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Mass Media Exposure and Gender Awareness: A Study on the Post Graduate Students

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Abstract:

This paper is a substantial effort to examine the level of gender awareness among the Postgraduate students in Silchar town through mass media as it is assumed that the awareness on gender issues among the Postgraduate students is high and media has played a very substantial role in creating this awareness. It also aims at analyzing the relationship between mass media exposure and the awareness about the gender issues among the respondents. The base data has been collected from a sample size of 450 post graduate youths which consists of both male and female to get equal representation of both the gender. The researcher has used a purposive sampling technique for the study. The rationale behind selecting Assam University, Silchar is that it gives sample from different fields and backgrounds. It is the only institution in the area that offers postgraduate courses in different disciplines and the respondents represents not only from the North East India but the entire country. However, in the other educational institutions of Silchar, representation of the respondents is very less.

Keywords: Gender awareness and mass media exposure

1. Introduction

Women are the unique creation of the world and constitute half of the population of the Country. A society has never progressed socially, economically, politically and culturally without the active participation of women. Still women are the most deprived and socially discriminated in the society in the name of gender and treated as sex objects and commodity. Such approaches and perceptions prevailed in the society are shown in the media from time to time. Gender and most importantly the role of women have been recognized widely as vital as important to international development issues. This means giving importance of gender-equality and ensuring equal participation of both the gender and at the same time understanding the different roles and the probability of the genders within the community. The role of media as a factor for socio-cultural transformation shaping the attitudes and behaviours of the gender towards the better development of the society, upliftment and equal recognition of the women in the society is recognized in a developing country like India. If media has at times shown women as sex objects or commodity, it has also shown women to fight back and come up with all odds. Thus, media simultaneously, portrays a multifaceted range of gender structure from its sympathetic attitude to biasness on gender issues. The paper has attempted to raise the critical questions on the role of media in educating the masses on gender issues, it has also tried to answer the reasons behind not discussing the gender issues and what is their view on gender issues and how much media has helped in the betterment of the society. Awareness of Gender issues has less attracted the scholars and it is assumed that the level of differences about gender issues may vary with the level of mass media exposure therefore, the present study was aimed to understand the patterns of mass media exposure and degree of awareness of gender issues among the postgraduate students in Silchar town of Assam, India.

1.1. Review of Literature

Not only in India, but it is the scenario in all parts of the globe that women are considered inferior to men because of their sex that is a social construction i.e. a name to differentiate the male and female. Infact, this sex differentiation became relevant after the meaning of the names attached to the sexes (*Geetha: 2002:10*). India is a developing country and at the same time a patriarchal society, this patriarchal system engraves in the human being that if you are a man than has to be aggressive, dominating, powerful, takes the decision and earn food and look for the basic needs of the family and if you are a woman than has to be caring, submissive, take care of the children and family members, do household cores and cooking. Women are taught to be pativarta nari i.e. obeying her husband following stridharma or patidrama and never to complain about any pain from the very childhood by their mothers. They are bought up as 'praya dhan' i.e. others property as once they are married daughters are no more part of the family and property. She has to stay with her husband and in- laws and bear all the hardships and pain with no complain. Hence this lineage passes from family to family

(Henry Maine: 2005; Chakraborty, Uma: 2006). Because of these gender stereotypes women are disadvantaged and are vulnerable to other kinds of discriminations, injustices and violence. Violence against women (VAW) are such as- rape, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, female foeticide, infanticide, witch killing, sati, dowry deaths, wife- beating, high level of female illiteracy, malnutrition, undernourishment and continued sense of insecurity keeps women bound to home, economically exploited, socially suppressed and politically passive. Women's powerlessness arises from their illiteracy, lack of awareness, poor knowledge and skills and also from their lack of self- esteem and confidence (Lazo: 1995).

Mass communication researches, primarily, concentrates on the study of its effects on the society. The role of mass media in development activity was very clearly implied in the dominant paradigm of development. Klapper (1960) suggested that people exposed themselves to messages selectively. There was a tendency of individuals to expose themselves relatively more to those items of communication that set with their beliefs, ideas, values, etc. Regardless of exposure to communication, an individual's perception of a certain event, issue, person, or place could be influenced by his/her latent beliefs, attitudes, wants, need or other factors. Thus, two individuals exposed to the same message could go away with diametrically different perceptions about it. Research showed that even recall of information was influenced by factors such as an individual's needs, wants, moods, perceptions and so on. From this it is now clear that some researchers are of the view that there is direct effect of media on society and individuals while the others say that there is limited impact of mass media on society and that is also under certain conditions. Some claims that there is no any direct of media at all.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

1. To analyse the relationship between mass media exposure and the awareness about the gender issues among the respondents.
2. To understand the level of awareness about the gender issues among the respondents.

