

Gender inequalities in the music industry in Spain: A mixed methodology study

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ABSTRACT

In today's music industry, many female workers live experiences of injustice and inequality that, whether perceived or not, are caused by and simultaneously affect both the system of music production relationships and daily their lives. These experiences are already evident from the state of ignorance associated with the absence of databases and records of economic activities by disaggregated by sex in this industry. This article attempts to answer a question: how can we investigate the possible experiences of gender injustices and inequalities when there are no official records to shed light on the basic structures that order the relationships of production affecting daily life? This is even more true now that there is ample evidence of the historical inequality of women compared to men in most labour fields. Therefore, the mixed methodology we used here responds to the injustice and epistemic ignorance underlying the present structure of labour relations and family reconciliation. This approach allowed us to undertake an exploratory and descriptive analysis of the situation of women in the music industry from this initial premise. The aim of this work arose from the need to present and justify the use and procedures of a mixed qualitative and quantitative methodology as a necessary tool to research the situation of female workers in the music industry in Spain.

Keywords: epistemic injustice, gender inequality, music industry, methodologies

SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

This article stems from trying to answer a simple question: what is the situation of female workers in the music industry (MI) in Spain? Under the umbrella of the Asociación Mujeres de la Industria Musical (Association of Women of the Music Industry, or MIM) and the Carlos III University of Madrid, in 2019, we began to develop research that would answer this question. On the one hand, we suspect this situation will have now worsened following the global COVID-19 pandemic that affected every economic sector of society, especially those circumscribed around the cultural leisure industry. On the other hand, all social injustice correlates with what we can call epistemic injustice

(Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013), which encompasses ignorance and the inability to name and attribute meaning to experiences of inequality and injustice that are experienced, thus preventing recognition of the possible relationships of domination that are present (Young, [1990] 2000).

The main problem we were forced to face was the inexistence of official records and databases that could show us the structural context of women, distribution of their positions in the MI, salaries, and other sociological variables. In other words, there is a lack of information about them from sources that can describe the population structure. How can problems of inequality and injustice be recognised

when there are no sources to draw upon to understand the material and fundamental forms of the relationships of production and social reproduction?

Thus, lack of knowledge and ignorance became the main problem, forcing us to rethink this research, in both epistemological and methodological terms. Thus, we moved towards an exploratory and descriptive analysis of the world and population under investigation. We also performed a qualitative analysis of the experiences reported by female agents in the industry. The objective of this article was to present how we responded, through mixed-method techniques, to the discovery of this other question underlying the inequality relationships that affect women in the world of work. Starting from the initial hypothesis that women, as with other industries and the labour market in general, find themselves in a situation of inequality that is as historical as it is present. We believe that this makes them less likely to reach certain employment and socio-economic positions than men, even despite having better qualifications.

LIMITING THE QUESTION OF INEQUALITY

The situation of women within the different cultural industries has been the subject of debate for some time now, to the point of leading UNESCO, in 2019, to urge the United States to adopt a series of measures. On the one hand, methods to support the work and presence of women in all cultural industry activities related to the creation and production of cultural goods and services. Furthermore, for the development of a legal and legislative framework in accordance with the need for greater gender equality. On the other hand, appeals were made to develop monitoring systems to evaluate the levels of representation, participation, and access of women to the different sectors and structures of the cultural industry with the aim of ensuring that the “National and international laws on human rights and fundamental freedoms are implemented and promote gender equality and artistic freedom” (Unesco, 2019).

This institutional initiative, which could be broadly framed within policies of recognition and redistribution (Fraser, 1990), stems from the different studies that have been conducted in recent decades on the situation of injustice experienced by women in terms of their emancipation and individual development on an equal footing with men. Thus, we find research that tells us about the existence of the social phenomenon known as the ‘glass ceiling.’ This is a metaphorical term that appeared for the first time in 1986 in *The Wall Street Journal* and which describes the difficulties that qualified women encounter in advancing professionally in the same way as men (Sarrió et al., 2002; Cotter et al., 2001; Faniko et al., 2017). This is a statistical reality that, when plotted, shows the employment trajectories of men and women in any given sector and which takes the form of ‘scissors.’ Globally across all sectors, women outperform men in terms of training, but when they reach mid-career levels, men follow an upward trajectory, while women, at ages associated with childbearing, stagnate or nearly disappear from the graphic.

These differences in job promotion behaviours have also been called a ‘leaky pipeline,’ because some of these women move from full-time to part-time work or leave the labour market altogether for varying amounts of time, or even indefinitely (Jiménez and Fernández, 2016; Vázquez-Cupeiro, 2015; Clark Blickenstaff, 2005). The concept of the ‘sticky floor’ also appears because women who continue full-time do not change their job, and so they do not assume positions of greater responsibility and seem to renounce promotion strategies (Fernández et al., 2015; Gómez Escarda et al., 2016; Yap and Konrad, 2009). Finally, it is worth mentioning ‘horizontal segregation’ (Bezunartea-Valencia et al., 2014), as a practice whereby women are relegated to certain jobs because they are considered to be more apt or appropriate to perform a certain function due to their gender (Barberá et al., 2011; Ibáñez, 2017).

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In Spain, the fight against direct discrimination such as, for example, the dismissal or non-hiring of pregnant women, parity in paternity leave and equal pay, etc. is now a matter of public knowledge and is a reality in most public institutions as well as in private companies. However, despite this, as Torns et al. (2002) showed, there is still a long way to go to understand the existence of the phenomena of injustice and inequality referred to above. Even more so, if possible, in the cultural industries and MI in particular.

