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Introduction: Is it a One Big Habitus?

Martina Topić

Abstract

This chapter presents an introductory study of the book. The chapter offers a brief introduction to the existing literature on women and leadership in public relations, the rationale for the book and then an ‘empirical’ reading of chapters. The chapter calls for further research using Aldoory and Toth’s socio-ecological framework and ecofeminism, as well as more research on women in public relations in non-western countries.

Leadership is a topic that has been attracting scholarly attention since the 1990s, however, women’s leadership has been researched less than other topics. Most works in leadership, linked to the position of women, focused on studying leadership characteristics and career progressions where women are historically seen as holding technical roles and struggling to progress to managerial roles (Aldoory & Toth, 2002; Grunig, 2006; Dozier et al, 2007; Creedon, 2009; Cline et al, 1986). In terms of characteristics of leadership, women are also seen as exercising “participative management, attempts to energize staff, and empathy” (Aldoory, 1998, p. 97), however, the white, male and middle-class norms are also seen as discriminating against women’s leadership potential and also, particularly, against women of colour, both of whom are perceived as less effective if they do not lead in line with their gender or race, or what is stereotypically expected from them (Aldoory, 2007).

The idea for this book derives from EUPRERA ‘Women in Public Relations’ project, which I have been leading since 2018. As part of the EUPRERA project, we looked at leadership from the point of socialisation and early experiences of upbringing, and also from the point of the Difference Approach (Tannen, 1995; 1990; 1986; West & Zimmerman, 1983; Vukoičić, 2013; Merchant, 2012; Yule, 2006; Maltz & Borker, 1982), which is linked to radical feminism arguing that women are different due to different socialisation experiences, and this then translates to how women lead and behave later in life (de la Rey, 2005; van der Boon, 2003; Grove & Montgomery, 2000; Crawford, 1995; Stanford et al, 1995; Alimo Metcalfe, 1995; Anderson et al., 2006; Morgan, 2004; Chemers et al., 2000). In that, we also used the cultural masculinities approach and looked at whether public relations organisations function as a masculine habitus (Bourdieu, 2007) and whether only ‘blokish’ or masculine women who embrace masculine behaviour and communication go ahead in their careers (Alvesson, 1998; 2013; Acker, 1990; 2009; Topić, 2018; 2020b; 2020e; 2021; Topić & Bruegmann, 2021; Mills,

2014; 2017; Ross, 2001; North, 2016; 2016a; 2009; 2009a). We were drawing from journalism scholarship, which first developed the concept of blokishness and in particular, Mills' (2014) argument that women who progress to senior roles become so bloke-ified that they are no longer role models for younger women. The EUPRERA work has thus been mainly centred on sociological and organisational studies, with which we contributed to existing research in the field, by also drawing from Aldoory (1998, 2007) and extending this research to an organisational and sociological inquiry in the position of women in public relations. This book is a continuation of that inquiry, but this time by using chapters offering diverse perspectives to explore wider trends in leadership, women and public relations.

Therefore, I was reading submitted chapters from cultural masculinities and habitus perspectives to explore to what extent women live and work in a masculine habitus and under masculine domination at the organisational and societal level. I read chapters 'empirically' and looked for concepts to explore to what extent habitus theory explains the position of women in public relations, concerning leadership in this book. This approach is relevant because whilst some work on women and leadership in PR has been done, this is far from well developed or mainstreamed and explaining how women can or cannot advance to leadership positions, also explains why women at all levels work in a masculine habitus. Therefore, one of the central ideas for the book was to explore what scholarship exists, and what existing findings show about women and leadership in public relations, which can then also inform further research in this important area.