1.3. Methodology

The proposed study is located in the Silchar town in the Cachar District of Assam. The study is aimed to examine the patterns of Media Exposure among the males and females and to analyze the relationship between Gender and Mass media exposure. The study is exploratory in nature.

1.3.1. Techniques and Data Collection

The base data has been collected by through a survey using a structured schedule with the postgraduate students of the study area. The study is conducted on a sample size of 450 postgraduate youths of the Assam University admitted in the academic session, 2010-2011.

1.3.2. Sampling

The sample size of 450 consists of 225 male respondents and 225 female respondents to get equal representation of both the gender. The researcher has used a purposive sampling technique for the study.

1.3.3. Rationale of the Study

The rationale behind selecting Assam University, Silchar is that the University offers all stream courses in order to get desired respondents related to the study and also the respondents represents not only the North East India but the entire country. However, in the other educational institutions of Silchar, representation of the respondents is very less.

1.3.4. Data Collection

The primary data has been collected by administering a highly structured schedule, which consisted of questions related to general information about the media habits of the respondents, gender awareness on empowerment and mass media exposure of the respondents. The secondary data has been collected from the available books, journals and government records.

1.3.5. Data Analysis

For the analysis, the researcher has used MS word excel. The data has been analyzed with simple nominal scale, frequencies and percentage.

1.4. Parameters of Study

- Media Exposure of the respondents has been studied in terms of the exposure of the newspaper access to television channels, magazines, radio, cinema, access to mobile phones/telephones and multimedia such as internet.
- Modern Mass media refers to the following forms of mass communication:
 - Print forms of communication – newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, books, novels, etc.
 - Broadcasting media – radio, public address systems such as amplifiers, loudspeakers, etc.
 - Audio-visual media – television, cinema, and video shows, etc.
 - Multimedia – computer based media such as VCD players, DVD players, Internet, etc.
- Gender awareness has been studied keeping into consideration knowledge and awareness of different gender issues, gender inequalities, crimes and violence against women, which hinders in the development process and women's access to all resources in the way of empowerment.

2. Mass Media Exposure and Gender Awareness

The present work is an analysis of gender awareness and mass media exposure among the post graduate students of Silchar.

2.1. Section- A: Gender Awareness

2.1.1. Gender Issues Discussed

Generally people feel shy to discuss openly about gender issues as it is being associated with sex, crimes and unwanted behaviours that are forbidden or taboo. The respondents were asked whether they have discussed about gender issues with anyone. Their responses are shown in table 1.

Sl.No	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
01	Yes	240	53.33
02	No	210	46.67
Total		450	100

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of the Gender Issues Discussed

From the above table it is clear that majority (53.33 percent) of the respondents discuss about gender issues while 46.67 percent do not discuss about gender issues.

2.1.2. Topic of Discussion about Gender Issues

In order to analysis the type of discussion about gender issues among the respondents, they were asked about the topics of discussion they frequently do. Their responses are shown in table 2.

Sl.No	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
01	Women Rights	59	13.11
02	Women Discrimination	44	9.78
03	Gender Development	22	4.89
04	Gender inequality	63	14
05	Women political participation/ reservation	35	7.78
06	Women as sex object	22	4.89
07	Gender Education	35	7.78
08	Gender injustices	29	6.44
09	Gender violence	28	6.22
10	Other gender issues*	40	8.89
11	Don't Discuss	207	46

Table 2: Topic on which respondents discuss about Gender Issues

* Women trafficking+ child marriage

It is evident from the above table that 46 percent respondents do not discuss about gender issues. Among them majority (14 percent) of the respondents discuss about gender inequality, followed by 13.11 percent on women rights, 9.78 percent on women discrimination, other gender issues such as women trafficking and child marriage with 8.89 percent; 7.78 percent each on women political participation or reservation and gender education, 6.44 percent gender injustices, gender violence 6.22 percent, 4.89 percent each on topics of women as sex object and gender development while 46 percent respondents who do not discuss about gender issues.