Within this cultural sector, today we can find important reference work such as the one presented by the European Expert Network on Culture and Audiovisual (EENCA) in 2019¹. In their report, the EENCA compiled data from several previous studies that establish a clear picture of imbalance in the music sector at a global level. This study mentions pay gap statistics in the United Kingdom, whose government, by law, collects data from companies with more than 250 employees and which, in 2019, established that

there was an average 29% pay gap across the three major record labels (Universal, Sony, and Warner)². Likewise, UK Music, the representative body of the British MI, presented its quantitative report on the diversity of the workforce in the British MI. However, this work merely provided percentages of ethnicity and gender within the MI (UK Music, 2018).

Also in 2018, the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative published another paper on inclusivity in the recording studio. It looked at the gender and ethnicity of artists, songwriters, and producers on 600 songs from 2012 to 2017. The headline of the study in this regard was clear “women are missing in music industry creative roles” with 22.4% female artists, 12.3% female composers, and 2% female producers (Smith, Choueiti, and Pieper, 2018) working on the songs analysed. In 2015, the Women in Music Association of Canada, under the title *A profile of Women Working in Ontario’s Music Industry* (Women in Music & Nordcity, 2015), presented a survey of men and women that helped present a profile of women working in the MI in the Ontario region, most of whom were engaged in marketing and promotion, event production, and management roles, with a significant under-representation in music production and business development roles. Regarding management positions, the survey showed that only 23% were held by women and in 48% of the companies surveyed women were not included in the executive positions.

In Spain, the debate on the issue of gender inequality in this area has increased in recent years, especially as the result of campaigns by women through different pressure groups and associations (Marinas 2019). At the level of civil society, the organisations

1 *Gender gaps in the Cultural and Creative Sectors (with the exception of the audio-visual sector)*. The European Expert Network On Culture and Audiovisual was established in 2015 as a consortium between the consultancy Panteia and the SMIT (Studies in Media, Innovation, and Technology) programme at the Vrije University of Brussels; it is funded by the European Commission.

2 Further details on these figures can be found in the following news item: <https://www.musicbusinessworldwide.com/revealed-what-major-labels-are-paying-women-compared-to-men-in-the-uk/>, (musicbusinessworldwide, 2019). In addition, the report generated by Warner Music on the wage gap: https://www.wmg.com/sites/g/files/g2000004716/f/201904/WARNER%20MUSIC%20UK_GPG_REPORT_2019.pdf can also be consulted (Warner Music Group, 2019).

that promoted this work were the MIM, Asociación Clásicas y Modernas (Classical and Modern Association), Asociación Mujeres en la Música (Women in Music Association), Asociación de Mujeres Creadoras de Música en España (Association of Women Music Creators in Spain), and the Fundación de la Sociedad General de Autores y Editores (Foundation of the General Society of Authors and Publishers, or SGAE Foundation). This was accompanied by research on the situation of women in symphony orchestras (Soler, 2017; Noya and Setuain, 2010), or the study *Dónde están las mujeres en la música sinfónica?* (Where are women in symphony music?) by the Classical and Modern Association (2019) and promoted by the same alongside the Women in Music Association, Association of Women Music Creators in Spain and SGAE Foundation. In addition, in 2010, the musicologist Pilar Ramos presented an interesting problematisation in her article *Luces y sombras en los estudios sobre las mujeres y la música* (Lights and shadows in studies of women and music; Ramos, 2010). Another study from 2017 by the Women and Music Collective examined the percentage of women artists at music festivals in Spain. It is also worth highlighting the debate on sexist attitudes in the media (Diagonalperiodico.net, 2013; Rockdelux.com, 2013), addressed by Rodríguez, G. S. (2008) and Gonem, F. R. (2012), among others. Or in the case of internet communication media, by Ureta, A. (2005).

THE UNDERLYING PROBLEMS AND A NEW EPISTEMOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE ISSUE

Despite the aforementioned work, little academic research in Spain has dealt with the situation of women in the MI in particular, with the majority of works of reference produced in the international sphere showing us the ongoing material structure of inequalities in the industry in question. While at the national level, we only find statistics such as those produced by the Ministry of Culture and Sport. Their Yearbook of Cultural Statistics (Spanish Ministry of Culture and Sport, 2019a) stated that

in 2018, women occupied 45.5% of all cultural jobs. In turn, the Survey of Cultural Habits and Practices 2018/2019 (Spanish Ministry of Culture and Sport, 2019b) reported that 69.5% of women usually listened to music every day compared to 71.6% of men. Of note, the aforementioned surveys, Spanish National Classification of Economic Activities (CNAE), and organisations such as the National Statistics Institute (INE) offer data on what could be called the MI. In other words, its agents, their activities, management positions, and a record of their working conditions disaggregated by gender. However, this is, by no means, a qualitative perspective of the experience of inequality and its implications in daily life, in daily agency, or the expectations of these workers.

Thus, we observe that, in addition to the aforementioned phenomena of inequality and injustice that affect women, there is another underlying problem that has not yet been considered that also affects the academic research that is and could be conducted. In Spain, there is, first of all, a notable difficulty in recognising and understanding the material and objective situation of women in the MI, which stems from the way in which public and private institutions collect, organise, and record information on the socio-economic sector of the MI. Secondly, few studies have explored the qualitative aspects of experience, such as the knowledge, expectations, decisions, and imaginaries present in the everyday agency and life stories of women workers in the MI, as well as the structural situation of inequality in which they find themselves immersed. We hypothesise that this gives rise to a situation of epistemic and symbolic injustice (Fricker, 2007) in that it makes it difficult to recognise the objective forms of inequality and discrimination experienced in the MI.