Bourdieu's concept of habitus explains social norms, which he sees as embedded into society through the socialisation process (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Bourdieu, 2007). This leads to a situation that individuals do not challenge oppression and inequality because discriminatory practices are seen as everyday and normal, and this particularly applies to women who do not always recognise the oppression (Chambers, 2005). Bourdieu (2007) argues that the oppression of women constitutes a masculine practice, which is so established that it is seen as "acceptable and even natural" and this practice is also "symbolic violence, a gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims" (p. 1). The way this practice perpetuates itself is through "arbitrary division which underlines both reality and the representation of reality" (ibid, p. 3). Therefore, "we have embodied the historical structures of the masculine order in the form of unconscious schemes of perception and appreciation" (p. 5), which means that the division between sexes is based on biology and this is socially constructed. Thus, the social order

“functions as an immense symbolic machine tending to ratify the masculine domination on which it is founded: it is the sexual division of labour, a very strict distribution of the activities assigned to each sex, of their place, time and instruments; it is the structure of space, with the opposition between the place of assembly or the market, reserved for men, and the house, reserved for women” (p. 9-11). Bourdieu (2007) also speaks of socialisation and the way we learn to behave and communicate, which then results in oppression and the fact women often end up facing dual requirements. From one point, women have to be as qualified as men to get a certain role but then they are also expected to show characteristics that are not natural to them due to the socialisation process such as “a physical stature, a voice, or dispositions such as aggressiveness, self-assurance, ‘role distance’, what is called natural authority etc., for which men have been tacitly prepared and trained as men” (p. 62, emphasis in the original). However, even when they do, this does not always result in a career progression and some studies from public relations have argued that women face catch 22 because when they show emotion or weakness they are not seen as manager material but when they are tough then they are labelled as ‘bitches’ (Topić, 2020f). As Bourdieu (2007) argued, sexual harassment is not always centred on sexual possession because, in some cases, it can also be centred on “sheer possession, the pure affirmation of domination in its pure state” (p. 21), which the fact women are judged in this way also demonstrates.

Chapters in the Book

The book starts with two chapters summarising existing research in the field and offering a suggestion for further research. In an opening chapter, Shawna Dias, Linda Aldoory and Elizabeth Toth offer an in-depth analysis of the state of leadership and women in public relations by analysing literature and practice since the beginning of scholarship. In that, authors identified hetero-normativity and whiteness as a norm for public relations leadership where women and particularly women of colour struggle to achieve leadership positions because of bias, stereotypes, boys clubs and also the fact that the change in leadership from white and male is seen as an anomaly rather than a normal practice. Authors, however, also argue that public relations educational programmes and scholarship have historically suffered from these heteronormative and white perceptions, as well as from too much focus on the managerial aspect of leadership. Instead, authors say that leadership is not necessarily linked to a managerial role and one can be a leader in the department without formalising it, however, when it comes to formalising it women, and particularly women of colour, face difficulties,

thus suggesting that public relations did not deviate too much from 'think manager-think male' view. Authors, however, suggest that future research needs to focus on analysing diversity, political economy in which public relations operate, with particular focus on capitalism and individualistic western cultures vs more collectivist cultures elsewhere in the world, and also organisational culture, mentorship and life cycles of public relations practitioners. This chapter correctly outlines issues women face and situate these issues within the context of patriarchal obstacles as well as in the context of racism and capitalism, thus essentially also inviting for radical feminist, and perhaps also, ecofeminist research in public relations. Research suggested in this chapter is also partially addressed by this book where some authors provide case studies on the leadership and women in public relations in contexts that have not been analysed before, e.g. Turkey, Czech Republic, Greece, etc.

In the next chapter, Sarah Bowman and Heather Yaxley argue that leadership is too often seen through male experiences, and that leadership in its traditional sense should be viewed as just one career option. In that, authors extend a radical feminist approach and propose a radical feminine approach arguing that women's leadership styles should not be compared with male leadership styles and rather should be seen as gender-neutral. Authors argue that the public relations industry has not recognised changes in professional identity and leadership in scholarship and society as a whole. Therefore, authors argue, similarly to Dias, Aldoorj and Toth, that public relations scholarship remains too focused on individualistic cultures. Thus, the authors propose that radical feminine lenses are needed to study and understand public relations because existing research consistently shows that women have internalised the masculine expectations and envision changes at the individual rather than a systemic level. Authors argue that it is the system, which prefers masculine norms, that is the problem and that needs changing and redefining, but they call for gender-neutral redefining to avoid stereotyping rather than moving from the masculine to feminine. This then also includes embracing an ecological approach to public relations ('mandorla'), which would include taking a radical feminine lens to examine masculine vs feminine ways of working and the organisational structures that come along with it.

