

Stereotyping and Bigotry in Media and how it Entrenches Gender Inequality

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ABSTRACT

In a diversified cultured nation like India, its society claims to have stereotyped moulds for every individual, treat them with prejudice, irrespective of gender, thus entrenching challenges to the survival. Such bigotry and chauvinistic ideals are rooted in the minds of every person, and the plight of the individual is undoubtedly questionable and more vulgar when it involves women. Gender bigotry has been one among the main and major cause for unnumbered mishaps, shaming and violence towards women. Be it a social-economical-political situation, the up roaring sexist violence is targeted, particularly against women. The most influential woman in the country or a domestic worker from a local ghetto faces similar trouble at the workplace, at the house, in the society, in the hierarchy, or subjected to prejudices, sexists comments, physical abuse, etc. The paper intends to analyse the society's ingrained bias towards women especially in media, or when a woman is subjected to reflex based on varied circumstances, and how media churns out female stereotyping in the limelight and justice in its lighter shades and hues are discussed here with examples.

1. Introduction

There are mostly written and unwritten laws in the society for the co-existence of the human beings, who are further divided into man and woman. This is the beginning of the stereotyping and bigotry. Without a profound regulation for the existence, one decides over the other's life style, performance, chores and laws. This happened be a longstanding debate, where it remains unsolved, till now, in the era of deconstructing identities. Constructs like being woman has its own undocumented regulations to adhere to, the woman's existence is made difficult by multiple external factors. Addition to these factors, there are gender centered biased opinions and lifestyles that makes them worse. Thus, ideologies like gender bigotry and stereotyping gains upper hand making the position and status of the women negotiable. For generations have passed witnessing the growth and development concerned with women both in the positive and negative way, still evils are rooted in the common minds that entrench the inequality between the genders. With keys like bigotry and stereotyping social evils against women happen relatively excess in statistical data every year, in every region, and in every field. Fields like Journalism and Media are cherishing, growing and bountiful, which includes women, represent women, and been a platform, recently in the few decades. And in the existing situation, the relevance given and claimed by women, in these fields seems to be a raging contradiction. However bright and flourishing these look, the adverse effects seem to be difficult for women. This paper intends to analyze how stereotyping and bigotry exist in media and thus leading to the entrenchment of gender inequality. This research paper is divided into two sections: gender inequality in media and how media entrenches the same over the society.

Bigotry and stereotyping in media

Women writers in media are expected to write the women's column of a journal, representing and presenting women of the society for the women readers, with feminine touch, precisely in other words, by the women, about the

women, for the women. This is the plight of the women writers in media or journalism, they deal are treated with bias, discriminated in a polite way at the work, thus becoming the victims of such bigotry in various levels in the scale of bigotry and stereotyping. To understand the victimization that exist in the field one needs to know the ideas that co-exist in a field that makes it difficult for women to actually exist. Without denying facts how the growth of women in the field has made efforts to resolve, but still cease to nullify. The primary concern of this paper is the plight of women in media and how they promote gender inequality.

Inside the Media, gender was first dichotomized, rendering the interests of women and men as contrary powers, and afterward it professed to be insignificant. Women activists, researchers and feminists call attention to that, after some time, men have reliably attempted to ensure their status, occupations, and pay, and have neglected to recognize how journalism was set up as a male enclave with "macho" values and a culture that impeded women. Presently women journalists have reached a position in the field; the news incorporates issues related with women' quotidian concerns, and it considers women important. However an assortment of gender division keeps describing journalism and its attributes, which one finds gendered designs in inclusion, particularly in governmental issues. Women writers are routinely sexualized and their high deceivability in various sections of the media. Through unequivocal examination of their bodies, haircuts, attire, and voices are countered by their imperceptibility in administration. Gendered twofold benchmarks and a biased based impediment keep on frustrating the advancement of women to key basic leadership and administration positions in print and communicate news associations and media.

Women keep on being gathered in low-status media outlets and beats: they overwhelm network, residential community, and territorial news associations, and they create "delicate news," human-intrigue stories and highlights. Men still overwhelm, in spite of the fact that they don't consume, the

majority of the high status territories of news generation, especially legislative issues and business, and the lucrative and mainstream zone of games, an exceedingly gendered and sexist area. The most plainly gendered field is war correspondence. Women who cover war and strife are made a decision by altogether different standards than men. Specifically, women are avoided when they head out to perilous clash regions, in spite of the fact that men who cover war keep on being generally unsusceptible from open feedback. Women war correspondents run a high danger of sexual brutality and badgering, despite the fact that women who have been explicitly assaulted once in a while tell their administrators most likely because of a paranoid fear of being pulled off a task.

The character of gender as socially developed, not natural, is definitely what makes the gendered parts of journalism critical: the different media characterize and perform what individuals can do and be in the public arena. Regardless of these concerns, men were worried about saving their hang on high status work, men editors and columnists communicated expanding caution at women's quality; men demanded that announcing would de-feminize and masculinize women. At the point when women kept on requesting and land newsroom positions, they were regularly consigned to the much defamed women's edge and grumbled that men editors, associates, and sources declined to take them seriously. Nevertheless, gender discusses have concentrated principally on women. Partially, this is on account of the gender jobs developed and endorsed for women have stayed thin and restricting even as they have advanced. To a limited extent, this outlines the proceeding with dichotomization of gender: if men speaks to the standard, women are the "Other."

