

# The Influence of Globalisation and Mass Media on Women Economic Independence: A Critical Analysis

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## ABSTRACT

The status of a person in a community is connected intimately with his/her economic condition. The enhancement strategy which neglects the requirement of developing the role played by a woman may not lead to a comprehensive economic or social development. However, with the globalization and introduction of various mass media like television or social networking sites etc. the enormous economic opportunities of the women have been introduced, though some of them still face mounting threats in a society or domestic violence at home. The rights of the women have also advanced and there is a change in their lifestyles and social equality. Thus, the current study analyses the impact of globalisation and the growth of mass media as important indicators that lead to economic independence of women in the developing countries of South Asia. From the current paper, it has been deciphered that both phenomenon of globalisation and mass media play a crucial role in augmenting the social status of women by providing them with more economic opportunities and fostering a climate for social changes and independence of women. Another dimension of seeking and achieving social parity for women would be to ensure that women find reasonable representation in those jobs and roles which were historically considered male bastions. The present job proliferation of women is mostly in the roles which are essentially new roles specifically suited to women. Thus, the litmus test of women competing with men in roles which were considered men specific is still missing.

**Keywords:** globalisation, mass media, women's economic independence, social independence, male bastions etc.

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## I .INTRODUCTION

Globalisation resulted in the development of world economy. As per Della Porta & Diani (2009), it is not merely a sum of national economies. Benería, Berik, & Floro (2015) stated that globalization is the major phenomena which shapes the world today. Globalization at one hand, intensifies the existing insecurities and inequalities of the women, while, on the other hand, it opens innovative opportunities for the professional and educated women of the society. For instance, agriculture is the biggest source of livelihood and income for the women in the rural regions of India after globalization. 78% of women are now engaged into agriculture whereas 68% of total men are engaged (Deb & Sen, 2016). Women in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Kerala provide more inputs in weeding, transplanting, fertilizing, threshing, drying, stacking and carrying products. Apart from that, the women are now working at national and international levels. Though, women are considered to be equal to men, Jensen, Arnett, & McKenzie (2011) argued that in some of the rural areas, it is still noted that the women are socially dependent on their men and suffer from domestic violence at home, in spite of earning for their families.

Apart from globalization, Ross (2010) observed that mass media also plays a crucial role in shaping the women's world while making them socially and financially independent. The central intention of mass media is to educate, inform or motivate the people to embrace new technologies and media while increasing their status and living conditions. But, at the same time, Baylis, Owens, & Smith (2017) claimed that if the media is not handled properly, then, it might create adverse impact on the life of women. At times, they are dominated in the patriarch society as well and face domestic violence. Keeping a focus on this, the paper has made a comparison of the fact whether the women have become socially independent or not after being economically independent following the age of mass media and globalization. The government has enacted various equal rights in order to counter social discrimination and violence while providing support to the working women. For instance, a law on Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 was introduced by Indian parliament to protect the women from the domestic violence (Chhabra, 2015). The factory act of 1948 was introduced for the women to provide them with healthy, safety and welfare at their workplace. Equal

remuneration act of 1976 provides the rights of equal payment to both the women and men without making any gender discriminations. As per the research works of King and Mason (2001) and Sen (1999), women can be productive workers, caregivers, mothers and often more capable to manage the household than men in various countries. According to Enloe (2007) and Klein (2007), the radical definition of globalisation, as postulated by feminist writers and various non-governmental organizations, is termed as the 'masculinity' of 'corporate globalisation' leading to constant and consistent subjugation of women across the globe. Wichterich (2000), and Parpart, Shirin and Staudt, (2002) have argued that in accordance with such a perception, globalisation might have fostered a pernicious impact on the social, political and economic life of women.

On the other hand, Bhagwati (2004) and Spar and Yoffie, (1999) revealed that the perspective of globalisation argues the fact that the aspect of globalisation liberates women by giving them enhanced opportunities as corporations intend to hire the most capable and able workers without adhering much to the traditional social norms that aim to develop men more than their women counterparts. Also, with different nations coming together for international development, there is an immense pressure for political change that is not categorized by medieval norms that ostracizes one section while blindly uplifting others, indirectly, ensuring the right of women to develop their career and social participation in the respective society. Thus, Deb & Sen (2016) concluded that globalisation allows women a greater and aggravated part in the social, economic and political lives of the societies.

