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WOMEN, MEDIA & SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGES IN INDIA

ALKA RAJAK

"There is no chance of progress of nation and welfare of society unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly with one wing."

Women, Democracy and Media

Contemporary society is extremely diverse and pluralistic in nature with different social groups competing to influence political definitions and decisions. Notions like 'freedom; 'equality; order and public interest which has formed the foundations of democracy, therefore no longer carry's homogeneous meanings. With the increased consciousness towards one's rights, different perspectives are available on the same notions. For instance, feminism has questioned the mythical neutrality of such values and has unraveled an in-built gender bias in them. A platform where several interests can be brought together exists in the form of media in today's democratic society. As an embodiment of democratic values, media offers a 'liberal, constitutional public sphere permitting a rational, well informed conversation between equals capable of resolving their differences by non-coercive means' (Schle-Singer and Tumber, 1995. 9 emphasis added). According to Habermas (1989) the idea of defining media as a 'public sphere' has been extrapolated from the model of the 'bourgeois public sphere'. Habermas defines the public sphere as a social space between the market (economy)

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