

The role of national libraries in contributing towards the sustainable development goal of gender equality

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Abstract:

The sustainable development framework aims to promote goals which are environmental and economic but also social and societal. Among the seventeen goals, gender equality (the fifth) is interlinked with the others in a fundamental respect. Women, who represent more than half of the population and who are usually the primary educators, can be involved in the fulfillment of all these goals, on the condition that their equality is recognised.

European policy-makers quickly grasped the issues linked to gender equality, understanding their huge impact on development. As an example, in 2013, the French government created the 'High Council for Equality Between Women and Men' whose mission is to enlarge the issue of gender equality to all social spheres including the economic, political and cultural. In a context where women are still removed from both high responsibility positions and the cultural and creative fields and, where their place in these environments must be recognised, encouraged and favoured, libraries have an important role to play. As mentioned in the Declaration of Lyon, signed by many national libraries, access to information represents an integral part of the people's ability to blossom and to empower themselves. We can, then, wonder what the role of the Bibliothèque publique d'information (Bpi).

As national institutions have a central role in the library science networks of a country, especially regarding training, professional reflections, and the promotion of collections, and as they are places for experimentation, they offer numerous opportunities for gender equality promotion.

All the libraries can have a role to play in the sustainable development and especially in terms of gender equality defence. We will present here how they can lean on the national libraries to develop these issues.

Keywords: gender equality; sustainable development; national libraries, France, Bpi.

Introduction

The UNESCO sustainable development framework aims to promote goals (SDG) which are environmental and economic but also social. Among the seventeen goals, gender equality is interlinked with the others in a fundamental respect. Women, who represent more than half of the population, can be involved in the fulfilment of all these goals, on the condition that their equality is recognised.

In a context where women are still removed from both high responsibility positions and the cultural and creative fields and, where their place in these environments must be recognised, encouraged and favoured, libraries have an important role to play: access to information represents an integral part of the people's ability to thrive and empower themselves. Therefore we can question what the role of a library is, especially nationally important large-collection libraries such as, the French *Bibliothèque publique d'information (Bpi)*.

As national institutions have a central role in the library science networks of a country, especially regarding training, professional reflections of librarians, and the promotion of collections, and as they are places for experimentation, they offer numerous opportunities to promote gender equality. In the first part this article will discuss the role of sustainable development, gender and librarianship, in a French context. In the second part, using open access documentation from the Bpi, this study will establish a picture of the library's involvement in these areas with the help of quantitative data, which has been gathered and analysed for this paper.

This study aims to observe if the Bpi plays a role in the promotion of gender equality. Therefore there is a question of understanding whether this role is effective, and thus to understand if it comes down to the establishment's own investments or about choices under the influence of external factors.

1 - CONTEXT

A – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The notion of sustainable development appeared for the first time in 1987 in the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development of the United Nations (UN), chaired by Gro Brundtland and named "*Our common future*". It deals with a "*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.*"¹

From the year 2000, several Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have been defined by the UN in order to guide the actions of developed countries towards sustainable development. Twelve years after, as the MDGs had shown their limits, especially in terms of lack of consideration towards developing countries, a new dialogue took place leading to the definition of the 2030 Agenda.

From January 1st 2016 this new action plan came into effect. It was definitively approved in 2015 during the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit. It presents seventeen goals that countries will have to respect.

¹ Caraco, Alain. *Les bibliothèques à l'heure du développement durable*. Bulletin des bibliothèques de France (BBF), n° 3, 2008, p. 75-83. Disponible sur le Web : <<http://bbf.enssib.fr/consulter/bbf-2008-03-0075-010>>. ISSN 1292-8399>

In France, Sustainable development is under the responsibility of the ministry of Ecology, Sustainable development and Energy created in 2002. More specifically, its participation in sustainable development issues requires commitment and action towards a large part of French economic and social areas. Among them, importance is given to education and raising awareness of sustainable development, especially in schools.

Beyond this, French local and regional authorities take part in pushing the sustainable development agenda by setting up concrete actions within their jurisdictions as part of local Agenda 21 defined in 1992. In order to report its engagements, France publishes a report on the environment quadrennially, in which the evolution of its action and answers to social challenges are confronted.

This involvement in the social approach of sustainable development is characterized by the 2013 definition of a French strategy concerning gender, aimed at “*putting gender equality in a cross-cutting way at the heart of the French policy of development, in order to help men and women to equally receive the benefits of development.*”²

B – GENDER EQUALITY

To understand the manner in which public policy grasped the questions of gender equality, it is necessary to refer to the historical construction of the struggles in favour of women’s causes in society.

In France, the struggle for women’s emancipation was mainly being developed in the 19th century by the commitments of diverse associations and groups. It is only after the Second World War, however, that the enhancement of women’s conditions began to constantly and consistently increase. At the beginning of the 5th Republic, social progress for women was still backed by associations, and the tendency for a militant approach to feminist issues increases in the 1950’s with the emergence of feminist movements. During this period, groups and individuals start to understand that they have to go beyond militant and associative actions by integrating into political institutions. In fact, a solely militant approach is being reproached for its lack of knowledge about administrative culture, and by extension political culture, being the most likely source of an improvement to women’s conditions. In 1985, the position of minister of the woman’s rights [sic] was created.

