Depiction of Female Sexuality in Bollywood Cinema: A Study of Selected Hindi Films.

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Abstract
It was for the first time in 1896, that Lumiere Brothers screened their short films at Watson Hotel of Bombay the audiences left mesmerized. It was an event which created history in terms of growth and spread of motion pictures across the globe. In 1913 Dadasaheb Phalke, released his film Raja Harishchandra. The silent era was dominated by the mythology and filmmakers narrated many stories of their childhood using motion pictures as a medium of expression. Initially the film industry and the fraternity could not get support of the society as there was no social approval of film viewing. Gradually the technology made it possible to make talkies and the first film – in 1931, Alam Ara made by Ardeshir Irani was screened in Bombay The credit of producing the first colored movie in India also goes to Sir Ardeshir Irani, who made Kisan Kanya (Peasant Girl) in the year 1937. 1940s to the 1960s is considered as the Golden Age of Indian Cinema by film historians. Beside that contemporary Hindi films have evolved through ages. From romance to realism to comedy to action; it has cross a long path. Introduction of latest technology has changed the cinematic landscape in India. Now the films are made with a rapid speed and cost of film-making has changed the production process completely. One side we are seeing big budget film competing with Hollywood but the cheap technology has provided wings to the new film-makers as well. The subject matter of the films shows divers thinking of the new breed and availability of new forums like, online release, You tube etc made it a profitable venture as well. In this global village world, the industry reached out to the international audiences too. In this background the paper will highlight the depiction of the lead characters and the stereotype behaviour of the movie directors.
Keywords: *Audience, bollywood, cinema, Globalization, sexuality.*

Introduction:

In the 60 years since Independence, Indian cinema has gone through a lot of changes including a shift from classic mythological blockbusters to "Bollywoodised" remakes of Hollywood's successful films. Women in the Indian film industry have played an important role in the success of individual films. Their roles however have changed overtime, from being dependent on their male counterparts to very independently carrying the storyline forward. Before referring to the changes, it is relevant to understand the importance of Indian Cinema in the world today. According to studies and surveys, Indian films are screened in over a hundred countries and watched by nearly four billion people worldwide. The Indian film industry is considered to be the largest film industry in the world with over 1000 films produced each year in more than 20 languages where Hollywood produces less than 400 films per year, according to available records. With the highest number of theatre entrances, about 3.3 billion tickets are sold annually in India . Another set of statistics states about 750 films are made yearly in 72 studios and shown in about 12,000 cinema houses to weekly audiences estimated at almost

70 million; some unusual records include Lata Mangeshkar in the Guinness Book as the world's most recorded artist; and Helen danced in a thousand films.

The Indian film market gets 90% of its revenue from non-English language films, mostly in Hindi followed by South Indian and other regional language films. The CRISIL Research (2010) projects that the industry is expected to grow from US$3.2 Billion to 2010 to US$ 5 Billion by 2014. Since this industry contributes a lot to the business and the society, it is interesting to see the changing trends in Bollywood from the past to the present time. The paper will start with a focus on the reasons Mumbai was chosen as an important city for film production. The next section provides a brief history of Bollywood and the rise of well-known Bollywood stars. The later section will analyze the changes taken place since 1940s followed by a focus on women and their changing role in the Hindi cinema with reference to some specific films. The paper concludes with some remarks and contribution of Bollywood and the important role played by the industry in shaping the society.

The golden era or globalization of the mainstream Indian film industry is a mere extension of these phenomena. What effects does the increasing westernization of these films have on perception of sexuality, beauty and gender roles for females? Taken together the highly increased and produce female roles in a strictly heterosexual and rigid fashion. This does not leave for many changes in the representation of women. Despite the progress that bollywood films, things haven't changed much for Indian women, as these kinds of depiction demonstrates (saxena, 2019). In a Washington post article concerning indias huge marketplace, advertisers find fair skin cells. In a television and for sunglasses, an Indian movie star walks along the beach flaunting the brand name glasses and his six- pack abs. soon a plethora of white models start to fall from the sky and the Indian movie star has tp literally run for cover. These images are hardly unique in the world of Indian advertisements. The faces of white women and men start out from billboard all over India. The presence of Caucasian models in Indian advertisements has grown in the past three years, industry analysts say. The trend reflects deep cultural preferences for fair skin in this predominantly brown skinned nation.

