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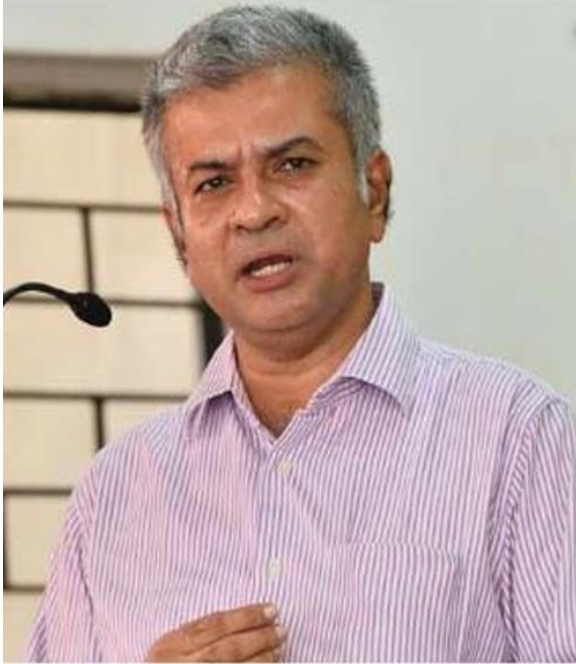
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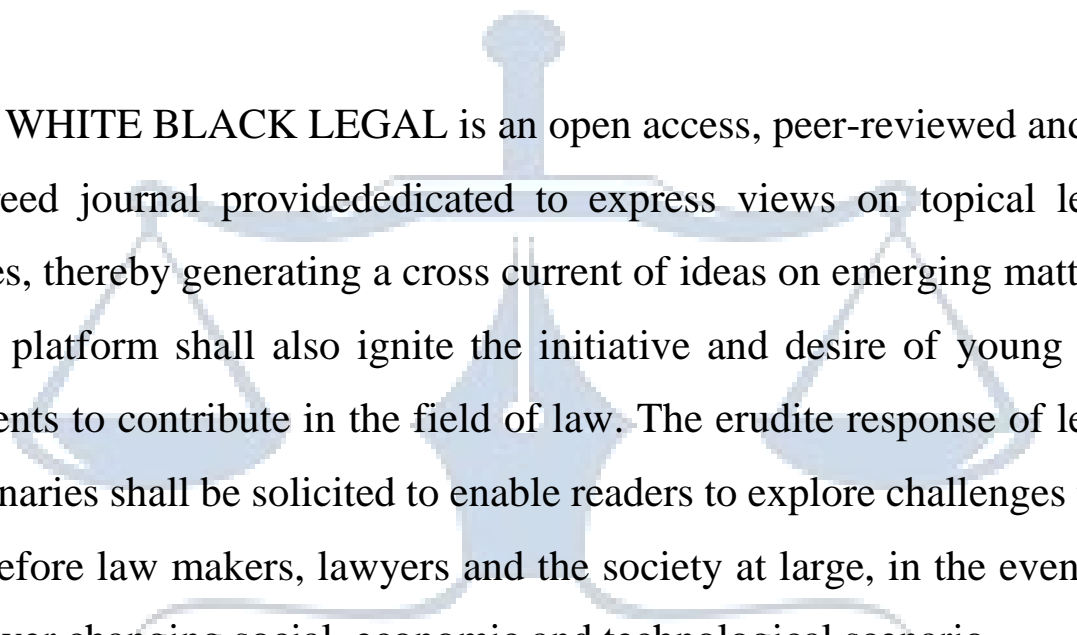
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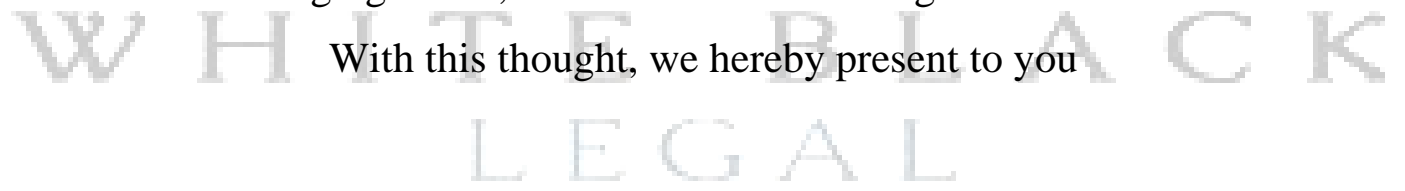
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WHITE BLACK LEGAL is an open access, peer-reviewed and refereed journal providededicated to express views on topical legal issues, thereby generating a cross current of ideas on emerging matters. This platform shall also ignite the initiative and desire of young law students to contribute in the field of law. The erudite response of legal luminaries shall be solicited to enable readers to explore challenges that lie before law makers, lawyers and the society at large, in the event of the ever changing social, economic and technological scenario.