From the inclusion of women in such dialogue, the betterment of women will be considered in every domain of social life and equal representation, equalisation of wages or juridical recognition will follow. Indeed, the chronology of political policy regarding women’s rights³ demonstrates a succession of laws aiming to improve the female condition with respect to intrinsic differences while also to favouring equality.

At the beginning of the 21st century, interministerial projects on the initiative of government bodies dedicated to women’s rights aim to put the question of women’s equality and rights into each ministry. In this frame, the ministry of Culture works to include these issues in every field of action linked to its sphere. Thus, since 2013, in the name of making visible the place of women in the cultural sphere, the department of prospective and statistics studies of the ministry has published annually the *Monitor of Equality Between Women and Men in Culture and Communication*.

While in France the notion of gender equality has been constructed, first through militant actions and subsequently, through public policies regarding women’s right in the social, economical and political sphere. This notion of gender equality is more apprehended by its fundamental character i.e. in terms of social progress in international institutions. Thus, gender equality has been written in the *Universal*

² Agence Française de Développement. *Le genre et la réduction des inégalités hommes-femmes, Cadre d’intervention transversal 2014-2017*. Paris : AFD, <http://www.afd.fr/webdav/shared/partenaires/CIT-genre.pdf>, 1er juin 2016

³ Chronologie, Les droits des femmes. droits des femmes, égalité hommes femmes, histoire, - Politiques publiques - repères - vie-publique.fr. (2015, juin 25). [text]. Consulté 2 juin 2016, à l’adresse <http://www.vie-publique.fr/politiques-publiques/droits-femmes/chronologie/>

Declaration of Human Rights of the UN⁴ since 1948, and from January, 1st 2016, this organisation brought into force seventeen SDG⁵ including aims for gender equality. Goal 5 states: “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls⁶.” The sustainable character of gender equality is justified as being one of the “necessary founding principles to institute a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world” and that “guaranteeing access for women and girls to education, to health care, to a decent work and to the representation in the process of political and economical decision-making will provide for the establishment of sustainable economies and will be beneficial to societies and the whole of humanity⁷.”

C - FRENCH LIBRARIANSHIP SPHERE

In order to understand the role of national libraries in France, it is necessary to briefly outline how the library system works.

French libraries can be under the supervision of three different types of administrative body⁸: the State, i.e. the different ministries, the local territories or companies and associations. Though their main mission is to make resources publically available and give access to information, French libraries serve many other functions.

Therefore, there are three national libraries which have a major role in the conservation of resources and are exemplars in terms of indexation and collections development. Placed under the supervision of the ministry of Culture and Communication, the BnF⁹ has a role of legal deposit whereas the Bpi is a place of experimentation and development for public reading. They are on the top of the pyramid for they play an important role in the cooperation between libraries of the whole country.¹⁰

University libraries offer vast quantities of resources broadcast and conservation and play a pedagogic role towards patrons. The ministries of Justice and Healthcare, coordinate the actions of hospital and prison libraries.

In contrast, public libraries and school libraries depend on the municipality whereas the Departmental borrowing libraries and Documentation and information centres are managed by the department. The supervision of these institutions depends on the will of the local elected representatives.

In these libraries, the question of gender equality is raised by groups or associations. For example, the focus group *Légothèque*, created by the Association of French librarians, focuses on the question of individual construction, sexual orientation or interculturality. The founding charter of the association underlines its desire to address these themes in order to “reconsider libraries’ missions, services, spaces and access to the collections.”¹¹ Therefore the initiatives concerning the themes of gender equality are raised by independent groups which are directly involved in libraries.

⁴ Article 2 de *La Déclaration universelle des droits de l’homme* | Nations Unies. (s. d.). Consulté 14 juin 2016, à l’adresse <http://www.un.org/fr/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

⁵ Organisation des Nations Unies (s. d.). *Objectifs de développement durable*. Consulté à l’adresse <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/fr/objectifs-de-developpement-durable/>

⁶ Organisation des Nations Unies (s. d.). *Objectif 5 : Parvenir à l’égalité des sexes et autonomiser toutes les femmes et les filles*. Consulté à l’adresse <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/fr/gender-equality/>

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ Tutelles des bibliothèques - Bibliothéconomie. (s. d.). Consulté 8 juin 2016, à l’adresse <http://bibliotheconomie.jimdo.com/typologie/tutelles-des-biblioth%C3%A8ques/>

⁹ BnF : Bibliothèque nationale de France

¹⁰ Christine Carrier, “*Mélanger les publics*”, propos recueillis par Véronique Heurtematte pour “Livres Hebdo”, <<http://www.bpi.fr/contents/christine-carrier--melanger-les-publics>> 1er juin 2016.

