INTRODUCTION

Media and the Women’s Question: Need for a Critical Enquiry
Mass media have come to acquire tremendous potential in today's modern, globalized society. Modern methods of communication intoxicate us thoroughly with its free flow of information, entertainment and amusement. Media, it is understood, are vital organizations that commit to discover and report the truth. Media, it is believed, have the ability to shape our consciousness. Media, it is hoped, play a democratic role in reflecting the perspectives of every sphere of society. However, in today's market driven society characterized by complex dynamics of economic, social and interpersonal relations, the role of media has transformed catering to the need of the market, state and dominant class ideology. Media, it is argued, have also emerged as a powerful weapon to manipulate public opinion and in the process, rule the people through manipulation.

Media is all-powerful. Media is the mentor. Media safeguards public interest. Media articulates the interest of the disadvantaged. Media is democratic. Media reflects social reality.
And there are contentions against media. Media is manipulative. Media sensationalizes/dramatizes, and in the process, distorts facts. Media propagates its commercial interest. Media voices the ideology of the dominant class. Media discriminate social issues catering to market need.

To sum it up, mass media in today’s context has become indispensable. And the importance and magnitude of media is still growing. Historically, messages were communicated face to face, but with the emergence of urban life and industrial development a new set of social processes arises. With the development of print technology and electronic medium, there has been a communication break through. Messages have been produced, distributed and consumed in mass scale and its easy and quick reach and accessibility has made the mass media a vital institution in today’s world. As its nature, method and technologies evolved keeping pace with the changing time, the media's impact on the mass has increased manifold. Within this framework, it becomes pertinent to understand and analyze how responsibly and democratically mass media reflect the issues of the disadvantaged lot in general and women in particular.

And especially at a time when, because of democratic sensitivity and egalitarian consciousness, we are articulating the demand for gender equality, it is important to examine the role of mass media in projecting women in Indian society. In fact, this research work has been conceptualized with an urge (that combines academic as well as feminist interests) to probe into the women’s
engagement with mass media: whether media in real sense are benefiting women's position creating an emancipatory consciousness and leading to a democratic society.

I

Sociological Relevance

Conceptually, as has been pointed out by S.C. Sharma, 'the mass media are technological agencies and corporate organizations, engaged in the creation, selection, processing and distribution of messages that are produced at speed and in quantities possible only with mass production methods. Mass media, thereby, are the broadest common currencies of public interaction in a society.' It may be pointed out that as media produces materials in mass scale and in quantity and speed that has the capability to reach people from every sphere of life, it is named as mass media. Though, there is occasional apprehension about the dilution of culture because of the way it is produced, published and circulated beyond any boundaries, the accessibility of this force to the mass prove its power in shaping and/or transforming the society and societal relationship according to the changing situation. Thus, this 'massification' of culture and ideology is one of the defining characteristics of the modern society.

Keeping this backdrop in mind, it becomes important to have a close look at the way mass media in India have evolved in the history of time. Though the introduction of mass media in the form of print owes its origin to the British era, the growth has been slow and halting. Ever since, the impact of media in the changing Indian society needs acknowledgement. Press played a crucial role during freedom struggle, and after independence took initiative in encouraging constructive programmes and helped in conveying the message of development to people.

The electronic media in form of radio and television flagged off during late 1970s and early 1980s and have gathered momentum thereafter. In 1990s, with the process of liberalization and introduction of open sky policy, private channels took over in the world of television and a new revolution in the television era is witnessed. Media play pivotal role in spreading the news to the masses, influencing the political, economic and social status of the nation state and shaping the values and culture of the society. A brief up of the origin and development of media in forms of print and electronic medium may be sited as follows.

**Print Media:** The growth of Press and public opinion in India has kept pace with the expansion of Western Education.

The first Indian newspaper, *The Bengal Gazette*, appeared on 29th January, 1780 in Calcutta. It was published by an English man Hicky. As the newspaper was meant for the employees of the East India Company, it was
published in English. It was only in 1818 that a newspaper in Bengali, namely ‘Samachar Darpan’, came out. In the 1830s and 1840s, despite the obstacles created by the colonial authorities, the number of publications in the regional languages increased, and they had great significance in spreading the ideas of the National Liberation Movement.

Political journalism in India may be traced back to 1861 when the Indian Council Act led to the nomination of distinguished Indians to the legislatures. Many of the great newspapers, which flourish today, were established during that period.