To date, the measures proposed by UNESCO in 2019 have not been complied with in Spain. This framework reflects the sense of injustice and rejects the premise of political neutrality of any state. Indeed, this situation reproduces forms of epistemic

ignorance (Medina, 2013) about how historical social and cultural structures have harmed women's freedom and equality with respect to men in terms of recognition and redistribution (Fraser and Honneth, 2006; Hess and Ostrom, 2007). This has limited their access to the most relevant social positions and roles in society (Mackinnon, 1987; Kymlicka, 1995).

Neither state nor civil society institutions have records of the gender distributions of the sociological variables of labour relations in the MI. This fact, in the first instance, seriously impairs our knowledge of and ability to recognise and intervene in historical and present gender inequality relations and possible reconciliation measures (Radcliffe Richards, 1980; Carrasco et al., 2003; Treas, 2008; Ajenjo and García, 2014; Moreno, 2015). In other words, these data are fundamental to understanding discrimination in the working world, given that to avoid the problems of epistemic and symbolic injustice towards women, we must be able to understand the cultural factors constructing the sexual division of labour inside and outside working hours. Without such records, uncovering the subjective experiences of the individuals, and even research participants themselves, is quite difficult.

Professional practices and discourses are not fixed but rather, change and transform, through social interactions, according to the time and place. Therefore, if recognition of care work comes into play in the reconciliation between personal and work life, in the MI we must explore the recognition of women as professionals capable of holding positions of authority as experts in their respective fields (Del Val et al., 2014). This is also the result of what the anthropologist Victoria Sau already pointed out, that “the signs of identity and culture are given by exclusively male categories, as if women woke up from a dream in each generation and found that, while they slept, men had done everything” (Sau, 1993. p. 13) while women had not.

All this shows us the crucial importance of understanding the social and epistemic structure of

society in order to understand the narratives, categories, and experiences that are articulated. This is provided that not only a relationship of inequality is reproduced, but its main mechanism is also embedded in inherited ignorance or knowledge about what it means to be a woman—her capacities, and the possibilities of her agency—as well as what is ignored about these experiences of inequality. In this way, both knowledge and ignorance appear as the greatest resource for the exercise of domination, given that “ignorance and opacity act in collusion or competition with knowledge in activating currents of energy, desire, products, meanings, and people” (Sedgwick, 1998, p.14). Cultural patterns are those that set the guidelines for professional recognition (Sau, 1993; Bryson, 1996).

A mixed methodology as a response to the problematic lack of knowledge

Contextualising the issue, the main problem we encountered when investigating the situation of women working within the framework of the MI, was (and still is) the lack of a census in Spain on workers and specifically, those in the MI, as well as a clear definition of the structure of the latter. Thus, this is the basis of studies and research on the experiences of the injustices and inequalities, which also seem to be present in other industries. However, the previously mentioned works pay more attention to the sociological structure of the industry, while the data on music consumption by women as well as their presence in the MI quantitatively reflect a situation in which they occupy fewer managerial positions. These data also highlight the structural variables of social class, educational level, gender, origin, and age. While the latter are still crucial in the constitution of an egalitarian framework in the industry, they do not reflect the lived experience of female workers in the MI.

The challenge we faced was therefore twofold: first, to carry out an exploratory investigation and analysis of the structure of the industry and the range of people populating it. This was so that

our incursion into this world would be done with a minimum level of rigour. Second, we wanted to simultaneously compile and analyse testimonies about experiences within this structure. Therefore, developing a combined methodology between quantitative and qualitative techniques seemed to be the most optimal protocol, given our position and objectives, as well as the dense nature of the problems addressed (Mendizábal, 2018). A survey was required to address the underlying missing structural data, including in relation to the gender distribution of the sociological variables present in studies already published in regard to the main issues and phenomena of gender inequality. However, as addressed from the new theoretical framework, qualitative research was also essential to collect the testimonies and experiences lived and recognised within the MI structure we explored.

In addition, and as also argued by Greene (2008), in relation to the theoretical framework we presented, a mixed methodology (MM) was best able to combine the four domains that underpinned our method: philosophy, techniques, practical guidelines for research design, and socio-political commitments. Because of its flexibility and pragmatism—a constitutive foundation of its inherent methodological pluralism (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004)—MM allowed us to design a research framework appropriate to the question we were addressing. In turn, this allowed us to better capture and understand the different experiences and ways of seeing, hearing, and understanding the social world. Thus, the dialogue both between the different steps of the research (design, approach to the object, data collection, analysis, and combination of techniques) and the different voices that may be present in the research could be optimised (Mendizábal, 2018; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007)³.

3 Continuing with Mendizábal (2018, p. 8), “the central premise is that the use of the qualitative and quantitative approach, in combination, provides a better understanding of the research problems, than a monomethod approach”.

