

XXIV

TECMUN Jr.

United Nations Entity for
Gender Equality

Outline of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality was created by the General Assembly in the resolution 64/289 on July 2, 2010 in order to accelerate the achievement of the goals in gender equality by merging four different entities previously existing in the UN that had a more specific focus on achieving this, but had not the sufficient support and strength in order to approach the problem as expected by the Organization. The General Assembly, decided that the faculties and functions of the Entity will be the same as those of the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), which are to support worldwide political negotiations in favor of gender equality, assist the Member States with financial aid and expert knowledge to implement the accorded rules, and to support other bodies of the UN in the promotion of gender equality. This Entity, accepts, adopts and promotes the definition of gender equality given by the OSAGI (2001) in which is stipulated that the term refer to an equality between all humans, in matter of responsibilities, rights and opportunities, without relying on whether they are born male or female.

Topic A

Consequences of the criminalization
principally to men because of their sexual
orientation in African countries

Nowadays, sexual orientation (focusing on same sex relations) has become a very important and relevant topic thanks to the different opinions and thoughts that this may lead, and because of its impact on society. Some people consider that a relation between two people of the same gender is not normal and should not happen, but some others think exactly the opposite. In many countries around the world, there are already laws that support same sex couples allowing them to marry and even adopt, but there are also other countries that do not allow this relations and even punish them, like the majority of the african countries.

In Africa, many countries in their laws prohibit relations and sexual contact between people of the same sex, but in some of these countries (Botswana, Mauritania, Ghana, Kenya and some others), man-to-man relations are being only penalized or are punished in a harder way than women-to-women relations. Sodomy is punished with imprisonment, fines, physical punishment and even the privation of life.

The punishments that damage the physical integrity of the citizens, clearly violates their Human Rights; they want to have the freedom to decide who they like, but these impairments may lead them to death. The main reason why african countries are against homosexuality, is because they consider that this “no natural conduct” comes from outside the continent and also disturbs the culture each country has.

Background

Defining the origin of the rejection that africans have to homosexuals may result into a hard task to accomplish, this, thanks to the complexity that implies to unify fifty four different countries that compose the african continent in one homophobic culture, because each of the countries has their own identity and their own past, so they may have different reasons that provoke the growth of homophobia. Besides that, different studies realized by a variety of experts (like the one lead by Deborah Amory or the one done by the expert and teacher of the University of Smith, Kim Yi Dionne; both of them focusing on the causes of the problematics) leads that the origin of the homophobic thinking is a consequence of the colonial period.

During the colonial period, that includes the XIX and XX centuries, several european powerful countries distributed among them different colonies of the african continent. As a result of the previous fact, Deborah Amory, an special investigator, mentions that social codes at that age in Europe were extremely conservative and included a harsh repression to homosexuality, therefore, the colonizers of Africa included these codes in the constitutions they created to govern the different colonies they had. It is important to mention, that before

colonial age began, some african countries accepted homosexuality, but because of the ideology that colonizers such as United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Portugal and France had when colonizing the african continent, they left no power to the native citizens to build their constitutions and legislations according to their culture and nowadays they follow the rules that european countries implemented.

After the colonizers started giving the independences to their colonies at the end of the Second World War, most of the now independent african countries decided to keep the constitutions they had as a colony, therefore, they kept the laws and legislations that are anti-homosexuality. Human Rights Watch made a study that demonstrates that half of the laws around the world that ban sodomy are consequence of the domain of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France and Portugal.

African countries after the colonial period

The main unsolved question will be “Why the african countries did not change that rules and laws that punish homosexuality?”. First of all, we have to take into consideration that for two centuries, the African continent belonged to the powers of Europe, so this mean that the citizens had to adapt to the lifestyle and rules the colonizers proclaimed.

At second term, specialist in the matter, Kim Yi Dionne, tells us that Africa at this time was passing through a lot because they had to face the transition from being a colony to become an independent country. They also had to face many internal problems and conflicts like the Genocide of Rwanda, just to mention an example. All of the previous situations provoke that african countries didn't have the enough time and resources to modify their legislations.

Africa nowadays

As we may know, some African countries nowadays have the highest index of homophobia because of the existing laws that encourages the hate for couples of the same sex, but there are also other factors that feed this repudiating ideology to homosexuals.

According to an study realized by the University of Pennsylvania, african politics make more declarations against homosexuality during the time of elections. The reason they do this is because they gain more points in favor and votes thanks to the already existing homophobia in the country, and they use this on their favor to cover problems such as the shortage of resources and the struggles they have to pass through in order to gain some.

This hate that politics spread increase the homophobia between citizens that live in the different countries. In addition to this, other politics use this homophobia in order to justify many situations, make use of personal violence and political persecution of some citizens. Example of this is when the ex president of Malawi, Bingu wa Mutharika, established that because of the homosexuality he lost external help to the country.

From the other side, some nations that have diplomatic relations with african countries, attempt to achieve a cutting off of anti-homosexuality laws and give ultimatums to certain african countries establishing that if they continue applying these hate-promoting legislations, they will suspend the humanitarian help, which include healthcare, volunteering, economical resources, food, just to mention some. Consequently, african countries take it as an offense to the country's pride, so the homophobia rises because homosexuals become an important part of the international spotlight, which means critics against the government.

