

**Gender Stereotypes and Election Campaigns: A Longitudinal Analysis of Print
Political Advertising in Greece**

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1. Introduction

The emergence of the field of political marketing has highlighted the prominence of communication towards shaping the candidates' image and building long-term relationships with voters, constituencies and financial donors. Political advertising has been described as a major marketing tool that allows the candidate to communicate to voters the superiority of his or her attributes over those of opponents (Kaid, 1999). Early research (Kaid, 1981) suggested that political advertising have cognitive, affective and behavioural effects on voters. Most importantly, Atkin et al. (1973) found that political advertising could overcome selective exposure, thus ensuring that non-supporters as well as supporters were exposed to candidates' messages.

The emphasis of the current study on gender stereotypes in print political advertisements can be viewed in the context of the emerging trends in the area of political marketing, which emphasize political communication as a means for political success (Johnston and Kaid, 2002; Kahn, 1996; Kittilson and Fridkin, 2008). *First*, political advertising communicates the brand promise of the candidate blending functional and emotional benefits that the voters gain from their relationships with the candidate. By investigating political advertisements one may see how candidates' expenditure is invested in communication efforts that produce and disseminate their image to voters.

Second, the central advantage of political advertising relates to the fact that candidates can control the message conveyed to voters. These advertisements therefore manifest male and female candidate's presentation of self in a particular socio-cultural context (Kaid and Davidson, 1986). Looking at the content of these advertisements enables us to see whether men and women conceptualise their candidacies differently. By employing alternative campaign appeals, male and female candidates could be adopting appeals that differ in their impact to voters. Since political advertisements appear to shape the perceptions of voters of candidates, thereby influencing voting decisions (Kahn, 1996; Carson, 2001), an examination of political advertisements has important electoral implications.

This paper concentrates on the role of gender in print political advertising of female and male MP candidates, which constitutes a significant component of modern election campaigns in western democracies. While gender stereotyping is considered to be a universal phenomenon, its intensity may vary across different countries (Oderkerken-Schröder et al., 2002). To date, relevant literature has mainly looked at gender stereotypes in the American context concentrating primarily on presidential and senate races. These studies have provided valuable insights, however, the scarcity of advertising research in a European context is regrettable (Wiles et al., 1995) in as much as researchers cannot infer that US results can be transferable to other national contexts (Carlson, 2001). Consequently, there seems to be a need in expanding research on gender stereotypes in political communication beyond the US context, given this phenomenon is idiosyncratic and largely dependent on political structures and cultural elements of investigated countries (Holtz-Bacha and Kaid, 1995; Fridkin and Kenney, 2009).

Based on the above, it is interesting to undertake such an effort in Greece that has witnessed an increasing modernisation of politics since middle 1990s (Negrine and Papathanassopoulos, 1996). Hence, gender stereotypes have been widely used in the Greek context to communicate candidates' images and create particular representations that add value to the profile of politicians. Even though, Greece has been classified by Hofstede (1996, 2001) as a "moderately masculine" country it is interesting to see whether this is manifested in the categories of gender stereotypes used in political advertisements.

The purpose of this study is to offer longitudinal evidence on female and male role stereotypes featuring in print political advertisements of MP candidates drawing insights from five Greek general election campaigns between 1993 and 2007. In doing so, the authors meet the calls for longitudinal research in the area of political communications (Carlson, 2001). The current study incorporates two dimensions of gender stereotypes, notable gender-trait and gender-belief stereotypes in order to capture non-verbal and verbal elements of political advertising. It investigates *gender trait stereotypes* that communicate personality strengths of male and female candidates between 1993 and 2007. Communication studies during the 1990s, have attempted to investigate whether there are differences between male and female candidates as to personality attributes they communicate in political advertising (e.g. Benze and Declerq, 1985; Johnston and White, 1994; Kahn, 1993; Kahn and Gordon, 1997; Kern and Edley, 1994; Procter et al., 1994; William, 1994). Concentrating on a single point of time, these snapshot studies have provided somewhat inconsistent and conflicting results perhaps due to the lack of systematic analysis of the content of advertising messages (Carlson, 2001). Viewed in this light, Fridkin and Kenney (2009, p. 302) claim that “there are important gaps in the literature studying gender stereotypes in elections”. The current study attempts to capture and compare male and female trait stereotypes in print advertisements by taking into consideration the dimension of time. Do gender stereotypes in political advertisements hold still or change over time? This is a basic query that the first research objective attempts to address by providing insights from the Greek context.

