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MEDIA REPRESENTATION OF GENDER

In the previous lesson, you have learnt about different usages of gender and language in media. Media has emerged as an influential and powerful entity as a powerful mechanism for education and socialisation. Media has transcended channels of communication to new heights. Media has developed to the extent that it can mould and give direction to public opinion in a specific direction. It has started shaping the perception and consent of individuals over various issues. Its reach to every possible individual through different communication means has transformed communications. You have also understood the complex use and abuse of vocabulary in media, indicating regressive mindsets about gender relations in our society.

This lesson explains the way of representation of Gender on different media and its consequences.



OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, learner:

- describes the different forms of electronic media such as (television, radio, films, internet), print newspapers, magazines etc. and traditional/media such as folklore, songs, street theatre etc.
- identifies reinforcement of gender stereotypes in media
- explores the impact of gender stereotypes in media
- appreciates the efforts to mainstream gender into the media

19.1 VARIOUS FORMS OF MEDIA

Media is the plural form of the word 'medium', which is 'one of the means of general communication, information, or entertainment in society, as newspaper, radio, or television'. It

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subscribes to the mode of communication through various electronic and print channels. Since the beneficiaries are a huge population group transcending national and geographical boundaries, media is usually denoted as a mass communication channel. Therefore, on the same front, media is now denoted as 'the mass media'.

You surely have been exposed to different media. However, through this chapter, you will be able to understand the unique features of different forms of media. Now you will study the nature, emergence and significance of various types of media over the years.

In our discussion, we will focus on the importance of media being gender sensitive and their role in promoting gender equity.

Women constitute nearly 50 percent of the country's population. They are visible in the national media, both in electronic and print. However, several systematic research studies point out that media has not ensured adequate space and time for women to participate in all media forms. For example, the coverage of issues concerning women does not get prime-time attention on popular T.V. and radio channels. Print media also do not give them enough space and coverage.

Gender Stereotypes and their reflections on media

For centuries, it was believed that the different characteristics of women and men are natural and are determined by biological (sex-based) differences. Hence, being aggressive or domineering or not expressing emotions is viewed as natural for men and being emotional or submissive and being sensitive and caring are the traits of women. However, we have many men around us who are emotional, expressive and caring. Are they not men? Similarly, we find many women who are aggressive and domineering. So, these personality traits are those of individual human beings and not of a man or a woman. This deep-rooted system makes socially constructed gender roles seem invincible and natural. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the distinction between the two to understand why we need to work to overcome these stereotypes.

Men who may be aggressive and domineering in the house could be fearful in front of their superiors in the office. Thus, men may take on masculine (aggressive, domineering) traits when they are in power and behave in a so-called feminine way (follow orders, be submissive) when they are in a subordinate position. This implies that these traits have more to do with power and social relations than the biology of being a female or a male.

You are well aware that there are two sets of roles - biological based on sex and gender, which are socially constructed. The process of socialisation immediately starts after birth and decides the attributed roles and responsibilities of an individual as per their gender. Even the kind of toys children are given to play with is enough for the child to imbibe the gendered messages, e.g. giving dolls and kitchen sets to girls as a preparation for them to later intake on



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the responsibilities of housekeeping, childbearing and caring. On the other hand, giving the building blocks and toy guns to boys to become warriors, protectors and breadwinners of the family. While the 'ideal' is worshipped, the 'real' is neglected. Some sacred texts consider women as Mother Goddess as Durga, Kali, and Lakshmi, and she is believed to represent divine power (shakti). In practice, however, they may be suppressed, face deprivations and get exploited in the patriarchal set-up. They are denied equal rights in marital, familial, social, educational, economic and political fields.

The dislike for daughters is deeply rooted in our culture. Many of the rituals and traditions reinforce the primacy of a male child. For example, there are rituals and blessings like kua puja (ceremony on the birth of a baby boy), a bride being blessed to 'doodho nahao, pooto phalo (May you be blessed with plenty of resources and sons). These rituals underline the importance of begetting a son. Incidentally, even the most educated tend to follow these rituals. However, now some people celebrate their daughters' birth, which reflects the change in traditional mindsets.