Finally, as expected, religion is also another cause of the increase of homophobia in Africa, but it is important to mention that it is not the main reason of its rising. Religious people capture the attention of african people by giving speeches against the homosexuality and the consequences that it has. Christian groups are very conservatives and belong to the United States principally; what they do is send missions and help to the churches that share this religion, and with this, they take advantage and organize some meetings in which they take about homosexuality as a threat to the african culture and to the new generations.

Homophobia inside africa in numbers

According to a survey made by the organization *Afrobarometer* in 33 countries of the african continent, they came to the following results in matter of homophobia in these countries:

- a) 91% of the citizens prefer living with neighbors of different etnies, 87% with neighbors of other religion, 81% with immigrant neighbours or foreign workers, 68% with neighbors that have HIV/AIDS and just 21% with neighbors that are homosexual.
- b) The four countries that are less homophobic are Cape Verde, South Africa, Mozambique and Namibia.
- c) The countries with the highest index of homophobic population are Senegal , Guinea, Uganda, Burkina Faso and Niger.
- d) In the other hand, the countries that are less homophobic but still have laws that punish sodomy are Namibia, Mauritius, Botswana, Tanzania and Tunisia.

Even though all the countries were not interviewed, homophobia is one of the most important problems that Africa has because the population of the different countries prefer to live near someone of other etnia, religion, or someone that has HIV/AIDS rather than with someone homosexual. This means, that population is still convinced that homophobia is a problem and still discriminate this people.

Also, the organization that made the survey reached an important conclusion, which is that tolerance to homosexuality is more frequently presented in countries with a variety of ethnicity and religions, which leads to say that cultural coexistence may be the key for the citizens to tolerate homosexuality.

The anti-homosexual laws and the inequality

The laws in the countries of Africa are not the same to every country; each of the countries has its own constitution with its own laws and punishments.

We can divide the african continent into three different groups according to their role in matter of homophobia. The three groups will be the following: countries that have death penalty for homosexuals (Mauritania, Sudan, northern Nigeria and southern Somalia); countries where homosexuality is illegal (Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Comoros, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda Zambia and Zimbabwe); countries where homosexuality is legal (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Côte d'ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, South Africa.)

The countries where homosexuality is illegal punish homosexual relationships and sodomy from an economical penalty to chastisement and even death penalty, which clearly violates human right number three -the right to live-, human right number five -the right of no torture- and human right number eighteen -the freedom of thinking- because laws are not giving citizens the opportunity to choose freely their ideology neither their sexual orientation; which all of these have the support of the right number thirty (No one can take away your human rights).

After studying each country's constitution, we can find out that there are some homophobic laws that are more harsh to men than to women. We can affirm that sixteen African nations only criminalize male homosexuality; in some other countries homosexuality is being criminalized in general. The countries in which inequality between the acceptance of male and female homosexuality exist are Botswana, Ghana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. In all of these countries, sodomy is only being punished allowing, in some of them, women to have homosexual relationships, and in others, punishing only with fines women-to-women relations..

The countries where punishments are supported by the law are:

- Botswana: Sodomy and every person that has knowledge of someone practicing sodomy is punishable for up to five years of imprisonment.
- Ghana: Any case of sodomy in which an individual is less than sixteen years old and is conscious act, may lead to a maximum of three years of imprisonment.
- Kenya: Sodomy and every person that has knowledge of someone practicing sodomy is punishable for up to fourteen years of imprisonment. And any attempt of sodomy, is punishable for up to seven years of imprisonment.
- Lesotho: Sodomy is punished with an arrestment without a warrant.
- Mauritius: Sodomy is punished with penal servitude up to five years.
- Namibia: Sodomy is punished with years of imprisonment.
- Seychelles: Sodomy and every person that has knowledge someone practicing sodomy is punishable for fourteen years of imprisonment.
- Sierra Leone: Sodomy is punished with penal servitude for life and imprisonment for a term not less than ten years.
- South Sudan: Sodomy is punished with imprisonment for up to ten years and a fine.
- Sudan: Sodomy is punished with flogging of one hundred lashes and imprisonment for up to five years. The second time that sodomy is committed, is punished with flogging by one hundred lashes and imprisonment for up to five years. The third time sodomy is committed, is punished with life imprisonment or death penalty.
- Swaziland: Sodomy is punished with death penalty.
- Tanzania: Sodomy and every person that has knowledge of someone practicing sodomy is punished for up to thirty years of imprisonment. An attempt of practicing sodomy, is punished with at least twenty years of imprisonment.

- Tunisia: Sodomy is punished with up to three years of imprisonment.
- Uganda: Sodomy and every person that has knowledge of someone practicing sodomy is punished with life imprisonment.
- Zambia: Sodomy and every person that has knowledge of someone practicing sodomy is punished with fourteen years to life imprisonment. An attempt of practicing sodomy, is punished with at least seven to fourteen years of imprisonment.
- Zimbabwe: Sodomy is punished for up to one year of imprisonment and/or with a fine.

Consequences

There are some cases where men and citizens in general have to run away not only from the police but from their own families who are ashamed of having an homosexual relative because represents a dishonor to the family and the country. Here is where we can see how the government is able to get that impact in society, that even someone very close to the individual is ashamed of his/her sexual orientation.

Political persecution provokes that men and/or citizens in general who are being persecuted due to their sexual orientation, migrate to the nearest country where they can live without the fear of being oppressed. This migration causes a lot of damage to health, because in most of the cases they make this journey walking and with very low resources for all the trip.