With this thought, we hereby present to you

THEN & NOW: PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN AND GENDER IN BOLLYWOOD

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LL.M (Corporate Law)

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SCHOOL OF LAW

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THEN & NOW : PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN AND GENDER IN BOLLYWOOD

ABSTRACT

Bollywood is believed to entertain, to take the viewer to a world that is different from the real one, a world which provides escape from the daily grind of life. Bollywood is a popular media of mass consumption which plays a key role in moulding opinions, constructing images and reinforcing dominant cultural values. The paper deals with representations of women characters in mainstream Bollywood movies. Women constitute fifty per cent of the population and hence their portrayal on screen is crucial in determining the stereotypes that exist in the society. The paper begins with a discussion on the field of feminist film criticism and how mainstream Hindi Cinema has restricted

itself to defined sketches of womanhood. It also undertakes some glimpses from popular films to analyze this process of stereotyping. Cinema is always constructed from the male view point. Bollywood has been successful in portraying Indian women of different shades in a society dominated by patriarchal values . Bollywood is not only for the entertainment but also it is the source of demining the cultural value in society. The cinema is believed to be that means of communication that can start a trend and also can stop any misbeliefs from a particular society. It is that kind of mass communication which molds the opinion and beliefs of the peoples. Though in India women is believed to be as a goddess but in films mostly the reality is different or sometimes it can be true and my study reflect that on the youths of Delhi (NCR) And this study signifies whether the current situation in Bollywood pin the subject of women portrayal is positive or negative.

INTRODUCTION

Bollywood movies are now regarded as one of the most significant visual forms of entertainment. Both men and women are portrayed in the movie, but not too much. Men are typically characterised as being robust, energetic, daring, self-assured, and logical. Women, on the other hand, are represented as sensitive, attractive but slim, reliant on the hero, and content housewives. The main reason for this lowly representation of women is the socialisation process where the cultural standards support gender-based violence. It tends to traditionalize women's duties and saw women as a marginalised social category. Bollywood films include women in a variety of roles and configurations. On the other hand, critics argue that conventional or Westernised portrayals of women in Indian cinema are the result of a male-dominated viewpoint. Women are also treated as objects in the mainstream media, especially in the commercial cinema sector. It is uncommon to witness female taking the lead and successfully challenging her male colleagues. To appease and support the hero, actresses typically adopt conventional and stereotyped roles like that of a wife, mother, item girl, sister, or beloved. Indian cinema has changed significantly since independence, moving from traditional mythological blockbusters to "Bollywoodized" versions of popular Hollywood films. The success of individual films has been significantly influenced by women in the Indian cinema industry. The largest movie business in India is Bollywood, and from its beginnings, the presence of women has played a significant role in the industry. This study primarily focuses on the portrayal of women, who are also an important component of society because India is thought to be the country with the

greatest number of youths, and studying their perspectives is akin to studying the future perspectives of the youth who will govern the nation in the future. Since the 1950s, Bollywood has played a vital role in the representation of women in society. Because of this, Bollywood film has shown a unique portrayal of women in each decade. Women have traditionally acted as ornamental elements in films for a very long time. Significantly, starting in the 1990s, the heroine's body has taken on equal or more significance than her face. As a result, the representations of the women are likewise hypothetical and completely separated from the Indian women who live in cities, villages, or the streets, who are literate or not, who work or do not work, and so forth. Second, since premarital sex, adultery, and initiate sexual approaches by women are all too prevalent and have gained public approval, ethical standards have also significantly shifted. In addition, men's perceptions of women's ideal appearance and behaviour are being shaped by films, and the prevalence of mental health conditions including body image disorders, anorexia, and bulimia among women is rising.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Srijita Sarkars[1] research, when women are portrayed in quality films, they may effect societal change by demonstrating a woman's emotional and financial independence. This is particularly important in Indian society, where women are mostly treated in a patriarchal and male-dominated manner. As a result, films that expose issues like male domination, exploitation, abuse, and domestic violence help to bring these issues to light and give women a voice in public.

