

# WHO MAKES THE NEWS?



**GMMP**

Global Media  
Monitoring  
Project

**2020**

## China (Mainland)

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### NATIONAL REPORT



## GMMP

Global Media  
Monitoring  
Project

# 2020



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GMMP 2020 is coordinated by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), an international NGO that promotes communication for social change.



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Media Monitor for Women Network  
妇女传媒监测网络

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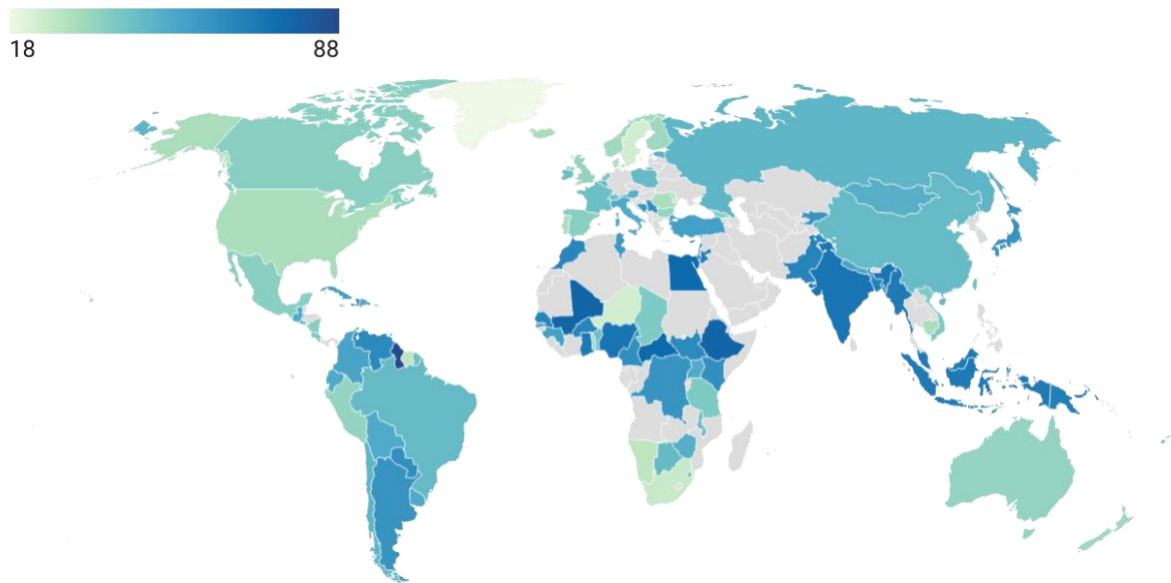
Professor Liu Wenju and Dr. Hong Yi at Hanshan Normal College in Guangdong Province, and their students Liang Zhichuan, Zeng Yuying, Xiao Yuqi made a short GMMP video with Chinese voiceovers and subtitles.

We appreciate the people who paved the road for the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) in 2020. They are Ms. Cai Yiping (coordinator of GMMP in 2000, and 2005), Ms. Zhang Qi (coordinator of GMMP in 2010), and Ms. Bu Wei (for making the sample which we have followed since 2000 with necessary adjustments).

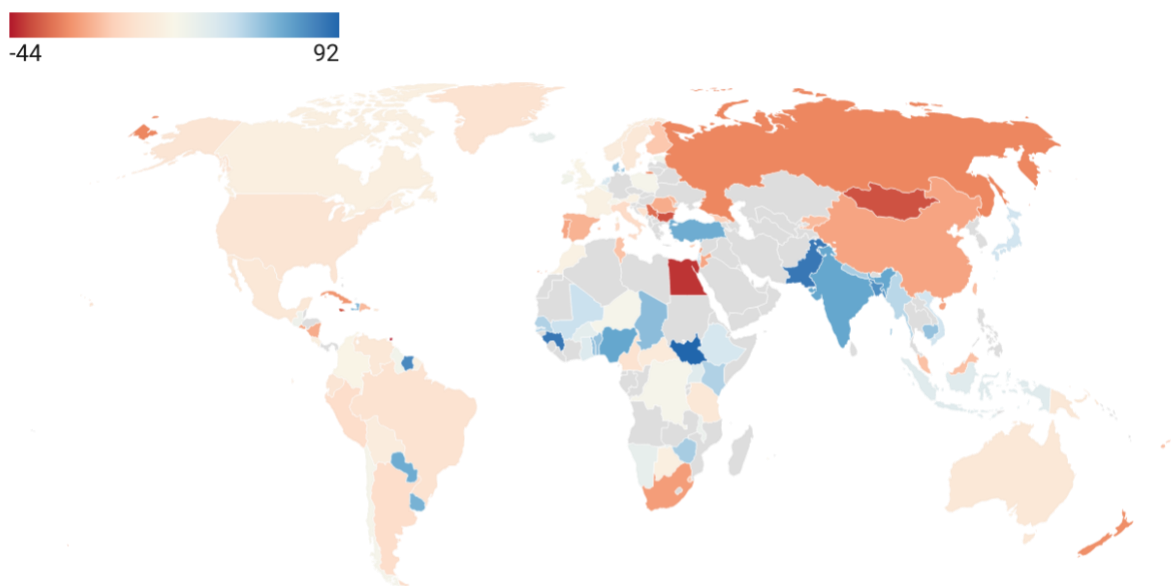
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*THE WORLD AT A GLANCE*  
*GENDER GAP IN SUBJECTS, SOURCES AND REPORTERS IN THE NEWS.*



*Figure 1. Gender Gap: News Subjects & Sources. Newspaper, radio, and television news.*  
*Data source: Global Media Monitoring Project, 2020*



*Figure 2. Gender gap: Reporters in the stories. Newspaper, radio, and television news.*  
*Data source: Global Media Monitoring Project, 2020*

## PREFACE

It is our great pleasure to participate in the 2020 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) and to present this country report on Mainland China to the audience, on behalf of the Media Monitor for Women Network. The Media Monitor for Women Network, which began in 1995 in Beijing and was formally launched in March 1996, was the only women-led initiative focused on gender and media in China until around 2006, when two other similar organizations were established. We aim to achieve the two strategic goals of women and media, which are to break through gender stereotypes and promote women's participation in media – both proposed by the Beijing Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women of the United Nations in Beijing in 1995. We believe that the GMMP makes an immeasurable difference in advancing women's representation and gender equality in news and media.

## Global Context

- The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) is the world's longest-running and most extensive research on gender in the news media. The research was designed to capture a snapshot of gender on one 'ordinary' news day in the world news media. An ordinary news day is defined as one in which the news agenda contains the run-of-the-mill mix of stories, everyday articles on politics, economy, social issues, crime, and other issues.
- It began in 1995 when volunteers in 71 countries around the world monitored women's presence in their national radio, television, and print news. The media monitoring has been repeated every five years since then, taking stock of change in the gender dimensions of news media content and collecting statistical data on new indicators.
- The 1995 research revealed that only 17% of news subjects – the people who are interviewed or whom the news are about – were women. It found that gender parity was 'a distant prospect in any region of the world. News [were] more often being presented by women but [they were] still rarely about women.<sup>1</sup>
- The first noteworthy change in women's overall presence in the news was registered in 2005 in the third iteration of the research.<sup>2</sup> Women comprised 21% of news subjects, a three-percentage point increase over the period 2000 to 2005. Their near invisibility continued however, with only 10% of stories focusing centrally on women, underrepresentation in the major news topics and as voices in the news.
- By the fifth GMMP in 2015, it was clear that "ordinary" news days could not be predicted or planned: unexpected events take place that dominate the news,

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<sup>1</sup> *Global Media Monitoring Project, Women's participation in the news*. National Watch on Images of Women in the Media (MediaWatch) Inc. 1995

<sup>2</sup> Gallagher, Margaret. *Who makes the news? Global Media Monitoring Project*, 2005. World Association for Christian Communication.

from the Kobe earthquake in 1995, to the Germanwings plane crash in the Alps in 2015.

- The 2015 research in 114 countries revealed continued severe gender disparities in news media content. Findings on key indicators suggested that progress towards gender equality had lost traction; women remained only 24% of the persons heard, read about, or seen in newspaper, television, and radio news, the same level found in the fourth wave of the research in 2010. Three editions of the research – in 2005, 2010 and 2015 – found no change on the indicator measuring women’s participation in the news as reporters; only 37% of stories in legacy media were reported by women.
- Women’s relative invisibility in traditional news media had also crossed over into the digital news delivery platforms included in the GMMP monitoring for the first time. Only 26% of the people in stories on mainstream news websites and media news Tweets combined were women. The challenges of news media sexism, gender stereotyping and gender bias were apparently intractable across time, space, and content delivery platforms.
- UN Under-Secretary-General and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka underlined that the ways in which women are depicted in the media “have a profound effect on societal attitudes and reinforce traditional gender roles. Women and girls are half of humanity. Giving equal time and weight to their stories, featuring them as positive models not victims, plays an under-appreciated part in creating a better, freer world for all of us.”<sup>3</sup>
- Events during the 2020 GMMP year were even more extraordinary; beginning in late 2019 and intensifying during the year, the world was ravaged by the novel coronavirus Covid-19. This sixth wave of the research offered an opportunity to scrutinize gender in media coverage during a global catastrophe, a time marked by a worldwide health crisis, and the intensified inequalities accompanying the crisis.
- GMMP teams in 116 countries monitored 30172 stories published in newspapers, broadcast on radio and television, and disseminated on news websites and via news media tweets in 2251 outlets. The stories contained 58,499 news subjects and sources and were reported and presented by 28,595 journalists. The number of participating nations increased by 63% since 1995 as baseline data were collected for eight countries joining the study for the first time. The number of news items monitored has doubled over the past 25 years and risen by over 8,000 since the 2015 edition.

Findings from the sixth GMMP reveal a mixed picture of progress, stagnation, and regression. While some glass ceilings are clearly being edged upwards,

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<sup>3</sup> In *Who makes the news? The Global Media Monitoring Project report*, 2015

others are setting in on certain important news media gender equality indicators, The past five years have seen small incremental changes towards parity, at the same time, the overall pace of change remains glacial.