Why man are being punished/criminalized harder?

Homosexuality is punished in most african countries both women and men homosexuality, but in the majority of these countries, men-to-men relations are punished harder than the way women homosexual relations are criminalized or punished.

Men are seen as the strongest part of the country, they are meant to be the strength and base, thank to this, African governments have the idea that if they allow men to be homosexual, other countries will see its country as one weak because they do not have the supposed power of heterosexual men. The previous, leads us again to two wrong ideas: Women cannot be the strength of a country because they stereotyped as weak, and the other one is that homosexuals are weak and men loses its “power” if they are homosexual.

Governments not only punish confirmed or open homosexuals, but they also do everything they can in order to “detect” men that might be homosexuals. Some of this methods include the ones used in Tunisia, which are the anal examinations in order to find any injury or

damage that may point the individual has been in sexual contact with a man. Some of the others methods include research for finding an “homosexual gen” and how erect the penis gets when watching heteresoxual pornography.

All of these tests and exams are done and supported by the governments for the objective that we have mention all along, which is that the country maintain and/or increase its strength in front of the international community. Therefore, the principal reason of why men are criminalized harder that men represent the strength of the country and women do not.

To sum up, we can summarize all in three key points to show that men are criminalized harder: first, men are seen as the ones who represent the strength of a country; second, governments agree and give permission to authorities of the country, such as the police, to prosecute people and ran some tests to confirm or deny homosexuality; third, the existing laws and penal codes that let the government chase homosexual or possible homosexual men.

International reaction

Some presidents have made a call to the african countries that continue punishing homosexuality, to stop doing it because of the consequences it has to their population. An example of the previous is the president of the United States of America, Barack Obama, when he invited the president of Kenya to visit the United States, promoted an environment of equality between homosexual and heteresoxual people.

Finally, we have to take into consideration that even when the position of governments around the world is in favor of the LGBT community, it has not existed any reaction or proposal to solve the existing inequality of punishing only men that are homosexual or giving more severe punishments to men than to women.

Suggested readings

The Law Library of Congress. (2014). Laws on homosexuality in African nations. Retrieved 15 june 2016. *The Law Library of Congress*. Web <<http://www.loc.gov/law/help/criminal-laws-on-homosexuality/homosexuality-laws-in-african-nations.pdf>>

Yoruba, C. (2013). Homosexuality and african history: The roots of the criminalisation of homosexuality. Retrieved 16 june 2016. *This is Africa*. Web <<http://thisisafrica.me/homosexuality-african-history-roots-criminalisation-homosexuality/>>

References

1. Afrobarómetro. (2013). Los países africanos más y menos homófobos. Retrieved 15 June 2016. *Africa LGBT*. Web <<http://africalgbt.org/index.php/es/item/357-ppaises-mas-menos/357-ppaises-mas-menos>>
2. Africa LGBT. (2013). ¿Cuál es el origen de la homofobia en África?. Retrieved 13 June 2016. *Africa LGBT*. Web <<http://africalgbt.org/index.php/es/component/content/article?id=92:editorial-cual-es-el-origen-de-la-homofobia-en-africa>>
3. BBC Mundo redacción. (2013). Los países donde ser gay es un delito. Retrieved 14 June 2016. *BBC Mundo online*. Web <http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2013/12/131211_india_homosexualidad_global_am>
4. Bunting, M. (2010). African homophobia has complex roots. Retrieved 13 June 2016. *The Guardian online*. Web. <<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/may/21/complex-roots-africa-homophobia>>
5. Collaborators of Wikipedia. (2016). ONU Mujeres. Retrieved 18 May 2016. *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*. Web <https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/ONU_Mujeres>
6. Frederic, T. (2014). África: Los derechos de las minorías sexuales. Retrieved 15 June 2016. *CETRI*. Web <<http://www.cetri.be/Los-derechos-de-las-minorias?lang=fr>>
7. General Assembly. (2010). Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 2 July 2010. Retrieved 17 May 2016. *UN Women documents*. Web <<http://www2.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/executive%20board/ga-res-64-289-en-adopted%20by%20the%20general%20assembly%20on%202%20july%202010%20pdf.aspx?v=1&d=20140917T100659>>
8. Gutiérrez, O. (2014). Condena de por vida para los homosexuales en África. Retrieved 14 June 2016. *El País En línea*. Web <http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2014/02/16/actualidad/1392580632_115937.html>
9. Human Rights Watch. (2016). Tunisia: Men prosecuted for homosexuality. Retrieved 17 July 2016. *Human Rights Watch*. Web <<https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/03/29/tunisia-men-prosecuted-homosexuality>>
10. International Amnesty. (2015). Túnez: La condena de seis hombres por mantener relaciones homosexuales pone de manifiesto la arraigada homofobia del Estado. Retrieved 17 July 2016. *International Amnesty*. Web <<https://www.es.amnesty.org/en-que-estamos/noticias/noticia/articulo/tunez-la-condena-de-seis-hombres-por-mantener-relaciones-homosexuales-pone-de-manifiesto-la-arraig/>>
11. Jiménez, S. (2016). Allí donde nunca brilla el arcoiris. Retrieved 17 July 2016. *Estrella digital*. Web <<http://www.estrelladigital.es/articulo/mundo/donde-arcoiris-no-brilla-nunca/20160630091909290187.html>>
12. JLCG. (2016). Kenia: Exigen suspensión de pruebas anales para determinar homosexualidad. Retrieved 17 July 2016. *El universal*. Web