Bollywood-produced commercial films presented "ideal women" as docile, selfless, moral, and in charge. Hegde[2] and Dasgupta. The wicked woman, on the other hand, is portrayed as being non-sacrificing, westernised, sexually aggressive, and independent. Bollywood films have long promoted the concept of the perfect Indian woman, one who puts up with all forms of cruelty, injustice, and animosity directed at her by men and society at large. According to Gokulsing & Dissanayake[3], women are still typically presented as inferior characters in commercial Hindi films, especially in light of recent worldwide improvements. In Bollywood films, women are typically portrayed in a

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[1] Sarkar, Srijita, "An analysis of Hindi women-centric films in India." Electronic Theses and Dissertations. Paper 1265, 2012. http://dx.doi.org/10.18297/etd/1265.

[2] Dasgupta, S. D., & Hegde, R. S. The eternal receptacle: A study of mistreatment of women in Hindi films (InR. GhadiallyEd.), Women in Indian society.· A reader. 1988; 209- 216. New Delhi, India: Sage Publication

[3] Gokulsing & Dissnayake. Indian Popular Cinema: A Narrative of Cultural Change. Thretham Books Limited: London.2004

stereotyped manner for historical, religious, and cultural reasons. Nooristani Humira[4] Since males predominate in the Indian film industry, how women are portrayed in films reflects how men see women in Indian culture. These films shape perceptions and frequently support disrespecting women. Bollywood films frequently centre on the circumstances of privileged women, whose pleasant lifestyles are countered by the treatment they receive from the males in their lives. However, the majority of them ignore the challenges that women from lower socioeconomic backgrounds deal with on a daily basis, such the harassment that occurs on buses and in public spaces—a problem that was most recently demonstrated by the mob rape of two young women. Bollywood is willing of demonstrating for men how women ought to be treated, but it hasn't looked into the consequences of this behavior up until this point.

Women have been depicted in these films as sexual objects in a way that males would find appealing when they saw them on screen. Because "the cinema satisfies a primordial wish for pleasurable looking," films offer a place for the objectification and exploitation of female sexuality by combining the patriarchal order of society with the pleasures of voyeurism. Laura Mulvey[5]. It can be concluded from Vogue that the primary means of portraying women in inferior and low-power roles in society is through sexualized representations of women. Katherine and Lindner[6]. The widespread popularity of Bollywood films in India has led to conjecture about the societal ramifications of how women are portrayed in the media, which has the potential to be extremely harmful. They are perpetuating the current contradiction of sex roles in addition to depicting a patriarchal environment. The consequence of Bollywood's enduringly unfavourable representation of women in India is to validate the idea that women are inherently inferior. The ultimate outcome can only be a gradual deterioration of women's self-esteem Kaul[7]

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[4] Humira Nooristani The Bollywood Effect: Women and Film in South Asia, April 2013 available at: http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/04/11/the-bollywood-effect-women-and-film-insouth-asia.

[5] Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings. Eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen. New York: Oxford UP, 1999: 833-44

[6] Lindner, Katharina (October 2004). "Images of Women in General Interest and Fashion Magazine Advertisements from 1955 to 2002". Sex Roles. 51: 409–421.

[7] . Kaul, C. "Some Perspectives on Issues of Gender and the Indian Media," in N. Dakovic´, D. Derman, and K. Ross (eds.) Gender and Media, Ankara: Med-Campus Project #A126 Publications. 1996

METHODOLGY

The analytical methodology has been adopted in the study. The secondary data including books, magazines, journals, and websites are used and analysed for the evaluation of the study and I did a survey through google form which includes some questioners.

Sample

Using purposive and convenience sampling, 30 participants (15 males and 15 females) were chosen with an age distribution of 18-24 (10 participants, 5 males and 5 females), 24-30 (10 participants, 5 males and 5 females) and 30+ (10 participants, 5 males and 5 females). Participants were chosen from different age brackets so as to eliminate any age-based bias that may have been there. The participants were mainly from urban areas of Delhi-NCR, well-educated with a good command over English.

OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the portrayal of women in the early 1990s Bollywood cinema.
2. To identify the portrayal of women in the current scenario of the Bollywood.

HYPOTHESIS

1. In the early 1990s of the Bollywood cinemas the portrayal was as weak and objectified?
2. In the current Bollywood cinema, portrayal of women is as strong women. Lead characters in the current Bollywood cinema are now portray as independent and move beyond the line of gender stereotypes.

