

Female Image Construction in the Workplace from the Perspective of Communication Studies—Take "News Queen" as an Example

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Abstract: "News Queen", as the most popular workplace drama on TVB in 2023, has set off a wave of screen surfing in China's major social platforms. Topics such as "big female lead", "female group images" and "independent women" have aroused heated discussions in major social platforms. The drama focuses on constructing female main body image and presenting female values in the workplace space, depicting female group image in the workplace, and transferring female consciousness. Based on the theory of communication, this paper explores the image construction of women in the workplace from the perspective of communication, focusing on the female image in the drama "News Queen", so as to enhance the self-worth cognition and identity of modern women.

1. Introduction

"News Queen" is a TV drama jointly produced by Youku and Hong Kong TVB, with the background of the news industry. Through the portrayal of the image of women in the workplace, all the characters present the mental state of "don't fall in love, only talk about career", reflecting the values of contemporary professionals. Since its launch, Youku has been a hot search site for its values, resonant lines and emotional acting skills. In recent years, the ideas conveyed by the female characters in Hong Kong dramas in the narrative mode and content interpretation of the scripts are very advanced, conveying to the audience how women should rely on their own strength to stand firm in the male-dominated society, and the concept of gender equality in work and life. This paper studies the image construction of women in the workplace from the perspective of communication studies. Taking the female role in "News Queen" as the research object, this paper analyzes the image construction of women in the workplace from three aspects: agenda setting, stereotype and empathy theory.

2. Agenda setting: the image of the dominant female in the workplace

American communication scholars McCombs and Shaw formally put forward the concept of "agenda setting" in their paper the agenda-setting Function of Mass Communication. Agenda

setting is the process by which mass media broadcast information about a certain subject repeatedly to strengthen the importance of the topic in the eyes of the public and influence public opinion[1]. The emphasis and prominence of the mass media on certain issues helps to guide the audience to attach importance to and focus on these issues. Media coverage of women in the workplace often positions them as passive, dependent roles, while gender identities in modern society are more diverse and pluralistic[2]. *Queen of the News* is a drama about women in the workplace, which tells the story of the female protagonists' growth and struggles in the highly competitive news industry. The female characters in the drama are rich and diverse, showing the tenacity and intelligence of women in the workplace as well as the confusion and entanglement of their hearts. The female lead in the drama is Wen Huixin, the number one anchor played by Sheshman, known as Sister Man on TV. Wen Huixin, as the main heroine, is able to deal with all kinds of emergencies in the face of work. "I also want to know who can take my position." and "Where I am, there is the live broadcast room." These are Wen Huixin's classic lines. From these lines, we can see her outstanding qualities as a powerful female lead. She not only has outstanding abilities but also knows how to handle and maintain good relationships with colleagues and subordinates. The application of Wen Huixin's wolf-raising leadership style in team management is very obvious. The "Wen Jiajun" led by her shows the characteristics of employees full of Wolf, and can do the best in the professional part of work. The label of the female master reflects Wen Huixin's strong professional awareness and ambition, and shows the characteristics of smart, brave and confident in the workplace. When facing the oppression of the male master Liang Jingren and the upper leaders, playing with the office struggle while adhering to the authority of the news and the bottom line of principles, she brings the audience into a realistic perspective and resonates. Every time the female master makes a successful counterattack, it creates for the audience an image of an all-powerful "big heroine" with literary intelligence.

The media plays a vital role in shaping and influencing public opinion. Among them, agenda-setting is one of the strategies commonly used by the media, which influences the public's attention and perception of a particular topic by consciously arranging the content and topic of coverage. By setting the agenda for the image of Wen Huixin in *News Queen*, media platforms such as Tiktok and Weibo enable the public to have a higher sense of identity for the status and role of women in the workplace, rather than stay in the passive and dependent workplace gender cognition. Wen Huixin, as a workplace heroine, has broken away from the constraints of traditional gender roles and won success in the workplace through her own efforts and wisdom. Therefore, "News Queen" successfully constructs the image of Wen Huixin female in the workplace.

3. Stereotype: Non-traditional female image

In the Science of Public Opinion, Lippmann put forward the term "stereotype" to describe the fixed and simplified cognitive models held by members of society towards specific groups[3]. This pattern is formed in people's long-term social interaction, and as a cognitive framework affects individuals' understanding and evaluation of new things. According to Lippmann, stereotype formation is a cognitive saving strategy that people adopt in order to simplify information processing. This strategy enables individuals to make rapid judgments and reactions in the face of complex and changing social environments. However, it also leads to a lack of individual differences in people's perceptions of different groups, which may exacerbate social prejudice and discrimination. Once formed, stereotypes are highly stable and difficult to change through external intervention[4].