The messages of socialisation, overtly or covertly, are passed from different institutions of society, including family, religion, law media, and the powerful medium of communication in today's time.

It is believed that one way to judge a nation's state is to study women's status. In reality, the status of women represents the standard of culture prevalent in any age. The social status of women in a country symbolises the social spirit of the age. The status enjoyed by Indian women is far short of expectations. Our country is growing economically but is not developing socially due to the lack of participation of women in the development process.

19.1.1 Role of Media

Media is not only a mirror of society but is also an instrument of social change. It plays a vital role in the dissemination of information and is therefore called the fourth pillar of democracy. Mass media has a tremendous impact on the minds of people, with constant exposure to information divulged by it. Media is the carrier of information, ideas, thoughts and opinions. Mass media channels are in a big way instrumental in motivating people's behaviour and attitudes in a certain way.

Various media can be used positively to propagate healthier values in our society. With the unforeseen expansion, media has acquired the capacity to set new trends, bring social transformation and reduce social injustice. It has a unique role in developing social & cultural values and socialisation. It can also play a vital role in altering the media depiction of gender roles, aspirations and expectations to bring about a more diverse and just society and be a catalyst for change.

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From traditional media to the new media, from age-old scriptures or books on moral teachings to new-age contemporary stories, from puppetry or folk music to radio, from television to the internet and other social networking platforms, all contribute and strengthen the given gender roles and expectations. In addition, the portrayal of men and women engaged in different life spheres playing different roles in media influences the socialisation process and people's opinions on gender roles.

It is important to analyse the representation of gender in media critically. It is the first step necessary to provide evidence to the producers of media and sensitise them to be progressive in their outlook. Furthermore, they must be aware of their critical role in triggering change with changing times.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 19.1**

1. What is meant by socialisation?
2. State the different forms of media.
3. Explain the meaning of being gender sensitive.

19.2 PRINT MEDIA

Print media is one of the oldest and most basic forms of mass communication. It includes newspapers, journals, weeklies, monthlies, and other printed media forms. It has held the core part of mass communication for decades and has immensely contributed to the field.

Media contributes to the transfer of knowledge and information. Print media still stands to hold an important place in communication. This is due to its advantage in making a long-term impact on the readers' minds and an in-depth analysis of events and happenings.

NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers are used and have become an important part of routine life for billions of people. News is the brief report of every important event occurring daily. News helps us to ease our life and make us more responsive to the dynamic needs of society.

The Indian newspaper immediately contributed to the socio-cultural awakening of Indians and the consolidation of nationality during the colonial rule of the British Empire. Their contribution to the freedom movement is also significant. Most of the newspapers emerged during the period of freedom struggle. Newspapers like the Pioneer (1866), the Amrit Bazar Patrika (1868), the Statesman (1875), the Hindu (1887), and the Tribune (1880) emerged during this period. Though many vanished over time, a few are still in publication.



The profession associated with newspapers is called Journalism, and the individuals who choose to work for newspapers are called Journalists. Though the primary task of journalists is to report the daily happenings from a neutral perspective without any biases, they also include other news-related activities. Furthermore, the nature of the job includes professional ethics and social sensitivity, which makes it important that journalists are also sensitised to gender just representation in their reporting.

19.2.1 Other Forms of Print Media

We all know the importance of print media. It would be interesting to know that 'the media' came as a phrase came to be used in the 1920s. Furthermore, what we call 'the mass media' was generally restricted to print media until the end of the Second World War.

Print Media and Gender

Mass media has long been responsible for being society's watchdog and guiding social change. A watchdog refers to a person, institution or organisation that monitors and publicises the behaviour of others to discover the activities are not in the interest of society. However, mass media is a domain primarily dominated by men. The media house owners, reporters, and editors are predominantly men. Therefore, discriminatory images of women are created since the media products are created by men, according to their interests.