The next chapters look at country case studies and according to findings, most of which come from recent and unpublished research, a general map of issues women face in the western and to some extent non-western organizational world is centred on structural and organisational barriers and the fact women have internalized oppression, which then also results in the lack

of opportunities and recognition. This is present at the general level but also in the context of leadership where women's leadership styles are not always recognised and accepted.

In the western context, Juan Meng, Marlene Neill and Solyee Kim analyse research findings, from 2020, based on a national research project on women and leadership in public relations in the United States. In that, they examine situational barriers women face both horizontally and vertically and they particularly analyse the type of organisations and ethnicities as key variables that condition women's chances of advancing to leadership positions. Authors argue that long-term effects of situational barriers to women's leadership, which are continually recognised in decades of research, impact women at several levels, such as decision-making processes, perceptions of women as leaders in public relations and women's perceptions of what they need to do to advance to leadership positions within their organisations or communication profession, more generally. Women, in this recent study, reported consistent barriers such as domestic roles and professional demands, as well as social attitudes towards female professionals and workplace structures, and authors link these barriers to the lack of women role models and mentors to help junior women advance to senior positions and women feel they lack authority over important resources and line responsibilities. These findings are consistent with recommendations from the first two chapters, i.e. Dias et al's chapter suggesting that whilst mentorship is not new in PR, it needs to be more widely used to help women advance in their careers, but also Bowman and Yaxley's chapter arguing that it is the systemic change that is needed, and both chapters correctly identified that women have internalised the oppression and often see masculine traits as those that take women forward, which findings from this chapter confirmed to still be the case. This chapter can be read from the Bourdieuvian position because women continue to face barriers and the lack of recognition of their leadership skills, which calls for further research and activism but also brings the notion of 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu, 2007) and the masculine habitus in which women work hard but struggle to obtain recognition.

In the next chapter, Ángeles Moreno and Cristina Fuentes-Lara analyse the position of women in public relations in Latin America with a particular focus on the opportunities for women to advance to these positions. Authors argue that despite social advances in women's rights in the past decade, labour discrimination, barriers and the glass ceiling for women remain. Authors link this with the professionalization of public relations and feminization, similarly to the previous chapter, and argue that as in other cases feminization of public relations did not automatically result in women advancing to senior positions. This study also shows the

internalisation of oppression by women because many blame themselves and their abilities and attitudes for not getting promoted and the way they understand their responsibilities. Bourdieu (2007) argued that women often fail to recognise barriers and oppression because masculine domination is deeply engrained into societies and barriers become everyday and normal, thus also leading towards calling these practices ‘symbolic violence’.

In the next chapter, I am presenting and analysing findings from a study conducted in England in 2020 on women and leadership in public relations. This chapter is more linked to radical feminist (albeit not radical feminine or a gender-neutral one as suggested by Bowman and Yaxley in chapter 2) perspective and also the notion of organisational culture that leads to leadership barriers for women (as suggested by Dias et al in chapter 1). However, I also analyse socialisation as part of the reason why some women progress in their careers and some do not, thus taking a sociological approach to studying women and leadership in public relations. In that, I argue, that women who grew up with boys embrace masculine characteristics and thus progress faster in the masculine organisational world (I use Bourdieu’s habitus) whereas women who experienced feminine socialisation face barriers. I use the term *blokishness* and conceptualise it to explain what kind of women go ahead based on their communications styles and behaviour. The findings show that women face issues at all levels and that despite improvements in society and policy, not enough has changed and public relations organisations remain a masculine world. A structural change remains needed for things to change, and whilst some women recognise barriers and discrimination, many have internalised the oppression and criticise women who embrace masculine characteristics and call them ‘bitchy’, thus showing that in a patriarchal organisation and society, women face a loose-loose situation. This chapter uses Bourdieu’s (2007) habitus and argues that women have merged into masculine habitus and no longer always recognise barriers and discrimination whilst also facing a catch 22, i.e. when they are tough as men they are seen as bitchy but when they are empathetic and soft then they are not seen as managerial material.