There was a phenomenal growth in the Indian Press after 1920, with the beginning of the Gandhian era in Indian politics. Gandhi himself had been editing The Indian Nation in South Africa from 1904. He established ‘The Young India’ in English, ‘The Nawjeewan’ in Gujarati in 1919 and ‘The Harijan’ in 1933. He conducted his political work and constructive work through these weeklies. They were a great force during that period.

After independence, the mass media assumed great significance. Indian democracy for more than five decades has ensured an unfettered growth of the Press in the country. This healthy growth, both in number and circulation, along with an analysis of different aspects of the print media is compiled and presented every year in the form of Report by the Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI).
The 43rd Report compiled by the RNI and published as Press in India- 1999, with statistics upto the year 1998, reveals the following facts and figures.

The total number of news interest newspapers including periodicals increased from 41,705 to 43,828, recording an annual growth of 5.09 per cent.

Newspapers were published in 100 languages/ dialects including 19 principal languages.

Hindi language continues to be at the top, both in number and circulation, where as among the states, Uttar Pradesh was first, both in number and circulation.

The circulation also rose to 12,68,49,500 from 10,57,08,191 copies registering an increase of 20 per cent. In 1998, 6030 newspapers out of 43,828, supplied their circulation data as compared to 5204 in 1997.

Delhi and Maharashtra publish newspapers in 16 out of 19 principal languages.

76.40 per cent of Tamil language and 62.63 per cent of English language press was published from four metropolitan cities.

Among periodicals, Malayala Monorama, a weekly in Malayalam ranked first with a circulation of 11,58,108 copies.
In the category of multi edition dailies, the Times of India, English occupied the first position with a circulation of 13,90,827 copies and Malayala Manorama in Malayalam came second with 11,23,745 copies.

Anand Bazar Patrika, a Bengali daily published from Calcutta with 5,86,637 copies, claimed the first position as the largest circulated single edition daily followed by the Times of India from Mumbai in English with 5,66,378 copies.

NUMBER OF NEWSPAPERS IN 1998

LANGUAGE AND PERIODICITY-WISE

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Electronic media: The broadcasting media, popularly known as the electronic media, due to its special nature in terms of instant reach, wide acceptability and easy comprehensibility, plays a unique role in many areas.

The advent of radio broadcasting: in the twenties of 20th century has been hailed as the beginning of a unique revolution in the Mass Communication. Broadcasting started in India in 1927 with two privately owned transmitters at Bombay and Calcutta. Government took over the transmitters in 1930 and started operating them under the name of Indian Broadcasting Service. It was changed to All India Radio in 1936 and it also came to be known as Akashvani from 1957.

Total Broadcasting Centres: 195
Regional Stations: 109
Local Centres: 74
Relay Stations: 09
Casting Centres: 03

Doordarshan: Doordarshan is one of the largest broadcasting organizations in the world. Doordarshan signals now reach most of the India’s population and as a result of its network of transmitters and a multitude of satellite transponders spread all over the country; millions of people watch its programmes.
The experimental telecast started from a make shift studio in Akashvani Bhawan in New Delhi on 15th September 1959. TV services were extended to Mumbai only in 1972 and until 1975 only seven cities were covered by television.

The first experiment with Satellite Technology in India was Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) in 1975, which was the very first attempt anywhere in the world of using this new, sophisticated technology for social education. Seven years later, when Asian Games were held in New Delhi in 1982, there was a massive growth of television service and colour television was introduced.

Doordarshan is now a part of Prasar Bharati- the autonomous Broadcasting Corporation of India. The Prasar Bharati Act of 1990 was given effect from 15th September, 1997 and the Prasar Bharati Board took charge of the administration of All India Radio and Doordarshan with effect from 23rd November, 1997.

Doordarshan now operates 18 channels- two All India Channels, 11 Regional Language Satellite Channels (RLSC), 4 State Network (SN) and 1 International Channel.

*The Dawn of Satellite Era:* Waves of dramatic and dynamic changes have flashed across the horizon of television in India during the last few years. The government opened up the skies in 1991 in the wake of liberalization and from
across the horizon, a new revolution ushered in. This multi national, multi channel and multi lingual satellite onslaught started with US News Service, CNN International. It flashed its live reports of the Gulf War in 1991 to virtually mesmerize Indian viewers with the potential of television. Then came Star TV with a bang. It included STAR Plus, BBC, Prime Sports, and MTV, and Asian Network (ATN). Introduction of localized satellite channels (like Zee, Jain TV etc.) to cater to the consumers’ requirement expanded the potentials of media in influencing millions of people in India.