Women's issues do not occupy enough space in print media. It has improved over the years, but the coverage is mainly about the atrocities on women and not on the bright side of their achievements in various domains, which may be fewer but is significant. In other words, the coverage of women's issues is inadequate and full of socio-cultural biases.

The stereotypical image of women, highlighting their full-time involvement in cooking, family care, and other domestic chores, represents them as the subordinate and weaker sex. They are hardly seen being interviewed or asked for their opinions on prominent national matters. Women are typically portrayed as homemakers and are hardly seen as politicians, newsmakers, business leaders and subject experts. Most coverage about women is about the violence against women and their domestic issues. They are common, represented by physical appearance and sexualised images. Merely using them as sexual objects for selling products is unjust. It strongly reinforces stereotypical gender roles and identities. In print media, the headlines, cover pages, photos, and placement of articles play a significant role in putting up the undesirable representation of women.

The visibility of women in the news is widely covered on special days like Women's Day and Mother's Day. On other days, the news coverage is generally about sensational stories of glamour, forms of violence and sex. The weekend special magazines highlight luxurious news items of beauty and fashion with sensational photographs of women on the cover page. This adversely affects the perception of the younger readers who internalise the idea of being

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skinny, fair, and beautiful in set ways. It may go to the level of developing eating disorders among them.

19.3 The Cinema

Hindi Cinema has been a major source of propagating Indian culture. It has long been the platform for exhibiting the changing scenarios of modern India that no other medium can do at such a scale. It can potentially influence the viewers' perception of their life perspectives. Over the past few years, films have been claimed to break the stereotypes related to women. To name a few, the roles played by Nargis in *Mother India* (1957), Priyanka Chopra in *Fashion* (2008), and Waheeda Rehman in *Guide* (1957) have been quite powerful for the times in which they were made.

Despite a few Bollywood films' progress, the objectification of women still persists, as seen through the exotic item numbers. The primacy of a woman's traditional role as a mother and a wife is reiterated. The woman's dress appearance reinforces cultural signs like the mangal sutra and sindoor as the symbols of marriage.

In *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai*, Tina, a young college girl, is shown dressed in a mini skirt during a ragging scene which amazes the entire college crowd, who chant singing a bhajan. This scene is followed by her dialogue about how she has not forgotten her "Bhartiya Sanskriti" even after living abroad in a Western country. This film was a huge box office hit, pushing ahead such norms for the youth, who comprise most of the audience.

The Indian cinema has been rolling out films where men are pursuing their dreams, aspirations, desires, and heroism. The women are primarily portrayed as their lovers, wives, or mothers. A woman is rarely seen acting independently and capable of making decisions.

Even cinematic elements like lighting, camera focus, and shots are set according to the body placement of the actress and the audience's eyes. The movements of the actress's body add up to the gaze, selectively focusing on specific body parts- the eyes, lips, breasts, buttocks, and legs.

From time to time, the number of films raising social issues increases, like *Padman* (2018) highlights the issue of Menstrual Hygiene, *Pink* (2016) highlights the issue of consent and *Matrabhoomi* (2003) on the issue of Female Foeticide.

In such films, too often, a female protagonist plays the "hero"; in a film, she is forced to wear the invisible masculinity. However, within the subtlety, we often misunderstand the patriarchal emphasis of male macho-ism portrayed in a female's body. For instance, characters like Shivani (Rani Mukherjee in *Mardaani*) and Meera (Anushka Sharma in *NH10*) established strong masculine female characters. However, they needed a "male character" to infuse energy into them.



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 19.2

1. Why is media referred to as a "watchdog"?
2. List all forms of print media.
3. What is meant by the objectification of women?
4. How has the role of women in cinema evolved over the years? Explain.

19.4 ELECTRONIC MEDIA - TELEVISION AND RADIO

Television has been a medium which has shown spectacular growth over time. Television is called the most real form of media. It represents women on T.V. and affects the mindset of those who watch it specially, the negative and debasing image of women as represented in commercial advertisements and serials. Sex stereotype is also evident in television in portraying men and women in their appointed roles.

