Key Issues for Gender Research in HRD: A Multi-Stakeholder Framework for Analysing Gendered Media Constructions of Women's Leaders

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The Handbook of Research Methods on Human Resource Development

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Introduction

Gender research can be a highly political process with significant impact, positively or negatively, on the researcher(s) and research participants. As a result there are key issues for consideration when preparing to undertake gender research in Human Resource Development (HRD). Gender research in HRD requires a mature level of researcher reflexivity in terms of personal understandings of gender; individual researcher values, philosophical positions and standpoints on gender; motivations for research; awareness of how gender research may construct researchers in their own professional settings and how research participants may respond to gender research. We contend that a process of researcher reflexivity, in critically reflecting upon and reviewing individual assumptions and standpoints, is essential *before* beginning gender research. Gender is a significant dimension of personal life, social relations and culture: an arena where we face difficult practical issues about justice, identity and even survival; where there is much prejudice, myth and falsehood, and where social sciences gender research is producing a relatively new form of knowledge (Connell, 2009).

This chapter outlines key issues for gender researchers illustrated through research into gendered media constructions of women leaders. We introduce the importance of women leaders and gender aware learning and HRD and outline understandings of gender; diverse advances in gender research; consistency, harm, pleasure and power; participant-research relationships and the researcher's position in gender research, by drawing upon our previous studies. We then present the key issues in practice, through our operationalization of a Multi-Stakeholder Framework for analysing gendered media constructions of women leaders. We utilize a mixed method design (Saunders, 2012) of statistical analysis of secondary data on women in senior positions in a UK region (geographies of gender); analysis of three Supplements of the Top 500 Influential Leaders via discourse analysis; a semi-structured interview with a media producer; group and individual interviews with selected aspiring and current women leaders and stages of on-going researcher reflexivity and accountability. We conclude with reflections on the constraints and possibilities of the multi-stakeholder framework approach.

Women Leaders and Human Resource Development

We follow Bryans' and Mavin's (2003) contention that much of what we know about learning and development has been based on the masculine norm and that management, organizing, learning and development have been historically viewed as gender neutral concepts where women's experiences are ignored. An example of this comes through education and development in UK business and management higher education settings where curricula and leader development interventions are argued to "to collude with the status quo;

simply repeating existing management theory and practice" which is gendered (Mavin and Bryans 1999:99). In terms of HRD, our assumption is that women's leadership experiences and strategies for learning leadership should be integrated into management and leader development, thus placing gender on the agenda, problematizing traditional perceptions of manager and leader as men and supporting the move to disrupt and "dismantle sex role stereotypes in the organisations to which the students (will) belong" (Mavin and Bryans, 1999:99). While there are increasing studies investigating the gendered nature of: leadership, management and learning research, subsequent models and frameworks (e.g., Bryans and Mavin, 2003; Elliott and Stead, 2008) and investigating empirically into women, gender management, learning and leadership (e.g., Kelan, 2013; Stead, 2013), there are few studies examining social contexts and processes which influence and 'shape the development of leadership practice' (Kempster and Stewart, 2010: 208). The research we outline in this chapter advances contexts and processes impacting on leadership by exploring how women leaders are gendered through media representations and reporting.