- <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/articulo/mundo/2016/06/16/kenia-exigen-suspension-de-pruebas-anales-para-determinar-homosexualidad>>
13. Kalende, V. (2014). Africa: homophobia is a legacy of colonialism. Retrieved 14 June 2016. *The Guardian online*. Web <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/30/africa-homophobia-legacy-colonialism>>
 14. Lester, J. and Atef, M. (2015). Médicos egipcios creen que exámenes anales pueden detectar “homosexuales crónicos”. Retrieved 17 July 2016. *Africa LGBT*. Web <http://africagbt.org/index.php/es/item/272-medicos-egipcios/272-medicos-egipcios>
 15. Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. (2001). Gender mainstreaming: Strategy for promoting gender equality. Retrieved 17 May 2016. *Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women*. Web <<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/factsheet1.pdf>>
 16. Smith, D. (2014). Why Africa is the most homophobic continent. Retrieved 14 June 2016. *The Guardian online*. Web <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/23/africa-homophobia-uganda-anti-gay-law>>
 17. The Law Library of Congress. (2014). Laws on homosexuality in African nations. Retrieved 15 June 2016. *The Law Library of Congress*. Web <<http://www.loc.gov/law/help/criminal-laws-on-homosexuality/homosexuality-laws-in-african-nations.pdf>>
 18. The Week Staff. (2014). Everything you need to know about Africa’s anti-gay crackdown. Retrieved 14 June 2016. *The Week online*. Web <<http://theweek.com/articles/448702/everything-need-know-about-africas-antigay-crackdown>>
 19. UN Women. (2016). What we do. Retrieved 16 May 2016. *UN Women*. Web <<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do>>
 20. UN Women. (2016). About us. Retrieved 16 May 2016. *UN Women*. Web <<http://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us>>
 21. Wikipedia collaborators. (2016). LGBT rights by country or territory. Retrieved 14 June 2016. *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*. Web <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_by_country_or_territory>
 22. Wikipedia collaborators. (2016). LGBT rights in Africa. Retrieved 14 June 2016. *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*. Web <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_in_Africa>
 23. Women Watch. (no data). UN Women: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Retrieved 18 May 2016. *Directory of UN Resources on Gender and Women’s Issues*. Web <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/directory/un_women_10001.htm>
 24. Yoruba, C. (2013). Homosexuality and African history: The roots of the criminalisation of homosexuality. Retrieved 16 June 2016. *This is Africa*. Web <<http://thisisafrika.me/homosexuality-african-history-roots-criminalisation-homosexuality/>>

Glossary

A

anal test / anal examination: It is also known as rectal examination. It consists of an internal examination of the rectum performed, supposedly, by a professional. The purpose of it, is to see if there is any damage to it caused by the practice of sodomy: *anal tests are performed to african men that are suspects of having man-to-man relations.*

B

ban: Officially or legally prohibit. An official exclusion from an organization, country, or activity: *a proposal to ban all trade in ivory.*

C

conservative: To hold traditional values and refuse to change and/or innovate: *African governments are conservative.*

E

entity: Something that has independence and has a distinct existence of something else: *the United Nations General Assembly created an entity specialized in gender equality.*

ethnic: Relating to a population subgroup within a larger or dominant national or cultural group with a common national or cultural tradition. Relating to national and cultural origins: *two playwrights of different ethnic origins.*

ethnicity: The fact or belonging to a social group which integrants have in common a culture and/or national tradition: *the diverse experience of women of different ethnicities.*

F

flogging: Beat someone with a whip or stick as punishment or torture: *the stolen horses will be returned and the thieves flogged.*

G

genocide: The deliberate killing of a large group of people, especially those of a particular ethnic group or nation: *The answer to how people or states convince themselves to commit murder or genocide is complex.*

gender: The male or female sex, or the state of being either male or female: *difference between the genders are encouraged from an early age.*

H

harsh: It refers to something that it is cruel or severe: *laws in some african countries are harsh for men than to women.*

homophobia: Prejudice or dislike of people with same-sex sexual orientation: *homophobia in Africa is still a social problem nowadays.*

homosexuality: To have a sexual attraction to people of one's own sex: *he was very outspoken against homosexuality.*

I

ideology: A system of ideas or ideals that someone follows because of what this system says: *around the world we can find many kinds of ideologies.*

impairments: The state or fact of being impaired, especially in an specified faculty, this means that something is better than someone but worst to somebody else: *there exist many impairments thanks to the gender gaps.*

imprisonment: The state or being putted in or kept in prison or a place like prison: *men are women are being imprisoned because of their sexual orientation.*

inequalities: Difference in size, degree, circumstances, etc.; lack of equality: *social inequality affects many countries around the world.*

M

merge: Combine or cause to combine something into one single entity: *different programs of the Commission on Status of Women, were merged into a single entity.*

P

penalty: Refers to a punishment that is imposed to someone for breaking a rule, law or contract: *homosexual relations in african countries are punished with economic and death penalty.*

S

sodomy: Sexual intercourse involving anal or oral copulation between two men. The sexual act of putting the penis into another person's anus: *sodomy in Africa is penalized even with death penalty.*

struggle: Make forceful or violent efforts in order to get free o a restraintment, restriction or constriction: *men and women in Africa suffer from many struggles that involve their sexual orientation.*

U

ultimatum: A final demand or a group of statements of terms that someone gives to somebody else in an specific topic or business: *governments give an ultimatum to their population in matter of homosexuality in the countries.*

Topic B

Gender violence caused by the existing stereotypes in the mass media focusing on the consequences to both genders

By: Fernando Sánchez López.

