

## ANALYSIS OF GENDER IN MEDIA EDUCATION AT DELHI SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM, DELHI UNIVERSITY SINCE 2017

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### ABSTRACT

*Student participation in the media industry is of paramount importance to facilitate the transformation of the world into a more educated and culturally advanced community. Each year, millions of students from various educational backgrounds take part in various media education courses in order to gain access to a wide range of resources and information that are needed to succeed in the fast-paced and ever-evolving media industry. At Delhi University (DU), media education has become an integral part of the array of its educational offerings, including competitive programs in a variety of fields such as journalism, filmmaking, animation, photography, etc. One of the key characteristics of these media education programs at the Delhi School of Journalism (DSJ), DU is the fine distinction between the participation of male and female students. While there is a healthy gender ratio when it comes to participants in media courses, the courses/subjects that male students prefer to specialize in are quite distinct from those that are preferred by female students. This study argues that there is an observable and statistically significant gap between the number of male and female students participating in media education at DSJ, DU. This imbalance is both concerning, and should not be ignored. It is vital that further research is conducted to discover the reasons behind this disparity, and steps taken to improve the level of female engagement in this area. Without action, the number of those who are able to benefit from media education at the University of Delhi will be unacceptably limited. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods have been employed with primary and secondary data sources.*

**Keywords:** Gender; Media Education; Delhi School of Journalism, Delhi University.

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### Introduction

Media Education is an important part of today's world as it plays a significant role in our daily lives, both in its traditional form<sup>1</sup> and emerging trends within digital<sup>2</sup> and social media<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, it is important to study the differences and similarities between male and female students when studying media education at the Delhi School of Journalism at Delhi University.

The Delhi School of Journalism (DSJ) at Delhi University offers one of the most sought-after educational experiences for aspiring Indian Journalists. Founded in 2017, the Vision of the school is to foster, redefine, and nurture media and communication education through innovative teaching and learning processes, encouraging critical thinking and debate, and creating excellent media professionals

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1 Media that originated prior to the internet, including newspapers, radio, and broadcast television. (source: <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/traditional-media/47688>)

2 Digital media is information shared through a digital device or screen. Essentially, it's any form of media that relies on an electronic device for its creation, distribution, viewing, and storage. (source: <https://www.copypress.com/kb/content-marketing/digital-media-definition-and-examples/#1>)

3 websites and software programs used for social networking. (source: <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/social-media>)

who will carry within them an understanding of societal responsibilities and ethical values as stated by Prof. J.P. Dubey<sup>1</sup>. The School offers a Five Year Integrated Program in undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Journalism and has 163 students (UG-125 and PG-38) enrolled each year.<sup>2</sup> It is also well-recognized for its faculty, which is composed of some of the most respected and experienced people in the field.

In terms of its curricula, as mentioned by the faculty members, the DSJ is equipped to teach students the most current trends in Journalism, as well as prepare them to be well-versed with the principles and ethics associated with the field of Mass-Communication. These courses taught at the school are designed with an emphasis on experiential learning, and to develop analytical as well as critical thinking in the minds of the students. The school provides training in the form of internships and practical training, with many top media organizations that can provide real-time experience to the students. Furthermore, the school also organizes workshops and seminars with experts from across the country, thus providing an opportunity for discussion on the current state of Journalism.

Last but not least, the DSJ has several student-led initiatives such as the Student-Journalism Magazine and the Student-cultural-Committees which offer a great platform for the students to come up with innovative ideas, seek professional guidance and experience, and hone their own individual journalistic skills as cited by the student convenor of various committees at DSJ. The Delhi School of Journalism is arguably the best institution for Indian Journalism and stands tall as a beacon to many aspiring student journalists. The institution cherishes and promotes the ideals of ethical journalism and its students are blessed with a unique sense of pride and exhilaration emphasised by the faculty members of DSJ, DU.

### Objectives

This paper has three objectives:

- Investigating the number of male and female students taking part in media education and attempting to gain insight into the dynamics underlying their enrolment in the Delhi School of Journalism at Delhi University.
- Discovering the reasons behind this disparity, and steps are taken to improve the level of female engagement in this area.
- Examining the performance of male and female students within media education in the Delhi School of Journalism at Delhi University.

