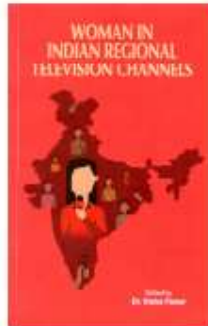


Book Review**WOMAN IN INDIAN REGIONAL TELEVISION CHANNELS**

Manu Dharma Shastra or 'The Laws of Manu' is one of the standard books in Hindu religion. It comprises of 2684 verses that are divided into 12 chapters. It presents the norms of domestic, social, and religious life in India. Manu Smriti both eulogises and criticises women. Where the discussion is about how men must sentinel their wives, women are described as licentious, freckle, hard-hearted, and completely unreliable. Contrary to this, on the other hand, where the discussion is about how men should respect women, the women are described as bearers of many blessings and as none less than Shri (Fortuna, the Goddess of Fortune) within the home. Even though women have attained a special position in the Indian societies, over generations, the media which is more aptly known as the fourth estate, has a different perspective on women of our present-day society.

The book - Woman in Indian Regional Channels - is an edited volume by Dr Nisha Pawar (Nisha Mude-Pawar). She has a vast academic experience of about 28 years - has been associated with the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at Shivaji University, Kolhapur. Besides, she has either authored or edited 7 books and has completed several major research projects.

I read the book, "Woman in Indian Regional Television Channels", with great interest as it is on a topical and relevant subject,



and one close to my own interest in consideration. This book is an outcome of the national conference on the captioned subject held at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Shivaji University, Kolhapur from March 07, 2019, to March 08, 2019. This edited volume covers a vast canvas on the woman in Indian regional channels - a consequential compilation of 22 chapters that include a chapter in Hindi at the heart of this edited volume under the title, "श्रीलंका के दूरदर्शन केन्द्रों पर भारतीय दूरदर्शन चैनल के कार्यक्रमों का प्रवेश तथा श्रीलंका के समाज और संस्कृति पर उनका प्रभाव।"

In this setting, it is very pertinent to recollect our understanding of sex sells that typically refers to promotional advertising. One of the fundamental characteristics of people that affects their thoughts and behaviours is sexuality. It has a phenomenal effect on their orientations towards others, and life in general. According to Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, everything people do can be connected to sexual motivations. Even though it can be deliberated that Freud has overstated this idea, it has a philosophical impact on the development of theories and research models about sex and consumption patterns for which television media is not any barring.

Another aspect that is most relevant in this setting is the cultural imperialism, originally conceptualised by Herbert Schiller. Cultural imperialism is the practice of promoting and imposing a culture that is not native. It indicates the cultural hegemony of industrialised or diplomatically and parsimoniously persuasive countries which determine general cultural values and standardise civilisations throughout the world. Television media has been significantly influenced by the attribute of cultural imperialism, without any doubt!

This edited volume provides an overview of the woman in Indian regional channels, presenting regionalisation of Indian television and gender sensitivity of media. To expound the incorporation, the expert contributors from this specialised area have contributed towards this volume. This book efforts to document the change and challenges taking place due to the presence of women in the television channels.

There is no second thought that this book, through the contributions made by such stupendous media scholars and academicians as Prof Usha Rani, Prof Mrinal Chatterjee, Prof Upendra Padhi, Prof Mira K Desai, Dr Ujwala Barve, et al., is a major contributor on the subject of the book. Nonetheless, as also admitted by the editor herself, this book is not bounteous to provide the comprehensive picture of the women in Indian regional channels, considering the very fact that plurality is the nature of India - so many languages, cultures and heritages in India demands a more comprehensive volume. This book is a well organised and thematically intertwined edited volume, *per se*.

At the beginning of the book, the editor discusses the fifty years of the glorious tradition of journalism education in the contextual reference of Nagpur University and then gives an overview about the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at Shivaji University, Kolhapur. The reviewer felt that this part of this edited volume could have been placed as an annexure to this book rather than the first chapter.