As stated by Mendizábal, MM is not a novelty today⁴. Since the paradigmatic work compiled by Tashakkori and Teddlie, (2003), in the wake of this methodology a multitude of recent research and investigation has followed. This guides the approach researchers trace when tackling a complex research object or phenomenon from a non-linear and eclectic perspective. We can summarise the steps and virtues of this method in the following points. First, it allows researchers to approach, collect, and measure the same phenomenon simultaneously and independently; this results in complementarity between methods, which allows not only the contrast of results but also for gaps, paradoxes, and even contradictions or unexplainable aspects of each approach to be covered. Thus, each method allowed us to improve the design and further development of the technique as we proceeded. For example, an in-depth interview allowed us to improve the elaboration of a survey, and vice versa (Pole, 2009; Mendizábal, 2018). This not only broadened the scope and breadth of the research, but also expanded it, opening it up to a wider range of research and applications in the socio-political, economic, and historical contexts (Morse, 2003).

4 In this respect it is important to cite the pioneering work of Yin, R.K. (1984). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Beverly Hills, Ca. Sage. As well as that of Greene, J.C., Caracelli, V.J., and Graham, W.F. (1989). Toward a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs. *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*, 11 (3), 255–274. In Spain we can also cite the pioneering works of Verd, J., and Lozares, C. (2016). Introducción a la investigación cualitativa: fases, métodos y técnicas. [Introduction to Qualitative Research: Phases, Methods, and Techniques.] Madrid, La Muralla. As well as by Verd, J.M.; Lopez Roldan, P. (2008). La ciencia teórica y metodológica de los diseños multimétodo [The Theoretical and Methodological Science of Multi-Method Designs], *Empiria, Revista de Metodología de Ciencias Sociales*, 16: 13–42; Bolibar, MM; Joel-Lozares, C. (2013). Aplicaciones de los métodos mixtos al análisis de las redes personales de la población inmigrada [Applications of mixed methods to the analysis of the personal networks of the immigrant population.] *Empiria, Revista de Metodología de Ciencias sociales* 26.

THE RESEARCH DESIGN

As we have explained, the initial difficulty to overcome was that our research participants were defined as a ‘hidden population’, or what we could call ‘hard to reach’ (Aldana and Quintero, 2008; Castro and Yañez, 2012; Baltar and Gorjup, 2012), meaning that drawing a sample of this group through simple random sampling techniques or any other probability sampling technique was difficult. Given this framework, the second problem was that it also seemed unfair to approach the exploration of the internal structure of the MI without also considering the understanding and agency of the individuals within it. We therefore had to gain objective knowledge of the experience and problems recognised by its agents, as well as the inequalities that the structure of production and reproduction relationships within the MI could offer us.

Objectification of the experience and structure had to be addressed in a combined way, so as not to fall into empiricist objectivism (Bourdieu et al., 2002) or risk the subjectivism already denounced by Mead (Carolina Agoff and Cristina Herrera, 2019). We therefore developed an initial framework of the structure of the MI based on data compiled by the MIM Association (from information provided by its partners) about some of the main associations in the sector⁵. The method consisted of identifying companies and workers through the MIM. In a second instance we contacted the companies and contacts obtained from this initial list, asking them in turn, for new contacts within the sector. Thanks to this, we were able to access more than 90 companies in Spain and 1,547 workers whose activity formed part of the MI. We also came into contact with self-employed, freelance, and other types of MI activities. Although the companies

belonging to these associations and their workers did not represent the industry as a whole, they did provide an initial snapshot of the gender distribution of the work roles, which we used to identify the relationships set out in table 1:

Table 1 Data provided by Aie Organo Conjunto de Recaudación de Artistas y Productores C.B. (Aie Joint Organisation for the Collection of Artists and Producers, or AGEDI), AEDEM, APM, and ARTE and compiled by MIM (table elaborated by the authors).

	Women	Men	Total
Chair	96	163	259
Management	18	20	38
Operatives	642	608	1250
Total	756	791	1547

A broader view would use a snowball sampling technique to consider the music sector itself, as well as the status of its partners and contacts, to give us an idea of both the study population and that of the MI. Here we refer to activities involving the circulation of both recorded and live music. This includes the activities of companies, people, or institutions such as creators and artists, associations, companies related to legal representation, digital distributors or aggregators, music publishers, companies involved in marketing and promotion, representation and management, and live music or venues, as well as management entities, recording studios, music festivals, phonographic labels, and record shops or e-commerce. In addition, we must also consider activities not directly linked to the MI but with clear synergies with it such as educational institutions, television, film or advertising producers, video game producers, or the media.

These are all activities that, in general, were circumscribed in a distribution of hierarchical functional positions which revealed a prior gender inequality. While there is near gender parity of male and female employees in the MI (see the totals shown in table 1), there was still a male majority, with the gap also

5 The Asociación de Promotores Musicales (Association of Music Promoters, or APM), Asociación de Productores Musicales de España (Association of Music Producers of Spain, or PROMUSICAE), Asociación de Representantes Técnicos del Espectáculo (Association of Technical Performance Representatives, or ARTE), and Asociación Española de Editores de Música (Spanish Association of Music Publishers, or AEDEM).

widening in favour of men in managerial positions (chairs and management) and towards women in operational positions. This led us to hypothesise that it was more than plausible that we were seeing evidence for the glass ceiling, leaky pipe, sticky floor, and horizontal segregation phenomena. But the question remained, what dynamics, processes, and characteristics described or made this distribution possible? More importantly, how was this unequal distribution and its possible characteristics experienced, understood, and recognised? Going even further: how did it affect the life expectations and social imaginaries (Pintos, 1995; Taylor, 2006; Castoriadis, 2007) present in the daily lives and constitutive of the social order of individuals in this industry?

