WOMEN IN THE WORLD OF INDIAN CINEMA:

A REVIEW ON STEREOTYPE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN BOLLYWOOD FILMS

Dr. Ruchi Singh Gaur[1], Puneet Bhalla[2]

[1] *Freelance Science Communicator, Punjab, India*

[2] *MA (Journalism and Mass Communication),*
Amity School of Communication,
Amity University Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

ABSTRACT

Cinema has brought a worldview, either in the type of amusement or an instrument of social change. Cinema has made a particular space in a human's life by affecting them through its temperament. Since cinema has appeared, women's depiction has also been changing. The contemporary time is progressively engaged to women's portrayal in the cinema is empowered or not. There are various roles that are played by women in Bollywood films and it is very immoral to see their portrayal as stereotypes because it harms women's dignity and self-respect in real life as well. These stereotype portrayals fill in as a stalagmite in viewers' psyche. The delineation of women in roles like vamps, a quiet wife(who follows man controlled society esteems), a lady who relies upon a man, can impact society negatively. This study is a compressive adaptation of different exploration studies and articles composed by researchers and authors on the stereotype portrayal of women in Bollywood films.

Keyword- *Women, Bollywood, Stereotype, Portrayal, Film, Cinema.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Bollywwod is constantly considered as the wellspring of amusement, where individuals are delineated in different roles and women's depiction has consistently been a most discuusive part in films. Whereas it is considered that cinema is the way of entertainment but when it comes to content and portrayal through which are being entertaining so it creates lots of questioning for cinema by society. Portrayal of women in different roles such as vamps, a silent wife, a loving women, a career oriented women, etc. influence society in real life as well. A women who is very shy and getting insult by her husband but still fulfilling her responsibilities towards family is considered as a stereotyope portrayal but still these movies are watching constantly. These stereotype charaters harm the dignity of women; it shows a kind of gender inequalities with women. Movies like Bulandi(2000), where Raveena Tondon played the

role of "Meena", a modern girl who got married in a village with a surpanch family. Where her sister-in-law scolded her to stay in limits of an ideal women. Her sister-in-law(Luxmi) said her to don't eat food before her husband. At last, Meena became like her sister-in-law. These portrayal are really negative for a status of women. It was a old movie but this movie still telecasts on television and other media playtforms. This is just an example there are lots of movies with the stereotype portrayals. Although there are so many films that are coming up the concepts of women empowerment and feminism but still there are so many controversial elements in that films as well. "Mardaani", a movie based on the power of lady police, even the concept is good but why the name of the movie is Mardani, "Mard" means man. It delineates the male force by name of the film. At an enormous degree, bollywood is affected by male centric society where male power films are huge in number and the amount of women's power and activist based pictures are less.

2. STEREOTYPE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN BOLLYWOOD FILMS:

Chauhan (2013) wrote an article on Role of Women in Indian Cinema and mentioned that Indian cinema definitely has grown since the days of the *bahu raani* (dearest daughter-in-law), *ardhangini* (other half), *sati savitri* (the devoted and faithful wife), and these stereotype portrayals reflect the society even in this time. But still in this age women are showing as an "item girl", "the quiet wife", "the lonely vamp", "the prostitute", and a woman who can even fall in hero's feet for love. And still in movies women have to fulfill the expectations to be in zero-size and having fair complextion. Women are still treated as sexual objects in these films and behind women's goals a man contribution is always shown.[1]

Agarwal (2014) has completed a research on changing role of Women in Indian Cinema and found that Bollywood films are changing by the influence of Western Cinema because now the Bollywood films are changing as per the demand of the NRI's. In Indian Cinema women role as the role model of other women. The role played by women allowed Indian women to relate with themselves. Now, cinema also helps in understanding the society in good way. The concept of good girl and bad has also changed, a vamp and heroine. The good girls are shown as decent and then again the vamp consistently smoke, ate no-vegetarian food, and was known for her bad behaviour. The good girls are mostly shown as very nice and on the other hand the vamp always smoke, ate flesh, and was known for her bad behaviour. In Purab Paschim, Saira Banu a foreign returned girl had been showed as a spoilt-brat who used to smoke and then taught lesson by the hero of movie. Therefore, a woman is portrayed either as an angel or as a monster.[2]

Mistry (2014) wrote a research paper on changing role of women in Indian Cinema and concluded that they don't always show girls in western dress as sluts, but the sluts invariably wear western clothes. If a main actress (heroine) wears mini skirt, she mostly has to prove her Indianness. In Kuch Kuch Hota Hai Rani Mukherjee, a girl returned from London in a mini dress sang a devotional Hindi song to prove her Indianness. Our cinema has moved from that roles. For example, in Dhoom (2004) Abhishek's wife (the character played by Rimi Sen) had been shown as a western style woman but she is loving and hardworking, but she did not proved her Indianness by wearing saree and poojas. With changing roles, dresses have also changed like Simple saree that covers full body, now turned into deep naval sarees. At last author concluded that Hindi Cinema always stays honest towards portraying women and give them the deserving space.[3]

