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Abstract

In media houses, particularly in journalism and entertainment sector what we observe that women have always been given a backseat. In serials / films/ commercial ads, she has been portrayed as a product rather than a character or a person. In the world of consumerism, women are always used as to attract eye balls of buyers to generate more revenue for the product.

The recent surveys of population suggests that men and women are almost equal in numbers. However, the gender biases have denied her 50% share in equities & opportunities. Media industry is supposed to be the most modern and having international exposure; till it has followed the same route of other fields by not giving much space to women at the peak/higher positions.

In Indian political arena, we observe that the mandatory reservations for women as a Sarpanch or local municipal member is just a cosmetic and many a times her husband or brother takes decision on behalf of her. This picture will change only when we bring in a true spirit of equality among men and women.

Key words- Gender, media, equality

Introduction –

As compared to last 23 decades, we can see the presence of women in areas like engineering, medical, technology, aviation, education, entrepreneurship and so on. Even in the Defense sector, we can observe that she has been given important positions of officer's grades in India. Even in a gubernatorial place she has become prime minister and even a president in a few countries. However, in Mass media she has been always neglected and never allowed to step in the ladder of higher positions. In the film industry too, we have less number of women in all different departments. In technical wings their number is negligible and in creative area, her presence is minimal.

Mass media sector in India is accelerating in a fast pace for last two decades. Due to globalization and technical advancement, rise in mobile technology audio -video transfer & sharing became very easy and attracts very little cost. Along with satellite TV, FM Radio, OTT (over the top) platforms are attracting audience resulting in strengthening viewership across the country. About 2 lakh crore rupees turnover has been registered in the year 2021.

The brief history of TV and Radio in India suggests that TV medium has been a part of Indian population's entertainment partner for almost 60 years and Radio for 90 years. The film industry has been on this soil for last 108 years. Advertisement sector, though had a very small pie in the beginning has reached the turnover of Rs 15000 crore recently. In Advertisement sector also we find women's representation more for cosmetic purpose than the integral part of the theme. Her beauty and grace is showcased more than her nature and temperament and intelligence.

In News channels too; you will find women as a reporter, newscaster but not as a chief editor or on an upper managerial level. When you go through the news stories across the globe, you will always find that she has been always given a secondary position. Her role as an expert in various branches of knowledge is not considered on an equal footing.

With such along inning on Indian soil, Media industry has been always seen as a male dominant sector having a very little role for women at responsible positions, in creative/ technical and administrative areas. This paper will try to explore the present position of women in media and will also try to find out the reasons

Though media carry glamor, media education doesn't have that shine. We hardly see that the media education being treated as the most sought for education sector. We do not have a uniform syllabus across the country for the same subject and modules. This never happens with medical, engineering,

management education. We have failed to groom media education as a professional knowledge sector.

There are more serious repercussions we have seen in media industry domain. The organization scope, hierarchy graph, professional attitude is all missing in major media houses.

Kofi Annan once said, "Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance".

However we have not yet realized the importance of man woman equality to build our society and nation in the right direction.

Review of the literature –

For writing this paper; the researchers have gone through following books & websites which enabled them to focus and concentrate more on the subject matter.

'**The Feminine Mystique** by Betty Friedan- published by W. W. Norton, Year of publication 1963 allowed him to see Woman in the right perspective. It also explains the challenges faced by women and their struggle. The other book - **Race, Gender, And Discrimination At Work**, by Samuel Cohn- published by -Rutledge (2000) The book loudly speaks about the discrimination aspects giving statistical data with lots of examples and case studies. It helps in shortlisting the probable reasons of such discrimination at work place.

The website -<https://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/in-focus/media>- Is a very reliable platform to know about various factors concerning women. Women and environment, women as decision maker, women and economy are some of the issues tackled in depth on this platform. This helped researchers in shaping their perspective about women issues to be highlighted through this paper.

The researchers have found following documents and reports appropriate for their study.