Once this first phase of this work was over, we proceeded to structurally design (Ibañez, 1992, Verd and Lozares, 2016) discussion groups to show the discursive productions of MI the workers. In other words, to expound the expectations, experiences, and imaginaries present according to the socio-logically relevant axes of their contractual situation (stable-temporary), age, educational level, and family burdens. In a subsequent step, these groups helped us to design a survey that would make this foray into the hidden population of women in the MI both a descriptive analysis and a small generalisation of our initial objective: to uncover the situation of female workers in the MI. Thus, we attempted to elaborate the focus groups through the already defined network, according to the structural variables of age, contract type, education level, and maternity status—variables collected in the studies mentioned in our research framework. Thus, we were able to build four research groups with the following distributions:

G1: women with an indefinite contract, young adults (20–40 years), 50% with a university level education, 50% mothers.

G2: women with a temporary contract or self-employed, young adults (20–40 years), 50% with a primary or secondary level education, 50% mothers.

G3: women with an indefinite contract, older adults (40–60 years), 50% with a university level education, 50% mothers.

G4: women with a temporary contract or self-employed, older adults (40–60 years), 50% with a primary or secondary level education, 50% mothers.

These groups were distributed among the cities of Barcelona, Madrid, Valencia, and Bilbao and comprised 37 MI workers and employees in record companies, management companies, journalists, and technicians as well as artists, with 6, 12, 15, and 4 people in each group and city, respectively. Thus, we achieved a high degree of homogeneity by age, education level, and employment status but found a number of drawbacks that could have been indicative either of an intrinsic characteristic of the MI or, on the contrary, a characteristic of our population. The most precarious contractual situation (most temporary) was found in the Valencia group; in terms of family responsibilities, there were few maternities, with the ratio being three to one. Lastly, the Bilbao discussion group only included four participants because two individuals did not come, although a balanced composition was still achieved, and the conversation was fluid. In turn, in Valencia, our expectations were exceeded because of the enthusiasm of the participants who came with last-minute companions from the industry. This was not a problem, beyond lengthening the discussion transcript.

The conversation structure was semi-open-ended, and we developed a script in advance (divided into five questions in different topic areas for subsequent generalisation) that could help encourage discussion among the participants in relation to the issues at hand, their expectations, and work and personal experiences. The first question, “for you, what are the advantages and disadvantages of being a woman in the music industry?,” was about the subjective perception and assessment of women in the MI. From here, the aim was to elaborate a

discussion that would shed light on the functional positions they occupied, the roles played, and the distribution of these roles by areas. These data were particularly useful to discover the phenomenon of horizontal segregation and possible feminisation (and masculinisation) of certain functional positions and social roles.

The second question, “which occupational, social, and cultural factors, in a broad sense, do you think have the most obvious impact on your career?”, addressed the perceptions and imaginaries of possible career determinants. The aim of this question was to discover the presence and importance placed by these women on classic structural variables related to their career paths and careers. These included training, years of experience, access to social capital and networking (mentors and personal contacts), work culture, family burdens, forms of employment (precariousness, temporary nature, and salaries, etc.), as well as their perception of inequality within these factors.

The third question, “Do you receive the same professional recognition as your male colleagues both from the same sector and from the public?”, revolved around their perception of the professional recognition of women as MI workers in society. Again, the question related to the functional positions and roles they played but aimed not only to get the participants to talk about their perception of the recognition of their work through awards and their presence in programming or as media figures, but also to see if they referenced other female MI workers who could be protagonists. In other words, here we wanted to clarify whether these women used other women as role models in their imaginary, or on the contrary, if they used men as models and referents to follow in their professional careers.

In the fourth question, “how does your work affect your daily life? How do you organise your time according to your working hours, your responsibilities and the demands of your job?”, we sought to explore the issue of the work–life balance. We aimed to exam-

ine the tensions between productive, reproductive, and non-work or leisure time experienced by these women, paying special attention to the distribution of working hours and negotiation and dynamics of the organisation of each ‘vital time’ according to the work structures indicated. We were also interested in what these women had or had not given up in order to maintain their professional careers. Thus, this emphasised what might be termed their ‘work culture’ awareness, especially in comparison with male colleagues.

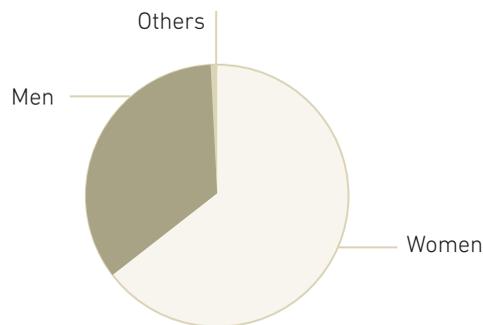
The aim of the fifth question, “if you had total freedom to choose your job and working conditions, what would you change?”, was to investigate the participants’ awareness and recognition of the inequality and discrimination experienced in the aforementioned aspects in terms of positions and roles, working conditions, work–life balance, and expectations of change, etc. With this, our aim was to discover how they constructed the identity of ‘working woman’ in terms of vocational and work and family life, as well as in relation (not necessarily in opposition) to the perception of the male category (the ‘working man’). Lastly, if it did not come up spontaneously in the conversation, we asked about their perception and experience of discrimination in the MI thus, “have you encountered discrimination at work because you are a woman?”

