

## **MEDIA CONTRIBUTION IN GENDER SENSITIZATION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Media is the fourth and strongest pillar of Democracy. With the rise of Internet ,Facebook and blogs ,now a days common people are very well empowered with media as the media is widely distributed than ever before and not limited to only media organisations.women have got in this way a new platform to share their views. Media is giving her power by segregating from real space. Women have to face so many challenges in this world.

Media is an appropriate weapon to deal with these challenges. Media become more sensitive after December 16 rape incident .This, in turn, helped a lot to create awareness about frequency of such crimes and gave courage to women to come forward and speak about their current position in the society.

This paper discusses about the role media play to create awareness and sensitivity among people in society.

**KEY WORDS:** -Media, Gender Sensitization

### **INTRODUCTION**

Media came into existence in 1780 with the introduction of a newspaper namely "**The Bengal Gazette**" and since then it has matured leaps and bounds. It has been playing a very important role in shaping human minds. Media makes us aware of various social, political and economical activities happening around the world. It is like a mirror, which shows us or strives to show us the bare truth and harsh realities of life. The media also exposes loopholes in the democratic system, which ultimately helps government infilling the vacuums of loopholes and making a system more accountable, responsive and citizen-friendly.

**A democracy without media is like a vehicle without wheels.**

It is mostly observed that news on political and economic issues dominate over social issues. Social issues are not given the kind of importance or platform of communication that it deserves. Issues of violence against women and other discrimination against women which basically stems from inequality – both in terms physical and economic power – between men and women is rarely given the importance it deserves. Mass Media cannot operate in a social vacuum; it naturally takes on the form and colouration of the social and political structures within which it operates.

Due to the outreach and technological sophistication, Media's role has now expanded and increased beyond the mere supply of information. It can be said, that media can now 'create reality'. Media can effectively shape public opinion, influence personal beliefs and even alter people's self perceptions. Ideologies, thought processes and the methods of socializations are greatly influenced by the media. It is time that media becomes highly sensitive to gender issues.

**GENDER SENSITIZATION**

Gender Sensitization is the process in which the people of all genders are taught to respect everyone irrespective of gender while acknowledging the differences.

**DEFINITION**

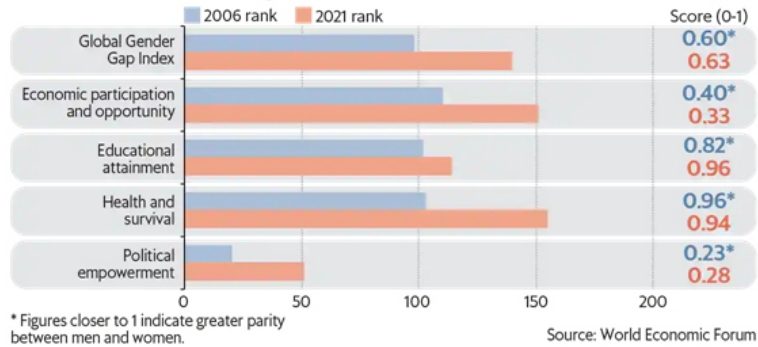
Gender sensitizing **"is about changing behavior and instilling empathy into the views that we hold about our own and the other genders." It helps people in "examining their personal attitudes and beliefs and questioning the 'realities' they thought they know."**

Gender Sensitization is one basic requirement for the normal development of an individual. Without being sensitive to the needs of a particular gender, an individual may refrain from understanding the opposite gender and in some acute cases even him or herself. The need for this sensitivity has been felt and realized through times immemorial and in almost all kinds of human existence, across the globe.

## INDIA'S RANKING IN GENDER GAP REPORT

### Mind the gap

India has slipped 28 places in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2021, and is now one of the worst performers in South Asia. It is now ranked 140th among 156 nations.



Source: World Economic Form

The above report shows the ranking of India in gender gap which is far beyond the achievement of gender equality. The gap can be removed from the effective role of media, the paper shows the role of media in gender sensitization.

