



Breaking The Barriers - Opening The Dialogue On Women Issues

Vipul Tiwari Lecturer, Department of Media and Mass Communication, Graphic Era Hill University, Dehradun Uttarakhand India.

Abstract

The media is often regarded as contemporary society's most crucial instrument due to its capacity for widespread dissemination of information. Societal and economic development greatly benefit from women's emancipation. They are the ones who give birth to new generations, educate them, and shape their ideas. The topic of this study suffers directly as a result of the social injustice committed against them and the neglect of economic decision-making capabilities to them in such remote locations of the nation. However, as the fourth pillar of our democracy, the media has responsibilities it must uphold for the common good. Effectively informing the public on women's status and value, it may serve as a catalyst for social change. This article reviews many studies with the goals of promoting a fair and accurate image of women in the media and increasing women's involvement in decision-making via the media.

Keywords : Role of Media, Empowering Women.

Introduction

The movement towards women's equality is both the most significant and longest-lasting change in modern history. Women's empowerment has far-reaching consequences for body legislation concerns in social, economic, and political settings, even as its fundamental aim is to enhance women's quality of life. The media's ability to reach a wide audience has been crucial in advancing the cause of women's liberation by drawing attention to the widespread disrespect and marginalisation of women in public life.

It's interesting to hear the mythological history of India's women and how they rose to such a lofty position just to be demoted to a subordinate one. The high stakes of the choice for an insignificant individual, along with the male-dominated spaces in foreign cultures, helped to establish women's equality.

Mass media communication is essential for nation-building and national progress in every developing civilization. Mass media are the products of modern scientific and technological progress. They serve a crucial purpose in people's lives by giving advice, imparting knowledge, and providing entertainment. Because of the reciprocal influences of the media and society, they are also used to effect positive social change. Radio, television, newspapers, magazines, the internet, weblogs, social networks, and other forms of online communication are all considered part of the mass media.

Media as Messenger : The mass media serve as a conduit for disseminating information to wide audiences. They permeate every aspect of contemporary life, and most people don't even realise it. It's safe to say that in a free democracy, the media's role also extends to providing citizens with information, amusement, and inspiration. It is generally agreed upon in liberal democracies that when the media helps to put knowledge at the disposal of the citizens, they will have the opportunity to officially or informally govern the state. The media play a crucial role in a democratic society. The media make it possible for citizens to actively engage in public policy debates and decisions by keeping them informed of relevant developments. The media's primary role in a democratic society is to serve as a watchdog of the state, exposing corruption and abuses of power without fear of retaliation. It is widely accepted that the watchdog's role in the media is supreme and should set the overall framework under which the media operates. The media also serve as forums for citizens to argue their respective positions and convince one another. Even when they're only trying to keep us entertained, the media are capable of displaying and creating ideals that improve our dialogue on social concerns and public attitude (Baishaki Nag, 2011).

The media provides both entertainment and news to the public. The topics covered might range from military and national security to personal development and the alleviation of poverty and backwardness. Television

shows, radio shows, newspapers, the radio, the internet (with its stories, blogs, and social networks), and other forms of popular media all play important roles in the contemporary world, both in terms of entertainment and education.

To examine the influence of women's conventional economic activities on savings and the variables impacting their efficient performance, Jabeen, S. (2020) set out to analyse how women supplement the family unit economy directly via wage earning and indirectly through spending. In order to reach the southern, northern, and centre plain regions, seven rural areas were selected from Khyber, which is in the region of Pukhtoonkhwah. About 480 women replied out of a total of 600 picked using snowball sampling from all three locations. The information was gathered through focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-person meetings. About 68.33% were illiterate, 47.71% were between the ages of 31 and 40, and 47.92% were part of a nuclear family. About 71.88 percent of women's livelihoods, including sewing, weaving, basket as well as candle producing, pickles, jams, as well as squash preparation, dairy things, apiculture, sericulture, or domesticated creatures, poultry, nursery raising, and a few activities not related to agriculture, were confined to the home because of the strict Purdah (shroud) culture. It was taken into consideration that the men in the household make the key choices due to the prevalence of patriarchal norms and beliefs. NGO and government advancement initiatives have been critical in providing the credit, training, and awareness that have emerged in the North and South. Although all women were aware of the positive effects of economic independence, some also acknowledged the negative effects on their physical and mental health and on the social bonds within their families and networks as a result of the extensive workload and time difficulties. The research found that several demographic characteristics, including social and cultural norms as well as economic factors, limit women's earning potential.