In the next chapter, Amalia Triantafylidou and Yannis Prodromos analyse findings from a study on leadership and women in public relations in Greece. In that, authors argue that women’s leadership comprises emotional competencies, communications skills, vision and strategic thinking, personal traits and ethical leadership, and communication knowledge. Authors argue that the leadership style of Greek women leaders is “gyno-androus” and has strong feminine traits such as emotional intelligence and empathy, as well as masculine traits such as self-confidence, planning and decisiveness. The findings thus go in line with previous

studies that argued women show inclusive leadership styles (Topić, 2020f; Aldoory, 1998). Authors also analysed findings against data on socialisation and argued that women who grew up playing with both boys and girls and were raised in a democratic household show a people-oriented and participatory leadership style combined with a mixed communication style. Results also show that women have internalised masculinity and see men as better qualified and also score masculine characteristics such as aggressiveness and self-confidence highly, thus again leading towards Bourdieu's (2007) argument on women as merged into masculine habitus.

These issues of the lack of recognition, internalization of oppression and structural and organizational barriers are recognised in western chapters, and to an extent in some non-western chapters (e.g. Greece and Latin America) but in some other contexts (e.g. Georgia, Czech Republic, Turkey, Malaysia), women are also faced with external, societal barriers and issues such as the lack of recognition or poor treatment due to a patriarchal culture that is pervasive externally but not always internally. In other words, in some countries, women face the societal expectation to be mothers and this affects whether they can progress to leadership positions and thus, whilst many western studies are considering work-life balance and looking for policies that would enable women to both work and look after a family, in some countries, societal expectations impede a possibility for this to happen.

Therefore, Leli Bibilashvili, Natia Kaladze and Mari Bandzeladze analyse the position of women in the Georgian (EU) public relations industry in the context of socialisation and leadership styles. In that, they show that women still face patriarchal challenges such as men looking down at them, however, this gendered issue remains at the employee / technical level rather than at the managerial level. Women in managerial positions argued that their success depends on hard work rather than gender, thus expressing liberal feminist views of one's road to success and not seeing societal views and patriarchal conditioning as an issue. These findings are intriguing because, from one side, women argue they face discrimination on a societal and technical level but not in a managerial one, which opens a question how is it possible that the same people who express prejudice at the societal and technical level all of the sudden show respect towards women's managers, inevitably opening a question of internalisation of oppression by women and whether they fail to recognise oppression. This, however, calls for further research to explore what is the treatment of women managers in Georgia (EU) and whether perhaps in a feminised industry, such as public relations, women might be able to succeed in managerial roles more successfully than seems to be the case in western countries.

In the next chapter, Denisa Hejlova analyses the position of women in public relations in the Czech Republic. Since this was the first study on women in public relations in a said country, Hejlova provides data on lived experiences as well as leadership, with a particular focus on socialisation and the country's cultural context. The findings show that women face a choice as to whether they want to be a career woman or a mother and in the Czech context, it is culturally common to spend around six years on maternity leave, which creates a significant gap in a constantly changing communication industry. Women without children thus said they are considering quitting their jobs to manage a family whereas women with children complained about difficulties they face since a social expectation also dictates that women should look after children within a family circle, such as seeking help from mothers and grandmothers but not hiring nannies, for example. However, women who do not form a family argue their career chances are equal to those of men. This brings back Bourdieu (2007) and his argument of masculine domination because it is men who set up patriarchal societies and patriarchal expectations of women as mothers and caregivers first.