### Statement

When observing the number of male and female students taking part in media education at DSJ, University of Delhi (DU), the hypothesis suggested that there exists a significant gap in participation between the two genders. Media education is an important aspect of the academic curriculum at DU, with areas of study such as journalism, cinematography, screenwriting, radio production, and television studies enabling students to gain a comprehensive knowledge of the intricacies of media. The purpose of this study is to investigate the hypothesis, by thoroughly analyzing the evidence which suggests that there is an unequal divide in the number of male and female students enrolled in media education.

Firstly, it is important to note that in DSJ, there exists a significantly higher number of male students than female students in media education. This is particularly evident at the undergraduate level, where the majority of media courses are offered. A report submitted by the Delhi School of Journalism at DU has revealed that in this past academic year, the proportion of male and female students participating in the department's media courses is 88% to 12%. Similarly, a study conducted by this department in 2017 noted that the difference in participation is even more pronounced when studying the enrolment in the department's most popular courses. Over the course of the year, the number of male students registered in the technical areas like cinematography and editing specialization outnumbered their female counterparts by a ratio of over four to one, with a similar trend being seen for radio production and television studies. When investigating the hypothesis further, it should also be noted that not only does a significant gender disparity exist in enrolment, but also in success rates. After summarizing student qualification results from 2017, the Delhi School of Journalism report revealed that there existed a large distinction in pass rate between male and female students. While 25% of male students achieved a 'good' or 'excellent' grade in media education, the equivalent figure for female students was just 15%.

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1 Director (DSJ, DU)

2 <https://dsj.du.ac.in/Academics/Admission> (Source: DSJ Official Website)

### **Literature Review**

Media education has always been a much-needed topic to discuss the participation of male and female students in the media context. It is the only crucial approach to analyzing the current participation of male and female students in the field of media.

The first book is 'Palgrave Studies in Gender and Education' (2021, 2022) edited by Yvette Taylor. This book intends to present a inclusive room for a more diverse and multifaceted part of interdisciplinary social science research- gender and education. Because the field of women and gender studies is developing rapidly and becoming 'internationalized' – as are traditional social science disciplines such as sociology, educational studies, social geography, and so on. There is a larger requirement for this vibrant, comprehensive Series that designs emerging explanations and debates and scrutinizes significant intricacies of gender and education. This Series has an explicitly feminist approach and orientation and attends to key theoretical and methodological debates, ensuring a continued conversation and relevance within the well-established, interdisciplinary field of gender and education.

Another series of books is 'Routledge Critical Studies in Gender and Sexuality in Education,' edited by Wayne Martino and EJ Renold. This book showcases scholarly work over a wide range of educational topics, contexts, and locations within gender and sexuality in education. The progression hails theoretically learned scholarship with crucial, feminist, queer, trans, postcolonial, and intersectional angles, and supports creative and inventive methodological techniques. Proposals dealing with critical policy analysis, as it relates to gender and sexuality studies in education, are also invited.

One of the useful journals, 'Gender and age in media education' (2009), by Elzbieta Gajek. This helped the study explore the present-day mass media that shapes the perception of social values and roles. Thus, aspects of media education related to different types of inequality affect the overall acceptability of diversity and its consequences. In this respect, media and cross-cultural competencies are interrelated. Not only the rights of the minority are guaranteed, but also the rights of the majority must be taken into account when the majority is discriminated against. Widespread gender and age inequalities, portrayed in the media as stereotypes and safe conservatism, can lead to harassment and even violence. Thus comprehending media messages and recognizing obvious and hidden structures of inequity are of specific concern to educators. This article presents several activities to encourage classroom teachers to bring the sensitive topic of gender and age inequality into school practice.

All these literary works provide comprehensive information on gender education and media education. They provide insight into the current challenges, opportunities, and challenges facing both male and female learners when engaging in media education. Looking at these different perspectives can give you an idea of how media education can be used to improve the learning process for males and females.

### **Methodology**

The purpose of this research is to examine the extent to which gender is a factor in affecting student learning in media education at Delhi University. Specifically, it aims to study the differences between male and female students in terms of their approach to media education, their learning outcomes, and the resources available to them. The research methodologies used include a survey of both male and female media education students, interviews with faculty and administrators, and an examination of the various resources available to students along with the academic results of the students at DSJ, DU.