## National Context

Chinese media has the biggest audience in the world. Digitalization has helped the party-state controlled media expand its capacity to reach out to people. At the end of June 2020, China's Internet penetration rate had reached 67.0%, and the number of Internet users had reached 940 million.

In 2020, there were at least 275 daily newspapers, 278 radio broadcast frequencies, and 34 TV stations in Mainland China.<sup>4</sup> According to a report published by an institute under the People's Daily, the average number of non-print edition users covered by all communication means ("integrated communication") of each newspaper is 16.197 million, while each broadcast frequency covers 3.272 million and each TV station covers 248 million (the total number of users above is not deduplicated).<sup>5</sup> In March 2020, the number of online news users in China reached 725 million, a decrease of 5.65 million from March 2020, accounting for 77.1% of the total netizens. Additionally, the number of mobile online news users reached 720 million, a decrease of 6.42 million from March 2020, accounting for 77.2% of mobile netizens.<sup>6</sup>

Women make up about 48.76% of the population of Mainland China (2020), 47% of netizens, and about 49% of the TV audience. About 51% of all journalists are women while 49% are men, an increase from 33% in 1997. Among all journalist positions, women have higher representation than men in the positions of staff editor (33% for women and 17% for men) and announcer/anchor (13% for women and 12% for men) <sup>7</sup>

China has participated in the GMMP since 1995, but was absent from the GMMP in 2015. The Media Monitor for Women Network has coordinated the GMMP in 2000, 2005, 2010, and 2020. The coordinators were Ms. Cai Yiping (2000 and 2005), Ms. Zhang Qi (2010) and Ms. Feng Yuan (2020). Ms. Bu Wei, a professor at the Institute of Journalism and Communication of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, created the sample

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4 人民网研究院：2020年媒体融合传播指数总报告，2021年04月27日，  
<http://yjy.people.com.cn/n1/2021/0426/c244560-32088214.html>

5 Ibid.

6 CNNIC, [The 45th Statistical Report on Internet Development in China](https://www.cnnic.com.cn/IDR/ReportDownloads/202008/P020200827549953874912.pdf), English edition:  
<https://www.cnnic.com.cn/IDR/ReportDownloads/202008/P020200827549953874912.pdf>;  
<http://www.cac.gov.cn/rootimages/uploadimg/1602953361765389/1602953361765389.pdf?filepath=ZBwvETilXzcBKt0IkqelkLBORFtRECosWUxqf1TXk2R~brA7NuheKafQvkBZImus2mDaUOCFMVWjnKeoC~wr0DEjTcORl173kmCTdY0vdSjs=&Text=%E7%AC%AC46%E6%AC%A1%E3%80%8A%E4%B8%AD%E5%9B%BD%E4%BA%92%E8%81%94%E7%BD%91%E7%BB%9C%E5%8F%91%E5%B1%95%E7%8A%B6%E5%86%B5%E7%BB%9F%E8%AE%A1%E6%8A%A5%E5%91%8A%E3%80%8B>, 2020年9月

；前瞻产业研究院：2020年中国互联网络新闻资讯媒体行业市场现状及竞争格局分析 中央媒体发挥领跑优势  
<https://bg.qianzhan.com/trends/detail/506/201215-67ea3777.html>

7 丁迈、缙赫、董光宇：全国广播电视新闻从业者调查报告(二)我国广电新闻从业者的群体构成  
<https://www.sinoss.net/qikan/uploadfile/2017/1020/20171020094325439.pdf>



according to the criteria of the 2000 GMMP. The sample was adjusted in 2020 in line with updated requirements for the GMMP and the changed media landscape in Mainland China.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mainland China team of Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) in 2020 monitored 901 news items across 37 newspapers, radios, television, the Internet, and Twitter on September 29, 2020. Here are some highlights of the findings:

**Representation:** Men still dominated the news. Women made up 27% of major news subjects and had an overall presence of 25% in China in 2020, compared to the 19% and 20 % recorded by the GMMP in 2005 and 2010.

The highest presence of women in the news was at 37% in the topics of science and health, as well as celebrity, arts, media, and sports.

Gender-related news only appeared in digital media (internet), and the only news subject was a man. Women were under-represented even in the gender-related news .

**Function and Occupation of female news subjects:** Women news subjects or spokespersons were rarely presented as knowledgeable experts or commentators (at merely 9% of the time).

There were some subtle differences of women's representation between traditional media and digital media.

**Reporters:** Women made up 52% of journalists, or 57% of all news reporters and 53% of all news presenters respectively. Female television announcers and reporters were overwhelmingly young, with 64% of them between the ages of 19-34 and 29% between the ages of 35-49. Male presenters tended to be older, with 34% between the ages of 35-49 and 24% between the ages of 50-64.

Women journalists were more often reporting on topics such as science/health (at 73%) and the economy (at 63%), and crime/violence (at 60%).

**Centrality:** Only 4% of all news stories had women as the central focus, even much lower than global data (10%). The highest was in newspapers (12%) and the lowest was in radio (1%). Regarding topics, 9% of both social/legal news and celebrity, arts, media, and sport news had women as the central focus; 6% of crime/violence news, 2% of stories about politics/government, economy, and science/health; and finally, the only gender-related story with news subject was not about women.

**Stereotypes:** Overall, news stories were not at all likely to challenge gender stereotypes (with only 1.2% of all news stories doing so) or highlight gender issues (with only 1.1% of all stories doing so). Even fewer stories highlighted issues of gender equality or inequality, with only 1.1% (10 items) covering it while 891 items did not. Digital media presented more stories challenging gender stereotypes than traditional media did (1.4% for digital and 0.9% for traditional). Compared with global data, mainland China media were less likely to challenge gender stereotypes.

**Stories on Covid-19:** The overall percentage of news stories related to Covid-19 was nearly 10%. Covid-19 stories composed 18% of newspaper reports, 16% of radio news, 14% of Twitter news, 8% of television news, and 6% of Internet news. However, Internet media covered one-third of all 88 news items related to Covid-19 on the day our monitoring of news media was carried out. COVID-19 news tended to have more women as news subjects (at 44%), experts or commentators (at 27%), and those asked to share personal experiences (at 75%) when compared to the news in general (at 27, 20% and 38% respectively). However, no Covid-19-related news challenged gender stereotypes or highlighted gender issues.

**Special Question:** Only 2% of all news stories (or 18 news pieces) covered issues put forth in the three special questions: Only 0.8% of all news items involved the over 10 million migrant or left-behind women in China. Additionally, only 1% of all news items involved coverage on the impact of Covid-19 on women and girls or women's participation in the fight against the pandemic, and only another 0.2% of news items involved domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence.

Both progress and regress co-existed by 2020 compared to previous country data, Women's overall presence in news, as well as in topics of politics and government, science and health had increased from 2005 to 2020, while their presence in economy, social and legal decreased or moved forward or back.

## A DAY IN THE NEWS IN CHINA

On September 29, 2020, Chinese National Day (October 1, 2020) was quickly coming up. That day, many reports about the achievements of the government and the military were published, and reports on different aspects of society and life were more likely than usual to be singing praises. In contrast, bad news such as stories about violence and conflicts mainly came from other countries, or places like Hong Kong, rather than Mainland China.

On the subject of the Covid-19 pandemic, awards ceremonies to recognize model workers and heroes who contributed to combating Covid-19 were highlighted in many news media outlets. The news media in China tended to highlight that everything was under control in China while the epidemic was raging abroad. In contrast, overseas Chinese news media outlets (which often have different political attitudes compared with the state-controlled media published in China) emphasized the serious impacts of the pandemic on China.

Since a seven-day holiday would follow Chinese National Day, there was some news about travel arrangements and tourist attractions.

Despite all the “unusual” things, the news on our monitoring day still reflected major features of the typical news landscape in China, full of good news and cheerful scenes.

## THE CONTEXT

### Country Background:

China has a state-controlled media system. Audiences in Mainland China are usually only exposed to news media belonging to different agencies of the party-state, with the notable exception of a few online news outlets run by large, privately-owned Internet companies. However, some people do manage to reach overseas news media targeting a Chinese audience.

Official media outlets include national, local, traditional, and online media, all aiming to carry out activities according to the will of the party-state in order to promote the achievements of its governing goals, and to respond, organize, guide, and supervise the public opinion. Examples of official media outlets include the *People's Daily*, the *China Daily*, *Xinhua News*, CCTV, and the Central People's Radio Stations and its local counterparts.

The market-oriented media that emerged in China in the late 1980s seems like a company but it is still directly or indirectly owned by the state. The *Global Times*, a subsidiary of the *People's Daily*, the official publication of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, declared itself as market-oriented media in a notice. In

March 2019, in accordance with a decision by the General Office of the State Council, all state-owned commercial cultural institutions across the country would be transformed into enterprises by December 31, 2023.

News websites have attracted the largest audiences since 2000. Besides official news media and market-oriented media run by the party-state, the news websites of the largest Internet companies in Mainland China are all popularist, such as *163 News*, *Sohu News*, and *Sina News*. All news and opinions from privately-owned Internet media are still under the tight supervision of the party-state, however.

Overseas Chinese media is an important source of alternative information for audiences in Mainland China who can break through the “Great Firewall” to reach press of a more varied political background, including “anti-communist” media like NTDTV, VOA Chinese Broadcasting, etc.

**Media Monitored:**

Most of the media monitored in this report were also monitored in 2000, 2005, and 2010, but a few adjustments have been made. One newspaper has been changed for geographical balance, while two Internet websites have been added for better representation. Two of the selected TV news programs have also been changed for diversity, with one being replaced due to it having stopped airing permanently and another one no longer being available in Mainland China. Twitter was also monitored for the first time.

A total of 901 news items from 37 media have been monitored. They include eight daily newspapers, eight television channels, eight radio channels, eight Internet news sites, and five Twitter feeds of Chinese media.

The rational of choosing the selected media:

- They are the most popular/influential media in different ways, and have a nationwide audience.
- They all represent different parts of China. This time, we added one newspaper to represent Western China.
- They each have different styles of reporting news.
- One TV channel and all Twitter feeds reflect different political and reporting perspectives.