In the next chapter, Begüm Ekmekçigil also provides the first Turkish study into women in public relations in the context of leadership and analyses the views of women in leadership positions in public relations and their work and experiences. She conducts her study in the context of feminisation and the lack of professional status of public relations in Turkey and argues that women disassociate themselves and their work with femininity and refuse to name public relations as a woman's work out of fear that it will not be recognised sufficiently. In addition to that, women admit that they face difficulties when dealing with men who do not always treat them well, however, they still argue that because most of the leadership positions in public relations in Turkey are occupied by women, within the field, women are not discriminated. Thus, discrimination happens externally and echoes similar research conducted in the western context where women also suffer from the lack of recognition and where PR is, as in the Turkish context, seen as fluffy (Topić, 2021). However, this chapter also echoes similarities with the Georgian chapter that also argued that women can progress in public relations and do not face discrimination in senior roles. Thus, further research is necessary to explore why is this the case, especially since there is a reported sense of discriminatory views of women at the societal level, the latter again bringing the notion of 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu, 2007).

Kate Fitch, Kiranjit Kaur, Deborah Nauli Simorangkir, Rizwanah Souket and Treena Clark, reviewed three diverse social and cultural contexts for public relations leadership and

introduced women's voices and perspectives highlighting the need for more qualitative research that will promote context-sensitive scholarship on women in public relations. The authors found that western conceptualisations of leadership are persistent in common perceptions on women and leadership in these three analysed contexts, however, authors argue that scholarship needs to move away from neoliberal framing of achieving progress through merit and from essentialist stereotypes about women's suitability for certain types of work and the need to better understand responsibilities that women face in addition to their work-related duties, which would include social, cultural and organisational contexts. To that end, authors call for research into structural and institutional barriers and the ways gender, race and class limit leadership opportunities. Therefore, in the authors' view feminist leadership needs to be re-conceptualised and re-developed, thus also arguing that women's "lack of career advancement into leadership is socially constructed process and therefore its meanings must be understood in relation to specific social, cultural and historical contexts".

This brief analysis has shown that in all contexts women suffer from 'symbolic violence' expressed either through societal lack of recognition and equality of women or specifically within the organisational world. There are differences between western and non-western countries, however, all countries have some sort of inequality of women in common, the only difference being at which level this happens. What is particularly interesting is that in some non-western contexts women report the lack of discrimination once they reach senior roles and/or the lack of barriers for reaching senior roles within a feminised industry, which calls for further research into why this would be the case.

The next three chapters give an overview of leadership in public relations by women who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and contribution to the field, thus celebrating women's contribution to public relations.

In the first chapter, Rachel Kovacs writes about Belle Moskowitz, one of the first women public relations practitioners, who is according to some authors and historical records, possibly the mother of public relations who coined the term, yet lost the credit to Edward Bernays who worked with her. Kovacs argues that women in the early 20th century did not compete with men for power, and even when offered, Moskowitz declined a formal position in the Government from a presidential candidate she supported with her publicity activities. Kovacs argues that Moskowitz' leadership style was feminine but not feminist, and despite her outstanding contributions to forming the PR Counsell, having her publicity and public relations

agency and her public affairs work for a presidential candidate Al Smith, she remains unrecognised and the public relations field associated with men.

In the next chapter, Neeltje Du Plessis and Tanya Le Roux, analyse the leadership style of a public relations academic Ronèl Rensburg who died in 2019 and who had a leading role in establishing public relations scholarship in South Africa. Authors do this through the prism of excellent leadership approach and argue that the leadership style of Ronèl was excellent, transformative and the analysis also show, that the leadership style of this PR academic was also feminine and supportive. Thus, Ronèl Rensburg not only developed the department and public relations scholarship in South Africa, but she also empowered other, junior colleagues and helped them achieve success in their careers, thus chapter demonstrating the impact women can have on the field and others.

In the final chapter of this section, Audra Diers Lawson analyses the leadership style of Ms Nicola Sturgeon, Scottish First Minister with a particular focus on how Sturgeon handled crises such as Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic. In that, she argues, Sturgeon demonstrated strong crisis leadership and being an agent of change, and not merely effective during the crisis. The role of a leader and an agent of change, in crisis management and communication, in Diers Lawson's view surpasses what it means to be a woman in a position of leadership; they represent what it means to have the potential to change the course of a country's history.