Understandings of gender

As gender researchers we see gender as "socially produced distinctions between male and female, masculine and feminine" (Acker, 1992: 250) and acknowledge that understandings of gender have progressed from traditional essentialist concepts of male-men, female-feminine as ascribed individual traits, to recognizing 'gendering processes', so that gender is constantly redefined and negotiated by individuals in everyday practices (Poggio, 2006). The way we each, as individuals, continually redefine and negotiate gender against the binary divide categories of male-female, feminine-masculine, is socially constructed. We know these processes as 'doing gender' (West and Zimmerman, 1987) which involves a "complex of socially guided perceptual and interactional and micropolitical activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine 'natures'" (West and Zimmerman, 1987: 126). Underpinning their concept of doing gender, West and Zimmerman (1987) analytically distinguish between sex, sex categorization and gender. There are ongoing debates about the value of identifying a clear distinction and a causal link between sex (biologically based) and gender (culturally based), recognized as a useful tactic for feminist sociologists. However, the contribution of physiological differences to social behaviour is not yet settled (Acker, 1992) and any gender research requires researchers to identify their assumptions and positioning within this debate. For example Kelan (2010) argues that people are already categorized by their sex (biology) when they 'do gender,' therefore the body is not neutral. "'Doing gender' is the process through which the gender binary is enacted'" (Kelan, 2010: 182). Amongst gender researchers, some argue this binary divide can be 'undone' by not referring to or ignoring it. Others argue that the binary divide can be destabilized through research positions that question the naturalness of the gender binary or disturb it through different and confusing readings of the binary (Butler, 1990, 2004). However, Kelan (2010), Messerschmidt (2009) and West and Zimmerman (2009), argue that undoing gender is really not undoing gender but re-doing or doing gender differently (Mavin and Grandy, 2011).

Our understanding of gender which shapes this chapter and our own life long gender projects, is that gender can be done well and differently through simultaneous, multiple

enactments of femininity and masculinity (Mavin and Grandy, 2011, 2012). In this way women and men can do gender well (in congruence with sex category e.g. women doing femininities and men masculinities), while simultaneously re-doing or doing gender differently (e.g. women doing masculinity and men femininity) (Mavin and Grandy, 2011). We explicitly incorporate sex category (feminine-masculine) into our understanding of doing gender, as we believe it cannot be ignored in experiences of doing gender. While gender binaries can be challenged or unsettled, the binary divide continues to shape how men and women do gender. Through gender stereotypes, women and men continue to evaluate themselves and others, and are evaluated against the femininity-masculinity binary divide in organizations (Mavin and Grandy, 2011, 2012).

Diverse advances in gender research

Beyond HRD, gender research has a longer history and as gender researchers we should remain cognizant of the ever advancing nature of the study of gender from multi-disciplinary perspectives. Gender research enables the possibilities of reaching out to other fields to advance existing knowledge within business, management and organizational studies and to contextualise our specific research questions in appropriate literature and research methods. As gender researchers we should also keep abreast of the diverse advances for gender research within HRD. For example a contemporary issue for management and organization studies is the need to be sensitive to the potential for geographical differences (Billing, 2011; Connell, 1987, 2009; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005), within explorations of the complexities and contradictions in how women experience gender and management. Further, the growing debates which draw upon intersectionality to highlight the salience of other social categories for gender relations, such as class, race and disability (Acker, 2000; Holvino, 2010; Valentine, 2007; Williams and Mavin, 2012) and whether gender research can produce valuable knowledge if gender is the sole conceptual frame. Within business and management studies, this poses challenges because as Broadbridge and Simpson (2011) point out, certain developments that run alongside gender research (e.g. diversity, masculinities and men in management, meritocracy and choice) occur at the expense of gender, diluting gender in the process. This is not to say that diversity or meritocracy have no place in gender in management nor is it to say that such discussions are less important than gender. It is suggested that the foci of gender in management should be "'gender with [. . .]' rather than the more equal footing of 'gender and [. . .]' race, class, age and/or other key categorizations" (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2011: 473). We recognize that gender is grounded in relationships of power and the body, which, when including other social categories can surface different dynamics (Hassard and Holliday, 2001). This suggests a heterogeneity for women and men, as different bodies are coded and read as inferior in relation to social categories such as disability, race, age, sexual orientation, e.g., experiences of women of colour are qualitatively different to white women (Crenshaw, 1991).

Consistency, 'harm and pleasure' and power in gender research

It is important for gender researchers to establish their own understandings of gender and to be consistent in how this is reflected in research methods and positioning of gender within

findings and conclusions. This is manifested most clearly in whether gender is treated as a key variable in research where findings are re-presented against the gender binary unreflexively, or whether gender is considered a co-construction between the researcher and the researched; where power relations and inequalities are integrated throughout the research and are transparently acknowledged and discussed. Without this reflexivity, research can serve to maintain the gender binary divide between men and women, sustaining gendered understandings of a social order which subordinates women to men, affirming organizational power to men and, therefore, denying power to women (Gherardi, 1994). Power is a key issue in gender research as a continual interacting process between people in organizations and is understood to be implicit as individuals' make choices, shape, resist or accept gender expectations (Alvesson and Due Billing, 1997) against a backcloth of patriarchy. Thus the significance of gender research cannot be underestimated.

