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# THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN GLOBALIZATION AND GENDER DISCRIMINATION: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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## ABSTRACT

*In the context of globalization, mass media has become an essential tool for disseminating information, shaping public consciousness, and connecting diverse cultures. However, this power comes with significant responsibility, as the media often perpetuates harmful stereotypes and gender discrimination. This article explores how media not only influences but distorts gender identities, reinforcing patriarchal norms and outdated ideologies. It examines the portrayal of gender in various media forms, highlighting the implications of stereotyping and the regression of women's roles in society. Additionally, the article argues for the media's potential to promote democracy, gender literacy, and pluralism, advocating for a more balanced representation of gender that reflects contemporary realities. Ultimately, it calls for responsible media practices that prioritize equality and challenge hegemonic narratives to foster a more inclusive society.*

## INTRODUCTION

In the age of globalization, mass media has become a vital tool for disseminating information across borders. Through Television, Radio, the Internet, Magazines, Newspapers, and other mediums, people are constantly informed about the happenings around the world. However, the power of media comes with significant responsibility (Berger, John, 1972). While it plays an essential role in connecting people and cultures, it can also propagate harmful stereotypes, gender discrimination, and flawed ideologies. This article aims to shed light on how media not only shapes but also distorts gender identities, and why it needs to prioritize democracy, gender literacy, and pluralism.

### Media as a Wheel for Globalization

Media has evolved into a critical mechanism driving globalization. It connects diverse regions, transmits ideas, and facilitates communication across different cultures. Yet, along with this positive influence comes the hegemony of particular ideologies. Media is no longer a neutral communicator; it frequently propagates ideologies of patriarchy, capitalism, and orthodoxy. These ideas work to dominate feminine perspectives and promote autocratic economic principles, which often align with the interests of capitalist, patriarchal structures. For instance, the glorification of consumerism and patriarchal norms frequently appears in corporate advertising and entertainment.

### Stereotyping and Gender Discrimination in Media

Gender is a social construct deeply tied to culture, behaviour, and identity. The media frequently reinforces gender stereotypes by associating specific characteristics with masculinity and femininity (Butler, 1990). Boys are portrayed as strong and unemotional, while girls are depicted as emotionally and physically weaker. Such representations are pervasive in various media, from advertisements to movies, TV shows, and even children's programs. For example, the notion that boys prefer blue and girls prefer pink is a product of media-driven cultural conditioning. These seemingly trivial colour associations cement a rigid understanding of gender roles.

Moreover, the media often presents women as dependent on men for protection, which fosters a culture of domination and dependence. Such narratives can be seen in Bollywood item songs, popular TV serials, and movies, which objectify women and present them as weak or as tools for male pleasure. Bollywood songs like *"Munni Badnaam Hui"* and *"Chikni Chameli"* reduce women to objects. At the same time, advertisements for products such as cars or clothing often exploit feminine sexuality to promote consumerism (Wolf, 1991). These representations are not only problematic but contribute to the perpetuation of gender discrimination in society.

### Orthodox Thinking and Media's Role in Gender Construction

The media, instead of challenging regressive ideas, often reinforces them. Orthodox notions of gender roles and identities are repeatedly presented, limiting the public's understanding of gender as a fluid concept (Gill, 2007). Media content reflects outdated values, which not only deny the evolution of societal roles but also impede the progress of gender equality. Advertisements, family dramas, and films often emphasize patriarchal ideals, pushing back against feminist concepts and contributing to the marginalization of women's voices.

Historically, women held positions of power and respect in society, as warriors, leaders, and spiritual figures. But today's media tends to portray women primarily as objects of desire or subordinate to male figures. This regression undermines the progress made in gender equality over centuries and leads to

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psychological harm, as these media portrayals create a skewed image of femininity and masculinity.

**Media's Responsibility: Promoting Democracy and Gender Literacy**

The media holds the power to shape public consciousness (Said, 1993). Rather than promoting patriarchal or capitalistic ideas, it should work to support democratic values, gender studies, and secularism. The portrayal of gender should be more balanced and reflective of contemporary realities. Media can play a crucial role in dismantling stereotypes and promoting gender equality by providing a platform for meaningful and fact-based discussions. Reliable and sustainable news, coupled with responsible advertising, can help foster a society that is more aware of corporate social responsibility and ethical practices.

**Challenges Posed by Neo-media Culture**

In today's world, neo-media culture—a blend of traditional and modern media—plays a critical role in shaping public opinion. However, it often threatens the stability of localized cultures by imposing external, often Westernized, norms. This import-export of cultural values through media can result in the dilution of indigenous practices, and when combined with the propagation of gender biases, it poses a significant threat to societal balance.

While the print media of the past maintained a degree of objectivity and neutrality, today's fast-paced digital media landscape often blurs the line between facts and fiction. We must remain vigilant in maintaining a balance, ensuring that media content respects the diversity of gender identities and promotes equality.

## CONCLUSION

Media has the potential to be a force for positive change, especially in terms of fostering gender equality. However, in its current form, it often perpetuates patriarchal norms, gender discrimination, and hegemonic ideologies. The need of the hour is for the media to focus on promoting democracy, gender literacy, and pluralism rather than reinforcing stereotypes and outdated ideas. By providing reliable, fact-based information, media can help create a more conscious and inclusive society. Gender sensitivity and awareness of gender-based violations are fundamental needs for our ongoing societal development. Only through conscious media practices can we hope to build a world free from gender bias and inequality.

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