2.1.3. Frequency of Discussion

On the basis of the frequency of discussion of the gender issues, they are categorized into 5 as shown in table 3.

Sl.No	Frequency of Discussion	Frequency	Percentage
01	Regularly	14	3.11
02	Sometimes	134	29.78
03	Often	43	9.56
04	Rarely	49	10.89
05	Don't Discuss	210	46.67
Total		450	100

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of frequency of discussion on Gender Issues

From the above table it is clear that majority (46.67 percent) of the respondents do not discuss about gender issues, while 29.78 percent discuss sometimes on gender issues, followed by 10.89 percent discuss rarely, 9.56 percent often and 3.11 percent discuss regularly.

2.1.4. Reasons for Not Discussing Gender Issues

On the basis of the reasons for not discussing gender issues, they are categorized into 3 as shown in table 4.

Sl.No.	Reasons not discussing gender issues	Frequency	Percentage
01	Don't have time	70	33.33
02	Feel Shy	45	21.86
03	Don't have interest	95	45.81
Total		210	100

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of reasons for not discussing gender issues

It is seen from the above table that majority (45.81 percent) don't have an interest for gender issues so do not discuss, followed by 33.33 percent do not have time to discuss and 21.86 percent feel shy to discuss.

2.1.5. Effectiveness of Gender Awareness Programmes Organised by the Department or University

To ascertain the role of educational institutions in imparting Gender Awareness Programmes to the youths, the respondents are asked whether their department or University has ever organised any programme on Gender Awareness.

Sl.No.	Gender Awareness Programmes	Frequency	Percentage
01	Yes	156	34.67
02	No	294	65.33
Total		450	100

Table 5: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of Gender Awareness programmes organised by the Department or University

The above table shows that majority (65.33 percent) of the respondents have attended gender awareness programmes organized by the Department or the University whereas 34.67 percent has not attended.

2.1.6. Sources of Gender Awareness Programmes Organized by the Department or University

In order to examine the sources from which the respondents have received information, they have been asked the source and form of gender awareness. Their responses are shown in table 6.

Sl.No	Form of Gender Awareness Programmes	Frequency	Percentage
01	Symposium/Workshop/Seminar/Assignment	32	20.51
02	Debate	49	31.41
03	Quiz	38	24.36
04	Drama	37	23.72
Total		156	100

Table 6: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of Form of Gender Awareness Programmes Organized by the Department or University

From the above table it is clear that the respondents who have attended gender awareness programmes organized by the Department or the University have attended in the form of debate with 31.41 percent, Quiz with 24.36 percent, drama with 23.72 percent and Symposium/Workshop/Seminar/Assignment with 20.51 percent.

2.2. Section- B: Media and Gender Awareness

2.2.1. Mass Media Role in Curbing Gender Problems and Injustices

Mass media have become the part and parcel of our day to day activities. The different forms of mass media available inform the people what is going on both in the world at large and at home in particular. In order to assess the role of mass media, the respondents were asked whether in their opinion mass media help in curbing gender problems and injustices. Their responses are shown in table 7.

Sl.No.	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
01	Yes	385	85.56
02	No	65	14.44
Total		450	100

Table 7: Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of Media role in solving gender problems and injustices

It is seen from the above table that majority (85.56 percent) of the respondents finds media help in solving gender problems and injustices whereas according to 14.44 percent respondents media do not help in curbing gender problems and injustices.

2.2.2. Portrayal of Women

Mass media is considered as the mirror of the society. It has always tried to portray reality into frame. In order to gather a qualitative opinion on the presentation of the women through the media, the respondents were asked to give their opinions in this regard. Their responses are shown in the table 8.

Sl.No.	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
01	Yes	326	72.44
02	No	124	27.56
Total		450	100

Table 8: Distribution of the Respondents according to their views on the proper portrayal of women through the Mass Media Programmes/news item

From the above table it is observed that majority, i.e. 72.44 percent of the respondents opines that media gives a proper presentation of the women whereas 27.56 percent do not think so.

2.2.3. Mass Media Programmes/News Items Promoting Women Empowerment

In order to assess a qualitative opinion on mass media promoting programmes or news items on women empowerment and nari sakti, the respondents were asked to give their opinions in this regard. Their responses are shown in the table 9.