These three chapters provide examples of outstanding women's leadership and while these women may have not been feminists nor they pushed for a feminist agenda, they demonstrated some 'feminine' characteristics in their leadership, and certainly excellence. However, despite these successes, public relations scholarship does not always recognise women's excellence, and thus these chapters contribute to that research gap, however, chapters also painfully expose the habitus that exists at the level of public relations industry but also academia since many public relations textbooks and works, in general, fail to explore women's contributions to what is one of the most feminised industries.

Finally, two critical chapters conclude the book. These chapters approach studying women using a critical qualitative method and focus on an in-depth understanding of the meaning women assign to their role using small interview samples. The findings from these chapters do not deviate from the findings presented above, and they fit into a western paradigm of the position of women in public relations, however, they offer a critical and post-feminist view of women's position and a desirable research agenda.

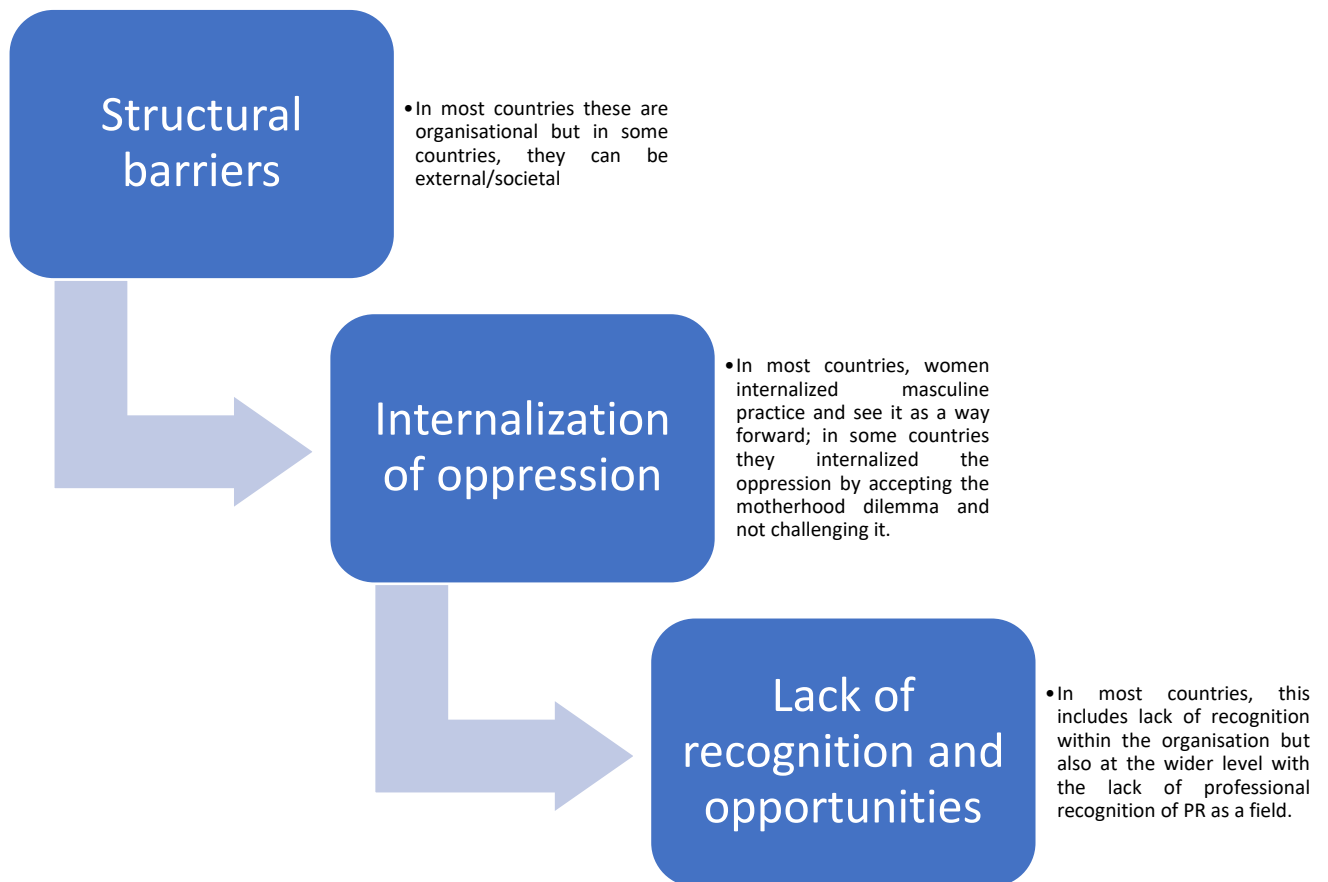
Liz Bridgen presents findings from a qualitative study on women who left public relations. In that, she argues that work assigned to women is too technical and interviewed women labelled it as trivial and meaningless and thus decided to leave the field. Some women said that senior roles were open to them but they were not willing to make required sacrifices to get there, and sacrifices are not linked to traditionally mentioned issues such as childcare and long working hours but required behaviours. In this study, women said they had to be bullies or bitches to succeed, which goes in line with Topić's chapter also conducted in England where women in leadership positions were labelled as bitchy for simply fitting into expected behaviour and mimicking masculine leadership styles. In some other cases, women said that senior roles did not exist and felt their careers have reached a dead end. This chapter demonstrates the importance of communication and behaviour and informal organisational structures in women's advancement. However, Bridgen interestingly criticises research into differences between women, women's approaches to work and research focused on management, with a notion that we should not be looking at career pathways but to meaning women assigned to work and how they negotiate identities, thus providing a methodological suggestion for future research. In other words, a lot of research, including this book, analyses data by looking at responses of the majority of the sample, thus opening a question of whether we have internalised masculine oppression in research and turned into positivists. However, this chapter confirms findings from other studies that speak of women being in technical positions (Cline et al, 1986; Topić et al, 2019) because women who left the field also said they did so because of the technical role of their jobs, thus pointing towards the lack of progression opportunities and the need for research into career progressions.