Mass media emerged as a powerful organ in fighting for the right of the Indian mass in British era. As India realized the need to free herself from the clutches of the British rule, Indian mass got organized to voice against the colonial rule. As an outcome, various social and political movements took shape with its manifest or hidden agenda to fight the battle for independence. As we look back in the history of time, print media worked as a powerful medium to disseminate among the mass the vital need for a free, democratic India. Then Mahatma Gandhi emerged as the pioneer to liberate India from its fragmented efforts to fight the cause and gave independent movement a concrete shape. And as Gandhian ideology spread its wing to the nook and corner of the country, Indian women managed to find their voice. Gandhi was clearly the first feminist in India. Though there have been occasional concerns shown by social and political activists to fight for the women’s cause before, and

\[2\] see, for example, Rama Jha, ‘Women and Print Media: Portrayal and Performance’, Chanakya Publications, N. Delhi, 1992, p.3
sometimes successfully so, it is Gandhi who organized women as a lot to realize their cause and made India perceive the need for the empowerment of women in India. He in fact acknowledged that without women’s active participation towards improving their social lots no real development and no kind of freedom in India was possible.\textsuperscript{3} Gandhi being a journalist was able to spread his philosophy to the mass through his powerful writings. And the emergence of new Indian women in a Gandhian era appeared to be revolutionary. Women started participating in the political movement and women’s problems were dealt sensitively and sincerely. Media, being a meaningful weapon then, started covering women’s issues as political issue. Women’s cause became the national cause. And Indian women made their entry into the decision making process subtly yet powerfully. Along with their political participation, some of the women started writing in newspapers of that period. Names of Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya, Sarojini Naidu and Aruna Asaf Ali became known to the readers of that generation. And women’s participation in mass media flagged off with the movement for independence. Women’s voice was heard along with voice for independence.

And as India emerged as a free, independent, secular and democratic nation, mass media became a potential organ of the nation state to serve sensitively and democratically the issues-political, economic or social- that concerns the common mass. The Constitution of India has also given a lot of autonomy to

\textsuperscript{3} see, for example, Embree, Ainslie T. (Ed.) by Mark Juergensmerger, ‘Imagining India: Essays in Indian History’, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, P.167.
media to constructively criticize the state and the government and help bring about reform in every sphere. The voice of the journalists is acknowledged as the voice of democracy that is expected to safeguard the values and ethics of the society. With the passage of time as the independent India is getting matured democratically and the common mass is getting increasingly conscious of his/her rights, the responsibility of mass media is becoming more and more crucial. And as a landmark in the history of time, the introduction of liberalization policy in 1990s and subsequent opening up of market and commercialization of media (both electronic and print) has made the role of media pronouncingly complex. And the very nature of media in today's modern, complex society characterized by market economy has become the subject matter of sociological enquiry.

And a free, secular and modern India has acknowledged women's issues as a potential social issue. After attainment of independence in 1947, women have been granted equal political right vis a vis men. The provisions of the Constitution of India not only grants equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for neutralizing the cumulative socio-economic, educational and political disadvantages faced by them. The preamble of Constitution resolves to secure to all its citizens justice-social, economic and political-, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and of opportunity and

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4 see, for example, 'The Constitution of India', forwarded by Prof. M. P. Singh, Delhi Law House, 2003
to promote among them all, fraternity, assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the nation.

To uphold the Constitutional mandates, the government has enacted various legal measures intended to equal right to counter social discrimination and various forms of violence and atrocities and to provide support measures to women. The Special Marriage Act-1954, the Hindu Marriage Act-1955, the Hindu Succession Act-1956, the Criminal Law (amendment) Act-1983, the Immoral Traffic (prevention) Act-1986, the Child Marriage Restraint(amendment) Act-1976, the Equal Remuneration Act-1976, the Dowry Prohibition Act-1961(amended in 1984 and 1986), the Indecent Representation of Women (prohibition) Act-1986 are to name a few.