Once the focus groups had been conducted (which we simultaneously recorded and then transcribed), we proceeded to prepare a survey that could be launched online through the Survey Monkey platform to the network of contacts and companies we had already established. Continuing with the snowball technique (Baltar and Gorjup, 2012; Verd and Olivé, 1999), we asked the users of the different associations we had contacted to also ask their contacts in the industry to complete the survey. It should be noted that the survey was sent to both men and women in order to avoid any gender bias and to establish a level of comparison. However, our ultimate goal was to come close to a statistically relevant definition of the hidden and varying

population of female and male MI workers, as well as to define the social and sociological contours and their work experiences within the MI.

As shown in figure 1, in total we obtained a sample of 320 ($n = 320$) responses from the surveyed population, which, as shown by our initial research, would have consisted of at least 1,547 people ($N = 1,547$), of which the majority were male rather than female workers. It should also be noted that the survey was voluntary, and so the answers came from people who really had an interest in answering questions about the initial topic the survey was presented with: A study to uncover the socio-labour situation of workers in the MI. Likewise, this work was exploratory, and so we were also able to see the number of people who declared their gender identity as being outside the binary framework⁶ In addition, several studies have shown the existence of what we could call hermeneutic injustice and testimonial injustice (Fricker, 2007), that is, the difficulty experienced by women to express situations and experiences of inequality and even of violence and thus, become aware of these contexts and choose to abandon them. This is because of their condition of dependence and their social position, as well as their fears or insecurities of being treated more unjustly by their social circle, thereby causing them to enter into a spiral of silence. Considering the above, we can assume that the experiences described to us and collected here in this work were, at least, situations experienced by a minimum number of women who dared to talk about these negative experiences in their work

environment (Roco et al., 2013; Hirigoyen, 1999, 2001; Escudero, 2005).



Response options	Responses	
Women	64,06%	205
Men	35,31%	113
Others	0,63%	2
TOTAL		320

Sample distribution: $n = 320$. Source: Prepared by the authors

Starting from the premise that any opinion gathered through an interview, or a questionnaire is born from the way in which the opinion was asked (Bourdieu, 1973), we elaborated a battery of questions—which were all filtered through and influenced by the opinions and recommendations of the MIM Association. We hoped these questions would allow us to take a snapshot of the social structure of a possible unequal relationship between men and women in the MI. In order to elaborate the survey, we wanted to answer a series of questions central to the experiences of inequality and injustice within our framework (glass ceiling, leaky pipe, sticky floor, and horizontal segregation), all based on the experiences discussed in our focus groups.

The first block of questions consisted of addressing the labour structure of the MI and discovering the distribution of job positions and functional roles according to sex. We wanted to understand whether the

⁶ At the risk of this research being interpreted as a study that falls back on the binary gender framework, it should be said that this work was conceived as an exploratory study on the issue of women’s inequality. The work was also sponsored by a women’s association and was not built upon the foundations of the binary framework or that of possible inequalities and injustices among the LGTBIQ+ collective. This question is undoubtedly relevant, but time and budget constraints prevented us from expanding the possible agents and case studies in this present study. We thus recognise that from this perspective, there is not only much more to investigate, but also the need to do so.

most determining positions, those in which decisions are made about what is produced or distributed, were evenly distributed by gender. In other words, this first block described the actual or objective status of women MI workers. To do this we asked about their identity as male/female/non-binary and ethnicity, etc.⁷ Next, we asked about marital status, whether these MI workers had any dependent children or were responsible for any other form of care (family or non-dependent). We also asked about formal and non-formal education and training variables, variables relevant to their professional path—years worked in total (career path), and how many years spent in the MI—in particular, how many years spent in the same job (professional path), and of these, how many in paid work.

In line with these questions, we were also interested in the ‘quality’ of the position held in the MI, in other words, whether they were self-employed, freelancers, employees, or partners in companies, etc., as well as the type of contractual relationship, if any. Following on from the salary question, we asked not only about their gross annual income, but also whether their work in the MI was their main source of income. In this respect, it was undoubtedly necessary to ask about the participant’s type of working day, and in order to ascertain the possibility of horizontal segregation, we asked about the functions and roles they performed (managerial, executive, operational, or common functions), as well as the positions (trades) occupied⁸. To

further narrow down this structural situation, we asked about the type of company they worked for⁹.

However, we also had to uncover the cost and conditions under which the participants had accessed their jobs, as well as their future career expectations, always considering the socio-family issue and work-life balance conditions: a key factor in understanding the existence of the inequality phenomena that constituted our framework. To do this, we elaborated a second set of questions that addressed issues such as what training the surveyees had when they had started paid work in the MI and the availability the job required of them, both for travelling and moving to other places, as well as in terms of dedication. That is to say: if their work had required them to dedicate more time to it than they had formally agreed upon in their contract.

We reasoned that if the variables of availability and dedication, together with access conditions objectively indicated the conditions of work performance, they could also tell us about the structural situation of what we could call the ‘work culture.’ However, to further qualify this question—which is key, above all, to understanding the condition of epistemic injustice—we had to understand whether they recognised themselves as being part of an unequal structure, i.e., the subjective status achieved through lived experience. For this purpose, we prepared a third block of questions aimed at finding out whether the participants had encountered any sort of barrier to accessing their job, whether it be because of issues of training or cultural, social, or epistemic capital (lack of knowledge to take advantage of opportunities, information on offers, etc.), or age, sex, sexual orientation, or maternity or paternity. The

7 It should be noted that for this section, we decided to ask about categories that would rely on the cultural aspect of possible differences between identities rather than on the biological aspects or the biological premises behind such differences, which could have generated disputes or biases in the answers. Thus, ‘ethnicity’ did not share any of the racial phenotyping burden of some approaches, and ‘non-binary’ did not allow for all people who, regardless of their biological sex, identify outside the cisgender paradigm.