### MEDIA AND GENDER SENSITIZATION

Media is a powerful weapon to deal with gender sensitization. With the support of media the work to aware people about different gender issues can be done. There are so many issues related with gender sensitization. Some examples of media's role as 'perpetrator' and 'challenger' of gender bias: The following examples will highlight the two sides of the same coin:

Haven't we all heard these sometimes-

- Boys shouldn't cry.
- Men don't cook food
- You should wear certain types of clothes to be safe.
- Women should take care of their families only
- Boys shouldn't mingle with girls.
- Married women should have children early.

- Men should look after the Finances and Women should take care of Home.

Believe it or not, all the people in India have heard these lines at least once. Gender inequality begins at home; mothers admonish their daughters that they should not play with boys. Sometimes Fathers tell their sons that it is the job of men to earn .Eventually children start believing this to be true and behave accordingly. The animated characters and television also portrays men to be super powerful and women or girls dependent on them.

Take the examples of **Chota Bheem or Doreamon** cartoon telecast in India. Most probably the male characters are strong and female characters seek help from them. This type of mindset tends to slowly start shaping the mindset of children. The impact is such that children start believing what they see or hear. All this can be changed with the help of media.

#### **Major issues brought up by different types of media**

**TV shows**With the change in passage of time the role of media has also changed from just information provider to shaping society and changing mindsets of people. There are so many examples where the TV shows has changed the mind sets of people like “**SATYAMEV JAYATE**” .

Many TV channels are launching topical shows to cater to urban audiences. Indian television has witnessed a sea change over the past 10 years from the grandeur of saas-bahu soaps, the drama of reality shows and the thrill of star hosted game shows, to hard hitting serials based on social issues.

Shows like **KAALI – EK AGNIPARIKSHA, RISHTON SE BDI PRATHA and ARMANON KA BALIDAAN- AARAKSHN** are based on

topical issues like molestation, honor killing and reservation issues.

**Mrinal Jha** , writer and co- producer of **Kaali** says “The focus is now on the fight for justice , not social evils. These new- age shows are a reflection of urban India and convey a strong message about how people feel vulnerable. The influence of rich and powerful is so strong that people are clueless about how to fight back.”

Television is a reflection of our society. Earlier shows are focused on larger than – life households and actresses with gaudy make up and flashy outfits. Viewers could not relate

to them, that's how the shows like **BALIKA VADHU, UTTARAN, UDAAN and NA AANA IS DES LADO** and many

more came about. These types of shows changed the mind sets of people. For over half a decade, **Balika Vadhu** has followed the social message beginning with delicate issue of child marriage, the show has gone on to discuss a number of issues which did hit the Indian community hard like issue of divorcee remarriage, rape, women's rights among other things. In **udaan and uttran** discussed about the cruel and unusual ways of poor people in society. In show **Na Aana Is Des Laado** lift up the crucial issue of female infanticide.

### Cinema

Not only the TV shows but cinema also has a great impact on people and the stars are the biggest influences. There are so many films that dared to break the mould and take on social issues like **TAARE ZAMEEN PAR, DOR, LAJJA, SWADES, UDAAN, PAD MAN , TOILET, DANGLE ETC.**

These all are the movies that touched a deep chord with the issues like The care a child needed in growth age (**taare zameen par**)

The life of a women in India after the death of her husband (**dor**)

The position of women in today's society and restrictions on them (**lajja**) The issues of brain drain (**swades**)

The issue related to stigma and taboos related to women in society (**padman**)