The list of news media and items can be seen in the table below.

Television	Radio	Newspapers	Internet news	Twitter
CCTV-1 Xinwenlianbo 33	China National Radio CNR-Morning News 6:30 am 19	Beijing Evening News 18	<a href="http://www.sina.com">Sina.com</a> <u>24</u>	@dajiyuan 15

CCTV-13 Wujianxinwen 23	Tianjin News Radio 7:00 am 11	West China City Daily 12	<a href="http://Sohu.com">Sohu.com</a> 65	@VOAChinese 15
QINGDAOTV-NEWS 18	Nanjing Jingji Radio-6:00 am 8	Qilu Evening News 12	<a href="http://News.163.com">News.163.com</a> 66	@globaltimesnews 22
JIANGSUTV-CITY 19	Chutian Radio 7:00am 7	Xinmin Evening News 12	<a href="http://People.cn">People.cn</a> 98	@ChinaDaily 20
HANGZHOUTV- XIHUMINGZHU 10	Xian Radio 7:00am 16	Southern Metropolis Daily 12	<a href="http://Youth.cn">Youth.cn</a> 83	@PDChina 21
FUJIAN TV-1 12	Shenyang Radio- Shiminnizao 6:00am 8	Dahe News 12	<a href="http://Ifeng.com">Ifeng.com</a> 50	
<u>NTDTV-China</u> <u>Forbidden News 8</u>	Zhengzhou Jingji Radio 7:00am 17	Chutian City News 12	<a href="http://Rednet.cn">Rednet.cn</a> 43	
YUNNANTV 13	Chongqing Radio-Zonghe 7:00 am 5	People's Daily 12	<a href="http://Thepaper.cn">Thepaper.cn</a> 50	
Total news items 136	Total news items 91	Total news items 102	Total news items 479	Total news items 93

Backgrounds of all monitored media:

### **Newspapers: All run by central or local agencies of the party-state**

*Beijing Evening News* - One of the most widely circulated daily newspapers in the country, published in Beijing, located in Northern China.

*Huaxi City News* – The most widely circulated daily newspaper, published in Chengdu, located in Western China.

*Qilu Evening News* – Published in Jinan, located in Eastern China.

*Xinmin Evening News* – Published in Shanghai by the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China, located in Eastern China.

*Nanfang City News* – One of the most popular newspapers in China, published in Guangzhou, located in Southern China.

*Dahe News* – One of the most popular daily newspapers, published in Zhengzhou, located in Central China.

*Chutian City News* – One of the most popular daily newspapers, published in Wuhan, located in Central China.

*People's Daily* – The most privileged daily newspaper, published by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in Beijing, located in Northern China.

### **Radio: All run by central or local agencies of the party-state**

CNR - China National Radio, headquartered in Beijing, located in Northern China.

Tianjin People's Radio – Based in Tianjin, located in Northern China.

Nanjing People's Radio – Based in Nanjing, located in Eastern China.

Chutian Radio – Based in Wuhan, located in Central China.

Xi'an People's Radio – Based in Xi'an, located in Northwest China.

Shenyang People's Radio – Based in Shenyang, located in Northeast China.  
Zhengzhou People's Radio – Based in Zhengzhou, located in Central China.  
Chongqing People's Radio – Based in Chongqing, located in Southwest China.

**Television: All run by central or local agencies of the party-state, except one run overseas by people of opposing political views**

CCTV-1 – China Central Television Integrated Channel, the most watched national news station in the country, headquartered in Beijing, located in Northern China.  
CCTV-13 – China Central Television News Channel, national news, headquartered in Beijing, located in Northern China.  
QINGDAOTV-NEWS – Based in Qingdao, located in Eastern China.  
JIANGSUTV-CITY – Based in Nanjing, located in Eastern China.  
HANGZHOUTV-XIHUMINGZHU – Based in Hangzhou, located in Eastern China.  
FUJIAN TV-1 – Based in Fuzhou, located in Eastern China.  
YUNNAN TV – Based in Kunming, located in Southwest China.  
NTDTV – Based in the United States but targets a Mainland Chinese audience, banned in China

**Internet: 4 are run by central or local agencies of the party-state, and large private Internet companies in Mainland China run another 4**

Sina.com – Internet company's website, based in Beijing, located in Northern China.  
Sohu.com – Internet company's website, based in Beijing, located in Northern China.  
News.163.com – Internet company's website, based in Beijing, located in Northern China.  
People.cn – Website of the People's Daily under the CCP, based in Beijing, located in Northern China.  
Youth.cn – Website under the Communist Youth League, based in Beijing, located in Northern China.  
Ifeng.cn – Website of a state-owned media outlet with headquarters in Hong Kong, located in Southern China.  
Rednet.cn – Website under provincial party based in Changsha, located in Central China.  
Thepaper.cn – Website-only news media under local party department based in Shanghai, located in Eastern China.

Twitter: Only 5 media Twitter feeds meet the criteria of the GMMP 2020. 3 of them are owned by the party-state agencies and are in English as they aim to tell Chinese stories to overseas audiences, mainly foreigners. The other two are in Chinese as they target Chinese audiences; one of these two is run by anti-CCP Chinese overseas, and another one is owned by the United States government.

Global Times News – Subsidiary of People's Daily.

China Daily – National broadcaster.

People’s Daily China – National broadcaster.

Dajiyuan – Overseas broadcaster, run by anti-CCP Chinese who left China in a diaspora.

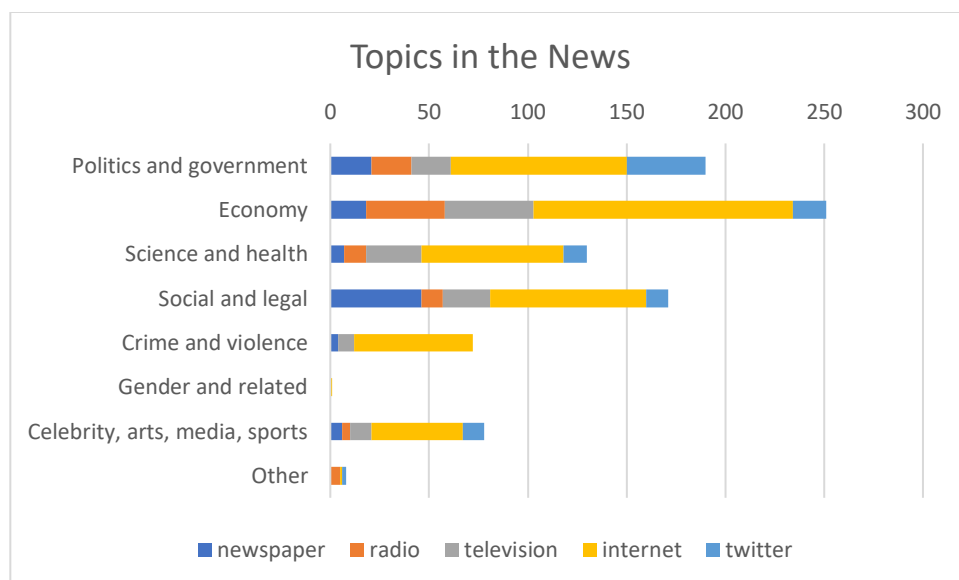
VOA Chinese – Overseas broadcaster, owned by the United States government.

### The monitors:

Thirty-nine (39) monitors were involved in China’s GMMP for 2020. They were university students who had taken classes in journalism and attended lectures on gender and media, as well as GMMP training. They coded a total of 329 news stories in traditional media (newspaper, radio, and television) and 572 Internet and Twitter news stories.

## TOPICS IN THE NEWS

Economic news topped the list of news topics, accounting for 28% of the 901 news items monitored in this report. Politics/government (21%) and social/legal issues (19%) ranked second and third, followed by science/health (14%), celebrities, arts, media, and sports (9%), and crime/violence (8%). Together, these six categories constitute the vast majority of news topics. Regrettably, out of the 901 news items monitored, only two stories (from Internet news) were about gender, which accounts for less than 0.2% of all news stories.

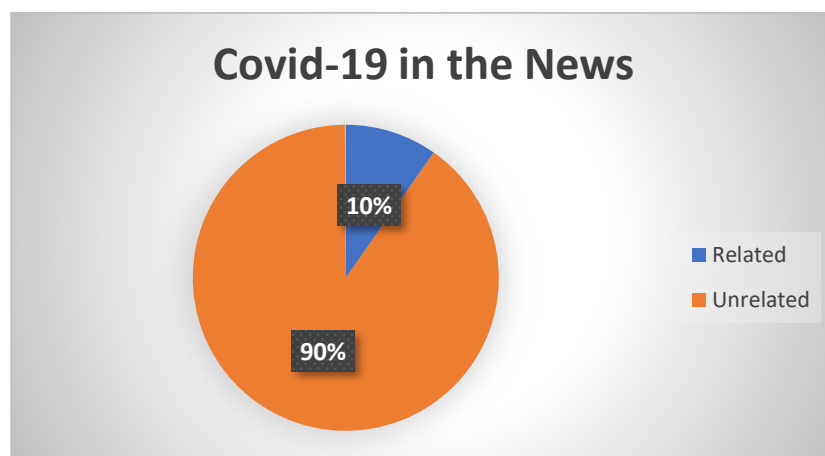


There were clear differences between the news media platforms. Economic news was the most frequent topic in radio (44%) and television (33%). Politics/government was the most common topic on Twitter and accounted for nearly half of the total Twitter news (43%). In newspapers, social/legal news received the highest amount of attention (45%). Science/health made up 21% of news reports in TV, making that platform its

most prominent one, which contrasts how newspapers proved to be its weakest media platform at only 7%.