Literature Review:

The book titled-Cinema India (2002), authored by Rachel Dwyer and Divia Patel and published Oxford University Press, New Delhi, traces the historical roots of Bombay's Bollywood film industry. The systematically arranged chapters of the book describe more than 100 years old Indian Cinema with apt visual and several interesting incidents. The book concentrates on the analysis of the reflections of national and cultural identities in Mumbai based Bollywood film industry. The author's focus on the development of Bombay based commercial cinema since 1913 on the periodical changes of the key elements of Bollywood films such as settings, costumes, music, makeup, beauty, drama, cinematography, advertising etc. get reflected in the informative and analytical content of each chapter. The highly research and extensively described contents of the book establishes the fact that Indian film industry has a distinctive art form that permeates into the daily life of every country where it goes and contributes in shaping a distinct global culture.

Bollywood Nation (2013), authored by Vamsee Juluri and published by Penguin Books, New Delhi, describes Bollywood from the early decade of mythological films to the films on the gangster and terrorist of the present

decade. The book highlights the changing trends of Bollywood films from time to time. This book investigates why and how Bollywood films become an integral part of the socioeconomic and political lives of billions of India. While depicting several instances of social, political, economic and technical changes that influenced the theme and business of Bollywood, Vamsee Juluri could explain about how Bollywood films become a mass national culture and tool for integrating diverse pluralistic Indian society. The author's examination in finding the reasons for the tremendous growth in the business of Bollywood beyond the geographical borders of the country is another aspect that found to be a source of important analytical input for the current study. In a nutshell, the book acts as an easy and accessible guide for the study of insights on how Bollywood films have been entertaining the mass for last 100 years.

In the paper The Emergence of Digital Cinema covers the Aesthetics, Paradigms, And Technological Development, Contours of The Digital Cinema; Implications of Soft machines For Making Digital Cinema, Outcomes of The Digital Cinema, and Probes into the Image of Digital Cinema, Implications of Digital Cinema for Narrative Fiction, and Implications of Digital Cinema for Documentary. The research concluded that the current situation is one where the potential for digital moving image practice is in advance of conventional cinematic theory. The theoretical basis of filmmaking has been developed over a seventy year period from the late nineteenth century until the mid sixties with a few extensions since. Digital Cinema requires a new theory base that allows and accounts for the new fluidity of mutual causality, nonlinearity, and metamorphosis. One that is based upon the values found in the paradigm of the Age of Information.

Objectives and Methodology of the Study :

The paper titled as "Depiction of Female Sexuality in Bollywood Cinema: A Study of Selected Hindi Films" based on review of literature covering the period from 1975 to 2006. The information was sourced from secondary data using journals mainly. A range of online databases was used to get insight into various aspects of the depiction of the lead characters and the stereotype behaviour of the female characters.

Overall Discussion:

Depiction of Lead Characters and Stereotyped Portrayal of Female Characters in Hindi Films: After a brief examination of the background of Indian cinema let us consider the representation of women and women's cinema as an important part of cinema in Indian society. The representation of women in cinema has been a major issue of debate amongst feminist film theorists in India. The complex and fascinating relationship between women and cinema has a substantial literature and some interesting work on third world feminism, which illuminates aspects of the representation of women in Indian films. The representation of women and the representation by women on screen are essential for understanding the interplay between women and cinema in India (Gokulsing, 1998). In traditional Indian society, the lives of women were severely circumscribed and there were certain prescribed roles which regulated the conduct of women. Women in India, defined by a set of relationships and models of conduct within the framework of a created society, over the years, learned to live under the twin whips of heritage and modernity (Bhattacharya, 2005).

When we look at the representation of women in Indian cinema we find that in the 1950s and 60s, Indian Cinema experienced one of its most illustrious times. Films were made to please the masses. During those times, many female actors showed their prowess as stars and actresses of immense talent. Exploring a background of women's role in Indian films, Dissanayake (1998) mentioned that four typical women's roles are reflected in a great deal of popular Indian Cinema. These important roles include the ideal wife, ideal mother, the vamp, and the courtesan. The first character is 'Ideal Wife' which is represented by sexual purity and fidelity. She must be consistent with traditional Indian roles by honoring the family and depending on the husband. The 'Ideal Mother' as second character involves religious suggestion. The country is connected with the mother goddess, Shakti, who represents great strength. The role of the mother in Indian film is often seen as a strong force, such as in *Mother India* (1957). The third character is 'Vamp' who is usually 'modem' and imitates western women in Indian film. Her behavior can include smoking, drinking, and dancing. She can also be quick to fall in and out of love. She represents unacceptable behavior and is seen as unwholesome. She is almost always punished for her behavior. And the last one is the 'Courtesan'. The courtesan is outside the normal realm of Indian womanhood in that she is a type of prostitute or dancing girl. She embodies sexuality. She is a character who helps with the physical and emotional needs of men. Often in Indian film, she gives the man comfort and care, after which, he leaves her to desperately mourn his loss.