- 1) UNICEF India's document of October 2018 on the programme Gender Equality.
- 2) "Dynamics of Women's Movement in India: Historical Legacy and Contemporary Challenges"-
- 3) <http://journals.sagepub.com/home/IJG>- This is an important digital document to understand concept of gender holistically
- 4) <https://www.outrightinternational.org> - it helped in getting acquainted with gender terminology and basic skeleton of gender concept.

Research Methodology

Qualitative analysis of the data on gender has been obtained from various documents, books, websites and some media persons.

Understanding the concept of Gender

Basically first we should understand the difference between sex & gender. Sex is all about biological characteristics, as per their physiology reproduction abilities usually it is a natural phenomenon.

But when we talk about gender; it is far reaching and touches various aspects of social, political, cultural opportunities available to a man or a woman. That opportunity also spells out the role and functions to be undertaken by a particular gender. Over the years this compartmentization has been viewed as a discrimination against men & women but mostly women suffer more by this unjust demarcation. To tackle this social injustice many ideas are mooted on different levels and are discussed among social organization to create comfortable work environment for women.

Gender Assessment- This audit is done to examine whether gender discrimination is prevailed in the society and what is the intensity of it. Whether woman is given a secondary role and treatment, it is evaluated in gender assessment.

Gender Equity talks about fair practices for both men and women. It tries to give level playing field to all the stakeholders and imbibe the idea of impartiality.

Gender Equality is also considered in this process which ensures equal opportunities and rights to men and women.

An idea of **Gender integration** helps to devise strategies for fairness. This is obtained by designing appropriate activities and programmes. It is an instrument to compensate the injustice aroused from discrimination.

Gender Mainstreaming helps to ensure that the entire programme of gender justice is implemented properly. The goals, objectives & mission statements are scrutinized to obtain better results. A stubborn notion that the society carries about gender that is the most challenging area, to tackle the issue of gender stereotype many regular activities to minimize it are supposed to be conducted.

The gender stereotypes have correlation with beliefs and pattern of society's living styles. We expect behavioral differences between boys and girls. Boy has to be masculine and girl to be delicate. Male gender is associated with brevity and openness while girl with obedience and shyness. The perception of the society as a whole is reflected in setting expectations from both sexes while performing their duties.

Global gender equality survey which was carried out to find out gender scenario in our society the findings were published in the year 2021. The major highlights of the outcome show the need for more sustained effort to do away with the discrimination.

As the report suggests that public at large shows interest in changing the gender stereotype. The solutions which came forward are legal framework, mass movement campaigns, data collection campaigns and continuous monitoring of the situation. The marginalized women, backward class women, ethnic and racial women should be given more priority that suggests the report. Since the survey was on global level its findings are more representative and touch the core issue of the gender problem.

Findings –

- 1) The survey was done in 17 countries & the 80% respondents agreed to the importance of gender issue
- 2) Majority of the respondents felt that gender equality is important in order to end poverty across the world.
- 3) Around 61% respondents agreed to participate and represent their countries to promote gender equality of their countries in gender related issues.
- 4) The majority also felt that the responsibility of eradicating gender biases lies with Government machinery.
- 5) Majority respondents are ready to vote the candidate who supports gender equality.
- 6) The support for this cause came from across the genders, age groups, socioeconomic groups, and countries.
- 7) 60% respondents have mentioned that there is some progress in gender issue after world conference of women.
- 8) 57% of the women who were a part of this survey reported that they were victim of gender discrimination in their personal, professional and public life; sometime or the other.

Reasons cited by respondents for gender disparity

- 1) An unequal distribution of money, domestic work & parental responsibilities.
- 2) Difference in employment opportunities for men & women.
- 3) The role of religion & culture.

(Ref: <https://focus2030.org/Global-Survey-Gender-equality-13-key-findings>)

The researchers have come across an interesting fact that is about portrayal of women in advertising world.

A team surveyed 1000 most viewed Ads on television & on YouTube. This is known as the first public study taken up to understand woman's position in this glamorous world.