Broadcasting Messages to Many People: Media, according to Premlata and Tanuja Jukariya (2018), is the most powerful tool in modern civilization because of its capacity for mass communication. Women's empowerment is crucial for the socioeconomic growth of every society. They play crucial roles in shaping the future of humanity as both teachers and innovators. In

particular, this study's topic is properly to blame for the social ill treatment and carelessness of their economic decision-making skills in such limited sections of the country. However, as the fourth pillar of our democracy, the media has specific responsibilities it must uphold for the greater good of society. Successfully communicating information to society in engaging women, through teaching society about their status and importance. This article reviews many studies that aim to promote a traditional and balanced representation of women in the media and to expand women's involvement in decision-making via the media.

Yes, B. K. Hazra. The work of 2017 is the availability of communication channels that have a dramatic effect on the empowerment of rural women and their ability to realise their aspirations for economic progress. Marginal rural women need to consider media convergence as both a strengthening tool and a way to an income. Women in remote areas may not be as well off as they may be because they lack access to portable technology and have less expertise using personal computers. This article looks at the ways in which rural women might benefit from using new media, such as a mobile web PC and contemporary mass media, in the fields of education, healthcare, and the economy. Because of cultural norms in India, rural West Bengali women have a hard time using modern forms of communication to advocate for themselves, which contributes to their marginalisation. This new structure is necessary now because it has absorbed previous ones and converged them into a single, highly effective mode of interaction. Our way of life, as well as another social structure in rural society, have been altered by this convergence.

In his research, Bhattacharyya (2013) looked at how the (MGNREGS) has helped rural Indian women in general. Women in rural areas are not excluded from MGNREGS's focus on fostering talent development for the rural poor. This design is quite remarkable because of the many thoughtful inclusions, such as access to clean water, shade, medical care in case of an emergency, and a crèche for employees. Mothers in remote areas benefit from creches because they save time and energy not caring for their children at home. Typically, the eldest daughter will care for the younger siblings while their mother is out at work. The older girls are free to go to school now that this service has been provided for them. Whatever the case may be, a revolution in the lives of rural

Indian women is quite possible thanks to the good intentions of local authorities and the knowledge of the recipients.

Media as a Channels of Information and Empowerment: It is undeniable that women have the ability to alter the course of history, making women's empowerment crucial to a country's progress. Women are contributing in two areas: the home and the workplace. Women's engagement is essential for economic growth, and their influence may change the course of a country (Panigrahy & Bhuyan, 2006). Without mass media in today's technological age, it would be impossible to achieve social and economic emancipation. The media is often regarded as the democratic fourth pillar of society. The media's influence on modern culture has grown substantially. Everything from the programmes one sees on television to the music one listens to on the radio to the books, periodicals, and newspapers one reads are all examples of media. It helps spread awareness of current events and shapes public opinion. People in general depend on the media to keep them informed about what's going on in the world. The media has the ability to highlight the flaws of democracy and apply pressure to fix them. It's vital to national cohesion and serves as the nation's fulcrum.

It's undeniable that the media has become a very potent organ with far-reaching effects in almost every area of human endeavour. In recent decades, television in particular has emerged as India's primary electronic source of news and entertainment. Television serves several purposes, from amusement to instruction. Television shows portray a variety of educational and entertaining institutions. As such, it's generally seen as a babysitter. Both young and elderly may spend hours entertained by watching television. It's encouraging women to take control of their lives using the media they already use. There has been a request for media outlets to be held responsible for their portrayal of women, which many see as damaging to their reputations.