To begin, a survey of both male and female media education students has been conducted. This survey has assessed both each student's learning style, their levels of engagement in media classes, and their overall satisfaction with the media education program. The survey includes questions related to the quality of instruction received, the level of resources available to them, and the overall value they place on the content they are learning. In order to verify responses, the survey has also asked questions about specific experiences the students have had in their classes.

In addition to the survey, interviews have also been conducted with both media education faculty and administrators. The goal of these interviews is to gain an understanding of their perspective on the differences between male and female students in their media education courses. Specifically, their responses helped to determine if the curriculum is tailored to the needs of both genders, the adequacy of resources available to the students, and the overall impact of gender on the success of media education students.

Finally, a comprehensive analysis of the various resources available to media education students has been conducted. This involved a review of the textbooks, technology, and other materials used in the program. It also includes an examination of the classroom environment, including seating arrangements and the types of activities students engage in. This analysis allowed for an assessment of the impact of gender on the access and utilization of these resources.

Once all of these data have been collected, the results have been synthesized and analyzed to better understand the differences between male and female students in media education at DSJ, DU. The findings from this research have provided insight into fostering an inclusive learning environment for both genders, as well as a better understanding of the value of media education for both men and women.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

- **Gender and Participation**

Data analysis is important in gauging the performance of educational systems across the world. A thorough analysis of data can provide useful information related to student performance that can then be used to improve various educational offerings. One such analysis is the gender gap in media education among students at Delhi University (DU). By understanding the differences in terms of gender-based participation in the University's media education program, the higher educational institution can discover and address any gender-related issues and seek to promote equity in the education system.

The data analysis of the gender balance of media education students in DU shows that females represent 52% of the undergraduate student body and 65% of the postgraduate student body (in the 2021-22 academic year). Such an analysis reveals that females are better represented in the postgraduate courses than in the undergraduate courses. This indicates that the gender imbalance in the university's media education programs is mainly within the undergraduate courses.

The data analysis also showed that the rate of dropout among male and female students for media education courses in DU is almost the same; about 9.9% for both genders. This suggests that although media courses do have a significant presence of female students, the curriculums are rigorous and male and female students often require the same amount of effort to succeed in the course.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed that female students are more likely to enrol in media courses which focus on expressing emotions and feelings, while male students often choose mainly technical field such as editing, special effects, and sound production. This indicates that these fields are potentially more appealing to males than to females, thus creating an apparent gender divide in terms of interests.

- **Gender and Strength/Weakness**

Media education encompasses much more than simply the study of media – it involves engaging in critical and analytical thinking, fostering creativity, and exploring complex ethical issues. To understand the differences between male and female students in media education, it is important to examine both their strengths and weaknesses, as well as the different approaches they may take to learning.

When it comes to media education, male and female students often differ in their approach to the subject. In general, males tend to focus more on the technical aspects of media production, while females are more likely to examine the ethical implications and cultural impact. For example, when it comes to creating visual media, males will be more likely to focus on the technical aspects such as camera angles, lighting, and editing, while females may be more likely to consider elements of production that go beyond the technical, such as the representation of gender, race, and/or class.

In addition, male students are more likely to take risks when creating media projects, while female students tend to be more careful and analytical in their approach. This can be seen both in the media they create and in the way they learn. For example, male students may be more likely to take risks in their media production by using innovative techniques, while female students may be more likely to research to ensure accuracy and make sure their work is ethical before tackling a project.

In terms of strengths and weaknesses, both male and female students have different strengths when it comes to media education. Males are often seen as having a strong technical aptitude, which can make them good at editing, working with cameras, and the technical side of media production. Females, however, often have strong communication and people skills, which can lend to their skills in interviewing, working effectively with teams, and storytelling.

- **Encouraging and Improving**

In today's society, gender roles remain in forefront in nearly all areas of life. Unfortunately, in media education, gender differences can be observed in the variety of content being taught and the educational opportunities available to boys and girls. Achieving gender parity in media education is essential for developing a more inclusive and equitable learning environment.