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[1] Chauhan, Ambica (2013) Role of Women in Indian Cinema, Retrieved from http://theviewspaper.net/role-of-women-in-indian-cinema/

[2] Agarwal, Ruchi (2014). Represented the Changing roles of Women in Indian Cinema (Bollywood movies), Retrieved from
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279017811_Changing_Roles_of_Women_in_Indian_Cinema

[3] Mistry, Pratima (2014) The Changing Role of Women in Indian Cinema, Retrieved from https://www.worldwidejournals.com/indian-journal-of-applied-research-(IJAR)/file.php?val=July_2014_1404542978__199.pdf

Srivastava (2014) has written an article on "Depicting Women in Bollywood: The mould never changes" in which she discussed that although the trends in bollywood has been changed but the stereotypical portrayal of women in bollywood remain same. The author also targeted a report which states that Indian movies are largely representing women as sexual roles. However Indian films are doing endeavours to adopt innovative characters rather to portraying women as stereotypes but due to expectations of audience, easiness in characterization of stereotypical roles the process has largely been slow. Although audience appreciated the Tabu's character in Haider as an atypical filmy mother but due to lack of Scriptwriters and the other factor is about risk to take new and innovative characters by business-oriented cinema Indian cinema is stereotypical. Since the years fans of bollywood have liked stereotypical women characters such as the character of Abla Nari- Kangana Ranaut from Rajjo, Sanskari Ladhki- Amrita Singh from Vivah, The Mother- Nirupa Roy as on screen mother, The Bad Girl- Deepika Padukone from Cocktail, The Vamp/Item Girl- Priyanka Chopra from Ramleela, The scorned woman such as Rekha's film Khoon Bhari Maang.[4]

Rad (2016) conducted a study on "Women and Their Portrayal in Indian Cinema" with the help of two women issue based films, Mrityudand(1997) and Daman(2001), and found that cinema is a social sight and considered it as a mirror of society because it reflects the value, ideas and beliefs of the society and women's lives in real. She also focused on subjects such as empowerment, decision making, education, rebellion, participation are the themes through agency aspect, it refers to the capacity of individual humans to act independently and to make their own free choices and concluded that these movies has covered all the subjects in the story. The other issue she found that due to the social and political situation of India, especially for women directors it is difficult to move away from typical treatments, even there is some context of agency in women characters but still in all cases patriarchal wins because representation of patriarchal structure is not rule only on the women characters even on the whole story of the film and it becomes also difficult to produce their desire's films related to women issues due to their cultural value structures. At last she concluded that now it is mandate to break down the gender stereotypes created by patriarchy.[5]

Anushna (2016) wrote an article on Portrayal of Women in Hindi Cinema in which author discussed about the Hindi Cinema is different for person to person, for some people it is the way of entertainment, for some the reality of society. Cinema also affects the society. Movies like Mother India were made to depict women as a shy, dependent and clad in sari but woman who wears western often considered as immoral. In 70s and 80s the vamps era has came into existence in which women used to smoke, drink as men used to do, in 90s women roles has also been changed such as the concept of independent, liberated, educated and employed women were showing in movies. In the contemporary era, 21st century the women characters in bollywood has been more powerful, now woman could be anything such as, journalist, politician to a sex worker and also an entrepreneur. The author also wrote about the audience choice, audience wants to see with which they are more familiar on screen, with which they are aware of. So the producer of the film invests money on the movie as per the taste of audience to get return on investment. Viewer likes to see women in the different characters and roles as per the changing trends in society. Still women are portrayed in the way that caters to the male gaze and also in stereotypical characters. At last author concluded that cinema is the best way of entertainment but somewhere it also worked as tool of social change in society.[6]

Ahmed (2017) has written an article on "Feminism in Bollywood: Where are the women behind the Camera?" described that in the contemporary time times women's activist based films have been expanded to battle with gender inequaities, for example, Gulaab Gang, Pink, Dangal, Begum Jaan yet some bollywood women's activist movies failed to make an effect on society. and described that in the contemporary era times feminist-based movies have been increased to fight with gender inequality such as Pink, Dangal , Gulaab Gang, Begum Jaan but some bollywood feminist films failed to create an influence on society. In Pink she analysed that "Pink" condemns the

