

Impact of Media Tools on Women Empowerment: A study on HP women

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“There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women.”—**Kofi Annan**

Abstract

Media is the mirror of society and media reports are reflection of happenings in the society. It is the primary means of communication used to reach the vast majority of the general public. The most common platforms for mass media are newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the Internet. Communication is extremely important for women's development and mass media play significant role. It is to be noted that growth of women's education and their entry into employment has contributed to the growth of media. Media has immense power to influence the masses and communication and IT revolution has further increased its importance.

An attempt has been made to explore the impact of various media tools on women empowerment. The present study includes their interest and reactions towards different media usage and its role in empowering women's of rural areas. Today, electronic media and print media, internet is considered to be a major source of awareness, entertainment and information. Media has immense power to influence the masses and communication.

The study was conducted to make note of using various media tools by women's of rural city of Himachal Pradesh and identify the motive behind to choose different media.

A sample of 200 respondents from Three villages of district Mandi (Nerchowk, dadour and Sundernagar) of Himachal Pradesh were selected for analysis. A questionnaire was used as a tool of study.

This research used both quantitative surveys and focus group interviews as data. The results are discussed and have been observed the types of different media tools used by them and special preference given to television programs. In the study it has been found that TV works its magic on women by inspiring them to come out of the four walls of the house and trying hard to

Improve the social status of women at large. The women who used media felt that they got positive impact on their status and helping them to empower themselves. The study also highlighted the TV program preferences among women.

KEYWORDS: Empowerment of women, Use of different media tools, TV, Radio, Internet, Newspaper, TV Program preferences

Introduction

“A woman is the full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture and transform.” — Diane Mariechild

The empowerment of women refers to providing the necessary rights and responsibilities to women in order to make them self-reliant.

Empowerment means

The ability to stand on their own legs.

The ability to become stronger and more confident

The ability to know the necessary rights and responsibilities

The ability to use the available resources for their betterment

The ability to participate in decision making process

According to Sen and Batliwala (2000) "Empowerment is the process by which the powerless gain greater control over the circumstances of their lives. It includes both controls over resources and over ideology.