Gender can result in both harm and pleasure in the world. As Connell (2009: 143) points out, the "harm of gender" is the system of inequality where women and girls are exploited, discredited and made vulnerable and this harm is also found in specific patterns of gender order that have power to affect the world by the collective resources of society. The pleasure of gender comes from how it organizes sexual relationships, our relations with children and is integral to cultural riches. This harm and pleasure is potentially reflected in the political nature of gender research. We raise this as an issue because gender research is grounded in explorations of "power structured relationships, arrangements whereby one group of persons is controlled by another" (Millett, 1972: 23) and where gender inequalities are generally expressed in terms of women's lack in relation to men e.g., power, income, wealth, social honour, cultural authority (Connell, 2009). However, while gender issues are not just about women, they are as much about men, we argue that to embark upon gender research is to commit to examining and exposing inequalities grounded in power. There will be those who resist this exposure as a threat to their own power, and those who do not see the inequalities which has implications for the research and the researcher, as well as those who share the motivation to expose. Participant responses to gender research have implications for the construction of knowledge within a political context for both the researcher and the researched.

Participant-researcher relationships and the researcher's position in gender research

Gender research can be highly sensitive as participants are often reluctant to discuss experiences of organization on the basis of being a man or woman. Depending on participant motivations, individuals may want to be recognized for competence and position power, not for gender. An example of this comes from our current research project 'Senior Women at Work' (2011 to 2013), exploring women's relations with other women at work. In recruiting women to the project we were completely transparent about the topic; our motivations to explore women's relations with other women; how women can progress careers within organizations and the 81 women participants self-selected into the study. However, we did experience, in the minority, a number of women who did not support our motivations. During the interview they wondered why they had agreed to do the research and/or did not want to

discuss their experiences of being a woman at the top of an organization. We also experienced more generally, participants who did not think that being a woman had anything to do with their career success to date but were happy to talk in a gender neutral way about being in their current roles and how they got there. Here we were cognizant reflexively of how the researchers' and participants' conflicting positions on gender were influencing the way we constructed knowledge about gender; how the data is being produced and the impact on the subsequent analysis.

The debate of whether to declare your assumptions, values and principles as a gender researcher can be finely balanced. As women researchers and as feminists we make sense of the world in a myriad of ways, bringing differing, even conflicting assumptions to our research but "feminism speaks with one voice in characterising the world it experiences as a patriarchal world and the culture it inherits as a masculine culture" (Crotty, 1998: 160). Our feminism is articulated in our research through a commitment to feminist standpoint research: the focus on women's experience as a basis for research, including the development of theoretical frameworks; the notion of the researcher as accountable to research participants and to a wider feminist constituency; acknowledging that the personal or private realm is also political and a reflexive perspective on research as part of a knowledge evaluative framework which has tended to reflect the concerns of dominant groups (Griffin, 1995). Regardless of commitments to feminism, gender research is always political when exposing inequalities which can also lead to the risk of 'taint' for gender researchers located within business and management schools primarily focused upon gender neutral/blind education and research. In this context, as a woman to lead on the gender research agenda opens up space for others (more powerful) to decide upon how the researcher and their performance are perceived, and to attach value or not to the research itself. Such micro-political contexts can lead to constrained careers and limits on the resources open to gender researchers, thus reproducing gender inequalities.

Taking our own medicine!

To summarize our discussions so far, we have introduced the following key issues for consideration by gender researchers in HRD:

- *Researcher reflexivity* is critical before a gender research project begins e.g. personal understandings of gender; individual researcher values and philosophical positions on gender; their motivations for research; awareness of how gender research may construct researchers in their own professional settings and how research participants may respond to gender research.
- Gender researchers to be consistent and transparent in establishing/positioning their *understandings of gender* and the gender binary*, in their *research methods, 'treatment' of gender, intersections with social categories* and relationships with *participants*. *Power* is a central concept in researching gender and cannot be ignored.