RESULT

➤ Most of the participants (52%) admitted that the Bollywood films mostly depicted women as in stereotyped, seductive, conventional and feeble forms while 48% supported films for presenting women in powerful roles. Asking "did films project women's unreal images among males' eyes? During 1960s-2000s All of the sample blamed films for using derogatory words such as go wear the bangles, implying that women are incapable and worthless and creating a inferior and weak image of women in society.

➤ Movies portray weak, powerless women who are more devoted, believe in their destiny, and never stop praying for the help of God. The films' narrative informs viewers that women's

history begins with the arrival of males. Her narrative adapts to achieve his hero's primary goal and challenges.

- Bollywood films paint good women as submissive, shy, wives, mothers, who wear salwar kameez or sarı, do not speak in front of elders, and eat after her family. The Bollywood rarely presents women strong and intelligent who do bear violence and argue with elder on wrong things.

- Participants also argue that the objective of presenting women as sexual object is to sell the films. After extensive viewing of these type of movies the mentality of boys are changed. They think teasing a girl frequently can make her to accept her love or friendship proposal because, most of the story of our films are started with the approaches and standpoint in which heroes tease the heroine. Firstly the heroine rejects the hero and then later accepts him. The Bollywood are developing this thinking in women minds that people adore the beauty and slimness. Therefore, they try to focus mostly on their cosmetics, body and clothes. Unrealistic and imaginary presentations of women's in various forms are convincing men to expect his life partner and girlfriends like film actresses.

- During discussion when they were asked "were they see any relation or connection between a rape victim and a woman portrayed in Bollywood films? Almost 79% said they thought there might be directly and indirectly some connection in this matter. Only 15% could not say anything about this 6% did not believe on this fact. In movies during 1930-90s when a baby born and if it is a baby boy it is said mubark ho ladka hua hai but never says mubark ho ladki hui hai. This leads to a preferential treatment of boys in families' right from their birth. The Indian Constitution conferred equal rights on men and women to eradicate gender inequality in the year 1950.

- Women in majority believe that the role played by the actresses in films is mostly the male director's idea of what roles they would play. This idea is based on the film maker's perception, beliefs, and personal opinion of viewers demand. During 1990s-2010, women in Bollywood are presented as sexual objects. Instead of projecting and focusing on the other prospective of women, films stress on women's sexuality, beauty and manner. On asking were they see any change in recent years portrayal of women in films, most of the respondents said YES, A LOT, Bollywood films had changed in recent years to depict the woman as more of an equal to her male counterpart and less of an object, their roles were more career-driven and less subservient. Even today there are a lot movies which are not run by male-leading actors .

- Talking about the women's item songs in films, almost 52% participants was considered it a degradation of women images by the in famous songs like Munni Badnam hui etc such type of portrayal is a terrible disrespect to the women because women are leveled item girls which referred a vulgar woman. In this way, most of Bollywood movies are not only objectifying women but also promoting stalking. Therefore, most Hero's in Bollywood films think Stalking is cool .

- Some women centric films such as Fashion, Heroine, Page 3, Corporate or Dirty Picture that have featured women's social issues and their social and sexual abuse. However, these films ironically paint women's different images which get ruined by their freedom that was accompanied by success. They were also shown using alcohol, drugs, when they were successful and finished with weak destiny. Even in movies like Lajjaa, Damini, Bandit queen, Water, etc. women were seen helpless and sought the assistance of men. So, it is concluded these films are also not free from gender stereotypes.

- On the discussion, why we should worry about the portrayal of women in films, most of the sample argued that movies reflected social attitudes more truthfully than any other mass medium and it reached the greatest number of people. Today, films are launched nationally and world widely, and these films identify the image of a society. The issue of rapes in India, Cases of acid attacks (Chhapaak,2020) leading actress Deepika Padukone , Gangubai Kathiawadi(2022) biopic of Indian Social activist her role played by actresses Alia Bhatt also many movies like MOM(2017), Thappad(2020) , Gujan Saxena:The KARGIL GIRL (2020), Mardaani(2014), Raazi(2018) had become globally a subject of discussion many times. Therefore, In recent times we observed that women empowered a lot Bollywood films can be acted as a catalyst in this context.

- Provocative Statements Querying about what they felt when they heard some derogatory dialogues such as Jaa Choodiyan Pehen Ke Beth Jaa, (go wear bangles and sit down). The entire group told these types of dialogues delivered negative messages about a woman that she is incapable, useless and intellectually and socially inferior to men. Now, time has changed and most of the women nationally and internationally have become successful. Ahead, the influence of historical and socio-cultural factors on the growth of women's roles in commercial Indian films suggests the stereotypical portrayal of women cinema plays an essential role in shaping views about gender roles and gender identities within the Indian context where women are viewed as playing subordinate roles to men.