Radio, television, newspapers, Internet is all considered as 'mass media'. These tools involve exchange of opinions, and public involvement. The reach of these tools extends to enormous varied masses living across the spread of the country. Today our day begins with a newspaper delivered to us with our morning cup of tea. Some of us switch on to radio or TV while getting ready for the day. Some of us even log on to our favorite sites for news and information, using social sites like facebook, twitter, what's app. Print and electronic media help in awareness related to current affairs. As we know Women's are the wealth of India and they have contributed in almost every field and made country feel proud at every occasion. **Due to increasing awareness among women they are entering into the job market and also venturing to become entrepreneurs. They are entering even into the nontraditional sectors like the police, defense, administration, media and research fields.** They are in front, leading the country, making mile stones and source of inspiration for many. In politics, Pratibha Patil, Meira Kumar, UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, Mayawati and Sheila Dixit, Nirupama Roy, in socio-cultural field, Medha Patekar, Arundhati Roy, Shobna Narayanan, Lata Mangeskar, Anjolie Ela Menon, Rekha, Meera Nayar and many others, in sports, Sania Mirza, Saina Nehwal are some of the names at the top. Women's are also playing important role in national growth and economic development through corporate houses. They are not only working at grass root level but participating in decision making. Jyoti Naik, President of Lijjat Papad, Kiran Mazumdar, Chairman and Managing Director of Biocon, Naina Lal Kidwai, Deputy CEO of HSBC, Ranjana Kumar, Chairman of NABARD, Ritu Kumar, CEO of Escolife, Priya Paul, Chairman of Apeejay Park Hotels, Indira Nooyi, Chairperson & CEO of Pepsico, Roshani Nadar, CEO of HCL are some of the pioneers in their respective field. At present women's are contributing and participating in every sphere, politics, business, education, science and technology, media, sports, art and culture etc.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ganesh, S. (1999) in his article on —Social communication through radio and TV ads|| pointed out that these two media have several advantages which include their being electronic and capable of communicating messages faster. They have much more impact on people than print media. They reach more people than all the print media put together and can communicate with people in everyday language. **Fatima (2000)** suggests through research that TV has a long-term effect on people's thinking. Therefore, instead of glamorization, portrayal of crime and commercialization, positive trends need to be introduced on the TV channels in order to save our values. **Bukhari (2002)** concludes that the youth is getting liberated ideas regarding the placement and position of women in the society. **Giacomo Corneo (2002)** found out in his research that in OECD countries watching television is by far the most time-consuming form of leisure. Surprisingly, television viewing is positively correlated with work hours across countries. Workers and capitalists are shown to exhibit opposite preference orderings over equilibria. The relative ability of those two groups in capturing a country's government may explain which equilibrium is selected. **Verma and Larson (2002)** in their study found that adolescents watch television for 12 hour per week on an average. The study further indicates that Television viewing is seen as a major source of stress relieving activity. It was concluded in the study that 29% of viewers watch television for purpose of learning/education. **Potter, 2008**, The mass media included several media technologies that are envisioned to influence large viewers. Broadcast media (also called as electronic media) communicate the facts electronically and include television, radio, movies, and certain other media like cameras and video raise. Alternatively, print media use a fleshly item for sending their facts, such as a newspaper, magazines, brochures, newsletters, books, leaflets and pamphlets. **Sharma (2011)** in his article role of television in rural development suggested that television is good in exposing people to a whole range of new ideas and experiences. **Anwasha Mohanty, (2012)**, Media is undoubtedly very fast, vast and powerful mode of communication. Nor does it only appeal a vast audience it has got a tremendous impact on the political run of a country and culture of a society. Films, TV shows, Journalism (newspapers and news channels) all come under short yet large "Media". By "Ethics and Media" we generally discuss the ethics in journalism which influences the mindset of people and moulds the society. **Devadas (2012)** in his research study pointed out that television is the most popular mass media. The popularity of television in turn diminished by the popularity of mass media such as radio, internet. Newspaper readership remains unaffected even though

TV is the most popular medium. Even radio listenership remains some extent unaffected. But in spite of Bangalore being the IT city, the respondent's awareness towards that medium is not very high. The movie viewing affected most considerably because most of the views wanted to watch movie at their own sets.

ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF MEDIA

Media is often considered as the 4th pillar of the society and democratic medium of information. The role of media has become very important in shaping present days society. Media is the part of the life, all around, from the shows one watches on television, music on the radio, the books, magazines and newspapers. It educates people about the current issues and influences the public opinion. The common people rely on media to know about happenings in the society. Media has the power to pressurize and criticize the drawbacks of democracy. It is instrumental in bringing about unity among the masses and is backbone of the nation. The reach of media to common people has increased and undoubtedly media has attained the role of a very powerful organ in virtually all spheres of life. The various media tools has become the most influential medium of mass communication in India. It is helping women to empower themselves.

Significance of the Study

Media analysis is an integral part of understanding society and this is because the media shows are telecasted through television and are bounded to have positive and negative impact on the Society. Media shows number of programs which influence women directly or indirectly. Women watch dramas, cooking shows, health shows, movies music, News program in daily routine. So study is highlighting the popularity of that effective media tool which has powerful impact on women and to identify the reason behind to choose it.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study has been conducted to identify the use of media tool by women in Himachal Pradesh.

The specific objectives of the study are:

To evaluate which media (electronic and print) is more popular among them for empowerment.

To identify the most preference given to which type of television programs.

To identify their thinking about role of Television in women Empowerment.