The planning and policy measures of the government also highlight women’s issue in their agenda and provided measures to safeguard their interest. Though the approach of the Five Year Plans shifts from welfare of women in 1970s to development of women in 1980s to women empowerment in 1990s, there has been a constant effort to enhance women’s position in Indian society.

Women’s movement world over in 1970s has left its impact felt in India as well. Various women activist groups and non-governmental organizations have emerged as a consequence in order to give a perspective to women’s problems. Mass media both in forms of print and electronic show their concern for the issue as a responsible organization.
Yet, it must be noted that women in India have a long way to go. They still remain the subordinate and disadvantaged lot and it reflects the lack of sincerity in the political and social agenda of development of the country. The demographic profile of India gives evidence to the number of ‘missing women’ in the sex ratio (1951-946; 1961-941; 1971-930; 1981-934; 1991-927; 2001-933). Similarly, statistics available on infant mortality rate, maternal mortality rate, health, education, economic status of women, women’s participation in politics and atrocity against women show that women remain the discriminated and marginalized section of the society despite the said efforts and show of concern. Though patriarchal ideology is conceived to be the root cause of such discrimination, it becomes important to scrutinize how the modern, liberal institutions of the society function within this patriarchal framework in reflecting women’s cause in specific and social reality in general. I have attempted to concentrate my focus on the role of mass media in highlighting women’s issue in this context.

It has been discussed earlier that women’s participation in mass media dates back to pre independent era. Though, it has been slow and hurdle some, women journalists have made their presence felt in the world of journalism in independent India. Though limited in number some of these women have made it to the decision making position. Liberalization and opening up of satellite channels have introduced enormous opportunity for the women journalists. We

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3 data referred. ‘Memoirs’ Reference Service, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, March, 2002
witness high visibility of women in the electronic media reading news, reporting from the field and covering vital issues.

There are journalists like Usha Rai, Mrinal Pande, Madhu Kiswar holding important positions in the editorial board of the news papers and magazines. There is Anita Pratap making waves in international journalism. We view Barkha Dutt fearlessly reporting from war front in Kargil. Women journalists of the present era have dared ‘to intrude into all field to cover stories such as sports, war, that were considered masculine thus unthinkable during our young time’. Reflects Usha Rai during my course of conversation with her. But how much difference have they made in removing the patriarchal ideology prevailing in the media world? Have they been able to contribute much in giving women’s issue its due coverage? Does higher visibility of women in this profession means more power?

Women’s issues are often seen getting sidelined in the mainstream media. We see Women’s Reservation Bill failing in the parliament time and again even after 55 years of independence. Issues on dowry death, rape and other forms of violence against women are still reported as mere crime report and no effort is made to analyze the root cause. Women are shown in the entertainment channels as ‘mere house wives’, ‘dutiful mothers’, ‘submissive’, ‘sacrificing’, thus, justifying the social stereotypes. Advertisements’ and television

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6 Usha Rai is the Deputy Director, Press Institute of India and have worked with the Times of India for several years. She was interviewed to get an insight in to the field of journalism during the course of my field work.
commercials are increasingly showing women as young and attractive and objectification of their body is thoroughly done to cater to the market need.

The above insight provokes a serious debate on the role of mass media in reflecting women's issue in today's modern, complex society. The relation between media and women may be questioned in a patriarchal structure. Mass media has assumed a responsible role in our society. How does media represent and portray women's question is a matter of serious concern as it has been conceived that women's upliftment is crucial for the all round development of the country. The following study covers the seriousness and sincerity of mass media in presenting women's cause from a sociological perspective in some analytical details.

The study may be contextualized in today's modern, complex society characterized by market economy where the position of women is in a state of paradox. On the one hand, media is seemingly insensitive to women's issues and objectification of women has become the norm of the day in order to cater to the need of the consumer in a patriarchal framework. On the other hand, women are increasingly participating in the public sphere especially in media as an after impact of the feminist movement and growing democratic awareness and their visibility in the field of media is expected to bring some change in the status of women in particular and society in general. In the given context, it becomes pertinent to analyze media's role in addressing women's cause within this complex structure.
In this study, I have made an attempt to understand and analyze the democratic role of mass media in representing women’s concern and their participation in this public space within the broader socio-cultural scenario in Indian society.

Two broad issues that have been touched upon are:

- Media’s response to women’s question;
- The extent of women’s engagement with mass media. 1. through exposure to media by way of programme and printed materials; 2. through the active participation of women in the production of media messages by participating in the decision making processes regarding programme content, policies and the projection of a balanced image of women.