In a similar tone, Sarah Duggan analyses four work stories of women working in public relations in England and criticises both liberal and radical feminist research arguing that research needs to move away from looking at women through masculine-identified roles in public relations and instead explore their stories and what they do, how they negotiate identities and how women also embrace multiple roles including masculine and feminine work practices, as they sit fit, which makes them black swans. In that, the author embraces postfeminist interpretation and argues that neither approach (liberal feminism, radical feminism or masculine vs feminine) works anymore, at least not for women entrepreneurs. This chapter again presents methodological criticism because in a study I conducted in England (which is also where Duggan conducted her research) and on a larger sample, women who spoke to me – across advertising, public relations and journalism – spoke of masculinities in organisations

and demonstrated that organisations still function as a masculine world where women have to be masculine to succeed (North, 2016; 2016a; 2009; 2009a; Mills, 2014, 2017; Topić & Bruegmann, 2021). What is more, many chapters in this book demonstrate the same on an international level and decades of research have been proving the issue women face in their career progression. However, it might be entirely possible that for women entrepreneurs, which is what this chapter analyses, the situation is different and they can have multiple or dual identities, which opens a potential for further research into entrepreneurship in PR, which is currently missing.

In conclusion to this introductory study, what all of the chapters show is the persistence of masculine domination and structural barriers women face in various countries, that surpasses national borders. In other words, women face both internal and external barriers to their progress, and whilst in the western world, these barriers tend to be on the organisational level, in the non-western world these barriers can be external or a combination of both. What also underlies the findings presented in this book is that women do often tend to lead differently and in a way that is more inclusive and empathetic, however, that also depends on the socialisation of women.

When looking at all chapters in the book, it can be summarised that women mostly suffer from structural barriers, which indeed comes out as a central theme from all chapters regardless of the method and approach used (graph 1). There are some cultural differences, however.