The paper also examines and compares *gender belief stereotypes* that convey the competence of candidates to deal with issues raised in political campaigns between 1993 and 2007. Gender belief stereotypes rely primarily on verbal cues of advertising messages manifesting the different political agendas of male and female candidates. The type of issues discussed in political advertisements constitute subtle but important aspects of gender stereotyping as they prescribe perceived areas of expertise for men and women candidates, which are often categorised on the basis of individual’s gender (e.g. female candidates emphasise maternity and childcare issues). The present study extends the literature by integrating issue specific notions into the examination of gender stereotypes in print political advertisements. Additionally, it offers longitudinal evidence on whether and how issues evolve over time to signal different priorities of genders in their political agenda.

In order to address the two research objectives of the study, the authors examine print political advertisements by employing the method of content analysis, which is particularly suited for capturing non verbal and verbal communication elements associated with gender stereotypes (Wolin, 2003). By probing into political advertisements of five electoral campaigns, the authors examine verbal and non verbal aspects of meaning of political advertisements associated gender-trait stereotypes and gender-belief stereotypes of political candidates.

The current study attempts to contribute into the areas of political marketing and gender stereotypes in three ways. *First*, it seeks to offer fresh insights into gender differences, if any, in political advertisements by drawing evidence from five national election campaigns between 1993 and 2007. Despite the seeming importance of gender stereotypes for political marketing, since the mid 1980s limited research has been performed to examine this phenomenon (Kahn, 1996; Wolin, 2003). Therefore, the current study builds upon recommendations of political communication scholars (e.g. Kahn, 1996) and gender analysts (Bordo, 1995; Gill and Arthurs, 2006; Whelehan, 2000) who suggest that recent evidence is required in order to enrich the area of gender stereotypes and document trends with respect to changes, if any, in representations of male and female candidates in print media.

Second, gender stereotypes are emerging social constructions rendering the concept of time useful in their investigation (Wolin, 2003; Zinkhan, 1994). Political communication has

approached stereotypes into a great extent from a static perspective, concentrating their investigation on single period of time. In order to deal with this limitation, the paper incorporates recommendations of Kahn (1994) who posit that images and issues in political campaigns are not static rather entwined with the temporal context. In doing so, the papers offers evidence from five national election campaigns, in an attempt to illuminate the process of “gendering” notably whether and how stereotypes evolve in the Greek context over time.

Third, gender stereotypes convey meanings that are mainly deep-seated, which require analysis of verbal and non verbal aspects of advertising messages (Goffman, 1979). The current study follows the philosophical underpinnings of Goffman (1979) who suggests that images about gender can be understood within specific social contexts, including the political arena and are manifested in verbal and non verbal communication elements. By investigating gender trait and belief stereotypes, the current study attempts to enhance depth and detail of content analysis of gender stereotypes in political advertising.

This paper is structured as follows. It begins with a literature review on the key notion of this study, namely gender stereotypes in the political arena. Following a discussion of the methodology adopted in this study, its findings are presented and discussed. The paper concludes with theoretical and practical implications as well as directions for further research.

2. Gender Stereotypes in the Political Arena

Gender stereotypes are defined as cognitive structures of inferential relations that link personal attributes, behaviours, and beliefs to the social categories of male and female (Ashmore and Del Boca, 1979; Browne, 1998). Research on gender stereotypes called attention to the portrayals of women and men in commercial advertising and promoted systematic investigation into the area of gender stereotypes in popular media (Dow and Condit, 2005). The issues raised by gender scholars have provided a basis for academic research in the area of communication in order to explore the degree to which advertising accurately reflects contemporary roles of women rather than depicting women in a stereotypical way (Kerin *et al.*, 1979). Relevant research suggested that advertising in popular media has been a primary means for introducing and promoting sexism, calling attention for systematic investigation into this area (cf. Wolin, 2003). Whereas the 1960s and 1970s largely documented women’s images in advertisements of consumer products and services, the 1980s and 1990s gradually embraced the argument that issues addressed by the studies of female stereotypes may be of relevance to male stereotypes (Kolbe and Albanese, 1996) rendering the examination of both sexes a fruitful avenue for research (Plakoyiannaki and Zotos, 2010).

The pervasiveness of gender stereotypes in political communication has lead relevant scholars to posit that the characteristics of political candidates and the issues discussed in political campaigns are manifestations of stereotyping that may even determine electoral success or defeat (Huddy and Terkildsen, 1993; Kahn, 1994, 1996; Kahn and Goldenberg, 1991). Particularly, relevant literature has highlighted the dominance of gender stereotypes in politics suggesting that impressions generated by stereotypes are more efficient in driving behaviours of voters than those based on newly acquired information on political candidates (Kahn, 1996). Various studies discuss the emergence of gender bias in politics reflected in the tendency of voters to evaluate the same candidate differently, solely based on the candidate’s gender (Fox and Smith, 1998).

