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A Study on the Role of Media Tools in Promoting Women Empowerment in Annamayya District

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of media tools on women empowerment in Annamayya district, a region in Andhra Pradesh, India. In recent years, both traditional and digital media have emerged as powerful platforms for raising awareness, promoting education, and fostering economic independence among women. The research investigates how various media tools including television, radio, newspapers, social media, and mobile communication have influenced women's participation in education, employment, decision-making, and social activism. A sample of 60 respondents from three villages like Bommavaram in Obulavaripalle mandal, Neethivaripalli in Chitvel mandal, Buduguntapalle in Rly Kodur mandal, Utukuru Venkatampalle in Pullampeta mandal were selected for analysis. A questionnaire was used as a tool of study. Using a mixed-method approach involving surveys, interviews, and case studies, the study highlights the positive correlation between media exposure and women's self-confidence, social mobility, and access to resources. Findings also indicate that while digital media has created new opportunities for empowerment, challenges such as digital illiteracy, gender bias in media content, and limited access in rural areas persist. The paper concludes by recommending media literacy programs and gender-sensitive media policies to enhance the role of media in empowering women in Annamayya district. Improving the social status of women. Women who used media felt that it had a positive impact on their status and helped them to empower themselves. The study also highlighted the preferences of TV programs among women.

Keywords: Women, Empowerment, Media, Status, Gender, Policies

Introduction

Women's empowerment has emerged as a critical goal in national and global development agendas, aiming to improve the social, economic, political, and personal well-being of women, particularly in rural areas. In recent years, media tools including television, radio, newspapers, mobile phones, and digital platforms such as social media have gained prominence as powerful instruments for promoting awareness, education, and social transformation. In the Indian context, where deep-rooted gender inequalities persist, access to information through media has proven vital in challenging traditional norms and providing women with the resources to assert their rights and participate meaningfully in society.

Media refers to the various channels, tools, and platforms used to communicate information to a broad audience. It includes all forms of communication that transmit messages, ideas, news, entertainment, or data to the public. Media plays a critical role in shaping public opinion, spreading awareness, and influencing social, political, and cultural behavior.

Media can be Broadly Categorized Into

1. **Print Media:** Newspapers, magazines, brochures, pamphlets, and books.
2. **Broadcast Media:** Television and radio, which transmit information through audio and video.
3. **Digital Media:** Websites, online news portals, blogs, podcasts, and video platforms.
4. **Social Media:** Platforms like Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube, which allow interactive and user-generated content.
5. **Traditional Media:** Folk songs, street plays, and community bulletins, especially common in rural areas.

In the context of development and empowerment, media serves as a tool for education, awareness, advocacy, and participation, particularly for marginalized groups such as women and rural communities.

Empowerment is the process of gaining power, confidence, and control over one's life and decisions. It involves

increasing individuals' or groups' ability to make choices, influence outcomes, and access resources and opportunities that improve their quality of life.

Empowerment Includes Several Key Dimensions

1. **Social Empowerment:** Gaining respect, equality, and freedom from discrimination or oppression.
2. **Economic Empowerment:** Having access to income, jobs, assets, and financial independence.
3. **Political Empowerment:** Participating in decision-making processes, leadership roles, and governance.
4. **Educational Empowerment:** Access to education, knowledge, and skills that enable informed choices.
5. **Psychological Empowerment:** Developing self-confidence, self-worth, and the belief in one's abilities.

In the context of women's empowerment, it means enabling women to recognize their rights, make decisions about their own lives, and actively participate in social, economic, and political spheres. Empowerment is both a goal and a process, requiring changes in attitudes, institutions, and access to resources.

Review of Literature

Sharma (2011) in his article on the role of television in rural development suggested that television is good at exposing people to new ideas and experiences.

Verma and Larson (2002) found in their study that adolescents watch an average of 12 hours of television per week. The study suggests that television viewing is considered a major source of stress-relieving activities. The study concluded that 29% of viewers watch television for learning/education.

