



Article

Exploring the gendered portrayal of care work in business magazines: A quantitative content analysis

Explorando la representación de género del trabajo de cuidado en revistas de negocios: Un análisis cuantitativo de contenido

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Abstract: This study examines gendered representations in profile articles published between 2018 and 2023 in three leading U.S. business magazines. Through a systematic content analysis, we compare male and female profiled individuals in terms of frequency of coverage, amount of space allocated, and the presence of references to care work and romantic partnerships. While men were featured more frequently overall, the average length of articles did not differ significantly by gender. However, women's profiles were significantly more likely to include repeated references to caregiving roles and romantic partners. These findings highlight persistent gendered narratives in business media and raise important questions about the portrayal of professional identities and private life in elite journalistic outlets.

Keywords: Gender Representation, Care Work, Media Analysis, Business Magazines, Content Analysis.

JEL Classification: J16, D63, M37.

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Resumen: Este estudio analiza las representaciones de género en artículos de perfil publicados entre 2018 y 2023 en tres principales revistas de negocios de Estados Unidos. Mediante un análisis sistemático de contenido, se comparan los perfiles de hombres y mujeres en cuanto a la frecuencia de aparición, el espacio asignado y la presencia de referencias al trabajo de cuidado y a las relaciones románticas. Aunque los hombres fueron perfilados con mayor frecuencia, la extensión promedio de los artículos no mostró diferencias significativas por género. Sin embargo, los perfiles femeninos presentaron significativamente más referencias recurrentes a roles de cuidado y parejas románticas. Estos resultados evidencian narrativas de género persistentes en los medios especializados en negocios y plantean interrogantes relevantes sobre la representación de las identidades profesionales y la vida privada en medios periodísticos de élite.

Palabras clave: Representación de Género, Trabajo de Cuidado, Análisis de Medios, Revistas de Negocios, Análisis de Contenido.

Clasificación JEL: J16, D63, M37.

1. Introduction

Women have increasingly joined the labor force over the past few decades, with a record-high 77.0% of prime-age women participating in the workforce in 2023 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023). Despite this, women are still expected to perform traditional gender roles as primary caregivers (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 2021). Due to this dual burden, women struggle to balance work and family more than men (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 2021). It has been found that even when women are the main earners, they spend more time caring for their families and doing household chores, while men spend more time working and relaxing (Minkin et al., 2023).

The concept of caring refers to providing physical and emotional support based on affection and responsibility to individuals (Cancian & Oliker, 1999). England (2005) notes that care has historically been gendered and female-identified labor. Through socialization, women and men internalize and perform this gendered responsibility (Cancian & Oliker, 1999) by providing care or avoiding it based on societal expectations, respectively (Gerstel & Gallagher, 2001). This reproduces gendered structures of inequality in the family by perpetuating clear divisions of labor by gender (Risman, 2004). For example, no matter whether they are in the workplace or not, mothers are still compelled to engage in intensive mothering practices, and child-centered, emotionally absorbing, and labor-intensive care work (Hays, 1996).

Additionally, gendered care work contributes significantly to inequality in society (Tronto, 2000; Williams, 2012). First, unpaid care work has been degraded to natural and unskilled work, reducing women's potential earnings on the job (Colello, 2007). It impedes women's progress in the workplace as well; the workplace still tends to assume that women are less committed to their careers and less competitive than men due to childcare responsibilities (Spence & Heilmreich, 1983).

As the U.S. population ages, elder care has become a more crucial component of domestic labor (Levitsky, 2014), with women bearing the brunt of this additional work (Hochschild & Machung, 1989). Recently, with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, longstanding gender gaps and social norms surrounding caregiving have been revealed. It highlighted its negative consequences, with mothers taking on more unpaid care work and experiencing more stress than fathers during the crisis (Miller, 2021).

In media, gender roles traditionally associated with women are still prevalent (Collins, 2011). Studies have shown that women are still often depicted in roles such as housekeeping, while men are more likely to be portrayed as professionals and office workers (Das, 2010). In addition, mothers are almost exclusively presented in the domestic, rather than the public, context. It is important to note that this can contribute to the socialization of the traditional gender roles and cultural expectations reinforcing the motherhood ideology (Maushart, 1999).