¹¹ *Texte Fondateur*. (2015, avril 19). Consulté 23 Juin 2016 à l’adresse <https://legothequeabf.wordpress.com/texte-fondateur/>

D - THE BIBLIOTHEQUE PUBLIQUE D'INFORMATION (BPI)

Opened in 1977 following a decree resulting from a interministerial will, the Bpi is a public establishment connected to the Georges-Pompidou National Art and Culture Center. It is characterised by encyclopaedic aspiration, cultural democratisation and open access. Its resources and services are inclined towards multimedia, news documentation and training. Since opening, its missions still follow the founding decree: “*the Bpi is a national library. Its mission is to offer, to all and as far as possible with open access, a constantly updated selection of collections, French and foreign, documents of general and current information; to constitute a documentary research centre linked with other centres, libraries and cultural establishments*”.¹² This policy of free access to the library since its opening has given the Bpi a wide reaching popularity. The Bpi is open 64 hours per week, offers open access collections and a staff trained in mediation between resources and patrons. With these new missions and its national character in the French librarianship sphere, the Bpi has become, year after year, the “model” library and a place of experimentation with new services. Indeed, “*for years, the Bpi was used as the “reference-library”, where librarians could come with their elected representatives, their architects and their partners whom can also see and be convinced.*”¹³ It is a model for the library policy-makers in the sense that it offers an approach oriented towards the patrons. The Bpi still claims a status of reference for all librarianship professionals today. Moreover, its website offers an entire section dedicated to professionals where it is possible to access various resources. The Bpi is also a publisher, it organises study-days and it is a place of debate for contemporary issues.

As for the notion of gender, within the frame of sustainable development, in the Bpi, it brings into question the involvement of this establishment regarding gender equality, which would bring to light a potential political commitment in favour of this notion.

Nevertheless, as a French public service, libraries have to conform to the principle of neutrality. Public services are based upon four immutable principles: continuity, equality, mutability and neutrality. Because they have a role in favour of the general interest, libraries have to be neutral in their relations to the patrons that they welcome and inform on an equal footing, but also neutral in their actions.

Neutrality in libraries is provided by the presence of diverse resources. Indeed, the point of neutrality is primarily linked to this diversity, viz. the requirement that French libraries provide the largest representation of points of view, topics, culture and the like. Libraries have to help patrons to develop critical thinking skills.

The librarian’s code of ethics underlines that “*librarians have to promote everyone’s reflection by providing collections marked by objectivity, impartiality and pluralism of opinion.*”¹⁴

¹² Décret n° 76-82 du 27 janvier 1976 portant sur la création de la bibliothèque publique d’information., 76-82 (1976).

¹³ Bertrand, A.-M., Bettega, É., Clément, C., & Melot, M. (2008). *Quel modèle de bibliothèque ? : séminaire*. Villeurbanne, France: Presses de l’ENSSIB.

¹⁴ *Code de déontologie du bibliothécaire*, ABF, consulté le 5 juin 2016 à l’adresse http://www.abf.asso.fr/fichiers/file/ABF/textes_reference/code_deontologie_bibliothecaire.pdf

2. RESULTS

As illustrated, policies undertaken by the Bpi are led by guidelines given by the government through its ministries. Thus, the decisions of the library are linked to state policy but also to the ideas of the librarianship. Indeed, as civil servants, the professionals are hired for their skills and knowledge but also to act as officers of public service. Although they are independent of political administrative supervision, the Bpi librarians follow the recommendations to some extent. For example, the general director of the Bpi is appointed by the minister in charge of culture.

Given that the Bpi shows a desire to promote gender equality through its signatory status to the Lyon Declaration and because the supervisory ministry is also invested in these issues, this study will address the actions implemented by the Bpi that demonstrate their commitments to advancement of the promotion of gender equality.

METHODS

In order to understand the role played by the Bpi in the issue of gender equality, the gathering of information lead first-of-all to browsing all the documentation produced on this theme. This showed that gender equality is not the object of attention for stakeholders in the French librarianship sphere, which therefore impacts the Bpi itself. None of the open access work explicitly points out the issue of gender equality and nor does the work illustrate a potential engagement of the structure of these issues.

The next step consisted of browsing and gathering data from the whole of the editorial production specific to the Bpi as well as related documents to create a dataset enabling analysis of the library's position. Thus, the study is mainly based on every open access document that was produced by the Bpi and available on the website: the activity reports from 2010 to 2015, the 2015 version of the documentation charter, the *Actu Bibliothèque* publications from January 2014 to April 2016, the e-zine *Balises* from the period May-June 2016, the monographs published since 1981 in the collections "Études et recherche" and "Paroles en réseau" in the Bpi's published catalogue, the *Festival du Film du Réel* website over the period May-June 2016, the organisation chart from September 2015, the quarterly magazine "De ligne en ligne" from March 2010 to April 2016 and the professional website during the period May-June 2016.

RESULTS

A first observation is visible from all of the analysed documents gives a first reading approach to the following results. None of the media use the epicene form which aims to promote gender equality through a neutral form when writing. Yet, the High Council for Women and Men's Equality published in November 2015 a *Practical Guide for a public communication without gender stereotypes*¹⁵ that is designed to remind about government recommendations in this regard.

Access to the archives of the publication *Actu Bibliothèques* is the opportunity to study the representation of women in the events programmes at the Bpi. The aim of analysis for this publication was to study the amounts of men and women as participants, guests or moderators, in the different types of events.

