PORTRAYAL OF SEXUAL AGGRESSION IN HINDI CINEMA

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Abstract: An exploratory content research had been conducted to inspect the portrayal of violence and crimes against women in popular Hindi cinema. Few films were picked randomly from the box office hits also few true incidents were examined. The initial findings recommend that moderate sexual violence is portrayed as fun, pleasure and a normal expression of romantic love. Sexual violence stanched by antagonist was a common portrayal, predominantly judicious violence such as aggravation of women with whom the antagonist ultimately became romantically involved. Stern sexual aggression was portrayed as crime while judicious sexual aggression was treated as fun and romantic. The core of the article is to investigate the film to gaze how sexual aggression is being portrayed through the lens. This will substantiate how audience takes this aggression in their actual being. It argues that the effect of the films and media is eventually negative, for they glorify sexual aggression and crime against women while holding out the hope of a better future. The adjacent study is an aim to identify films and scan the disparity in portraying violence and aggression against women. The contemporary trend is an attempt of filmmakers to create a kind of myth in audience by making violence fun and romantic. In this paper an effort has been made to find out how crime against women whether sexual aggression, domestic violence or sexual harassment are portrayed in cinema and revive them and contrive hope for the victims. The data collected for the research work is secondary. This study is exploratory and the method used for research is qualitative. This paper will throw light on how filmmakers and media make an effort to create a safe and secure environment for women who suffer from violence and crime and create empathy among audience while entertaining them through their lens.

IndexTerms - **Content Research, Eve-Teasing, Hindi Cinema, India, Sexual Aggression.**

1) INTRODUCTION:

Aggression against women is moderately a consequence of gender relations that presumes men to be superior to women. Women are given the subsidiary status in society and are treated as plaything. Expressions of aggression includes physical violence (burns, sexual abuse and rape), psychological aggression (mortification, slur, emotional threat). In severe case it may result into death.

Intellectual and communal factors are interwoven with the progress and proliferation of aggressive behavior. With diverse procedures of socialization that men and women undergo in their life, men actually take up stereotyped gender roles of supremacy, control and domination while women take up that of submissive, weak, dependent and respect for authority. A female child always grows up with the mentality of weak, in need of protection (physically, mentally and financially). This feebleness had led their exploitation at every phase of being.

Aggression against women in any form (physical or mental) has been clearly defined as a form of prejudice in copious documents. The World Human Rights Conference in Vienna 1993, recognized gender-based violence as a human rights violation. In the same year, *United Nations* declaration, 1993, defined *violence against women* as *"Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to a woman, inclusing threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life."*

Physical aggression or sexual pestering as well as unambiguous forms of aggression are used by the more powerful and dominating in the household and at work both. These methods are used to ensure compliance of the less powerful and therefore related to power vibrant in household as well as at work.

Sexual Pestering as defined by court specifies:

➢ "Such unwelcome sexually determined behaviour (whether directly or by implication) as physical contact and advances,
➢ A demand or request for sexual favors, sexually colored remarks,
➢ Showing pornography and any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature".

Apart from sexual pestering and physical aggression selling of wife is also being practiced in many parts of the country.
Especially in few districts of Rajasthan namely Kota, Bundi, Ajmer, Deoli, Tonk **'Nata'** (Re-Marriage) is practiced.
In some caste the Nata system is in vogue, especially among the Rajputs, Jats, Gujjars, Meenas and Bhils. According to this system, a wife can divorce her husband and live with another man of her choice as his wife, without going through the formalities of a marriage. This system is very popular in the rural areas because it does not entail any expenditure. This is marriage by mutual consent without the pomp and show of marriage. A widow can also live with a man as his wife without a formal wedding

ceremony. This is known as Nata in Rajasthan. Nata brokers are mushrooming in few districts of Rajasthan, who keep an eye on prospective women and force them to enter into a nata as local brokers earn sturdy commission for a covenant.

Nata egress in Rajgarh district of Madhya Pradesh. There it is actually the practice of the sale of women to men in return for a handsome price and the leading beneficiary is the father of the girl who uses her to earn a precise amount.

The cases related to sexual aggression against women are large in societies that have made dominated mentality and are number is increasing daily. Also the number for registered cases of sexual aggression and crime against women is increasing every year.

The explicit type of sexual pestering that is practiced in urban areas is **"eve-teasing".** Eve teasing can be defined as *the making of unwanted sexual remarks or advances by a man to a woman in a public place like streets, public transport, parks, cinema etc.* This kind of public pestering by a man or group of men includes oral spank (commenting, de trop sexual jokes), nonverbal spank (winking, whistling, stalking, staring) and physical spank (pinching, rubbing against women). In some cases eve teasing has taken a more violent shape where it has even resulted in rape and murder (Damini Rape and Murder Case, 2012). To the surprise more interesting fact is that major percent of eve teasers are college students.