Considering the gendered nature of caring and its devaluation, especially in the labor force, this study analyzes how care work is portrayed in the business media. In particular, the study examines gender differences in representation, care work responsibilities, and romantic partnership portrayals through a quantitative content analysis of profile articles from leading business magazines.

2. Literature review

2.1. Mass media's influence in society

A body of research has found that the mass media has an effect on people, suggesting media could influence audience's perceptions through what they show and in what way (Sacco, 1982; Bylaska-Davies, 2015; Baraian, 2018; Kleinnijenhuis et al., 2019).

Initially posited by Bandura (2001), social cognitive theory (SCT) provides a framework for human behavior that emphasizes learning from the social environment. To survive, humans have developed the ability to expedite learning through observation of models present in their environments; these models can be other people present in your social environment, or they can be provided through the mass media (Ryan, 2013). In this sense, what we observe and consume in the mass media can have a significant influence in shaping our thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors. Repeated exposure to mass media representations of reality can make people believe what is observed is the truth of our social existence, creating learned behaviors in individuals and thus replicating that apparent reality (Bandura, 2001).

Social Cognitive Theory has been applied in many studies that explore how the mass media can influence individuals. A study of the role of television, radio and newspapers on Indian women's child gender preference found that those who watched television and read newspapers every day would present a reduced preference for a son (Chatterjee & Pillai, 2018). In another study, self-efficacy about sexual assault prevention was found to be increased when participants were exposed to mini magazines constructed with both SCT and social norms theory (Hust et al., 2017).

Specifically looking at stereotypes in the media, there has been considerable attention paid to gender stereotyping in the literature on stereotyping effects, since content analyses have generally found that media often model traditional gender norms as well as sexist behavior (e.g., Aubrey, 2004; Graves, 1999; Mastro & Stern, 2003). Based on Behm-Morawitz and Mastro's (2008) content analysis, female characters are more likely to be depicted as socially aggressive than male characters in teen movies. In a subsequent survey, they found that watching teen movies can lead to negative stereotyping about gender roles. Rousseau and Eggermont (2018) found a positive relationship between exposure to sexually objectifying television and endorsement of an objectified dating script among preadolescents. Furthermore, the dating script that objectified girls and women contributed to the objectification of females in general, as well as to the objectification of self, showing modeling effects (Rousseau & Eggermont, 2018).

2.2. Gender representation in the media

Gender's meaning is culturally constructed based on biological reproductive organ differences, which people understand in terms of media representations of gender through codes and traditions (Hermes, 2007). In general, women are linked to femininity and men are linked to masculinity. According

to Stets and Burke (2000), these two terms have to do with “the degree to which persons see themselves as masculine or feminine given what it means to be a man or woman in society” (p. 997). What constitutes feminine or masculine qualities and behavior is determined by the individuals who are part of a given society, and these determinations will in turn be reinforced by males and females; examples of this include aggressiveness and competitiveness being regarded as masculine values, whereas passiveness and cooperativeness are thought of as feminine (Stets & Burke, 2000). In media studies, gender is addressed regarding femininity, masculinity, and their power imbalance (Brooks & Hébert, 2006).

2.2.1. General representation

Many studies have found that women are less likely to be seen in the media (Berkers et al., 2016; Van der Pas & Aaldering, 2020; Grau & Zotos, 2012). There are fewer female than male characters in textbooks in multiple countries (Islam & Asadullah, 2018). Men are also more likely to be mentioned in national news than in local and regional news (Armstrong & Gao, 2011). Aside from being under-represented, when women are present, they are also typically relegated to stereotypical roles (Collins, 2011).

In the business media, entrepreneurship is portrayed as a discourse dominated by masculinity, leading to the invisibility of entrepreneurial femininity (Hamilton, 2013). A study of metaphorical representations in business magazines found that businesspeople were associated with words containing masculinity, such as war, and that businesswomen's success was attributed to a boy-like upbringing (Phillips & McQuarrie, 2010). Additionally, women are underrepresented in the business media (Hamilton, 2013). In a study of several of the most popular business magazines in the United States and Canada, the presence of women on magazine covers, profile stories, and interviews was much lower than that of men; it was mostly concentrated in annual women's special issues, which may contribute to the perceived unusual nature of businesswomen and seems to indicate the low-value nature of women's coverage (Grandy, 2013b).