According to Domo and Russett (2004), modernisation theorists have argued that established contact with backward countries and more modern economies due to globalisation might enhance the rights of the women in backward countries as forces of modernisation might threaten patriarchy and the discrimination faced by women. Such amalgamated global scenario, where different countries come together for shared benefits, can spur the speed of the existing medieval norms, values and rights associated with those that are associated with the liberal and modern economy which are focused on general and expanded economic development, regardless the nature of orienteers of the economy (Held and McGrew, 2002). Henceforth, Vijaya (2012) commented that globalisation can have a direct influence on women empowerment through economic rights than social rights.

Due to globalisation, the women gained social justice and are allowed to participate in every sector of employment like men (Lee, & Vivarelli, 2006). Their social issues of poverty have been alleviated and they have the rights to use the social programs like education, retirement plan and healthcare. Thus, with the essential capitalist approach of globalisation, women are provided with various career options and scope for career development, due to the cultural enrichment and also due to expanded international influence mentioned above. Heath (2014) stated that though globalisation has expanded women's access to employment, it has not initiated changes that can reduce gender inequality.

Another phenomenon that has co-developed with the idea of globalisation is the inclusion of media in the domestic spheres of households. Communication is often perceived to be a developmental vehicle for women development, and in this aspect, mass media plays a detrimental role. Media intends to delimit the marginalization of women by their male counterpart by creating awareness and awakening the female population to achieve their potential and prime agents of change in society. Thus, media plays an important role to accelerate the process of women empowerment; facilitated by the phenomenon of globalisation (Chaudhary, n.d.).

Mass media has unconsciously impacted and influenced the perceptions of society. They have perpetuated the notion of an ethical women, bound by social rights and lack of privileges intending to serve their family (Ceulemans & Fauconnier, 2015). It has heightened the aspect of domestication of women. The women are engaged in communication sector, few have gained positions and few did not. Self-regulatory mechanism needs to be developed for the media and the gender-biased programs should be eliminated (Narayana, & Ahamad, 2016). The winds of globalisation brought changes in the capitalist realm and life in the household has considerably changed. Kim (2013) revealed that from witnessing the domesticity of women, media in the times of globalisation, have focused on the modern and independent image of women. Globalisation has transcended the phenomenon of 'westernization' of the cultural context, which has significantly altered and influenced the lifestyle of women. However, Ceulemans & Fauconnier (2015) mentioned that altering the cultural norms of societies in South Asia which are manipulated by patriarchy is difficult task, wherein such a modernised outlook for the lives of women have led to increase in physical violations of women and further strengthens the identity of the women borne out of patriarchal cultural norms.

Della Porta & Diani (2009) argued that despite the globalization of the world which turned the women independent financially, still there are instances where the women are still socially dependent. They are still facing violence at their home and are subservient to their men. Educationally, professionally and economically, the women are progressing rapidly as observed by Heath (2014), however, it is also important for them to become socially independent as well. Thus, the following paper has been developed on the basis of an important question whether the economically independent women have led to the matching changes in their social dependence.

### **Research Aim and Objectives**

The current review paper intends to review the impact of globalisation and media as an antecedent to women's economic independence. As per the aim, the paper intends to fulfil the following objectives:

- To analyse the influence of globalisation and media on the perception of women and their consequent changes in lifestyle
- To understand the role played by the economic independence of women on their social status and independence.
- To review the correlation between economic independence and gender-based violence on women
- To examine the effectiveness of the initiatives, schemes, policy changes initiated by the governmental authorities for empowering women.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In the past decades, globalization and mass media have made a tremendous effect on the lifestyle of the women in the countries of South Asia (Neumayer & De Soysa, 2011). India is one of them where the women received a great chance of employment after globalization and this creates an instantaneous change in the societies. In this section, a secondary analysis has been done on the basis of gathered data from relevant resources to meet the aim of the paper.

### **Impact of globalization and mass media on social status, life style and economic independence of women**

Globalization is said to be a multi-dimensional approach which refers to opening up the financial market to benefit its amalgamation with world economy. Paul (2014) commented that mass media is an important channel through which the nations can achieve the economic and national development with the help of an input of the external information. Mass media has helped in transferring the information of various opportunities of employment to the women for which they have become independent in the modern times. However, Ross (2010) noted that women still face the enormous pressure in order to conform to the social mores. They still play the traditional roles in their families and face physical abuse from their partners due to the earnings. The women are still fighting against the long-standing prejudices and are facing enormous pressure in order to conform to the social norms (Cho, 2013). Though the women have performed great in the corporate sector, still, the women from all the income classes are discouraged by their families from developing their careers in the world of employment. Though, globalization has created job opportunities for many, but, the women in the developing countries are still suffering as explained by Potrafke, & Ursprung (2012). The women are producing half of the food of the world, but, they are earning only 10% of the total income. The women are poorly paid and are physically and mentally unhealthy or insecure and demeaning.