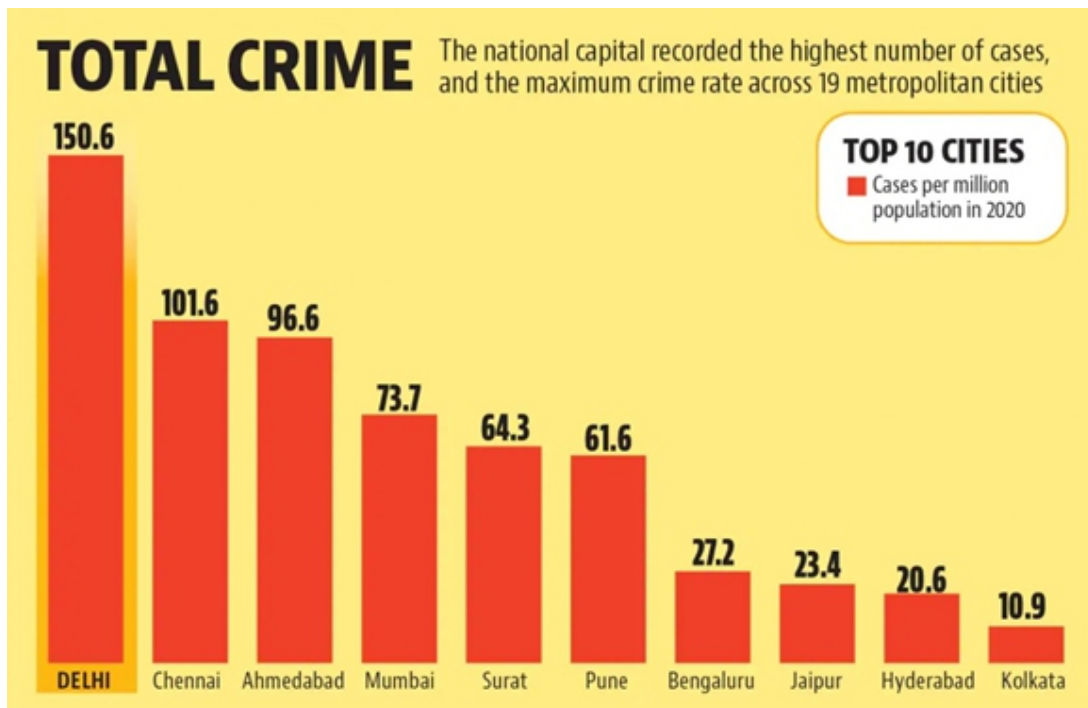
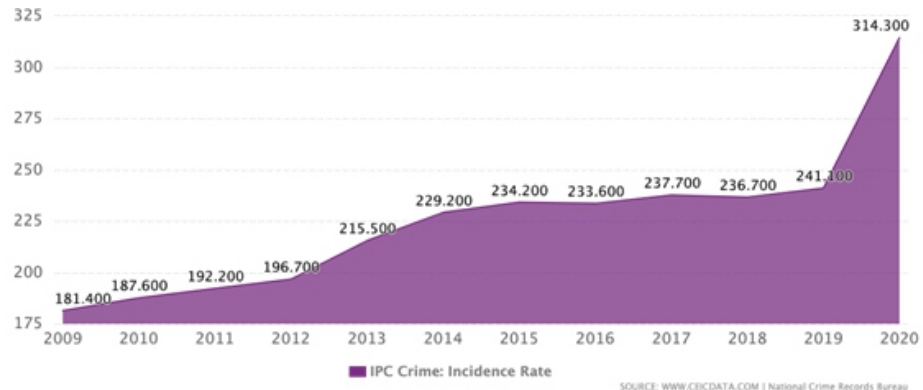
The message that girls also can do the things a man do (**dangle**).

These actually manage to change a couple of lives while some fill you with emotional turmoil and some give your life a complete new direction.

### News

According to figures released by the National Crime Bureau, During 2020, there were a total of 314300 incidents. The top 5 States/UTs in terms of highest Cognizable IPC Crime rate during 2020 were; Delhi, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Assam.

Proceedings of DGHE, Haryana approved National Seminar on Gender Sensitive Issues and Women Empowerment



The crime rates, media has also begun to pay more attention to cases of crime against women and human trafficking, etc in recent times. Which is instilling a fear in the minds of people.

There are so many cases which were highlighted by media so that people could evaluate in which direction our society is moving. The cases like:

*THE ASSAM MOLESTATION CASE*- in 2012 when a 17 yr old girl was molested outside a bar by a mob of 30 men.

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*THE DELHI GANG RAPE CASE*-on 16 dec 2012, the doctor of 23 was gang raped and beaten up brutally in a moving bus.

