**A STUDY ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH THE EFFECTIVE ROLE OF MEDIA**

**By**

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There is no chance of the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing.

Swami Vivekananda

It is noted that the total population of women in India is more than the half of population and the status of women is also changing very quickly due to the development development in various scientific and technological eras in the 21st century but we know the very existence of a world where women are suffered, discriminated, marginalized and oppressed because of various gender divide issues. The role of women empowerment is very essential for the development of the country and it could not be denied that women can change the destiny of a country. The country's overall development depends greatly on the inclusion of women in its development process in every walk of life in the world. The social and economic emancipation of women could not be achieved without the active participation of social media in the transition era of modern high technology because social media is a key agent of change in the world. Media is the fourth pillar of society and a democratic medium of information has certain duties to follow in the betterment of society. It has played an essential role for women's rights and spotted light on the challenging discrimination and stereotype role of women. There is a quite difference between the goals settle in the constitution, legislation, policies, plans, programs and related mechanisms on the one hand and the situational reality of the status of women in India, on the other hand. Mass media can play a vital role effectively for women empowerment through spreading information in educating society in the contemporary period. Media can prove the essential instrument for unity among the various masses. Therefore it is called the backbone of the nation. Media is the mirror of society and its reports are a reflection of society. New media introduces the new avatar of women based on Indian culture and society. The present research topic has explored how to increase the active participation of women in decision-making through the help of media and how to promote a decent and balanced portrayal of women in the media. The research article suggests that social media is needed for women's empowerment but there is virtual gender gap due to lack of literacy, cybercrime, etc and women are not able to fully utilize the new space.

It can be said that Indian Media portrays women as consumer products which like to concern with beautifying themselves, choosing make-up, new fashions, jewellery, cosmetics, constantly watching their weight, worried about their good figure and skin colour, proud of advertising and selling latest products. Woman is rarely portrayed as social and decision maker or as capable leaders and policymaker. Usually, she is shown to accompany her husband like a shadow or as a show piece. Manu's dictum that a woman is protected by her father in childhood, husband in adulthood and son in old age in ancient religious scripture which is mostly represented in all media. In most representations of media, woman is tactfully domesticated, and her place is 'home and hearth'.

Media is considered to be the most important tool of society in modern times as it has the power to reach out to a large audience by mass communication and create a far and wide every field of life. Social media through its ever updating apps and networking is an inevitable source of influence on mass. In initial stage, the media is not in supporting the movement for women's empowerment by focusing on the neglect and marginalization of the position of women in society. Communication is extremely important for women's development and mass media play a significant role for the welfare of women. The growth of media has contributed for the growth of woman’s education and their involvement into the business market through various roles.

Women have been reflected differently from the last decade of 19th century to the present time. Back in the days, women dress well, covered with clothes to show that they have class, and hair was done in such a way that when hats were put on, elegance will show. But the way women talk, walk and act soon changed over time. For every decade since the early 1900s, women were shown as weak beings, useless in business and politics and sometimes even portrayed as sex objects or sex icons on many occasions in the international level.

But the time is going on, the role of woman is changed and she is no longer remained feeble as society believed for then in the past. Now they became the great contributors in societies. In the 21st century in recent years and nowadays, the world has become advanced in the field of technologies. The growth of mass media in recent years has also created an enlarge impact not only on the looks of women but also the deeds in societies. The developments of innovative mechanical and communicative technologies have made a vital change in the lives of women with the helpful in many households. I am going to discuss the differential portrayal of women in media from the 19th century to the present time.

Back in the days in the year of the last decade of the 20th and after, the portrayal of women was still stereotypical as before gradually before but it has gradually changed over time. It is the human culture that believes that men are the stronger while women are weaker. Women could not achieve anything other than pleasing the men and do the households. When television was invented, media started coming out with television shows to entertain people back in the comfort of their own homes. In these shows, women can be exhibited as sex symbols, weak housewives and sometimes gold diggers. The media has already set a limit for the audience to perceive women in such a way that it is now very common for any human being to think of women in a bad way.

In modern times, advertisement plays a significant role in representing certain things as well. Even though advertisements are short and simple, it gives a huge impact and an enormous influence on the viewers as well as the spectators. In India, the advertisement of Milin Soman and model Madhu Sapre created controversy because both were naked totally and only covered their private parts with panther When the advertisement was released and shown to the public, mixed reactions were received.

Many debates noted that the advertisements are presented women only as an object and also to be portrayed as sex symbols. Then new trend was begun to show women in skin tight clothing in the advertisement as it was the ‘in-thing’ to present women in that manner. Even though there are some people and agencies groups out their support women from domestic violence, exploitation or other cases. In this case, pro-feminist cultural critic, Robert Jensen accused role of mass media and also advertisements which are used women as an object for the promotion of the goods and services. These women rather than being treated as human; instead they are presented as business promoters who are helpful to sell the product by to show off their bodies.

The role of media has portrayed women as sex symbols or objects. This can be seen in pop and rap videos of most of the artists and other rappers in the film industry. Women are dressed in almost nothing except for tight clothing to cover their private parts and are also seen wearing stilettos. In many music videos, there doesn’t have requirements of the over exposure of beautiful women but the artists involve them in songs and music videos only to attract the viewers through the exposure of women’s beautiful body parts.