Sl.No.	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
01	Yes	307	68.22
02	No	19	4.22
03	Not Applicable	124	27.56
Total		450	100

Table 9: Distribution of the Respondents according to the Programmes/News item promoting Women Empowerment and Nari Sakti

It is observed from the above table that 68.22 percent of the respondents thinks that mass media promotes programmes or news items on women empowerment and nari sakti, whereas 4.22 percent thinks mass media do not promotes any such programme and 27.56 percent thinks media do not gives proper presentation of women.

2.2.4. Acquired Knowledge on Gender Issues

In order to gather a qualitative opinion, the respondents were asked whether they have acquired any knowledge from the mass media programmes or news items on gender issues. Their responses are shown in the table 10.

Sl.No.	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
01	Yes	338	75.11
02	No	112	24.89
Total		450	100

Table 10: Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of Acquired Knowledge through the Programmes/news items on gender issues

It is evident from the above table that majority (75.11 percent) of the respondents have acquired knowledge on gender issues through mass media whereas 24.89 percent have not.

2.2.5. Mass Media Affecting the Socio- Cultural Life

In an attempt to gather a qualitative opinion on the role of mass media in affecting and influencing the socio- cultural life of the masses, the respondents were asked to give their opinions in this regard. Their responses are shown in the table 11

Sl.No.	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
01	Yes	367	81.56
02	No	83	18.44
Total		450	100

Table 11: Distribution of the Respondents according to the mass media affecting the Socio- Cultural Life of the masses

It is observed from the above table that majority (81.56 percent) of the respondents thinks that mass media affects and influence the socio- cultural life of the masses while 18.44 percent thinks mass media do not influence the socio- cultural life of the masses.

2.2.6. Mass Media Promoting Gender Awareness

In order to assess a qualitative opinion on the role of mass media in promoting gender awareness through mass media programmes or news items on gender awareness, the respondents were asked to give their opinions in this regard. Their responses are shown in the table 12.

Sl.No.	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
01	Yes	365	81.11
02	No	85	18.89
Total		450	100

Table 12: Distribution of the Respondents according to the promotion of Gender Awareness programmes by media

It is evident from the above table that majority (81.11 percent) of the respondents thinks that mass media promotes gender awareness while 18.89 percent thinks mass media do not promotes.

2.2.7. Themes on Which Mass Media Has Created Gender Awareness

In order to gather a qualitative opinion on the role of mass media in promoting gender awareness on the various gender issues through mass media programmes, the respondents were asked to give their opinions in this regard. Their responses are shown in the table 13

Sl.No	Programs	Freq.	%
1	Enhancement in education of both the male and female child	284	63.11
2	Contraceptive and family planning, fewer children in family	230	51.11
3	Increase in marriage age of girl child	227	50.44
4	Health, Child Care, mother-rearing and nurturing	215	47.78
5	Increase participation of women in decision making and leadership	193	42.89
6	Increase women's participation in the tile electoral process and political activities	187	41.56
7	Work towards equality between women and men in private sector	208	46.22
8	Establish equal access for women training	188	41.78
9	Not Applicable	85	18.89

Table 13: Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of Gender Awareness programmes

From the above table, it is clear that according to the 63.11percent of the respondents mass media helps in promoting enhancement in education of both the male and female child, 51.11 revealed mass media spreads the message for the use of contraceptive, family planning and fewer children in family; 50.44 percent said media helps in the promotion of the increase in marriage age of girl child; followed by 47.78 percent for health, child care, mother-rearing, nurturing; 46.22 percent responded media works towards equality between women and men in private sector, 42.89 percent for increase in participation of women in decision making and leadership; 41.78 percent to establish equal access for women training; 41.56 percent for increase in women's participation in the tile electoral process and political activities; and 18.89 percent do not thinks mass media promotes gender awareness.

2.2.8. Mass Media in Removing Masculine and Feminine Gender Gap

In an attempt to gather opinion, to what extent mass media has been helpful in removing the gap between masculine and feminine gender, a pointer scale has been set. The responses are shown through the table 14.

Sl. No.	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
01	To a very great extent (Very High)	63	14
02	To a great extent (High)	117	26
03	To some extent (average)	135	30
04	Not so much (low)	54	12
05	Not at all (very low)	81	18
Total		450	100

Table 14: Distribution of Respondents on the basis of the opinion to how much the mass media has been helpful in removing the gap between masculine and feminine gender

From the above table it is clear, majority (30 percent) of the respondents finds mass media have been to an average, i.e. to some extent helpful in removing the gap between masculine and feminine gender, followed by 26 percent to a great extent, 18 percent thinks, it has not at all been helpful in removing the gap, 14 percent of the respondents finds to a very great extent and 12 percent thinks not so much (low) is helpful in removing the gap between masculine and feminine gender.