According to Baylis, Owens, & Smith (2017), it created innovative opportunities for the women to become the fore runners in social and economic progress. Benería, Berik, & Floro (2015) added that economic globalization has expanded the work chances for the women for which the rate of their independent earnings is increased. It also improved the physical quality of their life while creating other additional options in terms of their household work and social life. Though, the job opportunities changed their lifestyle or enhanced their economic earnings, there was no job securities for them (Bussmann, 2009). It was clear from the evidence that the women were exploited in the society in spite of their monthly incomes. They face two types of issues. According to Oostendorp (2009), though the women have entered the corporate world and are earning independently, their household work has not alleviated. They are doing full time work in the workplace and sometimes, they work extra for which they are not paid more (Potrafke, & Ursprung, 2012). At the same time, they are working for the family and remains unpaid. They do not get the facilities of maternity leaves as well. Further, Cho (2013) added that women who are married or are pregnant are fired immediately. Like men, the women also do overtime, but, they are paid lower compared to men.

The women are working harder in this age of globalization to get a position in the society. With the migration of women to urban areas for job has led to the increased exploitations including trafficking and sexual exploitations (Bussmann, 2009). The MNCs have taken the advantage of the situations and have considered the women as cheap labours while denying them maternity benefits or equal wages. But, if the overall situation is considered, Deb & Sen (2016) mentioned that the role of women in the nations of South Asia is changing with time. The women made great strides in the world of corporate jobs and are also able to support their families alone like the men used to do.

### **Economic independence and gender-based-violence**

Various studies conducted in the geographical realm of South Asia have examined the role of stressors such as, level of education, low earning potential, marriage at a considerable young age and lower household socio-economic status, as various antecedents for violence within the household (Verma and Collumbien, 2003; Jeejebhoy and Cook, 1997; Jeyaseelan et al., 2007; Ackerson and Subramanian, 2008). Thus, studies have postulated conflicting information that asserts the relationship between the empowerment of women, particularly in the context of control of assets, social group participation and economic opportunity. According to Jeejebhoy and Cook (1997), women with an enhanced and established amount of economic resources, such as property or jewellery, reported lesser instances of violence, in comparison to employed women who have reported more instances of violence (Krishnan, 2005).

Various programs and policies that are initiated by the governmental authorities, aimed at improving the condition of women, by providing measures that can uplift them and protect them when required. Programs such as female education, vocation training and employment, intend to provide women with essential means and resources that will safeguard them. However, it has been postulated by various studies that such policies may conflict with the existing social norms and expectations of the society, which would inhibit the intended benefit and would furtherly aggravate the deteriorating situation of women in the society, or in prone-to-violence households (Koeing et al., 2003; Swaminathan, 2004). The study conducted by Rocca, Rathod and Falle (2008) posited that in societies and in cultures wherein the aspect of gender inequalities is deeply entrenched and adhered to, improving the social and economic resources of women would result in domestic violence.

#### **Effectiveness of governmental schemes on women empowerment**

There have been various policies across countries that intends to enhance the status of the most vulnerable sections of the society, particularly women (Coleman, 2004; Seguino, 2000). Such sanctions intend to enhance the economic development of women and to further augment their social conditions (Drury and Peksen, 2014). In India, the Ministry of Women and Child Development have administered some schemes to achieve gender-equality/ socio-economic development/ empowerment of women such as Swadhar and Short Stay Homes to provide relief and rehabilitation of women in distress; Working Women Hostel that provides for safe livelihood of women working away from home; Support to Training and Employment Program for Women (STEP) to ensure sustainable development and income generation for poor women; One Stop Centre to provide assistance for women affected by violence; Scheme for Universalisation of Women Helpline which is a 24 hour service providing emergency response for women affected by violence; Sabla Scheme for holistic development of girls aged 11-18 years; and various other capacity building measures to encourage women for a sustainable livelihood (Press Information Bureau, 2015).