The National Commission for Women has recommended changes to the Indecent Presentation of Women (Prohibition Act) of 1986 in response to such incidents. In 2012, the government passed new modifications to the Indecent Presentation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 in an effort to bolster the legal mechanism defending the dignity of women. The goal was to include new forms

of media such as MMS and electronic media, as well as those that were outside the Act's scope yet continue to promote harmful gender stereotypes, such as posters and television serials. To utilise media in a constructive manner and to prevent the bad consequences of any such medium, it is crucial to encourage a fair and nonstereotypical representation of women in the media. In most nations, women still face barriers to learning about and working in the media, both traditional and new. Women are becoming more powerful as a result of the media and new forms of communication, which have increased their opportunities for self-expression and involvement in decision-making. It's important to recognise and investigate the media's potential for good change in advancing women's rights and gender parity.

The role of the media in promoting the advancement of women is crucial. Women's increased access to higher education and the workforce has aided the media industry. Women have an essential role in regulating population growth, promoting literacy, and enhancing the standard of living for large populations. However, if women realise their power and are no longer marginalised due to male dominance, they may assume this position. To help women realise their full potential as the driving force behind social change, the media plays a crucial role in this setting. Today's successful communication relies heavily on the power of print and electronic media.

Literature Review

Moghadam (2007) looked at how the media has addressed women's concerns. The importance of women's rights has been brought to light. It has attempted to influence public opinion on the subject of women's rights. In his study, Ray (2008) found that the media is an excellent resource for teaching and tutoring. He concluded that mass communication via the media is a key factor in influencing people's attitudes and habits in society.

Asif (2013) argues that empowering women is a key to societal progress. Self-sufficiency is a key factor in empowering women, and the media's influence can be seen in almost every aspect of society. According to Jammie Victory Abdulai's blog post "The new media and the worldwide women's empowerment movement," published in 2011, "the new media" is the reality

that anybody, anywhere may take part in the worldwide knowledge sharing process by posting any article or information on social media platforms.

According to Khan and Moin (2013), now that more households have internet, women are utilising it for a variety of tasks. It has opened doors for women in fields as diverse as politics, medicine, and the military, as well as in the home. While a 2013 paper entitled "Women in decisionmaking: the potential of the new media for enhanced political engagement" stated that the new media represented a wider digital divide, other research has shown that the new media may have a beneficial effect on young women. New media primarily gives women the chance to:

- (i) Collaborate with other females
- (ii) Make online personas that boost self-esteem.
- (iii) Use appealing and relatable fashion and topics to win over other ladies and your peers.

Subhash (2015) found that the media's effect on women had led to their emancipation in her study "Impact of Mass Media on Women: A Sociological Study of Gulbarga District," but that women still had many suggestions for limiting crime-related programmes, raising educational standards, achieving gender parity, and so on. Therefore, media outlets should listen to women's feedback in order to enhance their content, transmissions, audiences, and expertise.

According to the research conducted by Narayana and Ahamad (2016), women are underrepresented in the media despite its ability to advance their status in society. It also urged that the media's potential to promote women's empowerment and gender equality should be encouraged and investigated further. They also discovered the ways in which media can empower women by expanding their opportunities for self-expression and leadership.

According to the results of Dr. Sonia Gupta's (2017) study, "A Study on Role of Media in Women Empowerment in India," the vast majority of respondents (85% and 90%, respectively) are highly empowered in making their own decisions regarding their health care and the hiring of domestic help.

Additionally, most responders are well empowered in terms of economic empowerment. This data demonstrates that women in India have achieved a degree of empowerment that is indicative of a medium level of empowerment and a high proportion of impact from Media and technology. This shows that women have a good grasp of the factors that might set them on the path to independence.