2.2.1. Gender role

The term “gender roles” refers to the socially and culturally acceptable behaviors and identities assigned to certain biological sex types (Thompson & Walker, 1989). In each culture, according to Thompson and Walker (1989), gender determines certain rules, roles, and behaviors that are solely based on the individual's gender. There are different domains of family life, marriage, work, and parenthood, and each requires different gender roles for individuals (Thompson & Walker, 2004).

Care work

Care work refers to “feelings of affection and responsibility combined with actions that provide responsively for an individual's personal needs or well-being, in a face-to-face relationship” (Cancian & Oliker, 1999, p. 2).

The unevenness of perceived capabilities can also be extended to the realm of social roles in general. For example, women's jobs in children's literature are more homogeneous, suggesting a limited space of social competence for women (Hamilton et al., 2006). Women are also more connected to parenting behaviors (Holub et al., 2008). A study of content including television, newspapers, and magazines showed that mass media frames females in stereotypical gender roles, revolving more around the family and lacking authority within the household (Tuchman, 2000).

Even in career-related media content, where competence is supposed to be emphasized, women's families, romantic relationships, and appearance are emphasized more, compared to their professional ability. Stories on female politicians focus on private topics such as family; women are perceived to be

less visible as politicians (Gill, 2007; Heldman, 2009; Montalbano-Phelps, 2005; Ross, 2010; Van der Pas & Aaldering, 2020). In terms of businesswomen, they also similarly get more attention paid to their family lives (Koller, 2004; Krefting, 2002; Lee & James, 2007). According to Krefting (2002), these portraits can reinforce the negative perception of women's competence and likability as executives, negatively affecting their professional and entrepreneurial careers.

The representation of female entrepreneurship in women magazines is equally biased; women are encouraged to find their entrepreneurial passions from their personal lives and interests, to engage in feminine businesses, and to use their homes as workplaces (Hamilton, 2013). The professional difficulty and risks of entrepreneurship are downplayed, and entrepreneurship is seen as something to effortlessly succeed at; this exacerbates gender inequality in the workplace (Ruth Eikhof et al., 2013). Women in family businesses are viewed as problematic by the media because such women entrepreneurs represent the dichotomy between corporate and maternal roles (Bjursell & Bäckvall, 2011). Thus, when businesswomen are associated with motherhood and family, they are perceived negatively. Furthermore, business magazines likely play a potential role in viewing male executives as the norm in a culture where readers are given the message that female entrepreneurs are less trustworthy than men (Grandy, 2013a).

Romantic partnership

A romantic partnership is defined as a mutual and voluntary relationship based on affection and intimacy (Collins et al., 2009), such as a marriage or a sexual relationship (Law Insider, n.d.).

In relation to stereotypical gender roles, media portrayals of romantic relationships and occupations have received considerable attention (Signorielli, 1982; Signorielli & Bacue, 1999; Signorielli & Kahlenberg, 2001; Tedesco, 1974). According to Mazzella et al. (1992), in Australian television advertisements, most women are seen as dependent on their spouse, a homemaker, or a sexual object. It is common for women's magazines to focus on marriage and lack guidance for women's personal development, and for women to be defined as subordinate to men in relationships (Tuchman, 2000).

In prime-time television, female characters are more likely to be identified in roles associated with being a spouse, while male characters are more likely to be identified in occupational, employment roles. According to Signorielli (1982), the marital status of female characters on prime-time television was more likely to be known than that of male characters. Most female characters were found in family-related programs. The author noted that, compared to male characters, female characters are more developed and portrayed in terms of marriage, home, family, and romance (Signorelli, 1982). Furthermore, it is found that popular films have highlighted female scientists and engineers' high status, but they tend to emphasize their romance as well as appearance, and some of them reinforce stereotypes by showing their interactions with male colleagues (Steinke, 2005).