Mass media has become an important part of our lives, due to it we can know what is happening around the world and/or in our community at the instant of the events due to the technology. But all of this means of mass media, like television, radio, newspaper or social networks, impulse and reaffirm stereotypes with the different programming they present and the participation of females icons in these, which result is affecting the female gender.

Since 1998, television has increased the participation of women throughout the years; but there is still existing lack of participation of women in important positions in mass media. All of this because of the gender stereotypes that affect women and men, in a way they cannot feel free to participate in certain works as a result of the possible consequences this may lead to.

In some TV channels, women have less important participation in the programming, they are not able to host a program, and if they do, it is usually of the well known “gossip programs”. Also they are considered not able to manage certain topics like sports, politics or economy. Women, in many shows, are used as a sexual objects thanks to the fact that they are usually hired because of physical appearance or they are requested to have certain weight and height among other requests, which again, leads to stereotypes, this because they look more attractive to the spectators (principally male audience) and with these they increase the rating in the programs.

All of this stereotypes generated are result of the impact that mass media has in our lives and that has shown us, to lead violence to women, because the society is accepting them and then they force women to fit with each stereotype, and more important that now with the digital media, the cyberviolence against women is increasing because of the sexualization of them as a consequence of their specific and reduced appearance in television.

Background

Television, radio and internet have become nowadays a very important source of information, and with this they have also become in the most important means of information that compose the mass media. This has its positive and negative side of view, because it is very useful to have a handy tool that lets us know what is happening around the world or use it just for entertaining. But, for the negative side, this components of the mass media are causing that the existing of gender stereotypes gain more power for the content that is presented either in TV, radio or internet to the audience.

These stereotypes presented by the means of information, arrive to the audience in a way gender stereotypes cause them to believe that how the gender roles are represented in the different contents of the means of information, is how men and women have to develop in a daily basis. And in consequence of the wide range of audience this means reaches, the amount population to whom this stereotypes arrive is huge.

We can see that the principal cause of this gender violence provoked by the mass media is not entirely fault of the people that lead the means of information, but also, of the spectators that follow this stereotypes thinking that is “the correct thing to do”, which in most cases is not. It is also important to mention, that this is not an actual problem but a matter that has its roots long before radio, television or the internet where created.

An stereotype, is a thought that dictates the conduct of someone in the daily life. This thought might be accepted by the population and what it dictates it is not correct, so it leads to people that follow the stereotype to change in order to fit into the stereotypes, or make other change in order to make them fit into the stereotype which finally lead us to the extremism of recurring to violence for achieving this.

It is important to say, that now that we have this advanced and wide mass media, people in this industry may spread even more the stereotypes intentionally and unintentionally.

How mass media shapes the gender roles

Nowadays, mass media has a great impact into society in general, because it influences our thoughts, perspectives and opinion through the different shows and programming it transmits. Some of this programming may include different psychological techniques in order to transmit an specific thought with an specific objective. This mass media sometimes show us parts of a situation, but not the entire problem in order for us to follow a way of thinking or a perspective in the matter, which is unethical.

Also, through the different contents and programming it presents, intentionally or unintentionally, some stereotypes related to what each gender may and may not do, can make the viewers believe that the way the different characters or roles that are presented in the contents, are the accurate ones that society must follow.

With what we outline above, all the subliminal messages, the way men and women are presented, the activities of the different characters and what they may be representing, makes society delimit what is correct for a men to do and what is correct for a women to do.

Mass media is a very powerful tool and being used to shape the genders using the stereotypes is an example of the bad focus that we give to it. It is supposed that this useful facility may help us to give a positive impact on society like remarking that any activity of any topic can be done by both genders, and not specifying or classifying what men and women can and cannot do.

Gender stereotypes

As we stated before, stereotypes are thoughts that a certain part of the population consider right to an specific aspect of living or way in which things are done. There are plenty examples of stereotypes nowadays that are being spread by the mass media reaching more people and convincing them that that stereotype is good, which may not.

There are different types of stereotypes that may affect everyone of us, but the most common or the ones that cause more consequences are the gender stereotypes. This gender stereotypes are the ones causing more problems, because men want women to fit in this stereotypes or women also want men to fit in some other stereotypes and in some cases they are aggressive to each other in order to achieve, which leads to other problems caused by the gender stereotypes.

Some of the existing gender stereotypes are that women are not aggressive, that men are dominant, that women are indecisive, that men are stronger and cruel, that men do not cry, men do not cook, women have to be in the house, just to mention some of them.

We can notice how this gender stereotypes cover a wide range of “topics” of our daily basis and most of them may not be accurate at all or may lead to a problem between the genders if people are forced to follow them. It is also important to recall, that this stereotypes are generated by both genders and also both gender are being victims of it, because they define what they can or cannot do. This problem is affecting both genders excluding them to do some activities because it does not fit in the gender stereotype.

