



THE LACK OF GENDER SENSITIVITY IN MASS MEDIA



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ABSTRACT

Mass Media is the combination of print media and electronic media which are composed of the Radio, the Television, the Film, the Press, Publication and Advertising. Among these media, the television, films, Advertisements, photography, animation, paintings etc. are regarded as the visual media. Media feed the people with the latest information and

create the need for change in contemporary society. Mass media have both positive and negative role in the society. According to the need fulfillment and psychological tendency of male dominated society, women are always sidelined. We can find the lack of gender sensitivity in mass media.

KEYWORDS

Mass media, people, society, gender, need

RESEARCH PAPER

Introduction:

Women are shown and portrayed according to male desires like beautiful creatures, submissive mothers of children, efficient housekeepers, cruel and deceptive vamps but nothing else. The positive roles of women's progress and their contribution for national development have a largely been neglected in the media of communication. The emphasis on stories about women about their struggle for recognition is only the surface trimming. The film industry is one that has a major effect on how young women are has viewed in society. Young women often have roles as passive and vulnerable characters, which tend to leave the tough, strong and assertive roles to men. Women's roles are written with irrelevant sexualization their characters primary function is to please men, dance and sing in skimpy costumes.

The music industry is very similar to the film industry, which exhibits the use of irrelevant sexualization, and their aim is to attract an audience of young people. Music videos showcase behavior is just as promiscuous as shown in the films. Women's bodies are constantly displayed in a sexual way and this behavior is imitated by young girls in and across the country who idolize them.

Another negative portrayal of women depicted in media is domestication. The majority of commercials about house products or childcare are still aimed at women. This reinforces the sexist and outdated stereotypes of women only working inside the home, whereas, men are never shown contributing to housework or childcare. It is very true that images of young women in the media have a tremendous impact on young people everywhere. Whether it is through film, music, Television serials, advertisements or any other mass media format, the public is constantly pressured to fit into today of what beauty is. Young people and even children are interested to act like the characters they watch on Television.

Many advertisements which are cinematographed in monochrome with the right shades of darkness and mood lighting, and are very hot ad, but have no direct relationship with the product being advertise. Such kind of ads in media raises relevant questions about perspectives on gender in media representations of men and women. Ads for instance,

underscore how men in Indian ads are being presented in a much more macho dominant manner than they were before. Another ad for male underwear shows a number of females with pseudo-coy expressions on their faces coming out of a toilet. The camera cuts to a shot inside the toilet where a handsome male model prostate lies with telltale lipstick marks across his body. Again the product advertised does not really have a direct relationship with the message on the script. Secondly few Indian males would be caught dead before females catch them in their underwear and in a public toilet. These all are Western concepts which are imposed on Indian ad scripts and prove that visuals need not necessarily represent the social norms of a society.

Women in Indian advertisements are being presented in less dependent roles than they were before. An advertisement for a leading women's fortnightly recently carried a delightful image of an aging woman in bridal attire. It later transpires that her daughter is getting her married again. This is an example of positive advertising that subtly carries a social message. Many mother and daughter advertisements in recent times bear out female bonding and marginalizing the role of men by cutting them out completely from such advertisements. Yet, women do not appear in ads for 'solid' products such as steel and cement and even if they do, they all side-tracked within the script. The lack of gender sensitivity in the media is evidenced in the failure to eliminate gender based stereotyping. Generally the media do not provide a balanced portrayal of women's diverse lives and their contributions to society in a changing world, often reinforcing stereotyped images of women and their roles in the society. It is a common practice to assess the professional success of a woman through questions and claims about her related to being a good mother and a wife.

In the portrayal of women in mainstream daily newspapers, positive images of women have a narrow scope and are based on new stereotypes of women's success: a pop star, a beauty queen, and a sports woman with an outstanding result. There is an absence of image of an active, assertive working woman, or a successful; businesswoman, or a positive image of a woman politician. Average women are nearly always portrayed as victims of poverty, social injustice, domestic violence and organized crime. Popular magazines with large circulations

like the 'Sunday' and 'India Today' flash vulgar and obscene glossy photographs on their cover pages.

The advertising world continues to use women to peddle its products and to present women as sexual objects. Advertising also reinforces housework as the sole responsibility of the women, with household equipments ads addressed only to women. The passivity of female characters in film and television is a major cause of concern

Conclusion:

To be concluding women are considered ideal only when she is in her nurturing roles and as a supportive supplement to man. Media has less focused on issues concerning women. It reveals the dependency of women. The image of educated women is typecast as insensitive, self-centered and uncaring. Mass media presents women specific programs only perpetuate sex stereotypes and it caters to women as housewives and mothers, rather than provide knowledge and skills for their role as economic contributors.

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