In the chapter titled, "Regionalisation of Indian TV and Gender Sensitivity of Media," the author Prof Usha Rani Narayana argues that historically media have framed women as an object of desire and have traded them as a commodity in a male-dominated society. Insofar as this argument is concerned, the reviewer is in total agreement. The prior discussion about sex sells and cultural imperialism holds good to justify this point. Another interesting fact that adds weightage to the influence of cultural imperialism is the inkling put forward by Prof Mrinal Chatterjee in the chapter titled, "Women in Regional Television Channels" that mass media in Odisha had its genesis first in missionary activity and later in the reformist and national movement like in several provinces in India. Incidentally, the reviewer argues that the impact of cultural imperialism sustained more and more in India to have its greater impact on all forms of media including television media.

In another interesting topic titled, "Women's Employments in Doordarshan: A Study of Sahyadri Channel," the author of the chapter, who is also the editor of this volume, Dr Nisha Pawar, compre-

hensively discusses such essential topics as activities relating to women in Doordarshan, the organisational structure of Doordarshan Sahyadri, and about women newsreaders in Sahyadri with statistical support of several facts. She concludes the chapter with the springing fact that the women employment in Sahyadri News unit is satisfactory, but it limits the higher position to work for women because of the recruitment system. The reviewer is in full agreement with this point as the same holds good in the case of government-owned or private television networks across India. This very point could be reflected for further exploration in comprehensive research work. Another chapter contributed by the same author i.e. on Women's Representation in Marathi News Channels is also statistically resilient in the argument.

One more interesting topic that offers statistical evidence to the facts mentioned in the chapter is, "Women in Regional Television Channels: An Analysis," authored by Prof Mira K Desai. An attention-grabbing point that has been raised by the author in this chapter is an aftermath of #Me Too. The author takes the reference to sexual harassment faced by women employees of Doordarshan Kendras across the country.

The remaining chapters are correspondingly interesting and discuss mainly on aspects analogous to Marathi, Odiya and Bengali regional channels. This edited volume, unquestionably, includes the most relevant topics on the subject of the book. Nonetheless, though I understand that it is always very easy to critique books for what they leave out, I felt, in this case, the inclusion of at least one chapter on the regional television channels from South India would have made this edited volume thorough in some respects although the editor admits that this book lacks to bring out the picture of some regional channels. Despite this limitation, this book would however surely serve as an important reference book to the scholars working on feminist studies and gender-based media studies.

It is tough to envisage which domains within women in media will attract greater attention from researchers, which ones will be de-emphasised, and what new research topics will emerge. It depends merely on such aspects as technological development of

the media in future, economic trends, world events, and funding trends in education. It is a matter of fact that addressing practical problems effectively will require more powerful theories than currently available to address practical gender-related problems. For this, theories that accurately account for how people construct, use, and respond to messages are very much required. Without a doubt, this book set aight conversation about the relevant issues to the topic chosen for this volume.

The editor of this book has achieved the objective that was set when compiling the volume in the first place - to document the change and challenges occurring because of the women's presence in the television channels. To this end, this admirable publication, by all means, paves a way for scholars in advancing their knowledge and in framing a truly grounded approach to the women in Indian regional television channels, making it a more serious research topic in the future. This book, for sure, will serve as a reference book in the field of the captioned subject - will appeal to graduate students and faculty members who want an overview of the women in regional television channels and also the research stemming from such a vast topic.

Further in this context, this book would also serve as a locus to undertake marketing research on sexual appeals in the milieu of cultural imperialism concerning the analytical study of regional television channels in India. Of course, research in this area should embark on the rare attempt of assessing the implications of sexual appeals beyond negative reactions to damage to a brand's image and reputations.

Review by Dr. Suman Kumar Kasturi
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WOMAN IN INDIAN REGIONAL CHANNELS

Editor: Dr. Nisha Pawar; Preetam Prakashan, Dharwad; **Ed:** 2019;
ISBN: 978-93-83890-42-2 (PBK); **Pages:** 253; **Price:** 200.00

Keywords: Cultural Imperialism; Television; Feminist; Regional Channels; Sex Sells; Manu Dharma Shastra; Mass Media; Women.

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