In an survey of how media is gendered, Catherine Covert (1981) adroitly saw that journalism history praised freedom and individual self-rule, in this way disregarding the impacts of family and companionship systems. News itself was composed as far as strife, contention, and rivalry, reflecting, Covert proposed, men's enthusiasm for winning. Secretive differentiated this manly dialect to women's qualities: accord, concordance, connection, and network. From that point forward, activists and researchers have kept on regarding sexual orientation as characteristically dichotomous and everlastingly critical, in spite of the fact that not generally with Covert's subtlety. Because of static cases about impacts, the contention for enlisting and advancing women is constructed not with respect to value or the inborn estimation of decent variety, however the case that women's novel qualities, interests, and needs would change media. The thought was that the move in sexual orientation viewpoint would deliver changes in the structure, definition, and constitution of news.

Certain women in the field speculating proposes that mindsets and knowing are profoundly impacted by social personality, which is influenced thus by encounters, socialization, and social history, which are all gendered. A few researchers close from this that sexual orientation influences how stories are explored, sourced, surrounded, and composed, and that women are mingled distinctively into the media. As far as wide qualities, the supposition has been that

women journalists and columnists, with their unmistakable "womanview", are, contrasted with men, more intrigued by their groups of onlookers, more worried about setting, and wary of "male" systems, for example, objectivity (Van Zoonen, 1998). The main linkage was achieving minimum amount, a material science term alluding to the time when a chain response may start. Rosabeth Moss Kanter spearheaded endeavors to evaluate the time when women would never again be secluded tokens in associations and could feel great in shaping coalitions, and along these lines, in acting aggregately for the benefit of their mutual advantages to relieve sexism and segregation (Kanter, 1977).⁴

In a democracy like India, the media is also known as the Fourth Estate that is the invisible but very powerful fourth arm of the three government machineries – the legislative, the executive and the judiciary. Till the late 1980s, women reporters in most Indian dailies were barred from doing night duty which was a double-edged disadvantage for the women. One, they lost out on the stories that came on the teleprinter before the computer age, late in the night. Two, since they had no access to high voltage news stories that filtered in the night, their promotions were automatically either halted or slowed down. In one newspaper in Mumbai, the women reporters, numbering one less than the figure for men, approached the editor to demand night duty. They were told that the office did not consider it safe for women to do night duty as they had to go home at unearthly hours of the morning. Another hollow reason was that the newspaper office did not have separate toilets women journalists could report to at night and had to go downstairs which could be unsafe. But they insisted stating that their 'safety' was their concern and that they would not lose out on promotions because of some out-dated office rule. They had to give a fight but ultimately, they won their cause and doors to night duty for women opened followed by other publication offices subsequently.

One report on women journalists in India points out that woman from small towns and rural areas who migrate to the cities with a journalist's job find safe and good accommodation a big hindrance towards continuing at the job. Many girls from modern and progressive families are ready to leave their cities in search of employment in publications and news channels and radio stations. But the dearth of working women's hostels in big cities creates blocks in their careers. The report states that due to non-availability of such hostels they end up living in dingy rooms in narrow lanes of urban villages in South Delhi. If Delhi is in this condition, one shudders to think the situation in other Indian cities. Non cooperative roommates, unhygienic food and substandard accommodation are other problems women must face. Other more serious issues are those of gender discrimination at the workplace while assigning stories or giving promotions or changing beats that hinder the rise of women in the profession even if they are very good at it. An anchor with a reputed channel tries to commit suicide by consuming poison because she had constant disputes with some in the organization. She claimed that a SMS she had sent to a staff member was taken as her resignation and she was not allowed to enter the office the following day. The channel offered the convenient excuse that she was suffering from depression and the matter ended there. But her

messages on a social networking site clearly made allegations against senior channel officials who were hatching a conspiracy against her.

Unquestionably sexism proceeds in the public arena and in newsrooms, where female columnists are accepted to add zest and sex bid to pull in male groups of onlookers. To be sure, absolutely on the grounds that men can now just once in a while escape with unrefined sexism, women writers who dress provocatively and who make mean remarks about pedantic women are giving scholarly cover to news associations that desire to ridicule women subjects and women's liberation. This means dichotomous reasoning is inefficient, including the male/female, hard/delicate, and lack of bias/subjectivity doubles. More beneficial would envision women's activist ways to deal with journalism (more relevant and arranged journalistic practices and shapes) and to newsroom association (shared, non-aggressive, even work structures) that take into account further and more genuine work, and are more fair, enabling working guardians to deal with family obligations. Women journalists are often barred, subtly and indirectly from pursuing and filing 'hard core' stories such a criminal cases and set off for lifestyle and glamour stories which are "safe" and more 'woman-friendly'. They forget that in addition to a different method to reporting the news, women decision-makers may also change the views at which women portrayed as a subject of the news and how they are depicted by the media. Yet, the bright light at the end of the dark channel shows that a critical mass of women in leadership posts, it is now possible to find women who have moved into top media management and discover what contributions they are making.

This study is not enough to reach any solution but it indicates a number of things having further research ground. Here it is noticeable that contract system is making things more difficult for women since vulnerabilities increases with job insecurity and there is no forum or union for addressing the issues. The findings are showing that women journalists are at compromising end and their work is not being recognized. The representation of women in mass-media is talked a lot but women within media as workforce is less considered issue. The suppression and oppression of women by transnational corporations is translated into employment. Now commercialization of mass-media has make things more tough, since very olden days journalism had no certain requirements of the candidates but with emergence of modern education system now it has become more attracted that talks about global media and it provides chances to certain people who have access to resources but it really ignores women from poor groups. It should be considered that how the phases of discrimination affects women of particular class, caste, culture, religion.

Finally, the paper based on experiences of women journalists raises things that how changing patterns of media industry treats women and ignores to accept her as a professional entitled to enjoy every professional facilities equal to man. Why there is - 23 - low visibility of women journalists working in Hindi print media? Why women journalists are not decisive force? Though it indicates silent revolution but it is less visible. Moreover, the discrimination of the society defines the position and work culture in media.

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