Despite the research providing valuable findings, there is still a lack of research on gender differences in the profiles of businesspeople in mainstream U.S. business media in recent years, particularly regarding the gender roles attributed to both women and men in these publications. There is also little in-depth research on whether the portrayal of successful businesswomen is more about their personal lives and families, including those involving parenting and relationships with their husbands.

Most of the research into the representation of women in business magazines focuses on how often they are featured; it rarely considers how they are described and portrayed (McShane, 1995). Many studies focus on women in general instead of female workers (Power et al., 2020) or they are considered only in the context of female entrepreneurs and executives (Krefting, 2002; Radu & Redien-Collot, 2008).

For these reasons, more recent and extensive research is required to fully understand the gendered representation of female workers in business magazines, particularly concerning traditional gender roles that are deeply ingrained in our society.

2.3. Magazine readership and circulation

Over the decades, several studies have examined magazines and their media effects. Some scholars suggest that reading beauty and fashion magazines tends to lead people to internalize the ideal body images in magazines (Thompson, 2004; Park, 2005; Levine & Harrison, 2009; López-Guimerà et al., 2010). It would also lower the audience's body satisfaction and sometimes lead to eating disorders (Harrison & Cantor, 1997; Harrison & Bond, 2007; Durkin & Paxton, 2002). Also, with magazines' sexual content, teenagers are more likely to engage in sexual activities and self-objectification when they see the content (Pardun et al., 2005; Aubrey, 2006; Brown et al., 2006; Aubrey et al., 2009). These studies show that magazines have a profound impact on what we think, how we feel, and even how we define ourselves.

Business magazines also hold a significant impact in the business industry. Although print magazines face challenges competing with online content in the digital era (Hogarth, 2018), the magazine industry remains robust. A report estimated that the print magazine industry would remain optimistic because of a doubling of new print magazines (Silber, 2021). Also, according to Statista, magazine readers in the U.S. increased by more than 200 million per year between 2016 and 2020 (Statista, 2022; Watson, 2024). The top-circulating business magazines continue to have a significant impact on the U.S. business communities that they serve, maintaining a significant reach (Grandy, 2013a).

However, female representation in business magazines is significantly low (McShane, 1995). For example, 81% of people mentioned in Forbes magazine were men (Jia et al., 2016), even if women comprise a large proportion of business media readers, ranging from 35% (Fortune) to 45% (Forbes) in 2018. Since business magazines are cultural indicators, their representations of women can have a direct impact on women's positions in business (Johnston & Swanson, 2003). Grandy (2013b) noted that business magazine consumption may reinforce gender stereotypes, such as the notion of the male executive and financial expert. Thus, it is crucial to review business magazines and their representation of women to address gender inequality in the workplace.

There has been an escalation in gender disparity in the workplace resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, and mothers have been disproportionately impacted. The employment rate and working hours of women declined more rapidly than those of men during the pandemic (Alon et al., 2021; Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 2021; Bluedorn et al., 2021). The reason for this is that mothers carry a greater load of unpaid childcare responsibilities than fathers, resulting in a reduction in their participation in the labor force (Andrew et al., 2020; Del Boca et al., 2020; Sevilla & Smith, 2020). In consequence, many mothers were forced to choose between work and caring for their children, a decision that fathers did not have to make to the same extent.

Studies have evidenced that 19.6% of adults in the U.S. who were able to work cited childcare disruptions due to the pandemic as the main reason they were not working (Heggeness & Fields, 2020). Among this group of non-working adults, the most affected were women between the ages of 25 and 44, being "almost three times as likely as men to not be working due to childcare demands" (Heggeness & Fields, 2020). Thus, we are interested in capturing female representation as well as portrayals of care labor in business magazines over the last five years due to this differentiated effect, wondering if business magazines have portrayed this gendered experience and how. With all this in mind, the present research will explore the following research questions:

RQ1a: How many women vs men are represented in profile articles in business magazines?

RQ1b: When women are represented, how much space does the article take up on the pages of the magazines?