### **III. DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

In order to show the growth of economic condition of women and their position in the society, previous primary data has been reviewed from different resources. As it has been viewed from the secondary resources of Paul (2014), the work participation rate of women has increased a lot compared to prior times. According to the primary data collected by the researcher from the field, it has been noticed that the economic empowerment of the women has also increased due to globalization and mass media for which there was a change noticed in their status and lifestyle also. Jensen, Arnett, & McKenzie (2011) analysed that India is also ranking high in this term since the education has clubbed with the women's participation in the service industry. This has been presented followed by an analysis of the collected primary data from other secondary resources as below.

| Year       | Gender | Tamil Nadu |       |       | India |       |       |
|------------|--------|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|            |        | Rural      | Urban | Total | Rural | Urban | Total |
| 1981       | Male   | 59.24      | 51.25 | 56.58 | 53.8  | 49.1  | 52.6  |
|            | Female | 33.55      | 11.97 | 26.52 | 23.1  | 8.3   | 19.7  |
|            | Total  | 46.48      | 32.05 | 41.73 | 38.8  | 30.0  | 36.7  |
| 1991       | Male   | 58.28      | 52.78 | 56.39 | 52.5  | 52.4  | 51.6  |
|            | Female | 38.50      | 13.10 | 29.89 | 26.7  | 31.0  | 22.3  |
|            | Total  | 48.49      | 33.34 | 43.31 | 40.0  | 42.0  | 37.5  |
| 2001       | Male   | 59.38      | 56.37 | 58.96 | 52.4  | 50.9  | 51.9  |
|            | Female | 41.33      | 18.42 | 31.32 | 31.0  | 11.6  | 25.7  |
|            | Total  | 50.39      | 37.59 | 44.78 | 42.0  | 32.2  | 39.3  |
| 2004- 2005 | Male   | 59.7       | 59.3  | 59.5  | 54.6  | 54.9  | ---   |
|            | Female | 46.1       | 24.1  | 35.5  | 32.7  | 16.6  | ---   |
|            | Total  | 52.8       | 41.8  | 47.5  | ---   | ---   | ---   |

|            |        |      |      |     |      |      |     |
|------------|--------|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|
| 2009- 2010 | Male   | 60.3 | 56.9 | --- | 54.7 | 54.3 | --- |
|            | Female | 40.5 | 19.1 | --- | 26.1 | 13.8 | --- |

Figure 1 Work participation of women in India with special reference to Tamil Nadu

Source: (Vijaya, 2012)

As per the above figure is concerned, the work participation of women has increased in recent years compared to previous times. From the data, it is evident that the economic base of the women has enhanced a lot for which they are said to be equal to men in service sector.

Other than this, it has been evaluated from the study of Ross (2010), women in modern days are capable of using the mass media like information technology or social networking sites or television to gather the news of employment and earn their basics. Keeping a focus on that, the participation of women in IT (Information Technology) industry has also increased since they are educated and can become economically stable as well.

|             | Total no. of employees | Women in Nos | Percentage | Ratio |
|-------------|------------------------|--------------|------------|-------|
| Wipro       | 12658                  | 2530         | 19.98      | 1:05  |
| TCS         | 21800                  | 5450         | 25.00      | 1:04  |
| Infosys     | 15356                  | 2896         | 18.86      | 1:05  |
| Hewlett-P   | 2245                   | 320          | 14.25      | 1:07  |
| Polaris     | 4800                   | 1200         | 25.00      | 1:4   |
| L&T         | 2250                   | 900          | 40.00      | 1:2:5 |
| HCL         | 5757                   | 1150         | 19.97      | 1:05  |
| SUN         | 596                    | 119          | 19.96      | 1:05  |
| Oracle      | 2702                   | 540          | 19.98      | 1:05  |
| Philips     | 757                    | 190          | 25.09      | 1:04  |
| Siemens     | 1390                   | 260          | 18.70      | 1:06  |
| Rolta India | 2346                   | 123          | 5.25       | 1:19  |

Figure 2 Participation of women in IT sector

Source: (Vijaya, 2012)

According to the above figure, it can be analysed that the women in today's world are able to perform equally like the men. In the era of globalization and mass media, the women have become equally educated like men and take participation in the service industry to earn their basics and look after their families as well.

Although, the women have participated in the workforce and are earning equally like the men, still, there are issues of social dependency of women and physical violence which they suffer in a society. The following table has analysed it in a detailed manner.

|   | Physical violence |           | Emotional violence |          |
|---|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|
|   | Beta co-eff       | Odds      | Beta co-eff        | Odds     |
| Income difference (earning more than husband) | 0.10              | 1.11      | 0.38               | 1.46     |
|   | (0.05) **         | (0.06) ** | (0.06) *           | (0.09) * |
| N   | 28535             | 28535     | 28400              | 28400    |
| Own money (money kept for own use)            | 0.05              | 1.05      | 0.07               | 1.07     |
|   | (0.02) *          | (0.03) *  | (0.03) *           | (0.03) * |
| N   | 28535             | 28535     | 28400              | 28400    |



| Employment status of husband | -0.2     | 0.82    | -0.44   | 0.64    |
|------------------------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|
|                              | (0.08) * | (0.07)* | (0.09)* | (0.06)* |
| N                            | 28461    | 28461   | 28332   | 28332   |

**Figure 3 Economic empowerment of women and violence**

Source: (Paul, 2014)

As per the above figure is concerned, it can be analysed that with the increased participation of women in the service industry, the domestic violence has also increased in some areas of India. Based on the survey results collected from the study of Baylis, Owens, & Smith (2017), it has been evaluated that if women go to work, then, it hurts the ego of the men in some cases for which they become violent on them to show the frustration. At the same time, it has been reviewed that if the violence increases then the women stop participating in job since they fear of further violence (Benería, Berik, & Floro, 2015). Henceforth, it can be assumed that the physical or emotional violence of the women are related with their economic opportunities through job.