8 The positions cited were: legal representation; administration; agent/manager; author, composer, arranger, lyricist; music publisher; record label executive; performer (music, singer, or backing vocalist); logistics and management; live music (venue or festival management); operator, set-up and transport; music journalism; audiovisual production; promotion, marketing, public relations; studio and live sound recording, engineering technician; and other.

9 The companies cited were: music association; law firm, legal representation and copyright; digital distributor or aggregator; music publisher; marketing and promotion or advertising company; event representation and/or management company; live music company or venue; management entity; recording studio; music festival; educational institution; television, film, or advertising production company; video game production company; media; phonographic label; soloist or band; record shop; e-commerce; and other.

participants were also asked whether, in order to keep their job or develop their career, they had had to give something up (see table 1, Q33); and lastly, they were

asked specifically about their work climate to examine whether they had experienced exploitation, segregation, harassment, or even violence (see table 1, Q34).

Table 1.

Q33	Indicate which of these statements is most like your experience. To achieve my goals and keep my current job position in the music industry, I have had to give up...
A	Training and specialisation (in this or other fields of work).
B	A part of or a large part of my previous social life (friends and family etc.).
C	Being a parent.
D	Having a relationship.
E	Travelling, or another types of leisure activity.
F	Living in the town I had wanted to.
G	I have not had to give anything up.
H	Other more advantageous jobs (better paid, better hours, or more senior positions, etc.).
I	Other (please specify).
Q34	Of the following statements, indicate which are characteristics of your current work environment:
A	Assignment, in general, of demeaning tasks.
B	Assignment of specific tasks (not previously required in the job description) because of my sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious orientation.
C	An excessive individual workload assigned indiscriminately compared to other colleagues at work because of my/their personal characteristics (gender, age, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation).
D	I have been the subject of rumour-mongering.
E	I have suffered sexual harassment from colleagues or superiors (comments, excessive approaches, and even unwanted contact).
F	I have suffered sexual assault of any kind at the hand of my colleagues or superiors.
G	I have suffered offensive negative judgements by my colleagues or superiors because of my physical appearance (insults, put-downs, sexist criticism, or other forms of personal ridicule).
H	I have suffered negative offensive judgments from my colleagues or superiors because of my personal condition, abilities, or the work I do (insults, humilia-tion, sexist criticism, or other forms of personal ridicule at work).
I	I receive positive judgments from my colleagues or superiors for my work and professional disposition (congratulations, promotions, or incentives, etc.).
J	I have received positive judgments from my colleagues or superiors for my physical appearance (compliments or exaltations of my physical and sexual attrib-utes).
K	I have received a reduced workload because of my religious, ethnic, or sexual identity.

L	I have been indiscriminately denied access to the resources, materials, and means necessary to carry out my work.
M	My colleagues and superiors have cold-shouldered me (left me isolated or on the fringes of the group) in my workplace.
N	I have suffered from the appropriation of my ideas or merits by colleagues and superiors.
O	None of the above answers apply to me.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Overall, the results we obtained especially highlighted the glass ceiling that defines the work experience of women. Only 14% of independent companies we examined were run by women. Furthermore, the survey of companies from four different associations (APM, ARTE, AEDM, and PROMUSICAE) indicated that 37% of the presidency positions were held by women compared to 63% by men. In the case of the three major record labels, men held all three presidencies. The average profile of the women we encountered in the MI was that of a young adult (aged 30–40 years), who was not a mother (74%), with a high education level and knowledge of languages, who worked in full-time employment (47% of the cases), had worked 15 years or less (56%), and lived mainly in Madrid or Barcelona (78% of the cases), with job profiles related to marketing and public relations (25% of those surveyed) being over-represented. However, other profiles related to administration, coordination, and management, both in live music venues and festivals were also represented (37%). In addition, a clear vocational component was observed among the respondents. All this also led us to believe that horizontal segregation was a fully objective fact, especially with the under-representation of women in executive profiles (2.1%), performance and composition (7.8%), editing positions (2.1%), and as recording technicians (2.6%).

In addition, the MI had a precarious structure: the average salary for women in the industry was around €16,800/year and there was also a high level of seasonality, with few cases of long-term career trajectories within

the MI or in the same jobs. Added to this were demands on the participants' time, with them dedicating more time than a standard working day to their work. In their opinion, this had prevented them not only from developing a stable career, but also from reconciling their work and family lives. This precariousness and lack of professionalisation was evident in the discussion groups and showed us a relationship structure that affected all the women, but more so among the younger ones. This not only affected issues such as motherhood, but also the recognition of women as professionals that are as valid as their male counterparts. The MI was painted as a precarious, unequal, and unfair labour market in every aspect, including in terms of wages, job stability, and career paths, etc.

Maternity was among the factors that had negatively affected professional careers, in both surveys and in the individual cases. The reconciliation of work with social and family life was perceived as a large obstacle given their working conditions and requirements of the jobs they held. Up to 14% of the participants thought this way about maternity, while 16% insisted upon the incompatibility of having a personal life and their working conditions. We observed the unequal sharing of household tasks and care roles both in the survey and interview results: more than half of the mothers said that they had had no help with care tasks. This reproduced gender roles that generated a sexual division of labour that affected work expectations and was undoubtedly the determining factor for the so-called sticky floor factor. The women we interviewed and surveyed had continued to work full time without changing their jobs and so they had not taken on positions of greater responsibility and seemed

to renounce promotion strategies. Interestingly, they themselves recognised that experience (years in the sector, leading to a better reputation and knowledge of the work culture) and adaptive strategies to gain authority enabled successful career paths.