- Then female actors earns much lesser than male actors . then times comes where female actor gets equal amount as male actors but Now, Female actors gets much more than his co-male actors . In one of the interview with Deepika Padukone during promotion of movie Padmavat she herself said that she gets more signing amount than her co-star Ranveer Singh and Shahid Kapoor. As, She is the main character in the movie , though Bollywood is considered as male dominating industry back then.

Changing Image of Female in Indian Cinema Period 1913-1980

Early Indian film was primarily centred on epics and mythical tales. Raja Harishchandra, the first feature film, told a mythical tale. Then, Indian film developed become a platform for expressing anger and calling for independence from British colonial control during the time of the liberty struggle. Following independence, social challenges and difficulties were portrayed in Indian film with the goal of creating a society that was both desired and achievable. The 1950s to the end of the 1970s are regarded as Bollywood's golden age of cinema. Films of this period emphasised our rich cultural heritage, the rural economy, friendly and familial ties, conventions, norms, and ethics. Poverty-related concerns were also brought up. The appeal was in how easily viewers could relate to the characters on the screen. The female actors played significant roles in the flicks. They had a great deal of duty to market and sell the pictures. Together with the male performers, women were assigned equally prominent roles in the movies. Several well-known films from this era include Padosan, Half Ticket, Pakeezah, Mother India, Kaagaz Ke Phool, and Pakeezah. Let's talk about Mehboob's 1957 film "Mother India" as an example. He makes an effort to fuse traditional traditions with communist ideas. In the first scene of Mother India, Radha plays an elderly woman who is requested to officially launch a new canal that has been built through her a small town. They won't allow anybody else to open the canal but her. Radha is introduced as a survivor who will usher in a new era of wealth and advancement in the first scene of the movie. The value of being a woman is demonstrated throughout the movie. An aspect of Indian consciousness is the phrase Bharat Mata, which means Mother India. A song in the movie declares that a woman's destiny is to leave her parents' house once she gets married. Its songs have incredibly powerful lyrics. A line from the movie continues, saying that only "laaj is a woman's dharma." Radha is presented as an ordinary lady who makes a wonderful wife and daughter-in-law. Her husband is a heavenly to her. She is brilliant and highly responsible. Men and women alike readily relate to her in this movie; the former see her as their own moms or wives and the latter as their non-sexual partners.

In Bollywood films, the action phase started in the 1980s. It resulted in significant adjustments. The hero took away the Bollywood women' power and personal space. She was diminished to a glitzy extra in the movies. She was slain, raped, or abducted while dancing among trees. The 1989 Ketan Mehta film "Mirch Masala" is an example of an action role for women in Indian cinema. It tells the tale of Sonbai (Smita Patil), who works in a chilli plant in the western region of India before to independence. Her spouse moves to the city and takes a job in the railroads. In the meantime the Subedar (or tax collector) arrives to collect taxes. He gets attracted to Sonbai, and calls village headman, (Mukhi), to bring her to him. To collect taxes, the Subedar, also known as the tax collector, appears in the interim. He summons the local headman, Mukhi, after being drawn to Sonbai, and asks him to bring her to him. However, he brings the incorrect woman by accident. Sonbai was unexpectedly taken by the Subedar when she chance to walk past his camp the next day. Somehow, she manages to get away and dashes into her workplace, the chilli factory. She is protected by Abu Miyan (Om Puri), an elderly Muslim watchman. After realising that her husband had lied to the Subedar to get Sonbai turned over to him, the mistreated Mukhiani, the wife of Mukhi, visits Sonbai. The Subedar and his hunchmen mock Mukhiani's protest. When they get at the factory, they rob the guard and smash down the doors. In the last scene, when Subedar gets closer to Sonbai, the other factory ladies start tossing sacks of chilli powder in his face. In this movie, ladies play glamourous roles such as dancing and being gazed at by the seductive Subedar. In a different scene, the Subedar uses a telescope to see Sonbai. In contemporary film, an actress's physical appearance has become crucial to her career. Their curvy figures are a testament to the amount of time they spend working out at the gym. As an instance, Sri Devi, the main woman of the I980s, is referred to as having "thunder thighs." Like many other female celebrities, Sri Devi spends a lot of time in the makeup chair to play the tough, bossy roles. She outfought and outdanced the males in "Himmatwala". She battled with the bad guys on her own and overcame them. Even two of the greatest male heroes in "Joshila" (1989) struggled to maintain their roles when pitted against Sri Devi. Showtime asked, "Is Sri Devi a hero?," in September of 1997. During this period, attitudes and perceptions about women had completely transformed.