RQ2: Do profile articles in business magazines feature mentions of care work?

RQ3: Is there a difference in the mention of care work between men and women in profile articles in business magazines?

RQ4: Is there a difference in the mention of romantic partners between men and women in profile articles in business magazines?

RQ5: Is there a difference in the mention of care work between pandemic and non-pandemic years?

3. Method

3.1. Sample

The sample for this study was sourced from three business magazines found among a general top 10 ranking for online magazine consumption: Entrepreneur, Forbes, and Fortune (Kunst, 2023). In 2021, the United States had over 222 million people who were magazine readers (MPA, 2022). By itself, Forbes boasts a monthly readership of over 150 million individuals across all platforms (Forbes, n.d.). Fortune magazine reports an audience of 3.7 million people worldwide, as well as 55 million page views every month on its website (Fortune, n.d.). Entrepreneur also has a considerable audience, with 3.2 million readers and 20 million monthly website visitors (Entrepreneur, 2023). Considering their prominence and high readership numbers, these magazines were selected for the purposes of this study. The sample was constructed from each of the magazines' publications from 2018 to 2023, which includes the time period before and after the initial onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The unit of analysis was profile pieces, which were identified and compiled from all the volumes and selected by using a simple random sample to reduce the potential for bias and increase the generalizability of the results. Specifically, only articles that spoke about one individual as a central subject were considered as profiles (Grandy, 2013b). The magazines were accessed using the EBSCO Business Source Complete database. The total number of volumes from 2018 to 2023 was sampled for each magazine. We then divided the list by magazine, each of us taking one, and sampled all the profile articles included in each volume of the magazine. The inclusion criteria for sampling profile articles included the following: (1) the article was about one person as the central subject; (2) the content of the article explores the background and character of a particular person; (3) the piece had more than one paragraph and (4) took up the majority of the page; (5) the name of the profiled individual was mentioned either on the title, subtitle, or in multiple paragraphs in the piece, otherwise, (6) if it was determined that the profiled individual was the author of the piece, it would also be included. The list of identified profile articles was then randomized, and 300 total articles were randomly selected for inclusion in the final sample.

3.2. Codebook development, training and reliability

Due to the limited quantity of previous studies, we developed a codebook attempting to capture the phenomenon of female representation, portrayals of care work and romantic partnerships. For this, variables were developed through a literature review, where we found evidence for definitions and descriptions of what constitutes care work and romantic partnerships. The result was the development of a brand-new codebook consisting of detailed definitions and operationalizations of the variables and examples for clearer illustration, for which we underwent four weeks of self-coder training using profile articles belonging to the initial sampling of magazines from 2018 to 2023 but outside of the actual sample used for analysis. After each round of practice coding, four times in total, there was at least one session longer than two hours for examining the reliability results and reviewing the coding. The codebook was modified according to the reliability results and the emergent issues after the first two times of practice coding. Following the last two times of practice coding, the sole change to the codebook was removing the variables that failed to meet Krippendorff's alpha standard for intercoder reliability, which is higher than or equal to 0.667 (Krippendorff, 2004a; 2004b).

Referring to the codebook with the qualified variables left, the reliability coding was then conducted by the three coders, all coding the same articles representing 10% of the final actual sample of 300 profile pieces ($n = 30$). The reliability results of this coding round were the final reliabilities and were all higher than 0.667.

3.3. Unit of analysis and coding

The unit of analysis for this study was decided to be profile articles, as previously mentioned. The space profiled individuals took up in a magazine was coded in two dimensions. First, word count ($\alpha = 0.98$) is the numerical number of words that a piece of text contains. Second, page count ($\alpha = 1.00$) is the numerical number of pages that an article takes up. These were both coded as ratio level variables.

Gender ($\alpha = 0.88$) of the central profiled individual was coded. Gender here refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls, and boys that are socially constructed. It was recorded according to the gender labels and pronouns (i.e., woman or she, her, hers) that the article used to refer to the profiled individual. Apart from being coded as male or female, if the profiled individual was referred to with "they/them" pronouns, then this was coded as "other." If the article did not use pronouns or any other identifiable labels for gender, this was coded as "gender cannot be determined" (i.e., only "I" can be found in the whole piece).