However, if the overall results of social and economic progress of the women can be analysed, then, it can be believed that globalisation would lead to an impact on the social rights of the women as well. The fulfilment of social rights is a crucial antecedent for the achievement of global rights. The economic rights of women's right to choose profession and equality in the processes of hiring and promotion can be established with the help of women's right to education, freedom to travel, freedom to inherit property or the freedom to choose their own life partner. Furthermore, according to the study conducted by Neumayer and de Soysa (2011), economic and social rights are strongly correlated as women's right can be attained comprehensively if both the discussed rights are fulfilled. Such a strong correlation also translates to enhanced bargaining power enjoyed by women, and thus, greater economic power, which allows them to furtherly, augment their need for social rights.

According to the findings of the study conducted by Potrafke and Ursprung (2012), the above-mentioned thought is enhanced furthermore. According to them, globalisation strengthens the institutions that intend to foster gender equality; due to the principal economic and social capabilities of globalisations, they can lead to institutional change that drives gender equality. Global economic integration, fostered by globalisation, is beneficial for populations in the low-income countries. The social aspect of such an integrated global picture can undermine the established social and political-economic order by empowering the role played by women. Their study was conducted in the realm of Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and South America, wherein the males dominate the society and ruling elites who consider the advent of globalisation as an anarchy that can destabilize their existing position in the society.

Due to globalisation, more women have come to the forefront of economic development in various countries; the discussed social phenomenon has enabled women, in large, to witness the world in large by providing them with mediums that showcase a life which could be theirs. The global phenomenon has not only uplifted women, but has also uplifted various mediums that can establish equality in the sexist societal dynamics, particularly in the less-developed or developing countries, particularly the role of media.

The role of media is crucial for determining the empowerment of women, however, the portrayal of women in such developing countries of South Asia are majorly guided by the patriarchal norms rather than the modernised aspect of globalisation (Singhal, 2016). Thus, it is important for mass media to inculcate the vision of an independent women, who are provided with equal choices, opportunities and respect as their male counterparts to further empower them.

## CONCLUSION

Globalization and the advent of mass media has exposed the economy of the countries of South Asia rapidly along with setting the policies and legislations by the government. Due to introduction of mass media, the attention of the women has been gathered towards the job opportunities which have evolved for them (Deb & Sen, 2016). This has helped them in earning their economic rights to save money for them and look after their family which revealed the notion of equality between men and women in the society. For the economic opportunity of the women after the globalization and introduction of mass media, their lifestyle and social position changed. However, as per the early studies and results are concerned, it has been analysed that their still remains gaps in between the economic and social independency of women (Jensen, Arnett, & McKenzie, 2011). Are they still dependent on the men and experience domestic violence at home?

As per the results analysed, it has been noticed that in some parts of India and other South Asian countries, the working women face issues of domestic violence since the men cannot tolerate them working and earning money while taking the equal position like men (Paul, 2014). Thus, the women belonging to certain sections of the society are forbidden to

enter the professional realm or the labour market (Ceulemans & Fauconnier, 2015). In order to augment the participation of women in South Asian countries, various policies have been introduced, the most fundamental being reservation in government jobs. In Bangladesh, 10 to 15 percent and in Pakistan 20 percent government jobs are reserved for women (UNIFEM, 2003). However, it is not just participation of women in public spheres or the instances of paid work which indicates towards the phenomenon of economic empowerment for women, indicated by increased freedom, choice and opportunities for them. However, it is crucial to not limit the focus on just single or individual aspects of women empowerment, as notably, such a goal can be achieved with integrated focus on other defining aspects of women empowerment. Thus, within the geographical realm of South Asia, multidimensional approaches are required to ensure that steps are taken that intend to eliminate the instances of inequalities and discriminations faced by women (Jensen, Arnett, & McKenzie, 2011). In making concluding remarks, I will quote Joss Whedon 'Ultimately what I end up writing about is helplessness and the flipside of that empowerment'.

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