Data analysis and summary of results- Mini Project by Ofry Peler and Sewar Iraqi

First of all, we decided to focus on the years 1980-2022 for the reason that 1980’s was the time in which women’s rights began to be more incorporated into the daily world after long periods of struggle. In more detail, while university and high studies were more of a man’s world in the early 20th century, women turned that around during the 1980s. Beginning in the '80s, more than half of bachelor's degrees were awarded to women. Pursuing this further, shifting our point of view to the influence and power of women, Sandra Day O’Connor became the first woman nominated to the Supreme Court in 1981. Given this knowledge, we thought this was a good starting point for our project. We wanted to put our focus on movies, which have a great influence on all of us (as we are influenced by what we see), analyzing the integration of women (female actors) in the movie industry over the years, from that starting point and until today. As the incorporation and admiration of women rises in generally around the world, including in the United States, we thought that the United States, being the star of the film industry, could be a good place to focus on as it is very diverse and filled with content.

Some questions we thought about and aimed to discover:

Was the Integration of women in the film industry back then already respectable? Was it still significantly low compared to males? Has it risen over the years, and if so, has it increased sharply, or was it a more moderate increase? What where the roles that women were chosen to play back then, and what are they chosen to play now? Has this changed? What type of role do we generally expect a woman to play, as opposed to a male? Who are the top females who played in the most movies? Furthermore, we wanted to see if there where specific genres women where more associated with, as opposed to males.

We expected there to be a rise in the number of women incorporated in the film industry over the years, and we expected that in this time today (the years 2019-2022) the number of female actors in comparison to male actors would be almost equal, as the world progressed, and women have a stronger position in our society. Additionally, we expected the genres that women are more associated with to be lighter and softer (such as romance, comedy). We also expected the roles to be associated with women back then to be less powerful and more gender-related – such as to play a mother, a wife, a maid, a dancer and so on, and today for women to play more significant roles, roles that have a bigger influence.

The findings suggest a few things. Starting off, there has been a general increase in the number of female actors over the years, as we expected. Although, we were surprised to find out that even though there was a rise in the number of female actors, this amount is still smaller than the number of male actors today. The ratio is around 1:3 (one female actor for every three male actors). We want to note that the amount of data we had for the years 2019-2022 is smaller for the reason that 2022 is still ongoing and thus this is irrelevant – what is relevant is the general incline.

Pursuing this further, looking at genres, the biggest number of female actors play in drama and comedy genres. In both, the female to male ratio is about 1:2 – fifty percent (more females then the general 1:3 ratio, 30 percent).

As we expected, the highest female to male ratio appeared in comedy, romance, and music (with around 65 to 80 percent of female actors involved), as opposed to the lowest female to male ratio which appeared in genres of war and sports (with around 20 to 30 percent of female actors involved). This associates a softer and lighter context with women, which could be positive but notes on a less serious point of view towards them.

Regarding the roles that the female actors tend to play, the findings portray the most played roles by females are dancer, reporter, receptionist, secretary, and teacher. This adds to our view that women are generally more associated with softer and less powerful roles, as opposed to major and stronger roles like president, king, officer and so on. Though, if we look at the shift in the roles over the years, even so that the general top roles played by female actors stay the same, we can see that there is an increase in the more “powerful” and looked upon roles in terms of the number of female actors who play them. Specifically, in the last few years for instance, the top roles for female actors consist of officer, agent, and queen which portray a very positive shift in our point of view as people.

The top 5 female actors who have played in the most movies consist of strong, well-known women - with Karen Strassman in the first place having played in almost 600 films.

We still have a long way to go, but we are halfway there!

\* It is important to note that the sample does not represent all the films because the role of the character in the plot has not always been documented.