have not been strictly respected. The only exception would be the rigour with which the objectification of women and the fragmentation of their bodies is avoided. On the other hand, the criterion of parity has not been applied in all contents, nor has positive discrimination. There has also been no increase in content that questions gender roles, nor those that address matters related to gender inequality. On the other hand, although there is care taken in the preparation of the discourse, sexist language has not been completely eliminated, and the repeated use of qualifying adjuncts has been detected, accompanying the sports played by women and not those played by men. Ultimately, given the scant coverage of minority sports, it is evident that the desire to show the diversity of sports played in Catalonia does not mark the daily practice of those responsible

for the sports section of the TN news programme.

6.1 Limitations and new lines of research

With the general view of the data collected in this research, although indicative given the analysed sample, it seems interesting to open new lines of research such as an analysis of journalistic routines and professional practices, starting from interviews with those responsible for the sections of sport of the Catalan Audiovisual Media Corporation to evaluate decision-making and the work and supervision processes for compliance with the Catalan public body's own regulations and recommendations. We consider that there is a margin of reflection on which to propose new actions or evaluate alternatives (such as the revision of a system of quotas or positive discrimination), which can give women's sport an adequate progression in terms of visibility, treatment and consequently, social perception in Catalonia.

On the other hand, and in more detail, the number of news items detected for some of the categories, such as mixed competitions, is excessively low, precisely because of the limitation of the analysed corpus, only one month of the news programme, and they need, therefore, new studies with larger samples to assess patterns and infer editorial criteria that can only be formulated here as hypotheses, such as coverage of these competitions.

7. Conclusions

The lack of representation of women's sport in the media in general and TV3 in particular, deprives children and young people of female role models. Despite the female presence leading the sports section, the reality of women in the TN vespre evening news programme continues to be explained from an androcentric point of view, meaning that men prevail over women both in terms of news items and viewing time. There is a protection of the dominant male value, and sexist biases are detected during the narration of the chronicles or during the introductions of the news items.

The TN vespre evening news programme ensures that the coverage of women's football mimics that of the men's sport, that is to say, it uses the same formula and sidelines the rest of the sports, turning disciplines such as basketball or tennis, which years ago were the female sports with the most representation, into minority sports in terms of media coverage. The sports section of the news programme follows this same dynamic in establishing a hierarchy in the news items, always giving priority to football, women's and men's, to the detriment of the other disciplines. This professional practice places the other sports played by women in an axis of double discrimination, the result of the sum of women's sports and minority or underrepresented sports. And it has clear consequences in the creation of role models for current, and especially future sportswomen, because if football is mostly presented as the

only relevant female discipline, the girls and teenagers who want to dedicate themselves to skating, the different styles of hockey, or sports as popular as basketball or tennis, will suffer double discrimination: one for playing a sport in female categories, and the other for having chosen a sport which is minimised in the media sphere and the public agenda.

From the Catalan Audiovisual Media Corporation, it is necessary to implement measures that help the professionals to take on board a set of recommendations appropriate to current regulations and public service objectives. The #ThoEstàsPerdent campaign⁵ started in 2020 and promoted by the CAC, the Generalitat and the CCMA to promote women's sport in the media, cannot be purely anecdotal for the Corporation, but should apply the commitments to which they adhered, such as promoting the presence of female sportspeople to achieve full equality or the breaking of gender stereotypes. It is therefore about continuing to work on journalistic routines to reduce the current tendency to make women's sport invisible, promote real parity between women and men in the sports section of TV3's evening news and contribute to reducing the ongoing gender inequality in this area of the public sphere.

Notes

1. For literal quotations from original texts in English or Spanish, the translation corresponds to the author.
2. 'Barcelona women's team once again breaks the world attendance record: 91,648 spectators'. Source: <https://www.rtve.es/deportes/20220422/barcelona-femenino-repite-record-asistencia-91648-espectadores/2337460.shtml>
3. The research derives from a previous investigation by the first-named author, which deals with the presence of women's sport in the primetime news on TVE (La1), during the 2021-2022 season, collected in the Final Bachelor's Degree project (TFG) tutored by the second-named author and presented before the academic tribunal in June 2023 (full consultation in the UPF Repository).
4. The Special Olympics appear segregated as a supra-category, since, in the news item that appeared, no particular sport was mentioned, but rather the newsworthy item was the opening ceremony of the event itself.
5. The CAC, the Generalitat and the CCMA promote the #ThoEstàsPerdent campaign to promote women's sport in the media <https://www.cac.cat/actualitat/cac-la-generalitat-i-la-ccma-impulsen-la-campanya-thoestasperdent-fomentar-lesport>

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