*BADAUN GANG RAPE CASE*-in 2014, two minor cousin sisters went out to field in up never returned back home.

*MEERUT GANG RAPE CASE*-a teacher was abducted in a Madrassa and was allegedly gang raped and held for three days.and many more. The percentage of rapes even increased after the crucial incident of 16 dec Delhi gang rape.

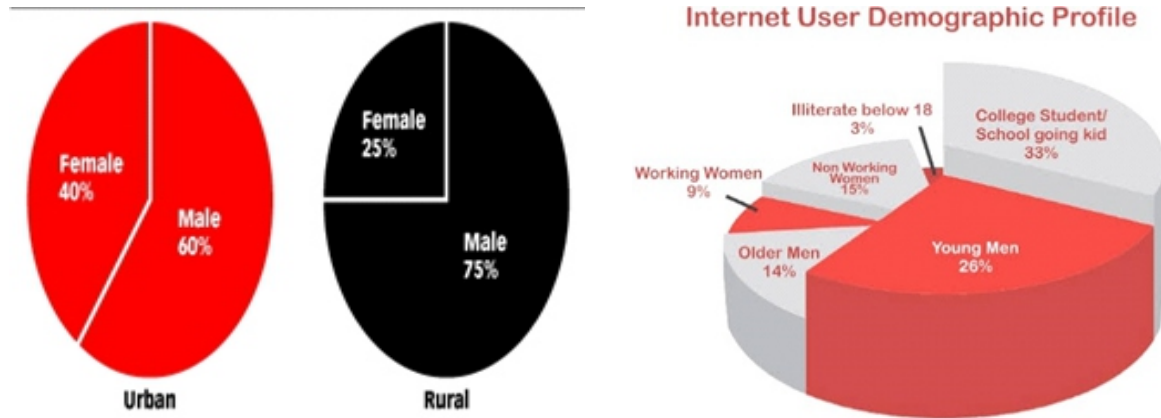
Newspapers also there is editorial pages where the articles of different people are published on different social up and downs .newspapers also help to create awareness on different type s of issues and work of different social workers for the society so that other people also feel motivated and do something for the nation. Some articles on the newspapers-





There are so many issues which given needed attention by different forms of media.

Social media and popular media



With the growth of internet's reach across the country , women have got a chance to express their voice on various social media platforms such as blogs,facebook,youtube and twitter internet has become an increasingly powerful medium today to raise a debate ,inform about the rights of person, create awareness and change stereotypes and mind-set. We all saw the power of media after **December 16 gang rape** incident where mass protests were organized by use of media.

The data shows that major percentage of internet users are young men and the ration of



women is just 24% in demographic profile. In rural area only 25% and in urban only 40% share belongs to women in social media users, which is not satisfactory media should be powerful enough so that women feel secure and free to use this kind of platform for these issues.

The data shows that in all Asian countries India has the shown great increase in internet users. There are no. Of famous Bollywood personalities who use media to show their views and their work for humanity like

**Priyanka** has been associated with the '**Awaaz Do**' campaign, advocating the cause of every child's entitlement to free schooling through the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act. Launched in 2010, the digital campaign '**Awaaz Do**' reportedly generated an overwhelming response with more than 200,000 people signing up in less than three months.

**Richa Chadha** has reportedly joined hands with **KETTO**, a crowd-funding digital platform. She will help raise funds for NGO, which provides shelter homes located in suburban Mumbai where around 15 such girls are given various forms of vocational training.

There are so many short films which raised voice against many issues in the society. Like **Madhuri Dixit Nene** featured in a YouTube video titled "**start with the boys**". The message was instead of teaching boys not to cry teach them to respect girls.

**Kalki Koechlin** starred in a short film "**rape-its your fault**" where she took blame for being raped because she "**ate chowmin**", **used mobile phones and not dressed has to toe**.

There or not these videos has larger impact on society but it is a step towards awareness people are looking it more positively than before.

### **Conclusion**

Media has the capacity to mould the behaviour and opinions of people, and is taking serious steps in this. India is the largest country in users of internet and other forms of media. Even if media is not giving attention to your voice then you should yourself raise voice.

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