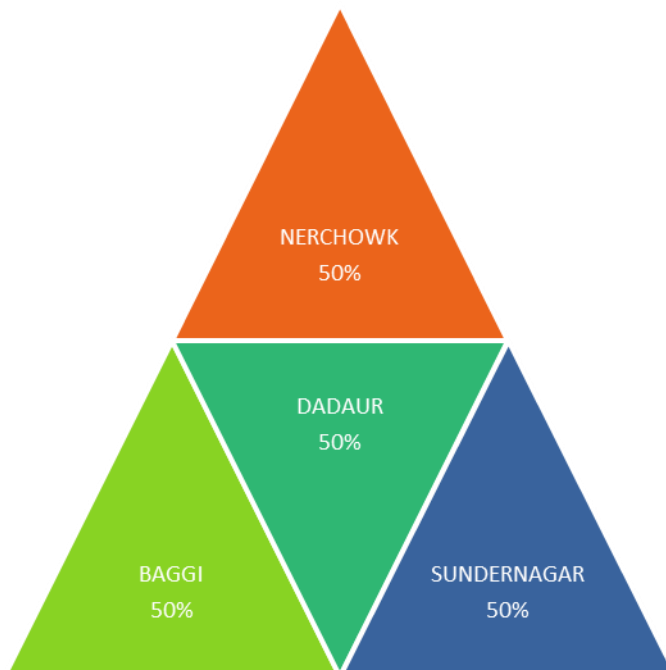
Limitations of Study

- The geographical area of the study is limited to areas such as like Nerchowk, Dadour, Sundernagar, Baggi in Mandi District of Himachal Pradesh.
- Women of age group from 25-40 above has been considered for data collection according to concept of the study.
- Samples have been taken for the study, 200 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents out of which 180 are duly filled and responded by the women.

Methodology

The research is done to check the availability of media tools which was used by women for awareness. Random sampling method has been followed to collect the data from respondents because sampling frame was available tool of Data Collection. An interview schedule was administered by the researcher to collect the required information. In which 200 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents out of which 180 are duly filled and responded.

AREA-WISE DETAILS OF THE SAMPLE DISTRIBUTED



Himachal Pradesh was selected for the study as it is seen as one of the four most progressive states in India. The literacy level of women in HP is quite high at 60%, and almost 80% of the women are exposed to some form of media. A lower incidence of domestic violence and high Decision taking power by women was reported compared to India as a whole. On the basis of data collected from census survey 2011 it has been observed that employment rate is highest in Punjab in terms of total population but in case of female, employment rate is highest in Himachal Pradesh in comparison to other states & in Punjab only 14.03% females are employed. So to analyze the exposure of different Media tools on them equal number of samples are distributed in four areas of the Mandi District.

Table01. Tool of media used by women

MEDIA FORM	DAILY	PERCENTAGE	WEEKLY	PERCENTAGE	RARELY	PERCENTAGE
TV	165	91.6	12	6.6	3	1.6
RADIO	132	73.3	46	25.5	2	1.11
NEWSPAPER	116	64.4	52	28.8	12	6.6
INTERNET	154	85.5	14	7.7	12	6.6

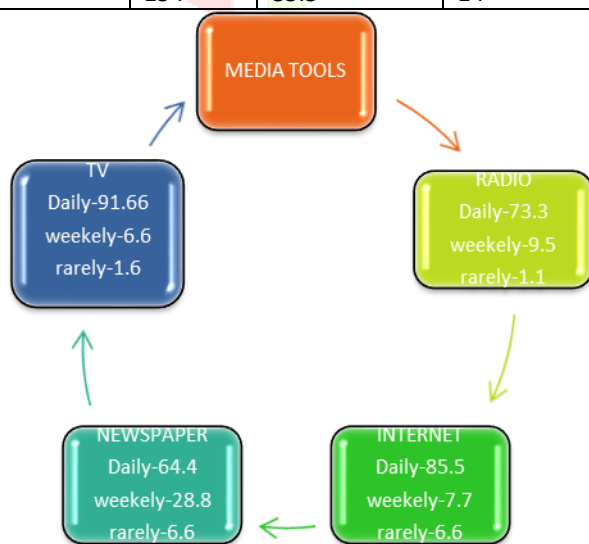


Table 01. Shows trend to use media among women in these areas. According to data represented in the table, overall TV (91.66) is frequently used by majority of women on daily basis. Only 1.6% women rarely watch television.