Traditional social standards have been challenged by women in Indian film. One of the most influential actresses of her day, Devika Rani, co-founded Bombay Talkies studio and initiated what may have been the first and prolonged kiss in Hindi movie history.

Bollywood Heroines in 1990s

The 1990s were the next era. It resulted in additional modifications to Hindi film. The films from this era demonstrated how women's roles in Indian cinema are evolving. A 1994 movie called "Mohra" starred Raveena Tandon as Roma Singh. Roma's facial expressions suggested that she was a highly "liberated" lady. "The heroine may have metamorphosed over the years, but she still cannot break away from the shackles of certain norms set by Hindi cinema years ago," Monica Motwani said in an article published in the Indian film magazine "G." The space that women had made for themselves was lost. Heroes took central stage, while ladies were reduced to a glamorous supporting role in movies. The story did not advance in any way by their presence. Bollywood films declined in quality the more globalised India grew. A few directors tried telling stories about women's empowerment, and actresses like Vidya Balan and Tabu received a unique opportunity to take the lead in these roles. However, these were few and hard to come by. Some popular films from the 1990s post-liberalization era suggested a yearning for a traditional lifestyle in which men earned the bread and women took care of their houses. With one of the 1990s' biggest successes, Hum Apke Hai Kaun, Madhuri Dixit won over hearts and started a trend of heroines who would never put their own goals before of their family's hopes and wishes. The nurturing role of the woman as housewife was trendy again. Late 1990s films such as "Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gum," "Kuch Kuch Hota Hai," "Dil Toh Pagal Hai," and "Biwi No.1" featured women as homemakers and ornaments. These films, all from up-and-coming directors, did not include women in professional roles. Even the Generation X film Dil Chahta Hai, directed by a youthful filmmaker, adhered to the conventional role for its female stars.

Bollywood Heroines in modern time

Singh (2007) shows how the popular film industry significantly leans on Indian mythology to maintain its mass appeal. It dramatises the masculine fantasies of the feminine, primarily sharing the interests and ideals of male discrimination. As a result, women are portrayed as either monsters or angels.

The distinction between the vamp and the heroine disappeared in the 1990s, a while later. The heroine represented the audacity and provocative movements of the past era's bad girl. According to some critics, the rise of globalisation and commercialization forced heroines to become more decorative than genuine women. She may be shown dancing in snow-covered Switzerland or Australia, but she essentially embodies the domestic lady that Indian men like. The shift in visual happened gradually

rather than all at once. In the movies, there have been some noticeable alterations to the stereotypical roles of women. Jiah Khan, for instance, is a novel modification in "Nishabd". It centres on the adolescent's developing awareness of her sexual identity. She reaches out to a man who is over twice her age and accepts with confidence. The opening of small theatres has made it feasible in part. The multiplex culture has inspired new directors to recognise that the time is changing and incorporate their own aspirations into screenplays. Nowadays, it makes people giggle when an actress appears on the cover of a magazine or appears in a movie while wearing a bikini. However, it's important to remember that Mehtab performed a topless bathtub scene in Kidar Sharma's 1942 film "Chitralekha". History is repeated.

Sexism in Movies in Recent Times

As we discussed previously, there has been a shift in the overt presentation in the past 20 years. Stereotypes about gender roles now manifest themselves differently. One such film is Jab We Met, which made a big deal out of its unconventionally portrayed female lead. Even though Geet had a great personality in many ways, the stereotyping is unavoidable. She was forced to sacrifice her sense of duty or reason in order to become a carefree, creative, and impetuous girl. Then there was the more modern Kabir Singh, who widely normalised sexism, abuse, and violence against intimate partners in the name of love. Other series include Dabangg, Student of the Year, Housefull, and so on.. However, the films frequently undermine these efforts by continuing to promote gender role preconceptions in other ways. Bias against gender roles for women is closely linked to that towards males. Most people consider vulnerability, helplessness, delicacy, sacrifice, compassion, and generosity to be feminine traits, whereas males are supposed to defend, battle, dispute, assert, and advance in their careers and finances. Imran Khan's mother, who plays the male lead in the film I Hate Luv Stories, was heard lamenting over the phone because she had wanted a son and had been given a daughter instead. Therefore, even a brief conversation in a film may maintain gender role prejudice and affect how people perceive it. Despite being marketed as women-centric, films like Fashion, Corporate ultimately adhered to gender stereotypes and prejudices of society. The lead female in Fashion suddenly gave up her desire to have a family and only became aware of morality and right and wrong after succumbing to cocaine and racism (an unexpected sexual encounter with a black man was the catalyst for the lady's psychological awakening); the lead female in Corporate demonstrated poor professional decision-making skills (sacrifice for love, once more) despite being a staunch professional. These characters were shaped by stereotypes of society. In despite concerted efforts over