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[4] Srivastava, Priyanka (2014) Depicting Women in Bollywood: The mould never changes, Retrieved from https://www.indiatoday.in/movies/bollywood/story/depicting-women-in-bollywood-222702-2014-10-11

[5] Rad, Mana Tabatabai (2016) Women and Their Portrayal in Indian Cinema, Retrieved from file:///D:/Feminism%20through%20the%20eye%20of%20bollywood/R1.pdf

[6] Anushna (2016) Portrayal of Women in Hindi Cinema, Retrieved from https://www.indianfolk.com/portrayal-women-hindi-cinema/

issue of sexual assault but still the movie was based on a man's character, Amitbhan Bachchan who speaks for women and other people do not heard until he speaks so. In bollywood feminist films like Dil Dhadhakane Do, Piku, Neerja and Pink, women have been portrayed in growing and developing characters. At last she discussed that the inclusion of women behind the camera has improved but in bollywood due to lack of women writing and producing, there is a problem in film industry with lack of female portrayal.[7]

Zafar and Bhatta (2017) did a study on Liberation and changing Representation of women in Indian Cinema and found that with the rapid change of Indian media the Hindi film industry also changed. Earlier people requested the removal of conservative portrayals or bad images of women. Nowadays bollywood cinema depends on NRI concept so with the help of foreign business, fashion, accessories, songs have also influenced. With the developing society women began to reclassifying their status in the society. This showed up with the progressive moving of the recently procured strength. Regardless of whether women really picked up anything considerable from the procedure of progression is yet to be seen.[8]

Group Discussion Team (2018) have conducted a GD on portrayal of women in Indian Cinema the greater part of the films are male driven, eve-teasing are portryed as love, women are portrayed as helpless in front of enemy and furthermore found a negative side that in old movies Heroines were portrayed as submissive, wants to be homemaker, not career oriented and endures the worst part of oppressive spouse quietly. Presently the female characters in movies are progressively sensible and are numerous entertainers are not doing such sort of futile roles.[9]

Sibal (2018) has conducted a research on Stereotyping Women in Indian Cinema and concluded that the Image of women in most of the Indian movies depict like Sita, to show the concept of ideal and obedient women. In Movies such as Dahej, Pati Parmeshwar, Gauri portrayed women as submissive wives for their families. Although the concept of these movies was based on breaking the patriarchal rules but in the whole life she suffers from the emotional and physical abuse. In Abhiman Jaya Bachhan gave up her musical career for her husband's satisfaction. These kind of movies demand motherhood and traditions.In this study the researcher also discussed that now the time is to refine the concept of male gaze and leaving the concept of stereotype women can help to build up the status of women in Indian Society.[10]

3. CONCLUSION:

The various readings concluded that the role of women in the bollywood is extensively discussive area in the field of media and women studies. This study concluded that at some extent the stereotypical portrayal has turned into empowered roles but at large extent women's portrayals are still as stereotypes and immoral like a man contribution is usually shown behind a woman's goals, movies like pink condems the issue of sexual assault but still it shows that the struggle of Amitabhan Bachachan, a male to provide them justice. Still women are portraying in roles to cater the male gaze. It is additionally concluded that because of social structure of India it hard for executives to move away from these typical role and in all cases male centric society (Patriarchy) wins in cinema. This investigation additionally found that the audience needs to see content increasingly recognizable on screen, with which they know about. So the maker of the movies puts away cash on the film according to the taste of audience to get rate of profitability.

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[7]   Ahmed, Fatima (2017) Feminism in Bollywood: Where are the women behind the Camera? Retrieved from https://www.browngirlmagazine.com/2017/06/bollywood-feminism-women-directors/

[8]   Zafar, Shabistan & Bhatta, Ajoy (2017) Liberalization and Changing Representation of Women in Hindi Cinema, Retrieved from http://www.indjst.org/index.php/indjst/article/viewFile/115859/83092

[9] Portrayal of Women in Indian Cinema (2018) Retrieved from https://www.groupdiscussionideas.com/portrayal-of-women-in-indian-cinema/

[10]   Sibal,   Vatika   (2018)   Stereotyping   Women   in   Indian   Cinema,   Retrieved   from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323786469_STEREOTYPING_WOMEN_IN_INDIAN_CINEMA

Prior the ladies were doing roles like submiisive women, as a homemakers where there were no professional objectives and now ladies are additionally avoding these inane roles. Finally creator presumed that bollywood films despite everything depict ladies in generalization characters broadly. Although, numerous movies are likewise propelling with the idea of woman's rights and empowernment yet at the same time individuals watch the stereotype depiction of women through different movies on TV. The bollywood should not portray women in streotype roles and try to portray them in more powerful and empowered roles.

4. REFERENCES:

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