Topic	Newspaper	Radio	Television	Internet	Twitter	Total
Politics and government	21%	22%	15%	19%	43%	21%
Economy	18%	44%	33%	27%	18%	28%
Science and health	7%	12%	21%	15%	13%	14%
Social and legal	45%	12%	18%	16%	12%	19%
Crime and violence	4%	0%	6%	13%	0%	8%
Gender	0%	0%	0%	0.2%	0%	0.1%
Celebrity, arts, media, sports	6%	4%	8%	10%	12%	9%
Other	0%	5%	0%	0.2%	2%	1%

Covid-19 news accounted for only 9.8% of the 901 news items monitored. Internet media reported more than one-third of all Covid-19 news (at 31 out of 88 Covid-19 stories), but even then, it only comprised 6% of all Internet news. Radios and newspapers had 15 and 18 items respectively, forming the highest percentage of Covid-19 news (at 16% and 18%) among all forms of media.



## NEWS SUBJECTS AND SOURCES

### Overall presence of women in the news as subjects

Of the news monitored in the 2020 GMMP, the overall presence of women in all forms of media as news characters accounted for 25%. Women formed 28% of major news subjects, compared to only 20 % of all news subjects in the 2010 GMMP.



Function of news characters	Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%
Unknown	2	67%	2	33%
Subjects	75	28%	184	72%
Spokespersons	118	19%	201	81%
Experts or commentators	48	20%	59	80%
Personal experience	49	38%	60	63%
Eyewitness	9	29%	10	71%
Popular opinion	2	0%	2	100%
Other	7	14%	6	86%
<b>Total</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>75%</b>

The topics where women formed the largest number of news subjects and sources were in two topics, one was science/health and another was celebrity, arts, media, and sport (both at 37%), followed by social/legal (at 31%). The biggest contrast was in the topic of politics/government in which women only made up 17% while men made up 83%, followed by economy and crime/violence news, in which women made up 20% and men made up 80%. The only news subject related to topic of gender was about male students who sexually harassed a boy at a school in the United States.

The Overall Presence of Women in News by Topics	Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%
Politics and government	23	17%	115	83%
Economy	37	20%	146	80%
Science and health	34	37%	58	63%
Social and legal	41	31%	92	69%
Crime and violence	18	20%	73	80%
Gender and related	0	0%	1	100%
Celebrity, arts, media, sports	26	37%	44	63%
Other	0	0%	1	100%
<b>Overall female presence</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>75%</b>

Compared to the 2010 GMMP, the presence of women in Chinese media increased among political/governmental, economic, and scientific/medical topics but decreased in social/legal topics from 39% to 31%.

Women in media (%)	👩 Journalists	👩 news subjects	👩 news subjects in politics and government	👩 news subjects in economy	👩 news subjects in science and health	👩 news subjects in social and legal
2005 8	65	19	8	27	22	31
2010	48	20	14	16	19	39
2020	52	25	17	20	37	31

In terms of media types, women made up 27% of all news subjects in traditional media (newspapers, radio and television) and 24% in digital media (the Internet and Twitter).

In traditional media, women made up 54% of news subjects and sources in celebrity, arts, media, and sports stories, which was high compared to the frequency of men in such stories (at 46%). Women also composed 40% of all news subjects in science/health news and 30% of subjects in social/legal news. Men, in contrast, were present nine times more often than women in stories about politics/government and crime/violence respectively (10% for women and 90% for men), and over three times more often in stories about the economy (23% for women and 77% for men).

In digital media, specifically the Internet, women were the subjects and sources in news related to science/health 34% of the time, making it their most frequent topic of appearance. They were also in social/legal news 32% of the time, celebrity, arts, media, sports news 27% of the time, and both politics/government and crime/violence news 21% of the time each. Besides the only piece of gender-related news, the biggest contrast was in topic of economy, where men were represented four times more often than women (18% of the time for women and 82% of the time for men). In politics/government and crime/violence stories, men were represented over three times more frequently than women were (at 21% for women and 79% for men).

Because men were represented in the only piece of gender-related news in digital media, they were in gender-related news 100% of the time by default.

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8 Cai Yiping: [http://www.raduga.com.cn/skwx\\_eypt/LiteratureReading.aspx?ID=233292](http://www.raduga.com.cn/skwx_eypt/LiteratureReading.aspx?ID=233292)

Presence of Women as News Subjects and Sources by Medium	Newspaper, Radio and TV				Internet and Twitter			
	Female		Male		Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Politics and government	5	10%	46	90%	18	21%	69	79%
Economy	21	23%	71	77%	16	18%	75	82%
Science and health	19	40%	29	60%	15	34%	29	66%
Social and legal	25	30%	58	70%	16	32%	34	68%
Crime and violence	1	10%	9	90%	17	21%	64	79%
Gender and related	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Celebrity, arts, media, sports	14	54%	12	46%	12	27%	32	73%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
<b>Overall female presence</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>76%</b>

### Function of women in the news

Overall, women appeared in the news as sources of information 25% of the time (numbering at 175 instances), while men served as sources of information 75% of the time (at 522 instances). Women made up 19% of all spokespersons, 20% of all experts and commentators, and 38% of those asked to explain personal experiences. But all news figures who had popular opinions were men. For comparison, women made up 7% of all information sources appearing on the news in China's 2010 GMMP.

WOMEN AS ...						
Subject	Spokesperson	Experts or Commentator	Personal Experience	Eyewitness	Popular opinion	Unknown /other
42%	26%	9%	21%	2%	0	3%

67% of media did not mention that any of their functions in the news were women.

Overall, 15% of all female characters in the news were mentioned in the context of their family roles, whereas the percentage of men brought up in such contexts was 8%. Surprisingly, the family role of women was not especially emphasized on television (at 2% of all news stories). However, in newspapers, 50% of women were identified by their family status of the time, which was nearly three times more often than men (18%). The Internet follows in second place, with 19% of all female characters in news stories having their family roles mentioned in Internet news. In radio, there were no

related records on this matter. As for Twitter, the 2020 GMMP did not set up any monitoring in this area. For comparison, China's 2010 GMMP found that 83% of all female news subjects were identified by their family status compared to only 3% of all male news subjects.

Family Role	Newspaper		Radio		Television		Internet	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Total number of news characters	16	45	16	48	53	132	86	288
Number of characters been given family role	8	8	0	0	1	6	16	28
%	50%	18%	0%	0%	2%	5%	19%	10%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>15% for female, 8% for male</b>							

### Positions and occupations of women in the news

Normative and gender-specific social roles held in an occupational context can be gleaned through data representing the positions held by female and male news subjects. Among 310 female news characters, 11% of them were government employees, public servants, spokespersons, etc. (whereas 25% of 529 male news characters held the same roles), 5% were politicians or members of parliament (19% for male news subjects), and 12% were businesspeople, executives, managers, and stockbrokers (9% for male news characters). Those occupational groups accounted for about one-fourth all female news characters, while male news characters comprised 53% of those same occupational groups.

#### Position or occupation of news sources, by sex

	Female %	Male %	Overall number
Media professional, journalist, film-maker, etc.	67%	33%	12
Sportsperson, athlete, player, coach, referee	67%	33%	3
Health worker, social worker, childcare worker	60%	40%	10
Student, pupil, schoolchild	57%	43%	7
Activist or worker in civil society org., NGO, trade union	56%	44%	9
Celebrity, artist, actor, writer, singer, TV personality	50%	50%	2
Academic expert, lecturer, teacher	47%	53%	17
Office or service worker, non-management worker	43%	57%	7
Science/ technology professional, engineer, etc.	43%	57%	7
Unemployed no other occupation given	40%	60%	5
Villager or resident no other occupation given	40%	60%	10
Doctor, dentist, health specialist	33%	67%	12
Businessperson, exec, manager, stockbroker...	32%	68%	38
Not stated	32%	68%	22
Tradesperson, artisan, laborer, truck driver, etc.	25%	75%	4

Government employee, public servant, spokesperson, etc.	16%	84%	61
Agriculture, mining, fishing, forestry	13%	88%	8
Politician/ member of parliament, ...	7%	93%	54
Child, young person no other occupation given	0%	100%	0
Criminal, suspect no other occupation given	0%	100%	1
Homemaker, parent (male or female)) only if no other occupation is given e.g. doctor/mother=code 6	0%	100%	2
Lawyer, judge, magistrate, legal advocate, etc.	0%	100%	1
Other only as last resort & explain	0%	100%	0
Police, military, paramilitary, militia, fire officer	0%	100%	17
Religious figure, priest, monk, rabbi, mullah, nun	0%	100%	0
Retired person, pensioner no other occupation given	0%	100%	1
Royalty, monarch, deposed monarch, etc.	0%	100%	0
Sex worker	0%	100%	0
<b>Overall</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>310</b>

## News subjects as victims or survivors

Gender-based discrimination and violence was found to still be largely invisible during this report's monitoring day.

In all types of news media, women made up 57% of victims (for a total 23 victims) and 40% of survivors (for a total of 10 survivors) reported, while men made up 43% and 60% of victims and survivors reported respectively. The 2005 and 2010 GMMP in China found a smaller percentage, with women making up 24% and 38% of all victims respectively.

As victims, 57% of all victims reported were women and 43% were men. 46% of women and 64% of men were victims of accidents, natural disasters, poverty, and acts of war, terrorism and state violence. One woman is mentioned as a victim of opinion control by the state in one news story from an overseas Chinese media.

Victims	Female		Male		Proportion of	
	N	%	N	%	Women	Men
Victim of an accident, natural disaster, poverty	3	23%	3	30%	50%	50%
Domestic violence, rape, murder	1	8%	0	0%	100%	0%
Non-domestic sexual violence, rape, assault	1	8%	0	0%	100%	0%
Other non-domestic crime, robbery	2	15%	2	20%	50%	50%
Violation based on religion, tradition	0	0%	0	0%		0
War, terrorism, vigilantism, state violence	3	23%	2	20%	60%	40%
Discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity age, religion, ability	0	0%	2	20%	0%	100%
Other victims	3	23%	1	10%	75%	25%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>43%</b>

As survivors, 40% of all survivors reported were women and 60% were men. Both women and men are concentrated in three categories, but the total proportions of said categories are slightly different. The first category comprises of survivors of accidents, natural disasters, and poverty (at 25% for women and 33 % for men). The second category is made up of survivors of war, terrorism, vigilantism, and state violence (25% for women and 17 % for men), The third category is “other” (both 50% for women and men). For comparison, women made up 19% of survivors in the 2005 GMMP.