Internet is on the second rank with (85.5%).It was mostly used by young women for getting information, chatting, use various social networking sites like facebook, twitter, whatsapp and Radio listing on the 3rd rank. It also identifies that newspaper reading is less popular among women than TV Watching. .

Table 02 Age of the Respondents

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
20-30	85	47.2
30-40	60	33.3
40-ABOVE	35	19.4
TOTAL	180	100

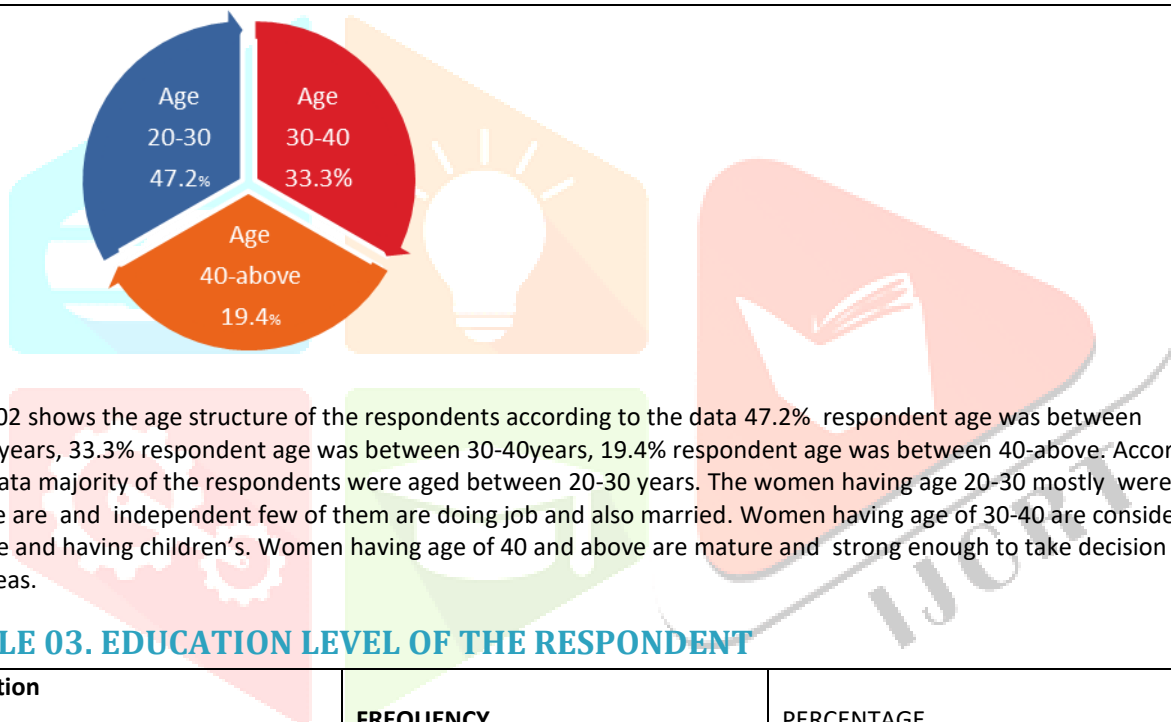


Table 02 shows the age structure of the respondents according to the data 47.2% respondent age was between 20-30 years, 33.3% respondent age was between 30-40years, 19.4% respondent age was between 40-above. According to the field data majority of the respondents were aged between 20-30 years. The women having age 20-30 mostly were studying in college are and independent few of them are doing job and also married. Women having age of 30-40 are considered as mature and having children's. Women having age of 40 and above are mature and strong enough to take decision in most of the areas.

TABLE 03. EDUCATION LEVEL OF THE RESPONDENT

Education	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
PRIMARY	1	0.5
MIDDLE	4	2.2
METRIC	10	5.5
SECONDARY	65	36.1
GRADUATION	78	43.3
POST GRADUATION	22	12.2
TOTAL	180	100

Table 3. Shows the educational level of the women of particular area. Data shows that educational level of women is very effective. 43.3% women has bachelors degree,36.1% respondents were secondary education level which is followed by post graduation degree (12.2%) and the education level was 5.5% at metric level,2.2% were at middle level and a small number of primary level of education(0.5%). Due to family issues and less income sources they did not able to study further. In Himachal Pradesh people are exposed to good quality education at school and university level which helps in improving the sex ratio in the state i.e. 972.