¹⁵ Haut Conseil à l'Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes. Guide pratique pour une communication publique sans stéréotype de sexe. Paris : HCE|fh, 2015. Consulté le 3 juin 2016, à l'adresse : http://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/hcefh_guide_pratique_com_sans_stereo- vf- 2015_11_05.pdf

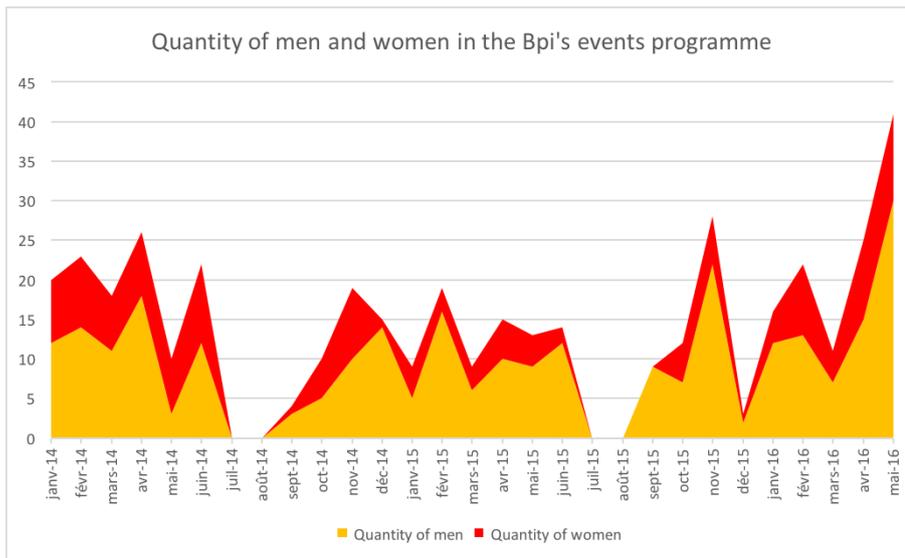


Figure 1 : Quantity of men and women in the Bpi's events programme.

The data (fig. 1) show that over this period, women represent 33% of the participants.

Since the creation of the Bpi, publishing has always been an activity of the library. Two of its collections are particularly well regarded and benefit from a digital spread on the publication platform OpenEdition. The first collection “*Études et recherche*”, offers a sociological approach on technological mutations and cultural practices. The second, “*Paroles en réseau*”, focuses on reporting meetings dealing with different professional and social issues. The data gathered is concerned with the amount of women, as author's statements of responsibility, (fig. 2 and fig. 3) and shows an underrepresentation. Indeed, in the first collection, 44% of the authors are women and in the second collection, 32% are women. Thus statistical analysis does not demonstrate an evolution in the objective of parity, as shown by the following charts :

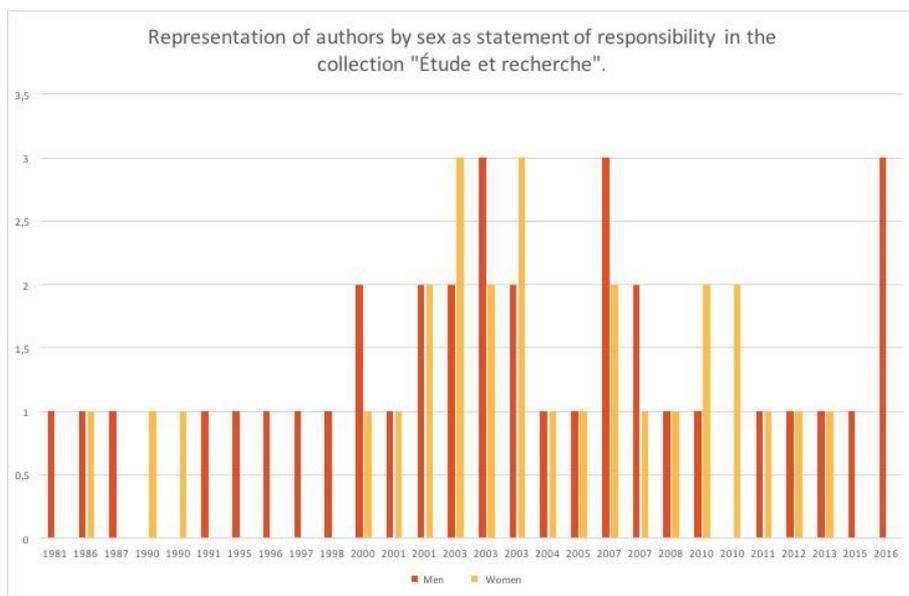


Figure 2 : Representation of authors by sex, as statement of responsibility in the collection “*Études et recherche.*”