The important fact is that mostly the images of women in cinema were an object of male desire and potential possessions, which had to be protected by the strength of male (Jain and Rai, 2002). In traditional Indian society, the lives of women were greatly restricted. Strict rules and regulations had to be followed. Women's roles in films too were essentially those of daughter (*Bed*), wife (*Patni*) and mother (*Ma*). They had a profound effect on shaping the morals of Indian society and it was believed that a female should be subject in childhood to her father, in youth to her husband and when her husband is dead, to her children (Gokulsing, 1998). For example, the concept of woman as Sita was prevalent in Indian society, as well as, Indian films. Over the years Indian popular cinema had perpetuated this ideal of a wife's selfless devotion. Women were defined not only in relation to the man but also as dependent on the man and subordinate to the man (Majumdar, 2009). In most cases women's presence in a film started with their characters' introduction as the hero's love interest, then as emotional accomplices midway into the film and just for a hug at the end of the film. Women had nothing much to contribute to the film. In this sense Indian cinema has usually misrepresented women and imaged them in stereotypical terms.

Most of the films displayed women as subordinate characters, often viewed as objects of desire, through the objectification of female body and the repression of female identity. The woman becomes an object and not the subject. Heroines were just centerpieces and had common dialogues like, '*Bachao, Bachao'* (help help!), '*Kaminey, Chod De Mujhe* (Rascal, let go of me), etc. In movies like *Balwan, Mohra, Tezaab, Parinda, Beta, Phool Aur Kaante, Parampara, Raju Ban Gaya Gentleman, Baazigar*, etc. the actress used to be the point of attraction for the heroes. The wardrobe exhibition which the heroines took towards the end of the 20th century

made them more prone to being just glamour dolls (Bhattacharjee, 2007). Among these stereotypes and demonization, the real Indian woman was often lost or ignored.

The new Indian cinema has attempted, to some extent, to rectify this lapse by looking at women's issues more seriously and by attempting to avoid some of the stereotypes. There was an increase in the numbers of women centric films, as male producers and directors show at least a superficial concern with 'women's issues'. The post-emergency period witnessed the production of a number of films dealing with women's issues, particularly by those who came under the category of the 'New Wave' directors (Mazumdar, 2007). The new cinema movement of the 70's and 80's made attempts to explore women's subjectivity, her familial and civic role. In the artistic

Cinema, directors associated with New Cinema represent a very different image of women. They have showed women as products of diverse social formations and seeking to transcend their sordid circumstances, not as objects of male desire (Gokulsing, 1998). Female characters were now being developed with the fullness that male characters always had. They were portrayed in a much more mature and realistic manner than in the past. Women centric films were being penned by many innovative scriptwriters and film producers who gave a unique importance to women in Hindi cinema. The trend continued and in the past few years some Indian films have sought to present a more realistic view of the Indian woman. Some of these films have actually represented women in a radical mode and even explored the question of female sexuality (Bharucha, 1995). Indian cinema has changed across the ages and women are identified as the harbingers of change. In the new cinema women are symbolic of the rage against the oppressiveness of patriarchy. The women once caught between the conflicting interests of passive femininity and regressive masculinity strive to achieve a stable sexual identity. Contemporary socially relevant films like Madhur Bhandarkar's *Page Three,* Revathi's *Phir Mileage* (We Will Meet Again), Mahesh Manjrekar's *Astitva* (Identity), Prakash Jha's *Mrityudand* (Death Penalty), Kalpana Lajmi's *Daman* (Domination), etc, portray women who strive to make a mark of their own in the domestic sphere as well as the public sphere. They no longer subscribe themselves to the harsh and oppressive patriarchal truths.

Conclusion:

While the representation of women by the media still remains an area of concern there is obviously room for change based on the fact that the representation of men has significantly changed indicating that if undertaken representations of women can also change to reflect social reality rather than traditional social norms. Media has objectified women in all sectors of media. The way they are treated and portrayed in this arena exposes her to sexual harassment. As women are considered weaker than men, it is not expected of them to give a reaction in their defense. Not only are the suffocated in their workplace but also in the show business. Their deteriorated representation does not permit them to flourish beyond stereotypes and change the negative image of woman despite all her personal efforts. This misrepresentation of women leads to the assumption that any woman involved in media is morally corrupt. This personally permits them target and victimize them. These people are not outside media but also within the media. Here the directors and producers blackmail women too which demoralize them ever more. Even in print media the news regarding women in media is judgmental and of low

standard. Hindi films should be unbiased and neutral. Media can easily alter the stereotypical image of women. The disgracing of women in media is because some people are only interested in money making through sensuous advertisements. Media is biased as far as the issue of gender inequality is concerned. Their contribution is necessary in order to nationally and internationally create a positive image of women. Women should be provided platforms and opportunities to prove themselves in order to alter the stereotypical image portrayed by the media.

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