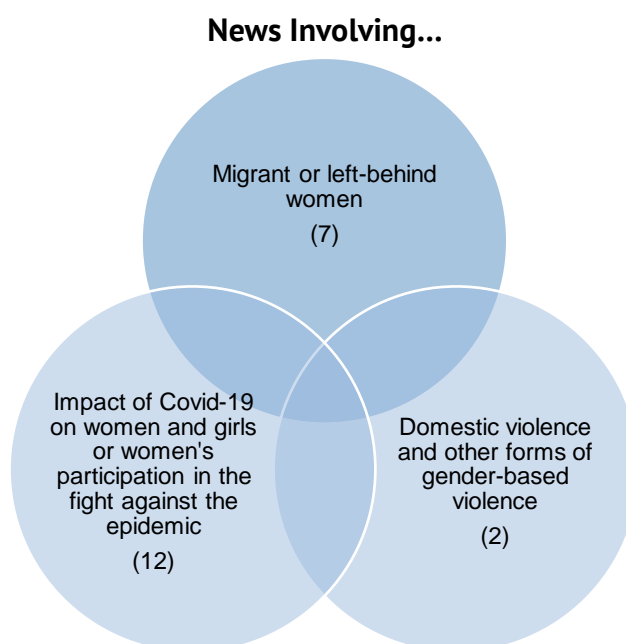
Survivors	Female		Male		Proportion of	
	%	N	%	N	Women	Men
Not applicable (the story identifies the person only as a victim)						
Survivor of an accident, natural disaster, poverty	25%	1	33%	2	33%	67%
Survivor of domestic violence, rape, murder, etc.	0%	0	0%	0		
Survivor of non-domestic sexual violence, rape, assault, etc. (sexual violence only)	0%	0	0%	0		
Survivor of other non-domestic crime, robbery, etc.	0%	0	0%	0		
Survivor of violation based on religion, tradition...	0%	0	0%	0		
Survivor of war, terrorism, vigilantism, state violence...	25%	1	17%	1	50%	50%
Survivor of discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, ability, etc.	0%	0	0%	0		
Other survivors (specify in comments)	50%	2	50%	3	40%	60%
Unknown, Undecided	0%	0	0%	0		
Total	100%	4	100%	6	40%	60%

### Results on special questions

Among the 901 news items monitored, only 2% of all news stories (or 18 news pieces) covered issues put forth in the three special questions: migrant or left-behind women; the impact of Covid-19 on women and girls or women's participation in the fight against the epidemic; and domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence. Only 0.8% of all news items involved the over 10 million migrant or left-behind women in China. Additionally, only 1% of all news items involved the impact of Covid-19 on women and girls or women's participation in the fight against the epidemic, and only another 0.2% of news items involved domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence.

In one news story involving the issues facing migrant or left-behind women, the subject of the piece was a post-90 village secretary who led their whole village out of poverty and became rich.

And in a news piece related to domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence, several men beat up a woman because she expressed her dissatisfaction with them when they sexually harassed her at a restaurant.



## JOURNALISTS AND REPORTERS

### Sex of reporters, announcers and presenters by medium

The 2020 GMMP found that the overall percentage of women as announcers and reporters in news media was almost 52%. For comparison, China's 2010 GMMP recorded that women made up 48% of all reporters and announcers at the time.

Women formed 38% of announcers and reporters in newspapers and 54% in radio, compared to 62% and 46% for men in those respective mediums. However, women made up 60% of announcers and reporters on television (compared to 40% for men). Overwhelmingly, female television announcers and reporters were young, with 64% of them being between the ages of 19-34 and 29% of them being between the ages of 35-49. Male presenters tended to be older, with 34% of them being between the ages of 35-49 and 24% of them being between the ages of 50-64.

SEX OF REPORTERS, ANNOUNCERS AND PRESENTERS	Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%
Newspaper	22	38%	36	62%
Radio	53	54%	45	46%

Television	113	60%	76	40%
Internet	35	41%	51	59%
Twitter	3	75%	1	25%
Overall	226	52%	209	48%

### Sex of reporters by major topic

Men were found to more frequently report on stories under the topics of politics/government and social/legal issues, coming in at 50% and 46% of all stories respectively. Women reported more frequently on stories related to economy (at 63%), science/health (at 73%), and crime/violence (at 60%).

SEX OF REPORTERS ON MAJOR TOPICS	Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%
Politics and government	7	50%	7	50%
Economy	25	63%	15	38%
Science and health	14	74%	5	26%
Social and legal	18	46%	21	54%
Crime and violence	3	60%	2	40%
Gender and related	0	0%	0	0%
Celebrity, arts, media, sports	5	50%	5	50%
Other	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>43%</b>

### Does the sex of reporters influence gender issues presented in the news?

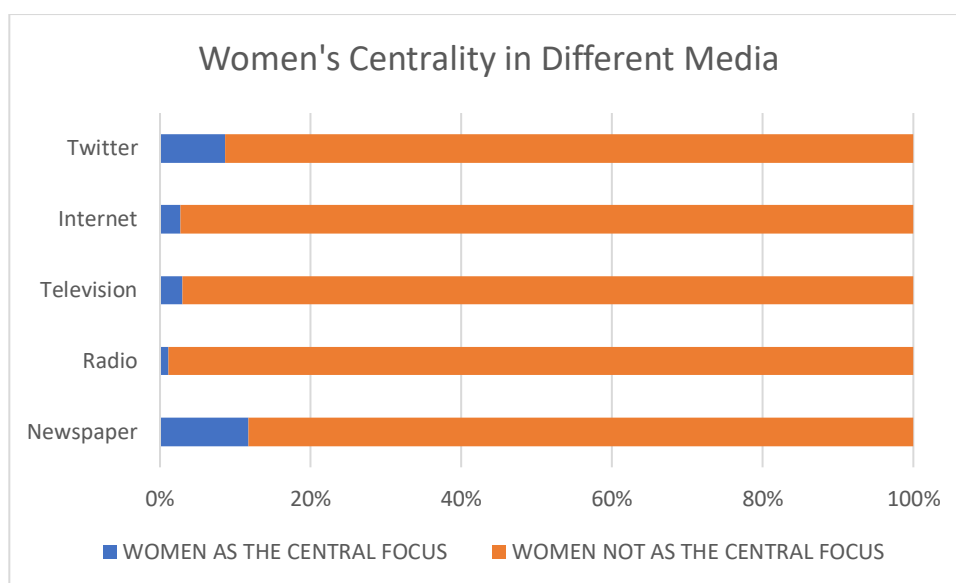
Female journalists were more likely than male journalists to report news with characters, although they still more often reported on male news characters. Regarding the relationship between the sex of journalists and the likelihood of them to report news that highlights gender issues or challenges gender stereotypes, the sample is too small to tell if there are any gender-related difference in this area.



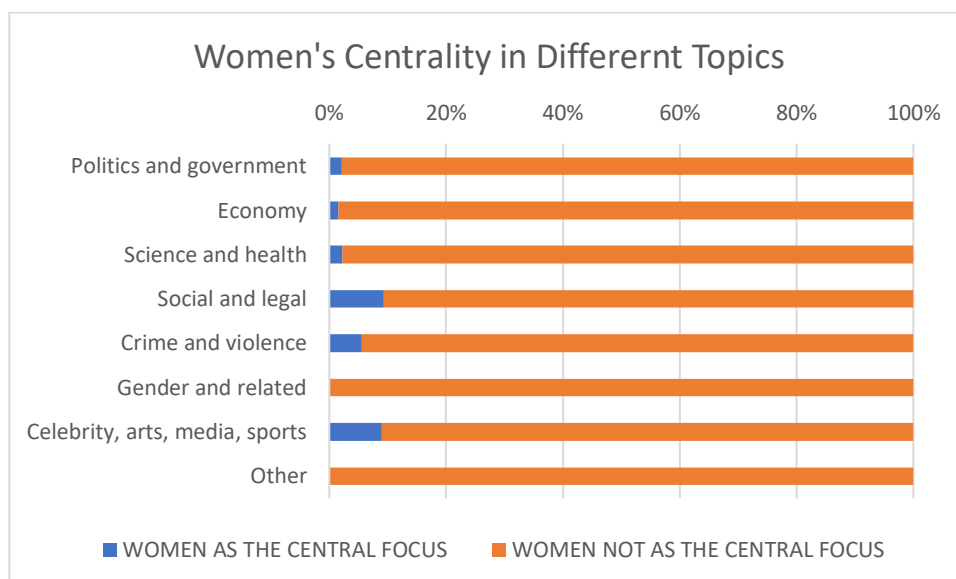
## JOURNALISTIC PRACTICE: ON WOMEN'S CENTRALITY, GENDER STEREOTYPES, AND RIGHTS-BASED REPORTING

### Women's centrality in the news by medium and topic

The overall percentage of stories with women as the central focus was only 4%, two times less than global data (10%). The gap between the various forms of media is too large; the highest was in the newspaper category at 12%, and the lowest was in the category of radio at 1%, as seen below:

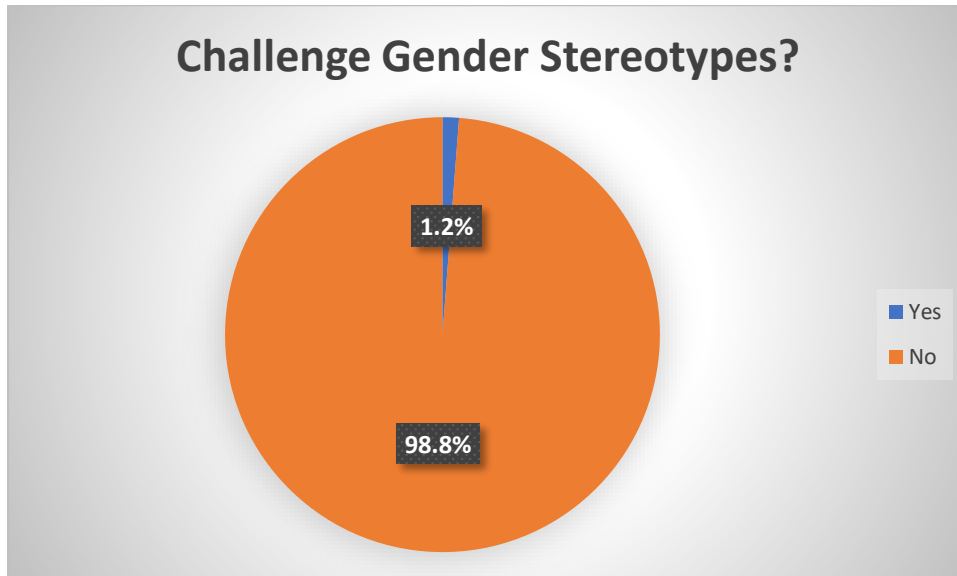


Women were the central focus of news stories 9% of the time in social/legal news and celebrity, arts, media, and sport news; 6% of the time in crime/violence news; 2% of the time in stories about politics/government, economy, and science/health; and finally, the only gender-related story with news subject was not about women.