Television serials have undergone a considerable transformation in the last two decades. The serials have moved a great deal from the portrayal of strong women characters like Pallavi Joshi and Shaifali Chhaya as Air Force officers in the Aarohan programme of the 1990s inspired middle-class girls and women and challenged the mainstream ideology. Instead, most soaps show "home" or the domestic sphere as the core set. The fundamental theme is centred on women, with the primary concern on family relationships, either playing the role of a vamp who creates problems or playing a good daughter-in-law or loving wife in serials. In this context, women's achievement is valued for running a successful household, settling down in matrimonial bliss, bearing children and trying to be 'ideal' human beings.

Advertising

The power of advertising to persuade, manipulate, and shape behaviour has long been recognised. Most people realise that the images in the media rarely reflect reality. However, that does not mean that these images are not influential. Advertisements often represent a fantasy or ideal image of how things should be. There used to be advertisements mostly related to women's beauty products. However, some products for men's beauty, e.g. fairness creams, hair gels, etc., are also advertised. Specifically, they help to reinforce how an ideal woman or a man should look and behave. Women sell everything- food, clothing, washing powders, cars, computers, creams- anti-wrinkle and anti-pimple creams. They even market shaving lotions and underwear, at times exposing their bodies. Such advertisements exploit their sexuality and commodity. Advertisements for various deodorants show women crazy to run and flock over to men using these. Such advertisements are highly regressive and depict women as if they do not possess any sense of judgment.

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It is said that Indian viewers now spend more time watching the news than reading it. This is because T.V. news channels in India compete for more viewership, and more and more sensational types of news programmes are being created, vying for public attention and ultimately improving their television rating points (T.R.P.s). NDTV, CNN-IBN, Headlines Today, Times Now, Aaj Tak, Star News, NDTV India, and India TV are popular news channels that show news 24X7. The question that arises is, do we need 24X7 rolling news? It seems that many of the news channels, by and large, are working on the old strategy of creating one package for different time bands. Gender and related issues are ignored by the news channels that often depend on Bollywood and teleserial stars for their survival. Most news channels sensationalise news related to celebrities - what do they do or eat to stay in shape, which gym they go to, who are they friends with, whom are they having affairs with, who are on the verge of break-ups, marriage or divorce etc. and tirelessly present the content for hours for T.R.Ps. Though with time, things have changed a little, and there is coverage of positive stories related to women, they considerably lag in comparison to the major part of sensationalising murder mysteries of celebrities (e.g. Arushi Murder case), and Jiya Khan, Bollywood film actress) or about the untimely demise of Sri Devi.

How credible is the media? What portion of news is devoted to women's issues or women as victims of circumstances, of their bodies and course, of men? Ironically the voices raised over such matters do not get space in the media. What about news on laws related to women, awareness of women's issues in India, especially education on health, work-life issues, domestic violence, sexual harassment and successful career women in different, innovative work segments? Very few channels highlight issues women face in India, and that too occasionally.

The context of the violence portrayed and the viewer's age is most important. Also significant is the participant's ability to differentiate between fantasy and reality and justified or unjustified use of force. The three factors in this triadic model do not necessarily make equal contributions. The influence of an Individual, Environment, or Behavior depends on which particular factor is strongest at a particular moment. For example, Bandura studied to scrutinise whether social behaviours like aggression can be acquired by observation and imitation. His experiment revealed that children learn by observing the behaviour of others. Television programming portrays interpersonal violence, much of it in an entertaining and glamorised manner. Prolonged exposure to such media portrayals increases acceptance of violence as an appropriate means of problem-solving and achieving one's goals.