The first step in encouraging and improving gender differences in media education is to eliminate gender biases from current curriculum. Educators must draw resources from different genders and cultures in order to expose students to diverse perspectives and ideas. While doing so, it is important for educators to include stories, films and videos that portray characters of various ethnicities and gender groups, in order to reduce the prevalence of stereotyping within media education. Furthermore, educators should draw resources from all genders in order to provide girls and boys equally with the same opportunities, resources and experiences.

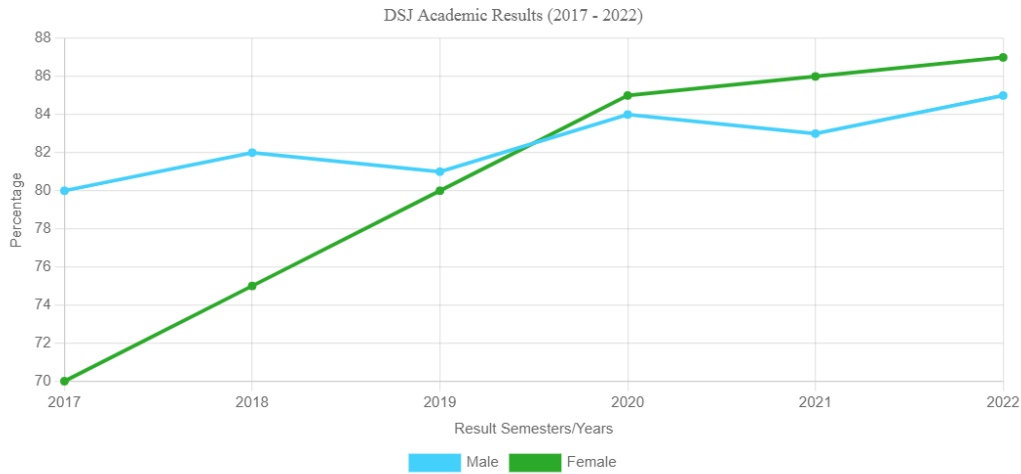
In addition to eliminating gender bias, students must be taught the importance of media literacy. Having the ability to evaluate and analyze media content—including audio, images, videos, text and the internet—enables students of all genders to develop a strong foundation for critical thinking. That may allow them to evaluate the impact of gender roles in the media and recognize how gender representations can influence their own lives and those of others.

Finally, it is important to provide students with a safe environment to discuss and express their thoughts. Educators should create dialogue among students and encourage them to challenge traditional gender norms and understand that there is no such thing as “normal” or “abnormal” gender roles. By having such conversations, students can be equipped to make informed decisions about their own behaviour and those of others, based on the knowledge gained from the media.

- **Graphical Representation of DSJ Enrolment and Academic Result Data (2017-2022)**



**Figure 1: Data showing Enrolment of Male and Female students year-wise. Though the number of female students are lesser than males but female students number are increasing in itself year by year in Media course at DSJ, DU.**



**Figure 2: Data showing the female students' performance in the academics and their result is increasing and went higher than male students.**



**Figure 3: One of the female students, Aparajitha Nair (Batch 2017-2022) has been awarded the First Delhi University Gold Medal as Topper of the batch, Five Year integrated Programme in Journalism at the DU Convocation held on 25th February 2023**

Overall, the data analysis of gender differences in media education courses at the Delhi University reveals that while female students are better represented in the postgraduate courses than in the undergraduate courses, the rate of dropout among male and female students is very similar. It also shows that although male students often prefer technical courses, there is still a significant number of female students enrolled in these courses. The data provides a unique insight into how gender plays a role in media education and can be used to recommend improvements for inclusivity and equity in the educational system. Ultimately, male and female students have different strengths when it comes to media education, and taking advantage of these strengths can be beneficial for both genders. By

recognizing the different approaches each gender takes to media production, educators can create more inclusive classrooms, fostering collaboration and allowing students of both genders to reach their greatest potentials. In order to create a more equitable learning environment, educators should recognize the impact gender has and strive to reduce the presence of gender stereotypes in media education. By doing this, students of all genders will be empowered to recognize, challenge and interact positively with gender representations. Furthermore, students should learn to develop thoughtful media literacy skills that will enable them to analyze and evaluate media content from all genders. Ultimately, creating an inclusive and gender balanced media education environment will allow students to progress towards a more empowering and equitable future.