Indian Television industry has become instrumental in widening the gap between men and women as an equal partner of the society. The data for this research was quite substantial having 20 news programmes, 20 sitcoms and 100 commercials over 3 weeks of period. Though this survey was based on the data of late 80s the situation today has not changed much, which we could gather from Megha

Tata's statement. Woman Entrepreneurs ON Gender issue -Megha Tata's (author and Managing Director – South Asia, Discovery Communications) views on gender discrimination have been quite studied and self-explanatory. She is of a view that though you find media industry dynamic in all respects and views of looking at woman have changed, still we have to go far in gender equality. Women representation needs to be increased as women too are big consumer of this media world.

The findings are more vital for this paper as it indicates that though woman has been a prominent part of the commercials they are still highly stereotyped. They are less visible in public spaces and paid jobs. They were shown to sale domestic products and food items to other women and looking after child care and doing shopping.

Ref-<https://www.unicef.org/rosa/reports/gender-bias-inclusion-advertising-india>

Role of Social Media in Gender equality

For the last two decades, due to internet penetration, a new branch called social media came into existence and has been growing very rapidly. Here we can see how gender issue is being perceived by netizens.

These online mediaplatforms are a great influencer in shaping our idea about gender. However what we observe that gender inequality is very much seen on social media in the form of tweets and comments & imojis. Perpetuation of gender discrimination through online media is very dangerous as it has a speed and move around at accelerated speed. We come across many posts that advocate culture and our historical past that obviously are in favour of life style having male dominance.

The picture of women presence on social media in USA is different from ours. Their women are very active and their communication is also very strong and consistent as they are having a good communicative logic. They are expert in communicating with many at a time with their multi-tasking abilities. Compared to real world on virtual platform they are more dynamic and shows leadership skills. This automatically makes them techno savvy.

Women on social media seen to be vibrant and proactive.They influence all sectors of communication like film advertising and over all entertainment arenas.

Women are emotionally charged and their every actions are derived from this temperament so they are very sincere in approach on social media.

Pintersset & Instagram are necessarily women oriented platforms having soft and aesthetically rich content.

In a way, social media platforms are creating a new **trend of** liberty and participation for both men and women equally, erasing a line of discrimination between genders.

. (<https://connectamericas.com/content/women-are-driving-social-media-revolution>)

The Overview of the Gender Inequality in the Media Organizations:

An idea of Gender - Gender is known as the attributes of men and women in the social setting. So the issue of gender is viewed differently across the world. When we talk about gender identity it is about the perception of men and women about themselves, as a part of social milieu.

This is all about the customs and culture having years of beliefs and assumptions which transcends into dos and don'ts for both the categories.

Women in media are always a popular topic which is discussed frequently and confirms that we have a long way to go to achieve balance between men & women at work places. According to the study conducted almost for 20 years reveal that in 114 countries only 24% women are mentioned into happening events or news. Taking into consideration this inequality many countries are focusing their efforts to improve this situation.This picture is visible everywhere In another survey it was revealed that 46%of news stories across the media reflects stereotype, only 6% advocates gender equality.73% of top management posts are occupied by men.

One interesting study on gender discrimination pointed out that out of 22 media organizations they have studied, less than one third have enough women representatives (Ref-<https://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/in-focus/media>)

The picture of gender equality is as gloomy as it is in the other walks of life in the society & in Europe & western countries too. In European countries we found women are not on equal footing in the area of news production, distribution, administration and finance related departments. The responsibility to command or lead the organization hardly bestowed to the woman employee. About 25% share is given to women as a news maker or an expert in particular field. In the headlines in political and fiscal issues; woman is hardly visible.

(Ref-<https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/women-in-media>)

The BBC model –

The media diaspora across the countries show that majorities of the institutions have less number of women on their payroll. The BBC research team have come with a very stark reality about exposure to women in media in different capacities. In 2015 report, women were hardly 15% participated in their shows as an expert, while women reporters were comprised of hardly 37% of the total employees.

To end this imbalance BBC came out with a unique idea of 50-50 exposure to both men & women in 2017. Within 4 months they could achieve 50-50 formula for on air contribution. Taking the inspiration from this experiment BBC has implemented this in other shows also. These systematic efforts needed to be replicated in other organizations too.

(Ref-<https://unfoundation.org/blog/post/its-time-to-hear-and-see-women-in-media/>)

Gender picture in Indian media:

The report of 2019 on Indian media & Gender suggests that only 5% higher positions were occupied by women media persons in subsequent years the same picture continued.