The Influence of Media on the Views of Gender Equality: Mass media is often regarded as the most all-encompassing and preeminent sector when it comes to the powers and affects on how people see men and women. Media constantly push their words and communications into people's consciousness, regardless of where they are in their day. Every medium has its own portrayal of the sexes, and most of them are unrealistic, stereotyped, and limiting. There are three main ideas that show how the media portrays gender. To begin with, the lack of female voices gives the impression that males are the wise ones, that they have more power, and that women don't deserve respect. Second, accepted notions of gender are perpetuated by the perpetuation of male and female stereotypes. Third, portrayals of male and female interactions tend to emphasise gender norms and normalise criminal behaviour and violence against women (Wood, 1994). While it is true that the media has shaped people's perceptions of gender in ways that make men seem more powerful and authoritative than women in most settings, it is also true that women are increasing their educational attainment, working in a variety of fields, and even starting their own businesses, all of which contribute to the greater good of society.

Role of Media in Directly Empowering Women: There is no question that the media has expanded its reach to the general public and fulfilled its role as a remarkable instrument in nearly all walks of life. Electronic media, particularly television, have emerged as the most powerful means of reaching a large audience in India. Television serves a wide variety of purposes, from informing viewers to providing amusement. Television presents a wide range of informative and entertaining content. It's often used as a substitute for a babysitter. Both young and elderly may enjoy watching television for long periods of time. Using a variety of media tools, it aids women in empowering themselves. The media's demeaning depiction of women is evidence of a

failure to influence their sexual orientation, and this has led to calls for more accountability on the part of those who portray women.

The function of mass media in facilitating this kind of communication is crucial to women's empowerment. Women's increased access to school and the workforce has aided in the expansion of the media. In order to slow the rate of population growth, increase literacy, and improve living standards for the people, women must play a central role. Women aren't always expected to take the lead, but when they realise their power and aren't kept down by male dominance, they can. The media plays a key role in raising women's consciousness in this setting, empowering them to realise their full potential as agents of social change.

Consolidation of Stereotypes of Girls and Women in Media: The media's depictions of women and girls perpetuate harmful assumptions about their identities and the roles they should play in society. Both women and the society at large are affected by the unfavourable connotations associated with these stereotypes. The dissemination of informational, educational, entertaining, or promotional messages is the function of media. The term "media" is used to include both wide and targeted forms of communication, such as print, broadcast, outdoor, and electronic media. Dissemination of information about the improvements being made across the country, especially in rural areas, is facilitated by these media outlets (Stereotypes of Girls as well as Women in the Media, 2014). These improvements include the building of roads, highways, medical centres, educational institutions, and the encouragement of rural people to open financial accounts and be aware of how to properly handle their finances.

A positive stereotype that links an individual or group to an explicit positive feature may have unintended negative implications, as can any simplistic generalisation about a person or group of people that disregards individual differentiations. Examining the prejudices encountered and how they made the person feel is important here. Prejudice and bias are reinforced by using generalisations. It is necessary that women be given sufficient space that they could share how they believe without fear of judgement (Stereotypes of Girls as well as Women in the Media, 2014). This is because women are often

reluctant to express stereotypes out of fear that others will assume they believe in those stereotypes.

Suggestions and recommendations

Although media may significantly contribute to women's equality if more women used it, this was not the case. The media has been instrumental in giving women more agency in society. No other industry has done as much as the media to shed light on the violence against women and to encourage women to take action. The media has a responsibility to raise public awareness of the hazards that exist in everyday life, whether at home, in the workplace, or when travelling or staying in a hotel. Empowering women requires economic independence, but this alone is not enough.

Legal structures guaranteeing equal rights and opportunities for women must be strengthened, and this is where public policies come in. Awareness of politics, law, the economy, and healthcare should be provided via the media. They need to inform people about where to get help. The media's overall outlook on life should be upbeat. They shouldn't let adversity make them lose their nerve and consider suicide.

They need a strong resolve to achieve their goals in life. For women to develop their own inner power, they need to hear the tales of other women who have achieved great things.