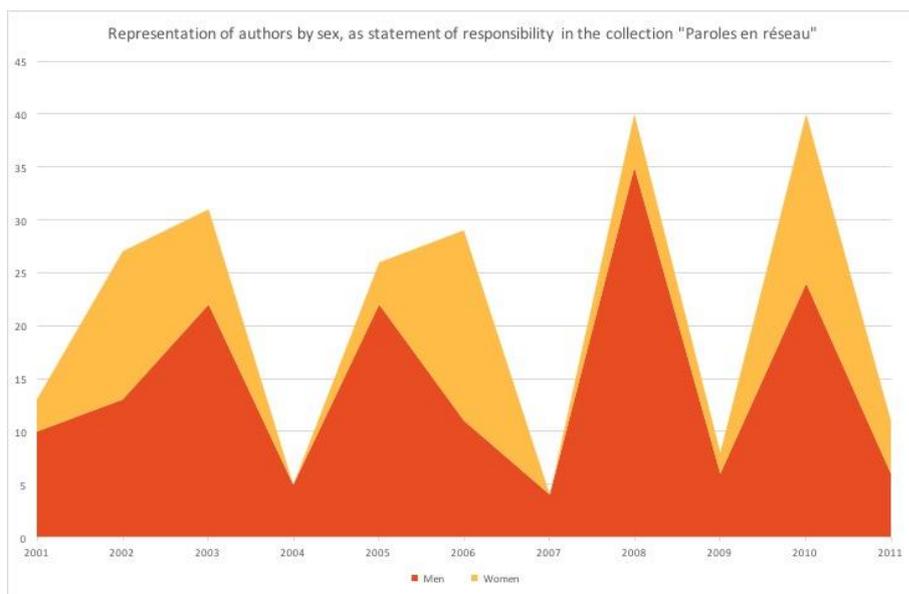


Figure 3 : Representation of authors by sex, as statement of responsibility in the collection “*Paroles en réseau.*”

Created in 2014, the Bpi e-zine offers patrons and readers a series of resources, articles, videos, sounds, portraits or chronicles about current topics¹⁶. Among the publications, there is a significant underrepresentation of female artists featured in the publications. (fig. 4)

¹⁶ Many of the other publications in this e-zine such as bibliographies, maps or slideshows have not been counted because there were no data concerning the gender in this type of resources.

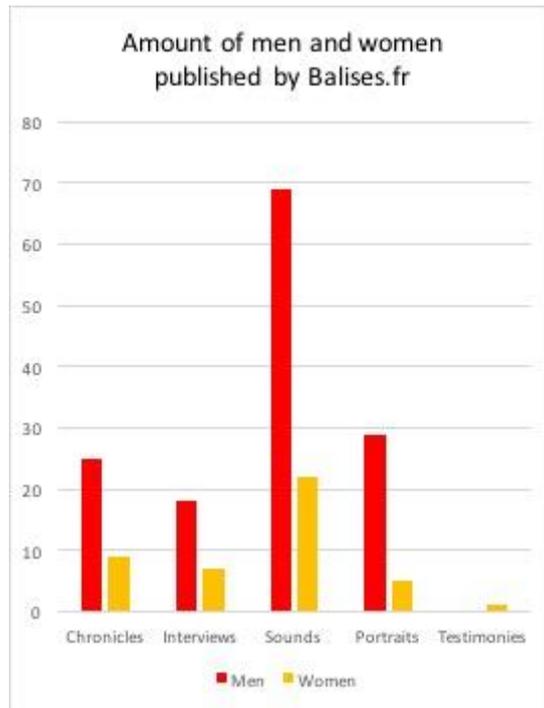


Figure 4 : Amount of men and women published by Balises.fr

Whereas twenty-five chronicles concern books written by men, only eight have been written by women. Moreover, a large discrepancy exists between the music clips offered where men are clearly overrepresented. In general the resources presented on *Balises.fr* discuss the work of male artists. The data can then be linked to the percentages, provided by the *Monitor of Equality Between Women and Men in Culture and Communication*, which underline the low presence of women in contemporary arts. In 2013 for example, only 26% of female artists were presented in the Regional collections of contemporary art or art centres.

Studying the *Festival du film du réel* Palmarès, organised annually in collaboration with the association *Les amis du cinéma du réel* has shown that the amount of men winning awards every year is greater than women.

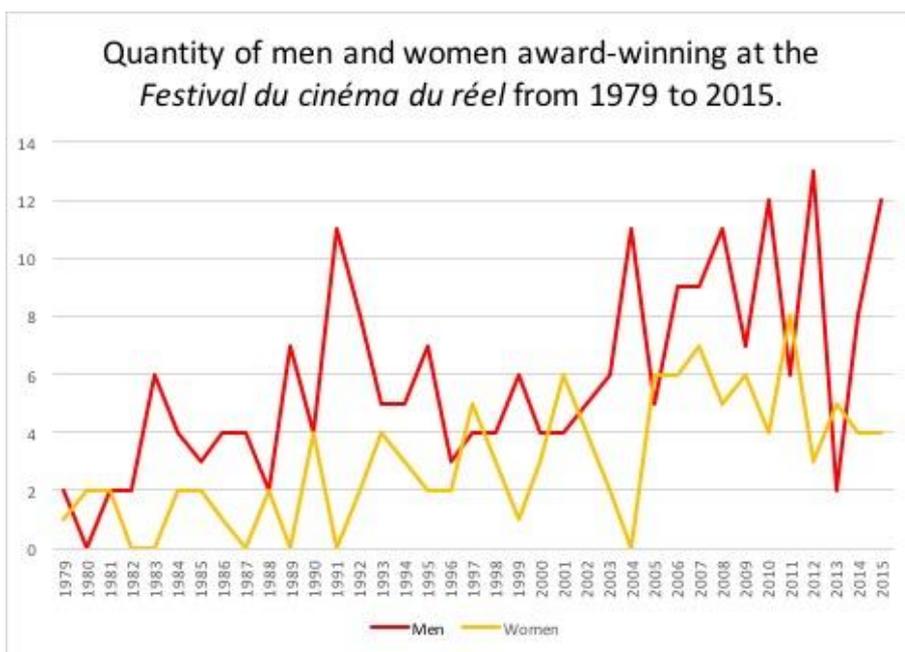


Figure 5 : Quantity of men and women award-winning at the *Festival du Réel* from 1979 to 2015..

