

On August 6th, The Rio Olympic gold medal winner Katinka Hosszu was commented by NBC, an American National Broadcasting Company, that “this is just an unbelievable performance, a world record for the Iron Lady. And there’s a guy responsible for turning his wife into a whole different swimmer.” NBC is a very influential media companies in America, and even in the world. The event is a live examples to demonstrate that there are indeed serious gender differences between media coverage contents towards athletes and the gender differences might evolve into media sexism. It is not to say that female and male athletes should have the same description regard to their achievements, but coverage time should be equal and female athletes’ own effort should be praised.

1. The coverage of male and female athletes is inequivalent.

The coverage equality is different between areas and time. Though the situation is getting better in the long run. Paul et al. (2016), analyzing the media coverage of 2014 Sochi winter olympics of NBC found that women athletes recieved 47.7% broadcast time, which is the highest among all the previous winter Olympics. While in 1994, 98.3% media coverage is about men athletes. (Duncan & Messner, 1998). However, the media equality still has a long way to go. Regard to areas, Nicolas and Amy (2016) analyzed the media coverage of 2014 Sochi winter olympics by French, British and Spanish newspapers. Female athletes are strongly discriminated in French newspapers; British newspapers are resulted in a less media coverage in Male athletes; Spanish newspapers are found to be equal in both female and male athletes. (more analysis)

2. The media coverage content is different in many ways.

Female athletes are more likely to be commented about their body shape, their background and emotions, while male athletes are more likely to be commented about their strength.

3. Why the differences exist?-Stereotype, biological differences, historical view...

There is a gender stereotype of females. Female athletes are viewed as inferior athletes. Victories are attributed to their opponents' weakness or by other special reasons rather than the athletes' own effort or talent. Objectification: "women's object is to meet the desire of men". Restrictive gender roles: "Women should behave as soft, delicate, nurturing. (Emily & Ivy, 2016) There are biological differences between female and male athletes. The testosterone level indicates that female athletes are not as competitive as male athletes. (biology) ...

(The three parts above are my main claims for this paper, but the content will be more detailed, and I will include more peer-reviewed articles as my reference.)

Media is a dominant social structure to direct the public's thoughts and image, producing a common culture for the majority of individuals. Media tends to link female athletes' athleticism with sexual appeal, femininity and limited physical capacity, while male athletes' athleticism is linked with strength and power. The differences in coverage and description will cause inequality in many directions, such as salaries of athletes, coaches, servers, participation of females in sports etc. (references) It is related with the public's view of female and male athletes. Therefore, it is a social and cultural context.

(This paragraph is about the influence of inequal media coverage between female and male athletes on the athletes themselves.)

Conclusion:

As explained by the researchers, these comments are closely related to gender stereotype and their gender image is formed just through the way the sports content is covered. Since women have been considered as mothers or wives for a long time, it is difficult to get used to viewing them as "competitors". However, some basic factors such as the difference between broadcast time, name mentions of female athletes can be changed. Our media should pay more attention to think about the real reason for female athletes' success while

minimizing the influence of gender stereotype and describing female and male athletes' success in a more sensible and equitable way.

Reference:

MacArthur, P. J., Angelini, J. R., Billings, A. C., & Smith, L. R. (2016). The dwindling Winter Olympic divide between male and female athletes: The NBC broadcast network's primetime coverage of the 2014 Sochi Olympic Games. *Sport in Society*, 19(10), 1556-1572.

Delorme, N., & Pressland, A. (2016). The Visibility of Female Athletes: A Comparison of the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympic Games Coverage in French, British, and Spanish Newspapers. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 33(4), 317-333.