2) CINEMA AND SEXUALITY:

The erratic reasons that promote sexual aggression in society are intricate. Yet for a researcher or scholar, the idea that Hindi cinema plays a vital role as dominant of society. Cinema as a knack structure not only replicates the society but also performs as a reflector to that society. Cinema has always been the most powerful and dominating medium since last centuries. It is a unique medium to portray prejudice and intent perspective alternatively. The direct and indirect suggestions that are made in films have certain and uncertain impact on audience. Films depends on mental state of the audience who are actually ambushed in a dark room, lingering to be agitated, entertained, or in other words to get their fund's worth. Films express gist both through denotative and connotative means.

Despite of Cinema Halls, films also reach the household of the Indian domicile through countdown shows on idiot box that attribute film-based songs and dance, movies etc. Having said that, in accumulation access to cable television is growing rapidly or rather digitization is at its peak. Even there are few cable operators who screen movies of their own choice every day to attract their customers.

The significance of sexual aggression portrayal in films is mainly pertinent to Indian audience. This is not because these portrayals are viewed in profusion but actually sexuality and sexual aggression is not discussed in Indian families, it is rather considered a taboo. Indian film renderings form a "restricted arena for construction of sexuality" for the common people and it also serves as a primary source that educates men and women how sexually they have to behave with each other.

There are films that portray women in a stereotypical position that actually accept sexual aggression and violence as a normal part of their life and relationship. Also this condition gets worse when Hindi cinema renders men's abuse of women in a glorified manner. Actually cinema goers take home what they see in films or in other words we can say that what we observe we absorb. As the college going student is being portrayed as a hero in movie who upsets the heroine in the starting and at the end wins her heart, this glamorization of eve-teasing in movies is supportive in real life as well. Even though many reviewer have raised their voice against this concern. They express their views on this by making this statement that Hindi films portray vigor and physical aggression in romantic relationships and love. Hence sexual aggression is not only normal but also predictable in quixotic liaison between heroes and heroines.

3) RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIA AND SEXUAL AGGRESSION

This has already been proven from different research that were under taken that Hindi films casually influence people on sexual aggression, especially in India also this influence depends on the behavior of audience and how the audience take this sexual aggression at home. Due to this some researchers have even stated that there is no similarity and relation between the domestic sexual aggression and sexual crimes in society.

However there are some studies that prove that there is relation between the media utilization of sexually unambiguous resources and some erratic related to sexual aggression. It is believed that consumption of media portrayal of sexual aggression can lead to target desensitization. It is also believed that watching pornography can lead some male viewers to interpret the same with their partners.

To conclude it can be said that the effect of sexual portrayal in Hindi films that has some type of unambiguous images, predominantly those that contain aggression, can lead to harmful effects on audience.

4) THE ILLUSTRATION OF WOMEN THROUGH LENS

With the globalization of media fraternity and availability of new methods of delivery through satellite and cable television as well as through internet, the people across the globe has access to portrayal of Indian women through online video, print etc. From magazines, films, advertisements, news etc. the face of Indian women are highly sexualized. Indian women are portrayed as women who speak English well, have fair skin, seem to be from upper class of the society and are heterosexual. This face that is being portrayed through the lens undeniably is not the actual face of millions of Indian women and it fails to represent them accurately. On the other hand, current stories depict Indian women from villages in negative light. Deeply religious, conventional women-these women are actually cast as backward.

Hindi cinema continues to transform and change and reflects new trends in gender relations. Women who go against the rules of society (narrative and culture) in film are castigated and seen as depraved. These functions and creations of women are replicated in popular Hindi cinema. There are different roles that are portrayed by women in Hindi cinema namely ideal wife, ideal mother, the vamp and the courtesan.

Women in Hindi cinema, ranging from trendy movies silver screen blockbusters like Insaaf ka Tarazu of eighties to the most recent which engages itself with serious social, political issues continues portray women in a stereotypical image where male is still dominating the society and women is treated like a slave or mistress. The women are still shown as having no sphere of their own, no individual identity. They plunge in combined reminiscence as natural limitation, dilapidated, wobbly, deranged creations, fictional construct of 'fragile handle with care' male ego.

Truth of countenance and truth of narrative are irreconcilable, yet they are inquisitively blended in Hindi cinema to portray a harmonized realism which has the unambiguous trample of male commanding supremacy. The male characters in Hindi cinema, i.e. antagonist or protagonist are portrayed as the macho in the movie space and women as the sacrificial wager. As the story progress towards climax, Hindi cinema proves again and again that woman's loves, dreams; their unexpected destinies shall always vacillate inanely between the pluralisms of customs and traditions, paradoxes of progress and representational aporia.