According to Potter, 2008, mass media includes many media technologies that influence large audiences. Broadcast media (also known as electronic media) convey facts electronically and include television, radio, movies, and some other media such as cameras and video collection. Alternatively, print media uses common material such as newspapers, magazines, brochures, newsletters, books, pamphlets, and leaflets to send their facts.

Anvesha Mohanty, (2012), Media is undoubtedly a very fast, wide and powerful means of communication. It not only attracts a vast audience but also has an immense impact on the political governance of a country and the culture of a society. Movies, TV shows, journalism (newspapers and news channels) all fall under the big "media" even though they are small. By "Ethics and Media" we generally discuss ethics in journalism, which influences public mindsets and shapes society.

Research Objectives

- To identify which type of television programs are given the most priority.
- To study the awareness in different empowerments on women.
- To identify the role of television in women's empowerment.

Methodology

Random sampling method was chosen for this study. The researcher prepare questionnaire and distributed to the respondents. An interview schedule was administered by the researcher to collect the required information from the respondents.

Data Collection and Analysis

Table 1: Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-30	30	50.00%
30-40	20	33.33%
40 above	10	16.66%
Total	60	100.00%

Table 01 shows the age structure of the respondents according to the data 50.00% respondent age was between 20-30 years, 33.33% respondent age was between 30-40 years, 16.66% respondent age was above 40 years. According to the field data majority of the respondents were aged between 20-30 years.

Table 2: Education Levels of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	10	16.66%
Secondary	15	25.00%
Graduation	20	33.33%
Post-graduation	07	11.66%
Illiteracy	08	13.33%
Total	60	100.00%

The above table indicates that 33.33% women has bachelor's degree, 25.00% respondents were secondary education, 16.66% respondents were primary education, which is followed by post-graduation degree 11.66% and 13.33% of the respondents are illiterates.

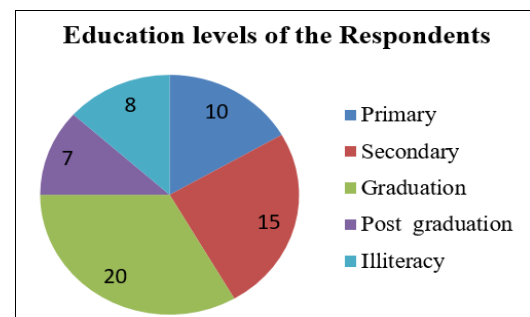


Table 3: Occupation of the Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Private sector	20	33.33%
Government sector	05	08.33%
Students	05	08.33%
House wife	30	50.00%
Total	60	100.00%

Table 04 presents occupation of the respondents of the area. According to the field data 50.00% of the respondents were House wives and they were live in their home and look after their family while 33.33% respondents were private employee and only 08.33% women were Govt. employee and 08.33% respondents were students. The relevant data shows that most of the women were House wives.

Table 4: Media used by Women

Media	Daily	Percentage	Weekly	Percentage	Rarely	Percentage
TV	38	63.33%	12	20.00%	10	16.66%
Radio	10	16.66%	07	11.66%	05	08.33%
Newspapers	15	25.00%	07	11.66%	12	20.00%
Internet	50	83.33%	06	10.00%	04	06.66%

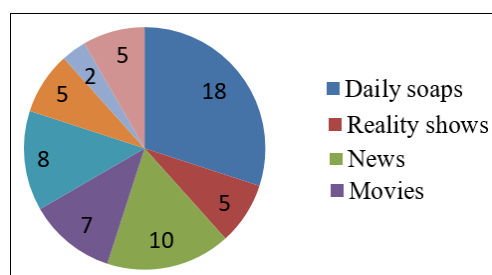
According to data represented in the table, 63.33% of the respondents are watching television on daily basis, 20.00% of the women on weekly; only 16.66% women rarely watch television. Internet is used 83.33% daily basis. It was mostly used by young women for getting information, chatting, use various social networking sites like facebook, twitter, whatsapp, 10.00% weekly, 06.66% rarely. Radio listening is 16.66% daily basis, 11.66% weekly, 08.33% rarely and newspaper reading is 25.00% daily basis, 11.66% weekly, 20.00% rarely.