2.2.9. Mass Media In Solving Gender Discrimination

In an attempt to gather opinion, to what extent mass media have been helpful in solving gender discrimination, a pointer scale has been set. The responses are shown through the table 15.

Sl. No.	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
01	To a very great extent (Very High)	54	12
02	To a great extent (High)	144	32
03	To some extent (average)	126	28
04	Not so much (low)	54	12
05	Not at all (very low)	72	16
Total		450	100

Table 15: Distribution of Respondents according to the opinion how much the media has been helpful in projecting Gender Discrimination issue

From the above table it is clear, majority (32 percent) of the respondents thinks mass media have been to a great extent helpful in solving gender discrimination, 28 percent thinks it have done average, 16 percent thinks it have not at all been helpful in solving gender discrimination and 12 percent thinks mass media have been to a very great extent helpful and rest 12 percent thinks not so much (low) helpful in solving gender discrimination.

2.3. Section – C: Mass Media Exposure and Gender Awareness

Mass media has influenced the thinking, habit and way of living of the people in different ways. This section deals with the effectiveness of mass media exposure and degree of awareness about the gender issues among the respondents.

2.3.1. Gender Injustices, Women Welfare and Empowerment

In order to assess the effectiveness of mass media exposure of the respondents on the awareness of gender injustices, women welfare and empowerment, through mass media programmes in the form of serials, films, news, documentaries, talk shows, advertisements, features/ editorials of the newspapers and magazines, books, banners, hoardings and pamphlets, the respondents are asked questions based on the following theme and it is found that regarding dowry, child marriages, widowhood and desertion majority (32 percent) of the respondents saw films more than serials with 26.44 percent against such theme in TV. Majority saw such themes in TV in the form of news (24.89 percent) and talk shows (7.78 percent). Books play an important role with 14.67 percent. Regarding Foeticide, infant mortality, majority (16.44 percent) of the respondents saw serials against this theme more than films. Regarding advertisements, majority (25.11 percent) saw in TV. Regarding news, 8 percent saw in TV followed by newspapers with 6.89 percent; regarding talk shows, majority (6 percent) heard in radio and 6.22 percent read in features/editorials of newspapers. Concerning girls married after 18 years, majority (20.89 percent) of the respondents saw more serials about the theme rather than films in TV, majority (20.22 percent) saw in TV advertisements, followed by 13.56 percent saw in TV news. Regarding fewer children in family, majority (13.78 percent) of the respondents saw serials on this theme, rather than films in TV. Majority (26.67 percent) saw advertisements in TV; radio talk shows is more popular rather than TV; features/ editorials in magazines is more popular than in newspapers and 16 percent read in books. Programmes on education of both the male and female child equally, majority (11.56 percent) of the respondents saw more serials on this theme rather than films, majority 14.67 percent saw advertisement in TV. Regarding news, 11.78 percent saw in TV; majority (10.22 percent) heard in TV talk shows; features/ editorials in magazines is more popular than in newspapers; and 9.33 percent read in books. More working women in a family majority (12.44 percent) of the respondents saw serial in support of the theme in TV. Regarding advertisements, most of them saw in TV. Majority (4.2 percent) saw in TV news; similarly, majority (4.67 percent) saw in TV talk shows; 12.56 percent read in books and 11.56 percent through internet. While only 2.4 percent

did not responded nor could recall about the gender injustices, women welfare and empowerment. 23.3 percent of the respondents find that the mass media programmes on the gender injustices, women welfare and empowerment are not beneficial, whereas 51.33 percent finds the programmes to be topic of discussion, 38.67 percent promoting knowledge and Information, 36.67 percent said it motivates for further study. Thus, TV is the most popular medium of mass media and TV advertisement, followed by TV serial and TV news is the most seen item that spread gender awareness programmes, followed by books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc., then TV talk shows and features/ editorials of magazines.