To examine if the subject was portrayed as engaging in care work, three nominal variables were used. First, parent as a care worker ($\alpha = 0.92$) referred to the subject being mentioned as being a parent and undertaking primary devoting labor or activity that contributes to the physical, mental, social, or emotional well-being of their child or children. On the contrary, parent not as a care worker ($\alpha = 0.78$) meant the subject was mentioned as being a parent without any reference to engaging in care work for their child or children. Besides childcare, care work involves caring for people who have a relationship with you and are incapable of caring for themselves because of aging, illness, or disabilities (Duffy et al., 2013). As a result, the care labor process involves relationships and emotional connections with others, not just children. Also included are feelings of affection and responsibility, along with actions that support an individual's well-being or needs (Cancian & Olicker, 1999).

Thus, the variable other family role as care worker ($\alpha = 1.00$) was used to code instances in which the profiled individual gave care to dependent(s) as another family role other than being their parent. Two ratio-level variables were applied to measure the frequency of these mentions. Count of parent as care worker ($\alpha = 0.88$) referred to the number of times one article referenced the profiled individual's role as a parent who engages in care work. Notably, the unit of analysis in this regard was the paragraph, so one or more than one mention within the same paragraph counted as one mention. By the same principle, count of other family role as care worker ($\alpha = 1.00$) was recorded based on paragraphs as well. The exception was when the same paragraph mentioned different recipients of care (i.e., mother and grandmother in the same paragraph), for which the number of the recipients were recorded as different mentions.

To examine whether females are more likely to be emphasized as someone's romantic partner, we used the variable mention of romantic partner ($\alpha = 0.75$) to record if the profile piece mentioned the profiled individual's romantic or sexual partner (i.e., boyfriend, ex-wife, spouse) or any romantic or sexual relationship (i.e., dating, marriage). Likewise, count of mention of romantic partner ($\alpha = 0.73$) was the number of times one article referenced the profiled individual's romantic partner based on the paragraph and the number of different romantic partners (i.e., ex-husband and husband) as illustrated above.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive data

In total, our sample had 70 articles from 2018, 80 articles from 2019, 48 articles from 2020, 47 articles from 2021, 47 articles from 2022 and 8 articles from 2023, totaling 300 articles overall. Out of the 300 articles, 200 (66.7%) had male profiled individuals, 88 (29.3%) had female profiled individuals, and 12 (4%) had profiled individuals whose gender could not be determined. Controlling for outliers, Table 1 exhibits the means and standard deviations for all variables.

Crosstabulation analysis by gender revealed that 8 (4%, $n = 200$) articles about men mentioned engagement in care work for their children, whereas 21 (23.9%, $n = 88$) articles about women had this mention. In terms of carrying out care work for another family member that was not the children of the profiled individual, this was found to be present in only one article for the men and one article for the women. In terms of mentioning being a parent without talking about an active engagement in care work, this was present in 27 (13.5%, $n = 200$) articles for men and 12 (13.6%, $n = 88$) articles for women. Lastly, mentions of a romantic partner were found to be present in 47 (23.5%, $n = 200$) articles for men and 27 (30.7%, $n = 88$) articles for women.

Table 1. Descriptive frequencies.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Word count	300	1631.39	1179.12
Page count	300	3.40	2.39
Parent with mentions of care work	300	0.10	0.30
Count of parent with mentions of care work	300	0.19	0.74
Parent without mentions of care work	300	0.13	0.34
Mentions of care work for other dependents	300	0.01	0.08
Count of mentions of care work for other dependents	300	0.01	0.08
Mentions of romantic partner	300	0.25	0.43
Count of mentions of romantic partner	300	0.66	2.01

Source: Authors.

A crosstabulation of the variable parents with mentions of care work across the different years showed that this was present in 7 (10%, $n = 70$) articles from 2018, 8 (10%, $n = 80$) articles from 2019, 7 (14.6%, $n = 48$) articles from 2020, 1 (2.1%, $n = 47$) article from 2021, 6 (12.8%, $n = 47$) articles from 2022, and 0 ($n = 8$) articles from 2023.