- The researcher's *feminist ideals, gender philosophy and epistemological position* should be acknowledged with consideration of the impact on participants and the research itself in producing knowledge, as *participants* may not share the researcher's commitment to exposing power relations, investigating gender and/or feminist ideologies.
- Gender researchers to consciously remain open to *additional diverse discussions* within HRD. Also *multi-disciplinary perspectives* concerning the advancing nature of the study of gender.

As white, middle-class, academic (elite) women, during our careers we have committed to gender, activism, development work and research and as a result of our experiences in grappling with and confronting the issues outlined, we next outline a Multi-Stakeholder Framework developed to research gendered media constructions of UK women leaders. Through the Framework we make transparent how we have 'taken our own medicine' and are guided by our recommendations for gender researchers. In the discussion that follows we outline the literature drawn upon: the multiple methods within the Framework; how we operationalized the elements and how we considered key issues for gender researchers in our research approaches**.**

A multi-stakeholder framework: gender-media-leadership research

Our current 'Gender, Media and Leadership' research concerns the marginalized position of women senior leaders in organizations, reflected by the lack of women on UK company boards, despite ongoing efforts to achieve more women in leadership positions (Davis, 2011). This is a gender issue where explanations can be explored through the experiences of women in organizations and reflect the growing body of contemporary research exploring how women leaders, and particularly women political leaders, are gendered through media representations and reporting (Mavin, 2009; Mavin *et al.,* 2010; Skalli, 2011). We understand this gendering of women in the media as significant, as media reflects dominant social views (Tuchman, 1978) and are interested in understanding further *how women leaders are gendered in the UK media*, particularly in regional business media. Underpinning the research is our assumption that how women are constructed as leaders and how leaders are constructed in the media will have an impact on audiences, who, according to feminist media studies, construct meaning for their own lives from such sources (e.g. Ang, 1996; Ang and Hermes, 1996; Kelan, 2013) and as such, will influence women's progress as leaders in organizations i.e. women's 'acceptance' as leaders.

As researchers with a feminist commitment to understand women's experiences and progress (or otherwise) in organizations, we drew upon the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) (Macharia *et al.*, 2010) which highlighted a dearth of women in business and economic media reporting and sensitized us to geographies of gender relations (Billing, 2011; Connell, 1987, 2009; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005); gender relations constructed globally, nationally and local levels, as well as within everyday interactions. We pursued this through a gender analysis of media constructions of women in a UK regional newspaper

'Annual Supplement' (Supplements) which presents the 'Top 500 Influential Leaders' in the geographical region. We therefore aimed to investigate the potential for multiplicity reflected through local variations in gender relations, whilst also being cognizant of the social context and that interactions and gender relations are influenced by background assumptions (regional, national or global) which reflect and maintain beliefs of the superiority of masculine hierarchical superiority (Knights and Kerfoot, 2004).

In developing our research methods we agreed to advance the limited research exploring how women's access to leadership positions are represented in the news media by using the methodological approach of Tienari *et al.* (2009) from organization gender studies and combining this with a method outside HRD which drew upon over thirty years of feminist analysis in media, gender and communication studies research (Carter and Steiner, 2004). Tienari *et al.* (2009) outline a discourse analysis process (See Figure 1.) to interrogate gendered constructions around quotas for more women on company boards in the Swedish and Finish news media, by focusing upon small sections of text whilst aiming to engage in "mapping out more general social dynamics" (Tienari et *al.,* 2009: 507).

< TAKE IN FIGURE 1>

We integrated this discourse analysis process into the first stage of a Multi-Stakeholder media analysis Framework adapted from Carter and Steiner (2004) (see Figure 2.) to reflect the media, gender and communication studies feminist literature which argues that media should be interrogated as articulated relationships between (1) texts, (2) institutions producing them and (3) audiences, to produce a multiple stakeholder and multiple methods approach.