This stereotypes are generating many kinds of problems because they have convinced us that they are accurate even though they are not. The reason why they are not is simple: both

genders are capable of doing what the other gender is capable of doing so it is not necessary to split the abilities a human can have. But people that are not aware of this want to fit or make others fit in the stereotypes generating a bigger problem that leads to more and more problems.

Mass media

As stated previously, nowadays mass media is composed by the internet, newspaper, television and radio, and this are the fastest and “more accurate” ways of communicating what is happening around us in every moment of our daily life or entertain us, which is the main goal or objective of this means.

What mass media wants, is to give a positive impact in the people by giving appropriate content with their different variety of programs or content they show during the whole day, and all of this, most of the time they do it to target and specific audience. But most of the time this means do not generate a positive effect but a negative one with all the programming and content they show, causing gender stereotypes appear in most of the programs and contents which may lead to a misinterpretation of the spectators leading mass media as something that encourages more and more the following of this stereotypes.

Gender stereotypes are shown by the mass media not only in the programming they have or the content they show, but in all of what it compose a TV station, a Radio Station, the behind maker group of a newspaper and all the users of the Internet, in other words, mass media is encouraging gender stereotypes from the inside to the outside.

Mass media: The internal problem

By the internal problem we must understand that we are referring to all what we do not see in the programming or contents, the backstage of the programs and contents in television, radio, internet and newspaper. This includes the reporters, anchors, writers, actors, executives, directors, and all the people that work in this industry.

They are gender stereotypes from the way the organization is structured (either TV station, radio, newspaper or internet) to the way the people that act or are seen on TV dress and are made up.

Many studies realized by the United Nations and other partner organizations revealed that women represent a fewer percentage of employee in mass media. The different corporations prefer to hire a man than a women to be the one that leads a news or radio program,

or the one that writes a report. And also in the executive or corporation leading level, there are less women working because of the gender stereotype that they are not able to lead this kind of things.

Then, other existing stereotype, is that women in Television are used to attract male audience. TV stations do this by hiring women with “good body” proportions and “prettier” than the others, in order to men be able to “enjoy” watching the programs. Most of the programs in which we can see this are the sports type, weather and advertisements.

Advertisement, is one of the longest programming we see in any mean. Each day we approximately see 225 adverts in mass media that try to persuade us to buy a product or hire a service. Focusing on them, they use principal women in order to persuade men to buy the products, because of the stereotype they are the ones that give money to do that. Advertisers hire women in order to make their products look better and convinced them to buy it because a pretty woman recommend it, makes happy a woman or it can make a women looks better. It is important to remark, that in most of the cases the women are the main star of the ads, but they are other ads targeting men only that are protagonized by a men because the activity they are performing is a men activity, like mechanics commercial or a sports commercial.

In order for all of this to function, the dressing and make up that the person that appears is wearing is very important. This is why in television and advertising, women are dressed with dresses that shape even more their body or give more volume to some parts of their body in order to look more attractive. There are some cases in which women had been forced to wear something they feel uncomfortable with, and if they deny it they were punished by no having work for a certain period, firing her of the program or the project or even giving her a veto just because she did not felt comfortable with the clothes she has to wear.

In some programs women are being use as sexual objects, they are being sexually harassed when transmitting a program physically or verbally. What we mean with this, is that in some programs a man sexually abuse a woman by touching private parts of her with or without the concern of the women using the excuse that is part of the program and women are not able to do something, because they are being paid to do that, that is what the program’s about, or is in their contract.

Finally, in mass media exist different sections (the news section, the cooking section, the entertainment section, among others) as a result of this, man and woman are stereotyped to

lead an specific section and they cannot lead another one because they are not able, in the case of women, or because they may appear to have other sexual orientation to the audience, in case of man. Focusing now on the case of men, they are excluded of leading entertainment, cooking or health programs, because this topics 'are for women and not for men', which leads that when a man is conducting a program of this topics the audience start to speculate about his sexual orientation.

Mass media: The external problem

We must have into consideration that when we refer to the external problem, we are talking about the problems that cause this means of mass media into society, how all of this gender stereotypes that the mass media includes or make us of affect our way of thinking and then our daily life. All of these backstage problems, make a big impact into our lives causing that we try to modify someone in order to fit into this stereotypes.

Due to the existing division of the topics a man can handle and a woman not, and vice versa, causes that when someone try to do something that not fits in their range of activities their able to, like women fixing a car or being a professional crime journalist and men cooking or being fan of an artist, it is seemed by the rest of the society like something they must not be doing because they have saw in TV, internet, newspaper or radio that he or she is not able to. Then, this may lead to a verbal or physical aggression because is strange to other people sawing how someone dares and is able to do something that does not belongs to their gender, by reason of the influence of the mass media. This aggression may lead to be exposed in the digital means with the social networks and many other tools that internet has now damaging the self esteem of the person and also his or her dignity.

Another problem mass media is causing, is that with the content they show and produce, they only hire women with specific characteristic, which lead the audience to think that all the women have to accomplish with that specific size of body, weight or height. This causes, that men pressure woman that they are related to in order for them to fit in this stereotype of how woman must be. Another consequence, is that women thanks to this, feel bad about how they are, how they look and to satisfy society they want to fit in this specific sizes so they do the impossible to achieve it, and in the way they may fall into alimental disorders or something related to. In addition to this, men are also capable to offend physically or verbally this women that are not "fit" or "beautiful", because the stereotype say it, and this damage their self esteem, dignity and physical integrity.