Certain factors may accentuate gender stereotypes in politics making their study of importance for political communication: 1) information overload about relatively unknown candidates may encourage voters to use gender stereotypes –“as low information shortcuts” (Sanbonmatsu, 2002, p. 21) – in order to process the political information (Kahn, 1996); 2) information scarcity on individual candidates may drive voters to rely on gender stereotypes for making political decisions (Kaid and Holtz-Bacha, 1995); 3) individual voter’s

characteristic (e.g. demographics and psychographics) and past reliance on gender stereotypes may elicit stereotypical behaviour for making political decisions (Sanbonmatsu, 2002); and 4) individual voter's motivation, time and resources are related to the reliance on gender stereotypes for making political decisions (Sanbonmatsu, 2002).

Scholars interested in explaining the electability of male and female candidates have attempted to examine the role of gender stereotypes in political campaigns. Towards this direction, the three streams of research emerged that investigated: 1) the impact of stereotypes on voters' decision; 2) the impact of gender stereotypes on media coverage; and 3) the impact of gender stereotypes on the political campaigns of candidates.

As far as the *first research stream* is concerned, studies examining sex stereotypes among voters demonstrated that people consider the candidates gender when forming impression on particular candidates. Using different methodological designs (survey, experiments etc) and exploring different aspects of candidate evaluation, such studies concluded that voters use sex stereotypes to differentiate between male and female candidates (Kahn, 1994). The *second research stream* deals with media impact on politics associating media coverage with gender characteristics of candidates. Scholars in this research stream suggest that if people of the media hold stereotypical views on men and women candidates, then these stereotypes may influence coverage patterns, notably the quantity and substance of news coverage. The results show that female candidates tend to receive less media coverage comparing to their male counterparts. Additionally, the coverage that female candidates receive, concentrate on their viability rather than their political issue positions. The *third research stream* that appears to be of relevance to the current study (cf. Kahn, 1996) considers how gender stereotypes are shaped and communicated in political campaigns of candidates. This research stream lies on the premise that gender identities are socially constructed and advertising suggests lifestyles and forms of self-presentation that individuals use to define their roles in society (Giddens, 1991; Wolf, 1991). By analogy, candidates of both sexes may consciously consider voters' stereotypical images when developing communication messages for their electoral campaigns. In an attempt to develop an effective political advertisement candidates promote attributes and symbols that appeal to the target audience. It is important therefore to examine the content of political communication since the voter can make more reliable political judgements once being informed that a political message may have several layers of reading. To date, there seems to exist a void in relevant literature concerning the systematic examination of gender stereotypes of political candidates building upon gender and political communication studies.

The current paper may be positioned in the third stream of research, since it seeks to analyse the content of political advertisements placing emphasis on gender trait and gender belief stereotypes that are considered perhaps "the most powerful source of political gender stereotyping" (Huddy and Terkildsen, 1993, p.125). The two aspects of gender stereotypes and research propositions of the study are discussed in the following section of the paper.

3. Research Propositions

3.1. Gender Trait Stereotypes: Research Objective 1

Gender trait stereotypes are linked to personality features and strengths that political candidates communicate in their campaigns. Huddy and Terkildsen (1993, p. 121) suggest that in political advertising "there are pervasive and remarkably uniform differences in the personality traits ascribed to men and women", which need further investigation. There seems to be an agreement of various gender and communication studies that advertisements reflect and perpetuate gender role orientations of society.

Relevant literature in the context of political advertising has identified two broader categories of gender trait stereotypes assigned to male and female political candidates. The first category of stereotypes incorporates features associated with toughness, strength,

success, competence and aspirations achievement in the future (future orientation). The extant literature in political marketing largely relates these categories of stereotypes to the portrayal of male candidates in advertisements (cf. Carlson, 2001). The second category of stereotypes relies on notions of honesty, integrity, compassion, warmth and youth to describe female political candidates. The former category of stereotypes is often labelled “male traits” whereas the latter category of stereotypes is labelled “female traits”. For instance, evidence on print advertising from Benze and DeClerq (1985) suggested that female House and Senate candidates stress their compassion and warmth twice as often as their male counterparts. Similarly, male candidates emphasize toughness three times as often as female candidates. It should be noted that commercial marketing literature also ascribes different stereotypes to the portrayal of men and women in advertising. For example, Klassen et al. (1993) suggest that women in advertising appear to be submissive and caring contrary to the “traditional” male who seems to be aggressive and successful.