2.3.2. Health and Hygiene

In terms of assessing the effectiveness of mass media exposure of the respondents on the awareness of health and hygiene programmes through mass media programmes in the form of serials, films, news, documentaries, talk shows, advertisements, features/ editorials of the newspapers and magazines, books, banners, hoardings and pamphlets, it is found that regarding Family Planning, majority (48.44 percent) of the respondents saw advertisements in TV, followed by 14.89 percent read in newspapers; 12.22 percent also saw such themes in TV serial about this theme. Regarding talk show, majority (9.33 percent) saw in TV followed by radio; even regarding documentary, majority (8.89 percent) saw in TV, majority (9.78 percent) of the respondents read in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding choice of contraceptive, majority (70.67 percent) of the respondents saw in TV advertisement on such themes, followed by newspapers. Regarding talk show, 5.11 percent saw in TV. For health care, majority (57.11 percent) of the respondents saw advertisements in TV on such themes. Regarding talk shows, majority (10.44 percent) of the respondents saw in TV. Regarding documentaries, majority (5.33 percent) saw in TV. Regarding features/ editorials, 8.67 percent read in magazines followed by 6.22 percent in newspapers and 9.11 percent in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding child care, majority (54 percent) of the respondents saw advertisements in TV on such theme; regarding talk shows, 5.11 percent heard in radio and 5.11 percent read in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding vaccination / pulse polio, majority (70.22 percent) saw advertisement on TV on such theme and 11.56 percent went through books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding nutrition, majority (41.3 percent) saw TV advertisements on such theme, followed by newspapers. 12.67 percent saw in TV talk shows; most of them also saw these themes in features/ editorials of magazine and 12.44 percent in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Among mass media programmes items such as advertisements, documentaries and talk shows is quiet popular in TV along with features or editorials and books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding safe drinking water, majority (59.56 percent) of the respondents saw advertisements on TV on such theme; regarding talk show, majority (5.78 percent) heard in radio; and 12.44 percent found in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding sanitation, majority (53.56 percent) of the respondents saw advertisements on TV. Regarding talk shows, majority (10 percent) saw in TV followed by radio; and 11.1 percent read in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding NRHM, majority (53.78 percent) of the respondents saw advertisements on TV on such theme, followed by 26.22 percent in newspapers advertisements and 9.33 percent saw in pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc.

8.89 percent of the respondents find that the programmes on the health and hygiene are not beneficial, whereas 60.67 percent finds the programmes promoting knowledge and Information, 54 percent finds media promoting social status and participation, 45.33 percent revealed the programmes brings colours to life. Thus the response from the above themes shows, TV is a popular mass media among the post graduate youths. Advertisement is a popular item of that spread gender awareness, followed by radio documentary, TV talk show and books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc.

2.3.3. Gender Issues

In terms of assessing the effectiveness of mass media exposure of the respondents on the awareness of some of the crucial social issues, regarding domestic violence, majority of the respondents saw these themes in films followed by serials; regarding news, majority saw in TV, followed by newspapers, radio. Most of their respondents also went through in TV talk shows, features/ editorials in magazines and in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding rape, majority (46.67 percent) saw this theme in films more than in serials; regarding news, majority (58.67 percent) saw in TV, followed by in newspapers; regarding features/ editorials, majority (9.33 percent) saw in magazines and 17.33 percent saw in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding Honour killing, majority (31.3 percent) saw in TV news followed by, newspapers news. 18 percent respondents have seen in TV serials followed by films, then in feature/editorials of magazines and 8.44 percent in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding Female prostitution, women trafficking, majority (45.3 percent) saw theme in films followed by serials; regarding news, majority (68 percent) saw in TV, followed by newspapers (29 percent) and then radio. 9.33 percent respondents went through in TV talk shows, followed by TV documentary, feature/editorials of magazines and in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding Gender empowerment, majority (28 percent) saw in serials more than in films; regarding news, majority (26 percent) respondents saw in TV, followed by newspapers. Regarding advertisements, majority (22.67 percent) saw in TV, followed by each in newspapers and magazine. A good number of respondents also went through in TV talk show, TV documentary, in features/editorials of magazines and in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding Women and human rights, majority of the respondents saw in TV news followed by news in newspapers, then in TV serials (14.67 percent). A good number also went through in TV talk show (9.3 percent), TV documentary (9.3 percent) followed by radio documentary and 24 percent also found in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. Regarding Gender inequality, in case of news, majority (30 percent) of the respondents saw in TV, followed by newspapers; and 21.3 percent each also went through serials and books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. A good percent also went through in TV talk show and TV documentary. Regarding Gender participation, majority (22 percent) saw this theme in films followed by TV serials; regarding talk shows, most of them saw in TV and 30 percent in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc., many respondents also saw in TV news followed by news in newspapers. Regarding Gender budgeting, majority (24 percent) saw in TV news. Regarding