19.5 FOLK MEDIA

Folk media refers to the channels of communication embedded in social, cultural, and psychological thinking, exhibiting the values and lifestyle of the people. These rich cultural reservoirs promote local language and remain an integral part of the socio-cultural and religious part of communities. It includes oral traditions, customs, and rituals which are complex

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communication resources. It generally includes different art forms like folk theatre, street theatre, folk dance, folk music and songs, paintings, puppetry, traditional motifs, designs and symbols, traditional games, fairs and festivals, storytelling and traditional youth clubs etc.

Unlike mass media, folk media has its ties to traditional social spaces and represents the homogeneity of a particular society. It is a non-electronic medium used to transmit tradition from one generation to another. Since ancient times, people in local communities have engaged in folk dances and songs, rituals and festivals etc., which are part of their daily lives. The lifestyle, perceptions, social approval, relations, and value systems are communicated through folk media. It is also used to exhibit social views on sex, gender, education, health, and social perception, and interestingly adapt to newer values and situations.

In earlier times, folk media were patriarchal primarily in their structure and presentation. Women had to forgo certain privileges and rights regarded as exclusive to men. They were constantly exhibited as inferior to their male counterparts, presented only in the roles of mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters, being confined to the four walls of their homes. They were shown proud women who would forgo their lives to care for their family members. While women were shown as dedicated nurturers and physically attractive, men were shown as breadwinners, protectors of women, and the head of families.



Figure 19.1 Folk Media



Figure 19.2 Folk Media: A Kathakali Performance

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Thus, folk traditions and symbols established the social norms for individuals, groups, and communities. For example, the traditional drums of Khasis use instruments to reinforce the patriarchal social norms. Khasis is a tribe in Meghalaya in North-East India that classifies drums as male drums and female drums. The male drums are played during ceremonial rituals, whereas female drums are played during festival dances. This is co-related to Khasis; while men conduct all the rituals, women are not even allowed to witness some ceremonies. They have a famous saying, "Khasis U Rang Khatar Bor", which means "A man has twelve powers", and "Ka Thei Shibor", which entails that "A woman has one power".

Gradually, contemporary folk media have undergone some shifts not only in their content but also in their treatment and presentation. These can become powerful media to connect with people and bring awareness on various issues such as positive images of women, changing roles of men and women, women empowerment, and portraying men as partners and protectors.

Folk media can be used in contemporary times as a purposeful art form to discuss issues sensitive to society. For example, health issues might not be appropriate for face-to-face communication, but the intended message can be easily disseminated through folk media. Likewise, issues like Immunization, HIV/AIDS, Family Welfare, dowry, early marriage, construction of toilets etc. can be effectively prompted by these media forms.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 19.3**

1. Explain the credibility of media in our lives.
2. Define Folk Media.
3. How do traditional media serve the purpose of communication?

19.6 SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a vast collective of online communication channels that is becoming an integral part of our day-to-day lives. The most prominent social media platforms are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, Google+, Wikipedia, etc. Nevertheless, even on social media, one exhibits gender-specific behaviours. For example, it is known through research that men are more likely to use social media platforms to seek information and start new relationships; while women tend to be drawn to such platforms to connect with people they already know.

Social media plays a massive role in our lives. It allows networking opportunities and brings the communities closer by disseminating messages and opinions. However, like other forms of

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media, even messages perpetrated through social media influence the mindsets of its audience, especially the youth. A research study examined how teenage males and females utilise social media platforms and found gender differences in usage patterns. Fifty-seven (57) per cent of the teens reported starting new friendships online. However, only 20 percent met their online friends in real life. The low self-esteem of females directly affects their social media usage patterns. For instance, males are more likely to use authoritative language than females. Females, on the other hand, use words more emotionally. A study examined 15.4 million Facebook status updates by 68,000 Facebook users. It found that females generally used more positive emotions like 'love', 'happy', and 'excited'; and social relationships like 'friends' and 'family'. On the other hand, males used more fact-oriented words related to subjects like politics and sports- 'tax', 'government', 'football' etc.