Carlson (2001) suggests that longitudinal research in gender stereotypes may illuminate changes, if any, in portrayals of political candidates in media over time. Relevant literature suggests that two trends associated with changes in gender trait stereotypes over time. These are linked to the premise that portrayal of men and women political candidates is likely to converge in future studies. Convergence in male and female portrayals has two aspects: 1) convergence of male and female trait stereotypes in favour of both genders; and, 2) convergence of male and female trait stereotypes in favour of male trait stereotypes. *First*, the male-dominated nature of election campaigns is gradually eroding leading men and women political candidates to gradually use both aspects of trait stereotypes to communicate with voters. For instance, Sanbonmatsu (2002) suggests that political candidates in spite of their gender may choose to promote either feminine or masculine traits in their representations in media depending on target voters. *Second*, Huddy and Terkildsen (1993, p. 141) argue in favour of the prominence of male trait stereotypes indicating that “typical masculine traits are still considered more central to politics than feminine traits”. In the Greek context, Pantelidou-Malouta (2002) has discussed the salient role of gender stereotypes in politics during the 1980s and early 1990s and noted that their influence is likely to subside in future electoral campaigns. Based on the above, the authors can expect a convergence between male and female trait stereotypes used by political candidates over time, but cannot predict whether it is attributed to the first or second reason discussed above:

P1: *The current study is likely to show a convergence in gender trait stereotypes used by MP candidates over time.*

3.2. Gender Belief Stereotypes: Research Objective 2

While gender trait stereotypes reflect character traits assigned to different political candidates, gender belief stereotypes manifest voters’ viewpoint on how political candidates deal with issues raised in political campaigns. Therefore, gender belief stereotypes are associated with the perceived issue competence of male and female politicians (Phau et al., 2002). Specifically, voters’ beliefs about male and female candidates are likely to affect the types of issues that candidates choose to emphasize in their political campaigns. By concentrating on their perceived strengths in their advertisements, candidates are attempting to make these issues salient to voters, thereby leading voters to contemplate these issues while evaluating competing candidates. Viewed in this light, emphasis on different issues may be attributed to the attempt of male and female political candidates to promote their own candidacies by developing different political agendas.

Kahn (1994) argues that past research has clearly demonstrated that male and female candidates are viewed as competent of different policy issues, however recent studies may demonstrate different trends regarding issues coverage by the two genders (Kittilson and

Fridkin, 2008). Despite the differences in the context of political elections, scholars suggest that there is likely to be a convergence in the issues discussed by men and women political candidates in their political advertisements. To override gender stereotypes, female candidates will need to concentrate on some policy issues, such as internal affairs and defence issues, on which they are assumed less competent than their male colleagues; whereas male candidates will need to develop an active posture on issues such as women rights and healthcare, on which they may be at disadvantage. In line with the above observation, Koch (2000) suggests that political candidates are increasingly seen as equally competent to handle economic or education issues regardless of their gender. Thus:

P2: *The current study is likely to show a convergence in the types of issues presented by male and female candidates over time.*

3. Methodology

In order to address the research objectives of the study, the authors needed a method for capturing and enumerating gender stereotypes featuring in print political advertisements. Content analysis was chosen, because it is the best at providing “a scientific, quantitative, and generalizable description of communications content” (Kassarjian, 1977, p.10). The study reported in this paper has been conducted following the content analysis standards proposed by Holsti (1969), Kassarjian (1977) and Kolbe and Burnett (1991). The process outlined in Table 1 aimed to enhance the quality of the content analysis investigation in terms of objectivity, systematization, sampling and reliability. It indicates that content analysis is a dynamic procedure based on interrelated activities that are briefly discussed below.

Table 1: The Content Analysis Procedure in the Current Study

Content Analysis Dimensions	Dimensions Characteristics	Description of Characteristics	Application to the Current Study
<i>Objectivity:</i> refers to the process by which analytical categories are developed and used	* Rules and procedures	* Description of rules and procedures followed in content analysis * Details of categories and operational definitions	Categories of gender trait and gender belief stereotypes were defined using relevant literature
	* Coder training	* Familiarity of coders with the coding scheme	Coders were provided with detailed guidelines on how to use the coding scheme
	* Measure pre-testing	* Pre-testing of the coding scheme	Coders conducted double pre-tests into a sample of 15 print advertisements not included in the sample
	* Judge independence	* Coders make autonomous judgements and work independently	Male and female coders were selected to control for gender bias Both coders worked completely independent of each other
<i>Systematization:</i> refers to the systematic articulation of research objectives and data collection procedures	*Statement of research objectives, questions or propositions	* Testing of hypothesis or propositions	The study was conducted based on research propositions outline in section 3

	*Data collection design	* Clear focus on data collection design	Clear focus on the examination of communication material in order to address “what” and “how” questions
Sampling: refers to identification of the sample and recording unit of the content analysis study	* Population * Sampling techniques * Sampling frame * Sampling units * Recording unit for enumeration	* Details associated with <i>how</i> the sample was selected	Multistage sampling: Newspapers were sampled after stratification by geographical areas, readership level and ideological representation. The whole electoral period was covered. Sampling Unit: Print advertisements of MP candidates Recording unit: categories of gender trait and belief stereotypes
Reliability: refers to the extent to which a measuring procedure yields the same results in repeating trials	*Stability *Reproducibility *Accuracy	*Ensures the some content analysis result analysed more than once by the same coder *Refers to the extent to which a classification produces the same results when coded by more than one coder *Refers to the extent to which the classification of a text/image follows a standard instrument	Each coders were invited to code a sub-sample of advertisements twice in a period of two weeks Inter-coder reliability measurement using the Perrault-Leigh (1989) and the agreement percentage index Coders followed strictly the same content analysis instrument throughout the study
Validity: refers to the extent to which a measuring procedure represents the intended, and only the intended concept	* Semantical validity	*Is indicated by a substantial agreement between two different partitions of the same set of the unit of analysis	Invited external judges relevant to the research topic to comment on the content analysis instrument, process and results of the study