Table 5: Preferences for different categories of Television Programs

TV Programmes	Frequency	Percentage
Daily soaps	18	30.00%
Reality shows	05	08.33%
News	10	16.66%
Movies	07	11.66%
Health shows	08	13.33%
Cooking channels	05	08.33%
Sports channel	02	03.33%
Educational programmes	05	08.33%
Total	60	100.00%

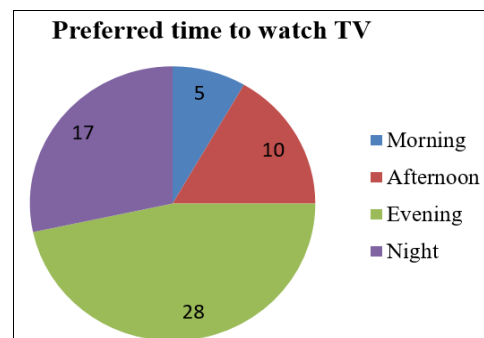
The above table shows that most of the TV channel programs seen by women in their daily routine. According to the field data 30.00% of the respondents were like Daily soaps, 16.66% respondents were like News, Health shows were 13.33%, 11.66% were watch Movies, Cooking channels, Reality shows(singing competition, dancing competition, game shows like Kaun banega crorepati), Educational programmes is equally liked by them i.e. 08.33%, only 03.33% were like Sports channels.

Preferences for Different Categories of Television Programs

**Table 6:** Preferred time to watch TV

Time	Frequency	Percentage
Morning	05	08.33%
Afternoon	10	16.66%
Evening	28	46.66%
Night	17	28.33%
Total	60	100.00%

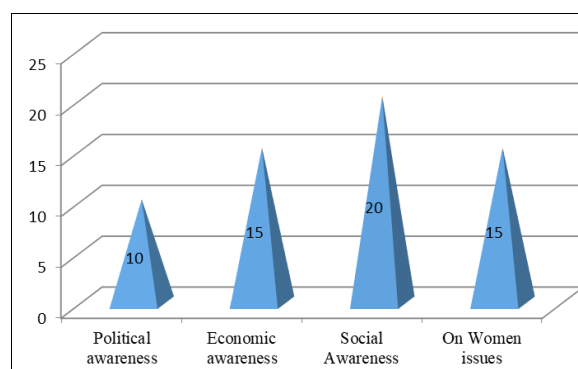
Table 06. shows that the preferred timing to watch T.V 46.66% of the respondent was preferred to watch TV at evening, 28.33% respondent was preferred to watch TV at late night, 16.66% respondent was preferred to watch TV at afternoon and 08.33% respondent was preferred to watch TV at morning. It concludes that nearly half of the respondents were preferred to watch TV at evening.

**Table 7:** Role of Media in Women Empowerment

Empowerment	Frequency	Percentage
Political awareness	10	16.66%
Economic awareness	15	25.00%
Social Awareness	20	33.33%
On Women issues	15	25.00%
Total	60	100.00%

Table 07. shows that respondent thinking about different features of media that helpful to understand role of media in women empowerment. It shows that media helps to promote social awareness to a large extent with a frequency rate of 33.33%. Women admitted that media is also raising the women issues with a frequency rate of 25.00% which helps them to know their rights and responsibilities. 25.00% respondents were getting economic awareness and finally 16.66% respondents were known about political awareness.

Role of Media in Women Empowerment



Conclusion

This study shows the positive outcome of media awareness, which is a good indication and leads them towards empowerment. Women with access to media are increasing their awareness to empower themselves. Media tools are influencing their attitudes, beliefs, judgments, lifestyles, decision-making processes, and social world. Women from selected areas of Andhra Pradesh used all types of media such as radio, newspaper, internet and TV to learn about women empowerment programs. Respondents used media more than expected.

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