Women have been facing a lot of unfavourable and abusive responses as and when they voice their opinions. This is purely a reaction based on their gender. This was proved with the help of an experiment conducted by a male who spoofed a Twitter account. He found the responses more negative and abusive when the Twitter account was portrayed as owned by a female. The most common forms of harassment witnessed at social networking sites are constant criticism, highly abusive and aggressive language usage patterns.

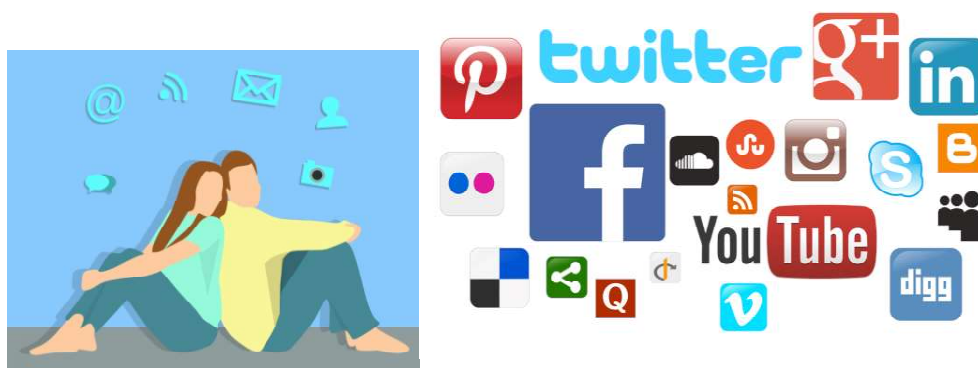


Figure 19.3 Social Media

Commercial advertisements appearing at social media, like other media platforms, reinforce gender-stereotypical norms. For example, females are generally portrayed objectifying their bodies or are seen in commercials involving domestic and cosmetic products. Male ads, on the other hand, often involve cars, insurance & investments, and business products.

Social networking sites can potentially encourage social, political, and economic empowerment and promote gender equality. The HeForShe Campaign, for example, was initiated by the United Nations on social media. It attempted to use social media to close the gender gap between men and women.

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Media**Notes****Community Radio**

Community radio is a type of radio service that serves a particular community and is also run by that community. It is free from the authority of the market and profit-making in its functioning. Community radio derived its basic objective from the fundamental principles of democracy of entailing equal and active participation in freedom of speech and expression. It is managed, controlled, and run by the community for the needs, aspirations, and interests of the community.

Why is community radio an important medium?

Community radio gives a viable platform to marginalised communities to raise their voices on issues that do not receive adequate attention in public and private radio services. It allows them to express their views and opinions not duly heard in the mainstream media. It enables individuals, groups and communities to share their stories and experiences and contribute substantial content to the media. It is a two-way process that empowers people to identify problems and seek solutions. Community radio can potentially encourage the participation of the most marginalised in decisions for positive changes. It is a dynamic and non-commercial medium for grassroots communication.

How does Community Radio empower women?

It is imperative to focus on women's participation as they are the most marginalised, most unheard in the public domain and discriminated against in access to and participation in mainstream media. Community radio has traditionally been inclusive, thereby enabling a range of women to exercise their communication rights. Several Community radio stations are being run by women, managing technology, content and participation of people. An impressive number of women work in community radios nationwide, mainly as producers, on-air, and station managers.

19.7 PARTICIPATORY VIDEO

Participatory video is an interactive group process that builds participants' capacities to communicate with others. The group members are required to record themselves and the world around them in a video. This enables them to communicate their own stories in creative ways. In addition, video production provides a powerful medium for the participants to explore their local situations and collectively reflect on their experiences. Thus, it is "Media by the Community."

How are participatory videos different from usual film-making?

Participatory videos are an interactive process that aims to build the participants' social influence. They help in establishing collaborative relationships and catalyse collective group actions. Participants reflect on their situation together, deepen their understanding of the real



picture of the issue, and develop ways forward. It gained much attention due to two main reasons:

1. It does not require conventional literacy to operate the media
2. The engagement of the audience in this method is much more than in any other medium.