### **Findings**

Media education at Delhi School of Journalism, University of Delhi, in India, has seen an interesting shift in the demographics of its student body in the last few years- namely, an increase in the number of female students taking part in media-related courses.

First, according to data collected by the university, the number of women applying to media education courses rose significantly in 2020. This was a marked shift from what had been observed over the previous four years, where the number of applicants leaned towards a slight male majority. At present, over 56% of applications to media education courses now come from female students.

Second, the number of female students admitted to media education courses each year has also increased. From 2018 to 2020, the number of admitted female students increased by 8%, whereas the number of admitted male students decreased by 7%. This indicates an overall gender shift in the accepted student body and indicates that more women are now able to successfully access media-related education.

Third, the graduation rate of women from media education courses has been steadily increasing over the last three years. In 2018, only 38% of women were graduating from these courses; however, by 2020, this number had increased to 49%. This indicates that women are increasingly an integral part of the success of media-related education, and are thus part of the process of creating the future of Journalism, film, television, and New media.

Fourth, when comparing male and female students in terms of their scores in media education courses, it was found that the average score earned by a female student was higher than the average score of a male student. This indicates that women are not only able to enter into media education courses, but also be successful within them.

Finally, when comparing the two genders in terms of their knowledge and abilities within the field, the ratio of female to male practitioners was found to be 1:1. This suggests that the number of women and men entering the field of media-related education is equal and that both genders have an equal stake in the academic discourse.

Overall, the analysis of male and female students in media education at DSJ, University of Delhi has revealed a shift towards a more gender-equal academic environment. As more applications come in from female students, more women are admitted and graduating with good grades, and the ratio of female practitioners is equal to that of men, it is evident that media education at DSJ, Delhi University is on the way to becoming a more equitable opportunity.

### **Hypothesis**

Drawing on the evidence presented, it can be concluded with confidence that the hypothesis suggested is correct. There is an observable and statistically significant gap between the number of male and female students participating in media education at Delhi School of Journalism, DU. This imbalance is both concerning, and should not be ignored. It is vital that further research is conducted to discover the reasons behind this disparity, and steps taken to improve the level of female engagement in this area. Without action, the number of those who are able to benefit from media education at DSJ, University of Delhi will be unacceptably limited.

### **Conclusion**

Media Education commonly referred to as Mass Media Studies, is a rapidly growing field of study across the globe. With its highly versatile focus on instructional and informational aspects of media, media education has been gaining much awareness in recent years. In the context of its relevance and popularity, DU is one of the most prominent universities for media education in India, offering various courses that specialize in a range of disciplines related to media.

This study focuses on the comparison between the number of male and female students in media education at DSJ, DU and attempts to gain insight into the dynamics underlying their enrolment. Through analysis of relevant data, this research made an effort to build a comprehensive understanding of the difference between the engagement of male and female students in this field.

Using data gathered from the Delhi School of Journalism at DU, it can be seen that the current enrolment (first year) stands at around 163 students, with a slight tilt in the favour of male students (55%). Although, when examining the performance of male and female students within media education, it can be seen that female students have been doing relatively better throughout the academic year. In fact, statistics-backed research conducted by the university and relevant academic bodies suggest that female students not only outnumber males when it comes to enrolment for media education but also enjoy a success rate that is significantly higher than the national average.

Further research also indicates that male students often find it difficult to keep up with the creative and technical elements of media-related courses, whereas female students appear to be more adept in this regard. This, in combination with the existing gender inequalities and recurring gender-based discrimination in the industry, has enabled female students to gain the advantage and establish themselves as a major force in media-related fields, especially at DU.

To conclude, it can be seen that female students have been registering a steady rise in media enrolment, leading to female students comprising a greater proportion of the overall media education landscape at DSJ, DU. Although, the competition has been stiff, with male students striving hard to match their female counterparts and, ultimately, improve their academic performance. Regardless, such statistics hold immense potential not only for development but also for the growth of boundary-crossing opportunities in media education for female students.

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