The enlivening power of the women character in movie is always ignored completely. The two major areas on which Hindi cinema always focus are the role of women as 'the mother', who has immense power and status of the 'mother goddess' as the tradition and culture of Indian society and secondly the role of trapped women as somebody's wife, somebody's daughter or somebody's love always being portrayed as somebody's someone but never as their own selves i.e., never as an individual women who has her own identity and own rights.

5) WOMEN AND INDIAN TRADITIONS

The contemporary portrayal of women in Hindi cinema simply perpetuates the Indian tradition depreciation theory "I am a girl, therefore I am bad and destined to suffer" is the message that is conveyed by movie after movie. The disparity between a strong woman real life and her portrayal on silver screen needs to be conferred and optimistic ambience and fore ashore. Hindi cinema plays a dual role in influencing mindsets of its people. These portrayals are loved greatly and also have tremendous mass appeal but that is not enough, this must also set a stage for social change. Cab woman be reanalyzed and reconceived into- I am a woman, therefore strong and invincible. Only by this a woman characters can come alive on silver screen. Till then they will be considered as mere fictional constructs and one dimensional figure who are different from the ordinary, real life woman.

"Imaginatively she is of the highest importance practically she is completely insignificant, she pervades poetry from cover to cover; she is all but absent from history."

This quotation from **Virginia Woolf's a Room of One's Own** expresses the ironical paradox of a woman's life. Men need her, love her, worship her and write about her. But they do so in relation to their own selves".

This statement portrays exactly the image of women in Indian society, whether educated or illiterate. The issues of inability and liberation have frequently been the subject matter for filmmakers both male and female.

Films are the mirror of society. It is believed that movies are the true reflection of the society and social values and customs, it would not be incorrect to say that Hindi cinema have a profound impact in changing the scenario of society. It changes the situation in such a way that no other medium can do. Would it be hyperbolic to say, "Without women there would be no cinema"?

The answer to this question is big "NO" but the portrayal of women in Hindi cinema has not inscribed maturity. Relatively it has disparaged it. Society has created a hypothetical image or rather one dimensional image of women in films that of a pretty and glamorous face hovering on a silvery plinth of virtue.

In this male dominated society, there exists a history of aggression or rather sexual aggression against women, more so in India. The history of Hindi cinema portrays a doleful image of prejudice and marginalization of women. Whether it is an era of 70's or the contemporary there has been a little disparity in the image of the silver screen woman. Commercial movies can't change their attitude towards women suddenly, an attitude marked by bigotry and abuse. Women in Hindi cinema are always portrayed as committed housewives, forfeiting mothers and submissive daughter-in-law.

This portrayal of women image is bradawl persistently into Indian women psyche that they themselves have started believing in this 'self-portrait: and no one disagrees with this that the movies have strong intuitive influence and magnetic effect on the minds of spectators.' The makers of these films (mostly men) emphasize on this that they are only portraying what is demanded by the audience. There is a strong conflict to the representation of the woman who is coherent, vocal and independent. The silver screen woman has always been flutter as a derivative, deferential stature. Although the women of modern era has pierced and excelled in jobs that were once the privileged of men only, the heroine in contemporary movies continues to be an outmoded image with an idealistic set of values and customs. It is a different kind of reliance.

Hindi cinema portrays the social themes based on the realm of women's issues like dowry, rape, trafficking etc. but these movies have not been blockbuster neither they have been viewed popularly. According to Butalia, *"such movies take a superficial interest in women and their issues."* This means that although this kind of movies deal with the social issues relating to women, the movies do not hub on the women's point of view but relatively portray how man actually plays the hero in these situations and fixes them.

Popular Hindi cinema which may be considered as a spot of plural implication, as a vivacious and lively medium for effectuating communal change, a catalyst of public and private materialization of human conduct and a receptacle of dominant ideologies. At the same time, Hindi cinema has been used as the reflector of assenting and anti positions, sometimes sieving our chauvinism and biases and sometimes acting as a tool of our allegorizing hallucinations on love and hatred, heroism and villainy, riches and poverty, vice and virtue.

Films are a very vigorous medium which sway our society. The movies that portray women in the accurate perception from a humanistic and rational point of view need attention and appreciation, even women artist must challenge the cliché: "in the film industry women are seen and not heard." They must not be conventional to the custom set by Hindi cinema of methodical cultivation of women as objects of desire. The portrayal of marriage as the honor and achievement in women's life is a matter of departed era. In contemporary world audience wants to see construction of strong and powerful women protagonists, through the lens, who are able to step out and rise beyond their conformist concerns.