Fig 19.4. Images of Participatory Video

How are participatory videos helpful?

- Participatory videos enable participants to rapidly learn how to use the video equipment through workshops, exercises, and games.
- The facilitators help the community members to identify prominent issues in and around their community and showcase these through participatory video methods.
- The videos can be shared with the wider community through daily group screenings and Sabhas.
- It is a dynamic and ongoing process of community-led learning and exchanging of ideas, which sets sharing in motion.
- Community members have ownership as they are involved in varied degrees during video making.
- Participatory video as an approach can potentially transform the way we move towards more significant social equity and human compassion needed for the true development of a society.

Participatory media has become a powerful tool for the masses as they give freedom to the people to express their issues and empowers them by amplifying their voices through the power of media. Thus, participatory video for development is an excellent medium to connect with people at the local level.

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1. Define the concept of community radio.
2. How is a community radio different from a commercial radio station?
3. What kind of issues can be addressed through community radio platforms?
4. What is 'Media by Community'?
5. How are participatory videos helpful for gender sensitivity?

**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**

- Media can be used positively to propagate healthier values in our society. This is because media has acquired a remarkable capacity to set new trends, bring social transformation and reduce social injustice.
- Digital players have entered the mass communication field through the internet platform. They have provided people with an alternative medium of information and communication. The news gets delivered on demand through computers, laptops, mobile phones and other communicating devices.
- The primacy of a woman's traditional role as a mother and a wife is reiterated in almost all forms of media. However, a few filmmakers have tried to break away from this and give more real roles to women actors like Dum Laga Ke Haisha, English Vinglish, Dor and more.
- The major parts of Indian cinema portray men pursuing their dreams, aspirations, desires, and heroism. The women are primarily shown as their lovers, wives, or mothers. A woman is rarely seen acting independently and making her own decisions.
- The relationship between media depictions of violence and subsequent violent behaviour is highly complex. Several interacting variables play an essential role in determining who will be affected, by what material, and in what way. The context of violence and the age of the viewer are the most important variables for determining the potential impact of violence.
- Folk media has its ties to traditional social spaces and represents the homogeneity of a particular society.
- Social networking sites hold the potential to encourage social, political, and economic empowerment and promote gender equality.



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- The new media technologies are more interactive than traditional media and tend to incorporate two-way communication.
- Hashtag activism has brought women's issues to the forefront of the political discourse.
- Using social media for online activism is restricted for many women due to illiteracy, language barriers, and the digital divide. These factors mainly affect rural women.
- Community radio gives a platform to marginalised communities to raise their voices about issues that do not receive adequate attention in public and private radio services. Community radio helps communities in remote parts of the country to integrate at national and global levels. It has been known to improve governance by enabling people to hold the local government for the timely delivery of services.
- Participatory videos are an interactive process which aims to build the social influence of the participants. They help in establishing collaborative relationships and catalyse collective group actions. The participants reflect on their situation together, deepen their understanding of the accurate picture of the issue and come up with ways forward.



TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. How do media impact our perception of gender roles?
2. How can print media be used to promote gender equality?
3. What challenges does print media face in enabling change in people's mindsets regarding gender roles and expectations?
4. Illustrate with an example that cinema significantly impacts the masses and gender sensitivity.
5. Do you think television serials have created an unrealistic image of women? Justify your answer with suitable examples.
6. How can folk media be used to address social issues and gender discrimination in rural area?
7. What has been the role of social media in promoting and designing campaigns to empower women?
8. How are participatory videos different from usual films? How can they be used to increase women's participation in development activities?
9. How is community radio used to empower women?

**Notes****ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS****19.1**

1. The socialisation process immediately starts after birth and decides an individual's attributed roles and responsibilities per their gender.
2. Media is the plural form of the word 'medium', 'one of the means of general communication, information, or entertainment in society, as newspaper, radio, or television'. It subscribes to the mode of communication through various electronic and print channels.
3. It is important to analyse the representation of gender in media critically. It is the first step necessary to provide evidence to the media producers and sensitise them to be progressive in their outlook. Furthermore, they must be aware of their critical role in triggering change with changing times.