< TAKE IN FIGURE 2>

This wider media, gender and communications literature addresses a range of issues pertinent to our research, including women as (or in) entertainment; the news; the production of media and audiences (Byerly and Ross, 2006). This critique supported our feminist ideals. It recognizes women's absence, reflects concern to raise women's voices and promotes women's participation in public and political life, by highlighting the extent of women's exclusion or misrepresentation in the media. Reviewing literature from beyond the boundaries of HRD, management and organization studies enabled us to establish that gender studies of media representations tell us something important about the messages media producers want to share with their audiences; something about perceptions of women's place and roles in social life which are socially acceptable, and contextual, therefore reflecting dominant social beliefs about public/private space (Norris, 1997), whilst also considering audience engagement (or rejection) of such messaging.

Management and organization studies media research has focussed mainly on exploring researcher's interpretations of texts (Kelan, 2013). In developing the Framework and methods employed, we extend both gender media and communications, and management and organization studies literature which focuses upon discourse analysis of the discursive construction of media texts (Fairclough, 1995; Matheson, 2005; Sunderland, 2004; Tienari *et al.,* 2009; Vaara *et al*., 2006), by including a media producer and an audience analysis. We therefore followed the shift in feminist media studies and the suggestion that the most influential feminist media analysis incorporates an appreciation of the media's contribution to the discursive negotiation of gender by exploring the interplay between text, production and the reception of media (van Zoonen, 1994; Carter and Steiner, 2004). We extend management media analysis by including the media producer and reflecting Carter and Steiner's (2004) media interplay between text, production and reception. We now move to explain the context and process of the Framework we utilized (shown at Figure 3).

< TAKE IN FIGURE 3>

A team of four women researchers engaged in research to understand gendered media constructions of UK women leaders (women's experience as a focus for research), operationalizing a mixed method design (Saunders, 2012), involving: i) statistical analysis of secondary data on women in senior positions in a UK region (geographies of gender); ii) analysis of three Supplements of the Top 500 Influential Leaders in the region via discourse analysis: independently, in pairs and as a group of four (gender intertextuality); iii) semi-structured interview with a media producer (man) (gendered understandings); iv) group and individual interviews with selected media audience (aspiring and current women leaders) (women's voice) and v) various stages of on-going researcher reflexivity (and accountability). All methods were employed before the overall analysis took place and enough time was set aside for each stage of the methods. As researchers we were active in the interpretations and analysis and reflexive of our role in the process.

The statistical analysis of UK NOMIS[1] data, freely available to the public, of the top two Standard Occupational Classifications (SOCs) enabled a three year comparison of the percentage of women in the geographical region classified as holding senior manager and professional roles, with the three Supplements. NOMIS results showed that the combined percentage of women in the top two SOCs in the region (40.9%-38.4%-40.6% over three years) far exceeded the percentage of women profiled in the Supplements (16.8%-17.2%-18.2% over three years). A UK regional comparison of the same SOCs highlighted that the geographical region was mid-table or above regarding percentages of women holding senior positions, although full statistical analysis of the figures was problematic due to the amount of estimation present in the percentages reported by NOMIS. However the results challenged the assumption that the lack of women profiled in the Supplements was reflective of a

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[1] http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/

geographical constraint and supported the researchers' assumptions that the media publication was not profiling sufficient women as influential leaders in the region.

For the discourse analysis we followed Tienari et al's (2009) approach to critical discourse analysis of media texts where individual texts are not subjected to linguistic in-depth analysis and the process is iterative. We combined Carter and Steiner's (2005) first level of intertextual analysis to position the media within its broader social context (connecting what we know of gender and management/leadership to the Supplement texts) with Tienari et al's (2009) approach where all authors identify similarities and differences in original interpretations of media materials and note how to account for these apparent similarities and differences. We conducted discourse analysis of three lead articles (editorial, lead article, sponsor article) from the three annual media Supplements via individual, paired and group discourse identification. We were guided at each stage by a number of questions: What discourses contribute to framing the representations of gender and regional leaders in these texts? What factors have influenced the media producers? What technological or workplace issues have shaped the media texts? How is the text positioned or positioning? Whose interests are served by this positioning? Whose interests are negated? What are the consequences of this positioning in terms of gender and power? This process of staged discourse analysis produced a number of benefits. It identified diverse individual researcher perspectives/interests and while individuals and pairs named discourses differently, there was resonance in the results and patterns identified, resulting in agreed final discourses through the group analytical stage. The development of the discourses was thorough, inclusive and comprehensive in that individuals, pairs and the four researchers returned to the supplements and to their research notes (which were shared where appropriate) at each stage to check that all relevant extracts and interpretations for each discourse had been collated. The resulting discourses were checked against each other and back to the original data to ensure coherence, consistency and distinctiveness.