This violence may be presented in the shows Television and radio produce in which they leave women in evidence of it making jokes of them or making them to do other things that show this inabilities of them; it can also be via digital means in which all the people can criticize them and go viral worldwide. It is important to mention, that this situation can also happen to the men, because mass media also shows muscled and toned men bodies which leads women and society in general that that is the body every men must have, and many times it is not taking into consideration that some people have this problem to lose weight or are not able to get a “perfect” body, which also leads to violence against them same as the case of the women.

Finally, mass media also shows to the audience fictional stories that lead the society to believe or follow other stereotypes related to this TV soaps, radio shows, radio novels, TV series, streaming series, etc. The most common stereotypes that this type of programming or content show, are that the black people are all robbers, drug addicts, just to mention some of them. Also, that all the high income people are bad or mean with the low income ones, that women that dress with short dresses or short skirts are prostitutes or man everytime that are sad or have troubles drink alcohol in order to feel better, and many more like this ones.

All of these gender stereotypes shown in this context may lead also to violence, because they are generalizing the behaviour of both genders, which is not correct. This because not all men drink alcohol in hard times and they have the right to express their feelings in different ways. And also not all the womens that dress with short clothes are prostitutes because they have the right to dress however they like, and by cause of this thought women are being criticized if they wear this type of clothes verbally and physically, and in some cases they can even suffer of sexual harassment because of this. In addition, also these stereotypes leads to the misunderstanding that women do not drink, and if they drink alcohol they can be criticized or for some it cannot be good to see women drink it, which also it is not accurate, because both genders are able to do the same activities.

Conclusion

Gender stereotypes are more frequent to appear nowadays in everyplace, and this leads to a higher rate of violence as a consequence of them, because the main objective of them is to dictate how something must be done or behave, and if it is not like that, it may lead to be not normal behaviour that causes a bigger problem, in this case what women and men must or must not do.

Nowadays, an important factor of how this gender stereotypes are been spread are mass media, because intentionally or unintentionally they show society the stereotypes, and in behalf of this, people adopt them and make others fit in this stereotypes, which also leads to critics and violence to the ones that do not follow this stereotypes.

The important thing to consider, is that most of the times stereotypes are not correct and represent a reality that might be not correct, so following may lead to a misunderstanding and in some cases make people think that they are doing things wrong or they cannot be something they want because it is not what the gender do.

Finally, stereotypes are shown from the inside of the industry of the mass media, which is the part we may not see at a simple sight, to the outside, that are all the spectators and audience of the mass media that may follow the behaviour or stereotypes each of them show. But in both cases, mass media and society are the ones to blame for this to happen, because mass media is spreading and showing to everyone the stereotypes without thinking that society can follow them causing other problems, but also society is accepting all of this thoughts and by accepting them they are causing this to continue happening.

Suggested Readings

Ceulemans, M. and Fauconnier, G. (1979). Mass media: The image, role and condition of women. Retrieved 16 July 2016. UNESCO. Web <<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0003/000370/037077eo.pdf>>

Haines, E., Deaux, K. and Lofaro, N. (2016). The times they are a-changing... or are they not? A comparison of gender stereotypes, 1983-2014. Retrieved 5 september 2016. *Psychology of women quarterly*. Web <<http://m.pwq.sagepub.com/content/40/3/353.full.pdf>>

Wood, J. (1994). Gendered media: The influence of media on views of gender. Retrieved 19 July 2016. *New York University*. Web <<https://www.nyu.edu/classes/jackson/causes.of.gender.inequality/Readings/Wood%20-%20Gendered%20Media%20-%201994.pdf>>

References

1. Becerra, A. (2015). TV y género: La sexualización de la mujer en los medios de comunicación. Retrieved 16 July 2016. *Diario Uchile* Web <<http://radio.uchile.cl/2015/05/18/tv-y-genero-la-sexualizacion-de-la-mujer-en-los-medios-de-comunicacion>>
2. Ceulemans, M. and Fauconnier, G. (1979). Mass media: The image, role and condition of women. Retrieved 16 July 2016. *UNESCO*. Web <<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0003/000370/037077eo.pdf>>
3. Comas, D. (2013). La representación de las mujeres en los medios de comunicación. Retrieved 18 July 2016. *El diario.es*. Web <http://www.eldiario.es/agendapublica/impacto_social/representacion-mujeres-medios-comunicacion_0_193880948.html>
4. Council of Europe. (2013). Gender equality: Media and the image of women. Retrieved 18 July 2016. *Council of Europe*. Web <<http://www.humanrightseurope.org/2013/03/gender-equality-media-and-the-image-of-women/>>
5. Davtyan, A. (2016). Woman and mass media. Retrieved 17 July 2016. *Heinrich Böll Stiftung*. Web <<http://www.feminism-boell.org/en/2016/04/08/women-and-mass-media>>
6. Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres. (2005). La mujeres y los medios de comunicación. Retrieved 17 July 2016. *Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres*. Web <http://cedoc.inmujeres.gob.mx/documentos_download/100762.pdf>
7. Mar de Fontcuberta. (n.d.). Imagen, mujer y medios. Retrieved 17 July 2016. *Universitat de Barcelona*. Web <<http://www.ub.edu/SIMS/pdf/PensarDiferencias/PensarDiferencias-10.pdf>>
8. The Elementary Teacher's Federation of Ontario. (n.d.). *Gender issues in the media*. Retrieved 17 July 2016. *The Elementary Teacher's Federation of Ontario*. Web <<http://www.etfo.ca/Resources/ForTeachers/Documents/Gender%20Issues%20in%20The%20Media.aspx>>
9. ONU Mujeres. (n.d.). La mujer y los medios de difusión. Retrieved 18 July 2016. *UN Women*. Web <<http://beijing20.unwomen.org/es/in-focus/media>>
10. ONU Mujeres. (n.d.). Medios de comunicación. Retrieved 18 July 2016. *UN Women*. Web <<http://www.unwomen.org/es/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/media>>
11. Rodigou, M., Nazar, M., Monserrat, S. and Hunt, L. (2007). La Violencia hacia las mujeres en los medios de comunicación. Retrieved 18 July 2016. *Red mujer y hábitat de América latina*. Web <http://www.redmujer.org.ar/pdf_publicaciones/art_21.pdf>
12. Sab. (2014). Role of women in mass media: How mass media change their lives. Retrieved 19 July 2016. *Desert recollections*. Web <<https://sabrinaandersonxo.wordpress.com/2014/10/21/role-of-women-in-mass-media-how-mass-media-is-changing-their-lives/>>