Table 04. Occupation of the Respondents

OCCUPATION	Frequency	Percentage
Private sector	55	30.55
Govt. sector	30	16.66
Student	26	14.44
House wife	69	38.33

Table 04 . Presents occupation of the respondents of the area. According to the field data 38.33% of the respondents were House wives and they were live in their home and look after their family while 14.44% respondent were Students and they were doing studies in their relevant fields. Only 16.66% women were Govt. employee and 30.55% respondents were private employee they had less time to watch TV as compare to the housewives. The relevant data shows that most of the women were working in private sector.

TABLE 5. PREFERENCES FOR DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF TELEVISION PROGRAMS

TV PROGRAMES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
DAILY SOAPS	35	19.44
REALITY SHOWS	45	25.00
NEWS	40	22.22
MUSIC	20	11.11
MOVIES	3	1.66
HEALTH SHOWS	20	11.11
SPORTS CHANNEL	5	2.77
Cooking CHANNELS	12	6.66

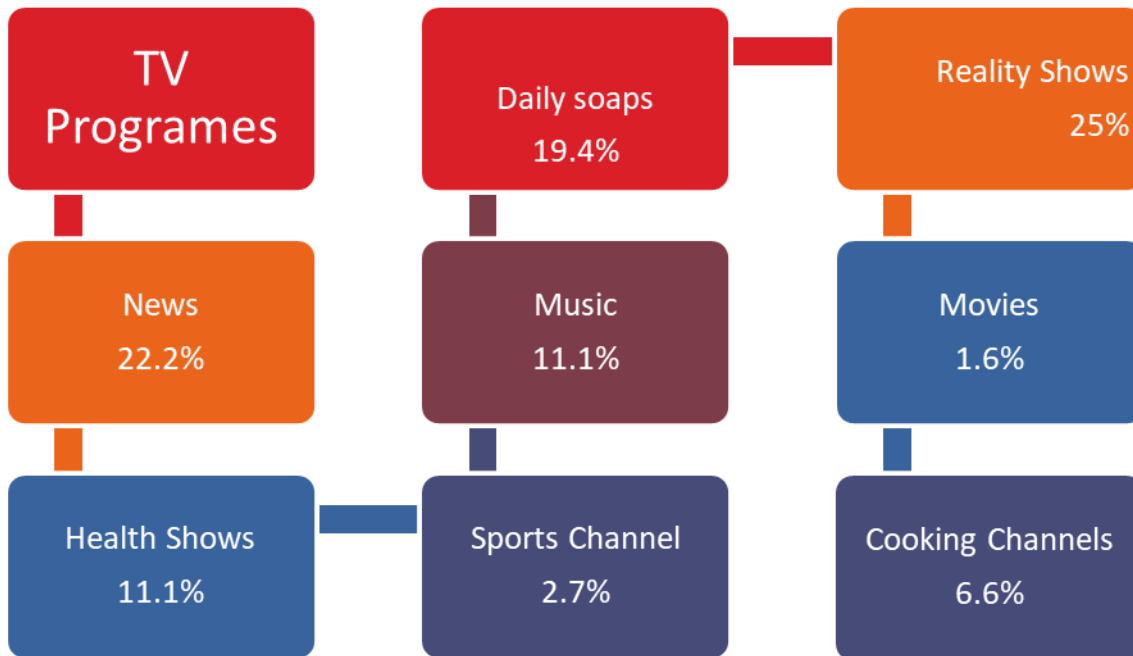


Table 05. Shows the most of the TV channel programs seen by women in their daily routine .According to the field data 25% of the Respondents were like reality shows, 22.2% respondents were like News , 19.4% were like Daily soaps, Health shows and music is equally liked by them i.e.11.1%. 6.6% were like cooking channels and 2.7% were like sports channel and 1.6% were love to watch movies.. The above data indicate that majority of the respondent were like Reality shows programs. Reality shows based on singing competition(Rising star, voice of India), dancing competition ,game shows like Kaun banega crorepati have become very popular after the never-ending era of daily soaps.