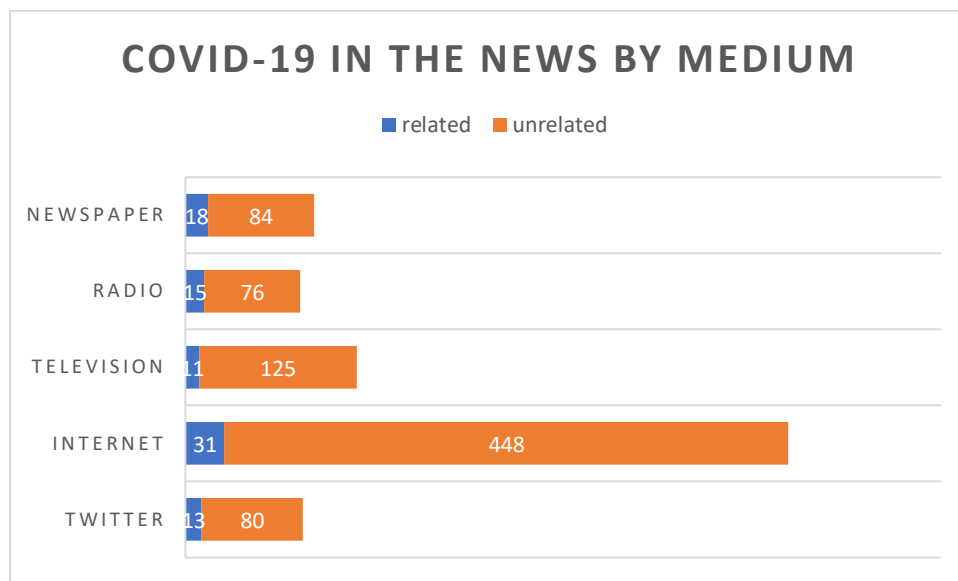
## Stories that challenge or reinforce gender stereotypes and highlight issues of gender equality or inequality

Only 1.2% of all news stories (11 out of 901 news items) challenged gender stereotypes in some way, while the remaining 98.8% (890 stories) did nothing about it. Slightly fewer stories highlighted issues of gender equality or inequality, with only 1.1% of all news pieces (10 items) doing so and the remaining 98.9% (891 items) not doing anything about it.



## FOCUS ON COVID-19 NEWS

News related to the Covid-19 pandemic accounted for only 9.8% of the 901 news items monitored in this report. Internet media reported more than one-third of all Covid-19 news (at 31 out of 88 Covid-19 stories), but even that still only comprised 6% of all Internet news. Radios and newspapers had 18 items each, giving them the highest percentage of Covid-19 news (at 16% and 18% respectively) among all news media platforms.



	Newspaper	Radio	Television	Internet	Twitter
Related to Covid-19	18%	16%	8%	6%	14%
Unrelated to Covid-19	82%	84%	92%	94%	86%

In terms of scope, out of 75 pieces of Covid-19 news, 79% of them were on the local and national level, while 21% of them were of the international level; the additional 13 pieces of Covid-19 news from Twitter had no scope monitoring set up for them.

As news characters among Covid-19 related stories, women made up 37% of all news characters, and 44% of major news subjects, forming a bigger proportion than all news monitored (at 25% and 27% respectively). Overall there were 19 female characters and 32 male characters.

To compare all news pieces that were monitored, the function of female news characters in stories related to COVID-19 was more likely to be as experts or commentators (at 27%) and to be asked to share personal experiences (at 75%) than anything more general than that (at 20% and 38% respectively).

Function of news characters in Covid-19 news	Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%
Subjects	12	44%	15	56%
Spokespersons	1	11%	8	89%
Experts or commentators	3	27%	8	73%
Personal experience	3	75%	1	25%
Other	0	0%	0	0%
Unknown	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>63%</b>

No news stories mentioned any women or men as victims or survivors of the Covid-19 pandemic, although one related piece of news did talk about how some other countries lacked protection for women against the epidemic. Also, no news characters had their family status mentioned, and not a single piece Covid-19 news challenged gender stereotypes or highlighted gender issues in some way.

In terms of reporters, a larger proportion of female reporters (at 57%) covered COVID-19 issues compared to all other news monitored (at 52%).

Sex composition of COVID-19 related news	COVID-19 related news		All news monitored	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Reporters	57%	43%	52%	48%
Proportion of news characters	37%	63%	25%	75%

## DIGITAL NEWS ON TWITTER AND NEWS WEBSITES

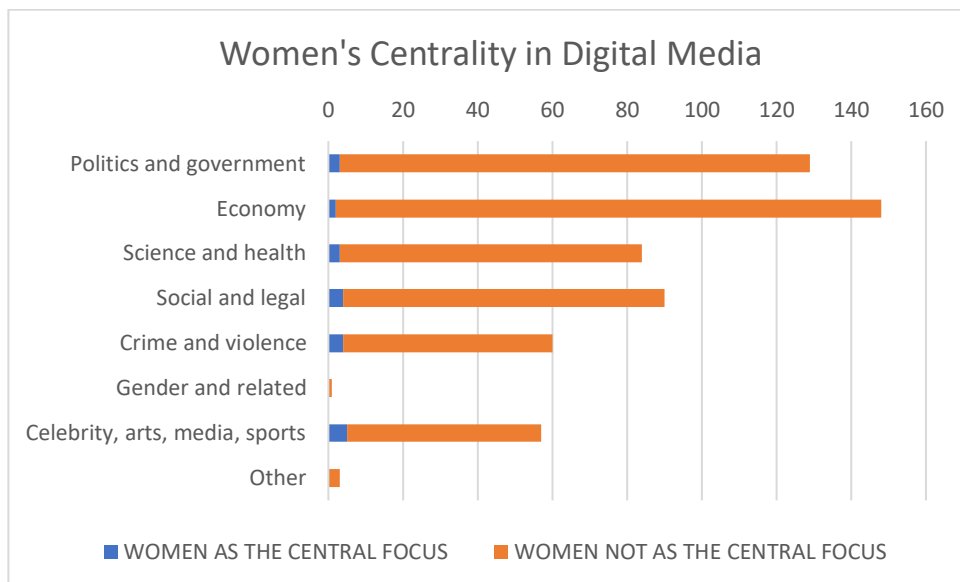
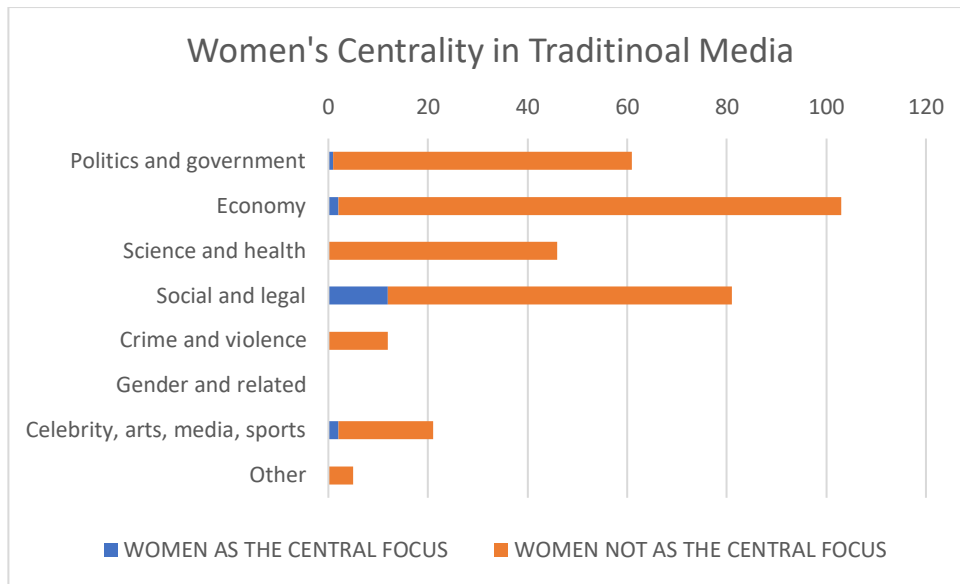
In digital news on Twitter and news websites, women made up 24% (numbering at 94 instances) of all news characters, less than in traditional media (27% in newspapers, radio and TV news, numbering at 85 instances) while men served as sources of information 73% of the time (numbering at 225 instances). The proportion of women as news subjects was at 27% of the time, lower than in traditional news (at 32%). The highest proportion of women in digital news were as eyewitness and those asked to share personal experiences (at 40% and 36% respectively), while women in those same categories were respectively represented 39% and 22% of the time in traditional news.

The biggest difference between traditional media and digital media was the role of women as experts or commentators. Women made up only 8% of experts or commentators appearing in digital news, almost 4 times lower than in traditional news media (which was at 27%).

Function of news characters	Newspaper, Radio and TV				Internet and Twitter			
	Female		Male		Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Unknown	2	100%	0	0%	2	50%	2	50%
Subjects	24	32%	51	68%	49	27%	133	73%
Spokespersons	24	20%	94	80%	22	17%	107	83%
Experts or Commentators	13	27%	35	73%	2	8%	24	92%
Personal experience	19	39%	30	61%	17	36%	30	64%
Eyewitness	2	22%	7	78%	2	40%	3	60%
Popular opinion	0	0%	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Other	1	14%	6	86%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>76%</b>

The overall percentage of stories with women as the central focus was similar in both traditional media (4%) and digital media (5%).