19.2

1. Mass media has long been responsible for being society's watchdog and is liable to guide social change. A watchdog refers to a person, institution or organisation that monitors and publicises the behaviour of others to discover the activities are not in the interest of society.
2. Print media is one of the oldest and most basic forms of mass communication. It includes newspapers, journals, weeklies, monthlies, and other printed media forms.
3. Despite a few Bollywood films' progress, the objectification of women persists, as seen through the exotic item numbers. The primacy of a woman's traditional role as a mother and a wife is reiterated. The woman's dress appearance reinforces cultural signs like the mangal sutra and sindoor as the symbols of marriage.
4. Hindi cinema has been a significant source of propagating Indian culture in our society. It has long been the platform for exhibiting the changing scenarios of modern India that no other medium can do at such a scale. It can potentially influence the viewers' perception of their life perspectives. Over the past few years, films have been claimed to break the stereotypes related to women. To name a few, the roles played by Nargis in *Mother India* (1957), Priyanka Chopra in *Fashion* (2008), and Waheeda Rehman in *Guide* (1957) have been quite powerful for the times in which they were made.



Notes**19.3.**

1. News devoted to women's issues or women as victims of circumstances of their bodies and men do not get space in media. So the news on laws related to women, awareness of women's issues in India, especially education on health, work-life issues, domestic violence, sexual harassment and successful career women in different, innovative segments of worktop are not highlighted. Very few channels highlight issues women face in India, and that too occasionally. This undermines the credibility of the media.
2. Folk media refers to the channels of communication embedded in social, cultural, and psychological thinking, exhibiting the values and lifestyle of the people. These rich cultural reservoirs promote local language and remain an integral part of the socio-cultural and religious part of communities. It includes oral traditions, customs, and rituals which are complex communication resources. It generally includes different art forms like folk theatre, street theatre, folk dance, folk music and songs, paintings, puppetry, traditional motifs, designs and symbols, traditional games, fairs and festivals, storytelling and traditional youth clubs etc.
3. Folk media can become powerful media to connect with people and bring awareness on various issues, such as positive images of women, changing the roles of men and women, women empowerment, and portraying men as partners and protectors. Moreover, folk media can be used in contemporary times as a purposeful art form to discuss issues sensitive to society. For example, health issues might not be appropriate for face-to-face communication, but the intended message can be easily disseminated through folk media. Moreover, issues like Immunization, HIV/AIDS, Family Welfare, dowry, early marriage, construction of toilets etc., can be effectively prompted by these media forms.

19.4

1. Community radio is a type of radio service that serves a particular community and is also run by that community. It is free from the authority of the market and profit-making in its functioning. Community radio derived its basic objective from the fundamental principles of democracy of entailing equal and active participation in freedom of speech and expression. The community manages, controls, and runs it for its needs, aspirations, and interests.
2. Community radio gives a viable platform to marginalised communities to raise their voices on issues that do not receive adequate attention in public and private radio services. It allows them to express their views and opinions not duly heard in the mainstream media. It enables individuals, groups and communities to share their

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stories and experiences and contribute substantial content to the media. It is a two-way process that empowers people to identify problems and seek solutions.

3. Community radio has traditionally been inclusive, thereby enabling a range of women to exercise their communication rights. Several Community radio stations are being run by women, managing technology, content and participation of people.
4. Participatory video is an interactive group process that builds the participants' capacities to communicate with others. The group members are required to record themselves and the world around them in a video. This enables them to communicate their own stories in creative ways. In addition, video production provides a powerful medium for the participants to explore their local situations and collectively reflect on their experiences. Thus, it is "Media by the Community."
5. Participatory media has become a powerful tool for the masses as it gives people the freedom to express their issues and empowers them by amplifying their voices through the power of media. Thus, participatory video for development is an excellent medium to connect with people at the local level.