4.2. Independent t-tests

To analyze mean differences between men and women, we carried out independent sample t-tests. Following Levene's test of homogeneity of variance, equal variances could be assumed for the tests with the variables word count, page count, and count of mentions of care work for dependents besides children. Levene's test was violated ($p < .05$) for the tests with the variables count of parent with mentions of care work and count of mentions of romantic partner, thus the results of the test where equal variances were not assumed were interpreted for these. Results for the t-tests are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. t-test results.

	Male	Female	t-test
Word count			
Mean	1683.50	1662.90	0.14

	Std. Deviation	1137.94	1280.82	
Page count				
Mean	3.54	3.42	0.37	
Std. Deviation	2.30	2.60		
Count of parent with mentions of care work				
Mean	0.06	0.54	-3.62**	
Std. Deviation	0.29	1.24		
Count of mentions of care work for other dependents				
Mean	0.01	0.01	-0.60	
Std. Deviation	0.07	0.11		
Count of mentions of romantic partner				
Mean	0.38	1.40	-2.80*	
Std. Deviation	0.85	3.38		

Source: Authors. Note: * $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.001$.

Regarding how many words the articles contained for either men ($M = 1683.50$, $SD = 1137.94$) or women ($M = 1662.90$, $SD = 1280.82$), no significant differences were found between the two groups, $t(286) = 0.14$, $p = 0.89$, Cohen's $d = 1183.23$. No significant difference was found for the number of pages between men ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 2.30$) and women ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 2.60$), $t(286) = 0.37$, $p = 0.71$, Cohen's $d = 2.40$. In terms of mentions of caring for other dependents besides children, no significant differences were found between men ($M = 0.01$, $SD = 0.07$) and women ($M = 0.01$, $SD = 0.11$), $t(286) = -0.60$, $p = 0.55$, Cohen's $d = 0.08$.

When it came to mentions of profiled individuals being parents and engaging in care work for their children, we found that women ($M = 0.54$, $SD = 1.24$) were significantly more likely than men ($M = 0.06$, $SD = 0.29$) to have more of these mentions in their articles, $t(90.05) = -3.62$, $p < 0.001$. Cohen's $d = 0.72$. The difference in the number of mentions of romantic partners between men ($M = 0.38$, $SD = 0.85$) and women ($M = 1.40$, $SD = 3.38$) was also found to be statistically significant, $t(91.91) = -2.80$, $p = 0.01$, Cohen's $d = 2.00$.

5. Discussion

The present study analyzed content from profile articles in three top business magazines to determine if there were any differences between male and female profiled individuals in terms of presence, how much space was given in the magazine, mentions of engaging in care work, and mentions of their romantic partners. The data showed that, out of 300 articles, 29.3% of them were about a female individual as the central subject of the piece. This was found to be mostly consistent with another similar research (Grandy, 2013a; Macharia, 2020). Looking specifically at representation in business magazines, we find that, according to the results of the present study, women remain underrepresented, considering that currently women make up 56.2% of the workforce in the United States (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.).

Even though there were more male than female profiled individuals, we found that, when featured, the magazines gave equal space to both genders. Whether male or female, profiled individuals got an average of three pages for their profile articles. The word count was also very close among males and females, both averaging about 1600 words per article. This is a very positive and important finding, revealing that prominent business magazines give equal importance to the individuals they profile, regardless of gender.

The topic of engaging in care work is not one that was portrayed too often, appearing in only 29 (9.7%) out of the 300 articles in the sample. However, it is interesting to note that, when applying a gender lens, significant differences were found between how many times this was mentioned between men and

women. Even controlling for outliers, women were found to be significantly more likely to have repeated mentions of their role as parents who actively engage in care work, something in keeping with gender stereotypes for women as the expected caregivers for children. However, it is important to note that this study did not control for the different writing styles of the profile articles. Some articles were written in a narrative manner, including quotes from the profiled individual, while others were printed in a question-and-answer interview format. Some articles were even written by the profiled individual of the piece themselves. This counts as one of the limitations of this study, given that we cannot at this time differentiate whether it is the author who inserts the mention of care work in their narrative, or whether it is the profiled individuals themselves who bring up their role as caregivers. We can only report on whether there was a mention of this or not, which can still be revealing of the role women currently hold in terms of engaging in care work efforts for children.