the past twenty or thirty years to remake the way women are portrayed in Indian film, major productions have continued to portray women as either the goddess-type, the impulsive, crazy, irresponsible, or the amoral types. There is still a long way to go before women are generally portrayed as balanced characters, or at the very least free from such dramatic dichotomy.

Role of Objectifying Songs

The cherry on top is the contemporary appeal of raps and item songs that degrade and itemise women. Older films' item or cabaret songs featured ladies with skimpy attire and unprofessional behaviour. Lyrics from songs like Fevicol, Sheela, Munni, Jalebi Bai, Choli Ke Peeche, Mujhko Ranaji Maaf, and many more disappeared along with the visual objectification. Women were reduced to nothing more than "desire and lust," with no inherent worth. After that, rap music gained immense popularity and was played at both nightclubs and child-friendly gatherings. The dehumanising videos, along with the ongoing promotion of stalking (Aaja Meri Gaadi Mein Baith Jaa) and the devaluation of women (Kudi Mainu Kehndi, Blue Eyes, Sunny Sunny), made their way into mainstream films and music to the point where it is difficult to find a modern mainstream film without a soundtrack that sounds similar. Although some could contend that these are only personal choices expressed in the lyrics, we must acknowledge the profound impact that popular entertainment has on all of us, particularly on children and teenagers.

Women Empowerment—Patriarchy Reinforcement Paradox

The duality of women's emancipation and patriarchy's reinforcement in Hindi movies should be discussed here. These include films like Mother India, Fashion, Corporate, Veere Di Wedding, and others that attempted to empower women while yet remaining within the boundaries of patriarchy. These films show males with varying personalities or situations encouraging women without actually understanding what it means to be autonomous or self-identifying. Though arguably a progressive step, portraying liberated women in relatively recent films engaging in traditional male activities like drinking, smoking, masturbating, and sexual advancement equates gender independence with things that, at their core, have little to do with gender equality. Women have frequently found themselves basing decisions about their lives and careers on the possibility of marriage. Certain female characters are portrayed as being more rebellious and less intelligent. Ironically, these kinds of thoughts have their roots in the patriarchal structure and ideals. Disobedience to the traditional feminine attributes fostered by patriarchy does not challenge patriarchy; rather, it serves to strengthen it. Such films also

have the issue of portraying gender equality as the total opposite of societal norms. It generates discussions and links equality with inappropriate behaviour (many behaviours, such as drug use and promiscuity, are potentially damaging to both sexes). Gender equality is then devalued when feminism as a whole is reduced to another extreme viewpoint.

Women in Realistic Cinema

Realistic film differs from popular filmmaking in that it draws inspiration for its subject matter from actual events and social events. While appearing to belong in the category of popular movies, its visuals and character illustration are more interesting than those of popular movie. It's worthwhile to examine a few films from this increasingly well-liked cinematic genre. This type of movie combines critical acclaim with mass appeal. Movies like Black Friday (2004), Udaan (2010), No One Killed Jessica (2011), Akrosh (2010), and Once Upon a Time in Mumbai (2010) are included in this category. The films analysed by Madhur Bhandakar have been chosen for analysis based on precision and clarity. A well-established link exists between Bhandarkars' films and harsh realism. He belongs to the new wave of Hindi filmmakers who have been praised for their ability to portray contemporary subjects on screen. Bold and unconventional subjects including the abuse of women, the cycle of poverty, organised crime, the media's and celebrities' devotion, the cruelty of large business, and industrial espionage have all been the subject of his films. A majority of his films had female leads. Typically, Bhandarkars' female characters are shown as strong, self-reliant, rebellious, and successful in their chosen industries. They make their own judgements and live their lives as they see fit. His film reels open with an incredibly attractive picture of a self-reliant leading women. However, as the movie goes on, the main character's confidence gradually decreases and she starts to conform to social norms. In the end, she will either possess Even though Bhandarkar tries hard to provide us strong female characters in his films, he chooses to situate them in a larger societal framework. His characters try to defy him, yet they always stay inside the parameters of what they are doing. A review of his previous works, such Page 3, Chandani Bar, Traffic Signal, Jail, and so forth, may point out the ways in which he compromised his performance in order to fit in or avoid being victimised.