Another factor they considered a negative was age: either being too young or too old for the work required of them by the MI. Without a doubt, the perception of what the MI required of them as women was a determining factor in understanding the working culture of the sector, which the focus groups considered to have male chauvinist culture. Firstly, because it values men and women differently according to stereotypical attributes. The dominant image in their imaginary was that of an experienced middle-aged man, which clashes with that of the often-younger woman who had had to enter the sector later¹⁰. Moreover, this lack of appreciation in relation to decision-making was accompanied by less visibility, given that these professions are usually based on informal contacts and women have more difficulty entering networking dynamics, receive fewer calls, and are less often among the names of those responsible for recruitment and promotion in different sectors.

Secondly, these attitudes forced women who remained in the MI to strategically adopt male language and practices, in other words, as stated by one interviewee, “you had to demonstrate your masculinity all the time.” In addition to this, there was a lack of female role models within the sector to guide other ways of interacting and doing things, as one of the participants from Barcelona told us:

I remember when I was little, there was absolutely no one at the jams, at the concerts, of course, and as a woman who sang and played a wind instrument I had no role models, and I remember everything as a mental thing, right? I mean, obviously, I wouldn't tell you anything very specific, but I think there's a burden [so] that we

women artists have to work very hard. Well, and if you work at it, you overcome mental obstacles¹¹

On the other hand, there were also comments, in the form of jokes, value judgements, or questions about the female condition, which appeared to be associated with this masculinised environment and which caused exclusion. Above all, it seemed to undermine the confidence that female professionals had in their work and ability to participate in meetings and be listened to by their colleagues. Moreover, the focus groups even included mentions of the possibility of women becoming pregnant, a clear indication of the interference of gender roles in professional recognition. This shows us that the work culture is articulated, as we can see, around the question of recognition in two distinct but mutually reinforcing ways.

Firstly, the difficulty experienced in being recognised as full professionals equal to men, even when they reached certain positions. This became a problem of legitimacy and authority for women as full agents in the MI: “Men are treated as professionals and women are treated as women,” said one of the participants in the Bilbao group. Secondly, there was a lack of recognition of the difficulties women faced in pursuing a career on equal terms as men, despite the fact that their initial training was often superior to that of their male counterparts. This was particularly noticeable when they heard comments from colleagues in their work meetings suggesting that the position they had achieved was because of their good fortune or good economic position. This was also perceptible when the reason for their musical tastes was explained to them in relation to gender, as one of the participants of the Valencia group explained as follows.

It is assumed that you are on borrowed time, that your tastes are borrowed, that you have not formed

¹⁰ In fact, more than 33% of the respondents said that they had been working in the industry for 5 years or less, and more than 25% had been in the industry for between 5 and 10 years.

¹¹ Translated from the original: “Jo recordo de petita, és que no hi havia absolutament ningú a les jams, als concerts, clar, i una dona que cantés, i que toqués un instrument de vent, no tenia cap referent i jo recordo tot una cosa mental, no? O sigui, evidentment, així específic no et diria algo, però crec que hi ha una càrrega que tenim les dones artistes que hem de treballar-nos-ho molt. Buenu, i si t'ho vas treballant, vas superant obstacles mentals.”

your own opinion on things. It's very hard to be taken seriously, it's very hard for [your] opinion about a record, a concert, etc., to be worth the same as a guy's, when you might even have much more personal musical culture [than him].

According to the participants, this is a social fact that is rooted in a cultural problem in the construction of expectations. As we stated above, there is a gender division in knowledge. Men are often associated with rationality, technology, and 'hard' music genres (heavy metal and punk, etc.) while women are not seen as people with musical identities, tastes, and criteria. Inequality is materialised, as we have shown through the survey presented in this article, in the distribution of functional and professional positions in the industry. In this context, women tend to develop certain occupations in a certain working arrangement that can be categorised as a distribution of occupational gender roles.

CONCLUSIONS

Our research corroborated the relationship of injustice with regard to the increasing demands for recognition of (and redress for) the situations of injustice and inequality female workers increasingly feel they are experiencing in the MI. This was materialised in their knowledge

of the relationships, interactions, and effects of how this is articulated in the MI that they shared with us. Knowledge of one's own situation and recognition of one's own experience is undoubtedly the epistemic basis for tackling inequalities and injustices. Thus, we corroborated the presence of phenomena of injustice such as the so-called sticky floor and glass ceiling problems—as well as the strong influence of factors such as motherhood, salary, education, starting position, and spousal support in domestic and care work—on the development of women's careers.

One of the main problems we faced with this study laid in the difficulty of extrapolating our data to the population of the MI world in general, given the lack of a census or registration of MI workers. This problem is still an ongoing reality, and we strongly suspect that the population comprising this universe is exponentially larger than the one we identified and sampled in this current research. In this sense, although it is a legitimate argument that private initiatives must correct this male chauvinist labour and material culture, we certainly advocate that the first barrier to full equality should be broken down by administrations by developing a legal and legislative framework capable of recognising the structural situation of the labour market and the material inequality experienced by women in the MI.

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