Regarding caring for other dependents other than children, including family members and even romantic partners, this was a topic that came up far too infrequently, only once for each gender, and no statistical differences were found among them. This seems to stand in contrast with the rates of caring for other dependents, given that about 22.3% of U.S. adults report caring for friends or family members (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). Reasons for this could potentially include that the profiled individuals did not have elderly or disabled parents or family members, or that they had help or enough resources to provide other arrangements for their care. However, no further research was done to confirm if the profiled individuals had other dependents or specific arrangements for them, which stands as another limitation. Notably, taking care of a romantic partner, cooking meals for them for example, did not come up often either. So, it may suggest that women were not presented as a typical housewife to their spouse in the traditional way.

The number of mentions of a profiled individual's romantic partner, whether it be a spouse or a boyfriend/girlfriend, was found to have a statistically significant difference between men and women. Articles about women were more likely to have repeated mentions of their romantic partners. An interesting trend to highlight here is that, in several cases, female profiled individuals were found to have their spouse or partner as chief executive officer or another prominent administrative role in their business. When this occurred, mentions of the romantic partner tended to be more frequent, given that they played a very relevant role in the operations of the business. This could potentially imply that, even when women achieve in business, the portrayal of the success is not solely attributed to them; instead, interest is given to the role that the spouse played in that success.

Looking at differences between pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post-pandemic years in terms of the number of mentions of parents engaging in care work for children, we discovered that the presence of these mentions was almost evenly divided across the years. Of particular interest was the fact that the count seemed to go down during the height of the pandemic (2020, 2021). Yet, there are a couple of limitations in this analysis. One limitation is the fact that the number of magazine publications in general appeared to be reduced during the pandemic years; our analysis showed a decrease of about 20 to 30 articles between non-pandemic and pandemic years. Further, very few articles were sampled for 2023, given that the year was still in course at the time of data collection and thus the publications were fewer.

The present study does contribute to filling in gaps in research, particularly with respect to care work. Caregiving, though an integral activity for the functioning of society and one that has been present across the decades, is severely overlooked and undervalued (Cancian & Oliker, 1999). Additionally, it is an activity usually ascribed exclusively to women, and one that is naturally carried out by them, thus failing to recognize that it is work that is labor-intensive and often physically and emotionally taxing (Cancian & Oliker, 1999). It is thus important to continue carrying out research that analyzes the gendered portrayals of care work, particularly who is mostly portrayed to be a caregiver. Further, it is of interest to continue researching this phenomenon in business-related media, given that often women are faced

with the choice of pursuing a career or being a mother, given restrictive policies about part-time and full-time work, parental leave and even salaries, among other factors (Scott Paul, 2012).

It is also important to continue researching gender representation in the media. This present study contributes to this as well, evidencing differences between the males and females when it comes to being profiled by prominent business magazines. This study also contributes to the literature in feminism and gender stereotyping by taking a close look at mentions of care labor and romantic partners between males and females.

In terms of future research, it would be of interest to expand the sample to include other business publications, as well as the digital-only articles from these magazines; this could also potentially aid in filling the gap of magazine publications during the pandemic years. Coding for the ethnicity of the profiled individual would also be an important aspect to include in replications of this study, to see if there are any differences across this demographic variable. Lastly, future research could potentially expand on this study, applying different methodologies to test for effects of these gendered portrayals on business magazine consumers.

The present study sought to explore potential differences in gender representation, portrayals of care work and romantic partnerships between men and women in top business-related magazines. The findings show that, though the space given to males and females on the magazines seems to be equal, there still are some issues when it comes to female representation in the business realm, as well as the stereotypical portrayals of their roles as romantic partners and expected caregivers for their children. This study helps fill an important gap in the literature related to these portrayals in business magazines. Future research will hopefully expand on this area and continue to analyze if these gender differences remain or change over time.

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