<u>CASE STUDY</u>

A not-so-successful Hindi movie

LAJJA...: It is a brave and sincere attempt on the part of Raj Kumar Santoshi, trying to make a mainstream film that showcases many different faces of oppression of women of across social strata

in our country. Many critics have called it loud and melodramatic.

THEME 1 'Say no to womanizing husbands'

THEME 2 'Say no to dowry'

 THEME 3 'If men never have to prove their chastity, why women?'

THEME 4 'Me thakur, you dalit : Me human being, You animal!'

On the whole, LAJJA is a purposeful film within commercial parameters and the best part is that the Indian masses will be able to identify with the goings-on. To be fair to it, Lajja is a well-intentioned effort,aimed at raising the levels of social consciousness of the cinema- going public.

IMPLICATIONS

The main implication of this study was that representation of women in such films encourages social change in the treatment of women in Indian society, which is very male-dominated and patriarchal, by showing women as emotionally and economically independent. Therefore, by acknowledging the open-secrets like domestic violence, abuse etc, it brings these problems upfront, by allowing women to talk about it in public.

SUGGESTIONS

1. The government has to establish specific rules about how women should be portrayed in the media.
2. Covering women's success stories and their importance to society should be given more priority. Movies need to support giving women's problems a platform so that the glamorization of women's objections may be removed.
3. The Indian film industry need to take a proactive stance in assisting women and motivating them to attain gender parity through the elimination of sexual hierarchy.

CONCLUSION

With a focus on gender, the study intends to look into and evaluate the effects of how women are portrayed in Bollywood adult comedies as well as the broader social implications of these portrayals. We found that respondents could identify the pervasive gender stereotypes that were present in the representations of female characters, with female participants demonstrating a greater sensitivity and awareness of differences between how women are portrayed in real life and in films. Due to these

dominant presumptions, women are expected to behave personally and in relationships in ways that are unreasonable.

Women have been portrayed in Indian cinema for at least a century, despite the fact that they have only been marginally acknowledged and only sometimes seen. Inadequate efforts have been made by Indian filmmakers to portray the true problems faced by women and equip them for an equal and productive role in society. Filmmakers used to concentrate on how poorly women were portrayed in films, but now days things have changed for the better. The Indian film industry has just come to the realisation that Indian ladies are the most modest and courteous people anywhere in the world. Over time, there has been a good shift and improvement in the portrayal of women in films. Women's representation in cinema has always been divisive and up for discussion. Women may now be seen working in films thanks to professionalism and advances in technology, but another conflicting image of the Indian film industry is the lack of effective female representation in the sexual division of labour. Women should not be shown as vulgar; instead, they should be portrayed as powerful, confident, self-sufficient, and capable. The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition Act), 1986 was recommended to be amended in order to forbid the indecent representation of women in publications, advertisements, paintings, figures, or other media, as well as for related matters, due to the way women are portrayed in the media. The concerns surrounding women's representation will not go away even after the parliament passed the act if filmmakers, production companies, advertising agencies, and the women who represent themselves in the film industry do not apply to the laws in the real world.

Establishing a consensus over the way women are portrayed is hard. It is incorrect to believe that women on Indian silver screens have always been depicted the same way, given the fact that women in India are not an evenly distributed population and have varying goals and desires as a result of belonging to different classes, religions, castes, and socioeconomic status. Naturally, the representation ought to be considerate of the group to which they belong. Films must thus be sensitive to the environment in which they place their female protagonists. Women characters should be able to negotiate their place within the existing power systems and have the agency to overthrow it. It's time for movies to rethink women as objects of desire for males. It is essential that women's experiences and challenges be used as story points at this moment. Overcoming stereotypes will be extremely beneficial to the status of women in Indian culture. In order to assist Indian women in

achieving their goals, the film industry must establish a distinct and autonomous realm. The purpose of films should be to inspire social change via amusement, not only to entertain. Cinema, as a media product recognised to hasten modernization, should not limit itself to producing films; instead, it should create more progressive portrayals of women. These types of portrayals would honour women and their position in society.

I want to draw the conclusion from this study that women are becoming more powerful, independent, tolerant, educated, and capable leaders. This study will be helpful in the future when analysing women's roles in the 21th century. It's safe to presume that women performers are now gaining the same rights as males and are becoming more vocal in their requests for roles.

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