Source: Kassarijan (1977); Weber (1990); Kolbe and Burnett (1991); Krippendorff (2004)

Objectivity: The content analysis instrument was based on recommendations of Goffman (1979) suggesting that gender stereotypes are communicated in verbal and non verbal aspects of advertising communications (e.g. text, headlines and images, manner and activity of advertising models). Using insights from gender theory (Goffman, 1979; Dow and Condit, 2005) and political communication studies (Kahn, 1994; Kaid and Holtz-Bacha, 1995), two aspects of gender stereotypes were examined, notably gender trait and gender belief stereotypes. As indicated in table 2 gender trait stereotypes incorporated perceived “male” and “female” traits whereas gender belief stereotypes referred to perceived “male” and “female” issues.

Table 2: The Content Analysis Instrument

Advertisement Data	
Number	
Newspaper	
Year	
Candidate Data	
Candidate's Name	
Gender (M/F)	
Region	
Party Affiliation	
Elected (Yes) – Non-Elected (No)	
Advertisement Emphasis	
Emphasis of the ad:	
Issues	
Images	
Trait Stereotypes	
“Female Traits”	
Honesty/Integrity	emphasizes sincerity and trustworthiness; speaking to traditional values
Compassionate/Warmth	emphasizes concern for other people, family orientation
Emphasising Youth	emphasizes freshness and novelty of political ideas
“Male” Traits	
Toughness/Strength	emphasizes aggressiveness, activeness and decisiveness
Success/Competence/Experience	emphasizes accomplishments; qualifications
Future Orientation	emphasizes optimism for the future; calling for changes in the future
Issues	
“Female” Issues	
Social Issues	e.g. housing, family issues, social justice
Education	e.g. student evaluation, university policies; virtual educations
Healthcare	e.g. health policy issues
Gender Equality	e.g. gender policies in the work environment
Environment	e.g. alternative/ renewable energy sources
“Male” Issues	
Foreign affairs	e.g. relationships with other countries ; European policy
Defence Issues	e.g. military spending
Economy	e.g. wages, prices, taxes
Labour Market	e.g. employment conditions; unemployment
Domestic Issues	e.g. regional development

Systematization: Final coding was conducted by each coder independently and served to address the four research propositions outlined earlier in the paper. Following insights of Holsti (1969), the current study constitutes an exploratory investigation of communication material that attempts to address “how” questions, namely “how male and female political candidates are depicted in print advertisements?” and “how the portrayals of male and female candidates have changed, if at all, over time?” In order to investigate propositions P1-P2, the authors conducted a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA).

Sampling: The current study examined a sample of advertisements of male (N=633) and female (N=71) MP candidates, elected and non-elected, during five electoral campaigns that took place between 1993-2007 in Greece. It employed a multistage sampling process (cf. Krippendorf, 2004, p. 68) in that it combined several sampling procedures in succession in order to determine the sample for content analysis. An initial step into the sampling process was to decide upon the communication medium for investigation. Newspapers were selected for four reasons: 1) They frequently host MP candidates advertisements, because they appeal more effectively to specific target-groups of voters than other media 2) Given their wide readership, newspapers are an important medium that hosts advertisements of political candidates and may have a profound effect on voter’s perceptions of MP candidates running

in national elections (Kahn, 1996); 3) Newspaper advertisements of political candidates are easily accessible and available for thorough investigation even after the political campaign is completed. 4) Since 2002, political advertising in Greece is limited by law to a single mass medium, i.e. newspapers.

Newspapers were sampled after stratification by geographical area, i.e. 8 high circulation national and 5 local newspapers covering the whole duration of the electoral campaigns; readership level; and political parties' representation. A subsequent step in the sampling process was to select advertisements of all male and female MP candidates elected and non-elected, during the five electoral campaigns that took place between 1993 and 2007 in Greece. The categories of gender trait and belief stereotypes appearing in these advertisements were the recording unit of the study (Krippendorff, 2004).