In digital media, stories with women as the central focus seemed evenly distributed by topic in terms of numbers but were lower in terms of percentages when compared to the situation in traditional media.



Stories about challenging gender stereotypes and highlighting gender equality/inequality issues were very rare in all media, although a slight difference existed between traditional and digital media. Digital media presented more stories challenging gender stereotypes than traditional media (1.4% for digital and 0.9% for traditional), while traditional media got a higher proportion in highlighting gender equality/inequality issues (1.2% for traditional and 1.0% for digital).

Compared with global data, mainland China media were less likely to challenge gender stereotypes.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> <https://whomakesthenews.org/gmmp-reports/gmmp-2020-preliminary-reports/>

Challenge gender stereotypes or not?	Newspaper, radio and TV		Internet and Twitter	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
N	3	326	8	564
%	0.9%	99.1%	1.4%	98.6%

Highlight issues of gender equality or inequality	Newspaper, radio and TV		Internet and Twitter	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
N	4	325	6	566
%	1.2%	98.8%	1.0%	99.0%

Digital media presented more female victims (50% for women and 50% for men) than traditional media (44% for women and 56% for men).

News characters portrayed as victims	Newspaper, Radio and TV				Internet and Twitter			
	Female		Male		Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Victim of an accident, natural disaster, poverty	0	0%	2	40%	3	33%	1	11%
Domestic violence, rape, murder	0	0%	0	0%	1	11%	0	0%
Non-domestic sexual violence, rape, assault	0	0%	0	0%	1	11%	0	0%
Other non-domestic crime, robbery	0	0%	2	40%	2	22%	0	0%
Violation based on religion, tradition	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
War, terrorism, vigilantism, state violence	2	50%	1	20%	1	11%	5	56%
Discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity age, religion, ability	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	22%
Other victims	2	50%	0	0%	1	11%	1	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>50%</b>

However, all findings here were based on a relatively small sample so it may not completely reflect the presence of women in the news landscape.

Digital media offered more information related to Covid-19 at 50% of all news pieces monitored; these stories appeared in 8 Internet websites and 5 Twitter feeds, while the other 50% of news pieces were published by 24 traditional news media outlets (8 in newspapers, radio, and TV respectively). Although the same number of Covid-19 news

items appeared in digital and traditional news, it made up higher percentage in traditional media (at 13%) when compared to digital media (8%). In traditional media, Covid-19 news most frequently appeared in topic of social/legal news (at 23%), while in digital media, science/health was the most common topic for Covid-19 news (24%).

Covid-19 News	Newspaper, Radio and TV				Internet and Twitter			
	Related		Unrelated		Related		Unrelated	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Politics and government	7	11%	54	89%	11	9%	118	91%
Economy	6	6%	97	94%	8	5%	140	95%
Science and health	9	20%	37	80%	20	24%	64	76%
Social and legal	19	23%	62	77%	2	2%	88	98%
Crime and violence	0	0%	12	100%	0	0%	60	100%
Gender and related	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Celebrity, arts, media, sports	0	0%	21	100%	3	5%	54	95%
Other	3	60%	2	40%	0	0%	3	100%
Overall	44	13%	285	87%	44	8%	528	92%



## Case Studies

### Case 1. A story that shows gender awareness and challenges gender stereotypes

A

**Title of the article:** Thousands of Miles to Drive Alone, Xie Lin Dispatched to Wuhan and Xinjiang to Combat the Epidemic with Her Truck

**Website:** The Paper ([https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail\\_forward\\_9384018](https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_9384018))

**If the story is from a newspaper or Internet, is it one of the stories you coded in the quantitative part of the study?**

No

**Date:** September 28, 2020, at 21:04 (shown in layer 1 on the morning of September 29)

**Country:** China (Mainland)

**Topic:** COVID-19

**Skills:** Language

**By:** Wu Yi, Wu Xizhen

#### Analysis:

The news feature was focused on two dispatches during the COVID-19 pandemic done by Xie Lin, a female truck driver. The headline is *Thousands of Miles to Drive Alone, Xie Lin Dispatched to Wuhan and Xinjiang to Combat the Epidemic with Her Truck*, which described the story's content fairly.

Xie Lin, the subject of the story, had driven a truck for over 30 years and still loved doing it, although "*some people said that it's not a job for women*". She was nearly the only source in the story and is quoted directly.

There are only three sentences describing her physical appearance, and none were about her facial features. The only time her family role is mentioned was when the news piece speaks about how she fell in love with driving a vehicle because of her father. Some words such as "*drive alone*" and "*Long March*" are used to praise her bravery and tenacity. The story uses data to visualize her driving experience, such as "*4,300 kilometers to Xinjiang with 29 tons of building boards*" or "*900 kilometers to Wuhan*".

There are four photos in the story. One of these is a photo of her with two men assigned to hand over goods in Wuhan, two are photos of her with her truck in Wuhan and returning from Xinjiang respectively, and one is a view of an empty highway from her truck. These are full-length photos without any close-ups of her face.

The story quoted many of her own words, including how she learned to drive and take care of a truck from her father, how she impressed customs officials as a female truck driver when she drove a heavy-duty truck to Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, and Burma, how she survived after her truck broke down in a desolate region of Tibet, the support and encouragement she received, and her experience with the impact of the epidemic in Wuhan and Xinjiang.

The phrase "*Chinese women are really amazing*" was quoted two times in the story and became one subtitle in the text. These patriotic words were apparently catering to the time the story was published, which was just before Chinese National Day. It seems the story of a female truck driver and the official ideology had to be coined together in this article.

## Case 2. A story that conveys subtle stereotypes

D

**Title of the article:** Online Saleswomen “Guli” and a Journey of Poverty Alleviation  
(脱贫路上的带货“古丽”)

**Website:** Youth.cn (official website of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League), layer 1 ([https://cy.youth.cn/dtxw\\_138178/202009/t20200928\\_12512197.htm](https://cy.youth.cn/dtxw_138178/202009/t20200928_12512197.htm))

**If the story is from a newspaper or Internet news website, is it one of the stories you coded in the quantitative part of the study?**

No

**Date:** 29 September 2020

**Country:** China (Mainland)

**Topic:** Economy

**Skills:** Photos

**By:** Hu Huhu, Xinhua News Agency

### Analysis:

The headline is *Online Saleswomen “Guli” and a Journey of Poverty Alleviation*. “Guli” is the name of the news story’s subject – a team entirely composed of young female Uyghur anchors from Xinjiang focused on selling local specialties online.

This story reports that the local government of a poor county in Xinjiang promotes local agricultural products through live webcasts. All six photos are scenes of “Guli” working in the live broadcast room and warehouse. Four of the photos show “Guli” faces and two have close-up shots of their youthful hands and fingers to display goods. In two pictures, “Guli” are in Uyghur traditional clothes in front of the cameras or potential customers; one photo description said that they were showing their dancing talents to attract the attention of netizens. However, they usually wear t-shirts or other “common” clothes, especially since they do not need to wear anything fancy when facing their online customers.

The story emphasizes these anchors’ youth, beauty and exotic natures. None of the “Guli” are quoted, and there is no text in the story conveying their opinions on their lives and dreams. The story mentioned that these women graduated from a local vocational high school, and said they are contributing to the youth of their hometown.

Thus, this story conveys subtle gender stereotypes about women by using their young, beautiful, and exotic appearance to attract audiences’ eyeballs. As a result, it failed to tell the audience more about the real meaning of these young Uyghur women’s work in alleviating poverty and their own opinions on their lives and dreams.

## Case 3. A story that is gender blind, and therefore a missed opportunity

E

**Title of the article:** National March 8th Red Flag Bearers Commendation for Fighting the Covid-19 Epidemic was Held in Beijing  
(<https://tv.cctv.com/2020/09/29/VIDEXuyXoRteN5dBdAPSQacM200929.shtml?spm=C31267.PFKSaKh6QQC.S71105.35>)

**If the story is from a newspaper or Internet news website, is it one of the stories you coded in the quantitative part of the study?**

No

**Date:** 29 September 2020

**Country:** China (Mainland)

**Topic:** Politics

**Skills:** TV News

**By:** Li Mobai, Wang You Wen, and CCTV, the National TV Station)

**Analysis:**

This is a video news report about the China Women's Federation commending female workers in various industries for fighting the epidemic. Deputy Prime Minister Sun Chunlan attended the event. In the video, there are scenes of women receiving the award and Sun Chunlan awarding it to someone. The overwhelming majority of characters in the video are women.

A female news announcer gives a list of the sponsors for this recognition ceremony. They are the All China Women's Federation under the Chinese Communist Party, the National Health Commission, and the Political Work Department of the Central Military Commission. 800 individuals and 200 collectives were awarded for their contribution to combatting COVID-19. However, no names were explicitly mentioned, and neither the female leaders of the party and state who handed the awards nor the women who received the recognition were identified. Most of the content the announcer spoke of was political jargon, with nothing specific to women and gender equality.

In the CCTV's most popular primetime news program, this report was the 19th news item listed out of 26 pieces and was broadcasted for 32 seconds. It was followed by a 30-second news report that showed a national preaching conference on the theme of a "youth anti-epidemic" which presented slightly more male than female news characters or audience members. In comparison, a news report showing the blooming consumer market before Chinese National Day (a golden time for the consumer market) that was several items ahead of this news piece was given 1 minute and 44 seconds of broadcasting time. It quoted a female consumer, a female merchant, and a male government official. There was also another 40 second news report titled as "The Double Festival is Coming, Hong Kong Streets are Filled with a Festive Atmosphere".