The detailed data indicates that in major national English newspapers 3 article out of 4 are written by male counterparts. In major English news channels only 20% berth is given to women as panelist. This picture is graver in Hindi news channels, where hardly 10% women are the part of discussion panels .

Even during Covid pandemic various discussions took place on the English news channels. In 271 talk shows around 1300 people participated out of which only 14% were women. Hindi channels had only 8% women experts and participants on their shows.

The team had also probed into subjects and topics and gender's participation.

Government policies, Power politics & law and order subjects were completely dominated by Male participants On English channels programmes on Global happenings, defense and legislative matters. Barely 14% of Men grabbed the show Subjects like human interest stories and entertainment had comparatively good numbers of women but it doesn't exceeded 32% of the total participants. On 14 sport channels which were under survey had no woman participant as an expert.

During Peak time of Covid pandemic, debates on the virus dominated larger space on the news channels. While studying 14 channels about gender disparity ,it was observed that out of 1300 panelists barely 14% were women .

Percent were women. In Hindi news segment , situation is more pathetic .Out of 125 discussions hardly 8% were women participants.

Newspaper

In Print media also same story continued as women were not visible as strongly as men. The study revealed that out of 21988 articles published hardly 25% articles were penned by women writers.

The Times of India however came out with 31% women contributors and Amar Ujala with 29%. The Telegraph had very few women writers and it recorded only 11% .

Digital and audio media –The stories surveyed showed that 41% of the content was generated by women.

Newsroom gender Statistics:

It has been observed that gender discrimination is not visible in this area, In fact In **The New Minute channel** 65% positions were given to the women employee in community radio women surpassed men .However the managerial position was given to 75% of men staff. In 11 commercial radio station surveyed it was found that Radio jockey position was given to both genders in equal number.

Observations..

Gender discrimination in Government Media Houses in India

The one of the researchers himself was associated with Doordarshan & Human Resource Department's educational TV media wing for more than 2decades.He has observed following things there :

- 1) The highest post of Director General of I& B Ministry in TV & Radio wing was never offered to a woman employee.
- 2) Even no. 2 & no 3 rank posts that of ADG & DDG was occupied by female employee very rarely.
- 3) The Center head of Radio stations& TV stations across the country were mostly men.
- 4) In the programme side & technical side the ratio between men employees &women employees was always loft sided.
- 5) News & current affairs programme were hardly headed by woman officers
- 6) In The News channel sector the chief editor has always been male with no exception.
- 7) In the Bollywood film industry director, art director, screenplay writer, action director, Music director makeup artist are mostly men.
- 8) In the advertising sector too owner or chief executives officers are always men with a few exceptions
- 9) In the Marathi Theater sector playwright is always a male of course with rare exceptions.
- 10 In newspaper sector editor/owner of the newspapers are always male with rare exceptions.

After discussing the reasons with some of the editors and its associates about women's role in media as a professionals / participants, the researchers have concluded with the following major inferences for gender discrimination

- 1) On Educational ground , women have less opportunities to learn media as a subject .
- 2) Since media education is not be considered as an important knowledge to earn living, women are discouraged to pursue the same.
- 3) Media sector is not as organized and systematic as medical, engineering sectors.
- 4) The role of women in media is always secondary & carries less significance.
- 5) Media sector is considered as unorganized sector for many decades. As job generation and stability of employment has always been very poor
- 6) The requirement of media jobs are always tough , demanding and requires extensive travelling.Late working hours had impacted entry of women in media.
- 7) Social stigma & mindset- In India it was a practice that women remain indoor while men go out for work .Though the situation has changed now still the temperament of the society has not changed much. That might have resulted in getting woman into media business.
- 8) Politics& international affairs are the subjects which are considered as reserved domain for men and women are not competent enough to deliver.
- 9) The cause for gender inequality is said to be patriarchal view of the society where male is considered to be a leader.
- 10) There are no equal opportunities for women results into injustice to women to get into media business.
- 11) Women have very less political representation.

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