Reliability: According to Weber (1990), reliability incorporates three dimensions, notably stability, reproducibility and accuracy. *Stability* renders the same content analysis results when coded more than once by the same coder. Table 1 shows the application of this principle in the current study. *Reproducibility* refers to the extent to which a categorization produces the same results when a text/image is coded by more than one coder (Weber, 1990). It is associated with the measurement of inter-coder reliability (cf. Kolbe and Burnet, 1991). Perreault and Liegh's (1989) reliability index was considered appropriate for this study because it considers the number of coders and the nominal characteristics of our categories, is sensitive to systematic coding errors, and allows for correction due to chance agreement. The operational range of values for this index is between 0.0 (no reliability) and 1.0 (perfectly reliable). The estimated reliability of the current study for category decisions across all advertisements included in the sample was 0.92 for gender trait stereotypes and 0.95 for gender belief stereotypes. In order to provide greater objectivity, the authors assessed inter-coder reliability using also percentage agreement. Both indices provided similar results and exceeded the critical values suggested in the literature (Cohen, 1960; Kassarian, 1977; Perreault and Leigh, 1989) rendering the content analysis process highly reliable. *Accuracy* pertains to the extent to which a categorization of stereotypes corresponds to a standard or norm encountered in theory. Table 1 shows how accuracy was promoted in the current study.

Validity: It refers to the extent to which a measuring procedure represents the intended, and only the intended concept. Krippendorff (2004) highlights the importance of semantical validity that is indicated by a substantial agreement between two different partitions of the same set of the unit of analysis. In order to enhance semantical validity, the current study invited external judges relevant to the research topic to comment on the content analysis instrument, process and results of the study (cf. Krippendorff, 2004).

4. Findings

4.1. Research Objective 1: Gender-Trait Stereotypes

Examination of the data relating to *proposition P1* concentrated on the types of gender trait stereotypes employed to depict men and women MP candidates in Greek print advertisements over five election campaigns. Table 3 provides the percentages for gender trait stereotypes encountered in print political advertisements of male and female MP candidates.

Tables 4 and 5 provide an expanded view of gender trait stereotypes over time. They also present the MANOVA results and demonstrate that the difference of means is highly significant in female trait stereotypes including "compassionate/warmth" ($p < 0.05$) and "emphasizing youth" ($p < 0.05$). The appearance of the former trait stereotype seems to gradually decline in female and increase in male MP candidate advertisements reaching approximately 15% for both genders in 2007. This finding manifests a convergence in the use of "compassionate/warmth" trait stereotype by men and women MP candidates. The appearance of latter trait stereotype, namely "emphasising youth" is gradually increasing in

representations of female MP candidates and decreasing in those of male candidates over time. In a similar vein, MANOVA results suggested that the use of male trait stereotype “toughness/strength” ($p < 0.05$) is gradually decreasing in women MP candidate advertisements without however affecting the overall observation that female candidates relying largely on male trait stereotypes in political advertisements in Greece.

Table 3: Gender Trait Stereotypes in the Total of Political Advertisements

Gender-Trait Stereotypes	Male Candidates		Female Candidates	
Female Traits				
	Ab. Value	Frequency %	Ab. Value	Frequency %
Honesty/Integrity	92	14.5%	6	8.4%
Compassionate/Warmth	72	11.4%	9	12.7%
Emphasising Youth	29	4.6%	10	14.1%
Male Traits				
	Ab. Value	Frequency %	Ab. Value	Frequency
Toughness/Strength	255	40.3%	21	29.6%
Success/Competence	108	17.0%	9	12.7%
Future Orientation	77	12.2%	16	22.5%
Total	N=633	100%	N=71	100%

On aggregate, evidence also demonstrated that male and female candidates are primarily portrayed using male-oriented cues. Particularly, male traits described in total 69.5% of male and 64.8% of female MP candidate advertisements respectively (see tables 4 and 5). In light of the aforementioned aggregate and per year analysis, proposition P1 that predicted a convergence in gender trait stereotypes used by MP candidates is partly supported.

Table 4: Male Candidates and Gender-Trait Stereotypes

Year	1993	1996	2000	2004	2007	Total
Female Traits						
Honesty/Integrity	15.5%	16.4%	11.8%	22.9%	6.2%	14.5%
Compassionate/Warmth	6.1%*	11.1%	16.3%	16.7%	15.4%	11.4%
Emphasising Youth	7.0%*	4.7%	3.0%	2.0%	1.5%	4.6%
Male Traits						
Toughness/Strength	40.2%	38.6%	38.0%	39.6%	50.8%	40.3%
Success/Competence	19.2%	19.9%	12.6%	14.6%	13.8%	17.0%
Future Orientation	12.0%	9.3%	18.3%	4.2%	12.3%	12.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*indicates a difference significant at the .05 level