The Bpi’s functional organisation chart is a tool to understand the organisational structure of the services and their heads. The amount of women who have held a position of responsibility as executives is shown in the following:

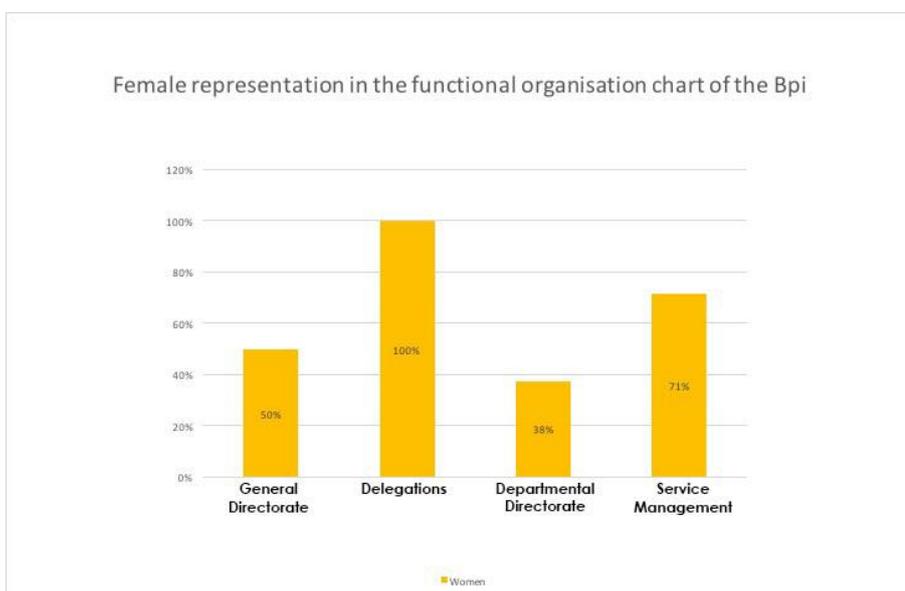


Figure 6 : Female representation in the functional organisation chart of the Bpi

This chart shows a high rate of women’s representation (fig. 6). The only category showing an underrepresentation is the departmental directorate. This high rate of representation, comparable to that of the BnF, can be explained by the fact that “power is, if not limited, at least divided among a large number of officers”¹⁷. It also stresses that, on the contrary, men are present in a larger proportion in structures “where their power is less attenuated.”

¹⁷ Forlani, Séverine. *Femmes, pouvoir et bibliothèques : l'accès aux hautes fonctions dans les bibliothèques françaises* [en ligne]. École nationale supérieure des sciences de l'information et des bibliothèques [enssib],

The organisation chart shows that parity has been reached at the general directorate level. Yet it is important to notice that of the nine directors of the library since its creation, only two women have held this position.

The quarterly magazine “*De ligne en ligne*” aims to give a report of the library’s news and to give the patrons a chance to voice their opinions. Every quarter, it publishes in-depth files and articles about society. The study of this documentation allow us to take a qualitative look at the content produced by the librarians and thus to define their points of view about gender equality issues. For example, among the twenty editions already published, several articles deal with gender, sex or women’s issues. The edition published in March 2010 dedicated itself to a file entitled “*Sex and creation*” that aims to show how art can favour the evolution of social standards that constrain women and men to assigned roles. The edition published in April 2014 shows the Bpi’s engagement in favour of minorities, especially the LGBT¹⁸, through the publication of an article concerning IFLA. The text underlines the importance of libraries to be able to follow societal changes in order to answer to everyone’s needs for access to the available resources in libraries.

The qualitative analysis of the resources produced by the e-zine Balises has shown that there are publications concerning gender, feminism and the equality of men and women. The interview section featured many women such as Nurith Aviv, the first woman to obtain a professional card to become a lead camera operator, or Oxana Shashcko a member of Femen whose life has been featured in the Alain Margot film *Femen*.

The bibliography category offers, along the same lines, a series of works that relate the history of abortion, and books concerning feminism, sexual identity or maternity are presented in the Chronicle category. For example, there is *Celle que vous croyez* by Camille Laurens, or *Toutes les femmes sont des aliens* by Olivia Rosenthal.

Furthermore, thanks to the “Questions/Answers” service, librarians have answered and relayed questions about the female condition, giving this theme more visibility, among them : “What are the steps that a female victim of domestic violence can follow?,” “What are the recent masculine points of view about feminism ?” and “How can women appropriate urban space and its culture?” have been answered.