The study examines in great detail the sociological implication of women’s engagement with mass media. It aims to concentrate its focus on the media culture in Delhi. Delhi has been chosen for the purpose of study because it is the capital city of India. It is also the most happening and politically active city of the country where a large chunk of ideology is manufactured and modified in forms of print and/or electronic medium; and it subsequently influences in shaping the ideology of millions of Indians on the process.

The central themes of the study are:

- To study the degree/intensity of women’s presence in media profession: the number of women participating in the process of producing news/entertainment items determines the amount of focus it has on women’s
issues - the mere representation expects some impact on highlighting women’s point of view.

- To study the role women professionals play in decision making process: it is also imperative to examine how many of these women representatives in media would make it to the decision making position. Without that ‘power’ women remain the marginalized section of the society whose voices are often unheard of even if they consist of half the population of the world. Does this status reflect in the media world as well?

- The meaning they attach to media, culture and society; from a more critical point of view, it is also important to analyze the kind of news/issues preferred by media, attitude of media towards women’s issues, the position and role of women journalists in media industry, pattern of interaction with their male counter parts and the extent of patriarchal culture prevalent in the industry with its impact on producing ideologies.

- More concretely, the study analyzes the news/entertainment items focusing on women’s issues in order to get an insight of the intensity of concern and sincerity of the media professionals towards the women’s cause. Both newspaper reports/editorials/articles and TV programmes have been scanned for the said purpose to get a wholesome view.
Methodology

Methodologically speaking, the nature of the study is essentially qualitative, interpretive and reflexive. To begin with, it has to be realized that the research project emerges out of a very complex engagement between the researcher and the domain of enquiry. When as a woman, I brought feminist sensibility; I begin to study the media. I cannot escape my own political or social location. My reflexivity is bound to come in the thesis. In this sense, the thesis interrogates the positivistic deadlines of self vs. objective world, knower vs. known and facts vs. values. Far from being reduced into a technical and disembodied research document, it becomes a reflexive and interpretative quest in which the researcher's own engagement has always been kept alive.

The entire project has been done through a series of interactive interviews, face to face discussion and dialogic sessions. In the process of engaging with women participants in the media, I have documented their experiences, work culture and ideologies. All these constitute a major component of my data that I have used sociologically. Another important component of the thesis is the textual interpretation of news reports, editorials and television images. These are the real contents of the media. As a researcher with a sociological sensitivity, I have tried to understand and interpret these contents. Interpretation as a method, a sociologist knows, is extraordinarily complex. It is not explaining 'the reality' in terms of certain invariable natural laws. Instead,
it is to understand the specificity and contextuality of the reality with its unique potential. Interpretation is not a technical enterprise, as contemporary interpretative philosopher would have argued. It is more like an artistic enterprise in which a sociologist is engaged to situate the specificity of events in larger social context. Any interpretative study as a result cannot claim to have the so called 'certainty' of a purely empirical quantified work. Interpretation because of its very nature is more like a narrative that bears the tension that emerges out of a complex relationship between subjectivity and objectivity, politics and text.

Another major component of the thesis is the collection of select life histories or biographies. Although I have interviewed many media practitioners, I have chosen some of them and studied them more elaborately. These life histories or biographies give us a fresh insight on how the insiders themselves experience the world they live in, and it is becoming more and more acceptable in contemporary social sciences that life histories and biographies have to be seen as a major constituents of sociological knowledge. Because these narratives make us familiar with much deeper and finer issues which a gross macro work often misses.

The empirical locale of my enquiry is the following. Though I have made an attempt to understand sociologically the media culture in Delhi, I have chosen Hindusthan Times (print) and Doordarshan (electronic) as my sample media organizations. It must be pointed out that in a ph.d. project because of its
limitations, one cannot choose all possible organizations. This does by no means suggest a meaningful work could not have been done had I selected other related organizations. However, my reasons for choosing these two organizations have also their substantial sociological relevance. Hindusthan Times as a leading newspaper in Delhi is important to reckon with. Firstly, this newspaper is considered as one of the most popular and leading newspapers of the country in general and Delhi in particular. Secondly, the choice of an English newspaper was a deliberate one. As an influence of the British era and the subsequent developments in independent India, English language has come to play a vital role in establishing link between the South and the rest of India and continues to remain the dominant language because of its role as an agenda setter among the elite political arena. Doordarshan on the other hand, is the most accessible, state governed television channel. Definitely a study of these organizations takes us near to the central question we are raising. The following methods were used as tools of research, though not in its strict orthodox sense, to gather data for the purpose of the study.