Table 5: Female Candidates and Gender Trait Stereotypes

Year	1993	1996	2000	2004	2007	Total
Female Traits						
Honesty/Integrity	11.1%	5.6%	7.1%	12.5%	7.7%	8.4%
Compassionate/Warmth	27.8%*	5.6%	7.1%	0.00%	15.3%	12.7%
Emphasising Youth	11.1%	11.1%	7.1%	12.5%	31.8%*	14.1%
Male Traits						
Toughness/Strength	22.2%	44.4%	43.0%	25.0%	7.7%*	29.6%
Success/Competence	16.7%	22.2%	00.0%	12.5%	7.7%	12.7%
Future Orientation	11.1	11.1%	35.7%	37.5%	29.8%	22.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*indicates a difference significant at the .05 level

4.2. Research Objective 2: Gender-Belief Stereotypes

Analysis of the data relating to *proposition P2* concentrated on the types of gender belief stereotypes employed to depict men and women MP candidates in Greek print advertisements in five election campaigns. Table 6 provides the percentages for gender belief stereotypes encountered in print political advertisements of male and female MP candidates. Tables 7 and 8 demonstrate that female issues featured in total in 54.83% of female and 23.12% of male MP candidate advertisements, whereas male issues described in total 76.86% of male and 45.17% of female MP candidate advertisements. They also indicate the MANOVA results and show that the difference of means is highly significant in stereotypes such as “education” ($p < 0.001$), “foreign policy” ($p < 0.05$) and “domestic issues” ($p < 0.05$) across the five election periods. Particularly, the evidence manifests an increase in educational issues emphasised by male MP candidates in 2004 over the other election campaigns. This impressive increase may be attributed to the intentions of Greek political parties to revisit the education system in light of the EU guidelines. It seems that male political candidates picked upon this issues in 2004; whereas female candidates appear to have a constant interesting in educational issues throughout the five election campaigns.

The insights drawn from MANOVA put forward changes in the emphasis placed on “foreign policy” and “domestic issues” by male MP candidates. It seems that male MP candidates appear to emphasize over time domestic issues associated with regional development initiatives in Greece (see table 7) while they appear to place limited emphasis on foreign affairs issues. On the contrary, female candidates display a dual focus on social/environmental and foreign affairs issues manifesting an internal/external balance of issues communicated in their political campaigns over time (see table 8). Interestingly, Greek female MP candidates appear to pay insufficient attention to gender equality issues ($p < 0.05$) described as their primary area of expertise in relevant political communication literature (cf. Kahn, 1996).

Table 6: Gender Belief Stereotypes in the Total of Political Advertisements

Gender Belief Stereotypes	Male Candidates		Female Candidates	
	Ab. Value	Frequency %	Ab. value	Frequency %
Female Issues				
Social Issues	10	6.80%	14	22.58%
Education	9	6.12%	8	12.90%
Health Care	9	6.12%	4	6.45%
Gender Equality	1	0.68%	4	6.45%
Environment	5	3.40%	4	6.45%
Male Issues				
	Ab. Value	Frequency %	Ab. value	Frequency %
Foreign Policy	5	3.40%	13	20.98%
Defence Issues	4	2.72%	0	0.00%
Economy	7	4.78%	6	9.68%
Labour Market	14	9.52%	2	4.83%
Domestic Issues	83	56.46%	6	9.68%
total	147	100%	62	100%

The aggregate analysis indicates that male issues described 76.86% of print political advertisements of male candidates whereas female issues described 54.83% of print political advertisements of female MP candidates. The aggregate and per year analysis shown in tables 7 and 8 suggest differences in gender belief stereotypes associated with the issues presented in male and female MP advertisements. It seems that social and foreign policy issues lie at the centre of attention for female while domestic issues are of priority for male MP candidates in

Greece. Based on the above proposition P2 that predicted a convergence in gender belief stereotypes communicated by MP candidates was not supported.

Table 7: Gender Belief Stereotypes for Male MP Candidates

Year	1993	1996	2000	2004	2007	Total
Gender Belief Stereotypes						
Female Issues						
Social Issues	3.22%	14.00%	3.03%	0.00%	16.67%	6.80%
Education	4.84%	3.57%	3.03%	50.00%*	5.56%	6.12%
Health Care	12.91%	3.57%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	6.12%
Gender Equality	0.00%	3.57%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.68%
Environment	3.23%	4.00%	6.06%	0.00%	0.00%	3.40%
Male Issues						
Foreign Policy	3.23%	0.00%	3.03%	0.00%	11.11%**	3.40%
Defence Issues	1.61%	3.57%	3.03%	0.00%	5.56%	2.72%
Economy	8.06%	0.00%	6.06%	0.00%	0.00%	4.76%
Labour Market	4.84%	14.29%	18.18%	4.50%	5.56%	9.52%
Domestic Issues	58.06%	53.57%	57.58%	46.5%*	55.56%	56.46%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