Among the stereotypes, gender stereotypes are the most prominent. "There are twice as many male roles as female roles on television, and when women do appear, it's mostly in drama and light entertainment, and that's been the case for years," Williams said. "The fact that there are more men

than women on TV is disturbing," said Sparks, a communications scholar. "It may suggest to the audience that the frequent presence of men on TV should be considered more important or meaningful. "News Queen" breaks the public stereotype, the female characters in it are non-traditional female images, most of the female roles are set in the "anti-gender stereotype", the play's female characters such as Wen Huixin, Zhang Jiayan, Xu Xiaowei, Xu Shiqing and so on, all interpret the image of professional women who struggle for their careers. The female images presented by the mass media and TV dramas are all women with traditional virtues. They are often portrayed as good wives and good mothers, caring for husbands and children, and taking charge of women's affairs. However, the characters in "News Queen" are very appropriate in presenting "anti-gender stereotypes", subverting the public's fixed evaluation of traditional men and women and breaking the existing stereotypes. For example, Zhangjiayan's boyfriend has been asking her to change her career and return to her family, becoming a good wife and mother. "Is your work important or am I important?" Is Zhangjiayan boyfriend questioned Zhangjiayan most of a line, finally Zhangjiayan in the pain and struggle, still insist on their pursuit of career, choose career. This also shows that with the development of The Times, more and more women began to struggle for their career in the workplace, rather than just the traditional concept of family-based women.

The female consciousness conveyed by "News Queen" is very mature. Women are striving to realize their own value, rather than relying on men to achieve themselves. "Find a man to marry" is the most classic lines in the play, which in the TVB workplace drama, but become a mockery of women's lack of work ability, not suitable for the workplace struggle of the words, which is in sharp contrast to the mainland TV series, "find a man to marry" has become the life goal of female characters. The same lines, different connotations, which also shows that the "news Queen" shapes the diversity of female images, constructs non-traditional female images, breaks female stereotypes, and transmits the signal of female power in the new era.

4. Rational empathy: the image of women in the new era

Empathy refers to an individual's ability to accurately understand the emotions of others and make accurate emotional responses in certain situations. Empathy transforms individual feelings into group feelings, creating emotional resonance[5]. In the field of communication studies, it is required that the transmitters take empathy as the tipping point of the hot information, and reach the emotional resonance of both receivers, so as to obtain widespread attention from the public. Understood from the perspective of communication, empathy is a systematic process of planning, expression, resonance, acquisition and feedback between the messenger and the receiver. Professor Zhang Zhian believes that the content production of mainstream media on mobile, social and visual platforms is mainly based on "mixed emotional communication mode". On the basis of propagating mainstream ideology, emotional mode is the core of content production, and a variety of modes such as information, politics and stories are adopted.

The plot of "News Queen" is in-depth, so that the character image is three-dimensional and full, so that the audience can understand the setting of the characters in the drama more empathically. Liu Yan as a newcomer to the workplace, due to lack of business ability, but under the guidance of Zhangjiayan, she also gradually improved the level of business, and completed a number of exclusive news. After being bullied in the workplace during the live broadcast, she was almost fired several times and was transferred to the unknown blog department. In the face of difficulties, she always adheres to the ideal of news, not for anything else, only for the truth. This role positively interprets that as a new worker, you should not be defeated when you encounter difficulties, but you should firm your goals, have the courage to struggle, and enhance your personal value. Liu Yan's interpretation in the workplace is the portrayal of many new people's work now, so that the female new people struggling in the workplace, have a strong empathy, cause the female audience's sense

of identity, and enhance the communication effect of the plot[6].

When watching TV dramas, the audience interprets the content information. Only when the values conveyed are similar or the same can the plot get the audience's emotional feedback[7]. The recognition of values is an important basis for empathy. Xu Shiqing, the supporting actress of "News Queen", has a sexy figure and image as her biggest asset. In the drama, her sexiness has also become the target of male gaze. However, the drama did not embellish or cover up Xu Shiqing's figure and image, but the real show to everyone to see a different female body, show a different health, breaking the public think that women should be weak, petite image. In the workplace, Xu Shiqing is a female elite who tries her best to go up in the workplace, but in the family, she is a daughter who honors her father. The contrast between people before and after gives this character more warmth and helplessness. Xu Shiqing, in order to let the father suffering from Alzheimer's disease remember himself, offers Wen Huixin tea, takes clothes and arranges a restaurant, etc. All these were assistant tasks that he didn't want to do before. In order to have more prime time, for his father, the always ambitious and proud him lowers himself. The empathy of the characters cut into the point, see the big, step by step, narrow the distance between the TV series and the audience, so that the audience has emotional resonance, to achieve emotional resonance. In Liu Yan and Xu Shiqing, we see the efforts, wisdom, hard work and struggle of women in the workplace, "News Queen" successfully builds a new era of female image.

5. Conclusion

News Queen closely links the roles of women with the workplace through women with different personalities, reshapes the positive, diverse and authentic image of women in the workplace, successfully constructs the image of women in the workplace, non-traditional women and women in the new era, and helps to improve the recognition and attention of the image of women in the workplace. It is undeniable that there are still stereotypes about the image of women in the workplace, but TV dramas play an important role in promoting the further development of gender equality and women's rights and interests. It not only helps the audience to reflect on and examine the traditional gender concepts, but also plays a certain role in shaping the cognition and attitude of the real society. Women in the workplace play an irreplaceable role in promoting the progress of enterprises and society. We need to continue to pay attention to and support women in the workplace, and provide more opportunities and space for their development and growth [8].

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