Interactive Interviews: this formed the principal source of data collection. During the course of my fieldwork, I extensively engaged myself in discourse with the women professionals of the sample media organizations to get an insiders' perspective. Series of in depth interviews were conducted for the purpose with special focus on their role and position in the news industry- the successes and constraints- being women in this profession; their socio cultural dynamics of the media world and the determining force influencing/hindering
the feminist ideologies getting priority in news/entertainment items. The series of informal discussions with those professionals introduced me to a lot of insight regarding the way the media organizations function when it comes to prioritizing women’s issues, and their experiences in the field as women, women journalists and journalists respectively.

In order to get a comparative perspective, I have also incorporated the views of some of the journalists from Navbharat Times(print- Hindi) and also professionals’ from some of the private news channels.

**Content Analysis:** Content analysis has been used as yet another method of collecting and analyzing data for the purpose. During the course of my field work, I have scanned through the newspaper clippings of Hindusthan Times-reports, editorials, articles- of three years(spanning between 1999 and 2001) to investigate the coverage of women’s issues/news. I have also analysed the contents of some of the popular soap operas of the leading private channels and the text of 50 television commercials for the purpose.

**Case Studies:** Life histories of 8 leading women journalists were randomly selected to be presented as case studies. Their background, experiences and views on women and media were studied as useful insights for the purpose of study.

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7. As a method of social research, content analysis is a documentary method that aims in qualitative and/or quantitative analysis of the content of texts, pictures, films and other forms of verbal, visual or written communication. (Sarantakos, p.210)
Secondary Resources: To make oneself aware of the recent issues and trends, to find out the historical trajectory of women and mass media and to get a clear cut theoretical perspective on the subject, secondary resources were consulted. Various books, journals, reports, articles were referred to in the course of study for the said purpose.

However, what is significant about this project is that I have not completely restrained myself and limited my options. Although Doordarshan and Hindusthan Times provide the backbone of the thesis, I have also studied media persons from other organizations and media spectacles emanating from some of the private television channels. And not all the life histories that I have collected are necessarily from the select organizations which I have studied. This is by no means arbitrary. Instead, in the process of engaging myself in the project, I have realized that strict methodological restriction may prevent one from getting the real pulse of the story. At times it is important to break the wall and to come closer to the dynamics of the reality one is studying. It has to be realized that my purpose is to study the women’s question in mass media. And hence, some of these empirical sights are only catalyst to make me understand that. This should not be seen as constraining and limiting in nature. In other words, methodologically speaking, the work provides some kind of creative space that enables the researcher to have an expanded horizon.
III

Structure of the Thesis

The preceding sections briefly reflected upon the significance of mass media in a modern complex society, discussed media's role in handling women's question, highlighted the methodological aspects of the study and the researcher's field experience while gathering data. The subsequent chapters aim to analyze in great details the proposed theme of the study in order to get a perspective.

The thesis is divided into four chapters flanked by an introduction and a conclusion. The introduction attempts to contextualize women within the democratic role of mass media and gives a broad overview of the research work.

Chapter I attempts to provide a background on 'mass media and women' by discussing various theories and perspectives available in media research and feminist literature and analyze the range of views available on the subject under study. The chapter however, focuses its attention on the role of media in depicting women's position in Indian context.

Chapter II scrutinizes the field information gathered from the print media organizations in Delhi and studies the media's concern in handling women's issues in some details. This analysis is further authenticated through the views and opinions of the women journalists in the press.
Chapter III focuses on electronic media of communication and studies the experiences and attitude of women professionals in this medium. Women's depiction in the soap operas shown in various private channels has also been observed to understand how these shows enhance the 'ritualization of stereotypes'. Television commercials have also been scanned to study how women are portrayed in advertisements to sell product in today's context characterized by market economy and consumer culture.

Chapter IV presents profiles of 8 select leading journalists and elaborates their views on important issues pertaining to women and mass media in some details.

The concluding chapter summarizes the major findings and gives a perspective to the research theme.