The audience analysis comprising group and individual interviews conducted by one researcher, also raised gender consciousness (Martin, 2003; Mavin 2006) to gendered media constructions and participant's responses to this media. Participants were given complete hard copies of the Supplements to read and discuss. Resulting data was analysed via template analysis (King 2004; 2012), one of the most well-used forms of thematic analysis in the management field which can be applied to any kind of data (Cassell, 2012), to identify and compare key themes. We followed the conventions outlined by King (2004; 2012) and were guided by McGivern's (2009) beginning with a *mechanical* exploration before moving on to the *intellectual analysis*. This consisted of one researcher conducting an initial exploration of the group interview data to get a 'feel' for it and to devise inductively the initial thematic categories. This was followed by the 'intellectual analysis' involving the other researchers in an iterative process of moving between the data and the literature, resulting in thematic resonance. This process of coding and interpretations enabled the researchers to discover links within and across categories/themes and enables conceptual or theoretical links to be made (Cassell, 2012). The resulting themes provided resonance with the researchers' discourse analysis regarding audience responses to, and issues about, the Supplements. The

audience analysis moved beyond the gendered constructions of women leaders and extended to the problematizing of 'leader' and 'leadership' constructed in the Supplements.

The semi-structured interview by one researcher with a lead journalist from the media producer was a key method to extend existing research in business media analysis. An existing relationship with the media producer facilitated access. The data was analysed again by template analysis (as above) and challenged the research team's assumptions about how the Supplements were developed: who was involved; how leaders had been included or not; which images were included and of whom, and produced important insights into the production of the Supplements. The challenge to assumptions was recorded via researcher reflexivity, formalized via a proforma of individual reflexive data from experiences across the research methods, subsequently discussed as a research team.

Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has outlined key issues for HRD gender researchers and how we reflected the issues within a Multi-Stakeholder (multi-method) Framework. We initially outlined how in gender research, it is important to engage in researcher reflexivity regarding values, philosophical assumptions, and understandings of gender, and how gender research (as political and grounded in power) may impact upon researchers and participants. We introduced debates concerning the gender-sex binary divide, geographies of gender, intersectionality and moving beyond HRD boundaries to advance gender research. We outlined how key issues for gender research impact on our choice of methods and our production of knowledge. The Framework enabled us to 'take our own medicine' in terms of operationalizing the key issues in a gender project; in our choice of multiple methods and stakeholder participants, and in extending research methods already in use. Producing data from various sources had the benefit of building resonance, credibility and confirmability of our findings and thus trustworthiness of the research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and facilitated development of the research team's knowledge, research skills and abilities. The constraints of the Framework; that it requires a research team, engagement in a time consuming process and access to producers of media, which can be problematic, are outweighed by the benefits it delivered for us as a research team and the research question. From our experience, consideration of the key issues outlined can lead to the development of protocols which guide the research process and reflect the researchers' location within the issues raised and we contend that this process produces transparent, credible, defendable contributions. Significantly for us, engaging with colleagues in gender research is incredibly rewarding and develops research teams to build credibility and trustworthiness in research.

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Annotated Reading

Bryans, P., & Mavin, S. (2003). 'Women learning to become managers: learning to fit in or to play a different game?'. Management Learning, 34(1), 111-134. An introduction to key issues in the debate on gender, learning management and HRD.