* indicates a difference significant at the .001 level

** indicates a difference significant at the .05 level

Table 8: Gender Belief Stereotypes for Female MP Candidates

Year	1993	1996	2000	2004	2007	total
Gender Belief Stereotypes						
Female Issues						
Social Issues	27.5%	26.65%	18.19%	25.00%	10.00%	22.58%
Education	11.11%	13.33%	9.09%	12.50%	10.00%	12.90%
Health Care	0.00%	6.67%	9.09%	12.50%	0.00%	6.45%
Gender Equality	16.67%*	6.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	6.45%
Environment	0.00%*	6.67%	9.09%	12.50%	10.00%	6.45%
Male Issues						
Foreign Policy	16.67%	20.00%	27.26%	25.00%	20.00%	20.98%
Defence Issues	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Economy	11.11%	6.67%	9.09%	12.50%	10.00%	9.68%
Labour Market	5.56%	6.67%	18.19%	0.00%	10.00%	4.83%
Domestic Issues	11.11%	6.67%	18.19%	0.00%	10.00%	9.68%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

* indicates a difference significant at the .05 level

Even though, there appears to be little empirical longitudinal evidence on gender belief stereotypes in advertising (cf. Kahn, 1996), the evidence linked to proposition P2 appears to match with the study of Fridkin and Kenney (2009) that noted minor changes in the issues advocated by male and female candidates. Particularly, the current study indicated differences in the issues incorporate in print political advertisements of MP candidates in Greece. It showed that female and male MP candidates tend to communicate to voters female and male issues, respectively. This appears to challenge the early work of Huddy and Terkildsen (1993) who suggested that longitudinal evidence may encounter similarities in issues emphasized by male and female candidates in their political agendas.

5. Conclusions

The findings of the current study provided interesting insights into the role of gender stereotypes across five general elections. As far as the first research objective is concerned, the evidence indicated that there is no statistical difference in the total of gender trait stereotypes used by MP candidates in their election campaigns in Greece. An analysis of data

over the five years suggested that there seems to be a convergence in gender traits stereotypes used by male and female MP candidates towards the masculine end. With respect to the second objective, the evidence suggested that there is no statistical difference in the total of gender belief stereotypes projected by male and female MP candidates in Greece. However, insights from Pearson correlation coefficient pointed out a tendency towards the use of female issues by female MP candidates. This theme is also reflected in the per year analysis of data that showed statistical differences in the issues associated with male and female MP candidates. To illustrate, data revealed that that social and foreign policy issues lie at the centre of attention for female while domestic issues are of priority for male MP candidates in Greece.

The contribution of this study is threefold. *First*, it sought to offer fresh insights into gender differences, if any, in political advertisements by drawing evidence from five national election campaigns between 1993 and 2007 in Greece. Viewed in this light, current study followed recommendations of political communication scholars (e.g. Kahn, 1996) and gender analysts (Bordo, 1995; Gill and Arthurs, 2006; Whelehan, 2000) who suggest that recent evidence is required in order to enrich the area of gender stereotypes and document trends with respect to changes, if any, in images of male and female candidates in print media. *Second*, gender stereotypes are emerging social constructions rendering the concept of time useful in their investigation (Wolin, 2003; Zinkhan 1994). The current study offered evidence from five national election campaigns in an attempt to illuminate the process of “gendering” notably whether and how stereotypes evolve in the Greek context over time. *Third*, gender stereotypes convey meanings that are not transparent rather than deep-seated, which require analysis of verbal and non verbal aspects of advertising messages (Goffman, 1979). The current study followed the philosophical underpinnings of Goffman (1979) who suggests that images about gender can be understood in various social contexts, including the political arena and are manifested in verbal and non verbal communication elements. By examining gender trait and gender belief stereotypes, it attempted to enhance depth and detail of content analyses of gender stereotypes in political advertising.

In addition to its contribution, this study suggests several directions for research. First, future studies may examine the associations between gender trait and gender belief stereotypes, which is a relatively under-explored theme. This study attempted to discuss the potential association between these two dimensions of gender stereotypes acknowledging however that such endeavour was beyond its scope. Future studies may conduct cross tabulation analyses in order to examine whether and to what extent these dimensions of stereotypes are connected.

Second, political advertising in other countries can be examined in order to investigate whether the results of the current study can be generalized in a broader setting. This may allow the accumulation of a greater number of advertisements for women MP candidates, which constitutes a limitation of the current study. Such a research endeavour may offer a comprehensive picture regarding male and female stereotyping in political advertising and explore factors that may inhibit progress toward role perceptions of genders in election campaigns. It can be complemented by longitudinal research that may illuminate whether and how representations of candidates in print advertising have changed over time.

Third, little research has been undertaken to investigate the existence of gendered-biased language, spoken or written, in political communication messages. This topic presents a research opportunity for marketing and political scientists to consider advertising language as an integral part of the entire advertising message, which complements and reinforces the pictorial elements of the advertisement. Towards this end, future studies may employ discourse analysis and semiotics in order to explore in greater depth the meaning of political advertisements on the basis of verbal communication.

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