Television also plays an important role in confirming social belief in the mind set of viewers because most viewers of the television serials are women. Television doesn't just teach the viewers how a particular gender should act; it also shows how the other particular gender should act as expected by the patrician society. In the broadcast of television shows, women are portrayed in several manners. Women are sometimes portrayed as motherly people to little children, sometimes also portrayed as passive and innocent women, sometime portrayed as traditional kind of religious believers the best examples are housewives and aged woman characters in the most of T.V. serials and movies in the entire world. As also mentioned earlier, women are shown as sex objects or can just simply be overlooked as an unimportant existence on the universe. These scenarios are presented in the last decade of 20th century and forward.

As years passed, women were soon coming out as stronger and more positive figures in society. In cinema and Television Shows and Serials are produced in the second decade of 21st century, the role and image of the women are gradually changeable. Now women become the dominant in every spheres of life i.e. social. Political, corporate world, army, navy, administration etc.After long period battle for their rights, finally the media has taken a turn and started to show that women are powerful in certain aspects and they are allowed to hold certain posts as well. With the use of media, women are starting to get more promotions in their career more than they have in the past.

The media does not only influence society, it also holds the current societal values of the society and also the society's views. Since the media is said to be a very powerful medium, it creates a very solid and united front toward socialization. It is proved true in the words of Weinmann about mass communications provide experiences from which we collectively shape our meanings. Even though the time is going on, as television becomes more popular in society and it has gradually become more of a way of life, it may start to develop as an even more influential medium in society. The importance of media is evident, as I have mentioned several times earlier and also the way women are being used and portrayed should be of vital interest to society.

In the media world, media has already set impossibly high beauty standards and the result of this often leaves women in a losing position in reality. Here the media established the image of women that a woman's worth is strongly dependent on her sexuality. Women's sexuality is valued mainly on their beauty and also their performance. Since the media has already set such high standards for women's beauty, hence women will spend countless amounts of money on beauty products and clothing. They pass lot of time to reach the standard of beauty set by media when they are failed to achieve them they feel disappointment and depressed. The fact should be also accepted by women too that they cannot be innocent and sexual at the same time in the eye of the world so women are compulsion to choose either be innocent or be sexual at one time.

In the past, many stereotypes portrayed in mass media have unfortunately held women back. Fortunately, there appears to be a new wave of consciousness and action emerging, where women are being portrayed as strong and capable. Now they set their long term goals, plan them and achieve them through their determination and hard works.

The patrician society believes that women are very feeble so that they have not treat equal to man in every aspects of life. If there is no active participation of women in every walk of life, the world may not function as properly as it can be and it may even fail without women because women occupy half of the population on Earth. During their lives, man dominated society makes realization to them that society provides them not only woman rights but also education, good health, economic security and political power. Mahatma Gandhi, a international figure, political and social leader firmly believes that the status of women would not change merely by bringing legislation; it must be supported by the change in the women's social circumstances and situations and also man's sexist attitude towards women.

Even though the idea of new communication technology has been lingering in the thoughts of people for centuries, the concept of this new communication technology only began to rise to the attention of people as a form of media communications in the middle of 20th century. After surfacing at the top, this new media started generating and these new media including electronic mail, voice mail and fax machines were produced and were then used for interpersonal communication in the world.

It is enough to prove that media is already a powerful tool in influencing society; the use of new communication technology can be used as an effective tool to empower women in the contemporary society. With the help of different types of mass media campaigns, they could pitch in to help organize campaigns to allow society to understand their medium. They use a traditional form of communication such as story-telling, puppetry and several other mediums. They introduce feminist based research to explore and theorize the concept how class of women in the world challenges the mainstream media for their stereotype representation. Women themselves produce several different types of new media which produce the women’s feminist values in their production process.

In modern age, new technologies provide number of opportunity for women in manufacturing and machinery field. Women acquire new skills that enable them to undertake tasks requiring multiple skills, logic, inventiveness and creativity which inspire them to increase their motivation to learn more. The knowledge and technical skills create lot of opportunities for women in areas that were not available or appropriate for them before. One effect of mechanization and computerization of manufacturing is that it reduces the need for physical labour and increases the need for skilled labour. This opens up new possibilities for women to get employment in manufacturing fields after undergoing technical training.With the introduction of new technologies, the 'heaviness' of work has reduced gradually. Further, women demand for equal wages of works with man due to the abolition of the distinction between 'heavy' and 'light' work in the factory.

It is a commonly believed that women are less engaged with Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) than men. Everyone has an opportunity to learn the new communication technologies which also provides equal benefits and advantages to women. The upper class of society will not curtain the advantages of knowledge from women so that every part of women population freely takes the benefits of it. Thus any form of media plays a vital role to empower women in economic and social field of society.

The current subject of women and media is quite relevant in the present day context from various platforms for equal right The exploitation and discussions on the subject are initiated from various platforms for the progress of women in the society. women normally face the burning issues such as gender equality, equity and empowerment of women. It is requirement of time to start the discussion the issue because women have now started to become even more significant in women's lives as they have a vital role in the growth and also development of knowledge in every field of life in the world. Because of women's biological and social roles, they are generally more persistent than men in the regions of their habitat. Women are therefore much more aware than men of the environmental, economic and social needs of their region. In the words of Jawaharlal Nehru, you can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women.

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