Gender equality, majority of the respondents are aware through books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc., then TV serials followed by films, many respondents also went through news, mostly in TV followed by newspapers, then TV advertisements and TV talk show. Regarding Gender justice, majority (22 percent) of the respondents read in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc., followed by TV news (20.67 percent), TV advertisements and TV serials with 18.67 percent each. Regarding Women as sex object, most of the respondents saw in TV advertisements, a minimum percentage also saw in features/ editorials of magazines. Regarding Deteriorating widows conditions, majority (24 percent) saw in TV news followed by, news in newspapers, then in TV serials, followed by films, regarding documentaries, majority saw in TV and also in TV talk show. A good percentage also read in books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc. While 0.44 percent respondents did not recall any such programmes. While 46.67 percent finds the media promotes social status and participation, 37.33 percent each finds the programme to be inspiring and promoting knowledge and Information. Thus, the majority of the respondents are aware of the gender issues through serials, films, talk show and documentary shown in TV and books, pamphlets, hoardings, banners, etc..

3. Findings and Conclusion

From the study it is clear that in terms of the role of mass media in solving gender problems and injustices, majority of the respondents finds media help in solving gender problems and injustices. While assessing on the basis of the qualitative opinion of the representation of women through media, majority of the respondents thinks that the media gives a proper presentation of the women. Similarly, majority of the respondents opine that mass media affects and influence the sociocultural life of the masses and majority of the respondents think mass media promotes gender awareness. In terms of qualitative opinion on the role of mass media in promoting gender awareness of the various gender issues through mass media programmes, majority of the respondents finds mass media helps in promoting the enhancement in education of both the male and female child. 51.11 percent reveal mass media spreads the message for the use of contraceptive, family planning and fewer children in the family. 50.44 percent said media helps in the promotion of the increase in marriage age of the girl child, followed by 47.78 percent for health, child care, mother-rearing, nurturing.

In terms of the degree of opinion, majority (30 percent) thinks mass media have been to an average, i.e. to some extent helpful in removing the gap between masculine and feminine gender, followed by 26 percent to a great extent and 18 percent thinks, it has not at all been helpful in removing the gap. Similarly, in terms of the degree of opinion to what extent mass media is helpful in solving gender discrimination, majority (32 percent) of the respondents thinks mass media have been to a great extent helpful in solving gender discrimination, 28 percent thinks, it has done average, 16 percent thinks it is not at all helpful in solving gender discrimination. It is revealed from the findings of the study that television is the most popular form of mass media and TV serials, TV talk shows, TV news and TV documentaries are among the most popular items of mass media, through which the respondents are exposed to gender issues. Advertisements play an important role in awaking the masses, TV advertisements are most recalled by the respondents, followed by advertisements in newspapers and magazines. Another interesting fact that is revealed from the study is that respondents are exposed to gender issues and problems more through books in their childhood.

From the study it is revealed that, programmes on crucial social issues penetrated in our society for gender development, health and hygiene should be shown more in private satellite channels rather being telecast only in Doordarshan as the viewership in the private channels is more. The content and the programme quality in Doordarshan and All India Radio should be increased so that people opt for Doordarshan and AIR also, rather than viewing only satellite channel. The programme content in the various mass media should be infotainment (information + entertainment), rather than being simply entertaining. Almost 100 percent respondents have internet facilities and cannot do without internet, hence, more display or pop-up advertisements or themes on gender issues and economic development should be designed in the internet pages. Books, hoardings, pamphlets and banners play an important role in creating awareness. Therefore, various gender issues and socioeconomic problems hindering the development of the country should be more included in their educational curriculum and syllabus from the childhood and should be engrained from the high schools or undergraduate level.

Gender awareness programmes on the various themes for economic development, gender empowerment, health and hygiene and eradication of social issues should be more conducted in the interior and village areas so that the awareness themes and development starts from grass root level. Until and unless, the following points are taken into consideration, awareness along with development and empowerment in all senses is not possible.

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