Mrs. Anita (age 37) said roles on television shows helps them wearing fashionable cloths and inspire them to be financially independent.

Miss Poonam and Sangita(age between 20-25) view Reality shows as a source to polish their hidden talents.

Mrs. Lata (age 42)mostly watch News to get better informed on what’s going on in the world and some of them use television as a stress management tool to counter their stress full work life through music, sports and movie channel .

TABLE 6. Preferred time to watch time

TIME	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Morning	12	6.66
Afternoon	16	8.88
Evening	98	54.44
Night	54	30.00

Table 06. shows that the preferred timing to watch T.V 54.44% of the respondent was preferred to watch TV at evening, 30% respondent was preferred to watch TV at late night, 8.88% respondent was preferred to watch TV at afternoon and 6.6% respondent was preferred to watch TV at morning. It Concludes that more than half of the respond were preferred to watch TV at evening.

Table 07. Distribution of respondent according to their thinking about role of media in women Empowerment

statement	To greater extent(No.)	% frequency	To some Extent (No.)	% frequency	Not at all (No.)	% frequency
Political awareness	112	62.22	66	42.22	2	1.11
Economic awareness	106	58.88	69	36.66	5	2.77
Social Awareness	152	84.44	28	15.55	0	0
On Women issues	124	68.88	53	29.44	3	1.66

Table 07. Shows respondent thinking about different features of media that helpful to understand role of media in women empowerment. It shows that that media helps to promote social awareness to a large extent with a frequency rate of 84.44. Only 15.5% respondents were agreed to some extent.

Women admitted that media is also raising the women issues with a frequency rate of (68.88%) which helps them to know their rights and responsibilities. It is highlighting the women cases like rape, domestic violence etc. the mass media presents the information about the government/NGOs policies regarding rural development. Respondent added that media provide information about political issues (62.22%) which helps them to know their political rights.

CONCLUSION: The study shows the positive result of Media awareness which is a good indication and can lead them towards empowerment. Women having access to media are getting awareness to empower themselves. Media tools are influencing their attitudes, beliefs, judgments, life style, decision making process and matter concerning to the social world. Women of the chosen areas of Himachal Pradesh utilized all forms of media like radio, newspaper, internet and TV to learn about the women empowerment programs. The respondents are utilizing the media more than the expectation.

It can be concluded that among the various media tools women use television to a large extent as a learning source. Television is being the most popular reliable media and programs telecasted on television were helpful for women to improve their empowerment status. Most of the respondents were house wives and many of them are student and other respondents were professionals and doing private or government jobs. . When respondents were asked about their favorite program, it was found out that a majority of the viewers were like all entertainment-oriented and informative programs. Finding of the study revealed that electronic media has significant effect on the modern lifestyle. TV raises the women violence cases, women problems, rights and responsibilities and motivated women to adopt demanding life styles. According to the field data 25% of the Respondents were like reality shows, , 22.2% respondents were like News. All the age groups consistently preferred "Reality shows" whereas "News coverage" was more preferred by higher age groups The study also highlights the various reasons for women to watch television, To gain Knowledge, Medium of Relaxation and, Upliftment of hidden talents and Stress management tool. Reality shows based on singing **competition (Rising star, voice of India)**, dancing competition(**dance India dance,Nach Baliye**) ,game shows like **Kaun banega crorepati ,Khatron ke khiladi ,Big Boss** have become very popular after the never-ending era of daily soaps. Study also shows that women have a more than average level of understanding about their economic and social awareness and also legal and political rights. Television has a myriad of different goals, which range from entertainment to education. Various confines of education and entertainment are depicted in television. The viewing of television can entertain the young and old alike for great amounts of time.

The freedom of press in the country is a blessing for the people. So it is essential that media should devote a good percentage of their programs to create awareness among women and the society at large, give information about women's rights to approach for their all round development . Much developmental news should be aired through the medium of communication.

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