For example, whilst women in the West, Latin America and Greece fit into a western research paradigm and report discrimination and barriers at the organisational level, in some other countries (e.g. Turkey and Georgia) women report societal and thus external barriers as more relevant, these include societal prejudices against women and the lack of professionalism and recognition of PR. Whilst societal issues have not been reported in the western context, the lack of recognition of PR has been a recognised issue and thus the lack of recognition of one of the most feminised industries remains a challenge.

A Call for Socio-Ecological and Ecofeminist Approaches to Studying Public Relations

In a recent book on feminism in public relations, Aldoory and Toth (2021) called for a socio-ecological model of research in public relations where scholars would focus on exploring five levels of influences on public relations, practitioner, organizational, professional, media and ideological level of influences. It is safe to say that the majority of chapters in this book, and public relations scholarship generally, focus on practitioner and organizational levels of influences and that research into ideological level is lacking. Aldoory and Toth (2021) also correctly emphasised that the political economy influences how public relations operate, and in particular in the context of capitalism. This research agenda is relevant and requires exploring not just because this work has not been done before, but also because of the societal importance of exploring the role of public relations, and women who work in the industry, in the context of capitalism.

This book had no chance to apply this innovative framework as Aldoory's and Toth's book has been published well after the call for this book and most of the chapters have been received, however, the book is a useful lens towards understanding findings presented in this book. Firstly, if we look at chapters that only look at the practitioner level, it appears we can end up in a post-feminist area of claiming that masculine domination and the fact women still suffer from patriarchal prejudices and systematic barriers is somehow irrelevant. Research in the field, as well as some chapters in the book, have proven otherwise, however, these chapters indeed ignore women who do not fit into either side, feminine or masculine. At the same time, organisational research focuses too much on barriers women face within organisations, which inevitably exist, however, these researches do not sufficiently focus on societal and external barriers that women in some cultural contexts face. Therefore, Aldoory's and Toth's proposal of looking at all these levels of influences seems feasible, relevant and comprehensive, as well as much needed.

How do we do this in terms of method, theory and conceptualisation? One way is to use ecofeminist theory in exploring public relations. Ecofeminism stands at the intersection of socialism and radical feminism (Topić et al, 2021) by calling, at the same time, for the end of the domination of both women and nature and it does so in the context of the critique of capitalism as inextricably intertwined with patriarchy and masculine domination. In other words, ecofeminism particularly focuses on the duality of the oppression of women and nature, and in that particularly on hegemonic masculinity and patriarchy, seen as intertwined with capitalism (von Werlhof, 2007; Merchant, 1992; Stoddart & Tindall, 2011; Radford Ruether, 2012; Henderson, 1997; Maclaran & Stevens, 2018; Gaard, 1997; Ling, 2014; Warren, n.d.;

Durđević & Marjanić, 2020). Ecofeminism also offers a useful conceptualisation and can be used as a sensemaking approach in identifying elements of hegemonic masculinity by focusing on our behaviour towards other humans, species and the environment (Topić, 2021a).

What is more, and taking Aldoory's and Toth's (2021) suggestions forward, public relations exist in capitalism and in a way served historically to protect capitalism and the general western position of women has been met with resentment in the global south because women from southern countries argued that white woman's consumerism has an impact on them since global south is more likely to suffer from climate change than the western countries (Holy, 2007; Salleh, 2000; 1994; Sandberg & Sandberg, 2010; Griffin, 2020). What does that say about western public relations as a capitalist endeavour and do we need better and greener PR? How could women use their distinctive experience of thousands of years of oppression to change the PR industry and enact positive change? Ecofeminism recognises that it is the masculinity and masculine practice, along with masculine technology, that brought the world to the brink of collapse (Buck et al, 2014; Topić, 2021a), however, whilst PR still works and functions as a masculine habitus, the majority of the workforce are women and many women own PR agencies thus having the power to enact change. Future research, therefore, could look at environmental views of women PR practitioners and how these feed, or fail to influence, their public relations work in the context of capitalism and the competitiveness it brings, however, this will again need to be linked with cultural masculinities and looking at what kind of women succeed in public relations business.

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