This news piece could have been a made into a more gender-aware piece. Chinese women made up most medical professionals in the frontlines against COVID-19. Women also formed the backbone of community workers that were key to maintaining the society during the lockdown. Women took the lead in urgent responses to COVID-19 such as advocating the extension of the Spring Festival Holiday to reduce the possibility of virus transmission; fundraising, donating, and transporting masks and other medical devices; and sending sanitation materials such as napkins to female medical professionals. They also kept cities going by offering free rides for pregnant women to the hospital, basic service to communities, and other forms of volunteer work that people needed when local governments failed to provide public service. Women's contributions for combatting COVID-19 were under reported by the news media in China, and not recognized nor acknowledged by the authorities in China.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the conclusions reached from the 2020 GMMP find that women are still underexposed in media reportage, and that gender issues are far from being taken seriously by the media. The core findings for China are that:

1. Women were underrepresented in the news – only appearing in about 27% of major news subjects, and with an overall presence of 25% on average. The highest presence of women in the news was at 37% in the field of science/health. Thus, men still make up most news characters.
2. Women were the central focus of 2-9% of all news stories: 9% in both social/legal news and celebrity, arts, media, and sports news; 6% of the time in the crime/violence issues; 2% in stories about the politics/government, economy, and science/health.
3. Women in the news often functioned as subjects and spokespersons (at 68% of the time) but rarely as knowledgeable experts or commentators (9%).
4. News stories were not likely to make reference to issues of gender equality/inequality, or challenge gender stereotypes. Only 1.1% of all news stories mentioned gender equality or inequality, and only 1.2% of all news stories challenged gender stereotypes. Digital media presented more stories challenging gender stereotypes than traditional media did (1.4% for digital and 0.9% for traditional). Compared with global data, mainland China media were less likely to challenge gender stereotypes.
5. COVID-19 news tended to have more women as major news subjects (at 44%), experts or commentators (at 27%), and those asked to share personal experiences (at 75%) when compared to the news in general (at 27, 20% and 38% respectively). However, no pieces of Covid-19 news challenged gender stereotypes or highlighted gender issues.
6. Only 2% of all news stories (or 18 news pieces) covered issues put forth in the three special questions: Only 0.8% of all news items involved the over 10 million migrant or left-behind women in China. Additionally, only 1% of all news items involved the impact of Covid-19 on women and girls or women's participation in the fight against the epidemic, and only another 0.2% of news items involved domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence.
7. Women made up 57% of all news reporters and 53% of all news presenters. Overwhelmingly, female television announcers and reporters were young, with 64% of them being between the ages of 19-34 and 29% of them being between the ages of 35-49. Male presenters tended to be older, with 34% of them being between the ages of 35-49 and 24% of them being between the ages of 50-64.
8. Progress and regress co-existed by 2020 compared to previous country data, Women's overall presence in news, as well as in topics of politics and government,

science and health had increased from 2005 to 2020, while their presence in economy, social and legal decreased or forth and back.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN 2021-2025**

Based on context and findings, we have listed the following recommendations below:

To policymakers: Keep promises from Beijing in 1995 and accelerating the commitment to achieving strategic goals of women and media in the Platform for Action of the UN in Beijing.

To UN agencies in China: Facilitate positive changes in policymaking, industry practices, education, and research to provide more information, guidelines, and other technical support.

To regulators: Develop concrete policies and measures to promote reporting on gender equality and women's rights, as well as the role of female journalists in news media.

To news media organizations: Enhance the capacity of media organizations and their staff to perform and provide news with ways of questioning and overcoming gender stereotypes and inequality.

To journalists: Be mindful of their own gender blindness and biases, keeping open minds and finding more ways to cover stories with gender sensitivity in mind.

To audience: Be active in providing information, feedback regarding women's empowerment and gender issues to media organizations and journalists.

Action plan for 2021-2025:

As a non-governmental initiative, the Media Monitor for Women's Network will continue to promote guidelines, good practices, and training to increase the capacity of journalists, including those who work with media organizations or as freelancers, citizen journalists, and active audiences, to create more news focused on women and gender quality, with professional, rights-based approaches, and to keep working with other partners and women's rights advocates to conduct research and monitor the situation.

## Annex 1. Methodology 10

A key characteristic of longitudinal research is the assessment of change over time on the observed indicators. In the case of the 2020 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), the methodology, indicators, approach to data collection and analysis are consistent with past editions of the research to allow for the usual historical comparisons.

### *Process*

The global monitoring day scheduled initially for the first quarter of 2020 was postponed to later in the year due to the upheavals caused by the first coronavirus (Covid-19) wave worldwide. As the April monitoring day approached, it became quickly clear that proceeding as planned would result in a news sample that would be almost entirely focused on coronavirus stories. A new need emerged to address the practicalities of monitoring during the lockdowns and curfews imposed to contain the spread of the virus, as the regular sit-down communal coding sessions were now out of the question for most teams. The risks to health and livelihoods, the need to find ways of coping with everyday life, would shift the GMMP down on the ladder of priorities for the volunteers, potentially increasing the drop-out rate. These new challenges called for a pause on the plans to search for solutions and put in place the tools and resources necessary before monitoring could proceed.

The GMMP technical advisory group and the database development team Code for Africa worked to systematically address the issues. A new monitoring date was set for September, the coding tools were tweaked to capture Covid-19 stories without compromising on the ability to compare results across time based on story topics, exhaustive audio-visual training resources on how to code in a pandemic were put in place, electronic coding instruments were developed, and the teams were re-trained in numerous webinars.

As with previous waves of the GMMP, the initial data capture was conducted offline by volunteer teams across the 116 participating countries. For the 2020 GMMP, a spreadsheet version of the coding sheets was provided, to allow for electronic recording of the observations.

In the period leading up to the monitoring day, a series of regional and national training sessions were organised to build a uniform understanding of the teams on the methodology and approach to coding. The teams received training on media selection, newscast and article selection, and the number of media to code.

For the 2020 GMMP, teams could choose from two possible options for the monitoring:

- **Full monitoring**, whose results provide a comprehensive picture of the status of gender equality dimensions in news media.
- **Short monitoring**, a shorter version which focuses on the key GMMP indicators, for teams who wished to participate but for various reasons could not implement the full monitoring.

To ensure accuracy in the coding process, radio and television bulletin were recorded, and copies of digital and print media items were collected. Across the different media types- both

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<sup>10</sup> See the global report for the extended discussion on the GMMP 2020 methodology

for the full and short monitoring-monitors captured information about the story, its main themes, and the people in the story, as journalists, as story subjects and sources. Additionally, three optional special questions, unique to each country, allowed individual countries to analyse issues of national interest. For standardisation purposes, as well as the multilingual nature of this study, all responses were numerically coded from fixed lists.

To enable comparability of data gathered from a pandemic-heavy news agenda with the historical results, an additional question was included which asked whether the story was related to Covid-19. For such stories, monitors were requested to select the most relevant secondary topic. While global news stories had diversified to pre-pandemic levels by the global monitoring day in September 2020, the regional analysis demonstrated the significance of this question, particularly for North America and the Middle East, which recorded 37% and 36% of Covid-19-related stories respectively.

### *Media bands*

The media bands system was introduced in 2005 to ensure a more even spread of data and serve as each country's reference point on the minimum number of media to monitor. This system was retained for the 2020 GMMP and was updated with the input of the country coordinators.

### *Weighting*

While the GMMP seeks to understand how gender is represented in media across the world, differences in media access and impact across the participating countries mean that a simple aggregation of the data would lead to biased results. For example, if a country like France submitted data from 100 media, the entries from a smaller country like Fiji would have little, if any, impact on the results. Additionally, while two countries may have similar numbers of newspapers, their impact, in terms of the number of people who read them, may be significantly different. To address these challenges, GMMP 2020 updated, re-tested and applied the weighting system first developed for the 2005 edition.

### *Accuracy*

The GMMP involved several thousand people across 116 countries from diverse gender and media stakeholder groups, with different research abilities and working in a wide range of languages. For a study of this scale, it was crucial that accuracy was considered at each stage, to maintain the high levels achieved in previous years. Data entry and processing errors can have severe biasing effects on the data analysis, resulting in misrepresentation of the observed variables. To minimise this risk, we leveraged on a variety of automated processes, as well as the extensive media monitoring experience of the country coordinators.

### *Limitations*

As with any study, great effort was made to ensure accuracy of the data. As observed in previous GMMPs, an exact error of measurement cannot be determined due to the study's magnitude. Conventional error measurement would involve different researchers coding the same story and then calculating a level of error from the differences between the results. Although this was not possible for GMMP, we followed best practice to make sure that there were minimal errors in the data capture and analysis generation process.

### *About Code for Africa*

*Code for Africa (CfA) is the continent's largest network of indigenous African civic technology and investigative data journalism laboratories, with over 70 staff in 19 countries, who build digital*

*democracy solutions that are intended to give citizens unfettered access to actionable information that empowers them to make informed decisions and that strengthen civic engagement for improved public governance and accountability.*



## Annex 2. List of Monitors

39 individuals monitors are:

Liu Gaoshang  
Jiang Jiaying  
Wang Huiyuan  
Jiang Tongyu  
Xiang Min  
Yan Min  
Pan Ziyang  
Lv Yi  
Liu Xin  
Zhang Junhuan  
Xie Yuntao  
Su Liping  
Zhang Xueqin  
Xiao Liping  
You Chao  
Geng Jiashuai  
Liu Xinru  
Li Jing  
Zhang Huimin  
Zheng Liyuan  
Yang Xinyu  
Li Xiangping  
Liu Liu  
Wu Ke  
Zhang Rongfang  
Yi Tingjun  
Hu Xin  
Jin Guixian  
Meng Zihan  
Yi Cai  
Han Xinxin  
Cai Jingchao  
Xu Chen  
Hu Xinru  
Yang Desheng  
Qv Lei  
Zhang Zheng  
Li Ning  
Chen Rong



Media Monitor for Women Network  
妇女传媒监测网络

WACC  
308 Main Street  
Toronto  
ON M4C 4X7  
Canada

**Tel:** +1 416 691 1999  
gmmp@waccglobal.org  
www.whomakesthenews.org  
@whomakesthenews

Media Monitor for Women Network  
Beijing  
China

Email:  
fenfem@gmail.com  
<http://www.chinadevelopmentbrief.org.cn/org721/>