13. Sarup, K. (2016). Women's participation in Media And Discrimination. Retrieved 18 July 2016. *The Nolan chart*. Web <<https://www.nolanchart.com/womens-participation-in-media-and-discrimination>>
14. Sharms, A. (n.d.). Portrayal of women in mass media. Retrieved 16 July 2016. *Media watch*. Web <<http://www.mediawatchglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Portrayal-of-Women-in-Mass-Media.pdf>>
15. United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. (n.d.). Gender stereotypes/stereotyping. Retrieved 16 July 2016. *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner*. Web <<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/WRGS/Pages/GenderStereotypes.aspx>>
16. Wood, J. (1994). Gendered media: The influence of media on views of gender. Retrieved 19 July 2016. *New York University*. Web <<https://www.nyu.edu/classes/jackson/causes.of.gender.inequality/Readings/Wood%20-%20Gendered%20Media%20-%2094.pdf>>

Glossary

B

backstage: Relating to the inner working or operation (as of an organization), in other words, the working that cannot be seen when airing a program: *in television, we did not see what is happening at backstage.*

C

cyberviolence: Someone who uses the internet to harm or frighten another person, especially by sending them unpleasant messages: *with the new technologies, the ratio of cyberviolence has increased.*

D

daily basis: Usually used when you want to say that something is being practiced or done constantly day by day: *people that work at television stations, radio stations or newspaper have to go in a daily basis.*

dignity: The quality of a person that makes him or her able of deserving respect, sometimes shown in behavior or appearance: *dignity of women in television is usually not respected because of what they are forced to do.*

E

extremism: Belief in and support for ideas that are very far from what most people consider correct or reasonable: *the extremism in any theme or topic has bad consequences.*

G

gender: The male or female sex, or the state of being either male or female: *any human belongs to a gender.*

gossip program: Television show in which you find stories about the social and private lives of famous people: *at the majority of the time gossip programs are hosted only by women.*

H

host: A person who introduces guests and performers on television or radio, usually he or she is the head of the program and is the one who appears at the most part of the show or program: *the majority of the news program, the host is a man.*

I

icon: A famous person or thing that represents something of importance and because of this, it is used as a reference of what it is representing: *mass media turns lots of the actors and/or hosts into icons that are in favor and represent different themes.*

impact: The strong effect or influence that something has on a situation or person: *nowadays, the means of information generate a great impact in our way of seeing reality.*

M

mass media: It involves the newspapers, magazines, television, radio and nowadays even internet. This, reach large numbers of people and usually are used to inform the audience about different events and situations that can be of local, national, international or global awareness: *most of the news and information we have knowledge of, comes from mass media.*

P

programming: The schedule of television and radio has that says punctually the time when the broadcasts of different programs and shows will be aired: *television programming is very punctual, it establish when a show starts, ends, and the advertisements section.*

R

rating: It refers to the record of the number of people who watch or listen to a particular show or program aired in television or radio, when the record is higher, it means that a lot of people are watching it: *television hire women that consider pretty, in order to use them as a visual attractor for audience for the rating of the program increase.*

S

self-esteem: An overall subjective emotional evaluation that you do to yourself: *contents in mass media may lead to people decrease their self-esteem because they do not fit in the stereotypes this means of information propose.*

sexualization: To see someone or something in sexual character or terms, or to make someone or something sexually exciting and it is also linked to sexually objectify something or someone: *in some programs, women are being sexualized.*

sexual harassment: Unwanted or offensive sexual attention, suggestions, talk or insinuations from an employer or other person in a higher position or power to someone in disadvantage: *the majority of women around the world suffer from sexual harassment at work.*

subliminal: Not recognized or understood by the conscious mind, but still having an influence on it: *visual media most of the time presents subliminal messages to their audience.*

stereotype: An idea that is used to describe a particular type of person or thing, or a person or thing thought to represent such an idea: *stereotypes at most of the time are not correct.*

T

TV soap: Popular television series that commonly talks about the daily lives and problems of a group of people who live in a particular place in a dramatic tone: *TV soaps include a wide range of stereotypes as subliminal messages.*

U

unethical: That something it's not morally acceptable or correct: *the abuse of power in order to reach something is considered unethical.*