Finally, the e-zine has also underlined the partnership between the Bpi and the “Editathon Art+ Feminism” project which aims to increase the number of publications about women and feminism on Wikipedia as only 10% of the contributors are women.

The activity report of the library published every year in order to underline the actions of the Bpi during the year testify to some initiatives taken to promote gender equality. The activity report from 2010 demonstrates some cultural manifestations of the gender theme or featuring women.

Especially since 2014, the year in which the library signed the Lyon Declaration and Christine Carrier became director, the Bpi offered two exhibitions about women. The *Duras song* presented a retrospective of Marguerite Duras in cinema and included meetings and readings. Then in 2015, the Bpi developed an exhibition of Claire Bretecher’s works. These two exhibitions honoured the presence of women at the heart of the cultural activities of the Bpi.

Moreover, the activity reports also underline the 2014 creation of the *New generation* space, and especially the *Graphic Saloon* in the Bpi. It’s a new space aimed at young people from 18 to 25 and it brings together resources about individuals, especially concerning issues of sexuality and society through big themes such as sexism.

janvier 2010 [consulté le 12 juin 2016]. Disponible sur le Web : <http://www.enssib.fr/bibliotheque-numerique/documents/48195-femmes-pouvoir-et-bibliotheques.pdf>

¹⁸ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender

The Bpi's documentation charter¹⁹ and plan for the evolution of the collection are closely linked to the global library project. These two documents are of an accrued importance, and so receive regular updates, on account of the exemplary character of the Bpi in relation to other public reading establishments in France. The Bpi aims to represent the whole of domains and objectives that the library has to achieve through the elaboration of 32 thematic sheets.

Above all, the documentation charter serves as a reminder of the principles that determine the document selection criteria for the collections. Among the criteria concerning ethics (p.23), it is said that sexism in the documentation is discriminatory: "*Illegal contents (racism or anti-Semitic apology, crime or incitement of criminal behaviour, historical revisionism, sexist discrimination...) should be the object of particular attention.*" Representation in the collections of notions linked to gender or sex is rather recent and appears clearly only in the thematic sheet *New Generation*, which is the latest collection holding. In the subsection *The Individual and Society*, the notion of identity appears thus: "*how to shape your personality, differences, sexual identity, genders, religious identity*" (p. 112). It also deals with issues of societal violence and especially sexism: "*The thematic dealing with the society are the following: societal violence (discrimination, sexism [...].*"

3. DISCUSSION

Before this study focuses on the involvement of the Bpi in gender equality issues, it is necessary to restate that while this library is committed to neutrality, it is still anchored in a political landscape.²⁰ Indeed, although the librarians aim for a certain neutrality in their performance, they are party to such guiding texts as the *UNESCO Manifesto for Public Libraries*, which offer widely recognised guidelines. In this regard, neutrality is relative. Agreeing to these fundamental principles is a political choice.

Thus, the Bpi doesn't express an obvious involvement through its different communication media but it helps, through its actions, the choices made by the political ministerial body. In France, the question of gender equality is carried by the ministry in charge of Women's Rights since 2012. In the same year, an interministerial committee²¹ launched an action plan which consisted of defining roadmaps for each ministry, including the ministry of Culture and Communication over the period 2015-2017. This document, which relies on (among others) the statistics documents from the *Monitor of Equality in Culture and Communication* from 2013, aims to implement genuine gender equality.

Moreover, the Bpi committed to the gender equality issue by signing the Lyon Declaration. This document asserts that access to information is a fundamental aspect for fulfilling SDG. Concerning gender equality, it clearly mentions the crucial place of gender equality in sustainable development. Indeed, the 2nd article says: "*Inequality is reduced by the empowerment, education and inclusion of marginalized groups, including women [...]*" and "*Gender equality, along with full social, economic and political engagement, can be significantly enhanced by empowering women and girls through equitable access to education.*"²²

This context shows that the Bpi indeed has a role to play in the promotion of gender equality. The question is now how to interpret these issues, that the Bpi has taken on, are an expression of its commitment.

¹⁹ La charte documentaire de la Bpi. (s. d.). Consulté 14 juin 2016, à l'adresse <http://www.bpi.fr/missions-et-organisation/la-charte-documentaire-de-la-bpi>

²⁰ Cristina Ion, *Les bibliothèques publiques et le modèle politique français*, BBF, consulté le 5 juin 2016 à l'adresse <http://bbf.enssib.fr/consulter/bbf-2011-02-0018-003>

²¹ Droits des Femmes : les feuilles de route ministérielles | Ministère des Familles, de l'Enfance et des Droits des femmes. (s. d.). Consulté 5 juin 2016, à l'adresse <http://www.familles-enfance-droitsdesfemmes.gouv.fr/dossiers/actions-dispositifs-interministeriels/droits-des-femmes-les-feuilles-de-route-ministerielles/>

²² The Lyon Declaration. (s. d.). Consulté 5 juin 2016, à l'adresse <http://www.lyondeclaration.org/>

Figure 1 on men and women in the Bpi's events programme shows a female representation of 23%. The participants being, primarily, people from the cultural and political spheres, these results can be compared with statistics concerning women's representation in the same sphere in France. In 2013, women represented 26%²³ of researchers in public and company research. In 2012, women represented 20%²⁴ of the artistic programme.