Carter, C. and Steiner, L. (2004). Critical Readings: Media and Gender. Maidenhead: Open University Press. We recommend chapters 1 and 2 which an overview of the importance of media representations of gender, and the relevance of multi-levels of analytic focus when choosing research methods.

Wetherell, Margaret; Taylor, Stephanie and Yates, Simeon J. eds. (2001). Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader. London: Sage Publications Ltd. A collection of classic articles on discourse research which provides an overview of key themes.

Wetherell, Margaret; Taylor, Stephanie and Yates, Simeon eds. (2001). Discourse as Data: A Guide to Analysis. London, U.K.: Sage Publications Ltd. This book provides step by step guidance on how to do discourse analysis from a range of different perspectives.

Figure 1. **Tienari et al. (2009) Three Stages of Discourse Analysis**

1. Independent researcher discourse analysis of selected media texts.

2. Paired researcher reflexive comparisons of independent interpretations.

3. Research team identifying similarities & differences in interpretations of gendered discourses.

Figure 2.
Carter and Steiner's (2004) Framework –Three Levels of Analytic Focus

1. Intertextual analysis to position the media text within its broader social context.

2. The technological / economic context of the publishers and their motivations in producing the media.

3. The audience practices.

Figure 3. A Multi-Stakeholder Framework for Analysis of Gendered Media Constructions of UK Women Leaders

Carter & Steiner's (2004) Three Levels of Analytic Focus	A Focus on Women's Experience as a Basis for Research		
	Our Focus	**Research Method**	**Taking Our Own Medicine**
Intertextual analysis Three Supplements of the Top 500 Influential Leaders in a UK Region (2008 / 2009 / 2010). Sponsored by a recruitment/HR solutions agency operating regionally & nationally. Produced by regional daily newspaper.	Identifying number of women in senior & professional positions (via SOCs in NOMIS) in the UK region.. Exploring geographies of gender.	i) *Statistical analysis* of SOCs (senior manager & professional positions).	Identifying potential pool of leaders within region contributes to geographies of gender relations.
	Drawing on the extant literature to connect what is known of gender & management/leadership against four researcher interpretations of three editorials, lead articles & media sponsor sections of the Supplements. Pieces chosen for analysis as they set the tone of the publication, communicate the understanding of 'influence' adopted: editorial, sponsor article & lead article (which focused on leadership & current issues/for the region).	ii) *Discourse analysis*: 1) Independently: four women researchers, followed by; 2) Paired reflexive comparisons of interpretations &; 3) Team identifying similarities & differences in gendered discourses constructing leadership in three Supplements **(Tienari *et al.*, 2009)**	Through DA/feminist standpoint utilizing doing gender well & differently theory, leadership as masculine & women as marginalized in analysis. Structured reflexivity through proforma, discussion & incorporating different gender & methodological interests in design/analysis of the project. Reflexivity via individual, paired & team analysis of gendered discourses.
Institutional analysis Daily newspaper av. readership 88,000. Considers itself to be key part of regional business community.	Background & position of the news media within the region. To understand key issues in media producer's construction of Supplements: rationale for publication, technological constraints/opportunities, target advertisers, construction of leadership, stakeholders influencing inclusion of influential people, anticipated audience, response to NOMIS analysis.	iii) One researcher conducted a *semi-structured interview* with lead journalist (man) from the editorial team of the Supplement.	Multi-disciplinary focus incorporating media & gender issues with media producer. Openness to challenge of research assumptions. Reflexivity post-comparison of assumptions regarding media producers' motivations vs. findings of semi-structured interview. Influenced the overall project-data analysis.
Audience analysis	How do aspiring or current women leaders within the region respond to the Supplements & to initial NOMIS analysis?	iv) One researcher conducted 3 *group interviews* comprising 17 women & 5 *semi-structured interviews* with women.	Commitment to women's voice. Transparency of research interests to group &individual interviews; inviting & exploring diverse participant perspectives. Reflexivity via responses to NOMIS analysis. No intersectional analysis due to low variation in participant backgrounds.

BUILDING RESONANCE & CREDIBILITY IN RESEARCH