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Name of the Topic- Portrayal of Women in the Indian Electronic Media: Perception & Impact

Findings:

This research analyses the portrayal of women in Indian electronic media, social perceptions, attitudes and its impact on women journalists working in the newsroom. The findings indicate that women in television news channels face multilayered gender stereotypes, structural complexities and professional challenges. The study highlights the role of responsible media representation in promoting gender equality in the media and shaping public discourse. Finally, the research offers recommendations for media personnel and policy makers to promote more inclusive and positive portrayals of women in electronic media, with the aim of establishing a more equitable society. The research reveals that women are given more space in soft news (entertainment, lifestyle) than in hard news (politics, economy, crime). When women are included in the news, they are presented in terms of traditional gender roles, thereby reinforcing social stereotypes. Women politicians, social activists and professionals are portrayed in the media based on their physical appearance, family role or personal life rather than their expertise, thereby marginalising their actual contributions.

The portrayal of women in the media has a significant impact on the social beliefs and gender attitudes of the audience. Exaggerated sexualisation and objectification of women in the media not only affects their self-esteem but also reinforces traditional and prejudiced views towards the role of women in society. Studies indicate that viewers who are constantly exposed to such portrayals tend to view women's social role in a limited and traditional perspective. In the context of women journalists, studies show that challenges such as pay inequality, limited promotion opportunities, low representation in leadership positions and gender discrimination at the workplace exist. Many women journalists experience direct and indirect harassment at the workplace, including inappropriate comments, exclusion from key news assignments and lack of institutional support. In the absence of effective policies against gender discrimination in journalism and their strict enforcement, women media professionals continue to face challenges.

The study concludes that policy interventions, editorial accountability and social awareness are essential to ensure fair and empowering portrayal of women in the media. This research provides guidance to media organizations to adopt gender sensitivity in their programs and news, so that the media can act as a platform promoting inclusion and gender equality.