Figure 5 showing the amount of men and women receiving awards at the *Festival du Film du Réel* from 1979 to 2015 details the existing disparity between women and men in cinema. Indeed, women have been awarded 33.8%. The data resonates with the available data from the Cannes Festival which shows that in the last 68 editions, only one woman received the supreme award.²⁵

Thus, the two previous comparisons show that the rate of women who are present in the Bpi's programme is far from being egalitarian and reflects a reality that exists at the national scale in those same cultural and research spheres.

This first part of the study aimed at analysing the results in a quantitative way demonstrates a trend of underrepresentation of women in the Bpi's field of activity. Yet, the study of different documents available on the Internet offers a more qualitative approach in terms of content.

Thus, although the notion of gender equality appears in the documentation and in the cultural action undertaken by the Bpi, the results linked to the open access data show that they are only isolated acts. Because of the absence of a strong library policy, lack of coordination is visible between the different departments: the issue is mentioned in only one category, entitled *New Generation* and doesn't have an equal representation in the publishing or in the cultural programme.

Even if governmental willpower wants to create "real equality" between men and women and as the Bpi is publicly engaged in these issues through its signature to the Lyon Declaration, these data raise questions about the divestment of this national library. As it has already been mentioned, the library profession is traditionally characterised by neutrality. Working to promote gender equality can be considered as an engagement that won't be compatible with a striving for neutrality.

As stated in the policies followed by the structure, the Bpi's missions are to aspire to develop universalism and up-to-date information in terms of collections and cultural actions. To some extent, this is a reflection of society. For this same reason, data analysis is a way to show that the Bpi follows the general trends undertaken by the whole of society. The 2016 edition of the key numbers concerning equality between women and men²⁶, published by the ministry in charge of women's rights, shows that the equality is more about a formal consensus than a real practice of defending gender equality.

This is indeed the state the Bpi is in. It doesn't have the role of initiating reform that is suggested by its position with regard to the national socio-political landscape. On the contrary, the Bpi follows the movement of French society.

²³ Insee - Entreprises - Chercheurs de la recherche publique et des entreprises en 2013. (s. d.). Consulté 12 juin 2016, à l'adresse http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/tableau.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=NATCCF13203

²⁴ Observatoire 2014 de l'égalité entre femmes et hommes dans la culture et la communication - Égalité entre femmes et hommes - Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication. (s. d.). Consulté 12 juin 2016, à l'adresse <http://www.culturecommunication.gouv.fr/Politiques-ministerielles/Egalite-entre-femmes-et-hommes/L-Observatoire/Observatoire-2016-de-l-egalite-entre-femmes-et-hommes-dans-la-culture-et-la-communication>

²⁵ Durand, A.-A. (2016, mai 11). Au Festival de Cannes, 69 éditions et toujours une seule Palme d'or féminine. *Le Monde.fr*. Consulté à l'adresse http://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2016/05/11/au-festival-de-cannes-les-femmes-realisatrices-ne-sont-pas-a-la-fete_4917579_4355770.html

²⁶ Vers l'égalité réelle entre les femmes et les hommes – Chiffres-clés – Édition 2016 | Ministère des Familles, de l'Enfance et des Droits des femmes. (s. d.). Consulté 23 juin 2016, à l'adresse <http://www.familles-enfance-droitsdesfemmes.gouv.fr/publications/egalite-entre-les-femmes-et-les-hommes/vers-legalite-reelle-entre-les-femmes-et-les-hommes-les-chiffres-cles-lessentiel-edition-2016/>

CONCLUSION

After exploring the inherent obstacles to sustainable development, gender and librarianship issues, the first step of this study was to analyse, in terms of quantity, the open access data from the Bpi and to understand to what extent women's representation in their data allows the expression of a certain commitment from the Bpi towards gender equality. It is clear from the results that there is not presently an exemplary gender equality. Therefore, there is a necessary requirement to comparison with data from other open sources in society. In some way, the Bpi is a reflection of the given society. Moreover, because of the interministerial commission and the Lyon Declaration, it doesn't seem relevant, with regards to the data, to analyse the Bpi's commitment to gender equality through this lens due to their recent implementation.

Thus, as the results derived from these data show a lack of relevance, it is necessary to discuss this exemplary role through a qualitative examination of the Bpi's available data. The analysis of those same media reveal the position held by the Bpi regarding gender equality.

Though, while the Bpi is indeed a cultural establishment aware of its exemplary status on a national level, it seems that the gender equality issue is taken into consideration through isolated initiatives of its documentary policy and cultural action. Indeed, the study does not demonstrate any will coming from the directorate of the establishment to implement a strong initiative in favour of gender equality.

The Bpi doesn't show that it particularly commits to the goal of gender equality as understood in the Goal 5 of the SDGs, and furthermore it is necessary to note that the statement of the goal itself doesn't account for people who do not identify themselves within a binary vision of gender. Therefore, this fact also results in their exclusion. The desires of the LGBT community are intricately linked to the desire for gender equality. And, for reason of their position in the political and socio-cultural landscape it is imperative to consider them in the issue of equal access, consideration and representation in the Bpi and further afield.

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