The media's involvement in women's empowerment in India has become increasingly important in the modern age of globalisation and the transformation in means of communication and information technology. As their current role is counterproductive to women's empowerment in India, the Indian media must now concentrate on women's concerns in a determined manner. A significant portion of the media's time must be devoted to educating the public about women's issues, including their rights and the resources available to aid in their personal and professional growth. They should think about what they want out of life and work for it with all their might. Radio and television stations should play an important role in broadcasting important development news. Women from cities' lower middle classes have particular informational needs.

- (i) Employment/Job Opportunities/Self-Location in India.
- (ii) Affordable medical care and creche
- (iii) They have easy access to nearby schools.
- (iv) Legal protections against self-help, violence, and the dowry system.
- (v) Organisational Non-Governmental Organisations Information
- (vi) Protections for women and children against domestic violence, sexual harassment, and other forms of social injustice.

Media have a crucial part in promoting women's empowerment, which in turn benefits women's economic and social standing. However, media outlets, like all social media, are good and efficient methods to increase the social awareness of women, providing young women beneficial thoughts and instances for gaining financial independence through the promotion of healthy concepts about being women, of what is the function of women in contemporary society, and of the positive roles that women give us every day.

In Indian patriarchal culture, women are supposed to remain at home and raise their families. Aggarwal (1997), Kabeer (1999), and Sen (2006) all find that women's empowerment is negatively impacted when society assumes that their primary interests lie inside the home. Women in India are empowered, according to a recent poll, but this is mitigated by their strong desire to maintain home responsibilities. Gender disparities are created and maintained in large part due to the influence of those in positions of social authority. There is a positive and statistically significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables in the hypotheses I have investigated. India's women still don't feel safe since just a small fraction of them are economically independent and educated about their rights. Press freedom in the nation is a boon to the populace. Government and non-government organisations may take steps to improve women's qualities and skills. Women's representation in decision-making would benefit from increased access to educational opportunities like seminars and lectures, as well as encouragement to pursue paid work.

Conclusion

Through the use of media campaigns, the mass media might potentially significantly contribute to the propagation of the idea of gender equality. People will accept him back into society if they see him triumph against sexism in the media. People's minds and actions have been subtly shaped by the Mass Media for decades. Despite the inappropriate portrayal of women, the media should highlight the achievements of well-known and accomplished women. Since it plays such a pivotal role in creating normative gender roles in society, it's crucial that its gender-related checks and balances be improved. The media should encourage respectful and dignified portrayals of women and refrain from unfavourable portrayals of women. There has to be a shift in how women are portrayed in the media, towards a more nuanced and positive portrayal that is grounded in Indian culture and society. To combat this threat and ensure that women are seen as persons deserving of respect rather than objects, we need strong legislative action in tandem with widespread societal awareness based on morals and ethics.

References

- 1) Directorate general for internal policies report on “Women in decision-making: The role of the new media for increased political participation” 2013.
- 2) Enhancing Women Empowerment through Information and Communication Technology.
- 3) Khan, E. A. and Moin, A. (2013). Women Empowerment: Role of New Media. Retrieved from [http://www.ocwjournalonline.com/Adminpanel/product_images/7f2535d7e476506d7e2a368e4bdb220c.p df](http://www.ocwjournalonline.com/Adminpanel/product_images/7f2535d7e476506d7e2a368e4bdb220c.pdf)
- 4) Narayana, A. and Ahamad, T. (2016). Role of media in accelerating women empowerment. International Journal of Advanced Education and Research ISSN: 2455-5746. Retrieved from www.newresearchjournal.com/education Role of mass media in empowerment of women.

- 5) Retrieved from <https://www.slideshare.net/harishhari58760608/role-of-mass-media-in-womenempowerment> The responsibility of Women empowerment on media. Retrieved from <http://www.legalservicesindia.com/article/article/the-responsibility-of-womenempowerment-on-media-1657-1.html>
- 6) Women Empowerment in India www.womenempowermentindia.com
Women for sustainable cities <http://womenforsustainablecities.org>