6) NEW TREND OF PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN HINDI CINEMA

Recent trend show that the commercial films off late started focusing on portrayal of women in Hindi cinema. Bollywood these days is setting up new trend by focusing on positive portrayal of women with directors casting big superstars in role which raises awareness about the social issues and hardly known ailments. These movies not only entertain their viewers but also enlighten them. And it will be appropriate to term this period as the paradigm shift in how a filmmaker looks at the condition of women in society and portrays it through the lens. Rather than just making viewers sympathize with her quandary, the director asked us to treat her with love and care and to stop getting upset with her inability to cope with this male dominated society.

In the last few years, the portrayal of women has undergone a change. Female centered movies such as Pink (2016) and Mom (2017), in an attempt to market the "globalized" Indian woman. The milieu to the movies like Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (1995) and Bride and Prejudice (2004) show that the Punjabi women are liberated and free to choose. Working woman in cities is shown mainly in laden, victimized and infrequently enjoying equal status as a bread winner. She is not allowed to work because she 'want' or 'is capable' to work but due to disability of man to earn. The conclusion is mostly be her victimization and later been taken under the dominance of man. There are hardly any sign shown of her liberation or participation in decision making.

In Hindi cinema, primarily in Indian society, male sexual dominance is often associated with and is considered tantamount to aggression and violence. Thus sexual harassment is not only portrayed as normal but is in fact romanticized.

Serious sexual aggression, such as rape, is shown in a negative light and is often attempted by the bad and spoiled brats in a movie. But minor or moderate sexual aggression, such as stalking, teasing etc. is often perpetrated by the protagonists and thus is portrayed normal and fun. Since the heroine reacts positively to this harassment either by being shy or by reciprocating the hero's feelings, so Indian minds are reinforced that a woman need to be enticed in such a manner.

The acceptance of aggression and violence as an expression of masculinity by educated women shows how deeply these ideas are ingrained in Indian society. When they are shown in the frame of normality instead of being shown as nuisance or a social evil, these ideas gain acceptance and legitimacy in the contemporary world.

Pink is a 2016 Indian courtroom drama social thriller film directed by Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury, starring Amitabh Bachchan, Taapsee Pannu, Angad Bedi etc. The film was specially screened for the Rajasthan Police so as to train them to be sensitive and sensible about women's rights and dignity. Three Delhi girls - Minal (Taapsee), Falak (Kirti) and Andrea (Andrea) - are on the run after one of them escapes a molestation attempt by a pig-headed, powerful guy, Rajveer (Angad). Minal attacks Rajveer with a bottle injuring him grievously. This is just the beginning of their nightmare. Pink is a powerful statement on the existing feudal mindset of a majority of India, where men and women are judged by a different yardstick. And if the man happens to be from a powerful family, then the fight for justice is even more skewed.

Mom is 2017 Indian thriller film directed by Ravi Udyawar featuring Sridevi as a vigilante who sets out to avenge her daughter. The bliss of a biology teacher's family life in Delhi is shattered when her daughter, Arya (Sajal Ali) is physically assaulted by Jagan (Abhimanyu Singh) and gang. Does Devki Sabarwal (Sridevi) wait for the law to take its course? Or does Devki become Maa Durga and hunt down the perpetrators of the crime? Mom reminds you for the umpteenth time that we're in Nirbhaya country. Like other films on the same subject, debutant Ravi Udyawar's emotional thriller tells you that India, or should that be New Delhi specifically, isn't safe enough for women, especially young girls.

Hindi cinema has certainly evolved in recent years. Recent movies have celebrated women's ability beyond treating them as sexual objects. In 2009, with 'Wake Up Sid', the actress is not only a successful writer but also encourages hero to be self-sufficient nd force him to grow up and effectively educates him. Additionally, in 2012 the sleeper hit 'Kahaani', the actress is elevated to the status of an action hero and mastermind, manipulating a series of events to avenge the death of her husband and destroy a terrorist cell. Furthermore to add in the series, in 2016 with 'Pink', that strongly has drawn this statement that if woman has said **"NO"** it clearly means a **"NO"**, no further explanation is required after that. And moving on in 2017, 'Mom', which states that *Mothers are a symbol of strength; this movie further reinforces that.*

7) CONCLUSION

It is clear that there is strong correlation between the reel and real world of Indian society. There are ample of substantiation regarding the effect of films on the mindset of the audience's attitude regarding sexual aggression against women. The perception of dominance and sacrifice is thus intertwined with sexuality, sexual aggression.

The conclusion then is to look at every social issue and phenomena from the lens and try to allow multiple narratives within the discourse. A single storyline such as the one mentioned above emphasize certain attitudes, assumptions, perceptions and stereotypes. When multiple perspectives are provided for the same topic, it gives audience a more realistic view of the real life through the lens. Taking an example from the issues as mentioned in the article, if movies also portrayed instances where women react negatively to the harassment or when eve-teasers had to face assured ramification, along with showing instances where such behavior was considered flattering, cinema would be providing a more realistic view of society and might even help to curb the growing problem of sexual aggression and harassment through the lens.

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